

**PASTOR JIM'S THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS -**  
**MARCH 2020**



Dear Friends,

Greetings in the name of our Loving God! I don't know about you, but I can hardly believe Easter is fast approaching. It seems like just yesterday we were singing *Silent Night* and making Christmas cookies! Now we're remembering all of the different colors of "marshmallow peeps and bunnies" that we used to get in our Easter baskets and the words of *Up From The Grave He Arose* fill our hearts and minds!

February 26 is Ash Wednesday and begins the season of Lent. Ash Wednesday worship services are a reminder of the sacrifices of God and Jesus and the presence of the Holy Spirit. We know the Holy Spirit that unites us today has been a part of the Christian community for thousands of years and continues to unite us today.

Lent is a time of the Christian year when we do our best to focus on prayer, fasting and simple living so we can devote our energy to drawing closer to God. As I look back over the last 30 years of my life and ministry, I realize that during Lent I feel closer to Jesus and God than any other time of the year.

I think this has to do with the emphasis we as Christians place on the ways Jesus lived out His commitment to God in a way that He was willing to literally die on a cross so you and I can have our sins forgiven, and then live forever in heaven. During the season of Lent, when I think about the sacrifices God and Jesus made for me, I do my best to struggle with three simple questions I heard years ago during an Ash Wednesday worship service. I intentionally ask myself these three questions each day during Lent:

- Am I searching for something more meaningful in life?
- What is God telling me the purpose of my life is at this time?
- Am I living my life with purpose and passion?

How about you, dear friends, are these questions you are willing to explore during this season of Lent? How is God inviting you to receive His love and the assurance of hope and meaning for your life?

I invite you to look deep in your heart and your Bible to see the promises God has for you. Please join us in our Worship Service Sunday mornings. Please join me for Bible Study Wednesday evenings. God has amazing plans for you! Please open your heart to receive the Holy Spirit who will help you understand the promises and courage and energy God has for you!

See you in Church as we prepare our hearts to celebrate the gift of Christ and His resurrection on Easter Sunday!

Blessings,

Pastor Jim