

St. Paul's E-pistle March 2020

From the Pastor's Desk

“March Madness.” The very mention of the phrase causes the hearts of many sports fans to start racing and likely as many non-sport fans to roll their eyes in mock horror. This refers, of course, to the NCAA basketball tournament, which begins with the conference tournaments, continues with “Selection Sunday,” and progresses through “the brackets,” complete with “bracket buster upsets,” “the Sweet Sixteen,” and “the Elite Eight,” all the way to the “Final Four” and the eventual crowning of a new champion.

There are many traditions that have developed over the years since the first men’s tournament in 1939. Then, only eight teams were involved; this year, 68 schools will take part. In the years since that first tournament, 35 teams have “cut down the nets” (11 times by UCLA). Among the women, 15 teams have claimed the prize (11 times by Connecticut) since the first NCAA tournament in 1982.

I mention this about the basketball tournaments because it occurs to me that the Church is also engaged in its own version of “March Madness.” No, we are not going to gather in the South Boulder Rec Center for a church-wide free throw contest (although that might be fun!). Rather, on Ash Wednesday (February 26) we began an exciting season: the season of Lent and the leadup that will see us arriving once more on Easter morning. Starting on March 1, we’ll begin the Sundays in Lent and a unique telling of the gospel story of Holy Week.

As happens all too frequently in the life of the Church, and in the lives of individual Christians, we can get “all spun-up” in the busy-ness of the Church, in the frenetic whirl of our own lives, and forget to enjoy the gift from God that is life.

The purpose of Lent, you see, isn’t to make us tired from yet another obligation to

squeeze more into an already full calendar. It isn't supposed to make us desire to get to Easter, so that we can move on to the next event already peering around the corner on our calendars. No, the season of Lent is designed so that our time isn't "mad," but purpose-filled with the grace of God that comes from being present with and to God.

I invite you then, as you move through the days given to you this month, to "ponder anew what the Almighty can do" in your life and in the world unfolding with promise – not mad, but marvelous!

Every blessing,
Pastor Charles

Print copies of our devotional for Lent can be picked up from the table in the narthex or in the church office. Daily entries are posted on our blog (www.bolderstpauls.blogspot.com) and on our Facebook page.

Lenten

Sermon

Series

Why would we celebrate Palm Sunday on the first Sunday of Lent? Because Holy Week is a sacred time for Christians everywhere; but the week passes by so quickly that we don't have the time to reflect deeply on what it means. Instead of cramming our reflection time into one schedule-packed week of special services, we are going to slow down and spend the entire season of Lent on the events that took place during Holy Week.

It just makes good sense that if Jesus's final week begins on Palm Sunday in Jerusalem that we begin there. Each week afterwards we will spend our time examining a day-by-day account of what Jesus did during His final week before his

crucifixion and resurrection.

Week 1, March 1: What kind of King is Jesus? (Mark 11:1-11)

Week 2, March 8: Trouble in the Temple (Mark 11:12-19)

Week 3, March 15: Conflict and More Conflict (Mark 11:20-13:37)

Week 4: March 22: The Need for a Traitor (Mark 14:1-11)

Week 5: March 29: A Last Supper and Gethsemane (Mark 14:12-71)

Week 6, April 5: The Crucifixion of Jesus (Mark 15:1-41)

Week 7, April 12: Easter Sunday: Resurrection (Mark 16:1-8)

Our primary source for this series, however, is the Gospel of Mark. Why Mark? Because Mark was the first gospel account written and the other gospel writers used Mark as a source themselves.

You are encouraged to prepare and participate in the following ways:

- Read the final week on your own in Mark 11:1-16:8.
- Spend time each day praying about what you have read.
- Be present each week and expect to hear from God.

I'm excited about this series for many reasons. I'm certain that we are going to be challenged in new ways by the life and teaching of Jesus. We may even have some long-held beliefs about Jesus and the Kingdom of God overturned. I'm praying that this rather unorthodox approach will make Easter much more meaningful this year as we explore some big questions, like:

What actually happened during the Final Week of Jesus's life?
Why were the religious authorities threatened by Him?
Why did the disciples desert Him in His hour of need?
Why was He crucified as a common criminal?

And more importantly, what does it all mean for me as I follow Christ in my own time?

—From Ministry Matters website

ST. PATRICK'S DAY LUNCHEON

We're all a little Irish on St. Patrick's Day. Since St. Patrick's Day (March 17th) comes soon after Sunday, March 15th, plan to join your church family for a Potluck Luncheon after the service on the 15th. Food will be provided by the Fellowship Committee. We'll have Shepherd's Pie, Lamb Stew, Corned Beef & Cabbage, Irish Soda Bread, Fruits & Veggies, and Bread Pudding. Just bring your appetites and a few dollars to contribute for the meats. We hope everyone will bring plenty of good cheer for this event.

—Fellowship Committee

Monthly Events

Ladies Lunch Bunch will meet on Thursday, March 5, at 11:45 at Zolo Mexican Restaurant (2525 Arapahoe Avenue). Louise Cook will take reservations (303-494-7226) by March 3.

Men's Breakfast will meet on Saturday, March 14, at 8:00 a.m. at Le Peep. No reservation needed; just come and enjoy.

Sew What will meet on March 27 at 10:00 a.m. at the home of Brenda Smith. Please let Brenda know if you are coming: 303-410-2915.

Theater Notes

Here are schedules for BDT Stage and Candlelight Dinner Playhouse for Spring and Summer, 2020.

BDT Stage

Ragtime: March 7—May 30

The Sound of Music: June 5—September 19

Candlelight

Jekyll and Hyde, the Musical:

January 30—March 29

Curtains: April 9—May 31

Peter Pan: June 11—August 23

We have 21 people signed up to see *Ragtime* at BDT Stage on Thursday, May 7. We'd love to have you join our group. Ticket price would still be \$51, but seating with the group not guaranteed. See Judy Waller if you're interested.

St. Paul's on YouTube

Each week we record the anthem and the sermon for our YouTube channel. On our channel, we invite you to subscribe (no cost!), visit any of the playlists such as sermons, choir, Jubilante Ringers, and more. Find the video you want to see and be sure to give us a "like," comments of course are welcomed! The channel can be found by searching for St. Paul's UMC – Boulder or at this link:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCJAOAiYsJw1TVrzYvRjROA>

March Money Minute (Finance Committee)

Your Finance Committee is working hard to update our policies and procedures,

and to make your stewardship to St. Paul's easier and more transparent. Here are your "March Money Minutes":

One of our goals is to improve the security of your checks and donations that come by automatic draft from your bank account. **We now have a safe!** Checks received during the week will be placed in the safe, and will be added to the weekly deposit as has always been done. The addition of a safe will provide much-needed security for everyone.

Unless you would like yours more frequently, **giving statements** will only be distributed at year end. If you would like a quarterly statement, please email [Martha Batch](mailto:marthabatch@gmail.com) at marthabatch@gmail.com

We are using a **new financial management system** which is web-based. One of the financial secretaries, plus one other person will be counting on Sundays from here forward. If you would like to volunteer, the process now only involves making copies of the checks and depositing the envelope at Chase Bank in Table Mesa. Please email Louise Cook at louisecook916@gmail.com if you would be available to assist in the Sunday counting process.

Would you be interested in donating via Credit Card or ACH transaction? We are interested in how many of you would be interested in this option for your donations. Please email [Martha Batch](mailto:marthabatch@gmail.com) at marthabatch@gmail.com if this is something you might consider. Please know that there would be a fee associated with either type of giving-- the credit card fee is 2.9% and the ACH fee is 1%. This is just one more way that we are eager to meet your giving needs!

Audit needed! Are you a numbers person? The Finance Committee is looking for someone who would be willing to do an audit of our 2019 books. This is a great stewardship opportunity for you to provide to your church! Please prayerfully

consider if you would be able to do this for us. There is a UMC-approved process and procedure that we will provide for you. Melanie Muckle (mjmmuckle@gmail.com) can answer your questions about the auditing process.

EGGS, BUNNIES & BASKETS, OH MY!

It's time for us to gear up for our annual Easter mission: providing Easter supplies to EFAA families. Lindsey Warren, the Children's Program Coordinator, is so appreciative of all that we do for the EFAA kids. She shared that "the baskets and eggs offer us many opportunities to support the families and children in so many different ways."

Here's what we need: 200+ MEDIUM-SIZED plastic eggs; many baskets, all sizes; stuffed animals—Easter/Spring themes (bunnies, lambs, so forth); a few more empty egg cartons; and, of course, lots of candy! (Monetary donations also accepted)

Cartons/bags of empty eggs will be in the back of the Sanctuary March 22, to be returned filled with candy by April 5. Thank you for helping to make Easter a little more special for these families.

The Mission of the Reconciling Ministries Team

Differences over the full inclusion of persons with a range of sexualities has been a source of painful controversy for the United Methodist Church for decades. As most of us are now aware, this has culminated in a season of crisis for the larger church, which faces the possibility of transforming into a church no longer "united."

A number of congregations have decided that it is important to them, however the larger church acts on this issue, to determine their own stance toward the inclusion

of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Questioning (LGBTQ) individuals within their faith communities. Here in Boulder, for over twenty years now, since 1997, First Church has identified itself as belonging to the Reconciling Ministries Network, declaring itself as “fully welcoming of LGBTQ people and their loved ones”; Mountain View Church has also recently joined the Reconciling Ministries. First United Methodist in Fort Collins, Arvada United Methodist Church, and dozens of others in our conference have done the same. So this seems an apt moment for our congregation to take the opportunity to seek our own path.

Here at St. Paul's, a small group of us have formed an informal committee, outside of the church's administrative structure, to begin a journey toward understanding what commitments we might want to make, collectively, toward becoming a more inclusive congregation. What does it mean to US to be followers of Christ? How do WE understand Gospel teachings on inclusivity? How does inclusivity fit into OUR values as people of faith? Should St. Paul's join the Reconciling Ministries Network? The current members of this committee are Scott and Rebecca Glancy, Steve Batch, Judy Waller, Abby Lagemann, and Claudia Mills.

To initiate this process, we are using the resources provided by the “Building an Inclusive Church Toolkit” put together by a number of mainstream Protestant denominations struggling with these same issues. The methodology proposed in the Toolkit is one that diverges remarkably from what we see in our nation's political life in these divisive times: it is based on principles of respect for all voices and active, empathetic listening. Because we are seeking to formulate a position on inclusivity for our church, a church beloved by all of us, on this exploratory journey, our committee is committed to hearing from all of you before we are ready to propose a statement on inclusivity to be put forward for a congregational vote. With this aim in mind, over the course of the next few weeks, we will be inviting each of you to talk with us, one on one, to share your thoughts and feelings. Our goal is not to teach or to preach, but simply to listen, and to hear.

If you have questions about the committee's work, any of us would be happy to answer them. You can also explore resources provided on the Reconciling Ministries website at www.rmnetwork.org

Safe Gathering Training

The Mountain Sky United Methodist Conference is committed to ensuring that we provide safe places of worship and fellowship to everyone we serve. Safe Gatherings is an online abuse prevention program that screens and trains clergy, staff and volunteers to help prevent abuse of children, youth, and vulnerable adults in group settings. When employees and volunteers are trained to identify potential abusers, recognize the signs of abuse, and how to handle reporting, they are better equipped to prevent abuse. When using Safe Gatherings, upon successful completion of the application, background check, reference checks, and the online training program, each applicant will receive documentation of approval valid for three years and will have continued access to the online training program for an entire year. The price per applicant for the program customized for Mountain Sky UMC churches is \$37. That includes processing of two electronic references, a national and current county of residence 7-year background check, sex offender registry check, and the 1 1/2 hour online abuse prevention and boundary awareness training. Visit <https://www.mtnskyumc.org/safe> to learn more.

MARCH BIRTHDAYS

- 3-4 Jim Vander Vorste
- 3-5 Jayson Dupre
- 3-9 Lily Berlin
- 3-9 Bets Daniels
- 3-11 Elise Cook

- 3-19 Kent Beaber
- 3-22 Diane McKnight
- 3-30 Alexandra Muckle

March Volunteers

	3/1	3/8	3/15	3/22	3/29
Fellowship	Josie Glancy	Hults	Potluck	Daniels	L
Flowers	Glancys	Hults	Sandra Jordan	Daniels	S
Lay Liturgist	Amy Abshire	Amy Abshire	Amy Abshire	Amy Abshire	A

MARCH CALENDAR

Sunday	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Worship with Communion 10:15 a.m.	2 Yoga with Rebecca 9:00 a.m.	3	4 Chancel Choir 7:30	5 Ladies Lunch Bunch 11:45 a.m.	6 World Day of Prayer	7 <i>Spring ahead!</i>
8 Worship 10:15 a.m. Daylight Savings	9 Yoga with Rebecca 9:00 a.m.	10	11 Chancel Choir 7:30	12	13	14 Men's Breakfast 8:00 a.m. Le Peep
15 Worship 10:15 a.m. Church Potluck 11:30 a.m.	16 Yoga with Rebecca 9:00 a.m. Newsletter	17	18 Chancel Choir 7:30	19	20	21
22 Worship 10:15 a.m. UMCOR Sunday	23 Yoga with Rebecca 9:00 a.m.	24	25 Chancel Choir 7:30	26	27 Sew What 10:00 a.m.	28 Pikes Peak District Conference 9:00 a.m.
29 Worship 10:15 a.m.	30 Yoga with Rebecca 9:00 a.m.	31				