



The Ambassador

April 2025

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From the Pastor

Dear Friends,

A few days ago I was talking with a member of our church about the daffodils that are cheerfully greeting those who pass by or come in the church. I was noting that our church daffodils are about a week ahead of my daffodils at home – one or two have bloomed but most of them are waiting for a later day to burst. She noted that hers are not even that far yet – they have budded but still have a ways to go.

Later on, I reflected on that conversation and I remembered the differences of time in the Easter story. In John's gospel, the traditional Easter Sunday passage, Mary begins her journey to the tomb early, while it was still dark. In Matthew and Luke, this happens at early dawn while Mark has the sun already risen as the women make their way. I am not sure if there is any theological significance in this nuance but I do like the fact that according to the Bible, it takes a while for Easter to unfold.

Like the daffodils in our respective yards, Easter reveals itself on its own schedule: while it is still dark, early dawn, or after the sun has risen. And not only this, Easter manages to find us wherever we are. For the women that first Easter, they find an empty tomb right away, while Peter finds it a little later, and then our resurrected Lord shows up here, and there, and everywhere.

But we are not at Easter yet. I am looking forward to continuing our Lenten journey together. We still have a few more weeks in our series on the Sabbath (Page 2). We will have special services during Holy Week (page 3) and we have already begun preparing for our celebration of Easter on April 20th. And while it is not yet Easter – signs of it are all around. God is already busy making all things new!

Peace,
Pastor Kim <><

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Worship With Us

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

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REST

Lenten Series 2025

We continue our series on the Sabbath as we begin April, moving from our need for Sabbath rest into how we can observe it. We will explore what it might look like in our lives – what to include and what to avoid, as well as working to protect this gift of time from God. Sabbath is an expression of God's grace. This Lent let us dive deeper and explore further the divine invitation to REST!



<u>Date</u>	<u>Message</u>	<u>Scripture</u>
4.6.2025	Half-Rest: Take a Break	Luke 10:38-42
4.13.2025	Whole-Rest: Take a Day	Luke 19:28-40 and Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29



A Little Note from Pastor Kim

Please keep me in your prayers as I will be travelling to Chicago, IL on Friday, April 4th – Wednesday, April 9th for my second week with the Upper Room's Spiritual Formation Academy.

Then on May 4th, Rev. Larry Kreps will be preaching as I travel to Adrian, Michigan for my niece's graduation from Adrian College.

When I return home, I am having knee replacement surgery on Tuesday, May 6th. If all goes well, I will be back in worship to celebrate Pentecost with you on June 8th. Pastor Daniel will be preaching and covering pastoral care while I am out for surgery and recovery. If you have any questions or concerns, please let me know.

Blessings, Pastor Kim <><

“What It’s Like to Do A Bible Study with Pastor Kim”

I thought it was important to re-visit the “Making the Bible Your Bible” workshop experience many of us had on March 15th because as we continue to find ways to “dig deeper” into the Bible, you may find yourself signing up for our next one. You won’t regret it and here’s why.....

I’ll admit it—I spend a lot of time reading the Bible. As Worship Director, I read and refer to the Scriptures in my worship meetings with Pastor Kim and throughout the week as I plan music for our worship each Sunday...finding hymns, responses, anthems, and other service music that might augment, magnify, or highlight a particular direction of the scripture used that day. However, I don’t spend as much time as I should reading and reflecting on scripture so that it might strengthen or comfort me in my own personal life. This workshop not only allowed me to set aside time on a Saturday morning to be with the scriptures, but it taught me how to read more deeply into the scriptures and apply it to my personal situation. I left the workshop with solid tools to use to help get me on the path of regular reading, journaling, and life application.

As with many things that Pastor Kim plans, it was well organized, fun, encouraged discussion, and laughter was abundant! We received journals and new pens! We enjoyed great food and fellowship!

How good it was to spend a morning with the Bible, and with friends that I see every Sunday but often don’t get the chance to sit with and enjoy their company. Next time you see a sign up for a Bible Study, sign up quickly! Those of us who attended will be the first ones to put our name on the list because we know the value of that time spent with Pastor Kim, the Scriptures, and each other. There’s always room for more!

Mary Ellen Clinard

HOLY WEEK & EASTER WORSHIP



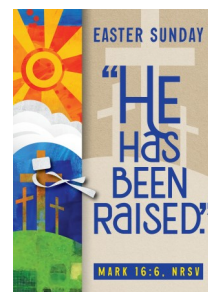
We begin our observance of Holy Week on Palm Sunday, April 13th. We will be concluding our Rest series and celebrating with the parade of palms with our children.

On Thursday, April 17th at 7 p.m. we will have a Maundy Thursday service with communion and special music from the choir.



On Friday, April 18th at noon we will observe Good Friday with prayer and quiet reflection on the passion story. At 6:30 pm there will be a community Good Friday service at First Baptist Church on the corner of Breiel Blvd. & Riverview.

And then on Sunday, April 20th at 10:30 we will celebrate Easter with special music and alleluias abounding!



"Wait patiently."

Psalm 40:1

As we read in this psalm, David worships God for his excellent and grateful deliverance of him in times of distress. David said God rescued him from desperation, making him step secure.

Besides that, David praised God because even when he was surrounded by many enemies who looked after David's life to destroy it, the Lord set him free and helped him. At last, David is thankful because it doesn't matter how many distresses he could have in his life or even his needs or afflictions, God always is there to secure him and deliver him from shame and confusion.

As you know, our little Eliette swallowed a hair clip a few weeks ago. When that happened, we felt our world was shaken. We felt like we were the worst parents in the world. We felt helpless, seeing our baby cry out because of the IV and all the tests. We were filled with fear, discouragement, and consternation.

Suddenly, a peaceful feeling filled our hearts and minds with hope, courage, and tenderness. We remembered this psalm and how God is our rock. The Lord brought to our worried minds the following text: "Happy are those who make the Lord their trust" (Psalm 40:4a). Every time that we saw our baby crying, we repeated to her and ourselves this verse. We said, "You are our Rock, and we trust in you; everything is going to be right."

Being in that situation was alarming and disturbing, but we could see God's faithfulness and loving care toward our little Eliette and us. God showed his mercy through his Word and prayers, the nurses, and the doctors. We felt covered by his presence in those dark moments. We are so grateful for God's loving presence in our lives.

In the same way, as a church, we can be passing through a valley of desperation and sorrow. Probably we are surrounded by thousands of enemies, or we can be going through struggles, but you know what? God is always willing to help us. The Lord is always there, inclining to us and hearing our cry. The Lord is always setting our feet upon a rock.

God was with David during times of distress. God was with us in the emergency room. God is with us as a church. Let's wait patiently. God is our refuge and our rock.

Con cariño y amor
Rev. Daniel Cardenas

2nd Mile Giving

Update as of March 25, 2025

As this update is written, we still have one more Sunday left in March and we are currently at \$65,769.56 pledged and have received a \$10,000 grant from our district. We are \$11,230 away from meeting our goal. If you have not made a 2nd mile commitment yet, would you prayerfully consider doing so? Commitment cards were mailed to you but you can also pick one up on Sunday mornings outside the sanctuary or the church office can mail you one. Thank you so much for your amazing support and generosity. God is so good!

Lenten Lunches

You are invited to join with other Christians in our community for a time of prayer and reflection. We started in March and are continuing in April. The remaining schedule is:

April 2nd St Paul's UCC with Rev. Jeff Wilder
 April 9th First Baptist Church with Rev. Daniel Cardenas

Lenten Offering

As has become our tradition, our Lenten and Easter offering this year will focus on the ministries of our church that focus on feeding our neighbors. We have a weekly **food pantry** that is open every Tuesday afternoon. We also offer pantry items in the form of **emergency food**, which is a grocery bag full of canned goods, peanut butter, crackers, etc. Last, but certainly not least, we host Monday morning **Breakfast Club** which provides a hot breakfast to anyone who comes.

This Lenten season you are invited to purchase pantry items that are the quickest to leave our pantry shelves. These items are:

Toilet tissue (4 pack)	White Rice (3 lb bag)
Laundry detergent	Shampoo (V05)
Dish soap	Apple Juice—Half Gallon
Vegetable/Canola Oil	Evaporated Milk
Flour	Paper Towels
Sugar	Ramen Noodles (Chicken/Beef)
Salt	Bar Soap Ivory/Zest
Vienna Sausages	

In addition to purchasing items for the pantry, prayerfully consider how you can be involved with these ministries year-round. Could you volunteer to serve during pantry hours or be a shopper for food pantry items that do not get donated? Or could you come to the church on Monday mornings to make a hot breakfast for our neighbors?

If you have any questions about our Lenten & Easter offering, or if you want to serve in one of these ministries, please contact the church office and we will help you get connected.



MISSION MOMENT

An update from Dr. Les and Debbie Dornon, missionaries to Nepal working in the Tansen Hospital. A few days ago we learned that our granddaughter was born in England. We are so thankful for her safe arrival and Hannah and Nathan are getting used to sleepless nights and lots of baby cuddles. Thanks to those who have been praying for them. (We will get to see them next month!)

Hannah's delivery was in a hospital with a team of midwives and nurses to take care of her and the baby. We were thankful for the good care she received.

In the meantime, here in Tansen, we recently had a mom whose delivery experience was not so nice! She was just over 31 weeks pregnant with twins, and had come to the antenatal clinic for a check up. All was normal, so she and her husband traveled back to their home which is a jeep ride of over an hour.

Having arrived back home, this mom started having pains which quickly escalated, so they got another jeep and started back towards the hospital. (Picture mountainous roads with lots of curves, lots of holes, and lots of dust) The first of her twins, a little girl, made her appearance in the jeep before they arrived at the hospital! The second twin, a boy, was delivered here, but he was breech. Both babies were small - 3.8 pounds and 3.5 pounds. Both were put into incubators with oxygen to help them breathe, and both were put on NG tubes for feeding as they could not suck enough to nurse.

Within a few days, the babies could breathe on their own, but they took more time to gain the needed strength to eat on their own. Both the mom and dad practiced "kangaroo care" which means holding the baby against the chest - skin to skin - to keep the baby warm.

The mom struggled with some postpartum depression, but our pastoral care staff were able to encourage and counsel her, and she improved as the babies gained strength! After 27 days in the hospital, the babies were discharged - new weights were 4.2 pounds and 4.1 pounds.

This little family didn't have enough money to pay for meals during their stay in the hospital so not only was the care for the babies given for free, but meals were also provided for the parents. This was all because of the Medical Assistance Fund which is supplied by donations from around the world - including many of you! Thank you!

Even though these little babies had a rough beginning, we are glad they are now thriving.


Blessings! Les & Debbie Dornon



(This photo is another set of twins born several years ago here in Tansen.)

April 2025



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<div>  </div>		1 1:00 SPRC 2:00 Pantry	2 Noon Lenten Lunch @ St. Paul UCC 3:00 & 7:00 Choir Rhrl 6:00 Hispanic Bible Study	3	4 Noon First Friday Concert	5
6 9:00 Sunday School 10:30 Worship	7 8:00 Breakfast Club	8 2:00 Pantry	9 Noon Lenten Lunch @ 1st Baptist 3:00 & 7:00 Choir Rhrl 6:00 Hispanic Bible Study	10 2:00 Elizabeth Cicle @ Mt. Pleasant	11 10:00 UWF Meeting	12 9:00 Hope Circle @ Bob Evans
13 PALM SUNDAY 9:00 Sunday School 10:30 Worship	14 8:00 Breakfast Club 6:00 Legal Clinic	15 2:00 Pantry 4:00 CMC	16 3:00 & 7:00 Choir Rhrl 6:00 Hispanic Bible Study	17 MAUNDY THURSDAY 7:00 Service	18 GOOD FRIDAY Noon Service 6:30 Ecumenical Service @ First Baptist	19
20 EASTER SUNDAY 9:00 Sunday School 10:30 Worship	21 CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED 8:00 Breakfast Club	22 NO Pantry 6:30 Trustees Mtg	23 3:00 & 7:00 Choir Rhrl 6:00 Hispanic Bible Study	24	25 AMBASSADOR Articles due	26
27 9:00 Sunday School 10:30 Worship	28 8:00 Breakfast Club	29 2:00 Pantry 3:00 Cong Care 5:30 Finance 6:00 Council Mtg	30 3:00 & 7:00 Choir Rhrl 6:00 Hispanic Bible Study	Dates to remember in May: 5/2 First Friday Concert 5/26 Memorial Day 5/28-5/31 West Ohio Annual Conference—Capital University		

- 1 Butch Adams
 2 Sharyn Edelen
 3 Gloria Freeman
 6 Dave Balsmeyer
 12 J.C. Shew
 15 Anita Shew
 16 Sandy Yaple
 21 Maya Fairchild
 24 Aaron Sutherland
 25 Sue Moore, Debbie Taylor
 26 Don Beasley
 27 Terry Stephens

Happy Birthday!



2025 First Friday Concert & Artist Series

**April 4, 2025
Jeff Jena**

**Don't miss this opportunity to hear
this very, very, funny man who's
been doing comedy since before the
invention of the cell phone and
internet existed.**

**First UMC - Middletown
@noon
Free Admission**