

# First Presbyterian Church of Nitro



Spring  
2022  
Newsletter



## IN THIS ISSUE:

### Pastor's Note

Words from the Pastor

### Christian Education

Sunday School Class Updates & Info.

### Announcements

Important Events, Dates, etc.

### Articles & Reflections

Enrichment

### Milestones & Celebrations!

Birthdays, anniversaries, and more...

### Fun and Games

Games & Comics to bring joy



Dear Members and Friends of Nitro First Presby,

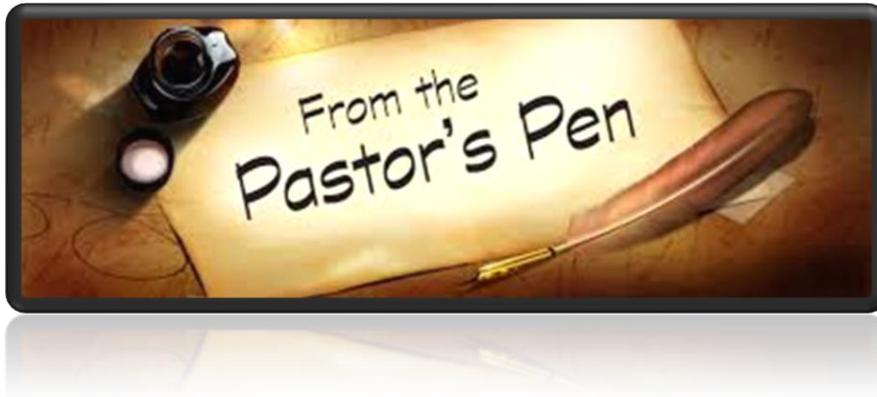
A few weeks ago I read an article entitled “What time is it?” by Christine Chakoian. It struck me as being very appropriate to not only this time in the flow of time but also to this season of Lent. I’d like to share portions of it with you, along with a few of my reflections on it.

This year (like last!) feels much different. On the downside, it feels like there is precious little we have control over. The rollercoaster ride of COVID’s rise and fall and rise again has left many of us feeling disheartened and passive: why bother making plans when they can change in a heartbeat? On the upside, we are by necessity more agile and adaptive!

Never before have the words of Ecclesiastes 3 been more meaningful to me: For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven...

The question all of us face is this: what is suitable for *this* time? It is true for our personal lives, and for our parishes as well.... [The questions we’ve struggled with around COVID have] pressed us to examine even more of what we used to take for granted. What used to be “usual and customary,” whether sacred worship traditions or budgeting and repairs, isn’t obvious. And perhaps, ironically, that is a gift. Questions we *could not dare to ask* have space now.

What are the questions we need to be asking ourselves today? What questions about what is suitable for this time do I need to ask myself? What questions about my life, my discipleship, my spiritual growth are the ones I need to ponder right now? Perhaps one of the most basic questions might be “Am I becoming a mature Christian?” That raises an even more basic question, “What does a mature Christian look like?” That is the question we will be exploring together during our worship service in Lent. In addition to this, you will find elsewhere in this newsletter the special opportunities for worship and prayer that we are offering during the Lenten season.



Along the same lines, what are the questions we need to be asking ourselves as a congregation? Christine suggests the following:

Is it time to face the truth of our shrinking membership – ...to reduce our staff ... to sell our building ... to merge with another church, or close altogether? Is it time to recalibrate our programs – to set down the expectation of Lenten studies ... to merge Sunday School classes ... to let go of retreats? Is it time to question how we do mission – ... to embrace new mission partners ... to seek to know our neighbors?

Questions like these will require our prayerful reflection and ongoing conversations. These will not be answered by a sermon series or a quick set of congregational gatherings. The truth is, COVID forced rapid changes upon us, but the world about us has been changing rapidly for many years. It isn't just COVID that is requiring us to re-think our priorities and how we do things. And Lent is a perfect opportunity to set aside extra time to be in prayer about what we are called to be and do today.

I pray that your Lenten season can be a time of growth in discipleship, of increasing maturity as a Christian, and of opening your heart and mind to whatever new ventures God is calling us to undertake.

Pastor Agnes



# SUNDAY SCHOOL

## Christian Education Committee Update February 20, 2022

This newsletter article provides an update on the recent activities of your Christian Education Committee, and previews future activity. The Adult Sunday School Class is currently in the middle of a DVD-based study, with accompanying study guide book, titled *If You Want to Walk on Water, You've Got to Get Out of the Boat* by John Ortberg. He invites us to consider the incredible potential that awaits us outside of our comfort zone. Out on the risky waters of faith, Jesus is waiting to meet us in ways that will change us forever, deepening our character and our trust in God. Peter may have been the first one out of the boat, but Jesus' invitation to walk on water is for all of us. Walking on water means facing our fears and choosing not to let fear have the last word; discovering and embracing the unique calling of God on our lives; and experiencing the power of God to accomplish what we would not be capable of doing on our own. As usual, we are having some great discussions as we work through this study and the related Bible scripture. We are currently one-third of the way through the six-session study and will likely take another 10 weeks or so to complete it. Please join us in person on Sunday mornings from 9:30 to 10:30am.

Lynne Kibler has continued teaching the Children's Sunday School Class. We welcome all kids, grandkids, neighborhood kids, etc., who may attend the class; and for you adults bringing the children, please come join our Adult class on Sundays!

We would still like to divide the older and younger kids for Sunday School and are in need of an additional teacher. If you are interested and feel called to assume this role, please contact me.

That concludes this update on Christian Education, and I again ask you to please become more involved with our activities. We would love to have you become a part of our educational efforts and learn with us!



**Baby Hugo is home  
from the hospital  
after 12 weeks and 4  
days.  
Praise God!!!**



**Lytton Pitzer  
&  
Lucy Smith  
were inducted into  
the National  
Junior Honor  
Society.**

**Nolan Criner made  
first chair in All  
County Band.**



# Church Lenten Events

- **Ash Wednesday Service (3-2)**

7:00 pm

- **Palm Sunday (4-10)**

Cantata

- **Maundy Thursday Service (4-14)**

7:00 pm

- **Good Friday Service**

7:00 p.m. Joint service with

St. Albans First, new pastor

Mark Boyd

- **Easter**

6:30 am Sunrise Service at

Memorial Park across the street

Breakfast at 7:00 a.m.

Flowering of the Cross on Easter Sunday

at 9:30 a.m. by Children

No Sunday School



# THE SEASON OF LENT

The season of Lent is a time of reflection and for asking for forgiveness in preparation to celebrate Jesus' Resurrection at Easter. Many people give up something for Lent. One suggestion might be to give up old hurts and grudges. Wise words from Max Lucado, "Forgiveness is unlocking the door to set someone free and realizing that you were the prisoner". What are you giving up for Lent? Maybe you could give up some of your time to spend with God in prayer or Bible study. Perhaps you could give more of yourself to help those in need or give up greed, anger, pettiness or jealousy. Have you extended the hand of friendship to someone who is lonely? Have you taken Christ's message to a non-believer? Have you spoken words of love to someone who has been hurt by "religion"?

Why do we give something up for Lent? It is a sign of sacrifice and to test your self-discipline. Christians believe that this is to represent Jesus Christ's sacrifice when he went into the desert to pray and fast for forty days before dying on the cross. While Jesus was there, Satan tempted him to turn away from God and worship him instead, but Jesus refused to, which is why people might give something up, in order to test their own self-discipline.

If you don't want to give something up for Lent, try adding something worthwhile on to your daily schedule. Perhaps you could pray more, read the Bible or take advantage of more church services. Join a Bible study, Sunday school class or attend more Sunday worship services. Work on your relationship with God which is a good thing anytime of the year.





One day, a man went to visit a church. He got there early, parked his car, and got out. Another car pulled up and the driver got out and said, "I always park there! You took my place!" The visitor went inside for Sunday School, found an empty seat and sat down. A young lady from the church approached him and stated, "That's my seat! You took my place!" The visitor was somewhat distressed by this rude welcome but said nothing. After Sunday School, the visitor went into the sanctuary and sat down. Another member walked up to him and said, "That's where I always sit! You took my place!" The visitor was even more troubled by this treatment, but still said nothing. Later, as the congregation was praying for Christ to dwell among them, the visitor stood up, and his appearance began to change. Horrible scars became visible on his hands and his sandaled feet. Someone from the congregation noticed Him and called out, "What happened to you?" The Visitor replied, as His hat became a crown of thorns and a tear fell from His eye, "I took your place."

Reprinted from an old newsletter, originally from the Internet

## A TALE OF TWO KINGS

The comparison of an earthly king  
and a heavenly king

By Lynne Kibler



When my daughter was nine years old, we made a trip to the Holy Land. We visited Greece, Israel and Egypt. While in Egypt, we visited the Great Pyramid of Cheops. After that trip I began to think about the importance that the Egyptian pharaohs gave to burial.

Cheops was the Pharaoh of Egypt. He is remembered most for building his burial tomb, the Great Pyramid of Giza. It is now known as one of the Seven Wonders of the World. He ruled Egypt for twenty-three years, had multiple wives and many sons. He was rich beyond compare. As Pharaoh, he was always checking to see how the work was progressing on his tomb. Although Cheops built massive monuments, he was not remembered warmly by his people. Some accounts say that slaves were forced to work on his tomb. Others say that Egyptians would gladly leave their own fields, crops, and families to come work on his great pyramid. Their labor on the pyramid was an act of worship. Regardless of which theory is correct, over 100,000 men worked on Cheops's tomb and it took over twenty years to build.

Unlike Cheops, we are unsure about the exact location of Jesus' tomb. Some believe it is located in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in the city of Jerusalem. Others say the burial site is a garden tomb outside of the city. There are no statues, no markers, and no burial artifacts to indicate where Jesus' tomb may be. We do know that Jesus was buried in a tomb, borrowed at the time of His death. Cheops with all of his riches was a royal king—the mighty King of Egypt. He was also the first Egyptian king to be mummified; so concerned was he about the afterlife. He spent a great deal of time, wealth and energy in readying his eternal resting place, thus preparing for what was to come next. There were over 100 life-sized statues of him made and placed in the pyramid. In the building of his tomb, he had engineers construct the pyramid in such a massive size and complex style to discourage grave robbers from looting the riches buried with him. Even though he went through a lot of trouble to hide his body from looters, his tomb was robbed and his mummy stolen. Yet we know which tomb was his by the marking on the walls which indicate his burial place. In this way, Cheops is able to live forever.

When Jesus was buried, his body was wrapped in burial cloths, nothing else. Even His robe had been taken away as soldiers cast lots for it. Yet the Roman guards were so worried that Jesus' body might be removed that they sealed His tomb with a great stone and posted a guard. Jesus was mockingly called "King of the Jews." He was given a crown of thorns, unlike Cheops who wore a golden crown. He was charged with aspiring to be the "King of the Jews" and put to death.

Jesus spent His time preparing and getting us ready for our everlasting home—heaven. His ministry was all about those He loved. He suffered ridicule, pain, and sorrow so that we might have life and have it more abundantly. Jesus loved us so much that he gave His very life willingly so that we might live forever. However, Cheops's reign was all about himself. He caused the suffering of thousands and ruled Egypt as a feared tyrant. He was obsessed with his own death.

In conclusion, there were several ways in which we can make comparisons between the lives and works of Cheops and Jesus. At the height of Jesus' ministry, He attracted crowds numbering in the thousands. Many followed Him, not particularly for what He had to say, but rather what He could do for them. He fed and healed them and showed them the way to a love-centered life. His concern was not for His own life but for theirs. Cheops also attracted thousands; but that was to work on his tomb. Building his tomb was all about what these men could do for him. He may have fed them, but his main concern was not for them, but for himself. Cheops was worshipped by some and hated by others, as was Jesus. There were followers of Jesus who came to understand that He was the Son of God. Yet the minds and hearts of others were closed to Him. In the end, Jesus' name and message is known to mankind. The Great Pyramid is recognized by mankind—but not the man, Cheops. I am thankful today that I know Jesus and that He lived and died for me that I might live with Him forever.

## March

- 4 Susie Humphreys
- 6 Elias Conner Criner
- 22 Dana Angell
- 24 Nolan Richard Criner
- 25 Jim Westlund

## APRIL

- 6 Peggy Dawson  
Jessica Dixon
- 18 Lytton Douglas Pitzer
- 21 Iris Marie Criner
- 29 Megan Ankers

## MAY

- 2 Carmen Kostelansky
- 3 Penney Ryan
- 8 Sandy Gray
- 10 Shelley Kostelansky
- 13 James Hamilton
- 14 Ruth Gibson  
Austin Goff  
Nancy Gilmore

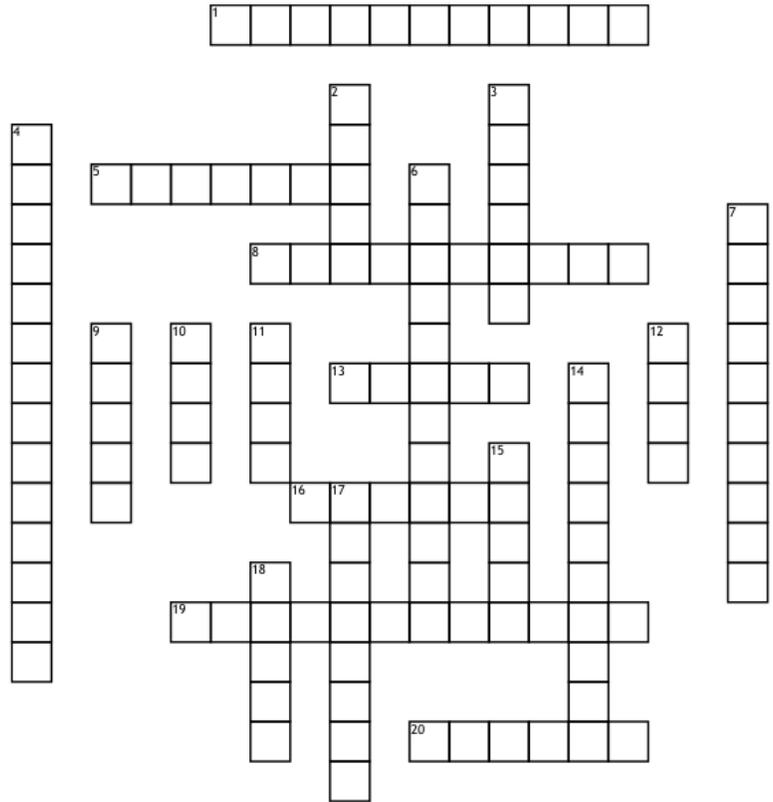


**MAY**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Travis and Beth Criner**  
**&**  
**14<sup>th</sup> Jon and Anessa Pitzer**

# Lenten Season



\*Solutions on NEXT page\*



### Across

1. What comes after Lent (2 words no space)
5. What is often practiced by individuals during the Lenten Season?
8. Holy week begins with? (2 words no space)
13. How many Days are observed in Lent? (Not including Sundays)
16. Lent is "a time to reflect upon baptism, a time for rebirth and renewal in preparation for the celebration of \_\_\_\_\_."
19. What is the first day of Lent? (2 words no spaces)
20. What is the "Color" of the Lent Season?

### Down

2. The day before Easter is called Easter \_\_\_\_\_
3. The word Lent means \_\_\_\_\_.
4. On this night Jesus instituted "a memorial" of his Passion in the Lord's Supper. (2 words no space)
6. Easter is the day acknowledging Christ's \_\_\_\_\_ (2 words no space)
7. The day of Christ's Crucifixion. (2 words no space)
9. The color representing Good Friday is?

10. "Remember: You are \_\_\_\_\_ and to \_\_\_\_\_ you shall return" (one word)
11. Ashes come from \_\_\_\_\_(s) that were blessed on \_\_\_\_\_ Sunday the year before
12. Sundays are "in" Lent but not "of" it. How many are there?
14. Lent is the season of \_\_\_\_\_
15. What is Drawn on your forehead by Pastor on Ash Wednesday?
17. What word is not said during the Lenten Season?
18. The Triduum consists on \_\_\_\_\_ days.

## Lenten Word Search

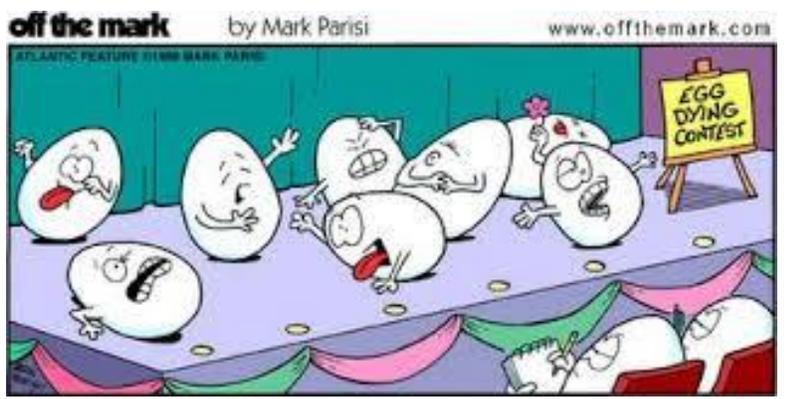
G	Y	P	R	E	P	A	R	E	F	E	S	V	E
R	K	S	F	E	C	I	F	I	R	C	A	S	F
I	D	C	S	I	H	O	L	Y	W	E	E	K	G
C	Y	N	N	E	P	U	R	P	L	E	S	T	O
C	P	P	S	I	N	T	E	S	N	N	S	N	O
P	E	N	A	N	C	E	E	O	O	F	F	R	D
N	R	L	P	O	I	H	V	I	N	I	E	R	F
O	F	L	G	R	S	I	T	I	I	S	G	I	R
E	O	F	S	A	A	A	R	G	G	H	I	O	I
R	U	C	H	I	T	Y	E	Y	I	R	R	G	D
E	G	T	I	S	S	I	E	R	R	V	O	N	A
C	R	O	S	S	D	S	G	R	I	A	I	F	Y
A	H	S	E	A	S	O	N	R	R	E	C	N	S
G	N	I	T	S	A	F	F	O	R	T	Y	S	G

- ASHES
- PENANCE
- GOOD FRIDAY
- GIVING
- CROSS
- FORTY
- PREPARE
- HOLY WEEK
- FORGIVENESS
- FISH
- PRAYER
- PURPLE
- SACRIFICE
- SEASON
- FASTING
- STATIONS



Facebook.com/FowlLanguageComics FowlLanguageComics.com ©Brian Gordon

# Word Search Solution



The LIGHT at the END of the TUNNEL.



# Crossword Solution

## Lenten Season

P A S S I O N T I D E

