



Inside Out:

The Newsletter of the Jackson Community Church
Vol. XXI, No.3

March 2022

Serving Our Church
Members & Friends
In Jackson, NH
And beyond!

FROM
THE
PASTOR



Friends — From Ash Wednesday until the day of resurrection on Easter Sunday, the journey we take is one of opening our lives to Holy Love. The prophet Joel writes, *“Yet even now, says the LORD, return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; rend your hearts and not your clothing. Return to the LORD, your God, for he is*

gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love ...”

WHOLE SELF

This opening text for Lent says it all. We are asked to hold nothing back. To offer our whole selves to this journey and to the places, experiences, and states of being that holistic and holy Love may lead us.

After all, Lent is not just a metaphorical and existential journey we take each year. Rather it is embodied and experienced. We move toward death itself, and the promise of what exists beyond it, which includes rebirth and renewal. It is an annual reminder of the promise that at the end of our mortal span, another way of being exists: eternal life in the presence of our God.

Yet how we live — here and now — also matters. Knowing that death will claim us one day, that the Cross and the tomb, as well as the promise of life beyond death, are part of our path, we are reminded to ask, how do we choose to live our lives right now? And every day that we draw breath? *Lent is a time to focus on an orientation toward holy, holistic, and healing Love.*

Marcus Borg reflects, “the themes of death and repentance are central to Ash Wednesday, Lent, Holy Week, and Christianity. But they are not about where we will spend eternity but about our lives here and now ... They are about dying and rising with Christ ... The result: dying to an old way of seeing and being and living and identity, and being born, raised, into a new way of seeing and being and living and identity.”

ACTIVE or CONTEMPLATIVE

Again, Lent invites each of us to offer our whole selves to God! What calls to my heart? To your mind?

Traditionally, the period of Lent, which spans Ash Wednesday through Easter, involves *fasting, praying, and almsgiving*. In the early days of the church, these disciplines served as a trial for new disciples preparing for baptism. *Nowadays they are intended to be restorative* for all pilgrims on the Lenten journey. *In fact, these practices may be approached as either active or contemplative.*

When implemented with care, with intention, these practices — fasting, praying, and almsgiving — become exercises in wellbeing. They help us regain focus and equilibrium in many aspects of our lives: spiritually, emotionally, mentally, and bodily. For instance, fasting, praying, and almsgiving promote self-awareness, as we acknowledge our messy, imperfect selves and our ongoing need for connection to a Holy Love greater than ourselves.

Fasting and almsgiving are reciprocal: two sides of one concept. When we make space in one part of our lives, we have more to offer in another part of our lives.

To fast, we might give up food or beverage. Or we might reduce screen-time, social media, or cut back on use of gas and electricity. It might even mean setting boundaries on certain relationships. By cutting back on something in which we indulge or over-indulge, we root ourselves in appreciation and awareness of the for what we miss, or what we regain.

When we moderate or give up something — habit, media, substance, stimuli, relationship — we also exert more self-control. We challenge or avoid dependence: reclaiming balance in mind-body-spirit. Fasts can help declutter, focus, and simplify our lives. This clears away the obstacles and interruptions that separate us from a healthy connection to self, others, and Creator.

Almsgiving is another way of thinking about abundance. What we save in one aspect of our lives, we may then give more meaningfully elsewhere. When we clear away interruptions, we also gain back resources. We may then give more time and attention and energy to healthy pastimes, passions, and relationships. Almsgiving may be intentional, both in financial and in other ways.

Let your Lenten spiritual practices nurture gratitude and delight as a form of abundance. Rather than experiencing lack, we cultivate healthy forms of fullness and fulfillment. Sometimes we need permission to immerse ourselves in what gives us contentment and joy. Note that such choices of activity, passion or relationship may become prayerful in their orientation: they also cultivate wellbeing and renewed connection to holistic Love.

Prayer may indeed be a time set aside for conversation with Godself. In a contemplative sense, we may orient ourselves to listen and receive God's presence by 'being'. We permit space for contemplation. For resting. Recuperating. Turning down too many invitations, stepping back from obligations and overcommitment, to become more present to self and other primary relationships. Again, such practices may assist us to simplify. Focus. Breathe. Be. Even Christ withdrew from the crowds, over and over in his journey, to pray and reflect and replenish himself and his disciples.

For restless souls, prayerful and contemplative practices may also be creative and kinetic. Consider spending time in nature, enjoying music, reading, holding conversations, playing games, or engaging in an artistic or crafty project.

BELOVED & BLESSED, NOT BROKEN & BAD

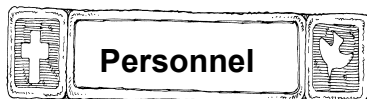
Finally, as we participate in Lent, acknowledgment of our messy imperfections does not mean that we are born broken or bad. Rather, may our spiritual growth also allow each of us to build up a sense of being valued. May we choose relationships and resources and passions that reinforce that we are beloved, as we have noted above.

We are called to accept our whole selves, both flawed and fabulous. Yet as humans, we are often our own worst critics. We cannot fully trust ourselves. Even when we falter, God does not. That invitation to turn to God with all of our hearts is a real one. Love seeks the whole self, not only the aspirational, idealized, publicly-acceptable parts of ourselves. *Our Lenten practices are designed to celebrate our strengths, yet also give us capacity to know and embrace our whole selves, both messy and remarkable.*

Mike Boucher, religious leader at a faith community called Spiritus Christi, reflects, "What if ... this Lent we focused on our worthiness. What if we focused on living whole-heartedly. What if we imagined more deeply ... What if we worked to live lives of courage, compassion, vulnerability, gratitude, connection with others and a leaning in to joy."



Jackson Community Church



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Church Council

The Church Council meets once a month on the 2nd Wednesday at 7:00pm. All Church members are welcome to attend. The council is made up of the Moderator, Pastor and all committee representatives. The next council meeting will be held via Zoom on Wednesday, March 9th at 7pm.

Newsletter Deadline

The deadline for submitting news and articles for the April newsletter will be Wed April 22nd. Items can be mailed to PO Box 381, Jackson, NH 03846 or emailed to: jcchurch@jacksoncommunitychurch.org

WILD & PRECIOUS LIFE

Let me close by asking, as the poet Mary Oliver famously writes, "*What is it you plan to do with your one wild and precious life?*" Perhaps we can simplify that question to: "What do you plan to do ... or not do ... during Lent ... with your own wild and precious Life?"

Yes, we anticipate a Life beyond this one. Yet here and now is the gift we have been given. How will we appreciate and celebrate this Life? How can our Lenten practices support our wellbeing and growth?

Whatever you choose, may your Lenten practices — active or contemplative — lead you toward a renewed and whole-hearted connection with the One who loves you.

— Rev Gail



Women's Group Tea Party

The Ellis River Inn in Jackson is hosting tea parties in their charming dining room. The Women's Group has booked Tuesday, April 19 at 1:00 for the group and friends to have a luncheon tea.

The menu includes tea in individual pots, a 3 tiered plate of sandwiches, followed by scones and little desserts. It is all well done with China teacups and all the trimmings. If you do not drink tea, you can have coffee. For an additional charge you may order a glass of wine.

The cost is \$25.00 plus tax and tip. You can charge your lunch, but you may have to pay the tip in cash.

You must make a reservation and you need to call as soon as possible if you have to cancel.

It will be a fun celebration of spring.

Call Linda Hastings at 603 383-9375 or email at jimlindahastings@roadrunner.com to make a reservation by April 15 and note any allergies or food issues when you reserve. If you find at the last minute that you can join us, please call Linda to see if it is possible to come.

Church Family News and Prayers



March 5: Emily Benson
March 8: Noah McLeavey-Weeder
March 10: Steve Allbee
March 14: Bill Botsford
March 28: PJ Benson

March 8th: Mona and Barry Chisholm

If you would like a special anniversary or birthday mentioned in the newsletter please let us know by sending an email to the office. In order to protect your privacy, we do NOT use the church records for these announcements and will only include them if you send it in!



Rev. Gail continues to make pastoral visits to homes through physical distancing, phone call or by remote video. If you're aware of someone who might benefit from a bowl of homemade soup and a visit, please let her know.



Vigil for Ukraine

The Jackson Community Church will hold a vigil in support of Ukraine on Saturday March 5th, noon at the Church.

Pray and hold silence with members of the church and community.



The Church Council will meet on the second Wednesday of the month.

The first half of 2022 schedule is as follows:

Wednesday	March 9th
Wednesday	April 13th
Wednesday	May 11th
Wednesday	June 8th



Free Fitness Classes on Wednesdays & Fridays

Laurie McAleer offers a free weekly exercise classes at the church. Classes are held on Wednesday and Friday mornings at 9:30am.

All are welcome to participate!!

NEW:: Starting March 4th Friday Fitness class added to the calendar

MAKING A DIFFERENCE ... locally and internationally



The Mission Group is always excited when new members are interested in joining. Are you passionate about a cause that is either local or international? Bring your ideas and positive energy to the Mission Committee—everyone is invited. Current members are Linda Hastings, Jeanette Heidmann, Kit Griffin, Meg Phillips, Jean Melczarek, and Gloria Hutchings.

Zimbabwe



Our partner church in Zimbabwe is nearing the last stages of completing the roof on the church they are building.

It will cost about \$26,000 for the last truss, the roofing materials and supplies and the machinery to erect and complete the roof. The Mission Committee has \$4,600.00 that can be sent to them to help complete the roof.

As a Lenten project, we would like to involve the congregation in helping to raise funds to help Raise the Roof. People who choose to participate may:

- Set aside \$1 per day (or the cost of a cup of coffee) during lent
- Choose another daily amount to set aside each day
- Donate a specific amount toward the Raise the Roof project.

This money would be added to the funds provided by the Mission Committee and make a big difference to our friends in Zimbabwe.

If you are interested in participating, please track your savings during Lent or simply make your one-time donation. Donations can either be mailed to the JCC, PO Box 381, Jackson NH 03846 (please note Raise the Roof Fund on your check), dropped off in the little white church in the narthex (again mark your envelope Roof Fund) or by donating online via the paypal link on our website noting the funds should go to Raising the Roof.





The Mission Committee wishes to thank the JCC congregation for their ongoing generous donations to help those with food insecurity in our community.

Donations can be dropped off anytime at the Church foyer in the designated basket.

The Way Station needs specific food items:

- Hearty soups, stews, canned spaghetti, canned tuna or chicken.
(Only with pop tops).
- Energy bars, fruit drink boxes, individual fruit cups, peanut butter.
- Wrapped snack crackers and small raisin boxes.

The Way Station is also in need of gloves, mittens, and winter socks – children sizes up through adult sizes.

For non-food donations for the Way Station contact Jeanette Heidmann or send to the Way Station at PO Box 1888, North Conway 03860

The Bartlett/Jackson Food Pantry needs the items below:

- Condiments (ketchup, mustard, mayo)
- Snack food and coffee
- Paper towels, toilet paper, cleaning supplies
- Shampoo, conditioner, toothpaste, toothbrushes

The Food Pantry also needs help identifying families and/or shut-ins who are in need of receiving these foods and goods. They can contact Brenda Medeiros at bbm829@yahoo.com & 603-383-9246 directly or you may also consider arranging a food pick up for a friend or neighbor.

The food pantry also accepts gift cards, checks and cash donations. Send to Birdy Ellsmore at PO Box 796, Glen NH 03838 or drop off to pantry staff at the side door of the Glen Community Church between 10 and 12 on the first and third Saturdays.

Easter Lilies



The Flower Committee will be collecting donations for lilies to be placed at the altar during Lent and Easter. Lilies will be \$10 each.

Please include who the lily will be in honor/ memory of. All names will be included in the Easter Sunday Bulletin.

Envelopes can be found in the front of the church or mail your information to: JCC, PO Box 381, Jackson NH 03846



UCC Mission Collection

The success and sustainability of the national ministries of the United Church of Christ relies on churches contributing to basic operating support and mission. Being 5 for 5 means our church provides support to Our Church's Wider Mission along with the four Special mission Offerings: One Great Hour of Sharing, Strengthen The Church, Neighbors In Need and The Christmas Fund. The Jackson Community Church is proudly a 5 for 5 church.

We believe these Special Mission Offerings collectively serve to lift people closer to the abundance and wholeness to which Jesus Christ has called us to work together to bring about. In past years we have asked for donations multiple times per year focusing on specific missions. This year you will see information in each month's newsletter - highlighting a mission - and we will do one BIG collection in the fall. Hopefully you can become familiar with each Special Mission Offering and when the time comes give generously. This month we focus on Neighbors in Need.



Neighbors in Need supports ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States, including the council for American Indian Ministries (CAIM), justice and advocacy, and direct service projects supported by Justice and Local Church Ministries.

Where does your support go? A few examples are below.



A United Church of Christ sanctuary church offering immigrants refuge in the Arizona borderlands will soon be offering a place of hospitality, support and hope on the Mexican side of the border for people who find themselves deported from the United States. The Shadow Rock UCC Sanctuary Action Team and the Rev. Ken Heintzelman, in an extension of the spirit and intent of their ministry of sanctuary in Phoenix, are in the process of establishing Hope Station Nogales, in Sonora, Mexico.

The thought is Hope Station, which was funded in part by a \$10,000 grant from Neighbors in Need, can be a place of transition, a place where people who are deported but have family in the U.S. can find a meal, safe lodging and assistance.

With a grant from the United Church of Christ's Neighbors in Need offering, 24 high school students from an economically challenged Houston neighborhood learned about activism and carried out a local campaign for a \$15 minimum-wage law.

The idea came from the basic insight that many Houston residents find it hard to make ends meet, especially workers in fast-food and other service industries. The Rev. Darnell Fennell serves some of those people in both his callings. He is pastor of Just Love Church, affiliated with the UCC and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). He also teaches high school social studies. He sought the NIN grant to introduce young people to local activists in the national Fight for \$15 wage campaign and involve them in learning by doing.



Bushee Thorn Scholarship

Opportunity for 2022 Summer Camp Scholarships

The Bushee Thorn Mountain Trust Fund primarily focuses on providing camperships for Church operated camps such as the UCC camp at Horton Center on Pine Mountain, but also includes other camps in our area. Priorities for awarding camperships are as follows:

1. Christian camps
2. Special needs camps
3. YMCA/YWCA, Girl/Boy Scout camps, Tin Mountain camps

This is available to children or youth from any town in the Valley that sends students to Kennett High School or Fryeburg Academy. Circumstances of need will be evaluated.

Representatives from the four Mt. Washington Valley UCC Churches (Conway, No. Conway, Jackson and Bartlett) administer the funds.

Application is available in the Church foyer or [here](#) and must be received by April 6th..

For more information contact Birdy Ellsmore: 603-996-1659, bellsmore4@roadrunner.com.



The Ipswich Youth Group recently stayed at the Jackson Community Church for their youth retreat and sent along this thank you to the church.

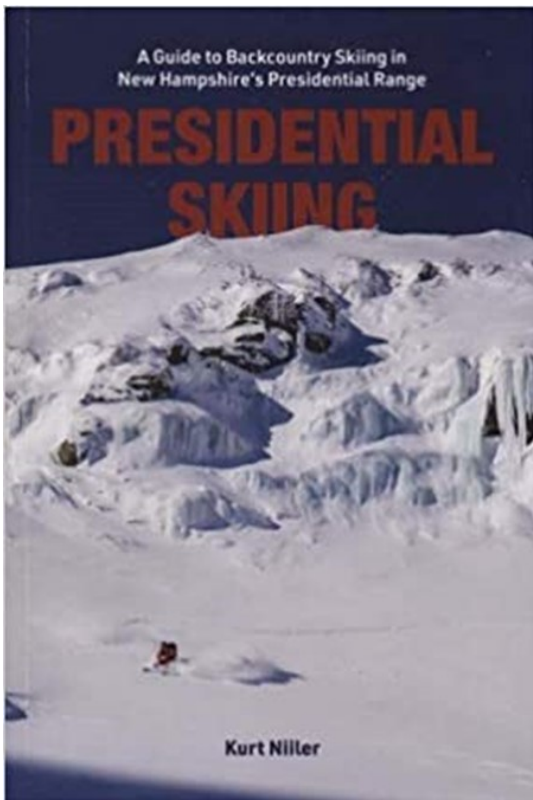


Steeple Light

The Jackson Community Church Steeple is lit this month in honor of The Jackson Community Church celebrating the 175 years

If you would like the steeple lit in memory or in honor of a loved one, family member, friend or organization, please mail your request along with a donation to:

Jackson Community Church
Attn: Steeple Lighting
PO Box 381
Jackson NH 03846



Bartlett Public Library March 8th 7pm Author Event: Kurt Niller

Meet and greet Kurt as he describes his favorite places that include many areas that aren't as well-known – that just might have been found by you. The maps and pictures alone are worth looking into this book.

Local author, skier and climber from Freedom NH. He now resides in Bethel ME where he coaches alpine ski racing full time. Kurt will be here to introduce his book and answer questions. A first of its kind backcountry skiing guide to the steep gullies of Mount Washington and the Presidential Range in New Hampshire's White Mountains. It includes detailed descriptions of 90 different routes, and 17 areas with four identified zones. Also features stunning aerial photography, detailed maps, approach information and much more.