



The Methodist

Memo

SPREADING THE GOOD NEWS OF JESUS CHRIST
AND SHARING OUR FAITH WITH OUR NEIGHBORS



Spiritual Renewal: Healthy, Holy Pastoral Ministry



Rest and Renewal are an important part of our ministry and life together. Each UMC clergyperson is granted a week of spiritual renewal leave per appointed year of ministry, or one month of spiritual renewal time every four years.

Both our UMC Book of Discipline & the Standing Rules of the Northern Illinois Conference explain the specifics and parameters of clergy spiritual renewal and vacation time. As our Northern Illinois Cabinet has been concerned about clergy burnout, they have encouraged us to take advantage of spiritual renewal time now more than ever. With the blessing, affirmation, and encouragement from my Elder Mentor, our District Superintendent, and our SPRC approval, I'm looking forward to spending **April 1 - 30 in spiritual renewal leave.**

I have not taken this opportunity for spiritual renewal leave since my first pastoral ministry appointment in 2015. Though I am feeling depleted, I am doing okay. I am in *no way* feeling a crisis with my soul, my pastoral ministry, or my physical health. In the past nine years I have moved four times, and this has taken a bit of a toll with my energy.

My soul is renewed and refreshed by spending time with the people I love—my family and long-time friends. I will be visiting Michigan, Minnesota, and spending time in Tinley. This will be a joyful time in fellowship with loved-ones, and with time in solitude and rest. I will be spending active time outdoors each day, doing some creative writing and art making, and listening to the ways God is speaking and guiding my life.

I have asked our Lay Leader, Dawn Shires, to lead the four worship services in April. There will be no Holy Communion in April; in March, we celebrated the Sacrament of Holy Communion three times.

I am looking forward to sharing my experiences with you when I return! Our mission will continue to be making the world a better place here and now, and for the future.

Keeping the faith with hope and gratitude for our future ministry together,

Pastor Mark
Gilmore

Emergency Pastoral Care Contacts in April

April 1-18

Rev. Jacques Conway
Church: 708-444-8560
Cell: 708-699-5802
Email: jacquesconway@icloud.com

April 19-30

Rev. Caitlyn Nesbit
Church: 708-448-0798
Cell: 815-474-3136
Email: pastoreaitlynnesbit@gmail.com

Making Life Bearable

By Amy Peterson

The following story is taken from *He is Risen: 10 Reflections from Our Daily Bread*

Does having a friend nearby make pain more bearable? Researchers at the University of Virginia conducted a fascinating study to answer this question. They wanted to see how the brain reacted to the prospect of pain, and whether it behaved differently if a person faced the threat of pain alone or holding the hand of a friend or stranger. Researchers ran the test on dozens of pairs and found consistent results.

When a person was alone or holding a stranger's hand while anticipating a shock, the regions of the brain that process danger lit up. But when holding the hand of a trusted person, the brain relaxed. The comfort of friend's presence made the pain bearable. Jesus needed comfort as He was about to face betrayal, arrest, and death. He asked his closest friends Peter, James, and John, to stay and pray with Him, telling them that His soul was "crushed with grief" (Matthew 26:38). But Peter, James, and John fell asleep. Jesus faced the agony of the garden without the comfort of a hand to hold. But because He bore that pain, we can be confident that God will never leave or forsake us (Hebrews 13:5). Jesus suffered so that we will never have to experience separation from the love of God (Romans 8:39). **God said, "I will never fail you. I will never abandon you."**



*And Spring arose on the garden fair,
Like the Spirit of Love felt everywhere;
And each flower and herb on Earth's dark breast
rose from the dreams of its wintry rest.*

~ Percy Bysshe Shelley



Dawn's Sermon Series



Date	Sermon	Scripture
April 7	"True Repentance"	Psalms 51
April 14	"God's Road to Repentance"	Genesis 43:1-3; 15-34; 44:1-14
April 21	"Sin, Repentance & Grace"	Psalms 32
April 28	"Going Beyond Repentance"	Hebrews 5:11-6:3



Chapel of the Ascension



Chapel of the Ascension / Mount of Olives

In Jerusalem, several churches commemorate the Ascension of Jesus into heaven. On of the most popular is the Chapel of the Ascension, located on top of the Mount of Olives. A Byzantine church in honor of the Ascension was constructed on this site in about 300 A.D. by a Christian woman named Poimenia. The open-air church was said to contain a stone with the imprint of the foot of Jesus.

The Persians destroyed the church about 614 A.D. , but it was later restored by St. Modestus of Jerusalem. Crusaders rebuilt the church about 1150; however, by the end of the 12th century, the Muslim general, Saladin, had captured the church and converted it into a mosque.

The chapel remains a holy site for Christians and for Muslims who also acknowledge the Ascension of Jesus, and who continue to occupy the site. The walls in the courtyard of the Chapel of the Ascension are lined with hooks. Pilgrims used the hooks to stretch tents when then came to celebrate the Feast of the Ascension. *Source: The Little White Book: Six-minute Reflections of the Parables of Jesus. (2021).*



The Supper at Emmaus

by Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio (1572-1610)

The Italian artist, Caravaggio, was know for his fiery temperament and unconventional technique. He used ordinary working people as models for his saints and was able to make viewers of his paintings feel they were a part of the scene. shows an Innkeeper standing while Jesus and two of His followers are seated at a table when they recognize Him as the risen Lord (Luke 24:31). One disciple is pushing himself to a standing position while the other's arms are outstretched and his hands open in astonishment.

Luke, who records these events in his gospel, tells us that the two men immediately returned to Jerusalem where they found the other disciples assembled together and said, "The Lord has really risen!". . . Then they told their story of how Jesus had appeared to them as they were walking along the road, and how they had recognized Him as he was breaking bread" (Luke 24-35).

Evangelist Oswald Chambers said, "Jesus rarely comes where we expect Him; He appears where we least expect Him, and always in the most illogical connections....Whatever road we are on today, may we be ready for Jesus to make Himself known to us in new and surprising ways. *Source: The Little White Book: Six-minute Reflections of the Parables of Jesus. (2021).*

REASONS

to go to Church



A friend and colleague is a subscriber and avid reader of *Life:Beautiful*, a Christian publication devoted to spreading the word of God. She shared an article with me titled “101 Reasons to Go to Church.” There isn’t enough room in this issue to provide all 101 reasons, so I will provide a few, and continue with this topic in upcoming issues. Perhaps sharing this information with a friend will encourage him/her to return to church with you. It’s worth a try!

1. **Experience love.** “See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him” (1 John 3:1).
2. **You can hear good music.** “The priests took their positions, as did the Levites with the Lord’s musical instruments, which King David had made for praising the Lord and which were used when he gave thanks, saying, “His love endures forever.” Opposite the Levites, the priests blew their trumpets, and all the Israelites were standing” (2 Chronicles 7:6).
3. **It will give you something to think about that could change your life.** “Praise the Lord. I will extol the Lord with all my heart / in the council of the upright and in assembly. / Great are the works of the LORD; / they are pondered by all who delight in them” (Psalm 111:1-2).
4. **Become a better leader.** “Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth” (2 Timothy 2:15).
5. **Discover ways to better yourself.** “Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith” (Hebrews 13.7).
6. **Enjoy a building that is beautiful physically, artistically, and architecturally.** “And he carried me away in the Spirit to a mountain great and high, and showed me the Holy City, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God. ¹¹ It shone with the glory of God, and its brilliance was like that of a very precious jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal” (Revelation 21:10-11).
7. **To look in a mirror and reflect (figuratively speaking, that is).** “Do not boast about tomorrow, for you do not know what a day may bring. Let someone else praise you, and not your own mouth; an outsider and not your own lips” (Proverbs 27:19).
8. **Strengthen your community.** “For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit. Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God’s people and also members of his household” (Ephesians 2:18-19).

Celebrate with Us!

APRIL BIRTHDAYS

Brad Bettenhausen	2
Dawn Shires	5
Ken Brandau	5
Ed Row	28

Mary & Grant Steeve
April 9 Wedding Anniversary



Spring is Here Wordsearch!



abloom,
awakening,
baseball,
bloom,
born,
budding,
caterpillar,
chick,
crocus,
egg,
thaw,

active,
baby animals,
beautiful,
blooming,
bouquet,
bulbs,
changing,
chirping,
daffodil,
eggs,

airy,
barefoot,
bee,
blossom,
breeze,
bunny,
cheerful,
clean,
daisy,
farmer,

alive,
baseball bat,
beehive,
blossoming,
breezy,
butterfly,
cheery,
cloudless,
darting,
grassy,

April Fool's Day,
baseball field,
bird,
blue skies,
bright,
buzzing,
cherries,
clouds,
dugout,
spring,

April,
baseball player,
birth,
blue,
bud,
calf,
cherry,
crisp,
Easter basket,
sprout,



“A little Madness in the Spring
Is wholesome even for the King”

- Emily Dickenson



April is National Poetry Month

In April of 1996, the Academy of American Poets initiated April as National Poetry Month to celebrate poets and recognize the importance of poetry in our lives.



The Poetry Tree by Shel Silverstein

Underneath the poet tree
Come and rest a while with me
And watch the way the word web weaves
Between the shady story leaves.

The branches of the poet tree
Reach from the mountains to the sea,
So come and sit...and dream...and climb
Just don't get hit by falling rhymes.



A Red, Red Rose By Robert Burns

O my Luvie is like a red, red rose
That's newly sprung in June;
O my luvie is like a melody
That's sweetly played in tune.



The time has come, 'the Walrus said,
To talk of many things:
Of shoes — and ships — and kings —
Of cabbages — and sea is boiling hot —
And whether pigs have wings ...

'The Walrus and the Carpenter'
By Lewis Carroll

Dreams

by
Langston Hughes

Hold fast to dreams
For if dreams die
Life is a broken-winged bird
That cannot fly.



I Sit Beside the Fire and Think By J.R.R. Tolkien

I sit beside the fire and think
of all that I have seen,
of meadow-flowers and butterflies
in summers that have been

A Prayer In Spring By Robert Frost

Oh, give us pleasure in the flowers today;
And give us not to think so far away
As the uncertain harvest; keep us here
All simply in the springing of the year.

A Word To Husbands by Ogden Nash

To keep your marriage brimming
With love in the loving cup,
Whenever you're wrong, admit it;
Whenever you're right, shut up.