



Edison Memorial United Methodist Church

Building Disciples; Growing in Faith; Serving in Christ's Name

Dear Friends,

On February 17, Ash Wednesday, we turn our collective liturgical attention to the season of Lent. In some ways it feels like we have been living in Lent for a year now, ever since the coming of COVID-19. We've given up many habits and behaviors. We've taken on new ones. We've re-examined many of our assumptions about life. We've been awakened to needs for justice, peace, and equality that we managed to overlook in the "Before-Times." Has any of all this brought us closer to Christ? Perhaps?

Once again, in the approaching Lenten season, we have a new opportunity for growth in our walk with the Lord. Elsewhere in the newsletter you will find information about how we will re-invent some of our Lenten traditions for this coronavirus time. But for now, let me share a prayer based on Psalm 51:10, *Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me.* I invite you to make it your prayer in this season:

Create in me a clean heart, open and receptive, so that I may embrace the many ways you choose to visit my life.

Create in me a clean heart, cleared of the refuse of old battles with others and deadly opposition within myself.

Create in me a clean heart, free from the clutter of distractions, so that I have time to dwell with you in the listening space of solitude and silence.

Create in me a clean heart, cleansed of anxiety and lack of trust, restoring in me an enduring faith in your abiding presence and unconditional love.

Create in me a clean heart, washed with your mercy and strengthened by your love, helping me move beyond whatever keeps me from union with you.

Create a clean heart in me, God. Dust off the unmindful activity that constantly collects there. De-clutter my heart from harsh judgements and negativity. Wash away my resistance to working through difficult relationships. Rinse off my un-loving so the beauty of your love can shine through me. Remove whatever keeps me from following in your compassionate footsteps. Amen.

So may it be for us all in this season. Wishing you every blessing as you begin your Lenten journey.

Yours, in Christ,
Pastor Barbara



Lenten Plans in a Time of Pandemic

The Lenten Season officially begins with Ash Wednesday, February 17. Like so much else in this past year, we are faced with the need to reinvent our church's Shrove Tuesday and Lenten traditions. We want to mark the beginning of Lent and to help Lent be a special and meaningful season for you. But we are mindful of public health official's advice to "double down" on all our coronavirus precautions right now as new variants of the virus emerge. So, this is our plan:

On Sunday, Feb. 14 in worship you will have the opportunity to receive an "Ash Wednesday Kit". This "kit" will contain a communion cup that has been consecrated by Pastor Barbara, an Ash Wednesday prayer card, and a burlap pin with a cross of ashes. On Ash Wednesday, you will have the resources you need for a private time of holy communion and prayer. By wearing the burlap pin on your lapel, coat, or sweater, you will be able to wear the sign of the Ashen Cross, and mark this special day of prayer, remembering your mortality and Christ's death out of love for you.

On Shrove Tuesday, February 16 at 7 p.m., we will offer a short "Lenten Eve" Service of Holy Communion via Zoom. This will allow those who would like to begin the Lenten season in the community of other church members to do so. The service will include an invitation to a Holy Lent, scriptures, Holy Communion, and pinning on our burlap ashen cross pins together. If you have not previously been part of a church Zoom meeting, please contact Pastor Barbara for the Zoom link.

May this Lenten season be a special time for each of us, and for our church, to draw closer to Christ.



Attention All “Cookie Extravaganza” Bakers!

We have a number of cookie containers in the kitchen left from our successful December “Cookie Extravaganza”. Items include Rubbermaid plastic containers, a large glass platter with a holiday design, a stainless steel pan, and a number of covered cookie trays. They are now washed and ready for you to claim them. Please come to the kitchen to take them home.

Teach-Reach-Bless Campaign Update

Thanks to your wonderful generosity, our church members donated a total of \$2510 to our East Ohio Conference’s Teach-Reach-Bless Campaign for Africa University. The goal of this campaign, as you recall, is to build a new women’s dormitory at Africa University, which will give 200 women students a safe and secure place to live as they pursue their educations. This, in turn, will have significant impact on their lives, their futures, and the futures of their communities. Last fall our Trustees agreed to match our congregation’s donations through a gift from the Wilbur Trust, thus allowing our total church gift for the campaign to be \$5020! What a significant and impactful gift this will be!

But there’s more good news: Rev. Bill McFadden and his wife Marti, an East Ohio retired pastor and his wife who are passionately committed to Africa University and who have been involved there from its beginning, have made a very generous challenge matching grant available to the churches of East Ohio. They offer to match all gifts to the Teach-Reach-Bless Campaign remitted in the year 2021 (in order to speed the receipt of funds, and speed the ability to “break ground” on the new dorm). So thanks to this generous matching grant, our \$2510 will turn into \$10,040, quadrupling our initial gift! Isn’t that incredible?

Thank you again, to all who have contributed to this need and to this significant accomplishment for mission through our church. We are very grateful to you!



Dear Edison Memorial UMC,

As Church & Community Engagement Coordinator for Flat Rock Homes I would like to Thank you for your very generous contribution given by way of the Wilbur Charitable Trust.

We are blessed to be partners in ministry with the Edison Memorial UMC Family. As partners we are here for you in the way of pulpit supply, program speaker, facilitator of retreats and workshops.

If we can be of help to you in any of these areas please feel free to contact me.

Our prayers are with you always.

Sincerely,

Deaconess Sherri Buehl

Congratulations to Jessica Lynne Seel

On her very special baptism day - January 24, 2021



*This is a special picture
with Wesley photo shopped in -
he was unable to attend because of
being quarantined.*

*Here Jessica is greeting
church family with
Pastor Barbara afterwards.*



See what great Love the Father has
lavished on you, that you
should be called
child of God!

And that
is what
you are!

Happy
Valentine's Day

