

HOPEWELL

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

'A Place to Find Hope and Be Well'

*20220 Hopewell Road
Mount Vernon, OH 43050*

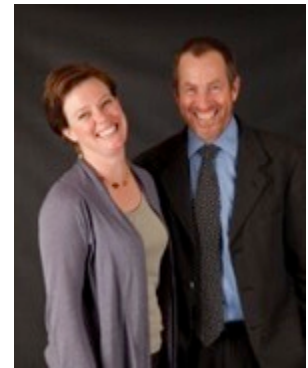
*Our mission is to make and mature disciples of Jesus Christ
and minister to the needs of others in His name.*

February – March, 2016

Pastor's Ponderings – *Pastor Lee Cubie*

Lent

We are entering into the season of Lent. The United Methodist Book of Worship describes Lent as “a season of forty days, not counting Sundays, which begins on Ash Wednesday and ends on Holy Saturday. *Lent* comes from the Anglo-Saxon word *lencten*, which means “spring.” The season is a celebration for celebrating Easter. Historically, Lent began as a period of fasting and preparation for baptism by converts and then became a time for penance by all Christians. The First Sunday describes Jesus’ temptation by Satan; and the Sixth Sunday (Passion/Palm Sunday), Christ’s triumphal entry into Jerusalem and his subsequent passion and death. Because Sundays are always little Easters, the penitential spirit of Lent should be tempered with joyful expectation of the Resurrection.”



Penitence is the primary emotional and intellectual response to Lent. Penitence, which is the “action or showing sorrow and regret for having done wrong,” is usually expressed during the Lenten Season by the giving up of some food or action that one enjoys. Penitence and fasting expressed in this fashion do not lead to any change of life or improve one’s relationship with creation, man, or God. This kind of penitence is shallow and is not ascribed to in the scriptures. Showing remorse or sorrow for one’s actions is also, by itself, not what God is seeking from us. Paul writes of two types of grief or sorrow for one’s action in *2Corinthians 7:9-13a*. In 7:10 he instructs the Corinthians of this difference, writing, “For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation and brings no regret, but worldly grief produces death.” In other words, what God is looking for is not just feeling sorrowful for what we have done but a change of heart and actions. This is called an ethical response for the good rather than the evil, or doing what we know to be good and stopping what we know is bad. Or as James, the brother of Jesus, pens, “But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.” (*James 1:22*) Or put in a different way, “But some will say, “You have faith and I have works.” Show me your faith apart from your works, and I by my works will show you my faith. You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe and shudder. Do you want to be shown, you shallow man, that faith apart from works is barren?” (*James 2:18-20*)

We live in a time where a faithful person of God keeps a private morality. This morality basically revolves around family values, sexuality, substance abuse, and our use of language. This is all good, but scriptures call for a more diligent moral response to God. What is it that God requires of us? God speaking through the prophet Micah tells us, “He has showed you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?” (*Micah 6:8*) Justice is public

righteousness expressed by the will of a society through its laws and legislations. Humbleness is to be teachable by God. Righteousness is morality and justice expressed on a private level.

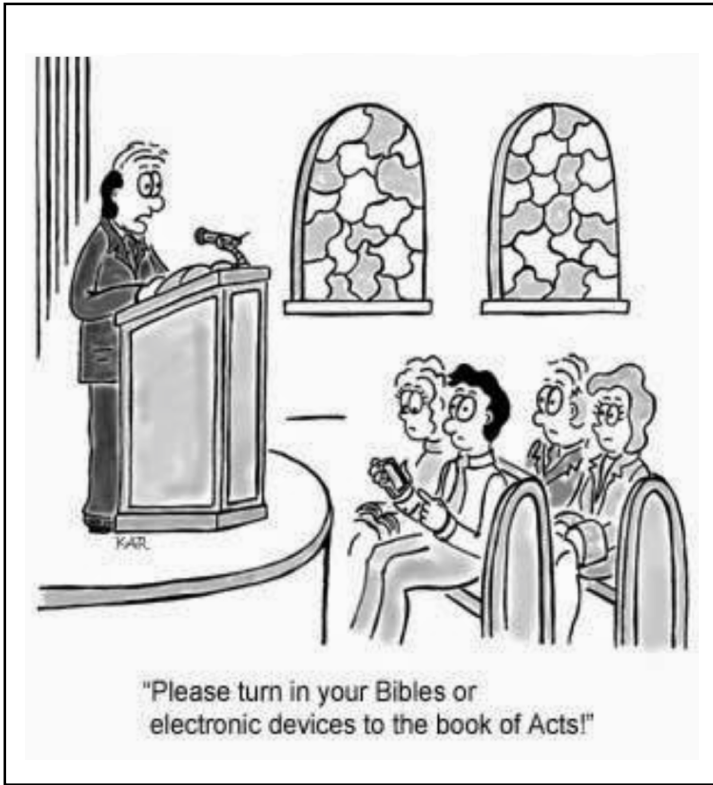
Lent, which revolves around penitence, is focused then on forgiveness which is seen in the scriptures as more than an intellectual or spiritual response to God's grace. The scriptures, which ultimately do not divide a person's mind and spirit from the body, but always seeks to unify them, understands forgiveness as also including physical actions. Paul, in rebuking those who do not believe in the bodily resurrection reasons, "For if the dead are not raised, then Christ has not been raised. If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. Then those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If for this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all men most to be pitied." (*1 Corinthians 15:16-19*) What Paul is saying here is our forgiveness is expressed by God not in some spiritual sense but in a concrete physical way, by our resurrection with Christ. God prepares his people for this understanding in the Jubilee found in Leviticus. Jubilee was to take place after the seventh seven year Sabbath celebration, or every fifty years. It was to be announced on the tenth day of the seventh month (Sept. 10), a time of harvest, and the day of Atonement when God would harvest his faithful into his kingdom through his provision of forgiveness for his people. This forgiveness was expressed by the uniting of families and by restoration of land that was seen as the inheritance of God for his people. It was a time of forgiveness of debts, release from prisons and bondage. The keeping of the Jubilee year was a year of resurrection for the land, for those who had fallen on hard times, and just as importantly raised up the low places and lowered the high places as in Isaiah 40, "A voice cries: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD, Make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken."" (*Isaiah 40:3-5*) In other words, the wealthy and proud will learn humility, and those who feel despised and abandoned will learn that they are of great value to God.

This Lent what will you give up? Will you give up feeling better than those around you? Will you give up feeling morally superior to those who do not know the forgiveness of God? If you feel like you are worthless, of little use or ability, will you allow God to raise you up and begin to show you the resurrection? And will you fast the fast God calls for:

"Is not the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds wickedness, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and 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 him, and not to hide yourself from your own flesh? Then shall your light break forth like the dawn, and your healing shall spring up speedily; your righteousness shall go before you, the glory of your LORD shall be your rear guard. Then you shall call, and the LORD will answer; you shall cry, and he will say, Here I am.

"If you take away from the midst of you the yoke, the pointing of the finger, and speaking wickedness, if you pour yourself out for the hungry and satisfy the desire of the afflicted, then shall your light rise in the darkness and your gloom be as the noonday. And the LORD will guide you continually, and satisfy your desire with good things, and make your bones strong; and you shall be like a watered garden, like a spring of water, whose water fail not. And 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 dwell in.

"If you turn back your foot from the Sabbath, from doing your pleasure on my holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight and the holy day of the LORD honorable; if you honor it not going your own ways, or seeking your own pleasure, or talking idly; then you shall delight in the LORD, and I will make you ride upon the heights of the earth; I will feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken." (*Isaiah 58:6-14*)



Birthdays

February

- 1 Don Newland
- 1 Julie Zimmerman
- 4 Anne Russell
- 9 Shad Bevington
- 11 Brad Coon
- 11 Amy Yashnyk
- 13 Howard Workman
- 18 Leah Gourley
- 20 Donna Lybarger
- 23 Alivia Zimmerman
- 28 Michael Padula

March

- 13 Karolyn Smith
- 14 Joanne Purcell
- 14 Mike Cedoz
- 21 Audra Cubie

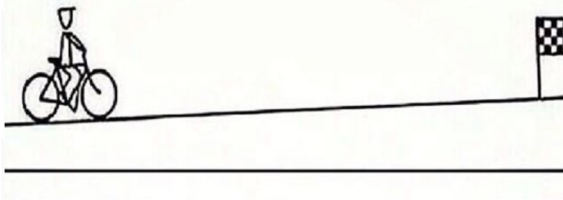
Next Vision Team meeting:

Wednesday, **February 3**, 7-8:30 PM.
 We will meet for dessert and discussion at Don & Irma Newland's home, 11 Plaza Drive. All members and friends of HUMC are invited.

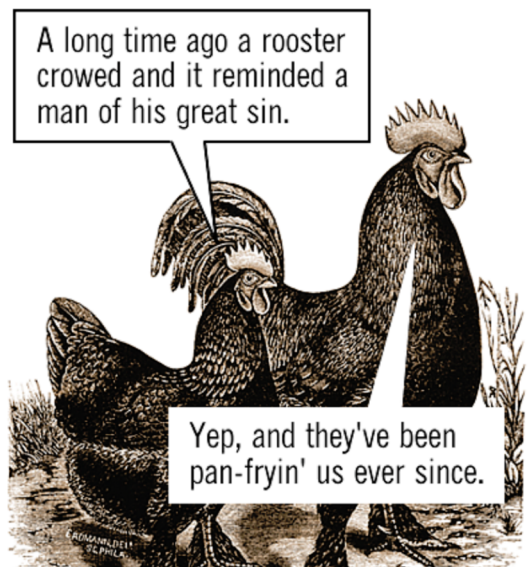
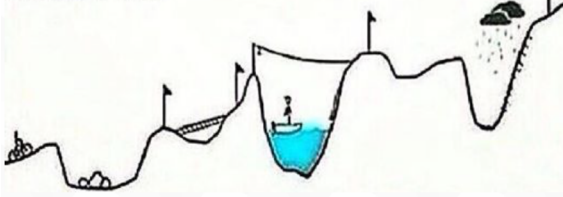
Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper:

Just before the beginning of Lent, let's gather at Bob Evans' Restaurant on Tuesday, **February 9** at 6 PM for a traditional meal of pancakes (or any other menu selection) and good conversation. The invitation has been extended to South Vernon UMC members, too.

Your plan



Gods Plan



Hopewell United Methodist Church
Financial Statement December 31, 2015

GENERAL FUND	YTD	YTD
Beginning Balance January 01, 2015		\$27,231.45
Income		
Envelopes		\$ 36,321.00
Plate		\$ 3,132.00
Coin		\$ 341.65
Fund Raiser		\$ 2,372.89
Special Donation		\$ 290.00
		\$ 42,457.54
Total Receipts		
Expenses		
Operating Expense	\$ 29,639.69	
Transfers Saving/CD	\$ 35,000.00	
	\$ 64,639.69	
	Checking Balance	\$5,049.30
	General Fund Saving	\$10,000.00
	Certificate of Deposit	\$25,094.09
	General Fund Balance	\$40,143.39
BUILDING MAINTENANCE FUND/saving		\$ 6,008.33
Certificate 9147		\$ 5,701.24
Certificate 8619		\$ 5,375.51
	Bldg. Maintenance Fund Balance	\$ 17,085.08
CENTENNIAL CAPITAL CAMPAIGN SAVINGS		\$21,175.52
16 Pledges \$34,540.00		

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...on the Web:

www.mvhopewellumc.org

...on Facebook:

www.facebook.com/HopewellUMCMtVernon

Follow Three Rivers District...

<http://3riversumc.org>

“Hopewell’s Got Talent”, which was prolifically displayed on Sunday, January 24.



(from left) **Elaine Farie**, representing the Nursing ministry, provided health advice. **Don Newland, Annika Kanuckel-Wolfe**, and **John Wolfe** performed “Home on the Range.” **Jean Riley** and **Ellen Kaiser** shared some memories of ‘the way we were’ at Hopewell UMC.



(Clockwise from top left) **Annika and Rylanne Kanuckel-Wolfe** performed “My Favorite Things.” **Ellie, Aubrie, and Joanne Purcell** shared samples of their needle arts. **Pete Lawhon** performed a piano solo. **Marsha Clayborne** recited her original poem about Hopewell church and congregation. *Not shown:* **Gina Lawhon** performed a piano solo; **Irma Newland** played a patriotic medley on the organ; **Linda Joseph** presented a selection of her needle crafts; **Joanne Purcell** and **Bob Joseph** performed a piano/voice duet “Swing Low, Sweet Chariot.” And many displayed their culinary talents at the potluck lunch, which included **Bev Lahmon’s** delicious yeast rolls.