



Hebron Community Church

March 2024 Newsletter

March 2024—Observing a Holy Lent

Joel 2:15-17-- “Blow the ram’s horn trumpet in Zion! Declare a day of repentance, a holy fast day. Call a public meeting. Get everyone there. Consecrate the congregation. Make sure the elders come, but bring in the children, too, even the nursing babies, Even men and women on their honeymoon—interrupt them and get them there. Between Sanctuary entrance and altar, let the priests, God’s servants, weep tears of entance.

Let them intercede: “Have mercy, God, on your people! Don’t abandon your heritage to contempt. Don’t let the pagans take over and rule them and sneer, ‘And so where is this God of theirs?’”

We are now a couple of weeks into the season of Lent. We started with Ash Wednesday, a day for receiving ashes in the form of a cross on our foreheads to remind us of our sinfulness and need of God’s grace. I am reminded that not everyone really knows or understands what Lent is all about. I have been one, as long as I have been a pastor, to try to teach these important traditions of the church, because I know how often the true meaning can get lost in the ritual. Growing up, words like Lent, Advent, Maundy (for the Thursday of Holy Week), among many others were words that were thrown around at church but often with little explanation. I believe there were various reasons for that. Sometimes, there was the expectation that we knew what the words meant, or sometime even the pastors were just going through the motion of the rituals without much thought to the meanings.

There are many who believe that because of that, the rituals have little meaning for our modern world, and there is little reason for us to follow them. I, however, have come to see the beauty in many of the rituals and the depth of service that they offer, if we reclaim the meaning for our modern world. One of these is the season of Lent. Lent is a season of 40 days, not counting Sundays that lead up to Easter Sunday. Lent begins on Ash Wednesday and has traditionally been a season of prayer and fasting, ever since the days of the early church. Faithful Christians throughout the centuries, have used this time to examine their hearts and their lives in light of the cross of Christ, and drawn closer to the One who took our sins upon Himself.

The 40 days remind us of the 40 days of rain, with Noah and his family on the Ark, as God saved them from the flood. They remind us of the 40 days Jesus spent being tempted in the wilderness, facing every temptation that we as humans face. They remind us the greatest saving activity of God in history—the suffering, death and resurrection of Christ. And the ashes remind us that we don’t deserve any of it. Ashes have been used throughout time,

as a sign of repentance, as we remember that it was our sin that led Jesus to the cross, and His love for us that held Him there.

Lent has traditionally been a time to fast, and re-focus ourselves on Christ. When I was younger, I often fasted from things like sweets, or soft drinks, things that really didn't do much to draw me closer to God. The scripture above is a call to repentance, and believes that it is serious enough to call everybody together, even nursing babies, and newlyweds. Our sin has caused a separation from God, and we need His forgiveness. Without the grace of God, we have no hope. The point of this season, and any fasting is to remind us of the suffering of Christ on our behalf and to use the time that would have been spent in doing other things with our Lord Jesus, seeking His grace and forgiveness. Like any other rituals we celebrate in the church, there is the temptation to do them out of habit, or because it makes us look more holy, so we must remember that it all comes down to the heart. If we don't practice the rituals of the church from the heart, they mean nothing.

One of the things that I have learned through the years is that people love a celebration. We love celebrating joyous days, like birthdays, Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Easter, but not so much the days that make us look seriously at ourselves or days that remind us of suffering. This includes times like Ash Wednesday, Lent, and Holy Week. We had a small crowd here for our Ash Wednesday service, as is normal in many churches, but is sad, as we need to take every opportunity to seek after God's grace and forgiveness. We will likely see more people for Palm and Easter Sundays than we will for our Holy Week services. People like to jump from one celebration to the next, but if we go with Jesus through the darkness of Holy Week, if we can bear with Him a little while and see His suffering, it will make the light of Easter shine all the brighter. We can't truly appreciate the sunshine without the rain.

Let us walk through this holy time of Lent together, in prayer and self-reflection, as we prepare anew for Holy Week and Easter, as we receive anew the love and grace of God. May God bless you during this Lent and always.

Your servant brother in Christ Jesus,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Pastor Dustin D. James". The signature is written in black ink on a light-colored background.

Pastor Dustin James

OUTREACH AND MISSIONS MINISTRIES – FEBRUARY 20, 2024

Outreach and Missions Ministries are in full swing at Hebron. The Worship Committee, Friendship Circle, Methodist Men, and Outreach and Missions Committee have prayerfully implemented many projects to reach out to our church members, community, and beyond. The church calendar is filling up fast! Our collaborative goal is to be intentional in all that we do to honor God and fulfill His desire for us to reach out to as many people as possible to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

I encourage everyone to pay particular attention to the “happenings of Hebron” in the coming weeks and months. Your participation and suggestions are paramount in helping us shine God’s light on those in need of His love, in addition to providing food and supplies to many in need.

Hebron love,
Pat

Upcoming Events in April

Faith Sharing Workshop ends on Wednesday, April 3rd. A Bible Study begins on Wednesday, April 10th at 6:00 pm and will continue until November 27th.

Safe Sanctuary Training will be on Sunday, April 7th beginning at 11:30 am.

April 13th will be a Family Fun Day with Kite Flying.

Church Council will meet on Sunday, April 14th at 3:00 pm.

Friendship Circle will meet on Monday, April 15th at 7:00 pm.

April 19th and 20th will be Stencil Painting times. Friday from 12 to 8, Saturday 9 to 1.

April 23rd is the newsletter deadline.

April 25th the Methodist Men will meet at 6:00 pm.

April 26th and 27th will be Crafting Days.

Birthdays in March

2nd	Justin Williams
4th	Mary C. Burgess
5th	Susan Dixon Agatha Johnson
7th	E.C. Sykes, III Howard Williams
8th	Margaret Cheek
15th	Shirley Burgess Mary L. Burgess
16th	Teresa Dallas
20th	Deanne Greeson Aiden Efland
23rd	Ellen Williams Helen Williams
24th	Charles Glosson
28th	Sue Anderson
29th	Jesse Raines



Easter Sunrise Service will begin at
7:00 am on March 31st.

March 2024 Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
25	26	27	28	29	1	2
					5-8 pm Scout Pinewood Derby	10-12 Scout Pinewood Derby
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
9:30 Sunday School 10:30 Worship Communion 3:00 Acolyte Training	9-4 ALM 6:30 Scouts	9-4 ALM	9-4 ALM 6 pm Faith Sharing	9-4 ALM	Men's Stew Prep	Men's Stew Sale / Ladies Bake Sale
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
9:30 Sunday School 10:30 Worship	9-4 ALM 6:30 Scouts	9-4 ALM	9-4 ALM 6:00 Faith Sharing	9-4 ALM		
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
9:30 Sunday School 10:30 Worship	9-4 ALM 6:30 Scouts 7:00 Methodist Women/Friendship	9-4 ALM Newsletter Deadline	9-4 ALM 6:00 Faith Sharing	9-4 ALM 6 pm Methodist Men		11-3 Easter Egg Hunt
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
9:30 Sunday School 10:30 Worship	9-4 ALM 6:30 Scouts	9-4 ALM	9-4 ALM	9-4 ALM 7:00 Maundy Thursday Service	7:00 Good Friday Service	
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7 am Sunrise Service No Sunday School 10:30 Worship						

Nursery Schedule

March 3rd Martha Graham & Joannie Wilson
 March 10th Maddie Moss & Brenda Moss
 March 17th Jay Wilson & Markie Roberts
 March 24th Betty Boney & Betty Albright
 March 31st Cicero Sykes & Joannie Wilson

Greeters

Sammy Lankford & Brenda Moss
 Ben & Betty Boney
 Aaron Moss
 Jay & Joannie Wilson
 Sammy Lankford & Brenda Moss