



THIRD  
UNITED PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH

LOVE GOD...LOVE OTHERS

# Third Church Monthly Newsletter

Volume 1, Issue 1

April 1, 2010

THIRD UNITED  
PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH  
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WASHINGTON, PA  
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## Special points of interest:

- Pastor's Message
- Easter Activities
- Youth Activities
- Pancake and Sausage Breakfast Outreach

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## The Easter Season, by Pastor Tom Bellhy

The snow has melted away and we have come out of a long snowy winter ready to enter Springtime and the promise of new life. There is revival in the earth as once dormant, dead seeds rise up to bloom into new creations so different from their dismal dreary state of winter's deathlike grip.

In this same way our lives, as believers in Jesus Christ, reflect the grip of death that once held us as we move onto a new life in Christ. Romans 6:4 tells us that, *"We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life."*

The old, dead life of disobedience toward God has broken

way to a new life of eternal relationship. We have been reconciled once again to the Father. The Easter message of death to sin and renewal of life by the saving work of Jesus on the cross and His glorious resurrection is at work in us. Our fallen human nature of defiance toward God has been put to death and we have been resurrected to new life in Christ.

The growth of our relationship to God is the walk of the Christian life. As we celebrate Easter may our hearts rejoice for what Jesus did for us. Our old nature is gone and, through Jesus Christ, we too blossom into a new creation.

2 Corinthians 5:17 *"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!"*



### The Easter Season

*"There is revival in the earth as once dormant, dead seeds rise up to bloom into new creations..."*

## Easter Week Services and Activities

### Maundy Thursday Service:

The service is April 1 at 7:00pm. An intimate candlelight service remembering Jesus last supper with His disciples. We will read His Word and participate in the Lord's Supper.

### Good Friday Service:

Our Good Friday Service is April 2 from 12:15 to 1:00 and will be a dramatic reading of the combined gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

### Good Friday viewing of "The Passion of the Christ":

Join us on Good Friday, April 2 at 7:00 pm, *"The Passion of the Christ"* will be shown in the sanctuary for PG13 audiences.

### Easter Prayer Vigil

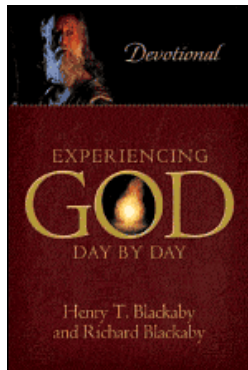
24-hour Easter Prayer Vigil from April 3, 7:00am, Saturday to April 4, 7:00am Easter Sunday; to affirm our commitment to the Lord. We need 48 prayer volunteers to fill ½ hour slots.

### Easter Sunrise Service:

7:00-7:30am, April 4, the service will remember the early morning open tomb and resurrection of Christ, conducted outside at the conclusion of our 24-hour Easter Prayer Vigil as weather permits. Breakfast follows.

### Easter Service:

11:00-12:00, April 12  
The Lord has risen, the first fruits of those to follow.



## The Risen Lord

*Lot's of things  
going on in  
April...  
Come and  
join us!*



Church  
Leadership...

Is serving Christ!

## Monthly Devotional

*His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes like a flame of fire; His feet were like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, and His voice as the sound of many waters.*

(Revelation 1:14-15)

At times it is tempting to conclude: "If only I could have walked with Jesus, as the twelve disciples did, it would be so much easier to live the Christian life!" This thought reveals that we do not comprehend the greatness of the risen Christ we serve today. The Jesus of the Gospels is often portrayed as One who walked along the seashore, loving children and gently forgiving sin-

ners. Yet the image of Jesus that we see at the close of the New Testament is far more dramatic! He stands in awesome power as He rules all creation. His appearance is so magnificent that when John, His beloved disciple, sees Him, he falls to the ground as though he were dead (Rev. 1:17).

We grossly underestimate the God we serve! To ignore God's word or to disobey a direct command from Him is to ignore the magnificent nature of Christ. Our fear of other people proves that we do not understand the awesome Lord who walks with us. The Christ

we serve today is the Lord of all creation. He is vastly more awesome and powerful than the gentle rabbi we often imagine.

If you struggle with your obedience to Christ, take a closer look at how He is portrayed in the Book of Revelation. If you are succumbing to temptation, call upon the powerful One who dwells in you. If you have forgotten how great and mighty the Lord is, meet Him through the vision of the beloved disciple. The encounter will dramatically affect the way you live!

## Activity Calendar for April

### Maudy Thursday Service

Thursday, April 1, 7:00pm

### Good Friday Service

Friday, April 2, 12:15-1:00

### "Passion of the Christ" showing

Friday, April 2, 7:00pm

### Pancake Breakfast

Saturday, April 3, 8:00-11:00am

### 24 Hour Prayer Vigil

Saturday, April 3, 7:00am to April 4, 7:00am

### EASTER SUNDAY

**Sunrise Service** Sunday April 4, 7:00

**Breakfast** Sunday April 4, 8:00-9:00

**Sunday School** Sunday, April 4, 9:30-10:30am,

**Morning Service** Sunday, April 4, 11:00am

### Committee Meetings:

**Worship Comm** Wednesday, April 7, 6:30pm

**Finance, Steward,** Wednesday, April 7, 7:30pm

### And Endowment

**Mission/Evangelism** Wednesday, April 7, 8:30pm

**Christian Ed** Tuesday, April 13, 7:00pm

**Building/Grounds** TBA

**Noontime Study** Friday, April 9, 16, 23, 30 12-12:50pm

### Preparation for Spaghetti Dinner

Saturday, April 10, 10:00-12:00am

**Sunday Services (11:00am & 5:00pm) and**

**Sunday School** Sunday April 11, 18, 25

**Youth Sunday** Sunday, April 18,

**Young at Hearts** Monday, April 19, 6:00pm

**Youth Group** Thursday, April 22, 7:00-8:00pm

**Spaghetti Dinner** Saturday, April 24 4:00-7:00pm

## Session Committee News

Five Session Committees meet monthly and several others meet as needed. Contact the church if you are interested in any Committee. The April meetings and Committee Chairs are as follows:

### Worship Committee

**Chair: Linda Lindsay**

Wednesday, April 7, 6:30pm

### Finance, Stewardship, and

**Endowment Committee**

**Chair: Matt Johns**

Wednesday, April 7, 7:30pm

### Mission & Evangelism

**Chair: Shane McMurdy**

Wednesday, April 7, 8:30pm

### Christian Education

**Chair: Ashley Crile**

Tuesday, April 13, 7:00pm

### Building & Grounds

**Chair: Chuck Gongaware**

TBA

### Session Meeting

Monday, April 19, 7:00-9:00pm

## Youth News

### Prepare Spaghetti Dinner

Saturday, April 10 10:00-12:00

The youth will meet to get ready for their 4/17 dinner

### Youth Sunday

Sunday, April 18, 11:00am

The church youth will conduct the service. Alyssa Crile will give the sermon.

### Youth Gathering

Thursday, April 22, 7:00-8:00pm

### Spaghetti Dinner

Saturday, April 24, 4:00-7:00

## More News

### News from March

#### Dedication of the "Songs of Praise and Worship" book.

On March 21 we dedicated the new Praise song book to the memory of Flora Parker (March 21, 1942-May 31, 2005). Flora was involved in the church as a faithful and loving member of the choir, elder, and deacon.

### Current Thanks:

#### FROM BOBBI HEASTINGS, Third Church Music Director:

Kudos to choir members! I am so grateful to members of the choir who have been so willing to come to extra rehearsals and be present each Sunday to serve in music ministry. From Advent season through Lent and Easter, many hours have been devoted to practice to ensure a pleasing outcome for the praise of our Lord. The gift of music, the gift of service. Thanks to all!

### Upcoming News:

#### Mother Daughter Banquet

will be held on...  
Wednesday May 5, 2010 at 6pm at the church.  
Reservation deadline is Sunday April 25th.  
Cost is \$10 for adults and \$6 for children 12 and under.  
Checks should be made payable to the church.



**Icy, Cold and Snowy  
Winter is finally over!**

## Notes from the Office

### Adult Sunday School:

Please attend the Adult Sunday School Class every Sunday at 9:30am. The 15-20 minute in-depth video tours and following study take you to the buried, distant, or otherwise forgotten places where the stories of the Bible actually happened.

### Noontime Bible Study:

Friday, April 9, 12:00pm  
Every Friday we hold a noon-time Bible study. Drinks/light meal is served as we work our way through the Gospel of John. Please consider coming for the study and fellowship. Let Pastor Bellhy know if you are interested.

### Maundy Thursday Service:

The service is April 1st at 7:00pm. An intimate candlelight service remembering Jesus last supper with His disciples. We will read His Word and participate in the Lord's Supper. We are honored to have **Deirdre Skiffington** at 3rd to perform with the choir for our **Maundy Thursday service**. She is a freshman at Trinity High School and was the oboe principal at PMEA District 1 Jr. High Band. She is

also the principal of the South Hills Junior Orchestra. Her parents are Dr. Gene and Mary Skiffington.

### Good Friday Service:

Our Good Friday Service will be held April 2 from 12:15 to 1:00 and will be a dramatic reading of the combined gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

### Good Friday viewing of "The Passion of the Christ":

Join us on Good Friday, April 2<sup>nd</sup> at 7:00 pm, "The Passion of the Christ" will be shown in the sanctuary for PG13 audiences. A separate movie will be shown in the nursery for children.

### Pancake Breakfast:

The Finance & Stewardship Committee will extend our Annual Pancake & Sausage Breakfast through Lent. The final breakfast will be held the Saturday on April 3 and **will be free of charge**. Donations will be taken. We are asking for volunteers to help with breakfast and advertising. Please come and enjoy breakfast with your church.

### Easter Prayer Vigil

We will conduct a 24-hour Easter Prayer Vigil at the church from:

#### April 3, 7:00am, Saturday morning to April 4, 7:00am

#### Easter Sunday morning:

to affirm our commitment to the Lord in all we have lifted up to Him in our Daily Lenten prayers since Ash Wednesday. In doing so we need 48 prayer volunteers to fill ½ hour slots through the 24 hour continuous prayer time. Each time slot will have specifics to pray for and an area set aside for a prayer room in the chapel. Please sign up for a time slot. Those who are more able please sign up for the late evening to early morning hours.

### PRAYER LIST:

Clara Bell Smith, Sam Beton, Richard Geisler, Mary Jane Bieda (Friend of Mary Lou Ott diagnosed with cancer) Ron & Patricia Lindsay, Loretta Hoy, Henry & Freda Szotkowski,

### Our Homebound

**Maundy  
Thursday Service,  
An intimate  
candlelight  
service  
remembering  
Jesus last supper  
with His disciples.**



### **PANCAKE AND SAUSAGE BREAKFAST IN ACTION!**

The last breakfast, April 3, is free of charge as an outreach to the poor and hungry and thanks to the community.

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## Why is Easter on a Different Date Every Year?

The Christian festival of Easter celebrates Jesus' resurrection. The name 'Easter' derives from the Anglo-Saxon goddess of Spring (Eostre or Ostara), but the Christian festival developed from the Jewish Passover, because according to the Gospels the events of Jesus' last days took place at the time of Passover. Easter was originally observed on the day following the end of the Passover fast (14 Nisan), regardless of the day of the week on which it fell. In the mid-second century, however, some Gentile Christians began to celebrate it on the Sunday after 14 Nisan, with the preceding Friday observed as the day of Christ's crucifixion, regardless of the date on which it fell. The resulting controversy over the correct time for observing the Easter festival reached a head in A.D. 197,

when Victor of Rome excommunicated those Christians who insisted on celebrating Easter on 14 Nisan. The dispute continued until the early fourth century, when the Quarto-decimans (from Latin for '14') were required by Emperor Constantine to conform to the empire-wide practice of observing Easter on the Sunday following 14 Nisan, rather than on that date itself.

Easter is currently celebrated on the first Sunday after the first full moon following the vernal equinox on or after March 21—or one week later if the full moon falls on Sunday. In other words, Easter falls between March 22 and April 25. Easter falls differently for Orthodox Christianity which, unlike Western Christianity, did not accept the Gregorian calendar reform in 1582.

Originally a unitary feast celebrating the Exodus and the Christian redemption, Easter was split up in the fourth century into its component parts, Easter Day becoming a separate commemoration of Christ's resurrection. For a long time it was also the pre-eminent occasion for Christian initiation (baptism), understood as a participation in the paschal mystery.

Achtemeier, P. J., Harper & Row, P., & Society of Biblical Literature. (1985). *Harper's Bible dictionary*. Includes index. (1st ed.) (233). San Francisco: Harper & Row.

Youngblood, R. F., Bruce, F. F., Harrison, R. K., & Thomas Nelson Publishers. (1995). *Nelson's new illustrated Bible dictionary*. Rev. ed. of: *Nelson's illustrated Bible dictionary*.; Includes index. Nashville: T. Nelson.