

CHRIST CHRONICLES

**Christ United Church of Christ, 1414 Ligonier Street
Latrobe, Pennsylvania 15650**

March 2021



Worship Services For March

**Christ Church will resume in-person worship on March 7
See announcement on the inside page of this newsletter
for details on reopening and information on Lenten worship**

March 7, 14, 21, 28 - Sunday Morning Worship, 11:00 AM

March 7, Holy Communion 11:00 AM

No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey you are welcome here.

FROM THE CHURCH COVID 19 SAFETY COMMITTEE

Our church covid-19 safety committee, including Pastor John, met recently to discuss safely reopening our church for services. After considerable discussion, we concluded that it would be reasonably safe to open the sanctuary one day per week, providing that we resume the safety measures which we followed last year.

Sunday church services in the sanctuary will resume on **March 7**. As last year, we will follow the CDC guidelines of requiring *wearing of masks, physical distancing and limited, quiet singing*. If you don't have or forget your own mask, we will have some available for you. If you happen to have a condition that doesn't permit you to wear a mask, then, for the safety of others, we will ask you to sit in the chapel area. As before, there will be tape on the pew seats indicating safe distancing between people, and ushers will assist people in exiting the church by rows at the conclusion of the service.

Since safety guidelines suggest that we limit physical gathering, *we will not be having Lenten services in the sanctuary*. Pastor John is planning on having *online services* (either live or prerecorded for broadcast at noon on Wednesdays). He will also be meeting with the Worship Committee to finalize plans for Maundy Thursday/Good Friday.

We all pray that our reopening will go smoothly and be permanent and that this pandemic is truly on the wane. We believe that we can help that happen by all of us following the latest CDC guidelines in our personal lives. If you or your loved ones do not feel comfortable returning to church with these restrictions or for fear of exposure, Pastor John is planning on continuing to post the service online.

Concerns of the Congregation

Please pray for: Chad Amond, Henry Arelt, Marcie Baker, Baker and Hilty Families, Jim and Joan Banocy, Olive Barr, Donna and John Brajdic, Eleanor Bridge, Richard and Ruth Burns on the passing of their son-in-law, Pastor John Cofield, Dick Crawford, Kristen Disciascio, Dorothy Facemyer, Tim Farkas Family, Amy Flynn, Belinda Henry, Helen Hoover, Ron King, Stacey Klug, Zoe Klug, Michelle Kutzer, Leanne Lehosky, Mick Mattern, Bill McCullough, Chuck McNerny, Ben and Jane Miedel, Dana Miller, Ruby RaeLynn Moore, Joan Musick, Pastor Shirley Musick, Bob and Evelyn Neighly, Harvey and Helen Noel, Richard Porembka, Emmett Michael Poto, Joyce Puzak, Shirley Robb, Bailey Robinson; Emily, Eva, and Graeme Sautter; Ken Sible, Judith Short, Laken Smith, Rick Stahl, Larry and Loretta Staruk, Nathan Stevens, Scott Thompson, Ken and Sheila Yost, Sara Young



Praying the roll: Everyone on the church roster will have a turn at experiencing the comfort and peace of intentional prayer. We are family . . . and families pray for one another! Please keep these families in your thoughts and prayers for the entire week.

Week of March 7 - Joan Zeiders, Amy Zomisky, Rev. David and Marsha Ackerman

Week of March 14 - Dave and Stephanie Albaugh, Richard Albaugh, Jami Altman

**Week of March 21 - Lisa, Dwayne and Aaron Amoroso, Rich and Marcie Baker,
Ann and Steve Baltich**

Week of March 28 - Andres Banocy, James Banocy, James and Joan Banocy



A Message From Pastor John

A year ago...

A year ago, last March, we went into lockdown for the first time. Then, we were told the lockdown would last about two weeks. Although we enjoyed a respite of several months from the most austere precautions, here we are a year later, and not enough has changed for our lives and our church to return to normal. Life certainly isn't like it used to be.

Recent improvements in response to the Coronavirus, including more vaccines and more vaccinations, perhaps more people wearing masks and following guidelines, give us hope that we may yet emerge from isolation to be able to socialize more freely and be able to spend more time in the company of others.

As I write this, it was only yesterday that we observed a modified Ash Wednesday. We held a "drive-in" service. The service was broadcast using a small FM Transmitter normally used to connect your phone to your car's FM radio by Bluetooth. From what I was told, the audio was loud enough and clear, excepting when my phone went into a power saver mode. I'll have to turn that off next time.

If you wondered why Pastor Wayne accompanied me, I thought that with the mask and shield people couldn't hear me say the words of imposition, "From dust you came, to dust you shall return." I asked Wayne to accompany me and say those words, and I am grateful for his assistance.

The service and worship experience seemed to go well. And many enjoyed being able to see others and talk and share fellowship...as best we could. The "experiment" certainly proved that, if we must, we can conduct worship this way.

Lent is normally a time during which we think about sacrifice and offer a sacrifice to God as we "give up something for Lent." Perhaps, given the nature of the last year, we offer God something in gratitude or celebration.

We have "given up" over the last year. Perhaps Lent is a time to be kind and generous to ourselves and others this year. Instead of giving something up for Lent you could make generous gifts to causes you believe in (I'm not necessarily suggesting the church), particularly those that enhance or celebrate life or even make life possible for some folks (I'm thinking of places like the Union Mission), organizations that work to make the world a better place.

Jesus will go to Jerusalem. But remember as Jesus enters Jerusalem he is celebrated. During this Lent, perhaps we celebrate Jesus through the gates of Jerusalem, then we will walk with him on the Via Dolorosa (The Way of Grief).

Blessings, Pastor John

MARCH USHER LIST CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 8.



"But as for me, I watch in hope for the Lord, I wait for God my Savior; my God will hear me". Micah 7:7.

I have been reflecting most of today, on the beautiful service that I was honored to be a part of yesterday, Ash Wednesday, at the church. The sun was shining so brightly in the winter sky, and the air temperature was cold, but there was a warmth throughout that parking lot, that was palpable.

How wonderful to see your faces! How truly heartwarming to see the friendly faces of our neighbors from St. John's and some of our members from Christ Church, some who haven't been able to venture out very much, all together, sharing the service of ashes.

Thank you to the Consistory and Pastor John for coming up with idea of the parking lot worship service, and to everyone who participated.

We are now in the liturgical season of Lent, six Sundays, culminating with Palm/Passion Sunday on March 28, 2021. It is a time of reflection and prayer. A time to meditate and let God into our hearts.

As I look ahead to the music for the services, I will be following the lectionary, as I always do, choosing hymns that fit in as closely as possible, to the scriptures and the Gospel lessons. The Bell Choir is preparing a couple of pieces for the Lenten Sundays and also for Easter.

I would like to thank my choir member couples that have been assisting me with the singing for the virtual recordings, too.

One of my favorite Bible verses follows:

"Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer." Romans: 12:12

Love, Julie

**ARTICLES FOR THE APRIL NEWSLETTER ARE DUE ON
MONDAY, MARCH 15**

Please send to cocoakitty2001@gmail.com or give to Loretta Staruk

DO YOU WANT TO FAST THIS LENT? Words From Pope Francis

Fast from hurting words and say kind words.
Fast from sadness and be filled with gratitude.
Fast from anger and be filled with patience.
Fast from pessimism and be filled with hope.
Fast from worries and trust in God.
Fast from complaints and contemplate simplicity.
Fast from pressures and be prayerful.
Fast from bitterness and fill your heart with joy.
Fast from selfishness and be compassionate to others.
Fast from grudges and be reconciled.
Fast from words and be silent so you can listen.

Submitted by Ellen Sautter

THE ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING (OGHS) special mission offering of the United Church of Christ involves you in disaster, refugee/immigration, and development ministries throughout the world. When a disaster strikes or people are displaced or made refugees by violence or extreme poverty, you are part of the immediate response and of the long-term recovery. Through OGHS you engage in holistic development programs including health care, education, agriculture, food sustainability, micro-financing and women's empowerment. Because the UCC relates in mutual partnership to churches and organizations through Global Ministries and worldwide response & recovery networks, your contributions to One Great Hour of Sharing put you in the right place at the right time for the relief, accompaniment and recovery of the most vulnerable. You meet immediate needs and you address the underlying causes that create those needs in the first place. The OGHS offering will be taken on **Sunday, March 14.**



Mission Statement: To reflect Christ's love in everything we do.

Vision Statement: Not our will, but God's

A humble thought . . .

I have a corduroy shirt of unknown age. It is soft, warm and sturdy. The only blemish is a frayed collar from years of my beard rubbing against it. It has been mentioned many times that I should throw it out and buy a new shirt. Why?



There was a time when things that were old and a bit worn around the edges were valued. They were seen as a repository of memories.

“Do you remember when our daughter tried to roll out cookies on the coffee table?” You can still see the marks of the rolling pin.” They exude a kind of stability that can anchor us in the past, as we reach for the future.

When my wife and I were married there was hardly a piece of furniture new to us. It was gathered from many sources, sometimes didn't match very well with what was there, but they were precious because of who gave them or how we got them. They still are because many pieces still exist and are used everyday. We still laugh about the old greasy stove (\$10) that we carried down the street, took apart to degrease, and then carried piece by piece up to our third floor apartment to reassemble. (We *did* leave that behind).

A dear elderly lady gave us a wingback chair more than 40 years ago. It was a terrible color, but it was comfortable! We decided to have it reupholstered. It came back looking nice and new, but when I sat in it my rear end no longer fit. That nice little hollow in the horsehair cushion was gone, thanks to new high density foam! It keeps springing back!

Maybe we need to step back from always wanting the newest and the latest. It can result in a constant sense of being an itinerant, with no roots and no rich memories. Does it have to be replaced with new just because it's a little worn? I always feel a little sad when I am driving and I see an old sofa or chair placed on the curb to be picked up. Sometimes, of course, things break and need to be replaced. However, what if it just doesn't match the latest color scheme? I have on occasion stopped and looked at an old sofa or chair and they were just fine. Why were they there?

As a pastor officiating over weddings for 45 years, I have met young couples who immediately went out and bought an entire apartment of new furniture (with no interest for 6 years!) When visiting them, their apartment seemed cold and sterile, devoid of story (except you bought all new furniture.) They will, of course slowly accumulate those memory marks over time. But, when it is a bit worn, or out of fashion, will it wind up sitting on a curb?

I should say that I am 75 and a bit worn around the edges. Should I go sit on the curb?

.....just a humble thought

Christian Education Committee Update



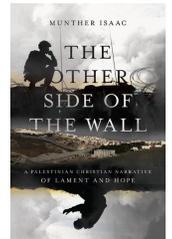
Sunday School for Children will resume on March 14 and will meet again on March 28. Sunday School for Children meets the second and fourth Sundays of the month.

In the upcoming weeks, there will be a review of the Lord's Prayer and also lessons on the life of Jesus.

Wednesday morning bible study and Adult Sunday School are cancelled until further notice.

CHRIST CHURCH'S BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP

The March meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 9 at 10:00am - *The Other Side of the Wall* by Munther Isaac. Isaac's deeply moving *The Other Side of the Wall* tells his story as a Christian growing up in the Palestinian town of Bethlehem over decades of violence, war and occupation.



April Meeting (date to be announced) *The Penguin Book of Womens' Humor* edited by Rebecca Barreca. *The Penguin Book of Womens' Humor* is a landmark anthology that proves there is a distinctly female way of being funny. Regina Barreca's wide-ranging selections span three centuries.

VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED to help with **Senior Food Distribution on Tuesday, March 16 at 8:30 AM.** Thanks so much for your help as always.



Daylight Savings Time begins Sunday, March 14.
Don't forget to turn your clocks ahead one hour on Saturday night, March 13.

LAY LIFE AND MISSION UPDATE

The Lay Life and Mission Committee is happy to announce that there will be a “Blessing Box” built and erected in front of the church on Ligonier Street. This “Blessing Box” will provide food for those in need in our community, especially now with the pandemic. This box will be supplied with non-perishable food items. Lay Life is asking for donations of food and/or money (to purchase food items). Should you have any questions and/or would like to donate, please contact Dorthy Paulovich. Thank you in advance.



March/April Mission - Christmas for Christ Church

The Lay Life and Mission Committee will continue Christmas for Christ Church as the March/April mission. Please take a post-it from the board displayed at the St. Clair Street entrance and place the donated item(s) in the box located at that entrance. Thanks so much.

The Lay Life and Mission Committee will meet on **Monday, March 1 at 6:30 P.M.** in the Chapel and will be discussing the “Blessing Box.”



BIENVENUE will not meet in March.

Bienvenue will meet on April 7 at 12:30 PM in the Chapel.

Please bring a lunch and a beverage. All the ladies of the church are welcome. Face masks must be worn except when enjoying lunch.

USHERS FOR THE MONTH OF MARCH

- March 7 - Art Dira and Jim O'Connor
- March 14 - Harvey Noel and Sally Walker
- March 21 - Jim and Elena Sillaman
- March 28 - Bob and Carolyn Stutzman



UNION MISSION - UPCOMING FUNDRAISER



**Drive Thru Spaghetti Dinner - Sunday, March 14
(4pm-sold out), Cost is a donation.**

**More information contact Cathy Shine 724-689-5341 or
cshine@theunionmission.org.**

“C” Dollar Bills for the Union Mission - Christ Church Charity. An almost painless way to support the Union Mission. Another \$50.00 was just taken to the Union Mission. That is a total of \$450.00 since we started to donate “C” dollars. The donation jar is on the table in the vestibule.



Happy Birthday!

March 1 - Stephanie Albaugh	March 12 - Richard H. Boring
March 2 - Ann Baltich	March 15 - Richard Vogt
March 2 - Kylie Boring	March 25 - Andrew Banocy
March 2 - Jim Sillaman	March 25 - Joan Banocy
March 3 - Larry Staruk	March 25 - Jim O'Connor
March 6 - Thomas Davis	
March 8 - Richard Crawford, Jr.	

Happy Anniversary!

March 22 - Ron and Catherine King
March 25 - Dana and Dewey Silvis



CONTACT US

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The Jefferson Bible—a Biography

Ever since visiting Thomas Jefferson's home, Monticello, when I was young, I've been fascinated by this particular founding father. He was a man of great intellect, an inventor, scientist, linguist and a leader deeply involved in formulating the political mechanisms of our young country. He also served as Secretary of State, Vice President and our third President, and he greatly expanded the size of our country with the Louisiana Purchase. Nevertheless, he asked that on his tombstone there should be inscribed three accomplishments of his life: "Author of the Declaration of Independence," "Founder of the University of Virginia" and "Author of the Statute of Virginia for Religious Liberty."

This third inscription (actually listed second on the tombstone) indicates how deeply important it was to Jefferson that Virginia government (and, also, the federal government) keep itself separated from religious involvement. He is even credited with originating the phrase "a wall of separation between Church and State," which he believed was assured by the First Amendment. We might ask why this was so important to him.

In a recent book by Peter Manseau, "The Jefferson Bible – A Biography," we can learn some answers. This small book, while not as detailed as "Jefferson's Extracts of the Gospels," provides a fairly detailed account of what is known about Jefferson's religious thinking, particularly as it's reflected in this "Bible." I put that last word in quotes because Jefferson never referred to this work as a Bible.

Although Jefferson thought deeply about religious belief, he always remained very private about his own faith. Fairly early in life, during his college years, he became disillusioned with many aspects of the Anglican faith of his family. As time went on, he also developed antipathy towards other religious clerics, many of whom seemed to be overly controlling in their actions and words towards their followers. Further, the Anglican church at the time received financial support from taxes imposed on *all* citizens of the commonwealth, which Jefferson and others decried.

Jefferson was a man of the Enlightenment period, a firm believer in reason and scientific evidence. As he read the Bible, he found numerous contradictions and inexplicable events, things which he could not rationally accept. Yet, he greatly admired what he read about Jesus, as long as Jesus' life and words were not adorned with questionable accounts by other Biblical writers. So it was that, later in his life, TJ created two books, the first being "The Philosophy of Jesus" and the second, more important to him, "The Life and Morals of Jesus of Nazareth." This latter book is what has come to be called "The Jefferson Bible."

Over the years, Jefferson read and communicated with two other influential people of his era who had publicly expressed thoughts similar to his, Viscount Bolingbroke (Henry St. John) and Joseph Priestly (the discover of oxygen). Both of these men had publicly distanced themselves from many orthodox Christian beliefs and practices of the time. In the end, Jefferson felt that he had to get to the essence of Jesus' moral teachings, which he called "the most benevolent and sublime probably that has ever been taught." He had already spent considerable time reading and discerning to his own satisfaction what he believed were likely to be Jesus' actual words and actions divorced from any miraculous or supernatural events that he could not reconcile with his sense of reason. He then ordered copies of recently published New Testaments in English and other languages and spent a number of years literally razor cutting and pasting together those parts of the New Testament (in English, Greek, Latin and French) into his "Life and Morals of Jesus of Nazareth." This book became a part of his nightly reading in the later years of his life.

During his political life, Jefferson would not publicly endorse any of the orthodox Christian sects of the time. As a result he was often accused of being an atheist or, perhaps, a heretic. TJ refused to be categorized by others as to his personal religion, saying that his beliefs were between him and his God. This book is an excellent introduction to Jefferson's theology as reflected in his "Bible."

Jim Sillaman

March 2021 Prayer Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Continue to pray for those affected by COVID 19.	Pray for recipients of Meals on Wheels	Pray for our shut-ins today	Thank God for everyone who makes Jesus real to other people	Pray for scientists and technicians who probe the secrets of the earth	World Day of Prayer Pray for women throughout the world	Offer prayers for farmers
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Ask God for the strength and wisdom to live as we should	Pray today for those who live in fear	Thank God for those who serve on the Christian Education Committee	Thank God for mountains and valleys	Pray for the well being of your neighbors	Pray for God's guidance for Christ Church – to know and follow His will	Thank God for rivers, lakes, the sea, and the delights of the seashore
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Pray for the congregation at St. John's in Darlington	Pray for those struggling financially	Pray for the well- being of children everywhere	Thank God for the joy and companionship of animals	Thank the Lord for all His love, demonstrated in so many ways	Praise God for forgiveness and mercy	Spring begins Thank God for flowers and plants
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
Pray for guidance for clergy everywhere	Pray for our sponsored child at Rawdat El Zuhur	Pray for all the children at Rawdat El Zuhur.	Pray for the teachers and administrators at Rawdat El Zuhur	Ask God to help us set a good example	Pray for those living with dementia	Pray for a fresh perspective on God's word
28	29	30	31	O Lord, in your great mercy, keep us from forgetting what you have suffered for us in body and soul. May we never be drawn by the cares of this life from Jesus our Friend and Savior, but daily may we live nearer to his cross. --Hedley Vicars (adapted)		
Ask God to help us grow spiritually	Thank God for never giving up on us	Pray that cancer researchers may one day find a cure	Praise God for the beauty of nature			

Christ United Church of Christ Consistory

Stephanie Albaugh, Vice President
 Rick Kunkle
 Michelle Kutzer
 Jim O'Connnor, Secretary
 Harvey Noel

Kenny Repko
 Ellen Sautter
 Elena Sillaman
 Carolyn Stutzman, President

MARCH 2021 CHUCH CALENDAR

ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING OFFERING WILL BE TAKEN ON MARCH 14.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 6:30 PM Lay Life and Mission	2	3 12 Noon Virtual Lenten Service Consistory Reports Due	4 Bells TBA	5	6
7 11:00 AM Worship Holy Communion	8 6:30 PM Consistory	9 10:00 AM Book Discussion	10 12 Noon Virtual Lenten Service	11 Bells TBA	12	13 Be sure to turn your clocks ahead one hour tonight
14 11:00 AM Worship Sunday School for children follows the children's message Daylight Savings Time Begins	15 April Newsletter Deadline	16 8:30 AM Senior Food Distribution	17 12 Noon Virtual Lenten Service	18 Bells TBA	19	20
21 11:00 AM Worship	22	23	24 12 Noon Virtual Lenten Service	25 Bells TBA	26	27
28 11:00 AM Worship Sunday School for children follows the children's message	29	30	31	Maundy Thursday	Good Friday	

MARCH 14 – 4:00 PM UNTIL SOLD OUT – UNION MISSION DRIVE THRU SPAGHETTI DINNER