



# Lent

**CLC Weekly Update - February 26, 2023**

**In-Person Worship**

**February 26th at 9:30AM**

## **WORSHIP WITH US**

### **First Sunday In Lent**

**Pastor Erin Evans presiding**

**First Reading: Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7**  
**Psalm 32**

**Second Reading: Romans 5:12-19**

**Gospel: Matthew 4:1-11**

**Pastor Brian Bennett preaching**

**Pastor Bennett is Campus Pastor for Lutheran Campus Ministry in Greater Pittsburgh**

**The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you. The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace. ✝**

**Christ Lutheran Church**

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In the neighborhood...  
For good.

**CLC**  
**MILLVALE**  
Christ Lutheran Church



# Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness

MATTHEW 4:1

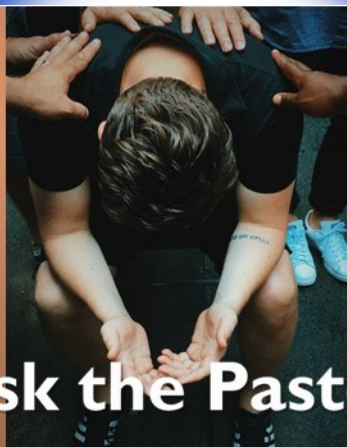


Today's gospel tells of Jesus' temptation in the desert. His forty-day fast becomes the basis of our Lenten pilgrimage. In the early church Lent was a time of intense preparation for those to be baptized at the Easter Vigil. This catechetical focus on the meaning of faith is at the heart of our Lenten journey to the baptismal waters of Easter. Hungry for God's mercy, we receive the bread of life to nourish us for the days ahead. ~

Thank you to all who sent cards, food, well-wishes and words of encouragement! I'm returning to work this week, feeling good, while continuing to heal from major abdominal surgery. Your care and concern for me was touching, and I very much appreciate your support! - *Pastor Erin*







## Ask the Pastor

***You asked, I'll answer!***

Question:

**Why do we use ashes on Ash Wednesday?**

Answer:

Ashes are spent. They are black and grey, charred and useless. Ashes are universal – all things, when put into a fire with enough heat, will turn to ashes. Ashes remind us that all things are temporary in our world, including us. Ashes inherently represent the passing of something vital and living. In many congregations, the ashes are made from burning the palms from last year's Palm Sunday.

But ashes have always been a sign of repentance as well, and examples of this can be found frequently in scripture. The sinful Ninevites responded to Jonah's call to repent by putting on sackcloth and sitting in ashes. Scripture also tells us that Job, after having endured his trials and tribulations, repents before God with dust and ashes. And that's nothing compared to Jeremiah, who calls for Israel's repentance by putting on sackcloth and rolling in ashes. Finally, Jesus reproaches certain cities for their lack of repentance, and their unwillingness to put on ashes and turn to God. Since the days of the early church, Christians have adopted this practice as a mark of penitence.

But we are not rolling in ashes, we are making the sign of the cross with ash. A visible reminder of the invisible seal we receive in our baptism, when we are marked with the cross of Christ forever. A symbol of both our earthly mortality, and new life in Christ.

***Thanks for your question!***

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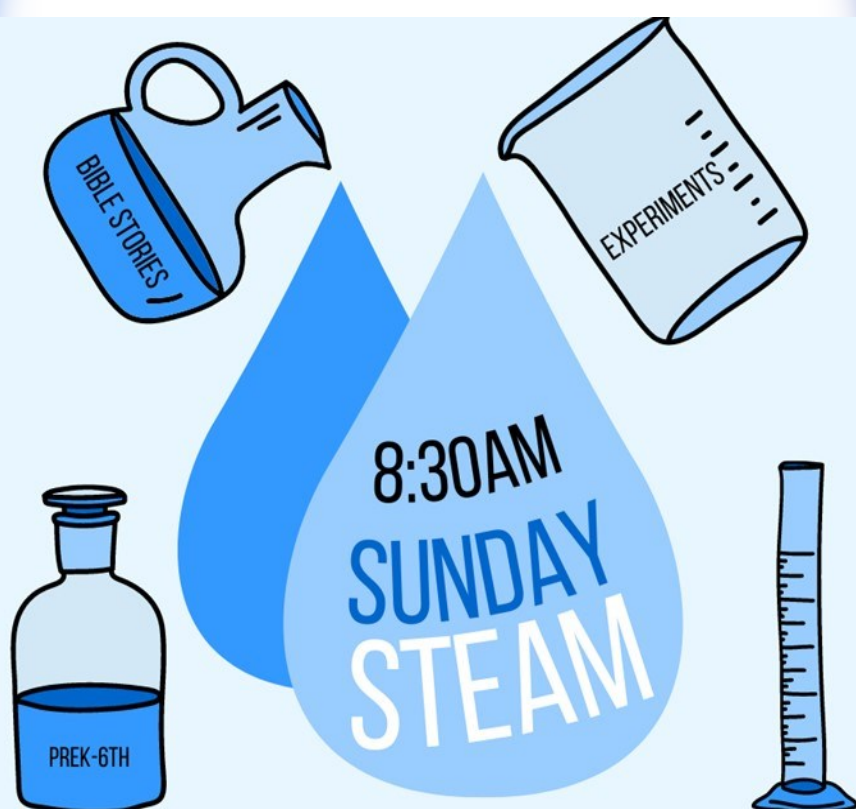
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## NEW FEATURE!

### “Ask The Pastor”

Submit an anonymous question in the offering plate, and you might get your question answered in the Weekly Update! Have a Bible question? A Church question? A burning query about what the number of candles means and why?

*Ask away!*



**PRE-K THROUGH GRADE 6**

**SUNDAYS AT 8:30AM**

Sunday STEAM is our "one room school house" model teaching kids PreK - 6th grade bible stories and incorporating STEAM lessons to go with the theme for the day. Main teachers cover basics and provide consistency, along with special guest teachers covering things in their field or area of interest. We do science experiments, hands-on projects, and cover all things "STEAM" (Science, Truth, Engineering, Art, and Music). **Come have hands-on fun every Sunday at 8:30am.**

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## *Lenten Wednesdays: Spiritual Drumming*

### **LENTEN WEDNESDAYS: SPIRITUAL DRUMMING**

One way to improve conscious contact with God through prayer and meditation is with music. Drumming has been used in nearly every faith for the purpose of experiencing the sacredness of God. The earliest music one experiences is the heartbeat of their mother. The simple heartbeat is the sound of the universe – the sound of life. Drumming is a time-honored method of uniting people, and the power of drumming multiplies on many levels in a group of drummers.

**We invite you to join us for Spiritual Drumming on Wednesdays during Lent on March 1st, 8th, 15th , 22nd, and 29th , from 7:00 – 8:00pm.** Share in the prayers and rhythmic energy of the drum as we lift our prayers up to God. We'll explore our Lenten theme, "Ask", and engage in conversations and questions. No previous music experience is necessary, and drums will be provided. See Pat Bauer if you have more questions about drumming, and please sign-up in the narthex.

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LENT 2023 Theme:



At some point in every Christian's life, they discover a question.

You know the kind.

Not How are you? or What kind of toothpaste should I buy?

**But What really happens when we die?**

**Or Why does this terrible stuff happen to people who do their best to follow God?**

**Or How could God forgive me after what I've done?**

**Or How do I know what God wants me to do next?**

You know. **That** kind of question.

In my experience, people often feel isolated when they discover that type of question, as if they are the only ones asking it. For whatever reason, questions like this often feel like obstacles to our faith. They may feel forbidden, out-of-bounds. In the Bible, we read about characters like Job and Nicodemus asking questions that sound like ours, only to hear what sounds like a very touchy response from God.

But what if faith requires us to ask questions?

What if questions are an essential part of our personal faith?

What if we need questions to survive and grow as a community of faith?

**You want to go there, don't you?** You want to believe that dialogue with God, relationship with God, requires questions. Well, guess what? You're in good company.

When we read scripture carefully, we discover questions everywhere. Hundreds of questions. Questions are created in the Garden of Eden. In the Gospel of John, the first thing Jesus says to someone after his resurrection is a question.

Like people, these questions come in every type. Some are pesky. Some prefer to hide in the shadows and never be noticed. Some shout loudly, repeatedly, and beg attention. Some walk with us to the grave. Similarly, like people, once you start engaging questions, you quickly discover how hard they are to understand. Questions are hard to pigeonhole. They defy stereotyping. And no matter how hard we like to think they can stand alone, they almost always require some kind of relationship.

Once you start noticing questions, once you start looking for them in the lectionary, you see them everywhere. Everyone has one, even if they keep it in their back pocket or tightly trapped behind their teeth. **Biblical people have plenty of questions, too... Join us at CLC this Lent for worship, devotion, activities, prayer, and of course, questions. ~**

**NEW! Squirrel Hill Health Center Mobile Medical Unit At CLC** Do you need a local Dr. you can walk to? Need a quick check up or conversation and not sure where to go? The Mobile Medical Unit RV will be parked here on NORTH AVENUE, TWICE A MONTH, for all your primary care needs! See below:

SQUIRREL HILL

HEALTH CENTER



## SHHC'S MOBILE MEDICAL UNIT IS COMING TO MILLVALE

Squirrel Hill Health Center's mobile medical unit provides primary healthcare services to Pittsburgh communities, regardless of patients' income level or insurance status. We treat patients of every age.

**PAYMENTS AND INSURANCE:** SHHC ACCEPTS ALL INSURANCES AND OFFERS A SLIDING FEE SCALE FOR THOSE WHO ARE UNINSURED.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT SHHC, PLEASE CALL  
(412) 904-5284**

### CLINIC DATES:

**1PM - 4:30PM | THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 23RD**

**1PM - 4:30PM | THURSDAY, MARCH 9TH**

**1PM - 4:30PM | THURSDAY, MARCH 23RD**



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**\*\*Mobile Unit Will Be Parked on North Ave\*\***

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## Dust to Dust

Joseph Imhoff

The Lenten season has begun with the imposition of ashes on the forehead Ash Wednesday accompanied by the words, "Remember thou art but dust, and unto dust thou shalt return." The response being, "Amen." So be it.

Aside from these words spoken on this occasion we usually consider dust as annoying and a nuisance but the words indicate all of us are created of the dust, the dirt, the earth, the clay as we learn in Genesis that God formed man from the dust of the ground. At a Synod Assembly quite a number of years ago Dr. Frank H. Seilhamer, gave a very apt description: The Hebrew word for red is 'adam', it also is the word used for earth or clay. God created the first man out of that clay and that word was used as his name, Adam. When the chancel of our church building went through the process of being repainted with the brilliant depiction of a God centered universe the lower portion below the green rail was of the clay, the terra cotta color showing that man was part of that image. Unfortunately it was since painted over for some vague reasoning.

The journey we take during Lent which will end with The Resurrection. Remind yourself that the ashes are still on your forehead even though you've washed your face and can't see them. The ashes were imposed on you because you requested them, and like oil on the forehead at Baptism, they should be in the form of The Cross. They tie you with the first Adam and the soil from which he was created.

As one Pastor mused a long time ago, "That way Jesus will see you coming from a far distance and hurry to greet you!" ~

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## *If You ...*

In today's gospel, Jesus is led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted. This story recalls that of Job, whose righteousness God also allowed to be tested. Both Job and Jesus are urged to turn away from what they know to be true and faithful. In Job's case, it is his friends who are relentless in making this enticement.

Another commonality in these stories is the phrase "If you." Three times in today's gospel the tempter says to Jesus, "If you . . ." In Job's story, this phrase is hurled back and forth between him and his friends. These two little words are meant to test and are always conditional: If you do or do not meet the condition, some consequence or other will follow.

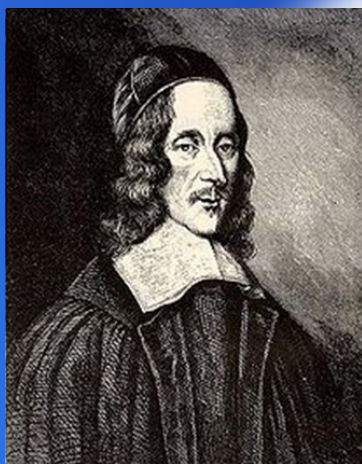
In a world full of conditions, it can be hard to believe that God's saving work is completely unconditional. Even we who proclaim God's free gift of grace might fall into saying it is free if you accept it. We cling to the work we might do to make ourselves right with God.

In his Small Catechism explanation of the sixth petition of the Lord's Prayer, Martin Luther suggests that God does not tempt anyone, but that the devil, the world, and we ourselves provide plenty in the way of opportunities to be led astray. God does not need to provide conditions and tests—we excel at this all on our own. When we pray, "Lead us not into temptation," Luther says we are praying for God's protection. This is never conditional. We pray for God's protection so we might learn to see it in the world and in ourselves.

When you pray the Lord's Prayer today, regardless of the temptations you face, know that you are a beloved child of God, fearfully and wonderfully made to be an instrument of God's unconditional grace in and for the world. ~

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## Upcoming Commemorations

### **George Herbert, hymnwriter, died 1633 Wednesday, March 1, 2023**

An excellent scholar, Herbert served briefly in the English parliament, then became a parish priest. He was known for devoted care of his parishioners, as well as for writing poetry and hymns, including "Come, my way, my truth, my life." He died at age 40.

### **John Wesley, died 1791; Charles Wesley, died 1788; renewers of the church - Thursday, March 2, 2023**

These brothers led a revival originally intended to remain within the Church of England, one that involved frequent communion and advocacy for the poor. Except for a brief time in America, they worked in England. Charles was also a prolific hymn writer. After their deaths, their work led to the formation of the Methodist Church.



John Wesley

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Thank You Hearts:

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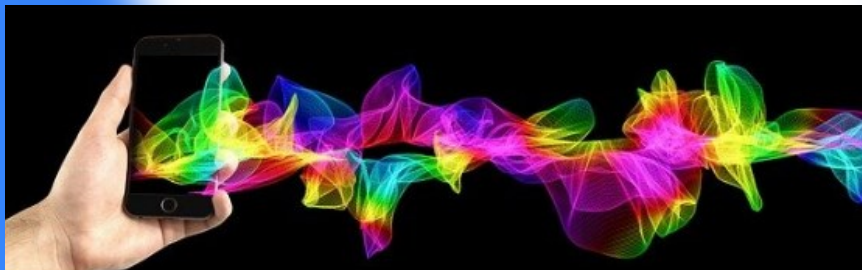
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