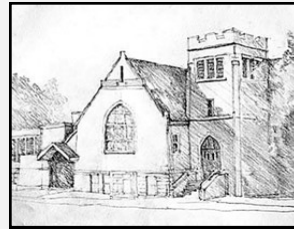


Glendive & Wibaux United Methodist Church Newsletter

February 2021



Pastor's Corner

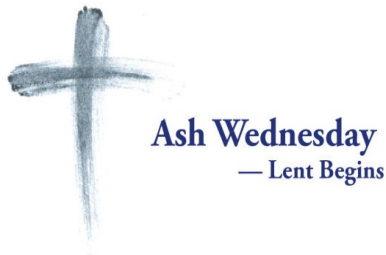
Greetings to all,

It is wonderful to be back in worship with each of you! I deeply appreciate everyone's patience and grace in the midst of us halting our in-person worship and in-person gatherings. In our time of separation, I pondered on a couple different themes. Two of the most prominent themes which plagued my thoughts, actions, and anxiety were how to hold on to hope and how to be creative in the times we face. Let's start with hope.

You have probably heard me say this word so many times throughout the Advent and the Epiphany seasons that you are tired of me saying it, but the concept of hope is foundational to our Christian teachings, philosophy, and ministries. Contemplate on the words of Paul when he says, "When it is beyond hope, he [Abraham] had faith in the hope that he would become the father of many nations, in keeping with the promise God spoke to him..." (Romans 4:18 CEB). God's covenant with his people is a promise of hope and assurance, but more often than not, we see this assurance in the love others show us and the hope which sustains them. Think of the song by Bill Withers, *Lean on Me*, "Lean on me when you're not strong and I'll be your friend, I'll help you carry on for it won't be long 'til I'm gonna need somebody to lean on" (Bill Withers 1972, Sussex Records). Let us look to one another for hope!

Hope is not something we hold for ourselves, but our hope inspires our collective imagination and creativity. Human beings throughout our world have always been visionaries of our future through our creative expressions of understanding the world around us. Whether it be music, literature, science, architecture, food, we have always used the world around us to feed our creative minds fueled by our hope of the future. Fear and hatred for one another kills this mentality and moves us down a path of cynicism, stagnancy, and destruction. I am reminded of a book I read in college called, *Mountains Beyond Mountains*, which was a book about Dr. Paul Farmer, a doctor set out on a mission to cure the world. There is a Haitian proverb quoted in the book that translates into English by saying, "Beyond mountains, there are mountains." We will always have problems in our world, but we will face them together.

Covid-19 has pointed out and accentuated the difficulties we face in our world, but do not let it stop us from doing the work of the Gospel! Let us choose to see hope in one another in our times of doubt and discomfort. When we step outside our church doors in Glendive, we see the majestic buttes proudly standing in their daunting beauty, and when we climb one of those buttes, we may see buttes beyond buttes. Let us not be discouraged by the difficulties we face, but let us follow the words of Christ and, "Take up thy cross and follow me!" (Mark 8:34 KJV). Let's be hopeful and creative, Glendive and Wibaux, for hope is not lost!



The Season of Lent

Ash Wednesday and Wednesday Lenten Services

During the month of January, Pastor Brenda, Brother Guy, and myself briefly met to discuss what we should do for our Lenten traditions of gathering together for fellowship and service on Wednesday evenings for soup and a service. We decided it would be best, as with many of our usual calendar events, to spend Lent in our respective congregations. Since we are not meeting with others in the community, I have brainstormed an idea for what we can do to celebrate one another throughout the season of Lent.

Each Wednesday evening at 6:00 p.m. we will gather in the Fireside Room to meet for Soup & Scripture. It will be BYOS (Bring Your Own Soup) and we will casually discuss our New Testament lectionary text of the week. There may be some weeks where we just catch up and that is perfectly fine, but we will wear masks, socially distance, and prepare our own meals at home to avoid as little physical contact with one another as possible. We will conclude our fellowship time together by moving to the Sanctuary at 6:30 p.m. to listen to Jake's Wednesday Musical Musings concert. We will start this on February 24th and go through March 31st.

Specifically, for Ash Wednesday, we will meet at 6:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary, or in the livestream just as we do on Sundays, to read a few scriptures, say a couple prayers, and I will perform a couple Taizé songs vocally accompanied with my guitar. I will also place the ashes on everyone's forehead as we normally do, but I will use a Q-tip, a different one for each person, and wear gloves to ensure we are continuing to practice safety measures put in place by our Re-Opening Team. The service will only be around 30 mins long and you are more than welcome to stay and listen, virtually or in person, to Jake's Wednesday concert following the service.



Covid-19 Vigil

I had someone from the Glendive Ranger-Review meet with me around a month ago talking about a need in the community. We spoke about how there has been no place to grief as a community for those we have lost to Covid-19. We discussed how our church here in Glendive is a prime location for displaying a visible display for those we have lost to Covid-19. I would like to have this vigil setup on February 26th which is the first full week of Lent and I would like to keep it up through all of Lent. I am thinking something interactive would be meaningful to people where they could leave something for a loved one to remember them by. I need your help though!

I have a lot on my plate at the moment as I finish preparations for Lent, start focusing on finishing Easter planning, and work on the week-to-week work I must complete to stay on top of reporting and managing. What can I use help with? Outreach, planning, advertising/marketing, brainstorming, and logistics are just a few areas I can think of off the top of my head. If you would like to help, then please let me know in person, via email, or leave a message on the church phone or my cell phone. We will eventually setup a meeting where we can all discuss in further detail. If you think anyone in the community would be a good resource, then please invite them to participate! Pastor Brenda at Zion Lutheran is already willing. Let us be the Gospel in our community!

Happy Birthday

February

Feb. 5th	George Skerritt
Feb. 11th	Kim Vashus
Feb. 12th	Charles Powell
	Melissa Kwasney
Feb.14th	Ruth Powel
Feb.17th	Heather Haas
Feb.18th	Anne Friestone
Feb. 22nd	Cole Neard

Happy Anniversary

February

Feb. 7th Gerald & Janine Huschka



Newsletter

**Glendive & Wibaux
United Methodist Church
February 2021**

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