

# Spire

## Barre Congregational Church, UCC

Pastor – Margaret Keyser

Organist – Deborah Page

Choir Director – Karla Peterson

Sexton – Ann Clark

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# 2024

### ***A Message from Pastor Margaret...***

#### ***Lessons from Traveling in the Snow!***

On my way home from church on Sunday, I quickly realized how out of shape I am driving in the snow. After church I noticed that the snow had begun to stick to the ground, and so I rushed to get on the road before it became too difficult for me to drive. I reminded myself to take a slow and steady approach and carefully gave way to those who were on a higher speed than my 30/35 mph journey! It did not help to see a car that slid off the road and was surrounded by police vehicles! I continued my slow and steady pace and arrived home approximately forty minutes later than usual, with great relief and the need for a hot cup of tea! I wonder whether anyone can relate to this experience, or am I still, after 25 years, not used to the New England way of handling these wintery road conditions? We are still in the middle of winter, and I believe I will likely be confronted with similar experiences but hope to remember to keep it slow and steady and be patient!

The phrase I kept in my head throughout that trip was to be slow and steady. Stay focused and do not fear, I remember telling myself. This experience reminded me how in life, we encounter many situations that require us to take it slow, to be patient and keep it steady. We make plans and put everything together to implement our plans, and we hope and pray that everything will be successful. Occasionally, when something goes wrong, or unforeseen circumstances and delays occur, we struggle to manage and cope with those changes.

Perhaps slowing ourselves down a little bit might also help us find a little more peace inside. It might also give us the opportunity to get to know one another better while we wait for the bus or train, or plane. Our plans may not always fall into the place at the exact time, but maybe we need one another more, or just maybe a little prayer and the help of God in those circumstances to try and work things out.

This lesson reminded me of the importance of patiently walking with God, and listening to God's council as we do the work of God, recognizing that the road itself is not always smooth and steady, that relationships aren't always the easiest to manage, and that the work we do does not always have the resources to accomplish the tasks. Walking with God gives us the opportunity to slow down and wait for God's answer and guidance. While we may be worried and concerned, God is always steady, and so, we have the incredible opportunity to incorporate into our lives and church activities those special moments where we bring all our concerns to God, trusting in silence and on a slippery road, that the steady voice of God will come to us.

I was aware that the phrase in my head, go slowly and steady was not the only reason why I felt more relaxed on the road. I trusted God in those moments to be with me, and to find the calm I needed to remain focused and not let fear overwhelm me. May God help us in bringing those unsteady feelings and circumstances in our lives to God and help us to wait for the answer and direction as we embark on this new year, 2024.

Blessings to all of you.

*Pastor Margaret Keyser*

**Those in the Nursing Homes, Asst. Living, Shut-ins, & those living far from us  
They would love to receive a visit, a note, a card, or a call.....**

***Please let us know if there is anyone you know of that needs a visit, a call or our prayers! Please call  
the church office, 978-355-4041 or email, barrechurch@gmail.com.***

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**OUR PRAYERS FOR THE  
COMMUNITY**

- Our Police, Fire & Emergency Personnel
- The Barre Food Pantry
- The Drug Response Coalition
- AA Groups
- Girl Scouts
- Boy Scouts
- Students, parents and caregivers of the Quabbin School District

**MILITARY SERVICE**

Those Friends and Members who serve our Community

*“God has created each of us,  
calls us by a special name,  
and says to us:  
You are precious in my eyes.”*

## **CHURCH COUNCIL & COMMITTEE CHAIR**

**Church Council**  
**Sunday, February 11, 2024**  
**11:00 AM**

In Fellowship Hall

Please let Sue Musnicki or Wendy Isgro who the Chair Person is for your committee. So email reminders can be sent out each month to your committee representative

### **COMMUNITY FRIENDSHIP** **DRIVE—THRU SUPPER**

**Hot Meatball Sandwich**  
**Chips, beverage, & dessert**  
**Thursday, February 15, 2024**  
**Pick -up 5:30 pm—6:30 pm**

This is the same day as the Food Pantry Distribution. Please don't forget the Food Pantry, the Pantry always could use donations of canned items, personal care items, pasta, pasta sauce.

### **CHOIR**

Lent begins February 14th! Please consider joining us to add some special music to our church services. The end of March has Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday and Easter. Plans are being made and we would really like you to come on Tuesday night at 7pm in the sanctuary to "make a joyful noise unto the Lord!"

*Deb Page and Karla Peterson*

## **COOPERATION**

The following article was shared with me, from Deb Page who received this from her Dad's priest in Connecticut. This is only excerpts from the article. I thought it was worth sharing with you:

As you enter church this weekend, you'll notice most of the Christmas decor is put away and we are back in the Ordinary Season of the liturgical year. We need to focus on some of the "ordinary" events of life and allow ourselves to cooperate with God to make them extra-ordinary. Like containers of water becoming wine, God can make the impossible possible. He just wants our hearts and souls to cooperate. Let's make it a goal, call it a resolution, to cooperate more with God's love and grace this year. We can cooperate with God by cooperating with one another. Accept the challenges to go out of your comfort zone to share your gifts and talents with our church family and the greater community as well. Wouldn't it be nice to see a growth in participation in our ministries, especially Church Committee, Pastor Parish, Stewardship and Nominations? If more of us do just a little bit, then nobody gets stuck with doing everything. I believe its called cooperation.

If you're interested please see or leave a message for Wendy Isgro and she will get it to the appropriate person.

(Taken from Fr. Joe's message from Sacred Heart Church, Suffield, CT)

## **Drive Thru Church Dinner**

### **Chicken Parmigiana**

Pasta, Salad & Dessert

Saturday, February 10, 2024

\$14.00 for Adults \$5.00 for Children

For reservations, please call Lisa Holloway  
or the church office 978-355-4041

*Church participation is greatly appreciated.*

*This is a fundraiser for our church.*



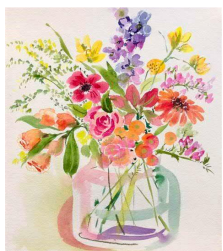
## **CHRISTIAN EDUCATION**

Sunday School continues after the Time with Children. Join Toni Brown and Kendra King! Ann Clark and Charlie Page do activities with the Youth Group, normally the first and third Sundays of the month. The youth group continue to work along with Missions to collect non-perishable food items as well as personal items for the food bank.

*Deb Page*

## **FLOWER COMMITTEE**

Anyone interested in providing flowers or plants for a Sunday service, please reach out



Please watch for notices about Easter Plants during the coming weeks. Easter is March 31, 2024.

Thanks,  
Ann Clark, Beth Richard, Sue Musnicki

## **PLEDGING & DONATIONS**

You may pay your pledges or make a donation by Visiting: [www.barrechurch](http://www.barrechurch) by to enter your PayPal donation or you may mail it directly to:

Barre Congregational Church  
P.O. Box 936, Barre, MA 01005

## **LENT IS.....**

Lent is a **Christian season of spiritual preparation before Easter**. It begins on Ash Wednesday and lasts for 40 days, in imitation of Jesus Christ's fast in the wilderness. During Lent, many Christians observe a period of fasting, repentance, moderation, self-denial, and spiritual discipline. Lent is a period of preparation to celebrate the Lord's Resurrection at Easter. The word "Lent" comes from the Anglo Saxon word *lencten*, meaning "lengthen" and refers to the lengthening days of spring.

During the **Lenten season**, Christians observe various traditions and practices as a way of preparing their hearts and minds for Easter. Here are some common Lenten traditions:

**Fasting and Abstinence:** Lent is a period of **self-denial** and **spiritual discipline**. Many Christians choose to fast from certain foods or activities during this time. For example:

**Giving Up:** Some people give up specific things, such as **chocolate, sweets, or social media**, as a form of self-discipline and focus on Christ.

**Abstaining from Meat:** Traditionally, Catholics are asked to **fast and abstain from meat** on certain days during Lent.

**Ash Wednesday:** Lent begins on **Ash Wednesday**, which marks the start of the 40-day period. On this day, Christians attend church services where ashes are placed on their foreheads in the shape of a cross. This symbolizes our humanity, mortality, and the need for repentance.

**Prayer and Reflection:** Lent is a time for **deep reflection** on Jesus Christ's suffering, sacrifice, and resurrection. Christians engage in **prayer, Bible reading, and meditation** to draw closer to God.

**Almsgiving:** During Lent, Christians practice **generosity** by giving to those in need. This can include donating to charities, volunteering, or helping others in practical ways.

**Lenten Devotionals:** Many people use **devotional materials** specifically designed for Lent. These provide daily Scripture readings, reflections, and prayers to guide their spiritual journey.

**Stations of the Cross:** Christians participate in the **Stations of the Cross**, a series of 14 stations or images depicting Jesus' journey to the cross. This practice helps believers reflect on Christ's suffering and sacrifice.

**Lenten Meals:** Some families modify their meals during Lent. For example, they might have **simple, meatless meals** on Fridays as a reminder of Jesus' sacrifice.

**Lenten Symbols:** Symbols associated with Lent include the **cross, crown of thorns, and purple color** (representing penance and preparation).

Remember that Lent is a time of repentance, introspection, and spiritual growth.

*Taken from the UCC*

# FEBRUARY 2024



Love grows by sharing, You can only have More For yourself by giving it away to Others  
~ unknown

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				<b>1</b> 9-12 Wendy in office 11:00 Pastor Margaret Office <b>7:00 Deacons Meeting</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b> 7:00 AA
<b>4</b> <b>Fifth Sunday after Epiphany/ Communion</b> 9:30 Pastor Margaret preaching/ Communion/Sunday School/Youth Group	<b>5</b> 5:30-6:30 Girl Scouts	<b>6</b> 9-12 Wendy work at home <b>7-8 Choir Practice</b>	<b>7</b> 9-12 Wendy work at home	<b>8</b> 9-12 Wendy in office	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b> <b>5:00 Drive Thru Church Supper</b> 7:00 AA
<b>11</b> <b>Transfiguration Sunday</b> <b>8:30 Choir warm-up</b> 9:30 Service/Pastor Margaret preaching/ Sunday School <b>11:00 Church Council</b>	<b>12</b> 5:30-6:30 Girl Scouts	<b>13</b> 9-12 Wendy work at home <b>7-8 Choir Practice</b>	<b>14</b> 9-12 Wendy work at home 9-12 Food Pantry Distribution <b>7:00 Church Committee</b> ♥♥♥♥♥♥ <b>Ash Wednesday</b> †††††††† <b>Valentine's Day</b>	<b>15</b> 9-12 Wendy in office 5-7 Food Pantry Distribution <b>5:30-6:30 Community Friendship Supper Drive Thru</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b> 7:00 AA
<b>18</b> <b>First Sunday of Lent</b> 9:30 Service/ Pastor Margaret preaching/ Sunday School	<b>19</b> 5:30-6:30 Girl Scouts <b>President's Day</b>	<b>20</b> 9-12 Wendy work at home <b>7-8 Choir Practice</b>	<b>21</b> 9-12 Wendy work at home	<b>22</b> 9-12 Wendy in office 11:00 Pastor Margaret office	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> 7:00 AA
<b>25</b> <b>Second Sunday of Lent</b> <b>8:30 Choir warm-up</b> 9:30 Service/ Rev. Charlie Page, preaching/Sunday School	<b>26</b> 5:30-6:30 Girl Scouts	<b>27</b> 9-12 Wendy work at home <b>7-8 Choir Practice</b>	<b>28</b> 9-12 Wendy work at home	<b>29</b> 9-12 Wendy in office 11:00 Pastor Margaret office		

## Daily Lectionary Scripture References—January 2024

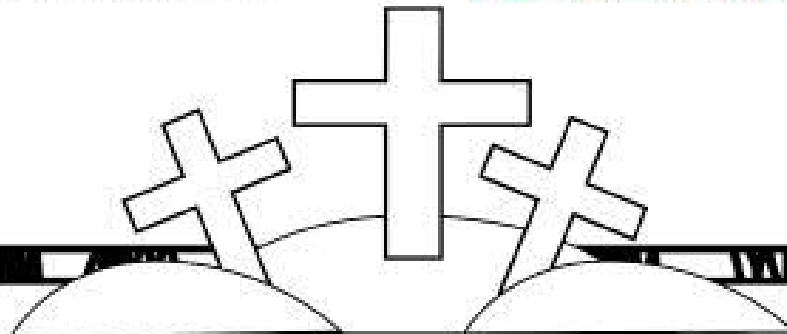
<b>Thursday, February 1, 2024</b>	Psalm 147:1-11, 20c; Proverbs 12:10-21; Galatians 5:2-15
<b>Friday, February 2, 2024</b>	<b>Presentation of the Lord</b> - Malachi 3:1-4; Psalm 84 <i>or Psalm 24:7-10</i> ; Hebrews 2:14-18; Luke 2:22-40
<b>Friday, February 2, 2024</b>	Psalm 147:1-11, 20c; Job 36:1-23; 1 Corinthians 9:1-16
<b>Saturday, February 3, 2024</b>	Psalm 147:1-11, 20c; Isaiah 46:1-13; Matthew 12:9-14
<b>Sunday, February 4, 2024</b>	<b>Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany</b> - Isaiah 40:21-31; Psalm 147:1-11, 20c; 1 Corinthians 9:16-23; Mark 1:29-39
<b>Monday, February 5, 2024</b>	Psalm 102:12-28; 2 Kings 4:8-17, 32-37; Acts 14:1-7
<b>Tuesday, February 6, 2024</b>	Psalm 102:12-28; 2 Kings 8:1-6; Acts 15:36-41
<b>Wednesday, February 7, 2024</b>	Psalm 102:12-28; Job 6:1-13; Mark 3:7-12
<b>Thursday, February 8, 2024</b>	Psalm 50:1-6; 1 Kings 11:26-40; 2 Corinthians 2:12-17
<b>Friday, February 9, 2024:</b>	Psalm 50:1-6; 1 Kings 14:1-18; 1 Timothy 1:12-20
<b>Saturday, February 10, 2024</b>	Psalm 50:1-6; 1 Kings 16:1-7; Luke 19:41-44
<b>Sunday, February 11, 2024:</b>	<b>Transfiguration Sunday</b> - 2 Kings 2:1-12; Psalm 50:1-6; 2 Corinthians 4:3-6; Mark 9:2-9
<b>Monday, February 12, 2024</b>	Psalm 110:1-4; Exodus 19:7-25; Hebrews 2:1-4
<b>Tuesday, February 13, 2024</b>	Psalm 110:1-4; Job 19:23-27; 1 Timothy 3:14-16
<b>Wednesday, February 14, 2024</b>	<b>Ash Wednesday</b> - Joel 2:1-2, 12-17 <i>or Isaiah 58:1-12</i> ; Psalm 51:1-17; 2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10; Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21
<b>Thursday, February 15, 2024</b>	Psalm 25:1-10; Daniel 9:1-14; 1 John 1:3-10
<b>Friday, February 16, 2024</b>	Psalm 25:1-10; Daniel 9:15-25a; 2 Timothy 4:1-5
<b>Saturday, February 17, 2024</b>	Psalm 25:1-10; Psalm 32; Matthew 9:2-13
<b>Sunday, February 18, 2024</b>	<b>First Sunday in Lent</b> -Genesis 9:8-17; Psalm 25:1-10; 1 Peter 3:18-22; Mark 1:9-15
<b>Monday, February 19, 2024</b>	Psalm 77; Job 4:1-21; Ephesians 2:1-10
<b>Tuesday, February 20, 2024</b>	Psalm 77; Job 5:8-27; 1 Peter 3:8-18a
<b>Wednesday, February 21, 2024</b>	Psalm 77; Proverbs 30:1-9; Matthew 4:1-11
<b>Thursday, February 22, 2024</b>	Psalm 22:23-31; Genesis 15:1-6, 12-18; Romans 3:21-31
<b>Friday, February 23, 2024</b>	Psalm 22:23-31; Genesis 16:1-6; Romans 4:1-12
<b>Saturday, February 24, 2024</b>	Psalm 22:23-31; Genesis 16:7-15; Mark 8:27-30
<b>Sunday, February 25, 2024</b>	<b>Second Sunday in Lent</b> -Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16; Psalm 22:23-31; Romans 4:13-25; Mark 8:31-38 <i>or Mark 9:2-9</i>
<b>Monday, February 26, 2024</b>	Psalm 105:1-11, 37-45; Genesis 21:1-7; Hebrews 1:8-12
<b>Tuesday, February 27, 2024</b>	Psalm 105:1-11, 37-45; Genesis 22:1-19; Hebrews 11:1-3, 13-19
<b>Wednesday, February 28, 2024</b>	Psalm 105:1-11, 37-45; Jeremiah 30:12-22; John 12:36-43
<b>Thursday, February 29, 2024</b>	Psalm 19; Exodus 19:1-9a; 1 Peter 2:4-10

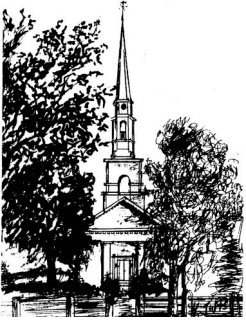
Name: Answer Key

# Unscramble Lent

Unscramble each set of letters to make words associated with Lent.

1. PaSnd mylau Palm Sunday
2. dMahyuTad nrysu Maundy Thursday
3. vPossrea Passover
4. entL Lent
5. yHkeelo W Holy Week
6. IdaSt uoHyyar Holy Saturday
7. ruTmidu Triduum
8. F oroidGady Good Friday
9. W yydnepdeaSs Spy Wednesday
10. osf ydtayr forty days
11. yWssAdene hda Ash Wednesday
12. daytSransEeu Easter Sunday





Barre Congregational Church  
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