

Welcome to March!

March always felt like a really weird month when I was a kid. It seemed almost like an afterthought. Where I grew up, it wasn't really winter, but it wasn't really spring either. It was just this gray, damp time of the year when my soul felt almost like the weather.

Much the same as my childhood, March seems like a really weird month. It's not really the beginning of spring, although you might have thought that on Monday of this week when the temperature hit 40 degrees. However, the next day we are reminded by the snow/rain mix that spring has not yet arrived. March also begins our Lenten journey, and I suggest, especially after the last two years we've had, that we lean into this Lenten season. "Oh Pastor, we've done enough of that sitting with our 'stuff' let's just get to Easter." I get that, the last thing we want to do is be reminded that we are dust, that we are sinful, that we have to go through some hard places before we get to the goodness and celebration of Easter. The pandemic sucks, and the last two years have felt like our very own extended Lenten journey. So, Ash Wednesday (March 2) will kick off our forty days of Lent and with it a new opportunity to embody this discipline of self-examination and acts of love.

Have you, in past years, given something up for Lent? Taken something on? How does this year feel? Maybe you know how you want your Lenten journey to go, and if so, I tip my hat to you. Maybe you are just tired, worn out from all the "giving stuff up" you have had to do to keep yourself/family/friends safe, and adding a Lenten practice doesn't land high on the list. I understand that.

Wherever you find yourself this March, in whatever kind of condition you are in, God will meet you there. THAT is what we lean into this Lenten season. Our sure foundation isn't whether or not we refrain from chocolate for forty days... it's finding solace in the unshakable arms of God.

During my readings the last few months, I ran across some writings from a Lutheran pastor in Illinois which I just fell in love with, so in case you are feeling the weight of everything going on in life, and this March and Lent feels like just one more thing to add to a growing list, I wanted to share it with you. And then let me say it's ok to go through the motions.

A blessing for going through the motions

God, I don't feel like showing up in any real way today. My spirit is weak, I'm kind of worn out with all the churchy/adulthood/kiddo and teen stuff, and I'd love it if you could just take over for a bit. So, here's the deal. I'm going to fake it till I make it. I am going to show up, with all the stuff I have inside me... all the stuff you already know. I will go through the motions because that's what I can do right now. Thanks for recognizing that even when I am weak, you are still God, and we are still good. AMEN

God's peace, love, and warmth be with you as we enter into this new month.

Love in Christ,

Pastor Leslie

The Compass



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Ash Wednesday Services

It's hard to believe, but Lent is about to begin again. Therefore, Cross Roads will be holding its **Ash Wednesday Services on March 2. Two time options will be available: 10:30 am** (following our Coffee Corner) **and 6:30 pm** (online option available for evening service). Please mark your calendars and plan to attend one of these services as we begin our Lenten season in preparation for Easter.

Fall Boutique Coming Soon

Interest in resurrecting the fall boutique has been expressed and Jenny Daby has agreed to take the lead in coordinating this effort. If you have interest in crafting, assisting with planning, or working the boutique, please mark your calendar and attend the **PLANNING SESSION on Sunday, March 13th after service.** We will have coffee in the Library and the meeting is planned for one hour. If you want to be part of this event, but cannot attend, please contact Jenny Daby at jennydaby5@gmail.com or 320-470-0518.



March Celebration Bash

Our next Celebration Bash will be held on **Sunday, March 6,** following worship service, with cake and coffee. Please mark your calendars and plan to attend in person (if possible) to celebrate our congregation's March birthdays and anniversaries.



MN Food Share Month

Jesus commands us to "feed the hungry" and "help the poor". The month of March is MN Food Share month.

The Link has a grant through this program and ALL non-perishable food items and cash collected for this month will be matched by the grant! This means, your donations provide **DOUBLE** for the month of March.



The Mission & Outreach Team asks that you please place your items in the designated area near the kitchen, provide your cash in the white bucket, or drop checks in the offering plate/mail to church with a note that it is designated for "MN FOOD SHARE".

"Whatever you did for the least of these, you did for me."
~Jesus

March Birthdays

- Terry Albers 8th
- Diane Duke 13th
- Don Zeek 17th
- Jim Solheid 19th
- Donna Gertgen 21st
- Alan Zaske 22nd
- Donna Smith 24th
- Natalie Denz 26th

March Anniversaries

- Vern & Karen Dean 1st
- Warren & Barb Gerdes 20th



If we have missed your special day, please let the office know.

Messages From God

Recently Jim and I had the pleasure of going on a two week vacation. We missed worship on three Sundays because of our trip. It was a great time except that while we were gone, our daughters and son-in-law (Lacey, Rachel and Kevin) had to take our faithful companion, Buddy, to be put down as his health took a drastic turn for the worse while we were gone. Needless to say this was devastating for our family.

After we got back, it took a few days to get back to "normal" because of jetlag and sadness over our loss. Usually when we're gone, I try to stay abreast of the on-line sermons and watch them on line, or listen to them at the very least. If I don't catch them on the Sunday they happen, then I at least try to do it within a few days. This vacation wasn't conducive to that with the four-hour time change and activity level. A few days after we got home, I decided to catch up and listen to them as I did some chores, even though I was a few weeks behind by this time. I started with the most recent one we missed (February 13) then moved on to February 6 and finally to January 30.

The January 30 sermon was the one where Leslie talked about how the word "dog" is spelled backwards from "God" and what we can learn about God from our dogs. The sermon touched my heart and I cried for my loss (because we really CAN learn about God from our dogs) and I was grateful to God for speaking to me through Pastor Leslie. Had I followed my normal routine and listened to the January 30 sermon that January 30th day or even with a few days, it would not have meant nearly as much to me as it did after the loss of the Budster. I'm pretty sure God knew when I'd need to hear this sermon and "enabled" my procrastination so I heard the message when I needed it the most.

Keep your ears open and take all the opportunities you can to hear God's word. Some messages are more subtle and less obvious as to how they apply to us and our lives. Some messages are LOUD and SPEAK TO US directly. The point is that God knows what we need and provides it to us when we need it. Maybe not always when we think we need it, but let's trust that God knows exactly what we need and when we need it! Praise be to God!

I'd also like to highlight how great it's been to see Cross Roads out in the community with the Ice Fishing Tournament in February and with the upcoming Blood Drive in March. As our Methodist founder John Wesley proclaimed:

*Do all the good you can,
By all the means you can,
In all the ways you can,
In all the places you can,
At all the times you can,
To all the people you can,
As long as ever you can.*

Keep it up, Cross Roads! John Wesley would be proud.

Pat Solheid
Chair, Administrative Team

NOTICE: The Administrative Team will meet on Tuesday, March 22 at 6:30.



February 2022 Updates

January was a quieter month for The Link, which has been nice to settle and get into a routine. We are now planning for MN FoodShare month, which starts February 28 and runs through April 10th. The [Minnesota FoodShare March Campaign](#) brings together organizations, businesses, faith communities, and individuals to help keep 300 food shelves statewide stocked throughout the year. Minnesota FoodShare has distributed over 18 million dollars to March Campaign participating food shelves throughout the state via the Minnesota FoodShare FoodFund. This fund includes donations secured year-round from corporations, individuals, foundations, and businesses. 100% of donations received by Minnesota FoodShare during the March Campaign go into the FoodFund and are distributed to March Campaign participating food shelves. For more information on the Minnesota FoodShare, visit www.mnfoodshare.org.

The Community Revival Boutique and Thrift Store Volunteers Needed!!! We are in need of more volunteers!!! The Store hours are Wednesday-Friday 10am-3pm and Saturdays 10am-2pm. If you or anyone you know would like to volunteer on a regular basis in a fun, fast paced environment, please contact Shawna at 320-347-1047 or stop in during store hours. We have a lot of different jobs available from sorting and pricing donations to opening the store and running the till.

Donations of clothing and most household items are being taken Wednesdays-Fridays 10-3 and Saturdays from 10-2 (or by appointment). Please call if you have any questions about when/where to drop off items and if there is a need for any of your bigger household items.

In January, **The Food Pantry** welcomed 9 new families, served 31 children, 75 adults and 20 seniors. 2814 pounds of food was distributed and 341 pounds of food was donated from community members and churches. Food Rescue also brought in 2561 pounds of food from Cashwise and ALDI. We are currently also in need of more Food Pantry volunteers for Thursday afternoons. If you, or anyone you know, would be interested in volunteering 12-2:30 any Thursdays available, please contact Ashley at 320-354-5555.

The Wildcat Backpack Program- Each week, 2 kids from the High School come pack backpacks and deliver them to each school. So far, there are approximately 50 kids that are utilizing this program weekly. If you would like to donate any food for this program or if you know someone that would benefit from utilizing the program, please contact Ashley at 320-354-5555 for more information.

Senior Food Delivery- The Senior Food Delivery program is designed to deliver food to anyone that is homebound. If you, or someone you know, is interested in learning more about this program please have them call Ashley at 320-354-5555.

The Link's **Client Outreach and Household Exchange** programs served 8 families in the month of January. Throughout the month, The Link was able to help with utility bills, gas for medical appointments and furniture items such as beds, living room furniture, kitchen appliances, dishes and dining room furniture for families just getting back on their feet.

Tuesday's Table:

Tuesday's Table continues to be cancelled until further notice.

Monthly Giving Opportunities:

The Link makes monthly giving a convenient option for our donors. You can set up online giving through The Link's website at www.youarethelink.org or directly through your bank. If you would like to make a one-time donation, you can send a check to P.O. Box 823, New London, MN 56273 or via Venmo @The-Link-1. Please contact Ashley at 320-354-5555 or email her at ashley@youarethelink.org for more information.



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March 2022

Christian radio stations in the area:

K-Love 90.9

KTIS 92.7 & 98.5

Spirit 92.9

The Cross Roads Mission

To help everyone find joy in their journey by:

Inviting everyone to walk with Jesus,

Growing together as His disciples,

Serving others we meet along the way

And Joyfully Celebrating the Journey