

PEOPLE'S SPEAKS

A weekly newsletter brought to you by People's United Church of Christ

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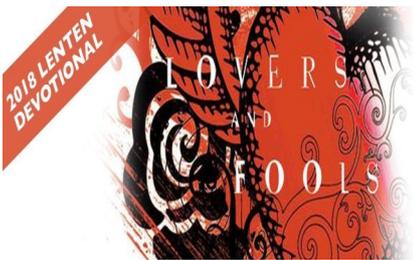
PEOPLE'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST



Worship—February 18 @ 10a.m.—The Stage @ Island Park

This Sunday we remember the covenant God made with us following the Great Flood. We will examine our own covenantal relationship with God and with creation.

Everyone is welcome.



Lovers & Fools

The UCC Still-Speaking Writers have published a new Lenten Devotional: *Lovers & Fools*. We are reminded we spend our days worshipping a God in love with weakness; following a foolish savior, even to the cross.

Join us on Saturday mornings, February 17—March 31 at 8:30a.m. We will get together in the deli area of Cashwise at 1401 33rd St. S, Fargo, just off 13th Ave S, to reflect on the readings together. It is a great way to deepen your faith, and get to know your friends from People's UCC.

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Check out our online giving at
www.easytithes.com/peoplesucc





Grace Notes

On Wednesday, from 11am-1pm, I was enjoying the mild, for North Dakota, temperature and sunshine as Pastor Joe Larson & I offered a blessing of ashes to passersby.

It was a time to remember our morality, it was also a time to remember that God is present to us, in our living

and in our dying.

As we ministered to others, we watched a sea of red shirts and skirts as indigenous people and their allies walked to remember our missing and murdered indigenous women. As with our ashes, a visible reminder of our mortality, the red clothing was a visible reminder of lives that are precious to God, lives that we must speak up for. A number of the marchers received ashes, too. As I applied ashes to two of the women, I said the familiar words: "Remember you are dust, and to dust you shall return." And then, "Carry your sisters' souls."

It was a reminder to me that we who are the descendants of colonizers need to remember we are all of the same dust. That we need to repent of all that we have done to be complicit in the loss of those women.

Then I came home, and the first reports began to come in. 17 dead in Parkland, FL. Teenagers and adults who were stripped of life in a matter of minutes. I was struck by the photo of the woman who had been to church, who wore her ashes, hearing those same words: "You are dust and to dust you shall return." Not imagining as she was smudged that she would look into the face of death. How many of us really did?

And again, we must consider, as we think of our own smudges of ash, how we have been complicit in that loss of life. May we remember we are dust, may we remember to carry the souls who are lost. Let's repent and speak out. Speak God's word of love and justice.

Shalom,



Pastor Grace

One Great Hour of Sharing, as part of Our Churches Wider Mission, is the special mission offering of the United Church of Christ that carries God's message

of love and hope to people in crisis. The UCC works with international partners to provide sources of clean water, food, education and health care, small business micro-credit, advocacy and resettlement for refugees and displaced persons, and emergency relief and rehabilitation. OGHS also supports domestic and international ministries for disaster preparedness and response.

We will receive this offering on March 11. You may also donate on-line at https://transactions.ucc.org/CampaignForm/UCChrist/one_great_hour_of_sharing.

