



The Demands of God and the Grace of Lent

American writer Madeleine L'Engle once wrote,
"The modern church is a safe place to escape the awful demands of God."

What a sobering indictment.

Yes, the Church should be a place of grace. It should be a sanctuary where weary souls find forgiveness, healing, and hope. But it must never become a refuge from God's call upon our lives. The Church is not meant to shield us from transformation—it is meant to shape us for it.

We gather not to escape God's demands, but to learn His ways and to be strengthened to meet them. Worship, prayer, Scripture, and fellowship are not spiritual hiding places. They are training grounds for faithful living.

This is, in many ways, the message of Lent.

Lent invites us into honest self-examination. God's demands often require us to look deeply into our own hearts—and that can indeed feel "awful." We confront our pride, our selfishness, our complacency. We acknowledge where we have fallen short. Such reflection is not comfortable, but it is necessary.

Yet Lent does not leave us in despair. Alongside the call to repentance comes the promise of mercy. For every repentant heart, there is forgiveness. For every honest confession, there is grace.

The Church must hold both truths together: the holy demands of God and the boundless mercy of God. One without the other distorts the Gospel. Together, they lead us toward transformation.

May this season strengthen us—not to escape God's demands—but to meet them with courage, humility, and hope.

Peace,

Pastor Hoyt

Little Hands Preschool



Pancake Breakfast on March 7th! We at Little Hands Preschool are gearing up for our annual Pancake Breakfast fundraiser. This year we're doing both a Silent Auction and a Basket Raffle. Mark your calendars for March 7 because you don't want to miss it! Tickets are

just \$10 for adults and will be sold at the door. We're looking for people to make mini muffins to be served that morning. Sign-up sheets will be in the Fellowship Hall. Whether you purchase tickets, make muffins, donate a basket or pray for our event, we appreciate your support so very much!

Katina Miller, Director/Teacher



Mustard Seed Food Pantry host to BBCA

On Monday, February 16 (7 pm) the Mustard Seed Food Pantry hosted the regular monthly meeting of the Bergen Business & Civic Association. The meeting gave BBCA members attending a close look & understanding of the MSFP operations and logistics. An understanding was also conveyed of how and who MSFP serves in the Bergen community. The BBCA was impressed with what they learned and saw with much grace and very positive feedback. The MSFP also served light refreshments. There were approximately 25 people in attendance.



Lay Worship Volunteer Schedule for March

GREETERS:

March 1 Gene Lowe
March 8 Anne Pocock
March 15 Jan Cooper
March 22 Bonnie Brinkman
March 29 Sherry Chraston

COMMUNION SERVERS:

March 1 David Aradine & Jan Cooper
April 5 Linda Ferguson & Linda Stephens



LAY READERS:

March 1 Sherry Chraston
March 8 Beth Aradine
March 15 Ginny Adams
March 22 Joy Hammond
March 29 Sherry Chraston

SCRIPTURE READERS:

March 1 Kevin Kent
March 8 Dawn Sprague
March 15 Sandy Owen
March 22 Rick Woodring
March 29 Kevin Kent



~~~~~Wednesday Community Dinner~~~~~

March Menus:

March 4 Chili
March 11 Chicken & Biscuits
March 18 Ham & Cabbage
March 25 Hot Dog Trash Plate



BERGEN COMMUNITY VBS 2026

Our planning for VBS 2026 is off to a great start! Our next planning meeting will be on Sunday, March 15th at 11:45 am where we will make the final decisions on the VBS curriculum and dates, in addition to other agenda items. Anyone interested in helping plan our VBS 2026 is welcome to attend the meeting, and if you have any questions, please see Joy H. or Rick W.

Please keep our planning committee and our VBS program in your prayers as we work on creating an exciting, Spirit-filled program for our community's youth and families.

Joy Hammond, 2026 Bergen Community VBS Director



March 4	Carl & Candie Pocock*	March 13	Thomas Hammond
March 8	Teddy Schelemanow	March 13	Amelia Hammond
March 9	Sandy Bater	March 31	Gladys Dunham
March 13	Carl Pocock	March 31	Elaine Keys



Mustard Seed Food Pantry

Bergen United Methodist Church, 27 South Lake Avenue

March Food Distribution Dates:

Thursday, March 12 – 5 pm to 8 pm

Saturday, March 28 – 9 am to 12 noon

FOODLINK at Bergen Evangelical Presbyterian Church on March 19 @ 4 pm

Valentine Fundraising Dinner a Success!

Thank you to everyone who supported our church's Valentine's Dinner Fundraiser! We had 55 people attend for an evening of delicious spaghetti & meatballs with delectable desserts, along with lots of laughter and fellowship! We made an approximate 50% profit to support Bergen UMC's mission of putting faith into action within our community and beyond.

This Fundraiser wouldn't have happened without everyone who volunteered their time, talents, and donations to plan, publicize, decorate, cook, bake, serve, and clean up for the event. We deeply appreciate all our volunteers, everyone who attended our dinner, and everyone who supported our effort with prayer. Thank you so much!!





Bergen United Methodist Church

Our Mission

Following Jesus Together, Sharing Jesus with Others

Our Vision

Led by Christ, we form disciples through worship, service, and study, putting faith into action so that all may know they are loved by God.

Sunday Worship Service
10:00 am (childcare is available)

Sunday School
9:45 am

Check us out on FaceBook!