

March 2018

Beacon

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OGDEN-HILLCREST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
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Joyce K. Allen, Pastor

DISPELLING THE DARKNESS

On Good Friday, many churches hold a Tenebrae worship service. Tenebrae (Latin for “darkness” or “shadows”) is an ancient Christian tradition that re-creates the emotions of Jesus’ Passion and death. The sanctuary gradually grows darker. A strepitus (Latin for “loud noise”) may signify the closing of Jesus’ tomb. As the service concludes, a Christ candle stands alone on the altar, reminding worshipers that victory is coming on Easter morning.

When Scottish missionary Peter Milne died in 1924, the thankful people he’d served in the South Pacific inscribed this message on his headstone: “When he came, there was no light; when he died, there was no darkness.”

Death’s darkness couldn’t conquer Jesus, the light of the world, so it does not conquer us. “*The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it*” (John 1:5, ESV).

PASTOR'S PAGE

"The whole assembly got up and led Jesus to Pilate and began to accuse him. They said, "We have found this man misleading our people, opposing the payment of taxes to Caesar, and claiming that he is the Christ, a king." Pilate asked him, "Are you the king of the Jews?" Jesus replied, "That's what you say." Then Pilate said to the chief priests and the crowds, "I find no legal basis for action against this man." Luke 23: 1-4

I like the way Lent and Easter fall on the calendar this year. March contains the Lenten season and then at the end, Holy Week, while Easter is in April. They are very different seasons, and in March we will continue our Lenten journey as we ponder what Jesus went through and then how he died. In April we'll celebrate his resurrection. In fact, on Easter morning the church will be filled with people who want to celebrate. Before we get there, Pilate has a question to ask.

The question Pilate asks Jesus, "are you the king of the Jews", is a question he might ask ourselves this month. If Jesus is the King of the Jews, if he is our Lord and our Savior, if he died on the cross for us, then don't we owe it to him to worship him? Don't we owe God the gift of traveling through this journey again, so that we might better understand it, and that we might better understand the relationship God wants to have with each of us?

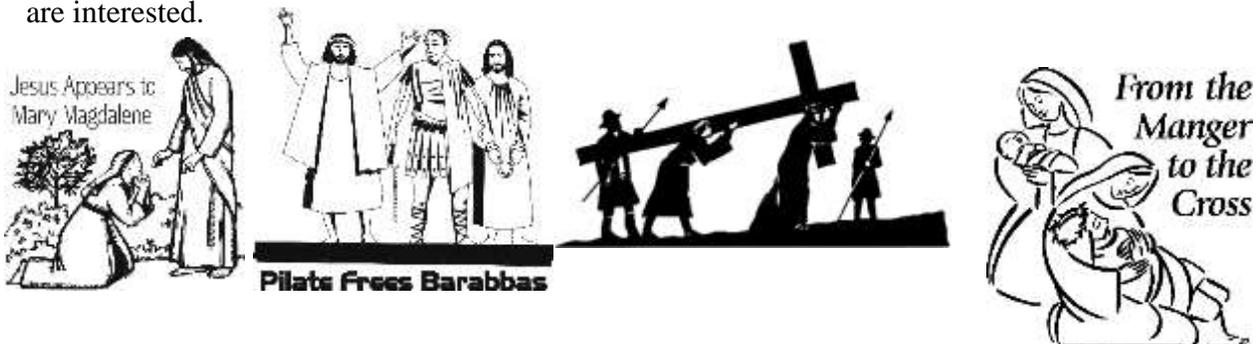
Don't wait until Easter. You'll miss most of the story if you wait until the end, and it's a really good story. Come and hear again, about Jesus and his friends in an upper room. Have communion on Maundy Thursday evening. And on Good Friday come and hear what Jesus did for you. You'll never really understand Easter, if you don't live through Holy Week! Please come and join in.

Peace,

Pastor Joyce

LENTEN WEDNESDAY SERVICES

There are three more Wednesday evening services in March. We will meet on the 7th, 14th and 21st at 7pm for a service of hymns, prayers and some voices from Jerusalem. This is our chance to put ourselves into Jesus' time and place, and to hear accounts from some of the folks who met him along their way. Pastor Joyce is looking for readers for each week. Please contact her if you are interested.



LENTEN STUDY

Our Lenten study continues this month, during the adult Sunday school class which meets between our two services. Pastor Joyce is teaching from a book called, *Embracing the Uncertain, a Lenten Study for Unsteady Times*. You can just come to class and get a book.

DINNER GROUP

This month we are going to a building we've been to before, but it's a new place now, so we're giving it a try. A couple of our group have been and gave it a thumbs up. Johnny and Wilson's Diner is located on Upper Court Street in a former Arby's building. There's a full menu and lots of parking on the side. Our reservation is for March 16th at 6pm. Let's meet there and have dinner together.

Mark your calendar for April 20th when we'll meet again at the Ground Round.



Youth group will meet on March 4th at the church for some fun, games and snacks. We'll discuss our next outing then.

AN OPPORTUNITY TO HELP

Pastor Joyce will be leading the Sunday worship service at Elizabeth Church Manor on Sunday March 18th at 2pm. You are invited to come and share God's love with the residents. You can share a smile, sit with someone, help people find the right page in the hymnals, and even offer a hug or two. There are lots of ways God can use you, so come along and serve God. It only takes a half an hour or so, and you will find yourself feeling blessed.





MISSION PROJECTS

2018

January	Distribute hats and mittens
February 11	Blanket Sunday
March 2	Church Women United World Day of Prayer at Nimmonsburg Church
March 11	UMCOR Sunday;
May	Assemble Health Kits for UMCOR
May 20	Special Coffee hour between services
June	Collection of suitcases for RISE for one month only;
Summer	Collection of products for the Oxford Veteran's Home June - September
August	Pound Auction at Church Picnic in Port Dick Park
September	Conclude Veteran's drive; by visiting Oxford Veteran's Home
October 31	Halloween Necklaces
November 11	Veteran's coffee hour.
November 11	Thanksgiving food drive ends
November 15 or 16	Assemble hat and mitten tree on
December	Hat and Mitten Collection for local school children
December	Children's Home - Tree Lighting Ceremony

UMCOR SUNDAY

Every year, United Methodists and other people of goodwill come together to assemble, deliver, and ship the many thousands of kits that give people in crisis basic supplies and a reminder that someone cares for them.

But these supplies could not be delivered so effectively if it weren't for generous gifts to UMCOR Sunday, formerly, **One Great Hour of Sharing** offering.

UMCOR Sunday makes that happen by underwriting the administrative costs that support the operations to facilitate the receipt, processing, and shipping of relief donations.

HOLY WEEK SERVICES



On Maundy Thursday, March 29th, we will meet in the Pine room for a covered dish dinner at 5:30. We'll commemorate the last supper Jesus had with his disciples, and then we'll go up to the sanctuary for a 7pm worship service. We will share in Holy Communion and spend time with Jesus in the garden. Everything about Maundy Thursday is family friendly and everyone is welcome.

On March 30, Good Friday, our church will be open from noon until 3 for silent prayer. At 7pm that evening we will meet for a service of remembrance and we will ponder Jesus' suffering and death. The nature of this service makes it difficult for children to understand. Everyone is always welcome at Ogden, but if you're bringing your kids, you may want to discuss the service with them ahead of time.



On Easter morning we will greet the sunrise with a 6:30am service at the Chenango Valley cemetery. We will be near the offices and the cannons.

Our regular Sunday services will be held at 8:30 and 10:45 on Easter morning, April 1. Come and celebrate the Risen Christ with music, flowers and God's Word proclaimed. It's a perfect day to remember God's love is more powerful than our foolishness!



The Lord is Risen!



THE CHURCH MOUSE



Holy Guacamole! Can you people bake! That bake off was terrific! In case you hadn't heard, the winner, with her coconut custard pie, was Linda Sisson. Carylyn and Alicia Masland won second prize for their Chocolate Oreo creampuffs, and Lynn Masland finished third with her Luscious Lemon Cake. Everyone got to taste and to vote and it really was fun. There was plenty of covered dish food for me to fill my larder. I hear there's another covered dish dinner coming up. If you haven't come to one, now's the time! You can sample the first time through and figure out what you want to get seconds, thirds, and fourths of. That's how I work it, anyway.

We've had a couple of sick people over the last month or so; Herb and Diane Weber went on a cruise and caught the flu. He was in the hospital but he's home now. Say a little prayer that they both feel better. Tom and Bev Knopick have had trouble getting out and about this winter and I miss them. Carol Harrison had surgery and was home for a while but the pain was just terrible, so she has gone back to Buffalo to the hospital again. My young friend Wyatt has been in the hospital too, so please hold him in your prayers. He is one of the Masland clan.



Shirley Christoff and Joan Wilber took a ride to Florida for a few weeks. Joan said it was windy and chilly but I heard Pastor talking to Nancy Keyes and she says it's warmer in the south. Bill and Linda Judd are the other snow birds this year, but with those new twin granddaughters, we don't know if they'll ever come home!



I overheard one of our teenagers say that they love this church because "our church family are so supportive of them". That made me cry a little mousey tear. And I know it's true. Jesus said we are supposed to love each other and the people in our church sure do a good job of it. If you don't come to church, how about starting now and let your family here love you.



Methodius Mouse

Puzzle!

Search for these words that are all associated with the Lenten journey.

crown donkey hosanna penance Pilate sins
colt crucifixion forsaken kiss prayer suffer
confess death Gethsemane lots repent thorns
cross denial Golgotha palms silver vigil

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

“Wind of God”



Tiny breeze or mighty wind, swirling round as God commands. Hats go flying. Branches bend. Little seeds spread through the lands.

God Almighty makes the wind; great big gusts can shape the sands. Awesome is the power of God, when even wind obeys his plans.

—MaryAnn Sundby



Spoiler alert

In these days of DVRs and streaming programming, it’s common courtesy to warn people before discussing a show’s plot or ending. How frustrating to inadvertently hear how a much-anticipated drama concludes!

Knowing how everything ends is a blessing for Christians, however. Jesus’ victory over death gives us hope and confidence for this life — and for the life to come.

“The church does not pretend ... that it does not know what will happen with the crucified Jesus,” writes Thomas Hopko in *The Orthodox Faith*. “It does not sorrow and mourn over the Lord as if the church itself were not the very creation which has been produced from his wounded side and from the depths of his tomb. All through Holy Week services, the victory of Christ is contemplated and the resurrection is proclaimed.”

Indeed, Jesus’ followers know how his story — and therefore our story — ends: in Easter life!