

March 2021

Sumner Center UMC Newsletter

Sunday Worship



Weekly Worship Services are offered each Sunday via Sumner Centers Facebook page or if you do not have access to the internet contact Pastor Bridget and a weekly DVD of worship will be mailed to your home. During this time of a pandemic we are trying new and innovative ways to come together in the name of Jesus Christ.

Pastor Bridget Sheely

Cell: 507-438-1352 bridget@countrywidecarriers.com

Pastors Notes...

Spring is a miraculous experience. The whole world comes alive after the winter in which it seemed that everything was dead. The world comes filled with color and the scent of delicious greenery. The world that seemed so dull and cold has come alive once again. Little did we know that beneath the cold hard ground the plants and trees were preparing for rebirth.

Spring gives us hope for rejuvenation in our own lives as well. Spring is a time to renew the excitement and zest for life that lives inside.

It is time our lenses come in to focus on the color that begins to show itself beneath the snow, for it has been to many days of gray. There is beauty out there just waiting to sprout and soon blooms of blessings, days of hope, songs of inspiration will be our guide.

There is nothing I enjoy more than when time gives way and the turning over of dirt, the first smells of fresh soil in the crisp air wash over me.

The season of winter rest is coming to an end and I for one celebrate its final act!

Friends let us raise our praises and dance in the joy of Spring! God truly created a sensational gift when He dipped His fingers in the color palette of

his painting wheel and brought Spring to life on His canvas.

Where do you find inspiration in the changing of seasons?

How do you celebrate the gift of God's creative works?

When do you find time to offer your praise of thanksgiving to the one who blessed you so?

What are you longing for? Who do you think will provide the path for your aspirations?

My friends it is time to shake off the remnants of the past year and find your way back to the joy of planting new seeds of possibilities, bulbs of joy and a new generation of hope!

For there is a season for every living thing. Now is our time of coming back to life with God as our gardener.



The Way to Start your Day...

Go outside and face the East and greet the Sun with a blessing, chant or song that you made yourself and keep for early mornings. Do not fret if you do not know how to make a song it is very simple. First, don't try to think what words to use until you're standing there alone. When you feel the Sun, you'll feel the blessing, chant or song too. Just open your heart and release it. You see, a morning needs to be greeted. A new day needs to be honored. It is our responsibility to welcome the Sun and create a good day for it. We must also make a good world for it to live in one day at a time. So, as you rise out of bed tomorrow remember to look to the East and offer your blessing. And if you are very lucky there may be a time when the sky thanks you back with colors of beauty and magic. **Now that's the way to start a day!**

Calendar of Events

(subject to change and/or be added to as the need arises)

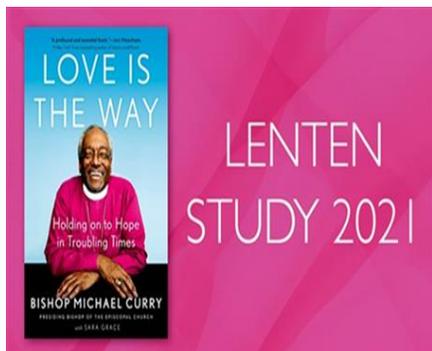
February 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3 Online Lenten Worship	4	5	6
7 Online Worship Communion	8	9	10 Online Lenten Worship	11	12 GIRL SCOUT DAY 	13
14 Online Worship 	15	16	17 HAPPY ST. PATRICKS DAY Online Lenten Worship 	18	19	20  Spring Equinox
21 Online Worship	22	23	24 Online Lenten Worship	25	26	27
28 Online Worship  Holy Week Palm Sunday	29	30	31			



Wednesday Lenten Service Schedule

(subject to change upon covid-19 vaccine status)



- March 3: Chapters 3&4 with Pastor Jon Marburger
- March 10: Chapters 5&6 with Pastor Laura Nordstrom
- March 17: Chapters 7&8 with Pastor Bridget Sheely
- March 24: Chapters 9&10 with Pastor Jon Marburger

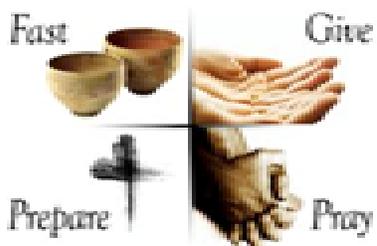
Holy Week: Chapters 11&12 in review

- April 1: Maundy Thursday with Pastor Laura Nordstrom
- April 2: Good Friday Ecumenical Service
- April 4: Easter Sunday

Wednesday Evening Lenten Services will be offered via Facebook/YouTube link/email

(If you choose to purchase a book you may find it on Amazon for \$17.33 or contact your Pastor.)

You do not need a book to share in this Lenten service experience



When will we be Worshipping in person again?

I know everyone is very eager to resume in person worship services. Our Administrative Council is actively studying the most current and recommended guidelines. All decisions are based on the safety and health of our faith community. Below are the current recommendations from the CDC and Mn Conference. These decisions are made to the best of our ability and understanding. God bless you all and together we will find better, healthier days ahead

Businesses can open with some restrictions. People are still encouraged to limit movement to essential needs, and remote work is still urged. Infection rates are high.

What The Mn CDS recommends:
Updated 2/13/2021



Worship and life events:

Strong recommendation for virtual services ONLY.

We have reason for optimism! Vaccine availability is expanding, hospitalizations are down, and COVID-19 cases are lower than they've been in a long time. The sun is rising on the pandemic even as Minnesotans have gotten back to important parts of daily life.

But we need to be cautious as well. We should continue to take measures to combat the spread of the virus in our communities – wear a mask, keep groups small and distanced, and wash your hands. Places of worship remain open at 50% capacity but without an overall maximum capacity. 6 feet of social distance must be maintained.

No food or drink except when essential to perform a ritual or service (e.g., Communion)
Congregational singing is permitted as long as congregants are masked.

The Conference simply asks that we and our leaders make the best decisions for our context. The Conference advises for the most prudent and 'caring for our neighbor' path is to remain in on-line worship, and limit our gatherings to small groups, no more than 50 in worship.

Tips on Reading the Bible Daily

Plan Length: 365 days

Estimated Completion Date: Wednesday, July 14, 2021

Eighth month of daily biblical connection. If you would like to start now no worries, it is never too late to begin connecting with the Word.

1. Start reading the Bible today -- there is no
2. Set aside a specific time each day. Set your great, but feel free to use any time that works
3. Read the Bible for the sake of learning, not a short prayer to God before you begin, asking understanding, then be refreshed by the words you read!



better time, and there's no reason to wait. schedule and then stick to it. Mornings are consistently for you. simply to accomplish your next reading. Say the Holy Spirit to give you wisdom and

Day 212 - Psalm 62-64; Romans 1

Day 229 - Psalm 107-108; Romans 15:22-33

Day 213 - Psalm 65-67; Romans 2

Day 230 - Psalm 109-111; Romans 16

Day 214 - Psalm 68-69; Romans 3

Day 231 - Psalm 112-115; 1 Corinthians 1

Day 215 - Psalm 70-72; Romans 4

Day 232 - Psalm 116-118; 1 Corinthians 2

Day 216 - Psalm 73-74; Romans 5

Day 233 - Psalm 119:1-48; 1 Corinthians 3

Day 217 - Psalm 75-77; Romans 6

Day 234 - Psalm 119:49-104; 1 Corinthians 4

Day 218 - Psalm 78; Romans 7

Day 235 - Psalm 119:105-176; 1 Corinthians 5

Day 219 - Psalm 79-81; Romans 8:1-18

Day 236 - Psalm 120-123; 1 Corinthians 6

Day 220 - Psalm 82-84; Romans 8:19-39

Day 237 - Psalm 124-127; 1 Corinthians 7:1-24

Day 221 - Psalm 85-87; Romans 9

Day 238 - Psalm 128-131; 1 Corinthians 7:25-40

Day 222 - Psalm 88-89; Romans 10

Day 239 - Psalm 132-135; 1 Corinthians 8

Day 223 - Psalm 90-92; Romans 11:1-21

Day 240 - Psalm 136-138; 1 Corinthians 9

Day 224 - Psalm 93-95; Romans 11:22-36

Day 241 - Psalm 139-141; 1 Corinthians 10:1-13

Day 225 - Psalm 96-98; Romans 12

Day 242 - Psalm 142-144; 1 Corinthians 10:14-33

Day 226 - Psalm 99-102; Romans 13

Day 227 - Psalm 103-104; Romans 14

Day 228 - Psalm 105-106; Romans 15:1-21



Lenten greeting: Practicing the disciplines of love

[Bishop David Bard](#)

February 17, 2021



I greet you in the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the peace and power of the Holy Spirit as we enter the season of Lent. “The United Methodist Book of Worship” tells us that Lent “began as a period of fasting and preparation for baptism by converts and then became a time for penance by all Christians.” Lent begins with Ash Wednesday where we are reminded of our mortality. Somber colors are encouraged during the season, with an encouragement to remove “all shiny objects from the worship area,” and perhaps give up flowers. Individually, people often give something up for Lent.

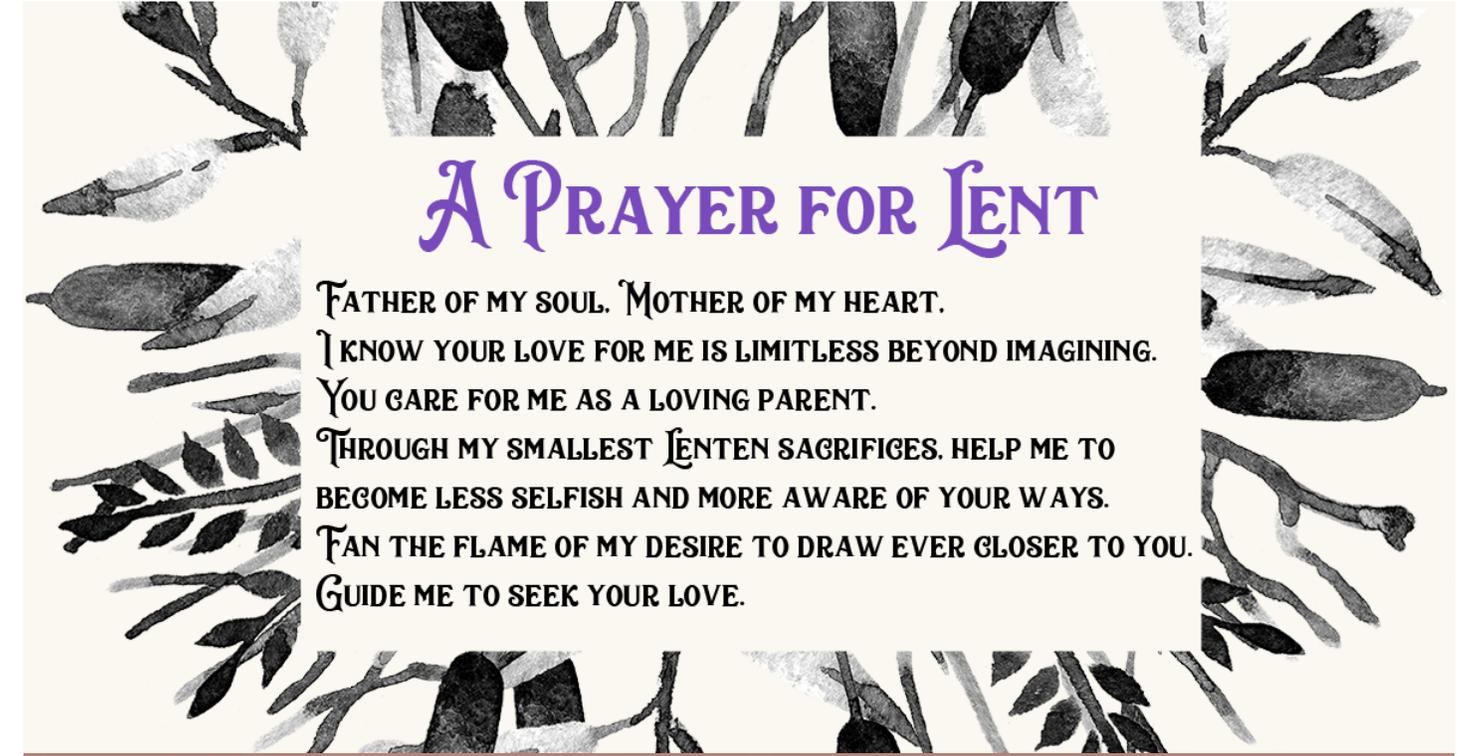
It was last year during Lent that our churches were asked to refrain from in-person worship due to the coronavirus pandemic. The hope early on was that perhaps by Easter we would again be able to gather together for worship. It was not to be. Months later, we would also be asked to refrain from in-person worship during the Christmas season. We have given up a lot and we are not yet through this pandemic.

Of course, some have given up even more. This past year has been a year of incredible loss. Reminders of our mortality arrive every day as we hear the running total of deaths from COVID-19, now over 400,000 here in the United States. Some of you are grieving loved ones lost, whether from COVID or not. We have lost time together with family and friends, missed marking milestones in ways we would have liked. There have been moments when we’ve lost a measure of hope—moments such as the death of George Floyd, or when some of our cities were aflame, or when our political rhetoric burned, or when we witnessed the violent storming of the Capitol building.

Lent acknowledges loss and limits. It invites giving something up, but that never for its own sake. When we voluntarily give something up, it is intended to be in the service of creating space for something new, creating more space for God’s grace, God’s love. Lent reminds us we don’t have all the time in the world, so we are invited to use our time well. Lent reminds us that life entails real loss, so we’re invited to appreciate its good gifts when they come our way. Lent encourages us to be more disciplined in our use of time, in the direction of our attention, in the expenditure of our energy. Discipline—and the most important Lenten disciplines are the disciplines of love—patience, kindness, thoughtfulness, and humility. I wrote about these in my [monthly blog for February](#), and I hope you will go back and read it.

Friends, Lent reminds us that we are fragile, mortal, and sometimes broken, that we know loss and that we lose our way. Yet we are always also loved by God, wildly and extravagantly, and in these limited mortal lives of ours we might reflect that love of God in what we do and who we are. Disciplines of love exercised in grace help us do that. I invite you to observe a holy Lent, honing the disciplines of love, knowing that you are loved by God.

[Bishop David Bard](#) is interim bishop for the Minnesota Conference. He also serves as resident bishop for the Michigan Conference.



A PRAYER FOR LENT

FATHER OF MY SOUL. MOTHER OF MY HEART.
I KNOW YOUR LOVE FOR ME IS LIMITLESS BEYOND IMAGINING.
YOU CARE FOR ME AS A LOVING PARENT.
THROUGH MY SMALLEST LENTEN SACRIFICES. HELP ME TO
BECOME LESS SELFISH AND MORE AWARE OF YOUR WAYS.
FAN THE FLAME OF MY DESIRE TO DRAW EVER CLOSER TO YOU.
GUIDE ME TO SEEK YOUR LOVE.

WEEK 1

FAST

When we fill our lives with obligations, relationships, or ways of thinking that distract us from focusing on Jesus, we are less able to experience life to its fullest. This week challenges you to create space in your life for the full life Jesus came to give us.

WEEK 2

Pray

Prayer can seem mysterious, either because of doubts about the ability of prayer or because it's difficult to incorporate prayer into daily life. The challenge for week 2 is make time in your day to read and pray the Lord's Prayer, then to create your own prayer based on the model of the Lord's Prayer.

WEEK 3

GIVE

When we give of ourselves by using the gifts God has given us to serve others, we are able to uniquely worship God. This week challenges you to explore your gifts and talents and then creatively use those to serve those around you.

WEEK 4

THANK

Thankfulness is more than an expression; it is an attitude of life. When we are thankful we are better able to experience blessings in our lives. The challenge for this week is to thank someone in your life who has expressed God's goodness to you. This week also challenges you to express God's goodness to others in your life.

WEEK 5

SERVE

God values everyone equally and immensely. When we express this to each other we are experiencing life with more love. This week challenges you to think critically about how your actions value others.

WEEK 6

REFLECT

Living a full life requires change. During this week, we will reflect on each of the previous weeks, what we have learned, and how we will recommit ourselves to those actions, even after this journey is over.

Lent

Q Y C O Z Y R E S U R R E C T I O N A I D Q Q O
 N Z V F G R E R B W E M O L O H T R A B B W J P
 H U H L S M E I W F B G R T R B N A M M F A V S
 V C R I R B S F L K Q E X T H O M A S D M E J A
 R Z M J T J A V L J T K R S V R Y Y R E A R E T
 S O R D E P R V L E L W I I X M A O S S D L R U
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 O S U D M E V X Q A E S L R E N R R Z K O W D W
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 A V P T A A S T G I S H B F Y S K Z L X S J Q W
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 O V F M I L E B D N P N N M Q T Z M A R T H A J
 L O V Y P S I N I H O O O G C M H A J A M A O I
 D V M H U V U P A P P F R I U N A A E D L H L T
 I K J J G A C E V F R A Z G N P F R D Z N W I J
 E T R L M D U R C I K L R E N U K X Y D G L V P
 R O U A X S M B S C K C X A B I M C M R E F O Z
 G K G U M D Y M Y X Z P V Z D E P M R J D U J S
 E I Z N Q Y L K E E W Y L O H E D E O H H D S A
 V A J Z X A W B D K P F T M S W Y E E C J H V I
 L V J I P F M W E H T T A M R Z N W E W E F C X
 L N V T J C Y J P U J G I L Y A D I R F D O O G

Halleluia	Judas	Simon	Thaddeus
James son of Alphaeus	Thomas	Bartholomew	Philip
Peter	James son of Zebedee	John	Luke
Mark	Matthew	parade	Good Friday
Lord	Resurrection	Stones	Reflect
Communion	Holy Week	Palms	Mauudy Thursday
Pray	tree	cross	weeping
Roman soldier	Martha	Mary	Disciples
Lent	Easter		

Walk through these 40 days in the wilderness with one of the Gospels

A Study in Matthew

- Week 0 (February 14 through February 17): Read Matthew 21–25.
- Week 1 (February 18 through February 24): Study Matthew 26:1–29.
- Week 2 (February 25 through March 3): Study Matthew 26:30–58.
- Week 3 (March 4 through March 10): Study Matthew 26:59–27:14.
- Week 4 (March 11 through March 17): Study Matthew 27:15–44.
- Week 5 (March 18 through March 24): Study Matthew 27:45–66.
- Week 6 (March 25 through March 31): Study Matthew 28:1–20.

A Study in Mark

- Week 0 (February 14 through February 17): Read Mark 11–13.
- Week 1 (February 18 through February 24): Study Mark 14:1–25.
- Week 2 (February 25 through March 3): Study Mark 14:26–50.
- Week 3 (March 4 through March 10): Study Mark 14:51–72.
- Week 4 (March 11 through March 17): Study Mark 15:1–21.
- Week 5 (March 18 through March 24): Study Mark 15:22–47.
- Week 6 (March 25 through March 31): Study Mark 16:1–20.

A Study in Luke

- Week 0 (February 14 through February 17): Read Luke 19:28–21:38.
- Week 1 (February 18 through February 24): Study Luke 22:1–38.
- Week 2 (February 25 through March 3): Study Luke 22:39–62.
- Week 3 (March 4 through March 10): Study Luke 22:63–23:25.
- Week 4 (March 11 through March 17): Study Luke 23:26–56.
- Week 5 (March 18 through March 24): Study Luke 24:1–27.
- Week 6 (March 25 through March 31): Study Luke 24:28–53.

A Study in John

- Week 0 (February 14 through February 17): Read John 12–17.
- Week 1 (February 18 through February 24): Study John 18:1–24.
- Week 2 (February 25 through March 3): Study John 18:25–19:12.
- Week 3 (March 4 through March 10): Study John 19:13–37.
- Week 4 (March 11 through March 17): Study John 19:38–20:18.
- Week 5 (March 18 through March 24): Study John 20:19–31.
- Week 6 (March 25 through March 31): Study John 21:1–25.