

From the Desk of Pastor Katie

There is something that I love about Lent. In fact, I would say that Lent and Advent are my two favorite times of the Liturgical year. Times of preparation and reflection as we wait, in Advent, for the coming of the Christ child and as we prepare ourselves to go with Jesus to the cross during Lent. Christmas and Easter themselves are wonderful, of course, but there is something incredibly sacred and holy about the weeks preceding each. How often do we really take time to slow down, reflect, repent and contemplate our relationship with God? Lent offers us the time and space to do just that throughout 40 holy days.

We begin each Lent on Ash Wednesday, a day on which we remember that “all come from dust, and to dust all return.” This year there was a particular juxtaposition between Ash Wednesday and Valentine’s Day, on which Ash Wednesday fell this year. Perhaps it is a striking difference, these two days, or perhaps it was the perfect combination. What better day to remember that we are created by a God (Ash Wednesday) that loves us so very, very much (Valentine’s Day). If you will remember, this past Ash Wednesday/Valentine’s Day was also the day that the realization of our mortality hit a community in Parkland, Florida especially close. Below are the words that a seminary colleague of mine posted on Facebook that day. She put to words what my heart could only grasp at that day:

“From cosmic dust we were created and to cosmic dust we shall return. Today, ‘Ashentine’s Day,’ was a long, hard, and holy day. I love the fact that God is greater than all of our imperfections, hurt, anger, and rebellion. I love the fact that God embraces those who are weary and those who seek restoration.

Mortality was very real today for the community of Parkland, FL. And God is embracing them this day and in the days to come.

The beautiful thing about being cosmic dust with such a gracious Creator, is that we are called into co-creation and co-restoration in this world. So be it. These next 40 days, let’s rise to the challenge to begin reconciling ourselves to God, repenting for our complicity in our broken world that allows tragedy to happen, and get to work with the Holy Spirit to turn this world upside down.

We will return to cosmic dust but let’s make [darn] sure that every second we have on this earth is used, in conjunction with the grace of God, to make it better.”

Rev. Nicole Anderson

Vermillion UMC, South Dakota

Some number of years ago a spiritual guide in my life challenged me to take something up instead of giving something up for Lent. This year I am going to do something far outside of my comfort zone each week of Lent. It is my hope that by stepping out of my comfort zone I will lean even more on God, my Creator. Perhaps I will even begin to help make the world a better place in some ways. What will you do? What will you fast from that separates you from God? What will you take up? However you spend this Lent, may you find it to be a truly Holy time.

Called to REACH, TEACH, and LOVE the Village of Newtown and beyond,

+Pastor Katie

Lenten Bible Study

Often times when we approach Lent we think about things we might give up. Have you ever thought instead about adding a spiritual practice for 40 days? This Lent consider joining Pastor Katie for a Lenten Bible Study. The study will be offered:

Wednesday evenings at 7:00 p.m. Feb 14 (Ash Wednesday Service is class 1) – March 28

Thursday mornings at 10:00 a.m. Feb 15 – March 29

Suggested book donation: \$7

World Day of Prayer

Using the motto "Informed prayer, prayerful action," World Day of Prayer is a worldwide ecumenical movement of Christian women of many traditions who come together to observe a common day of prayer and action. The 2018 program has been written by church women in Suriname. This small country on the northeast coast of South America has a rich and varied history. You will enjoy hearing about their culture as we worship. Join women from around the area on **Friday March 2, 2018** at Mt. Washington Presbyterian Church (6474 Beechmont Ave.) for World Day of Prayer 2018 "All God's Creation is Very Good"



Come at 9:15 a.m. for Fellowship, Coffee and donuts

Worship begins at 10:00 a.m.

Questions? Call 513-231-2650

Little Free Pantry/The Giving Box

Update by Jen McComb, Chair of the Board of Trustees

Have you ever wondered if what we do as a church truly affects someone? Can it transform their life? It's hard to see the impact we make on our community when we aren't at church every single day of the week. But, I can tell you, the Little Free Pantry has made a difference in the lives of the people in our community. There are 2 occasions I have been a personal witness to and countless others I've only heard about.



The first came about while scanning the Anderson Township Facebook Group. A member put out an "ISO (in search of) Food Pantry" post, describing the difficulties her family was facing waiting for their food stamps to arrive in the mail, and asking our online community for help. Dozens of people commented with their 2 cents. All the food pantries in the eastern Hamilton and West Clermont areas were named. And someone, who doesn't attend our church, tagged our Little Free Pantry page. I reached out through private message, just wanting to make sure that this person had directions and knew that the pantry was available 24 hours. She was happy to learn that she didn't have to make an appointment and could come at night.

The second came on the first night of our NUMC leadership retreat, just a few weeks ago. As we were sharing our meal and starting our retreat, we heard the door to the building open. A man's head quickly peeked through the doorway. It was no one I had ever seen before. Josh Haffer got up to investigate. This man was looking for our Pantry. Josh was able to direct him outside and this man was able to get what he needed.

These were just 2 examples of how the Little Free Pantry is already touching those in our community. How awesome it is to take care of each other, as Jesus called us to do. Our next step will be to get lighting installed by the Turpin High School class to provide visibility for the location at night. If you feel compelled, and have the means, consider donating to the Little Free Pantry. Coming soon, we will have overflow storage inside the church on the days you come and nothing else will fit.

"In every way I've shown you that it is necessary to help the weak by laboring like this and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, because he said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'" Acts 20:35

Stories from the Soft Space

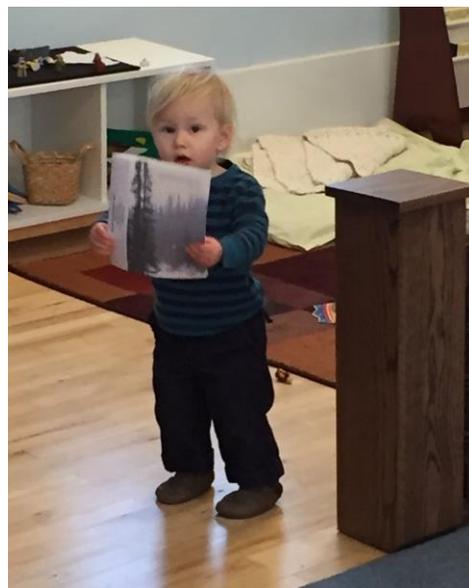
During Advent Newtown United Methodist Church introduced the first "Soft Space" in the area for young worshippers. The introduction of the Soft Space was preceded by months of conversation and research done by the Worship Team into current best practices for welcoming children in church. We would like to begin telling stories of how we see this initiative of Radical Hospitality reaching children and families. If you have a story to share please make sure it is given to the office by the 15th of the month to be published in the following month's newsletter. This month we hear from Devon Clausing:

Soft Space Story

Written by Devon Clausing

This is from the perspective of one who was enthusiastic when the Soft Space was announced, as I had seen it in other churches and it seems a great way for parents and young children to be in worship together. I believe that seeing, hearing, and experiencing the worship experience leads to a comfort level with worship as one grows. (I confess that the first week, I was tempted to go to the Soft Space myself since it looked so comfortable with the stuffed elephant and all). In the weeks since, the joy of seeing our youngest attendees participate in Sunday worship from a nearby front pew has been even more heartwarming than that could possibly have been. As an example, on Sunday January 14 when the congregation was singing "Here I Am Lord," James picked up a bulletin. He used it as a song sheet; earnestly singing along, as naturally and appropriately as he could. It warmed my soul, and made me smile. (I also noted smiles from Pastor Katie as well as those who were seated with me.) I admit that I felt compelled to catch a photo of the moment, but certainly did not feel distracted as I considered what a privilege it is to see this early step of one who knows when and how to make a joyful noise to the Lord.

Devon Clausing



Feed the Hungry

As a congregation we once again are having our annual special mission outreach during Lent to support Inter-Parish Ministries with filling their Choice Food Pantry shelves. We have found that cash donations work best because we can buy in bulk and make your donations go further. We will happily accept anything cash or food product wise to support this important mission. Please make checks out to the church and mark them and/or your envelope for "Feed the Hungry". Let's see if we can beat last year's total which was: \$11,446 – can we get back to \$15,000? Let's try!

Thank you to all for your support of this important mission outreach.



Maundy Thursday

Join us on Thursday March 29th as we remember the last days of Jesus. We will begin with a simple meal together in the Fellowship Hall at 6:30 p.m. and conclude with a service of remembrance and reflection in the sanctuary at 7:30 p.m. There will be an opportunity to have your feet washed if you so choose, please keep this in mind as you decide on footwear for the evening.

Easter Egg Hunt

Shortly after our 10:30 am Easter Service, we will be hosting our annual Easter Egg hunt on the lawn for the children. Children from tiny through grade school are welcome. If you would like to donate toward this event, we will be accepting Plastic Easter Eggs, Easter Candy and/or cash donations toward the purchase of supplies for the hunt. If you are able to help with the event, please see Tiffany Sexton or Jean Goldey.

Ad Council

Ad Council meets on Monday March 12 at 7:00 p.m.

Board of Trustees

Board of Trustees meets Monday March 19 at 7:00 p.m.

Acknowledgements

The congregation of the Newtown United Methodist Church would like to thank the families below for sponsoring the **CHIMES** and the Sunday Bulletins. Information about becoming a sponsor can be found on the church message board section of this issue of the **CHIMES**.

CHIMES

JANUARY	MARILYN & ROBIN BEATTY
FEBRUARY	DOROTHY LARSSON
MARCH	DOROTHY LARSSON
APRIL	RICHARD SMITH
MAY	CHUCK & NANCY LINGO
JUNE	
JULY	
AUGUST	
SEPTEMBER	
OCTOBER	
NOVEMBER	TOM ZIMMERMAN
DECEMBER	TERRY NIPPERT

In Memory of Catherine & Edward Nippert

SUNDAY BULLETINS

JANUARY	DOROTHY LARSSON
FEBRUARY	DOROTHY LARSSON
MARCH	RICHARD SMITH
APRIL	CHUCK & NANCY LINGO
MAY	
JUNE	
JULY	
AUGUST	
SEPTEMBER	
OCTOBER	
NOVEMBER	TOM ZIMMERMAN
DECEMBER	

Office Hours

Mondays 9 a.m. – 3 p.m.
Wednesdays 9 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Pastoral Needs

If you have a need for Pastoral services, please contact Pastor Katie to make an appointment by calling the Church office at 513-561-6678 or email Pastor Katie at pastor.numc@zoomtown.com

If you have an urgent need after office hours, contact Pastor Katie at home at (513) 582-6811.

Church Staff and Support Personnel Email Addresses

Facility.NUMC@Zoomtown.com
Music.NUMC@Zoomtown.com
Office.NUMC@Zoomtown.com
Outreach.NUMC@Zoomtown.com
Pastor.NUMC@Zoomtown.com
Publicity.NUMC@Zoomtown.com
Treasurer.NUMC@Zoomtown.com

Craig Correll
Kristy Swift
Phyllis Fought
Jennifer McComb
Pastor Katie Steele
Robin Steinmetz
Clay Anderson

The Mission of the United Methodist Church is to:
Make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

NEWTOWN UMC VISION STATEMENT

Newtown United Methodist Church is called to REACH individuals, TEACH our community about God and to extend God's LOVE to all the world.

CHURCH MESSAGE BOARD

- ❖ If you would like to sponsor the **Chimes** please place a donation of \$49.00 (checks payable to the church) in an envelope marked **Chimes**.
- ❖ If you would like to sponsor the **Sunday Bulletin**, the cost is \$30 per month. Please place your donation (checks payable to the church) in the offering plate marked **Sunday Bulletin**.