

# RAQUETTE LAKE CHAPEL



FEBRUARY 2021 NEWSLETTER

RAQUETTE LAKE, NEW YORK

## FEBRUARY SCRIPTURE – REVISED COMMON LECTIONARY YEAR B

**February 7** (5<sup>th</sup> Sunday After the Epiphany) – Isaiah 40:21-31; Psalm 147:1-12, 21c; 1 Corinthians 9:16-23; Mark 1:29-39

**February 14** (Last Sunday after The Epiphany) – 2 Kings 2:1-12; Psalm 50:1-6; 2 Corinthians 4:3-6; Mark 9:2-9

**Wednesday February 17** (Ash Wednesday) – Joel 2:1-2, 12-17; Psalm 103:8-14; 2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10; Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

**February 21** (1<sup>st</sup> Sunday in Lent) – Genesis 9:8-17; Psalm 25:1-9; 1 Peter 3:18-22; Mark 1:9-15

**February 28** (2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in Lent) – Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16; Psalm 22:22-30; Romans 4:13-25; Mark 8:31-38



## CHAPEL NEWS



*The Chapel Elders met in January via Zoom*

and renewed their commitment to meet several times a year to discuss Chapel business. We have made progress toward creating a Chapel Trust to ensure the Chapel remains the special place it occupies in the community. Tasks so far included gathering and reviewing legal documents to ensure the Chapel status. The Elders will keep the community updated. Tom outlined drainage work to be done in the spring along the road to the Chapel. The Elders reported several inquiries about holding weddings at the Chapel this fall. One party has already visited the Chapel to plan wedding logistics. Pastor Vance will continue regular reflections (“Sunday Blasts”) and Sunday Evening prayer services on YouTube. Elizabeth faithfully maintains the Chapel website: [www.raquettelakechapel.org](http://www.raquettelakechapel.org).



**From Pastor Vance:** In 2021 I will be on a spiritual study journey through Celtic Christianity, its history, saints, liturgies, and implications for our modern world. I will share some of what I encounter along the way each month. Please do not hesitate at any time to contact me with your thoughts, interests or questions. You can send your message through the Chapel website or via email at [vance.mortensen@gmail.com](mailto:vance.mortensen@gmail.com)



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## “HEALING AND UNITY?”

We hear a lot about “healing” and “unity” and “moving on.” However, very little is said about how to do just that, and further, people’s actions belie their words. What then? It is no surprise that our Christian faith offers a path to healing, unity, cooperation, and that path includes one important step - repentance.

**Repentance can be a threatening word.** Often it conjures up an image of an intimidating person holding up a sign with the bold letters “REPENT – THE END IS NEAR!” Most Christians think repentance is feeling guilty or remorse associated with “sin” (doing something they think is bad) followed by “forgiveness” (someone says, “that’s ok.”) People often think repentance is a step in a simple formula: do something wrong, feel sorry, and promise never to do it again. This will lead to “all is forgiven and forgotten.” But, we shortchange ourselves if we stop there. Biblical meanings of repentance are much richer and demand action.

**In the Old Testament two Hebrew words enrich the concept of repentance:** NACHAM, the emotions of grief or lament leading to a different course of action; and SHUB, a radical change of mind with a conscious separation from sin and a redirection toward God. Remember that repentance in the Old Testament is often used to relate to Israel’s experience of exile in Babylon. To us moderns Israel’s repentance is a metaphor. Repent means not just feeling sorry but leaving that unspiritual place, our exile, that has separated us from our neighbors and our God to embark on a journey of “return” to the homeland.” In other words, go where God is.

**Repentance is also an important admonition in the New Testament.** Jesus’s first words in Mark’s Gospel are: “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent and believe in the good news. (1:15)” As we listen to Jesus’s message in the Gospels, “repent” retains its Old Testament resonance: return from exile, turn away from where you are and return to God, embark on “the way of the Lord.” The Greek word METANOIA in the New Testament is usually translated as repentance. Its Greek roots carry the meanings “change of mind,” “to turn around,” and the intriguing phrase “**to go beyond the mind that we have.**”

What does it mean to “to do beyond the mind that we have?” As the natural result of growing up and absorbing the physical world, **we are surrounded with a way of looking at the world.** This applies to all of us. So, to go beyond the mind that we have, **Jesus taught to repent means to see in a new way** – a way shaped by God as known in Jesus. This is repentance.

While the Bible does speak of repenting for our sins, we should understand the rich and complicated task that is, going beyond contrition, sorrow, and guilt. It is about turning away from our spiritual desert and returning to God. **Repentance is about changing the way we look at ourselves, each other, our world, and God.** Turning away and returning to God, going beyond the mind that we have, tossing out harmful habits – that is the path that leads to “healing,” “unity,” and “moving on.” I believe all of us have a job to do here. May it be so. AMEN.

## A PRAYER FOR CHANGE

Dear God, as we brace ourselves against the winter chill, remind us that we are not frozen in our ways. Just as spring thaw comes, send your blessings to thaw our hearts and renew our minds to your guiding word, that we may find the path of love for our brothers and sisters which has been obscured by our rigid and selfish words and actions. May it be so. Amen.