

## MARCH NEWSLETTER 2023

Dear members and friends of Hope Community Presbyterian Church,

Little did I know that I would experience Ash Wednesday and the beginning of Lent in 2023 on a ship, cruising in Brazil, exploring the Amazon, crossing the equator twice and then heading north through the Caribbean to Fort Lauderdale, Florida. It was my privilege to be exposed to the annual Carnival in Rio de Janeiro as well as the Carnival and Mardi Gras in Santos, Brazil on February 22, 2023. I continue to thank and praise God for this remarkable opportunity!

On February 23, I attended a meaningful ecumenical Ash Wednesday worship service on the ship. Lent begins with a call to fasting and repentance as we begin our journey to Easter. The pastor, who administered ashes on the foreheads of those who attended the service said that the sign of ashes suggests our human mortality and frailty. He also said that what seems like an ending is really an invitation to make each day a new beginning in which we are washed in God's mercy. Please allow me to share THE SYMBOLISM OF ASHES which was printed in the worship bulletin: "Ashes in a Jewish and Christian context suggests judgment and God's condemnation of sin, frailty, our total dependence upon God for life, humiliation and repentance. We are reminded forcefully of the words of committal in the burial service, 'earth-to-earth, ages to ashes, dust to dust.' For one day those words will be said over us. Moreover, ashes suggest cleaning and renewal. They were once used as a cleansing agent in the absence of soap, and on Ash Wednesday the ashes have sometimes been understood as a penitential substitute for water as a sign of baptism. Water stifles and refreshes, drowns and makes alive; so ashes also tell of both death and renewal."

And finally, this prayer: "Merciful God, accompany us on our journey through these forty days of Lent. Renew us in the gift of baptism, that we may provide for those who are marginalized, pray for those in need, fast from self-indulgence, and above all, that we may find our treasure in the life of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord."

May God bless you and give you peace during this season we call Lent. I look forward to returning to serve at Hope Community Presbyterian Church and to seeing all of you at the end of this month.

Peace and blessings,  
Rev. Wendy



### Sunday Lectionary Readings for March 2023

Date	Old Testament	Psalm	New Testament	Gospel
3/5/23	Genesis 12:1-4a	Psalm 121	Romans 4:1-5, 13-17	John 3:1-17
3/12/23	Exodus 17:1-7	Psalm 95	Romans 5:1-11	John 4:5-42
3/19/23	1 Samuel 16:1-13	Psalm 23	Ephesians 5:8-14	John 9:1-41
3/26/23	Ezekiel 37:1-14	Psalm 130	Romans 8:6-11	John 11:1-45

## Happy March Birthdays

5- Pat Claesson	16- Hayden Skalko
9- Klara DeVries	21- Milo Kroll
11- Nikolas Jesch	29- Craig Stevens
14- Kay Hoelscher	31- Monica Marks
14- Becky Peterson	

## Session Highlights

- Session approved the 2022 Church Statistical Report that was submitted to PC(USA) and the 2022 Church Annual Report.
- The dishwasher has been fixed in time for the April 23 luncheon.
- An updated church directory has been printed. Contact the office if you would like a copy mailed or emailed to you.

## Preaching Schedule

Mar. 5 – Rev. Frank Davis, Communion  
Mar. 12 – Pastor Ellen Taube  
Mar. 19 – Rev. Doug Workman  
Mar. 26 – Rev. Wendy Christianson returns

## All That Jazz!

We had a grand Transfiguration Sunday Jazz Worship Service on February 19! Thanks to all the musicians and singers who participated and the congregants who attended. It was an excellent start to our celebratory year! There is a rumor going around that we may do this again next year. Thanks to Mason Kroll, who was able to get all the new camera angles and audio microphones synched up to provide the digital congregants with an inspired worship experience. A link to the video of the service can be found on our website.

## Sanctuary Centennial Celebration

Sunday, April 23, will be our big day. It begins with our 10:00 a.m. traditional Worship Service followed by a catered luncheon by Paul's Italian Market of Champagne Chicken, glazed baby carrots, roasted red potatoes, tossed salad, and a meat and cheese tray with assorted buns. The cost is \$15 and we need a head count by April

16. Please RSVP to the church office and/or sign up on the sheet in the back of the sanctuary. At 3:00 p.m., Vicki Gornick and Amy Szumal will thrill us with an organ concert on our King of Instruments – the Bennet Organ – also 100 years old. We have a treasure of a church building. Let's celebrate it in royal style!

## South Room Centennial Showcase

The Sanctuary Centennial Committee has set up memorabilia from our church's history in the South Room. The Eveleth and Mt. Iron Presbyterian churches combined with the First Presbyterian Church of Virginia to form Hope Community Presbyterian Church. Stay tuned for Sylvia Chad's Journey Towards Hope in the bulletin to learn how that name was chosen from a list of very "interesting" ideas. We have photo albums, church directories, bulletins, offering plates, and other treasures to see. The 6-page history of Virginia's congregation has been "up-sized" and posted on the 2 bulletin boards in the back of the South Room. Take some time to read through it. It's fascinating!

## Envelopes Attached

We've attached 2 envelopes to this newsletter. One is for members who would like to pay the \$33/member per capita that the church pays to regional and national levels of PC(USA). The other is for the One Great Hour of Sharing special offering. This offering is made by Presbyterians around the world to provide relief from natural disasters, hunger, poverty and oppression.

## Worship Videos

Don't forget that you can watch our Sunday worship services live most Sundays on our YouTube channel. Links to the livestreams and past videos can be found on our website: [hopecommunitypc.org](http://hopecommunitypc.org). Weekly videos can also be seen on Virginia Cable Channel 5 at the following times: Friday 5pm, Saturday 7am, Sunday 10 am, Monday 1pm, and Tuesday 9:30pm.



# CHRISTIAN EDUCATION & YOUTH NEWS



March 2023



## ELEMENTARY SUNDAY SCHOOL

March 5

*John 3: 1-17*

*Because God so loved the world he saved the world through Jesus. We learn it is through faith in Christ we receive new life and belief in the resurrection*

March 12

*John 4: 5-42*

*Through the Samaritan at the well, we learn God can save us no matter what our situation and we need to share openly what the Bible teaches - kindness, sharing with everyone no matter what their place in life.*

March 19

*John 9: 1-41*

*As Jesus helps a blind man see again, we want to understand how to be aware of others' needs.*

March 26

*John 11: 1-45*

*The death of Lazarus is there to show us when things seem difficult and we don't understand how God is working with us - He has his own plan, his own timetable and we have to have faith in Him. Trust that He has our best interest in hand and one day all will work out.*

### BirthDay Corner

Klara Devries March 9  
Hayden Skalko March 16  
Milo Kroll March 21



## CHRISTIAN EDUCATION CALENDAR

Sunday March 5	Sunday March 12	Friday March 17	Sunday March 19	Sunday March 26
Second Sunday in Lent  John 3: 1-17	Third Sunday in Lent Day Light Savings Time <i>(Spring ahead)</i> John 4: 5-42	<b>St. Patrick's Day</b> 	Fourth Sunday in Lent  John 9: 1-41	Fifth Sunday in Lent  John 11: 1-45



### SOUPER BOWL OF CARING

Thank you to everyone who has helped make this project a success. This year, our total donation thus far, going to the Salvation Army Supper Club, is \$208. Thank you for your generosity!

### ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING

The Lenten Fish Banks were sent home in February for the first Sunday in Lent (Feb. 26th). Remember to fill them a little each day or week. We will be "netting" them anytime around

*Palm Sunday April 2.*

You may bring them in to the church (CE building) anytime you have them filled. It is usually open T,W,Th 12:00-3:00 .



### Don't Forget shut-in CARDS

I still send out cards to our shut-ins. I would love to have some of your own pictures to use so send or bring your pictures to the CE building. I will send them out each month with the shut-in cards. "Thanks"



### 40 DAYS OF LENT

*"Just as Christ was raised...we too might walk in the light of newness" Romans 6:4*

*Try to follow in Jesus' footsteps :*

- Think of others
  - Help someone you might not know or needs help
  - Do something special you are not used to doing
  - Take on a new task
  - When you feel lost, focus on something in the distance and walk towards it
  - Try to remember what Jesus would do or would want you to do
- Remember God is always with you - you be there for others*