

The Arbor's Brush

to inform, to inspire, to celebrate

Vision Statement

REACH, GROW, SEND

"We worship by reaching for God and to others, by growing and nurturing others in Christ, and by sending disciples to meet human needs."

Got News?

If you have news you would like included in our monthly newsletter, please email office@ramahpcusa.org. The deadline for May's *Arbor's Brush* is April 26.

Staff

Elder on call

Kay Skipper 704-575-9152

Music Director

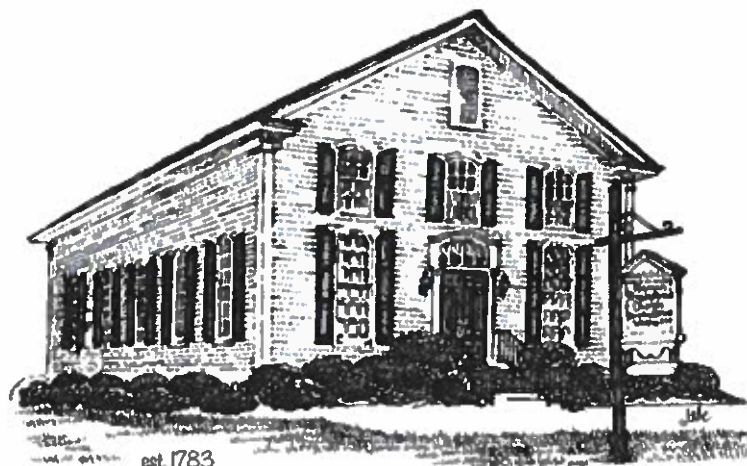
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A Message from Ramah...

The Season of Easter

Easter isn't just a Sunday — it's a season. One day out of 365 is hardly sufficient to celebrate the great mystery of our faith — that Jesus Christ is risen from the dead. Easter Sunday is something like the keystone of an arch — the top and center stone upon which all the other stones lean and depend — both in terms of its theological significance and its relation to other events in the Christian year. Theologically speaking, the faith we claim and the life we live depend on the affirmation, celebration and proclamation of Christ's resurrection.

Remember in Prayer

Please continue to pray for our first responders, military and those on our prayer list:

Huntington Hospital

Gale Allen

Malcom Bland

Jim Borta

Peggy and Walter Craven

Jimmy Fox

Jenny Morton

Pat Motley

Martha Ann Readling

Jeanette Shoemaker

Rita Sikes

Paul Sims

Beulah Stallings (Mother of Kay Skipper)

Dot Summer

Deane Washam

Barbara Wise (Karen Helm's Mother)

Steve Wise (Karen Helm's Brother)

On this Sunday of all Sundays, Easter, we celebrate our transformation as a new people. When Christ rose from the grave, death and all other “principalities and powers” that seek to entomb God’s will were forever defeated.

Easter is not simply the miracle of a dead person raised from the grave, but a celebration of power that can shatter death in order that people can freely serve the God of life. In the resurrection of Christ, God’s awesome purposes were on display, revealing a radically new world of peace and harmony and equality and mutuality, about which we can only dream. The Lord of the future has been disclosed to us. Both the incarnation at Christmas and the resurrection at Easter testify to the lordship of Christ.

On Easter we glimpse a new landscape — the age to come — and experience a sense of holy awe at the significance of the resurrection for human life. The shape of the age to come reveals a new people of God, a new humanity.

When Christ was crucified, humanity died with him on Calvary. But on Easter morning, a new world was born — raised up with the crucified and risen Christ. Bursting the bonds of death, the first human being of a new human race, Jesus Christ, appeared among those who crucified him. In the midst of the old sin-struck world, God gave the world a new beginning, a new humanity. By faith the old guilt-ridden humanity was

born again into the new forgiven humanity of Jesus Christ. Ever since, here and there, clusters of the new people of God live according to the new social order of the new age.

Therefore, Easter faith recalls the past, especially the awesome act of God in raising the crucified Christ from the grave. Easter hope looks to the promised future, to that which awaits us.

Easter love celebrates the presence of the crucified and risen Christ who is now among us, reconciling us as one people. Resurrection faith asserts that by grace we are born again into the new humanity of Jesus Christ. We are called to new life for God and for neighbors. As representatives of the new humanity we walk in newness of life.

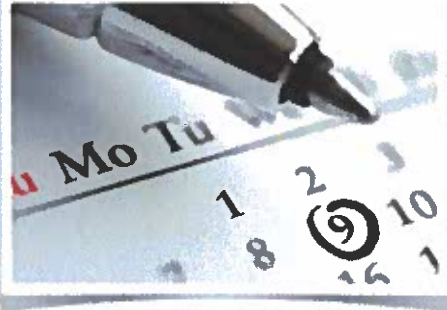
Easter really isn't just a season either. In the fullest sense, Easter is a new way of life — in which we are “dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus” (Rom. 6:11), called to “walk in newness of life” (Rom. 6:4).

Every year, for fifty days, the church celebrates and rehearses this new way of life in the Season of Easter — as we await its completion in the fullness of Christ's reign

Happy Birthday!

- 1 R.B. Helms
- 4 Wyatt Bradford
- 6 Kay Skipper
- 11 Kim Thomas
- 12 Elaine Self
- 19. Kim (Grier) Bradford
- 21. Jo Brown
- 27. Dawn Bradford





Mark Your Calendar

Saturday, April 3

Worship committee meeting

Sunday, April 4

Easter I Holy Communion

Wednesday, April 14 | 5pm

"Ramah apart but together dinner"

Monday, April 19

Session Meeting

Ramah Preschool News.....

Preschool Registration is Open

Registration for 2021-2022 is open. Registration applications can be picked up at the preschool office or online at

You may call to schedule a tour or to get more information at [704-875-6683, ext. 14](tel:704-875-6683), or email our director at

Preschool@ramahpcusa.org



Easter Memories.....

About one year ago, the pandemic closed many parts of our lives, including our church. Many, if not all, were unsure how to celebrate Easter without going to church. The church has been the very heart of our Easters. John 3:16 was the first memorized Bible verse of many! From Lent to Good Friday to Easter morning, our Easter season evolved around the church. Pancakes and Easter eggs, flower covered crosses and communion, sunrise services and outdoor crosses draped in fabric, dogwoods, Easter music and the

Easter story.....all of these activities remind us of the season. And all were missed last year!!!

This year, the church is somewhat open, but activities are limited. We can still celebrate the Easter season in many ways, most especially in our hearts! A few of our Ramah folks have shared their Easter memories with us below, and they will always carry them in their hearts!

Karen Helms grew up in the Winston Salem area. She always spent the night before Easter at her friend's house. They would get up early to watch the Moravian Band march down the street playing Easter music. This is one of Karen's favorite Easter memories!

Larry Kepley grew up in the Boiling Springs, SC area. Several Lutheran churches gathered at one large church to have a big pancake supper on Shrove Tuesday. After the pancake supper, each church youth group provided a program or some type of music, skit, etc. for the whole group. Then, on Easter morning, the youth group would lead a contemporary sunrise worship service with guitars, keyboards, drums, trumpets (whatever youth group talent they had that year), and after the sunrise service they had another pancake breakfast.

Jim and Pat Borta had a fun tradition when their daughters were young, and it has been passed on to the next generation! They would color and hide eggs. When the eggs were found, they would have an "egg war" where two people each take an egg. The eggs would be held end to end. At the count of three, each person would hit the other's egg. Whichever egg didn't crack was the winner. No other prize than the fact your egg was the strongest.

Ross Bradford remembers an Easter egg hunt when David McCord found the golden egg. He looked up high while everyone else was looking on the ground! He also remembers getting a new suit one year for Easter. He was so excited, he ran outside, fell and split the pants of his new suit!!! Oh no!!!

Elaine Self remembers getting new Easter dresses!! Ross and Elaine both have great memories of egg hunts, sunrise services, baskets from the Easter Bunny, family gatherings and ham.

Ann McCarthy reflects on a unique experience while growing up during the week preceding Easter: the foot washing service. It was a time of preparation: self-examination, humility, and service to fellow Christians. Easter means newness of life to Ann. Without the resurrection, Christ's death would have been in vain. Thank God for this gift of grace which He extends to all.

Deirdre Houk remembers going downtown Cincinnati to the Poly Flinders outlet store for a new smocked Easter dress with her Aunt and cousins. They then attended Easter service on Sunday after which they celebrated a meal together. Peanut butter eggs, jelly beans and a chocolate bunny were always in Dee's Easter basket and the highlight was coloring eggs which always turned into deviled eggs.

Scott Bradford also remembers the fun of Easter egg hunts!!

Whatever your Easter memories are, hold them in your heart, and have a BLESSED EASTER!



Daily Bible Reading.....

Have you ever read the ENTIRE Bible all the way through in one year or at all? We have found one that is not so overwhelming and can easily be done each day in about 10 to 15 minutes. Click on the link [BIBLE READING PLAN](#) and print it out or keep it saved on your computer. There are also copies available in the narthex of the church.

If you would like to step it up a notch, send an email to Kay Skipper at kls5410@aol.com and she will add you to the list of people who want to get a daily question to go along with the Bible selection for the day. The question will help you search for the highlights of the daily selection. You can choose to write down the answer you find or not. No one is looking over your shoulder! It's your own special time with the Lord. Find a comfortable place where you can prayerfully ask God to open your mind and heart to receive Him and to help you understand what you are reading.

Your Word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path.

Psalm 119:105 (NIV)

Troop 200 Scout News April 2021....

Congratulations to Ben Stadler for making the rank of Eagle. Ben had his Eagle Board of Review in March and is now officially an Eagle.

Hopefully we can have a recognition ceremony early this summer for Ben – and hopefully more to come.

Troop 200 had a campout at Ramah on March 19-21 where we had a crossover ceremony on Saturday to welcome our new scouts and parents that are moving up from the pack. It was a beautiful day and we took advantage of Ramah's outdoor amphitheater. A total of 13 scouts crossed over during this ceremony – almost doubling Troop 200 at one time!

Thank you to everyone who bought pine needles at our annual sale. We sold over 1000 bales and hit our goal.

The Scouts also helped with Ramah's clean-up day.

Our Scouts joined to get all the pine needles spread in record time.



Now that we are back to daylight savings time, Troop 200 has resumed meeting in person on Tuesdays at the amphitheater. Masks are still required. We are also still holding Zoom meetings along with the in-person meetings. We are so proud of our Troop for sticking to our meetings when we could not meet and for continuing Troop 200's progress.



We are hoping to go to a state park to camp out in April.

Many thanks to our scouts, parents, committee members and scoutmasters for keeping our troop going during the pandemic.



All our Scouts are encouraged to help friends and neighbors if and where possible. With prayers, social distancing and diligence of following the rules.

Pack 200 News...

Cub Scout Pack 200 is adjusting to the new normal. Dens are meeting with a mix of virtual meetings and socially distanced outdoor and in-person meetings. Popcorn sales are all online this year. The Webelo den joined Troop 200 in a campout. The Arrow of Light den hopes to join the troop soon for camping. Things are different this scouting year, but we are still scouting-on and doing the best we can during these trying times.

Again, many thanks to Ramah for supporting Pack and Troop 200.

Boy Scouts: <https://www.troopwebhost.org/Troop200Huntersville/Index.htm>

Cub Scouts: pack200hn@gmail.com

Worship Committee News.....

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Seal: A Closer Look (continued)

In experimenting with the basic lines and shapes of the cross, the contour of a book began to emerge in the horizontal section, and the two center lines of the cross became the representation of an open book. This integration of the horizontal dimensions of the cross with the book motif highlights the emphasis which the Reformed tradition has placed on the role of Scripture as a means of knowing God's word.



What are the liturgical seasons?

The PC(USA) *Directory for Worship* says:

God has provided a rhythm of seasons which orders life and influences the church's worship. God's work of redemption in Jesus Christ offers the Church a central pattern for ordering worship in relationship to significant occasions in the life of Jesus and of the people of God. The Church has thus come to observe the following days and seasons:

- a. **Advent**, a season to recollect the hope of the coming of Christ, and to look forward to the Lord's coming again;
- b. **Christmas**, a celebration of the birth of Christ;
- c. **Epiphany**, a day for commemorating God's self-manifestation to all people;
- d. **Lent**, a season of spiritual discipline and preparation, beginning with **Ash Wednesday**, anticipating the celebration of the death and resurrection of Christ;

- e. **Holy Week**, a time of remembrance and proclamation of the atoning suffering and death of Jesus Christ;
- f. **Easter**, the day of the Lord's resurrection and the season of rejoicing that commemorates his ministry until his **Ascension**, and continues through
- g. **the Day of Pentecost**, the celebration of the gift of the Holy Spirit to the Church.

The church also observes other days such as **Baptism of the Lord, Transfiguration of the Lord, Trinity Sunday, All Saints Day and Christ the King.**

Human life in community reflects a variety of rhythms that also affect Christian worship. Among these are the annual cycles of civic, agricultural, school and business life; special times of family remembrance and celebration; and the patterns of a variety of cultural expressions, commemorations and events. The church in carrying out its mission also creates a cycle of activities, programs and observances. While such events may be appropriately recognized in Christian worship, care should be taken that they do not obscure the proclamation of the gospel on the Lord's Day (W-3.2002 – W-3.2003).

Why does the planning calendar call May 25, 2008, the "8th Sunday in Ordinary Time" when there are no references to Ordinary Time in the previous weeks?

The starting point in our search for the missing Sundays in Ordinary Time is that preeminent moveable feast, Easter (or the Resurrection of the Lord). For Western Christians (Catholics and Protestants) the Day of Easter is the first Sunday that comes after the first full moon that occurs on or after March 21 (the Spring Equinox) — occasionally shifted to the following Sunday, when the original date happens to coincide with the Jewish Passover. (There is actually a difference between the "Paschal full moon" and the "astronomical full moon" that we can't begin to explain.) This computation means that Easter always occurs sometime between March 22 and April 25, inclusive. The Eastern Churches (Greek and Russian Orthodox, e.g.) use a different set of astronomical tables based on the Julian Calendar (instead of the Gregorian), which means that Orthodox Easter generally follows the Western date by one, four or five weeks (sometimes occurring in early May).

The beginning of Lent with Ash Wednesday is calculated by counting backwards 46 days from Easter Sunday — 46 and not 40 because the forty-

day fast of Lent does not include the always festive celebration of the Lord's Day (i.e., the six Sundays in Lent, including Palm/Passion Sunday).

All this means that, depending on how early the season of Lent begins (which depends on when the Easter season begins), the fourth through eighth Sundays in Ordinary Time may be preempted. Imagine them waiting in the wings (or warming the bench) to find out when Easter is scheduled. For this first period of Ordinary Time, the Baptism of the Lord is always the first Sunday. The Transfiguration of the Lord is always the last of these Sundays after Epiphany. However, it's better not to think of it as the "Nth Sunday in Ordinary Time," because the Fourth through Eighth Sundays in Ordinary Time have their own identity, as they are associated with a particular set of lectionary texts. In other words, each numbered Sunday in Ordinary Time is always connected with the same set of texts.

The season of Easter begins with the Day of the Resurrection of the Lord (Easter Sunday) and extends for fifty days (covering eight Sundays). The last of these Sundays is, of course, Pentecost (from the Greek for "fiftieth day"). Following the Easter season begins the second period of Ordinary Time (perhaps better called the Sundays after Pentecost). Depending on the date of Pentecost (which depends on the date of Easter), the Ninth through Twelfth Sundays in Ordinary Time are in a similar state of limbo. Trinity Sunday is always the first Sunday in this period, but it's better not to think of it as the "Seventh Sunday of Ordinary Time" since that name is used to designate a particular set of lectionary texts. Similarly, Christ the King/Reign of Christ Sunday is always the last Sunday in that second period of Ordinary Time.

Finally, there is another nomenclature (found in the Episcopal Book of Common Prayer, e.g.) that you may have encountered in the Sundays after Pentecost — that of "Propers." For instance, Sunday, Sept. 2, 2007, is alternately called Proper 17 and the 22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time. The system is similar to the numbered Sundays of Ordinary Time. The later the Day of Pentecost falls, the more earlier Propers (Proper 1, 2, etc.) are displaced.

To summarize, there's something like a buffer zone of Sundays in Ordinary Time that surrounds the Lent/Easter cycle, and some of those Sundays always get absorbed depending on when Easter takes place. Each of the Sundays in Ordinary Time is given a number as a "permanent label," however, and that number always refers to a specific set of lectionary texts. There have been attempts over the years to standardize the calendar — from the Quartodeciman

Controversy of the second century A.D. (which attempted to tie the Easter celebration to Passover), to an initiative at the Second Vatican Council, to a 1977 proposal that Easter always be celebrated on the day after the second Saturday in April. It never seems to stick.

Source: Laurence Hull Stookey, *Calendar: Christ's Time for the Church*

Why is there a fifty-day season of Easter?

Your home is littered with the separated hemispheres of colorful plastic eggs. Flowery new dresses are rumpled in the laundry hamper. Foil chocolate wrappers are crumpled in the garbage. There's half of a ham and a partially eaten container of potato salad in the refrigerator. But Easter isn't over. Easter has just begun.

One day out of 365 is hardly sufficient to celebrate the great mystery of our faith—that Christ is risen from the dead. Accordingly, the season of Easter lasts seven weeks, spanning the fifty days from the Sunday of the Resurrection to Pentecost Sunday. The notion of Easter as a season of fifty days is patterned after the ancient Jewish festival of seven weeks that extended from the beginning of the barley harvest (on the second day after the beginning of Passover) to the end of the wheat harvest, at the Festival of Weeks (see Deuteronomy 16:9-12). The Festival of Weeks later came to be called Pentecost (“fiftieth day”) by Greek speaking Jews.

In addition to the agricultural calendar, the symbolic value of numbers plays a meaningful role in the duration of this festival. In ancient Israelite culture, the number seven implied wholeness or completion; thus there are seven days in week, the time required for the completion of creation. A period of seven weeks, each consisting of seven days, suggests fullness “squared.” The season of Easter is, therefore, a “week” of weeks. Seven weeks is roughly one seventh of a year (52 weeks); just as the seventh day of the week is holy to God, one seventh of the year is set apart as a holy season. The number fifty also has symbolic significance, since Leviticus 25 designates every fiftieth year as a time of jubilee, when captives are to be released and debts are to be forgiven. Easter, as a season of fifty days, represents the “great jubilee,” in which we are released from captivity to death and the debt of our sin is forgiven by God. Finally, in an eschatological sense, Easter stands just outside, but adjacent to, the “week” of weeks (49 days) as the great fiftieth day, just as

Sunday is considered the “eighth day” of creation, since Christ rose from the dead on the first day of the week.

The five Sundays between the Sunday of the Resurrection and Pentecost Sunday, often erroneously called “First Sunday after Easter,” “Second Sunday after Easter,” etc., are properly called “Second Sunday of Easter,” “Third Sunday of Easter,” and so forth. This small change helps to demonstrate that Easter isn’t a day, but a season. Sometimes a little preposition makes a big difference.

The season of Easter is intended to be an extended time of joy and celebration in the church. In 325 CE, the Council of Nicaea decreed that fasting and kneeling were to be forbidden during the fifty days of Easter. For some contemporary congregations that do not ordinarily celebrate the Eucharist each Sunday, the seven weeks of Easter provide an opportunity to explore this practice. The liturgical colors throughout the season of Easter are white and gold, except for Pentecost, which is red.

Source: Laurence Hull Stookey, *The Calendar: Christ’s Time for the Church* (Abingdon, 1996) 53-58.

Guest Minister Schedule for April

The worship committee is pleased to present our guest ministers for April:

April 04 - Rev. Christine Conrath

April 11 - Rev. George Slaton

April 18 - Rev. Eleanor Shell

April 25 - Rev. Caroline East

**April “Ramah Apart, but Together” Dinner
Wednesday, April 14th, 5:00pm**

The Easter ham is long gone and it’s the day before Tax Day – do we need another reason to share a meal (while apart) with our Ramah family?

Jack and Wyatt Bradford are cooking up their favorite spring and summer staple – make your own Pimiento Cheese sandwiches, fresh fruit salad, crackers, and Alice’s hand made cookies.

Call, email, or text Kim Bradford to let her know you’re coming and we’ll have one ready for you.
kimscot@bellsouth.net 980-213-5918

