

CONTACT

A LENTEN JOURNEY ON PATHS BOTH NEW AND FAMILIAR

Scripture Meets with the ‘Wizard of Oz’ on the Yellow Brick Road

Jesus preached and taught powerfully with parables – stories of common situations or characters – to illustrate his major points. Parables use familiar, everyday conditions and people.

This Lenten season, though, we are turning to an American cultural icon as a guide for our spiritual Lenten pilgrimage: The 1939 film “The Wizard of Oz” - based on the 1900 book by L. Frank Baum. It is not a parable, of course, but a work of fiction with many human and spiritual truths in it.

While interweaving the movie’s plot and characters through our Lenten Lessons is not unique to Redeemer, our Worship and Music folk believe it will add energy, depth and a new perspective to our time together.

After all, who doesn’t know the main story and figures in the film? Who doesn’t get misty hearing the heart-rending “Somewhere Over the Rainbow” song or feel energized when the main characters sing “We’re Off to See the Wizard” on the Yellow Brick Road? (Movie buffs say the movie is this nation’s most widely viewed film.)

Wait! Are we equating the movie’s characters with Biblical ones?

(Which wicked witch is the stand-in for Satan? Surely, the Wizard himself is not a model for God or Jesus?) No, for that borders on being offensive or even sacrilegious.

Instead, Mike, Kim, Pastor Judith and I are turning to the film’s metaphoric value. With prayer, pondering and minimal research, we have identified symbolic values and characters in it. The Yellow Brick Road in the film is not the Road to Emmaus, for example, but it’s a wonderful metaphor for the Lenten Journey or other spiritual pilgrimages.

Pop Quiz: Do you recall which character on the journey to the Emerald City needed a brain, a heart, or courage? While we logically know no humans could survive without those attributes, we certainly identify with their search for wisdom, compassion and bravery in our secular and spiritual lives.

And what of Dorothy, the quintessential, wholesome teenager? Her focus was on her beloved dog Toto and returning safely home – even if it meant trading the technicolor radiance of The Land of Oz for the black-and-white drudgery of sunbaked Kansas in the Dust-Bowl era? Can she be an inspirational figure during Lent?

And what better time to try something novel than during the interim journey –

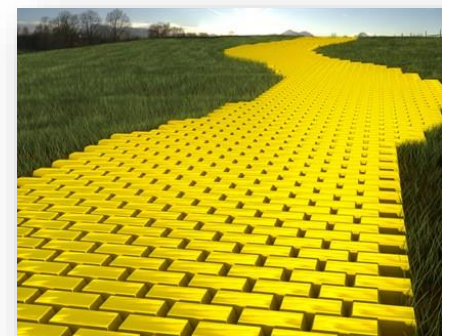


a period when churches try new things to glorify God, spread the Gospel’s message and make disciples for Christ.

Finally, think of the central theme of hope that permeates the movie. While Dorothy and her entourage faced challenges we will never see, they never lost hope for long.

While the idea of using “The Wizard of Oz” as a metaphor may strike you as brilliant, odd or just plain confusing, please pray that the Holy Spirit will open you to new learning, more trust and deeper faith during this experience. I expect to see you all on the Yellow Brick Road for the next five Sunday mornings!

Blessings, Pastor Tom



Leadership Team Update

By Kim Merkert, Chair



The Leadership Team held its monthly meeting on February 13, 2020. Following are updates of the activities we have going on.

New Leadership Team members have chosen which oversight areas they would like to serve. Previous leadership team members have offered to continue working on the oversight areas as well. We are grateful to also have support from congregation members and staff members for some of these areas. We have added a new Stewardship oversight area which will research areas that impact the financial decisions of the church. Following are the leadership team assignments:

- **Financial Oversight:** Jonathan Bell, Tim Conrad, Dave Stong
- **Building Maintenance/Use:** Tim Conrad, Lorna Davis, Dan Hottenstein, Dave Stong, Tom Bell
- **Staff:** Kim Merkert, Lorna Davis, Dave Stong
- **Worship & Music:** Judith deChamplain, Kim Merkert
- **Technology:** Jonathan Bell, Tom Bell
- **Community Outreach & Hospitality:** Jan Stong, Virginia Fleck, Beverly Patton
- **Stewardship & Fundraising:** Lorna Davis, Dan Hottenstein
- **Pastoral Care & Visitation:** Judith deChamplain

A top priority this year is getting Redeemer's financial house in order. We are thankful that our treasurer, Jonathan Bell, works very diligently to keep up with the demands of our busy church. We would like to put some safeguards in place to ensure there is more support of the treasurer position if it is ever needed and to increase our transparency to the congregation. The Leadership Team decided to update our bank accounts so that all officers have access to the accounts. We will also begin putting a monthly update in the bulletin that gives attendance and offering information this year vs. last year. There will be a quarterly update in the newsletter with a more extensive treasurer report. Leadership Team is beginning to gather information to have an outside audit done as well. The audit will begin after tax season in April, so for now we are researching and gathering documents.

The profile is complete and has been accepted by the leadership team. There will be a congregational meeting after worship on Sunday, March 15, when the

Profile will be presented to the congregation for discussion.

The Life Gospel Chinese Christian Church has signed a provisional 90-day agreement to use our church for their worship activities Friday evenings, every 3rd Saturday afternoon, and Sundays. We are happy to share our space with them and believe it will be a beneficial agreement for both congregations.

Final touches are being put on a membership letter to be sent to all current Redeemer members. This will allow us to gather information that can be used to update our membership rolls.

A staff/volunteer expense form has been created that will add structure to the process of reimbursing personal expenses accrued by staff and volunteers as they perform work-related tasks for Redeemer. Expenses must be detailed and submitted to the Leadership Chair by the 10th of the month following the month that expenses are incurred.

We continue to endorse the Redeemer Kindred Challenge to defray the maintenance expenses we have had over the past year. Over \$13,000 has been raised to date. Thank you to all who have contributed and continue to contribute!

In May, we will have a paper towel drive for the Bethesda Mission. Jan Stong will be coordinating this effort and will provide more information later.

We are currently looking at solutions to have a deep cleaning done in the downstairs bathrooms. We have had some plumbing work done as the sinks were draining slowly. Please also watch for upcoming announcements about our May 16 clean-up day. We will be asking congregation members to volunteer to help tidy the interior of the church and find better storage solutions for some of our belongings.

A group of Leadership Team members along with Pastor Tom met with the Director Love Inc. to discuss possible opportunities that Redeemer can get involved in to help with Love Inc's mission. More details will follow.

If you have any questions, comments, or ideas for the leadership team, please feel free to discuss them with any leadership team member. Our next meeting will be held on Thursday, March 12, at 7pm.

Respectfully Submitted, Kim Merkert, Chair

HERSHEY MINISTERIUM

2020 Community Lenten Midweek Service and Luncheon Schedule

<i>Date</i>	<i>Host</i>	<i>Preacher</i>	<i>Liturgist</i>
Ash Wednesday February 26	St. Joan of Arc	John Triscik, St. Joan of Arc	Rev. Ursula Schreffler, Zion Lutheran of Union Deposit
March 4	Derry Presbyterian	Rev. Beth Rogers, Hummelstown United Church of Christ	Rev. Marie Buffaloe, Derry Presbyterian
March 11	Hershey Evangelical Free	Rev. George Minick, St. Paul's Lutheran	Rev. Dave Hyatt, Hershey Evangelical Free
March 18	First United Methodist	Rev. Tom Caruso, Church of the Redeemer	Rev. Adam Ulm, Spring Creek Church of the Brethren
March 25	Grace United Methodist, Hummelstown	Rev. Stephen Casey, All Saints Episcopal	Rev. Tom Caruso, Church of the Redeemer
April 1	Holy Trinity Lutheran @ Derry Presbyterian	Rev. Jim Smith, Country Meadows	Rev. Cindy Brommer, Holy Trinity Lutheran
April 8 (Holy Week)	Spring Creek Church of the Brethren	Rev. Chuck DeShong, First United Methodist	Sue Edris, First United Methodist
Easter Sunrise Service April 12	Hershey Gardens	Rev. Jennifer Williams, Fishburn United Methodist	Rev. Jim Smith, Country Meadows
All Services begin at 12:10 p.m. Luncheon follows from 12:50-1:30 p.m. Requested donation: \$3.00			



Redeemer Meeting Set for March 15

Profile Presentation

A Congregational Meeting will be held on Sunday, March 15, following our worship service. The Profile Task Force who has worked long and tediously over the last two years, will present the final document before it returns to the Leadership Team then to the Penn Central Conference.

On Sunday, March 1, copies of the Profile along with a well-written summary will be available at the rear of the sanctuary for your review. Please be sure to take a copy with you and plan to attend the meeting on March 15.

Attendance Statistics 2020 vs. 2019

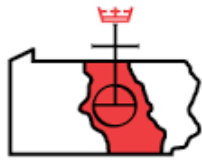
	Date	Members	Visitors	Total
Feb 2020	02/02/19	21	5	26
	02/09/19	24	6	30
<i>Avg / wk</i>	02/16/19	23	5	28
	26.75	02/23/19	20	3
Feb 2019	02/03/19	No data	No data	
	02/10/19	No data	No data	
<i>Avg / wk</i>	02/17/19	23		23
	21.5	02/24/19	20	20

Ash Wednesday at Redeemer



On February 26, members of Hummelstown UCC Church joined Redeemer to celebrate Ash Wednesday. Pastor Beth Rogers and Pastor Tom shared the pulpit and both the HUCC and Redeemer choirs performed. Photos clockwise include HUCC Choir, Pastor Tom and Redeemers, Pastor Beth Rogers, and Redeemer Choir members Judith deChamplain, Nancy Kapp, Sharon Thomas, and Jan Stong.





PENN CENTRAL CONFERENCE

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Ash Wednesday Brings Memory of Lost Baby Twin

Death reminds us of both fragility and the promise of life with God

“For the fate of humans and the fate of animals is the same; as one dies, so dies the other. They all have the same breath...all are from the dust and all turn to dust again.” - Ecclesiastes 3

While a young pastor in New Jersey, I was blessed to have a young couple in the congregation from Liberia.

The wife was pregnant when I arrived, and they were overjoyed to learn they were expecting twins. The day of the birth came, yet only one twin survived.

In the days to come the couple struggled with the joy of their baby boy’s life and grief at the death of their baby girl.

This was a classic pastoral situation – one fraught with sorrow and questions and anguish in the face of a seemingly capricious universe. Their faith sustained them, but it did not soothe their heartbreak.

The church had recently created a small memorial garden in our historic graveyard. We were not expecting the first set of ashes to be those of a tiny girl.

When I stood with the parents in the garden, they took out the small bag holding the cremains (how was it possible this was all that remained?) and I shook the contents into the space we had made in the ground for her.

As I did this, the ashes stirred in the wind and my hands received a light dusting. A moment later I reached out for the mother and fathers’ hands and we stood in prayer. In that one, singular moment, I felt the grit of the baby’s ashes in the palm of my hand against the warmth of the mother’s hand in my own, and I knew mortality as a complete, wrenching fact. These ashes – to this we are reduced.

Historically Lent was a time to confront our mortality and ponder our life on earth as preparation for returning to God and ash. Our task remains the same today.

Death has a way of reminding us of both the fragility and promise of life. During Lent we consider anew the inevitable fact of our own death alongside how to live into the promise of God during our days on earth.

Every Ash Wednesday I think of that young couple and that moment of standing in the garden. I also remember the faith that encircled us, and the warmth of the living hands that held my own.

Ash Wednesday this year was about remembering – from whence we come and where we will go – both into the cold earth and into the warm hands of God.

This year I sat with my hands in my lap and remembered the ash-covered hands that held mine in the garden. I remember Mary Oliver’s words, “Doesn’t everything die at last, and too soon?”

And I remember, day after day, to grab hold of Jesus’ hand, the one that will lead me through 40 days of reflection, truth-telling, and healing, all the way to another garden, where we will see the glory of our true end.

Peace, Carrie

The Rev. Carrie Call, Phd

Transitional Conference Minister

PCC Bids Scott Watts Goodbye

Scott Watts, Facilitator of Clergy Care and Clergy Family Care, will complete his work with the Conference on March 4. Scott has been tireless in his care of Conference Clergy and their families for the last for several years. Not only did he oversee a network of clergy chaplains, workshops and educational sessions to broaden skills and foster networks. In addition, to being a lead speaker at several clergy training events; Scott has also attended various ministeriums and run workshops at our Annual Meeting. Conference office staff celebrated his service to the conference on February 25, but his final day will be March 4. We will seek a new Facilitator for Clergy Care (a part-time position) in the next few weeks.



Peace, Carrie

Looking for Greeting Card Donations

Our Leadership Team will begin to send greeting cards to those who are ill, experienced loss, or a simple “thinking of you” message. We are looking for cards with envelopes that are in good shape and fit the message criteria. If you have some extra cards, or are willing to purchase some, please deposit them in the basket at the rear of the sanctuary. Requests to send cards can be submitted to the office or to Jan Stong. Please be sure to include complete addresses. **Thank you!**



Prayers for Concern and Healing for:

Michelle Smith as she begins chemotherapy

Jan Herr for continued improved health

Lisa, Bev Patton's ex-daughter in law, who is battling a brain tumor

Tyrell Johnson and **Logan Wilson** for continued healing

Tina Hale for recovery for congestive heart failure and help with costs of supplies for diabetes

Patricia Winters during her diagnosis of congestive heart failure

Darrell Hicks struggling with the effects of Muscular Dystrophy

Brenda, Phyllis Weikel's niece, as she struggles with health issues

Prayers of Comfort for the **Family of Kay Koch**, Jan Herr's sister, who died in Florida after suffering a stroke

Prayers of comfort for **Rev. Mike Benyon**, whose wife, The Rev. (Chaplain) Norma Llewellyn, died Jan. 21

Prayers for the Larger Community for those who serve and protect; for those in government who make decisions that affect our world, our country, our commonwealth, and our communities

Easter Flower Orders Due by March 23

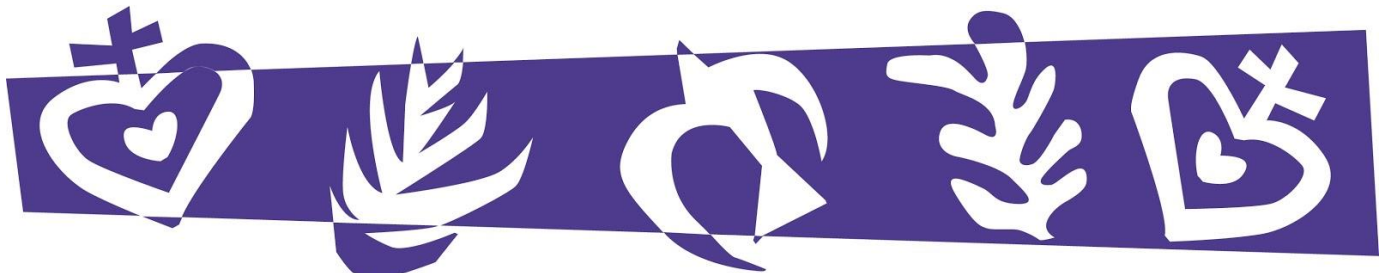
You know it's Spring when it's time to order Easter Flowers!

We'll be ordering from Royer's Flowers again this year as pricing is consistent with last year. Daffodils, Tulips, and Azaleas are available.

Please be sure to complete your order form and submit it along with your remittance by Monday, March 23.


Flowers will be delivered to the church on April 11 and available for pickup following Easter services.

Questions? Please call Jorja in the office!





March 2020

Sun.	Mon.	Tue.	Wed.	Thu.	Fri.	Sat.
1 9:15 Worship w/ Communion 10:30-3:15 LGCCC Worship Activities 3pm KISS AA	2 12pm Nooner AA 6-8pm Soup for the Soul 7:30 pm OA	3 9am FARA 12pm Nooner AA 7:15-9:30 VOP	4 12pm Nooner AA 12:10 pm Lenten Service & Lunch Derry Presby. Ch. 6:30p KISS AA 6:45 pm Choir	5 12pm Nooner AA 12:00 pm Focused Prayer	6 World Day of Prayer 12pm Nooner AA 6:30pm KISS AA 7:15-10 pm LGCCC	7 7:30am Sunrise AA 12pm KISS AA
8 Daylight Savings Begins 9:15 Worship 10:30-3:15 LGCCC Worship Activities 3pm KISS AA	9 12pm Nooner AA 6-8pm Soup for the Soul 7:30 pm OA	10 9am FARA 12 pm Nooner AA 7:15-9:30 VOP	11 12pm Nooner AA 12:10 pm Lenten Service & Lunch Hershey Free Ch. 6:30pm KISS AA 6:45 pm Choir	12 12pm Nooner AA 12:00 pm Focused Prayer 7pm Leadership T	13 12pm Nooner AA 6:30pm KISS AA 7:15-10 pm LGCCC	14 7:30am Sunrise AA 12pm KISS AA
15 9:15 Worship Congregational Meeting (Profile Presentation) 10:30-3:15 LGCCC Worship Activities 3pm KISS AA	16 12pm Nooner AA 6-8pm Soup for the Soul 7:30 pm OA	17  St. Patrick's Day 9am FARA 12 pm Nooner AA 7:15-9:30 VOP	18 12pm Nooner AA 12:10 pm Lenten Service & Lunch 1 st UMC Hershey (Pastor Tom) 6:30pm KISS AA 6:45 pm Choir	19 12pm Nooner AA 12:00 pm Focused Prayer	20 CONTACT CONTENT DEADLINE!! 12pm Nooner AA 6:30pm KISS AA 7:15-10 pm LGCCC	21 7:30am Sunrise AA 12pm KISS AA 3:45-6:15 LGCCC
22 One Great Hour of Sharing 9:15 Worship 10:30-3:15 LGCCC Worship Activities 3pm KISS AA	23 12pm Nooner AA 6-8pm Soup for the Soul 7:30 pm OA	24 9am FARA 12pm Nooner AA 7:15-9:30 VOP	25 12pm Nooner AA 12:10pm Lenten Service & Lunch Grace UMC Hummelstown Ch. 6:30pm KISS AA 6:45 pm Choir	26 12pm Nooner AA 12pm Pastor Tom's Community of Practice 12:00 pm Focused Prayer	27 12pm Nooner AA 6:30pm KISS AA 7:15-10pm LGCCC	28 7:30am Sunrise AA 12pm KISS AA
29 9:15 Worship 10:30-3:15 LGCCC Worship Activities 3pm KISS AA	30 12pm Nooner AA 6-8 pm Soup for the Soul 7:30 pm OA	31 9am FARA 12pm Nooner AA 7:15-9:30 VOP	March Special Celebrations Happy Birthday to Jan Herr, Dave Stong, James, Sube, Shaila Thomas, Shellie Beers, and Bailey Conrad Happy Anniversary to Dick and Shirley Conrad Thanks to the Dick and Shirley Conrad for sponsoring this issue!			

Hershey Resources Supported by the Ministerium during Lent

Love (INC) In the Name of Christ

The mission of Love In the Name of Christ of Greater Hershey is to mobilize churches to transform lives and the community, doing so all in the Name of Christ. Primarily, Love INC does this through a centralized call center or Clearinghouse Ministry where needs are assessed, and resources matched. The Parsonage Ministry is a home away from home for families of adult patients at the Penn State Hershey Medical Center. The Mentoring Ministry provides one-on-one guidance to help with longer-term needs such as budgeting and chronic poverty resource issues. The Personal Care Closet Outreach provides personal, household, and baby basics not covered by food stamps. Educational classes for life skills and transformational ministries are being developed. The communities of Hershey, Hummelstown and Elizabethtown are served. Please contact Love INC at 717-835-0101 to get involved or go to www.loveincgreaterhershey.org.

The Hershey Food Bank and Community Outreach is an all-volunteer 501(c)(3) organization whose purpose is to serve the community by providing free food and assistance with the temporary needs of families in financial distress and emergency help to transients. Our goal is to help all who are in need and to stop hunger. Twice a month during the three days we are open, registered families can shop for their food needs as well as paper and personal care items. Currently the Hershey Food Bank is providing food to an average of 420 families each

month with some families using the food bank twice a month. At Christmas, we provide gift certificates for clothing and shoes to over 300 children of registered families. The food bank also makes available free budget counseling to any family in need of this service. In addition, we make referrals to other organizations. The food bank is staffed by a large group of volunteers who collect, shelve, and distribute supplemental food to our clients. We are fully funded by the generous donations of individuals, churches, businesses, and social organizations throughout the community. Contact information: hersheyfoodbank@verizon.com or 717-520-3143. More information can also be found on our website: www.hersheyfoodbank.com.

Lenten worship services are provided by the churches of the Hershey Area Ministerium. The worship service begins each Wednesday at 12:10 pm. The Luncheon begins immediately following the worship, and those who must return to work are invited to proceed to the luncheon during the final hymn. Contributions (suggested \$3 per person) for the luncheon may be placed in the baskets at the entry of the fellowship hall. Donations to the Hershey Area Ministerium can be placed in the baskets located near the entrance/exit of the sanctuary.



Coming soon:

- *A Note from Pastor Tom*
- *Leadership Team Update*
- *April Celebrations*
- *PA Conference Updates*
- *April Calendar*
- *Holy Week Schedule*



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