



The Pastor's Corner By: Pastor Ruffin Stepp

Dear Church Family,

This Wednesday marks the beginning of the Lent season. For those that might not be familiar with Lent, it is the 40 weekday period between Ash Wednesday and Holy Saturday. It marks a time of humility, repentance, and soul searching as one draws closer to the Passion of Christ.

Do you observe Lent?

And if so, are you giving something up for Lent?

What and Why? I appreciate the Lenten season for many and various reasons. This year, I'm choosing – along with some other things – to give up “coffee” during the Lent season. You know me and the coffee addict that I am, this will certainly be a “test” of self-denial.

But even after acknowledging that I myself am “giving up” coffee during Lent, I'm concerned about how easy it is to give something up during Lent. Umm, especially when it's something like chocolate, sodas, sugar, Facebook, television, and – umm – coffee. I don't want to knock those who give stuff up. In fact, I understand its value and significance but if we're not careful, we can so easily just fall into religious practice for the sake of religious practice. If the goal is merely the giving up of something without taking up of something more significant, the focus is just merely on the stuff which we give up or really, the focus is on the practice of giving up something.

That is religion gone bad.

Anything that produces rituals, expressions, prac-

tices, and whatever – without ultimately inviting us to a deeper understanding and worship of the Living God...lends us to religion. Isaiah 58 speaks of fasting but fasting that God is not pleased with. It's a fasting that caters to our own eyes, but not the kind of fasting that God invites us to... A life broken and transformed by the things of God. Or in other words, I wonder if God might have these words for me: *“Umm, I didn't ask you to give up coffee. I asked you to give up your life to me.”*

So here's the question:

In what way does the self-denial of whatever for Lent make you more mindful of Christ and the Kingdom of God?

For me, I don't want to think of it as a giving up but rather a season of more deeply ‘giving in’ or ‘giving to’...

- In what way am I more compelled to give in to the ways of God?
- How am I more deeply giving in and giving to – to my neighbors, wife, children, church, or strangers?
- How am I more deeply giving or growing in my generosity or convictions?
- How am I more giving in to the Ways of Christ? How am I more giving in to Mercy, Justice, and Humility?

Here's an alternative invitation for Lent – whether you give up something or not: *Give yourself more fully to Jesus and the Kingdom of God.*



Music Notes

By: Juanita Meeks,
Minister of Music

Everyone knows Paul, he's been an usher for years greeting you as you came into the services and a familiar face passing the offering plates. Additionally, he has carried the cross into the worship center for many Easter celebrations. However, his new role as one of the bass voices in Choir is not only a change for him but a real blessing for the choir! Before the Stermens moved, David invited Paul to come to choir rehearsal and take over his music number, folder, and choir robe. With a bit of arm twisting from Jim Meeks, Paul accepted and is now a vital part of the bass section along with Pastor Ruffin!

Litha Varone is another new face in the alto section. Many of you will remember her Mom, Eleanor Gordan, who was a frequent guest pianist here. Paul, Litha, and Ruffin have musical backgrounds and are using those gifts and skills to contribute to the musical part of worship! There are others in that 9:30 service who have wonderful voices and just need a special invitation to come be part of choir.

So consider this your special invitation. There couldn't be a better time to start as new Easter music has just been introduced! Preparation of new music for Palm Sunday and Easter as well as brushing up some of the Maundy Thursday selections will keep us busy. However, we try to have an anthem every Sunday – that's 52 anthems to prepare!

Paul, Ruffin, and Litha are very busy but have chosen to try something new! Why not follow their lead and be part of a group who love the Lord and love to sing?

Faces of Faith

Come and listen, all you who fear God, and I will tell you what he did for me. Psalm 66:16

Ever feel like there aren't enough voices for Christ speaking up? Where are the Christians in Hollywood? What about the music industry? What does it even look like to be a Christian politician?!

This year we'll listen to Christ's witness in voices from different corners of our culture and how faith is very real in their lives. May your faith be encouraged through the testimony of our fellow believers.... Pastor Ruf

"I feel the older I get, the more I'm learning to handle life. Being on this quest for a long time, it's all about finding yourself. For me, God is in my life. I don't hide from that. I think the



search has been on since the 1960s. I stepped off the path there for many years and found my way back onto it, thank God." **Ringo Starr, drummer for The Beatles**

"I've been a Christian since July 25, 1979 at 3 a.m. It was the classic story of a prodigal. When suc-



cess hit for Kansas, it was a different test as a Christian because I got everything this

world says you should go after—in abundance. I was a successful songwriter and musician with fame and fortune, but at the same time I was now a follower of Jesus Christ and was not to be of the world. It was an unusual kind of struggle, but with the grace of the Lord I'm able to maintain the right perspective." **Kerry Livgren, founding member of Kansas**

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Upcoming Lenten Sermon Series*

24 Hours that Changed the World

based on the book *24 Hours that Changed the World*

by Adam Hamilton

No single event in human history has received more attention than the suffering and crucifixion of Jesus of Nazareth. Beginning February 14, Pastor Ruffin Stepp will share a series of messages that guide us through the last 24 hours of Jesus' life. Each service will be designed to help you experience and understand the significance of Jesus' suffering and death in a way you have never done before. We will look at the geographical and historical setting of the events on that fateful day, and video footage of the modern day sites.



Whether you are a long-time Christian or simply curious about the story of Christ's crucifixion, you are invited to join us for this powerful series as we retrace – 24 Hours That Changed the World.

February 14-March

Feb 14, 2016 The Last Supper Luke 22:14-20

Feb 21, 2016 The Garden Matthew 22:36-39

Feb 28, 2016 The Courtroom and Courtyard Mark 14:53-64

March 6, 2016 Sentenced Matthew 27:24-26

Mar 13, 2016 The Torture and Humiliation of the King Mark 15:15-20

Mar 20, 2016 Crucified (Palm Sunday) Mark 15:25-39

Mar 27, 2016 Easter Hope! Victory, Promise, Change John 20:11-18

*Weekly *Sermon Notes* will include daily Lenten Devotions. Sermon Notes can be found in your bulletin on Sunday or on the church website: www.pwpchurch.com

Mark your Calendars!

Lent and Holy Week Events

Ash Wednesday

February 10th

Sanctuary will be open
7:00am-9:00am for the
imposition of ashes
5:30 pm Dinner (Potluck)
6:30 pm Service

Palm Sunday

March 20th

8:30 am, 9:30a m & 11 am

Maundy Thursday

March 24th

6:00 pm Dinner
7:00 pm Service

Family Easter Festival

March 26th

2:00 pm–4:00 pm
Easter Egg Hunt & Fun for
the whole family!

Easter Sunday*

March 27th

6:30 am Sunrise Service
9:30 am & 11:00 am

**Plan to stay for Easter
Brunch in the Fellowship
Hall following each service.*

New Members and Coffee with the Pastor

We invite you and your family to our home (kids are welcome) **Saturday February 13th 5-7pm** This gathering is for those who have recently started attending or who are considering joining Palms West Presbyterian Church. We would love to get to know you better and give you an opportunity to learn more about our vision in an informal setting. This will be a relaxed evening of great fellowship! Please RSVP by calling the church office (561) 795-6292.

The next **Coffee with the Pastor** is March 13th. Join pastor Ruffin in the Fellowship Hall between services (9am or 10:30am). If you are new to our congregation, this is an opportunity to hear more about the vision and mission of Palms West Presbyterian Church. RSVP Card can be found in the Friendship Pad on Sunday mornings. Please complete the card and drop it in the offering plate or rsvp by calling the church office (561) 795-6292.

(Faces of Faith con't from page 2)

"When I gave my life to God, I felt like He gave me the courage to say no to my rock-star dream, to say no to my own desires, and to look at [my daughter] and say, 'Yes, I'm going to be home, and I'm going to take care of you. It's about you now.'" **Brian Welch, former guitarist for Korn**



"The point of the death of Christ is that Christ took on the sins of the world so that what we put out did not come back to us, and that our sinful nature does not reap the obvious death. That's the point. It should keep us humbled....it's not our own good works that get through the gates of heaven. **Bono, front man for U2**



"What people don't realize is that when you become a Christian it doesn't make things easier, it makes them harder. It makes your life harder. It makes your soul at ease with God because you know where you are with Him. It doesn't make your social life or your normal life in America any easier. In fact, it puts you under the microscope." **Alice Cooper, shock-rocker**



Alice Cooper
opens up about
being Christian

rightnow MEDIA

col-
lege

students, single adults, working professionals—all aimed at helping you grow.

You should have already received an official invitation email to give you FREE access to RightNow Media. If you haven't received it yet, check your mail filter (because it came from RightNow's system, it may have gotten caught there).

Once you find the email, simply click the link, sign up for an account, and you're all set to explore more than 12,000 videos. We pray that RightNow Media will be a blessing for you and your family!

-Pastor Ruffin Stepp

Dear Church Family,

I'm excited to share that our church now has access to an extensive, new video library called RightNow Media! It's like the "Netflix of Video Bible Studies" and has a HUGE library of faith-based videos that you can access whenever and wherever you want—on your phone, iPad, computer, or at home on your TV.

As a church staff, we're always looking for ways to help you develop and strengthen your faith. We believe that RightNow Media will be a tool to serve you as you live out your faith at home, at work and in your neighborhood. RightNow Media has videos for everyone—kids, youth, parents, married couples,

Youth Group News!

Souper Bowl– Sunday February 7th

Souper Bowl : One of our most delicious events here at PWPC is also one with great purpose! Join us on Sunday February 1st for our annual Souper Bowl. Please select your favorite soup recipe and bring it for our awesome youth group fundraiser. We will have extension cords for those that have crock-pots. A signup sheet will be on the patio.

This fun event always delights our taste buds, so bring your appetite! The proceeds collected that day go to support the Youth Group and their activities. This summer we plan to take 10 kids to summer camp, so all money raised will go to help make that possible!

Talent Show! Feb 21st

Let Your Light Shine! Annual Talent Show Sunday February 21st

5:00pm Dinner /
6:00pm Talent Show

Join us this year as the youth and kids let their talent SHINE for Christ! We welcome all youth and kids to come with their God given talent to sing, dance, play an instrument or even joke around. Please email me if you would like to perform or sign-up at the information table. Email me your act and approx how long your act will be. Examples of Acts: Dance, Drama, Comedy, Vocal, Instrumental, Artwork Presentation (I will help you put them into a slide presentation), Martial Arts exhibition, Gymnastics



Contact Melanie: (561) 601-7425 or melstepper@gmail.com

Tickets \$10 per person. Available on the patio following worship or from the church office.— Proceeds go directly to the PWPC youth group mission trip summer 2016.

\$10 ticket includes Dinner which will be catered by our very own Cindy Kepler and will include chicken parmesan, spaghetti and meatballs, salad and beverages.

Come have fun at our **Family Easter Festival** *March 26th* *2-4pm*

We need volunteers to help :

- Stuffing Easter Eggs (March 15th or 17th)
- Hide the Eggs
- During the Event
- Crafts/Games

We will appreciate any donation of candy for small prizes to stuff in the Easter eggs. Suggested candy: individually wrapped bubble gum, sweet tarts, Jolly Ranchers, tootsie rolls etc. No chocolate please. Prizes could include: pencil sharpeners, erasers, stickers or tattoos.

Contact Melanie Stepp to volunteer or if you have supplies:

melstepper@gmail.com or

561-601-7425



Birthday Blessings January

Pam Fix	1/2
Viola Gamble	1/2
Kyle Kelly	1/5
Austin Armstrong	1/7
Skip (Walter) Linn	1/8
Janet Thompson	1/8
Hazel Gray	1/11
Tami Sullivan	1/11
Margaret Granda	1/13
Cindy Kepler	1/13
Katelyn Widness	1/13
Analeigh Casto	1/14
Carol Joy Morrison	1/14
Lauren Smundin	1/14
Marilyn Hill	1/15
Robin McLeod, Jr.	1/15
Alvetia Tassone	1/15
Miriam Smith	1/16
Charmine Sangster	1/18
James Stepp	1/19
Nancy Wilson	1/19
Neil MacMillan	1/20
Eddie Crawford	1/21
Janet Rankin	1/21
Kelsey West	1/21
Lorna Drummond	1/22
Emma Roura	1/22
Rosemarie Hosford	1/23
Jenna Friedman	1/24
Sandra Polson	1/24
Oliver Roberts	1/24
Martin Squire	1/25
Janet Bowers	1/26
Melissa Giles	1/26
Carissa Kazee	1/27
Kenneth Varone	1/27
Elaine Moore	1/28
Beth Hershock	1/29
Karl McNish	1/29
Luther Mills	1/30

Here are some great opportunities to help you...
**Grow in FAITH, Connect in
COMMUNITY and HUMBLY Serve!**

We have some great Fellowship opportunities planned during Lent and Holy Week. Come make new CONNECTIONS and RECONNECT with old friends. Please join us for a potluck dinner of soup and sandwiches on Ash Wednesday (February 10th at 5:30 pm), and on Maundy Thursday March 24th at 6:00 pm before the 7:00 PM service. Also please register for one of the Continental Breakfasts on Easter Day. Check at the information table to sign-up for both of these events.

STEP-UP and SERVE...It is time to spruce up our facility in preparation of Easter. **Saturday, March 19th** from 8:30 am to noon we will be cutting, clearing, planting, washing windows, dusting, vacuuming etc. Please plan to help. The more people we have the more we can get done. Refreshments & food provided by the Men's Group.

Please bring shovels, rakes, clippers, saws, gas blowers, grass trimmer, hedge trimmer, buckets, sponges, rags etc. **THERE'S A PLACE FOR YOU TO HELP!** Call the Church Office 795-6292 to sign-up...or just show up on Saturday morning.

Fellowship– Valentine Tea

Women's Valentine Tea

Saturday, February 13th
2:00 pm-4:00 pm .

Cost is \$10.00 per person,. What a wonderful way to spend Valentines Day...with your church family! Bring your favorite tea cup and wear a hat.

There will be lots of fellowship and games—including the famous “Hat Contest”. There will be a prize for the “Prettiest Hat” or “Most Unusual Hat”, put your creativity to work . Look for the clipboard on the patio to reserve your spot. Bring friends and family— young and young at heart!



Education Opportunities and Small Groups

Men's Bible Study, Prayer and Breakfast: Every Tuesday at 8:30 am at Butterfields 1145 Royal Palm Bch Blvd, Royal Palm Beach, FL 33411 Just Show Up and Bring your Bible and appetite!

Tuesday Morning Bible Study: Every Tuesday at 9:30 am led by Cheri Wood. We meet in the PWPC Fellowship Hall. Bring your bible...we make the coffee.

Bible Study and Prayer Group: Tuesdays at 7:00 pm led by Pastor Ruffin Stepp in the PWPC Fellowship Hall. Join us for in depth bible teaching and discussion followed by a very powerful time of prayer. We lift up prayer concerns from the group members and from the prayer cards from congregation members. Prayer cards can be found in the Friendship pad on Sunday mornings.

Small Group: If you are interested in joining a small group let us know either by signing up on the patio on Sunday mornings or calling the church office at (561) 601-7425. Small groups are beginning new bible studies for Lent, so contact us asap! Small groups are a great way to grow deeper in faith and connect with others who want to grow deeper too! Be sure to check out ***RightNow Media*** for a great selection of Small Group Bible Studies. Check out our website (pwpcchurch.com) for more information.

Stewardship / Generosity

Offering Envelopes are here. Please stop by the tables on the patio before or after worship to pick up your envelopes. If you have never requested envelopes, but would like them, please contact the church office administrator, Carol Everest at (561) 795-6292 and she will assist you in getting envelopes.

Easter Flowers for the Sanctuary

Memorialize or honor loved ones this Easter by contributing to the purchase of Easter flowers to adorn the Sanctuary on Easter morning. A list of those remembered and honored will be printed in the Easter bulletin. To make a gift, please complete form found in the bulletin or on the patio on Sunday mornings. Orders must be received by Sunday, March 13th. Please contact Carol Everest in the church office (561) 795-6292 or pwpc_officemanager@yahoo.com for more information or to order flowers.



Birthday Blessings February & March

John Molnar	2/2
Jen Allen	2/3
Bruce Hoffman	2/5
Susan Nesbit	2/7
Christy Giles	2/9
Christopher Wint	2/9
Jim Joy	2/13
Landon Worby	2/16
Adlin Francis-Lee	2/17
Kyle Sangster	2/17
Rick Sullivan	2/18
Paul Eiseman	2/22
Angela Stitt	2/22
Lucy McQuillan	2/24
James Park	2/24
Carlton Willie	2/25
Marva Park	2/26
Marie Pelfrey	2/27
Heidi Allen	2/28
Connie MacMillan	3/3
Fred Burton	3/4
Richard Ries	3/5
Yvonne Roberts	3/6
Karen Wong	3/6
Jessica Jury	3/8
Jamie Molnar	3/13
Ruffin Stepp	3/13
Bob Bowers	3/16
Shannon Patelsky	3/16
Phyllis Hoffman	3/18
Daphane Thirbenny	3/18
Afua Whiteside	3/18
Adrienne Ferrin	3/19
Harriet Beckert	3/20
Kathryn Stepp	3/21
Sienna Morales	3/26
Debbie Stermen	3/26
Debbie Still	3/26
Olivia Sangster	3/29
Earl Snyder	3/29
Roseanne Giordano	3/31



Let Your Light Shine!

Youth Group Talent Show

Sunday February 21st \$10 tickets

5:00 pm Dinner (Pasta, Salad and Dessert)

6:00pm Show— Awesome performances from our Youth and Children

Come support the Children and Youth of Palms West Presbyterian Church