

I would like to also go on a prayerful journey exploring new means of service through Lent. We are still in a moment where we cannot move into fully interactive places of service and care; but that doesn't mean we cannot reach out and remind others they are important. Each week I would like to send a service challenge for us to pray over as a community. Each of these service projects will challenge us in new ways to reach out to our faith community and share with our friends they are loved.

Looking ahead, these service opportunities will be as follows:

1. Notes of prayer (Feb 21- 27)

Mail a card or a letter to fellow church members with the phrase "You are in my Lenten Prayer this week." You can say and share more in these notes, but even the basic phrasing "You are in my Lenten prayer" is a blessed reminder to another they are in our thoughts and prayers.

2. A day of cleansing prayer (February 28- March 6)

Pick a day to walk around your community and pray. Out of respect to continued social distancing, I would request that you not stop individuals to pray with in person. Instead, we can walk by houses and personally pray, "God, be real for this family." Our previous Bishop Mary Ann Swenson once presented the challenge to "discover ministry in our own zip code." Please discover ways, in this prayer and, once the world opens up, that you can make connections within your own zip code.

3. A day to pay it forward (March 7- March 13)

Pick a day of prayer for public outreach agencies that care for larger-scale concerns. UMCOR, ISN Shelter, Brother Benno's, and many other places continue to provide care in this unique time. As we pray over the areas that inspire us, I also pray to find ways to pay forward our blessings to assist their service.

4. A day of prayerful preparation (March 14- March 20)

We will pray over the preparation it takes to be ready to care for unexpected needs. Thursday, March 18, Pastor Drew will be sitting outside the building at the entrance to the narthex to collect goodies for our college students and deployed military, as well as clothing for Brother Benno's outreach. The focus of our prayers this week will be on preparing for ways to reach the needs of those we have not yet been blessed to meet. (The Pastor will also provide communion elements on this date.)

5. A time to share your story. (March 21 to March 27)

Please send an email to the Pastor at pastordrewdavis@gmail.com and share a story of the changes you have seen through your journey of personal reflection and community care. The Pastor hopes to use your stories as “resurrection celebrations” on Easter Sunday.

Let us be in prayer together through this journey. May we all find beautiful blessings throughout Lent.

Pastor Drew Davis