

Show us your Wild Hope

Lent and Holy Week, March 1 to April 12



“O Israel, hope in God, For with God there is steadfast love, and with God is the great power to redeem” Psalm 130

Lent comes from the Latin word “spring.” Here in northern Indiana, starved for sunshine, we understand the longing for new life, for signs of growth and green. “Show us your wild hope” is an imperative to God: “Show us that something can be different. Show us that spring will follow winter. Show us that the outer and inner landscape can change.”

It is not only our local lack of sunshine that sobers us, but also the stories of raging wildfires, disappearing rainforests and rising water temperatures. Is there truly a reason to hope? During Children's time this season we will hear stories of animals on the brink of destruction, victims of our environmental degradation. And what of the raging frustration within, the disappearing energy, the rising cynicism?

The point of Lent is not to make us feel bad about the grim state of our planet or about ourselves. Gayle Boss, author and theologian writes, “The purpose of Lent has always been to startle us awake to the true state of our hearts and world we’ve made. Which wakes an aching, wild hope that something new might be born of the ruin.”

In the gospel texts for this cycle, Jesus shows that change is possible, blind men are healed, women on the margins are given water of life, Jesus tries to explain to Nicodemus how one can be born again, and Lazarus is brought back from the tomb. The promise of new life and resurrection is present in each of these gospel stories. From Ezekiel we are given a vision of a valley of bones who are dried up, whose hope is lost, who are cut off completely. And God says, even these, dry lifeless bones can be resuscitated and brought back to life through God’s life-giving breath. Each of these stories helps us to prepare for the story to which all of Lent is pointing: the death and resurrection of Jesus. The death of Jesus is not the hopeless ending that it seems, but an event that transforms the finality of death itself.

As we hear the stories of dry bones, dying coral, and death on a cross, may we have the courage to imagine and act for a more beautiful, hopeful world, filled with God’s redeeming breath.

To deepen your work with the theme, consider these communal options:

March 4, March 18, April 1: Lenten groups (See half sheet for more information. Groups were assigned to those who signed up)

February 25: 5:30-7pm Second Annual Shrove Tuesday Pancake supper at the church hosted by the pastoral team

February 26: Ash Wednesday Service options: Pathways Retreat at 12pm and Faith Mennonite at 6:30pm at the meetinghouse

March 18: 6:30pm Intergenerational Lenten Prayer and craft stations (adults will have a 2nd chance to participate during second hour on the 22nd)

April 8: 6:00pm Wednesday night Maundy Thursday/Good Friday, light supper, foot washing and tenebrae service*

April 11: 6pm Family-friendly Easter Vigil*

April 12: 7am Easter Sunrise Service, Steve Shantz’s house (60728 CR 27, Goshen)

April 12: 9:00am Easter finger food potluck followed by **worship at 10:00** (bring food to share and fresh cut flowers and lilies for the service)

*Sign ups encouraged, details to come

	Lectionary texts - year A	Preacher	2nd hour	Other info
March 1 Lent 1	Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7; Psalm 32; Romans 5:12-19; Matthew 4:1-11	Lora Nafziger	Communion Service	<i>Imposition of Ashes</i>
March 8 Lent 2	Genesis 12:1-4a; Psalm 121; Romans 4:1-5, 13-17, John 3:1-17	Sandra McMasters	Stories from Semilla: Leon Bauman, Char Yutzy and Anna Yoder Schlabach	
March 15 Lent 3	Exodus 17:1-7; Psalm 63; Romans 5:1-11; John 4:5-42	Eric Kurtz (MCC)	TBD	Covenanting new members Fellowship Meal
March 22 Lent 4	1 Samuel 16:1-13; Psalm 23; Ephesians 5:8-14; John 9:1- 41	Karl Shelly	Lenten Prayer Stations or Conversation about prison ministry with Ed Hollenberg	Anointing
March 29 Lent 5	Ezekiel 37:1-14; Psalm 130; Romans 8:6-11; John 11:1-45	Elizabeth Reimer (GC student)	Singing through Lament and Hope- Rebecca Dengler Kaufman	
April 5 Palm Sunday	Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29; Matthew 21:1-11	Brian Sauder (Faith in Place)	Faith in Place	<i>Palm Procession</i>
April 12 Easter	Jeremiah 31:1-6; Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24; Colossians 3:1-4; John 20:1- 18	Anna Yoder Schlabach	No Sunday School	9:00am Breakfast Potluck 10:00am Easter Service



