

Hebron United Methodist Church
9811 Main Street, P.O. Box 323, Hebron, IL 60034

Catch the Spirit!

www.hebronmethodist.org

MARCH 2025

The Pastor Ponders...

...What's With The Ashes?

*Then I turned to the Lord God to seek an answer
by prayer and supplication with fasting and
sackcloth and ashes.*

(Daniel 9: 3)

For many years, it was customary in the Roman Catholic Church for lay folks to receive ashes in the shape of a cross on their foreheads on Ash Wednesday. I think it was in the early 1970's when United Methodists began the practice more regularly. I can remember my Catholic friends having to get up really early so they could go to church and get their ashes before school started. As a United Methodist, we often didn't receive our ashes until the evening service. Since I've been ordained, I've been known to distribute ashes before the crack of dawn, at noon, in the evening, and, in some cases, just sat around the church all day waiting for folks to drop in and "get ashed." As I've researched this, it seems that there is no prescribed time to impose ashes on Ash Wednesday. While it may be a way of receiving God's grace, it is not considered a sacrament or even sacramental.

In fact, there are no specific instructions for imposing or receiving ashes either. Most ashes have been created by burning the palms from the previous

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Mark your Calendars

Wednesday, March 5th - 7:00 pm
Ash Wednesday Service at HUMC

Thursdays, March 6th - April 10th
Winter/Spring Productive Aging
Chair Tai Chi 9:30 a.m.
Lenten Study 10:15 a.m.

Sunday, March 16th
9:00 a.m. Church Council
No Church Works/No Sunday School

Sunday, March 23rd, 30th, April 6th
Adult/Youth Choir Rehearsal 9:30 a.m.

Sunday, March 30th
UMCOR Sunday
Noisy Can Sunday for United Voices for
Children - bring your coins!
HUMC Centennial Celebration Planning
Committee meets after worship

Sunday, April 6th
Mission Links - UMCOR Where Most Needed

**SAVE THE DATE for the
HUMC Centennial Celebration!**
July 5th & 6th
More information to come!

The Pastor Ponders (continued)

year's Palm Sunday services. I like to use plain ash, while some of my friends like to mix theirs with olive oil or holy water. Different folks have different things to say while imposing ashes, the most common being: "From dust you are, to dust you shall return. Repent and believe in the gospel."

So, how long do you have to leave your ashes on? Is it OK to wash them off or do you have to wait until they disappear on their own? There are NO guidelines. Leave them on as long as you wish or wash them off whenever you wish. Some folks find it a meaningful reminder of the times they have failed to do God's will and will leave them on for quite a while. Some folks find it is a visible witness to others of their commitment to following Jesus. In any case, the mark of ashes on our foreheads should not only remind us of our sin, they should also remind us of God's love which has washed away our sin and given us a fresh opportunity at new life.

From the earliest times, the wearing of sackcloth and the placing of ashes upon one's head have been a public way of acknowledging our sorrow or regret for having done something wrong. People have worn sackcloth and ashes when they were in mourning, when they were acknowledging their mortality, when they were practicing penance, and when they were acknowledging their humility before God. They were also a sign of one's intent of repentance – turning away from sin and turning back to God. When we receive the ashes on Ash Wednesday, our reasons and intent may be similar.

Daniel 9 records Daniel's prayer of confession and supplication, not only for himself, but for his entire country. During his prayer, Gabriel came to him in a vision, telling him what would come in the future. Essentially, it was a message of hope for God's people. God was in control (despite appearances) and God would deliver God's people. The kingdoms and rulers of this world didn't stand a chance. They were temporary, while God's kingdom is eternal.

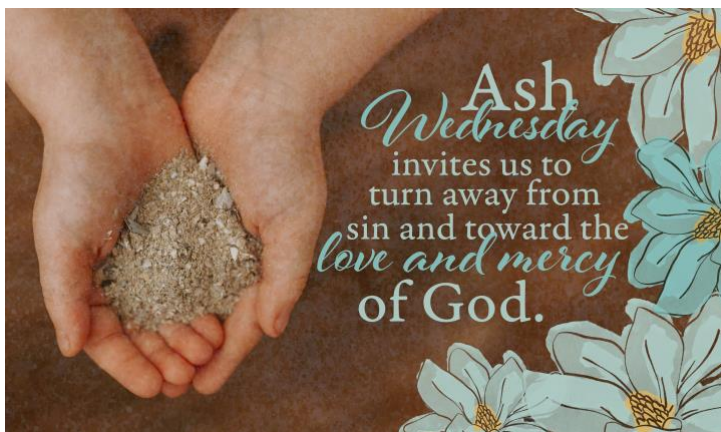
Now, I am not suggesting that we must continuously wear ashes and sackcloth in order for God to hear and answer our prayers. But, I am thinking that, during this time of Lent, approaching God with an attitude of humility and reverence as we pray for ourselves, our communities, our church, and our country might not be such a bad idea.

May you have a holy and blessed Lent, *Pastor Char*



Calling all singers!

Choir rehearsal begins soon to prepare Special Music for Palm Sunday, Good Friday, and Easter Sunday! The Church Works Youth are already hard at work learning the music. Come join them before worship on Sundays at 9:30 a.m. (or anytime you can arrive before worship) on March 23rd, March 30th, and April 6th.
See you there!



You are invited to the Hebron United Methodist Church for our **Ash Wednesday Service**
Wednesday, March 5, 2025
7:00 p.m.

Cultivating Health Ministries



On February 20th at St. John's Lutheran Church, we attended the second in a series of educational programming on Alzheimer's and Dementia provided by the Alzheimer's Association through our partnership with Cultivating Health Ministries. In this session, Susan Laten and Aileen Zei provided instruction on how to communicate effectively with someone who has Alzheimer's. They also provided resources for more information on caregiving and support. We were blessed to have this important and informative session and discussion provided to us here in Hebron! Our next session in this series has not yet been scheduled, but look to HUMC's or St. John's websites for an announcement on that later in the year. Thank you to everyone who attended and a big thank you to St. John's Lutheran Church for hosting this health event!



On Thursday, March 6th we will kick off our 6-week Productive Aging session for Winter/Spring! We will begin with a 40-minute Chair Tai Chi class led by Stephanie Claussen at 9:30 a.m. Then at 10:15 a.m. Pastor Char Hoffmann will lead us through Adam Hamilton's *24 Hours That Changed the World*. This Lenten bible study and video journey will take us virtually to the Holy Land and provide us with a deeper understanding of Christ's last days on earth.



Save the date for our AED refresher course at HUMC! On Sunday, April 27th at 11:30 a.m. after morning worship, Sharon Smith will provide AED training for anyone who needs a refresher class. Come learn how you can save a life!



Thank you to everyone who came up with Big Ideas for HUMC to Strive and Grow! We are thrilled to see your ideas shared in the box at the back of the church throughout January and February. We received over a dozen of new ideas, many of which suggested we have more community events and fundraisers. One suggestion, we are happy to announce, is already being put into action: We have been bringing back Special Music into our services every week! Thank you so much to Chaylee, Naomi, Riley, Vivian and Tallulah, who have provided beautiful music for our worship services this year. We are looking forward to hearing Candy and Kris sing and play next Sunday, more music from our HUMC Kids/Youth, and soon, we will be pulling together an all ages choir for Holy Week! Stay tuned as we make more announcements based off of your comments and feedback!

N.O.W. TEAM

In February, HUMC celebrated Shirlee's return to Sunday morning service! Shirlee continued to serve HUMC "remotely" as she recovered from surgery and we are very happy to see her again on Sundays with renewed appreciation for all the work she does for the Nurture and Outreach efforts for our church!

Our 2025 Mission Program is off to a great start! We'd like to thank everyone for their donations to the food pantry for Soup-er Sunday, and to our Mission Links mission this past month for Reconciling Ministries Network. With matching funds from HUMC, we raised \$421.00! What a wonderful way to celebrate our 2nd year anniversary as a Reconciling Congregation!



See the back page or our website for more information about our upcoming missions for UMCOR and United Voices for Children at the end of March.

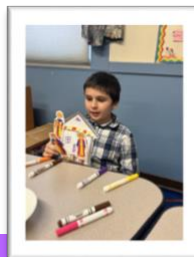


HUMC KIDS

Our Sunday School class is Celebrating Wonder through the stories of Jesus, his life and his teachings. We learned about Jesus' baptism, Feeding the 5000, Levi the tax collector, the story of the prodigal son, and finally, the story of celebration after finding the lost sheep and the lost coin - which meant we had to make party hats!

Our Church Works class has been devoting time to working on Special Music for Palm Sunday, Good Friday, and Easter Sunday. We would like to open up this Church Works class/choir rehearsal to anyone of any age who would like to be a part of this Holy Week choir! All ages rehearsals begin at 9:30 a.m. (or whenever you can make it in) before worship on March 23rd, March 30th, and April 6th.

A big thank you goes out to Becky Klein for substitute teaching our Sunday School class during this past month! Please note that we will not be having Church Works or Sunday School on March 16th.



G.R.A.C.E.

G.R.A.C.E. hosted a movie night the first evening in March. We started with a potluck dinner and then watched "Will & Harper," a road trip documentary which witnessed to love, acceptance and patience shared between two old friends after one had transitioned into a woman. Dessert and discussion followed, along with a little planning for what comes next for G.R.A.C.E.

Dear Lord, please hear our prayer for the following...



Chela Johnson recovering from surgery
Kris Bottlemy and family on the passing of her Aunt Kipp
Stephanie Kasten's friend, Mary, experiencing multiple problems
James Hampton's brother-in-law, James, diagnosed with heart problems
Shirlee Correll's neighbor, Sherry, experiencing heart problems, and her friend Lori, diagnosed with cancer
The Bailey family as Harold is experiencing health problems
Sandy Rutherford, experiencing health problems, and Rose as she cares for him
Karen Vipond's friend, Bob Athey, going through cancer treatments
Marj O'Halleran experiencing health problems
Dale Walker's friend Sandy's mom on her diagnosis of cancer
Dan Staten's son, Nick
Alberta Austin at Alden Terrace ***Anyone wishing to send a card see below***; and her son, Donny, experiencing health problems
James Hampton and his family on the passing of his grandson, Justin; the passing of his aunt, Lucy; and his mother, Marjorie, experiencing health problems
Dave Dickey
Joan O'Halleran, recovering from surgery
Katelyn Winter Sampson
Pastor Char & Glenn's daughter-in-law, Julie,

We pray for all who have suffered as the result of natural disasters.
We pray for protection & safety for all those who defend & protect us
We pray for peace for all countries during these trying times of war and unrest. Surround those affected by these and all conflicts with your precious love.
We pray for the victims and families of all who have been affected by and from violence.
We pray for all children, women, men who have been victims of abuse
We pray for the return of goodwill and unity among all people.
We pray for all those affected by illness; and for the safety of all medical staff and personnel during the care of all patients.
We pray for our church, the Village of Hebron, and all leaders - local, state and national; our church leaders in Hebron, our Prairie Central District Sup't. Wendy Hardin Hermann, our Bishop Dan Schwerin, and the entire UMC.
We pray for the names in our hearts that they will be kept safe from harm. God bless us all. Amen

If you wish to have someone added to our Prayer List please contact Shirlee on our Nurture Team at (815) 648-5009 or at offqueen@aol.com.

During a mental health crisis, anyone can call the 24-hour National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255. Veterans crisis line is 800-273-7255.



Thank you everyone for your prayers during my procedure and recovery. I very much appreciated all the kind words and texts I received! -Chela

***Alberta Austin
c/o Alden Terrace
803 Royal Drive, Rm. 602
McHenry, IL 60050



JOIN US FOR WORSHIP SUNDAYS AT 10:30 A.M



Opportunities to Give

Thank you to everyone who gave in February to Reconciling Ministries Network! With our HUMC matching program, we gave \$421.00 to this Mission Links mission! Thank you for your support! We also collected several items for our Soup-er Bowl Sunday food drive! Thank you! [Click here](#) for our Mission Links Program 2025. Upcoming ways you can give this month:

- 1) Special Sunday - UMCOR March 30th
- 2) Noisy Can Sunday - Bring your coins for United Voices for Children - March 30th
- 3) Mission Links - UMCOR Where Most Needed (HUMC will match up to \$200) - April 6th
- 4) Local Giving - Hebron Community Food Pantry
(any Sunday in February- baskets in back of Sanctuary).

Monetary donations to restock the pantry's meat supply will also be accepted and appreciated!

[Click here](#) to give to any of these missions through HUMC.



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