

DeBows Crows

The Monthly Newsletter of DeBows UMC



February 2016

DeBows UMC

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The
Season
of Lent
Begins

Ash Wednesday
February 10

Sunday Worship Schedule

Bible Study	9:45 – 10:45 AM
Worship Service	11:00 AM
Sunday School	11:00 AM
Fellowship Time	After Worship Service
Choir Practice	12:30 PM

Bible Study Opportunities

Women’s Bible Study - This group meets in Fellowship Hall. – Sunday’s at 9:45 AM

Adult Bible Study - This group meets in the class room downstairs. – Sunday’s at 9:45 AM

Mid-Week Bible Study – This group meets on Wednesday’s at 11:30 AM.

***** Lenten Bible Study ***** – 6 Sunday’s from February 14 through March 20, 9:30 – 10:45 AM. The study is based on the new book by Adam Hamilton, “John: The Gospel of Light and Life.” Each class will have a 15 minute DVD presentation followed by discussion questions. The two Sunday morning bible study groups will combine for this 6 week study and everyone is welcome to attend. You may contact Mark or Guy for further details.

Prayer List



Please keep the following people in Prayer

- | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------|
| Madhavi Badey | Charlotte Stevenson |
| Chris Bitondo | Debra Quinn |
| Tina Clark | Cindy Raymond |
| Karen Hornak | Dean Sparling |
| Rudy & Jean Iannacone | Jim West |
| Dottie Weeks | Helen Kramer |
| Anita Chichester | Bert Pitcher |
| Diane Hinze | Bob Allerton |
| Ruth Kyle | Allie Juliano |
| Family of William Kaiser | The Homeless |

Those in prison and those who guard them
Those in the Armed Forces and far from home
Those who serve and support the
DeBows Food Pantry

NOTE: Please inform the Pastor when a name should be added or removed from the Prayer List. Also, contact the church office in the event of a pastoral care situation that might need Ernie’s attention or response. Thank You.

A Word From the Pastor

Dear Friends,

Lent is a very special season in the life of the church – a time to slow down – a time to evaluate priorities. Christians have always observed with great devotion the days of our Lord's passion and resurrection. It became the custom of the church to prepare for Easter by a season of penitence, fasting, and prayer. Lent is this season of forty days (excluding Sundays). This became a time in which converts to the faith were prepared for baptism into the body of Christ. It is also the time when persons who committed serious sins, and had been separated from the community of faith, were reconciled by penitence and forgiveness, and restored to the fellowship of the church. The whole congregation is thus reminded of the mercy and forgiveness proclaimed in the gospel of Jesus Christ and the need we all have to renew our baptismal faith.

An unmistakable feature of our lives today is that everyone is "busy" – we deal with overloads of one kind or another daily. The "terror of time" (or lack of it) creates stress in all of us. Lent is a time to slow down.

Lent is often caricatured in our culture as a time to "give up" something – usually something inane. But Lent is less about "giving up" things, and much about "taking on" new things – especially those things that will enrich us spiritually. Lent allows us an opportunity to be intentional about preparing to receive the gift of God's grace extended to us in the Easter mystery. Lent is a time to focus on our own growing through repentance, a time to develop and deepen fellowship, a time for more deliberate prayer.

Let Lent be the time of preparation for us to worthily participate in the mystery of

Easter. As we move closer to Easter, the intensity increases. That will be reflected in the tenor of our worship.

Erica and I invite you to keep a holy Lent. We encourage you to slow down. We urge you to take upon yourself a "gentling" discipline that will allow you to make new space for God. It is our prayer that we will, both individually and collectively, find the journey through Lent to Easter to be a time of refreshment and renewal.

Shalom!



Special Preaching Series

Pastor Ernie will begin a special 3 week preaching series beginning on Sunday, January 31. Please join us!

January 31 - Empowered by Word and Spirit

"The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

February 7 - The Greatest Gift

"And now faith, hope and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love."

February 14 - I Believe in the Church

"And on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell will not prevail against it."

NOTE: There will be an Ash Wednesday Service on Wednesday, February 10 at 7:00 PM

Upcoming Events

February 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8 Food Pantry	9	10 Ash Wednesday	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22 Food Pantry	23	24	25	26	27
28	29					

Wednesday, February 3

Bible Study 11:30 AM
SPRC meeting 7:00 PM

Sunday, February 7

Bible Study 9:45 AM
Worship Service & 11:00 AM
Sunday School
Choir Practice 12:30 PM

Monday, February 8

Food Pantry Open 6:30 PM

Wednesday, February 10

Bible Study 11:30 AM
Ash Wednesday Service 7:00 PM

Thursday, February 11

Wesley Club 6:00 PM

Saturday, February 13

Contemporary Worship 6:30 PM
Service

Sunday, February 14

Scout Sunday
Lenten Bible Study 9:30 AM
Worship Service & 11:00 AM
Sunday School
Choir Practice 12:30 PM

Wednesday, February 17

Bible Study 11:30 AM

Sunday, February 21

Lenten Bible Study 9:30 AM
Worship Service & 11:00 AM
Sunday School
Choir Practice 12:30 PM
Training at Grace UMC 4:00 –
in Eatontown 5:30 PM

Monday, February 22

Food Pantry Open 6:30 PM

Wednesday, February 24

Bible Study 11:30 AM
Admin Council Meeting 6:30 PM

Thursday, February 25

Wesley Club 6:00 PM

Sunday, February 28

Lenten Bible Study 9:30 AM
Worship Service & 11:00 AM
Sunday School
Choir Practice 12:30 PM

NOTE: Please visit www.debowsumc.org
for the latest schedule & event information.

Looking Ahead . . .

Saturday, March 5

Day of Learning at 8:30 AM –
Aldersgate UMC 3:00 PM

Sunday, March 20

Palm Sunday Service 11:00 AM

Friday, March 25

Good Friday Service 7:00 PM

Sunday, March 27 - Easter

Resurrection Service 11:00 AM

DeBows Online

Visit DeBows UMC online at:

www.debowsumc.org

or

www.facebook.com/debowsumc

You can visit now on your smart phone by scanning the below QR Codes.

DeBows Website



DeBows Facebook



On the website you can access the latest information concerning schedules, events and activities, as well as current blog posts and general information about the church.

Emails can be sent to church staff via the "Contact Us" page. Also, alert notices, such as the cancellation notice that was posted for January 24th due to the snow storm, will also be displayed on the website as needed. Visit often for the latest information.



Inside the church you can connect to the WiFi service using the instructions found on the bulletin board outside Fellowship Hall.

New Outreach Ministry

by Donna Ridge

As most of you know, I am helping my son to raise my grandson. I could give you statistics about how many grandparents or great grandparents are raising their grandchildren and everywhere I go I meet people in the same situation. You may know a friend, neighbor, relative or you may have found yourself in the same situation. It is life changing to say the least. For quite a while I have been thinking about how I could offer support to others that are experiencing similar situations.

With this in mind I plan to launch a new outreach ministry at DeBows UMC. The first step will be to start a blog to share the ups and downs of raising another family at my age and to provide an email address so others can share with me. Encouragement is a two way street.


Hopefully this will generate enough interest to start a physical support group. I have lead support groups in the past for two different circumstances. I feel strongly there is a need for such a group.

Planning for the blog is in progress and it should start sometime in February. It will be accessible on the DeBows UMC website from the main menu. Please visit the DeBows UMC website at www.debowsumc.org for more information and a notification for when the new blog is available.

Please share this information with anyone you know who may be interested. Please pray for me as I start this new journey with the Lord. If you have questions or have something to contribute, please contact me at seeyamom8@gmail.com.

Blessings,
Donna

Training Opportunities



mark your
calendar!

Training for church leaders and active laity has been scheduled as follows:

“Back to Basics” training sessions for:

- ✓ Pastor/Staff Parish Relations Committee
- ✓ Board of Trustees
- ✓ Finance Committee/Treasurer
- ✓ Administrative Board/Church Council
- ✓ Lay Leader/Lay member to Annual Conference

Sunday, February 21 from 4:00-5:30 PM

Monmouth Grace UMC
76 Wycoff Road
Eatontown, NJ 07724

NOTE: We are trying to arrange a car pool leaving from the church for this event.

Also, the 2016 Greater New Jersey Central Region Day of Learning Workshops (*Formerly the District Day of Learning*) is scheduled for March 5, 2016 from 8:30 AM - 3:00 PM at Aldersgate UMC in East Brunswick.

More details will be made available in the near future for both training events. Please let Pastor Ernie know if you are interested in attending any of the training sessions and look for sign-up sheets outside of Fellowship Hall.

Lenten Word Search



Find 12 words associated with the season of Lent. Up, down, diagonally, forward or backwards. All words are in a straight line.

Repentance	Prepare	Forty	Jesus
Fasting	Crucify	Ashes	Cross
Covenant	Cup	Bread	Prayer

T	B	F	A	S	T	I	N	G
R	C	J	E	P	I	R	B	C
P	R	E	P	A	R	E	N	O
C	M	S	Z	N	A	P	P	V
R	W	U	S	F	G	E	R	E
U	L	S	O	D	C	N	A	N
C	D	T	F	O	R	T	Y	A
I	A	R	S	L	O	A	E	N
F	E	S	W	X	S	N	R	T
Y	R	P	H	A	S	C	U	P
P	B	U	O	E	B	E	W	T
J	E	H	V	K	S	Y	E	D

Did You Know?

- ✓ Jackson Township received 21 inches of snow from the recent blizzard on January 23rd. Drifts were much higher ☺
- ✓ Feedback and/or suggestions for possible future newsletter content can be submitted by visiting the Contact page on the church website. Select “Newsletter Content” from the recipient pull down list and compose/send the email.
- ✓ You can access the Upper Room and other daily devotionals online by visiting www.debowsumc.org and selecting the “Daily Devotionals” page found under the Resources / Worship-Bible menu item.
- ✓ You may support the ministries of DeBows UMC online by using the “Make A Difference” button found on the left sidebar on the church webpage. All donations are tax deductible and will be reflected in your year-end giving statement.
- ✓ Large print hymnals are available for those that need them. Just ask an usher.
- ✓ You can pick up an updated copy of the Church Directory on the sign-up table outside of Fellowship Hall.

Bible Verse for Reflection

*And now these three remain:
faith, hope and love.
But the greatest of these is love.*
1 Corinthians 13:13



A Little Snow Humor



Easter Candy Fundraiser



DeBows will conduct an Easter Candy Fundraiser starting on Sunday, January 31 and ending on Sunday, February 28. Easter is March 27. The candy will be from Old Monmouth Candy in Freehold, NJ.

You can get sale brochures and information from Sue Hayward. Candy orders will be ready for pick up on Sunday, March 6 at the church.

This has traditionally been a very good fundraiser for the church. Thank you for your continued faithfulness and support.

Reflections in the Snow

By Mark Hayward

While talking to Guy as we removed snow at the church on Sunday after the blizzard, I mentioned in passing that I had always somehow enjoyed shoveling snow. It seemed like a strange statement at the time given the amount of snow and my growing list of aches and pains.

A little later I realized that it wasn't the actual shoveling I enjoyed, but rather the appreciation of the conditions created by a blanket of new fallen snow. Other than the initial beauty of the snow there is an amazing sense of quiet and peace. The natural sound absorption qualities of the snow remove what little noise is present and you are left with a sense of profound silence.

Upon more reflection I remembered two things. First; a quote attributed to Ralph Waldo Emerson: "Let us be silent that we may hear the whisper of God". And second; that I had experienced this before, specifically in 2009 when another snow storm inspired me to write the following devotion. It was one of 40 devotions collected that year from the congregation to help observe Lent. I share it again here:

Be still and know I am God - (Psalms 46:10a)

It was just before dawn and I was half way down my driveway removing the snow that fell overnight. It was here I paused, but did not immediately know why. Then I realized it was quiet; very quiet. In fact, the silence was deafening. There was absolutely no sound, just perfect stillness and the serenity of the scene created by the fresh fallen snow. As I stood there contemplating, I thought of Psalms 46:10, "Be still and know I am God". For it is in

moments like this we have an opportunity to appreciate God's handiwork and remind ourselves that God is truly our refuge and our strength (Psalms 46:1). The instruction to "be still" does not tell us to be idle or lazy. But rather to pause long enough from our often self-imposed hectic lives to realize that God is in control. As Jesus calmed the water for His disciples (Matthew 14:32), God can calm the turmoil in our lives so we can focus our labors on bringing in His Kingdom.

Let Us Pray . . .

Heavenly Father, we are thankful for those moments which lead to Your truth. May we always be mindful of our reliance on Your love and protection. In Jesus' name we pray. – Amen

Trustee News

The Board of Trustees met on January 6 and elected the following officers for 2016.

President	Linda VanArsdale
Vice President	Guy Raymond
Recording Secretary	Roger Cregle

The Board of Trustees are charged with the responsibility for the supervision and care of all property and equipment owned by the local church. The Board is to plan and set policies for the maintenance and use of the property and equipment, and receives and administers all bequests to the local church.

Please notify the Trustees if you observe anything that may warrant their attention. They will investigate and take the appropriate action. Also, the Trustees would like to thank Guy, Mark, and the Stevison Family for removing the snow from the recent blizzard from the church sidewalks and entrance ways.

Christian Hospitality

- DeBows UMC has been designated a Certified Welcoming Congregation. This was the result of meeting criteria per UMC guidelines. The below symbol can be seen next to our church name in the UMC Find-A-Church website. While this designation was well earned, we must as a church remain diligent about maintaining and improving our efforts to be the most welcoming church possible.



- The DeBows **Prayer Shawl Ministry** has been active since 2008. Prayer shawls have traditionally been distributed during summer mission trips and at Care One during the holidays. This year we are expanding this ministry by distributing prayer shawls year round, as needed, to church members & friends of DeBows who are experiencing significant issues that prevent them from attending church for extended periods of time. To accommodate this expansion we need to increase the number of shawls available for distribution. Anyone able and willing to make a prayer shawl can drop it off at the church office anytime. You may contact Donna Ridge for further information. The giving of a prayer shawl is a tangible way to share God's love with others.

Hymn Story

"Were You There" – UMH # 288

As we journey through Lent and approach Holy Week and Good Friday, we often encounter "Were You There", a powerful hymn depicting Christ's passion and resurrection.

This African American spiritual predates the Civil War and no doubt had special meaning for those who were oppressed by slavery. They would sing it together for encouragement and believers would reflect on Christ's sufferings and the consolation of the Gospel.

The hymn repeatedly asks the rhetorical question, "Were you there?". While the physical answer may indeed be "No", for those who view the redemptive events by faith may well answer a spiritual "Yes".

Each time we partake in the Sacrament of Holy Communion, we remember and acknowledge what Christ did for us. We may also reflect on what the Apostle Paul said in this passage found in Romans:

We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. For one who has died has been set free from sin. Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him.

Romans 6:4-8