



Saint Paul United Methodist Church
1320 Fernwood-Glendale Road
Spartanburg, SC 29307

Non-Profit
Organization
US Postage Paid
Spartanburg, SC
Permit No. 33

e-mail churchsecretary@stpumc.org

voice (864) 582-4040
Sunday Service at 10:00 A.M.

The Epistle

News For The Weeks Of
February 4, 11, 18, & 25, 2024

www.stpumc.org **web**

(864) 583-0850 **fax**

Return Services Requested

The Pastor's Pen

As the weather warms up and we anxiously await the coming of spring, several questions arise: When is Easter? When does Lent begin? Just so you know.... Easter is March 31st, and Ash Wednesday is right around the corner on February 14th. As a pastor, the onset of Lent and the journey to Holy Week awakens a liturgical (related to worship) conundrum. You see, the Sunday before Easter is most often celebrated as Palm Sunday, but it is also Passion Sunday, the day to read and reflect on the Passion Narrative (the story of the Crucifixion).

My conundrum (in 3 parts): 1. Do we celebrate Palm Sunday or Passion Sunday or some combination? 2. Since approximately one-third of the congregation attend the Maundy Thursday and Good Friday Services, if we celebrate Palm Sunday the week before Easter, many in our congregation will go from one celebration to the next without experiencing a vital part of the story. 3. Trying to do some combination of Palm/Passion falls miserably short of giving either the attention they deserve.

After wrestling with this for several years I have come upon a solution that I sometimes like to implement. I call it "Holy Week Lent." The idea is simple in concept. Celebrate Palm Sunday on the First Sunday of Lent. On the Second Sunday of Lent celebrate/use the readings from John's Gospel for Holy Monday. On the Third Sunday of Lent you do Holy Tuesday, and so forth. Following this pattern actually puts "Good Friday" on Passion Sunday.

Aside from solving the problem of most the congregation going straight from "Hosanna" to "Alleluia," this pattern allows me to pursue a particular theological concept. I think the story of the Crucifixion is every bit, if not more, important than the Resurrection. So I want a Sunday for us to reflect on it during the whole worship hour. I want Lent to be as much about the journey to the Cross as it is about the journey to the Tomb.

I hope you will take some time this Lenten season and read carefully the stories from the Gospels concerning Holy Week. To help you:

Matthew 21 - Matthew 27
Mark 11 - Mark 15
Luke 19:29 - Luke 23
John 12:12 - John 19

As you read these accounts, you will find that they differ in numerous ways, mostly in what details they each recount. Our "remembrance" is actually a blending of all of them so, as you read Matthew, it may surprise you enough to say, "Wait a minute. What about this? It is missing!" You will then probably find this part of the story in Mark or Luke.

John's account, you will find, is decidedly different. As might be expected, the account handed down by one who was actually there includes details not found in any of the other Gospels, particularly John 13-17. Much of these chapters recalls a long discourse or teaching by Jesus, including the familiar passage declaring, "In my Father's house are many mansions..."

As you read, try to read them anew. Yes, you know the story, but try to slow down and not anticipate what is coming. Ask yourself, "Which character am I most like?" "If I were there, what would I have been doing?" "Would I have gone all the way to Calvary?"

So this year I invite you to join me in celebrating a Holy Week Lent. A journey to the Cross as well as to the Tomb. I especially encourage you to be here, and to invite your friends, to our "Good Friday" service on Sunday, March 24th. We will have a special guest with an interesting presentation that I assure you, you will not soon forget.











May your Lenten season be a time of renewal and spiritual healing.

God's blessings this year!



Jeremy

February 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
4 9:00 Sunday School 10:00 Worship Service 1:00 Pickleball for Members 6:00 UMM Donna Harward 	5 Ansley Vereen 	6	7 6:30 Choir Rehearsal	8 5:45 PS Board Meeting	9 Barbara Barnes 	10 Johnsie Page Leland Howell 
11 9:00 Sunday School 10:00 Worship Service 1:00 Pickleball for Members	12	13 11:30 49ers-Mardi Gras 7:00 Alice Walker Circle (outside venue)	14 Ash Wednesday 6:00 Ash Wednesday Service	15	16 10:00 Threads of Agape	17 Gladys Westbrook 
18 1st Sunday of Lent 9:00 Sunday School 10:00 Worship Service 1:00 Pickleball for Members	19 10:00 Blanche Greer Circle	20 Newsletter Deadline 6:30 6-week Lenten Bible Study Nancy Curry Kathy Bush 	21 6:30 Choir Rehearsal Julia Paciulan 	22	23	24 Kay McBee Mary Ann Myers 
25 9:00 Sunday School 10:00 Worship Service 1:00 Pickleball for Members Candy Nettles 	26	27 6:30 6-week Lenten Bible Study Bobbi Duncan 	28 6:30 Choir Rehearsal	29 5:30 Fellowship Meal		



Financials & Attendance

	Dec. 31	Jan. 7	Jan. 14	Jan. 21
Received	\$7,793	\$11,615	\$23,472	\$11,006
Non-Restricted	\$0	\$0	\$644	\$5
Restricted	\$100	\$162	\$1,004	\$331
Total	\$7,893	\$11,777	\$25,120	\$11,342
Sunday School	34	36	29	27
Worship	65	85	87	85

Altar & Narthex Flowers



Altar Flowers are given on February 4th for the glory of God by Guy and Nell Davis in honor of their children and grandchildren.

Altar Flowers are given on February 11th for the glory of God by Andy and Maryellen Horton in honor of the wedding of their parents, Mark and Martha Mulkey.

Narthex Flowers are given on February 11th for the glory of God by Bill and Bobbi Duncan in memory of Mary and Mom's birthdays.

The Elsie Greer Circle will meet on Tuesday, February 6th, at 12:00PM at Bronco's Mexican Restaurant, 435 E. Main Street. Call or text Eileen Byers at 864-590-1891 to RSVP. Guests are welcome!

The 49ers will be meeting on Fat Tuesday, February 13th at 11:30AM in Poston Hall. We will provide fried chicken and drinks. Please bring a side dish or dessert to share. We'd love for everyone to don their Mardi Gras colors for our festivities (purple, green and gold).

I will need a few volunteers to help set up and clean up. Please call me at 706-7936 if you can help. Susan Owens

Our Ash Wednesday Service will be at 6:00PM on Wednesday, February 14th in our beautiful sanctuary. We hope to see you there as we begin our Lenten journey.

6-week Lenten Bible Study

Remember by Susan Robb

This 6-week Lenten study will begin on Tuesday, February 20th and go through March 26th, 6:30PM in Room 103. If you would like to attend, you may fill out a Sunday service sign-up insert or contact the Church Office at 864-582-4040 or churchsecretary@stpumc.org. We hope you'll join us!

Our February Fellowship Meal will be on February 29th at 5:30PM in Poston Hall. Please join us for delicious food, great fellowship and some Leap Year fun!!!

*If you would like to put church-related information in the Newsletter, please send an email with your "blurb" to churchsecretary@stpumc.org before the Newsletter deadline date, February 20th. Thank you!