

February 2023

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

120 S. PARK AVE, FREMONT, OH 43420 419-334-7171 WWW.FREMONTFPC.ORG

Pastoral Reflection: The Way of Forgiveness and Deliverance

Starting February 22 with Ash Wednesday we begin our Lenten journey. Words that are often present in our devotions and worship for Lent are *forgiveness* and *deliverance*. In Scripture we read that Jesus forgives us and we are called to forgive others. But how do we define and view forgiveness? Do we see it as an obligation? Jesus forgave me, so I should, or must, forgive others. Or do we see it as a demand that we must fulfill, and so drag our heels when we are called to forgive? Is our attitude towards forgiveness one of “I’ll do it if I must”? Or do we view forgiveness as freeing and something that can help to heal broken relationships?

I just received a phone call this evening from a friend in northern Wisconsin (way north!) and her community has had a heavy snowfall and power is out due to the weight of the snow on the power lines. She asked for prayers for her neighbors as they have an elderly family member and a young family member who depend upon medical equipment that requires electricity. The family has a back-up generator but it is currently not working. The family is debating trying to get both family members to the hospital or a care facility, but cost and medical insurance problems are an issue. Family members were also trying to decide if they should call an ambulance or try to drive to a hospital, but there are issues with the roads and emergency personnel having access to back roads and side roads. My friend is keeping a prayer vigil for this family at the moment even though she is also faced with her own dilemma, as she works as a hotel front desk clerk and her employer wants her to come in and work the night shift. She usually does not drive at night since she is in her 70s but needs the money due to her husband’s medical bills.

We may wonder why people must face such awful or difficult decisions. We try to figure out why some have so many problems, or why some beat the odds while others don’t. We may try to blame it on luck or the amount of courage a person has. Some might be quick to judge, saying God saved them because ____, but didn’t save them because _____. Exodus clearly reminds us that while God calls followers to be obedient and holds them accountable, God is also a God of forgiveness and deliverance.

In preparation for your Lenten journey, read some of the portions of the book of Exodus. The book of Exodus is central to the history of Jewish identity. In Exodus, Joseph is sold by his brothers into slavery in Egypt. A famine comes, but Jacob forgives his brothers and is eventually reconciled

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Opportunities for Worship:

- Sunday School - 8:30 am, via Zoom
- Worship - 10:00 am, in the sanctuary

CONTACT INFO:

To contact the pastor, call the church office at 419-334-7171. In case of a pastoral emergency, call 419-341-2548.

NEWSLETTER PREFERENCE:

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2023 PER CAPITA

\$38.60

with them. Time passes, and the numerous descendants of Jacob end up as slaves in Egypt. Life for the Israelites was difficult; resources such as food were scarce.

God sends a series of plagues to weaken the Egyptians leading up to an opportunity for the Israelites to leave. They are told to be ready, take just what they need, and mark the doors of their households with the blood of the Passover lamb so they are spared when death passes by. When we think of the group of Israelites departing, we may think of the dramatic scene from the movie *The Ten Commandments*, with Charlton Heston as Moses, and the walls of water parting miraculously. What is key in this journey is that the Israelites entered the water as slaves and exited as free men and women. God delivered them. This was a journey of freedom and deliverance.

Elie Wiesel states that the Exodus is a story about human dignity. While the Pharaoh is considered the leader of the Egyptians, he has no dignity as exemplified by the way he treats those underneath him. God, on the other hand, has compassion for the abused, the neglected, the imprisoned, the forgotten, those whom the world only sees as a source of work and production. They are all precious in God's sight. God desires freedom for them. This is contrary to what so many have done throughout history to justify injustice and inhumane treatment of others, saying the poor or the enslaved should be happy with their lot. That is where God wants them to be. Exodus would say otherwise.

We might want to cheer when the Egyptian army perished, but they are God's children, too. Ancient rabbinical tradition did not encourage Hebrew listeners to consider this text with a triumphalist attitude. While the Exodus may make a great movie, it is not a good guys versus bad guys story; God does not rejoice when someone is defeated or suffers. Key also in Exodus is that while the Israelites triumphed when crossing the sea, their path to the Promised Land was not a straight one. God led them on a long journey first, and their purpose would only be made known to them in the midst of their long trek at Mt. Sinai. As human beings, we are bound to sin and selfishness and we desire freedom from bondage just as the Israelites did. We ask God to set us free. God sets us free, not to do our own thing, but to follow the path God wants us to walk. God stands with us and with all people when the storms of life are raging. God's way may not always be clear to us, but we trust and know God is with us. May we trust and know that God is with us as we begin our Lenten journey.

Pastor Julie

SNOW CANCELLATION POLICY

Services are automatically cancelled whenever a *Level 2* Snow Emergency is in effect for Sandusky County as of 8 am on Sunday morning. Information about what level the county is at is available on the Sheriff department's recorded information line:(419-332-2613) or website (www.sandusky-county.com/index.php?page=sheriff-s-snow-emergency).



SUNDAY SCHOOL ON ZOOM

Join us Sunday mornings at 8:30 am for Sunday School via Zoom. We will be continuing the New Testament Fast Track with Acts and the Letters of Paul. Go to zoom.us/join and use Meeting ID: 894 1653 3841 and Passcode: 366167

UPDATE YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have moved, changed phone numbers, or have a new email address, please email those changes to the office at: fremontfpc@gmail.com. Thank you! Amy Monk, FPC Administrative Assistant

RAINBOW STATION

Preschool News



Happy Valentine's Day! We should show love every day wherever we go, so others can see God's love in

us. Ask God to show you someone who needs an extra hug or smile and try to lighten their day.

We are still looking for a Director/Teacher for Rainbow Station. If you know of someone who has a calling for this type of work, please mention us to them and ask them to stop by. I have agreed to stay on until the end of August as long as my health holds out.

We are busy learning how to get along with each other and how to share. Sharing and turn taking can be a difficult skill to learn, but we try to help them each day.

Thank you for all your support of any kind to Rainbow Station. You are greatly appreciated.

Rainbow Station Staff

RECYCLE!

Don't forget to bring in your used ink and toner cartridges **and old cell phones** to be recycled. These are returned to Staples, and Rainbow Station receives credit toward future purchases on needs such as paper and ink. Every little bit makes a difference! Thank you for your continued help!



Happy Birthday!

4 - Greyson Amolsch

SATELLITES

We are going to Applebee's on February 8th at 11:30 am. You can call or text Diane Bascone @ 419.680.0190. Bring a friend!



"SOUP"ER BOWL SUNDAY!



There will be a Fellowship Meal "Soup"er Bowl Sunday event after church on February 12. Soup will be provided. Anyone wishing to contribute may bring a

salad, dessert, or appetizer. We hope you can join us for good food and good fellowship!

ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE

Please join us for an Ash Wednesday service on February 22. There will be a joint supper and service at Eastside Presbyterian Church. The meal will begin at 6 pm, followed at 7 pm by a service with Ashes and Holy Communion.



For God

so loved the world,
that he gave his
only
begotten
Son,
that whosoever
believeth
in him should not perish,
but have everlasting life.



John 3:16

Thank You!

A big thank you to those individuals who participated in our annual Christmas caroling to our shut-ins. The Christian Growth and Nurture Team appreciated your time, your efforts, and beautiful singing voices that you showed on December 11th. The following shut-ins enjoyed the care you showed that day:



- Helen Cominsky
- Peggy Earhart
- Donn Jones
- Paul Livingston
- Diane Roush
- Dave Stubler (East Side)

Neighbors' News

In Matthew 25:35 & 40, Jesus says "For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat." "I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me."



Thanks to all who choose to put extra items on your grocery list to fill the containers in the Social Room. As always, please look for sales and help only as you are able.

(optional) - Dish Soap and/or Liquid Laundry Soap

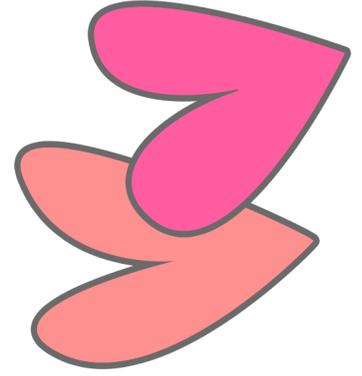
February

- 5 - Potato flakes
- 12 - Corn
- 19 - Chili
- 26 - Pears

Thanks for your help neighbor!
Rod and Linda Combs

February

				1		2 6:00p - Choir	3	4
5 8:30a - Zoom Sunday School 10:00a - Worship	6 7:00p - AA 7:00p - Alanon	7		8 11:30a - Satellites 7:00p - Session		9 6:00p - Choir	10	11
12 8:30a - Zoom Sunday School 10:00a - Worship -"Soup"er Bowl Luncheon	13 7:00p - AA 7:00p - Alanon	14	Valentine's Day	15 6:30p - Deacons		16 6:00p - Choir	17	18
19 8:30a - Zoom Sunday School 10:00a - Worship	20 7:00p - AA 7:00p - Alanon	21		22 6:00p - Ash Wednesday Meal/Service at East Side		23 6:00p - Choir	24	25
26 8:30a - Zoom Sunday School 10:00a - Worship	President's Day Newsletter Articles Due	28		Ash Wednesday				



6	Ken Myers	17	Kathy Fawley	20	Harry Sargeant
7	Barb Stout	19	Jenna Herman	21	Ellen Abbott
10	Greg Van Dyne	19	Katy Hull	23	Stacey McConnell
10	Trevor Weickert	19	Robertta Patterson		
15	Pam Clark	19	Steven Reinbolt	28	Teddy Ross

Birthdays



THE BOARD OF DEACONS

- Pam Clark*
- Joan Gamble*
- Gerrie Hensley (Secretary)*
- Susan Myers*
- Carolyn Taylor (Moderator)*
- Lisa Zimmerman*

THE CHURCH MINISTRY TEAM

- | | |
|----------------------------------|------------------------|
| Pastor | Rev. Dr. Julie Kling |
| Choir Director | Lori Damschroder |
| Organist Emeritus | Paul Livingston |
| Secretary | Amy Monk |
| Children's Ministry Coordinator | Nicole Whetstone |
| Rainbow Station Director/Teacher | Roberta Patterson |
| Rainbow Station Teacher | Kathleen Daley |
| Rainbow Station Floater | Shari Mehling |
| Co-Treasurers | Larry & Carol Van Dyne |
| Volunteer Parish Nurse | Linda Hamilton |
| Custodian | Scott Slatter |

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN
COORDINATING TEAM

- | | |
|------------------|-----------------|
| Moderator | Dannita Cowdrey |
| Secretary | |
| Treasurer | Carol Van Dyne |
| Funeral Luncheon | Susan Myers |
| Rachel Circle | Dannita Cowdrey |
| Rummage Sales | |
| At Large | Jo Elder |
| | Lois Livingston |

THE SESSION

- Rev. Dr. Julie Kling (Moderator)*
- Dannita Cowdrey*
- Bob Gamble*
- Ken Myers*
- Bill Taylor (Clerk)*
- Nicole Whetstone*



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