

March / April 2012

PASTOR'S TWO CENTS:

By now most of you have received your preparatory Lenten Letter, offering envelope and Calendar. As we begin our Lenten journey we are "invited" by our Creator and our Church to STOP! Stop and think! Stop and think about who you are, who God is to you and who you are to others? It's a time of reflection and meditation. It is a time to put away our selfish natures, for the time being, and think about something and/or someone outside our own selves. It is a time to think about how we have responded this past year to our God, our neighbor and our world.

It is also a time for the church to provide the resources for you to do this. Here at Trinity UCC, we not only offer a Sunday worship service but we also offer adult and children's Sunday school, discipleship classes and an alternative Thursday night worship service, as well as, a vital prayer ministry that can be used as part of your Lenten meditations.

This year is an important year for me as I begin to teach the educational portion of the Open and Affirming process for our church. An Open and Affirming church in the United Church of Christ means that we accept and affirm the rights and ministry of ALL ages, genders, disabilities/abilities, race, ethnicities, and sexual orientation. As of mid-February, 1,000 UCC churches across the country have been "certified" by a congregational vote to be Open & Affirming Congregations of the United Church of Christ.

Although thousands of churches "claim" to be Open & Affirming, often they are afraid to take this step for fear of causing a split in the church. This is why we are implementing a slow and cautious educational program to understand the Scriptures regarding these "hot button" issues and truly learn what God has said in reference to the aged, the infirmed, race, and ethnicities, as well as, sexual behavior. We have already covered the majority of these Scriptures passages in our Thursday night services but I will be reviewing them again with the entire congregation and will provide scholarly research to assure we are proceeding in the proper Biblical and Christian direction.

I sincerely hope that you will use this time of Lent to truly reflect on how we treat those who are different from us and how we carry out our Christian call to proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ and make disciples of ALL nations. May you have a truly meaningful and meditative Lenten Season.

God's Blessing to all,
Pastor Steve