



Third Word News & Notes



FEBRUARY/MARCH 2013



Pastor's Message

FORTY DAYS THAT CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE



The forty days from Ash Wednesday to Easter is referred to as the season of Lent. "Lent" is from an Old English word, "*lencten*" which means "the time of lengthening days" or Springtime. Easter is the holiest of Christian holiday observances, and for centuries Christians around the world have made the forty days leading up to Easter a time of self examination, reflection, repentance, and rededication as a preparation of heart and mind for the celebration of Easter.

Lenten observance draws its inspiration from Jesus' example of withdrawing to the wilderness to fast and pray for forty days. He did this after his baptism to prepare himself for the public ministry he was about to undertake. Jesus in turn was following the example of Moses who lived in the wilderness as a shepherd for forty years before he was called by God to lead the enslaved Israelites out of Egypt to Sinai where he received the Ten commandments during a forty day period of fasting and praying. Afterward, he led the Israelites through the wilderness for another forty years where their loyalty to God was tested. Forty signifies a period of time, whether days or years, that are dedicated to a specific purpose, and which is sufficiently long to accomplish that purpose.



Lent is meant to be a forty day season that can make a difference in our life. Some do this by giving up something that they feel is a hindrance to their spiritual growth. Others choose to add something to their lives that will advance their spiritual growth. This year our Sunday school classes are learning about Lent. In the first half they are choosing to give something up. In the second half they are adding something to their lives. Let's all use this time of lengthening days to make a difference in our lives and in the world. Amen

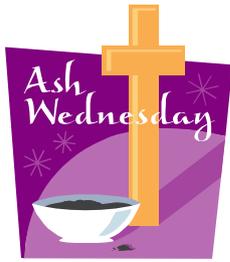
*Blessings,
Pastor Norm*



239th Annual Meeting

The meeting was held on February 3rd and was moderated by Russ Hassmann. All nominees were voted in and the budget for the new year was approved. Thanks to the estate of Arline Rich we were able to fully fund a Scholarship for graduating seniors for ten years. The fund will be named the Arline Rich Scholarship Fund. It will give \$500 per year to a deserving graduate. Thank you to Russ Hassmann for serving as president for two years. Brian Mendoza was voted as President, David Tycz as Vice President and Lori Albert as Corporate Secretary. Thanks to those who have served in many areas and thanks to those who continue to serve.





Lent Season

The season of Lent has begun. Ash Wednesday services were held on February 13th. The Maundy Thursday Service will be held on March 28th. This is a somber service symbolizing Jesus' commitment to his followers on the eve of his crucifixion. Palm Sunday will be celebrated by our annual re-creation of The Triumphal Entry. The students will hand out palm leaves to our members. Our Easter Services on March 31st begins with the sunrise service at 6:30AM at Miner Cemetery. The Deacons hold a breakfast following that service. The Family Service is at 10AM with an Easter Pageant put on by the students. The Easter Egg Hunt ends the services with all children able to participate to find candy and prizes on the lawn.



Heifer Project

This year we are following a different plan for the Heifer project. The students are observing Lent in two ways. They are to give up a precious item or activity for three weeks. After three weeks we will then ask the students and teachers to add something to their week. Some act of kindness needs to be performed each day or each week. We hope that the students learn about sacrifice and giving through this exercise. If they miss a day of giving or sacrifice they must bring in a \$1 for our Heifer fund. Heifer Project allows families in the US and developing countries by providing animals such as goats, cows, camels and chickens that can generate income for the families. It is a wonderful program that we support each year. The students in our 5th and 6th grade class gave a wonderful presentation to the congregation about the project on February 24th.



Climate Survey

A survey was set out to members to judge the state of the church in several ways. Questions related to spiritual growth and guidance, a sense of support and community, recognition of efforts and expectations of membership. It was distributed by the Strategic Planning Committee in an effort to see where the most work can and should be done in the coming year. The results will be reported at the next standing committee meeting and in the next newsletter.



Scholarship Opportunity

We are pleased to announce that a scholarship has been funded for graduating seniors at Third Church. All students who are graduating and moving on to higher education are eligible. Requirements include: being a graduate of a confirmation class here at Third Church, having several written recommendations from teachers and chairpersons here at the church, a written essay on how your faith and church involvement has helped to form your attitude, conduct and responsibilities toward society and others. Also state how the church has helped you to form and complete some of your life goals and twenty hours of service, most of which is to be at the church. If you know of a senior who is eligible and would like to apply, please contact Kim Kennedy.



Thousands of candles can be lighted from a single candle, and the life of the candle will not be shortened. Happiness never decreases by being shared.