



Little Brown Church of Sunol

United Church of Christ – Congregational

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March 2020

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March-April Calendar

Sunday, March 8 ... Daylight Saving Time begins

Saturday, March 14 ... LBC hosts refreshments for Sunol Repertory Theater

Sunday, April 5 ... Palm Sunday

Friday, April 10 ... Good Friday service, details in April newsletter

Sunday, April 12 ... Easter Sunday

Souper Bowl of Caring

Every year, Little Brown Church joins thousands of churches and other groups nationwide on Super Bowl Sunday to collect money to feed the hungry. This year's LBC donation came to \$37.34, which will be donated directly to Sunrise Village homeless shelter. Nationwide, donations of cash and food items were worth more than \$9 million.

SRT Refreshments

Little Brown Church will provide refreshments at the Sunol Repertory Theater performance on Saturday, March 14, at Sunol Glen School. Please sign up at church to bring beverages, baked goods, berries, or other finger food. Or you can just reply to this newsletter. We also need people to set up the refreshments between 7 and 8 p.m. and serve the refreshments at about 9 p.m.

This is a good opportunity to meet the community and make a little money from donations. Our own Robin Spindler has a major role in this year's play, a melodrama titled *The*

Treasure of Shiver River. Be sure to catch one of the performances held every Friday and Saturday, March 7-28.

News from The Little Brown Church Council Chairman

Greetings everyone,

In late January we received sad news on the passing of longtime church member and council member Susan Ewing-Haley. Her memorial service February 1 filled Little Brown Church to overflowing with her extended family and many, many church members. She will be sincerely missed by all.

February has been a slow month for maintenance and church council. Other than Landy reporting that the faucet in the courtyard is starting to show signs of a slow leak, there are no new issues to report.

Blessings to all,
Allen Cook

Lent Madness 2020 ***The Sainly Smackdown Returns!***

www.lentmadness.org

“What are you doing for Lent?” In the run-up to the church’s holy season of repentance and renewal, this question echoes in parish halls and dining rooms, pews and study halls.

One exciting and life-giving answer to the proverbial question is “Lent Madness!” That’s because, for the eleventh straight year, people of faith the world over are filling out brackets and gearing up for the 2020 “sainly smackdown.”

With its unique blend of competition, learning, and humor, Lent Madness allows participants to be inspired by the ways in which God has worked through the lives of saintly souls across generations and cultures. Throughout Lent, 32 saints will battle to win the coveted Golden Halo. Based loosely on the NCAA basketball tournament of a similar name, this online devotion pits saints against one another in a bracket as voters choose their favorites throughout this penitential season.

Here’s how to participate: on the weekdays of Lent, information is posted at www.lentmadness.org about two different saints. (Once you sign up, each new pairing will show up in your email every weekday during Lent.) Each pairing remains open for 24 hours as participants read about and then vote to determine which saint moves on to the next round. Sixteen saints make it to the Round of the Sainly Sixteen; eight advance to the Round of the Elate Eight; four make it to the Faithful Four; two to the Championship; and the winner is awarded the Golden Halo.

The first round consists of basic biographical information about each of the 32 saints. Things get a bit more interesting in the subsequent rounds as we offer quotes and quirks, explore legends, and even move into the area of saintly kitsch.

This year, Lent Madness features an intriguing slate of saints ancient and modern, Biblical and ecclesiastical. This year’s saints include heavyweights such as Patrick, Harriet Tubman, Clare of Assisi, Hildegard of Bingen, Joseph, and Jude, along with many lesser known yet equally

inspiring people of faith. The competition kicks off on “Ash Thursday,” February 27, with an epic battle between Thomas More and St. James the Less.

The full bracket is online at the Lent Madness website www.lentmadness.org and, while not necessary to participate, you can order *The Saintly Scorecard: The Definitive Guide to Lent Madness 2020* at www.forwardmovement.org. This companion guide includes biographies of all 32 saints, a full-color bracket, and information about how to fully participate.

Lent Madness began in 2010 as the brainchild of the Rev. Tim Schenck, an Episcopal priest and rector of St. John’s Church in Hingham, Massachusetts. In seeking a fun, engaging way for people to learn about the men and women who make up the church’s calendar of saints, Schenck devised this devotion. Combining his love of sports with his passion for the lives of the saints, Lent Madness was born.

Why focus on saints during Lent? Like us, their vision may not have been perfect — and they had their share of blind spots. But what binds them together, is a strong faith in Jesus Christ and a willingness to serve him amid the circumstances of their own day. They saw the face of God with perfect clarity and shared God’s love for the world in their own ways. If we allow them into our lives, the saints can serve as a deep source of spiritual inspiration.

This year’s Golden Halo winner will join illustrious company. Previous winners were George Herbert, 17th century English poet, 2010; C. S. Lewis, 20th century British writer and theologian, 2011; Mary Magdalene, disciple of Jesus, 2012; Frances Perkins, 20th century American public servant, 2013; Charles Wesley, 18th century English preacher and hymn writer, 2014; Francis of Assisi, 13th century monastic and advocate for the poor, 2015; Dietrich Bonhoeffer, 20th century German theologian and activist who was killed by the Nazis, 2016; Florence Nightingale, 19th century nurse and social reformer, 2017; Anna Alexander, the first African-American Deaconess in the Episcopal Church, 2018; and Martha of Bethany, the Biblical sister of Mary, 2019.

If you’re looking for a Lenten discipline that is fun, educational, occasionally goofy, and always joyful, join the Lent Madness journey. Lent needn’t be all doom and gloom. After all, what could be more joyful than a season specifically set aside to get closer to Jesus Christ?

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LITTLE BROWN CHURCH OF SUNOL

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