

April 2023

The First Connection

a publication of

Mason First United Methodist Church

Growing in Faith, Serving Others, Sharing the Love of Christ



WHAT'S NEW...

Easter and a Living Hope

Worship and Pray here and with the community during Holy Week.

Coming Soon:
Looking for Jesus
a new sermon series!

Faith Chat returns for a limited time!

Rummage Sale is coming!
Time to donate!

Youth Bowling Event April 23

Spring in the Memorial Garden

Bright Future Update:
When is that Sound System getting updated?

Ignite is collecting items for March Dinner in the Park

Grief Support returns

Euchre Night April 21

Town Hall Meeting April 16

April Noisy Bucket supports Red Bird Mission

A peaceful place to read a book!

A Living Hope

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By his great mercy he has given us a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ. 1 Peter 1:3

I'm looking out my office window trying to figure out if I see buds on the trees yet... probably not. It's supposed to snow again tomorrow. But I do have hope! Spring is coming—of that, I am certain!

The apostle, Peter wrote in his letter to the exiles, that Jesus has given us *new birth into a living hope* through his death and resurrection. We often use the word "hope" as if it were a wish that may or may not be granted. But I think Peter was talking about an extra-special understanding of what hope is and does. What does it mean to be born into a *living hope*?

Spring may be a perfect illustration. It might snow tomorrow. It quite likely will snow again sometime in April. It's Michigan and winter always seems to throw us one last curve before making its exit. But even if we get six inches tomorrow (we better not!), I know for certain that spring is coming. The robins have arrived, the buds are starting to appear, the sun shines more, and the days are getting warmer... Winter is a resting place—not a dying place. Not even six inches of snow can hold back the new life that is about to blossom!

The resurrection of Christ was the dramatic fulfillment of John's prophesy that Jesus was a light to the world that the darkness could never overcome. It is the incredible victory of Easter that reminds us every single day that there is nothing of this world that can conquer the promise of life we have in Christ, and it is that very promise that gives us a living and life-sustaining hope!

Grace and Peace be with you in this season of Easter!

Pastor Suzanne



Holy Thursday
Prayer Walk

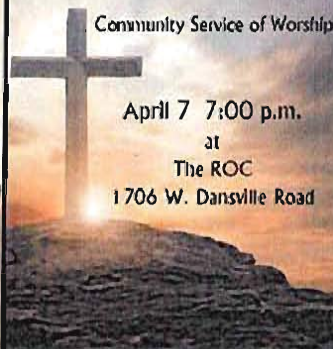
Thursday, April 6
10:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.



Good Friday

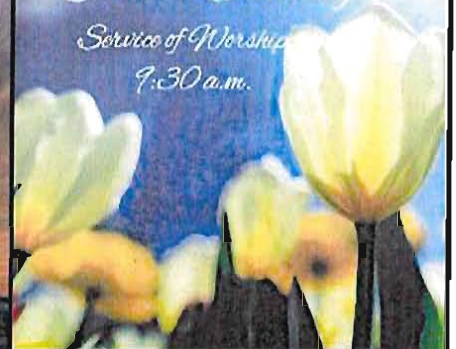
Community Service of Worship

April 7 7:00 p.m.
at
The ROC
1706 W. Dansville Road



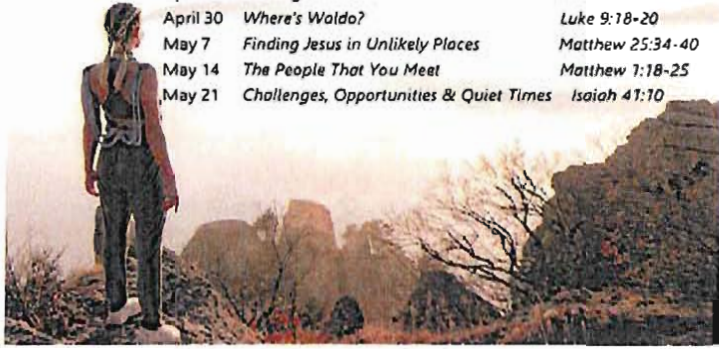
Easter Sunday

Service of Worship
9:30 a.m.



Looking for Jesus

April 9	Easter Sunday: <i>Looking for Jesus</i>	John 20:1-18
April 16	<i>Hide and Seek</i>	John 20:19-31
April 23	<i>Looking in the Usual Places</i>	Matthew 6
April 30	<i>Where's Waldo?</i>	Luke 9:18-20
May 7	<i>Finding Jesus in Unlikely Places</i>	Matthew 25:34-40
May 14	<i>The People That You Meet</i>	Matthew 7:18-25
May 21	<i>Challenges, Opportunities & Quiet Times</i>	Isaiah 41:10



Looking for Jesus is a new sermon series that begins on Easter Sunday as Mary Magdalene goes to the tomb looking for Jesus, only to fail to recognize him when he stands in front of her. Is it possible that we don't recognize Jesus when he's right in front of us? Perhaps our preconceived notions of who Jesus was prevent us from seeing him as he is in our lives today. Join us in the weeks to come as we learn to recognize the Jesus who is the resurrected presence of living hope! And don't forget to invite a friend!

Faith Chat, our online faith conversations forum, is making a limited-run return after Easter. It's been a while since we curled up in our comfy clothes at home and just met to speak as friends do about what's going on in the world and how we process those things through a lens of faith.

This class is facilitated by Pastor Suzanne and meets via Zoom. We will, in our first meeting see if there is any interest in having an in-person version of the class as well.

Class begins April 18 and runs through May 23. Please sign up at the Connection Point and be sure to include your email address so that you may receive the link for the meeting.

Faith Chat

Conversations of life and faith

Meets via Zoom Tuesdays at 10am & 7pm



United
Women
in Faith

"We are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do."

Ephesians 2:10

This is another verse from the Upper Room where I have found many stories of inspiration. If you would like to read the Upper Room, copies are available at the church for 50 cents—you'll get your money's worth!

We have a new name (United Women in Faith) and a new logo, shown above. Each color has a meaning. Yellow is for spirituality, blue is for faith and hope, red is for action, and green is for our land. Each color is important. When you look at the top of the logo the two colors side by side are different. Yellow and blue are together which combines spirituality with faith and hope. The blue and red colors combine faith and hope with action. Lastly, the red and green colors combine action with our land. All of these colors work together like our UWF where we all work together to do many good things.

We will put together Spring Baskets on May 3, 2023, to give to our shut-ins. The Lavender and Lace Luncheon is May 18. Please save those dates. I hope to see you all there.

YOUTH & CHILDREN... Growing, Serving, Sharing!

CALLING ALL YOUTH !!

YOU'RE INVITED TO JOIN US FOR AN EPIC

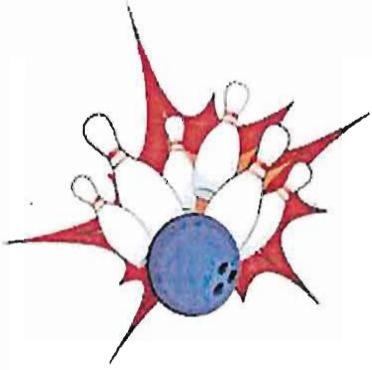
BOWLING PARTY AT CITY LIMITS

Sunday, April 23

2:45pm-5:00pm

\$5 Per Person Includes:

Bowling, Shoe Rental, Pizza, & Pop



Youth catching fire for Christ

Please RSVP to Laurie by April 20th

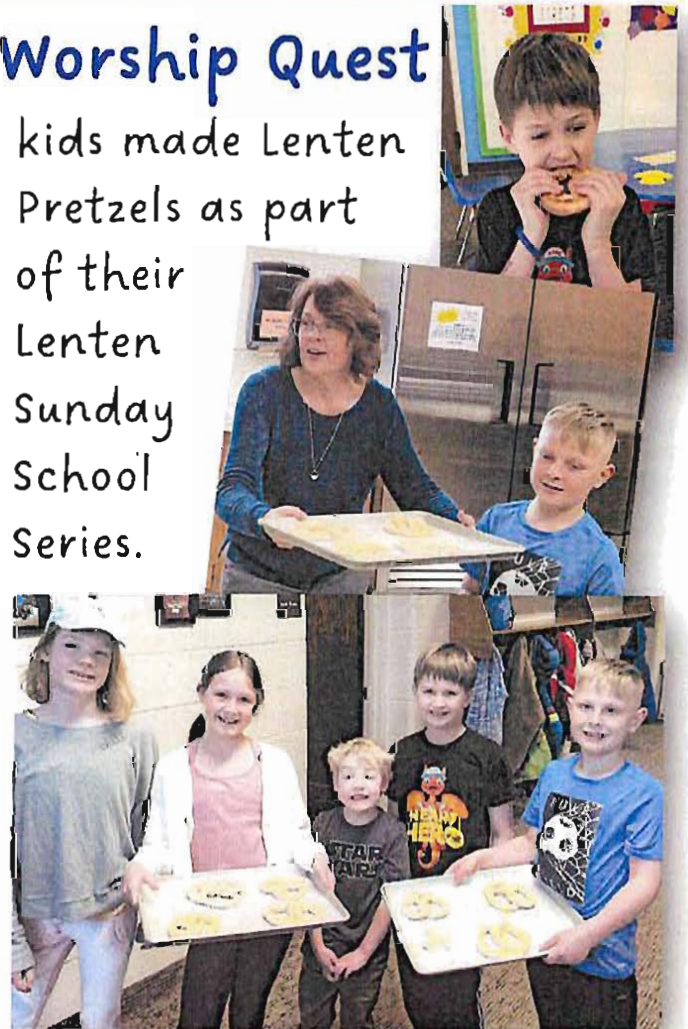


IGNITE Youth Ministry prepares and serves the homeless at Reutter Park in Lansing.



Worship Quest

kids made Lenten Pretzels as part of their Lenten Sunday School Series.



AROUND THE CHURCH...

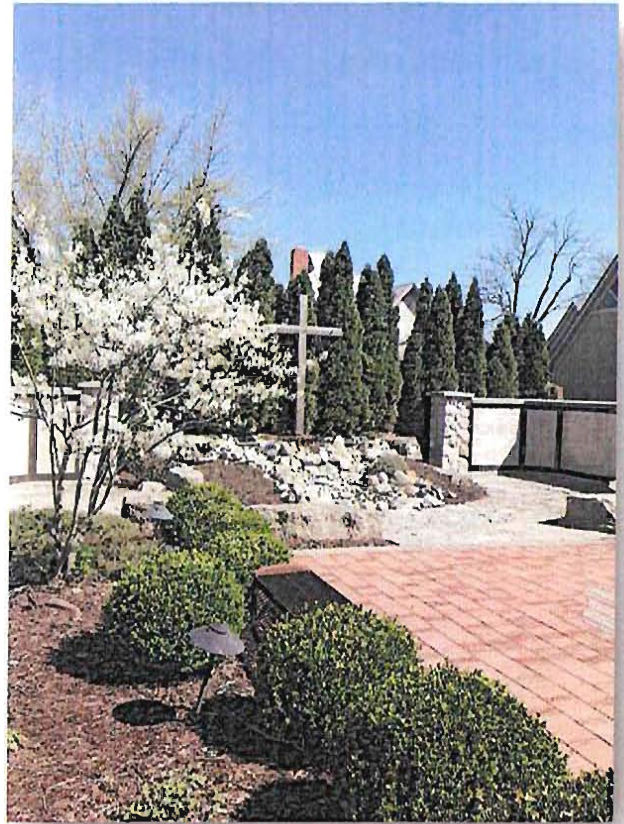
Spring in the Memorial Garden

Situated in a secluded garden spot alongside our sanctuary is a lovely memorial prayer garden and columbarium. (A columbarium is a structure with niches where cremains may be interred.) It is a peaceful spot to sit and pray, or listen to the water trickling over the rocks in the fountain. The landscaping is beautifully maintained and kept updated by master gardeners David Gunns and daughter, Kelly Trieber. The walkway is paved with engraved memorial bricks and there are benches on which to sit and just take in the quiet comfort of the space.

In its seclusion, it might be easy to forget it's there, but many people come to sit quietly and be at peace. And it is a beautiful spot for people to come and remember their loved ones.

There are one hundred and twelve niches in the columbarium with seventy-six still available. There are a range of options varying in price according to location and occupancy, with an administrative fee which covers the costs of creating the legal paperwork, engraving the granite facing, etc. Money from the sale of the niches is put into the Grover Akers Memorial Columbarium Fund and invested so as to provide care and landscaping for the garden in perpetuity.

If you are considering your arrangements and would like to reserve a niche, please see Mike Buckner, Chair of the Columbarium Committee, or talk to Marilyn Lautzenheiser. You may also see Marilyn to order a memorial brick to be placed in the walkway.



Dressing for Church when it's Spring in Michigan

Spring and fall are tough seasons for the church staff—especially the guy in charge of the HVAC system—when it comes to making people thermally comfortable! The truth of the matter is, that one day can be 35 degrees and the next 70, and unfortunately large systems that serve large spaces do not turn on a dime! And, quite frankly, we're trying our best to save dimes!

So, our best advice to everyone is to give yourself options. Bring or wear a sweater that you can peel off if you're feeling warm, or bundle up if you're feeling coolish.

Dress as if *anything* could happen... because it's Michigan! So it probably will.



Bright Future Update

Things continue to move forward on our Bright Future project list! Last month we received a new carpet presentation from Flooring America with design suggestions—some we liked and some we were feeling kind of “meh” about, so we still have some design decisions to make. However, the quotes that have come in so far are encouraging. Hopefully, carpet will happen in the not-too-distant future!

We received a second consultation from an architect to begin envisioning some changes to the front of the sanctuary, which is technically Phase III on the project list. However, it's never too early to start planning!

We're still seeking a sound company to consult and bid on our new sound system. But in the meantime, we've submitted grant applications for some significant financial help so that when we've got a vendor, hopefully we'll have that project funded.

Thank you for your enthusiastic support and your generosity as we look toward a Bright Future!

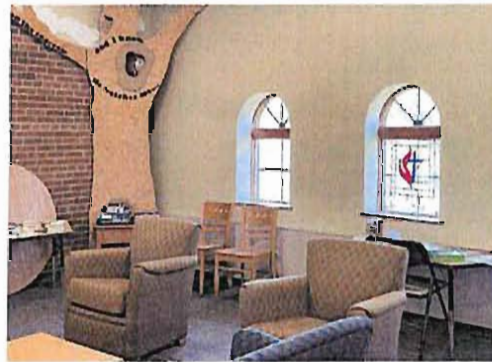
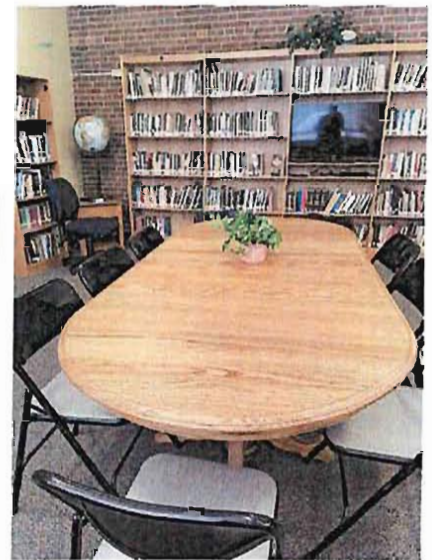
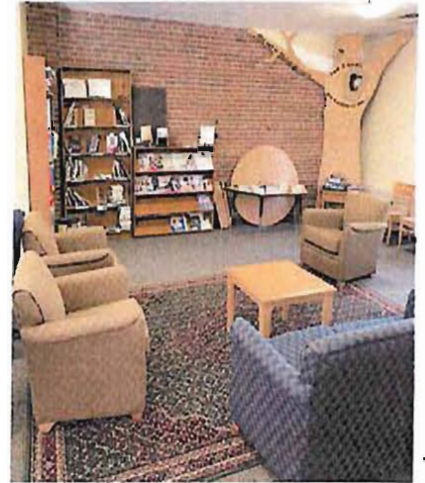


A New Look in the Library

One of the hidden gems of our facility is that we have a beautiful library loft situated above the atrium gathering space. There are all kinds of books from Biblical reference and Bible study material, to adult and children's fiction. The space is lovely with its old brick wall which used to be the eastern exterior of the sanctuary, its palladian windows overlooking the children's playground, and the sounds of trickling water from the fountain in the atrium. There is a comfortable seating area, a beautiful large oak table that comfortably seats up to ten people for a book review or Bible study, and other tables which can be used for projects and puzzles.

The library has been lovingly tended by Elaine Ferris and Dorothy Stebleton, and over the years, they have created an extensive library catalog of the books available. We are now hoping to add a "Take a book, leave a book" feature to the library so that anyone might feel free to contribute or enjoy the books available. We're hoping to add some more comfortable seating for the study tables, and it is our hope to add a small coffee station and perhaps hold periodic events in this space. It would be a lovely space for a small shower.

If you would like to be a part of creating a new comfortable look and purpose for our library, please see Pastor Suzanne and we'll get you connected!



You don't have to do it alone! The spring-summer session of our grief support group here at Mason First UMC will begin on Wednesday, May 10 and run through July 12, 2023. Preregistration is requested by May 3. This group is for anyone suffering from the loss of a significant other, recently or in the past. The group will be closed after the second session (May 17). For more information or to pre-register, contact Pat Mentzer at (517) 896-6980, or call the church office at (517) 676-9449.



Euchre Night every 3rd Friday!

Join us every third Friday (April 21) at 6:30 p.m. for an evening of Euchre-fun. No partner is required – just be sure to sign up at the Connection Point so that we can arrange to have full tables. Bring a snack to share and your own beverage. *(If you need to cancel, please be sure to let Pastor Suzanne know so that we can arrange to fill your spot.)*



Jeff Lautzenheiser won the Pay Day trophy for most successful loners, and Tom Collin took home two 100 Grand (candy bar trophies) for total points scored and successful loners.

IN THE LIFE OF OUR CHURCH...

Noisy Bucket Offerings Support Red Bird Mission in April

Red Bird Mission is a United Methodist-supported Appalachian mission in three parts: The Red Bird Christian School exists to prepare students for post-secondary education with an emphasis on leadership in the service sector; the Red Bird Clinic strives to improve the health of those living the remote and underserved areas of

Appalachia; and the Red Bird Mission empowers individuals and advocates justice through spiritual, educational, health, and community outreach ministries. Its Community Outreach ministries address hunger and other basic needs of families through case management and delivery services. In addition, the Community Store and Craft Marketing provides jobs and income for over 100 families.

Thank you for your generous support of this significant outreach ministry through your loose change contributions!



Church Family News

Our sympathies are extended to:

- Mark and Linda Carmer on the passing of Mark's father
- Mike and Debra Buckner on the loss of Debra's father

Prayers & Healing Wishes to:

- Barbara Wheaton, who is hospitalized at Sparrow
- Larry Silsby, who is hospitalized at Sparrow
- Phyllis Balsch, who is home following hospitalization
- Chuck Reed, who is recovering from hip replacement surgery
- Lynda Crandall, who is recovering from a stroke
- Rebecca McKimmy, who is home following hospitalization for pneumonia
- Our shut-ins and friends in assisted living/rehab
- Those who have been battling COVID

Please note: Hospitals do not notify us when someone from our church family is admitted. We appreciate you keeping us informed.

Thinking of members/friends in assisted living, rehab/nursing facilities, and hospice care:

- Dansville Country Care Assisted Living: Dick Magsig
- Divine Nest, Leslie: Joyce Darling
- Grand Haven Living Center, Lansing: Marilyn Murthum
- Green Acres, Mason: Beth Grosshans and Jeanette Strickland
- Ingham Co. Medical Care Facility, Okemos: Char Bush and John Dodge
- Island City Assisted Living, Eaton Rapids: Don Dickinson
- The Willows of Okemos: Lew Tibbits

TOWN HALL MEETING SUNDAY, APRIL 16



Sunday in Fellowship Hall
Immediately following worship

Be a part of the conversation!

Scholarship Applications Available

Applications for the Mason First United Methodist Church annual college scholarship awards are still available. The deadline for turning in your application is Friday, May 5 by 3:00 p.m. Scholarships awarded to qualified students may be used for tuition, books, room and board, and specific fees associated with pursuing a college education.



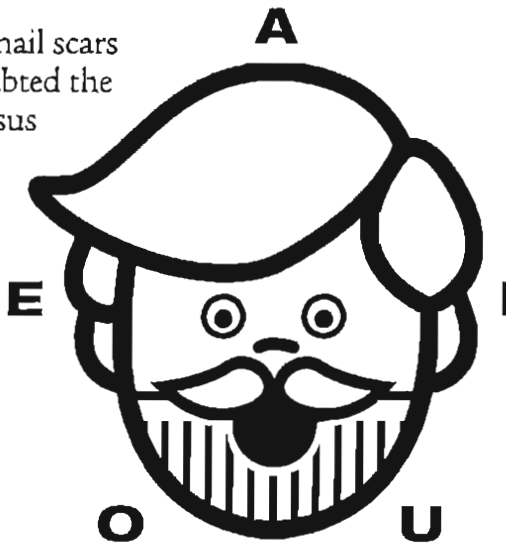
Contact the church office for more information or to receive your application.



SEEING AND BELIEVING

Until Thomas saw Jesus' nail scars with his own eyes, he doubted the resurrection. What did Jesus tell Thomas?

Directions:
Use the code to fill in the vowels and complete
John 20:29, NIV.



"B_c_s_y_h_v_s_n m_,
oo oo oo oo oo oo oo oo oo oo oo

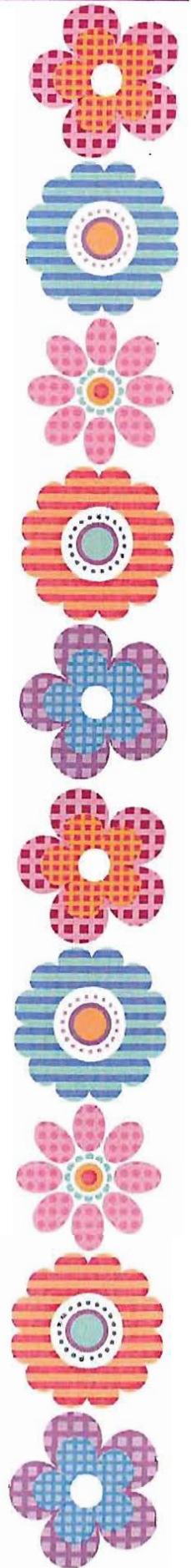
y_h_v_b_l_v_d;
oo oo oo oo oo oo oo oo oo

bl_ss_d_r_th_s_wh_h_v_n_t
oo oo oo oo oo oo oo oo oo oo oo

s_n_nd_y_t_h_v_b_l_v_d."
oo oo oo oo oo oo oo oo oo oo oo

JOHN 20:29, NIV

Answer: "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed." John 20:29, NIV





Mason First United Methodist Church

Growing in Faith,
Serving Others,
Sharing the Love of Christ

201 E. Ash Street * Mason MI 48854
Phone: (517) 676 9449
www.masonfirst.org

NON PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT #47
MASON MI 488C54 1775

Return Service Requested

The Spring Rummage Sale is Coming!

Time to get that spring cleaning done and bring your retired treasures to the church so that they may be given a new purpose as someone else's treasure! Plus you'll be helping the UWF to raise funds for mission and ministry. We'll begin accepting treasure donations on Monday, April 17. Clothing Donations may go downstairs to the Youth Room; all other donations will be stored in the front coat closet across from the prayer chapel.

THE BIG EVENT WILL BE HELD:

Friday, April 28 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Saturday, April 29 9:00 a.m. - noon



April 2023

Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

						<p>1 9:30am United Women in Faith Lenten Breakfast</p>
<p>2 9:30am WORSHIP 11:00am Wired Word Class in Chapel</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>4 4:00pm Lenten Study "Luke"--Chapel 5:30pm Potluck in fellowship hall</p>	<p>5 9:00am UWF Leadership Team 10:30am Lenten Study meets in Library 6:30pm "Witness at the Cross" study in chapel 7:00pm Chancel Bells 8:00pm Chancel Choir</p>	<p>6 10:00am Prayer Walk 6:30pm Missions Committee in the conference room</p>	<p>7 7:00pm Good Friday Community Service of Worship at The ROC 1706 West Dansville Rd.</p>	<p>8</p>
<p>9 9:30am WORSHIP</p> <p><i>Happy Easter!</i></p>	<p>10 Church office closed.</p>	<p>11 5:30pm Potluck in fellowship hall</p>	<p>12 10:00am Visitation 10:30am Bible Study-chapel 11:00am Memorial Service for Dick Clark 12:00pm Luncheon 7:00pm Chancel Bells 8:00pm Chancel Choir</p>	<p>13 12:00pm Mason Community Leaders</p>	<p>14</p>	<p>15</p>
<p>16 9:30am WORSHIP 10:30am Town Hall meeting 11:00am Wired Word Class in Chapel</p>	<p>17 7:00pm Finance meeting</p>	<p>18 10:00am Faith Chat--Zoom 5:30pm Potluck in fellowship hall 7:00pm Faith Chat--Zoom</p>	<p>19 10:30am Bible Study in library 7:00pm Chancel Bells 8:00pm Chancel Choir</p>	<p>20 10:00am Endowment Committee</p>	<p>21 9:30am MOPS meets in the youth room 6:30pm Euchre Night</p>	<p>22</p>
<p>23 9:30am WORSHIP 11:00am Wired Word Class in Chapel</p>	<p>24 9:00am UWF Rummage Sale set up 7:00pm Church Council meets in the library</p>	<p>25 9:00am UWF Rummage Sale set up 10:00am Mary Martha Circle 10:00am Faith Chat--Zoom 1:00pm Rebekah Circle 6:30pm Miriam Circle 7:00pm Faith Chat--Zoom</p>	<p>26 9:00am UWF Rummage Sale set up 10:30am Bible Study in library 7:00pm Chancel Bells 8:00pm Chancel Choir</p>	<p>27 9:00am UWF Rummage Sale set up</p>	<p>28 9:00am Rummage Sale 9-5</p>	<p>29 9:00am Rummage Sale 9-12</p>
<p>30 9:30am WORSHIP 11:00am Wired Word Class in Chapel</p>						



APRIL

Birthdays & Anniversaries

Birthdays

Rece Arehart.....	1	Thad Baker.....	27
Charles Oesterle	2	Tim Colby	27
Shane Kirk.....	2	Judy Silsby.....	28
Joann Becker	4	Marilyn Lautzenheiser	28
Beth Bousfield	5	Amy Place	28
Sienna Goss	5	Julie Harrison	28
Noah Etzel.....	6	Linda Simpson.....	29
George Hosek.....	7	Duane Marlan.....	29
John Calhoun	7	Ron Underhill.....	29
Quinlin Ireland	8	Derek O'Connor.....	29
Leslie Ireland.....	8	Evelyn Bochenek.....	30
Dorothy Spink.....	9	Phyllis Dickinson	30
Foster Whipple.....	10		
LeAnne Ruttan	10		
Luanne Dancer.....	11		
Sharon Sodman	12		
Royce Sperry.....	13		
Larry David.....	13		
Julie Adolphson	13		
Ray Tombaugh.....	13		
Carrie Thorburn	13		
Pat Lange	14		
Ellen Funkhouser	14		
Gerry Bosshart.....	14		
Dan Plyler	16		
Nicholas Wissner	16		
Larry Silsby.....	18		
Brittany Beaune.....	19		
Dave Aldrich	19		
Conor Whipple	21		
Mike Waltz.....	23		
Steven Gaylord	24		
Brandon Nay.....	24		
Mike Stebleton	26		

Anniversaries

Bill and Sylvia Rogers	11
John and Ellen Lord.....	16
Don and Shaun Sherwood	21
Darryl and Shelbey Englander.....	21
Dennis and Sharon Whipple	28



Thank you notes
have been received
from Bill Husband
and Mark and
Linda Carmer.