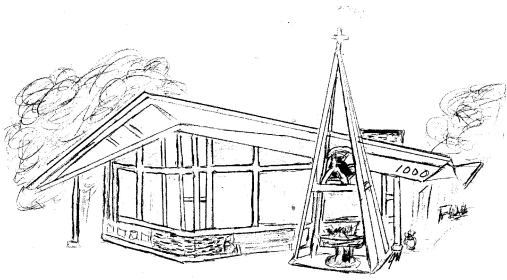


Buffalo United Methodist Church



March 2021

1000 30th Street NE
Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52402



The Way

Bishop Laurie Haller

It's the journey that counts, not the destination. Growing up, my father used to say to us kids when traveling, "Look out the window. Pay attention to everything you see. Don't be so eager to get to your destination that you can't relish the beauty all around you."

As our annual Lenten journey begins this week on Ash Wednesday, I decided to prepare my heart, mind, and spirit by reading Jane Leach's book, *Walking the Story: In the Steps of Saints and Pilgrims*. Dr. Leach is a British pastor and theologian who is Principal of Wesley House, a Methodist theological college in Cambridge, England.

Walking the Story is a theological recounting of Leach's 2005 pilgrimage on the 500-mile El Camino pilgrimage trail from Pied-de-Port in southern France, across the Pyrenees, and stretching across northern Spain to Santiago de Compostela. Since Gary and I walked the Camino in 2019, I felt a nudging to use her book as part of my own Lenten journey this year.

The image I often use for Lent is that of "the Way," which, as every Camino pilgrim discovers, is a journey that mirrors the life of Christ. The night before Jesus was crucified, he instructed his disciples in John 14:1-6. "Don't be troubled. Trust in God. Trust also in me. My Father's house has room to spare. If that weren't the case, would I have told you that I'm going to prepare a place for you? When I go to prepare a place for you, I will return and take you to be with me so that where I am you will be too. You know the way to the place I'm going." Thomas asked, "Lord, we don't know where you are going. How can we know the way?" Jesus answered, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

During Lent, we have an opportunity to walk with Jesus on the Way to Jerusalem and the cross. There are

three parts to this journey along the Way. First, the Lenten journey always begins with letting go. On the Camino, the letting go starts before the first step is even taken and lasts for the entire journey. In order to walk with Jesus along the Way, we let go of family, work commitments, and ego. We let go of our cell phone and laptop and commit ourselves wholeheartedly to following Jesus on the Way. We let go of pride, as the Way challenges mind, body, and spirit. And we discover in those first few days that if we do not release some of the cherished possessions in our pack, the physical weight that we carry on our backs will not be sustainable over five hundred miles.

The tangible expression of letting go occurs on Ash Wednesday as we receive the sign of the cross on our foreheads with ashes, along with these words from Genesis 3:19, "Remember that you are dust and to dust you shall return." As pilgrims walk step after step after step and day after day after day, we sense that we are breathed into life by the Spirit of God at the same time as we belong to the dust of the earth. The term "humility" comes from the Latin word *humilis*, which can be translated as "humble", "grounded", or "from the earth" (*humus*). Knowing that we belong to the earth, pilgrims embrace their weakness, humanity, and humility as gifts. The essence of Ash Wednesday is found in the "humus" (soil) of the earth as well as in the ashes of repentance. We are breathed into life by the Spirit of God, yet we also belong to the earth. . . .

Second, our Lenten journey along the Way includes an acute awareness that we walk with the whole human race. When we engage with Christ, the Pilgrim, the one who had no place to lay his head (Matthew 8:20), our focus extends beyond our own humanity to the spiritual needs of our neighbors who also walk on the Way. In fact, in

many parts of our world, walking is the only form of transportation. Dr. Leach writes, "Mission becomes our continued pilgrimage with others into the living heart of God who has made all of humanity his Home." . . .

Those who travel the Camino give up whatever status, education, or power they may have in order to journey the Way together and show hospitality to one another. At the end of the first and most difficult day of hiking, pilgrims cross over the Pyrenees Mountains from France to Spain and spend the night in Roncesvalles, whose monastery demonstrates centuries of unbroken hospitality. What a blessing to see a statue of a weary pilgrim with this 13th-century poem:

*The gate is open to everyone: To the sick and to the well,
Not only to Catholics But also to unbelievers,
To Jews, heretics And vagabonds as well.*

Third, when Camino walkers arrive at the Church of St. James in Santiago de Compostela, we discover that the end of the 500-mile Lenten journey is also a new beginning. Seeing the gigantic swinging botafumeiro send incense across the cathedral and embracing the centuries-old tradition of hugging the statue of St. James remind us that the journey is not over. Rather, the pilgrimage is meant to open doors to new life in Christ. Having been strangers ourselves on the Way, we vow to embody our life's journey with new commitments to care for the least, the last, and the lost.

Our world desperately needs pilgrims whose primary focus is embodying the grace of Jesus Christ. . . . our world needs those who see our common humanity rather than our differences and respond with compassion and grace. How will you be spiritually formed during this season of Lent? What disciplines will you practice along the Way? Fasting? Seeking reconciliation with someone who has harmed you? Intentional Scripture reading? Tithing? Reaching out to one of your elderly neighbors? Leading a small group for Lent? However you do so, you walk along the Way of Christ.

Lord Jesus Christ, you called your first disciples to follow you, and they left their father and their nets in the boat and went after you. Whether we are called to set out in faith or practice a deeper faithfulness at home, give us grace to leave behind what we do not need, courage to persevere when the way is tough and unrewarding, and find us faithful companions along the way. Amen.

[The Bishop's complete text is available on her blog *Leading from the Heart*. A link to her blog can be found on the UMC Connections page of the Buffalo website <http://buffalounitedmethodist.weebly.com/>]

Administrative Board Meeting February 17, 2021

- Trustees' Report: Marlene reported that the stove fan and fire extinguishers have passed inspection and the boiler will be inspected on March 30. Black dirt to cover damaged areas in the lawn was not available in the fall and no prediction on when it might be available this spring or summer.
- The Board discussed the policy for church rental fees. Currently there is a \$50 fee for non members. It has been suggested to add a \$25 charge if the kitchen is to be used and a \$50 damage deposit that would be returned if there are no problems. Pastor Kathryn and Chris Gochenouer volunteered to study other church rental policies and report back to the Board.
- Bob Marrs will chair a committee (with Mary Fredericksen, Barb Crawford, and Pastor Kathryn) to investigate the possibility this summer of scheduling a 145th church anniversary that would coincide with a dedication of the Hahn Memorial. One suggestion is to have a camp style meeting with outdoor picnic. Please contact any committee member if you have suggestions for this Buffalo community celebration.
- Judy Hackney reported that the biannual church report has been completed and Buffalo's Articles of Incorporation are due to be reviewed in 2023.

March Special Offering

UMCOR Sunday (official date: 14 March), previously known as One Great Hour of Sharing, celebrates the United Methodist Committee on Relief and its worldwide ministries of food, shelter, health, and peace. Please give generously to this outstanding agency.

Summer Rummage Sale

When you are doing your spring cleaning, please save items for a summer rummage sale. No date has yet been set, but we trust the COVID-19 vaccinations will make it possible for the return of our annual rummage sale on a Thursday and Friday in June or July.

Heavenly Recipes

Question: *What do Mary, Chris, Marlene, Barb, Judy, Verna, Margie, and Bob all have in common?*

Answer: *They all have some of their favorite recipes posted on the Heavenly Recipes page of the Buffalo website.*

To join this illustrious group, please send your favorite family recipes to Bob Marrs (rmarrs@coe.edu).

March 2021

<i>Sunday</i>	<i>Monday</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>Thursday</i>	<i>Friday</i>	<i>Saturday</i>
Women's History Month	1 Birthday of Glenn Miller from Clarinda, Iowa	2	3	4	5 Churchill's 1946 Iron Curtain speech in Fulton, Missouri	6
7 8:45 am Worship Service 3 rd Sunday of Lent	8	9	10	11 First Spanish Flu cases at Ft. Riley, KS; 22 million die worldwide	12 The Great Blizzard of 1888	13 <u>Warning:</u> Daylight Savings Time begins at 2:00 am Sunday
14 8:45 am Worship Service UMCOR Sunday	15 Buffalo Gals Church Cleaning Committee (9:00 am)	16 Cookie donation for First Nations due tomorrow	17 St. Patrick's Day	18 UMW Meeting (9:30 am)	19 Feast of St. Joseph	20 Spring Equinox: First Day of Spring
21 8:45 am Worship Service 5 th Sunday of Lent	22	23	24	25 Feast of the Annunciation	26	27
28 8:45 am Worship Service Palm Sunday	29	30	31	If you are more fortunate than others, build a longer table, not a taller fence.		

March Birthdays: 17 – Pastor Jenny Seylar
24 – Barb Crawford

20 - Pastor Kathryn Newhall
27 – Allison Hall

The Buffalo Gals

Spic & Span Church Cleaning Committee

This month's meeting will occur on Monday, March 15, beginning at 9:00 a.m. No experience or prior training is necessary. All Gals (and Guys) are welcome.

A Thank You Message for Pastor Kathryn

Thanks to Pastor Kathryn for her Sunday messages and words of encouragement. At UMW on February 18, Pastor Kathryn shared the World Day of Prayer message from the women of Vanuatu. The congregation also appreciates her planing of the personalized Ash Wednesday service and the opportunity to be blessed with a cross of ashes in a "drive through" setting.



Buffalo United Methodist Women

UMW still has RADA cutlery items available for purchase: paring knives, peelers, dish cloths, etc.. A list of available items can be obtained from Barb Crawford (826-2468) or Marlene Himes (393-3374). UMW will meet on Thursday, March 18 at 9:30 am. Chris Gochenouer will provide the program.

First Nations Food Baskets

Basked goods for the First Nations Community food baskets should be brought to the church by noon on Wednesday, March 17. Cookies donated in January and February were stored in the church freezer because the weather disrupted the distribution schedule. Please put six to eight cookies in a package with a label identifying the type of cookies. Diabetic baked goods are much appreciated.

Two Outreach Suggestions

#1: The Little Library is visited frequently, more books are needed, and cash donations can be given to Judy Hackney.

#2: Send cards to our church members who are in care facilities or staying at home. Barb Crawford (826-2468) will be glad to share names and addresses.

Candidates for Church Message Board

- If you are still praying for snow, PLEASE STOP.
- Tweet others as you would like to be tweeted.
- Sin is a short word with a long sentence.
- God gave us mouths that close and ears that don't. That may tell us something.
- God's last name isn't Damn.
- Seven days without prayer makes one weak.
- We may not be a Dairy Queen but we have some wonderful Sundays.



Buffalo UMC's Mission Statement

**A welcoming fellowship
reaching out and caring for the community.**

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