



The Center Chronicles



March 2025



Ash Wednesday is March 5 and marks the beginning of the Lent Season. Over the course of 40 days, God's people will be invited to look at themselves with a spiritual mirror and evaluate what areas in their lives they need to let go and let God deal with according to God will. It is also during this time that we as a church take up a special offering called the One Great Hour of Sharing offering. This year's theme is

based on Isaiah 58: 6-9 where we read,

**“6 Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen:
to loosen the chains of injustice
and undo the chords of the yoke,
to set the oppressed free
and break every yoke?”**

**7 Is it not to share your food with the hungry
and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter—
when you see the naked, to clothe them,
and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood?”**

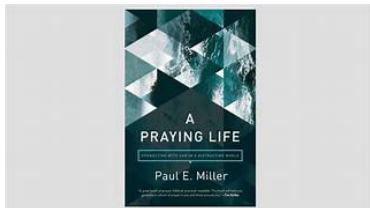
**8 Then your light will break forth like the dawn,
and your healing will quickly appear;
then your righteousness will go before you,
and the glory of the Lord will be your rear guard.**

**9 Then you will call, and the Lord will answer;
you will cry for help, and he will say: Here am I”.**

The One Great Hour of Sharing offering focuses on three areas of ministry. The **Presbyterian Hunger** program is used to provide sustainable food resources and clean water possibilities to people in need whether they live on reservations in the states or in areas of poverty across the world. The **Presbyterian Disaster Assistance** program provides disaster support for those who have been impacted by fires and floods or any other catastrophes that leave behind disaster and destruction. Then there is the **Self-development of People** program that assists people with disabilities, low-income families who need assistance with things like childcare, and elderly who struggle to survive.

The children will be given offering containers to put their change, and envelopes will be placed in the pews for those who want to give through the offering plate. Attached to this Newsletter are some Lenten activities and prayers that can be utilized during the Lent Season of reflection.

Blessings, Jon



Wednesday Night Bible Study resumes at 5pm

We will continue our study on Paul Miller's book, The Praying Life. We meet in the upstairs Sunday School classroom.



Children's bell choir practice, March 5 @ 6pm

Calling all Youth and parental ringers as we make preparations for the Easter season. Bell ringers meet every other week at 6pm in the upstairs Sunday classroom.

"All are from the dust,
and to dust all return."
Ecclesiastes 3:20, ESV



Ash Wednesday Service

Ash Wednesday Service @ 6pm, March 5

Ash Wednesday literally marks the beginning of the Lent Season in preparation for the celebration of Easter. Each person will be marked with the sign of the cross on their foreheads with the charred ashes of last year's palm branches which were used to celebrate the final arrival of Jesus to Jerusalem.

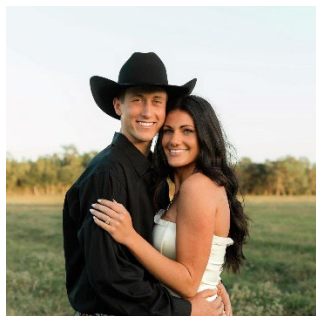


Choir Practice is March 5 at 6:30pm

It will meet at 6pm on the following Wednesday's up to Good Friday on April 18.

Bridal Shower

March 9, everyone is invited to join Kori Hamilton and Levi Kearney at the Lodge at Tellico at 2pm for a Bridal Shower. Their wedding will be Saturday, March 29 in Baker, FL.



Men's Bible Study on Revelations

Saturday's at 9am



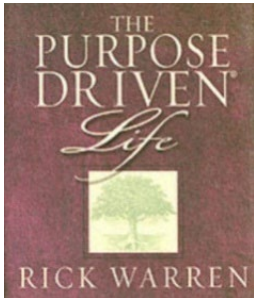
Have you ever wondered about the end times, God's judgement, or how Jesus Christ will come to judge the "quick and the dead"? You are invited to join us for a study in the hope of Revelation as we use BSF's study guide to help us process John's visions recorded in Revelation. We meet every Saturday at 9am in the upper Sunday School classroom.

Youth Group on Sunday at 4:00pm



Both youth and anyone else who might be interested are invited to come and watch and discuss each episode of the Chosen, Season 4. We will meet in the fellowship hall. There are 8 episodes. Season 5, which covers the holy week, will come out at the end of March.

Adult Sunday School Update



Donald Bivens continues his class studies on Rick Warren's classic, The Purpose Driven Life. Adult Sunday Class meets at 9:15am on Sunday morning.

Dorcas Ministry meets every first and third Wednesday at 9:30am



The Dorcas Ministry is a vital ministry of Center Church. What a blessing! If you want to get involved, please contact Sandra Black at 423-253-3876

Session Meeting

Session will meet March 20 @ 6pm

The Session regular meeting is scheduled for Thursday March 20 @ 6pm in the upstairs Sunday School classroom.

Daylight Savings Time switches Sunday, March 9 @ 2am.



Be sure to spring forward your clocks for Sunday School and worship, before you go to bed Saturday night.

Mission trip Update



February 26-28, mission volunteers from Center Church, Baker's Creek and Mars Hill Church in Athens traveled to Del Rio to once again assist Samantha Hurst make repairs to her home. We are blessed to have Roy Helton, the Disaster response coordinator for the Pigeon Forge Rotary Club, who is providing the financial funds to purchase materials for this mission rebuild project. We spent close to \$2500 for materials such as wire, a breaker box, breakers, and receptacle boxes for this trip.

Wood was already there for the framing projects.



So, what did we accomplish in two days? The back bathroom and bedroom walls had been removed so that the subfloor could be replaced. The first day was spent removing the header boards where the walls used to be so that new walls could be rebuilt according to a redesigned plan. The second day was spent framing and rebuilding the new walls. Credit goes to Danny and Daniel Reed (father/ son team) who worked with Anthony who lives in the area to frame up those walls.



While one team was framing, the other team was beginning the process of rewiring the whole house. Bud Moore Glenn from the Baker's Creek Church and myself put in the breaker box and did the long runs that reached the other end of the house. After that, we replaced the old receptacle and switch boxes that still had the remnants of mud from the flood with new boxes. Once we got the main run wires completed, we started going back to run wire to every box. We completed the laundry room, kitchen and living room. Both bathrooms and bedrooms still need to be done. We will be planning another trip in the new future. If interested, please contact me at either 423-253-2303, 270-705-2914 or email at jfaraone@bellsouth.net

A Sharing Calendar for Lent 2025

Each day at or after a meal time, gather around this map activity. Consider the reflection and questions, place a coin or a bill (a "gift") in your fish coin bank or a jar.

<p>March 9-14</p> <p>Sunday: <i>God, open our eyes to your face in every person. Let us see the ways we are all connected with all of Creation. May we as your Church, together, seek love, justice and peace with all. Amen.</i></p> <p>Monday: Using the online map, find a DDA partnership near where you live. Say a prayer for those recovering from natural and human-caused disasters.</p> <p>Tuesday: In a natural disaster, people are often unable to access their normal sources of drinking water. Sharing a gift in your fish box will help water reach people who need it.</p> <p>Wednesday: Climate change is affecting growing seasons and forcing families to leave their homes. Make a gift to OGHs to help people working to address climate change.</p> <p>Thursday: Think of three people you are thankful for. Find a way to let them know you are thinking about them. Consider sharing a gift in their honor.</p> <p>Friday: Blue T-Shirt Sunday celebrates the ministry of Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA). Wear a blue shirt for worship this Sunday and learn more at pda.pousa.org.</p>	<p>March 16-21</p> <p>Sunday: <i>Gather us all around your banquet table, O God, with all who hunger and thirst. May we join, together, to share the abundance you've intended for all. Amen.</i></p> <p>Monday: Using the online map, find an SDOP partnership near where you live. Read about the need being addressed and say a prayer for the people involved in that ministry.</p> <p>Tuesday: Social barriers can be like locked doors that hold people back and keep them from thriving as Jesus intended. Make a gift to help open doors so all people can grow and learn freely.</p> <p>Wednesday: Clean water is a necessity for every living thing. Using the online map, find three projects related to water. Give a gift for each faucet in your house.</p> <p>Thursday: What are you thankful for in yourself? God offers gifts and talents to each of us. Make a short list of yours and make them part of a "Thank you, God" prayer.</p> <p>Friday: Millions of Americans live in a food desert, far from a store where they can buy fresh food. Make a gift for each grocery store near your home.</p>	<p>March 23-28</p> <p>Sunday: <i>Encourage us, Creator, when things get difficult. May we draw creativity and hope from your Spirit, and from our partners along the way. Amen.</i></p> <p>Monday: Using the online map, find a project or partnership near a location you have wanted to visit, but have never been. Say a prayer for all neighbors whom you have never met.</p> <p>Tuesday: People who care for others also need care. Do something special for the caretakers in your life to say, "Thank you."</p> <p>Wednesday: Wiggedy worms and buzzing bees are essential to healthy soils and plants. Give a gift of things for all the little things that help the world grow.</p> <p>Thursday: The right supplies make all the difference, whether you are growing crops or learning at school. Remember the last time you had the right tool for a project and make a gift as part of remembering.</p> <p>Friday: Make up a mealtime prayer and use it during meals this weekend. Give a gift in thanks for the food you have.</p>	<p>March 30-April 4</p> <p>Sunday: <i>God, you say, "Come to the waters" and "Buy wine without money and bread without price." Let us learn by your generosity, the gift of giving what we have to share. Amen.</i></p> <p>Monday: Using the online map, find a Presbyterian Hunger Program partnership near where you live. Say a prayer for the people involved in the ministry there.</p> <p>Tuesday: When rain is scarce, special collection systems are built to catch the water so it can be used for growing plants. Give a gift to help bring water to people when it doesn't rain.</p> <p>Wednesday: Electricity is usually the first utility that is lost in a storm. Can you identify a favorite Bible verse about light? Make a gift in honor of the verse.</p> <p>Thursday: Social support and connection are important parts of being healthy. Give a gift of gratitude for one person or place that offers welcome to you.</p> <p>Friday: Teaching healthy food choices and food safety can change the health of an entire community! Make a gift for the healthy foods you had today.</p>	<p>April 6-11</p> <p>Sunday: <i>Loving God, help us to learn from what others have seen, so that we might grow in understanding across lines of difference. Amen.</i></p> <p>Monday: Using the online map, locate a ministry in a country far away from you. What needs are being addressed there? Say a prayer for the people involved in these ministries.</p> <p>Tuesday: Without the right nutrition in the first two years of life, a child's physical and mental development is compromised. Make a gift to help ensure healthy food for infants.</p> <p>Wednesday: The vulnerable are often the most impacted in emergency situations. Visit pousa.org/OGHkits and ask your church to assemble kits for such emergencies.</p> <p>Thursday: Think of all the things people share with you. Write a thank you note to one of these people and give a gift of thanks for their care.</p> <p>Friday: Learn about the Indigenous peoples who inhabited the land where you live. Learn the name they used for the land when they lived there.</p>	<p>April 13-18</p> <p>Passion/Palm Sunday: <i>Guide us through the paths that feel lonely, assured that you are always with us. Be with us in the darkness as we walk by faith and not by sight. Amen.</i></p> <p>Monday: Immunizations give us hope for a day when certain sicknesses will no longer cause pain and pain. Give a gift for each immunization you have received.</p> <p>Tuesday: It is estimated that nearly 1 in 11 people around the world will go to bed hungry each night. Make a gift to eliminate hunger.</p> <p>Wednesday: Education helps lift people out of poverty. OGHs helps kids world wide attend school. Make a gift and consider donating books to a local reading program.</p> <p>Thursday: Blankets are used internationally to comfort those impacted by war and disasters. Give a gift for each blanket on your bed.</p> <p>Friday: Communication can be incredibly difficult after a disaster, especially if the internet isn't working. Give a gift for every phone your family has.</p>	<p>April 20</p> <p>Sunday - Resurrection/Easter/One Great Hour of Sharing: Present the gifts in your coin box to your congregation. Say a prayer for all those who will receive help from your generosity.</p>
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For more locations and ministries, go to pousa.org/ogtmap or scan this code.



ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING
SPECIAL OFFERINGS
HUNGER • DISASTER • DEVELOPMENT