

# MONROE COMMUNITY NEWS

## Pastor Earl's Letter

Wednesday, March 1st of this year was known as Ash Wednesday, marking the beginning of **Lent** which is a season in the Christian Year where Christians focus on prayer, repentance and fasting to draw closer to God. Excluding Sundays, **Lent** takes place forty days before Easter. The word **Lent** in many languages means "forty" which is symbolic of the time that Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. He fasted and prayed for forty days and forty nights and found clarity and strength to resist temptation and soon afterwards He was ready to begin His ministry. (Matthew 4:1-11)

For the churches that hold an Ash Wednesday Service, in the Jewish and Christian history, ashes are a sign of mortality and repentance. Mortality because we all die and our bodies eventually decompose and we become dust, dirt, and ash. Repentance because long ago when people felt remorse for their sin, they would put ashes on their head and wear a sackcloth to remind them that without repentance, sin leads to death of the Spirit or separation from God. So this was their way of confessing their sins and asking for forgiveness. We get the ashes for the Ash Wednesday Service by saving the palms from the Palm Sunday Service the year before, burning them and then mixing them with a little oil. At the Ash Wednesday Service, Clergy will use these ashes by dipping his/her finger into the mixture of ash and oil, and then will make a small symbol of the cross on one's forehead by smudging the ashes.

Many Theologians speculate that Christ needed to get away from His family, friends and His daily routine in order to draw closer to God as He searched for direction and answers so that He could

### HIGHLIGHTS THIS ISSUE

Easter Egg Hunt	2
Library Story Hour	2
Ashton Needs Mail!	2
Fire Dept Breakfast	2
Town Meeting Update	3
Quarter Auction	4
Fast Squad Dance	4

see things more clearly. As Christians, **Lent** serves as a great time to return to God by repenting, praying, fasting and changing one's lifestyle while letting God change your heart. Some Christians will fast during **Lent** without food for as long as they can while others will fast by giving up the things that distract them from God such as chocolate, soft drinks, alcohol, tea, coffee, cigarettes or meat as a way to purify their bodies and lives. Others skip one meal a day and use that time to pray to God instead as prayer draws us closer to God.

So consider what it is that you need to let go of that perhaps clutters your life in terms of what you eat, wear and do in order to focus more on God. Seize this opportunity as well in taking something on for Christ like collecting food for our food pantry, volunteering in your community, helping a stranger or a friend--for in serving others we are serving God. Forgive someone who perhaps doesn't deserve it, and create some extra quiet time to go deeper into the Bible.

May this season of **Lent** draw you closer to God, and may the witness of our lives and profession of our faith help to spread the Gospel and build up the church.

Pastor Earl

## Upcoming Church Events

Feel free to join friends and neighbors at any of these Lenten Soup & Sandwich Suppers. All take place from 5-6 PM, and are free:

- † March 5<sup>th</sup>, St. Luke's Episcopal Church, Woodsville, NH
- † March 12<sup>th</sup>, Groton United Methodist Church, Groton, VT
- † March 19<sup>th</sup>, South Ryegate Presbyterian Church, South Ryegate, VT
- † March 26<sup>th</sup>, Haverhill Congregational Church, Haverhill NH
- † April 2<sup>nd</sup>, Bath Congregational Church, Bath NH



And don't forget the annual **Easter Egg Hunt!** The fun will be on Saturday, April 15<sup>th</sup>, at Monroe Town Hall, from 1-3 PM. Buddy the Clown will join us for extra fun!



Easter Sunday (April 16<sup>th</sup>) Sunrise service will be at 7 AM, regular service at 9:30 AM.



## Library News

People have enjoyed Kim's creations in the library, so you can now see how to do them for yourself! Come to **"Upcycled Book Art"** on **Friday, March 17<sup>th</sup>, at 6 PM.** The supplies are provided – you bring your own creativity, and any refreshments you want.



Also, please join us for Pre-school Story Hour! Join Kim in stories, songs and crafts on alternating Tuesday and Saturday mornings from 9-10 AM. Here's the March schedule:

Sat, March 11 <sup>th</sup> :	Dr. Seuss
Tues, March 14 <sup>th</sup> :	St. Patrick's Day
Sat, March 25 <sup>th</sup> :	Night Animals
Tues, March 28 <sup>th</sup> :	Zoo

Jessica would like to remind everyone the Library will be closed the evening of March 14<sup>th</sup> due to Town Meeting. Also, thank you to everyone who came to Becky's retirement reception!

**Fire Department Breakfast on Sunday, April 2<sup>nd</sup>, 7:30 – 10 AM at Monroe Town Hall. Cost is by donation.**



## Join the Band!

The Summertime Marching Band of NH and VT is accepting new members as we start practicing for our third year of parades. All band instruments are welcome. Members range from age 10 to over 70! We recently gained 8 new members, so now is a perfect time to join us! We choose easy to learn songs to keep things fun for everyone. Practices are once a month on Sunday evenings. Our next practice is Sunday, March 12<sup>th</sup>, from 6-7:30 PM at the Monroe Town Hall. For more info, call Mary Choate at 603-638-4903, or see our [FB page](#) for photos and videos.

## Please Write to Ashton!

Glenn and Sandy Wagner's son, Ashton, has just been deployed to Iraq, and they are asking for cards and notes from home to let him know he is in our prayers. You may write him at:

Spc Wagner, Ashton R.  
Charlie Battery/2-82 ra, 3ABCT, 1CD  
APO, AE 09330

We know the thoughts and prayers of the entire town are with Ashton, his family, and indeed, all of our servicemen and women. We can never thank them enough for their service.

## Town & School News

A reminder from Marilyn to please get your dog(s) licensed. Ryegate Clinic is holding their rabies clinic on Thursday, March 23<sup>rd</sup>, and Marilyn will be there to handle paperwork. The clinic runs from 6 PM to 7 PM, no appointment is necessary. Rabies shots are \$20. Ryegate will also have distemper shots available for both dogs and cats (dogs \$30, cats \$24.)

The Town Clerk's office will be closed all day Town Meeting day, March 14th. Voting will be held at Town Hall from noon to 6 PM. You may register to vote on that day. Town Meeting starts at 7 PM (town goes first this year, followed by the school meeting.)

Here are names of folks who are running for office for Town positions:

(Write-ins are always available)

Moderator: Denis Ward

Selectboard: Dan Powers

Treasurer: Monica Jaynes

Library Trustee: Jeanne Ward

Trustee of Trust Fund: Write-ins needed

Sexton, Village: Larry Thomas

Sexton, N. Monroe: Todd Webster

Board of Adjustment: Robert DiMatties

Planning Board: (Need 2) Rocky Bunnell, Robert DiMatties

Budget Committee: (Need 4) P. J. Blanchard, Robert DiMatties, Cindy Frazer

And for School positions:

Moderator: Denis Ward

District Clerk: Betty Ward or Kim Ward

Treasurer: Stephanie Morris

School Board: (Need 2) Robert Martin, Greg Collins, Leilani Provencal

## QUARTER AUCTION

The Monroe School 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Class is hosting a fundraiser on March 19<sup>th</sup> at Town Hall, beginning at 2 PM. What is a quarter auction, you ask? (Well, we asked!) Upon arriving, you purchase one or more numbered paddles for \$5 each. Items for bid are put up for 1-6 quarters. If you wish to bid, you put the correct # of quarters in the cup on the table and hold up your paddle. If the auctioneer picks your paddle from the basket, you win a great prize for anywhere from 25 cents to \$1.50. There will also be vendors there like Tupperware, Pampered Chef, Norwex, Scentsy, etc. with items for sale. Some of the prizes you will be bidding on include four 1-day Park Hopper passes for Disneyworld, a \$50 WalMart gift card, and more.

## FAST SQUAD DANCE

The FAST Squad will be hosting a spring dance on April 8<sup>th</sup>, from 8 PM to midnight at the Monroe Town Hall.



The band is SideShow, tickets are still \$10, and may be purchased from Paul's Whistle Stop in McIndoe Falls or from Maynard Farr at 638-2612 (or mfarr30@roadrunner.com).

Doors open at 7 PM. Tickets will not be available at the door – please be sure to get yours ahead of time so you are not disappointed! 21+, BYOB.

**No, This isn't Junk Mail!**  
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