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Chapel Hills • *Weekly News* • February 18, 2021

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Live & Online Worship Service via Zoom

Sunday, February 21st - 10:15 a.m.

Join us @ <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85370379661>

or by dialing 1-312-626-6799 and enter the Meeting ID: 853 7037 9661 #

You can begin logging in/calling @ **10:05 a.m.** for pre-service conversation.



Reminder!

Annual Meeting Following Worship

Stay logged in and the meeting will begin shortly after the Postlude.



In Prayer

- Doug and Meredith Allen ask prayers for their daughter, Barb Fulton, son-in-law, Chris, and grandsons, Michael & Joshua. They all tested positive for Covid after attending the funeral of Chris' father, who died of Covid.
 - Marilyn Krekelberg is undergoing a series of medical procedures and is doing well.
 - Prayers for Laura Feierabend's friend, Deb Larsen, who had open heart surgery and is recovering at home.
 - Anna Kerr has been temporarily placed in a Crisis Respite home. Cards of encouragement or just to say hello can be mailed to: **Anna Kerr, 8941 Terrace Rd NE, Blaine, MN 55434**
 - **Essential Workers:** Jon Braman, Nina Camilli, Swan Erickson-Gunther, Libby Fairchild, Ed Fowler, Tyler Hagebusch, Steve Krekelberg, Jeff Miller, Kevin Miller, Patrick Sickler, SkyAnne Sickler, Jack Stroessner, Jon Lundberg, Jill Guelich Garnier, Chris O'Neill
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After Worship Social Time

Approximately 25 people stayed logged in last Sunday for our after-worship social time. Bob Huber randomly divided us into small groups where we shared conversation and fellowship during this special on-line gathering. It was enjoyed by ALL!

Faith Talks - Please Join Us... All Are Welcome!

Join us Wednesdays at 12:00 noon via Zoom @ <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85370379661>
... or by dialing 1-312-626-6799 and enter the Meeting ID: **853 7037 9661 #**.

This will be a time to check in and support one another over the lunch hour. Pastor Kristen will present a faith topic for discussion each week. The hour will begin and end with prayer.

Book Group

Mark Your Calendar for our next virtual get together tentatively scheduled for Monday, March 1st at 1:30 p.m. Books for discussion include I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings, by Maya Angelou, and Dakota: A Spiritual Geography by Kathleen Norris.



Many of us are wondering how we can observe Lent this year: many of feel that Lent 2020 never ended, and after a year of restrictions and sacrifice we've had enough of "giving up." But Lent is also about giving to: works of love are an ancient spiritual practice during Lent. And so is prayer. Every weekday morning during Lent and Easter the ONA family will continue to offer a contemplative service of Taizé Morning Prayer at 9 and 11 am (EST) in the Coalition's Zoom Chapel—Monday through Friday. We'll also gather at 10 pm (EST) every Sunday night for Compline—an ancient experience of prayer, silence and song at the close of day. Each service is about 20 minutes and draws from ancient Christian practices of daily prayer, although in inclusive, non-binary language. Morning Prayer and Compline are sometimes posted on Facebook, but you can always join us on Zoom at zoom.us/j/5556624822.

Looking Ahead

- February 21 Worship Service (10:15 a.m. via Zoom*)
 Annual Meeting (11:00 a.m. via Zoom*)
- February 24 Faith Talks with Pastor Kristen (12:00 to 1:00 p.m. via Zoom*)
 Pastoral Care Team Meeting (4:00 p.m.)
- February 28 Worship Service Provided by UTS – Seminary Sunday – (10:15 a.m. via Zoom*)
- March 1 Book Group (1:30 p.m. via Zoom)
- March 3 Faith Talks with Pastor Kristen (12:00 to 1:00 p.m. via Zoom*)
- March 7 Worship Service & Communion (10:15 a.m. via Zoom*)
- March 10 Faith Talks with Pastor Kristen (12:00 to 1:00 p.m. via Zoom*)
- March 14 Worship Service (10:15 a.m. via Zoom*)
 Receiving One Great Hour of Sharing Offering
 Daylight Saving Time Begins
- March 17 Faith Talks with Pastor Kristen (12:00 to 1:00 p.m. via Zoom*)
- March 21 Worship Service (10:15 a.m. via Zoom*)
- March 24 Faith Talks with Pastor Kristen (12:00 to 1:00 p.m. via Zoom*)
- March 28 Palm Sunday Worship Service (10:15 a.m. via Zoom*)
- March 31 Faith Talks with Pastor Kristen (12:00 to 1:00 p.m. via Zoom*)

***Zoom Info:** <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85370379661> or by dialing 1-312-626-6799 and enter the Meeting ID: **853 7037 9661 #**

Weekly Devotion from Pastor Kristen

Shout out, do not hold back! Lift up your voice like a trumpet! Announce to my people their rebellion, to the house of Jacob their sins. Yet day after day they seek me and delight to know my ways, as if they were a nation that practiced righteousness and did not forsake the ordinance of their God; they ask of me righteous judgments, they delight to draw near to God. "Why do we fast, but you do not see?

Why humble ourselves, but you do not notice?" Look, you serve your own interest on your fast day, and oppress all your workers. Look, you fast only to quarrel and to fight and to strike with a wicked fist.

Such fasting as you do today will not make your voice heard on high. Is such the fast that I choose, a day to humble oneself? Is it to bow down the head like a bulrush, and to lie in sackcloth and ashes? Will you call this a fast, a day acceptable to the LORD?

Is not this the fast that I choose: to loosen the bonds of injustice, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover them, and not to hide yourself from your own kin? Then your light shall break forth like the dawn, and your healing shall spring up quickly; your vindicator shall go before you; the glory of the LORD shall be your rear guard.

Then you shall call, and the LORD will answer; you shall cry for help, and he will say, Here I am.

If you remove the yoke from among you, the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil, if you offer your food to the hungry and satisfy the needs of the afflicted, then your light shall rise in the darkness and your gloom be like the noonday.

The LORD will guide you continually, and satisfy your needs in parched places, and make your bones strong; and you shall be like a watered garden,

like a spring of water, whose waters never fail. Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt; you shall raise up the foundations of many generations; you shall be called the repairer of the breach, the restorer of streets to live in. — Isaiah 58:1-12

This is one of the lessons assigned to us for Ash Wednesday. I have left it in its entire form for us to see the definitive character of God. We do not have a transactional God. We do not do things like fast or pray outside or give up chocolate to gain favor with God. If we do all those things to become better Christians, we are wasting our time, energy and willpower. God is not impressed and doesn't like us more for observing Lent as a time to better ourselves or lose weight.

We are in a time of national crisis and confusion about the nature of God. American Christendom is called be better, to do better; to act in ways that are new and yet very old. God has called us to be the repairers of the breach, the restorer of the streets to live in. And we have a street, just miles from our own church that is known now throughout the entire world for breaking the spirit of a man and ending his life. This breach set in motion a series of events and outrage that we did not imagine possible.

Here in the ancient words of the prophet Isaiah, God has laid out a clear plan for ministry—not just for this season of Lent but for every day. What better time to begin than now?

PRAYER: *God of all freedom and hope, inspire me on this Ash Wednesday to be part of your movement of restoration and justice for your people. Lead me, equip me and guide me toward actions that restore and heal those who are hungry, suffering, oppressed and hopeless. Remind me that you do not require self-sacrifice as a way to prove my own worthiness but rather as a path toward the restoration of our nation, your people and all those who suffer on this day. Empower me to be your faithful follower, God, and make me part of the light that rises in the darkness of these times. AMEN.*



“God’s Loving Paths”

First Sunday in Lent

Teach me your paths, O Lord, the Psalmist cries.

Teach me your paths! These are powerful words as we take our first steps into the season of Lent.

As we enter Lent, we are invited into humility. We remember that no matter who we are or where we are on life’s journey, we still have things to learn. We approach Lent as students of Christ’s way. When we agree to be a student, we agree to be transformed. We agree to come out of the period of teaching different than the way we went in, aware that everything new that we learn will change us.

As we enter Lent, we look to Christ, who each year has something new to teach us. No matter how often we have taken this journey, the Lenten path is waiting for us, and ready to teach us.

The psalm, with its plural “paths” rather than singular “path” reminds us that there is more than one way to embark on the Lenten journey. If you have always approached Lent the same way (by giving up something in particular, or by taking on something in particular, or even by doing nothing unusual at all) try a different path this year. Follow the Holy One in another way and allow yourself to be transformed.

As we enter Lent, we remember that we are never alone. We are always accompanied by The Teacher, who wants for us the renewing and transformation of our minds, hearts, and souls. So, be open to Christ’s teaching, be ready to follow a new path if one appears before you.

A prayer to carry with you into Lent:

Teach us in your paths, O Lord! Guide us as we walk and instruct us as we journey. As new paths open before us, help us to follow them with curiosity and joy. Remind us that no matter the path you guide us on, you always desire to lead us in the way of new life. In your name we pray, Amen.