

# Hilltop Hallelujah

March 2019

Volume 7, Issue 9

## from the Interim Pastor's Perspective

### In this issue:

<b>Pastor's Message</b>	p. 1-2
<b>Daycare Director</b>	p. 1-2
<b>Youth Group</b>	p. 2
<b>Opportunities to Serve MOPS</b>	p. 3
<b>Opportunities to Study Adult Sunday School Sermons on Line</b>	p. 3
<b>Lenten Series</b>	p. 4
<b>Special Dates</b>	p. 5
<b>Opportunities to Gather Ash Wednesday Bunco</b>	p. 5
<b>March Birthdays</b>	p. 5
<b>Liturgical Color of Lent</b>	p. 6

Many of us have asked, been asked, or overheard someone ask the question, "What did you give up for Lent?" Often, the respondent makes an overture about "chocolate," or "television," or "desserts," "fast food," or going to bed too late – any number of vices that seem to have an emotional or physical "hold" on us. (By the time the Lenten season rolls around those New Year's Resolutions have mostly run their course and it may seem time to make a second effort to re-secure our resolve.)

Sometimes, people just know they need to make some changes and feel like Lent is an opportunity to bring God back into the picture by thinking, "If I make God part of the deal, I'll be more successful." Some people choose to practice fasting or abstinence and replace that which they've given up with prayer and meditation on God's Word. These folks may be closer to the reality of what the season of Lent represents in the Christian's life and the Church calendar; yet, many people in today's church ask another question about Lent: "Practice Lent? Why?"

(continued on page 2)

## Hilltop Preschool and Daycare



If your child is attending Edna C. Stevens in the fall, there

are some important dates coming up. Parent Orientation Night for the 2019-2020 school year will be held on Wed., March 20<sup>th</sup>, from 6:30-7:30 pm. Appointments for Kindergarten Registration will be taken that night.

Family Math/ Literacy Night will be held on Wed. March 27<sup>th</sup>, 6:30-7:30 PM at Edna. C Stevens. All families of children entering kindergarten in Cromwell in the fall are welcome to attend.

Kindergarten Registration for Edna C. Stevens will be on Wed., April 24<sup>th</sup> and Thursday, April 25<sup>th</sup>.



If you do not attend the Parent Orientation Night on March 20<sup>th</sup> then you will have to call ECS to make an appointment.

During this time of year there seems to be a lot of illnesses going around. Please remember to keep your children home if they have a fever or have had one during the previous 24 hours, have vomited within a 24 hour period or have a constant cough.



Looking ahead: on Thursday, April 4<sup>th</sup>, Soccer Shots, a traveling soccer program that goes to preschool and daycares, will be coming to do a free soccer demo with our three and four year old classes. If you are interested in having



(Interim Pastor's Message, continued from page 1)

As a child, my family did not observe Lent. We did not observe Ash Wednesday – and when I saw some of my friends at school with a “black smudge” on their foreheads – I had some questions that my parents found difficult to answer. Preparing to be a pastor, I had the opportunity to raise the same questions with other pastors and professors. I was surprised to learn that in not observing Lent, I was missing out on a personal enactment of Christ's own journey to the Cross, and therefore, had not the personal experience of taking up my cross as a spiritual exercise.

Lent is a 40-day preparation between Ash Wednesday and the Maundy Thursday before Easter used as an observance of Christ's passion, burial, and resurrection. Though Lent is not biblical – meaning, we are not taught to observe Lent from the Bible – it is an ancient, spiritual custom handed down from the early church and Apostolic Fathers – leading us to understand more deeply what Christ's relationship with us looks like, and it intentionally has the effect of leading us to Christ as an observance of the unfolding drama of His revelation to us.

Jesus taught, “If you want to be my disciples you must “turn from your selfish ways, take up your cross daily, and follow me” (Luke 9:23). By this statement, Jesus meant that we must be willing to “die to self” and live for God – even if it costs us something dear. The season and practice of Lent helps prepare us to do that. It allow us to participate in the believer's discipleship of “sharing in His sufferings” (Philippians 3:10).

There are many ways to practice Lent; however, in my opinion, replacing time we spend on ourselves doing things we enjoy by intentionally spending time with God in His Word and in prayer will be a blessing producing pure joy. May the Lord grant you the patience and discipline to observe Lent and so enrich your experience with Him. Amen.

Pastor Kevin

(Daycare Director's Message, continued from page 1)

your child take soccer lessons here at Hilltop there will be a chance to sign up for that following the demo.

For more information on Soccer Shots you can view their website at [www.soccershots.org](http://www.soccershots.org).

April vacation for school age children is the week of April 14<sup>th</sup>. If your child will be at Hilltop any of those days please indicate so on the sign-up sheet so we can begin to plan accordingly. Hilltop will be CLOSED on Friday, April 19<sup>th</sup> for Good Friday. Easter service will be Sunday, April 21<sup>st</sup> beginning at 9:30 am. All are invited!

Ms. Laura



**GUESS WHO'S GOING BOWLING?**

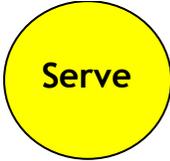
**YOUTH GROUP! ANYONE ELSE FEEL YOUNG ENOUGH TO COME WITH US?**

Sunday, March 24 after worship (the alleys don't open until 11 so we may as well as have a snack first at Coffee Time!)

Berlin Bowl, 1782 Berlin Tpke.  
Shoe rental and a couple of games will cost about \$15.

Please contact Ms Laura or Ms Shari if you plan to attend. Better yet, plan to be at church first - it will be the first time we've all been together since CHIC!

OPPORTUNITIES TO



Communion: March 3, 2019 Barbara Damon, Laura Winoski

	GREETERS	USHERS	READERS	COFFEE TIME
Mar. 3	Shari Pekarovic	Jordyn & Nicole Pekarovic	Sally Huggins	Dale Comstock
Mar. 10	Lorrey Hamilton	Dale Comstock, Barbara Damon	Bob McNaughton	Bob Curtis
Mar. 17	Sally Huggins	Brian & Joan Armet	Nicole Pekarovic	?
Mar. 24	Dale Comstock	Jenn & Jim Hite	Jim Hite	
Mar. 31	Lorrey Hamilton	Barbara Damon, Laura Winoski	Julia Cunningham	



March 12 – thank you Jen Beck

March 26 -

If you can provide supper for the moms on any MOPS nights, please sign up on the poster in the narthex.

**What if I can't prepare a meal, but want to help?** People have given donations so that we can subsidize the cost of preparing a meal, for those who need it, or so that we can purchase a meal when no one is available to cook.

OPPORTUNITIES TO



ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL

Adult Sunday School follows Coffee Time.

Resolve to study God's Word and the impact it can have on YOUR life and on the lives of those around you!

Sermons Are Online!

If you missed a Sunday sermon, you will be able to hear it on our website by the end of the day on Tuesday following the Sunday you missed; in other words, two days after the worship service.

[www.hilltopcovenant.org](http://www.hilltopcovenant.org)





## LENTEN SOUP, BREAD, AND DEVOTIONS



### Theme: A Road Less Traveled

The following is from Fr Mark Leo Curesky, OFM Conv., Pastor at St. John Church.

“Lent is upon us. For the past several years, the Christian family in Cromwell has observed this season of preparation for Easter by sharing a simple meal of home-made soup and bread, by conversing about our lives of faith and enjoying fellowship on the Wednesdays of Lent.

While recognizing that the world we live in is much less civil than in the past, the Christian ministers of Cromwell are asking that we envision the world in the light of where St. Paul sees the Spirit of God leading us. In his letter to the Christian community in Galatia, he describes that world as one of “love, joy, peace, patient endurance, kindness, generosity, faith, mildness and chastity” (5:25) It sounds wonderful! But is it too good to be true?

The Lord Jesus has shown us the way to such a world when he sat on a hillside and presented what are known as the “Beatitudes.” Each of the Beatitudes begins with the word, “Blessed.” But what follows does not seem to ring true in terms of what we understand blessings to be. Being blessed has come to be understood as a life of happiness, positive experiences, wealth, comfort, and/or the absence of problems. I do not know about you, but my life has some moments like this, but there are days of just the opposite. So does that mean I am not blessed? Does that mean that St. Paul’s vision is not possible?

Perhaps we must come to terms with what is meant by a life that is “blessed” so that we can see that the life described by St. Paul is a vision that is possible. During our Wednesdays in Lent, we will probe together several of the Beatitudes and the vision of St. Paul (Galatians 5:13-25).

You are invited to join us for an hour and a half, at most, on the Wednesdays in Lent at 6 pm at one of the local churches. Each evening, we will spend a brief time in prayer, conversation, enjoying a bowl of home-made soup and the mutual support of fellowship.

The first *Soup & Bread* evening will be on Wednesday, March 13 at St. John Church conversing on the Beatitudes in general. The second evening will be on Wednesday, March 20 at Bethany Lutheran Church conversing about those who are “poor in spirit” being blessed. The third evening will be on Wednesday, March 27 when Grace Communion International and Hilltop Covenant will host at First Congregational Church a conversation about those “who show mercy” being blessed. The fourth and final evening will be on Wednesday, April 3 at First Congregational Church conversing about “peace-makers” being blessed.

As Christians, we do not have the easiest and most comfortable way to live in the world. Robert Frost, I believe, captured this in his poem, *The Road Less Traveled*: “Two roads diverged in a wood, and I - I took the one less traveled by, and that has made all the difference.”

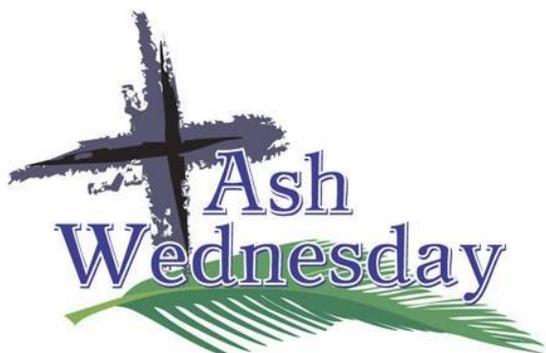
March 13 - St. John Church

March 20 - Bethany Lutheran Church

March 27 - Grace Communion International & Hilltop Covenant will host at First Congregational Church

April 3 - First Congregational Church

OPPORTUNITIES  
TO



Ash Wednesday service is on Wed., March 6, at 7:00 pm. Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the penitential season of Lent. Join us as we remember our brokenness, frailty and sin, in preparation to receive the gift of grace that is offered to us through the Resurrection. The service will conclude with the imposition of ashes, as a reminder that we came from the dust of the earth, and to the dust we shall return.

*When I find it's time to "go to press" and there are blank spots in the Hallelujah, I feel it's my duty to fill those voids. When I first read Pastor Kevin's message I realized that I didn't grow up observing Lent either. My mother was the church organist so I went to worship, but I don't remember Lent! I would see the ashes on some of my friends and that's when I figured it must be something that just Catholics observe. I don't think that's so true anymore.*  
Sally Huggins



Getting together for an evening of Bunco is long overdue!

Come to play (easy to learn and suitable for just about all ages!)

We'll meet in the lower level, 6 PM, Saturday March 30. Don't eat too much at supper that night because we'll have an ice cream sundae bar!

There are prizes, too!



BIRTHDAYS IN MARCH	ANNIVERSARIES
--------------------	---------------

Avery Pessa	3/4	Bill Drew	3/15
Jack Beck	3/4	Noah Hallden	3/22
Bob Curtis	3/4	Betty Comstock	3/27
Bob McNaughton	3/10	Steve Beck	3/29
Carolyn Johnson	3/12	Shari Pekarovic	3/29



# Believe It or Not!

a new church season begins on March 6, when we enter the season of Lent.

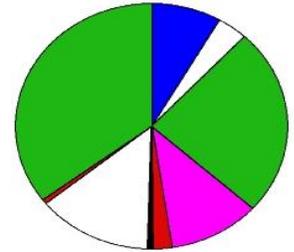
The purple we use at Lent is a color that represents somberness and solemnity, penitence and prayer. <sup>1</sup>

We will use purple throughout the six Sundays in Lent, ending on Palm Sunday, April 14th.

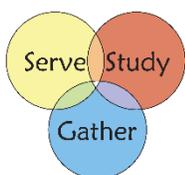
We will enter Holy Week on Maundy Thursday and you will see a new color in the sanctuary. That was the day on which Jesus was betrayed, followed by "Good Friday", which calls for "sober reflection on the cost of our redemption. Without Christ's sacrifice on the day the sky turned dark and hid the sun, there would be no light of Christ to live in, nor new life in Christ to enjoy." <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1,2</sup> – Lutheran Worship Notes, Issue 29, 1994

- Advent
- Christmas
- Epiphany
- Lent
- Holy Week
- Good Friday
- Easter
- Pentecost
- Ordinary Time



Hilltop Preschool and Daycare  
 82 Hicksville Road  
 Cromwell, CT 06416



Circles of Life in Christ