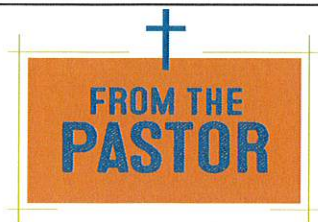


THE ASSISTANT PASTOR

March 2025



Volume 67 Number 3



Saint David's Compassion

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If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person? (1 John 3:17)

St. David's Day is always Saturday, March 1. This year our annual dinner will actually be on the day of the national holiday. We also focus on St. David's example during the worship service on the next day. One of his renowned points of emphasis was compassion. It so happens, that we have also begun an adult Sunday school class for Lent called "Gut-level Compassion," led by Heather Nusbaum.

St. David of Wales taught kindness, compassion, and care for others. He also taught his followers to live a disciplined life. He himself lived a strict monastic life, eating only bread, vegetables, and water. He also taught his followers to fast and work hard. St. David led by example, showing people how they could care for others in small ways. St. David is the patron saint of Wales.

It is inspiring when we witness or hear about acts of true compassion. Of course, Jesus greatly exemplified compassion. Luke quotes Jesus in Acts 20:35, by also quoting Paul, "In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'" So Paul not only worked compassionately, he worked hard for the weak, the poor, and the needy. In a culture that calls us to get ahead for ourselves, it is good to hear the beckon call of St. David and the early saints compelling us towards compassion. It is an imperative for us, if we want to live by Christ-like love.

In Christ's love,
Pastor Mo Dunn

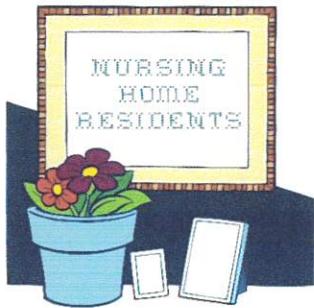
MARCH

2025

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
9:00 am Sunday School 10:15 am Worship 11:30am Christian Education	7:00pm 4-H meeting	7:30pm Deacon & Deaconess	6:00pm Bells 7:00pm Choir	7:00pm Bible Study		4:30pm St. David's Day Dinner & Bazaar
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9:00 am Sunday School 10:15 am Worship <i>Daylight-Sowing Time Begins</i>	7:00pm 4-H meeting	7:00pm Trustee meeting	6:00pm Bells 7:00pm Choir	7:00pm Shalom 7:00pm Bible Study	<i>World Day of Prayer</i>	9 to Noon Recycling at Uncle Al's
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
9:00 am Sunday School 10:15 am Worship	7:00pm 4-H meeting <i>St. Patrick's Day</i>		6:00pm Bells 7:00pm Choir	7:00pm Bible Study <i>Spring Begins</i>		
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
9:00 am Sunday School 10:15 am Worship			6:00pm Bells 7:00pm Choir	7:00pm Bible Study		
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
9:00 am Sunday School 10:15 am Worship	7:00pm 4-H meeting		6:00pm Bells 7:00pm Choir	7:00pm Bible Study		
30	31					



Mar. 2	Janet Alger & Carol Sunderland	Carson Sunderland
Mar. 9	Maxine Brooks & Martha Britt	Wyatt Diller
Mar. 16	Marty & Deb Thomas	Gena Thomas
Mar. 23	Oren & Michele Long	Rayna Ogle
Mar. 30	Bob & Kim Roethlisberger	Kennedy Larimore
Apr. 6	George & Hope Diller	Beckett Sunderland
Apr. 13	Louie & Jan Siefker	Beth Ogle
Apr. 20	Brian & Rachel Baker	Madi Larimore
Apr. 27	Dave & Pam Smith	Norah Baker
May 4	Larry & Deb Stewart	Zoey Diller
May 11	Bruce & Vi Lloyd	Carson Sunderland
May 18	Derik & Sarah Mooney	Wyatt Diller
May 25	Steve & Dina Tadena	Genna Thomas



Joan Thomas, Dick Williams
 – The Meadows of Kalida,
 755 Ottawa St., Kalida, OH
 45853

Virginia Bok – Roselawn
 Manor, 420 East Fourth St.,
 Spencerville, OH 45887

Note from our Pastor/Staff

Pastor Dunn is available to you for counseling and visitation. You can often catch him at church between 9:30am and 11:30am on days that the office is open. However, to ensure you see him, it is best to call or text his phone at 937-855-7665 to arrange a meeting. It could be set for at the office or in a public meeting place or in your residence. He wants to be accessible.!



The electric sign in front of the church needs to be replaced. The goal for the new sign \$25,000. The fund continues to grow with the balance currently at \$7205.00. Thank you

Tell your story

In his *Confessio*, St. Patrick shares his fascinating biography, placing Jesus at the center. Believers should follow suit, especially in a culture that is “ignoring and forgetting the Christian story,” states Father Billy Swan. At WordOnFire.org, the Irish Catholic priest writes:

“Our calling is to retell the greatest story ever told and to help people find their place within the drama in which God has created them to participate. Like St. Patrick, we retell that story not as detached bystanders but as witnesses whose lives have been changed by being drawn deeper into the dynamics of the great love story of God and his people.”

Patty Breen, a lay minister in Michigan, also finds inspiration from the fifth-century saint. “The journey and life story of St. Patrick invite us to wrestle with and consider these questions,” she writes. “Who is God for me? How do I contribute to the coming of the kingdom of God? What is God’s plan for my life? Where am I invited to serve?”

Writing down our own *Confessio*, or faith story, is “a way to remember and see God’s presence with you at each step of your life,” adds Breen, “even at times when you weren’t necessarily following God.”

Fasting and feasting

During Lent, consider this practical — and biblical — advice from Arthur Lichtenberger, a former presiding bishop of the Episcopal Church:

- Fast from criticism, and feast on praise.
- Fast from self-pity, and feast on joy.
- Fast from ill-temper, and feast on peace.
- Fast from resentment, and feast on contentment.
- Fast from jealousy, and feast on love.
- Fast from pride, and feast on humility.
- Fast from selfishness, and feast on service.
- Fast from fear, and feast on faith.





Trustees Meeting

FEBRUARY 2025

Members present: Members present...Matt Nusbbaum, Jim Siefker, Travis Watkins, Jeff Weis, Deb Thomas, Bob Roethlisberger.

A devotion was provided by Pastor Dunn focusing on internal law. Lawlessness is condemned by the Bible. He reminded us that our spiritual development is an internal work of the spirit of God that guides us daily. A thank you was issued to outgoing trustees, Jim Siefker, Tom Evans, and treasurer Dina Tadana, for their work for the church. Their dedication and spiritual contribution to making our church run effectively will be missed! The financial report was presented by treasurer, Dina Tadana. A motion to pay the bills presented was made and approved.

OLD BUSINESS

Matt reported that bids are currently being accepted to replace the furnace providing heat to the Pastor's study and the office area of the church. The old furnace is not operating properly and parts to repair are not available. It is in the best interest to replace it. Jeff Weis has offered to repair the splash guard on the roof at the west end of the church as well as clean the gutters. Jim Siefker has offered to help. It will be addressed as soon as weather conditions allow.

NEW BUSINESS

Deb discussed the improvements needed to upstairs area of parsonage. The upstairs bathroom is in need of repair and replacement of floor. Jeff Weis suggested replacement of any other areas of concern in the bathroom. Deb reported that flooring remains that was used in downstairs bathroom remodel, so that will not need to be purchased. An estimate will be presented at the next meeting. Deb reported that a group of people involved with Spinning and Weaving have requested use of the church in conjunction with the Welsh Society. They would like to use the Fellowship Hall of the church on the Sunday that the museum is open. The Welsh

Society would be responsible for opening and closing the church. Church members' activities and scheduling will take precedence over others. Further info will be provided.

A motion to adjourn was made and passed.

Respectfully submitted,
Deb Thomas, secretary

Amid life's storms

The hurricanes that battered the East Coast in fall 2024 also battered my soul. I was over the rain and humidity. I was tired of lugging my two preschoolers through the downpours and driving through flash floods at night. Yet I had no reason to complain. Our house was still standing, with no damage.

The news around us was worrying and heartbreaking. "What if that was us?" I wondered. "Would I be strong enough?"

Then the kids asked to play outside. Even though I knew they'd get wet and muddy, I gave in. When a rainbow appeared, I'd never been more humbled as I remembered: I don't need to be anxious. I don't need to be strong enough. God watches over us all. He knows the hurt and sorrow. And he promises to be "our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble" (Psalm 46:1, ESV).

Lord, forgive my unbelief. "Hear my cry, O God ... when my heart is faint. Lead me to the rock that is higher than I" (Psalm 61:1-2, ESV).—Kristen Greene



The next Christian Ed meeting will be held Sunday, March 2nd.

The children will be singing during the church service on Sunday, March 2nd for St. David's Day. Planning is underway for Easter breakfast hosted by the committee.

"If you are patient in one moment of anger, you will escape a hundred days of sorrow."—Chinese proverb

Stewardship is WORK

The Stewardship Committee has selected The Veteran's Food Pantry for the March project. Some items requested are ramen noodles, canned soup, canned fruit, shampoo, body wash and jiffy muffin mixes.

March 9, 2025



Living water

In the mountains, my mom and I have a favorite riverside picnic spot. Inevitably, we end up removing our socks and shoes, dunking our feet in the icy water. While seeing who can keep both feet submerged the longest, we distract ourselves by admiring the rushing water. Hundreds of gallons from melting snow cascade over rocks and around fallen trees.

Although we're in the same spot visit after visit, the water is always fresh. The same is true about God's presence and his Word. We can revisit the same beloved Scripture and experience the same truths in fresh ways, as "rivers of living water" flow within us (John 7:38).

In *The Attentive Life*, Leighton Ford describes enjoying solitude by a river. "I remembered that the ancient philosopher Heraclitus said it was impossible to step into the same river twice, for a river is always in flux," he writes.

Ford continues: "Yet Heraclitus left out an important truth. A river is more than a succession of millions of disparate drops of water. I can step into a river in this living moment and know it has *never* changed. For each moment of time, each part of creation, each aspect of my life is also lived under the eye of God and is gathered and held in his eternal hand." —Janna Firestone

Pastor Mo will be enjoying some vacation time from March 12 to March 27. If you have any Pastoral needs during this time, please contact the church office 419-642-2681 or any deacon.



On the path to victory

After moving to a college town, Pastor Kendra Thompson learned about the athletic phenomenon known as March Madness. And after a nondenominational upbringing, as a young adult she learned about Lenten traditions.

Lent and the NCAA college basketball tournament, which usually coincide, both point to the divine, Thompson argues. "In Lent, with each day we are drawn closer to the crushing reality that we've crucified our God. And yet we are also faced with an impossible victory: that death did not win, that our God is raised in Jesus Christ," she writes. "Likewise, watching college basketball invites us into a season of hoping in unlikely possibilities, marveling at upsets, and giving thanks to God for the connection we find as his people."

Like fans swept up in high-stakes games, Jesus' disciples abandon everything to follow him. Lent might be "holy madness," Thompson muses. It's "an opportunity to 'feel' our religion, not just in our heads but with our skin, our voices, even in the anxieties of our prayers."

Two-way benefits

"When you do nothing, you feel overwhelmed and powerless," observed Connecticut politician Pauline Keezer. "But when you get involved, you feel the sense of hope and accomplishment that comes from knowing you are working to make things better." Indeed, it's impossible to shine light in someone else's life without lighting up your own. We might think being generous toward another with our time or possessions leaves us with less. But as Jesus said, "Whoever loses their life for my sake will find it" (Matthew 10:39, NIV). How common it is that when we minister to others in Christ's name, we find we have also — or perhaps even more so — received ministry. This is the miracle of God's love at work.



Ladies Tea

The Welsh Society of Northwest Ohio will hold a Ladies Tea on Sunday, May 4th from 3-4:30 pm in the fellowship hall of Gomer Congregational Church. Laura Jenkins Gorun, a renowned lovespoon carver will share her knowledge about this

lovely Welsh tradition!

Laura graduated from Capital University with a Bachelor of Fine Arts, then worked in financial services for a couple decades, mostly as an IT project manager, until discovering the Welsh Lovespoon tradition that led her to give up that career and return to the arts.

Captivated by this lovely tradition, she taught herself to carve and developed her own very distinct and delicate style.

She's had several collaborations with world-famous lovespoon carver, David Western, and has been featured in multiple publications, including David Western's "History of Lovepoons."

Though some injuries have slowed down her carving in recent years, she still loves to speak about the history of the art. She will explain a bit of the history, talk about the carving process, and offer some insights into the romantic symbolism often used to distinguish this cherished centuries-old Welsh tradition.

Bring a tea cup and join us for our annual Welsh Tea! Cost is \$10.00 and reservations can be made by contacting Deb Thomas 419-230-4344 or Sue Grusenmeyer at 419-236-0289.

In Loving Memory

Robert B. Quillen

January 17, 1945 — January 2, 2025

Memorial Fund: Bill Morris, Susan Siefker

"Of one thing I am perfectly sure: God's story never ends with ashes." —Elisabeth Elliot

Resting in Jesus

An old hymn declares:
I heard the voice of Jesus say, "Come unto me and rest.



Lay down, O weary one, lay down your head upon my breast."
I came to Jesus as I was, so weary, worn and sad.
I found in him a resting-place, and he has made me glad. (Horatius Bonar, 1846)

Many people these days feel exhausted by division, the news, hatred that seems louder than love. More than ever, we who are "weary, worn, and sad" need to hear Jesus say, "Come unto me and rest."

Jesus wants to be our resting place — but not so we can hide forever from reality. Instead, he offers a place of refreshment where we can relax long enough to remember that not everything is bad; there is gospel to share. Not everything is hatred; God's love is stronger.

Resting in Jesus, we focus on God's goodness. We are reminded of love shown by kind people to those in trouble, bold voices speaking for justice, warm friendships that brighten our days. Gladdened by rest, we rise again. Jesus walks with us, as always. We can lean on him every step of the way.

—Heidi Hyland Mann



Gomer Congregational Church,
Thank you very much for your donation to our food pantry. It is greatly appreciated and will help to continue our service to God's children. May God bless you and keep you.

The Church at Allentown
5 Loaves Food Pantry



25 Codey Ewing
26 Aidan Lester

27 Willard Bentley Nusbaum
Halee Good

ANNIVERSARIES

10 Linda & Dennis Traynor
20 Jim & Sandy Schwartzengraber
22 Mike & Pat Kohn
27 John & Carla Olds

SPECIAL DATES

- St. David's Day, March 1
- Transfiguration Sunday, March 2
- Ash Wednesday, March 5
- World Day of Prayer, March 7
- Daylight saving time begins, March 9
- First day of spring, March 20

Bible Quiz

Complete this sentence which introduces a well-known Bible story:
"The hand of the LORD was on me, and he brought me out by the Spirit of the LORD and set



me in the middle of a valley; it was full of _____."

- A. flowers
- B. sheep
- C. rocks
- D. bones

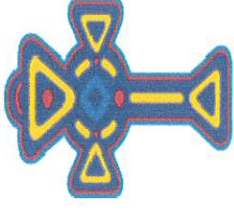
BIRTHDAYS

1 Denise Myers
2 Kay Studer
3 Jenni Martin
6 Bob Roethlisberger
9 Dylan Barnes
Riley Barnes
10 Ellen Sunderland
15 Emily Diller
Karly Frank
17 Vi Lloyd
18 Greg Henderson
19 Wilma Evans
20 Evan Hollar
21 Roberta Brentlinger
23 Asher Henderson
Sophi Ridley

Answer: D (See Ezekiel 37:1, NIV.)

Christian symbol

ANKH, OR ANSATE CROSS — Originating in Egyptian hieroglyphics, this symbol represented life and regeneration. The shape and meaning made perfect sense to ancient Christians, who appropriated it as a sign of eternal life.



St. David

David was born in the year 500, the grandson of Ceredig ap Cunedda, King of Ceredigion. According to legend, his mother St Non gave birth to him on a Pembrokeshire clifftop during a fierce storm. The spot is marked by the ruins of Non's Chapel, a nearby holy well is said to have healing powers.

St. David became a renowned preacher, founding monastic settlements and churches in Wales, Brittany and southwest England- including possibly, the abbey at Glastonbury. St David reputedly made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, from which he brought back a stone that now sits in and altar at St. Davids cathedral, built on the site of his original monastery.

St David and his monks followed a simple, austere life. They ploughed the fields by hand, rather than using oxen, and refrained from eating meat or drinking beer.

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The Lenten desert



During the Lenten season, which begins on Ash Wednesday (March 5 this year), Christians figuratively follow Jesus into the desert. Just as our Savior spent 40 days fasting and facing temptation, we focus on self-reflection and contrition.

In an 1873 hymn, Claudia Hernaman wrote, "O Lord, throughout these forty days, you prayed and kept the fast. Inspire repentance for our sin, and free us from our past."

The desert experience of Lent serves a clear purpose, filling us up rather than depleting us. "This is what Lent is meant to be," writes theologian Ron Rolheiser. "Time in the desert to courageously face the chaos and the demons within us and to let God do battle with them through us. The result is that we are purified, made ready, so the intoxicating joy of Easter might then bind us more closely to God and each other."