



ELMHURST
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH

MARCH 2020

Newsletter

A NEWSLETTER FOR MEMBERS AND FRIENDS OF ELMHURST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

INSIDE

PAGE 2

Pastor's Corner (cont.)

PAGE 3

Family Ministry

PAGE 4

March Music

PAGE 5

Trustee News

PAGE 6-7

Presbyterian 101

PAGE 8

Leadership Breakfast
Book Study

PASTOR'S + CORNER

REV. TRACI SMITH

Observing a Holy Lent — The Three Pillars of Lent

Lent, the days and weeks leading up to Holy Week is from February 26 - April 9. As this is the March Newsletter, we're just at the very beginning of the Lenten season for 2020. It's not too late to begin a Lenten discipline for the year. What are some of the ways you observe Lent? Our Roman Catholic brothers and sisters speak of the "three pillars" of Lent, which provides a wonderful sense of structure to our practice. Here are the three pillars, along with some examples of how you might consider practicing each one this Lent.



Pillar 1: Prayer



When you think of a prayer practice, what comes to mind? Do you imagine someone with a healthy prayer practice on his or her knees for hours at a time, saying eloquent words? That's one kind of prayer, but maybe not the most realistic ones. Here are some other types of prayer practices:

Gratitude Prayer

I recently started a Google Doc on my computer that's simply called "gratitude." As I am able and think about it, I open it up and type out a few things that I'm grateful for at that moment.

Creative Prayer

Praying through coloring, scripture, art, and music is a great way to connect with God without using words.

Journaling Prayer

Get a new journal and write out your prayers as the Spirit guides you. Your prayers are between you and God, you don't need to worry if they are eloquent or adequate as long as they are from the heart.

Walking Prayer

For centuries Christians have experienced God through walking in nature. Walk and speak (or listen) to God.

Continued on page 2

Lent

pray • fast • give

2

Pillar 2: Fasting

Jesus fasted for 40 days in the desert to hear God's voice. Fasting doesn't need to be so extreme. Fasting can include abstaining from other things besides food. Here are a few ideas:

- » **Fasting from alcohol or caffeine**
- » **Fasting from extra screen time**
- » **Fasting from television**

Fasts can be for the entire Lenten season, or a small portion. One thing that might help to orient your fast is to think about what you will do instead of the thing you've given up. If you give up screen time, how will you spend your time instead?

Observing a holy Lent can take many forms. I pray that you may find a way to celebrate and honor the season that resonates with you.

With grace + peace,

Pastor Traci

3

Pillar 3: Almsgiving

Almsgiving can be as simple as writing an extra check to a charity or giving extra money away during Lent. Here are some other ideas:

- » **Clean out your closets and basement** and donate unneeded items to a charity.
- » **Find out what the Food Pantry needs** and give an extra gift. EPC encourages gifts of full tubes of toothpaste and full size shampoo.
- » **Do special acts of kindness** during Lent: Be generous with love! Return someone's grocery cart. Pay for the coffee behind you. Go the extra mile for others.

HAPPENING IN MARCH »»»

March 4 | 1-2:30 pm

Knitting w/Prayer Shawl Ministry

March 7

St Pats Parade

March 8 | 9:30 am

Leadership Breakfast

March 15

Funtopia

March 25 | 7 pm

Book Study—*Thirst*

BY EMILY CULELLA, DIRECTOR OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION AND YOUTH MINISTRY

ON LENT AND PERMANENT CHANGE

A few years back, I gave up angry driving for Lent. While driving “defensively,” I clutched the steering wheel, my neck knotting into my shoulders. If one had Photoshopped out the steering wheel, you would’ve seen a woman ready to fist fight. Even after leaving my car, I took a piece of that anger with me. It would slowly leak away like poison. I had an epiphany once when I heard my son ask why I was so angry at the car ahead of me. I answered, “He’s not driving well and it’s making me feel...” I stopped. The truth was, I wasn’t angry, I was anxious and it translated into anger, behind the wheel. Once I interrogated that anxiety, I realized that I was anxious about being late, about the kids fighting, about all the things I needed to get done.

For Lent that year, I gave myself the permission to not worry about getting to my destination on time. I

let my mind wander. I turned off NPR and turned on music. I began to let a lot more people into my lane. And I even forgave them when they didn’t wave. The permission of that Lent, to let go of the feeling of needing to be anywhere else, to be doing something else, to get away from others, to pull ahead of the pack, has carried with me.

**MAY THIS LENT CHANGE
YOU, AND ME, AND THE
WHOLE WORLD, ONE
SMALL ACT AT A TIME.**

I once heard a pastor say that Lent should change us, permanently. In the same way that a flower changes the world around it permanently, or the teachings of a first century Hebrew man from questionable origins. Sometimes it’s learning how to not abuse your car horn. Sometimes it’s not having that second glass of wine. Sometimes it’s saving the world through radical non-violence. I hope this Lent changes you, and me, and the whole world, one small act at a time.

What
We’re
Learning
Downstairs

One of the best things about the Deep Blue Curriculum, is that it ping pongs around the Bible, letting our kids draw inferences between stories. This unit we’ve covered Moses, Jesus’ baptism and calling the disciples, Deborah, and David! As we head into Lent, we’ll cover more of David’s life and then the ministry of Christ on earth.

family ministry calendar

MARCH 7

ST. PAT’S PARADE

Handing out cocoa and popcorn to our community.

MARCH 15

ALL-CHURCH EVENT AT FUNTOPIA IN NAPERVILLE

Let’s shake off those winter blues!

MARCH MUSIC

GETTING TO KNOW YOU — THE MUSICIAN BEHIND THE GROOVE

BY SUSAN SMENTEK

EPC worship includes a variety of musical styles due to the talented musicians who call EPC their church home. Brian Collins is behind the drum set. He also plays percussion, is gifted at interpreting requests to “play something ‘Shoom- BOP- BOP’”, and, brings a large cup of coffee to Sunday morning rehearsals.

Brian, when did you start playing music? I started playing in my grade school band. My dad played drums on occasion but I really didn’t gravitate towards them until I was hooked into music through band.

What was your first instrument? Snare drum. The school music program didn’t have mallet instruments to go along with the drum. My mallet skills didn’t begin to develop until college.

Where did you go to school? Johnson Elementary and Blackhawk Junior High School in Bensenville.

What did you study in college? I first attended Loyola University in Chicago. I was on the Bio/Pre-Med track for two years but something always felt like it was missing. I left school and came home feeling defeated, but decided to enroll at College of DuPage (COD) part time and work full time. At COD, I timidly joined the Concert Band knowing that my musicianship suffered for not having played for two straight years. It was like a wave of positive emotions hit me when I started to play music again and it was then that I knew I just HAD to pursue a career in music if I was to be happy. I finished up my college career at Elmhurst College where I enrolled in almost every performing ensemble I could be in while studying to be a music educator.

What do you like about playing at EPC? Even with minimal sleep from a gig the night before, I enjoy waking up Sunday mornings to play music and be a

part of the positive energy that is EPC. The friendly, welcoming, familial attitude at this church is unlike anything I experienced at a church growing up. I feel very fortunate to perform every week with some very high quality musicians.

What do you do outside of church? I’m a grade school band director at Westchester Intermediate School. I’m lucky to say that Clare Collins is my wife and we have a wonderfully friendly dog named Marley that always makes us laugh. Other hobbies that I enjoy are: Fixing things and working with my hands, playing other instruments, building computers (when I need a new one), playing video games, reading books and going to the gym.

Favorite performers who influenced you? Throughout my life, there have been many “musical epiphanies” that have happened. For me, a certain artist or genre will just supercharge my interest and I’ll just listen for months to a year. Certain drummers have left an impact that has either changed up my playing or changed up the way I approach playing music. An abbreviated list: Buddy Rich, Dave Weckl, Max Roach, Jack DeJohnette, Steve Gadd, Jojo Mayer, Vinnie Colaiuta, Benny Greb, Steve Jordan, Poncho Sanchez, Tito Puente and Todd Sucherman. Non-drummers: Keith Jarrett, Billie Holiday, Charlie Parker, Cannonball Adderley, Jeff Beck, Jaco Pastorius, Wayne Bergeron, Bill Watrous, Jimi Hendrix, Paquito D’Rivera and Michel Camilo.

Anything else you’d like to share? I’m not a winter person and would rather be surfing!



EVER WONDER WHAT TRUSTEES DO? WONDER NO MORE.

Many people come to church on Sunday, or meetings throughout the week and don't think twice about the building, lighting, heat or air conditioning, or other parts of the facilities. This is in large part because of the Trustees and their committees. Trustees serve the congregation by managing the property and assets of the church. Part of this responsibility includes the pledge drive every year, and creating the annual budget. Once the budget is adopted by congregational vote, the Trustees keep a close watch on revenue and expenditures.

When something breaks, needs repair or replacement, the Trustees solicit bids, select the vendor, approve the work and make sure bills are paid. An example of an unanticipated expenditure was the recent replacement of the commercial refrigerator in the kitchen. It took many hours of research to find the best replacement, and how to dispose of the old fridge. Other items that flared up last year included replacing a broken sewer pipe in the parking lot, and the improvement to our sump pumps that the City of Elmhurst required. The lighting was changed to LEDs throughout the building to save substantial electricity expense.

Trustees are elected for a term of three years with two members being elected each year. Trustees watch over the balance sheet, the church's investments, and revenue streams so that the church has money to function. This year the Trustees will be looking at the timeline for major maintenance to the building, such as painting the wooden entry doors and windows, sealing the parking lot, new signage, concrete repairs, and surfacing the circle drive. Due to the expense, the projects will be planned over a several year period. Trustees would like to fill the open space in the education wing with an additional renter.

Trustees work as a committee, and we have open discussion about projects, budgeted items, additional expenditures, and so much more. The work is often executive decisions, but may also include trimming bushes, or digging out the drains along the building.

Don't be shy the next time the Nominating Committee asks for people willing to serve as a Trustee at EPC.



PRESBYTERIAN 101

Reprinted from <https://www.presbyterianmission.org/what-we-believe/what-makes-us-unique/>

The name Presbyterian comes from the Greek term in the New Testament for elder, *presbuteros*, a term used 72 times in the New Testament. The Presbyterian movement began among Protestants in the 16th and 17th centuries and centered on what form of church government would be appropriate. Some thought the church should be governed by bishops (Greek: *episkopos*) and became the Episcopal party, some by elders and became the Presbyterian party, and some directly by the congregation, which became the Congregationalist party.

Presbyterian church government emphasizes that the leadership of the church is shared between those called to be ministers and church members called to be elders within the congregation — we use the terms Teaching Elder to refer to ministers and Ruling Elder to refer to church members called to be elders. This strong emphasis on Presbyterian church government is our heritage from Scottish Presbyterians.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is Reformed in its theology and Presbyterian in its church government.

In North America the first presbytery was organized in 1706, the first synod in 1717; the first General Assembly was held in 1789. Today's Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) was created by the 1983 reunion of the two main branches of Presbyterians in America separated since the Civil War — the Presbyterian Church in the U.S. and the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. The latter had been created by the union of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.

and the United Presbyterian Church of North America in 1958.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is distinctly a confessional and a connectional church, distinguished by the representation of elders in its government. The church has a membership of 1.6 million in all 50 states and Puerto Rico with nearly 10 thousand congregations and worshipping communities.

What is unique about the Presbyterian Church?

Presbyterians are distinctive in two major ways. They adhere to a pattern of religious thought known as Reformed theology and a form of government

that stresses the active, representational leadership of both ministers and church members.

THE LEADERSHIP OF THE CHURCH IS SHARED BETWEEN THOSE CALLED TO BE MINISTERS AND CHURCH MEMBERS CALLED TO BE ELDERS

REFORMED THEOLOGY

What are human beings created to do? Reformed theology says that human beings are to “know God and enjoy [God] forever.” Theology is a way of thinking

about God and God's relation to the world.

Reformed theology evolved during the 16th century religious movement known as the Protestant Reformation.

In its confessions, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) expresses the faith of the Reformed tradition. Central to this tradition is the affirmation of the majesty, holiness and providence of God who creates, sustains, rules and redeems the world in the freedom of sovereign righteousness and love. Related to this central affirmation of God's

sovereignty are other great themes of the Reformed tradition:

- » The election of the people of God for service as well as for salvation.
- » Covenant life marked by a disciplined concern for order in the church according to the Word of God.
- » A faithful stewardship that shuns ostentation and seeks proper use of the gifts of God's creation.
- » The recognition of the human tendency to idolatry and tyranny, which calls the people of God to work for the transformation of society by seeking justice and living in obedience to the Word of God. (Book of Order, G-2.0500)

CHURCH GOVERNMENT

A major contributor to Reformed theology was John Calvin, who converted from Roman Catholicism after training for the priesthood and in the law. In exile in Geneva, Switzerland, Calvin developed the Presbyterian pattern of church government, which vests governing authority primarily in elected members known as elders. The word Presbyterian comes from the Greek word for elder.

Elders are chosen by the people. Together with ministers of the Word and Sacrament, they exercise leadership, government, and discipline and have responsibilities for the life of a particular church as well as the church at large, including ecumenical relationships. They shall serve faithfully as members of the session (Book of Order, G-10.0102). When elected as commissioners to higher governing bodies, elders participate and vote with the same authority as ministers of the Word and Sacrament, and they are eligible for any office (Book of Order, G-6.0302).

The body of elders elected to govern a particular congregation is called a session. They are elected by the congregation and in one sense are representatives of the other members of the congregation. On the other hand, their primary charge is to seek to discover and represent the will of Christ as they govern. Presbyterian elders are both elected and ordained. Through ordination they are officially set apart for service. They retain their ordination beyond their term in office. Ministers who serve the congregation are also part of the session. The session is the smallest, most local governing body. The other governing bodies are presbyteries, which are composed of several churches; synods, which are composed of several presbyteries; and the General Assembly, which represents the entire denomination. Elders and ministers who serve on these governing bodies are also called presbyters. Presbyteries and synods are also collectively referred to as mid councils.





ELMHURST
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH

367 SPRING ROAD
ELMHURST, IL 60126

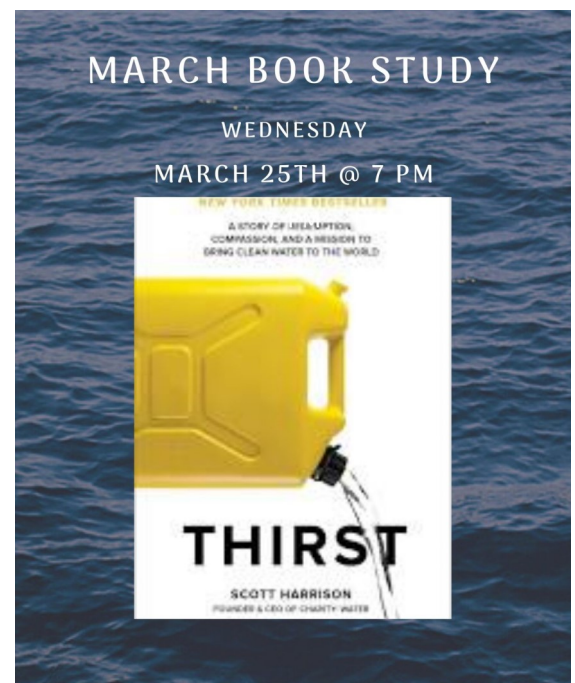


Sunday, March 8, 9:30 am
Calvin Hall

LEADERSHIP BREAKFAST

All committees are meeting to
discuss plans for winter.

Not on a committee? Come and
learn about opportunities to get
involved.



MARCH BOOK STUDY

WEDNESDAY
MARCH 25TH @ 7 PM

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER

A STORY OF LIFE, MISSION,
COMMISSION, AND A RESSION TO
BRING CLEAN WATER TO THE WORLD

THIRST

SCOTT HARRISON
FOUNDER & CEO OF CHARITY WATER

367 SPRING ROAD | ELMHURST, IL 60126 | 630-834-7750
ELMHURSTCHURCH.ORG | EPC@ELMHURSTCHURCH.ORG

