

The Spark



Reflecting on our Risen Christ

Easter Sunday, April 20, was the day we celebrated the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. Indeed, some churches only refer to Easter as Resurrection Sunday. Luke 24:1-6 describes what happened. “On the first day of the week, very early in the morning, the women took the spices they had prepared and went to the tomb. They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. While they were wondering about this, suddenly two men in clothes that gleamed like lightning stood beside them. In their fright the women bowed down with their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, ‘Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here; he has risen!’”

This event was a physical raising of Jesus’ body from death to life. It was not just spiritual, but a real, physical event. It confirmed that Jesus was and is truly God, that He defeated death once and for all time, and that he made salvation available to all who will repent and believe in Him.

Sometimes people ask me, “Why is Easter not on the same date every year?” The reason is because Easter is celebrated on the first Sunday after the first full moon after the vernal

equinox. Remember, our modern calendar (based on the earth’s rotation around the sun) is not the same calendar used during biblical times. (It was based on the moon’s rotation around the earth.) In effect, this means that Easter is observed between March 22 and April 25, depending on the year. This year, Easter was on Sunday April 20.

As we walked through the season of Lent, a time of fasting, moderation, and self-denial, we considered its value as one way to remind one another of the importance of true repentance. Doing so does not earn us “extra grace” with God, but is focused on our acceptance of the grace He has already given to us through Christ. I see observing Lent as a personal matter because it is not trying to earn God’s favor. His love for us could not be any greater than it already is, and that is why he sent his only begotten Son to be our Messiah, our Redeemer...our Savior.

God bless you all following our celebration of Resurrection Sunday together on April 20!

Pastor Jim Huber

**April/May
2025**

**First
Union
Church**

- **Reflecting on our Risen Christ**
- **A Matter of Prayer**
- **Board Highlights**
- **How About You?**
- **The Recipe Box**
- **Wisps from Willow**



A Matter of Prayer Sue Rye

Thoughts on prayer, from Phillip Yancy...

"Prayer helps correct myopia, calling to mind a perspective I daily forget. I keep reversing roles, thinking of ways in which God should serve me, rather than vice versa. As God fiercely reminded Job, the Lord of the universe has many things to manage, and in the midst of my self-pity I would do well to contemplate for a moment God's own point of view."

"I can view prayer as a way of asking a timeless God to intervene more directly in our time-bound life on earth. Indeed, I do so all the time, praying for the sick, for the victims of tragedy, for the safety of the persecuted church."

"Prayer means keeping company with God who is already present."

We continue to pray for the following groups connected to our church:

Leadership of all small groups
Bible study groups
Prayer groups
Caregivers
Sunday school teachers and classes
Musicians
Contributors to *The Spark*
Deacons and Elders
Cedar Bay Camp & Retreat Center
Northwoods Christian Camp
Custodians and Office Help
Funeral committee
Missions committee
Youth Group and Anchor Club volunteers
To those I may have missed mentioning,
I am sorry!

Let's pray for **Jamey Nichols**, our former interim minister, who is facing major health problems.

Madge Berryhill continues to suffer with a bad back and needs our prayers for relief.

Lynn Forrester has found some relief for her back through surgery.

Janette Renaud has some health concerns and appreciates our prayers.

Pray for **Rhonda McDonald**, who has cancer but is stable at this time.

Patty Carr flew to see her mom, who has cancer. Pray for peace of mind for Patty's mom.

Gillian Bickham appreciates all the prayers and cards. She is starting a new round of chemo once every three weeks over a 12-week period. Please pray a stubborn tumor will shrink, allowing future surgery.

Carole Jacob is recovering from recent carpal tunnel surgery.

Linda Jack had her long-awaited surgery in Traverse City and is now home. Please pray for complete healing.

Pray for **Nelda Vaught**, who fell recently and is in pain.

Margaret Dingman's friend we had been praying for, Dana Green, has passed away.

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We have a new baby in our church family, **Clara Jane Knapp**. She is the daughter of **David & Lily (Freel) Knapp**. Congratulations to them, and also to grandparents **Rob & Brianna Freel** and great-grandparents, **Dick & Sue Freel**.

Editor's note: I recently saw a picture of Clara and is she ever CUTE. So welcome to **Clara!**

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We extend our sympathies to:

-Mike & Leslie Freel and family on the death of Leslie's mother, **Geraldine Izzard**. Please also pray for Gerry's other two children and their families, **Jim (Julie) Izzard**, and **Yvonne (Paul) McConkey**.

-Holly Perkins, Taylor & Jerrod Dillon, Norm & Marcia Perkins, Wayne & Claudia Brood and their families on the loss of **Tim Perkins**. Tim was Holly's husband, Taylor's dad, and Norm and Claudia's brother.

Board Highlights

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. and was opened with prayer (Mike Bolcer).

Attendance – Present: Marcia Perkins, Mike Bolcer, Jim Huber, Del Jacob, Sherri Huff, George Huff, Rick Wilson, Jeremy Bigelow,

Minutes of the Feb 24th meeting were reviewed. G Huff moved, J Bigelow second to accept. Approved Treasurer's Report – Rick

Monthly reports; updates

Currently at 7/12 through the budget year, we are doing very well.

See sheet monthly pro-rated calculations (general budget; missions) as of 3/24/25

Pastor's Report – Jim

Maundy Thursday - encourage attendance to service at Pickford Methodist at 6:00 p.m.

Good Friday service here at 1pm (April 18th)

Easter morning (April 20th) - breakfast potluck (No coffee hour. No Sunday school hour)

I am teaching the 9am Sunday school class for Mike/Jane Davis until mid-April

Sermon series on the 10 Commandments has been quite challenging to prepare but it seems to have gone quite well

Attendance fluctuates during the winter but we still averaged 95-100 the past three months - very good for winter months (at least when compared to a few years ago)

Very grateful for what still appears to be very positive progress for the church's growth

Deacon's Report – Rick

List of projects currently underway ("at a glance" page) - routine updates

List of items needing more input from the board ("meaty topics" page) – see page 3 & 4

Color suggestions for fellowship hall painting were shared – Del Neville to do the work

Manse deck project is in the process of ordering material through Lowe's in Petoskey

Trex decking will be included (an anonymous donor is covering the cost of this upgrade)

The landscaping project for surrounding the west side of the manse will need to be coordinated with the deck re-construction

Additional mini-split unit for fellowship hall will cost some \$8560, though Cloverland is giving a \$2000 rebate so the net will be around \$6500ish. - See below under "New Business"

See pages detailing how much savings the mini-splits are providing us. Our kilowatt hours used have

been reduced by 1/3 or more - impressive savings (and it provides cooling in the summers too)

Three exit lights at the church are not working properly - needing repair. George Huff will investigate.

Mission committee – Jim

Association for the Recovery of Children (ARC) - Cody; Charity Pearson. This will be discussed at the May meeting of the mission committee.

Happy to see more emphasis on Mission Sundays – including specifics from our supported groups.

Women's association – Sherri

Daughters of the King banquet is on Sat May 3 rd at 4:30pm (meal at 5pm)

Sherri will assist with planning the Easter morning potluck

Christian Education – Christy/Marcia

Anchor Club continues to go very well with +/- 30 kids each occasion.

Volunteers have been consistent and helpful

Concerns about 9am children's Sunday school attendance – inconsistent numbers -

discussion will continue at Christian Education Committee.

Youth Programs – Daniel; Solana

Day trip to Petoskey this Wed for laser tag, etc.

Youth Retreat at Cedar Bay (past month) was attended by almost all of our youth teens

Old Business – none

New Business -

Discussion to give some benevolence funds to Cody; Charity Pearson. M Perkins moved, J Bigelow support to send \$1560 to them to assist their expenses during their investigation into the ARC program.

Please understand this will be discussed at the Mission Committee in May for what might be included in the new budget.

Approved.

Special meeting will be called for April 13 after church (announced this Sunday March 30) to seek approval to go ahead with one additional mini split unit for fellowship hall at a net cost of roughly \$6500.

Meeting adjourned at 8:05pm

The next scheduled board meeting is: Monday, April 28 at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jim Huber

How About You? Mike Davis

We need more time!

In the book, *Time Keeper*, by Mitch Albom, he asks readers to consider the word Time. Pass time. Kill time. Lose time. In good time. About time. Out of time. Mind the time. Be on time. Spare time. Keep time. Stall for time. In every nation and in every language, time is the most precious commodity.

On a personal note, I had an eighth grade English teacher who had a sign on his classroom clock that said,
"TIME WILL PASS...WILL YOU?"

Early in my career as a teacher, I knew I would never take that approach with my students. I wanted all my students to pass.

So back to the word Time...
Do you use your time wisely?
Do you take time to be still?
To cherish?
To be grateful?
To lift up and be lifted up?

No other creatures on earth care about time. Just humans.

How did it all start that we felt we needed to record what time it is? Did man invent time? Keep in mind that man invents nothing that God did not create first. Some say days go by slowly but years pass by swiftly. Ecclesiastes 3 says, "For everything there is a season and a time for every matter under Heaven." And it says in Psalms 31, "Our time is in HIS hands" and mine is. How about yours?



Christ Is Risen, He Is Risen, Indeed!



Patrick & Grace Minarik, Ron Gulder, and Nate & Ellie Scheetz blessed us on Easter Sunday

The Recipe Box Sue Rye



Hi, Everyone! I can't help feeling sad as I write The Recipe Box this month. A very close friend of mine, **Gerry Izzard**, and a cousin of mine died within a day or two of each other. Gerry and I first met at War Memorial Hospital in 1969 when we were both expecting our first babies. My son, **Vaughn**, was born December 25 and her daughter, **Yvonne**, was born on December 28. I had a little "baby blues", so **Gerry** invited me over to her salon for a hairdo. We were friends ever since. I will miss her! My cousin, Chalta Hillock, was my oldest living cousin at age 96.

In looking for a recipe for Meatloaf, I happened to ask Barb Smith if she had a good recipe and she said, "Yes." It's a recipe from **Pat Sullivan**, but we don't know why it's 'lost'...

Mom's Lost Meatloaf

- 1-1/2 lbs. ground chuck
- 1 cup dry bread crumbs
- 1-1/4 cup milk
- 1 egg
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 1 T Worcestershire sauce
- 1-1/2 t salt
- 1/2 T dry mustard
- 1/4 t pepper
- 1/8 t ground sage (optional)
- 1/8 t garlic powder
- 350* bread loaf pan, 4" x 8"
- 1 big loaf or 2 smaller loaves

Becky Meyers and I were texting one day and she said she makes a taco soup. I asked her for the recipe because I love tacos. Here it is!

Taco Soup

- 1 lbs. ground beef (chuck)
- 1 can tomato soup
- 1 soup can water
- 1 can kidney beans
- 1 can diced tomatoes
- 1 packet taco seasoning

Brown the hamburger until brown and crumbly.

Drain well.

Mix all ingredients in a kettle.

Serve when hot.

Garnish with any taco toppings you like, such as shredded cheese, shredded lettuce, sour cream, corn chips or Doritos, chopped green onions, and sliced black olives. I'm going to the kitchen to make this!!

BOOKS

I've discovered the world of books on tape. I was always a reader who read on a daily basis. Then I found my eyes failing, and I read less and less.

Eventually, even large-print books became too hard for me to read. I had to give up reading entirely.

Then I discovered Audio books! No kidding, in the couple of months since I started, I've probably listened to over 50 or 60 books, including all the Fannie Flagg books and all the Mitford books, I've listened to about a dozen books by Kristen Hannah. What a wonderful author!! I've also listened to many, many more. I hope I won't run out of audio books now.

Wisps from Willow Greg Wagner



What a privilege it is to raise a little boy.

There's just something about a little boy.

He will be the easiest to love you've ever known.

He may be brave and adventurous and as rowdy as they come, but when he's finally still and asleep in his bed, you'll always see the baby you cradled in your arms.

He might have more energy in his pinky finger than you have in your whole body, and it may exhaust you just to watch him sometimes. Sometimes it's better not to watch, actually.

He might be rough and loud and dirty, and you will have to remind him often to be gentle and "a little more quiet, please" and to take a shower, for goodness' sake.

You have no idea where he puts all the food he eats, and your couch and chairs and tables and railings and toilets and walls won't ever be the same.

But you know someday the fridge will be full and the cushions will stay on your couch, and even just thinking about it leaves a lump in your throat.

He will put on a brave face, but in the quiet

solitude of his room it will be your tender words of comfort he seeks. And when his feelings are hurt and his heart is broken, you will be the one he turns to.

He may choose football or soccer or karate or chess—it won't matter because as long as he loves it, he'll put in 110%. And no matter how many people are cheering him on, his eyes will always find yours in a crowd.

He might be a living, breathing replica of his daddy, or be nothing like him. Either way, he'll find ways to tell you he's his own person, through and through. Make sure to listen.

You will worry about him, hoping he'll make good decisions and not put himself in risky situations. You'll hope he's listening even when it seems like he isn't, and that he'll learn from his mistakes, as much as you want to keep him from making them in the first place.

You will encourage him to choose good people to walk with him through life, to not be afraid to ask for help, and to be a committed and equal partner.

You will pray that he never feels like he has to hide who he is, or compromise his morals and values just to fit in.

And you will steel your heart for when another love takes priority over yours, at least for him.

Because your heart will be his forever.

And no matter what, he'll always be your little boy.

What a privilege it is to raise a little boy.

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The Spark

Creating intentional followers of Jesus Christ
