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From the Pastor's Keyboard



Dear friends in this wonderful family of faith,

Blooming flowers and greening grass have been showing us for a couple of weeks now that spring is here, or at least well on its way! Isn't it amazing to sit back and see God's handiwork in the changing of the seasons here in south central Pennsylvania, and, in fact, in all of nature!

This time of year also points to some of the most important dates on our Christian calendar! The last two Thursday Lenten lunches and worship services with our sister UCC churches in the UCC York Association are: April 3 at Hayshire UCC, 100 Haybrook Drive, York 17406 and April 10 at Trinity UCC, 32 West Market Street, York 17401. The overall theme is: "Dreaming God's Dream from Genesis to Revelation".

Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter are from April 13 – 20. Some of you have told me that Holy Week is the most spiritually meaningful time of the year for you. It is for me, too. I invite you to join us here at St. John's Blymire's UCC as we remember the events of that impactful week of Jesus' earthly life. Our Lay Minister, Cindy Innerst-Axe, will be preaching for our special Sunday morning Palm Sunday service on the 13th. On Maundy Thursday, we will have our annual service in the Gathering Room with music, hand-washing, Tenebrae (lengthening of shadows from candlelight), and Holy Communion (commemorating the Last Supper, Jesus praying in Gethsemane, Jesus being arrested). After His sentence to death and crucifixion on Good Friday, on Easter Sunday, we celebrate the glorious resurrection of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ with music (including both our choir and handbells), stirring liturgy, and Word and Sacrament of Holy Communion. If there is a friend, co-worker, family member, or inactive church member whose life you would like to touch spiritually, please ask them to come to one or more of these worship services and/or our activities during this meaningful time.

This all leads me to ask: what does the resurrection mean to each of us? Oswald Chambers, theologian/teacher/chaplain of the early 20th century, who I cite often because his writings touch my heart, offered a helpful explanation. He cites a verse from Galatians which is one of my biblical life verses. "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God." (Galatians 2:19b-20). Chambers explains that the inescapable spiritual need each of us has is the need to sign the death certificate of our sin nature; that is, any claim to our rights to ourselves. The Apostle Paul did not say, "I have made a determination to imitate Jesus Christ," or, "I will really make an effort to follow Him." Instead, Paul said, "I have been *identified* with Jesus in His death."



Once we make this moral decision and act on it, all that Christ accomplished *for* us on the Cross is accomplished *in* us. Our unrestrained commitment of ourselves to God gives the Holy Spirit the opportunity to grant to us the holiness of Jesus Christ. Our individuality remains, but our primary motivation for living and the nature that rules us are radically changed. Paul does not say the life which I long to live or even pray that I live. But instead, he says that the life I now live in my mortal flesh – the life which others can see, “I live by faith in the Son of God...” This faith is not Paul’s own faith in Jesus Christ, but is a faith that transcends all imaginable limits – a faith given to him that comes only from the Son of God. May you and I live out this resurrection faith in the life of our church and in our everyday lives.

Another thing that is happening is that our search committee has been busy and has interviewed a candidate for our next part-time settled pastor who will team up with our Lay Minister Cindy Innerst-Axe. Once they have decided on a person that they want to recommend to the congregation to be our next pastor, a letter will be sent out to the congregation with a bio of this person and with an invitation to attend a Saturday meet and greet/potluck supper and a Sunday trial sermon worship service and congregational vote following that service. If there is a positive vote, then a starting date will be determined for our new pastor.

As our search committee finishes up its work and as I wrap up my interim pastorate with you, it is more important than ever to answer the questions that I have been asking all during my interim pastorate: **Who are we as St. John’s Blymire’s United Church of Christ? Who are our neighbors? Who is God calling us to become as we journey into God’s future? What is our unique niche here in Dallastown?** God has yet a lot in store for us here at St. John’s Blymire’s United Church of Christ for service to God and others and for the glory and honor of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!

See you around this month of April, Pastor Rick

April Humor:

A little boy’s prayer: “Dear God, please take care of Daddy and Mommy and my sister and my brother and me. And please take care of Yourself, God. If anything happens to You, we’re gonna be in a big mess.”

from Church Chuckles, by Ellen P. Blooming and Paul Seaburn, New Seasons, Publications International, Ltd., 2005

Old Pete was very close to dying but made a miraculous recovery. In the hospital, his pastor came to visit him, and the conversation went like this: “Tell me, Pete, when you were so near death’s door, did you feel afraid to meet your Maker?” “No, Pastor,” said Pete. “It was the other man I was afraid of!”

from The World’s Greatest Collection of Heavenly Humor, compiled by Bob Phillips, Harvest House Publishers, 1982:



CALLING FOR PICTURES OF CHURCH MEMBERS

Instead of a pictorial directory and for the benefit of our new pastor and our new church members, we are starting to put on one of the bulletin boards in the hallway pictures and names of our church members.

Please submit a picture of yourself individually, as a couple, and/or as a family (along with your name) to Sharon Stein for her to put up on the bulletin board. She will begin putting them up on April 6. If you need any help, please see Sharon.

Let’s fill the bulletin board with the beautiful faces of our wonderful church family!

MONTH OF SUNDAYS WORSHIP SERVICES FOR APRIL 2025

APRIL 6, 2025 – FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT

Message Scripture: Philippians 3:4b-14 Centering Scripture: Isaiah 43:18-19
Message: “What’s This About A ‘Killer Resume’?” Theme: Christian transformation doesn’t happen overnight. It’s messy. Look at the Apostle Paul. God’s love has the power to heal even the hardest soul, and it’s never too late for a new beginning.
Reflection/Question Time and Sunday School

APRIL 13, 2025 – PASSION/PALM SUNDAY

Message Scriptures: Luke 19:28-40, Phil. 2:5-11 Centering Scripture: Zechariah 9:9
Message: “Into Jerusalem” - Cindy Innerst-Axe
Reflection/Question Time and Sunday School

APRIL 17, 2025 – MAUNDY THURSDAY SERVICE AT 7:00 PM IN THE GATHERING ROOM

Message Scripture: 1 Corinthians 11:23-26 Centering Scripture: John 13:1
Message: “Come to the Table” Theme: The meaning of Tenebrae, Music, Washing of Each Others’ Hands, and Holy Communion Remembering Passover

APRIL 20, 2025 –EASTER SUNDAY

Message Scripture: John 20:1-18 Centering Scripture: 1 Corinthians 15:20-22
Message: “What’s This Grave Situation?” Sacrament of Holy Communion
Theme: All Mary Magdalene knew was that Jesus wasn’t where He was supposed to be — a truth many of us have come to understand. Jesus, so often, isn’t where we think He’s supposed to be. But maybe He’s where He needs to be.
Reflection/Question Time, but no Sunday School

APRIL 27, 2025 – SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER

Message Scriptures: John 20:19-31 Centering Scripture: John 20:26b-27
Message: “The Phrase We Never Want to Hear” - Rev. Curt Weber Theme: Doubt is one of God’s most effective tools for producing mighty men and women of faith.
Reflection/Question Time and Sunday School following worship

CONGRATULATIONS GRADUATES!

You are about to complete a very important step in your life and we would like to recognize you for your accomplishment on Sunday, May 25, during the worship service. If you are graduating, or have graduated in the past year from high school, college, or a trade/business school, please complete the information below and return it to the church office **no later than Sunday, May 4.** We will include a paragraph about you and your future plans in the June edition of “*Bly Lines*”.

NAME _____ PARENTS NAMES _____

SCHOOL NAME _____ DATE OF GRADUATION _____

DEGREE EARNED _____ AWARDS/ACTIVITIES _____

FUTURE PLANS _____

APRIL
BIRTHDAYS



*May God
Bless You
On Your
Birthday*

2. Mark Eberly
3. Sasha Richardson
Connor Boyd
6. Beth Markey
7. Jeri Jones
8. Elijah Matthews
9. Teila Geesey
11. Cindy Innerst-Axe
12. Kara Sylte
Roslyn Bowen
Sydney Brown
13. Joan Mickey
15. Daniel Neuhaus
21. John Barley
Nancy Taylor
22. Charles Diehl
Aubrey McKinsey
Roberta Wills
24. Debra Forbes
26. Marcia Ness
27. Fran Doll
Brandon Ness
28. Tessa Myers

CELEBRATING APRIL ANNIVERSARIES

- April 6 - Fred and Brenda Kerchner - 34 years
April 10 - Nelson and Marti Leader - 60 years
April 18 - Peter and Donna Busch - 10 years
April 22 - Jeri and Lou Ann Jones - 36 years

FINANCIAL REPORT

Undesignated General Fund

Red Brick Chapel

Cemetery

Month-2024	Income	Expense	Income	Expense	Income	Expense
January	\$7,763.00	\$10,980.79	\$3001.83	\$384.30	\$1,127.63	\$0.00
February	\$8,040.00	\$10,783.87	\$2.33	\$492.68	\$257.54	\$427.22
March						
April						
May						
June						
July						
August						
September						
October						
November						
December						
Total	\$15,803.00	\$21,764.66	\$3004.16	\$876.98	\$1,385.17	\$427.22

Balance of Undesignated General Fund @ March 1, 2025

(\$2210.50)

Balance of Red Brick Chapel Fund @ March 1, 2025
(Includes \$63,672.70 Endowment)

\$74,772.73

Balance of Cemetery Fund @ March 1, 2025
(Includes \$916,449.27 CD's, Trusts, UCC Foundation)

\$936,335.92

Financial Assistance Given through Hand of Hope Fund - 2025

	#	Total	Monthly	Available
	Families	\$\$\$	Donations	Balance
Beginning				\$ 542.38
January	4	\$225.00	\$ 81.00	\$ 398.38
February	3	\$175.00	\$ 87.00	\$ 310.38
March				
April				
May				
June				
July				
August				
September				
October				
November				
December				
Total	7	\$400.00	\$ 168.00	

REMEMBER OUR SHUT-INS and those in need of PRAYER

Terry & Fran Doll

Room 346
Residence @ Fitz Farm
2200 Springwood Rd.
York, PA 17403
Terry's cell (717) 968-2454
Fran's cell (717) 968-8754



Linda Trone

Room 604
York View Nursing Home
970 Colonial Avenue
York, PA 17403

Keeping in our prayers

Cindie McKinsey

**Friends battling cancer
Covid 19 patients**

Peggy Luckenbaugh

Room 710B
York View Nursing Home
970 Colonial Avenue
York, PA 17403



**Remember
and pray for
Our Members
in the
Military**

A1C Ness, Brandon

6907 S. Camino de la Humanidad
Tucson, AZ 85756

SUMMER CONCERT SERIES

We will once again be holding several outdoor concerts this summer. Mark the following dates on your calendars and watch for more details in the May newsletter:

- June 8-Emigsville Band
- July 27- JC Fisher Band
- August 10-Rock & Roll Express (DJ)

Emmanuel's Closet



Thank you again for your ongoing support of Emmanuel's Closet. Here is a list items that are currently needed the most: **Peanut butter/jelly, canned meat such as ham, spam, beef stew, roast beef, chicken, pork (no tuna, we have plenty of that).** Of course, other non-perishable food items, as well as paper products, cleaning supplies and toiletries are always welcome.

Life Path Christian Ministries has offered a way for us to dispose of items that we are no longer using and help the clients who come to Emmanuel's Closet at the same time. When you donate clothing, books, toys, household items, furniture, etc. at the Life Path Thrift Store at the Cape Horn shopping center, tell them you are donating for St. John's Blymire's UCC. They will keep track of what is donated and will in turn give us gift cards for the Emmanuel's Closet clients to use in their store. If you have a large amount of donations or pieces of furniture that you are unable to bring yourself, call the store at (717) 229-7300 and they will arrange to come to your house to pick up your items.

Since Emmanuel's Closet no longer offers clothing or household items, this is a great way to help our clients while de-cluttering our homes!



Beginning March 20th, the book room will feature a special spring sale. Any 5 books for \$2.00. Be sure to take this opportunity to stock up on your spring and summer reading material. Sale ends June 1st.

Ladies Afternoon Out



The FUN Team is once again sponsoring an afternoon out for the ladies. This one is called "Life Is Like a Box of Chocolates." The event will be held from 12:30-4:30 PM on Saturday, May 3. The cost is \$20 per person.

Come join us for an afternoon of fun and fellowship, including a chocolate buffet. There is a sign up sheet in the Gathering Room or you can call the church office at (717) 244-0655. This is not just for church members, so grab a friend or two and come join us. Deadline to register is Sunday, April 27.



MEN'S GROUP

On April 8th at 7:00 PM



we will be holding another edition of the Men's Group. Come prepared to test a Mystery Guest on guessing their occupation and then listen to a conversation with Jeri and have your questions answered. This is going to be a whale of a program.



Our first chicken BBQ of the season will be held on Saturday, April 12, from 11:00 AM-1:00 PM. You will get a 1/2 chicken, baked potato, applesauce, roll and butter all for \$10.00. To place an order, please call the church at (717) 244-0655. We sold out early nearly every month last summer, so to be guaranteed a dinner, it is best to pre-order. Other BBQ's will be held on the 2nd Saturday of each month thru October.

We are also planning to set up a bake sale table and would welcome donations of homemade cookies, rice krispie treats, cupcakes, candy, etc. Please put individual portions in baggies or plastic wrap. They may be dropped off at the church the day before or the morning of the BBQ. Thank you.



CHAIR/GENTLE YOGA

Are you looking for some gentle, easy exercise? Come check out our Chair Yoga classes! These classes are especially good for beginners. No equipment is necessary. Yoga is one of the most highly recommended forms of exercise for seniors! You can come occasionally, once, twice or three times a week. Classes are Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 10:00-11:00 AM here at the church. There is a \$10 fee for each class.



On Sunday, April 6, from 6:00-8:00 PM, you are invited to join us for an old-fashioned Hymn Sing, followed by delicious refreshments. The public is invited and there is no charge.

LANCASTER THRIFTING DAY

Mark your calendars for Friday, May 30. That is when we will be taking a road trip to Lancaster County to check out lots of shops. More details to follow.

What is Messy Church? It's church, but not as you know it! Messy Church is a form of Community Outreach for families, friends and neighbors. It involves creativity, celebration and hospitality! It's church for people of any age and at all stages of their faith journey. A meal will be provided. Our next Messy Church gathering will be held on Friday, April 18, 6:00-8:00 PM.



Messy Church team is asking for volunteers to help with crafts and other fun activities. Any questions, see Sharon Stein.



CARD and GAME CLUB



We have started a group to play card and board games here at the church. Everyone is welcome, and if you don't know how to play certain games, there will be someone who can teach you. You can bring lunch or order in.

We meet the second Wednesday of each month starting at 11:00 AM and playing until people are ready to stop. April's meeting will be on the 9th.

GUIDED MEDITATION and DRUM CIRCLE



Meditation and Music are very good ways to deepen your personal spiritual practice. Relax, let go of worldly thoughts, and sink into your soul. We invite you to join us on Saturday, April 19, at 10:00 AM, for Guided Meditation, followed by Drum Circle, with a variety of instruments available. We meet at the home of Cindy Innerst-Axe, 2285 Swamp Road, Dallastown. Questions, call Cindy (717) 855-6330.



WOMEN OF WONDER

Who? What? Where? When? We are a group of women who simply enjoy each other's company, conversation and compassion...while sharing a message of God's love to each other, our church family, and our community. We read scripture and share devotions. We offer advice, support, and sometimes a shoulder. We laugh together and find joy. If this sounds like something you or a friend would like to do, we meet on the 4th Saturday of every month at 11:00 AM at the church. (We also go out to lunch afterward). Hope to see you in the Gathering Room at our next meeting on April 26.

THE TABLES TURNED

The greatest reversal occurred in a cemetery outside of Jerusalem. Jesus the Christ was Jesus the corpse. No pulse, no breath, no hope. And his followers? They were hiding in the cupboards and corners of Jerusalem, for fear of a cross that bore their names.

Their world was broken.
Their hearts were broken.

And just when all joy was lost his heart began to beat! Eyelids popped open. Pierced hands lifted. Jesus stood and placed his heel squarely on the head of Satan.
And when he did,
“the tables were turned.”

No matter how you write it, the Easter morning announcement is just the same. “He isn’t here! He is risen from the dead, just as he said would happen. Come, and see the place where his body was lying” (Matthew 28:6). The God of the great turnarounds performed his greatest work.

Max Lucado



April 2025

Science has never drummed up quite as effective a tranquilizing agent as a sunny, spring day.

W. Earl Hall



MY GOOD FRIDAY MIRACLE

“Freda. This looks like a good day to plant those seeds,” my husband said, as he left for work.. That afternoon, in the sunshine’s warmth, I knelt in the garden planting sweet-pea seeds. It was Good Friday and the hour when most people were at church.

I was recovering from a serious operation. The doctor didn’t think I would walk ever again. I could only get around with the aid of my walker, and I felt slow, awkward, frustrated. Recovery seemed impossible.

“Why is it called Good Friday?” I wondered. For Jesus it had been a day of sadness and pain. Crawling slowly on my knees, I poked a finger into the earth, dropped in a seed, then covered it. Soon shoots would be popping up through the spring snow. I pictured them and could almost smell their fragrance.

In the garden, I felt very close to God. I thought of Christ praying in the Garden of Gethsemane. As I struggled on my knees, my thoughts traveled to His trial and then to Golgotha, where He suffered on the cross. Sadly, I remembered His cry, “It is finished.”

I too had suffered, had lingered near death after brain surgery. Only faith and family had sustained me. Working in the soil, I felt at peace and strengthened. Tucking in the last seed, I stood and gazed proudly at my rows. “Well, it’s finished.”

My thoughts remained on Good Friday as I walked to the house. At the porch, I glanced back at the garden. Then I saw it! Standing among the rows... “my walker!”, I gasped. I had walked without it, and I’ve never needed it since.



Freda Creager

TALK TO JESUS

Tell him about your week
Tell him about your dreams
Tell him about your fears

Tell him what you’re learning about
Tell him about a decision you face
Tell him why you’re discouraged
Tell him what you need his help with
Tell him how he’s blessed you
Tell him why you need forgiveness
Tell him what you love about him

Soulshepherding

“I think joy and sweetness and affection are a spiritual path. We're here to know God, to love and serve God, and to be blown away by the beauty and miracle of nature. You just have to get rid of so much baggage to be light enough to dance, to sing, to play. You don't have time to carry grudges; you don't have time to cling to the need to be right.”

Anne Lamott

Sometimes people say unkind or thoughtless things.
When they do, it is best to be a little hard of hearing.

Ruth Bader Ginsburg

Every day is a new day for you to
color in with a handful of
joy-filled crayons!

Bob Goff

“Prejudice is jumping to exclusions.”

Hazel Brick





A teacher brought balloons to school and asked the children to blow them all up and then each write their names on their balloon. They tossed all the balloons into the hall while the teacher mixed them from one end to the other. The teacher then gave them 5 minutes to find the balloon with her name on it. The children ran around, looking frantically but as the time ran out - nobody had found their own balloon...

Then the teacher told them to take the balloon closest to them and give it to the person who's name was on it. In less than 2 minutes everyone had their own balloon. Finally the teacher said, "Balloons are like happiness. No one will find it looking for theirs only. Instead if everyone cares about each others they will find theirs as quickly as possible."

Finally, my winter fat is gone. Now I have spring rolls!

In the spring the world is mud-luscious and puddle-wonderful.

e.e cummings

Mother Nature apologizes for the late arrival of spring.
Father Time was driving and refused to stop to ask for directions.

"Pour out upon us the power of your love, that we may protect life and beauty. Fill us with peace, that we may live as brothers and sisters, harming no one. O God of the poor, help us to rescue the abandoned and forgotten of this earth, so precious in your eyes.

In Jesus Name, AMEN "

From a devotional- contributed by Jane Picking



LISTEN!

You can tell when you're with someone who's listening. She hears you, really hears you. He hears the sadness in your tone or catches your joy. Be a listener, to music, to life, to others, to God. Life is noisy, but there is music in every heartbeat. God is waiting to bring joy and peace to the confusion of our days.

Sheila Walsh

"Don't believe everything you think"
- is probably the best advice
I've ever been given!

Timber Hawkeye

"Am I really so insecure that I surround myself only with people who agree with me? When people are flat wrong, why do I appoint myself sheriff to straighten them out? Burning down others opinions doesn't make us right. It makes us arsonists."

Bob Goff

THE JERUSALEM TIMES CLASSIFIED ADS THE FIRST EASTER

For Sale: Used Tomb. Good location!
Like new! No longer occupied!

For Sale: Large selection of sackcloth (mourning clothes)--men's and women's, sizes. No longer needed.

For sale: One Cross. Well used!
Priceless! Best offer!

Looking For Work: 2 former guards.

Lost Item: One body lost. Big Reward for its return!--the Sanhedrin.

Companions Wanted: Long-term relationships desired. I am dying to meet you!--JC

BE THE LIGHT

"You are the light" is the core message of Jesus. Everything else he taught was about how best to shine holy light into the world. That's not necessarily the message of Christianity. The core message of Christianity, according to many, is that Christ died on the cross to save us from our sins and from eternal damnation.

However, Jesus never heard of Christianity. He did not preach that without believing in him people were destined for hell. Not even John 3:16 or 14:6 says that. He did not say, "You could be the light" or "You might be the light" or "You will become the light if you believe the right things and say the right prayer." No.

Jesus said, "You are the light of the world" right now, as you are, full stop. Light is your nature, your identity, your being. No one can change that. There is nothing you need to do to become what you already are.

That doesn't mean you don't have work to do. As for me, I routinely block the light with bushels of fear, buckets of resentment, and lampshades of ego. Jesus shows me the way to turn those bushels into lampstands and to let my light shine, like him. Regardless, be what you are. Be the light.

Prayer - *I am the Light. I will shine.*

Matt Laney



New life defines the season of spring. Make this Easter craft that symbolizes rebirth.

What you need:

- Brown paper lunch bag
- Scissors
- Pencil
- Glue stick
- Jellybeans



What you do:

1. From the bag's bottom, cut two 2-inch circles. Set aside.
2. From the sides, cut two 10-inch circles.
3. Draw a thin spiral on each large circle and cut along the lines. Crinkle spirals gently.
4. Starting at the center, wrap one spiral into a nest. Glue every few inches to hold it.
5. Glue one small circle to the bottom of the nest.
6. Repeat with the other spiral. Fill nests with jellybeans and give to a friend!



OUR EASTER GIFT

Thanks to Easter, what wonderful gift does God give us?

Directions: Start at the given letter, move one space in the direction each arrow points. Write the last letter in each sequence in the spaces provided. Then write those answers in order on the blanks below to complete 1 Peter 1:3, NIV.

A	B	C	D	E
F	G	H	I	J
K	L	M	N	O
P	Q	R	S	T
U	V	W	X	Y

1. C → ↓ ↓ _____
2. H → ↑ → _____
3. V ↑ → ↓ _____
4. I ← ← ↑ _____
5. T ↑ ← ↑ _____
6. P ↑ → → ↓ _____
7. D ↓ → ↓ ↓ _____
8. T ↑ ← ↑ ← _____



Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ!

In his great mercy he has given us

into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

1 Peter 1:3, NIV

Answer: new birth