



Sandy Run Lutheran Church  
*February Tidings*

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I remember the Hebrew language professor at Lutheran Southern Seminary in Columbia telling my class that whenever the number “40” shows up in scripture think to yourself: “a long time.”

Rain fell while Noah and his family (and all those animals) were in the ark) 40 days and 40 nights – a long time. And, Noah and his family (and those animals) waited another 40 days until they could leave the ark – also a long time.

Moses was on Mt. Sinai 40 days receiving the Ten Commandments from God – a long time.

The children of Israel wandered in the wilderness 40 years – a long time.

Jesus was in the wilderness tempted by Satan for 40 days and nights – a long time.

And this month, we join Christians around the world in our annual Lenten pilgrimage, a 40-day pilgrimage (not counting Sundays) – again, a long time.

Lent is our pilgrimage to once again follow Jesus to the Cross. Lent is the reminder once again of how much Jesus has done for our salvation and for the salvation of the world.

Lent also is a time to draw closer to God through intentional prayers, intentional fasting (giving up certain foods or giving up eating at certain times) and intentional giving (giving of time, talents and treasures).

We are called during these 40 days to be in reflection, service (works of love), and prayer.

I encourage you, as these 40 days begin, to pick one – just one – Lenten discipline to add to your already busy routine.

Perhaps you can take on a service project (donating canned goods to our 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday collection for the food pantry is an idea).

Or you can get up 10 minutes earlier for a few minutes of quiet time in scripture reading and prayer.

Or, you can give up something for Lent – a certain food your afternoon snack time.

Forty is the journey. Forty is a long time.

But, forty also is the time we have for reflection on Jesus’ sacrifice, for giving to those who most need our help, and for giving up those things that pamper us so that we might focus on God’s enormous love for his creation, especially his human creation.

And the pilgrimage during this long time will lead us back to a closer relationship with God.



**Lent begins February 22** with the Ash Wednesday worship service.

Council has set the schedule for Lenten activities and services:

▪ **Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper** (February 21) – 6 p.m.

▪ **Ash Wednesday worship** (February 22) – 7 p.m. This service will include Holy Communion.

▪ **Evening Lenten services** (Sundays, beginning February 26) – Meal at 6:15 p.m.; worship at 7 p.m.

A sign-up sheet is on the sanctuary bulletin board to volunteer to provide the “soup and sandwich” Lenten meals.

Thank you to those families who already have volunteered. Additional volunteers are needed for March 12, 19, and 26.

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**The Evening Lenten services** will follow the *Prayer Around the Cross* format (with candlelight) similar to that used at our congregational retreat last fall.

The theme this year is *Stories of Hope*.

*Pastor Pam*