



Greetings to you, Friends of Hope, and Blessings in Christ Jesus,

As we enter into this Lenten Season, preparing ourselves for the Risen Christ, a traditional discipline of Christ Followers, which seems to be lost in modernity, always comes to mind: fasting. “When people first hear the word “fasting,” they often think of giving up food and/or drink. In the weeks to come, you are invited to fast from something that tempts you, something that has power and influence over you, or something that keeps you and your family from spending time with the Holy One. This might be TV, video games, phone apps, etc.”(umcdiscipleship.org/devotions/lent).

Perhaps it is something more serious, like harmful relationships with a certain person or substance. Whatever it is, the Holy Spirit is already helping you to identify it; that one thing you know is doing more harm than good in your life, pulling you away from God rather than closer. Whatever it is, take a break from it. That is what this season is about! We’ve made fasting to sound like some self-imposed method of torture, when it is a gift from God, and a means by which we are called to reconnect with the Holy One.

Consider, with an open mind, this scripture: *Luke 4:1-13* Jesus returned from the Jordan River full of the Holy Spirit, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness. There he was tempted for forty days by the devil. He ate nothing during those days and afterward Jesus was starving. The devil said to him, “Since you are God’s Son, command this stone to become a loaf of bread.” Jesus replied, “It’s written, People won’t live only by bread.” Next the devil led him to a high place and showed him in a single instant all the kingdoms of the world. The devil said, “I will give you this whole domain and the glory of all these kingdoms. It’s been entrusted to me and I can give it to anyone I want. Therefore, if you will worship me, it will all be yours.” Jesus answered, “It’s written, You will worship the Lord your God and serve only him.” The devil brought him into Jerusalem and stood him at the highest point of the temple. He said to him, “Since you are God’s Son, throw yourself down from here; for it is written: He will command his angels concerning you, to protect you and they will take you up in their hands so that you won’t hit your foot on a stone.” Jesus answered, “It’s been said, Don’t test the Lord your God.” After finishing every temptation, the devil departed from him until the next opportunity.

“What temptations keep your attention and love from God?” Consider taking a break from taking a break from your relationship with God. Let us fast and pray together! “Loving God, You are always with us, guiding us and loving us. Sometimes we get so focused on our lives that we forget to spend time with you. This week, help us find new ways to focus on you. Getting ready for the mystery of Easter is big work. During this first week of our Lenten journey,



FEBRUARY LT MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

Financial Report: Giving has declined; due, in part to lower attendance and departure from in-person worship. Funds are sufficient to cover over four months of expenses.

Outreach/Missions: Discussion took place regarding a meeting for all interested in participating in the care network. Post meeting, the date was set for February 27, 2022, at 12:00 noon. Informational guideline will be presented at that time for caring callers.

Inclusivity: Next "Time To Talk" meeting is set for April. The April meeting and any following will offer additional information and afford opportunity for discussion. General Conference should soon be announcing the decision on moving forward with 2022 conference or setting it over to 2024.

David Girton has been offered the position of organist/pianist/keyboardist for both Traditional and Modern Services. He will serve as worship planner, selecting hymns and worship music for Traditional Service, and will also be working with the youth and other Modern Service musicians.

The Church now has license and plan to proceed with live-streaming of both services. It is anticipated that this will be commencing shortly.

Trustee Report: Due to problems with existing heating units, estimates are being sought and secured regarding repair and/or replacement of some of the furnaces serving Reese Hall.

WANT TO DONATE TO THE FOOD PANTRY? THESE ARE THE ITEMS WE CURRENTLY NEED



EFP

Edwardsburg Food Pantry
Helping our neighbors with their most basic needs

Toilet Paper
Laundry Soap
Shampoo
Conditioner
Razors
Baby Wipes

Craft Night
Friday, March 4

Craft night is coming on Friday, March 4, from 6:00pm - Midnight in Reese Hall. Join us whenever you are available. Bring a friend and a current project that you are working on. We will be collecting non-perishable food for the Food Pantry if you'd like to donate.





DEB LANG	3/01
STEVE LEIST	3/02
SHARON MORGAN	3/02
MIRANDA ANDERSON	3/02
SPENCER BEEHLER	3/02
ERIC FRIES	3/03
PEGGY JENSEN	3/03
NANCY BOWMAN	3/04
JACK GOULD	3/05
LILA BLOUGH	3/05
LORRAINE BYLSMA	3/07
CHANDLER SHEETS	3/07
AJ FROST	3/07
LANA OLEJNIK	3/08
RICHARD LAWSON	3/08
EVAN STRONG	3/09
DAVID MORTIMER	3/10
LAURYN CORP	3/10
DONNELDA LOHR	3/11
TIM PELMEAR	3/12
MACKENZIE FLICK	3/13
NANCY MEAD	3/14
BOB MORGAN	3/16
JENA BERLIN	3/16
JEFF MILLER	3/17
TOM BLUNIER	3/21
PAULA RALPH	3/24
RONDA FAHEY	3/24
DEVON TRUEX JR.	3/25
MILLIE GRISSINGER	3/25
MATT WEILER	3/26
SHAWNA LaPORTE	3/27
BRAD STRYCKER	3/28
SUSIE HENDRICKS	3/29
AARON DITSON	3/30
KEITH MILLER	3/30
STEVE PURVIS	3/30



CHARLENA & BRETT MAPLES 3/09
HEIDI & RYAN BENTZER 3/21



Hope's online Prayer Chain has faithfully continued during the pandemic. To have a prayer concern added call **Melissa at Hope, 269-663-5321**, and leave your request on her answering machine. Or email your request to Marti Bartels, **mbbartels@aol.com**.

SHUT-IN PRAYERS

Those Hope members listed below are restricted to home or nursing facility. The term shut-in reflects that their condition warrants "shut inside" or not able to leave the home on a regular basis. Should you have additional people to add to the list please call the church at 269-663-5321 Ext. 2.

Please remember these people in prayer: Bob Fuller, Ardith & Carl Higley, Verlaine Hoffman, Sherry Leininger, Grace Werner, Ray and Nourma White.



FINANCE QUESTIONS?????

If you have a question about the how the church finances work, please contact Dawn Weingart at extension 6 or Pastor Nate at extension 8 at 269-663-5321. We also have summaries of the information that has been published in prior newsletters in the office.

FINANCES

CURRENT HOPE FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Month of January Ministry Fund Summary

Ministry Fund Donations:	\$ 9,576
Ministry Fund Expenses:	<u>\$-19,348</u>
Shortfall for the Month:	\$ -9,772

Monthly Budget amount: \$ 19,207

All January bills have been paid. Our Ministry Fund balance is \$76,796. Thank you for your continued support!

January Mortgage & Mission Fund Allocation:

\$309.04 Missions
 \$1,000.00 Parsonage Mortgage Extra Principal Payment
 \$ 50.00 Designated Donation to Parsonage Mortgage Paydown
\$1,781.31 Capital Improvements
 \$3,140.35 Total Donations

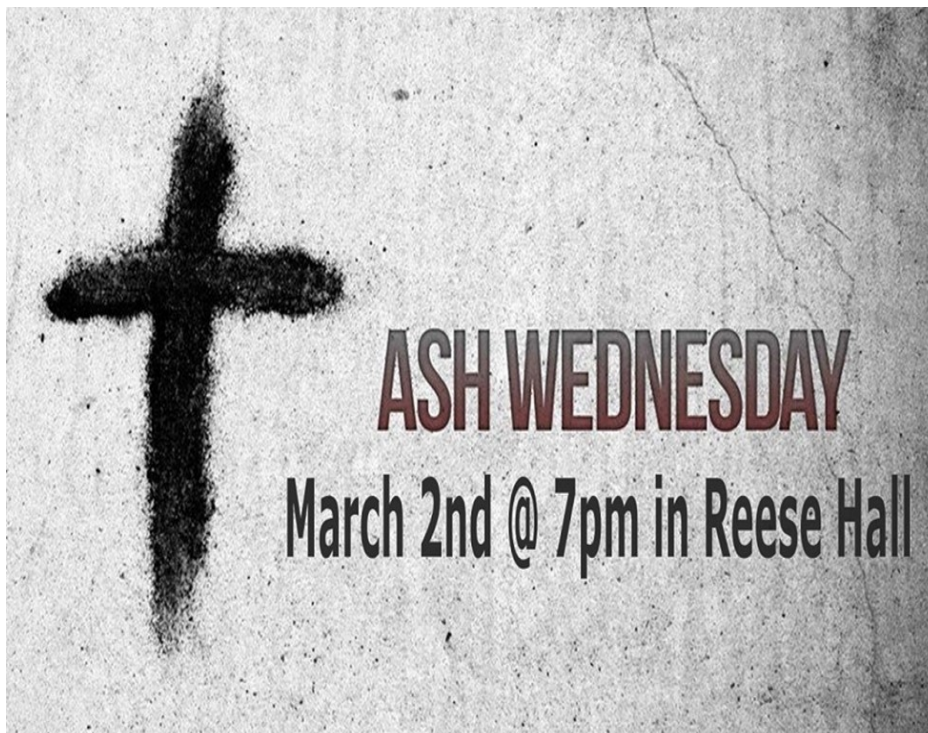
Parsonage Mortgage Update:

\$998.58 Regular Mortgage Payment - Ministry Fund
 \$100.00 Rental to Mortgage Payment
\$1,050.00 Extra Principal Payment from the Mortgage Fund
 \$2,148.58 Total Payment

Current Parsonage Mortgage Balance = \$137,468 after the February 2022 Payment.
 Our projected payoff date is May 2037, which is **36 months earlier** than the original payoff date!

2022 Ministry Fund Budget

Hope's 2022 Ministry Fund (Operating) Budget of \$230,480 has been approved by the Leadership Team. This is \$14,689 (6%) less than 2021's budget. The majority of the reduction is due to the elimination of the Church Mortgage payoff line of \$20,000 since the Church Mortgage was paid off in March 2021. The largest increase for 2022 is \$4,000 in the programming area. Copies of the 2022 budget are available in the office or by contacting Dawn Weingart at 269-663-5321x6.

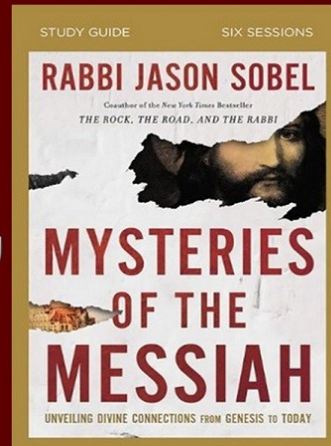


MARCH 13

**Women's
Bible Study**
starting a 6 week video series,
"Mysteries of the Messiah"
by Rabbi Jason Sobel
March 7 at 6:30pm.

**Call or text Donna Mansell (574-214-7521)
if you would like to join us.**

Books are running between \$7-\$8.



Keep our Service People in Prayer



Joshua Adams, Charles Berry, Andre Brower, Phil Bryden, Sam Chaput, Jonathan Ditson, James Gallo-

way, Justin Gerou, Dakota Kizer, Andrea Long, Alyssa Malott, Josh Marner, Jay Moore, Brandon Morgan, Jessica Ramus, Jason Salter, Dylan Smallwood, Jeff Starr, and Tyler Wilson.

Amazon Smile

If you are already shopping on Amazon, you can support Hope. Using Amazon Smile will donate a portion of your purchase to our church! All you need to do is go to smile.amazon.com and select that you are supporting Hope United Methodist Church of Edwardsburg.

To keep the list of service people accurate, would you please notify Melissa in the Hope office or Shirley Andrews if your listed loved one is no longer serving. OR if a name should be added, let us know. Thanks.



MARCH 13



Next Messy Church Sunday, March 27th 6-7:30pm

GOD'S WILL OR OUR WILL

Do you, as I sometimes do, struggle with our life's toils? I wake up with aches & pain in my back, legs or shoulder. Some days I have a pain in my heart from troubled things. Things I should have done or I did that cause heart pain. They can be financial, physical or mental that cause grief. I may struggle with how this is God's will for my life today.

God looks at our earthly life from birth to earthly death. He gives us free will to choose each day how to live it. If we have chosen Jesus as our savior we have help. The Holy Spirit lives in us to guide us through our trials. We must ask for His help in understanding this life. And then listen for His guidance in all circumstances.



DO NOT IMITATE WHAT IS EVIL
BUT WHAT IS GOOD.
— 1 JOHN 1:5

Sounds easy enough, but am I really listening for help? Or am I seeing it my way and going that pathway ahead? Sometimes I will seek the answer through a quiet prayer. Other times I'm so disheartened I travel my own path. When things happen I question, could this be God's will? If it turns out bad will God turn it into a good that I see?

Not always will we see the good that is happening to us. I feel discouraged and alone at times with life's troubles. I don't see how good can come from my pain and grief. My heart and my body ache, but I must live on today. I need to carry a hope that somehow a good will come. Even though I don't see God's love, I need to have faith.

If the Bible is truly God's words for us to live by, then we must carry on by that faith that all things work for His good and will bring someone joy and Glory to Him. Jesus suffered and died for everyone to have the free will to choose who we will follow and He offered all forgiveness when we ask for it for our earthly mistakes.

Even though we don't always understand, continue in faith and seek the Holy Spirit's advice always. Try not to get discouraged and know somehow that someone will see good in our life and how we live it. I get upset with God at times, but He always seems to find ways for my repentance and renewed life.

May you, if you are troubled, have the faith to carry on and the hope that the Holy Spirit will help you get through whatever your struggles. If life's good now, reach out to someone hurting and give them that hope the Bible says will come.

Love, Deb and Tony Lang

This year, Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent, falls on March 2. During worship services that day, pastors in many



Christian churches dip a finger in ashes (often made by burning branches from the previous Palm Sunday) and make a cross on parishioners' foreheads.

Why ashes? Traditionally, they're a sign of mourning, humiliation and penitence. Ashes also represent the frailty and temporary nature of human life ("You are dust, and to dust you shall return," Genesis 3:19). Christians are pained because our sins led to Jesus' death. With repentant hearts, we begin the season of Lent, knowing that it leads to Jesus' resurrection on Easter Sunday.

For Ash Wednesday — and throughout the 40 days of Lent — ponder this prayer from an Italian sacramentary, or liturgical book:

"O God, you know how fragile is our human nature, wounded as it is by sin. Help your people to enter upon the Lenten journey strengthened by the power of your word, so that we may be victorious over the seduction of the Evil One and reach the paschal feast in the joy of the Holy Spirit."



MARCH 17