A Publication of Mt Paran PC Fellowship Ministry

February 2020 / Volume 4 Issue 2

THE MT PARAN MESSENGER

...whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God." 1st Corinthians 10:31

This newsletter is dedicated to the Glory of God by the people of Mt Paran Presbyterian Church Randallstown, MD USA. The Messenger is a ministry of the Session, Elder Mitzi Ecker, Clerk & The Fellowship Ministry, Elder Cathy Mobit, Chair

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

The Observance & Meaning of Lent By Pastor Ed Terry

As you know the people in the Mt Paran family come from many backgrounds. Some of us grew up in liturgical churches and some of us who grew up in non-liturgical churches have had only a passing exposure to words like Lent, Shrove Tuesday, Mardi Gras, Ash Wednesday, and or Maundy Thursday. Someone may ask you why or why don't you not observe these times. They may state "shouldn't all Christians follow the Liturgical Calendar"? We all should be prepared to answer these people if they want to know more of the meaning and celebrations of these days in the liturgical year.

The six weeks before Easter is called the Lenten Season. Lent is a time to focus on the suffering, death and resurrection of our Savior, Jesus Christ. Because Jesus died, and thus paid for our sins, we have life. Because Jesus rose from the dead, we as Christians will rise and enjoy heaven throughout eternity.

- The word "lent" means "lengthen" and stands for that time in spring when the days grow longer.
- The original period of Lent was 40 hours. It was spent fasting to commemorate the suffering of Christ and the 40 hours He spent in the tomb.
- In the early 3rd century, Lent was lengthened to 6 days and around 800 AD it was changed to 40 days.
- Lent starts on Ash Wednesday and ends 40 days later before Easter. Sundays are not included in those 40 days. The 40 days correspond with Christ's 40 days in the wilderness.
- Shrove Tuesday, the day before Ash Wednesday, is celebrated in many parts of the world with feasting. The French call it "Mardi Gras". The Germans call it "Fausching". The feasting comes from the custom of using up household fats prior to the 40 days of Lenten fasting, when no fat is used.
- Shrove Tuesday takes its name from *"shriving"* or forgiving sins.
- The word "carnival", in relation to Mardi Gras means "Fat Tuesday".
- Ash Wednesday takes its name from the ancient practice of applying ashes as a sign of repentance and sorrow for sin.
- Maundy Thursday or Holy Thursday commemorates the Last Supper, when Jesus washed the feet of his disciples and established the ceremony known as the Eucharist. The name Maundy originates from the old Latin name for the day – *"Dies Mandatum",* which means the day of the new commandment; the commandment (or mandate, which comes from the same Latin root) by Jesus Christ to his disciples, to love one another as he had loved his disciples.
- In Bach's day, often the organ and choirs were silent during Lent.
- In early England, women of the parish traditionally spent Holy Week scrubbing the church, so it would sparkle for the Festival of Easter.

So why don't some Christians make a big deal of celebrating Lent, Ash Wednesday, and Maundy Thursday? Maybe it is because we have corrupted what was started as a good practice to keep us focused. ***The key is this … Are we celebrating the day or we celebrating the purpose of the day?*** The key issue is whether or not Jesus is in your life, not religious festivals. Have you made Christ the center of your life? Do you worship Him or do you go through the motions of religious festivals? Do you know that through Christ's death on the cross all sins of the people that trust Him are forgiven? There is no need for us to try and score points with God anymore. We are called to respond to The Lord's awesome sacrificial love for us with all that we are.

Lent is a time for us to focus on the suffering, the death and the resurrection of our Savior, Jesus Christ. Lent is also a time for us to focus on our selves, to look at ourselves the way Almighty God see us. Lent is a time to grow closer to our Lord and savior Jesus Christ.

February newsletter

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February 26th - Ash Wednesday – 7:00 pm
A Worship Service with the Imposition of Ashes

Please make every effort to attend this service which begins our journey to Resurrection.

Getting to Know…

connect to Ministry Missions

Isaiah 6:8

Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?" And I said, "Here am I. Send me!"

Mission Ministry

Purpose: Extending The Word to the community through outreach activities and opportunities

Chair: Franklin Epeme

Duties:

- Plan and provide for the distribution of the benevolent funds
- Plan and provide for people to go on mission trips
- Maintain contact with the missionaries our church supports
- Maintain contact with the mission partnerships our church supports
- Plan at least one special local hands on mission activity each quarter
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Excerpt from "Mt. Paran Church Ministries, Reorganization 2017"

February Birthdays

Please wish the following people a Happy Birthday by calling them or sending them a card, or connecting with them on social media.

The following people in our Mt Paran family have birthdays in February
Denis Nkengateh – February 2
Josiane Lerro – February 2
Monica Labah – February 3
Samuel Nkeh – February 4
Cassandra Azue – February 6
Precious Abeh – February 7
Odilia Jator February 7
Daisy Kum – February 8
Rochelle Miller – February 8
Martin Nkemtaji – February 8
Malyka Akum- February 10
Donald Dokas - February 10
Marion Tabe – February 13
Samuel Mpoudina – February 13
Shelia Shallow – February 13
Cletus Fongoh – February 14
Joachin Anya – February 14
Edna Akum – February 15
Precious Moti – February 15
Christian Nkempu – February 16
Cedrick Emeka – February 17
Ndeh Tadzog - February 17
Evan Akum – February 18
Sarah Beth Prall – February 18
Henry Tanwani – February 18
Evan Akum – February 18
Lawrence Koffi – February 20
Kenneth Bononjah – February 21
Charlotte Kenfack – February 22
Abbie Magee - February 26
Anthony Mboh – February 26
Cottin Miller – February 27
Stephan Tita – February 27

Those Who Serve February 2020

DEACON'S CLEANING TEAM FOR THE MONTH: Contact Deacon Cassandra Azure	**Sunday February 2nd**	**Sunday February 9th**	**Sunday February 16th**	**Sunday February 23th**
Lay Reader	Brinley Tebit	Danielle Owusu	Theresia Mbenga	Stephen Abunaw
Lay Reader	Marc Frank Anang	Pam Carter	Yolanda Garcia	Odilia Jator
Lay Reader	Lumbe Mfobujong	Henry Tanwani	Charles Tangwan	Mitzi Ecker
Greeters	Eni Kuchambi	Dottie Bell	Brittney Moti	Bryanna Moti
Greeters	Calab Nchumulah	Ziporah Enone	Martha Kembumbala	John Abeh
Greeters	Janelle Tanwani	Ophilia Samba	Christy Aluna	Shelia Shallow
Greeters	Pauola Abunaw	Roland Madindo	Viana Mbah	Cassandra Azue
Greeters	Prince Akum	Tina Langha	Pauline Arrey	Helen Ayuk
Ushers	Edna Akum	Roland Madindo	Martha Kembumbala	Alan Kweindjen
Ushers	Stephan Tita	Mitzi Ecker	Theresia Mbenga	Christy Aluna
Ushers	Janelle Tanwani	Dottie Bell	Elijah Akum	Bryanna Moti
Ushers	Georgie Kweindjeu	Nelly Enone	Tina Langha	Pauline Arrey
Ushers	Lumbe Mfogujong	Ophilia Samba	Stephen Eyoug	Viana Mbah
Children's Church		Beatrice Muma / Dwayne Cook	Tanwani Akum / Eric Nchumulah	Akwa Angwafo / Pauline Tanwani
Fellowship Host/ Hostess	CWF	CWF	CWF	CWF
Assisting Elders	Beatrice Muma	Tanwani Akum	Akwa Angwafo	Franklin Epeme
Offering Dedication	Dwayne Cook	Eric Nchumulah	Pauline Tanwani	Stephen Abunaw
Counter	Franklin Epeme	Martin Aluna	Henry Tanwani	Emmanuel Akum
Counter	Akwa Angwafo	Gladys Fai	Jessica Fongyi	Pam Carter
Counter	Chris Ndzo	Stallone Kemende	Dwayne Cook	Eric Nchumulah
Counter	Stephen Abunaw	Cassandra Azue	Ophilia Samba	Pauline Tanwani

The Sacrament of The Lord's Supper – February 2nd and March 1st

We will celebrate The Sacrament of The Lord's Supper as part of our morning worship on February 2nd and March 1st. In the 11th chapter of 1st Corinthians the Apostle Paul tells us that we need to properly prepare ourselves **prior** to coming to the Lord's Table. We are to prepare for receiving communion by examining ourselves. We need to take a serious look at ourselves. We need to ask ourselves if my thoughts, my words, and my actions are pleasing to Jesus. We need to ask ourselves if I am living the victorious life that God planned for me and the victorious life that is available to me through Jesus Christ. We need to ask ourselves if I am if I am being a good steward of my time by praying and meditating of God's Word to me, The Bible, each day. We all need to take a serious look at ourselves, and when we do if we are honest, we will admit that I can and should do a much better job of being an *Ambassador of Christ*. But the Good News of Jesus is that access to His table is not given to the worthy but that Jesus invites all people to come to His Table who come in repentance, humility, and faith.

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The Celebration of The Lords' Supper
February 2nd and March 1
Please begin by preparing yourself today!
Please make a special effort to attend!

JOIN THE DEACON'S PREP TEAM FOR THIS WEEK

Each Saturday

"His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!'
Mt 25:23

One of the many important responsibilities of the Deacons is to gather faithful saints each week who will prepare the building and sanctuary for worship.

This is God's house and we are blessed and honored to come before His presence surrounded by other Christians. In order to prepare the atmosphere for worship, the bathrooms need to be cleaned, the sanctuary needs to be vacuumed, the kitchen floor needs to be mopped, etc.

Want to help out with this valuable ministry for the month of February? Please contact **Deacon Cassandra Azure** at your earliest convenience.

Scriptures on Prayer

Ask

Matthew 7:7 *"Ask, and it will be given to you seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you*.
Matthew 21:22 *And whatever you ask in prayer, you will receive, if you have faith."*

Pray in Faith

Mark 9:29 *And he said to them, "This kind cannot be driven out by anything but prayer."*
Acts 9:40 *But Peter put them all outside, and knelt down and prayed; and turning to the body he said, "Tabitha, arise." And she opened her eyes, and when she saw Peter she sat up.*

Always & With Thanksgiving

Ephesians 6:18 *praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints,*
Philippians 4:6-7 *do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus*.

We Have Continuing Prayer Concerns For:

Elsa; Kimberly; David; Mary; Josh; Warren; Liah; Electra; Jack; Fred; the Nkeh family; the Lea family; the Dashi family; Dottie; Pine Ridge Presbyterian Church; Nyen Presbyterian Church; Naikom Presbyterian Church; the Terry family; Ngwokwong Presbyterian Church; an end to human trafficking / violence; the Simms family; the James family; Kevin; Trinity Presbyterian Church, Cherry Hill Presbyterian Church; the Aluna Family; the Madindo family; Danielle; Robinson; the Esakenong family; the Hackley family; the Akum family; the Hutchins family; and your pastors.

Remember we will start a new list of Continuing Prayer Concerns on December 15th. Names do not carryover automatically. You must call Pastor Ed or Pastor Anita if you want to place a person's name on the list.

From
The Desk of Clerk of Session
Elder Mitzi Ecker

2020 Per Capita

The Per Capita in The Presbyterian Church USA is very similar to The Annual Enrollment Fee in The Cameroon Presbyterian Church. The Per Capita apportionment is the annual dollar amount that each local Presbyterian Church pays to defray the administrative expenses of the Presbytery, of the Synod, and of the General Assembly. Paying your per capita is a responsibility of every member of Mt Paran. Every local Presbyterian Church is required to pay $35.73 for each active member in 2020 even if an individual member does not meet their own personal responsibility. When a member does not pay their per capita it really hurts Mt Paran. Make your check payable to the Mt. Paran Church and ear-mark it *"per capita"* or if your pay cash, please put it in an envelope marked *"per capita"*. Thank you for honoring your obligation as a member of Mt Paran.

The Annual Meeting of the Congregation

The Session has called for Part I of The Annual Meeting of The Congregation to be on Sunday February 23, 2020 immediately following the 11:00 am worship service. Part II of The Annual Meeting of The Congregation will be held on Sunday March 1, 2020 immediately following the 11:00 am worship service.

The purpose of Part I of The Annual Meeting is to receive and discuss The 2019 Annual Report. The purpose of Part II of The Annual Meeting is to receive and discuss The Proposed Budget for 2020. The Annual Report for 2019 will be posted on our website www.mtparanchurch.net by February 16th, so everyone will have ample time to review it prior to the meeting. If you need a printed hard copy please see one of the Pastor's. The budget, once approved will available upon request. Contact the church office with questions.

ASH WEDNESDAY: A TIME TO TURN

An excerpt from the *Companion to the Book of Common Worship* (Geneva Press, 2003, 109-110)

The Lenten journey from the ashes of death to resurrected life begins on the first day of Lent, Ash Wednesday, which signifies a time to turn around, to change directions, to repent. This first day of Lent reminds us that unless we are willing to die to our old selves, we cannot be raised to new life with Christ. The first step of this journey calls us to acknowledge and confront our mortality, individually and corporately. In many traditions, this is symbolized through the imposition of ashes — placing a cross on one's forehead. During the imposition of ashes the words: "You are dust, and to dust you shall return" (Genesis 3:19) are repeated again and again. We are to remember that we are but temporary creatures, always on the edge of death. On Ash Wednesday, we begin our Lenten trek through the desert toward Easter.

Ashes on the forehead is a sign of our humanity and a reminder of our mortality. Lent is not a matter of being good, and wearing ashes is not to show off one's faith. The ashes are a reminder to us and our communities of our finite creatureliness. The ashes we wear on our Lenten journey symbolize the dust and broken debris of our lives as well as the reality that eventually each of us will die.

Trusting in the "accomplished fact" of Christ's resurrection, however, we listen for the Word of God in the time-honored stories of the church's Lenten journey. We follow Jesus into the wilderness, resist temptation, fast, and proceed "on the way" to Jerusalem and the cross. Our Lenten journey is one of *metanoia* ("turning around"), of changing directions from self-serving toward the self-giving way of the cross.

February 26th - Ash Wednesday – 7:00 pm
A Worship Service with the Imposition of Ashes

Please make every effort to attend this service which begins our journey to Easter

Mt Paran Presbyterian Church

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Proclaiming & Demonstrating the Love of God for 300+ years

Find us on the Web:
www.mtparanchurch.net

February Sermon Titles / Scriptures

February 2 2020 - Communion *"Preparing Our Hearts to Receive"*
Psalm 32:3-5, 2nd Corinthians 13:3-5, Mark 14:17-25, **1st Corinthians 11:17-34 (Sermon)**

February 9, 2020 –"Biblical Principles of Stewardship"
Matthew 25: 14 – 30; Matthew 6: 1 - 4; 1st Corinthians 16: 1 – 4; **1st Chronicles 29:1 – 20**

February 16, 2020 – "***Why We Receive An Offering Each Time We Gather For Worship"***
1st Corinthians 16: 1 – 4; Philippians 4:10 – 20; 2nd Corinthians 8: 1 – 15; **Mark 12:41 – 43;**

February 23, 2020 – ***The Stewardship Of Time***
2nd Corinthians 6:1 – 2; Ephesians 5:15 – 20; Romans 13:8 – 14; **Matthew 25: 14 – 30**

February 26th- WEDNESDAY 7PM- Ash Wednesday –*"The Heart That Yearns for God"* Psalm 51

Join us for our Lenten Services when we examine
"Growing Closer to Christ"
Select Wednesday Evenings 7pm-8pm
and an accompanying on-line Bible Study
Look Out for Further Information.

Mt Paran Presbyterian Church

P O Box 415

Randallstown, MD 21133

[Recipient Name]

[Street address]

[Address 2]

[City, ST ZIP Code]