

# SEASON : LENT

## LENT: IT'S PERSONAL, BUT...

Lent, as a season, can be deeply personal. Some Christian traditions emphasize giving up something or adding something, the addition or subtraction of which will, presumably, be a means through which the Holy Spirit draws us closer to God and Christ-likeness. I remember that one year in middle school I gave up gum - mostly because peer pressure said I should give up something, and I was tired of giving friends pieces of gum throughout the day at school. Unsurprisingly, I don't remember feeling closer to Jesus through that season.

Focusing on our own practices and habits is a personal matter, to be sure; however, the season's personal focus runs deeper. Ash Wednesday invites us to remember two things: 1) we are dust, mortal, infected with sin, and to dust we shall return; and 2) Jesus's love transforms our mortality from a burdensome fear to a blessing of holiness. Maundy Thursday traditionally invites us to hear Jesus calling his disciples to "Do as I have done for you: serving you, washing your feet, being humbly with you." Good Friday invites us to acknowledge ways we, in John's words, "love the darkness" (Jn 3.19), as well as ways in which our lives, our actions, and our states of being contribute to the need for Jesus's crucifixion and death.

All these themes feel very personal, and if they bear the fruit of growth in love like Jesus's love, then we'll have been well-served by them; however, many in church tradition, from the very beginning, along with the Apostle Paul (1 Cor 12; Rom 12), have also contended something to the effect that all salvation is communal. For example, St. Basil the Great (4th Century Bishop of Caesarea) said, "If we attempt to live in isolation, whose feet shall we wash? To whom shall we be servants? How can we become the least if we live alone?" (Longer Rule, Question 7). Thus, Lent is personal, but...it's also communal, global, cosmic even.

This season, we invite you to the personal and communal, to acts and practices through which the Holy Spirit forms us to be more fully like Jesus. If that's a commitment to worship, great. If that's a private and personal practice of self-denial or ethical addition, great. If that's participation in an ongoing study or group, or joining a Lenten study, great. As we're stepping into Lent together, let's invite the Spirit into our practices and lives, that we might grow more like Jesus, love like Jesus, and act like Jesus. May we experience the holiness of God growing in us and the world this Lent.

## SUNDAY WORSHIP

8:15 AM Traditional Worship  
9:30 AM Modern Worship  
11:00 AM Traditional Worship

## STAY CONNECTED

Stay connected with everything happening at Kearney First UMC through our website!

- Learn about & sign up for events
- Share a prayer request
- Worship online
- Give online



## KEARNEY FIRST UMC SCHOLARSHIPS

Attention Seniors and College Students! Pick up your scholarship application from the front office doors or find it on our website. All applications must be submitted by March 7th.

# KEARNEY FIRST UPCOMING EVENTS

20  
25

## March

**CARE KITS FOR KIDS (DONATE UNUSED PRODUCTS FOR STUDENTS)**

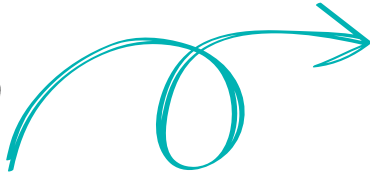
**03 LENTEN STUDY (PASTOR JO ELLEN)**

**05 ASH WEDNESDAY (6:30PM)  
(CONFIRMATION STUDENTS LEADING)**

**07 SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS DUE**

**26 NO WEDNESDAY NIGHT ACTIVITIES**

**22-24 OMAHA MISSION TRIP**



**CHILDREN + YOUTH**

**YOUTH**

**FAMILY / ALL**

**SPECIAL EVENT**

## April

**06 WOMEN'S DINNER + MOVIE NIGHT (8TH GRADE + UP)  
REGISTER ON OUR WEBSITE!**

**13 FAMILY FUN PRAISE IN THE PARK (4:00-6:00PM)**

**20 EASTER SUNDAY**

**30 LAST WEDNESDAY NIGHT (YOUTH + KIDS)**

UPCOMING EVENTS:

LENTEN STUDY: "THE HARDEST PART:  
HURT WE CARRY, HOPE WE FIND"

Join us Mondays from 7:00-8:00pm, beginning March 3rd and running through April 21st, as we walk together through Lent, preparing to become truly Easter people. Pastor Jo Ellen will lead a study on how Christ's journey through suffering and death helps us face our own pain with hope.

This study invites us to reflect on the hardest part of being human, acknowledging our mortality and embracing the suffering of Good Friday, as we await the joy of Easter.

Contact the church office to be included, so we have a book and chair ready for you. We look forward to exploring this season together!

JOIN US FOR  
**ASH +  
WEDNESDAY**

March 5th | 6:30pm | Sanctuary | Confirmation Leading

**Care Kits For Kids**

Two ways to donate : drop off NEW hygiene products or give online!

**FAMILY FUN  
PRAISE  
IN THE  
PARK**

4:00-6:00PM  
APRIL 13TH

BOUNCY HOUSE  
HOT DOGS  
GAMES & MORE

**DINNER +  
MOVIE NIGHT**

SUNDAY, APRIL 6TH | 4:00-8:00PM |  
8TH GRADE & UP ARE WELCOME (INVITE  
YOUR MOM, SISTER, COUSIN , FRIEND)

★ -FEATURING- ★  
**LITTLE WOMEN**



# MISSIONAL GIVING

## THANKSGIVING & CHRISTMAS OFFERING

Jubilee Center - \$ 1,390  
Habitat for Humanity - \$ 2,035  
Hot Meals USA - \$ 1,860  
United Campus - \$ 7,705  
East Lawn - \$ 2,300  
UMCOR - \$ 1,800

A total of \$ 17,094 was raised!

We did not do the traditional Thanksgiving offering in 2023. We did a special offering for **Give Where You Live** to our church ministries that were a part of the **GWYL** (East Lawn & Pumpkin Patch). We raised a total of \$3,965.

## GIVING INFORMATION

Thank you for practicing generosity through the church for these ministry partners. Through giving, God grows God's image of generosity in us and blesses other through ministries of **mercy, justice and discipleship.**

## MESSAGE FROM GATEWAY DISTRICT

Thank you for reaching 100% of your 2024 Great Plains Mission Shares. Your support of our connectional ministry truly makes a difference in the lives of people in churches and communities in our Conference. We used to call our Mission Shares "Apportionments" - a portion meant for others. Your portion enables us to be in ministry and mission in substantial ways together locally and globally. From faith development of children and youth to leadership development of pastors and laity, we strive to keep God's call upon our lives ever before us.

Growth in our relationship with God is God's primary way of blessing others and transforming the world. As we focus on our relationship with God through our practices, during this season, we have a tradition of also focusing on where our gifts and abilities can intersect with the deep needs of those in our community. To this end, the Finance Committee of Kearney First invites us to practice generosity through missional giving through the church, over and above our regular giving to Christ's mission through Kearney First UMC.

Please prayerfully consider giving to one or more of these missional ministries through this season's missional offering. You can use the enclosed envelope, or give online through the website or the mobile app. Please note the enclosed offering envelope is only for the Lenten offering, not regular, church ministry giving. You may designate your missional giving to a particular ministry. Undesignated gifts will be distributed to each of the missional partners, which are described below.

### Habitat for Humanity [Goal of \$2,500]:

Partners with clients to provide & promote home ownership and financial self-sufficiency.

### Crossroads [Goal of \$2,500]:

Providing food, shelter, clothing, and physical, emotional, mental, spiritual, and vocational support to the homeless, as well as providing indigent services for those who are needy.

### Safe Center [goal of \$2,500]:

Center is a non-profit organization that provides free and confidential support and resources to empower those affected by dating and domestic violence, sex trafficking, sexual assault, and stalking while engaging communities through awareness and prevention education

### East Lawn Food Pantry [goal of \$2,500]:

A mission within the church that provides food to those in need in Buffalo County.

Thank you for your generosity!



If you would like to give using our mobile app, scan the QR code!

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First United Methodist Church

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Kearney, NE, 68847  
(Return Service Requested)

Phone: 308-237-3158  
Website: [www.kearneyfirstumc.org](http://www.kearneyfirstumc.org)

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Non-Profit Organization

U.S. Postage Paid

Kearney , NE

Permit #5



kearney

First United Methodist Church

MEET KEARNEY FIRST'S STAFF:

Matt Fowler - Lead Pastor

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Jo Ellen Axthelm - Associate Pastor (Youth + Caring Ministries )

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Makenna Palser - Communications & Witness Coordinator

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OUR MISSION:

At Kearney First UMC, we're seeking to be a community of people helping one another love God, love our neighbors, and grow as disciples of Jesus. We grow in love as a community of practice - talking to God, listening to God, partnering with God, growing with God, and sharing God's good news. We seek to let God's character of holiness, caring, graciousness, and equipping become our way of life.

see  
you  
soon