

Follow and Worship Jesus: Walk in his footsteps!

The Bible advocates that we should follow Jesus. Christian churches promote it. Pastor Tom preaches it. But what does it mean? It doesn't mean replicate Jesus Christ's ministry on earth. We can't! Nor does it mean act exactly as he did. We couldn't. Finally, it doesn't say the Bible can answer every question. It won't!

More questions: Shall we merge with another church or stay solo? Overhaul worship or just tinker with it? Why ask questions that give us all headaches? That's my calling. I'm called to promote discernment.

In reality, discernment is all our calling. We need to ponder, pray and meditate about where we are heading. Where is God calling us? Finally, an interim's task is to steady a church; not to grow or revitalize it! Interims stabilize a church.

The Bible tells us how to follow Jesus! It gives us clear directions in 2020's first three Sundays: Examine the themes for Jan. 5, 12 and today as roadmaps: Epiphany, witness, discipleship.

EPIPHANY: It took wise men from the East to locate the Messiah right under the noses of the Jewish folk.

It took an uneducated, rustic and itinerant preacher John the Baptist to lead folks to a public recognition of Jesus' mission. God's voice alerted others, too!

WITNESS! It took John and two disciples to show trust by literally following in Jesus' footsteps. They tailed him! What about Epiphany, witness and discipleship on the personal level?

It happened with Mary Magdalene after she found Jesus' tomb empty after his crucifixion. She didn't recognize Jesus standing nearby; she thought he was the gardener. She only recognized him when he called her by name. Her epiphany. *"She turned toward him and cried out in Aramaic, 'Rabboni!' (which means 'Teacher'). John 20:16.*

If you don't recognize who Jesus Christ is – your epiphany – how can you follow in his footsteps?

How does witness work for individuals? Have you publicly witnessed who Jesus Christ is in your life? Told others who he was?

Why is that vital? The main reason people return to a church after a first visit is that they believe we believe! If you can't witness your faith to others, why would they return? I witness, but that's not enough.

"Oh," you say. *"I am private person and that is just so awkward! Isn't just coming to church, donating money and volunteering here enough?"*

"Oh," you say. *"I am private person and that is just so awkward! Isn't just coming to church, donating money and volunteering here enough?"*

Actually, no! Witness is helpful, but we need to provide a structure, activity or function so folks follow Jesus' footsteps. That's called

discipleship. What are we doing with our faith?

DISCIPLESHIP:
How do we promote discipleship?



That is the hardest of the three core Christian functions of Epiphany, Witness & Discipleship. To what mission and ministry outside the church are we called. *"For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also."* James 10.

Without active Epiphany, witness and discipleship, no Christian church can survive long. And a pastor alone can't do that work. And I am sorry to say that a settled pastor can't do that work without your full participation. A settled pastor will not be your savior!

So let's pray that the Spirit moves us to fully embrace Epiphany, Witness and Discipleship. Recall the headline in the lead article in the January church newsletter:

"Rejoice in hope, be patient in trial and be constant in prayer!"

Hear these words of assurance from 1 Peter 2:9-10. Trust that God has equipped you with all the skills, experience and gifts to do this work. *"But you are his chosen people, the King's priests. You are a holy nation, people who belong to God. He chose you to tell about the wonderful things he has done. He brought you out of the darkness of sin into his wonderful light."*

By Pastor Tom Caruso, Interim

Leadership Team Update

by Kim Merkert, Chair



The Leadership Team met for its monthly meeting on January 9, 2020. We are very grateful for the service of the 2019 members who are leaving the Leadership Team including Bill Baker, Tom Bell, Beverly Patton, and Dave Stong. Our 2019 Leadership Team Chair, Dave Stong, led the new Leadership Team through the election of officers for 2020.

The members of the 2020 Leadership Team are as follows:

- Kim Merkert, Chair
- Lorna Davis, Vice Chair
- Jan Stong, Secretary
- Jonathan Bell, Treasurer
- Tim Conrad, Virginia Fleck, Dan Hottenstein, Members at Large
- Dave Stong, Chair Emeritus
- Pastor Tom Caruso
- Pastor Judith deChamplain

The repairs to the boiler have been completed. There was also the need to replace the hot water heater. The funding for these projects has largely been covered by Redeemer's Kindred Challenge, which has raised approximately \$12,000 to date.

The Leadership Team plans to begin looking closely at options to help bridge the gap between our Income and expenses. Some of the tasks involved in this endeavor include conducting an outside audit, researching our non-profit status, including the possible establishment of Redeemer as a 501c3 organization, and implementing a Stewardship oversight area.

In addition to the other oversight areas that currently exist on the Leadership Team (Financial, Building Maintenance & Use, Staff, Music & Worship, Technology, Community Outreach, Pastoral Care & Visitation). We will also research opportunities for us to use our building and other assets in a way that is beneficial to Redeemer going forward.

One of the outside support groups has requested the designation of a third handicap parking space in the parking lot and has offered to pay for the space to be painted if the cost is not too exorbitant. In the meantime, an orange cone has been placed to mark the space as handicapped parking.

A few projects recently completed or near completion are the establishment of guidelines for funerals in the church, a presentation by Derry Township Police on church safety, review of the building use policies and fees for outside groups who use our church building, and a draft of a membership letter to be sent out so we can get a more accurate accounting of our membership rolls.

The Leadership Team met with the Profile Committee after worship on January 19 to finish reviewing the profile. The next step will be for the Leadership Team to meet to discuss and vote on the finished profile. After that, there will be an upcoming congregational meeting where the completed profile will be presented to the congregation before it is submitted to the conference. We are appreciative of the Profile Committee's diligence and good faith as they worked on this project.

research opportunities for us to use our building and other assets in a way that is beneficial to Redeemer going forward.

The Leadership Team has received a request for use of our church building from the Life Gospel Chinese Christian Church. They have been renting space for several years, but their facility has been sold and they need to find space for their worship and prayer activities. The Leadership Team is currently researching to see if it will be possible to work out an arrangement for them to use our facility during times when it is not being used for Redeemer or Outside Support Group activities.

The next Leadership Team meeting will be held on February 13 at 7 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Kim Merkert, Chair

WANTED: Worship Helpers and Communion Preparers

As we start the new year, we are looking for volunteers to help with Sunday Worship and to assist with the preparation of the Sacrament each month. Please choose your dates on the signup sheet in the sanctuary.

Reflections from 2020 PCC Clergy Retreat by Pastor Tom

Finding and maintaining inner peace is difficult, but crucial for Christians! But it takes discipline, hard work and focus to maintain a healthy spiritual, physical and emotional balance in life, was the primary message at a three-day Penn Central Conference (PCC) retreat I attended in late January.

“Who is writing your life story?” the Rev. Margaret Wellert asked about 50 PCC pastors at the Mid-Winter Clergy Sabbath in Harrisburg. “We [Christians] do not write our life stories alone,” she said. “So, learn to be a co-author with God.”

Be open to letting God guide, empower and inspire you in all areas of your life. That means believers need to be comfortable with the uncertainty of divine mystery, we learned. Pray, meditate and make time for leisure and fun. “So be patient and learn to love the questions,” Rev. Wellert said. Within the first half hour of the convocation, I realized that this wise advice for pastors was also appropriate for lay folk, faith leaders and churches in transition.

We can become so wrapped up in tasks, duties and administrative work in our lives that we forget to focus on Jesus’ invitation to outreach ministry. Most churches are inwardly focused, so their ministry is satisfying members vs. doing outside ministry and mission work. That is certainly true at Redeemer.

“Jesus doesn’t ask us to worship him. He asks us to follow him,” Rev. Wellert and Dr. Jill Peters, another keynote speaker, agreed.



Rev. Margaret Wellert

Rev. Wellert is a retired pastor of the Moravian Church Northern Province, headquartered in Bethlehem, PA. She served congregations in Minnesota; Wisconsin; and Staten Island, NY, before retiring from parish ministry, and settling in Bethlehem.



Dr. Jill Peters

After graduating from Moravian Theological Seminary in 2007, the seminary asked Dr. Peters to gather information on what was needed in Continuing Education. Almost everyone interviewed reported the need for quality lay leadership training. After designing the program consisting of sixteen courses, Crossroads was launched in 2009 and since then over 150 people have participated in this supportive learning community.

Where is Jesus calling Redeemer as a church, I thought, and who does God want us to be? Effective discernment – sensing and identifying the will of God – means we must achieve a balance of work and recreation, or literally “re-creation.”

We learned a variety of stretching, movements and meditative practices to quiet our inner noise and hear the still, quiet voice of God and Spirit.

The Rev. Carrie Call, PhD, PCC’s transitional conference minister, said Christians are often resistant to self-care because we are too focused on completing tasks vs. letting God transform us from the inside out. We feel guilty not working. “We have to do this inner work,” she said.



Rev. Dr. Carrie Call

Profile Committee Update by Nancy Kapp

The Profile Task Force and the Leadership Team have now met for three joint sessions during which we worked together for clarification and understanding of the entire document. We made adjustments, clarified wording, and completed all points on this long, in-depth work. Now the completed profile is in the hands of the Leadership Team for final approval.

The next step after LT approves this document is to share the profile with the entire congregation, primarily through a congregational meeting. It is vital to Redeemer that all the members of our church family support our profile. Look for announcements from LT for the congregational meeting date. Prior to that meeting, copies of the profile will be available to any member who wants to read it ahead of time. After that congregational meeting, the profile will be sent to Penn Central Conference. Once officially approved in that office, the Profile Task Force's work is finished. The conference will be responsible for distributing our profile on a national basis. Responses from potential candidates will be sent to our own Search Committee, to be named and commissioned at a future date.

The members of the Profile Task Force are grateful to our Redeemer family for your patience, your input, and especially your prayers. God bless each of you.

COMING SOON! Meet your new Leadership Team!

Welcome (clockwise below) to Tim Conrad, Lorna Davis, Virginia Fleck, Dan Hottenstein and Jan strong to Redeemer's Leadership Team.

Beginning next month, we'll feature brief articles about each of our new Leadership Team members. Stay tuned! You may learn something new about each of them that you never knew! They will be installed on Feb. 9.



1st yr. 2020
Leadership
Team
Members

Soup for the Soul Sets February Meeting Dates

What could be more comforting in the cold of winter than hot soup and warm conversation with friends? Soup for the Soul will provide both in February from 6 to 8 PM on Monday 2/10 and Monday 2/24. Our discussion topics will come from The Wired Word, a curriculum that uses current news items as focal points to examine how we as Christians can live out our faith. Looking forward, since February 24 is Ash Wednesday, we are considering another weekly book study for Lent. All who participated in the Advent book study found it very interesting and uplifting. Look for upcoming announcements about book choice and meeting dates. Join us in February and bring a friend. Soup for the Soul is an open table for anyone who wishes to attend. Contact the church office @ (717) 533-7300 or info@redeemerchurchucc.org.

When Is Lent in 2020?

Here's Everything You Need to Know About this yearly Christian Observance

By Jennifer Aldrich
Country Living
Jan 15, 2020



There are quite a few important dates within the 40-day celebration leading up to Easter. Every spring, many Christians from different denominations celebrate Lent. Although you might have heard of—or even observe—the holiday, there's quite a bit to know about the Lenten season that leads up to Easter Sunday. Here's a look at the holy time that will occur from Wednesday, February 26, to Thursday, April 9, 2020.

What is Lent?

Lent is a six-week-long event marked in the Christian calendar, where the meaning is to be "encouraged to find our own method of confronting our sinfulness, remembering our mortality, and giving thanks for the gift of salvation we receive through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ," according to the United Methodist Church's website. The word "Lent" is derived from the Anglo-Saxon term "lencten" (relating to the lengthening of days), which translates to "spring." The holiday is 40 days long—not including Sundays. (So, technically, it's 46 days long.) Why is it 40 days, you might wonder? The United Methodist Church states, "It is a time of preparation and focus, reminiscent of Jesus' time in the wilderness before he started his public ministry."

When does Lent start?

This year, **Lent begins on Wednesday, February 26**. But before Lent even begins, there's Shrove Tuesday, the day before Lent, which is a time to "clean the soul," according to the *BBC*. The first day of Lent is called Ash Wednesday. On Ash Wednesday, priests gather ashes from the previous Palm Sunday (more on that later) and rub them on the congregant's foreheads. They do this while citing Genesis 3:19: "...For you are dust, and to dust you shall return." In addition to heading to church, many honor the beginning of Lent by

choosing to give up something for the 40 days Jesus spent in the wilderness, such as alcohol, sweets, or even swearing. Another option is to give themselves to a cause, which could include volunteering.

When does Lent end?

The official end of Lent is on Thursday, April 9, three days before Easter Sunday. However, there's an entire list of events leading up to the finale that's called Holy Week. Holy Week begins with Palm Sunday. This marks Jesus's arrival in Jerusalem, where he received palm branches at his feet, according to 40Acts.org. During Palm Sunday services, churchgoers are given palm crosses that are supposed to be kept until the next year.

After Palm Sunday comes Holy Wednesday, which acknowledges Judas Iscariot's plan to deceive Jesus. That's followed by Maundy Thursday and commemorates Jesus's last supper—this is the official end of Lent, but not Holy Week. Next is Good Friday, when Christians recall the crucifixion of their savior. The final day of Holy Week is Easter, when believers acknowledge that Jesus rose from his tomb.



Note: Hummelstown UCC Church members will travel to Redeemer for a joint Ash Wednesday service at 7 pm on Wednesday, Feb. 26.



February 2020

Sun.	Mon.	Tue.	Wed.	Thu.	Fri.	Sat.
						1 7:30 Sunrise AA 12 pm KISS AA
2 9:15 am worship Communion 3 pm KISS	3 12 pm Nooner 6-8 pm PCC House Meeting, Camp Hill 7:30 pm OA	4 8:15 Hershey Ministerium 9 am FARA 12 pm Nooner 7:15-9:30 VOP	5 12 pm Nooner 6:30 pm KISS AA 6:45 pm Choir Rehearsal	6 12pm Nooner 12pm Focused Prayer 6-9 Mary Kay Event w/Bev P.	7 12 pm Nooner 6:30 pm KISS AA	8 7:30 Sunrise AA 12 pm KISS AA 2 pm Funeral for Rev. N. Llewellyn
9 9:15 am worship 3 pm KISS	10 12 pm Nooner 6-8 pm Soup for the Soul 7:30 pm OA	11 9 am FARA 12 pm Nooner 7:15-9:30 VOP	12 12 pm Nooner 6:30 pm KISS AA 6:45 pm Choir Rehearsal	13 12pm Nooner 12pm Focused Prayer 7 pm LT meets	14 12 pm Nooner 6:30 pm KISS AA 	15 7:30 Sunrise AA 12 pm KISS AA
16 9:15 am worship 3 pm KISS 6:30 pm IPA	17 12 pm Nooner 7:30 pm OA	18 9 am FARA 12 pm Nooner 7:15-9:30 VOP	19 9:30 am Harrisburg Ministerium 12:30-3:30 pm Clergy Training 12 pm Nooner 6:30 pm KISS AA	20 10 am-Noon Community of Practice 12pm Nooner 12pm Focused Prayer	21 12 pm Nooner 6:30 pm KISS AA	22 7:30 Sunrise AA 12 pm KISS AA
23 9:15 am worship 3 pm KISS	24 12 pm Nooner 6-8 pm Soup for the Soul 7:30 pm OA	25 9 am FARA 12 pm Nooner 7:15-9:30 VOP	26 12 pm Nooner 6:30 pm KISS AA 7pm Joint Ash Wed. Service with HUCC at Redeemer	27 12pm Nooner 12pm Focused Prayer	28 12 pm Nooner 6:30 pm KISS AA	29 7:30 Sunrise AA 12 pm KISS AA

Let love and faithfulness never leave you;
bind them around your neck,
write them on the tablet of your heart.
Then you will win favor and a good name
in the sight of God and man.

Proverbs 3:3-4 New International Version

Happy Anniversary to Wyatt & Melissa Harris!

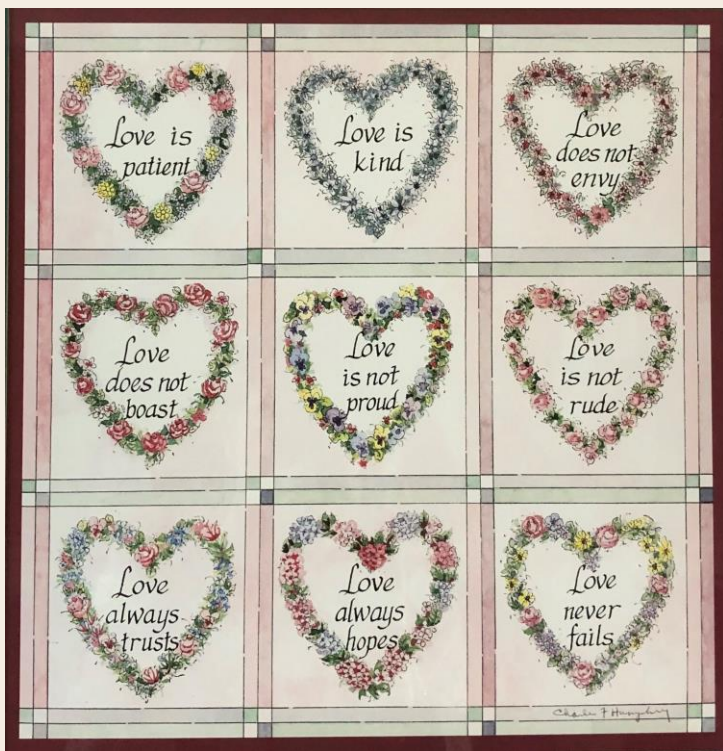
HARRISBURG ASSOCIATION MEETING

Our transitional conference minister, The Rev. Carrie Call, PhD, will lead a House Meeting for all clergy, members and friends of UCC faith communities in the Harrisburg Association on Monday, Feb. 3, from 6-8 PM. She will provide an update on plans to revitalize the conference, hire new conference staff and revisions to the conference's Strategic Plan. The meeting is at Chapel Hill UCC at 701 Poplar Church Road, Camp Hill PA 17011 A light supper will be provided.



Prayers for Comfort and Healing for:

- **Jan Herr** for improved health
- **Kay Koch**, Jan Herr's sister, who recently suffered a stroke
- **Diane**, who was diagnosed with cancer
- **Jason Gregg**, who is undergoing treatment for cancer
- **Dennis Mongold** as he undergoes cancer treatment
- **Susan**, Bev Patton's daughter-in-law, who is having knee surgery
- **Lisa**, Bev Patton's ex-daughter-in-law who was diagnosed with a brain tumor
- **Shirley Conrad** who continues to recuperate from her recent surgery
- **Kemmy Himmelberger** who is receiving therapies at home
- **Cindy Hall** who is recovering from a second knee replacement
- **Hayden and Allison Keefer** and their baby daughter who had complications following her birth
- **Edith Grove**, Kim's mom, who is undergoing treatment for cancer



This beautiful picture by Charles F. Humphrey can be found in our church. It seemed appropriate to share this month. Do you know where it is hanging? See if you can find it and delight in its beauty!

Thank You to everyone for your cards, phone calls and prayers. My recovery from my pacemaker and heart valve replacement surgery is coming along nicely.

Thanks again,
Shirley Conrad

Prayers for Peace and Comfort for:

- **The Family of Bradley Miller** who passed away on Jan. 12

KINDRED CHALLENGE CONTRIBUTIONS

as of 1/24/2020

\$12,495



FEBRUARY IS



**AMERICAN
HEART
MONTH**



Coming soon:

- *A Note from Pastor Tom*
- *Leadership Team Update*
- *March Lenten Series*
- *PA Conference Message*
- *March Calendar*
- *Meet your New Leadership Team Members*



**CHURCH OF THE
REDEEMER
HERSHEY PA**

**500 West Chocolate Avenue
Hershey, PA 17033
717-533-7300
www.redeemerchurchucc.org**



Pastor Tom Caruso, Interim
pastor@redeemerchurchucc.org
tominpenn@aol.com
717-798-0368

Heart disease is the leading cause of death for both men and women in the United States. **You** can take steps **today** to lower your risk of heart disease.

To help prevent heart disease, you can:

- Eat healthy.
- Get active.
- Stay at a healthy weight.
- Quit smoking and stay away from secondhand smoke.
- Control your cholesterol and blood pressure.
- Drink alcohol only in moderation.
- Manage stress.

Am I at risk for heart disease?

Everyone is at risk for heart disease. But you are at higher risk for heart disease if you:

- Have high cholesterol or high blood pressure
- Smoke
- Are overweight or obese
- Don't get enough physical activity
- Don't eat a healthy diet

Your age and family history also affect your risk for heart disease. Your risk is higher if:

- You are a woman over age 55
- You are a man over age 45
- Your father or brother had heart disease before age 55
- Your mother or sister had heart disease before age 65

Take care of your AMAZING heart!

