



The Ambassador

April 2023

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From the Pastor

Dear Friends,

I pray that this newsletter finds you having a meaningful Lenten journey and experiencing God's grace even in the wilderness of life. As we prepare to enter into Holy Week, the passage Philippians 2:5-8 is at the forefront of my attention.

*Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus,
who, though he was in the form of God,
did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited,
but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave,
being born in human likeness.
and being found in human form, he humbled himself
and became obedient to the point of death – even death on a
cross.*

This is God's offering to us – the giving of God's own self - not only coming to us in human form, but being so committed to loving us that Jesus even endured death on a cross. The Gospel of John reminds us that this is not only God's offering to us, it is God's offering to the entire world (John 3:16).

We are invited to give because God gives and I could not be more pleased with our Lenten and Easter offering this year. Our bags of food donations increase each day as someone drops by the office with groceries to donate. The monetary offering has been wonderful, too! As of the time of me writing this letter to you, you have given \$1,270 to the food ministries of our church! I am so thankful for your generosity and for the ministry that happens as a result of your commitment. It is not too late to give – we are collecting food through Palm Sunday worship

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Worship With Us

Online & In Person
Worship @10:30 am
Sunday School @ 9 am

In Person & Online
Bible Studies
@ 10 am Wednesdays and
@ 6 pm Thursdays
Spanish Speaking Bible
Study
@6 pm Wednesdays

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on April 2nd and the monetary Lenten and Easter offering will be received through Easter Sunday, April 9th.

In addition to our Lenten and Easter offering, I have an additional appeal. I encourage you to extend an invitation to a friend, co-worker, neighbor, or family member to join you in celebrating Easter this year. Worship will be uplifting and the sanctuary will be beautifully decorated. This is a wonderful opportunity to invite someone to worship. Easter Sunday worship is April 9th at 10:30 a.m. and we will be having an egg hunt following worship.

In closing, I want to share with you the words from the last verse of "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross" by Isaac Watts.

*Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were an offering far too small,
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my life, my soul, my all.*

As we prepare to enter the wilderness of Holy Week and as we celebrate Easter, let us each have the same mind that was in Christ Jesus. May we give God our life, our soul, our all. May we share the love of God in every way we can and with whomever we can, beginning now and throughout the year.

Peace,
Pastor Kim
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Holy Week Worship Services

Holy Week is the week before Easter, beginning on Palm Sunday. There are sharp contrasts in our worship life as we celebrate Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem, gather around the table to remember the Last Supper, and then come to the cross of our Lord. It is an emotionally challenging week but we are called to observe with devotion, and we are called to observe together. Here is our Holy Week worship schedule:

Palm Sunday, April 2nd at 10:30 a.m.

Sunday morning worship with palms and special music from our choir.

Maundy Thursday, April 6th at 7:00 p.m.

Worship with Holy Communion, special music from our choir

Good Friday, April 7th at noon

A quiet and reflective service with prayer, scripture, and singing.

Community Good Friday Service

April 7th at 6:00 p.m. at First Baptist Church

Music and Worship Notes *by Mary Ellen Clinard*

As Easter approaches, we all anticipate singing "Christ the Lord Is Risen, Today". It's not Easter unless we sing it. But did you know that it was written by Charles Wesley, brother of the 'founder of Methodism' John Wesley?

Charles Wesley, who died in 1788, wrote over 6,500 texts for hymn singing in his lifetime. He was a prolific writer to say the least, with many of his poems having multiple stanzas. The original text for "Christ the Lord Is Risen Today" had 11 stanzas and was titled "Hymn for Easter Day". Published in 1739, the alleluias at the end of each phrase weren't added until about 100 years later by an editor to better fit the tune we know and love—called EASTER HYMN. Until then it was often sung to the hymn tune ST. GEORGE'S WINDSOR, more commonly known to us as "Come, Ye, Thankful People Come". When it is sung to this tune, as it still is in some places in the world, the "alleluias" are not included. Another popular tune to sing the text is ORIENTUS PARTIBUS which in our hymnal is titled "There's A Spirit In The Air" or "The Friendly Beasts". When it's sung to this tune, the alleluias are also not included. Although the hymn fell out of favor for about 80 years, it experienced a resurgence in the early 1900's. The text, regardless of the tune, is now published in over 1,100 hymnals around the globe. I can't imagine this text sung to any other tune than "EASTER HYMN" with it's wonderful Alleluias!

As we enjoy this hymn on Easter Sunday, let's appreciate the journey this text and tune have taken over the last 2 centuries and our shared heritage with millions of Christians all over the world on this day.



Pastor Kim will be on vacation April 10-16. If you are in need of pastoral care, please contact Pastor Daniel

Upcoming Worship Series:

ALLELUIA 50 Days of Celebrating Easter Joy

April 9 : The Joy of Surprises

May 7 : The Joy of Being Chosen

April 16: The Joy of Second Chances

May 14: The Joy of Solidarity

April 23: The Joy of Recognizing

May 21: The Joy of Unity

April 30: The Joy of Abundant Life

Receiving the Kingdom of God like a Child

In 1924 the Mexican government declared April 30th to be national Children's Day. On this day nationwide, children are honored with big parties, delicious meals, and special programs in public and private organizations and schools. But this is not only a celebration, we also recognize children on this day because, like everybody else, they have rights.



Children have the right to live decently, the right to health care, the right to go to school, and the right to live in a healthy home, loved and cared for. So, on this special day, Mexican society commits to guaranteeing all these rights and watching over the children and their welfare.

God, too, has a special place for children in his heart. In the passage from Mark, Jesus (the Son of God) reproves the disciples' attitude toward parents and children who come to Jesus for a blessing. Jesus recognized the special place that children have in the Kingdom of God. But not only did Jesus honor childhood, he also gives it a key to receive the Kingdom of God. The Lord says *"I tell you the truth, anyone who does not receive the Kingdom of God like a child will never enter it."* What challenging words! Being like children means that we have nothing to do but we receive all. Being like children means that we leave all our pride behind and we come humbly to God with nothing to offer but just our hearts trusting that we are made children of God immediately and we get his blessing over our lives. This is how grace works, and it is amazing.

Dear friends, we are called to become like children to enter into the Kingdom of God. We must recognize our humble condition, and accept that God can love us even through our failure, weakness, and grief. We are called to accept these truths and believe them to participate in the Kingdom of God. We are called to live depending on Him and his promises like children depend on us.



*"I tell you the truth, anyone who doesn't receive the Kingdom of God like a child will never enter it."
Mark 10:15 NLT*





A Way To Show Our Appreciation

Linda Schmitt, our Financial Secretary, is stepping down after many years of service. We are hosting a reception in her honor on Sunday, April 23rd, after morning worship. As is customary at FUMC, a LOVE offering will be given to her as a further expression of our gratitude.

We are asking the congregation to contribute to this gift. You may do so by placing it in any Sunday offering collection or by mail or by dropping it off at the office during weekday business hours. Please remember to mark checks or envelopes with the word LOVE.

The reception will be a good opportunity for you to personally express your thanks to Linda for all she has done for us. We hope you will attend.



Staff Appreciation 2023

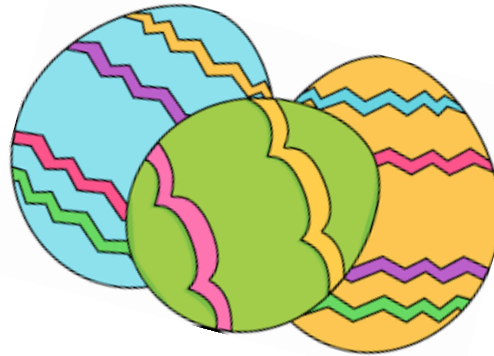
We will be celebrating our staff during the month of May for Staff Appreciation 2023. Every member of our staff is present on Tuesdays, so those are the days in May we are designating to honor them - May 2nd, 9th, 16th, 23rd, & 30th. As before, we have paired up the many groups in our church and have assigned a Tuesday in May to do something nice for our staff. Your committee Chair has the details. This is for **everyone**, so if you're not in a group, you may also contribute individually. There will be baskets set out during May for cards and small gifts.

Thank you from your SPRC Committee



EASTER EGG HUNT!

Calling all children! Plan on staying after worship on Easter Sunday for a special Easter egg hunt! It is going to be fun!



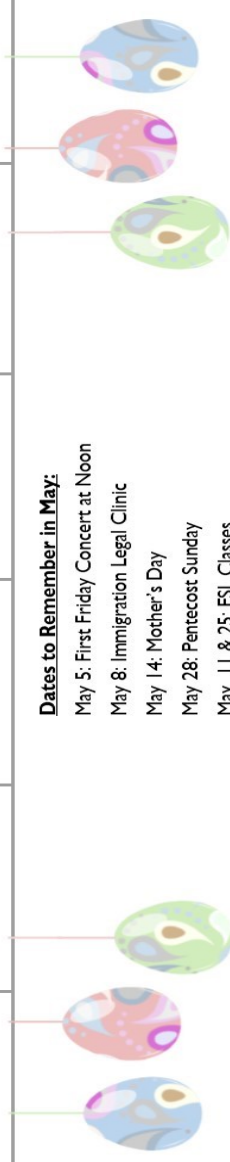
Read the Bible In a Year – Reading Schedule for April

Three months down! Yay! You are doing a great job! April begins with a new book but familiar stories as many of the stories of I and II Chronicles can also be found in I and II Kings. We will move pretty quickly through Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther, which will leave us reading through Job that last week of April, but fear not – the Psalms will bring us comfort in May.

April 1	I Chronicles 1:1-9:44	April 16	Ezra 1:1-3:13
April 2	I Chronicles 10:1-12:40	April 17	Ezra 4:1-6:22
April 3	I Chronicles 13:1-16:43	April 18	Ezra 7:1-10:44
April 4	I Chronicles 17:1-22:1	April 19	Nehemiah 1:1-4:23
April 5	I Chronicles 22:2-27:34	April 20	Nehemiah 5:1-7:73
April 6	I Chronicles 28:1-29:30	April 21	Nehemiah 8:1-10:39
April 7	II Chronicles 1:1-5:1	April 22	Nehemiah 11:1-13:31
April 8	II Chronicles 5:2-9:31	April 23	Esther 1:1-4:17
April 9	II Chronicles 10:1-13:22	April 24	Esther 5:1-10:3
April 10	II Chronicles 14:1-16:14	April 25	Job 1:1-5:27
April 11	II Chronicles 17:1-20:37	April 26	Job 6:1-14:22
April 12	II Chronicles 21:1-24:27	April 27	Job 15:1-21:34
April 13	II Chronicles 25:1-28:27	April 28	Job 22:1-31:40
April 14	II Chronicles 29:1-32:33	April 29	Job 32:1-37:24
April 15	II Chronicles 33:1-36:23	April 30	Job 38:1-42:17



April 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
2 PALM SUNDAY 9:00 Sunday School 10:30 Worship	3 8:00 Breakfast Club	4 2:00 Pantry Pie Peddler Pick up	5 10:00 Son Reflector's Bible Study 6:00 Spanish Bible Study 7:00 Choir Rhrls	6 MAUNDY (HOLY) THURSDAY Service: 7:00	7 GOOD FRIDAY/ CHURCH OFFICE CLOSURES @ NOON Service: Noon Community Service 6pm First Baptist	8 1
9 EASTER SUNDAY 9:00 Sunday School 10:30 Worship Egg Hunt immediately following Worship	10 OFFICE CLOSED 8:00 Breakfast Club 6:00 Immigration Clinic	11 1:00 SPRC Mtg 2:00 Pantry	12 10:00 Son Reflector's Bible Study 6:00 Spanish Bible Study 3:00 & 7:00 Choir Rhrls	13 5:30 ESL 6:00 Sonshine Bible	14 12:00 First Friday Concert 10:00 UMW Board	15 9:00 Hope Circle @ Bob Evans 10:00 Elizabeth Circle
16 9:00 Sunday School 10:30 Worship Service	17 8:00 Breakfast Club	18 2:00 Pantry 4:00 CMC Mtg 5:30 Finance Mtg 6:00 Council Mtg	19 10:00 Son Reflector's Bible Study 6:00 Spanish Bible Study 3:00 & 7:00 Choir Rhrls	20 6:00 Sonshine Bible Study	21 2:00 pm Commons Movie: The War Room AMBASSADOR ARTICLES DUE	22
23 9:00 Sunday School 10:30 Worship Reception for Linda Schmitt following Worship	24 8:00 Breakfast Club	25 2:00 Pantry 6:30 Trustees Mtg	26 10:00 Son Reflector's Bible Study 6:00 Spanish Bible Study 3:00 & 7:00 Choir Rhrls	27 5:30 ESL 6:00 Sonshine Bible Study	28	29
30 \$5 ON THE 5TH 9:00 Sunday School 10:30 Worship	<p>Dates to Remember in May: May 5: First Friday Concert at Noon May 8: Immigration Legal Clinic May 14: Mother's Day May 28: Pentecost Sunday May 11 & 25: ESL Classes</p> 					

Sharyn Edelen April 2
 Dave Balsmeyer April 6
 J.C. Shew April 12
 Betty Risner April 13
 Anita Shew April 15
 Sandy Yaple April 16
 Elois Duff April 20
 Maya Fairchild April 21
 Sue Moore April 25
 Debbie Taylor April 25
 Don Beasley April 26
 Terry Stephens April 27

Happy Birthday!



2023 First Friday Concert & Artist Series

April 14, 2023*

Milt Goedde

**You won't want to miss this incredibly
creative piano man serving up pop & jazz
standards**

**Please note the date change*

First UMC - Middletown

@noon

Free Admission

masks encouraged, not required