

ARTICLE FOR COUNTRY GAZETTE

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Orting United Methodist Church

Life is a gift, and one that God wants us to experience spiritually. That means taking time to step away from the treadmill of our work to breathe in the presence of God, to see the world around us with new eyes, to hear the whispers of the Holy Spirit calling us in new directions or affirming God's purpose for us in deeper ways.

There is a time in the church set aside for this self examination. It is called Lent—the 40 days leading up to Easter. This is when Jesus undertook his final journey to Jerusalem where he was put to death. We are asked to take that journey symbolically with Jesus during Lent, to see how he claimed life even in the face of impending death.

If we see Mel Gibson's movie *The Passion of Christ*, we may forget that only a few brief passages of scripture talk about the details of Jesus' death. Most of the scripture about Jesus is an encouragement to live more grace-fully the gift of life.

We develop spiritual strength when we walk where Jesus walked, in his steps of self giving love, daily placing ourselves in God's hands through self evaluation, prayer, scripture study and acts of kindness and mercy.

At the Orting United Methodist Church we encourage each other to live the kind of life Jesus lived. We are engaged in a six week series of Lenten Events. Each Thursday of Lent we meet together at the church for a meal at 6:00 pm, followed by a Lenten family activity at 6:45 pm, which may be a craft project, game, drama, or story telling. This is followed at 7:30 pm by an informal service of prayer and praise ending at 8:30 pm. Visitors are welcome to come for all or any part of these events or to join us in Sunday morning worship.