



Volume 12, Issue 4
April 2023

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APRIL PASTOR'S PEN

"The Lord Is Risen"

The Apostle Paul declared that our faith stands or falls on the basis of the Resurrection. I believe that declaration remains true today. If I didn't believe in the resurrection, I wouldn't be a Christian and I certainly wouldn't be in the pulpit. If I didn't believe in the resurrection I would also search for another faith. It is because I believe in the resurrection of Christ that I am not only a Christian but a minister of the His gospel. My concern for the church of today is that God's people will continue to believe in the resurrection. Some of you might be inclined to say; "Well, don't all people who call themselves Christians believe in the resurrection." My answer might startle some of you because my answer would be "yes" and "no." Now that I have not only startled you but also confused you, allow me to explain. When I say that I believe in the Resurrection of Christ I am referring to the bodily resurrection. I believe that Jesus died and that He rose again from the grave. I believe that He had a body that people were able to see and recognize with the human eye. I believe that He talked, that He ate and that He ministered in a bodily form. The Bible teaches the bodily resurrection of Christ but when some well-meaning people today (including some ministers) say they believe in the resurrection what they are actually laying claim to but will not always tell you is that they believe in the spiritual resurrection of Christ. What does it mean to believe in the Spiritual Resurrection? The Spiritual Resurrection is the belief that the presence of Jesus rose in the hearts and minds of his followers but that his body rotted in the grave.

There is only one resurrection and that is a bodily resurrection anything less and you are left with a ghost and he's not the holy one either! Some people might say "but that's a narrow interpretation" and they would be absolutely correct. It is a narrow interpretation but then again, the Bible declares; "*Enter ye in at the strait gate' for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and **narrow is the way**, which leadeth unto life and few there be that find it*" (Matt. 7:13-14). Someone once took the time to list the reasons for belief in the bodily resurrection and I want to pass them on to you.

1. Jesus predicted His resurrection (Matt 16:21; Mark 9:9-10; John 2:18-22).
2. The Old Testament prophesied it (Psalm 16:10; compare Acts 2:25-31; 13:33-37).
3. The tomb was empty and the grave clothes were vacant. If those who opposed Christ wished to silence His disciples, all they had to do was produce a body, but they could not (John 20:3-9).

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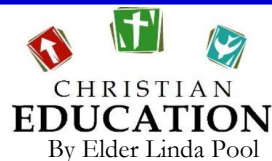


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4. Many people saw the resurrected Christ. They looked on His face, touched Him, heard His voice, and saw Him eat (Matt. 28:16-20; Luke 24:13-39; John 20:11-29; John 21:1-9; Acts 1:6-11; 1 Cor. 15:3-8).
5. The lives of the disciples were revolutionized. Though they fled and even denied Christ at the time of His arrest, they later feared no one in their proclamation of the risen Christ (Matt 26:56, 69-75).
6. The resurrection was the central message of the early church. The church grew with an unwavering conviction that Christ had risen and was the Lord of the church (Acts 4:33; 5:30-32; Rom. 5:24).
7. Men and women today testify that the power of the risen Christ has transformed their lives. We know that Jesus is alive not only because of the historical and biblical evidence but also because He has miraculously touched our lives.

THE LORD IS RISEN INDEED!!!

*He is
risen indeed!*



God's Love

-Ruth Bell Graham

To save us from eternal death, God had to give the very life of His Son, Jesus. God would send His Son to earth as a human baby too weak to lift up His own head. He would learn how to crawl, how to stand, how to run.

When He had grown to manhood, He would bring men back to the God whom they had forgotten. He would tell them: "The Lord our God loves you"(cf. John 3:16), You must love Him with all your heart and soul and mind and strength"(cf. Matthew 22:37), and "You must love others as much as you love yourself"(cf. Matthew 22:39).

Then He would show them, as well as tell them, what God meant by "love" when He fed the hungry, healed the sick and made the blind to see.

Finally, He would show them the greatest love of all: He would die for them so that the way to God would be opened.

After that, no matter how far a person wandered, no matter how big the sin, there would still be this way back to God. For love like this would be stronger than sin—stronger than death itself.

You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly....God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.---Romans 5:6,8

Prayer: Thank you, Lord, for sending Jesus Christ to die for my sins. I will tell others of His great sacrifice so that they may find new life through Him.

From: "Letters from Ruth's Attic" by Ruth Bell Graham



LOVE THE LORD
YOUR GOD WITH
ALL YOUR heart
& WITH ALL YOUR soul
AND WITH ALL YOUR
Mind.

MATTHEW 22:37

Evangelism Task Force

Sent People

Scripture Reading — John 17:6-19

“As you sent me into the world [Father], I have sent them into the world.”

The Bible describes Jesus’ followers in a number of ways. We are called forgiven sinners, adopted sons and daughters, and beloved members of the body of Christ. All of these are key aspects of who we are in Christ.

But one of the most important identities we have is as “sent people.” Just as Jesus was sent into the world to show God’s love, so he now sends us to do the same.

After Jesus’ resurrection, his followers received the Holy Spirit to empower them for mission. As Jesus’ followers today, we are called to share the good news of Jesus in our words and actions, inviting people to place their faith in Jesus just as we have done.

Too often, local churches become wrapped up in their own concerns. Christians spend so much time running programs and dealing with internal conflicts that they have little energy to build relationships with people outside the church. It’s not surprising that many of our churches are shrinking and that a lot of church “growth” is just a result of Christians transferring from one congregation to another. Jesus’ teaching makes clear, however, that his followers are partners in God’s mission of saving people who are lost in sin. It’s not enough to simply talk about sharing our faith—it’s part of our identity in being the people God calls us to be.

Father, use my words and actions to help others understand the gospel and see their need for you. Amen.

About the author — Anthony Joseph (A.J.) Gretz is a pastor in Grandville, Michigan. He has also served churches in Ohio and in Kalamazoo, Michigan. He and his wife, Anna, have three children.

“I PRAY ALSO
FOR THOSE WHO
WILL BELIEVE IN ME
THROUGH THEIR MESSAGE,
THAT ALL OF THEM
MAY BE ONE,
FATHER,
JUST AS YOU ARE IN ME
AND I AM IN YOU.”

JOHN 17:20-21, NIV

Key Things The Evangelism Task Force Has Learned About Evangelism

- Praying is essential in order to share Jesus with others. This is God’s work, so we need to be relying on Him before we can consider sharing.
- The more time we spend with Jesus, the more we start to look like Him. (Matt. 5:14) We need to make sure that we are showing the world Jesus, and we can’t do this unless we spend time in Him word and in prayer.
- We have the Holy Spirit in us. (John 14:26) We can not lead anyone to Christ without the power of the Holy Spirit. This is God’s work, not our work.
- Never give up and never quit telling others, even if they are negative or say no. (2 Pet. 3:9, I Cor. 3:5-8) Don’t take it personal.

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- Jesus died for everyone. Everybody doesn't look like us. No one is too broken or too far gone for God's grace. (Rom. 5:20) Changed behavior requires: "Know Be Do". They can't "Do" (change) until they have Jesus. They can't "Be" until they know. They can't "Know" unless they are told. (Rom. 10:17) Behavior is a symptom, not a problem. Change in a life can take a long time. The longer sin is allowed to stay in a life, the harder the heart becomes. (Heb. 3:13). The nudges of the Holy Spirit are harder to feel.

God doesn't call the equipped. He equips the called. As Christians, we're commanded to share the gospel. (Matt.28:19)

May the Lord use us to grow His Kingdom!



*God's Gifts Equip
Us for Ministry*



Charlene Hagy

Charlene Hagy lives in Highland Lakes, Leesburg.

Charlene was born and raised in Springfield, Ohio. She attended church at the Northminister Presbyterian Church in Springfield where she was baptized.

Charlene started working at United Parcel Service right after high school and years later took a transfer to Cincinnati, Ohio. Her jobs there included payroll accounting, billing, human resources and insurance. She met her husband, Silas in Cincinnati as they lived in the same apartment building and became friends right away. They married in March 18, 1978.

Charlene's mother worked in FW Woolworth. Her father had a dry cleaning business. Charlene had one sister, and 3 nieces, all have deceased. Charlene did not have children of her own.

Before her retirement, of 25 years at UPS, Charlene was involved with several UPS committees, as well as organizing employee retirement dinners. Charlene's husband Silas, retired early and wanted to live in Florida, so to Florida they came!

Charlene's hobbies are playing cards, reading, garage sales and luncheons. She misses playing tennis. Charlene feels our church has a great future and she is glad to be part of our congregation.





Les Deatherage—5th
 Harvey Pierce—6th
 Jim Teets—6th
 Paul McWilliams—7th
 Peach Pierce—11th
 John Romano—20th
 John Fraser—21st
 Lois Schielke—21st
 Zoe Shearer—21st
 Debbie Reed—24th
 Beverly Sapp—26th
 Linda Chermak—28th



April
 ANNIVERSARIES

Don & Zoe Shearer—2nd
 Marvin & Linda Pool—3rd
 Jim & Sue Davids—14th
 Jon & Mary Arnold—17th
 Bob & Lois Schielke—20th



Pastor John Fraser
 Pastor Rick Rosenkrans
 Jack Homoney (2023)
 Wally Klee, Sr. (2023)
 Marvin Pool (2023)
 Shelby Reed (2024)
 Al Rode, Jr. (2023)
 Judy Scott (2025)
 Jim Teets (2024)



**Last
 Friday
 Women's
 Breakfast**

**April 28th at 8:30am
 at Wolfy's in Leesburg**



Prayer Time with Pastor John

**April 6th & 20th
 at 1:00pm**

Tell us how we can pray for you!
GraceEPCLeesburg@gmail.com
 (352) 552-0052.



**The Widow's
 Luncheon
 will be on**

Thursday, April 20th at 11:30am

at Mikey's in front of Plantation

Please let Sue Hammond know if you are attending
 by Sunday, April 16th

Castro's Mexican Ministry

Our friends in Castro's Mexican Ministry have been doing well and have many things to celebrate as their church grows and matures! They are finally able to meet on Fridays and Sundays now and they have formed a new Women's Ministry. They were able to celebrate International Women's Day and had a couple of guest speakers who were able to come and share the gospel with the women in the new ministry.

They are continuing their training for church planting and are learning a lot and are very excited as they move closer to the time of planting. They have shared some pictures with us of their wonderful time together for their new Women's Ministry and of their Friday gatherings they have been able to have.





Did you know????

Did you know that after Easter sales are a GREAT opportunity to purchase items for the Operation Christmas Child Shoeboxes?? So if you happen to be shopping after Easter and you notice some great deals, please consider picking up a few things for the shoeboxes. We collect all year long so it is a great idea to keep these kinds of seasons and sales in mind!



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### Christian Care Center Love Your Neighbor Food Drive

The Christian Care Center is having a “Love Your Neighbor Food Drive” throughout the next month.

Want to get involved? Here’s how you can help:

1. Grab a can of food from your pantry.
2. Wrap a check (made payable to Christian Care Center) or bill of any denomination around the can with a rubber band.
3. Bring it to any designated drop off area (or directly to the Christian Care Center)
4. Know that you have shown love to the neighbors in your community who are in need.

For more information, you can visit:  
**[ChristianCareCenter.org/LoveYourNeighbor](http://ChristianCareCenter.org/LoveYourNeighbor)**

Christian Care Center  
115 North 13th Street  
Leesburg, FL 34748



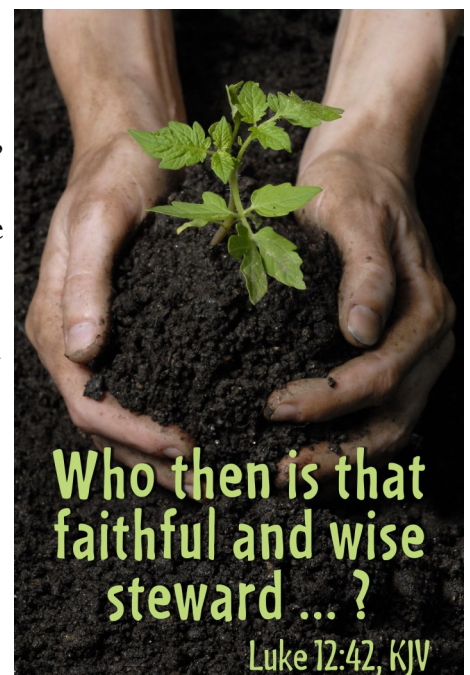
Welcome to April and the Easter season. This is the time of year when most are thinking about the resurrection and looking toward Easter Sunday. But I tend to think about the crucifixion. That is the part of this that is so incredibly unbelievable for me. I firmly believe that Jesus, before turning himself over to the Roman guards, knew exactly what was going to happen. What He volunteered for was not a unique occurrence during His time on earth so He had probably seen it or at least heard about it in gory detail. But, He marched ahead saying “not my will, but Yours be done”. And He did this so that you and I could have eternal life with Him. I find it absolutely incredible that anyone would do that for me. Think about this, Jesus is in the garden praying and during that time He knew exactly the pain, suffering, and humiliation that lay in store for Him. What was going to happen had been done to others and many of them did not even survive the scourging so never got to the crucifixion. Yet with the thought that “not my will, but Yours be done”, He presented himself to the guards. The other thing that I am constantly awed by is just the fact that for me to receive the blessings that He purchased all I must do is believe! Wow!

Okay, the first quarter is passed, and we are on a positive financial footing meaning that we are spending less than what you are giving. We were a little concerned during February but pulled ahead in March, so we are about where we had projected. However, now starts the period when our attendance usually falls off a bit as our part-timers head north and the travel season gets into high gear. So, please continue to pray for our church and consider what you can do to ensure our continued growth going forward. I still remind you to consider the growth that we are experiencing in our area and what we must do to enable us to show the pathway to our Heavenly Father that is so desperately needed. I read an article recently that outlined the 17,000 new homes that have been platted for this area. Most of these are within five miles of our property on US 27 with the others only slightly further. What is hard for me to wrap my head around is remembering that the town that I grew up in is about 20 miles from here. During the time that that I was there the local weekly newspaper spoke of having about 5,000 residents within 7 miles of the downtown area. But, that range extended well outside the city limits and several miles into the county. Now, there are plans for several times that number to be added to Leesburg within the next 5 to 7 years and it has already begun. Will we be there to welcome them?

I recently read an insightful excerpt from a book by Rev Laura Dunham. She wrote that Scripture teaches us that all we have is a gift from God and that we live by His grace. This perspective should help to keep us humble when we are deciding how we will use the income and assets He has put under our care. A theology of stewardship must keep in mind that all of creation is under the reign of God, and He made it our responsibility to care for His creation by using the time, talents, and money He has allowed us to control.

One final thought, if you are currently giving at a level at which you are comfortable that you are doing all that you can, my feeble attempts to describe our greater need will hopefully meet with some agreement. Maybe a positive nod, and nothing more. However, if you are bothered by my trying to highlight those needs, then maybe Someone is tapping on your shoulder. Remember, our job is to spread the gospel and that means that we must bring new people into our services and activities. However, to do that in a meaningful way we need more space than we currently have available.

See you at worship,  
Dave Hoffmeyer, for Stewardship & Finance





# April 2023

| Sun                                                                                                                                                                                             | Mon                                                                                                                     | Tue                                                                              | Wed                                                                                                                                           | Thu                                                                                                                                                         | Fri                                                                                             | Sat       |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| <p>2</p> <p>Communion Sunday</p> <p>9:00am Sunday School</p> <p>9:45am Coffee &amp; Fellowship</p> <p>10:30am Worship</p> <p>Don &amp; Zoe Shearer Anniversary</p> <p>Palm Sunday Potluck!!</p> | <p>3</p> <p>10:00am GriefShare</p> <p>6:30pm Royal Highlands Small Group</p> <p>Marvin &amp; Linda Pool Anniversary</p> | <p>4</p> <p>8:00am Perkins Men's Bible Study</p>                                 | <p>5</p> <p>9:45am Women's Bible Study</p> <p>11:00am SSBG Quarterly Meeting</p> <p>4:30pm Choir Rehearsal</p> <p>Les Deatherage Birthday</p> | <p>6</p> <p>1:00pm Prayer Time with Pastor John</p> <p>6:30pm Maundy Thursday Service</p> <p>Harvey Pierce Birthday</p> <p>Jim Teets Birthday</p>           | <p>7</p> <p>Paul McWilliams Birthday</p>                                                        | <p>8</p>  |
| <p>9</p> <p>9:45am Coffee &amp; Fellowship</p> <p>10:30am Worship</p> <p>HE IS RISEN!!!</p>                                                                                                     | <p>10</p> <p>6:30pm Royal Highlands Small Group</p> <p>6:30pm Royal Harbor Small Group</p>                              | <p>11</p> <p>8:00am Perkins Men's Bible Study</p> <p>Peach Pierce Birthday</p>   | <p>12</p> <p>9:45am Women's Bible Study</p> <p>4:30pm Choir Rehearsal</p>                                                                     | <p>13</p> <p>10:00am Finance Committee Meeting</p> <p>10:00am Chrismos Class</p> <p>10:30am Plantation Small Group</p>                                      | <p>14</p> <p>Jim &amp; Sue Davids Anniversary</p>                                               | <p>15</p> |
| <p>16</p> <p>9:00am Sunday School</p> <p>9:45am Coffee &amp; Fellowship</p> <p>10:30am Worship</p>                                                                                              | <p>17</p> <p>6:30pm Royal Highlands Small Group</p> <p>Jon &amp; Mary Arnold Anniversary</p>                            | <p>18</p> <p>8:00am Perkins Men's Bible Study</p> <p>10:00am Session Meeting</p> | <p>19</p> <p>9:45am Women's Bible Study</p> <p>2:30pm Villages Small Group</p> <p>4:30pm Choir Rehearsal</p>                                  | <p>20</p> <p>11:30am Widow's Luncheon</p> <p>1:00pm Prayer Time with Pastor John</p> <p>John Romano Birthday</p> <p>Bob &amp; Lois Schielke Anniversary</p> | <p>21</p> <p>John Fraser Birthday</p> <p>Lois Schielke Birthday</p> <p>Zoe Shearer Birthday</p> | <p>22</p> |
| <p>23</p> <p>9:00am Sunday School</p> <p>9:45am Coffee &amp; Fellowship</p> <p>10:30am Worship</p>                                                                                              | <p>24</p> <p>6:30pm Royal Highlands Small Group</p> <p>6:30pm Royal Harbor Small Group</p> <p>Debbie Reed Birthday</p>  | <p>25</p> <p>8:00am Perkins Men's Bible Study</p>                                | <p>26</p> <p>9:45am Women's Bible Study</p> <p>4:30pm Choir Rehearsal</p> <p>Beverly Sapp Birthday</p>                                        | <p>27</p>                                                                                                                                                   | <p>28</p> <p>8:30am Women's Breakfast</p> <p>Linda Chermak Birthday</p>                         | <p>29</p> |
| <p>30</p> <p>9:00am Sunday School</p> <p>9:45am Coffee &amp; Fellowship</p> <p>10:30am Worship</p>                                                                                              |                                                                                                                         |                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                 |           |

*Grief recovery groups*

GRIEF SHARE.ORG



## GriefShare News!

Our wonderful GriefShare program will be wrapping up on April 3rd, but don't worry! There will be another session starting up on **Monday, May 8th**. If you would like to sign up/attend the May 8th—July 31st session, you can go to [GriefShare.org](http://GriefShare.org) and search for the Grace EPC class (search for Leesburg, FL and you should see it pop up on the list). If you have any questions or would like further information, please feel free to speak to Jim Teets or Rose Hoxie.

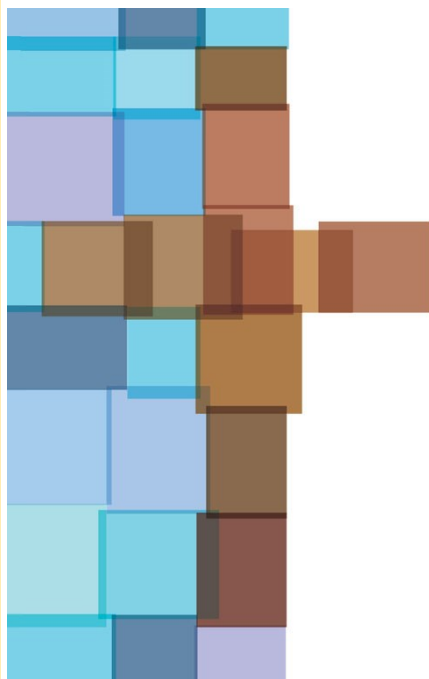
## May Sermon Schedule

**May 7th** Today, Before and After

**May 14th** Jude: Gratitude and Praise

**May 21st** A Friend Loves at All Times

**May 28th** Pentecostal Power



...the life  
I now live  
in the flesh  
I live by  
faith in  
the Son  
of God,  
who  
loved me  
and gave  
himself  
for me.

Galatians 2:20, NRSV

**WHEN  
THE DAY OF  
PENTECOST  
CAME,  
THEY WERE  
ALL  
TOGETHER  
IN ONE PLACE.  
ACTS 2:1, NIV**





**KNIT. CROCHET. PRAY.**

## Easter

*"The Angel said to the women, do not be afraid for I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. He is not here, He has risen, just as He said."*

*Matthew 28:5-6*

Little Cailynn is wrapped in her Winnie the Pooh quilt feeling very secure and loved.

Your Prayer Shawl Committee wishes to minister to all ages; adults, babies, and older children.

Already in 2023 Prayer Shawls have been spreading God's Love all over and to all ages! Many items have been shared with those in need of comfort. We can see the numbers so far in:

- Lapghans: 14
- Prayer Mats: 3
- Quilts: 5
- Pocket Crosses: 2
- Bracelets: 2



So many blessings already this year, and the Prayer Shawl Committee would love the blessings to continue to go out and spread God's love!

Don't forget! The Prayer Shawl "Gifts of Love" are for the whole community, both members and non-members. Please contact a member of the Prayer Shawl Committee if you know of someone in need of a "Gift of Love", or you can fill out a request card. Cards may be found in the back of the chairs in the sanctuary. Simply fill one out and drop it in the Offering Plate to share a "Gift of Love" with someone in need.

**HAPPY EASTER GRACE EPC!!**

Blessings from your Prayer Shawl Committee,

*Molly Bod, Mary Arnold, Alice Crotty, Connie Deatherage, Gail Edelman, Peggy Ernest, Jill Fraser, Jean Howse-Henke, Susy Quiggle, Lois Schielke, Judy Scott, Shirley Robertson*



## **Many Thanks!**

Bill Hetzer would like to thank everyone for the many prayers, cards, and much love that was sent his way. He is getting better each day and hopes to be able to return to Grace very soon!



**Worship: 700 S. 9th St., Leesburg, FL**

**Mailing: P. O. Box 490001**

**Leesburg, FL 34749**

**352-552-0052**

**Email: [GraceEPCLeesburg@gmail.com](mailto:GraceEPCLeesburg@gmail.com)**

**Website: [GraceEPC.church](http://GraceEPC.church)**

**Like us on Facebook: Grace EPC**

**All activities are tentative and subject to change.**

**SUNDAYS:**

- 9:00 AM ~ Sunday School
- 9:45 AM ~ Fellowship Time
- 10:30 AM ~ Worship Service

**MONDAYS:**

- 10:00 AM ~ GriefShare (1/9—4/3)
- 6:30 PM ~ Royal Highlands Small Group
- 6:30 PM ~ Royal Harbor Small Group (4/10 & 4/24)

**TUESDAYS:**

- 8:00 AM ~ Men's Bible Study & Breakfast @ Perkins
- 10:00 AM ~ Session Meeting (4/18)

**WEDNESDAYS:**

- 9:45 AM ~ Women's Bible Study
- 2:30 PM ~ Villages Small Group—On break until 4/19
- 4:30 PM ~ Choir Rehearsal

**THURSDAYS:**

- 10:00 AM ~ Stewardship & Finance Committee Meeting (4/13)
- 10:30 AM ~ Plantation Small Group (4/13)
- 11:30 AM ~ Widow's Luncheon (4/20)
- 1:00 PM ~ Prayer Time with Pastor John (4/6 & 4/20)
- 6:30PM ~ Maundy Thursday Service (4/6)

**FRIDAYS:**

- 8:30 AM ~ Last Friday Women's Breakfast (4/28)

**SATURDAYS:**