

The Vineyard

*A publication to encourage and motivate participation in the family of God
and an aid in ministry for the members of Myerstown United Church of Christ.*



April 2019

Volume 38, Issue 4

Lee Ann Kurash, editor

Pastor's Thoughts... Read Ephesians 5:8-14 and St. John 9:1-41

In this season of penance and discipline let us consider the question, "Which is the greater affliction, physical or spiritual blindness?" We might begin by honestly deciding which malady most directly afflicts our daily lives. To assist this quest, consider which condition we are most likely able to correct. Ask also, whether physical or spiritual health is a higher priority.

The lessons reacquaint us with scriptures focusing on light coming into the world. Paul's text has as its primary concern our spiritual vision. The gospel text begins with a story of Jesus' physical healing of one born blind. But then this account quickly moves onto helping us understand clear examples of what the Apostle Paul admonished the Ephesians.

First, we are introduced to the disciples' narrowness of vision as they ask of the man's affliction, "Who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" (John 9:2). Their reaction is the blindness of accepting traditional opinions and theology, which ignores the teaching of the prophets. Do we ever embrace thoughts and opinions of persons based on conventional wisdom, which is just another term for prejudice?

We next see the blindness of legalism represented by the concern that this man had been healed on the Sabbath. Is there ever a proper time to not do the right thing? Again, is the Sabbath not made for human and not humans for the Sabbath? And, while it is all too easy to turn this freedom into licentious activity, we must never forget that Jesus came to free us from the chains of temporal concerns and politics for the righteousness. Thus, the concern for the Sabbath, and any legalism, can in truth be a stumbling block to faith, leaving the practitioner only more hungry and thirsty for the sake of righteousness than before.

The third avenue of blindness is the chosen doubt and disbelief of those who witnessed the end of the miracle. Honest doubt is one thing; it can inspire us to search more deeply for knowledge. But, in this case, the evidence is clear and yet rejected. Think of times and persons who have had all the proper information and continued on in a biased course of action because doing so conformed to their chosen and comfortable beliefs.

The final limiting condition is that of fear. The man's parents were afraid of what the Pharisees might do to them. What are some of the ways fear impedes our growth of faith and willingness to walk in the steps Jesus sets before us? Loss of status, others opinions of us, creature comforts and going along in order to get along, are these not but a few of the reasons we, at times, choose darkness over light?

The light has come into the world and we are empowered, as well as, called to walk in the light. Following his release from Spandau Prison, Albert Speer was asked of his Nazi War Crimes sentence, 'Dr. Speer, how could such intelligent, sophisticated and accomplished men, such as you, have come to take so active a role in such horrible crimes?' His answer was simple, "You must remember, the descent into hell is an exhilarating ride, but it is a one way trip. I know, for I am still there."

So which condition is a greater affliction for us? Consider the prayer of Alcoholics Anonymous:

"God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change.
The courage to change the things I can.
And the wisdom to know the difference."

Sincerely,

Rev. Rick Lucetti

Julius Muthengi Update...

Dear Prayer Partners,

Greetings in the precious name of our Lord Jesus Christ from Nairobi. I trust this communication finds you being sheltered by God's amazing grace. Agnes and I continually praise God for being our shield and shelter in the midst of life's challenges. We too praise him for your partnership with us in his ministry as we serve him here in Kenya. Thank you so much for your prayer support, and for those who support us financially we deeply express our appreciation. To you all, we pray that God's amazing grace will be your portion as you worship him, and serve him in the capacity he has chosen for you.

We are grateful to God for the privilege of serving him through training of leaders at the university, and also reaching out to our community in the village. On Saturday March 2nd I had a great time with a dozen men at our home in the village. We started studying the book of Colossians, which I hope to teach for the next two to three months. After the meeting, and following taking breakfast I gave them some foodstuff to take home. I also gave each one a pair of pens. I praise God for the way these men expressed their gratitude to God for the gifts! Yesterday, I was privileged to be graduation speaker at a Bible college where one of my former student is the Principal. It was a great moment for me to see a good number of my former students, going as far back as two to three decades! Pray for these men and women that God will bless their ministries, and also meet their every need. Pray also for Agnes as she prepares for her ministry with over a hundred women on Friday March 29th. These women represent very needy families, and because of that we have been saving small amounts of money in order to purchase corn flour for each of them.

It is indeed, a privilege to serve the living God, and advance his kingdom globally. I really thank God for the privilege of teaching at International Leadership University. I am particularly excited about the quality of students we have, who are on fire for the Lord. Last weekend, over 10 students and two staff members traveled to our neighboring country of Uganda for a four days mission, when they came back, they were filled with gratitude for what God did through them. Some of their accomplishments involve the following: training of Christians on how to share the gospel with non-believers; showing the Jesus film to nearly 2,000 people; leading 930 people to Jesus as their personal Savior; planting a new church at a Christian college among others. . .Please pray especially to those who gave their lives to Jesus as they continue being disciplined. Thank you so much beloved for your role in our lives and ministry. Pray also for our monthly support which is quite low, as well as the remaining funds towards replacement of our car (\$4,000-5,000). God bless you.

Your friends in Christ,

Julius and Agnes

April

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

8:00 am and 10:00 am Worship Seives



April 7 – Fifth Sunday of Lent

Pew Communion at 8:00 am
Small Groups/Sunday School 8:45 am
Communion by Intinction at 10:00 am
Scriptures: Isaiah 43:1 John 12:1-8
Message – ‘Something New’

April 14 – Palm Sunday – Healing Service

8:00 am Service of the Word
Small Groups/Sunday School 8:45 am
Easter Egg Hunt during Sunday school hour
10:00 am Traditional Service
Scriptures: Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29 Luke 19:28-40
Message - ‘Into the Storm’

April 18—Maundy Thursday Service 7:00 pm

In the sanctuary

April 19—Community Good Friday Service

April 21 – Easter Sunday

8:00 am Service of the Word
Small Groups/Sunday School 8:45 am
10:00 am Easter Service/Youth led
Scriptures: Isaiah 65:17-25 Luke 24:1-12

April 28 – Second Sunday of Easter

8:00 am Service of the Word
Small Groups/Sunday School at 8:45 am
Scriptures: Psalm 118:14-29 John 20:19-31
Guest Pastor



Rev. Rick’s Office Hours

Office hours are subject to change.

Tuesdays and Fridays in April

8:00 am – 12:00 pm

Rev. Rick’s cell number
717/679-0001



STAFF CONTACT INFORMATION

Rev. Rick Luciotti, Interim Pastor
 (cell) 717/679-0001

Emily Frantz (cell) 717-383-1147
 emilyfrantz@me.com

Mark Herr (cell) 717-572-7734

Lindy Bennetch (home) 717/933-8506

Lee Ann Kurash (cell) 717/304-1738
 myerstownucc@comcast.net

**Boy Scout
 Troop 20
 Corner**



The Boy Scouts of Myerstown Troop 20 were active in March. The troop's monthly campout was held at the Troop Cabin. Campout activities included a trip to historic Fort Mifflin, located just north of the Philadelphia Airport. The Webelos II Den from Myerstown Pack 460 joined the troop for this event. The boys and leaders received a guided tour of the fort and participated in flint lock rifle and cannon demonstrations.

Additionally in March, boys began the Traffic Safety merit badge with Mr. Bewley. This merit badge will take a few weeks to complete. On March 3, an Eagle Scout Board of Review was held for Christian S; he is the troop's newest Eagle Scout. The boys also started to prepare for their back packing trip in April, which will take place on the Appalachian Trail.

Troop 20 meets in the MUCC basement on Wednesdays from 6:30 – 8:00pm from November through April. The troop meets at their land on Halfway Drive from May through October. If anyone is interested in joining Boy Scout Troop 20 (grades 6-12), they may come uninvited to any Wednesday night meeting or contact the scoutmaster Scott Hentz at (717)-866-6498 or hentzs@comcast.net. If anyone is interested in joining Cub Pack 460 (grades K-5), they may contact Mike Young at (717)-376-7280. You can also visit our troop website at

www.myerstownboyscouts.org

**Lebanon County
 Christian Ministries**



LCCM donation request for April are mops/buckets.

Lebanon County Christian Ministries continues to operate as a help agency for Lebanon County. Several fund raisers are held throughout the year. On Saturday, March 23 the annual Lenten Breakfast was held with a sizable number attending. Four members plus a visitor represented MUCC. The next major fund raiser will involve golf and more information will be forthcoming.

The needed items items for the month of April will be buckets/mops. We often have requests for these items and seldom have them available. Often people are moving to a new apartment and in addition to food, may need cleaning tools. We do usually have cleaning products available.

Thank you for your ongoing support. Remember that besides food and clothing, other services are available at LCCM. If you have a need, please call LCCM at 717/272-4400.

Worship Attendance

	8:00 am	10:00 am
3/3/19	(9 am worship only -	65)
3/10/19	15	48
3/17/19	13	61
3/24/19	16	56
3/31/19	18	53





Thursday Community Meal in the "new" year

After a break of two months, our Thursday Community Meal resumed "operations" on Thursday, March 14 following a beautiful day of sun and blue sky! We prepared to serve 120 and we came close with 115 (plus another 20 persons who helped prepare and serve the meal). There were many comments of appreciation for the menu served (baked chicken and baked potato with roll, green beans and ...thanks to Shirley Krall... a wonderful Whoopie Pie for dessert. And, there were many comments of appreciation for this ministry of Myerstown UCC by way of a meal that allows friends and neighbors to sit down together and share in a time of eating and conversation. Our meal next month, April, will be mini meatloaves, scalloped potatoes, cole slaw, rolls and Apple Pie.

Speaking of Whoopie Pies, there was an article in the Lancaster news about where to get the best whoopee pies and some of the strange ones were Key Lime Whoopie Pies, Cornbread with Crab! Well, Shirley made for us, what is really the best...just plain soft chocolate with cream icing. Many asked for her recipe following the meal. She made 120 and we had one left over. We don't know who didn't get one, but there were a few that split theirs with a neighbor.

Here's the recipe:

Makes 15 (thirty scoops) assembled

Cream together: 2 cups sugar/1 cup Crisco/ 2 eggs/2 teaspoons vanilla/1 cup sour cream;

Combine and add to creamed mix: 4 cups flour/1 cup of cocoa powder/2 teaspoons salt;

Stir together: 2 teaspoons baking soda/1 cup hot water...add to above mixture;

Drop by Tablespoons onto greased cookie sheets. Bake at 350 degrees until they spring back when pressed lightly with fork (approximately 14 minutes baking time). Cool and fill with icing mix of your choice....For the Thursday meal we used icing/filling from Sunnyside Pastry in Lancaster County.

Our next Community Meal is on Thursday, April 11. Please join us!!!!



We will be serving mini meat loaves, scalloped potatoes, peas and carrots and apple pie for dessert.



Myerstown Women's Club meeting is on Monday, April 1 at 6:30 pm in the Social Hall.

Council will meet Tuesday, April 2 at 6:30 pm in the Library.

Strong Bones fitness classes will meet the following days: April 1, 4, 8, 11, 15, 18, 22, 25 and 29th at 8:30 AM in the Social Hall. Please contact Shirley Krall for more information at 717-639-4969.

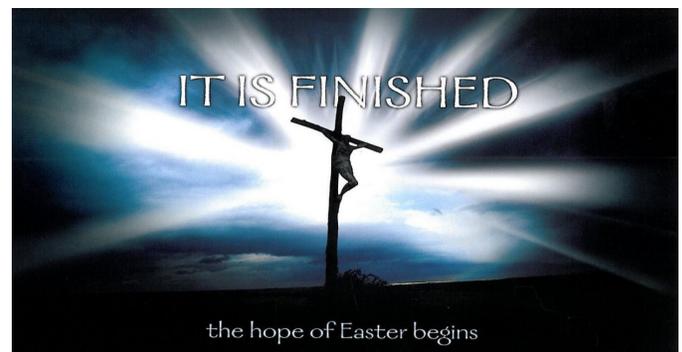
Upper Room Bible study will meet on Thursdays from 1:00 to 2:00 pm in the Library, except the Thursdays of the Community Meal. If you have any questions, please contact Marcia Bicher at 717/866-6401.

Staff Meeting, Monday, April 15 at 11:30 am in the office.

Personnel Committee meeting is Wednesday, April 17 At 6:30 pm in the Library.

Maundy Thursday Service at 7:00 pm in the Sanctuary.

Good Friday Community service begins with the Cross Walk starting at Noon at the Myerstown Pool parking lot and will end at StoneRidge Poplar Run. The service will be in the Theatre on Main beginning at 2:00pm.. If you only want to attend the service, please use the Main Street East entrance.



Property Committee meeting is Wednesday, April 24 at 6:30 pm in the Library.

New Horizons single adult fellowship will meet Saturday, April 27 at 1:00 pm outside Chocolate World in Hershey. Dinner will follow at Houlihan's at 27 W. Chocolate Ave.

Prayer List

Family members

Lee and Mary Smith

Long-Term Prayer Concerns

Family Members

Karen Wagner
Ellen Goodyear
Nancy Brown

Friends

Suzanne Fritsch - mother of Stephen Fritsch
Betty and Bill Gracely - mother and father of Margo McQuate
Dennis Palm - former ScoutMaster of Troop 20
Evelyn Rudy - friend of Ed and Candy Hibshman

Suzie Wartluft's contact number is 717/866-5490. Please call this number with any and all prayer concerns. Feel free to leave a message if Suzie does not answer and she will follow up to ensure accuracy on the listing of concern. The updated list will be called into the church office by 9:00 am each Wednesday morning. Feel free to contact Suzie with any questions or concerns.



Youth News

ONGOING:

Gift Cards - The orders are due the first Sunday of each month. Cards are delivered the next Sunday (or by arrangement if you will not be in

worship.) It's a GREAT way to make some money for our youth group. Order forms are on the Gathering Area Information table. Or we can mail one to you, if you are interested.

Volunteer at HersheyPark

Will you consider being a volunteer at HersheyPark this year to help earn money for our Youth Group and Community Outreach? For each hour you work, the Youth Group gets \$6.00. For each shift you work (3 to 5 hours long), you get a 1 day pass, including free parking, to HersheyPark. Occasionally, 2 or 3 passes are offered for a shift.. This is great to use for yourself or to give to family members.

The areas we volunteer are Food and Beverage in HersheyPark and in the Giant Center, Games, Guest Experiences, at the HersheyPark/Zoo America bridge, Ushering at Giant Center and HersheyPark Stadium, and Attractions and Rides.

If you are interested in being on the volunteer list, please call Candy Hibshman, Volunteer Coordinator, at (717)468-3563 and give her your email address and phone number. She will email you whenever she gets a request for volunteers. If you are available and interested, call her and she will contact Hershey.

(cont'd in next column)



April Birthdays

- 2 - Jeanette Mills
- 3 - Helen Lausch, Barbara Weaver
- 6 - Arlene Linn
- 7 - Marie Hibshman
- 9—William Arnold, Sr., David Winters
- 10— Eleanor Schnoke, Tony Vracarich
- 11 - Donna Weiss
- 12 - Jennifer Hassler
- 15 - Annamarie Behm
- 16—Ed Keller, Erin Harris
- 17—Michael Ebersole, Sr.
- 19 - David Rittle, Leah Rosen
- 20 - Angela Bicher, Haley Challenger
- 21 - Thyra Oakes
- 25 - Glen Mitstifer, Carl Weaver
- 27 - Elwood Schnoke
- 28 - Robert Boltz, Ellen Goodyear



Volunteer at HersheyPark (cont'd)

Volunteers must be at least 18 years old. Friends and family members are welcome to volunteer also.

If you were on last year's list, please contact Candy if you'd like to stay on the list.

Thanks!!



April 7 to May 5 2019
Worship Volunteer Schedule

April 7 Open - Cal Beamesderfer
8 am Greeter - Gene Haag
Worship Leader /Communion - Wanda Rabold
10 am Greeter—Pat and Trudy Yeager
Worship Leader - Carolyn Williams
Communion—Ed and Candy Hibshman
Stephen and Marianne Fritsch
Ushers - Ed and Candy Hibshman
Terry and Suzie Schott
Kenny Patrick
Sound - Paulie McQuate

April 14 Open - Mark Herr
8 am Greeters- Shirley Krall
10 am Greeter—Terry and Suzie Schott
Worship Leader—Stephen Fritsch
Lector - Marianne Fritsch
Ushers—Kristi Fields
Annamarie Behm
Darryl Brown
Charles and Carolyn Williams
Kenny Patrick
Sound - Paulie McQuate

Maundy Thursday—April 18
Greeters—Charles and Carolyn Williams
Intinction Communion—Marie Hibshman
Worship Leader—Carolyn Williams

April 21 Open - Marcia Bicher
8 am Greeter-Nancy Weaber; 8 am Worship Leader—William Arnold
10 am Greeters—Youth
Communion— Marie Hibshman, set-up
Youth
Worship Leader—Doug Bohannon
Ushers - Youth
Kenny Patrick
Sound - Robert Dash

April 28 Open - William and Betty Arnold
8 am Greeters—William and Betty Arnold
10 am Greeters - Paulie and Margo McQuate
Worship Leader - Sally Kulp
Ushers - Kory and Ryan Leppo
Robert Dash
Kenny Patrick
Sound - Robert Dash

May 5 Open—Cal Beamesderfer
8 am Greeter—Lindy Bennetch
10 am Greeters—Karen and Ryan Leppo
Communion—Suzie Wartluft
Annamarie Behm
Travis and Angie Bicher
Mary Smith
Worship Leader—Margo McQuate
Ushers - Travis and Angie Bicher
Gabby Bicher and Gavin Bicher
Kenny Patrick
Sound—Paulie McQuate



Rehearsals are the following dates at
7:30 pm in the Music Room:

Wednesday, April 10

Wednesday, April 17

Anthem Rehearsals are in the Music Room
at 9:40 am on the following Sundays:

(9:30 if you're not in Sunday School)

Sunday, April 14 (Palm Sunday)

Sunday, April 21 (Easter Sunday)

Please contact Emily Frantz with any questions
at 717/383-1147 or emilyfrantz@me.com



Our Church Officers:

Kory Leppo, President
Kristi Fields, Vice-President
Vacant - Treasurer
Marcia Bicher, Secretary

Church Council:

Darryl Brown
Jim Diehm
Mike Ebersole, Jr.
Sue Harvey
Sally Kulp
Mark Wartluft

Our Church Elders:

Bill Brown
Stephen Fritsch
Marie Hibshman
Charles Williams

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MARCH COUNCIL MEETING:

After being called to order by President Kory Leppo, the Council began with Devotions and Approval of the Minutes. The Treasurer's report was not available again this month, but will be voted on next month. Thanksgivings and concerns were presented. The steps to seek a new pastor were discussed. Council also discussed presenting a motion to the congregation to reduce the number of search committee members based on our current number of regular members. A "Media Permission for Minors" document was edited and approved by Council. Mark Herr can begin getting signatures from all of the parents of our children/minors to be displayed on social media. Committee and Task Group reports were presented. Highlights included approving the newly created Parish Administrator job description and approving Emily Frantz for the position. Other items of discussion were the locking and unlocking of the church, community meal preparation, and the work of the Congregational Assessment Team, the By-laws revision team, and the Nominating team. Old Business included the by-laws, the treasurer vacancy, the inclement weather policy, the Muthengi ministry, church insurance, and retaining a lawyer. New business discussed was participation in One Great Hour of Sharing, the importance of coffee hour and gathering time, and Holy Week services. Due to low numbers of youth, musicians, and changes in job a motion was made to suspend the Easter Vigil service this year, hoping to gain have the service next year. The meeting closed in prayer and was adjourned.

APRIL 22 IS EARTH DAY

Earth Day is an annual event created to celebrate the planet's environment and raise public awareness about pollution. The day, marked on April 22, is observed worldwide with rallies, conferences, outdoor activities and service projects.



Started as a grassroots movement, Earth Day created public support for the creation of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and contributed to the passage of the Clean Air Act, the Water Quality Improvement Act, the Endangered Species Act and several other environmental laws. The idea for Earth Day was proposed by then-Sen. Gaylord Nelson of Wisconsin, who died in 2005.

(livescience.com)

HOLY WEEK BEGINNING APRIL 14, PALM SUNDAY

