



THE TORCH

ROUND LAKE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
DEDICATED 1894
CELEBRATING OUR 119TH YEAR
FEBRUARY 2013

Pastoral Ponderings

Behold, I make all things new. Revelation 21:5

It happened early one Sunday morning. I had just heated up a breakfast pastry in our nearly 25 year old microwave. When I took the pastry out of the microwave something smelled wrong. While I was not absolutely certain it was microwave related I was pretty sure it was so I unplugged it. When Dan came downstairs and walked into the kitchen he smelled it and confirmed that it was the microwave. It was time for a new microwave.

We had a new one in time for dinner. Trouble is, I didn't really know how to use it. Over the past 25 years I had just pushed certain buttons and numbers without thinking. Now, it was all different. The familiar buttons were in new places and there were some new ones, too. The first time I heated a cup of coffee up I boiled it over when I tried setting the time for the same number of seconds as before. The same thing happened with several other foods. I began to wonder if I was ever going to learn how to successfully operate my new microwave. It took me nearly a month to really learn which buttons to push and for how long. Eventually, I was able to use the microwave without really thinking as I had with my old one.

It has been said that the only two things that are certain in life are taxes and death. To that I'd like to add a third, change. I add change to the list of things that are certain in life because there is nothing that stays the same, no matter how much we would like it to. So often we get really comfortable with how things are working in our lives, with the routines that give structure and order to our lives. We like the consistency. That is how I was with my old microwave. Like with my microwave, something happens and we are forced to think and/or act in a new way. We are forced to change something in the comfortable routine of our lives. At first we may feel rootless but gradually new roots develop around the new routines and a level of comfort returns.

Change is happening all around us. Change is happening in our individual lives and homes. Change is happening in our congregation, also. Members and friends come and go. Children grow up. Things wear out. Old activities lose their meaning. Events beyond our control (like rising energy prices, stagnant job market and wages and youth sports on Sundays to name a few) force us to consider just what we are doing and why we are doing it.

Round Lake UMC is also changing. Through the change we wonder if we will be viable in the future. Through the fall the Administrative Council led discussions on what options there might be to meet the challenges facing us as a congregation. These decisions are starting to be implemented and new ways of being the church are slowly beginning to emerge.

God is continually changing what has become routine and comfortable into something new and exciting for the present day. I am excited to be participating in God's creation of the new for Christians here in Round Lake. I pray you are equally excited as we move into the changes of God's new.

With Christ's Peace and Joy
Rev. Jane

Scriptures in Worship

We come to the end of the church season of Epiphany, when we celebrate the coming of God's light and presence into the world in the person of Jesus, the Christ. The last Sunday of Epiphany is celebrated as the Transfiguration of the Lord, when God revealed to three disciples Jesus' full identity. Following this experience, Jesus begins his final trip to Jerusalem and we begin our yearly journey to Jerusalem, the passion, cross and resurrection. Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, February 13th. In the early church this time was used to prepare people for baptism and membership. Later the emphasis turned toward penitence. More recently the church has returned to learning Jesus' ways of living as we prepare for the Easter celebration.

Sunday, February 3, 2013 *Sacrament of Holy Communion* Jeremiah 1:4-10; Psalm 71; 1 Corinthians 13:1-13; Luke 4:21-30.

Sunday, February 10, 2013

Exodus 34:29-35; Psalm 99; 2 Corinthians 3:12-4:2; Luke 9:28-36 (37-43)

Sunday, February 17, 2013

Deuteronomy 26:1-11; Psalm 91; Romans 10:8b-13; Luke 4:1-13

Sunday, February 24, 2013

Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18; Psalm 27; Philippians 3:17-4:1; Luke 13:31-35

Ash Wednesday Service

The Season of Lent will begin on Ash Wednesday, February 13th. This is the traditional start of Lent. The historic focus of this day is to remind us of the pervasiveness of human sin and of the inevitability of human death. Ashes, the traditional sign of grief and mourning, have been adopted by Christians as a sign of our own sinful mortality.

Our service on Ash Wednesday will remind us of our sinful mortality and the grace God offers in forgiveness and acceptance. In keeping with the mood of the day, the service will be quiet and reflective. The Sacrament of Holy Communion is part of the service.

Our individual meditations during the service will be based on these scriptures: Isaiah 58:1-9a, Psalm 51, and Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21. Please join us on Ash Wednesday for worship. The service will begin at 7pm.

Trustees

The Trustees would like to announce the election of John Davey, Helen DeVoe and Jean Halme at the December Charge Conference. They will serve on Trustees for a three year term beginning 1/13 through and including 12/15.

The officers for 2013 are: President – Doug Madigan, Vice President – Terry Reynolds and Secretary – Jean Halme. Also serving on this committee are Barbara Gregorek, Donna Alaskey, Tom Russell, John Davey, Dan Baker and Helen DeVoe.

Trustees, continued

On Saturday February 9th at 9am, Trustees are getting together to finish up a couple of small projects in the kitchen and Fellowship Hall. Anyone interested in joining us is welcome. Our next Trustee meeting will be on Wednesday, February 6th at 7pm. We encourage you to attend.

Prayer Ministry

This Prayer Vigil will be a little different! We will try to work with a prayer partner. We will sign up with a partner and agree on a specified time during the day of February 13th when you both can be in prayer for 30 minutes. We can spend this time together or apart, but at the same time be in prayer. As Matthew 18:20 says: *For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them."*

You can do this together at the church, in one of your homes, or separately in your own home at the same time. A phone call to your partner at the start of your prayer time will encourage each other. Say a short prayer together to get started. Then prayer time and contact at the end of the 30 minutes to share or wrap up with a short prayer together.

We will speak to God and then listen and then take an action about:

1. **SPEAK:** Give thanks to our Lord for the many blessings he has showered upon us.
LISTEN: For ways we can use these blessings.
ACT: Consider doing something "extra" during Lent as a sacrifice to say "Thank You Lord".
2. **SPEAK:** About the Round Lake UM Church, it's Leaders and Congregation, the transitions in our midst.
LISTEN: For God's ideas on how we can reach into our Community to increase interest and participation in our church.
ACT: Talk to a neighbor, friend, someone on the street, in Post Office or Grocery Store about a program our Church offers. (Example: Stone Soup, Bible Study, Prayer Vigils, Sunday Services, etc.)
3. **SPEAK:** About God moving you into a more Holy Relationship with God and recognizing God's constant presence within us.
LISTEN: To God's Guidance and prodding, His telling you what actions you could take to move into that more Holy Relationship.
ACT: Take an action or two during Lent to accomplish the above.
4. **SPEAK:** Continue to pray for those listed in the Bulletin.
LISTEN: While God opens our hearts, letting us feel the full impact of the sacrifice Jesus made for us when crucified.
ACT: Let God's love wash over you and overwhelm you.

