



Message from Pastor Bill Vincent

From ashes to foot washing. From denial to betrayal. From repentance to palms. From reflection to darkness. From temptation to deliverance. From death to life.

Such are the themes of the season of Lent.

We begin with ashes, noting that symbol of repentance and sorrow for one's sins, as well as the remembrance of our mortality, "ashes to ashes, dust to dust." The forty days of Lent (which do not include Sundays) remind us of Christ's 40 days in the wilderness during which he meditated and reflected on, struggled and wrestled with God's will for him. We remember his call to discipleship ("take up your cross and follow me") and the trail he blazed through persecution and death in his life of faithfulness, service, and love.

We perceive in Peter's words of denial and Judas' act of betrayal a reflection of our own failings as children of God. We note the shouts of "Hosanna!" that all too soon turned into cries of "Crucify him!" We "survey the wondrous cross On which the Prince of Glory died" and know "Love so amazing, so divine, Demands my soul, my life, my all."

* We embark on our pilgrimage of Lent on Ash Wednesday which, this year at least, is on February 14th: Valentine's Day. How appropriate, since the beginning and end of our pilgrimage, as well as of our lives, is the love of God poured out for us in Jesus Christ. This joint service will be at 7:00 pm at First:Union (communion will be served).

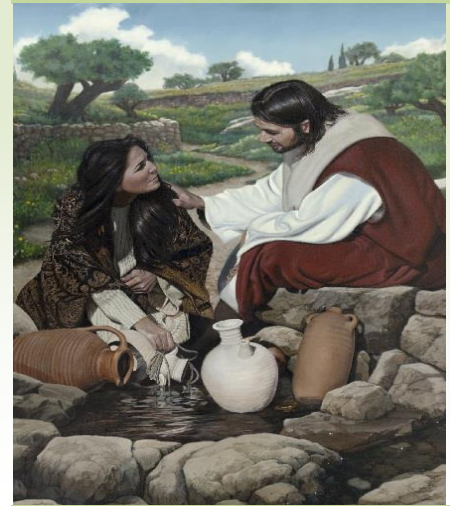
(* Yes, we'll also have a joint Maundy Thursday service on March 28th. Look for details in the March newsletter.)

* We'll share daily in Lenten Devotions from local places in our communities and beyond: observations and reflections on what we can learn, and discern, about God's presence in our lives and God's call to us amidst the everyday and the overlooked. These devotions will be made available weekly by email, with some hard copies available on Sundays for those who would like.

* I'll also lead us through a sermon series on Jesus' Final Week (according to Mark) as we focus on the events and teachings of those crucial, and holy, days leading up to Good Friday...and Easter.

So come, let us travel on this journey together: a journey to follow Jesus, a journey upon which he walks with us every step of the way.

*Peace in Christ,
Bill Vincent*



SAVE THE DATE:

There will be a joint Ash Wednesday service **Feb. 14**, along with Pacific Presbyterian. It will be held at **First Presbyterian, Union at 7pm.**

Presbyterian Women:

The Presbyterian Women will meet on February 25, 2024 at 9:00n A.M. at the Church. The Hostesses are Karen Calvin and Jane Sellier. The Bible Study will be Lesson 3.

**Fellowship:**

We will be having fellowship time on the last Sunday of the month after worship service. There is a signup sheet on the table in the Northex if you would like to host or co-host, please add your name to the list.

Worshiping and serving God, loving, and accepting all

**A reminder:**

Prayer concerns can be shared with me via email or phone before worship (preferably by Saturday evening); or you can write them down (legibly, please) on a piece of paper and place them in the basket that will be located near the entrance to the sanctuary.

Pastor Bill

Sunday Worship service will be Streaming live on Facebook on Sunday at 9:00 am. The bulletin will also be available on Facebook and the church website (www.unionfirstpresby.org), posted by 8 am Sunday morning.

Link to Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/firstPresbyterianChurchUnion/>

Bulletin can be found here: <http://www.unionfirstpresby.org/church-bulletins/>