

Amherst United Methodist Church

396 Park Avenue

Amherst, OH 44001

440-988-8330

www.amherstchurches.org

aumc396@gmail.com

Worship at 10:30 AM

AUMC March Newsletter



Scripture: *“The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness, on them light has shined.”* (Isaiah 9:2)

The season of Lent is upon us and our United Methodist understanding of Lent centers on grace, honest self-examination, and a return to the patterns of life that shape us into Christ’s people. Lent is not meant to be gloomy or punitive. It’s a season the church offers as a gift, inviting us to slow down, pay attention, and let God do the deep work in us that everyday life often pushes aside.

Lent’s forty days echo the biblical stories of preparation and testing: Israel’s forty years in the wilderness, Moses’ forty days on the mountain, and Jesus’ forty days of fasting before beginning His ministry. In each case, the wilderness is not a place of abandonment but a place of formation. United Methodists understand Lent in that same spirit. It’s a time when God shapes us, clears away what distracts us, and prepares us for the joy of Easter. Lent also helps us name the truth about ourselves: that we are beloved by God, yet still in need of healing. It’s a season of returning...returning to prayer, returning to Scripture, returning to the practices that open our hearts to God’s grace.

Repentance in the Wesleyan tradition is never about shame. It’s about turning toward the One who already loves us. John Wesley described repentance as a doorway to grace, not a wall of guilt. Lent invites us to walk through that doorway with honesty and hope. Many United Methodists choose to take on spiritual disciplines during Lent like prayer, fasting, acts of mercy, or intentional simplicity. These practices are not spiritual achievements. They are ways of making space for God. They help us loosen our grip on the things that drain us and strengthen our grip on the things that give life.

Lent is also a communal journey. We begin together on Ash Wednesday, receiving the sign of the cross and hearing the words, “Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return.” These words are not meant to frighten us. They remind us that our lives are fragile and precious, and that God meets us in our frailty with compassion. Throughout the season, worship takes on a reflective tone. We sing hymns of confession and hope. We hear Scriptures that call us to deeper faithfulness. We walk with Jesus toward Jerusalem, the cross, and ultimately the empty tomb. Our Church Family helps carry us when the journey feels heavy, and we help carry others in return. This is why I continuously stress the importance of the Holy Week Services. Trying to be a Christian all by yourself is doable, but hard. Living the Christian life shared with your Church Family is so much easier and I believe so much more satisfying. This year we are adding a good old fashioned Methodist Pot Luck dinner to our Maundy Thursday service. In my mind there is nothing more “gooder” than sharing a meal with good people and then sharing a time of worship as well.

Lent always points beyond itself. Its purpose is not to leave us in the wilderness but to lead us to resurrection. United Methodists understand Lent as a season of preparation for the great celebration of Easter, the triumph of life over death, grace over sin, and hope over despair. By the time we reach Easter morning, we have walked through a season that has softened our hearts and sharpened our awareness of God’s presence. The joy of resurrection rings louder because we have taken time to listen in the quiet.

Lent invites us to slow down, to breathe deeply, and to let God renew us from the inside out. It’s a season of truth-telling and grace-receiving, a journey that leads us not into sorrow but into the fullness of Easter life, and that is truly a life worth living.

Pastor Joe

LEADERSHIP TEAM NEWS FOR March 2026

As I write this article and look out our dinette window, it is a cloudy day and the ground shows grass rather than dirty snow. The weather forecast indicates that more snow will be coming this weekend. On Sunday, March 8th, we will “spring ahead” and that adds to more daylight! I do see some of our Spring flowers, like the snowdrops, are coming up!

Your Leadership Team met on February 9th. Per requests, the treasurer is working on establishing electronic giving so that giving can occur from a banking account transfer. Bob Kinser, trustee chair, reported that he, Aleah, Chris, and Jim met with Sean, the printer contract representative. Your Leadership Team is researching whether to renew the lease agreement on the printer or if it is more financially efficient to purchase a printer. Decision will be made prior to the July contract date.

Aleah provided information regarding the Ark trip. Currently, there are 12 adults and 6 children attending the June trip. Aleah will sign up for the downtown Amherst Walking on Wednesdays which occur in June, July, and August. Our church’s participation definitely is a wonderful way “to emphasis community outreach,” which is one of Amherst UMC’s current goals! (Please read Aleah’s messages within this newsletter for many other upcoming activities and events!)

Judy, from our church’s nurturing committee, announced that nurturing is focused upon visits to the homebound. Bread has been made for communion for those visits. “Effectively interacting with our homebound” is fulfilling another of our church’s current goals!

Chris and Pastor continue to oversee our website and work out any transmission issues. Pastor reported that the Fravel family had provided \$1,000.00 to use per Pastor’s discretion. Pastor will use this money to improve our sound system.

Polly with Missions announced that in March a collection of coloring books and crayons for a local children’s hospital will be the mission.

Judy, worship chair, is working with Pastor Joe and the worship committee to prepare for Easter. Pastor reported that the ashes were prepared for Ash Wednesday’s service on February 18th at 6pm. Pastor announced that Easter is the first Sunday of April and communion will be served on Easter. Information on the flowers will be forthcoming. Pastor Joe would like to have a Seder meal for Maundy Thursday, which is April 2nd. Both Maundy Thursday and Good Friday’s services will be held at 6pm.

Aleah, at her Amherst City Morning Mingle meeting, learned from the Amherst Police Dept. that scammers are reaching out to local churches to attempt to sell products. We need to be aware.

Our next Leadership Team meeting will be held on Monday, March 9th at 11am. As always, everyone is welcome to attend!!

Stay safe! Be well!

Hugs from a social distance,

Jean Rounds

Chair

Communion Sunday	March 1 st
The Ark Trip Meeting	March 1 st After Worship Service
Spring Forward	March 8 th
Leadership Meeting	March 9 th 11:00AM
Nurturing Committee	March 12 th 10:30AM
Mary Martha Circle	March 12 th 11:30AM
The Folks Melody	March 15 th
St. Elizabeth meal prep	March 20 th 2:30PM
Palm Sunday	March 29 th
Easter Egg Hunt	March 29 th After Worship Service
AUMC practices safe sanctuary and we do lock our doors for Sunday Service at 10:40AM. If you are running behind please ring the door bell and we will let you in.	
CALL IN NUMBER for CHURCH SERVICE (440) 462-2193 Or watch us on Zoom at amherstchurches.org	



Tuesday – 9:00 AM to 12:30 PM
Wednesday 9:00 AM to 12:30 PM
Thursday 9:00 AM to 12:00PM
Office phone: (440)988-8330
Pastor Joe: (440)724-2433



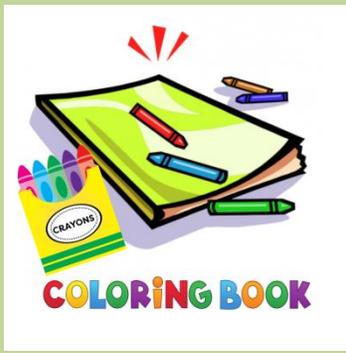
If there is a Sunday with severe weather please be advised that the church will always be open for service. But if you do not feel comfortable driving in bad weather we ask that you stay home and watch on Zoom.



Tom Petridis Mar 3 Karen Walton Mar 5
Jean Griffith Mar 8 Robert Stanley Mar 9
Tom Schoonover Mar 9 Susan Stang March 10
Hannah King Mar 11 Aubree Holbrook Mar 23
Wendy Dolyk Mar 24 Michele Pietch Mar 24
Carolyn Haney Mar 26 Sean Jackson Mar 28
Karen Allison Mar 31



God blesses us daily with answered prayers.
If you have a situation that could use a prayer, we are here for you.
Please contact Pastor Joe or Judy Gutman



Thank you to everyone who donated personal items to the office on aging.

Our mission for March will be collecting coloring books and crayons for a local children's hospital!

The Raise Right app allows you to purchase gift cards from hundreds of retailers and it will instantly be downloaded to your phone to make instant purchases. Rebates that you receive will benefit AUMC. All you have to do is download the app and enter in our code: **FBEELFD95896L**.



The season of Lent is fast approaching. So is the deadline date to order Easter altar flowers. Our flowers come from Pine Haven Greenhouse in Avon and include Lilies, Tulips, Mums, and Daffodils. Orders can be put in the offering plate, mailed in or can be called into the church office at (440)988-8330 or to Judy Gutman (440)935-3681. Attached below is an order form. There will also be some available in the sanctuary.

Easter Flower Order 2026

_____ Tulip _____ Lily _____ Mum _____ Daffodil

Please mark your choice with the number of plants desired.

Purchased by: _____

In Memory of: _____

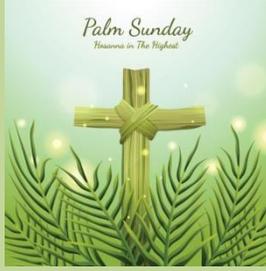
In Honor of: _____

The cost of each plant is \$11.00 the deadline for your order is Mar 15.

Cash or make checks payable to: Amherst United Methodist Church

Save the Date

Holy Week service schedule



Palm Sunday- March 29, 2026

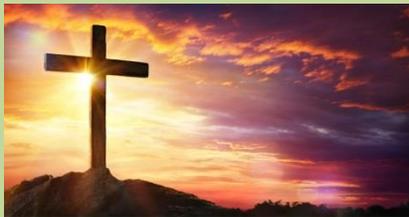
Worship Service 10:30AM



Maundy Thursday- April 2, 2026

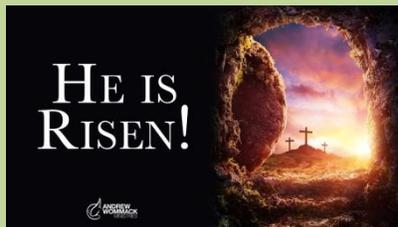
AUMC Potluck Dinner 6:00PM Please bring a dish to share.

Worship Service 7:00PM



Good Friday- April 3, 2026

Worship Service 7:00PM



Easter Sunday- April 5, 2026

Worship Service 10:30AM

If you cannot make it in person you can always watch us on Zoom at amherstchurches.org

Who is Jesus?

To the blind- He is the Light.

To the hungry- He is the Bread of Life.

To the thirsty- He is Living water.

To the sick- He is Cure.

To the dead- He is the resurrection and the life.

To the prisoner- He is Freedom.

To the lonely- He is a Friend closer than a brother.

To the traveler- He is the Way.

To Medicine- He is the Great Physician.

To the accused- He is the Advocate.

To the lawyer- He is the Judge.

To the judge- He is Justice.

To the weary- He is Rest.

To the liar- He is Salvation.

To me- He is King

