

GraceNOTES

The official newsletter of Grace United Methodist Church in Arlington, Texas

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www.Graceumcarlington.org

WHY DO WE CELEBRATE LENT?

Destiny Lewis, Youth Journalist

"All are from the dust, and to dust all return"
- Ecclesiastes 3:20.

Lent is a 40-day preparation period before Easter starts. Ash Wednesday is the first day of lent which Christians use as day of praying, fasting, and repentance. "Let today be the day you give up who you've been for who you can become." Lent is the imitation of Jesus Christ's fasting in the wilderness before he began his public ministry. The practice in Rome for repentant to begin their period of public admittance of wrongdoing on the first day of Lent. While Easter is celebrated as Jesus resurrection day, Lent is the 40 days leading up the crucifixion in Rome.

They were sprinkled with ashes, dressed in sackcloth, and obliged to remain apart until they were reconciled with the Christian community on Maundy Thursday, the Thursday before Easter. When the people stopped doing these types of practices, the beginning of the penitential season of Lent was symbolized by placing ashes on the heads of the entire congregation.

The next symbolization for the day of lent was using the of ashes obtained by the burning palms on the previous Palm Sunday which are then applied to the person's forehead in a shape of a cross. Nowadays we celebrate Lent by praying, seeking forgiveness, and fasting and/or giving up something we like for the 40 days until Easter.

It's not about giving up things so simple such as, drinking juice or anything like that. It's about giving up something that you use a lot or something you do a lot so that you can show that you are ready for what the Lord has in store for you. Take the time this Lent to pray for strength and forgiveness let the Lord know that you are grateful of him allowing you to be able to sacrifice something you cherish so dearly that you would give it for 40 days. Lent is here to teach us about letting go and it teaches us self-discipline like being able to give up something for 40 days. Lent is here to build you up not destroy you. "You cannot let the pain of the past destroy the happiness of the future."- Tracie Peterson.

Reminder

Easter Sunday service begins at 8:30 am
April 21! Save the time and date!

Grace UMC Arlington seeks to bring people into a life changing relationship with Jesus

Christ by making disciples through our words and actions in cooperation with God's Grace.

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Resurrection Power! Easter, although not originally a Christian celebration, has become known now as the anniversary celebration of the resurrection of Jesus Christ all over the world. The passage from Acts 10:34-43 is an irregular encounter. During this time, the church was wrestling with issues of exclusion and inclusion. Isn't this a familiar issue in our churches today? Peter is a Jew. Jews held a strong belief that in order to become a Christian, a person had to first become a Jew.

They also considered the Gentiles, and even the food they ate, as unclean. Cornelius was a Gentile, a Roman centurion, who prayed to God...big G. Now, he knew that he would probably never be accepted into the Jewish community as a Christian because he was a Gentile, yet he worshipped God still. He invited Peter to his home as a result of a visit from an angel that instructed him to do so. Surprisingly, Peter accepted this invitation because he too, had a vision.

Peter gives a summary of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus, proclaims the power of the Holy Spirit and explains why Jesus is important. But the first thing Peter says probably threw everyone off, and that is that "God shows no partiality." Earlier in Chapter 10, The Message Bible is interesting to account: Peter says "Jews just don't do this- sit around and relax with those of another race," (Now, can you imagine someone saying that in your house)? But he goes on to say "But God has just shown me that no race is better than any other." Peter is saying that God's gift and call in Jesus is open to everyone, everywhere.

A lot of people grow up in church and know the story of Jesus' life, burial and the power of his resurrection. It's one thing to know the story. It's another thing to experience the resurrection power of Jesus in our very own lives, and to see it and witness it in those around us. Resurrec-

a Word from our Pastor



tion power has the power over death and sin and any dead thing in your life! That's the hope for the life that we have in Jesus.

We've seen the resurrection power of joy for someone who has been depressed, the resurrection power of sobriety for someone who has been struggling with alcoholism, the resurrection power of reconciliation for those that have been sworn enemies for a long, long, time, and we've seen the resurrection power of peace for those whose lives have been in chaos and shambles and always experiencing one thing after another. The story is one thing, but when your back is against the wall, and you have been battered and bruised by the issues of life, the resurrection power of Jesus steps in and encourages you to hold on just a little while longer.

The power of Resurrection Sunday is the power of God's grace. It is grace that unites us. It is grace that releases God's power and love. Grace...abundant! This is a story of divine excess of God's power and reach exceeding expectation. Grace beyond anyone's understanding. He died for everyone and through Jesus, God is calling everyone to God's self. No one and nothing can separate us from that love that God is calling us to. God did this for everyone. Old things are gone and new life is present. We have power, and unity because

of new life through Jesus Christ. He is the Lord of all, and he is risen!

You Only Live Once (YOLO), Laughing Out Loud (LOL), Just Kidding (JK), Be Right Back (BRB) ~ Love, Jesus.

Pastor Rezolia Johnson

April

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
	1	2	3	4	5	6
		Choir 7pm Financial Peace Univ - St. Andrews	Prayer in sanctuary 6:30pm Worship Mtg 6:15 pm Bible Class 7 pm			Overture to Music 10:30 am
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
	Finance Mtg 6:15 pm Ad Council 7 pm	Choir 7pm Financial Peace Univ - St. Andrews UMW - UTA Dinner Wesley Equal Pay Day	Worship Meeting 6:15 pm Bible Class 7 pm			College Prep. 8-10 am
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Communion Stewards Meeting 11:30 am		Choir Rehearsal 7 pm Tax Day (Taxes are due)	Prayer in sanctuary 6:30 pm Worship Mtg 6:15 pm Outreach 6:15 Bible Class 7 pm		Good Friday Easter Production 7 pm	Prayer 9 am Overture to Music 10:30 am Easter Egg Hunt - St Andrews
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
Easter Worship Service time 8:30 am	Earth Day	Choir Rehearsal 7 pm	Worship Meeting 6 pm Bible Class 7 pm Administrative Professionals		Arbor Day	Prayer 9 am UMW/UMM 10am SPPRC 11am
28	29	30				
	Choir Rehearsal 7 pm					

