

The mission of Mount Olympus Presbyterian Church is to invite people to experience Jesus Christ and become his passionate followers.



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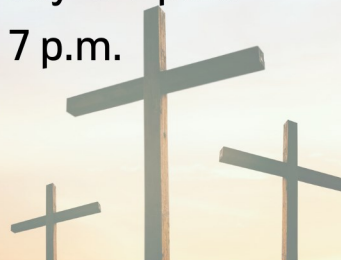
Holy Week Schedule

March 24 - Palm Sunday

March 28 - Maundy Thursday @ 7 p.m.

March 29 - Good Friday @ 7 p.m.

March 31 - Easter Sunday



IN THIS EDITION:

Message from Pastor Chris
March Sermons
Adult Discipleship Classes
Message from Pastor Bre
Dinners for Eight
Kenya 2025 Info

Pages 2-3
Page 4
Page 4
Page 5
Page 6
Page 6

A MESSAGE FROM PASTOR CHRIS

Anam Cara

March is the month for the Irish here in the United States. We celebrate St. Patrick's Day, in some capacity, every year on March 17. St. Patrick's Breastplate Prayer has long been a favorite of mine. Here's a shortened version:

As I arise today,
may the strength of God pilot me,
the power of God uphold me,
the wisdom of God guide me.
May the eye of God look before me,
the ear of God hear me,
the word of God speak for me.
May the hand of God protect me,
the way of God lie before me,
the shield of God defend me,
the host of God save me.
May Christ shield me today.

Christ with me, Christ before me,
Christ behind me,
Christ in me, Christ beneath me,
Christ above me,
Christ on my right, Christ on my left,
Christ when I lie down, Christ when I sit,
Christ when I stand,
Christ in the heart of everyone who
thinks of me,
Christ in the mouth of everyone who
speaks of me,
Christ in every eye that sees me,
Christ in every ear that hears me.
Amen."

Even though I am not Irish by any stretch of DNA testing (there have been seasons when I wished I were Irish, though I'm not sure exactly why), I have come to greatly admire the Celtic way of being Christian in the world, with their deep connection to the land and their awareness of how God speaks to us through creation. And I love the Irish blessings.

In worship services, the preacher offers a blessing at the end. It usually begins with the word "May," as in, "May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ" or "May the Lord bless you and keep you..." To bless someone, in the most literal sense of the word, is to confer your hopes on them. That's why so many traditional blessings begin with the word "may."

Take, for instance, what is perhaps the best-known Irish blessing (or toast, as the case may be):

May the road rise up to meet you.
May the wind be always at your back.
May the sun shine warm upon your face;
The rains fall soft upon your fields and until we meet again,
May God hold you in the palm of His hand.

"May" doesn't mean "so be it." May implies that something is possible but not a done deal. 'May' hopes that God puts it in play and that you get out of your own way and allow it to happen.

John O'Donohue, the late contemporary Irish poet/philosopher (and former priest), knew the power of "may." In his final book, *To Bless the Space Between Us*, he wrote:

"The language of blessing is invocation, a calling forth...[May] imagines and wills the fulfillment of desire. In the evocation of our blessings here, the word 'may' is the spring through which the Holy Spirit is invoked to surge into presence and effect. The Holy Spirit is the subtle presence and secret energy behind every blessing."

For many Celtic Christians, O'Donohue became the catalyst for exploring the ancient rhythms of our faith, the meeting place where our collective past informs our contemporary spirituality. In the introduction to an edition of *The Confession of St. Patrick*, O'Donohue described the Celtic spiritual concept of *Anam Cara* — which means that God is a friend to our soul:

"This relationship cuts across all other connections. In your Anam-cara you discovered the Other in whom your heart could be at home." He goes on to say: "[A blessing] touches that tender membrane where the human heart cries out to its divine ground. In the ecstasy and loneliness of one's life, there are certain times when blessing is nearer to us than any other person or thing. A blessing is not a sentiment or a question; it is a gracious invocation where the human heart pleads with the divine heart. There is nothing more intimate in life than the secret under-territory where it anchors."

St. Patrick's Day is meant to be a celebration that surpasses the kind of intoxication reached with one too many green beers. This year, may it be an occasion to bless and be blessed, a moment to remember the Anam Cara that draws us to one another in celebration and in sorrow.

O'Donohue concludes *To Bless the Space Between Us* with a poem titled "The Eyes of Jesus," which ends with the words:

Forever falling softly on our faces,
His gaze plies the soul with light,
Laying down a luminous layer

To unravel the last black knot
And we are back home in the house
That we never left.

Beneath our brief and brittle days
Until the appointed dawn comes
Assured and harvest deft

With Hope,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Chris", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Pastor Chris



THE QUESTIONS JESUS ASKED

MARCH SERMONS

<u>DATE</u>	<u>SERMON TITLE</u>	<u>SCRIPTURE REFERENCES</u>
3/3	<i>How Many Loaves Do You Have?</i>	Matthew 15:32-39
3/10	<i>Can You Drink the Cup?</i>	Mark 10:35-45
3/17	<i>Are You Asleep?</i>	Mark 14:32-42
3/24	<i>Has No One Condemned You?</i>	John 8:2-10
3/31	<i>Why Are You Crying?</i>	John 20:11-18

ADULT DISCIPLESHIP



Our Lenten Adult Discipleship class, called “A New Family: Opening the Doors of the Church,” continues during March, using a film series featuring author Rachel Held Evans. These short films invite us into reflection of our beliefs and welcoming practices as the Body of Christ. Come and join us in this important discussion on Sunday mornings at 9:45 a.m. in room 501.

Please join us for an **Easter Brunch**

SUNDAY, MARCH 31 AT 9:45 A.M.

PROVIDED BY THE MEN'S MINISTRY





As I'm writing this, we've just had the experience at MOPC of marking the start of the Lenten season with Ash Wednesday. I still have the words of our praise songs running through my head from the service... *"O, come to the altar. The Father's arms are open wide. Forgiveness was bought with the precious blood of Jesus Christ."* I still even have some ash under my fingernails, if no longer on my forehead.

This is a new experience for me in recent years. I wasn't brought up in a church that celebrated the Lenten season. I didn't even know what it was, really (unless you count being aware that some of my friends in high school all of a sudden couldn't eat chocolate for 40 days). But now that I'm part of a tradition that observes the various seasons of our Christian calendar, I deeply appreciate the essence of Lent. Truth be told, I need it.

On Ash Wednesday, we hear the words that God spoke to Adam in Genesis 3:19: "You are dust, and to dust you shall return." This year, as I repeated the phrase while drawing an ashen cross on my husband's forehead, it was a surprisingly sad moment—a stark reminder that he doesn't belong to me. He belongs to God, as do I. And both our lives will eventually end. After the service, we mused on it together for a while and realized that there, but by the grace of God, that would be it. We would both just be dust and nothing more.

That is worth remembering. There is sadness in it as we recognize our own mortality and finitude, but there's also hope and freedom. If we can hold our lives loosely—including our opinions, our habits, our "stuff," and even our relationships—life can have a lightness to it. A loveliness. We can be honest about our flaws and repent of our sins to God (who already knows it all anyway) AND we can be assured that we're forgiven and loved in spite of them because of Jesus. We can show up wholeheartedly and take ourselves a little less seriously.

This is why a fasting practice can be so formative during Lent. It helps remind us that the things we believe we're dependent on aren't actually as important as we make them out to be. That God is the true source of our being no matter what. It reminds us of *whose* we are and what Christ has done to make it so. Out of that freedom, we have space to let others in and invite God to do with us whatever he will. It's the resurrection life we look forward to and can receive even now when we enter the grave and come out on the other side with Christ.

Grace and peace,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Bre Magill".

Pastor Bre



MOPC will be holding Dinners for Eight in April and May. These fellowship dinners consist of eight people meeting at the home of a host at an agreed-upon date and time. The host coordinates the menu and what the guests can contribute. These dinners are an excellent way to connect with others in the church. If you are interested in attending or hosting, a sign-up sheet will be available in the gathering area beginning Sunday, March 3, or contact Dennis Winge (dennis.winge@hsc.utah.edu).



GOLFERS!! The MOPC golf group will begin play on Monday, April 1, and will continue weekly on Mondays through October (weather permitting). There will be three tee times starting at 9:20 a.m. at Fore Lakes Golf Course, 1285 W 4700 S. For more information, please contact Jim Stinson at (801)558-1416 or jbstinsonslc@yahoo.com.



A short-term mission trip to the ByGrace mission in Nairobi, Kenya, is tentatively scheduled for June 11-23, 2025 upon approval by Session. The schools of the ByGrace mission, which was started in 2005 by Stephen and Rosemary Mbogo, now serve over 350 primary-aged children, ~100 high school students, and another large group of children in the Mathare slum area of Nairobi. In June 2023, MOPC sent a team of 46 people to

work with the ByGrace schools and were able to contribute to their mission in substantial ways. We look forward to the June 2025 return trip. Our team will include both youth (junior high and older) and adults. Please consider whether you would be interested in participating. We would like to have our mission team assembled by June 2024 so we have enough time for training and planning. We will likely cap the team size at 45 individuals. Stephen and Rosemary will be visiting MOPC to speak about ByGrace on Sunday, April 7. Please let Dennis Winge know at dennis.winge@hsc.utah.edu if you are interested in participating in the 2025 trip.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
 <h1>MARCH</h1> <h2>BIRTHDAYS AND EVENTS</h2>					1 7 pm Rescue Mission 7 pm AA	2 11 am AA
3 8:30 & 11 am Worship 9:45 am Discipleship for all ages	4 12:30 pm Staff 7 pm AA	5 6:30 am Men's Bible 9:30 am PW 7 pm AA	6 1 pm Chronic Conditions 7 pm Youth 7 pm Mt O 45	7 7 am Men's Bible 9:30 am Wm's Bible 6:30 pm PAL 7 pm Wm's Bible	8 9 am Sandwiches 4:30 pm Soup Kitchen 7 pm AA	9 10 am Utah Food Bank 11 am AA
10 8:30 & 11 am Worship 9:45 am Discipleship for all ages	11 12:30 pm Staff 7 pm AA	12 6:30 am Men's Bible 6:30 pm Finance 7 pm Deacons 7 pm AA	13 7 pm Youth 7 pm Mt O 45	14 7 am Men's Bible 9:30 am Wm's Bible 12 pm Adult Lunch 7 pm Wm's Bible	15 7 pm AA	16 11 am AA
17 8:30 & 11 am Worship 9:45 am Discipleship for all ages 12:30 pm CM St. Patrick Potluck	18 12:30 pm Staff 7 pm AA	19 6:30 am Men's Bible 7 pm Session 7 pm AA	20 1 pm Chronic Conditions 7 pm Youth 7 pm Mt O 45	21 7 am Men's Bible 9:30 am Wm's Bible 6:30 pm PAL 7 pm Wm's Bible	22 7 pm AA	23 11 am AA
24 Palm Sunday 8:30 & 11 am Worship 9:45 am Discipleship for all ages	25 12:30 pm Staff 7 pm Personnel 7 pm AA	26 6:30 am Men's Bible 7 pm Facilities 7 pm AA	27	28 7 am Men's Bible 9:30 am Wm's Bible 7 pm Maundy Thursday Service	29 7 pm Good Friday Service 7 pm AA	30 11 am AA
31 Easter Sunday 8:30 & 11 am Worship 9:45 am Easter Brunch						



UTAH
FOOD
BANK

What a nice turnout we had in February, let's duplicate it!! Saturday, March 9 at 3150 S 900 W – 10 a.m. to noon (or however much time you are able). Closed-toe shoes required – Children 6 and older are welcome with parents!! See you then.



Every second Friday of the month, volunteers from MOPC help serve our community by giving their time to assist St. Vincent de Paul in providing food to those in need. On these Fridays, at 9 a.m., a group gathers in the MOPC kitchen to prepare sandwiches to be delivered. Also, at 4:30 p.m., MOPC volunteers by serving meals at the St. Vincent de Paul soup kitchen. If you want to participate, please sign up in the gathering area or contact the church for more information. The next opportunity to help will be March 8.



Our monthly Adult Fellowship Luncheon will be on Thursday, March 14, at noon in the gym. Our very own Jill Baskett will be the speaker, sharing her United States Mission Experience (USME). Her mission trip was in the Arizona border region. Come along and hear about this important mission exchange. A timely topic! Bring a friend, for fun, food, and fellowship (and your favorite dish to share!) We are looking for two people to come at 11 a.m. to help set up tables for our lunch on March 14. Please let Pauline know if you can help. (801-278-9566)



Thank you, MOPC, for joining in on the Presbytery of Utah Matthew 25 Souper Bowl of Caring. The congregation met and exceeded the challenge! In 2023, 526 food items were collected, and \$500 was donated. Our 2024 tally is 732 food items and \$1500. A big thank you goes to our MT O 45 Wednesday night group for counting and recording all the food items. All of the donations were given to the Utah Food Bank. MOPC tackled hunger, joining forces with ten other Presbyterian congregations across Utah.

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN (PW)



"March winds doth blow, and we shall have snow!"

Oh, no, oh, no "Doers" work better in Spring, don't you know?

Our regular MOPC PW monthly meeting will be Tuesday, March 5 at 9:30 a.m. for light refreshments and 10 a.m. for the business meeting. February brunch out was enjoyed by all, and monies were dispersed as follows: an additional \$400 to Souper Bowl of Caring and \$500 to the Mt O Youth to aid in sponsoring ByGrace students.

Our guest speaker in March will be our own Jill Baskett, who will relate her United States Mission Experience (USME) along the Arizona border region as she represented the Rocky Mountain Synod. Bible Study will be Marilyn Marshall. In April, Carol Day will review "The God Who Sees: Immigrants, the Bible, and the Journey to Belong."

The PW Spring Gathering will be April 19-20 at Community Presbyterian Church in Brigham City, Utah. The theme will be "Gracious Welcome: Opening Doors, Opening Arms," featuring USME participants, Jill Baskett and Emily Lower. A \$15 fee will be due at the door, which includes two meals and snacks. Register by April 15th with Pauline Forster or Sarah Yates sesyates@gmail.com.

Registration for the PW Churchwide Gathering in St. Louis will begin March 1. The PW in Utah is seeking volunteers to sew 100 vests for General Assembly which will be in Salt Lake City, June 29 to July 4. Materials and patterns will be available in March. Vests need to be completed by May 29. Contact Carol Day carolanneday@gmail.com if you would like to sew a few. Hostesses for March are Emily Piper and Jill Baskett.

-Pauline Forster

MOPC CHRONIC CONDITIONS SUPPORT GROUP

There are many types of conditions that chronically impact people. If you or a loved one is one of those people, we invite you to check out the support group designed for you. We meet twice a month via Zoom to talk, pray, and encourage one another. Our meeting this month will take place on Wednesdays, March 6 and 20 at 2 p.m. Please text or call Janet Nelson at 801-560-9044 for the Zoom link or more information.





Mt O Youth



In February, we commissioned our 2024 class of confirmands along with their mentors, as they set out for the next two months to intentionally explore their faith and determine if they would like to confirm their childhood baptism or be baptized for the first time to become formal members of Mount Olympus Presbyterian Church.

We have been very excited about our confirmation program for the last two years as we have talked about the class and the process of confirmation as being a 'rite of passage' for our students. It is like a coming-of-age ritual that they are invited into to help guide them on the lifelong path of faith.

Please keep them in your prayers as they set out on this journey with their mentors.

-Jared McClure, Director of Youth Ministries



Mt O Kids

Save the dates for our upcoming fellowship events! Contact Jen, Director of Family Ministry, for more information (jchristensen@mtopres.org).



What: Mt O 45 Movie Day
Who's Invited: 4th and 5th Graders
When: March 10 at 12:30 p.m.



What: St. Patrick's Day Potluck
Who's Invited: Everyone!
When: March 17 at 12:30 p.m.



What: Lunch and Fellowship
Who's Invited: Families with children in Pre K and younger
When: April 7 at 12:30 p.m.

Ministry Staff

Pastor
Associate Pastor
Pastor Emeritus
Executive Administrator
Administrative Assistant
Director of Family Ministry
Director of Youth Ministry
Treasurer
Director of Childcare
Facilities Manager

Chris Pritchett
Bre Magill
Jeff Silliman
Sheila Barnish
Sarah Brozek
Jen Christensen
Jared McClure
Jeanne Mehlhoff
Maddie Woodruff
Alex Woodruff

Contact Information

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Exec. Administrator: sbarnish@mtopres.org
Newsletter Items: sbrozek@mtopres.org
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Elders Serving on Session

Class of 2024

Brian Babb
Paige Frame
Carlee Johnson
Deb Penney

Class of 2025

Amy Beckler
Shauna Huston
Kaye Meidinger
Armand Van Hien

Class of 2026

Carol Day
Megan Judkins
Edward Owens
Mark Templeman

OUR MINISTRY OF CARE

Board of Deacons

Class of 2024: Jill Baskett, Marina Collins, Sheridan Metcalf, Sher Santaw,
Karen Spackman

Class of 2025: Lonnie Baskett, Chuck Graybill, Karen Jackson, Debora Owens, John Terrion,
Anne Gerrie van Hien

Class of 2026: Sherrie Bertrand, Thea Hayden, Julie Holtrop, Becky Sowards, Jim Sowards
Nikki Zyp

Stephen Ministers

Kristina O'Neal* and Lauri Winge*

* Stephen Ministry Leadership Team