

Leadership

FROM THE



I hope that the beginning to Lent has been meaningful and moving for you as we enter into this sacred season. Lent is my favorite time of the church year because it is a time of year when the center of gravity of the whole church's focus becomes much more contemplative. There is a deep value of taking a moment, or a time in life to take stock of our relationship with God, and reconcile ourselves to God and the truth that we are the ones damaging that relationship. This can be a very powerful season of the church for mending relationships, seeking to deepen your faith through new spiritual practices, and of acknowledging the reality of sin in our lives and that God loves us in spite of that.

To go along with these themes and the congregational bible study, Pastor Kathy and I have both written daily devotionals for you that can be found in the devotional books in the church. These devotions are to provide a way for you to have something to think about, pray over, and apply to your life that is being shared by the whole community. The Lenten Journey of faith and spiritual discipline is one that, when done in a community of support such as ours, helps to make this a time you hold dear every year.

Alongside Pastor's and my preparation for Lent, I have also been in conversation with several area food pantries and homeless shelters, and I recently attended a tour of the Delonis Center in Ann Arbor where several

board members and prominent local figures were there. I learned quite a bit about the shelter itself, but also how involved they are in the city and all of the unorthodox and imaginative ways they find to serve the people in need with limited resources. There are a number of ways for Zion to be involved with the Delonis Center and other shelters through volunteering, but I am also going to be in contact with them going forward to see if there are even more ways that we can connect our two contexts to serve the most people.

I have also been continuing to visit with our homebound and ill members, and continued learning as I lead worship with multimedia, and attended our most recent annual meeting which was my second annual meeting ever! It is such a blessing to be amongst you all and have the privilege to learn and grow with you in faith as we all seek to love and serve our God. Throughout this Lenten season, into summer, and throughout the rest of the year remember that each and every one of you has amazing gifts and an amazing faith that has helped me and so many others experience God as love and relationship. So let us take our next steps together as we travel to the Cross and Easter as one, in Christ. Amen.

~ Vicar Michael Wright

Intern Project Update

Latest session "was" *The Church in Society - Peace*

Thank you to everyone who came out to our "Faithful Conversation" on the ELCA's Social Statements: *The Church in Society* and *For Peace in God's World*.

The conversation covered how the Church understands what God's vision of Peace will look like, what the church and we are doing to move towards Peace, as well as imaginative ways to expand how we think about what the Church is capable of in pursuing peace in our world. These conversations have been an absolute joy to facilitate and I have learned so much about these topics and how they can be lived out faithfully, so thank you again for a great conversation.

There will be one more "Faithful Conversation" in March, and it will be decided by the team before the March session if there will be a following one in April. If there is not a conversation in April, I will host a follow-up deliberative dialogue to the discussion a group of us had last year on racial justice and reconciliation. The format for this dialogue would be similar to the previous one, but I will send out more information on that after the team and I decide how we will proceed after March. So please stay tuned and engaged, this project has been a great experience and the content of our discussions has been very heartfelt and meaningful. I look forward to our next chat!