

*The Network... a Publication of
University Presbyterian Church*

April 2024



Dear Friends,

As we enter the high holy days of the Christian year next week, I hope you will walk with Jesus from his grand entry to the Holy City, to his meeting with his disciples for the last supper, to his arrest and trial, then execution; and finally on Easter Sunday in his glorious resurrection.

These events are not free-standing worship services but are intimately related to one another. The narrative of Holy Week is this: an unexpected Messiah enters Jerusalem to face the forces of darkness that would erase his entire ministry of teaching and healing and leave him a forgotten figure of history, but these forces are themselves negated when he confronts them in his arrest and trial and finally on the cross itself with raw honesty and compassion, only to give the appearance that death has won until his empty tomb is discovered by his friends and they begin encountering him in their midst. It is one of the great dramas of the world, perhaps the great drama.

We will follow, in the worship services this week, every step of the way with Jesus from his entrance to the city to his completely unexpected rising to new life. We will experience the profound sorrow and joy his Holy Week journey offers. For me, this week and these services recharge and renew my faith and deepened gratitude and awe follow. May it be so for you this year as well.

Please consult this newsletter for important dates and events. April is full of great opportunities to learn and grow, See you in church!

Blessings of Holy Week,
Tom Yorty

Dear Friends,

Millions of people lack access to sustainable food sources, clean water, sanitation, education and opportunity. Enclosed in the Easter bulletin will be an envelope for One Great Hour of Sharing. This annual offering goes to support Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, the Presbyterian Hunger Program and Self-Development of People. All three work in different ways to serve individuals and communities in need.

From initial disaster response to ongoing community development, their work fits together to provide people with safety, sustenance and hope. The OGHS offering is typically taken on Easter—the Festival of Resurrection. What better time to send the good news of God’s love, renewal and new life for those in direst need who surely question whether there is hope or even a God. Won’t you be generous!

Sincerely Yours,

Tom Yorty, Interim Pastor

Worship Column

Sunday, April 7

2nd Sunday of Easter

Acts 4:32-35, Psalm 133 or Isaiah 65:17-25,
Psalm 3; 1 John 1:2-2:2; John 20:19-31

Sunday, April 14

3rd Sunday of Easter

Acts 3:12-19, Psalm 4 or Isaiah 6:1-9a,
Psalm 40:1-5; 1 John 3:1-7; Luke 24:36b-48

Sunday, April 21

4th Sunday of Easter

Acts 4:5-12, Psalm 23 or Zechariah 10:1-12,
Psalm 80:1-7; 1 John 3:16-24; John 10:11-18

Sunday, April 28

5th Sunday after Easter

Acts 8:26-40, Psalm 22:25-31, Exodus 19:10-16,
Psalm 118:19-25; 1 John 4:7-21; John 15:1-8



What's Happening in ...



Monday, April 1	7:30 pm	Zoom Deacons' Meeting
Tuesday, April 2	12:00 pm	Food Pantry Open
Wednesday, April 3	2:00 pm	Ukulele
Thursday, April 4	12:00 pm 7:30 pm	Food Pantry Open Choir
Saturday, April 6	10:00 am	Breakfast with Friends
Sunday, April 7	9:30 am 10:30 am	Choir Worship
Tuesday, April 9	12:00 pm	Food Pantry Open
Thursday, April 11	12:00 pm 7:30 pm	Food Pantry Open Choir
Saturday, April 13	2:00 pm	Syracuse University Choir Concert
Sunday, April 14	9:30 am 10:30 am 11:30 am 11:30 am	Choir Worship Fellowship Time Liturgist Training
Monday, April 15	9:30 am	Zoom Adult Bible Study
Tuesday, April 16	12:00 pm	Food Pantry Open
Wednesday, April 17	7:00 pm	Session
Thursday, April 18	12:00 pm 7:30 pm	Food Pantry Open Choir
Saturday, April 20	TBD	Bill Rugg Memorial Service
Sunday, April 21	9:30 am 10:30 am 11:30 am 11:30 am	Choir Worship UPC Students & Friends Bible Study 1st Congregational Meeting
Monday, April 22	9:30 am	Zoom Adult Bible Study
Tuesday, April 23	12:00 pm	Food Pantry Open
Thursday, April 25	12:00 pm 7:30 pm	Food Pantry Open Choir

April Happenings con't...

Sunday, April 28	9:30 am	Choir
	10:30 am	Worship
	11:30 am	Birthday Celebration
	11:30 am	New Member Class
Tuesday, April 30	12:00 pm	Food Pantry Open

Spring Clean Up

Mark your calendars for Spring clean up! All are welcome to UPC's Annual Spring Clean-up scheduled for Saturday, May 4th from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm (rain or shine). We will be working mostly outside so bring gloves and your favorite tools! Contact John Swaine 716-367-4218 with questions.

April Birthday Wishes Go Out to.....

- 4 Lee Ann Grace
- 5 Hazel Moodie
- 11 Linda Krempa
- 13 John Lopinski, Jr.
- 15 Desmond Chia
- 22 Henna Shirazi
- 23 Gladys Gifford
- 24 Meg Cheman
- 26 Olivia Smith
- 28 Jerilyn Hickey



Ministry to Community Committee

Gun Violence Awareness

Last May Session gave its support to the Ministry to Community Committee's request for a one year focus on Gun Violence Awareness. Part of that focus is sharing information with our church family.

The good news is that more than 3 million illegal gun sales have been stopped in the 30 years following the enactment of the Brady Bill. This federal law requires licensed gun dealers to perform background checks on buyers.

Background checks save lives. Loopholes do not. Private gun sales such as those that take place at gun shows and online do not require background checks. This loophole allows for easy and dangerous gun purchases. In fact, about 20% of gun sales are completed without a background check. It's not surprising that states with expanded background checks for private sales experience lower rates of gun violence.

The Background Checks Expansion Act of 2023 (S.494 / H.R.715) would subject almost every gun sale to a background check. Below are excerpts of that bill:

Sponsor: Rep. Fitzpatrick, Brian K. [R-PA-1] (Introduced 02/01/2023)

SEC. 2. PURPOSE.

The purpose of this Act is to utilize the current background checks process in the United States to ensure individuals prohibited from gun purchase or possession are not able to obtain firearms.

(2) Paragraph (1) shall not apply to—

“(B) a transfer or exchange (which, for purposes of this subsection, means an in-kind transfer of a firearm of the same type or value) that is a loan or bona fide gift between spouses, between domestic partners, between parents and their children, including step-parents and their step-children, between siblings, between aunts or uncles and their nieces or nephews, or between grandparents and their grandchildren, if the transferor has no reason to believe that the transferee will use or intends to use the firearm in a crime or is prohibited from possessing firearms under State or Federal law;

The full text can be read at:

<https://www.congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/house-bill/715/text>

Consider calling on our legislators to act.

For more information on gun violence awareness check out these sites:

bradyunited.org

everytown.org

sandyhookpromise.org



EARTH DAY April 22, 2024 -Creation Justice Ministries*

Caring About Agriculture

For six years you shall sow your land and gather in its yield; but the seventh year you shall let it rest and lie fallow, so that the poor of your people may eat; and what they leave the wild animals may eat. You shall do the same with your vineyard, and with your olive orchard"

Exodus 23:10-11 reminds us that God cares about what we do to the earth through farming. Farmers are commanded to allow the fields time to rest—something like the modern sustainable practice of crop rotation. Moreover, what grows during that time is meant to feed hungry people and even animals; the harvest does not just belong to the wealthy landowner, but to everyone.

What Can We Do?

Buy local, sustainably grown food

Local foods do not contribute to climate change by requiring thousands of miles of transport, as industrially grown foods so often do. Moreover, you are building a healthier lifestyle when you choose pesticide and herbicide-free options. Given food's enormous impact on health, it is no surprise that buying sustainably grown products can be a truly life-altering decision.

Advocate for funding of sustainable agriculture

Most agriculture in the United States is subsidized by the government. Giving our representatives the power to choose what types of farming get funded. Currently, we fund mostly corn for ethanol production and livestock feed—not even food for humans. If we could convince Congress to fund small and sustainable farming ventures instead, we could change our entire food system for the better and reduce carbon emissions by approximately 30% in the process by eliminating traditional industrial agriculture.

Join a CSA (community supported agriculture) program in your region

It's not always easy to maintain a big garden or a small farm, especially not by yourself! Help your local farmers support their projects by joining a Community Supported Agriculture program, or CSA. This system allows people to share out of their abundance so that everyone involved can have a taste of a variety of crops. From fresh produce to vegetables and dairy and even sustainably raised meat, CSA programs offer a whole new way to feed your family!

<https://www.localharvest.org/buffalo-ny/csa>

Visit your local farmer's market or start one of your own

Farmer's markets are a great way to support local and sustainable agriculture. They provide access to the freshest whole foods you can ask for, all while supporting small farmers.

<https://ediblewesternny.ediblecommunities.com/shop/guide-farmers-markets-western-ny>

*<https://www.creationjustice.org/about.html>

Syracuse University Choir Concert

On Saturday afternoon, April 13 at 2:00 pm, come and enjoy an afternoon of choral music showcasing a rich selection of works by esteemed composers, including Daniel Afonso, Joshua Jacobson, Shawn Kirchner, Susan LaBarr, Robert Ray, Salamone Rossi, Kate Rugby, and Antonio Vivaldi, and a piece in honor of American composer, arranger, conductor, and teacher Alice Parker. Free admission at University Presbyterian Church, Buffalo. Help us welcome the Syracuse University Concert Choir, conducted by Dr. Wendy Moy.



Re-Scheduled Opportunities

Tuesday, May 14th

Hearts for the Homeless of WNY Inc.

Food Pantry & Cafe

890 Tonawanda St., Buffalo 14207

@ the corner of Riverside Ave.



Parking lot in between two of the buildings (870 and 890)

Street parking on Tonawanda St., Riverside Ave., and Royal Ave.

Contact Person: Kelsey Jeff (Chief of Staff & Executive Assistant)

1(585)689-4771

Arrival Time: 10:30 am – 10:45 am

Maximum Number of Volunteers: 20 – 25



Saturday, May 18th

Jericho Road's VIVE Shelter

1500 Main St., Buffalo 14209

(Former Bristol Home)



Parking in Rear / Side door entrance

Arrival Time: 11:00 am

*Number of Residents/Staff will be received a week prior

Contact Person: Rachel Wood/Kitchen Manager (716) 940-7374

Activities:

Bingo Game/Prizes / Arts & Crafts / Clean Dining Room

Provide Lunch: Pizza & Wings for Residents/Staff

*No picture taking



Ministry to Community Committee
MLK Day of Service
University Presbyterian Church
Calvary Baptist Church

Well, it won't snow in May! Please join the warmth of our congregations for the rescheduled Martin Luther King Day(s) of Service!

Tuesday May 14 at 10:30 am

Hearts for the Homeless

890 Tonawanda St. Buffalo

Join us to work in the food pantry and cafe.

Saturday May 18 at 11:00 am

Jericho Road's VIVE Shelter

1500 Main St. Buffalo

Enjoy a time of games, arts, crafts, pizza and wings with residents.

Help clean the dining room.

***Please don't take photos.**

There are a limited number of spaces available at each location. Please email or call Marietta Bratton if you are interested in joining us. Do you need a ride? Can you provide a ride for someone else?

maribratton@mac.com

(716) 913-7628