

Gray Weekly News



Week Leading to Sunday, April 17, 2022

Holy Week 2022

Join us during Holy Week 2022 for the following worship opportunities at Gray Memorial United Methodist Church.

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| <i>Thursday, April 14</i> | <i>6 pm</i> | <i>Maundy Thursday Tenebrae Service</i> |
| <i>Friday, April 15</i> | <i>8 am to 6 pm</i> | <i>Stations of the Gospel Individual Worship</i> |
| <i>Sunday, April 17</i> | <i>9:30 am 11 am</i> | <i>Easter Egg Hunt Worship Service</i> |

Easter Sunday



Acts 10:34-43
Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24
1st Corinthians 15:19-26
John 20:1-8

He is Risen! Life Wins!

News and Notes

THIS WEEK

Sunday, April 17

Please join us on Sundays at 11 am. If you are unable to come in person, you can watch our livestream at graymemorialumc.org/facebook.com or graymemorialumc.org/youtube, at 11 am or any time after that at graymemorialumc.org/



If you have prayer requests, please contact Norma Adams, Jennifer Skinner or Gail Teems.

You may also call the church office at 850/385-6441 or send a text to 850/933-8469.

Prayer Requests & Praises

Sam, Patsy and Betty

Dawn's family for struggles, challenges and needs

Jack, Randy, Jim & Jane Workman

Joyce and Bob

Family of Cory Wilhoit who passed away recently

All those who are suffering from accidents, illnesses and surgery

Praises for friends coming into relationship with Christ again

Praises to God for healing of Bella and Brenna

The Big Give – Saturday, April 30

8:30 am to 12:30 pm

Start gathering the things you don't want or need any more. Plan to bring them to the church on Sunday, April 24 or anytime that week. Tables will be set up in the narthex and classroom for you to place your items on. If you need help moving large items, call the church office and let us know so we can arrange to pick them up before Friday, April 29.



God Raised Him – We are Witnesses!

By Rev. Dr. Derek Weber, www.umcdiscipleship.com

It's Easter. In many ways, this day plans itself. It forms itself. There are patterns and rituals and traditions to this day that are unique. Everything changed in that moment. Moment? Event, perhaps. Everything changed with that event. Easter is a new start, a new creation. We didn't go back to Eden, but the way to the kin-dom of God was opened on that day.

The problem is that not everyone saw it. You know how it is with amazing things. If you didn't see it, if you weren't there, it is hard to capture the experience. You've tried to share it, you've tried to tell your friends or family about this amazing thing that you saw, this amazing music that you heard, this amazing experience that you had. You describe it as imaginatively as you possibly can. You show them the motions, you talk about what happened to you, you relive the moment in front of them. You try your best. And . . . crickets. Then you shrug and say the only thing you can think to say. The only thing that anyone says faced with that lack of reaction: "I guess you had to be there."

That is what we might be left with when trying to talk about the latest movie we watched, or concert we heard, but it doesn't seem adequate for this. This Easter thing. This Resurrection moment, this being alive in a way that leaks into eternity experience. We can't and don't want to shake our heads and say, "I guess you had to be there" and sadly wander away. It is too good to keep to ourselves. Too wonderful to hide under a bushel. Too incredible to not share. Because we are witnesses.

Bearing witness is more than simply saying we saw it. Saying, with the disciples, "we are witnesses" is not simply a matter of pride, or worse yet, one-upmanship. It is claiming a responsibility, or better yet, an opportunity to be proclaimers. To share the experience, to offer the gift we've been given, to announce the kin-dom that has begun to take root in our midst – that's the Easter transformation and imperative that has taken place. We are witnesses.

This Easter season, our series dips into the Acts of the Apostles as a way of examining the witness of the one who first experienced the Resurrection. Their story, as they struggled to find a way to live out the implications of this amazing news, this gospel event, becomes our story as we too seek to bear witness to the Risen Christ and to live that witness daily.

We suggest as a companion piece to this series a book the United Methodist Women used as a part of their Mission u experience in 2021: *Bearing Witness in the Kin-dom: Living into the Church's Moral Witness through Radical Discipleship* by Darryl Stephens, (United Methodist Women, 2021.) Dr. Stephens walks the reader through a well-constructed process to redefine what it means to be a witness for the Christian disciple of Jesus Christ. Yes, it means to observe, to see God at work in the world. But it also means to proclaim, to act, to announce with our hands as well as our words our commitment to God's kin-dom for which we pray whenever we say, "thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

The season after Easter is where we consider what it means to walk with Jesus into eternity. But it is not about life after death, or rather not only about life after death. It is very much about life before death, life in the face of death. It is about life and about bearing witness to a life that resembles a kin-dom existence right here and right now. It is this life, this justice and righteousness, this hope and this glory to which we can say with confidence, “We are witnesses.”

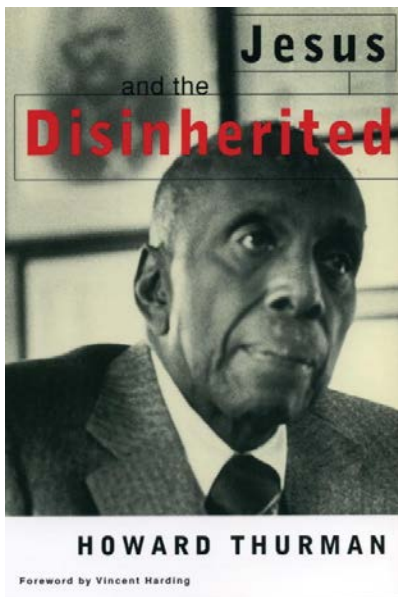
The “We Are Witnesses” theme suggests both “seeing” and “telling.” Claiming the faith that we have received is the beginning, but then offering this faith to the world at large is part of what it means to be witnesses. We are witnesses and we give a witness.

The Easter story should be told with power and passion in whatever ways that are meaningful to your community. But perhaps there is space to point beyond into the story of the apostles in the book of Acts, the foundation of the rest of the series. The subtext is that the greatness of Easter is found in the life that is lived in that light. So, even on Easter Sunday, we are pointing toward the future, toward what is coming.

Let our prayers be prayers of celebration of the gift that Easter is, but also for the strength to live into the promise of new life. Let there be a call to new life and new living. And that life is lived out loud in as public a way as possible. And the light and life of Easter invites us to see all that is still of death in our world—not just in our individual hearts, but in our community and in our world. We give witness to new possibilities and new hope because of Easter. We give witness to the end of hate, the end of war, the end of division, and the end of injustice. Because of Easter, we are witnesses to a new kin-dom—because God raised Jesus from the dead.

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North West District Study



We invite you and our entire North West District to come alive with us as we journey together through Howard Thurman’s, *Jesus and the Disinherited*. This six-week study will be theologically exciting, spiritually stimulating, and communally transforming, as we engage the work of one who greatly influenced the life and ideology of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Do you love Jesus, thought-provoking conversation, and personal growth and development? If so, this study is for you!

Join Nick Quinton, Latricia Edwards Scriven, and Michelle Shrader on Mondays at 6pm for six weeks, **beginning Monday, May 2, 2022**, via Zoom. We look forward to seeing you! Register [here](#) to join the study.

UPCOMING EVENTS

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| Tuesday, April 12 | 2 pm | United Women of Faith Meeting |
| Wednesday April 13 | 10 am | Neighborly's Time with Afghan Mothers and Children |
| | 7 pm | Lenten Bible Study with Pastor Beth Via Zoom |
| Thursday, April 14 | 10 am | Bible Study |
| | 6 pm | Maundy Thursday Service |
| Friday, April 15 | 8 am to 6 pm | Stations of the Gospel Individual Worship Opportunity |
| Sunday, April 17 EASTER SUNDAY | 9:30 am | Easter Egg Hunt |
| | 11 am | Worship Service |
| Monday, April 18 | 5:30 pm | Community Yoga |
| | 7 pm | Parkside-Park Terrace HOA Meets |
| Tuesday, April 19 | 7 pm | Executive Council Meets via Zoom |
| Wednesday, April 20 | 7 pm | Bible Study with Pastor Beth via Zoom (continuing with Lent Study) |
| Thursday, April 21 | 10 am | Bible Study |
| | 5:30 pm | Choir Practice |
| Sunday, April 24 | 9:30 am | Bible Study with Pastor Beth |
| | 11 am | Worship Service |