

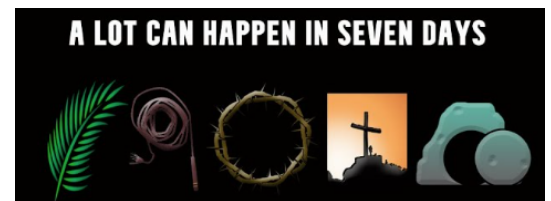


GOOD NEWS! April, 2025

Self Talk | Pastor Clay

Darby and I had our first “major” communication snafu when she asked me if I had an article for the April newsletter. I looked dumbfounded (one of my skills), thinking we did a Lenten newsletter that would cover us until Easter. As I was preparing my decisive debate skills, Darby indicated Jim had turned in his April article on March 15th, as he always has one in by the 15th. Oh, the shame of it all.... What am I to do? Write the article. Darby 1, Clay 0, but who's counting? (The above introduction is mostly true and presented for your enjoyment.) *(Note from Darby: I think the score would be Jim 1, Darby 1, Clay 0. Just saying.)*

Easter is just a few weeks away, coming later this year, but still feels a far way off. I recently saw an ad for apparel with the slogan, “A lot can happen in seven days.” I was curious, so I did a little digging and found out there is also a line of merchandise that reads, “A lot can happen in three days.” Both lines of merchandise are marketed to Christians; one emphasizes Palm Sunday to the empty tomb, and the other emphasizes the crown of thorns to the empty tomb. I like the seven-day emphasis better than the three days: let's take in all of Holy Week! Triumphal Entry, which was a huge party for people gathered for the yearly festival. It was anything but triumphal, on a beast of burden with no band or prepared speeches.... It was just weird. Maybe the festival wine helped the people celebrate, but they had no idea what or who they were celebrating. Then Jesus messed with the temple and money changers, left to hide out with his close disciples and get in some private instruction time before the non-Leonardo DaVinci version of the Last Supper (or should it be called the first supper?), then arrest, trial, crucifixion, burial, and finally empty tomb happen...all in seven days. A lot happened in seven days, and I only hit the highlights. No one was ready for the first Easter, not even Jesus: “Father, please, if possible, take this cup from me.”



I find comfort in Jesus' words of not wanting to suffer for the cause and yet trusting the Father. I find comfort that not a lot of preparation is necessary to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus the Christ, because a lot happened in seven days nearly 2000 years ago. I am also disturbed. What am I missing? Many of the people missed Jesus in his earthly days because he pleased them but did not conform to their view of a savior/messiah. How much of Jesus do I or you miss today because we ignore the parts of Jesus that do not match our preconceptions? Please read, re-read the Holy Week stories in scripture before Easter, read with curiosity and wonder. As we do this maybe, with prayer, we will move in the direction of conforming to Jesus, instead of conforming Jesus to the image we created.

Grace and peace, Pastor Clay

Weekly Schedule

Sundays

9:00 a.m. Chancel Choir Rehearsal
9:15 a.m. Youth Sunday School Class
10:00 a.m. Worship Service & Children's Church
(in-person and streaming live on Facebook)

Wednesdays

6:00/6:30 p.m. Weekly Bible study
(Time and format vary.)
Last Wednesday only:
6:00 p.m. Community Outreach Dinner

Coming Up in April . . .

* **Wednesday Evenings in April:**

April 2, 6:30 p.m. – “Jesus: Jewish Priest” (In-person; dinner will be served.)
April 9, 6:30 p.m. – “Jesus: King of the Jews” (In-person; dinner will be served.)
April 16 – NO BIBLE STUDY
April 23, 6:00 p.m. – Virtual Bible Study on Facebook
April 30, 6:00 p.m. – COMMUNITY DINNER and in-person Bible Study

* **Easter Egg Hunt, Saturday, April 12, 11 a.m.-noon** – We will host our annual Easter Egg Hunt on the front lawn, weather permitting. This event is a great time to share the Good News of salvation, along with information about our church, with our community. Kids of all ages are invited! The Christian Ed team will be stuffing the roughly 1000 plastic eggs on **April 11 at 10 a.m.** and would welcome your help. (Workers have been known to sneak a piece of chocolate!) See Barb for more information.

* **Maundy Thursday/Good Friday Service, Thursday, April 17** – Please plan to join us for a solemn worship experience in which we remember the night when Jesus broke bread, shared the cup, and was betrayed; and participate in a reflection on “Jesus: Suffering Savior.”

* **Easter Morning at MWBC** – We hope to see you at our traditional Easter morning celebration on Sunday, April 20, featuring Pastor Clay's message, “Now What?” and our ever-popular Flowering of the Cross! Come early to share in a continental breakfast beginning at 9:00 a.m.

. . . and Beyond

* **Quarterly Business Meeting, Sunday, May 4** – Our First Quarter 2025 congregational meeting will be held immediately after the worship service.

* **Racetrack Ministry Dinner, Tuesday, May 13** – The first of our summer evenings at the back track! A team of volunteers from MWBC will prepare and serve a meal for the workers at the racetrack. See Pastor Jim if you'd like to help.



True North VBS Is Coming!

Mark your calendars for the week of June 2-6. We will visit *True North* and learn about “Trusting God in a Wild World.” The bears, otters, eagles, crabs, and moose will help in our understanding, and kids will take a deep dive into the book of Matthew. Vacation Bible School will start at 9:30 each day and end at noon. Registration begins at 9. We welcome children aged pre-K through entering 6th grade. Be looking for ways to help! We are still looking for a few volunteers. We will also need to borrow a canoe, if anyone has one, for our set. VBS is always a fun time of learning and sharing the good news. Please share with your friends and family. If you have questions, please see Barb Cagle.

The Music of Easter

April finds us in the middle of Lent and then the celebration of Easter. The music of Lent has been more somber, quiet, and reflective. It reminds me of an autobiographical book I've read regarding the von Trapp family of Austria, *The Story of the Trapp Family Singers* by Maria von Trapp, which is the basis for the musical and movie *The Sound of Music*. After WWII, the family von Trapp built a home in Stowe, Vermont, which became the home base for their touring singing group. There is a chapel on the property, and the narrative in the book regarding Lent and Easter states that the chapel is quiet and dark during Lent as people come to pray and reflect on the sacrifice of our Savior. However, there is an undercurrent of excitement and joy barely able to be contained by all as they know that Resurrection Sunday is close and will be celebrated with joyful music and loud praises. "He is risen!," we sing with gladness and exuberance as we celebrate Christ's victory over death!

The hymn "Christ the Lord Is Risen Today," written by Charles Wesley, is one of my favorite Easter songs of joy and praise. It was sung for the first time in a deserted iron foundry in London, England, in 1739. The foundry, renovated and transformed into the first Wesleyan chapel, was called appropriately the Foundry Meeting House. Each phrase of the song is finished with an exclamation of "Alleluia!" as singer happily proclaim that Christ is risen from the dead, giving the believers hope for eternal life. All manner of creation, human and heavenly, rejoices in what has happened. Death has been defeated, love's redeeming work is done, and we believers will forever live again. Interestingly, the "Alleluias" were not written by Wesley but were added by someone later to fit the music tune. "Alleluia," or "Hallelujah," is an ancient Hebrew phrase of worship and became an expression of joy in the early Christian church. So, rejoice all, Jesus is risen, alleluia!

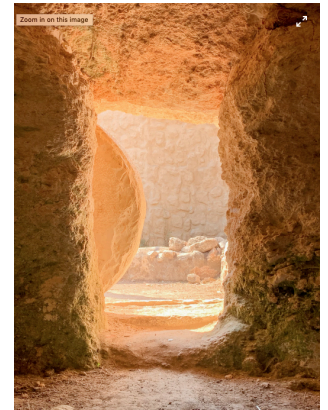


Photo Credit: Pisit Heng, unsplash.com

Blessings! ~ Rev. Jim Cagle, Minister of Music

Missions

International Ministries Calls for Prayer and Support for Those Impacted by Myanmar Earthquake

ABCUSA's International Ministries has sent an initial grant of \$10,000 in One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) emergency relief to partners who are providing humanitarian relief to the victims of the earthquake that caused widespread devastation in central Myanmar on Friday, March 28, 2025.

The first earthquake, with a magnitude of 7.7, struck around 12:50 local time, according to the US Geological Survey. A second earthquake struck 12 minutes later, with a magnitude of 6.4. To date, it's been reported that more than 2,900 have died and more than 3,400 have been injured in Myanmar, although it is difficult to obtain accurate information. In Thailand, authorities reported localized incidents that have left at least 13 dead and 77 unaccounted for when a building that was under construction collapsed.

International Ministries (IM) is deeply concerned for the safety and well-being of its global servants, partners in the region, and the communities they serve. All IM personnel have reported they are safe, and IM is assessing the needs of its partners in Myanmar and their communities as the situation unfolds.

IM Chief Program Officer Rev. Jim Bell notes, "This natural disaster presents a need and an opportunity to stand with and support the body of Christ in Myanmar, which was birthed two hundred years ago through the work of IM's pioneering missionaries Ann and Adoniram Judson. Through IM's network of Baptist and other Christian partners, your giving will reach places and people likely to have no other sources of relief, and will bear testimony to the ultimate help and hope to be found in Christ."

Excerpted from internationalministries.org. If you'd like to make a financial gift, you may visit the website for more information.

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Our Staff and Leaders

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Dr. Jih-Ting Chen, Accompanist | Darby Atchison, Administrative Assistant
Todd Racer, Praise Band Leader | Tim Rechel, Tower Bells Director
Jennifer Yantz, Day Care Director
Janeece Nation, Custodian