



From Pastor Jean

The Church year is turning to Lent, March 5 is Ash Wednesday. In the Protestant church, this day has often been ignored - it's a Roman Catholic tradition, right? Well, it is but its roots go back to the early church long before there were any such divisions. These forty days (excluding Sundays) have been a time of reflection and often thought of as a somber and humorless time. After all, we begin with Ash Wednesday (see below for the Community Ash Wednesday service at Pocket) and its call to penitence with the stark reminder that we too, are made up of dust and one day will return to it. The predominant color is purple, reminding us of Christ's suffering. We often talk about what we will give up - chocolate is a common favorite. To our ears, the music sounds very somber, even when it's not. We cannot forget - nor should we - that Good Friday will follow the ebullient cheers of Palm Sunday and, with it, Christ's suffering for you and me. Yet with believers of all times and all places, we know that Good Friday was not the end but a brief pause before the glorious Easter Son-rise.

Well then, how should we approach Lent? Perhaps this is the time to focus on our faith more intentionally. We have a new bible study (see below) beginning on Ash Wednesday and going through the first week of Easter. Perhaps you would prefer a Lenten devotional for your daily study. It just so happens that the author of our Bible study has one. Check out <https://katebowler.com/> and look for "The Hardest Part" devotional. While you do have to sign up there is no cost and you then can download the full devotional booklet. Or if you wish to give something up that's fine but what will you replace it with? For example, if you give up chocolate you might wish to take the money you save and contribute it to One Great Hour of Sharing or to the local food bank or other mission. Perhaps you have decided to read your Bible every day. Wonderful! Write it on your calendar so you don't forget. Oh, and if you miss a day it's okay to either catch up or just start again. Maybe you've decided to increase your prayer life. Fantastic! Make a note of those who you feel called to pray for when it strikes you (it's ok to wait until you get to a stop sign - no writing nor texting while you drive please. Better yet offer that prayer right then with your eyes wide open!) Or maybe it's something completely different, unique just to you. That's great! Take this time to deepen your walk with your Lord and Saviour.

I encourage you to also join in one of the special events and invite a friend.

We are all called to grow in our Christian walk, maturing in our faith. What will you do to follow our Saviour more closely as we journey together this Lenten season?

In His Love, Pastor Jean

Announcements

~In February we collected 92 pounds of food for the CUOC.

CUOC Needs	
Pantry Requests	
• Cereal, Oatmeal, Break-Fast Items	
• Canned Soup	
• Spaghetti Sauce	
• Canned Meat (not Tuna)	
BackPack Pals Requests	
• Oatmeal, Grits, Pop Tarts	
• Break-Fast Bars, Individual Cereal Containers	
• Canned Soup	

~Flower Calendar--Flowers are a beautiful addition to our sanctuary. This is a great way to remember or celebrate loved ones or special occasions. Please consider signing up in the narthex.

~The church has a piano available to anyone that would like to come pick it up. Please call Duane Jackson if you are interested.

~Monday Missions Meals--Our church loves to support our members. Please continue to sign up to take meals on the first & third Mondays of each month. We now support 3 members. They love having the visits, along with the meals. If you have any questions, please see Jessica Jackson.

~Pocket Presbyterian Church will have an Ash Wednesday Service, March 5 at 7pm. Everyone is welcome!

~Paster Jean will begin a new Lent bible study called The Hardest Part on Wednesday, March 5, 2025. There will be a morning bible study at 10:00 in the Fellowship Hall and a virtual evening bible study using Zoom at 7:00 pm. Both the morning and evening bible studies are now both held on Wednesday. We hope the new day and time for evening study will be more convenient for people to attend. The bible study is an 8-week study that concludes on April 23, 2025. Please note that the first evening bible study on March 5th will need to be held at 4:00 pm instead of 7:00 pm due to the Ash Wednesday Service at Pocket.

~SPRING FORWARD! Don't forget to turn your clocks forward Sunday March 9th!



W Joint Meeting

Where: Fellowship Hall
When: Saturday, April 26 @ 10:00 am

What To Bring: finger food

Agenda:
Brunch
Elect Officers
By-Law Changes
Birthday Offering
Quilting

From the Session

Stated meeting – Feb. 23, 2025

Meeting was called to order and a quorum was declared. Members present were, Janice Thompson, Nicole Thompson, Jessica Jackson, Duane Jackson, Ronnie McQueen, Angie Boatright, Crissy Jastzabski, Rev. Jean Sparks, and Lisa Stephens. Angie presented devotion and prayer.

The minutes from the Jan. 19th session meeting were reviewed and a motion to approve them was made by Ronnie and then unanimous approval. Jean discussed the pastor's report. There was some suggestion and discussion that we encourage other plans be made when Jean is very sick as she had been. Discussion that Ash Wednesday service will be at Pocket Presbyterian on March 5th. It will be posted on social media, and Jean is participating in the service.

Communications

Clerk received an email from presbytery inviting us to submit a name of an existing elder or past elder to possibly be nominated to be a commissioner at the General assembly of the PCUSA in Milwaukee, WI. This is considered a great honor for our church to be chosen to have this opportunity. We decided to look at a list of our elders and clerk will email that list to the elders this next week. We will discuss potential elders at our next meeting. The name must be submitted by May 1st.

Financial Report

Given by Angie and reviewed.

Committee Report

Worship -The youth will lead worship service on Sunday, March 9th.

Building & Grounds- New lights have been installed by the road. Thank you to Debbie Cox and her husband for completing that. Trying to give the extra piano away in the fellowship hall. Small leak in the roof of the fellowship hall. A roofing contractor has been contacted.

Christian Education- A new bible study will start March 5th. It will be an 8 wk study that will continue with a Zoom evening option and in-person morning option.

Commitment- no report

Witness- no report

Old Business

Lisa brought up the John Hall Presbyterian Church's fundraising for handicap accessibility. We had already decided to announce to church that they can contribute and mail directly their address. Will post notice in bulletin for next two Sundays with the information to mail your check. I asked Janice to please tell David to put in the bulletin.

New Business

Lisa handed out the cemetery financial report for 2024 completed by Pam Stephens. A motion was brought forth by Duane Jackson to approve the report, Angie Boatright seconded the motion. The Cemetery Report was approved. Crissy Jastzabski volunteered to complete the devotion and prayer for our next meeting scheduled for March 16, 2025. Meeting was adjourned.

YOUTH GROUP

Our first couple of Sundays this month were regular meetings at church with lessons, games, and snacks.

For Valentine's we took treat bags and Valentines to ten of our members. We wish we could take them to everyone, but we still send our love to those we did not get a chance to see.

We are busy working on our church service. We are going to lead worship on March 9 when Pastor Jean is away. Please make plans to come and worship with us.

Janice





Pastor Jean and Mike Spivey working hard in Puerto Rico!



Congregation Breakfast



A graphic featuring a green bicycle with a basket of gifts, balloons, and stars. The word "MARCH" is written in large, green, block letters, and "birthdays" is written in a cursive script below it.

MARCH birthdays

Carter Cummings *3/3*

Jessica Jackson *3/5*

Kate Jackson *3/6*

Luke Jackson *3/6*

Larry Wilson *3/29*



*Dean Green celebrated her
94th birthday with friends and
family on February 21st!*

Liturgist

2nd David
 9th Christin
 16th Nicole
 23rd Pam

Ushers

2nd Christin & Carter
 9th Lisa & Olivia
 16th Crissy & Gabe
 23rd Lawanda & Kaylee

MARCH 2025

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
						1
2 Sunday School 10:00 am Worship 11:00 am Youth 5:00 pm	3 Circle of Friends 7:00 pm	4 Day Circle 10:00 am Shirley Watson Circle 7:00 pm	5 Bible Study 10:00 AM Fellowship Hall Virtual Bible Study 4:00 PM Lent Service Pocket Pres. 7:00 PM	6	7	8
9 CUOC Sunday Breakfast 9:00 am Sunday School 10:00 am Worship 11:00 am Youth 5:00 pm	10	11	12 Bible Study 10:00 AM Fellowship Hall Virtual Bible Study 7:00 PM	13	14	15
16 Men's Breakfast 8:00 am Sunday School 10:00 am Worship 11:00 am Youth 5:00 pm Session Meeting 6:00 pm	17  St. Patrick's Day	18	19 Bible Study 10:00 AM Fellowship Hall Virtual Bible Study 7:00 PM	20	21	22
23 Sunday School 10:00 am Worship 11:00 am Youth 5:00 pm	24	25	26 Bible Study 10:00 AM Fellowship Hall Virtual Bible Study 7:00 PM	27	28	29
30 2 Cents a Meal Offering Sunday School 10:00 am Worship 11:00 am Youth 5:00 pm	31					



The Legend of St. Patrick's Day



St. Patrick's Day is officially observed on March 17 each year, though celebrations may not be limited to this date. The significance of March 17 is that it's said to be the date of St. Patrick's death in the late 5th century (circa A.D. 493).

Saint Patrick is the patron saint and national apostle of Ireland. He is credited with successfully spreading Christianity throughout Ireland—hence the Christian celebration of his life and name.

The man who would eventually become St. Patrick was born in Britain (part of the Roman Empire at the time) as Maewyn Succat in the late 4th century. His family was Christian, but it's said that Maewyn himself was an atheist throughout his childhood.

That would change at age 16 (around A.D. 400) when Maewyn was kidnapped from his home on the west coast of Britain by Irish pirates, who proceeded to carry him off to Ireland and force him to work as a shepherd herding sheep. After six years, he escaped his captors, walking nearly 200 miles through the Irish landscape and convincing a ship to carry him with them back to Britain. This harrowing experience certainly had an effect on Maewyn, who was convinced it was the Lord who protected him and delivered him safely home.

Upon returning home, Maewyn received his call (in a dream) to preach the Gospel—in Ireland, of all places! He spent the next 15 or so years in a monastery in Britain, preparing for his missionary work. When he became a priest, his name was changed to Patricius, and he returned to the land of his captors to begin his teachings.

Although some Christians already lived in Ireland at the time, the country was largely pagan, so spreading a foreign religion was not an easy task. Patricius traveled from village to village to share the teachings of the Lord and was eventually successful enough to found many churches there.

We wear a shamrock on St. Patrick's Day because, legend says, St. Patrick used its three leaves to explain the Holy Trinity in his teachings. (The Trinity is the Father, the Son, and the Spirit as three divine persons who are one divine being [God].) The truth of the St. Patrick legend, however, is in question, as there is no direct record that the saint actually used the shamrock as a teaching tool.

Note: The symbol of St. Patrick is a three-leaf shamrock, not a four-leaf clover. However, long before the shamrock became associated with St. Patrick's Day, the four-leaf clover was regarded by ancient Celts as a charm against evil spirits. In the early 1900s, O. H. Benson, an Iowa school superintendent, came up with the idea of using a clover as the emblem for a newly founded agricultural club for children in his area. In 1911, the four-leaf clover was chosen as the emblem for the national club program, later named 4-H.

