

THE CONNECTION March 2023



Connecting God's People Through Love

March 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3 Elijah's Closet 10-2	4 Elijah's Closet 10-2
5 <i>2nd Sunday in Lent</i> Worship 10 AM Communion <i>Trustees Mtg. after service</i>	6	7	8 <i>Elijah's Closet Mtg. 4:45</i>	9	10 Elijah's Closet 10-2	11 Elijah's Closet 10-2
12 <i>3rd Sunday in Lent</i> Worship 10 AM <i>Deacons Mtg after service</i>	13	14	15	16	17 Elijah's Closet 10-2	18 Elijah's Closet 10-2
19 <i>4th Sunday in Lent</i> Worship 10 AM	20 <i>Church In Society Mtg. 6:30 @ Church</i>	21	22	23	24 Elijah's Closet 10-2 <i>Prudential Board Mtg. 3:30</i>	25 Elijah's Closet 10-2
26 <i>5th Sunday in Lent</i> Worship 10 AM	27	28				

Revised Common Lectionary

The readings used at our weekly worship service and in most Mainline Protestant Churches and in Roman Catholic Churches are from a list of assigned readings known as The New Revised Common Lectionary. In our Congregational tradition, pastors are encouraged to use the assigned readings but it is not mandatory.

I personally prefer to follow the readings and I mainly focus on the Gospel lessons for my meditation. It gives me and you a structure through which we can study and learn from the teachings of the scripture of the Word (Logos) of God in our midst.

The readings for January: (You are encouraged to read them as well)

Date	1 st Reading and Psalm	Alternate 1 st Reading and Psalm	2 nd Reading	Gospel
Second Sunday in Lent March 5, 2023	<u>Genesis 12:1-4a</u>	<u>Psalm 121</u>	<u>Romans 4:1-5, 13-17</u>	<u>John 3:1-17</u> or <u>Matthew 17:1-9</u>
Third Sunday in Lent March 12, 2023	<u>Exodus 17:1-7</u>	<u>Psalm 95</u>	<u>Romans 5:1-11</u>	<u>John 4:5-42</u>
Fourth Sunday in Lent March 19, 2023	<u>1 Samuel 16:1-13</u>	<u>Psalm 23</u>	<u>Ephesians 5:8-14</u>	<u>John 9:1-41</u>
Fifth Sunday in Lent March 26, 2023	<u>Ezekiel 37:1-14</u>	<u>Psalm 130</u>	<u>Romans 8:6-11</u>	<u>John 11:1-45</u>

Treasurer's Report

December 2022 and January 2023 Offering Information

Monthly amount needed to meet the yearly budget of \$88,475: \$7,373

December Offering: **\$1,521.00**

January Offering: **\$4,332.00**

Many thanks to all of you for not only your money but your time and talents.

Marc

Moderators' Message

"After six days Jesus took Peter, James and John with him and led them up a high mountain, where they were all alone. There he was **transfigured** before them. His clothes became dazzling white, whiter than anyone in the world could bleach them. And there appeared before them Elijah and Moses, who were talking with Jesus. Peter said to Jesus, "Rabbi, it is good for us to be here. Let us put up three shelters-one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah." (He did not know what to say, they were so frightened.) Then a cloud appeared and covered them, and a voice came from the cloud: "This is my Son, whom I love. Listen to him!" Suddenly, when they looked around, they no longer saw anyone with them except Jesus. As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus gave them orders not to tell anyone what they had seen until the Son of Man had risen from the dead." (Mark 9:2-9)

In her Transfiguration Sunday sermon on February 19th, Pastor Janet shared several personal stories of life events that transformed or transfigured her and others. She remarked that each of us can tell of one or more experiences that significantly impacted us or changed our understanding or perception and/or deepened our faith.

As a community of believers, we have come to realize that the church is no longer as meaningful or relevant to many in today's society, and we are actively working to revitalize or reinvent the way we carry out our discipleship. We are seeking that transformation that will ensure our legacy for the next generations.

According to the website, Got Questions? ". . . the purpose of the transfiguration of Christ into at least a part of His heavenly glory was so that the "inner circle" of His disciples could gain a greater understanding of who Jesus was. Christ underwent a dramatic change in appearance in order that the disciples could behold Him in His glory. The disciples, who had only known Him in His human body, now had a greater realization of the deity of Christ, though they could not fully comprehend it. That gave them the reassurance they needed after hearing the shocking news of His coming death (GotQuestions.org).

Drawing a parallel from this lesson, perhaps we need to give others a greater understanding of who we are. It may be the right time for more ministry in our community, modeling our Christian beliefs, giving hope, and caring for all in need. Maybe we don't need to change the way "we do church." Maybe we just need to get better at demonstrating what we believe is the role of the church in Walton, New York. Do we transform the church? Or will the transfiguration of us as a body, an active team with a common purpose, make our church vital?

As part of the United Church of Christ, "we are a distinct and diverse community of Christians that come together as one church united in Spirit to love all, welcome all and seek justice for all." God is still speaking. That message will transfigure the way we teach, share, and care.

May the season of Lent be a special time of reflection and renewal for you.

Diane Meredith

A Note From Janet

How Can We Get to Know the Holy Spirit?

When reflecting on where to begin getting to know the Holy Spirit in the introduction to their edited volume, *The Holy Spirit: Setting the World on Fire*, theologians Fr. Richard Lennan and Nancy Pineda-Madrid write: "Developing a heightened sensitivity is the first step. The Holy Spirit's movement in our lives, and in the world, is often elusive, not readily discerned."

They note that:

The Holy Spirit meets us where we are. In our experiences of joy and serenity, guilt and distress, wonder and awe, pain and anger, the Spirit is present. The Spirit remains present in all that comprises our life's journey; closer to us than we are to ourselves, and the source of strength for our "inner being" (Ephesians 3:16). What is more, the Spirit continually invites greater life, animating our present. The Holy Spirit indwells our bodies and makes our very lives and living possible, empowering us with the grace of Christ. In being with us, the Holy Spirit is and remains sympathetic to our life situation and circumstance. For our part, we, like the prophet Elijah, need to learn how to pay attention, to deepen our awareness of the Spirit's presence.

What is at stake here is a matter of attunement, of learning to see and hear and experience God's presence in our lives and world anew. This latter point about experience is essential. Both the late theologian Dominican Cardinal Yves Congar and, more recently, the late Protestant theologian Clark H. Pinnock have all stated that the Holy Spirit is with us ALWAYS!

Quoted from Daniel P. Horan, a Catholic writer & teacher

Pastor Janet

IRT Program (Innovative Readiness Training)

Free Medical Care

This program is sponsored by the Department of Defense and provides 11 days' worth of no-cost medical care for the residents of Delaware County. It will be held July 10-21, 2023 at Walton high School and is supported by Delaware County and UHS.

Major Daniel LaVorgna is the Program Manager for the Army. They currently have 18 projects running this year across the United States. This program encourages their medical personnel to stay mission ready by providing medical services in local communities.

In Walton, they will provide no-cost, no appointment, walk in medical assessment, physicals, prescriptions, basic optometry and dental services, and veterinary spay/neutering services.

More information will be available in the Spring.



ONE-ON-ONE TECH SUPPORT

TUESDAY, MARCH 7, 14, 21, & 28

10:00 AM - 12:00 PM

WILLIAM B. OGDEN LIBRARY 42 GARDINER PLACE, WALTON, NY

Need help learning how to use features on your iPhone? Want to know how to use a program or application on your tablet, phone, or computer? A volunteer from the community will be at the library Tuesdays from 10:00 AM-Noon to assist and answer questions.

CALL THE LIBRARY AT 607-865-5929 TO SIGN UP FOR A 30-MINUTE SLOT

Pancake Breakfast



All You Can Eat Pancake Breakfast

Benefit for Programs and Services for the Elderly

Sponsored by The Delaware County Senior Council

Saturday, March 11th 8:00 am – 12:00 noon

Adults - \$9.00 Children 6-10 - \$6.00

Children under 6 - Free

Hamden Town Hall, Rt. 10 Hamden