

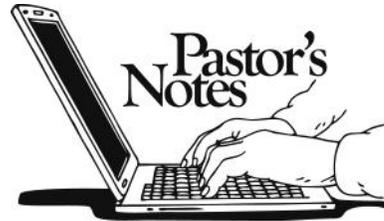


Tidings

March 2023

COMING EVENTS

- Sat. March 4—Men's Square @ Denny's,
(note **NEW LOCATION**), 9 AM
- Sun. March 5—Worship @ 10 AM
(inc. Holy Communion)
- Sun. March 12—Worship @ 10 AM
- Tues. March 14—Esther Circle @ 10 AM
- Thurs. March 16—Tidings article deadline
- Sat. March 18—Coffee with *The Word*, 11 AM
- Sun. March 19—Worship @ 10 AM
- Sun. March 26—Worship @ 10 AM
- Sun. April 2—Children's Easter Egg Hunt



Two years ago, as our family trip to Alaska was concluding, I had one more hiking goal for the trip. I had a plan for a 4 peak link up hike. It would be very easy to achieve from a navigational standpoint because it was simply hiking along a ridge. There would be views for days and no shortage of markers to guide me and my brother-in-law, Cam, along the simple route. I was excited because, while it would be physically challenging, there was little to no chance of getting lost or turned around. I was so confident, in fact, that I left my compass, the one tool that would tell us the right way regardless of the conditions, at home. Oops.

The day of the hike, the sun was shining in Anchorage but clouds were hovering along the tops of the peaks in the front range. "It will burn off before noon" we thought. We were

wrong. This simple hike along a ridge quickly turned into one of the more daunting route-finding challenges I have ever faced in the mountains because the clouds and fog never burned off. In fact, they settled in for a long day of eerie and at times confusing views like this one...



In the above image, there is mountain that dwarfed the one I was standing on hiding somewhere in the fog directly in front of me. We never saw that 5000+ foot mountain that day.

As Cam and I wandered through the mist, tracking our progress with a map and elevation readings on our watches, we reached an outcropping that I was certain was in the direction of travel we needed to follow. The issue was, I was standing on the edge of a cliff that wasn't supposed to be there. As I started searching for a route in the direction I knew beyond a shadow of a doubt was the correct one, Cam started walking along the ridge back the way we came, or so I thought. I had become so completely disoriented in the fog, that the rock I thought was the end of our journey was in fact just a little cliff on the side of the ridge facing nearly 180 degrees away from where we needed to go. I was lost.

I knew the plan going in. I had everything I needed to navigate and complete this ambitious goal that had been in my heart for over a year. I had food. I had water. I had a capable partner. The one thing I did not account for was the weather. The best laid plans can be completely undone by the actual situation on the ground on any given day. I thought a lot about the Church that day.

For centuries now, the Church has had a plan. Build big enough for more people, who will continue coming. Set programs for those people and for people who are not yet members. Worship in a sanctuary on Sunday is the centerpiece and prime moment of faith. This was all based on the weather of the last 2000 or so years. What it didn't account for was a shift in the way the world around us interacts with...basically everything.

Herein lies one of the great challenges facing the church. We have known where we are going for nigh upon 2000 years. The Church has endured great changes in society and the world because at the root of the cultures in which the Church thrived, was an assumption that people would want to show up to church. All we had to do was wait until that happened and be friendly and welcoming when it did. My friends, the weather has changed. You can now listen to the best preaching in the world at any time. You can now connect with like-minded people across the globe with the tap of a few keys on your computer. You can now find community with others over great distances and surrounding almost any interest. In all of these cases, showing up to a specific place at a specific time is unnecessary.

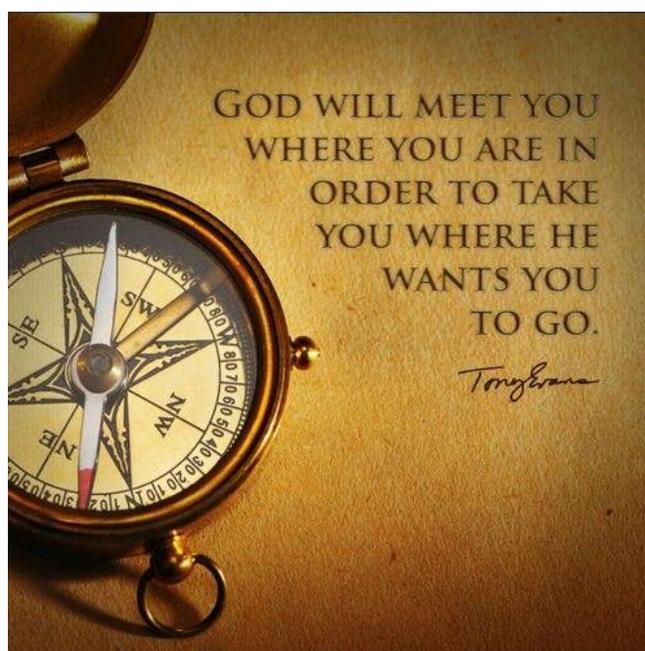
We can no longer be sure we are going the right way. In fact, decline across all churches in almost all denominations would indicate we are not. Not because the Gospel is any less compelling than it was when Jesus first shared it. Not because the Church is any less essential to human flourishing

than it was in Acts 2 when "they held all things in common and no one had a need of anything." We don't know where we are going anymore because, in my humble opinion, the Church has too often assumed the weather would never change and then leave the compass of prayer at home.

Our guide throughout these many centuries has always been the Holy Spirit and Prayer. Looking through the history of the Church, we see many moments when the Church has lost its way. Even our Scriptures are rife with stories of our mistakes and misdeeds. But in all cases, the road back to the path was lit by the strong force of Prayer and the voice of God in the Holy Spirit calling us back to where we belong.

We are in such a moment again, both in the Church at large and in Parma-South Presbyterian Church. The way forward is socked in. We need our compass to show us the way to our God's Kingdom, which has always been the direction we were meant to travel. We need prayer. I am inviting each of you to a Lenten discipline of focused prayer. Each time you pray from now until Easter, start with this: "Lord God, show us the way. We do not know where to go." Then spend time in silence listening. Speak this prayer for yourself and your family. Speak this prayer for your church and your community. Speak this prayer for our world. And then listen.

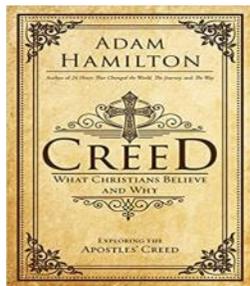
-Rev. Blake Seversen





COFFEE WITH THE WORD

Please join us on Saturday, March 18 at 11 AM in the church Dining Room for *Coffee With the Word*. Fran Marvel will review Adam Hamilton's book, "Creed", and we will also have a small lunch. Family and friends are encouraged to attend. If you have any questions, contact Fran Marvel or call the church office. Hope to see you then.



Youth



During Sunday School on Palm Sunday, April 2, there will be an Easter Egg Hunt for our youth. Children will start out in the Sanctuary, and leave immediately following the Children's Chat for all the fun.

NOTE: On Easter Sunday, April 9th, there will be no Sunday School program. Children are invited to worship with their families that day.



Help needed! The Education Committee is looking for someone to help teach Sunday School on the 4th Sunday of the month. Lesson plans will be provided and the children would love to get to know more members of our congregation! Please contact the office or Lisa Profio if you are able to help on any of these dates:

- Feb 26
- Mar 26
- April 23
- May 28

MEN'S SQUARE

Our next meeting of Men's Square will be Sat. March 4 @ 9 AM. Note **OUR NEW MEETING LOCATION:** From now on, we will gather for breakfast in the back room at DENNY'S in Parmatown (8111 Day Dr., Parma, OH 44129).

Any members having suggestions for group projects or anyone needing more information, please contact Ed Walker.



ESTHER CIRCLE MEETING

Tuesday, March 14 at 10 AM
in Parlor



AID FOR EARTHQUAKE VICTIMS

During March, Parma-South’s Mission Team is collecting funds to help victims of the devastating February earthquakes in Turkey and Syria. If you would like to contribute, please make your check out to Parma-South Presbyterian Church and note on it that it is for “Earthquake Relief”. You may either drop it into the Sunday offering plate, or mail it in to the church.

One Great HOUR OF SHARING

One of the annual special offerings of the Presbyterian Church USA is the *One Great Hour of Sharing*. This collection is given to three large denominational programs:

- the Hunger Fund
- the Disaster Relief Fund
- the Self-Development of People Fund

During the season of Lent, we celebrate that God connects with us through Jesus’ resurrection and connects us with "those who have least" – that’s how Matthew 25 puts it – and that’s what *One Great Hour of Sharing* is all about: Connecting.

This Lenten season, please give generously to *One Great Hour of Sharing*. Together we make a difference.

Your offering boxes have an envelope for the *One Great Hour of Sharing* offering, but we will receive the gifts throughout the Lenten Season.



CARING CORNER

Our friend Trudy Castor, soon to be 101, has moved to Arizona to be near her son. She would love to hear from us. Mail cards to:

Trudy Castor
 The Forum at Desert Harbor
 13840 N. Harbor Desert Dr. #602
 Peoria, AZ 85381





There are three scholarships offered annually for members of Parma-South.

Daryl Laing Scholarship – in memory of Daryl Laing, awarded to members enrolled or planning to enroll in a two-year or four-year college or university degree program the year of the application.

Pardee Scholarship – in memory of Mr. and Mrs. James T. Pardee, awarded to members enrolled in the College of Wooster, with an effort to provide sufficient financial assistance to make the cost of attending Wooster comparable to the cost of state universities in Ohio.

Howard & Estelle Withers Scholarship – in memory of Reverend and Mrs. Withers, awarded to members enrolled in approved graduate schools or theological seminaries in preparation for full-time professional service to the Presbyterian Church.

These are awarded annually and are renewable for subsequent years of study. The criteria for awarding these scholarships include active participation in the worship, stewardship, and mission at Parma-South; financial need; and academic achievement. The award for each scholarship is based on the amount available in the endowment funds each year.

Scholarship Application Forms may be obtained in the church office. Please return them no later than **May 1**, of the year that you will be attending.

OFFICE NOTES

- Please call the office to request that you receive your monthly Tidings newsletter via email. We would love to accommodate you with this request!
- Please let Sara Ekkens in the office know when your meetings are scheduled so that they can be entered onto the Church Calendar. Equally important is letting us know when you cancel or reschedule meetings.
- Please call the church office to confirm that you and your family have an emergency contact card on file.

In Memoriam

Ronald Miller 2/10/23



MEMORIAL CARILLON

Carillon music during March will be played in loving memory of:

March 5

Marilyn Weiss
John W. Kuhn
Dorothy and William Kuhn

March 12

Courtney Kromer
Peggy Kromer
Esther Jones
Norman T. Lischer & Ferne Lischer

March 19

Elizabeth Ashmus

March 26

Phyllis Goode
Mr. and Mrs. Ivan Horrigan
Betty French Wisch



Articles for our monthly Tidings newsletter are due the day after the regularly scheduled monthly Session meeting. Therefore, please note: Articles for the April Tidings will be due **no later than Thursday, March 16th**.



BIRTHDAYS

03/01 Lisa Profio

03/03 Margaret Betz

03/19 Richard Duransky

03/20 Wendy Hart

03/22 Roberta Lane

03/24 Trevor Csuti

03/26 Dakota Adam

03/27 Verna Buchholz

03/29 Taylor Zietlow

03/29 John Francis

03/30 Judy Tolve

03/31 Carol Crowe



Tidings

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Email: ddcerra@gmail.com

Visit our website: www.parma-south.org

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