



the INVITATION



Ash Wednesday: Imposition of Ashes

Wednesday, March 1, 6:00pm, Fellowship Hall

Discipleship Class: Study "He Chose the Nails"

Sundays, March 5 - April 16, 9:45am, Fellowship Hall

Soups and Rolls: Study "Mudhouse Sabbath"

Wednesdays, March 8 - April 5, 6:00pm, Fellowship Hall

Maundy Thursday: Worship and Communion

Thursday, April 13, 7:00pm, Sanctuary

Good Friday: Worship Service

Friday, April 14, 7:00pm, Sanctuary

Easter: Sunrise Service

Sunday, April 16, 7:00am, Courtyard

Traditional Worship Service

Sunday, April 16, 11:00am, Sanctuary

Back in the '60's, we were introduced to something called "the new math." When using new math, we set aside the abacus, began to bring in personal calculators and entered a brand new way of looking at the complicated topics of math and science.

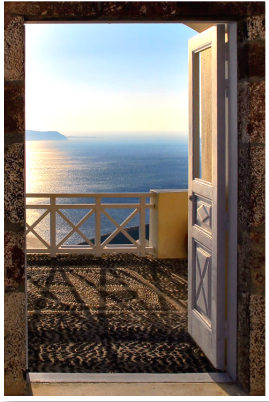
Every year during Lent, we begin the complicated task of thinking about trying to identify something that we might subtract (give up) during the Lenten season to help us better prepare for and focus on Easter. It's not unusual to see folks giving up chocolate, cell phone use or something else that's extremely hard to live without during Lent.

In 2017, we'll invite you to join us as we use some new math! Instead of (or in addition to) giving up something that's beloved, maybe it's a good time to add something to our life of faith. During the coming season, you'll be encouraged to add a spiritual discipline to your life.

To help you along the way, Lenten Soup & Rolls will be focused on Lauren Winner's wonderful book "*Mudhouse Sabbath*." Each week, we'll take a look at a different spiritual discipline (sabbath keeping, hospitality, fasting, grief and prayer).

We'll begin the journey on Ash Wednesday (March 1) at 6P with a very light meal in the Fellowship Hall. Afterwards, we'll journey to the Sanctuary where we'll receive the imposition of Ashes and be given the opportunity to reflect on the coming season of Lent.

In the coming five weeks, we'll meet in the Fellowship Hall for our traditional Soup & Rolls programming based on the idea of new math. Make plans to spend Wednesdays in Lent with PPC Brothers and Sisters as we prepare for Easter!



Have you ever felt like you were going in circles, doing the same things over and over again — laundry, groceries, emails. You visit the same places — school, gym, work, church. Life can feel like that, like a holding pattern in more ways than one. Spiritually, physically and emotionally there are times when we just don't seem to be getting anywhere.

The people of Israel found themselves in a 40 year holding pattern after they grumbled and disobeyed God. During those 40 years they ate the same food, wore the same clothes, circled the same wilderness. And during those 40 years God provided for them, taught them lessons and held them accountable for their attitudes and behaviors.

The story of the Israelites in the wilderness is the sort of Old Testament event that is never forgotten. The Psalms, Prophets, Gospels, and several New Testament letters reference the lessons learned from the wilderness wanderings. Later God fulfilled every promise he made to his people in giving them victory in the land of promise. They defeated their enemies in Canaan, they were able to cultivate the soil, make new clothes and live in more permanent dwellings. Eventually they learned that the wilderness wasn't forever, even though it probably felt that way for the two million people moving through the desert with nothing but manna to eat and dreams of a future home.

So can you withdraw today? Can you steal away for an hour, half an hour, even 10 minutes? Can you find a moment to kneel before God's presence, pour out your heart to him, ask him for clarity and make a list of any nudges toward action you sense while in his presence?

When I seem to be in a wilderness season, it isn't always because of my complaining or my bad choices. Sometimes it's my health, or circumstances or a moment in life that ushers in a time that feels like a wilderness. In the book of Numbers the author talks a lot about the wilderness. So my interest was perked again a few days ago as I came across this verse in the Luke 5:16: "Jesus often withdrew to the wilderness for prayer."

It reminded me that the wilderness is often a place of preparation. The Israelites took a census and got organized during their time in the wilderness. John the Baptist was a voice crying out from the wilderness. Jesus spent 40 days fasting in the wilderness before beginning his public ministry. Christ healed and taught people, but often withdrew to the wilderness for prayer and refreshment.

When I feel stuck in a routine, where the landscape around me never seems to change and I seem to be wandering in a wilderness, I can be proactive in prayer as I experience the preparation God intends for the next thing He will reveal to me.

- If we feel unsatisfied or unsure of our purpose, withdraw and pray.
- If we are weary and tired but uninspired, withdraw and pray.
- If we know God has big things ahead for us, withdraw and pray. So can you withdraw today? Can you steal away for an hour, half an hour, even 10 minutes? Can you find a moment to kneel before God's presence, pour out your heart to him, ask him for clarity and make a list of any nudges toward action you sense while in his presence?

Jesus will teach us in the wilderness, but we need to follow his example and withdraw from our life so that we can pray – all so we'll be prepared for what God has in store for us next!



SAVE THE DATE: **COUPLE'S RETREAT** [MARCH 10 - 12]

We live in an extraordinarily busy time. Making time for things that are really important is incredibly difficult to do. It's clear that there's always more to do than we have time for. At some stage, something or someone is going to get overlooked. Unfortunately, that someone is often the one that we care about more than anyone else in the world... our spouse!

The church has been working on ways to help the congregation find the time to pay attention to those things that are important to us (like family and faith). In an effort to offer a practical solution, we are offering a Couples Retreat in 2017.

This is NOT a marriage retreat! While it's our prayer that our marriages would be strengthened by a weekend where we have the time to focus on our relationships with our spouses and God, we will NOT have soul-baring testimonies of marital difficulty. Couples WILL have time to (both formally and informally) talk about how and why they originally got together and the role that God plays in their individual marriages.

For many of us, this retreat may be the first time (in a long time) that we've been able to focus on our marriage and our faith. On the weekend of March 10, 2017, PPC couples will have the opportunity to officially spend some time together. The retreat will take place at the Hampton Inn & Suites in Corolla, NC (about 90 minutes from the church).



We will gather on Friday evening after dinner for a time of fellowship. On Saturday morning, we'll have a discussion about how and why we initially got together. On Saturday afternoon, we'll talk a bit about the role that God should be playing in our relationships. On Sunday morning, we'll have a time of worship. During the rest of the weekend, couples are on their own to enjoy meals, have some undisturbed conversations, take a long walk, rest, relax or casually read a book.

Pastor Billy and Loretta will lead the retreat. The cost of the retreat will be around \$200 per couple for the weekend. We can be very flexible with payment terms. Let Pastor Billy know if the church can help in that area.

Should you have any questions, please contact Pastor Billy Ricketts at 289-9763 or "familylife@provpres.org."

*Valentine's Dinner
at Providence*



Saturday, February 11, 2017
6:00 pm

Tickets on Sale Now!

\$12.50/person

Your Choice of:

*Teriyaki Glazed Salmon topped with
mango salsa
or*

*Herb-Encrusted Beef Tenderloin
served au jus*

SESSION

The Session met on Monday evening, January 23rd, and concluded the following business:

1. Approved the PC (USA) Annual Statistical Report and directed that it be published to the congregation. The report can be found on the Session bulletin board outside the Media Room #103-104.
2. Approved an addendum to Pastor Billy Ricketts' contract that will enable him to serve as the moderator of the Presbytery's Commission on Ministry.
3. Approved the use of Max Lucado's "He Chose the Nails" as the five-week Lenten study for middle/high school through adult Sunday school classes, beginning March 5th.

MISSION MATTERS YOUTH GROUP

The Mission Matters middle/high group designed a series of Christmas cards for several purposes (Blankets for the Homeless gift cards, fund-raising cards, military personnel, shut-ins, etc.) before Advent. These cards were available in the Fellowship Hall following worship on every Sunday in Advent. Ultimately, they raised \$1,038!

Mission Matters had previously made the decision to fund Blankets for the Homeless with the money that was raised. On the first week of January, B4TH received their check and were extremely grateful (as their needs were many with snowy and cold weather).

Mission Matters planned January ice skating trip was cancelled - as was everything during this time based on the snow storm. On February 5, (4) students and (4) adult mentors will be taking the church bus to the B4TH warehouse; loading children's clothing; and distributing to families who are temporarily housed in hotels. This is one of the events that our Mission Matters group finds the most appealing!

PROVIDENCE WOMEN

Calling all Women...

Please join us for our Mission Project Day, Saturday, Feb 4th, from 9:00 - 3:00 pm. We have also invited women from other churches to join us. It is always a great way to fellowship and share our projects we created for some great missions. Please sign up on the bulletin board, for a head count for lunch, which is included. Our projects will include sewing pillowcase dresses, crochet /knitting baby hats & cards for shut-in's & college students. If you have items to help, such as crochet or knitting needles, yarn or items to decorate cards, feel free to bring them.

We will also be putting together Health Kits for the Migrant Workers. The following items will be needed and can be dropped off in the two bins marked Health kits in the hallway under the Mission Bulletin Board or bring with you on Feb 4th.

Each kit contains:

1 hand towel	1 toothbrush
1 washcloth	1 tube of toothpaste
1 comb	6 Band-aids
1 bath size bar of soap	

As a suggestion, you could donate a complete health kit (this way we don't get 50 bars of soap and no hand towels). Whatever you decide to bring, it is much appreciated and we will make it work to ensure we have complete health kits. Your generosity will be greatly appreciated.

Upcoming Events:

Italian Dinner - March 25, 2017

Attention: High School Seniors

Providence Presbyterian
College Scholarship
Application Forms
are available in the office or
online at [www.provpres.org/
resources/forms](http://www.provpres.org/resources/forms).

Scholarship Application
deadline is April 15, 2017

NEWSLETTER INFORMATION

Please e-mail newsletter items
no later than the 15th of each month
for the following month's edition to:
office@provpres.org

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Church Staff

Pastor	Rev. Jeffrey S. Bell
Pastor of Family Life Ministries	Pastor Billy Ricketts
Director of Music	Valetta Fellenbaum
Organist	John Dixon
Administrative Assistant	Lisa Nixon
Nursery Supervisor	Michelle Wofford
Treasurer	Carolyn Knowles
Financial Secretary	Ted Salter
Sextons	Gus and Mary Ann Villies

The Session

Moderator: Rev. Jeffrey S. Bell • Clerk of Session: Gary Reese

Administration

*Mike Schroeder, Glynn
Rogers, Dianne Stockmeier

Christian Education

*Karen Moore, Carol Hickman

Congregational Care

*Don Singletary, Ray Maxwell

Fellowship

*Susan Ayers, Ray Hall

Mission/Outreach/Evangelism

*Cecilia Daley

Property

*George Fitzgerald,
Riley Hensly

Worship

*Rich Lindgren,
Cathy Polychroni

*committee chair

PROVIDENCE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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