



Connections

April 2019

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Can you articulate how you have experienced the resurrection power of Christ in your life?

At a previous church I served, we offered a Lenten luncheon series (every Wednesday at noon) called *Stories of Resurrection*. We tapped people from the congregation and a few community members to talk about how they had experienced the resurrection power of Christ in real time in their everyday lives.

After all, the raising of Christ from the dead is, I would argue, a core belief of our Christian faith. As it says in our United Methodist Articles of Faith, “we believe that Christ did truly rise from the dead.” The resurrection of Jesus - that he truly died and was truly raised back to life - distinguishes him not merely as a great moral teacher to be emulated, but as a Lord whom we can follow. When Jesus died on the cross, he took with him all the sin and brokenness of the world and all the systems of oppression and degradation, and allowed their power over us to be crucified with him. That was a battle won, yet without the resurrection, there would have been no victory, no hope for the power of love to triumph over evil. The resurrection is the fulcrum upon which our hope hinges. There we can trust that in Christ, we can be forgiven and set free from that which binds us and live in greater relationship with God and neighbor-not to mention more at peace in our own mind and skins.

Because the resurrection of Jesus is central to our understanding of God's merciful nature and God's desire to empower us as disciples and make us new, I was curious how we actually experience resurrection in the day to day? Thus the Lenten luncheon series, *Stories of Resurrection* was born. There was a surgeon who shared how during a particularly difficult surgery, when his usual approach failed and time was critical, he prayed (out loud) during the operation and invited the entire team to join him. He described how he experienced a focus – an energy – to continue calmly with strategy and wisdom to complete the surgery successfully. He identified that as the resurrection power of Christ at work within him.

There was another story shared by a couple that had lost their son in a tragic accident when he was merely five years old. They described the difficult journey through grief and questions that seemed unanswerable. What brought them through was a resounding hope that Jesus had “defeated” death through the resurrection. They knew with assurance that their child was with God and had the “sure” hope that there would be a reunion (they elaborated on how it was more than just a feeling or an intellectual knowledge, that it was an assurance given to them by the Holy Spirit).

Continued on next page...

March/April Upper Room Devotionals are available in the Narthex, History Corner, and the Welcome Center.

THE UPPER ROOM
DAILY DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

Worship Series: Follow

- April 7** **Follow: The Economics of Grace**
April 14 **Follow: When the Crowds Cheer and When They Don't**
April 21 **Follow: A Risen Savior**



Palm Sunday - April 14 services at 8:30am, 9:30am, and 11:00am

Maundy Thursday - April 18 at 6:30pm in the Fellowship Hall

Good Friday - April 19 at 6:30pm in the Sanctuary

Eggstravaganza - April 20 from 11:00am - 1:00pm

Easter Sunday - April 20 services at 8:30am, 9:30am, and 11:00am

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There were several other accounts, but essentially the theme was this: the same power that raised Christ from the dead (resurrection power) is made available to us. Anytime we turn from any measure or depth of sin towards forgiveness and compassion that is the resurrection power of Christ at work within us. Anytime we recognize our own need and that God is one we turn to, God gives us resurrection power for strength or guidance. When we are faced with questions of eternity and our place in it, it is through the power of the resurrection and belief in Christ that we can trust that we have a place now and for all time. Whenever we see injustice or the oppression of others in this world and we surge with a fervent desire and motivation for equity and just opportunity or safety for all God's people regardless of economic status or ethnicity, that is the resurrection power of Christ seeking to make the kingdom real now.

As we move towards the Easter season, I invite you to consider how you would answer the following question: how have you experienced the resurrection power of Christ at work in your life? Because it is one thing to know about God, it is another to be connected to and walking in the power that raised Christ to new life and can do the same within us.

Thank you God beyond words for the meaning of Easter – the resurrection power made real in our lives,
 Pastor Darcey



SUNDAY MORNING 9:30



- (Room 211) Good News
- (Room 202) Contemporary Christian
- (Room 106) Preschool (3 years & fully potty trained until they start kindergarten)
- (Room 109) Early Elementary (K-2nd grade)
- (Room 105) Older Elementary (3rd-5th grade)
- (Youth Basement) Youth (6th-12th grade)

As we head into the home stretch to Easter, I hear the invitation to join the company of the living and to leave the company of the walking dead. Thinking of the invitation of the risen Christ in this way reminds me of the zombie comedy “Shaun of the Dead.” What adds comedy to this movie is that it takes the characters a very long time to notice the people around them are becoming zombies. They do not notice the homeless person wthat they pass by every day has become a zombie. They do not really notice the convenience store they visit almost daily has been ransacked, even as they are trying to make a purchase in it. They are puzzled by people who are wandering around acting strange who are in fact zombies. The irony is that it is the living who do not really see or understand those around them – they are on autopilot and don’t notice or pay attention to anyone but themselves. They are just as undead as the zombies.

Henri Nouwen was a priest and an author on the spiritual life. In the second part of his life he lived as a priest in residence to a community for the intellectually disabled and their caregivers. Before that, he was a professor in several Ivy League divinity schools. He once received a letter from a student asking about his academic method. Nouwen said he didn’t have one. He simply tried to offer his full attention to the person before him.

As we celebrate Easter and join in the work of the risen Christ, let us pay attention to the people around us just as Jesus did – noticing the woman who touched him in order to be healed and listening to her story. Noticing the parents who wanted him to bless their children. Noticing the paralyzed man who waited decades for healing. Noticing the convicted criminal crucified beside him in need of mercy. As we share in the ongoing mission of Jesus, may it start with us truly noticing the people around us so that the life God offers to us all will flow within us and between us as we truly notice and attend to each other.

In Christ’s Service,
Ed

April Birthdays

April 1

Janey Campbell
Grant Clarke
Bridget Wood

April 5

Molly Banta

April 6

Andraya Franklin

April 7

Michael Moosally

April 8

Kay Quagliano

April 9

Becki Mann
Brian Blevins

April 11

Jane Bren
Jimmy Dameron

April 12

Joan Peterson
Rory Buchholz

April 13

Anne Grayson Craig
Aubrey Cosby

April 15

Bill Bell

April 16

Stacy Wood

April 17

Sean Conner

April 18

Robert Best
Steve King
Amy King

April 21

Anne Dudley
Steve Rhodes

April 22

Linda Vines
Jordan Harless

April 23

Matt Benson

April 24

Gerould Ward
Harold Clarke
Eddie Clark
Alyssa Cather
Will York

April 27

Chip Mann
Karen Duer-Potts

April 28

Buddy Hiatt

April 29

Anne Colvin





Alex Lee Contact Information:

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Looking back at March:



Ava, Leona, and Jack Hiatt (not pictured) were the winners of our bi-weekly raffle! In a show of kindness, Ava gave her gift card away to Madison!



Our youth packed over 300 Easter eggs to help our younger brothers and sisters in Christ enjoy this year's Eggstravaganza! Candy and eggs were flying everywhere, but we made it to the other side without too many egg-secutions.

Mark your calendars! Here is what's coming up for our youth!

SUNDAY NIGHT YOUTH April 7th, 14th, and 28th @ 5:00pm – 7:00pm – Come join us for dinner, games, and a time of discipleship!

CONFIRMATION CLASS April 7th, 14th, and 28th @ 3:45pm – 5:00pm – Confirmation classes meet!

Maundy Thursday (April 18th) and Good Friday (April 19th) Services – Come join us in worship as we celebrate Passion Week during this Easter season. These services are opportunities for us to dive deeper in Christ's ministry for us, and prepare for the resurrection of Christ!

CONFIRMATION RETREAT March 29th-31st – Youth that are part of this year's confirmation class will be going on a retreat near Shenandoah River State Park! We will enjoy a weekend of hiking, worship, and games as we continue to journey through what it means to be a Christian.

SUMMER MISSION TRIP June 23rd-29th, 2019 – Summer Mission Trip at Passport Missions in Danville, VA! Please contact Alex for more information.

Grace and peace,
Alex Lee

Save the Date:

- **Easter Egg Hunt- April 20th**
- **VBS- June 17th-21st**



Nursery

Professionally-staffed Nursery is offered in room for infants, toddlers and preschoolers for all three service times (8:30, 9:30, 11:00) and Sunday evenings (September - May 2019) from 5-7 pm.

Sunday School Classes

Preschool-potty trained 3, 4 and 5-year-olds

9:30 am in room 108. Led by Penny Condrey, Tracy Wood, Carrie Francisco, and Meg Walunas.

Kindergarten -2nd Grade

9:30 am in room 107. Led by Jaimey Honea, Lara Malbon, Kim Cosby, and Megan Gilliland.

3rd-5th Grade

9:30 am in room 109. Led by John Honea & Robin Ely.

YOUR CHILDREN ARE WELCOME AT ALL OUR WORSHIP SERVICES! Please attend worship with your children, grandchildren, and guests! Worship attendance is very important, even at a young age, for spiritual development. We are ALL created for worship! Worship bags, Storybook Bibles, and activity binders are available at all three services.

If you feel like you need somewhere quieter to worship during the 11 am service, the Cuddle Room is available in the back of the sanctuary with a live feed of the service and activities for your child. Please see an usher if you have any trouble finding these things.

Important Dates

- **April 14th- last evening of M+M until fall**

Dinner is served from 5-5:30pm. From 5:30-6:15 K-2 will be in the choir room with Joy Price. 3-5 will be in room 109 for missions with Danielle Rinker. At 6:15 K-2 will come down to missions and 3-5 will finish up the night in the choir room.

5 and under are always welcome in the nursery.



Ladies' Brunch -- April 9 (Tuesday) -- 10:00 AM



Melinda Sledd's Home
355 Rolling Lake Court, Goochland
All women invited



A women's brunch will be held at Melinda Sledd's home on April 9. Carpools will leave church at 9:30 AM. Maps will be available.

For more information, contact Jane Bren, 804-314-2117 or janebren11@gmail.com. Bring a friend!

Women's Prayer Breakfast – April 11 (Thursday) – 8:30 AM

The monthly Women's Prayer Breakfast will meet at 8:30 on Thursday, April 11, at The Daily Kitchen in Carytown, 2934 W. Cary Street. No reservation needed - just come on out and join the group. Bring a friend.



A THANK YOU FOR THE CONGREGATION:

Thank you so much for the beautiful prayer shawl sent to me via Brenda Anderson from your ministry. It touched my heart to know that not only did you give up your time to make such a beautiful shawl but you prayed for me. I will think of y'all often as I recuperate from my fall. I will use your shawl often to remind me of God's abiding love.

Thank You,

Wendy Gay Wright



MISSIONS SAVE THE DATE

AlterNatives in the Welcome Center – Sunday, May 5

Rise Against Hunger – May 19

Shalom Farms Volunteer Day – Saturday, May 11

Email, text, or call Ellen Reaves at ellenreaves@verizon.net or 804 229 4277 for more info.

MISSION MOMENTS AND LENT

During the Sundays of Lent, the Missions Committee is talking about the missions that River Road supports. That's because the Easter offering goes entirely to support Missions. Thank you church family for every contribution. We thank God for you, and we thank God for the work He has given us to do together. We welcome you in all we do and as always, let us know if you have questions.

In addition to the Mission activities you hear about throughout the year, we support other missions financially. All God's Children Camp, a mission of the Virginia Conference UMC, is a camp for children of incarcerated parents and is located at Westview on the James in Goochland Co. Heart Havens, founded by the UMC, has group homes in Virginia for adults with developmental disabilities that ensure their lives are full. Highland Support Project, begun by our own Ben and Guadalupe Blevins, is long term transformational development in response to devastating political violence in Guatemala. Helping Children Worldwide is the presence of the UMC in Sierra Leone, one of the poorest countries in the world. The Child Rescue Center finds family for children, and Mercy Hospital provides healthcare. Housing Families First, through Hilliard House and Building Neighbors, provides the support necessary to move a homeless family to living productively in the community. UMFS empowers high-risk children and their families throughout Virginia. We have also supported two United Methodist missionaries for many years – Jacques Umembudi Akasa, a pilot who transports people and supplies in the Congo, and Clara Biswas, who works with children in Cambodia. Our congregation also helps support the mission work of two who grew up at River Road UMC - Stephen Irwin and his wife Kelly and daughters, serving in Spain, and Alicia Talley, serving in East Asia.

Our congregation added support for Crossover Healthcare Ministries for the first time this year. They provide high quality healthcare in the name of Jesus Christ for those who have no health insurance and also those who were already their patients but recently became Medicaid eligible. One of their locations is on Quioccasin near Parham. This is the first time we've increased the Missions budget in 8-10 years and we praise God for our generous congregation that made this happen.

REBUILDING TOGETHER IS SATURDAY APRIL 27

Rebuilding Together is an important ministry because we repair the homes of low income people who are disabled or aged and cannot afford the repairs. On this day, over 40 homes in Highland Park will be repaired by 1000 volunteers from churches and businesses in Richmond. If you would like to help, there is a job for you. All ages welcome and this is a great opportunity for families to participate together. If you have never participated in Rebuilding Together, give it a try! The best part is spending the day with our church family and the homeowners. We will repair two homes; Steve King will direct the repair at one home, and Tony and Jean Barnette will direct the work at the other home. Show up at 8 am for breakfast, coffee, a tee-shirt, and job assignment. Lunch and snacks will be provided all day. Sign up in the Welcome Center, and SignUp Genius will be available soon. Randy Reaves at randalreaves@verizon.net or 804 389 0449 will then contact you and keep you updated.

REBUILDING TOGETHER FOOD HELPERS NEEDED

Breakfast, lunch and snacks will be provided for our wonderful volunteers on Saturday, April 27. We are seeking people who will set up and manage the food tables at the two houses we are repairing. To volunteer or donate fruit, donuts, snacks, individual chips, desserts, or canned drinks for the day, contact Ellen Reaves, ellenreaves@verizon.net or 804 229 4277.

RRUMC IS GOING ON A MISSION TRIP TO FLORIDA JULY 21-27

It's getting closer! RRUMC will help rebuild homes in the St. Pete/Clearwater/Tampa Bay area destroyed by Hurricane Irma in 2017. Over 100 homes belonging to those living below the poverty level before the storm did not receive help right away or did not have insurance for repair and still desperately need help. If you would like to join us, please email Jim Banta at jamesbantacorp@gmail.com OR sign up in the Welcome Center. Watch for an informational meeting in April.

GERANIUM SALE TO BENEFIT SHALOM FARMS

On Sunday, April 7, geraniums will be for sale in the Welcome Center. 4 1/2" pots are \$4.50 and flowers will come in various colors. Thank you so much for supporting our great big beautiful United Methodist garden that brings great produce to people and areas of Richmond who need it.



**RIVER ROAD
UNITED METHODIST**
LOVING PEOPLE TO LIFE

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April 2019

**Articles for the
May 2019
Connections are due
April 22, 2018.**



We're on the web at
www.riverroadumc.org

RIVER ROAD UMC INVITES YOU TO CELEBRATE
COMMUNITY EASTER

EGGSTRAVAGANZA

EGG HUNT INFLATABLE SLIDES AIRBRUSH TATTOOS FACE PAINTINGS FOOD TRUCKS

APRIL 20TH Saturday, 11am to 1pm
River Road UMC
8800 River Road

Hunt begins promptly at 11:30am
Please bring a basket

Open Arms Christian Preschool

Thank you to all the families that attended the Pancake Supper on Shrove Tuesday! During the evening we also had a Scholastic bookfair; the purchases you made gave OACP money back to buy books for our library. From the purchases families made, our school has \$590 that we can use at Scholastic to purchase more books for the children! Thank you again for attending. It was a great night with over 140 people in attendance, good food, and great fellowship!



This month the OACP board members will be soliciting and collecting for the OACP scholarship fund. Please reach out to an OACP board member about giving to this wonderful cause, or you will find inserts in the Sunday worship bulletins you can fill out and return to the church. We want to share the love of learning through Christ with all children and families!

We have a few spots open for the OACP Summer camp as well as the 2019-2020 school year. If you or family/friends are interested in enrolling in our program, please reach out before spots fill up! Contact Preschool Director, Nora Hamlet, at 754-0027 or visit our website at www.openarmschristianpreschool.org.

