

First United Methodist Church

Lent, Fasting & Chocolate

Lent, which begins with Ash Wednesday, is only a couple of weeks away. Receiving the mark of the cross made of ashes on my forehead is a powerful reminder for me of my need for God’s grace. Like many Christians I will choose a form of a fast as a way to remind myself of Jesus’ sacrifice for me. Many years I have given up chocolate (which is one of my favorite things in the whole world) as my chosen fast.

A number of years ago a boy came to my door selling chocolate bars during Lent. He didn’t just ask me to buy a bar to support his school—he gave me a hard sell. I finally told him it was Lent and I wasn’t eating chocolate. At that point he said, “What’s Lent and what does it have to do with people



not buying my chocolate? You are like the 5th person that has said that!” I attempted to explain the alien concept of Lent on the doorstep. Finally I said, I have an idea. How about if I buy a chocolate bar and you eat it for me? He liked that idea!

Every year since then I think of that young man this time of year. And I reflect about what a strange idea this business of fasting during Lent is in midst of our culture. This year Ash Wednesday is even more counter-cultural. It falls on Valentine’s Day—February 14. According to the National Retail Federation Americans will spend over \$1.5 billion dollars on candy for the holiday.

So why, especially when it is counter cultural, do Jesus-followers fast? Here are some of the reasons I believe in fasting:

• **Jesus fasted and expected his followers to do the same.**

Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted there by the devil. For forty days and forty nights he fasted and became very hungry. Matthew 4:1-2 But when you fast, comb your hair and wash your face. Matthew 6:17

• **Fasting is a means of grace.**

“More than any other discipline, fasting reveals the things that control us. This is a wonderful benefit to the true disciple who longs to be transformed into the image of Jesus Christ.” --Richard Foster

• **Fasting is a powerful form of prayer and spiritual warfare.**

So He said to them, "This kind can come out by nothing but prayer and fasting." Mark 9:29, NKJV

"Go and gather together all the Jews of Susa and fast for me. Do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. My maids and I will do the same. And then, though it is against the law, I will go in to see the king. If I must die, I must die." Combining fasting with prayer can result in a spiritual atomic bomb that pulls down spiritual strongholds and releases the power of God in your life and the life of your church, its pastor, its leaders, and its members. –Bill Bright

• **The most important reason of all is that we are hungry for more of God!**

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. Matthew 5:6

But the time will come when the bridegroom will be taken from them; in those days they will fast." Luke 5:35

“...man does not live by bread alone but by everything that proceeds out of the mouth of God.” Deuteronomy 8:3

The danger is not lest the soul should doubt whether there is any bread, but lest, by a lie, it should persuade itself that it is not hungry. –Simone Weil

For all of these reasons I’m encouraging everyone connected with Logansport First United Methodist Church to embrace some form of fasting during Lent. The form of fasting you choose is between you and God. There are many different options (see practical fasting tips in this newsletter).

Remember that whatever form of fasting you choose you should add prayer and time with the Lord, not just remove something. In years when I’ve given up chocolate every time I’ve craved chocolate I’ve prayed “Jesus skipping this treat is reminding me of all the ways you sacrificed for me. Thank you. I love you, Lord.”

continued

Lent Fasting and Chocolate

Lent, Fasting and Chocolate continued

Fasting, if done for the wrong reasons or in the wrong way, can be both spiritually and physically harmful. Jesus cautioned us not to fast to make ourselves look good in others' eyes. He also cautioned us about embracing a harsh legalism like the Pharisees of his day. *Chocolat* is a beautiful book (and movie) about a woman named Vianne who opens up a chocolate shop during the season of Lent in 1959. She butts heads with stern towns people who didn't quite get that part of Jesus' message. We want to make sure that our fasting is done with a right heart.

Pastor Beth Ann's Practical Fasting Tips

What Type of Fast Is Right For You?

- **Water Only Fast**—this is the typical fast in Scripture, although in Esther they neither eat nor drink. (See *Esther 4:16*) This form of fast is only for very short durations. During Lent you may choose to do a water fast one day a week or skip certain meals and drink only water. This is not advisable for people who have medical conditions.
- **Partial Fasts**—some examples of restricted diet fasts are:
 - **Juice Fast**—fruit and vegetable juices.
 - **Daniel Fast**—basically a vegetarian diet, usually “no meats or sweets.” Some people incorporate dairy. Others don't. It's safe for athletes, those with physically demanding jobs, and long term fasting. It is based on Daniel 10:3.
 - **Justice Fast**—skipping a meal or eating rice & beans while donating the amount you would have spent to a food pantry. It is based on Isaiah 58:6-7
 - **Traditional Lenten Fast**—fasting for 40 days during Lent. Many Christians choose not to eat meat on Fridays.
 - Others give up a favorite kind of food. (Traditionally you don't fast on Sunday. As “little Easters” the Lord's Day is considered a feast day instead of a fast.)
 - **Wesley Fast**—John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, encouraged his followers to eat no solid foods from after dinner Thursday until mid-afternoon on Friday.
 - **Media Fast**—Giving up television or social media to spend more time with the Lord.
 - **Spending Fast**—Avoid unnecessary expenditures. Donate money that you would have spent to missions.

How do I Fast Safely?



Before beginning any long-term or strenuous fast, discuss it with your doctor. Individuals who have struggled with eating disorders, those who have diabetes/hypoglycemia or other serious health conditions, and women who are pregnant/nursing should not fast without medical supervision. Those who are unable to fast food are encouraged to fast from something like television instead.

You will experience fewer unpleasant side effects, if you wean yourself off of caffeine and refined sugars/flours before beginning your fast. The most common side effect is “fasting headache.” Many people find Excedrin helpful. A bad taste in your mouth or bad breath is a common side effect of longer term strenuous fasts. Taking Alfalfa tablets will minimize or avoid this. Other supplements like vitamins and fiber can also be useful during a fast.

If you do a strenuous or long-term fast, break it gently. Start with small amounts of light foods (broth, Jello, applesauce, etc.) and gently increase the amount. Your body needs to adjust. Failure to come off of a long-term, strenuous fast gently can actually be dangerous. Check out “Your Personal Guide To Prayer & Fasting” by Bill Bright on line at www.billbright.com/howtofast/ for details.

A Word about Grace

If you mess up during a fast, press the mental “delete key” and start over. God knows your heart and loves the fact that you are trying. Remember that grace abounds!

Blessings and peace,
Pastor Beth Ann

Beth Ann's Phone: 812-550-4736 *Email: revbethanncook@gmail.com *Instagram: [revbethanncook](https://www.instagram.com/revbethanncook)

The Finance Corner

The Finance Committee met January 18. The two goals that had been established for 2018 were discussed as follows:

- Transmit Worship Services Live: Our current website host expires April 1. Our staff will procure a new host, and ensure that “transmitting live” will be part of the new services offered.
- Make Electronic Giving Available: It is a proven fact that youth are more likely to contribute via electronic giving. Staff will investigate the cost/procedure to add this feature and report back to the Committee.

Another feature to be included in the new website is a “DONATE” button. One advantage of said “button” is when out-of-town folks wish to make a memorial contribution they simply click the button, fill in the required info and it goes to FUMC’s bank account. This same DONATE button will be available for ANYONE to use, but it is especially helpful for those out-of-town.

Quarterly statements will continue to be available, but will be sent via email upon request.

Your Frugal Co-Chairs Deb Binford and Scott Schafer

Remembering Pastor Dean Fager

With sadness and great faith in the risen Christ, I am writing to inform you that Dean Fager, our pastor appointed to Knox United Methodist Church, passed

away today in Mishawaka, IN following complications from a Friday surgery. Dean’s long and devoted ministry record has been a blessing to many! And as many of you know, Dean’s wife Jan is the Conference Assistant assigned to our District Center. Please keep Jan, Ben, Sarah and their family in your prayers.



Grace and peace,
Larry K. Whitehead, North District Superintendent

Service Details:

A visitation will take place on Saturday, February 3, 2018, from 11am to 2pm (CT) at the Knox United Methodist Church. A memorial service will take place Saturday, February 3, 2018 at 4pm (CT) at the Knox UMC with the Rev. Larry Whitehead officiating.

Memorial Contributions:

I contacted Rev. Whitehead and asked how we could best honor Dean. He asked Jan. Immediately she told him with donations to the Strong Tower Hispanic church in East Chicago. We will collect these donations at LoganFirst for the next two weeks and will mail them into the conference office. Please see Elaine Hall or place your special donation in the offering plate with "to honor Dean" on it. We also have a card for church members to sign that we will send to Jan and the kids. The card is located at the back of the sanctuary.

Expressions of sympathy can be sent to Jan, Ben, and Sarah Fager, 12383 Ivory Court, Plymouth, IN, 46563.

Blessings and Peace,

Pastor Beth Ann



Experiencing Jesus Sermon Series

Experiences matter. They shape who we are and what we become. Our Lent and Easter sermon series is “Experiencing Jesus.” Each week we will look at someone who had an incredible experience with Jesus. Meeting Jesus gave their lives new hope and purpose. We trust that we will meet the Risen Savior as well and be shaped by Him. Series begins on Sunday, February 18th. Bring a friend to worship with us!

The Ash Wednesday Service is February 14, at 7 pm.

All Lenten offerings will be received for Kairos Torch, a ministry that helps young men who are incarcerated.



Kairos Prison Ministries



Trustees' Report

Boiler Down / Boiler Up. A couple of Sunday's ago you may have noticed it was pretty cool in the

Sanctuary. Our boiler had shut down for an unknown reason. A call for service prior to the sermon brought a "speedy" response from Wilkinson Heating & Cooling. They were on the job prior to "Coffee Fellowship." A motor control contactor had tripped out and shut down the system. Heat was restored prior to our second service thanks to the prompt response to our service call. Wilkinson's had been reviewing our boiler issues for sometime and reports our two boilers' mechanicals are in good shape. An exception: one of two circulator pumps needs rebuilt or replaced. Most all to our problems have been related to electrical / electronic issues which Wilkinsons are working through for a long time fix. The circulator pump, which services as an alternate, will be removed and sent out for repair or replacement. This can't happen until after the heating season as the boilers will need to be drained before the removal procedure can take place.

Moving Cross The Cross was relocated to a position above the screen on February 2 (see back page). This project is not funded by our budget, and we are looking for donations. Some funds have been pledged, but we still hope for additional funds to meet the job estimate of \$1600.00.

Class room peeling paint. LCM "Frog Room" / Room 202 has numerous areas of peeling paint on the North/outside facing wall and around the windows. This will require some wall repair and painting soon. We are seeking bids for this expected contract work.

Wainscoting is scheduled to be installed on the hall wall of LCM room 303 in the Education wing. This will help protect the wall paper along the hallway from "little hands."

Later we will be addressing the need to **seal and stripe** our parking lots. We have an estimate from last fall and will be seeking alternate bids for a possible better price. With our budget constraints we may consider not resealing this year and only have the lots striped.

Evert Wolfe
Chair - Board of Trustees

Leader's Retreat



Did you say "I'm in!" when we talked about praying for revival at LoganFirst UMC? If so, circle Saturday, March

10, on your calendar! This will be a very important day in the life of our church as we gather for a Church Wide Leadership Retreat.

Don't let the name fool you--everyone is invited. You don't have to currently hold a church office or serve on a committee to attend.

Pastor Beth Ann's friend Rev. Martin Wright will be facilitating our retreat. Marty is the lead pastor at Ogilville Christian Church, a vibrant and growing independent congregation just South of Columbus, Indiana. Remarkably, the congregation has grown steadily every year for twenty straight years! They are seeing many professions of faith among young adults and recently added a third service. Marty also teaches evangelism and church growth at Christian Theological Seminary.

At this meeting we will begin discerning how God wants us to leverage the \$100,000 bequest we received. Our prayer is that it will give us the resources to revitalize our ministry and keep LoganFirst going strong into the future.

We are also going to talk about ways we can apply for grants from the Center for Congregations to make our money go farther.

Cost for the retreat is \$10 p/p. Please see the registration form in the bulletin on Sunday, or stop by the church office during normal office hours.

Diamond Conference Refined



Wired Women's Ministries of Life Gate Church in Logansport is hosting a two-day women's Diamond Conference in May.

Everyone is welcome to attend. Early registration rates end March 1. For information contact Life Gate Church.

Calendar, Birthdays, Anniversaries



February Bible Reading Plan

1 Leviticus 1-4	16 Numbers 8-10
2 Leviticus 5-7	17 Numbers 11-13
3 Leviticus 8-9	18 Numbers 14-15
4 Leviticus 10-12	19 Numbers 16-18
5 Leviticus 13	20 Numbers 19-21
6 Leviticus 14-15	21 Numbers 22-24
7 Leviticus 16-18	22 Numbers 25-26
8 Leviticus 19-21	23 Numbers 27-29
9 Leviticus 22-23	24 Numbers 30-31
10 Leviticus 24-25	25 Numbers 32-33
11 Leviticus 26-27	26 Numbers 34-36
12 Numbers 1-2	27 Deuter. 1-2
13 Numbers 3-4	28 Deuter. 3-4
14 Numbers 5-6	29 Catch-up day
15 Numbers 7	

February Special Events & Meetings

- Feb. 1** LCM Board Meeting, 5 PM, Parlor
- Feb. 7** Mark Bible Study, 6 PM, Parlor
- Feb. 11** Hope United Service, 2 & 4PM, McHale
- Feb 14** Ash Wednesday Service, 7 PM, Sanctuary
- Feb 18** First Sunday of Lent
- Feb 21** Mark Bible Study, 6 PM, Parlor
- Feb 27** Staff Parish Meeting, 6 PM, Parlor

Standing Meetings

Mondays

- 7 AM Men's Fellowship, Parlor
- 10 AM Staff, Pastor's Office

Tuesdays

- 11 AM Prayer Meeting, Sanctuary
- 9:30 AM Bible Study, Parlor
- 1:30 PM Women's Bible Study (Sep - May)

Wednesdays

- 5:30 PM Bell Choir (Sep-May)
- 6:00 PM Bible Study (Sep-May)
- 6:30 PM Worship Choir (Sep-May)

February Birthdays

- | | |
|--|--|
| February 8
Bill Byrd
Laura Karnafel | February 21
Jacob Fisher
John Schafer |
| February 10
Bruce Stuart | February 22
Mark Baker |
| February 11
Carly Hall | Luke Smith |
| February 16
Judy Williamson | February 23
Martine Byers |
| February 17
Vic Sutton | February 25
Christy Bartlett |
| February 18
Dale Byers | February 26
Kelsey Danhauser |

February Anniversaries

- February 22** Vic & Mary Sutton

JOY CIRCLE

Joy Circle Women's Group has two events scheduled to share God's love.

- **Cookie Project:** On February 14, they will be boxing cookies to deliver to some of the first responders in our community. For details contact Penny Schaefer.
- **Knotted Blanket Ministry:** Workers are needed for making fleece throws for domestic violence victims. Throws are single-layer, child-sized with knotted fringe around the edges. When completed the throws will be donated to the local Domestic Violence Task Force. Anyone who attends First Church is invited to participate in this project. (We wouldn't turn any of your friends away either.) The work day is March 7, 2018, from 1- 3 PM in the Fellowship Hall. Please bring sharp scissors, a ruler, and a pencil. Fleece will be provided or you may bring your own. Directions will be waiting for you. If you have questions or plan to attend, please phone Elizabeth Billman at 722-3453.



Concerns & Schedules



PRAYER CONCERNS

- * Dottie Gerhart
- * Skip Kuker
- * Family of Dean Fager

Tori Schwartz
Sawyer Black
Jenny Mansberger
Janis Gundrum
Deck Medlan
Sandy Stewart
Family of Carol Fry
Family of Donald Hyman
Mike Anderson

* New Request

MILITARY SERVICE

Alex Karnafel
Matt Karnafel
Michael Kennedy
Joshua Lyons
Tim Strubell

PRAYING TOGETHER

To help us partner with you in prayer, please submit all requests in writing so we can add the names to our written prayer list. (Even if you have verbally requested prayer during a church service.) Thank you. Prayer concerns are usually listed for two weeks.

CHURCH LEADERS

OUR BISHOP

Bishop Julius Trimble

DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT

Rev. Chris Newman-Jacobs

ASSOCIATE

SUPERINTENDENTS

Rev. Lamar Imes
Rev. Kate Walker
Rev. Rob Seewald

CHURCH CLUSTER

Crosswind UMC

Pastor Nick Robinson

First UMC

Pastor Beth Ann Cook

Main Street UMC

Rev. Damon Soper

Wheatland Avenue UMC

Pastor Michael Gonzalez

NURSING HOMES

GOLDEN LIVING CENTER

Don Shaver

MCKINNEY PLACE

Donna Bartlett
Ruben Vizcarra

WOODBRIIDGE

Jim Hoffman

FEBRUARY DOOR HOSTS

New Sign-up Sheets for Feb are on the Mission Bulletin Board in the Café Area.



Educational Wing

8:15 Don & Cindy Collins
10:45 Karla Padfield

Nursery Hallway

8:15 Jeannie Byers
10:45 Conna Kitchel

Narthex Hallway

8:15 Open
10:45 Larry Kitchel

CAFÉ SCHEDULE - FEBRUARY 2018

Thank you to our volunteers for baking and serving in our Café! Please provide 4 dozen baked items on the Sunday you have selected. Servers set-up and serve for our Hospitality Time between services, and clean up following The Stand. Thank you!



February 4 Wilma Scott
February 11 Fran Murr
February 18 Kit Clary
February 25 Mitzi Rogers

Missions We Support

- Zoe Project
- Kev & Deb Vance, Zambia
- Clara Biswas, Cambodia
- UMCOR Global Refugees
- Kafakumba Tablet Program
- Kafakumba Water Project, Zambia
- Kafakumba Pastor's School, Zambia & Congo
- Little Children's Ministry
- Salvation Army
- Emmaus
- Kairos Torch
- Domestic Violence Task Force
- Kokomo Urban Outreach
- The Place to Be



Little Children's Ministry

Little Children's Ministry News

February 2018

Little Children's Ministry has returned to our normal routine since the holidays. We are now focusing on this year's goals and missions. Above all things, we are focused on educating every child about Jesus Christ. Nicole and the staff are doing a wonderful job of educating them every morning in chapel as well as bringing the lessons into the classrooms. They have touched many little lives, and we hope to continue to grow in our teachings so that they may carry these lessons for the rest of their lives.

The first 2018 LCM Board Meeting was held February 1 at 5 PM in the Parlor. This year's board members are Elizabeth Billman (President), Belinda Jordan, Rhonda Martin, Laura Karnafell, Mary Ingram, Pastor Beth Ann Cook, Kristina Brand (Parent Rep), Janiene Downs (Staff Rep), and Nicole Hacker (Secretary). The church members, which will sit on the board to represent their area, are Everett Wolfe (Trustees), Deb Binford (Finance), and Marjorie Miller (Pastor Parish). We would like to welcome everyone new and look forward to working together to make LCM even more prosperous in 2018.

LCM has made "Project Playground" our main fundraiser goal for 2018. After researching equipment to replace the gray mountain on the larger playground and also a few new items for the younger playground side, we will need to raise \$15,000. LCM had begun our "Project Playground" goal in 2017, and we have already raised \$3,000. A variety of different fundraisers are planned for this year. A bubble thermometer will be posted on the Church Bulletin Board so that we can track our progress. Donations will also be accepted either in the front office or labeled and placed in the drop box. Physical health is also a very important goal here at LCM, and new playground equipment will help us to keep the children healthy and fit.



In regards to upcoming events, The Indiana Early Childhood Education Conference will be held again this April in Indianapolis. Several of the Little Children's Ministry staff will attend this training. It allows the staff to obtain 6 ½ hours of their state required 12 hours of professional development training per year. It is also very informative and gives the staff great ideas and techniques to implement at LCM.

February Bible Verse: "A friend loves at all times..." Proverbs 17:17 (NIV)

Mission: Collect items for the Humane Society

Sincerely,

Belinda Jordan, Director

LCM STAFF
Director - **Belinda Jordan**
Administrative Assistant - **Nicole Black**
Treasurer - **Tina Collins**

Communication

Phone: 574.753.3491
Email: loganfirst@comcast.net
Web: www.loganfirst.org
Church Office Hours: M-F, 8:30 AM-12:30 PM
LCM Office Hours: M-F, 6 AM-6 PM

Sunday Services

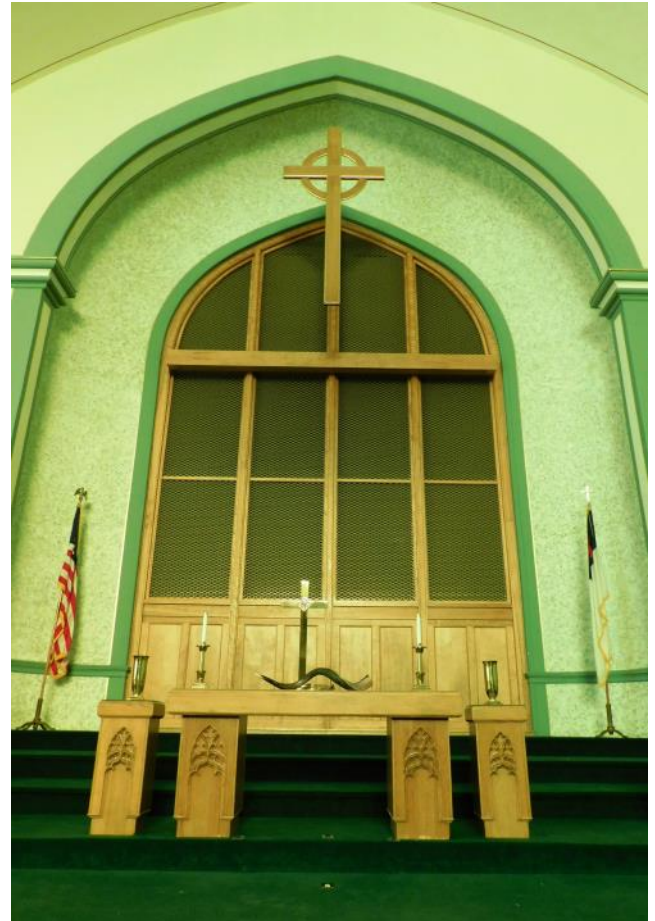
8:15 AM - Worship/Traditional
9:30 AM - Sunday School/Fellowship
10:45 AM - Worship/*The Stand*
2:00 PM - Burmese Worship

Bible Studies

Men's Monday Fellowship - 7 AM
Tuesday - 9:30 AM
Wednesday - 6 PM (Sep - May)

Church Staff

Pastor - Beth Ann Cook
Administrative Asst - Lori Shewman
LCM Administrative Asst - Nicole Black
Media Coordinator - Luann Hamilton
Treasurer - Elaine Hall
Financial Secretary - Penny Schaefer
Pianists - Deb Binford, Jeff Smith, Elaine Hall
Organist/Pianist - Gina Riendeau



Our Mission

*The mission of the church is to make disciples of
Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.*

Our Vision

REACH • EQUIP • SEND