



From the Pastor's Pen

March 2017

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These Forty Days

“The angel of the Lord came [to Elijah] a second time, touched him, and said, ‘Get up and eat, otherwise the journey will be too much for you.’”
 -1 Kings 19:7



A Broom Tree: Photo by Ariel Palmon

As March begins, we are called to deep reflection and reevaluation in the holy season of Lent. Starting on Ash Wednesday, we walk the long road to the cross with Christ and beyond into the joy of Easter. But this road is not an easy one – it asks much of us. Who are we? Where are we falling short? How can we follow more faithfully?

If we look to scripture, we find many examples of heroes of our faith connecting with the righteous path through 40 day or year periods of testing and spiritual discipline: Moses receiving the commandments on Mount Sinai, the Hebrew people wandering in the desert struggling to depend on God alone to survive, Jonah prophesying judgement on the people of Nineveh. We know that Jesus began his ministry by going out to the wilderness and fasting for 40 days. The devil came out to test him, twisting scripture to tempt him from his divine purpose. But Jesus stood strong and devoted for all our sakes.

In thinking about our own spiritual dedication, our own striving to imitate Jesus and share his love, my thoughts went to Elijah in the wilderness. He was a great and mighty prophet, but at this point in his ministry, he was exhausted. King Ahab and his Queen Jezebel worshiped idols and brought great sin to the people of Israel. Elijah prophesied against their wickedness and so they threatened to kill him. So, Elijah retreated to the desert wilderness. He found one, lone broom tree (more like a desert shrub – see photo above) and sat underneath it. He was exhausted – not just physically, but mentally and spiritually. He felt like a failure in his calling and in his life of faith. He said, “It is enough now, O Lord, take away my life, for I am no better than my ancestors.” And then he just went to sleep, hoping that it would all soon be over. Elijah did not know how to go on – he couldn’t on his own strength. But God did not give up on him. God sent an angel who said, “Get up and eat.” When Elijah looked, he found a cake of bread and a jar of water. Elijah ate and drank, but then went right back to sleep.

Cont'd...

Pastor's Pen con't.

Then the angel came back a second time, touched him (perhaps not as gently as before?) and said, "Get up and eat, otherwise the journey will be too much for you." So Elijah got up and ate and drank once more of this holy food. This food sent from God did not just fill his belly, it fed his spirit. After eating and drinking it, the Bible tells us that he had the strength to survive on that food for forty days and forty nights until he made it to Mount Horeb – a holy mountain of God.

Friends, we want to know Jesus. We want to follow him with reckless abandon, but some days we just feel too human to do it. Jesus was sinless and perfect and so, we sometimes think, of course he was able to withstand temptation! And I think here we can identify a bit more with Elijah. Sure, he was a prophet of God, but he was a sinful human like us. He went to the wilderness, too – looking for safety, for God, for direction in his life. He was so overwrought that he wanted to die, but God didn't leave him alone. God brought not once, but twice all the nourishment and support that he would need to make it through the wilderness – to stay on the good path.

Left to our own devices, maybe we wouldn't choose Lent: a time of repentance, contemplation, prayer, and almsgiving. Maybe we would turn away from the face of our Lord and Savior dying on the cross for love of each one of us. But maybe if we remember that Jesus is our guide through any time of dryness, we can be bold enough to be honest with ourselves. We can let go of habits or small pleasures that do not ultimately feed the soul. We can find an extra five or ten minutes a day for prayer or Bible study. We can remember to love and serve our neighbor a little bit more. So, join me in some holy discipline, trusting that Christ will nourish our spirits no matter what we face in the wilderness.

~Pastor Elana

In this month's "Trinity Bio" we are featuring Otis and Michelle Buttress.



Michelle and Otis have been married since June 2009 with a roller coaster of ups and downs that have lasted them a lifetime! They were married in Cozumel in a destination wedding of family and friends that have remained their support group.

Michelle has attended Church at both Saint Andrews Presbyterian (earlier years) and Asbury Methodist (teen years and up).

Michelle's dad, Kelly, passed in her junior year of high school. So as a tribute to him, she serviced in both the Air Force and Army National Guard with two tours of duty. She was a jet engine mechanic in the Air Force and a combat medic in the Army. Before, during, and after her service to her country, she attended OSU in Stillwater and finished her OSU degree in Management at the Tulsa Campus. She still wears her Red, White, & Blue and the Orange & Black proudly!

Before a car crash took its toll on his body, Otis was headed to a pro baseball career. After this set-back, he learned how to weld exotic and regular metals and furthered his welding abilities while he traveled with the government. His company was based out of Maryland and he worked in the D.C. area. His family as well as his son and daughter were in Oklahoma, so he gave up that great opportunity to move back and be closer to them. His son, Taylor, is now 26 years old, is married, and has been a salesman at Bob Hurley for several years. His daughter, Shelby, is 24 years old and is getting married March 5th in Tulsa. Otis' father passed away last year from cancer and his mom and his sister have been battling cancer also.

Michelle and Otis both love children and wished the stork had brought them little ones, but instead they have recused four loving pooches that are their fur babies. They thank you for your prayers for Otis through his surgery and healing process. The results were so much better than the doctor originally projected. And they thank you for the continued prayers for Otis' mom and sister. No matter what, they have leaned on each other, their faith, their friends and their family.



2017 Lenten Devotion

Lent is traditionally a season of contemplation and confession, a time to think about God and feel your connection with God and others. In a time when arguments are loud and people have stopped listening to each other, it can be easy to lose the sense of love for one another. Christ calls us to love in community. Truly listening to each other, to views from multiple perspectives, is a discipline of humility and love. To that end, Pastor Elana and Pastor Lucus are preparing a weekly devotion including scripture, prayer, and articles from different perspectives. These devotions will be available physically on Sundays, and also e-mailed to the congregation weekly.

Here are the topics of the devotion:

◆ **Distinct or Blended**

Is it acceptable to blend practices from various faiths into Christianity?

◆ **Action or Contemplation**

What is more central to Christian practice – prayer or service?

◆ **Traditional or Changing**

Change – is it inevitable? What does tradition teach us about ourselves today?

◆ **Gender Essentialism or Gender Constructivism**

Do ideas about gender come from God, or are they created by society?

◆ **Just War or Pacifism**

Is force ever just? Can peace be achieved without force?

◆ **Rapture or What?**

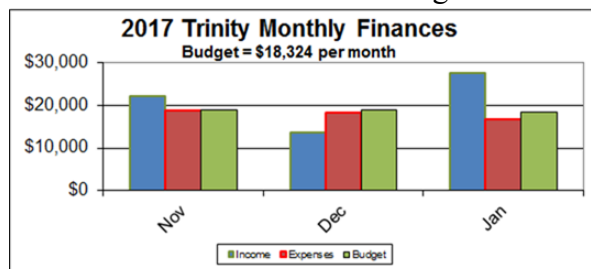
How will things work out in the end?

Finance/Stewardship randy smith

The following excerpt is from an article I enjoyed reading recently titled “10 Reasons to Escape Excessive Consumerism” written by Joshua Becker:

“More generosity. Rejecting excessive consumerism always frees up energy, time, and finances. Those resources can then be brought back into alignment with our deepest heart values. When we begin rejecting the temptation to spend all of our limited resources on ourselves, our hearts are opened to the joy and fulfillment found in giving our personal resources to others. **Generosity** finds space in our life (and in our checkbooks) to emerge...

Greater realization that this world is not just material. True life is found in the invisible things of life: love, hope, and faith. Again, we all know there are things in this world that are far more important than what we own. But if one were to research our actions, intentions, and receipts, would they reach the same conclusion? Or have we been too busy seeking happiness in all the wrong places?”



	Income	Expenses	Budget
YTD	\$ 27,6810	\$ 16,750	\$ 18,324

Randy Smith
Stewardship/Finance

Christian Education sue chancellor

As Christians, we are people of the living word. We believe that the law, poetry, and prophecies form our communities, and those words were embodied by the flesh and blood of Jesus Christ. And since Jesus' time, we have built the body of Christ out of our own imperfect parts. We have become his feet, hands, mouths, arms, and legs as we care for one another and the world. ~Carol Howard Merritt

The Lenten Season is here beginning March 1, with Ash Wednesday, and moving forward through April 15. As individuals and as a church, we can intentionally become Christ's "feet, hands, mouths, arms, and legs as we care for one another and the world."

An Ash Wednesday Service will be held this Wednesday, March 1, 2017 at 6:30 pm in the Sanctuary. All are welcome.

Thur., March 2

6:30 pm “Exploring Theologies of the Cross” Lenten study begins in the Trinity Café, led by Pastor Elana.

Why did Jesus die?

What happened on the cross?

Join us for this 6-week journey as we look at theologies of the cross from the early church to the Reformation, to our present day. Sue will lead engaging Lenten activities for children in the Parlor during this time. All are welcome!

SUNDAY MORNING LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES BEGINNING AT 9:15 AM

Child Care Attention Parents: Donna Bridenstine is available at 8:15 for childcare for those parents/guardians practicing with the choir. She is also available for team meetings on the second Wednesday of each month. Just let Sue know in advance.



Childcare for infants through preschool is available on Sunday morning from 9:00 a.m. through the close of Worship; Donna Bridenstine offers a nurturing engaging atmosphere for our very youngest. Pre-kindergarteners and kindergarteners can join Donna and an adult volunteer after their Sunday School class and through Worship.

All pre-school children through fourth grade are invited to join friendly enthusiastic kids and teachers in the rooms next to child care. During this Lenten season, we'll be discovering all the aspects of Jesus' amazing everlasting love for us. We'll also learn some exciting bible stories that teach us so much about how to love and care for one another.

March 5:	"Practice for Youth Sunday"
March 12:	Millie Spencer "God Calls Abram and Sarai"
March 19:	Vicky Adams "Water From a Rock"
March 26:	Melinda Carver "One More Sun"
April 2:	Valerie Wagner "Lazarus, Come Out"

All tweens and teens are welcome upstairs along with our great team of teachers as we discuss timely topics focused on inspiring and challenging lessons from the "Feasting on the Word" curriculum. Each individual is validated and accepted for where they are along their own personal faith journey. Please join us whenever you are able.

March 5:	"Practice for Youth Sunday"
March 12:	Royce Chancellor "Blessed to be a Blessing"
March 19:	Sue Chancellor "Thirst in the Wilderness"
March 26:	John Clawson "Don't Dismiss David"
April 2:	Bob Eckert "Fully God and Fully Human"



MARCH EVENTS



~The adult Sunday School class discussion of C.S. Lewis' book, "The Screwtape Letters" is winding down and will be ending on March 12. We'd like to thank Pastor Elana for her wise insightful leadership during this stimulating study.

~On March 19 the adult class led by our very own Richard Spencer will once again meet in the classroom off Churchill Hall. He (and others when he's unable to be in attendance) will be sharing an updated version of the DVD series discussion on "Living the Questions, 2.0." There will be some new material in this study that Trinity originally viewed and discussed in 2009. "Living the Questions is an open-minded alternative to studies that attempt to give participants all the answers. Living the Questions creates an environment where participants not only interact with one another in exploring the best of today's theological thought, but together strive to explore what's next for Christianity." All are invited to participate in this exciting enlightening study!

~Pastor Lucas will be offering an additional adult Sunday School class entitled "The Presbyterian Journey" in the near future; be looking for additional information coming soon.

~Midweek Book Study continues this month with John Philip Newell's book, "The Rebirthing of God, Christianity's Struggle for New Beginnings." This is a wonderfully insightful book and we welcome new folks to come and join the conversation in the cafe on Wednesdays at 11:00 a.m. We won't meet during spring break, March 15. We'll be packing backpacks at 10:30 on March 5 and March 22 in Churchill Hall. Everyone invited to stay following Book Study for sack lunch fellowship in the cafe.

~Thanks to all the wonderful folks who attended the Shabbat Service at Temple Israel on Friday evening, February 24. Trinity was well represented and we all enjoyed a delightful evening of learning and fellowship.

~This Sunday, March 5, is Youth Sunday, "See the Light...Be the Light"~

All the kids and teens have worked diligently for this special worship service!

Please join them at 10:30 a.m. for a beautiful energetic service!

TEEN/KID/FAMILY NEWS

- ◆ Thanks to all the kids and families who have shared their time and talents in January and February preparing for Youth Sunday. You are the best and we appreciate you immensely! Thanks, also, for the delicious meals that many of you prepared for our Sunday lunch time!
- ◆ Thanks, too, to those of you that joined us for all the high-energy fun we had at Sky Zone; a most fantastic time was had by kids and adults that attended! And...we all slept well that evening!
- ◆ **Sunday March 5 is Youth Sunday** and practice will begin at 9:15 in the sanctuary. We won't be going out to lunch this Sunday, but please join us for Theatre Group at 1:00 p.m. on March 5, 12, and 19.
- ◆ **Mark your calendars for March 26:** Following worship, we'll go out to lunch and then onto the Jenks aquarium for a swimmingly sensational time. Kids and adults of all ages will enjoy this excursion, so bring along your family and buddies!

SAVE THE DATES

July 9-13: VBS 2017: "Rome--Paul and the Underground Church"

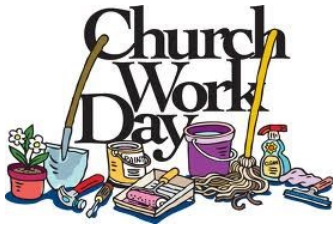
5:45-8:15 pm for children ages 3 through entering 5th Grade

July 16: VBS Worship Service followed by picnic/games

All kids and volunteers will be in for a most exciting unforgettable journey into first-century Rome.

Building & Grounds bob block

Also, mark your calendars now, as the Spring Clean up is scheduled for April 8th at 8:00 a.m. Everyone is welcome. The more the merrier!

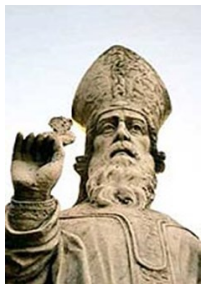


Much thanks to all,
The Building & Grounds Committee

Thank you to Bob Eckert, as new LED lights have been installed in our parking lot.



Evangelism brenda cunningham



ST. PATRICK'S BLESSING

AS HE BROUGHT NEW FAITH TO IRELAND
SO MAY HE BRING OUT IN YOU
A TOUCH OF IRISH KINDNESS
IN EVERYTHING YOU DO.
AND THROUGH THE GOOD ST. PATRICK
MAY YOUR HOME AND LIFE BE BLESSED
WITH ALL THE SPECIAL FAVOURS
THAT MAKE YOU HAPPIEST.

The team is working on revising the new member information packet and possibly a class entitled "The Presbyterian Journey" for old/new members. We are talking to Religious editors of several newspapers hoping to get an article on our Co-Pastors (thanks to Vicky Adams for the idea!)

Respectfully, *Brenda Cunningham*

Mission News craig hanson

- ◆ The Mission team has purchased gift cards to be provided to "walk-ups" who reach out to Trinity in need of assistance.
- ◆ The check was written for the 2016 donation to Embombeni Church in Malawi that we are sponsoring. Included in this check is the amount raised at the VBS from 2016 as well. A letter to accompany the donation is being composed.
- ◆ Backpacks 4 Bixby and BOC (Bixby Outreach Center) programs continue to need our support. Lists are posted in the entryway just inside the front doors of the church listing items needed. Please help if you can.

Respectfully, *Craig Hanson*

Presbyterian Women: March 8th is our next Presbyterian's Women's meeting.

Presbyterian Women meet on the 2nd Wednesday of every month, at 9:45 am in the Trinity Café! This is a perfect time for women of all ages to come and be part of such an important, productive, and friendly group, led by Sally Bright. Please join the women whenever you're able!

Sunday Funday at SkyZone!!





MARCH LECTIONARY

Ash Wednesday—March 1

Joel 2:1–2, 12–17
Psalm 51:1–17
2 Corinthians 5:20b—6:10
Matthew 6:1–6, 16–21

First Sunday in Lent—March 5

Genesis 2:15–17; 3:1–7
Psalm 32
Romans 5:12–19
Matthew 4:1–11

Second Sunday in Lent—March 12

Genesis 12:1–4a
Psalm 121
Romans 4:1–5, 13–17
John 3:1–17 or Matthew 17:1–9

Third Sunday in Lent—March 19

Exodus 17:1–7
Psalm 95
Romans 5:1–11
John 4:5–42

Fourth Sunday in Lent—March 26

1 Samuel 16:1–13



Happy Birthday

Ted Karner	3/2
Reggie Marshall	3/5
Dwayne Strasheim	3/8
Pat Barnard	3/14
Tomye Mainer	3/20
Dorothy Block	3/21
Matthew Sanstra	3/31



Trinity Theatre Groups Resume practices!!

The 2 Trinity Theatre groups, **Trinity Players** and **Holy Tigers Troupe**, will now both be meeting on Sunday afternoons at 1:00 pm. We look forward to a great year, and welcome any new members! The more the merrier!

Hope to see you there!



March 2017

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
<p>* On 3/13-16, Pastor Lucus, Pastor Elana and Sue C. and Nancy Cain will be attending the NextChurch Conference.</p>			<p>1 10:30 Pack backpacks 11:00 am Mid-Week Bk. Sdy. 6:30 pm Ash Wednesday Service</p>	<p>2 6:30 pm Lenten Study</p>	3	4
<p>5 YOUTH SUNDAY</p> <p>1:00 Theater Practice</p>	<p>6 10:00 am Yoga Class</p> <p>7:00 pm Turning Point</p>	7	<p>8 9:45 am Presby. Wm. 11:00 am Book Study. 12:00 pm Sack Lunch 1:00 pm Banner Mkg. 6:30 pm TEAM MTGS. (dinner at 6:00)</p>	<p>9 6:30 pm Lenten Study</p>	10	11
<p>12 Communion</p> <p>1:00 Theater Practice</p>	<p>13 10:00 am Yoga Class</p> <p>7:00 pm Turning Point REV. LUCUS</p>	14 REV. ELANA	<p>15 No Book Study 1:00 Banner Mkg.</p>	<p>16 6:30 pm Lenten Study OF OFFICE*</p>	17	18
<p>19 Lunch Bunch</p> <p>1:00 Theater Practice</p>	<p>20 10:00 am Yoga Class</p> <p>7:00 pm Turning Point</p>	21 6:30 pm SESSION	<p>22 11:00 am Mid-Week Bk. Sdy. 12:00 pm Sack Lunch Fell. 1:00 pm Banner Mkg.</p>	<p>23 6:30 pm Lenten Study</p>	24	25
<p>26</p> <p>1:00 Theater Practice</p> <p>Aquarium Trip</p>	<p>27 10:00 am Yoga Class</p> <p>7:00 pm Turning Point</p>	28	29	<p>30 6:30 pm Lenten Study</p>	31	

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