

# SALEM SCRIPTURES

Salem United Methodist Church Newsletter

January/ February 2018

## Annual Inspection

If you own a car registered in Virginia, you know two things are required. First you must pay taxes on the car and second you are required to get an annual inspection of the car. This is to make sure the key elements of your vehicle are safe and working properly.

The Christian year works the same way. We just finished Advent as a time of preparation, building our faith if you will. Then Christmas to celebrate why we have faith in Jesus. After Christmas we move on to Epiphany. In this season we are focuses more on the kinds of internal work the church needs to do to get ready. How are we exercising our faith muscles. We need to be reminded that it is God speaking to us and among us. We need to listen to God's voice. We need to be ready to move when and where the Spirit says move. We need to answer God's call in the varieties of contexts we and those we'll prepare during Lent will experience it. We need to stay focused on our work and God's call — the core work of discipling, not just fellowship or friendship. And we need to hear and help those we'll accompany during Lent hear God's call to go deeper, following Jesus where he leads. (<https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/worship/season-after-epiphany-2018-worship-planning-series/rise-up-series-overview>)

Let the light of God made known prepare you to share that light with those preparing to know it for the first time during Lent, and be fully immersed into it at Easter.



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## Big Game Food Drive.

Have a strong feeling about the Big Game? Who do you think will win? In our church's case it will be folks who are hungry as we collect canned and dry food items to give to a local church food bank. Sunday, January 28 and February 4, show your predicting skills, by placing canned food items in the box of the team you think will win the game.

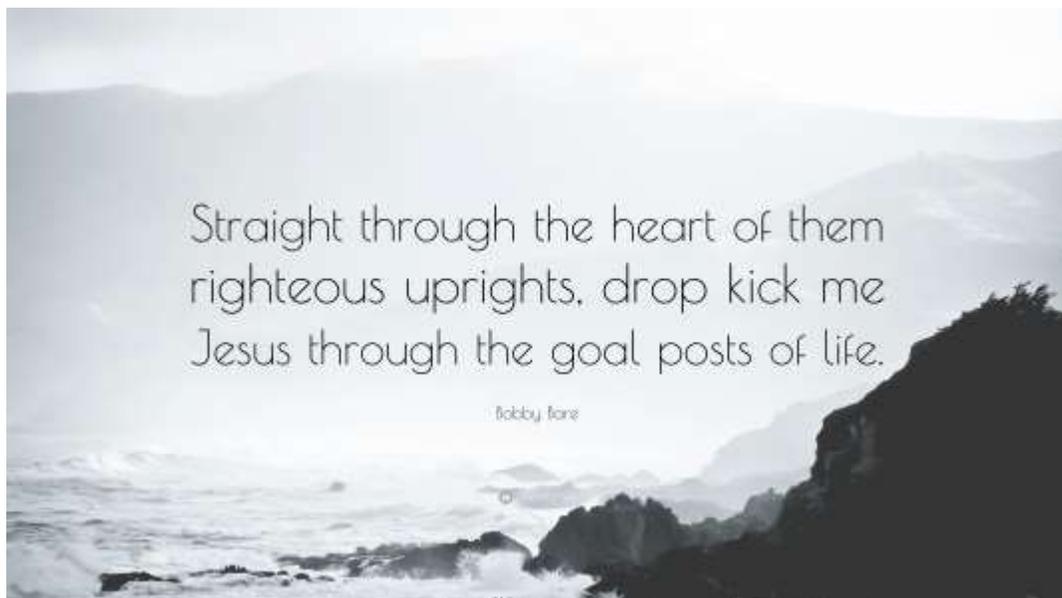
At the end of our service on February 4th, we will share who the congregation has picked. Then watch the game to see if our choice comes true. The real winners of this day will be those in need.

## Souper Bowl worship and Lunch

Sunday, February 4 is the big football game. But for Salem church it is a big day to enjoy fellowship and food with one another. That morning we will hold worship in the Fellowship Hall.

We will gather at tables for worship and communion and our worship will experience will be shaped very differently. It will be a great way to connect with others.

Following worship we will hold our 2nd annual "Souper Bowl" lunch. You are asked to bring a soup, stew or dish to share with the congregation. There will be some activities to get to know each other on a deeper level as we continue to serve God. For more information contact Beth Gibson at 757.646.2192



# CHURCH CALENDAR



## Weekly Calendar Items

Adult Sunday school –  
Sunday @ 9:00 a.m.

Worship Celebration –  
Sunday @ 10:00 a.m.

Karate in Fellowship Hall  
– Monday and Thursday  
at 5-8 p.m.

Girl Scouts – Tuesdays  
@ 6:00 p.m.

Ladies Quilting Group in  
the Quilting Room –  
Wednesday @ 10:00  
a.m.

Boy Scout Troop 471 –  
Wednesdays 6-9 p.m.

- **United Methodist Men's Breakfast**– Saturday February 3, 8-9 a.m. @ the church.
- **Souper Bowl Lunch**—Sunday February 4, 11:15 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall.
- **Finance Committee Meeting**—Tuesday February 13 @ 6:30 p.m.
- **Ash Wednesday** worship— Wednesday February 14 at 1 and 7 p.m.
- **United Methodist Women's** meeting– Sunday February 18, after worship.
- **Church Council Meeting** Monday February 19 at 6:30 p.m. in the Adult Classroom.



## Ash Wednesday February 14

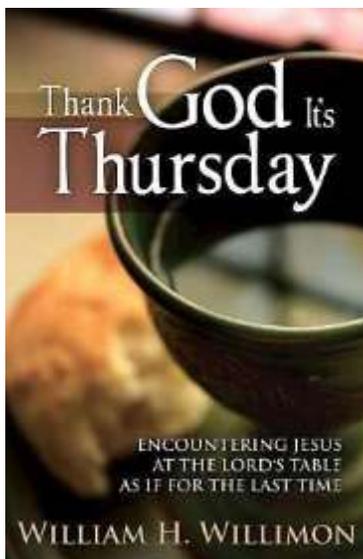
Ash Wednesday worship on March 1st at **1:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.** Ash Wednesday emphasizes a dual encounter: we confront our own mortality and confess our sin before God within the community of faith. The form and content of the service focus on the dual themes of sin and death in the light of God's redeeming love in Jesus Christ.

The use of ashes as a sign of mortality and repentance has a long history in Jewish and Christian worship, and the Imposition of Ashes can be a powerful nonverbal and experiential way of participating in the call to repentance and reconciliation. This practice is the historic focus of Ash Wednesday observance and gave the day its name. It is traditional to save the palm branches from the previous Passion/Palm Sunday service and burn them ahead of time to produce the ashes for this service. Alternatively, ushers may distribute small cards or pieces of paper on which each person may be invited to write a particular sin or hurtful or unjust characteristic. This would then be placed on the Altar.

### Lenten Bible Study– Thank God It's Thursday

Following the book of John, Will Willimon focuses on Jesus' teaching of his disciples prior to his own death but also before their own hour of decision. The climax of the Gospel is when Jesus pours out his life on the cross—surely an enactment and demonstration of the power of God's self-sacrificial love.

So to sustain and fortify his followers for the difficulties ahead, Jesus prepares them by teaching and offering sacraments of self-giving, through which they (and we) experience the grace and presence of the risen Lord. This book can equip Christians to face their hardships as they humbly serve with the promise of God's abiding presence already made good by his outpouring of sacrificial love. Written with the clarity, depth, and insight that are Will Willimon's trademark, this book offers afresh the challenge and grace of the message of the Resurrected One.





Rehab is a word that can refer to many different things. Just a quick glance through the Wikipedia article on rehabilitation, or “rehab,” points to issues ranging from health (cognitive rehab, wildlife rehab, drug rehab, occupational rehab, physical rehab, psychiatric rehab, vision rehab, vocational rehab) to politics (restoration of disgraced politicians) to home improvement (Rehab Addict!). In general, the word rehabilitate means to restore to a condition of good health, ability to work; to restore to good condition or operation; or to restore a person’s reputation.

Similarly, the annual observance of the Lenten discipline among Christians is a time to seek restoration for our lives. It is a time to reflect, take stock of our spiritual condition, and realign our lives. Our method for taking stock is the baptismal covenant as our reference point and making good use of the means of grace as our method. We enter the season through the Ash Wednesday call “in the name of the church, to observe a holy Lent: by self-examination and repentance; by prayer, fasting, and self-denial; and by reading and meditating on God’s Holy Word” (The United Methodist Book of Worship. Nashville: The United Methodist Publishing House, 1992, 322 from The Book of Common Prayer, 1979, Public Domain). As we contemplate the method of Lent, even the spiritually mature among us become aware of how out of step we

are with where we are called to be. We all have work to do.

There is much to mine from considering our Lenten journey this year within the frame of rehab, much to explore, much to learn. But the core of the learning in rehab, like the core of the learning in Lent, isn’t cognitive. It’s behavioral. In rehab, we learn how to live differently, to set a “new normal” for ourselves and our relationships after a period of time or perhaps a crisis has made it clear to us it is impossible to live as we had before. Likewise in Lent, we focus on helping those coming to faith in Christ for the first time, as well as those making their way back to Christ and the fellowship of the church after a period of absence or neglect, primarily in concrete, behavioral ways. Our goal for all who engage this period of time is that the way of Jesus becomes either the “new normal,” or, for those who have been consistent in the journey over time, is strengthened as our normal.

On each Sunday of this journey, the Scriptures provide the core guidance for the work of the week to come in our own lives and with others in midweek formation groups. We begin on Ash Wednesday by recognizing the limits placed on us by our mortality and the depths of our sinfulness. (continued on page 6)

(Cont.from page 5)..On Lent 1, we acknowledge we are entering a wilderness, uncharted and perhaps unchartable territory for us. On Lent 2, we become aware of the degree to which we need intervention and help beyond ourselves, and we identify how we can access it and start doing so. On Lent 3, we encounter the specifics of the kind of program that can keep us moving forward and learning this new normal, if we stick with it. On Lent 4, we address the sense of progress (and lack of progress) that comes with beginning to make some recovery. And on Lent 5, we remember with gratitude and hope the promise of healing and wholeness that awaits us as we continue to persevere, even in the face of challenging circumstances.

It is with that sense of gratitude and hope of a journey well-begun that we enter Holy Week. All of what has come before has prepared us to walk through this final leg of the journey with Christ and his church, through his suffering, execution, death, burial... and finally, after all of that, his resurrection.

<https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/worship/lent-2018-worship-planning-series/rehab-series-overview>

## Contact Us

Give us a call for more information about our services and products

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**Salem United Methodist Church: Changing Lives Together!**

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