



Norwalk United Methodist Church

Connecting Norwalk with God's purpose and Christ's love

thewalknorwalk.com

FEBRUARY 2023

Pastor Karen's Corner

Dear Friends,

February is upon us, and with it comes planning for the Lenten season and Easter. Easter is "early" this year – March 31st – so our plans for these next several weeks are already well underway. Ash Wednesday is February 14th; it seems fitting, somehow, that two days which celebrate love are coinciding. Worship will be at 6 p.m. on the 14th.

This is also a Leap Year; we have an extra day this month. I'd like to invite you all to prayerfully consider taking a leap or two of faith this Lenten season.

The first "leap of faith" opportunity is to be part of a short-term task group that brainstorms next steps from the ideas raised at our World Café. The groups will be organized around areas most frequently mentioned that day: 1) building relationships and community, both inside and outside the church; 2) Children and youth; and 3) Outreach – church growth and mission. There is a sign-up sheet on the table in the fellowship hall, or you can email the church to express your interest.

The second "leap of faith" opportunity is to participate in a small group conversation where we intentionally practice our Holy Manners covenant by choosing a topic that has been difficult to talk about and where we know there will be differing points of view. As the board has discussed this, they made the decision that the questions raised would be: "Do you believe our congregation should be open to hosting same-gender weddings? What has led you to your point of view?"

Here's how the process will work. We will gather with the intention of creating a space that is safe for all to share, as they choose to share. This will not be a decision-making process or an attempt to help participants resolve their differences. The point of the process is to help us listen to one another, and to do so in a way that demonstrates love and respect for ourselves and one another. Each person present will be asked to share their answers to the two questions, and we will go around the circle so that everyone has an opportunity to speak. We will take time during the sharing for silence, and after each person has spoken, we will have time to debrief (similarly to how we debriefed at the end of the World Café experience) and share how we experienced the process. I will be present in each small group to lead the process.

The format and principles we will use – in addition to our Holy Manners covenant – will be based on the Circles of Trust model developed by the Center for Courage and Renewal (CCR). The Circles of Trust model itself has its roots in the Quaker Clearness Committee process, where a person facing an important issue or decision gathers trusted spiritual companions to talk with them about it in a way that helps them discern how God's Spirit is leading/speaking to them. CCR has guiding principles, called Touchstones, which set boundaries to create trustworthy space. Among them are: giving and receiving welcome; observing deep confidentiality; being as fully present as possible; trusting and learning from the silence; speaking one's own truth in ways that respect other people's truth; and no fixing, saving, advising, or correcting. The full list, with some explanation of each touchstone, can be found with this link:

[CCR_Touchstones_V5.pdf \(couragerenewal.org\)](https://www.couragerenewal.org/CCR_Touchstones_V5.pdf)

If you are part of a small group, I would be happy to come to your small group at a time that is most convenient for you – just have your leader contact me. Also, I have set aside three Sundays during Lent, and one in April, where I will be present in the conference room (on the South side of the Fellowship Hall) at 10:20 a.m. following worship, for those who want to participate in the conversation. Depending upon the size of the group, we will allow approximately two hours for this process. The Sundays I've set aside are February 25, March 3, March 24, and April 7. I am open to scheduling more/other times if there is interest, so please speak to me if none of these options works for you.

This may seem, at first, an unnecessarily anxiety-producing exercise. I get it, but here's the paradox: it is usually the case that when we are willing to face into our fears, they begin to lose their power. It has been my experience that in this model of discernment and sharing, God's presence becomes tangible and visible in ways that are amazing to behold. The final Touchstone says, "Know that it's possible to leave the circle with whatever it was that you needed when you arrived, and that the seeds planted here can keep growing in the days ahead." May it be so for us as we take on this next adventure, together.

-Pastor Karen

"I thank my God for every remembrance of you, always in every one of my prayers for all of you, praying with joy for your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now. I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work in you will continue to complete it until the day of Jesus Christ." Philippians 1:3-6

p. 515.981.4251

e. norwalkumc@norwalkumc.org

a. 1100 Gordon Ave

THE WALK | ISSUE 12

Wed, Feb 7th @ 10:00 am

Women's Bible Study

Add'l 14th, 21, 28th

Wed, Feb 7th @ 5:45 pm - 6:45 pm

Confirmation Class

Add'l 21st, 28th

Tue, Feb 13th @ 10:00 am

Coffee, Cookies, and Conversations

Tue, Feb 13th @7:00 pm

Wolves Den Meeting

Add'l 27th

Wed, Feb 14th @ 6:00

Ash Wednesday Service

Sun, Feb 18th @ 10:00 am

Board Meeting- Open to Everyone

Sun, Feb 25th- during service

"Noisy Can" Offering

Sun, Feb 25th @ 10:20 am

Small Group Meeting

Easter Scavenger Hunt Around Norwalk

Our church will be hosting our 4th Easter Scavenger Hunt around Norwalk. Participants come to our church between 9-12 on Saturday, March 23rd for a set of clues that will lead them around Norwalk to find Easter eggs and prizes. It is a great opportunity to spread Christ's love throughout Norwalk. Ways to help:

Volunteer your house for a prize location

Donate candy

Volunteer to pass out clues the day of event

Upcoming Scripture Readings

FEBRUARY 04 |

Isaiah 40:21-31; Psalm 147:1-11, 20c; 1 Corinthians 9:16-23; Mark 1:29-39

FEBRUARY 11 |

2 Kings 2:1-12; Psalm 50:1-6; 2 Corinthians 4:3-6; Mark 9:2-9

FEBRUARY 14 | Ash Wednesday

Joel 2:1-2, 12-17; Psalm 51:1-17; 2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10; Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

FEBRUARY 18 | 1st Sunday in Lent

Genesis 9:8-17; Psalm 25:1-10; 1 Peter 3:18-22; Mark 1:9-15

FEBRUARY 25 | 2nd Sunday in Lent

Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16; Psalm 22:23-31; Romans 4:13-25; Mark 8:31-38

Warrior Giving

February 1 - February 14

Laundry Supplies

Detergent, stain remover, dryer sheets, quarters

February 15 - March 13

Cleaning Supplies

Disinfecting wipes/spray, dish soap, bathroom cleaner, toilet cleaner

Camp Sunday

On Sunday, April 7th, Mikaela Dunn from Wesley Woods will come during church to present about the numerous summer camp opportunities they offer. It will be a great opportunity for youth to hear what camp is like and how they can sign up. Mikaela can answer questions and give more information on overnight camps, day camps, and what to expect while at camp. The church will be participating in a campaign to raise money for camper scholarships that day as well.

Summer Save the Dates

June 23, 24, 25 (Sun, Mon, Tues)- Vacation Bible School. The June date worked well last year, so we will do another June VBS! So save the date for June 23, 24, 25!

United Women of Faith

Everyone knows school supplies are needed at the beginning of the school year, but by mid-year, teachers and students have used up many of those supplies. United Women of Faith has asked the schools what they need now. We have donated 24 boxes of crayons, 24 boxes of colored pencils, 20 containers of disinfectant wipes, 30 wide ruled notebooks, and 120 boxes of tissues. Thank you to all who help us raise money for these important projects!

There is no UWF meeting in February. The March meeting will be **Sunday, March 3rd** right after church.

February Birthdays and Anniversaries

Cyndie & Kent Strawn- 14th

Julie & Rob Landstrum 16th

Lia & Kevin Potratz- 23rd

Judy Poulsen- 2nd

Donna Grammer- 6th

Deb Billingsley- 9th

Jackson Warren- 13th

Jackson Wright- 15th

Nicholaus Rosonke- 16th

Kyra Greiner- 16th

Bob Baldwin-17th

William Bruner- 20th

Lia Potratz- 22nd

Brianna Baker- 23rd

Kyle Patava- 24th

Ashley Jo Rench- 24th

Ken Henke- 25th

Monica Friedman- 26th

Dianna Cooper- 29th