



***Wesley – West Berlin United Methodist Church
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Dear Beloved in Christ,

As we enter this holy season of Lent, I invite you to join me in a journey shaped by two words at the very heart of our faith: repentance and grace. These are not words of heaviness but of hope. They remind us that God loves us too much to leave us unchanged, and God is merciful enough to meet us exactly where we are.

Repentance, in the Wesleyan tradition, is not about shame or self-condemnation. It is about turning—turning away from what diminishes life and turning toward the God who restores it. It is the honest work of naming what has grown cold in us, what has drifted, what needs healing. Lent gives us the courage to look inward because we know the One who looks back at us is full of compassion.

And then comes grace—always grace. Grace that goes before us, grace that awakens us, grace that forgives and renews. John Wesley called it “the love of God shed abroad in our hearts,” a love that does not wait for us to be perfect before it embraces us. Grace is the steady truth that every step we take toward God is met by a God who has already taken ten steps toward us.

This season, I encourage you to make space for both movements:

- **Repentance that is honest**
- **Grace that is abundant**

Let your prayers be real. Let your confessions be freeing. Let your acts of mercy and compassion be signs of the new life God is forming in you. Lent is not a journey toward despair but toward resurrection, and every moment of turning back to God opens us more fully to the joy that awaits on Easter morning.

Thank you for being a community where grace is lived, shared, and made visible. I am grateful for the ways you seek Christ together and for the love you extend to one another and to our neighbors.

May the God who calls us to repentance also surround you with grace upon grace in these forty days.

Walking with you in Christ,

Jay W. Brown
Pastor