

We mark the beginning of Lent on Wednesday, February 14th. One of the questions many people ask is, “What are you giving up for Lent?” Lent is a time when we often engage in the spiritual discipline of fasting (denying ourselves of something so that we can focus more fully on God’s love and presence). Deborah Ann Wong, in an article about fasting, shared how NOT to fast.

Fasting in a Legalistic Manner. If you find yourself asking, ‘Can I do XYZ and still have it “count” as fasting?’ you’re asking the wrong question. The discipline of fasting is a means to an end, not the end in itself. Rather than focusing on whether we are doing it “right,” we should focus instead on how fasting is transforming our worship and love of God.

Fasting for the Sake of Fasting. The mere act of fasting is not the point. Fasting ought to transform us more into Christ’s likeness as we open ourselves to the Spirit. In Isaiah 58, we see God declare his displeasure with the Israelites despite their devotion to fasting because while they fasted, they continued to mistreat their workers and stir up quarrels and divisions. Their fast consisted merely of empty actions as they failed to allow God to transform their lives.

Fasting for Glory. In Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount, he criticizes the Pharisees’ public fasting. The target of his criticism was not their act of fasting, but their motivation in doing so—to be seen, ‘disfiguring their faces’ to draw attention to themselves. We must also beware of fasting to impress God, to show off our ‘humility’ and ‘pious devotion’. Such pride is the very opposite of what fasting is meant to develop in us. In a culture where we are quick to share everything on social media, we must examine the motivation of our hearts very carefully before posting about our fast.

Fasting to Manipulate God. There are times when we may fast in order to seek God’s wisdom and help. What we must remember is that it is God who decides whether and how to act. We do not control God with our fasting, as though making a sacrifice to pagan gods. I find it helpful to think of it this way: fasting does not change God, it changes me. Fasting puts me in a posture of humility and worship that allows me to hear God speak or recognize how God is working in my life.

May Lent be a time of deepened devotion to God and help each of us begin to live more like Jesus.

Pastor Ray



ASH WEDNESDAY

Join us at the church building or online at 7:00pm, February 14th as we mark the beginning of the season of Lent with a special service.

Shadow? No Shadow?
6 more weeks of winter?
We will see on Feb. 2nd!!



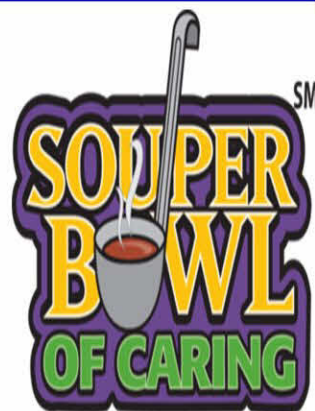
SOUPER BOWL SUNDAY



NEW

LOOK

On February 11th the NFL will host its 58th Super Bowl. We will participate in the “SOUPER Bowl of Caring” as we take a special collection on that day. Proceeds will be used for the church’s feeding programs.



Valentine's Day
Wed Feb 14th

(Which is also
Ash Wednesday
this year)



February 4 When Life Comes At You
February 11 Puzzling over the Transfiguration
February 18 Looking for Shalom in All the Wrong Places
February 25 Rest in the Wilderness

A decorative graphic for the month of February, featuring a horizontal blue line with the word "FEBRUARY" in blue capital letters. The background consists of soft, watercolor-like washes of pink, purple, and red.

FEBRUARY

Kum Ba Yah aka Kum Ba Zoom

We meet every Wednesday on ZOOM for fellowship, study and prayer. 7:00 PM. The link to the Zoom Meeting is sent in the Wednesday eMail each week.

Kum Ba Yah topics:

February 7 Genesis 23

February 14 **Ash Wednesday**

February 21 Remember We Need Communion

February 28 We Return to the Body in Communion

Adult Sunday School

Sundays at 9:30am on Zoom and in Person!

February 4 Is There Room for Mysticism?

February 11 The Perilous and Promising Pulpit

February 18 War

February 25 Misuse of the Environment

BACKPACK PROGRAM

We are grateful for the leadership of Dave Foster and Janice Johnson who organize our weekly food program with children at Roosevelt Elementary School. We are currently serving 47 students by providing weekend “backpacks” of simple, nutritious food.

We would like to thank all the volunteers for their hard work and dedication. From helping pack the backpacks, to their generous donations. With out you, we couldn't make this ministry what it is today. We have given **141 backpacks** since the beginning of the year.



MISSION COMMITTEE

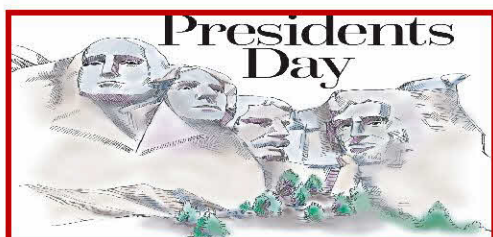
The Mission Committee met on January 23, 2024. In Global Mission we gave a gift of **\$300 to PDA.**

The Mission program is sustained in part by gifts from the Myers Sisters bequest as well as gifts from members. You can designate gifts to “Local Mission” or “Global Mission”.

The Deacons Shoe ministry has already given out **2** pairs of shoes since the beginning of the year.

The Food Pantry distribution average for last year (202) was 54 bags/month. As of 1/29/24 we have given out **49** bags of food.





7 Things You Didn't Know About Mt. Rushmore

On October 31, 1941, Mount Rushmore was officially completed after fourteen long years of work. Now, almost 80 years later, Mount Rushmore is probably the most visited spot in South Dakota.

Before you travel to South Dakota on your next school trip, here are seven things you didn't know about Mount Rushmore.

1. A Hidden Hall of Records There were parts of the National Treasure movies that were true. There really is a hidden room behind Mount Rushmore! Located behind Lincoln's head, there is an entrance to what would have been the Hall of Records. The sculptor of Mount Rushmore planned to create a room within the mountain where documents and artifacts would be put on display, but the project didn't have enough funding to be completed.

2. Who was Mr. Rushmore? Mount Rushmore received its name from Charles E. Rushmore, a lawyer from New York City. In his years as a young attorney, Rushmore traveled to South Dakota to survey and scope out recently discovered tin mines. During his time in South Dakota, Rushmore befriended a group of prospectors and asked them what the hills were called. They told him the hill he pointed out had no given name, but they would now call it Rushmore Peak.

3. Who chose the faces? Gutzon Borglum, the sculptor of Mount Rushmore, is responsible for choosing the faces now carved into Mount Rushmore. According to Borglum, the four presidents he chose "represented the most important events in the history of the United States." Borglum believed Washington, Jefferson, Roosevelt, and Lincoln represented the birth, growth, development, and preservation (respectively) of America.

4. Altering the Original Plan Doane Robinson, known as the "father of Mount Rushmore," planned to highlight local history by carving figures into the Black Hills. His original idea was to memorialize figures like "Buffalo Bill Cody, Meriwether Lewis, William Clark and Red Cloud, a legendary Lakota leader." A separate case was made by suffragists Rose Arnold Powell to include Susan B. Anthony as a fifth face on the mountain-side.

5. Is there a fifth face on Mount Rushmore? There is no secret fifth face carved into Mount Rushmore. However, for over 20 years, visitors were greeted by Ben Black Elk, unofficially called the fifth face of Mount Rushmore. Ben Black Elk "was a successful rancher, traveled extensively, and testified before Congress on the importance of teaching Indian history to Indians." Historians estimate that 5,000 photos were taken of him a day for his 27 years at Mount Rushmore.

6. How Big? Each of the heads in Mount Rushmore has slightly different proportions, but are each about 60 feet tall. Each eye is 11 feet long, and each mouth is 18 feet across. If that seems giant, remember that the original plan was to carve the full bodies of each president into the mountain!

7. Not Big Enough. If you think Mount Rushmore is the largest mountain carving, think again! Just 40 minutes away stands the largest mountain carving in progress, The Crazy Horse Memorial. After working a summer at Mount Rushmore, Sculptor Korczak Ziolkowski joined forces with Lakota Chief Henry Standing Bear to create a memorial honoring American Indians. The Crazy Horse Memorial is still under construction, but Crazy Horses' face dwarfs Washington's face by 27 feet!



2024 February

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
 TRANSFIGURATION SUNDAY February 11th	 BLACK HISTORY MONTH	 Presidents Day February 19th	 ASH Wednesday February 14th	1 10-12 Food Pantry 2:30 Backpack 7:00 GA	2 10-12 Food Pantry	3
4 9:15 am Breakfast 9:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am Worship Fellowship 11:30 Choir	5 10-12 Food Pantry	6 10-12 Food Pantry	7 10-12 Food Pantry 7:00 KumBaZoom	8 10-12 Food Pantry 2:30 Backpack 7:00 GA	9 10-12 Food Pantry	10
11 "Soup"er Bowl Transfiguration Sunday 9:15 am Breakfast 9:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am Worship Fellowship 11:30 Deacons Mtg	12 10-12 Food Pantry	13 10-12 Food Pantry	14 Ash Wednesday 10-12 Food Pantry 2:30 Backpack 7:00 Service	15 10-12 Food Pantry 7:00 GA	16 10-12 Food Pantry	17
18 9:15 am Breakfast 9:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am Worship Fellowship	19 Presidents Day 10-12 Food Pantry	20 10-12 Food Pantry 11:00 Mission Meeting 7:00 Session Meeting	21 10-12 Food Pantry	22 10-12 Food Pantry 2:30 Backpack 7:00 GA	23 10-12 Food Pantry	24
25 9:15 am Breakfast 9:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am Worship Fellowship 11:30 choir	26 10-12 Food Pantry	27 10-12 Food Pantry	28 10-12 Food Pantry 7:00 KumBaZoom	29 10-12 Food Pantry 2:30 Backpack 7:00 GA		



Jim Long.....2/1
 Bill Good.....2/7
 Barbara Reeves.....2/15

Should your name be here?
 Please let the office know your birth date so we can include you!

Scripture Reader Schedule

February 4	Grace
February 11	Karin
February 18	Diana
February 25	Clyde
March 3	Tim
March 10	Melinda
March 17	John
March 24 Palm Sunday	Abbey
March 31 Easter Sunday	Ross
April 7	Janet
April 14	Nathaniel
April 21	Grace

Please let Ross or Pastor Ray know if you cannot read the scriptures
the week you are scheduled.
Thank you for your service in the House of the Lord

"BY THE SWEAT OF YOUR BROW YOU WILL EAT
YOUR FOOD UNTIL YOU RETURN TO THE GROUND,
SINCE FROM IT YOU WERE TAKEN;

FOR
DUST
YOU ARE AND TO
DUST
YOU WILL RETURN."



GENESIS 3:19, NIV

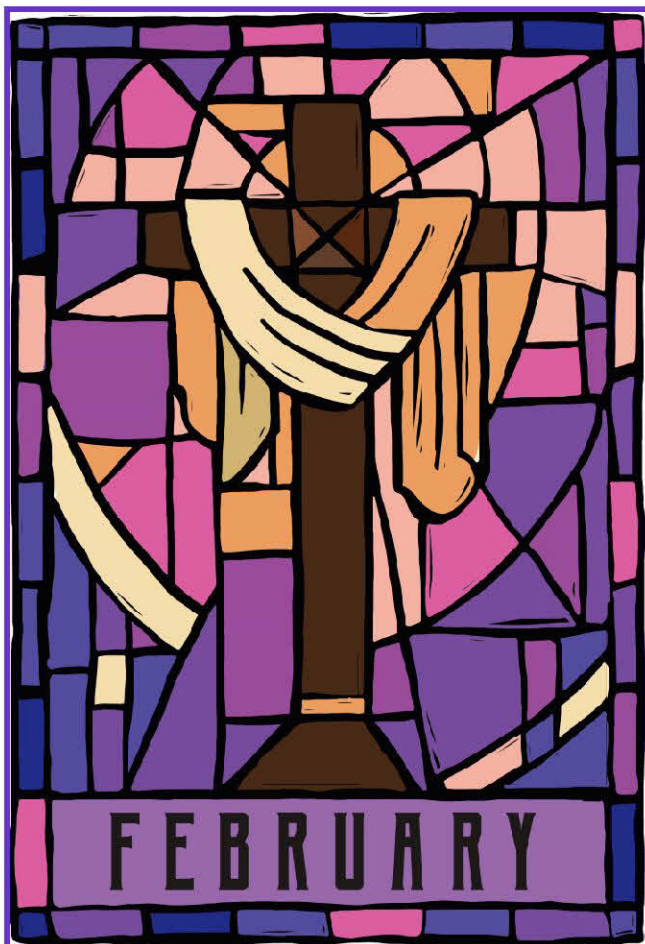
Ash Wednesday
Service 7pm

We would love for
you to join us in
person for our
Ash Wednesday
Service!


ASH
Wednesday

Servers in the Lord's House		
	Coffee Host	Backpack
Feb 5	Open	Thur Feb 1 Janice J. &
Feb 12	Open	Thur Feb 8... Open
Feb 19	Open	Wed Feb 14 Open
Feb 26	Open	Thur Feb 22... Diana S & Cindy H
		Thur Feb 29... Open

Please call the office or talk to Pastor Ray to sign up for servers slots!



Prayer Requests

All who protect and serve
Peace in the world

Scott Edwards - Had surgery

Ross Tomlinson - Having MRI on back & neck

Amanda May & Family - Living situation. Had a house fire and lost everything.

Jen & Husband -Awaiting the results of PET scan.

Jennifer & Family - Husband found out he has brain cancer.

Melba Cordell - Fell and broke her hip. She's recovering in a rehab facility.

Abbey Ankenman - Job interviews.

Janet Atkinson - Cousin on Hospice, daughter has job interviews, friend has a daughter who is fighting breast cancer, her Dad in the nursing home fighting dementia.

Everyone on the weekly card rotation list

Everyone listed on the prayer tree

The Pastor and Church Staff

The EOP & Synod of the Sun & the PC(USA)



Fun Facts About Leap Year!

1. Without leap day, our calendar would be off by about 24 days every century, or every 100 years!
2. The first leap year was introduced in 46 BCE by Julius Caesar of Rome.
3. People born on a Leap Day are sometimes called *leaplings*.
4. More than 4 million people around the world are leaplings.
5. On non-leap years, some leaplings choose to celebrate their birthdays a day early on February 28, while others choose to celebrate a day later on March 1.
6. There is an international club for leaplings! The Honor Society of Leap Year Babies has over 10,000 members worldwide.
7. Some cultures that use a lunar calendar – a calendar that is based on the moon's movement - add a whole leap month every three years.
8. The Summer Olympic Games are held every four years on leap years.
9. Since 2024 is a leap year, the next leap year will be in 2028. That means the next leap day is 1461 days away!
10. There are 525,600 minutes in a typical calendar year. On leap years, there are 527,040 minutes. What will you do with the extra 1,440 minutes this leap year?



New Directories!!!

It is almost time for a new phone directory!
Be sure to let the office know of any changes,
additions or corrections!



IT'S LEAP YEAR!



AFRICAN-AMERICAN HISTORY MONTH

Sunday, February 11th

TRANSFIGURATION SUNDAY



GROUNDHOG DAY FEBRUARY 2 Friday



PRESIDENTS DAY



Monday, February 19th





“May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in Him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.”

Romans 15:13



*The First Presbyterian Church
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Miami, OK 74354*