

hands & feet



A monthly newsletter of the Webster United Church of Christ, Federated

Mark Your Calendar

Tuesdays 6pm Small Group
"Bible 101"

Sunday, February 8, after Worship
Annual Meeting

Tuesday, February 17, 4:30-6pm
Shrove Tuesday Pancake Dinner

Wednesday, February 18, 6pm
Ash Wednesday Service

Sunday, February 22, after Worship
Monthly Brunch and
Birthday Celebration

Tuesday, February 24, 6pm
Start of Lenten Small Group



EDITORIAL

Dear friends in Christ,

"A light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it."

You may be wondering what a little bit of Advent and a hint of Epiphany are doing in an article about Lent. Simply, we cannot know the way of the cross if we do not see the consequences of amazing hope in God shining light into the world – what is hidden away is brought out into the light of day, and the reality of the world can never be hidden from view again. We see the world and ourselves differently. Hope and joy come to complete what we have hoped. And for us, it is not just a risen Lord, but a crucified one, too.

If Advent is a waiting for light, and Epiphany signals the light of God coming into the world through Christ, then Lent is walking in the shadow of the cross, and in light of it, the places that cast shadows of their own in the world.

Lent is about seeing clearly where the cross stands as a marker in places where the suffering and sinful world is met by a God who also suffers with us. Lent is about God's revelation that it is in the darkness of the world that God has come to bring to light.

We are so exposed to information and crisis daily that it can seem like this "light" is shining too bright – it is casting too many shadows – and we may want to shield our eyes.

(continued on page 2)

FEBRUARY 2026 EDITION

"Return to the Lord your God, for he is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love, and he relents from sending calamity." - Joel 2:13



EDITORIAL (conclusion)

These days, when the world seems especially chaotic, it is easy to get angry and sad, frightened, and anxious. It is overwhelming. It is hard to find levity when our hearts and minds are held prisoners by our circumstances.

It is sometimes challenging for us to feel at ease while going about our daily lives, taking time to rest, or enjoying even a moment of fun. This difficulty arises when we compare our lives to those who experience a level of suffering to which many of us have never been subjected and may never face. We may believe any distractions from solidarity even for a moment is a cause for shame.



God of goodness and mercy,
Hear my prayer as I begin this Lenten journey
with you.
Let me be honest with myself as I look into my
heart and soul, noticing the times I turn away
from you.
Guide me as I humbly seek to repent and
return to your love.
May humility guide my efforts to be reconciled
with you and live forever in your abundant grace.
Transform me this Lent, heavenly Father.
Give me the strength to make myself
100% available to you every day
as I prepare for Easter.

Amen.

“
**NEVER FORGET THAT
JUSTICE IS WHAT LOVE
LOOKS LIKE IN PUBLIC.**
— CORNEL WEST

In the past, recollection of suffering – especially on the suffering of Jesus – was practiced during Lent through fasts and modesty. Every week was meant to mirror Holy Week, with some feast days punctuating an otherwise somber season. Anything that could bring about a sense of enjoyment would often be seen as extravagant or luxurious and was discouraged.

Fasts do have their place and can still be helpful practices. Humility, though, can be practiced even in acknowledging our limitations and need for moments of rest, or on a day when the shadows seem a little too thick. Accepting the reality of the world means being aware and sensitive, but it does not mean always denying ourselves what we need to be comforted in troubling times (chocolate, anyone?).

This Lent, maybe the light of Christ can offer us a glimpse of the joy of living and the joy of the answer to our hopes, while it also can reveal the truth that hope sees injustice and pursues justice.

There is light in this current moment of darkness, and it is having our eyes opened to the truth beyond the tragedies that anger, frustrate, and sadden us – that a world that holds the cross and a world that has its shadows also has a light that shines in the places that seem darkest. Those places that are darkened and marked by the cross of Christ are places of hope and comfort, insight and wonder, and reveal the way of our life in light of Christ’s cross.

Have a holy but also bright Lent!

Pastor Sabina

Verse of the Month

Then I turned my face to
the Lord God, seeking
him by prayer and pleas
for mercy with fasting
and sackcloth and ashes.

— DANIEL 9:3

Worship News



New Sermon series

Have you ever stood in your mind at Calvary on the day that Jesus died? Use your imagination and stand quietly with Mary and John on that sad hill. There must have been an overload of the senses that afternoon. Not only in what they saw, but in what they heard...

Listen to the echo of the hammer as long spikes are driven into the hands and feet of Jesus. Can you hear the thud of the cross dropping into the hole that had been dug for it?

There are the cheers and jeers of people all around. The mockery of religious leaders and the cries of a frenzied mob all blend together to become the sound of chaos and confusion. Hardened soldiers play games at the foot of the cross.

The two men on either side of Jesus cross seem to have a conversation with one another and with the Man in the middle.

One voice stands out from the rest – it is the tender voice of Jesus. He always spoke grace and truth, and today is no different. Seven times He will open His mouth to speak and every word He says is full of passion and purpose.

Join us during Lent as we hear the “Last Words from the Cross.”

Date	Scripture	Sermon
02/01 God's Resolutions Communion Sunday	Romans 5:20-21	“I Will Grant You Peace when You Fall”
02/08 God's Resolutions	Jeremiah 29:11	“I Will Give You a Future”
02/15 God's Resolutions	Matthew 11:28:30	“I Will Give You Rest”
02/18 Ash Wednesday	Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21 Psalm 51:1-17	“Pulling Back the Husks”
02/22 Last Words from the Cross	Luke 23:26-34	“Father, Forgive Them”
03/01 Last Words from the Cross	Luke 23:35-43	“You will be with Me in Paradise”
03/08 Last Words from the Cross	John 19:25-27	“Behold Your Son, Behold Your Mother”

ASH WEDNESDAY

Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return.

Ecclesiastes 3:20

Service
February 18, 6pm

Ministries News



Happy New Year from the Threads of Hope Closet!

Happy 2026 from the Threads of Hope Closet!

We've had several visitors stop by to check out the Threads Closet recently, including Webster's police chief, volunteers from St Vincent de Paul, and the president of the local Lion's Club branch. With each passing month, we connect with more and more people in the community, and they spread the word to people in need of clothing and

shoes. We've had more than 515 people who have shopped for themselves and many have also shopped for their children since our opening in October of 2024.

Here's a picture of our new sign that was donated by one of the Threads volunteers.



I love seeing flowers on the altar. Silk flower bouquets are often beautiful, but they pale in comparison to real flowers. I have learned that in the not-so-distant past, our church offered the congregation the opportunity to have a bouquet of real flowers placed on the altar in the name of loved ones. The name of the loved one and the name of the giver were listed in the bulletin.

Good news! We will be doing that again!

A flower chart, where people can request that a bouquet be placed on the altar, in memory, in honor or in



Happy New Year from Feed My Sheep!

During the winter months, the Feed My Sheep ministry continues to provide warm, nourishing meals and a welcoming place for those in need in our community. As the cold weather sets in, these meals offer not only food but comfort, dignity, and a reminder that no one is forgotten.

This ministry is made possible through the generosity of volunteers, donors, and faithful supporters who give their time and resources throughout the year. Thank you for helping Feed My Sheep extend Christ's love through hospitality and care, especially during this season when it is needed most.



celebration of someone special, will be posted near the entrance to the sanctuary. If you would like to have flowers placed on either the large altar under the hanging cross or on the smaller altar, choose a date and write your name on the chart.

The cost of the bouquet is \$20. Please complete an Altar Flower form and put the form and the payment in an envelope marked Altar Flowers. The envelope can then be placed in the offering plate. I will purchase the flowers, arrange the bouquet and place it on the altar. After the service, I will wrap the flowers and give them to you.

Yours truly,

Cindy Denson

Ministries News



Golden Bees Sleeping Bag Ministry: Sharing Warmth, Hope, and God's Love

As we move through this winter, the Golden Bees continue their caring work of sharing warmth and hope with our

neighbors in need. Each Monday from 9:00 a.m. to noon, volunteers gather at the church to create sleeping bags and health



kits from donated materials. These are distributed to local organizations serving those experiencing homelessness and to individuals who come directly to our church.



Season by season, this ministry reflects God's love through simple acts of compassion. Thank you to all who support the Golden Bees with donations, time, and prayers—your generosity helps make a real difference.

Spiritual Growth

Have a Beautiful, Terrible Lent!

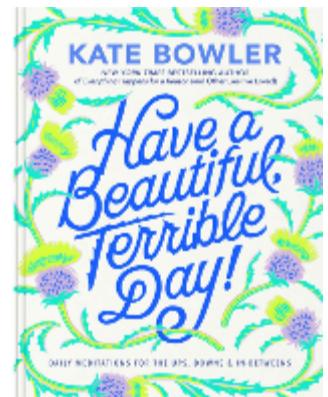
New Small Group for Lent!

Starting on Tuesday, February 24, at 6pm, our church will be offering a new small group, "Have a Beautiful, Terrible Lent" by Kate Bowler. Lent is full of hard truths. And it is a perfect moment for spiritual honesty. We can look on this tragicomedy with love and bemusement as we wait for the someday that will be God's promised future. There, God's kingdom comes. God's will be done on earth as it is in heaven. And in the meantime, there's this . . . our beautiful, terrible days.

During Lent, we ask God to show us the world as it is. We begin on Ash Wednesday with the reality of our finitude rubbed on our foreheads—from dust we were made, to dust we shall return. Then, we walk through that reality in a kind of dress rehearsal. It is

the downward slope of God—the Great Descent. The whole church must descend to the depths with their savior. Frankly, Lent is my favorite part of the church calendar. Suddenly, all of us are on the losing team. And we look at each other with well earned wonder, horror, and awe. We begin to tell each other the truth again: life is so beautiful and life is so hard. For everyone.

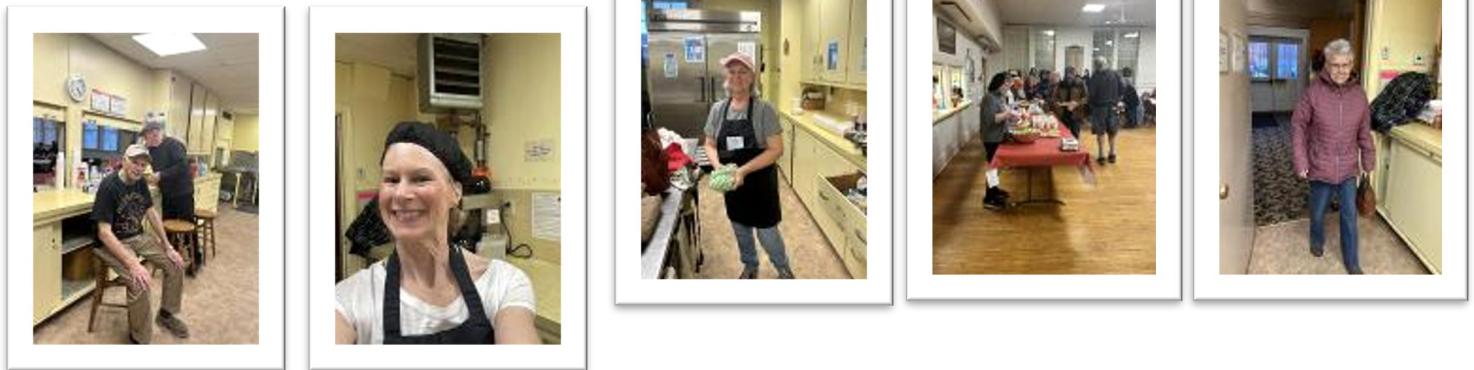
There is no cost for this group. Each participant will be given a Lent devotional ("Have a Beautiful, Terrible Day") so you will need to RSVP by 2/18 to the office or Pastor Sabina to make sure a book will be ordered for you! Using this devotional as your daily practice will help you go through this Lenten study.



This weekly small group is your invitation to join others in community and bless whatever this season is actually bringing you all. So let's stop waiting. This is the one we have. Let's bless it all—all of the beautiful and terrible parts.

MEMORIES

Feed My Sheep Volunteers



MISCELLANEOUS



Join us on Sunday, February 8, 2026 at the end of our worship service for our Annual Meeting, a gathering for members to conduct official business, review the past year, and plan for the future. It is also a time to celebrate our church!

When reading our 2025 Annual Report, and especially nominations for the 2026 year, you will notice a few new additions. We love to add new talents and volunteers to our groups so please consider prayerfully if you would like to join the following teams:

Building & Grounds: Are you handy? Do you like gardening? Do you like organizing things to do when it comes to fixing our building or taking care of the grounds? Please see our Chair: Cindy Denson. Also see Carol Beauchesne if you are interested in joining our kitchen team (not cooking but making sure the kitchen is clean, organized and in good shape!).

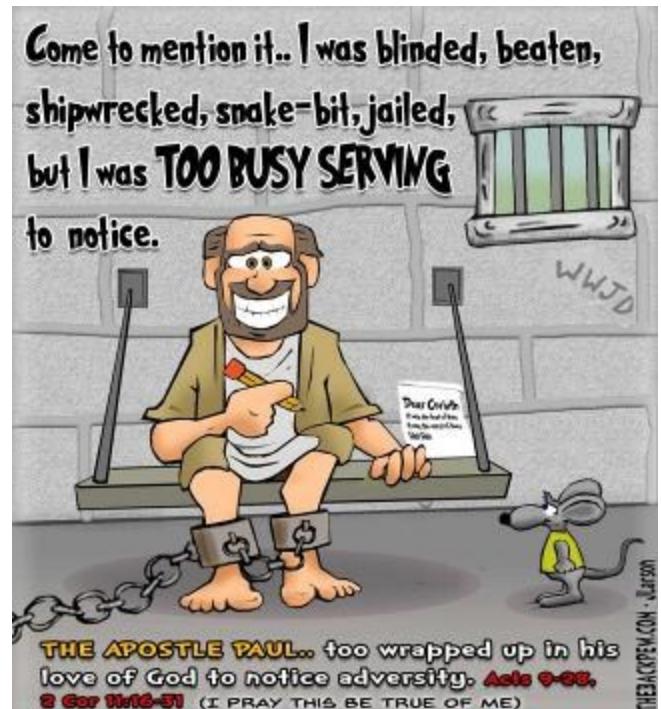
Worship Team: Interested in anything worship-related? We are in need of hands and minds to help plan all worship events! From music to communion, technology, greeting people and more!

Care Team: This is for the people that have love flowing in their veins! The Care Team takes care of many things, from sending out cards to knitting prayer shawls, to visiting people and bringing communion, to helping with funerals and weddings.

Outreach Team: Fun is the word! This is where we organize the events we offer the community. We need

people to brainstorm and lead the charge!

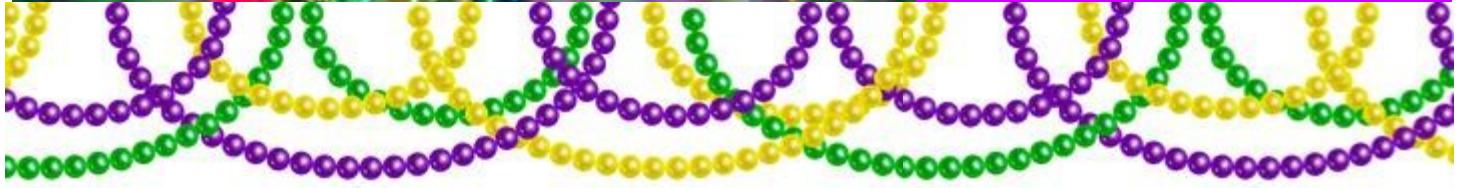
If you feel God may be calling you to volunteer, please try one or more of these groups. No commitment, just a desire to serve the Lord! Talk to Pastor Sabina if you feel called!



EVENTS



SHROVE
TUESDAY
Pancake
Dinner



JOIN US ON
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 4:30PM-6PM
FOR A **MARDI GRAS** CELEBRATION WITH
ALL-YOU-CAN-EAT PANCAKE FEAST!

SAUSAGES, SCRAMBLED EGGS, PANCAKES AND TOPPINGS,
AND FRUIT SALAD!!

\$8 DONATION (CHILDREN UNDER 5 EAT FOR FREE) TO BENEFIT OUR
FEED MY SHEEP FREE MEAL MINISTRY

United Church of Christ, Federated

"Come as you are, we mean it!"

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A monthly newsletter of the Webster United Church of Christ Federated

OFFICE HOURS: Tuesday through Friday, 9:30-1, or by appointment

WORSHIP: Sundays at 10, in person and live on Facebook

BIBLE STUDY / SMALL GROUPS: Tuesdays at 6pm

THREADS OF HOPE (free clothing, hygiene products,...): Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9-11, Thursdays 4-7

FEED MY SHEEP FREE MEAL MINISTRY: Thursdays, 5

GOLDEN BEES SLEEPING BAG MINISTRY: Mondays, 9-12

KNIT PRAY LOVE MINISTRY: Mondays, 10-12, Ladies' Parlor

OUTDOOR FOOD PANTRY: Ongoing