
March 2018: Outlaw's Bridge Universalist Church

Welcoming Congregation

The Bridge

***10:00 a.m. each Sunday: Intergenerational Devotional**

***10:10 a.m. Religious Education for all ages**

***Primary: "Love Surrounds Us"**

***Teens: "Families"**

***Adults: "Transforming Faith" by Fred Howard**

March 4: "Happiness" – Ann Malpass – Lay service from *Listening*

Hearts by Christine Robinson & Alicia Hawkins – Happiness seems simple. We all experience it, at some point or another. But when you think about it, happiness can be quite complicated. Let's talk.

March 11: "Listening for Healing – Finding Your Power" – Reverend Claudia M. Frost – What we pay attention to is what we are formed by. It has been said "underneath all we are taught, there's a voice calling us. In listening...we often find deep healing". A wound is healed when a binding together happens. Does a prayer for another bind us to them and bind us both to God?

March 18: "Hymnal Sunday" – Jimmy Merritt – We will be enjoying music with our own Jimmy Merritt as we explore our hymnal.

March 25: "Listening to Your Heart – Finding Your Purpose" – Reverend Claudia M. Frost – Continuing our worship series "Listening to the Sacred", listening to your heart and finding your true purpose requires a deep connection to Spirit. On Palm Sunday, connecting with the story of Jesus' final days provides another way to listen deeply to what makes us fully alive.

April 1: "Listening for Easter's Good News" – Reverend Claudia M. Frost – What is the "Good News" of Jesus' ideas for the *Kingdom of God on Earth*? What is our "Good News" as a faith community? Come celebrate the love, hope and joy of the Easter message.



Dates to Remember

March 8: 11:30 a.m. Dutch treat lunch at Johnny's Seafood followed by AUW meeting at 1:00 p.m.

March 11: Board meeting following services and pot-luck lunch.

March 29: Music Concert with our own Jimmy Merritt – Covered-dish supper at 6:30 p.m. followed by concert at 7:30 p.m.

April 1: Easter Breakfast at 9:00 a.m. followed by Easter egg hunt before services. Bring breakfast items and Easter eggs to hide.



Claudia's Comments

Looking back at March issues of my newsletter column, I noticed I usually mention the last cold days of winter and hopeful signs of spring. Well, it looks like Spring has already arrived even if it doesn't become official until March 20th. Daffodils, Bradford Pear trees and Tulip trees are in full bloom. Nature is calling us to get outside and enjoy its beauty when the sun is shining. However, I hope you are still setting aside time each day for turning from the distractions of daily noise and activity to focus attention on listening in a deeper way during Lent.

Many congregations follow a spiritual practice of symbolic sacrifice...giving something up for the 40 days and 6 Sundays before Easter. Such traditions are chosen to awaken spiritual awareness. Over the past few years I've sent a list of words or themes for personal focus each day for Lent.

This year I propose a spiritual journey of turning from the distractions of daily noise in our lives to focus on listening to the Sacred. Parker Palmer, a Quaker writer says we must listen "to what our life is telling us." To develop our own inner life, we must listen to that "still small voice within". Listen to the deep wisdom of God, the Spirit of Life, connecting us to our life's purpose.

Taking time for meditation each day can make us more aware and bring us out of ourselves into deeper connection with the world. This doesn't have to mean sitting still for a specific amount of time each day. There are many different ways to "listen". Why not let these days leading up to Easter be an intentional time creating space and worship experiences to just "be" in the presence of whatever is Holy for you. Wouldn't it be good to reconnect with an unhurried presence of the Divine? Pause each day. Stop. Take a deep breath. Let God's grace wash over you while spending time in silence.

Sometimes we just need to be alone in order to hear that "still small voice". Jesus withdrew from crowds and his disciples when he needed to pray. Listening through prayer as well as meditation on Holy texts is an ancient Lenten practice. What practice helps you get quiet?

Create personal sanctuary through listening. Add more time for silence journaling, sitting or walking meditation and prayer may be familiar ways to listen to spirit, but are you familiar with "lectio divina", "praying in color", art journaling or sacred text illustration? Come learn with us on our spiritual journey to Easter. Listen.



With love, hope, and joy,
Reverend Claudia