

Steeple Chimes ♡ February, 2021

...Open With Care...

The little packet that fell out when you opened this letter must be opened with care

Inside there are ashes
Created from burning the palm fronds used in worship last Palm Sunday
This is the Sunday that moves us into Holy Week
This is the week in which we remember the passion and death of Jesus.
The ashes are a symbol of our mortality
Created from star dust we return to dust
Created from Love we return to Love
Created for abundant life we are held in God's life forever.
The ashes are a symbol of mourning for the harm we do
to one another, to the earth, to ourselves.
The ashes are a symbol of our sincere desire
to heal, to care, to love
more than we have.



Ash Wednesday Evening Prayer Service
Wednesday, February 17, 7:00 – 7:30 p.m.

We will gather on Zoom

Music • Scripture • Reflection • Prayer

**We will mark ourselves with ashes as we enter the season of Lent
We will welcome God to open our lives with care, love, and healing.**

Zoom Meeting id: 226 143 8121 Passcode: 3121

From the Pastor's study...

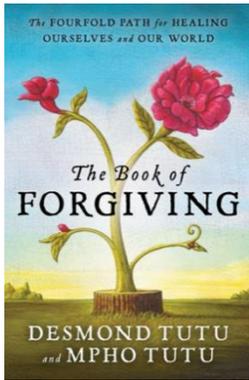
This month it will be a year since my mother died in the cold, dark days of February. Waves of grief still wash over me unexpectedly. I miss her. I have made a practice of remembering little things she did and said over the years and talking with my sibs about them. She used to make a contest of seeing who could run around our house the most times, barefoot, in the middle of winter when the snow lay deep on the yard. She ironed shoelaces.

I always feel like February is a month with two personalities. In stores the pink and red Valentine's cards and boxes of chocolates call us to celebrate love. It's cheery and fun. It makes me want to buy paper doilies and red construction paper and make my own love greetings for everyone in my life, and strangers on the street. *(over)*

And, February is the month we move into the season of Lent; remember that we are mortal; and, that we sin in both what we have done, and what we have not done (like not giving time, attention, monies to those in need).

None of us need to be reminded of our mortality or our failures. Many of us have lost loved ones over the last year. Around the world millions have died from COVID. We are suffering in our isolation and longing for life to get back to normal—whatever that will mean. We are weary of it all, and crabby, and impatient. It won't harm us to spend some time in Lent reflecting on ourselves and seeing the ways that we could grow beyond our self-interest into a greater capacity to love more fully. Life is short. God's love is endless and perfect. And free for the taking. Peace, *Pastor Renée*

Reading, Discussing & Practicing Forgiveness in Lent



The ODC Reading—Discussion Group will meet on Zoom for five weeks during February and March, Thursday evenings, from 7:00-8:30 p.m. We will talk about and practice forgiveness using *The Book of Forgiving: The Fourfold Path for Healing Ourselves and Our World*. Authors Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Nobel Peace Prize winner and Chair of South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, along with his daughter, Reverend Mpho Tutu, offer this manual on the art of forgiveness which includes exercises/practices to engage in. They remind us that we all need to forgive and be forgiven in order for healing and transformation to happen in us and in our relationships.

If you asked anyone what they thought was going to happen to South Africa after apartheid, almost universally it was predicted that the country would be devastated by a comprehensive bloodbath. Yet, instead of revenge and retribution, this new nation chose to tread the difficult path of confession, forgiveness, and reconciliation. Copies of the book are available in the Church Office. Call or e-mail ahead for pick-up: 845-338-6759; info@olddutchchurch.org. You can also purchase it as an e-book. Read on your own. Join as you are able for one, two, three...or all the weeks. Reading/Discussion Plan:

February 25 pp. 1-43
March 4 pp. 45-92
March 11 pp. 93-143

March 18 pp. 145-194
March 25 pp. 195-225

Honoring Native Americans Slaughtered in the 1643 Pavonia Massacre



February 26 at 7:00 p.m., we will remember the Pavonia Massacre in which Dutch soldiers attacked a Native American settlement in Northern New Jersey, killing innocent women and children. Chief Vincent Mann, the Turtle Clan Chief of the Ramapough Lenape Nation will be the featured speaker. He will be joined by Dr. Evan Pritchard, Etoaqua, and others from Neetopk Keetopk, and Nick and Linda Miles from the Association of Native Americans in the Hudson Valley. Some of us from Old Dutch will also speak. This event is part of a process begun between the Old Dutch Church and Native Americans over ten years ago in which we have committed to remember, speak truth, reconcile, and heal, together. The event will take place on Zoom. Zoom Meeting id: 837 0378 1887 Passcode: 004231