

“THE MESSENGER”

PUBLISHED BY ST. PAUL’S UCC, MIDDLETOWN OHIO 45044

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APRIL 2023

Maundy Thursday Service

April 6th – 5:30pm

Starting with a covered dish meal

(A~L– Main dish, M~Z – Dessert)

Our guests will be from First Baptist and First Christian churches. Then we will engage in the Seder Meal (symbolic of the one that Jewish families have been celebrating for centuries at the time of Passover). The Sacrament of Holy Communion will be observed around the tables. Following this will be some dramatic readings done by the pastors.

So, come and join with us for this special presentation – all in the Friendship Hall.

Please Rsvp by Sunday, April 2nd to the Church

We had a very small turn out but it was very moving.

HIS YOKE IS EASY By JOHN T. Faris

A man was carrying a heavy basket. His son asked to help him. The father cut a stick and placed it through the handle of the basket so that the end toward himself was very short, while the end toward the boy was three or four times as long. Each took hold of his end of the stick, and the basket was lifted and easily carried. The son was bearing the burden with the father, but he found his work easy and light because his father assumed the heavy end of the stick. Just so it is when we bear the yoke with Christ: He sees to it that the burden laid on us is light. He carries the heavy end.

MANY THANKS

First, many thanks to the people who volunteered to prepare the luncheon for our Lenten Series. Everything was delicious! Second, many thanks for your concerns when I had a medical episode on March 19th and to Jennifer and Carl for taking our grandkids home. All is well. I have a heart monitor to wear for a month. I'm raring to go!

PASTOR ON VACATION

Sue and I will be gone from April 25 – May 7th. We will return to the Office on May 8th. If there is a Pastoral emergency, please contact Pastor Jeff Wilder at First Christian Church. Their number is 513-422-2853.

REMEMBER EASTER SUNDAY

We will gather to celebrate the resurrection of our Lord and Savior at regular time of 10:15 am. We will serve Holy Communion. Please join us for this celebration! There will be **NO COMMUNION ON APRIL 2ND**.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU!

1 – JUDY BREWER

26 – JACK KINIYALOCKS

6 – LESA BOONE

27 – KAITLYN CANTER

12 – SCOTT LOWMAN

28 – ABBEY BREEDING

13 – MARY FLORY

24 – JORDAN LOWMAN

21 – RICK LYONS

BUNNY RABBITS, EGGS, AND EASTER FLOWERS AND CHOCOLATE

These are just a few of the symbols of Easter. It is the time of year when people dress up – or at least they used to – as they go out to worship and celebrate the resurrection of our Lord.

But amidst the usual Easter decorations and goodies that have been out in stores since Valentine's Day, one symbol we need not forget – THE EMPTY TOMB!

This symbolizes life over death. New life springs forth from the deadness of our former lives of sin and regret. The empty tomb stands tall to remind us of the opportunity Christ gives us to transform our lives from what they used to be into something entirely different.

You see, we become so enamored with ourselves and how we have been doing things and how our attitudes have been, that we forget how off base we often get from what God intends for us. The empty tomb invites us to empty ourselves of all our bad habits, bad attitudes, bad decisions, bad actions that have hampered us from doing God's work as his beloved children. It gives us the chance to reclaim our identity as brothers and sisters in Christ – and to reach out in love and forgiveness to those who have not found Christ to be their cornerstone.

Through the church, we discover ways in which we can bring the resurrection message to the hearts of those who come our way, seeking signs of hope and help in their state of despair.

The empty cross drives home the message of salvation to all who look to it as a sign of rejuvenation of spirit, a rebirth of inner strength to face the challenges and opportunities laid out before us in this uncertain world we live in.

So, as we celebrate Easter, let us celebrate the symbol of freedom we are able to enjoy through the risen Savior, who has left the tomb – the one that had all our burdens and woes buried within it, empty, that our hearts may be filled with joy!

May you all have a joyful and blessed Easter!

Shalom,

Pastor Rich

OUR LENTEN LUNCHESES

This year we had successful Lenten Lunches with First Baptist and First Christian Church. A special thanks goes out to Charlene Kiniyalocks, Barb and Dan Flory, Larry and Darlene Adams, Jim Rockwell, Judy and Steve Green, Rick Glatfelter, and Corrine Lowman for all their efforts in putting our luncheon together! All enjoyed the meal and fellowship.

From an Easter Hymn by Thomas Blackburn

Awake, thou wintry earth- Fling off thy sadness!

Fair, vernal flowers, laugh forth Your ancient gladness.

CHRIST IS RISEN!

COMMUNION PROTOCOL

Due to some confusion at our last Communion, our Coordinator has recommended a simple system to be followed each time we serve the Sacrament.

Ushers will instruct people to go forward and they will form a single line across the front of the sanctuary. Bread will be distributed to each person and they will hold on to it until it is blessed by the Pastor and instructed to eat it. Likewise, each person will receive a cup and they are to hold on to it until it is blessed and you are told to drink. When finished, you will place your empty cup in the collection trays on each side of the sanctuary and return to your seats.

If we follow this procedure, it should run smoothly. Of course, if any feel uneasy about walking up front, please let the Usher know and the elements will be brought back to you.

SPRING

When the bounds of spring are on winter's traces, the mother of months in meadow or plain fills the shadows and windy places with lisp of leaves and ripple of rain. For winter's rains and ruins are over, and all the season of snows and sin, and time remembered is grief forgotten, and frosts are slain and flowers begotten, and in green underwood and cover blossom by blossom the spring begins.

Algernon Charles Swinburne

SUNDAY MESSAGES

2 – “Who Are We on Palm Sunday? – dramatic readings

9 – “He Lives, and So Do We!”

16 – “Seeing is Believing vs Believing is Knowing.”

23 – “Breaking Bread”

LITURGISTS FOR APRIL

2 – Corrine Lowman

9 – Dan Flory

16 – Marsha Minge

23 – Carl Batliner

30 – Mike Ratliff

AED - Automatic External Defibrillator

The AED has been ordered. Delivery date not confirmed yet but should be end of March or early May. Anyone is welcome to take the on-line training at their own expense. There is also in-person training available. THE AED IS HERE will be placed in 3 Courses offered:

1. CINTAS - Daniel Kloffenburg (513) 545-3824 West Chester, OH the third Thursday of each month. \$150.00/per person
2. American Red Cross on-line prerequisite for all classes. On-line is \$37..per person for Adult First Aid/CPR/AED
 - a. Adult First Aid/CPR/AED Skills \$97.00 per person
 - b. Adult CPR/AED skills \$42. Per person Thu 3:00 to 4:15 at 370 West 1st St. ,Dayton
3. National Health and Safety Assoc. On-Line only. Training, test \$19.99 Card issued ... good for 2 years.