

2nd's Matters

March 13, 2019

From Your Pastor's Desk: Last Wednesday Christians around the world marked the beginning of Lent by observing Ash Wednesday. Many received a smudge of ashes (from the burning of previous Palm Sunday palm branches) at the beginning of the day and bear the mark all day. The practice is not a scriptural injunction, it is not a sacrament, it is not a command by God, but a practice that many find to be spiritually expressive of repentance, our mortality, and our need for a savior.

Each year there are incidents when others do not recognize the mark as a spiritual practice. A few years ago when Joe Biden had received ashes a clueless broadcaster remarked on the air, "What's happened to his head? I'm sure that's what everybody is asking at home." Her fellow broadcaster, similarly unaware, commented that it looked like he'd walked into a door. So much for informed reporting! This year a teacher in Utah caused a bit of a kerfuffle when she made a nine-year-old student (a relative of mine?) wash his forehead. Search for Biden or McLeod Ash Wednesday and you'll find these stories.

Some (over) react to such clumsiness or cluelessness by choosing to take great offense when what is needed is an explanation. I think such public incidents are moments when the Christian perspective on the human need for a savior, realized in Jesus Christ, is being given an opportunity to be declared.

Sunday Worship, March 17, The Second Sunday in Lent: We will rejoice with Michael VanOstenberg in his profession of faith and the baptism of his daughter, Harper. Mark 14:1-11 contains the story of the plotting of the Jewish leaders, the beautiful anointing of Jesus, and Judas planning betrayal. Pastor Doug's message will be, "She Has Done a Beautiful Thing." We will have a special offertory by Ben Mellema, Maddy DeWeerd and Amy Brasser. We will have a Noisy Coin offering for Insight Pregnancy Services, plus an offering for the General Fund and Hand2Hand

Mid-Week Study on *Reformed: What it Means, Why it Matters* continues this afternoon, Wednesday, March 13, 2:00 pm. We will discuss how Reformed churches work with other denominations and we'll talk about our emphasis on biblical teaching. Read pages 54-55, but even if you don't read it, feel free to come and join in our discussion.

Men's Lenten Breakfast begins this Friday, March 15, at 7 AM at the First Congregational Church on Hillcrest Ave.

Library News: At the IF: Fremont gathering last Saturday there were presentations by noted Christian speakers and authors. Now we have their books in our church library. Stop by the table in the lobby and find yourself some great reads!

Stock the Pantry: For the month of March, the Deacons request peanut butter and jelly.

Community

Feed My Starving Children is once again organizing a weekend to pack 108,000 meals for God's children around the world. On Friday, March 22 and Saturday, March 23 we are invited to be among the five hundred volunteers who will meet at TrueNorth to pack meals to Feed His Starving Children. Email Linda Ackerman at lackerman2@comcast.net or visit the website fmsc.org/mobilepack to register you and your family.

Russ and Tori Taff: A Night to Believe. Saturday, March 23 at 6 pm, join the Taffs at First CRC as they share their story of the struggle of addiction with their movie, music, and a special Q & A. Russ is a Grammy and Dove Award-winning musical artist. This event is being sponsored by CureUs Ministries, including support from Second CRC through our Outreach Team. Tickets are available at First CRC or through iTickets.com. They are \$10 in advance or \$12 at the door.

The Ball Brothers in Concert: Ferrysburg Community Church is presenting a concert featuring Christian music artists The Ball Brothers! Plan to join us April 7 at 7:00PM at 17785 Mohawk Drive in Spring Lake. No tickets are required but a free will offering will be taken. For further information, visit www.theballbrothers.com or call the church at 616-842-3880 or the Schaafs at 231-206-2964.

Inspire 2019: Attention Church Volunteers: Are you interested in spending time with other church volunteers to pause and celebrate the many people who make ministry possible? **Inspire 2019** is a 3-day event in Windsor, Ontario on August 1-3. Join others from across our denomination and choose from over 75 ministry workshops, listen to dynamic keynote speakers, and connect with people from more than 1,000 CRC congregations. Information can be found at crcna.org/Inspire or on the literature ledge in the lobby.

Pastor Doug: A Quote from a Book I Read

Commenting on Psalm 139 "You have searched me, Lord, and you know me."

"To be known in this profoundly intimate manner -- to be known by someone who knows us much better than we know ourselves -- is in many ways a frightening thing. God actually knows all of our thoughts and fantasies, our hopes and fears. Frightening, indeed. But it also serves to inspire our sense of wonder about the gift of salvation, as expressed in these hymn lyrics from Charles Wesley, 'Died he *for me*, who caused his pain?' or these from John Newton, 'Amazing grace...that saved a wretch *like me*.'"

Richard Mouw, *Restless Faith*, p.162

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