

CRC NEWSLETTER

LOVE. GROW. SERVE.



TRUSTING GOD THROUGH CHANGE

Despite the recent blizzard, March is the month that technically, and sometimes actually, ushers in spring. Spring brings with it new life and a welcome change. Now don't get me wrong, winter has its endearments. I love the first snowfall, Christmas, and a good board game by the fire. But by the time we get to March we are ready for the change that spring brings.

Churches also go through seasons and life cycles, and right now we are on the precipice of our own spring. At the last family meeting we announced that the new building, known as the Ministry Center, will be open and ready for use some time in May. It is a beautiful and practical space that will help us in our mission to make disciples who love God, grow spiritually, and serve others. We also announced that our search for a new full-time staff person to lead our Youth and Worship ministry has been going well. We have met with several good candidates and are hopeful about having someone in place this summer. And lastly, we announced that we are officially beginning the search for a full-time Associate Pastor of Discipleship to oversee our adult ministry and assist me with a variety of pastoral duties. God has sent several good candidates our way for this position without us even looking for them. We feel very thankful for this opportunity to interview them and hopeful about adding one to our team and family at CrossRoads.

However, that is potentially a LOT of change over the next few months. Spring is coming in like a lion around here. I anticipate that these changes will bring wonderful blessings but also some growing pains as we adjust to our new reality. So how do we prepare for all of this?

First, remember that all good gifts come from God (James 1:17). God is our provider. He is able to see our present and future needs and loving provide everything we need to serve Him well.

UPCOMING EVENTS

NEW WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY

You are invited!

Book Study: Abide - Study of 1, 2 & 3 John
by Jen Wilkin

**You can purchase the book on Amazon*

Time: 6:30-8:00 PM on Mondays for 10 weeks, starting March 13

Place: Fireside Lounge

Contact: Shannon Holm

Good Friday Service

April 7 6:30-7:30 PM

Annual Meeting

Sunday, April 23 12 PM

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Second, we can and should trust the Lord with ALL of our hearts. Proverbs 3:5-6 says, *Trust in the Lord with all of your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him and he will make your paths straight.* Here's the thing with this one, knowing you can trust God is not enough. Trust is not typically an intellectual exercise, it's a lived experience. To increase your trust in God you need to increase your relationship with God. The people that I trust the most are the ones that I know the best. These people have been open and honest with me, they have listened to me, and they have shown up when I needed them most. This is the kind of relationship that God desires to have with us as well. Romans 5:11 (NLT) says, *So now we can rejoice in our wonderful new relationship with God because our Lord Jesus Christ has made us friends of God.* God desires to be our Lord AND friend. When you spend time in God's Word you are listening to Him. When you spend time in prayer He is listening to you. When you submit to Him and place your trust in Him you will see him show up in your life, especially when you need Him most. This is how trust is built. As we anticipate the spring season we are about to go through as a church, I encourage you to prepare by looking to God as your provider, and growing in your relationship with Him so that your trust will increase as He leads us into all of the things He has planned for our church family. I'm so thankful to be on this journey with all of you. I can't wait to see what God does next!

Serving Him Together,
Pastor Joey

AGELESS WONDERS: LOL

It's time once again for the "Ageless Wonders" group to gather, for a time of food, fun fellowship... and some laughter! That's right, we plan to do lots of laughing this time, on purpose. A hearty soup lunch will be served, there will be time to catch up with one another, and we'll watch a hilarious video from a Christian comedian. He'll give us a chance to laugh with one another, as well as at ourselves. Plan to join us on Thursday, March 23rd, from 11:30 - 1:30. Contact Nancy Nelson (320-815-4724 or care@crossroadschurchff.com) if you plan to attend, and if you'd like to provide one of the soups or bread.

HOW OBSERVING LENT CAN HELP YOU GROW IN CHRIST

By Susan Narjala – The Gospel Coalition

Although observing Lent it is not a biblical mandate, it can deepen your meditation on the gospel and heighten your joy in the hope of Easter. Growing up in a south Indian Christian family, I had seen several family members fastidiously observe Lent. While my extended family did not seem particularly religious the rest of the year, my uncles and cousins would make an impressive effort to give up meat, alcohol, and sugar for the 47 days between Ash Wednesday and Easter.

As a teenager I learned the truth of God’s Word and knew that it was not good works that won God’s favor, nor rules and regulations that earned us a spot in heaven. As Lent seemed to fall in the “rules and regulations” category, I did not subscribe to this “man-made tradition” that the Bible did not explicitly prescribe. I veered to the side of flippantly dismissing Lent like one mocked Valentine’s Day for being a Hallmark holiday.

As I got older, however, I realized that setting aside the period of Lent to intentionally seek God in repentance and recommitment was not about earning one’s salvation but about preparing one’s heart for the miracle of Easter. I began to celebrate Lent by fasting from social media—as has been the trend among Christians for a few years—and meditating on Scripture, particularly reflecting on the gruesomeness of the cross and the greatness of God’s love revealed in Christ laying down his life to rescue, redeem, and restore us.

Lent comes from the Anglo Saxon word for ‘Spring’ where the days lengthen, giving one more time in the sun. Similarly as we “lengthen” the time we spend in the presence of the Son, the Holy Spirit awakens our hearts to the glory of the gospel.

If you are on the fence about whether to observe Lent or not, consider how this spiritual discipline might bolster your faith walk.

Observing Lent Can Steer Us to a Place of Brokenness

Lent begins with Ash Wednesday, a day which may seem obscure and confusing to many. If you went to a Catholic school in India, as I did, someone probably smeared ashes on your forehead and you probably wanted to wipe it off as soon as possible. But Scripture shows ashes represents grief over sin.

In the book of Job, we see Job sitting in dust and ashes as a sign of repentance (Job. 42:6). The rich symbolism of Ash Wednesday reminds us of our own fragility and humanness—that we are dust and will return to dust (Gen. 3:19).

In our contemporary Christian culture where the self is often the focus of social-media posts and even sermons at church, Lent steers us to the cross where we contemplate our fallenness, finiteness and frailty. We echo the words of Job and say, “Therefore I despise myself and repent in dust and ashes.” But the story doesn’t end in ashes.

Lent gives us the opportunity to move from brokenness to hope as we shift our gaze from the cross to the empty tomb. The ashes are smeared in the shape of a cross—redemption is already here.

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Observing Lent Can Reveal Our Heart Idols and Our True Need

We observe Lent by fasting from something we automatically gravitate toward—alcohol, chocolate, coffee, meat, screen time, video games, music apps, or social media. By intentionally cutting ourselves off from the things that temporarily satisfy, we confront the fact that we may have created insidious idols of them.

As Tim Keller points out: “A counterfeit god is anything so central and essential to your life that, should you lose it, your life would feel hardly worth living.”

When we stop drinking from the broken cisterns of the world, we gain a heightened awareness that our deep thirst can only be quenched by the Living Water (Jer. 2:13). Instead of being quick to slap on a temporary fix, whether it is chocolate or the distraction of a television show, fasting during Lent helps us understand only the one true God can meet our needs.

Observing Lent Can Prepare Us for the Joy of Easter

Easter in India has been commercialized and westernized to include chocolate bunnies, sugary eggs, and marzipan candy. Lent refocuses our attention on the wonder of the empty tomb.

After weeks spent on meditating on the Jesus’s cries in the garden of Gethsemane, the indignities and torture he endured, the abandonment and betrayal he faced, the depravity of our sin which he bore, and the separation from the Father that he experienced on our behalf, Lent breaks the ground of our hearts for the glory of the resurrection. The resurrection is not merely an occasion to celebrate. It is the very core of our faith. Without the empty tomb, our faith would be empty. Lent gives us the space to let the miraculous wonder of Easter capture our hearts and move us to a place of recommitting our lives for his glory.

After Jesus fasted and prayed in the wilderness for 40 days, he began his earthly ministry. In those weeks in the desert, as a man, Jesus experienced hunger, loneliness, and temptation as the enemy tried to make him fall. Yet Jesus remained without sin and poured out his life even unto death.

Observing Lent is not easy. We may experience “withdrawal symptoms” from whatever our “fix” may be. But Jesus shows us the way, particularly through his steadfastness and faithfulness in the wilderness.

If this is your first time celebrating Lent, start small. Recognize that this is not a rule to follow but a response to what Jesus has done for you on the cross. Pray about what you can give up or fast from for the season of Lent. Consider how you can redirect your time and affections through immersing yourself in the Word and in prayer.

As we reflect on the wondrous Cross where the Prince of glory died, may we be moved to declare, “Love so amazing, so divine, demands my life, my soul, my all.”

AWANA AROUND THE WORLD

Did you know that Awana has clubs in over 120 countries around the world? One of those locations is the Ukraine, where we have a sister church. They have the largest Awana representation in all of Europe. As you are very aware, this country has been in the news for several reasons over the past few years. Most recently because of the war. For this very reason we decided to take one evening of Awana to help the kids in our club get a little taste of what Awana is like in the Ukraine. It was a different and very fun evening.

Along with photos to give them a “picture” of what it looks like in the Ukraine, we also heard some music and verses in Ukrainian. As we observed as we watched a video of an Awana club in one particular city, we saw that they run their club quite differently. They do everything in the sanctuary of the church. When that’s all you have, you make it work. So, that’s what we did for our club that night. We even played the games and had our small group time in the sanctuary. The kids loved it! The pictures give you a little idea of what we did.

Naturally, we needed to address the issue of how the war is affecting not just the general population, but also what is happening to the Awana clubs in the Ukraine and the surrounding countries. It is quite sad when you see and hear what is happening, especially how families are being torn apart and forced to move from their own homes.

But, we wanted to do more than just learn about them and pray for them, so we decided to give the kids an opportunity to give of their own money to help meet some of the needs of the refugees having to leave their homes. Even a small amount can make a big difference!

Here are two links to some short videos you may enjoy, especially the precious little girl singing the Ukraine National Anthem. Take a few minutes and see what we got to experience that night.

Nancy Nelson - Awana Ministry Director



MINISTRY STAFF

Joey Kalan *Senior Pastor*
 Christi Horgen *Interim Youth Director*
 Trisha Grove *Children's Ministry
 Director*
 Nancy Nelson *Care Coordinator*

OVERSEER BOARD

Dan Heikes Dave Bjork
 Joey Kalan Katrina Mouser
 Bruce Money Charlie Smith
 Tim Swedberg Sue Wilken

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Email
info@crossroadschurchff.com

AWANA

Listeners: Help kids understand and memorize God's Word.

ADULT MINISTRY

Men's Bible Study Leader: Help men connect with one another and grow in their faith by spending time in the Word and prayer.

CROSSROADS CHURCH

629 E Channing Avenue, Fergus Falls, MN
 218-739-3391

crcff.com

OFFICE HOURS:

TUES, WED, FRI 8 AM – 12 PM



FINANCIAL UPDATES

RESTRICTED FUND SUMMARY

April 1, 2022 through February 28, 2023

FUND	Revenue	Expenses	Balance
Camp Fund	\$3,802	\$500	\$3,302
Trout Lake Camp Fund	\$0	\$3,400	\$5,443
Ukraine Fund	\$36,324	\$38,857	\$2,460
Youth Mission Fund	\$19,225	\$13,754	\$23,995

BUILDING FUND RECAP

Total Received (to date):	\$508,952
Total Expenses (to date):	\$471,102
Building Fund Balance:	\$37,850

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
MARCH			1	2	3	4
			9:00 AM Men's Bible Study 5:45 PM Family Meal 6:15 PM AWANA 5:45 PM Youth Group	6:30 AM Men's Bible Study (Perkins)		
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
9 AM Worship 10 AM Family Fellowship Time 10:30 AM Sunday School & Connection Groups	9:30 AM Women's Bible Study 6:30 PM Unwind	9:00 AM Women's Bible Study	9:00 AM Men's Bible Study 5:45 PM Family Meal 6:15 PM AWANA 5:45 PM Youth Group	6:30 AM Men's Bible Study (Perkins) 6:30 PM Ashlyn Heikes Bridal Shower		
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
9 AM Worship 9:30 AM Children's Church 10 AM Family Fellowship Time 10:30 AM Sunday School & Connection Groups	9:30 AM Women's Bible Study 6:30 PM Women's Bible Study (Abide)	9:00 AM Women's Bible Study	9:00 AM Men's Bible Study 5:45 PM Family Meal 6:15 PM AWANA 5:45 PM Youth Group	6:30 AM Men's Bible Study (Perkins)		
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
9 AM Worship 9:30 AM Children's Church 10 AM Family Fellowship Time 10:30 AM Sunday School & Connection Groups	9:30 AM Women's Bible Study 6:30 PM Women's Bible Study (Abide)	9:00 AM Women's Bible Study	9:00 AM Men's Bible Study 5:45 PM Family Meal 6:15 PM AWANA 5:45 PM Youth Group	6:30 AM Men's Bible Study (Perkins) 11:30 AM Ageless Wonders Lunch		
26	27	28	29	30	31	
9 AM Worship 9:30 AM Children's Church 10 AM Family Fellowship Time 10:30 AM Sunday School & Connection Groups	9:30 AM Women's Bible Study 6:30 PM Women's Bible Study (Abide)	9:00 AM Women's Bible Study	9:00 AM Men's Bible Study 5:45 PM Family Meal 6:15 PM AWANA 5:45 PM Youth Group	6:30 AM Men's Bible Study (Perkins)		

The Nursery is available each week during the Sunday service.

NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS

If you have something you would like to submit for inclusion in the newsletter, please email to info@crossroadschurchff.com by the 22nd of the month (to be published in the following month's issue).