



Cross Talk

Making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world by loving, engaging, and serving our neighbors

"This Lent, I invite you to look at Holy Week with fresh eyes. As a guide, I'm turning to the book Entering the Passion of Jesus: A Beginner's Guide to Holy Week."

CHURCH STAFF

PASTOR:

Reverend J. Harlen Rife

ADMINISTRATIVE ASST:

Pam Moore

FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATOR:

Margo Holmes

ORGANIST/BELLS:

Betty Gross

WORSHIP LEADER:

Dustin Oliver

CHOIR DIRECTOR:

Brian Lawson

NURSERY DIRECTOR:

Diana Langenfeld

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY:

Amy Dvorak

LOVING HANDS DIRECTOR:

Shannon Miller

ADMIN COORDINATOR:

Brittney Hurley

This month, I will wrap up my sermon series on spiritual disciplines. Together, we explored practices of silence, solitude, scriptural study, embodied prayer, and personal reflection. I hope that you were inspired to pursue your spiritual disciplines with renewed passion and to draw closer to God. This month, we start a new adventure: Lent. Ash Wednesday is on Valentine's Day and begins our journey toward Christ's passion, death, and resurrection.

This Lent, I invite you to look at Holy Week with fresh eyes. As a guide, I'm turning to the book *Entering the Passion of Jesus: A Beginner's Guide to Holy Week*. Don't let the name fool you, the book is not just for beginners and is insightful for those who have observed Lent for years. The work offers a different cultural perspective on these well-known events.

The author, Amy-Jill Levine, is a Jewish scholar who specializes in the writings of the early Christian church. An alumna of Vanderbilt and Duke, she is currently a Professor of New Testament and Jewish Studies at Hartford International University for Religion and Peace. She has also held office in the Society of Biblical Literature. In recent years, she has published a series of books with the United Methodist publishing house, the Abingdon Press.

Dr. Levine brings a deep awareness of Jewish historical and cultural context to the study of the early church. She helps Christian audiences discover subtle nuances in the text lost in translation from language to language, culture to culture, and time to time. When it comes to Holy Week, we've heard the story so many times, it has been normalized in our minds. In *Entering the Passion*, Levine shows just how radical some of Jesus' decisions really were.

The Abingdon Press explains, "Jesus' final days were full of risk. Every move he made was filled with anticipation, danger, and the potential for great loss or great reward. Jesus risked his reputation when he entered Jerusalem in a victory parade. He risked his life when he dared to teach in the Temple. His followers risked everything when they left behind their homes, or anointed him with costly perfume. We take risks as we read and re-read these stories, finding new meanings and new challenges." To learn more, join me for our Lenten events.

Each Sunday, my sermon will address the scriptures and ideas raised in one of the chapters of Levine's book. As always, you are welcome to join the Sunday conversation circle in between our two services to unpack your own ideas about this text. In addition, I plan to lead a small group study on the book. We'll meet on Thursdays from February 15 to March 21st at noon for a brown bag lunch and discussion. Even if you can't join one of the discussion groups, I encourage you to grab a copy of the book and read along. When, at the end of Lent, we reach Holy Week, I'm sure you will appreciate it all the more with this added perspective and time for reflection. Above all, may you have a blessed and holy Lent!

Sincerely, Rev. Harlen Rife

To Everything There Is A Season

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS



- 2 Nick Sopher
- 7 Reese Cowgar
- 10 Caleb Smesko
- 12 Alaya Johnson
- 13 Cassidy Chaffinch
- 14 James Kocsis
- 16 Gina Laterza
- 17 Margery Aller and
Pete Peterson
- 20 Sydney Rossiter

We want to share with everyone that the newsletter will be changing. With the USPS postage rates rising and the amount of content we have to share with you once a month we have decided to make some positive changes.

The first thing we are doing is UPDATING our data base at the church where we store your information. We would ask you to share with us your current EMAIL ADDRESS that you would like the church to communicate with you through. Along with email we would appreciate knowing any other changes also.

Our goal is to transition smoothly and to prevent you from not receiving your church news. Please call the church office to add your email or to make any other changes. The weekly Crosspoints will continue to be emailed and now we will be adding the CrossTalk through Constant Contact email service also.

This is the last monthly newsletter like this you will receive. Please call the church office during business hours and talk to Pam about your information. Those currently receiving this newsletter via your email will no longer receive this email format.

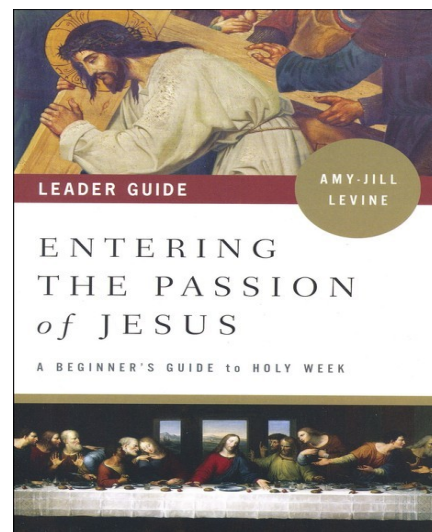
If you need questions answered please call and talk to Pam in the office. She will gladly help accommodate your needs.

Office Hours: M,W,F 9-1 and T,TH 9-3. 330-896-1936

Thank you!

LENTEN BOOK STUDY:

In Lent, Pastor Harlen will be preaching on ideas and themes in the book *Entering the Passion of Holy Week*, by Amy-Jill Levine. You can dive deeper into the subject by attending this weekly small group. We will meet in the church library at noon on Thursdays beginning February 15th through March 21st. Bring a packed lunch and your curiosity! The sign up sheet will be available at worship or by calling the church office. The deadline to register is Sunday, February 11th and the cost for materials is \$15 which can be placed in the offering plate or dropped at the church office.



FEBRUARY ANNIVERSARIES

Robert & Pam
Milhoan
February 4th



Greensburg UMC Financials as of December 31, 2023

	DECEMBER	YTD
Income	\$ 44,762	\$ 295,673
Expenses	\$ 23,627	\$ 282,361
GAIN or (LOSS)	\$ 21,135	\$ 13,312

MINISTRY NEWS

Children's Ministry—

We've started off the New Year learning about Rahab, Joshua, and Deborah. The kids have been learning and growing and are able to tell us the Bible stories they remember from the last 2 years! We are looking forward to trying the Yoga Worship at the beginning of February. Save the date—Palm Sunday, March 24, we will be having a kid Easter event! More details will come soon! Have a blessed February, and don't forget about leap day, it's my favorite day every 4 years!!

Blessings, Amy Dvorak and GUM Club & Level Up Team

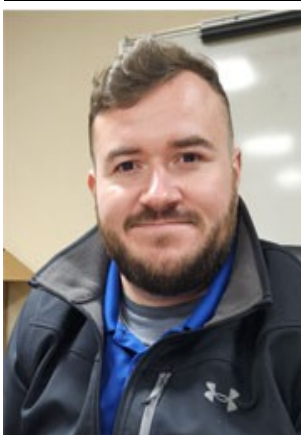


ASH WEDNESDAY — LENT BEGINS

On Ash Wednesday, February 14th, Pastor Harlen will offer space for prayer and the imposition of ashes in the sanctuary. You may stop by from Noon to 12:30pm. With Preschool in the building, we ask everyone to park at the top of the hill and use the sanctuary entrance.



YOUTH GROUP - BEGINS SUNDAYS 3-5



Join us in welcoming Cullen Kress on Staff as our New Youth Director. You might recognize him from being a long time member since his youth or a musician in the Worship Band. He began on Sunday January the 14th and he and the youth group have spent some time getting to know one another and working on the youth room. They worked together on moving things around as well as organizing and getting the room just the way they want it. It has been a nice way for all them to get engaged and get their environment right to learn more about their faith and themselves.

Cullen has already attended a Youth Ministry retreat the District sponsored and met and learned some new things to bring to the job. And he welcomes adults to help volunteer!

Greensburg UMC

2161 Greensburg Rd,
North Canton, OH 44720

330.896.1936
www.greensburgumc.net

"2024 FEBRUARY EDITION"

Ongoing Fellowship Opportunities

Saturdays - Walking Group meets at 9am by office entrance

2nd Tuesdays - Dementia Support Group meets from 6-7:30 in the library (directed by Chaplain Billy Kremer & Anita St John of Homestead Hospice)

Wednesdays - Choir meets at 7:30pm in sanctuary

3rd Thursdays - United Women in Faith meets at 3:30pm in the library

Check the church calendar at
www.greensburgumc.net

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

Before "lawn" the 2024 Church Lawn Care Team will have their engines roaring.

If you are interested in being a Team Member on the Lawn Care Team, call the church office!

Thank you for your consideration in serving in this capacity.



Join Us on Thursday, February, 15th at 3:30pm. We are beginning a new topic: FOOD, FAITH and FELLOWSHIP

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

MONDAY, WEDNESDAY & FRIDAY— 9AM TO 1PM / TUESDAY AND THURSDAY—9AM TO 3PM

IF YOU NEED TO STOP BY THE OFFICE, PLEASE CALL AHEAD!

330.896.1936