

Eastwood Life



“CONNECTING HEARTS & HANDS”

Eastwood Baptist Church Newsletter Lent 2021

OUR 2021 LENTEN JOURNEY

About this time last year, we were signing up for the Race for Reading God’s Word. There is much to be said for reading large sections of Scripture, looking for the big picture – the Mighty Acts of God.

This season of Lent, I have another challenge for you. I’m calling it the Matthew Project. What happens if we immerse ourselves in one book of the Bible? Here are your Chapter Reading Assignments:

Due Feb 21 – Matthew 1-5

Due Feb 28 – Matthew 6-10

Due Mar 7 – Matthew 11-15

Due Mar 14 – Matthew 16-20

Due Mar 21 – Matthew 21-27 Palm Sunday

Due April 4 – Matthew 28 Easter Sunday

Each week, there will be a new list of questions about the text, fact questions that may help you review the details. On Sundays, I will try and look at some messages of Good News from each section.

Each Sunday, we will extinguish a Lenten Candle as we near the time of the cross. Whether you are in the sanctuary or online, you can share in this sacred season of devotion and reflection with Christians around the world.

Finally, during Holy Week, you will have a chance to spend some time with Jesus, literally. We’ll give you a *Jesus To Go* wherever you go! Join our lenten adventure from wherever you are.

ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE

February 17th

7pm

Live on Zoom

Five churches and six clergy will be leading a live Ash Wednesday Service. In future emails, you will find the link and the order of service. Join in this unique event as our churches begin the season of Lent.

WEDNESDAYS IN LENT

Forgotten People of Easter

Feb 24	Simon of Cyrene
Mar 3	Centurion at the Tomb
Mar 10	The Apostle John
Mar 17	Pilate’s Wife
Mar 24	Joseph of Arimathea

Each Wednesday, the Eastwood UPDATE email will have a link to a NEW series of visits with those often overlooked people who played an important role in Jesus’ last days. These first person dramas will be available with a few moments of prayer and worship online each week.

PASTORAL TRANSITIONAL NOTES

Developmental Tasks of the Interim Time

Some years ago a research study conducted by the Alban Institute identified at least five opportunities, or experiences, which congregations typically face during an interim in pastoral leadership. The care devoted to these “developmental tasks,” as they arise naturally during the interim period, will have a direct bearing upon the future relationship with your next pastor and the effectiveness of your next pastor’s ministry. Likewise, avoiding these developmental tasks in order to “get through the interim period quickly” may have negative consequences for future ministry. The five developmental tasks are opportunities that present themselves—not necessarily in the following order and often simultaneously. A skilled interim minister and attentive lay leaders will recognize these opportunities to grow, heal, renew and revitalize their church:

- **Discovering our history** (the good and the bad): including typical patterns of making decisions and communicating; conflict; mission, failure and success.
- **Discovering our identity:** in the here and now, both internally and as perceived by the surrounding community.
- **Dealing with changes in leadership:** Inevitably a change in pastors leads to changes in lay leadership. There will be some who need to step back, while others may step up to new responsibilities.
- **Renewing denominational relationships.**
- **Preparing for a new pastor:** including tangible practicalities such as finances, housing, and office space, and intangible preparation by letting go to make room for an important new relationship.

(from “Calling an American Baptist Pastor”, AB Personnel Services, p. 10)

MARK YOUR CALENDAR - Rev. James Kelsey, the Executive Minister of the American Baptist Churches of NYS, will be with us in worship & will stay for a discussion of “What Happens Next?” after the service on Feb 14th.

CHURCH TRANSITIONS

ENDOWMENT INTEREST PROJECTS were approved at the Annual Meeting.

- One or more room air purifiers
- New laptop for use with the projection

BAPTISMAL MURAL - We have a new baptismal mural in the sanctuary!

LIVE STREAMING – You can join us live each Sunday at 10:30am online on our Youtube Channel. Also, all the services are recorded and posted on the Youtube Channel.

THAW NAY SAY has joined our evening cleaning staff and Eh Thaw finished at the end of last year.

IN MEMORIAM

HELEN STONE – We share with Jim, Sue, and Bill the loss of **Helen Stone**. Helen was a Deacon Emeritus of the church, and a living example of faith in action.

DORIS GAMBACORTO – We share with Doris Stoddard in the loss of her aunt Doris, a long time member of the church.

AMERICA FOR CHRIST OFFERING 2021

For the Purpose of Equipping Saints

EPHESIANS 4:11-13 (NIV)

What is the national goal?

American Baptist Home Mission Societies (ABHMS) is promoting the America for Christ (AFC) Offering 2021, which seeks to raise \$1,000,000 to support American Baptist mission and ministry across the United States and Puerto Rico.

What is the AFC 2021 theme?

The theme for the AFC 2021 Offering is “For the Purpose of Equipping Saints,” based on Ephesians 4:11-13: “The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry.”

How can I support AFC 2021?

You can give during the congregational offering Sunday at your church, or you can give an individual gift online by visiting abhms.org/AFC now. Also, consider encouraging your congregation’s Mission Committee to include an America for Christ Offering contribution in its annual budget.

How is my gift making a difference?

Your generous AFC gifts support our mission—connecting our partners to cultivate leaders and equip disciples who bring healing and transformation to communities across our nation and Puerto Rico. Your contributions share God’s love by:

- Cultivating Leaders — Strong leaders advance the mission of faith communities.
- Equipping Disciples — Broadening the understanding of what it means to be a follower of Jesus.
- Healing Communities — We believe the power of Christian love can—and will—change the world.

How is the AFC Offering used?

The offering is distributed in three parts:

- 59% supports the ministries of ABHMS;
- 12% supports the offering’s promotional and deputation costs and
- 29% supports regional ministries. (ABHMS is the only mission board to share its offering with American Baptist Churches USA regions.)

Dear Mission Partner,

Thanks to your America for Christ (AFC)

Offering contributions, American Baptist Home Mission Societies (ABHMS) supported communities distressed by the devastation of COVID-19 last year, as the pandemic swept our country and Puerto Rico. We helped families who lost homes to floods, wildfires and storms, along with children living on the edge because of poverty, and seminarians preparing to devote their lives to sharing the Good News. These are just a few of the ways we minister to those in need; there are many more.

We have been answering God's call to heal broken families and communities—as well as cultivate strong Christian leaders and equip passionate disciples—since 1832.

The world's needs today are as great as they were close to two centuries ago. By awarding grants to mission partners also doing the work of healing broken families and communities with the healing power of God's love, we increase the numbers of those in need who receive support across the United States and Puerto Rico, at the same time increasing the impact of your AFC gifts.

So, when you contribute to AFC, you increase our capacity to fulfill the biblical mandate in Ephesians 4:11-13: "Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service."

Our America for Christ Offering 2021 campaign—"For the Purpose of Equipping Saints," based on Ephesians 4:11-13—focuses on our discipleship and leadership empowerment ministries, which nurture the faithful followers who find their call and life's work as the hands and feet of Christ.

ABHMS' **Discipleship Ministries** sends more than 5,000 Discipleship and Christian Education Guides to regions, churches and individuals annually and provides 62 Church Life and Leadership workshops in English, Spanish, French and Karen, available for download at abhms.org. On average, more than 1,000 Bible studies—ranging in subjects from stewardship and eco-justice to children in poverty—are distributed each year, and, in 2019, several hundred American Baptists attended discipleship workshops addressing the church's viability in these changing times.

Our **Leadership Empowerment** work in 2019 broadened a three-year Lilly Endowment grant focused on fostering **clergy financial literacy, health and wholeness**. More than 35 ministry partners and ABHMS staff were trained to integrate a related toolkit—adaptable for native populations, speakers of languages other than English and people living with disabilities—into a variety of congregational and community ministries.

Chaplaincy, Pastoral Counseling and Specialized Ministries developed a three-phase plan to strengthen connections of its ministry professionals as they combat denominational isolation.

And a two-year integrative program for missional entrepreneurs, **Co-Creators Incubator**, was launched last year. The inaugural cohort fostered a spirit of collegiality and collaboration among six entrepreneurs creating innovative ministries in the name of Jesus, while providing resources to enhance their ministries. Each received a \$3,000 seed grant, hands-on training at two summits in King of Prussia, Pa., mentorship from an interdisciplinary team and monthly virtual meetings with experts to help their ventures flourish and grow. On behalf of American Baptist Home Mission Societies, thank you for your past generous support of our transformational mission. Our ministries, along with the ministries of our mission partners, are making a difference in the lives of so many individuals and families. With your help, we can bring God's healing touch to so many more. May we count on your generosity once again?

With gratitude, Dr. Jeffrey Haggray - Executive Director, ABHMS



LENT



Why Observe Lent? by Matt Meyer IVP staff

Believe it or not, “Lent” comes from a Latin word that means, “God wants you to stop eating candy for a few weeks until Easter.”

I’m kidding. But it sure *seems* like that’s what Lent has come to mean. And while there’s nothing wrong with a 40-day sugar fast, devoting some time and energy to understanding and observing Lent can be profoundly good for our souls.

In the first 300-400 years of Christianity, many faithful women and men recognized the fruitfulness of setting aside chunks of time surrounding major Christian holidays. Christians from Jewish and Gentile roots adapted this practice from the rhythms of festivals that God laid out in the Old Testament. Followers of Jesus began to contextualize this in order to help themselves fully prepare for and then enter into the most important annual celebrations like Christmas and Easter.

Lent was set aside as a time for Christians to contemplate Jesus’ work on the cross in preparation for a massive celebration on Easter. People would fast as an act of recognition of their sin and also as a means of preparing for the Spirit to have more access to work in their lives.

The same opportunity is available to us today during Lent. It’s a time to reflect on our sinful nature and our fragile humanity so that when Easter comes we are able to more fully appreciate and celebrate Jesus’ victory over sin and death on the cross.

CELEBRATING in MARCH

HAPPY BIRTHDAY to those celebrating in March

March	1	David Lollie
	2	Larry Wood
	3	Donna Price
	4	Andreanna Logan
	7	Cindy Rogers
	8	Lisa Sampson Heather Czarny
	10	Carol Mowat
	13	Veronica Melfi
	14	Steve Eichmann
	18	Jonelle Wood Joe Troiano
	19	Melissa Kuersteiner
	22	Olivia Barry Michael Copps
	23	Lisa Demello
	28	Madeline Kimbrell Redd Long Bonnie Seitz
	31	Dustin Hamlin

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY to:

March 22 Ann & Chris Braga