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Rev. Mike Bealla
Senior Pastor

“Being The Church in Unsure Times”

Greetings in the name of Jesus Christ!

I hope you are all well, staying at home as much as is possible and remembering to pray.

I don't know about you, but I am experiencing a strange combination of concern and some comfort in sheltering in place, while also getting a bit stir crazy! It's not like I haven't stayed home before for a while, but the thought of having to intentionally hibernate is unnerving. After viewing a lot of Netflix and Amazon Prime offerings, it's already hard to find something to watch in the evenings.

Each month when our editor asks me for my Pastor's article for the newsletter, I go back and check out what I had written the last few years for the previous month's edition. Of course, clearly Holy Week and Easter were prominent

in prior years. And while it is still a topic to share, the excitement of inviting you to come and worship to experience what are many of my favorite services, is less appealing this year.



How hard it is to think of Palm Sunday without the palms... shouts of Hosanna, the choir's anthems, and singing some of our favorite hymns together! How can we hear again the "Passion Narrative" read by a chorus of readers as the "Hosanna's" fade away to talk of

the arrest of Jesus?

Or how can we truly experience Maundy Thursday... the sharing of Holy Communion around the table set up to remember the intimacy of the night Jesus shared the Last Supper?

How can we see the sanctuary growing dimmer and dimmer on Good Friday as Jesus breathes his last breath?

And then comes Easter morning... and the sanctuary which is annually filled with worshippers and a garden of lilies is oddly barren and as empty as the Lord's tomb was on Easter morn. No brass... no choirs... no Easter outfits, and no shouts echoing "He Is Risen! He is Risen Indeed!"

This is just a tired old pastor's disappointment that we can't be

(Continued on page 2)

present together to share this marvelous week of worship in our beautiful sanctuary; that while it is still beautiful even when empty, it is you the congregation that reveals its true beauty!

Sometimes what happens around us means that we need to adapt even the most sacred of our practices. It is simply utterly important that we listen to our medical leaders and stay put for now. Remember, its out concern for others, and of course for ourselves that we hold fast to the sheltering in place for now.

In case you weren't able to watch Sunday's Service, I would point you to my sermon from Sunday, March 29, entitled "If Only You Had Been Here!" for those who are wondering "Where is God in the midst of this pandemic?". You can find it on our YouTube Page by searching for Elm Park UMC Church or click on the link on our webpage at www.elmparkumchurch.org. Some have apparently found it helpful for which I am grateful to hear.

So how will we still celebrate Holy Week? The best way we can, of course, using technology! On Palm / Passion Sunday we will be live streaming our regular Sunday morning service at 10:00 am. The same on Maundy Thursday, I will be with you via live stream at 7:30 pm to worship as we share some moments in the "Upper Room." Again on Good Friday evening at 7:30 pm, we'll be broadcasting our Tenebrae Service from the sanctuary.

Finally, Easter Sunday will find us broadcasting again live on our YouTube Channel at 10:00am. Remember, on the morning of the resurrection, Jesus still rose from the dead despite the few who witnessed the empty tomb!!

Please contact the church office if you need anything or just want to chat!

My friends, Stay Safe... Stay Strong... Trust God! See you soon!

Rev. Mike Bealla



Palm Sunday

Sunday 4/5

10:00 AM in the Sanctuary

10:00 AM Live on YouTube

Maundy Thursday

Thursday 4/9

7:30 PM in the Sanctuary

7:30 PM Live on YouTube

Good Friday

Friday 4/10

7:30 PM in the Sanctuary

7:30 PM Live on YouTube

Easter Sunday

Sunday 4/12

10:00 AM in the Sanctuary

10:00 AM Live on YouTube



Give Thanks in All Circumstances



Life is such a mystery.

When I was single, before I met my husband, I often spent my weekends alone. I was a high school Chemistry teacher then, so I would sit on my living room floor grading lab reports, sometimes feeling desperately lonely. On Sunday, I would go to church, only to be surrounded by couples and families, going home alone, more painfully aware of my isolation.

After I met my husband Brian, my days were filled with the bliss of new love. There weren't enough minutes in the day to contain all of the joy we felt. Fast forward a few years to the adoption of two children and I yearned for solitude. They wouldn't give me any peace. I couldn't even go to the bathroom without being disturbed by a toddler crying at the door!

Now, my children are young adults and I see them rarely. As I write this, Brian is caring for his patients and I am sitting alone in the kitchen. I have solitude, as many of us do these challenging days. Is it a happy solitude? I would welcome company, but I give thanks for the safety that solitude offers me at this time.

I recognize that one of my flaws is that I often want what I don't have. I give thanks, but not in all circumstances as Paul advised the Thessalonians. At this time, the thing that I desire is freedom of movement and a beautiful Spring day to enjoy with friends. In case you have a similar desire, I offer you hope in the form of a delightful poem.

Dr. Cathy Wilcox, Deacon Intern

Springtime Rhapsody

⁸ The voice of my beloved!

Look, he comes,
leaping upon the mountains,
bounding over the hills.

⁹ My beloved is like a gazelle
or a young stag.

Look, there he stands
behind our wall,
gazing in at the windows,
looking through the lattice.

¹⁰ My beloved speaks and says to me:

“Arise, my love, my fair one,
and come away;

¹¹ for now the winter is past,
the rain is over and gone.

¹² The flowers appear on the earth; es,

the time of singing has come,
and the voice of the turtledove
is heard in our land.

¹³ The fig tree puts forth its figs,
and the vines are in blossom;
they give forth fragrance.

Arise, my love, my fair one,
and come away.

¹⁴ O my dove, in the clefts of the
rock,

in the covert of the cliff,
let me see your face,
let me hear your voice;

for your voice is sweet,
and your face is lovely.

¹⁵ Catch us the foxes, the little fox-

that ruin the vineyards—
for our vineyards are in blossom.”

¹⁶ My beloved is mine and I am his;
he pastures his flock among the
lilies.

¹⁷ Until the day breathes
and the shadows flee,
turn, my beloved, be like a gazelle
or a young stag on the cleft
mountains.

Song of Solomon 2:8-17



With everything going on the last few weeks I wanted to remind everyone how to find our live stream and how to find online giving. To find our Live Stream go to livestream.elmparkumchurch.org. This link will take you right to the live stream if we are live or to the rest of our videos on YouTube if we aren't currently live.

For online giving go to elmparkumchurch.org/givenow which will take you direct to our online giving page on the our website or download the Give Plus app on IOS and Android. When the app is downloaded search for Elm Park United Methodist Church. If you can't find something check our website at elmparkumchurch.org where you can find all of this information.

If you have any questions or problems on Facebook or on YouTube either call the office at (570) 342-8263 or email Media@elmparkumchurch.org.

- Wesley Bealla

THE ELM PARK JOURNEY

Latest Episodes

You are always invited to watch our frequent Web-Series entitled "The Elm Park Journey." Each episode features our Lay Leader, Diana Howe, as she interviews guests from our church about events, programs, ministries, groups, and about the leaders from our church.

In the latest episode, Diana interviewed Rev. Mike about Soup and Sermon.

In an upcoming episode, Diana will be interviewing Cathy Wilcox about our monthly Dinner named Peace Meal.

If you have any ideas for future episodes for "The Elm Park Journey" contact Diana Howe, Rev. Mike Bealla, Wesley Bealla or email media@elmparkumchurch.org.



Check out our monthly printed and emailed Newsletter "The Journey"!



Elmparkumchurch.org

Our primary source for information, news and events. There's resources, staff information, and photos!



Announcements, reminders, and news sent via email from Rev. Mike.



Connecting you with news and announcements through social media.



[Facebook.com/elmparkscanton](https://www.facebook.com/elmparkscanton)

The Elm Park Journey, Live Streaming, Services, and Informational Videos.

Tinyurl.com/epumcvideos
Videos.Elmparkumchurch.org



Communications.Elmparkumchurch.org

The Church Roof Repairs Are Done!!!



Bread Basket Food Bank Still Open!

Our Bread Basket volunteers continue to reach out to those folks who are in need of food. Operating as a drive thru currently, many are thankful for their willingness to serve others during this crisis. Anyone who is in need of food can come on Wednesday mornings from 10 - 11:45 am to receive food once a month according to family size. The only requirement is that you live in one of the following zip codes:

18503, 18505, 18507, 18510, 18517 and 18518... Thank you for your gifts to this vital local mission!



The Book of Psalms could be called the hymnal of the Old Testament. It contains everything from God's care and love of his people, to songs of praise that God seemed absent in light of difficult times. Below are a few examples.

Psalm 23

**The Lord is my shepherd,
I shall not want.
He makes me lie down in
green pastures;
he leads me beside still waters;
he restores my soul.
He leads me in right paths for
his name's sake.
Even though I walk through the
darkest valley,
I fear no evil;
for you are with me;
your rod and your staff—
they comfort me.
You prepare a table before me
in the presence of
my enemies;
you anoint my head with
oil; my cup overflows.
Surely goodness and mercy
shall follow me
all the days of my life,
and I shall dwell in the house
of the Lord
my whole life long. (NRSV)**

Psalm 121

**I lift up my eyes to the hills,
from where will my help come?
My help comes from the Lord,
who made heaven and earth.
He will not let your foot slip—
he who keeps you will not slumber.
He who keeps Israel
will neither slumber nor sleep.
The Lord is your keeper;
the Lord is your right hand.
The sun shall not strike you,
nor the moon by night.
The Lord will keep you
from all evil; he will keep
your life.
8 The Lord will keep you
from this time on and forevermore. (NRSV)**

ent. Attributed to King David, the Psalms are poetry that address praise and glory to God, and even the heartfelt human cry for times of need. A few Psalms that can help us during this threatening pandemic...

21

the hills—
my help come?
the Lord,
heaven and earth.
You will not
be moved;

Remember nor sleep.
I will never
be in shadow at your
right hand.
You will keep me by day,
and by night.

You will save me from all
my enemies, O Lord.
Do not let your going
down bring in
darkness and
gloom.
(NRSV)

Psalm 42: 1-3, 10-11

As a deer longs for flowing streams,
so my soul longs for you, O God.
My soul thirsts for God,
or the living God.

When shall I come and behold
the face of God?

My tears have been my food
day and night,
while people say to me continually,
“Where is your God?”

I say to God, my rock,
“Why have you forgotten me?
Why must I walk about mournfully
because the enemy oppresses
me?”

As with a deadly wound in my body,
my adversaries taunt me,
while they say to me continually,
“Where is your God?”

Why are you cast down, O my soul,
and why are you disquieted
within me?

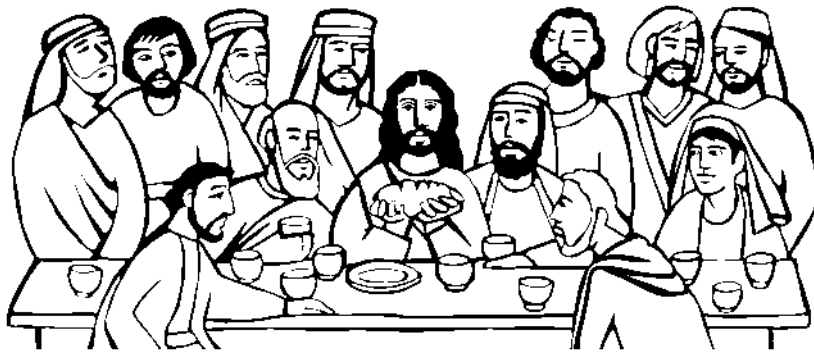
Hope in God; for I shall again praise
him, my help and my God.

(NRSV)



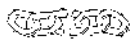







Picturing the Lord's Supper

Jesus ate the Passover meal with his disciples as a symbol of the new covenant.



Directions: Use the picture clues to fill in key words from Luke 22:19-20, NIV.

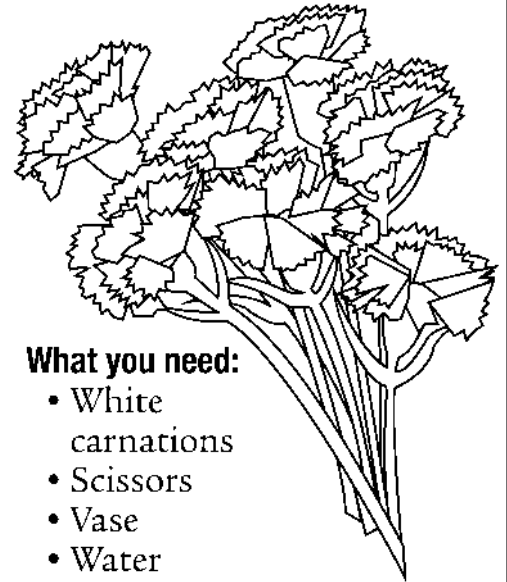
And he took , gave  and  it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is my  given for you; do this in  of me." In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying, "This  is the new  in my blood, which is  out for you."

LUKE 22:19-20, NIV

Answer: bread, thanks, broke, body, remembrance, cup, covenant, poured

Scripture AND NATURE

Conduct a simple experiment to illustrate Easter's meaning.



What you need:

- White carnations
- Scissors
- Vase
- Water
- Red food coloring
- Bible

What you do:

1. Cut the carnation stems (at an angle) to about 8 inches long.
2. Fill the vase halfway with water. Add 10 drops of food coloring. (More may be needed to darken the water.)
3. Add the cut flowers and observe what happens to the petals over time.
4. Discuss how this is like Jesus' work on the cross. Read 1 Peter 2:22-24 (NIV) and reflect on what his death means for us.
5. To learn more about this experiment, research capillary action.

God so
loved the
world

Remember God's special gift of Jesus by making this craft.

What you need:

- Large piece of blue paper
- Large bowl
- Pencil
- Scissors
- Paint (green and red)
- Paintbrush
- Wet wipes
- 3 wooden craft sticks
- Craft glue
- Black marker
- Bible



John
3:16

What you do:

1. On the paper, trace around the bowl. Cut out the circle.
2. Paint your palms green, one at a time, and press them in the circle side by side. (Clean your hands with wet wipes.)
3. Dip a finger in red paint and make a dot on the center of each handprint.
4. Between the handprints, glue two sticks end to end vertically. Glue the third stick horizontally to make a cross.
5. In marker, write the words of John 3:16 around the blue circle.



Jesus gives us *life*

Through his death and resurrection, Jesus offers the free gift of eternal life.

Directions: Match each clue from Holy Week with the correct image. If you get stuck, look up the Bible verses.

People spread these on the road for Jesus. (Matthew 21:8)

Mary pours this on Jesus' feet. (John 12:3)

Jesus shares this with his disciples. (Matthew 26:26)

This is placed on Jesus' head. (John 19:2)

Soldiers may have used these to compete for Jesus' coat. (John 19:23-24)

Jesus carries this himself for a while. (John 19:17)

Marks caused by these help Thomas identify Jesus. (John 20:25)

While on the cross, Jesus is thirsty and is given this. (John 19:28-29)

This is rolled away from Jesus' tomb. (John 20:1)

These are used to prepare Jesus' body for burial. (Luke 23:55-56)

These remain in the tomb after Jesus rises. (John 20:6-7)

Judas betrays Jesus for this. (Matthew 26:14-15)



Answer: palm branches, perfume, bread, crown of thorns, dice, cross, nails, vinegar on a sponge, stone, spices, silvers, silver coins



APRIL

Birthdays

01 Alex Duffy
 01 Meghan Sucheski
 01 Janet Weeks
 02 Elena Anderson
 02 Jean Bonnadio
 02 John Evans
 02 Roger Lysak
 02 Jerry Simmons
 03 Paul Keller
 03 John Troiani
 04 Connie Dempsey
 05 Gayle Roberts
 06 Stephanie Bidwell
 06 Julianne Dennis
 07 Melanie Brock
 08 Eric Duffy
 08 Kathy Fisk
 08 John Guzik
 09 Dorothy Winebrake
 10 Bruce Miles
 10 Colleen Washington
 10 Christine Wilford
 11 Jeanne McCloe
 12 Kristina Berdini
 12 Carrie Granche
 14 Jessica Dippre
 14 Rhonda Drake
 14 Gertrude Stone
 14 Nacy Swartz

15 Karen Baker
 15 Harrison Hughes
 16 Abigail Brier
 17 Tyler Dempsey
 17 Shea Kinney
 18 Scott Harron
 18 Maryetta Thompson
 18 Michelle Valinski
 20 Brenda Barrows
 20 Santino Berdini
 21 Frederick Lishman
 21 Matthew Prothero
 21 Julianne Rushin
 21 Shirley Shibak
 22 Jane Hoffner
 23 Calder Daniels
 23 Emma DeNunzio
 23 Leonard Licata
 24 Brittany Dennis
 24 Carol Mendicino
 25 Alexandra Bomersbach
 26 April Giordano
 26 Arthur Wilson
 27 Gale Black
 27 George Reihner
 28 Jeffrey Conrad
 28 Donald Fisch Sr
 28 Matthew Peregrim
 29 Susan Calpin
 29 Linda Hoover
 30 Jeffrey Muir

A Spiritual Moment

AS ACEDIA, BOREDOM is one of the Seven Deadly Sins. It deserves the honor.

You can be bored by virtually anything if you put your mind to it, or choose not to. You can yawn your way through *Don Giovanni* or a trip to the Grand Canyon or an afternoon with your dearest friend or a sunset. There are doubtless those who nodded off at the coronation of Napoleon or the trial of Joan of Arc or when Shakespeare appeared at the Globe in *Hamlet* or Lincoln delivered himself of a few remarks at Gettysburg. The odds are that the Sermon on the Mount had more than a few of the congregation twitchy and glassy-eyed.

To be bored is to turn down cold whatever life happens to be offering you at the moment. It is to cast a jaundiced eye at life in general including most of all your own life. You feel nothing is worth getting excited about because you are yourself not worth getting excited about.

To be bored is a way of making the least of things you often have a sneaking suspicion you need the most.

To be bored to death is a form of suicide.

-Originally published in [Whistling in the](#)

Signs we will never use!
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Betsy Miller



This is a snapshot of Events & Activities scheduled for the month of April. A full schedule is available on our website. Should you like to schedule an activity or have questions, please contact Marie Priblo at 570-342-8263.

Weekly Events for April

Monday	1:00 PM	Staff Meeting (L)
Tuesday	1:00 PM	Disciple Bible (L)
	7:00 PM	Disciple Bible (L)
Wednesday	10:00 AM	Bread Basket (MPR 1)
	7:30 PM	Choir Practice (CR)
Thursday	5:15 PM	Covenant Discipleship (L)
Friday	12:00 PM	Prayer Group (L)
Sunday	8:30 AM	Worship in Chapel
	9:00 AM	Sunday School
	9:30 AM	Fellowship
	10:00 AM	Worship in Sanctuary
	11:30 AM	Prayer & Praise Service



Saturday, 4/11 4:30 PM - 6:30 PM Peace Meal



Rev. Mike Bealla - Senior Pastor

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In This Issue

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Holy Week

**Give Thanks in All
Circumstances**

Book of Psalms

**A Note from our
Communicator**

Bread Basket



Worship Times

8:30 AM Chapel Service
9:00 AM—10:00 AM Fellowship time
10:00 AM Sanctuary Service
11:30 AM Prayer and Praise Service