



Building Disciples; Growing in Faith; Serving in Christ's Name

Dear Friends,

March Newsletter 2021

Recently I've been thinking about the cross. I guess that is appropriate in these final weeks of Lent. Perhaps it was our Bible study of The Letter to the Galatians that got my thoughts turning. You can't study anything St. Paul wrote without encountering the cross. It is central to Paul's theology; you see his reference to the cross again and again. The verse that especially grabbed me was Galatians 6:14: "May I never boast of anything except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ" as the New Revised Standard Version puts it. But the older, more traditional words are: "Far be it from me to glory except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." (RSV).

That idea of "glorying in the cross" has influenced many hymn writers through the years in such lines as "In the Cross of Christ I glory" (John Bowring in 1825), "...my sinful self my only shame, my glory all the cross" (Elizabeth Clephane in 1872), " In the cross, in the cross, by my glory ever." (Fanny Crosby in 1869). All of this leads me to ask, do I glory in the cross? If not, why not? If not, what do I glory in?

Theological writer Ian Markham suggests that "from time to time Christians should stand back and acknowledge how odd our faith looks. For Christians claim that the most important divine action in history is the humiliating death of a poor Jew at the hands of an occupying power. The central Christian symbol is the ancient equivalent of the hangman's noose or the electric chair. Instead of a dramatic demonstration of God's power, we have weakness and failure affirmed. It is odd." (Feasting on the Word Year B, Vol. 2 p. 86)

It is odd. St. Paul knew. He refers to the cross as foolishness—seeing the power of God in the powerless of Christ? Who would have imagined it? But as Paul goes on to explain in I Corinthians 1: 18-25, this is how God works. God shatters expectations—never more so than in all that happened at the cross. There God reveals God's true nature by becoming weak and vulnerable. There agony and suffering doesn't have the final word in life. There love and forgiveness is shown as never before. There a gruesome death becomes the way to life eternal and abundant. Being able to see this is itself a gift. For those who are "perishing" it seems complete and utter foolishness (I Cor. 1: 18), but to those who are being saved (do note that for Paul the project of salvation is not yet complete) it is God's power.

All of which is to say that when we look at the cross, when we "stand beneath it" as the old hymn bids us ("Beneath the Cross of Jesus I fain would take my stand..."), when we embrace all that the cross means, we realize we cannot boast, or glory, in our own efforts; but only in what God in Christ has done for us..

So in these final weeks of Lent, what are you glorying in? How can we help each other find our glory in the cross? Please let me know your thoughts. I appreciate them—and you!

Yours, in Christ,

Pastor Barbara



Tuesday Evening Bible Study of Ephesians Continues

Our Tuesday Evening Bible Study continues
to meet via Zoom at 7 p.m.

We are currently studying
The Letter to the Ephesians through the month of March.
What does this letter to the early Christians
have to say to us today?
Please join in our discussion to find out.
Contact Pastor Barbara for the zoom link.



UMCOR Sunday is March 14

UMCOR Sunday (formerly called One Great Hour of Sharing) is March 14. This is our opportunity to support the important disaster and relief work of UMCOR (United Methodist Committee on Relief) through a special offering that day. UMCOR is the humanitarian relief and development arm of the United Methodist Church, dedicated to alleviating human suffering around the world. UMCOR's work reaches people in more than 80 countries, including the U.S.

For example, right now, UMCOR is working in Texas communities impacted by the recent devastating winter storms. It is working among Syrian refugees in Lebanon and Jordan, helping with rent, medical assistance and clearing of landmines. It is supplying materials for temporary shelter as well as food, hygiene and health items for thousands of displaced people in Mozambique. On March 14, we can help with this important work, as well as with UMCOR's many other projects around the globe. We can join UMCOR as the hands and feet of Christ. Thank you, in advance, for your generous consideration of this special offering.

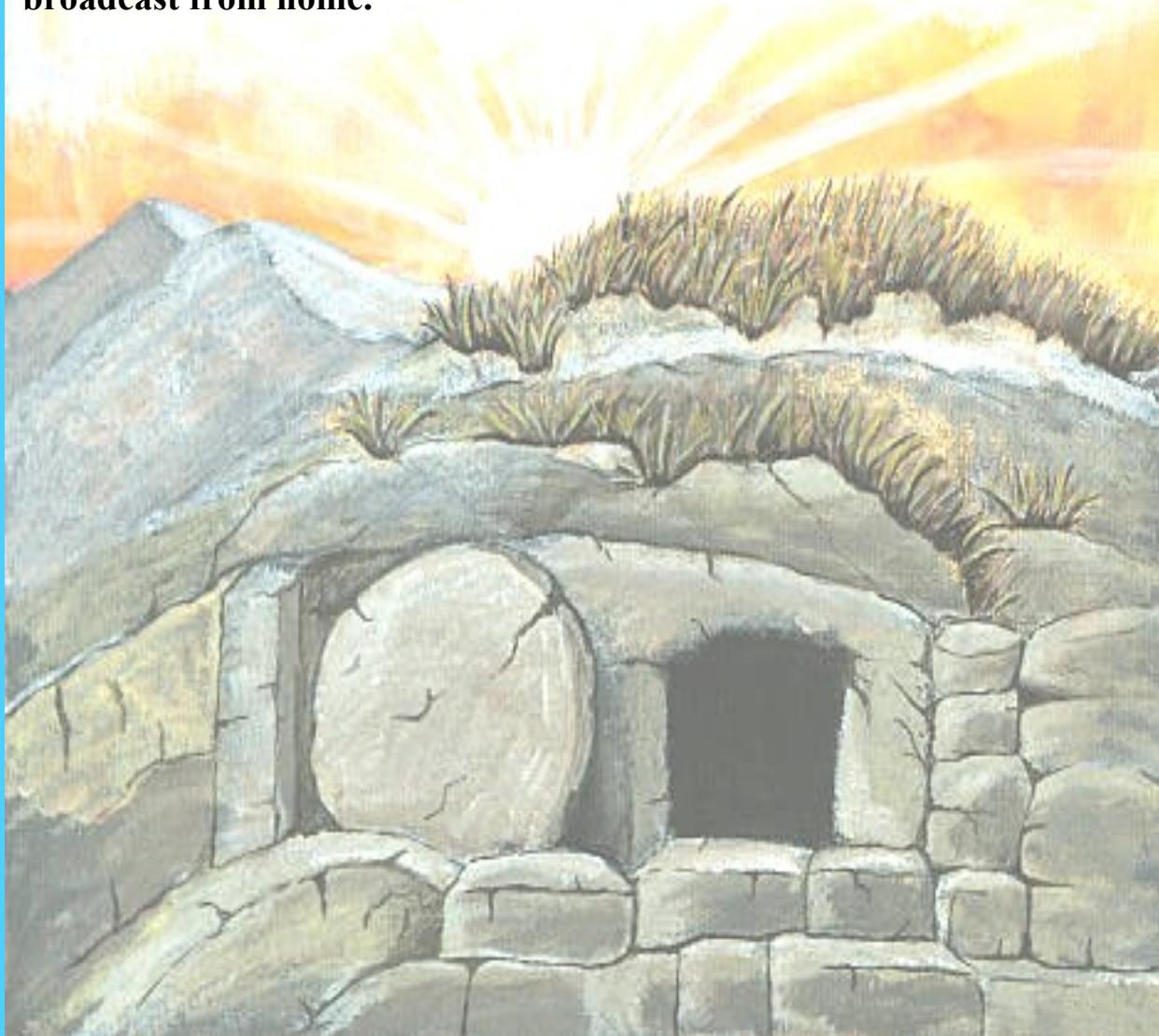
Holy Week Schedule

Palm Sunday, March 28 at 9:30 a.m. Celebrate Jesus' Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem with a "Palm Branch Parade" in worship. Palms will be distributed to all attending that day, whether inside the sanctuary or outside at drive-in church. *Palm branches will also be available to all the Milan community on a "Drive-By" basis at 9:15 a.m.*

Holy Thursday, April 1 at 7 p.m. Recall Jesus' Last Supper and his Journey to the Cross in this service of Holy Communion and telling the Passion Story. You may participate in this service through Drive-In Church or inside the sanctuary.

Good Friday, April 2, noon to 3 p.m. Our sanctuary will be open for private prayer and devotion. Consecrated communion elements will be available.

Easter Sunday, April 4 at 9:30 a.m. Celebrate the glad news of our Lord's Resurrection! All are welcome to participate in worship inside the sanctuary, through Drive-In church, or listening to our FM broadcast from home.



Easter Flowers

Due to the pandemic, this year our church will NOT be coordinating Easter flower orders. But we would love to have beautiful spring flowers decorate our altar and chancel area on Easter Sunday. If you would like to purchase your own Easter plant, be it an Easter lily, tulips, daffodils, or hyacinths, and loan it to our church for worship on Easter Sunday, we would love to have your help. If you feel able to loan us an Easter plant, please deliver it to church the day before Easter, on Saturday April 3 from noon to 2 p.m. This will allow the plants to be arranged appropriately. If you would like your plant to honor someone special, or to be used in memory of a loved one, please let our church office know that, or sign up on the clip board in the narthex.

Thanks, in advance, for your help in making our sanctuary beautiful for Easter Day.



Congratulations on the Birth of New Great Grandchildren!

Three families in our church can boast of new great grandchildren!

Congratulations go to:

*--Eda Hipp on the birth of her great granddaughter, Twyla Jolynn Greasly,
born on February 2, 2021 and weighing 7 lbs, 14 oz.*

*Kylie and Chase Greasly are the proud parents,
and Eda's daughter Debbie is the proud grandmother.*

Twyla is great grandchild number 6 for Eda.

*--Mary and Tom Crecilius on the birth of their new great granddaughter,
Natalie Ruth Lewan, born on February 5.*

*This makes great grandchild number 9 for Tom and Mary!
The proud grandparents are Scott and Mary Crecilius.*

*--Sharon Cox-DeAngelis on the birth of not one but TWO new great granddaughters!
Edith Mae Rainwater was born on February 2, and weighed 6 lbs, 13 oz.*

Then Mollie Kay Cundiff

(whose name honors her great grandmother

as Sharon and Mollie share the same middle name, Kay)

was born on February 18, weighing 7 lbs, 4 oz, and measuring 20 1/4 inches long.

*Sharon's daughter Jenny and her husband Don Cundiff
are the proud grandparents of both girls.*

Their births give Sharon a total of 5 great grandchildren now.

Congratulations and Blessings to all!



Our Ministry of Thanks

Once again, we have many reasons to be thankful to members of our church family in recent days. Our thanks goes out to:

--Yolanda Schnell for bringing us her reflections and experiences of God as she gave our morning message in worship on February 21.

--Judy Stanforth for all her help in creating our "Ash Wednesday kits", allowing us to celebrate a socially distanced Ash Wednesday.

--Karen Klinger and Rex Stanforth for their beautiful offertory duet in worship on February 21.

--Mark Crumrine for running our FM broadcast that same Sunday, which enabled Rex to take off those headphones at the back of the church and sing from the front of the church.

--Mike Seel and his buddy for wiring our fellowship hall and our church parlor for internet service. You can now get on the internet in both areas of the church!

--Ongoing thanks to Karen Klinger for her musical leadership on Sunday mornings and to Mark Crumrine for stepping in at the last minute on recent Sundays with his musical leadership when Karen couldn't be available.

--Mary Crecelius, Mike Seel, and Karen Klinger for their help in producing our new church membership directory. This painstaking project has been a long time in coming. We are extremely grateful for all their efforts.

-- Tom Crecelius, for fixing the office door. It works perfect now.

Thank you to all!

Yolanda Schnell 3/1
Shirlean Smith 3/1
Doris Quayle 3/3
Stephanie Crecelius 3/4
Victoria Grames 3/5
Jeanine William-Meyers 3/10
Benjamin Smith 3/12
Jennifer Swicker 3/12
Christina Ruiz 3/16
Zoe Grant 3-17
Lili Grant 3-18
Connie Smith 3/21
Abbey Chenevey 3/25
Mark Miller 3/25
Alyssa Robinson 3/25

Doug Crooks 3/28
Luke Forren 3/28
Sara Schwab 3/30



BIRTHDAYS
March

If We Missed You— Please let us know!

Our Worship Is Now On Facebook Live!

Our Sunday morning worship is entering the digital age! Beginning Sunday March 7, our Sunday worship can be accessed through Facebook Live. In order to participate in worship through Facebook, please go to our church's Facebook page: Edison Memorial United Methodist Church, and click on the Facebook Live feed. If you officially "like" our Facebook page, you will receive an automatic electronic notification when our service is live. Then you simply click that notification to enter the Facebook Live feed. After each worship service is concluded, it will remain on our church's Facebook page for three weeks. This way, if you cannot see the service in "real time" you can view it at your leisure, anytime within that 3-week window.

We are very grateful to Mike Seel for helping our church service become available through this digital platform. If you have questions or concerns about this new venture, please contact Mike, who is very happy to explain all about it.

Thanks, Mike!



**And Thank You Again Precious Lord Jesus
For the Cross and for Saving Us!!
Only because of these Can We Love You Forever!!**