

The Ivy Vine March 2023



Dan Wilson, Pastor
pastordan@ivy-chapel.org

You Are Cleansed

The 2023 Lenten Season is underway. As the saying goes, “The sky’s the limit!” One of the virtues of committing to and sticking with a 40-day journey toward Resurrection Day is that such a venture offers unlimited potential. Ideally, our relationship with God in Christ Jesus grows and continues growing!

“*Cleansing*” is a central metaphor of Christianity. Plain and simple. You are cleansed. Repent.

The simple basis for the Lenten Season is repentance. Yet we must be careful not to get it backwards. The order is not (1) repent, and (2) we will be forgiven. If there is an “order” at all, it is (1) we are forgiven, we are cleansed already; therefore, (2) we repent.

We repent, not “*in order to be forgiven*,” we repent “*out of*” gratitude that God already has offered us forgiveness. Crucial to the whole picture is God’s grace. This connects closely with Christ’s petition from the Cross: “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.” (Luke 23:34) The Rev. Dr. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, a World-War-Two-era Lutheran pastor in

Germany, identified this in his 1933 lectures at the University of Berlin. Years later, these lectures were re-created from his students’ notes and eventually published under the English title Christ the Center. The sure foundation of ‘*discipleship - costly and joyful*’ is Christ. As our Savior declares, “If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me.” (Matthew 16:24; Mark 8:34; Luke 9:23) Christ cleanses. That’s all there is to it. Cleansing.

The psalm traditionally read on Ash Wednesday is Psalm 51. This familiar psalm abounds with “*cleansing*” imagery. “Have mercy... blot out my transgressions... wash me... cleanse me... Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean. Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow... Create in me a clean heart, O God.” All of this and more is in Psalm 51.

Have you ever participated in some type of guided meditation or spiritual exercise which involved the leader inviting participants to inhale deeply and then to exhale fully? This action is called “*a cleansing breath*.” Typically, a meditation leader may invite everyone in a group to

join in by giving them a simple prompt, such as, *"Cleansing breath. Breathe in. Hold it. Breathe out."*

The Rev. Elisha Hoffman (1839-1929) was an ordained minister and a composer of sacred music. He is best known for the widely-sung, classic hymn Leaning on the Everlasting Arms (1894). Rev. Hoffman also composed Have You Been to Jesus for the Cleansing Power? This hymn's Spirit-filled lyrics include: *"Have you been to Jesus for the cleansing power? Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb? Are you fully trusting in His grace this hour? Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb? Are you walking daily by the Savior's side? Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb? Do you rest each moment in the Crucified? Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb? ... Lay aside the garments that are stained with sin, and be washed in the blood of the Lamb; There's a fountain flowing for the soul unclean, O be washed in the blood of the Lamb!... Are you washed in the blood, in the soul-cleansing blood of the Lamb? Are your garments spotless? Are they white as snow? Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?"*

You are cleansed. Repent. God invites us to approach Lent in this spirit. Granted, there are aspects of the forty days of Lent which may not be pleasant. Honest self-examination is necessary, and this can be painfully difficult. Taking a genuine look at ourselves may reveal disappointing truths. Yet we cannot merely brush off reality. This would be taking the sacred season *too lightly*. Being true to the full character of Lent calls us to risk engaging in some unpleasantness. There is an element of struggle involved in every spiritual pilgrimage. But don't despair. Personal faith struggles often result in growth. God's

Prophet declares, *"Come now, let us argue it out, says the LORD; though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be like snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall become like wool."* (Isaiah 1:18) In the end, each Lenten Journey arrives at Resurrection Joy. Ultimately, every Lenten Season leads to some version of this astonishing discovery: **God loves me, flaws and all. Alleluia!**

I encourage you to allow something on the order of the following serve as your basic approach during this Lenten Season. *Receive God's cleansing.* The rest is excess. Simplify. "Un-complicate." Streamline. God wants to cleanse you. Actually, God already has! This is the simple, uncomplicated truth. It is purely a gift. So just accept God's cleansing. Christ the Center.

In the days ahead, may you make your way toward Resurrection Joy by seeking to make "Christ the Center" of your life. Lent is merely an occasion for us to get started. It will take far longer than forty days. We'll need to work at this for the rest of our earthly days... breath by cleansing breath.

Christ the Center. Breathe in. Hold the breath. Breathe out. Christ the Center.

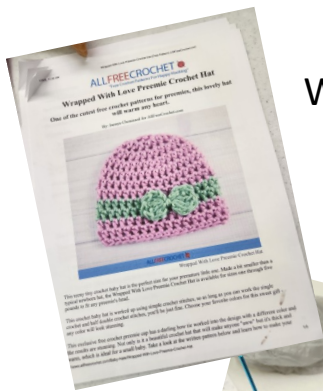
Breathe on us, Cleansing Breath of God,
Pastor Dan

*"Breathe on me, Breath of God;
Fill me with life anew,
That I may love what Thou dost love,
and do what Thou wouldst do."
Edwin Hatch*

Mary and Martha Wmns Grp

The Mary and Martha Women's Group met on Feb. 21st when we will tried our hands at simple crocheting of preemie caps with Pat Winship's instruction for Mercy Hospital.

At our March 21st meeting we plan to have a Lenten devotion with Pastor Dan. We are considering a soup luncheon in May-stayed tuned for more information.



Wrapped With Love
preemie crochet
hats



Feb Council Lifted Up:

- ♥ Earl Kreder for clearing sweet gum balls from Ivy Chapel's parking lot and sidewalks.
- ♥ Sarah Wilson and Jo Ann Moody for giving Children's Messages in worship.
- ♥ Ivy Chapel youth for their energy and efforts supporting the youth's "Sharing with the Caring" - Christian Action project.
- ♥ Earl and Kay Kreder for volunteering to take food pantry collections to Isaiah 58 Ministries.

Fellowship

Reminder to join us for coffee and a time to fellowship with others directly after church in the Fellowship Hall this month. Be on the lookout for more information in the KYP.

Scripture & Worship

5 Mar 2023, Second Sun in Lent: Genesis 12:1-4a, Psalm 121, Romans 4:1-5, 13-17 John 3:1-17 or Matthew 17:1-9

12 Mar 2023, Third Sun in Lent: Exodus 17:1-7, Psalm 95, Romans 5:1-11, John 4:5-42

19 Mar 2023, Fourth Sun in Lent: 1 Samuel 16:1-13, Psalm 23, Ephesians 5:8-14, John 9:1-41

26 Mar 2023, Fifth Sun in Lent: Ezekiel 37:1-14, Psalm 130, Romans 8:6-11, John 11:1-45

<https://lectionary.library.vanderbilt.edu/index.php>



Warm Greetings to everyone!

Our congregation will once again be participating in an “extra-mile” offering opportunity during the 2023 Lenten Season.



Ivy Chapel UCC Christian Action Board invites you to give a Special Offering Gift in support of **Caring for Kids, Inc.** during the Season of Lent. Please place your gift in one of the brightly-colored envelopes which will be in the sanctuary pew racks throughout the Lenten Season. What a sacred invitation this will be for our faith community to embrace in connection with the spirit of Lent.

We are blessed that Cynthia Harcourt, Executive Director of Caring for Kids, Inc., will gather with us in person and will offer a Mission Moment as part of our worship on Sunday, March 12, 2023. We look forward to receiving Cynthia's personal message about the life-giving ministries being offered to God's children by Caring for Kids, Inc.

Thank you for your special offering gift!

Caring for Kids immediately provides essential resources to meet the urgent needs of abused, neglected or at-risk children in St. Louis County...because kids' urgent needs can't wait!

Did You Know?

- » In any given month, the Family Court of St. Louis County provides services to approximately 1,300 children?
- » Children come under the Family Court jurisdiction because of neglect and/or physical or sexual abuse by caretakers or others?
- » Untreated substance abuse by parent(s) or untreated depression can often lead to a referral to the Family Court?
- » Tutoring services, once routinely provided by school systems, are no longer offered in many schools?
- » Only \$250 per year is made available for clothing vouchers for children ages seven and older in foster or residential care?

Caring for Kids, Inc. brings hope to children and families by fulfilling these essential needs. The systems serving these children now have an organization to call upon when faced with unmet, immediate needs. With the help of Caring For Kids, children can be reunited with their families and leave foster care; sometimes, this requires simply a bed.



PLEASE consider supporting this small nonprofit organization with a special offering on **March 5, 12, 19, or 26.**
THANK YOU!

CHRISTIAN ED.

Mark your calendar for

March 12th!

There will be a children's message and activities during the worship service.

We are working to include more weeks with a children's message and will need help when that begins again.

We are also planning some great activities leading up to Easter and during the spring months after-stay tuned and be sure to check your e-KYP for more up to date information.

Deacons

Thank you to all who signed up to give your time and talent in the upcoming year by serving as a Greeter, Usher, Liturgist, Fellowship Host or Care Corps volunteer. Your leadership is much appreciated.

We continue to be in need of additional volunteers to assist with the sanctuary sound system.

You can start gradually.

We welcome you to begin by shadowing one of our existing volunteers.

Please reach out to Sarah Wilson or Valerie Waterman.

Thank you.

Trustees

This winter, the Trustees have been busy keeping the parking lot clear of snow and gumballs. As the weather warms up, we plan to tackle outdoor projects including:

- Sanding/painting Pavilion steel plates and table legs,
- Fixing drainage at Pavilion,
- Grading Lower Parking Lot,
- Replacing sprinkler pipe - steps to sign
- Sealing and restriping parking lot – (contractor).

We are scheduled for the clean-up of our mile of Woods Mill Road on Sunday, March 5.
(weather permitting)



All are welcome to join us. Masks and social distancing still strongly recommended in consideration for the safety of immunocompromised and unvaccinated individuals.

Worship with us in the church, on Facebook or [YouTube](#) Sunday at 10 a.m.

For daily spiritual nourishment; we invite you to subscribe free of charge to our United Church of Christ Still Speaking Daily Devotional at <https://www.ucc.org/daily-devotional/>



UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST



DAILY
DEVOTIONAL
Created by the StillSpeaking Writers' Group



With God's Blessings

Happy Birthday to...



Happy Anniversary to...



3/4/2000 Bob and Doris De Fer

3/5/2011 Elizabeth and Scott Schurwan

3/27/1982 Mark and Nancy Gerdes

3 Jake Del Carmen

12 Linda Ledbetter

Wes Wieser

14 Kaillen Cox

15 Katie Amsler

21 Peter LaSalle

22 Wade Wieser

23 Alex Glenn

Deborah Washburn

24 Sue Lindhorst

Bruce Wilking

29 Doris De Fer

30 Jack Molyneaux

Serving God's People

God has called us to our positions, and we rejoice when we are able to serve God in these places of ministry. If there is some way in which our staff may be of help to you, please contact us at the church office 314-434-4991. Pastor Dan Wilson: pastordan@ivy chapel.org 314-580-4564 Office Administrator: ivy chapelucc@ivy chapel.org Office hours: Monday/Wednesday/Thursday 9:00AM–3:00PM Friday 8:30AM–2:30PM

➤ MAR CARE CORPS Sue Wilson 314-324-3465

➤ APR CARE CORPS Julie Mc Allister 314-576-4946

ASSISTING IN LAY MINISTRY: Please find YOUR Name. If you're unable to attend please switch with others serving on another date and let Gail Thoele know 314-576-0091/314-591-0057.

Greeter/Usher Schedule March

DATE	GREETERS/USHERS
5 MAR 2023	DONNA GROTE AND JAN WIRTZ— COMMUNION
12 MAR 2023	KATHRYN KUNTZMAN AND JACK MOLYNEAUX— DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME BEGINS
19 MAR 2023	MYRNA AND RALPH WEILAND
22 MAR 2023	DOTTIE FOSTER AND GAIL THOELE
26 MAR 2023	PAT AND CARL WINSHIP
2 Apr 2023	DONNA GROTE AND JAN WIRTZ— COMMUNION AND PALM SUNDAY
7 APR 2023	DON WOLFF (USHER)— GOOD FRIDAY
9 APR 2023	MYRNA AND RALPH WEILAND EASTER



E-KYP (E-KEEPING YOU POSTED)

By end of any Wednesday—Send your news to Ivy Chapel ivy chapelucc@ivy chapel.org for the weekly e-KYP (e-Keeping You Posted)—emailed every Friday.

Charities we serve: Please place items on the designated shelves in the cloak room or otherwise designated.

CIRCLE OF CONCERN—Shopping and monthly needs

List is on FH bulletin board. Place on TOP SHELF.

636-861-2623 <https://www.circleofconcern.org/>



Isaiah 58 Ministries Bag of Blessings list on

FH bulletin board. Place on 3rd-4th SHELVES:

food items, egg cartons, clothing, plastic bags, glass cases. <https://i58ministries.org/>



Every Child's Hope <https://everychildshope.org>

Lydia's House <https://www.lydiashouse.org>

UP—Unleashing Potential <https://upstl.org>

INSTITUTO EL REY: Explore the website how YOU can help students in rural northern Honduras pursue their dreams. www.ierschool.org



Getting new eyeglasses? Ask your eye doctor if they will take your old pair to recycle or go to this web site <https://allaboutvision.com/resources/donate.htm>

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2 AA (Ladies #744) 9:30-11am CE Mtg 7pm	3	4 AA 10:30am #350
5 2nd S in Lent prpl 10am Worship/ ✙LS	6	7 AA S.O.S. 10-11am AA 12pm #349	8	9 AA (Ladies #744) 9:30-11am	10 Square dancing 3:30-5:30pm 7-9pm	11 AA 10:30am #350
12 3rd S in Lent prpl Spring/Daylight Svg Time Begins 10am Worship w/ Children's Message HWY CLEAN-UP AFTER WORSHIP	13 Council Mtg 7pm	14 AA S.O.S. 10-11am AA 12pm #349	15 The Ivy Vine Articles DUE Men's Luncheon 11:30am Stackhouse 13419 Olive Blvd	16 AA (Ladies #744) 9:30-11am	17	18 AA 10:30am #350 AA Noon- 1pm
19 4th S in Lent prpl 10am Worship Coffee Fellowship	20	21 AA S.O.S. 10-11am AA 12pm #349 Mary & Martha Wms Grp 1pm	22	23 AA (Ladies #744) 9:30-11am	24	25 AA 10:30am #350
26 5th S in Lent prpl 10am Worship	27	28 AA S.O.S. 10-11am AA 12pm #349	29	30 AA (Ladies #744) 9:30-11am	31	April 1 AA 10:30am #350

IN MARCH: 12TH HWY CLEAN-UP 13TH Council Meeting 15th The Ivy Vine articles due
15th Men's Lunch 11:30am @ Duffy's Pub 19th Coffee Fellowship 21st Mary & Martha Women's Grp 1pm

AA=Alcoholics Anonymous CC=Chancel Choir EMMP=Eric Moody Memorial Pavilion	CA=Christian Action CE=Christian Education	FH = Fellowship Hall LL=LOWER LEVEL M&M GRP=MARY AND MARTHA WOMEN'S GROUP	KYP=KEEPING YOU POSTED LS=THE LORD'S SUPPER W=Wednesday	JRWP=JUNIPER ROOT WOODLAND PRESCHOOL NURSERY=NY SY=SANCTUARY	PP=PURPLE PAGES SS=SUNDAY SCHOOL
	Monday JRWP 8:30-3:30	Tuesday JRWP 8:30-3:30	Wednesday JRWP 8:30-3:30	Thursday JRWP 8:30-3:30	Friday JRWP 8:30-3:30

Ivy Chapel UCC
620 North Woods Mill Road
Chesterfield, MO 63017
ivy chapelucc@ivy chapel.org
314-434-4991
[twitter@ivy chapel](https://twitter.com/ivy chapel)
www.facebook.com/IvyChapel
www.ivychapel@ivy chapel.org



Dan Wilson, Pastor