



# RECTORTOWN Reporter



540-364-1066  
1-470-728-9060 - Pastor



[www.rectortownumc.org](http://www.rectortownumc.org)



[pastortaewonkang@gmail.com](mailto:pastortaewonkang@gmail.com)  
[secretary@rectortownumc.org](mailto:secretary@rectortownumc.org)



PO Box 301  
Rectortown, VA 20140  
3049 Rectortown Rd  
Marshall, VA 20115



## LENTEN JOURNEY

JESUS' SUFFERING, RESSURRECTION, &  
GOD'S LOVE



**Pastor TaeWon Kang**

“Yet even now, says the Lord, return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; rend your hearts and not your clothing. Return to the Lord your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love, and relenting from punishment.”

Joel 2: 12 -13 (NRSVUE)

This April, our Lenten journey concludes on Easter Sunday, April 20th. The path to Easter Sunday includes Palm/Passion Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday. Easter Sunday marks the culmination of Lent; however, reaching this point involves a series of steps. This is why Lent is referred to as a journey.

## THE LENTEN JOURNEY

The Holy Week preceding Easter Sunday serves as a reminder of Jesus' suffering and death. Jesus entered Jerusalem triumphantly, liberated the temple from the control of religious and worldly authorities, and reestablished it as a place of prayer. He offered his body as God's dwelling place, thereby extending this concept beyond a physical building or religious institution to encompass everyone. Despite his actions, he was not welcomed by the religious and worldly authorities or the residents of Jerusalem who were resistant to changing their lifestyles and mindsets. They ultimately condemned him and crucified him. Although Jesus foresaw the tragic outcome of his journey, he did not shy away from his mission. Instead, he proceeded with determination.

Jesus's journey to the cross is far from glorious; it is bloody and unromantic. It contrasts Jesus' desperation against his disciples' ignorance, his honesty against their betrayals, his faithfulness against worldly powers' unfaithfulness, and his suffering against his persecutors' brutality. Darkness tries to extinguish the light but ultimately fails. The resurrection brings awe and surprise, showing that light cannot be extinguished by darkness. This resurrection is already imprinted in Jesus's cross.

## LENTEN JOURNEY

Our Lenten journey continues, moving toward the cross of Jesus through self-denial and bearing one's own cross. The promise of resurrection accompanies this journey. Although the Lenten journey may be demanding rather than joyful, it offers an opportunity to draw closer to Jesus, contemplate his teachings, and focus on him. This process can provide profound insights and transformative experiences. I encourage you to deepen your understanding of Jesus, as he is always near. Embrace the path of Jesus, who invites us to be partners in God's mission by collectively carrying the cross of salvation for everyone on earth.

Every journey has its ups and downs that are neither predictable nor controllable. These fluctuations can evoke a range of emotions such as fear, discouragement, perplexity, surprise, and even joy and hope. It can be unproductive to judge events as right or wrong during the journey, as what seems negative today may become positive tomorrow. The greatest virtue on this journey is to remain open-minded towards all experiences and individuals, avoiding unnecessary limitations. Jesus taught, 'Do good even to those who hate you and oppress you,' and 'Love even your enemies.' These teachings instruct us not to confine the power of God's love within our personal and communal boundaries, which are influenced by our experiences, knowledge, culture, religion, faith traditions, race, gender, and educational background. Instead, we should seek ways to expand and magnify the power of God's love through ourselves and others.

## LENTEN JOURNEY

I encourage you to contemplate the life and actions of Jesus deeply. If he had restricted the power of God's love to his own human limitations and conditions—being Jewish, male, single, a peasant, Nazarean/Galilean, among other attributes—he would not have been able to call fishers to follow him, engage with non-Jews, women, Samaritans, tax collectors like Matthew and Zachariah, and so forth. He would not have accomplished the will of God to save all through the power of divine love. However, Jesus placed immense trust in God and God's love. Jesus willingly opened himself fully to God and humanity, maintaining his heart, mind, actions, and words even while suffering and dying on the cross. He became the gateway for people to enter God's kingdom and the path for them to reach God by wholeheartedly loving God and trusting the power of God's love for all.

Jesus remains alive in the hearts of believers. This is resurrection. Jesus should be resurrected in those who have lost connection with the power of God's love. The belief in Jesus's resurrection signifies complete trust in the power of God's love as manifested through Jesus Christ. Loving and trusting God's love means that resurrection is not merely a historical event but an ongoing reality. It demonstrates that God's love is boundless. Thus, strive to be lovers of God, transcending the boundaries we have consciously or unconsciously established. This is the way to become followers of Jesus, embodying the spirit of the cross, Easter People. God bless you, Amen!

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## BIBLE STUDY EVERY TUESDAY



Every Tuesday at 10:30 AM, a wonderful group of ladies gathers for Bible study with Pastor Kang. Their dedication to growing in faith, sharing wisdom, and supporting one another is truly inspiring! If you're looking for a time of fellowship, prayer, and deepening your understanding of God's Word, we'd love to have you join us. Come be part of this uplifting community!

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## UPCOMING SERVICES/ EVENTS

# Good Friday

Join us and MUMC for Good Friday!  
MUMC will have a noon service  
while RUMC will have a service at  
**5:30pm on April 18th!**

Celebrate the joy of the Resurrection with us at our Easter Sunrise Service! Join us early on **April 20th at 6:30am** as we welcome the dawn with worship, Scripture, and song. Please let us know if you are coming!



# Welcome Home

Join us this May as we celebrate **RUMC's 244th Homecoming!** We invite you to bring your **friends, family, and neighbors** to share in this joyful gathering. Stay tuned for more details—we can't wait to celebrate with you!

## FIG LEAF UPDATE



The Fig Leaf is moving forward! Over the past few months, we've welcomed nearly 30 customers each Saturday. Word is spreading, and more and more people are coming. With the change of seasons, the need is growing. Many clothing items have found good use, and we continue to receive generous donations from our community.

In the past two weeks, many new volunteers have signed up—it is such a blessing to serve those in need in a meaningful and fun way. Who doesn't love clothing and shopping for others? And even better, everything is free! We always welcome extra hands, whether on Thursdays, when we sort new donations, or on Saturdays, when the store is open. If you'd like to help, please sign up by calling the office at 540-364-1066 or online at [www.thefigleaf.org](http://www.thefigleaf.org).

Thank you all for supporting The Fig Leaf. It is an honor to be part of this incredible group!

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## FIG LEAF CLOTHING SWITCH



We need your help! Join us at The Fig Leaf on **April 10th from 3:00 to 5:00 PM** to help switch out seasonal clothing. This is a great opportunity to give back, get organized, and support our community. No special skills required—just bring your helping hands and a willingness to pitch in! If you can make it, we'd love to have you. Questions? Let us know! Thanks for your support!



## GIVE LOCAL PIEDMONT



We are excited to participate in Give Local Piedmont, a wonderful opportunity to support local organizations making a difference in our community. As government funding and grants remain uncertain, we rely on the generosity of our supporters to continue providing free clothing to those in need. Your donation will help us keep our doors open, stock essential seasonal items, and serve even more individuals and families.

**Early giving starts on April 29th, and the main donation day is May 13th.** Every contribution, big or small, makes a lasting impact. Join us in making a difference—donate through Give Local Piedmont and help us continue our mission!



## APRIL BIRTHDAYS

William Deitrich - 5th  
 Richard Thompson - 6th  
 Sandy Lowry - 7th  
 Morgan Thomas - 15th  
 Henry Symanski - 17th  
 Eileen Miller - 18th  
 Linda Rose - 20th  
 Brandon Haley - 23rd  
 Dylan Hall - 23rd  
 Larry Brown - 24th  
 Amanda Crossen - 25th  
 Peyton Hall - 30th

## APRIL ANNIVERSARIES

Julie & James Massaro - 2nd  
 Joann & Gary Garrett - 10th  
 Laura & Richard Thompson  
 - 11th

## APRIL MEETINGS & EVENTS

### Admin Council

April 3rd at 7pm

### Worship

April 14th at 6pm

### Bible Study

Tuesdays at 10:30  
 Fellowship Hall



### Trustees

April 8th at 6pm

### Palm Sunday

April 13th



### Maundy Thursday

April 17th

### Good Friday

April 18th @ 5:30



### Holy Saturday

April 19th

### Sunrise Service & Easter

April 20th (6:30am)



### Fig Leaf

April 15th at 10am



**RECTORTOWN UMC MISSION STATEMENT**  
 SERVING GOD THROUGH **P**RAYER, **A**CTION,  
 AND **L**OVE THROUGH **S**ERVICE.