

Ebensburg Presbyterian
Church
200 North Center Street
P. O. Box 327
Ebensburg, PA 15931
Phone: 814 472-6920
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www.ebgpresby.weebly.com

Join Us Each Week!

Worship @ 11:00 AM

Bible Study Sundays at 6pm

“From Jesus’ youth, indeed even from his birth, the cross cast its shadow ahead of him. His death was central to his mission.” says John W. Stott. This truth echoes a sermon theme I preached earlier this year alluding to how God prefers “Divine Purposes” through chaos—from the time of Jesus’ birth until his resurrection, things where rough the shadow of cross was becoming obvious.

In the next six weeks, the church worldwide will be observing Lent season. The church encourages Christians to participate in the journey with Jesus to the cross. We are urged to observe the season with fasting and self-emptying spiritual practices. Fasting is one of the spiritual disciplines practiced throughout the church history. Other major world religions practice fasting as their faith require. Muslims fast during the month of “Ramadhan,” and go on haji—a lifetime pilgrimage to Mecca in Arabia. Jews fast regularly but highly observed “Yom Kippur”—the day of atonement. Buddhists, Hindus and even Mormons take fasting as their spiritual practices. Besides Lent season, Wednesday and Friday were fasting days for Christians, but this practice and fasting in general, seem to have been forgotten or ignored in our contemporary Christianity.

Primarily, fasting is not about giving up something for Lent. Lent is sacrifice and it’s supposed to be a struggle and difficult. Lent is a time when we decide to give up oneself to God. It’s time where we cultivate spiritual setting for the Lord to indwell, nurture, and renew our spiritual lives.

Lent includes fasting, prayer, making time for devotion through Bible study, worship and doing good works to others and nature around us.

This period last longer in the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, where Lent starts on February 24 until Easter morning — Fascia (ፋሲካ) on April 19, 2020. During this season members of Ethiopian Orthodox Church, give up eating meat, fish, and dairy. Fifteen-twenty years ago, the whole country would go under a vegetarian and lactovegetarian hibernation— (only veggies). This is because most businesses were owned by the members of the Orthodox church in the country. If you’re a meat lover, you’d be advised not to travel to Ethiopia during Lent season.

There are two implications to this season: First, when we observe Lent, we are imitating Jesus’s 40days/40nights of perplexing situation in the wilderness. Jesus’ temptation mirrors our path today as we take and carry our own cross (Mark 8:34). When we carry our own crosses, we are faced with our personal life challenging burdens.

Second, Lent is away we encounter God through prayer. We empty ourselves, sacrifice our needs, and pursue God’s presence. Yet we are encouraged to make this encounter personal and secret. Jesus said, “whenever you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces so as to show others that they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that your fasting may be seen not by others but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.” Matthew 6:16-18

Therefore, the purpose of fasting is to practice the discipline of self-denial and focus on our attention primarily to God and to others. Our self-giving practice is also a way of honoring God and the sacrificial act Jesus made for us. Fasting, aids our attention in focusing our minds, hearts and whole selves to the agony of the Holy Week and Good Friday in particular. It’s meant to be a struggle not simply giving up coffee, ice-cream, chocolate for Lent. We are modeling Jesus’ suffering, self-denial and love for others.

Jesus advise us to keep our fasting personal and keep between you and God alone. Because it’s not about mastering spiritual strength against others. Often, we hear people sharing with others what they are giving up for lent. Make it secret! Fasting into a drama “so that your fasting may be seen not by others but by your Father who is in secret” Matthew 6:16-18. When you’re asked, remind people that your fasting is left between you and God. Because as soon as you tell others of your fasting, you’ve dismissed the true benefit of the sacrifice of your fast.

I pray that the Lord grant you both spiritual and physical the strength to focus on God and others as you observe the season. Take time with God, set aside a time every day to read, study your Bible and pray. Maybe deny yourself of a breakfast, lunch or dinner, or fast whole day if you are able and focus on you and god while praying for others. It is through these self-emptying, self-denial and emotional discipline that brings Easter to life and celebrate victory over circumstances—Deuteronomy 8:2-3.

May the God of hopes, who sees in secret bless you richly through the presence of the Holy Spirit in this season and beyond!

Rev. Owar O. Ojha



What's Happening . . .

The February 12 meeting of the Ebensburg Presbyterian Session opened with prayer, study on Ephesians 4: 1-16 and questions from the Handbook for Ruling Elders and Deacons in the Presbyterian Church USA.

Minutes from the January Session and Congregation Meetings were approved with corrections.

The Treasurer's report was accepted. Committee reports followed. Budget, Finance, Stewardship reported that old records are being cleared out and burned. The treasurer is working with the Board of Pensions to make sure that we are being billed properly.

Mission Committee met to plan activities for the year.

Pastor/Parish Relations Met and planned joint services (Colver and Ebensburg) for Maundy Thursday at 7 pm in Ebensburg and Good Friday at 7pm in Colver. They are also planning other joint services for later in the year.

Property Management is meeting with a company about the PA system. They plan to get a computer to use for audio/visual and stands will be made for the TV 's.

In Old Business, a final bill from Verizon included a termination fee.

Under New Business, a discussion was held about a possible speaker. The discussion will be continued next month.

A brief report about the recent Presbytery meeting was given.

Reverend Ojulu told us that the bulletin will be sent to shut ins. He attended the District IV Pastors meeting and Presbytery. He is also visiting members of the congregation.

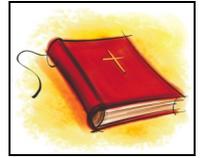
Jim Stratton presented the Clerk's Report and it was approved to send it to General Session. The Red Kettle Campaign of the Salvation Army brought in more than \$ 12,000. Several of our members helped by ringing the bell in December. Most of these funds help people in the local communities.

The Deacons prepared Valentine's Day gifts and visited with our shut ins.

The next meeting will be Wednesday March 11, 2020.

The Season of
Lent

Sunday Scripture Readings



March 1, 2020 - 1st Sunday in Lent

Genesis 2:15–17; 3:1–7 The man and woman disobey God, eating forbidden fruit.
 Psalm 32 My sin tormented me; but when I confessed, God forgave me.
 Romans 5:12–19 Sin and death came from Adam; grace and life come from Christ.
 Matthew 4:1–11 Jesus spends forty days in the wilderness and is tested by the devil.

March 8, 2020 - 2nd Sunday in Lent

Genesis 12:1–4a The Lord says to Abram: I will make you a blessing to the nations.
 Psalm 121 My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth.
 Romans 4:1–5, 13–17 Consider Abraham; the promise of God depends on faith.
 John 3:1–17 Those who seek God's kingdom must be born of water and Spirit.

March 15, 2020 - 3rd Sunday in Lent

Exodus 17:1–7 The people thirst and quarrel; God gives them water from a rock.
 Psalm 95 Make a joyful noise to the Lord, the rock of our salvation.
 Romans 5:1–11 Justified by faith, we have peace with God through Jesus Christ.
 John 4:5–42 Jesus offers living water to a Samaritan woman at the well.

March 22, 2020 - 4th Sunday in Lent

1 Samuel 16:1–13 Samuel anoints David, the youngest son of Jesse, to be king.
 Psalm 23 The Lord is my shepherd; I will live in the house of God always.
 Ephesians 5:8–14 Live as children of light; awake and rise, Christ will shine on you.
 John 9:1–41 Jesus heals a man born blind; the Pharisees question him about sin.

March 29, 2020 - 5th Sunday in Lent

Ezekiel 37:1–14 In a valley of dry bones, Ezekiel has a vision of hope for Israel.
 Psalm 130 Out of the depths I cry; the Lord has power to forgive and redeem.
 Romans 8:6–11 Set your mind on the Spirit, not the flesh; God will give you life.
 John 11:1–45 Jesus, the resurrection and the life, raises Lazarus from the dead.

Stories of Redstone

Ministry Partnership Recognized

Recognizing the needs of children who were under-performing in developing reading skills, Trinity United Presbyterian Church developed a new summer reading camp in 2006. Developing this critical skill during those crucial years is imperative for future success.



Initially, they sponsored and hosted the camp at the church facility, but in 2016, the summer ministry made an important choice. Why not have the program hosted at the East End United Community Center. Many of the children who had been participating were being brought from the Center for this summer educational experience. As a result, children in two classrooms were able to experience reading in a positive, fun and safe environment.

At the 2020 East End United Community Center M.L. King Breakfast, the Church was recognized with the M.L. King Service Award for their dedication to the children and the East End Community Center. Additionally, certificates of recognition were also received from public officials. While recognition is not the goal, the effective partnership with community groups and agencies represents a critically important way we live out our calling as disciples of Jesus Christ.

Christ at work in our midst

Communicate the Word... Carry on the Work... Change the World

Presbytery of Redstone

***Communicate the Word...
Carry on the Work...
Change the World.....Together!***

January Gathering Highlights

We gathered in worship with the Rev. Liddy Barlow (Exec. Minister, Christian Associates) challenging us to “Pick up Dangerous Things.” Richard Anthony and Rev. Steve LaSor, from Maplewood led in music and presided at the Lord’s Table, respectively. Chuck West and Belinda Lambie were installed as Moderator and Vice Moderator. Elders who have joined the Church Triumphant were honored.

The Presbytery recognized Rev. William King, Rev. Clark Kerr, Rev. Marnie Silbert and Rev. Don Graff and designated each one with the status of “Honorably Retired.” Counting each one, they represented 132 years of ordained service as a Minister of Word and Sacrament in the PCUSA.

Ruling Elders who currently are Commissioned to Particular Pastoral Service within the Presbytery were re-commissioned. Each was asked to reaffirm their vows and their calling renewed.

Rev. Mary Kay Glunt (Washington Presbytery) was presented to the Presbytery for examination. She and her call to the First Presbyterian Church, Belle Vernon were approved to begin February 1.

The Presbytery voted to concur with two overtures to this General Assembly. We affirmed the West Virginia overture on appropriate use of the “laying on of hands” for installation services and other occasions. We also concurred with an overture to provide for streamlining the sale of property which has been given as a gift for mission.

Mission Network reported on upcoming mission trips and a special offering was dedicated to support relief efforts in Puerto Rico by the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance.

If you need to contact Rev. Owar Ojulu for any pastoral needs below is his contact information:

Email: ojh3o@yahoo.com

Phone: 507-304-5958 (cell phone)

Ebensburg Presbyterian Church: 814-472-6920



ADOPT A FISH BANK FOR LENT



Yes, you can provide a home for your very own FISH BANK during Lent. Fish banks will be handed out to the congregation starting on Sunday March 1. Just pick up a fish bank (some odd folding will be required) take your fish home and 'feed' him (or her) change (coins or currency of any denomination). You are allowed to keep your fish until PALM SUNDAY when you can return him to church with a full belly. We will also accept any FISH after PALM SUNDAY in case you want to keep it a little longer.

All Fish Bank donations are for the **One Great Hour of Sharing** which is one of the 4 Special Offerings of the Presbyterian Church (USA). Your donations will be distributed as follows: 36% Presbyterian Hunger Program, 32 % Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, and 32% Self-Development of People.

We appreciate your participation in this collection and for providing a temporary home to a FISH.

THANK YOU from the Missions Committee!

If you would like more information go to Presbyterianmission.org/oghs

INFORMATION UPDATE

It is time to update the church records for 2020.

Please provide the following information for all members of your family.

Return the form to the church office or email your information to the church ebgpresby@gmail.com.

NAME _____

MAILING ADDRESS

PHONE NUMBER

EMAIL ADDRESS



PRAYER



FASTING



ALMSGIVING

EBENSBURG FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Year to Date as of January, 2020:

Actual Operating Income: \$4,812.24

Actual Operating Expenses: \$6,878.88

Gain/Loss: (\$2,066.64)



2019 Per Capita

2020 Per Capita – Our Per Capita offering, which supports the work of the presbytery, synod and general assembly, has been set at **\$42.50**. We are a connectional church, and we encourage you to submit your per capita as soon as possible! Just mark your envelope or the memo line on your check. We are then responsible for sending this full amount to the Redstone Presbytery. Thank you!



Save the Date!

Saturday, April 11, 2020

Kids' Eggstravaganza

10:00 am—12 Noon

Kids from ages 1—11 Welcome

Ebensburg Presbyterian Church

March 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>1 Worship 11:00 AM 1st Sunday in Lent</p> <p>Cub Scouts 5—7 PM</p> <p>Girl Scouts 7 PM</p>	<p>2 ACRP—3—8</p>	<p>3 Point of Freedom 6 PM</p>	<p>4 ACRP—3—8</p>	<p>5 Happy Birthday, Jeff Vietmeier</p>	<p>6 World Day of Prayer</p>	<p>7</p>
<p>8 Worship 11:00 AM 2nd Sunday in Lent</p> <p>Cub Scouts 5—7 PM</p> <p>Daylight Savings Time Begins</p>	<p>9 ACRP—3—8</p>	<p>10 Point of Freedom 6 PM</p> <p>Church reserved for Music Lessons 3:30—5:30 PM</p>	<p>11 ACRP—3—8</p> <p>SESSION MEETING - 7 PM Happy Birthday, Pat Magley Albright</p>	<p>12</p>	<p>13 Happy Birthday, James Estep, Jr.</p>	<p>14 Counselor - 9:45—12 N</p>
<p>15 Worship 11:00 AM 3rd Sunday in Lent</p> <p>Communion</p> <p>Girl Scouts 7:00 PM</p> <p>Happy Birthday Leif Vietmeier</p> <p>Happy Anniversary Scott & Sandy Magley</p>	<p>16 ACRP—3—8</p>	<p>17 Church reserved for Music Lessons 3:30—5:30 PM</p> <p>Point of Freedom 6 PM</p>	<p>18 ACRP—3—8</p> <p>Happy Birthday, Jenelle Weber</p>	<p>19 First Day of Spring</p> 	<p>20 Happy Birthday, Debra Shamble</p> <p>ACRP—3—8</p>	<p>21 NA Business Mtg 9:45—4 PM</p> <p>Happy Birthday, Mara Vermillion</p>
<p>22 Worship 11:00 AM 4th Sunday in Lent</p> <p>Cub Scouts - 5—7 PM</p>	<p>23 ACRP—3—8</p>	<p>24 Point of Freedom 6:00 PM</p> <p>Church reserved for Music Lessons 3:30—5:30 PM</p>	<p>25 ACRP—3—8</p> <p>Happy Birthday, Samuel Wheeler</p>	<p>26</p>	<p>27 Happy Birthday, Gregory Stratton</p> <p>Women in The Woods Retreat-Pine Springs Camp</p>	<p>28 Women in The Woods Retreat-Pine</p>
<p>29 Worship 11:00 AM 5th Sunday in Lent</p> <p>Cub Scouts—5—7 PM</p> <p>Women in The Woods Retreat-Pine Springs Camp</p>	<p>30 ACRP—3—8</p>	<p>31 Point of Freedom 6 PM</p> <p>Church reserved for Music Lessons 3:30—5:30 PM</p>				

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