

# First Things

Issue No. 6

A weekly publication of First United Methodist Church, Oak Ridge, Tennessee

February 14, 2021

## Lenten Offerings Available

The season of Lent is almost upon us. This is a time of the Christian year when we are invited to reflect on our faith and how it might be refreshed or deepened. Lent is a 40-day period (excluding Sundays) of repentance and preparation prior to celebrating Christ's resurrection on Easter. It is a time to let go of things that may be hindering your relationship with God, and to give attention to ways that deeper intimacy with God may be cultivated. Below are a few options for how you can observe the season of Lent with us.

**Daily Devotions**—Each day during Lent, we will be sending a church-wide daily devotion written by one of the pastors and staff directly to your e-mail inbox. We hope that these will be an encouragement to you as we journey together. Devotions will be sent from February 17–April 4.

**iStudy**—Rev. Mark Flynn will be leading an iStudy class on the Old Testament during the Lenten season. Be on the lookout for details about this great class. If you have questions or want to learn more, contact Rev. Flynn (mflynn@fumcor.org).

**Contemporary Sermon Series**—During the weeks of Lent, FUMC's Contemporary Worship service will be offering a sermon series on Adam Hamilton's book *The Walk*. This book focuses on five essential spiritual practices that are rooted in Jesus' own walk with God. If you have questions about this series, contact Rev. Chris Black (cblack@fumcor.org).

**Lenten Book Study**—During Lent, Rev. Jenny Caughman will be leading a book study on Desmond Tutu's book *Made for Goodness and Why This Makes All the Difference*. See the article at the bottom for more information.

**Book Study**—This Lent, ponder the themes of justice, poverty, freedom, and love in this upcoming book study on *The Grace of Les Miserables*. Date and time for this study are still being determined. Watch for details in the next First Things newsletter. If you have additional questions, contact Jim Hardy (mjhardy3@comcast.net) or Terry Pfeiffer (terrylynn73@gmail.com).

**Youth**—The Youth Group will continue to have online meetings Wednesday evenings at 7:00 p.m. during Lent as well as other activities and gatherings. Watch for updates on our website (fumcor.org).

**Children**—*Lent in a Bag* for children and families

During Lent, we invite our families to explore prayer. We will deliver bags with instructions and devotionals, with physical symbols to assist in practicing Lent at home. Reserve your bag by February 12 from Children and Family Ministry Director, Megan Alden (malden@fumcor.org).

## Memorial Donations for Bill Mooney

Rev. William Mooney died on November 26, 2020. While serving as one of our associate pastors, Bill was a strong supporter of our Adult Missions Program, especially the Vision Program. He was a member of several of our early Honduras teams. His obituary encouraged people to make donations in Bill's memory to current mission trips. While we do not have any trips scheduled due to the pandemic, the missions we support, most recently in Honduras and Panama, still need our help. We ask that you prayerfully consider making a donation to the Adult Mission Trip Fund in celebration of Bill's service to our church and its mission programs. The money raised through these donations will be sent to the Honduras and Panama ministries we currently support. You can donate by sending a check to the church with a notation for the Adult Mission Trip Fund. We can start the new year in a generous way by honoring the memory of one of our most beloved pastors and friends.

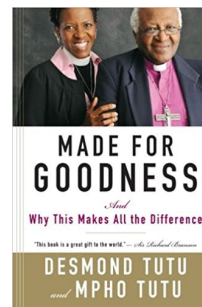
- Adult Mission Trip Leaders

## Take Part in Ash Wednesday

On Wednesday, February 17, FUMC will have two ways for you to observe Ash Wednesday.

- Tune into our special, recorded service on our website (fumcor.org) and on our YouTube page. This service will include an imposition of ashes and will be a time for prayer, penitence, and contemplation on our own mortality. You are invited to make the sign of the cross on your forehead during the service. This can be done with ashes, soil, or even nothing. *If you are interested in participating at home with your own ashes, we have some that are individually packaged and available for you in the church office. Feel free to drop by and pick them up.*
- You are invited to come by the church Welcome Center between 11:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. to have ashes imposed by one of the pastors. Jenny, Chris, and Mark will each be outside during a portion of the day to offer prayer and ashes. They will be masked and ask you to be as well. They will also be using hand sanitizer between each visit and ask that you remain seated in your car during the imposition.

This unique day can be a powerful moment in the life of the church because it signifies new beginnings in the faith and a time of returning to the Lord. It is a time for putting aside sins and failures of the past in light of who we are yet to become by the grace of God. Ash Wednesday is the 'essential first step' in our 40-day season of fasting and preparation called Lent, which leads us into Holy Week and Easter.



## Lenten Book Study Begins February 22 Desmond Tutu's *Made for Goodness and Why This Makes All the Difference*

During Lent, Rev. Jenny Caughman will be leading a book study on Tutu's book *Made for Goodness and Why This Makes All the Difference*. Starting Monday, February 22, a group will meet virtually from 7:00–8:00 p.m. to discuss the concept of human nature and questions such as 'Where is God when we suffer or fail? Are human beings fundamentally good or bad? Remarkably, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, a black man who grew up in South Africa during apartheid and afterwards chaired the Truth and Reconciliation Commission where the horrors of that time were voiced, believes strongly that we were made for goodness. Participants are encouraged to read the book and come to the group ready to engage in conversation. Books can be purchased on one's own or borrowed from the church. To register or for more information, contact Rev. Caughman (jcaughman@fumcor.org).

### In Sympathy

We extend love and sympathy to Cindy Weatherly and Mona Leake in the death of Cindy's husband and Mona's son-in-law, Jim Weatherly, who died February 3.

### Hospitalized

No one that we know of

### Our Gifts

Offering this Week	\$30,286
2021 Year to Date	\$166,410
2020 Year to Date	\$205,175
Special Offering	\$115

## Seeking Volunteers to Help High Schoolers

As we wind our way into the spring semester, a need for virtual learning help remains. With a handful of volunteers who are willing to spend some mornings or afternoons each week at the church, we could offer a supportive space for local high school students on their virtual learning days. This would entail encouraging students to stay on task and offering teaching help and tutoring when possible. If you feel like this is something you have the time and willingness to do, we would love your help. For more information or to volunteer, contact Rev. Mark Flynn (mflynn@fumcor.org) or our Youth Director, Kayla Carico (kcarico@fumcor.org).

## Birthday Cards Needed

The FUMC Stephen Ministers are working on a project to send birthday greetings to all of our members. We need help getting birthday cards. You may bring the cards with envelopes or blank cards to the Church office M-Th from 8:00 a.m.–noon or you can contact Michele Boliak (865.250.9175) who is coordinating this project.

### Pastors

Mark Flynn, lead pastor  
Chris Black, associate pastor  
Jenny Caughman, spiritual care

### Contact Information

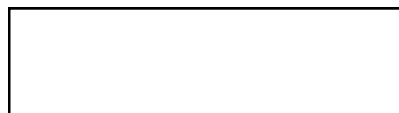
865.483.4357  
www.fumcor.org  
Pastor on call: 865.272.9862



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## Where do the ashes for Ash Wednesday come from?

Rev. Chris Black and Kayla Carico have made a video to share how the ashes are prepared for the first day of our Lenten Journey. We take the palms from the previous year's Palm Sunday celebration and burn them to make ash. We wear the ashes on our foreheads on Ash Wednesday to symbolize penance, mourning, and our mortality. The ashes are a sign that we are entering a time of penitence and a time of preparing ourselves for Jesus' Resurrection. Check out the video on our YouTube page.

## The Walk Sermon Series Coming to Contemporary

During the season of Lent, our Contemporary Worship service will be offering a sermon series on Adam Hamilton's book titled *The Walk*. In worship each week the pastors will focus on one of five essential spiritual practices rooted in Jesus' own walk with God and taught throughout the New Testament. This will certainly be a different take on the season of Lent, but our hope is that this series will help you to deepen your own walk with Christ in new ways as we prepare to celebrate Easter. Feel free to purchase the book to follow along. However, you do not need the book to take part in the series. If you have questions about this sermon series, contact Rev. Chris Black (cblack@fumcor.org). The themes for each week are:

- February 21: "Worship and Prayer: A Living Hallelujah"
- February 28: "Study: The Importance of Listening and Paying Attention"
- March 7: "Serve: Here I am, Lord, Send Me"
- March 14: "Give: Where your treasure is..."
- March 21: "Share: Going Fishing, Reflecting the Light"
- March 28 (Palm Sunday): "Putting it all together: The Five Practices from the Cross"
- April 4 (Easter Sunday)

## February Special Offering: Family Promise of Roane County

Family Promise of Roane County works in collaboration with faith-based organizations, civic groups, and concerned neighbors to shelter, nourish, transport, and assist families with children who are experiencing homelessness.

Local social service agencies refer families to Family Promise. Faith-based host congregations provide overnight lodging, meals, and hospitality during a family's stay. There are seven host congregations.

In 2020, Family Promise of Roane County helped approximately 74 families remain in their homes; they also sheltered 4 families. The agency continues to provide case management and coordinate with multiple social service groups to provide pathways to jobs and permanent housing.

## Last Call: Food Pantry Collection

Just a quick reminder that, through February 22, we're collecting cosmetic bags, cereal, chicken broth, bar soap, shampoo, deodorant, toothpaste, toothbrushes, and new women's panties (S, M, L, XL). Drop donations at the Vienna Road covered entrance.