



From Groundhog Day to Ash Wednesday: A Journey Through the Middle of Winter.



Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,
February is a peculiar month. It lies smack dab in the middle of winter. From winter solstice to spring equinox, Groundhog Day is kind of the beginning of the middle, with almost as much in the rearview mirror as lies ahead. A calendar version of the kid in the back seat of the car asking, "Are we there yet?", with "there" referring to Spring.

2023 marks the 30th anniversary of the movie Groundhog Day starring Bill Murray and Andie McDowell. Written by the late Harold Remis, the film is about an obnoxious TV weatherman who visits Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania to cover the festivities surrounding the eternal question, "Will the groundhog see his shadow?" and "How much longer until

Wednesday February 1
[Psalm 371-17; Ruth 31-13; 413-22; Luke 617-26](#)

Thursday February 2
[Presentation of the Lord](#)

Thursday February 2
[Psalm 1121-9; Deuteronomy 41-14; 1 John 51-5](#)

Friday February 3
[Psalm 1121-9; Isaiah 291-12; James 313-18](#)

Saturday February 4
[Psalm 1121-9; Isaiah 2913-16; Mark 71-8](#)

Sunday February 5
[Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany](#)

Monday February 6
[Psalm 119105-112; 2 Kings 223-20; Romans 112-10](#)

Tuesday February 7
[Psalm 119105-112; 2 Kings 231-8 21-25; 2 Corinthians 41-12](#)

Wednesday February 8
[Psalm 119105-112; Proverbs 66-23; John 812-30](#)

Thursday February 9
[Psalm 1191-8; Genesis 261-5; James 112-16](#)

Friday February 10
[Psalm 1191-8; Leviticus 2634-46; 1 John 27-17](#)

Saturday February 11
[Psalm 1191-8; Deuteronomy 301-9a; Matthew 151-9](#)

Sunday February 12
[Sixth Sunday after the Epiphany](#)

Monday February 13
[Psalm 1199-16; Exodus 201-21; James 12-8](#)

From Pastor Craig

spring?" The weatherman is forced to live this most mundane day over and over and over again until finally, like Ebenezer Scrooge before him, he is transformed by the process and becomes a better human being.

Groundhog Day has its roots in a religious celebration known as Candlemas. February 2 marks 40 days after Christmas and commemorates the presentation of Jesus at the Temple. In some traditions, people bring their candles to their local churches, where they are blessed by the church and used for the remainder of the year. These blessed candles serve as Epiphany symbols of Jesus Christ as the Light of the World.

Somehow, Pennsylvania Dutch settlers brought the tradition from the old world where, if a hedgehog (later groundhog in the Americas) pokes its head out and sees its shadow on the day of Candlemas, Spring will remain elusive for at least six more weeks. No shadow equals an early spring. Who came up with this? No matter how you look at it, it's a peculiar practice.

In the bleakness of February, there are a lot of ways that we humans have tried to give ourselves something to look forward to. In addition to Groundhog Day, we celebrate Super Bowl Sunday, Valentines Day, Presidents Day (an amalgamation of Lincoln's Birthday February 12 and Washington's Birthday February 22), and every four years, Leap Day on February 29. In addition, Mardi Gras usually falls during this month, too. February feels like a month that we have filled with events to intentionally cheer ourselves up and give us something to look forward to because, if we didn't, the bleakness and monotony of winter might overwhelm us.

Usually toward the end of the month (this year February 22) we have Ash Wednesday and the beginning of the six-week journey of Lent. The word "Lent" is derived from an old

Tuesday February 14

[Psalm 119-16; Deuteronomy 2321-244 10-15;](#)

[James 21-13](#)

Wednesday February 15

[Psalm 119-16; Proverbs 21-15; Matthew 191-12](#)

Thursday February 16

[Psalm 2; Exodus 62-9;](#)

[Hebrews 81-7](#)

Friday February 17

[Psalm 2; Exodus 199b-25;](#)

[Hebrews 1123-28](#)

Saturday February 18

[Psalm 2; 1 Kings 2120-29;](#)

[Mark 99-13](#)

Sunday February 19

[Transfiguration Sunday](#)

Monday February 20

[Psalm 7817-20 52-55;](#)

[Exodus 337-23; Acts 730-34](#)

Tuesday February 21

[Psalm 7817-20 52-55; 1](#)

[Kings 199-18; Romans 111-6](#)

Wednesday February 22

[Ash Wednesday](#)

Thursday February 23

[Psalm 51; Jonah 31-10;](#)

[Romans 11-7](#)

Friday February 24

[Psalm 51; Jonah 41-11;](#)

[Romans 18-17](#)

Saturday February 25

[Psalm 51; Isaiah 581-12;](#)

[Matthew 181-7](#)

Sunday February 26

[First Sunday in Lent](#)

Monday February 27

[Psalm 32; 1 Kings 191-8;](#)

[Hebrews 210-18](#)

Tuesday February 28

[Psalm 32; Genesis 41-16;](#)

[Hebrews 414-510](#)



From Pastor Craig

English word meaning "lengthen", because the time of the year marks the lengthening of the hours of daylight.

With the distractions removed, Ash Wednesday reminds us of our mortality but also of our redemption. The darkness has been significant, but just as we read in the first chapter of the Gospel of John, "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it." The words, "Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return," grim reminders of our own mortality, are made with ashes in the shape of a cross, the symbol of our salvation and the destination of our 40 day journey.

So, with all of that "meandering", how are you doing this February? Are you hopeful? Fearful? Bored? Sad? All of the above? Looking out the window and asking, "Are we there yet?"

As I think about this month with both trepidation and amusement, I find comfort in the fact that we don't go it alone. I think about a song of blessing that I have sung from time to time, written by the late John Ylvisaker.

As you go on your way, may Christ go with you.

May he go before you to show you the way;

May he go behind you to encourage you;

Beside you to befriend you;

Above you to watch over;

Within you to give you peace.

May Christ bless you with his presence and journey with you through the light and the shadows of this life and the promise of light perpetual in the next.

Peace!

Pastor Craig

Service Helpers February

2/5

Reader: Mike Boonstra

Ushers: John and Lynn Ries

Donut Host: Kimberly Pearson

2/12

Reader: Marvis Gilnett

Usher: Lance Lyon

Coffee: Host Helen David

2/19

Reader: Dan Harms

Ushers: Dan & Lonnie Harms

Coffee: Susan Williamson

Marvis Gilnett

Dixie Sheehean

2/26

Reader: Kenton Wolfe

Ushers: Kenton & Mary Wolfe

Coffee: Host Barb Bannister



**"Who's on Third?"
Community Concert**
*by Trudy Fowlks,
Concert Coordinator*

The February "Who's on Third?" concert will be held on Saturday Feb. 18th, and will feature the return of our favorite dance band group "Grand Jazz (Swing) Band". These folks have performed for us several times in the past, and they have become one of our favorite groups. This small ensemble group still puts out the Big Band sound that we all remember from the 30's and 40's. Their performances feature favorite swing music of Glenn Miller, Tommy and Jimmy Dorsey, Duke Ellington, Gene Krupa, and many others. The members come from all around the mid-valley area & consist of Teachers, Engineers, Salespeople, a Police Officer, and Retired Folks.

The concert will be held at Woodburn United Methodist Church, located at 700 N. Cascade Dr. (just south of the Cascade Park Retirement complex) in Woodburn. The concert performance time will run approximately 3:00 to 4:00 PM (with no Intermission). All the "Who's on Third?" concerts are open to the public. A free-will offering will be taken to support this community concert series. Offering plates will continue to be stationed at all the doors for you to drop your free-will donation into the plate either before or after the performance. We continue recommend that you consider wearing a mask if you are concerned about sitting close to other people, since we are not be able to spread out the audience.

Be sure to mark your calendars & invite someone to join you as we take a "trip back in time" (musically). Shake off the "Winter Blahs" by enjoying another extremely entertaining concert. We look forward to seeing you there.

Council Highlights

January Meeting

Council continues to be gratefully impressed by the faithful giving to the general fund. Halfway through our fiscal year we are well ahead of budget. December and to a lesser extent January do tend to see annual or quarterly donations. A financial summary is always available in the narthex.

We are also grateful for designated gifts that allow us to reduce our dependence on loan funds. Once we have completed our maintenance and improvement projects we look forward to paying the loan off early. Major plumbing repairs and updates in the parsonage are scheduled to start March 6.

Endowment presented their year end report. A summary is available in the narthex. They anticipate having \$4673 for Outreach grants \$667 for Hunger and \$1335 for Seminary/Education scholarships.

This month's thank you goes to Heide Hendrick for keeping our space clean.

In Our Hearts & Prayers

Prayers for

Amy Elliot
Alan John & K.J.
Angela Thompson
Angelina Barker
Anna (Grider) Westcott
Barb Bannister
Barb R.
Betty Gerhardt
Bill Lawrence
Bob and Sally Boonstra
Brant Popma Family
Brian Wolfe
Brooke
Burt Aus
Carol Smith
Cindy Caufield
Colin Brown
Connie Robertson
Dar & Vern Hopper
Dave Stegmeier
David M. Chamberlin
Dee, Family of
Dexter Walter Family
Don Enright
Eric Wechter
Greg Rivard
Heidi Daniel and family
Helen D
Howard & Kathy Brandt
Jim Grider
Jim Popwell Family
Jo Miller
JoAnn Caufield
John Barr
Joyce Colvin
Kate
Kimberly Pearson
Kylie McMinimee
Larry Marnella
Laurie Boyce and Family
Lawson Roberts
Linda Bradley
Linda Condon & family
Lynn Bloomfield
Mankin family
Matt H
Meghann, Chris & Freya
Mike Macklin
Mike McCue
Norman Colvin
Piper
Sandi & Robbie Helman
Sandy Lyon
Shirley Ann Andreason
Shirley Grant
Stetson McMinimee
Sylvia Peter
The Russel Family
Tom & Joy Nelson
Traci
Travis
Vi Anderson
Victims of violence

Requested by

Barb B.
Kimberly Pearson
Cindy C
Kim
Jim & Doris Grider
PC
Lynn R.
Kenton and Mary Wolfe
Joyce Colvin
Doris Grider
PC
Kenton & Marv
Heather W
PC
Helen D
Mary W.
Heather W
Sharon G.
Susan W
Dan and Lonnie Harms
Helen D
Ilene Marnella
Kay
Lance
PC
Kimberly Pearson
PC
PC
Mary W.
Dale Williamson
Judi Aus
Kimberly Macklin
Cindy C
Kimberly P.
Susan W
PC
PC
Barb B.
Ilene Marnella
PC
PC
Barb
Lynn R.
Lonnie and Dan Harms
Julie
PC
Nancy
Kim Macklin
Heather Wechter
PC
Heather W
Terri Weatherly
Lance
Ilene Marnella
Julie Perilli-Minetti
Barb B.
PC
Kim
Mary W.
Barb B.
Helen D
Judi
Lance

- Those with memory care issues and those who care for them.
- Those receiving radiation or chemotherapy.
- Those who are in hospice care.
- Our loved ones serving in the armed forces especially those serving overseas.



Who was Saint Valentine? Legend has it that he was a Catholic priest and doctor who became famous for performing secret weddings during a time when Emperor Claudius II had outlawed new marriages for young men. (Claudius thought unmarried men made better soldiers.) Upon discovery, Valentine was sent to jail, where he befriended his jailer, and his jailer's blind daughter, Julia. Emperor Claudius offered to pardon Valentine and set him free if Valentine would renounce his Christian faith and agree to worship the Roman gods. Valentine's refusal led to a death sentence. Before he was killed, Valentine wrote a last note to Julia which is said to have cured her blindness. He signed the note: "From your Valentine."



Feb 9 Debbie Greenfield
Feb 12 Krystal Snell

Feb 16 Charlie Eggert
Rick Snell
Feb 23 Sophia Ries
Feb 28 Marvis Gilnett



Feb 1 Charles & Marie Gunther
Feb 14 Colin & Jeanne Brown

February 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
5 10 am Worship 7 pm AA Meeting	6	7 6 pm AA Meeting	8	9	10	11 AA Special Speaker, 6-8 pm
12 Souper Bowl of Caring Fund Raiser and Food Drive 10 am Worship 11:15 am Mutual Ministry 7 pm AA Meeting	13	14 6 pm AA Meeting	15 Marion/Polk Mobile Food Pantry, 3:30-5 pm, Aurora Pythian Hall	16 Backpack Buddies 10 am	17 Creative Gathering 10 am	18
19 10 am Worship 11:15 am Council	20	21 6 pm AA Meeting	22 Ash Wednesday Services 7 pm	23	24	25
26 10 am Worship 7 pm AA Meeting	27	28 North Marion Services Team, Hubbard City Hall, 3-4:30 p.m. 6 pm AA Meeting				



Souper Bowl Sunday February 12th!

We are holding the "Souper-Bowl of Caring". This is a food gathering and fundraiser. We are having a friendly completion with Aurora Presbyterian! Each church will have a box for non-perishables and contributions of cash.

We will total up the gifts given per church and see if who wins the game. If for some reason, you forgot to bring your food and or monetary donations, we will be accepting them through February 12th.

Creative Group February 17th!

Join us for discussion of the verse of the day and fellowship. Please feel free to bring a creative project work on during the hour and 1/2 that we meet or some supplies are available. We are all creative as we are made in this image, the great creator.

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COURIER



February 2023

CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH OF AURORA



XOXO

FEBRUARY

