

Trail Guide -- Week of February 24, 2020

Lent begins this Wednesday with the traditional observance known as Ash Wednesday. Typically a time of spiritual preparation for Easter, a healthy practice of observing a holy Lent includes both sacrifice and spiritual growth. During this holy season of Lent, all LUMCers are encouraged to take on the three spiritual practices – Three Pillars - of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. We'll be sharing some creative ways to incorporate these practices individually and as a family, as we focus during Lent on Matthew's of Jesus spending time "at table" with his disciples, "tax collectors and sinners", Pharisees, and even surprise guests! For the first three hundred years following the Resurrection, Christianity spread throughout the world not by building large churches and cathedrals, but through sharing with others around the table – meals that included "the bread and the cup" shared in remembrance of Christ. In sanctuary worship and in our homes, may the Three Pillars of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving serve to grow our faith during this holy season of Lent that begins Ash Wednesday, February 26. Our Trail Guide, beginning with Ash Wednesday, will follow the recommended readings from our Three Pillars devotional.

Copies of "The Three Pillars: LUMC's 2020 Lenten Devotional" may be picked up in Wesley Hall, Asbury Hall, and AG-1 & 2.

Mon, 2/24 **Matthew 11:28-29** – In preparing for the season of Lent, what spiritual practices will you incorporate (or continue) in your daily routine? Jesus' intention is not to burden us, but to free us and refresh us. As you approach your spiritual practices, including our LUMC Three Pillars this week, apply them in ways that refresh your spirit and soul.

Tues, 2/25 **Shrove Tuesday** – Use your devotional time to look up the meaning and significance of this day in preparation for observing a holy Lenten season. What different practices did you find, both ancient and modern? How will you

Wed, 2/26 **Psalms 33:20** – Today's word is "Hope". Open your eyes, ears, and heart to messages and examples of hope today. In what ways does Jesus impart hope to you?

Thurs, 2/27 **Ephesians 3:16** – Today's word is "Strength". We all want to be strong. The reality is we are all weak at some point, and we are not alone. Pray these words for yourself, and be watchful and sensitive to those around you may need a spiritual "shot-in-the-arm" of God's strength. Say this prayer for them also.

Fri, 2/28 **Matthew 5:14** – Today's word is "Light". Because of your connection with Christ, you are light to others. Someone needs to see the light of Christ in and through you today. You may be the only light they see. Recognize and affirm the light of Christ in those you meet today, young and old(er).

Sat, 2/29 **Proverbs 14:27** – The word for today is "Fear". What makes you afraid? Anxious? Worried? Whatever it is, it typically fills our thoughts without even thinking. Imagine if we allowed Christ to fill our thoughts the same way – not as a concern, but as a life-giving, life-affirming, life-encompassing presence. When fear or anxiety intrude, turn your thoughts to these words. Picture a fountain of life, a refreshing flow from Christ to you; and through you to others.

*Pray for our worship, fellowship, learning, and serving on Sunday.
Invite someone to join you!*