SALEM UNITED
CHURCH OF CHRIST

CHAPEL CHIMES NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2020



FEBRUARY LECTIONARY READINGS

Sunday, February 2, 2020
Fourth Sunday after Epiphany

Hebrew Scripture: Micah 6:1-8
Psalm: Psalm 15
Epistle: 1 Corinthians 1:18-31
Gospel: Matthew 5:1-12

Sunday, February 9, 2020
Fifth Sunday after Epiphany

Hebrew Scripture: Isaiah 58:1-9a
Psalm: Psalm 112:1-9
Epistle: 1 Corinthians 2:1-12
Gospel: Matthew 5:13-20

Sunday, February 16, 2020
Sixth Sunday after Epiphany

Hebrew Scripture: Deuteronomy 30:15-20
Psalm: Psalm 119:1-8
Epistle: 1 Corinthians 3:1-9
Gospel: Matthew 5:21-37

Sunday, February 23, 2020
Transfiguration

Hebrew Scripture: Exodus 24:12-18
Psalm: Psalm 2
Epistle: 2 Peter 1:16-21
Gospel: Matthew 17:1-9

Wednesday, February 26, 2020
Ash Wednesday

Hebrew Scripture: Joel 2:1-2, 12-17
Psalm: Psalm 51:1-17
Epistle: 2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10
Gospel: Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21



FIRST NOTES

Given our established schedule of deadlines, this issue of the *Chapel Chimes* will be ready for distribution before Salem's annual congregational meeting. As I write, the annual reports are out and the agenda for the meeting is established. A good many things—like the adoption of a budget, for example—will be part of the schedule of events. Other items will be different this year. Unlike other years, I don't have a clear expectation of what will come out of this year's meeting and this year's plan of action. However, that situation doesn't fill me with fear and anxiety, and I'll share the reasons why.

Over the past couple of years, we have gathered, reflected, discussed, and prayed over the business of what is most important in ministry and what kind of governing structure will help us to accomplish what is most important. A good number of hours have gone into the process. We have tried to cover as many of the bases as we can. We have given our best efforts to prepare and plan.

At some point, though, we place things in God's hands, and that is where I believe we are now. The ability to place is a matter of trust. We let go and let God. That is a hard thing for a good number of us to do, but that is where we are now. Sometimes when we do that, God surprises us. As an old, departed friend of mine was fond of saying, "We propose: God laughs."

So—and sometimes the hard way—we learn to trust God and we learn to trust one another. I pray that we find ourselves at this point during the course of this year.

And one more thing before we close this front page: we begin Lent on Wednesday, February 26th, with worship, Holy Communion, and the imposition of ashes. Our midweek Lenten worship will follow the theme, *Entering the Passion of Jesus: Picturing Ourselves in the Story.* Soup and sandwich meals, fellowship, and study will all start on Ash Wednesday. Please plan to set aside time to be a part of this special season.

Your servant in Christ,

Rev. Jim Hoppert

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST