

Congregational Church of Pinehurst, UCC

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, February 14. The 40 days of Lent mirror the 40 days Jesus spent in the Wilderness after his baptism, leading up to his crucifixion on Good Friday and his Resurrection on Easter. Pastor Terry Yasuko Ogawa reflects on the significance of Lent and Ash Wednesday: "In Easter we celebrate victory over death through Jesus, but in Lent we remember our mortality. It's a time to examine your life for what separates you from God and to journey back toward God. We will launch this spiritual practice on Ash Wednesday with a ritual of ashes and dust. Please join us for this worship service at 5:30 p.m. on Wednesday, February 14."

On Wednesday nights throughout the rest of Lent (Feb.21 to Mar. 21), Pastor Terry and Rev. Sam Walker are partnering to offer a 40-day Social Justice Bible Challenge, based on a book of that title, edited by Marek Zabriskie. The leaders note that the Bible study challenge may be pursued entirely on your own. "However, everyone is also invited to participate in weekly group discussions, starting at 5:30 in the sanctuary, and served up with a simple supper of soup and bread. For those who have ordered books through the church, these are now available to be picked up in the office. Also, it is not too late to join in, and please don't let cost prevent you. Thanks to a generous donor, scholarship books are available. Just contact Pastor Terry if you'd like one."

On Sunday, January 18, Pastor Terry will lead the 10:00 a.m. worship service and preach her sermon titled "From Covenant to A Way Forward." She notes: "Based on the stories of God's covenant with

Noah and Jesus' Baptism through his time in the wilderness, we'll explore how God's covenant with us buoys our own faith journeys." Immediately following the service everyone is invited to the Hearth Room for fellowship hour with coffee and light refreshments.

The church is seeking to hire a part-time Administrative Assistant and has posted an ad in The Pilot's classified section. Because of confidentiality policy, members of the congregation are not eligible to apply, but please help identify good candidates.

Congregational Church of Pinehurst, UCC is an official Open and Affirming faith community that welcomes everyone, regardless of where they might be on their faith journeys. The Open and Affirming designation recognizes a core principle: "We value and respect differences in all people's religious backgrounds, personal experiences, gender definition, and cultural experience. We welcome everyone." The church is located at 895 Linden Road across from Elliott's Restaurant. For more information call the church office at (910) 295-2243 Tuesdays from 1 to 4 p.m. and Thursdays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. or visit www.youarewelcomehere.org or the Facebook page.

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