



ZION HAPPENINGS

March 2021

Pastor Note

Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus."
1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

We are in a time in which our Christian calendar focuses on Lent and Easter. As Christians, we are invited to practice at least three Christian disciplines that help us to connect to God. Among them, is Praying, giving, and fasting.

Growing as a Roman Catholic teenager, I always found it difficult to follow Christian disciplines. It was until one of my teachers in High School taught me that Lent is the time to refocus our lives, to contemplate, and to reflect on what it means to be followers of Christ. Those kind words have stayed within me throughout the years. I still have in my heart the memories of Father Cervantes, when we had those slow-paced walks in the hallways of the school between classes sharing about life and God. Father Cervantes belonged to the Jesuit Order. He was a profound Bible teacher and a godly and loving servant of God.

Now remembering some of his words, I have found in the discipline of prayer and contemplation among many other disciplines a way to grow and to connect with God more deeply. St Ignatius of Loyola, founder of the Jesuit order, was convinced that God can speak to us as surely through our imagination, our thoughts, and memories. In the Ignatian tradition, praying with the imagination is called contemplation, and contemplation is a very active way of praying that engages the mind and heart and stirs up thoughts and emotions.

For instance, in a time of contemplation in the Ignatian tradition, Fathers and monks read the scripture imagining themselves in the presence of God, or sitting beside Jesus. The purpose of this exercise is not only to enjoy their company but also to be aware of the feeling that is arising as they find themselves in the divine presence. In this tradition, contemplation also invites people to place themselves in the scene from the Gospel and ask themselves, what do they see? what do they hear? What do they feel, taste or smell? With the purpose to see what God wants them to notice.

For many people to find meaning and delight in the discipline of contemplation it takes time and practice. I have been practicing contemplation for a while and many times my mind still keeps thinking about something else when I am supposed to be focused on the Lord through the scripture so I have to stop to refocus. Then I wonder: How I am praying? Where is my imagination leading me? Is my imagination leading closer to God or away from God? Is my contemplation bringing me thoughts of comfort, thoughts of peace, or thoughts of sadness? After few moments of discernment, I have found that I need to re-start my time with God again, BUT it is worth it, once I meet Jesus in the gospel scene within my imagination, nothing is the same. It's a profound encounter with the living Christ. He is alive; he has risen and is present through the Spirit who works in prayer.

Some people find imaginative prayer difficult. They may not be able to picture the narrative easily, but yet they may have some intuition to the story; or they may better like to hear or feel the story more than visualize it, and that's okay too.

In a spirit of generosity, as we continue praying during the season of Lent, I invite you to explore the discipline of contemplation. Lectio Divina is a good way to practice contemplation, and if your mind wanders away from the scripture (as it happens to me), don't worry but trust God in the assurance that he will speak to you, whether it is through your memory, your understanding, your intellect, your emotions, or your imagination. The Apostle Paul tells us: "Pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus."

Anima Christi

(Prayer of contemplation in the Ignatian tradition)

Soul of Christ, sanctify me.

Body of Christ, save me.

Blood of Christ, inebriate me.

Water from the side of Christ, wash me.

Passion of Christ, strengthen me.

O Good Jesus, hear me.

Within your wounds hide me.

Permit me not to be separated from you.

From the wicked foe, defend me.

At the hour of my death, call me

and bid me come to you

That with your saints I may praise you

Forever and ever.



MARCH	APRIL
Lisa Hall - 1	Nancy Brooks - 3
Lisa Thomas - 8	Arnold Price - 3
Bobby Simpson - 10	Pam Hinson - 6
Marianna Villagrana - 12	CW Price - 6
Phil Apple - 18	Barbara Griffin - 9
Charles Medlin - 23	Miles Clark - 11
Dylan Beach - 24	Robert Kindley - 11
Brenda Robbins - 25	Todd Beach - 15
Helen Greene - 26	Dru Clontz - 17
Caroleen Baucom - 29	Darlene Furr - 19
Tom Daniels - 29	Rickey Mills - 19
Dana Taylor - 31	Skip Watwood - 21
Jimmy Clontz - 14	Rachel McCall - 25
	Robin Beach - 28
	Elsie Kindley - 28
	Kay Medlin - 30



*In Our Thoughts
& Prayers*

Kim Mullis
Mitzi McManus
Kay Medlin
C.W. Price
Jimmy and Susan Clontz
Jim Beam
Rondal & Eloise Purser
Phifer family
Biggers family
Tammy and Bobby Parker
The Greene Family
James Lowery
Virginia Braswell

MUSIC NOTES:

Happy March Everyone!!!

It is hard to believe that we have been in this epidemic for more than a year now!!! We are beginning to see the light at the end of the tunnel! We look forward to everything getting back to normal soon!

I had my covid shots and feel a little more safe having done that! Hope that if you want to get yours that you will not have any problem getting yours!

We are celebrating our Lenten season and we had a very inspirational Ash Wednesday service led by our Pastor Norma. It is a tradition to give up something for Lent or if you would rather you could give something back instead. Our Lord gave the most precious gift of all, His Son! As hard as it was for me to lose my two children, how hard it must have been for Jesus' mother to see her son hanging on that cruel cross.

Be in prayer during this season and look forward to Easter and celebrating Jesus resurrection!

Barbara

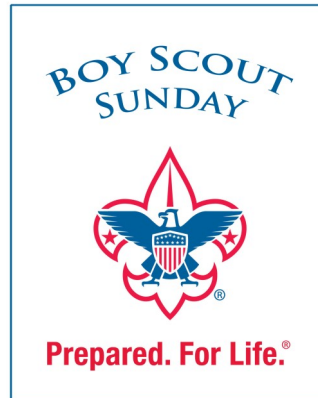


MARCH	APRIL
Jim and Susan Beam - 6	Kenneth and Debbie Purser - 6
Allen and Carol Johnson - 15	Vann and Bonnie Haigler - 16
Jimmy and Susan Clontz - 24	Chip and Leigh Harris - 25
Hugo and Norma Villigrana - 28	

Upcoming Church Events and News



- ◆ **Loaves and Fishes:** This month we will be collecting canned meats, such as tuna, chicken and salmon.



Thank you to everyone who donated to Boy Scout Troop 226, they were able to collect 4,273 pounds of food this year



February Giving's

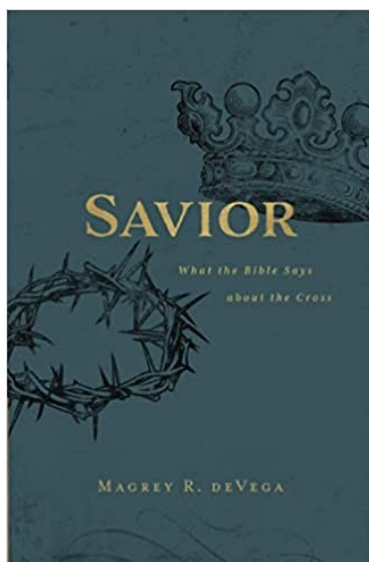
Tithes	13,861
Boy Scout Food Drive	50
Memorials	350
UMCOR	100
UC Community Shelter	150
Youth Fund	50
<i>Total</i>	<i>14,561</i>

- ◆ There will be no meeting in March
- ◆ Thank you to everyone who came out and donated blood!! We were able to donate 21 units!
- ◆ Next meeting is planned for April 27th at 6pm, unless otherwise announced.
- ◆ Congratulations to Bonnie and Van Haigler as they expect a granddaughter on March 20th! If you would like to send a gift please send it to

Dustin & Olivia Haigler
PO box 261
Pineola, NC 28662

Upcoming Meetings

- ◆ The care ministry team will be meeting on March 18th at 6:30 over zoom. If you would like to participate please contact Pastor Norma.
- ◆ The lent bible study will continue to meet on Thursdays from 12pm-1pm in the New Life Center or 5:30 to 6:30 over zoom.



ZION UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



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Holy Week Events

Self Guided Mediation on the Passion Narrative

The Holy week is referred to as the Passion Week or Holy Week of Christ. It begins with Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem, in what has traditionally been referred to as Palm Sunday, his final entry into Jerusalem on his way to the cross. It consists of Jesus' celebration of the last Passover meal with his disciples, a meal which will transition and be transformed into the Lord's Supper after Jesus' death and resurrection. It consists of the crucifixion of Jesus, which is referred to as Good Friday. It is through the death and the resurrection of Jesus that our sins can be forgiven and we can experience peace with God.

As we walk with Jesus through the Passion Week, you are invited to come and to spend 15-20 minutes with God in the scriptures through the quiet environment of our sanctuary beginning on Monday, March 29 thru Friday, April 2 from 7:00 AM to 6:00 PM. We hope that you can take the time each day as an opportunity to open your spirit to God so that you may respond freely to God's call to live and to serve in God's kingdom and in preparation for the great celebration of Easter.

Man and God Devotional

Men please join us for the Man and God Devotional on Monday
March 29th thru Wednesday March 31st at 7:00 PM

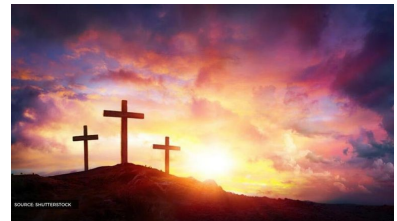


Maundy Thursday

Please join us in observance of Maundy Thursday on
April 1st at 7:00 PM

Good Friday

Please join us for The Message of the Cross on Good
Friday, April 2nd at 7:00 PM

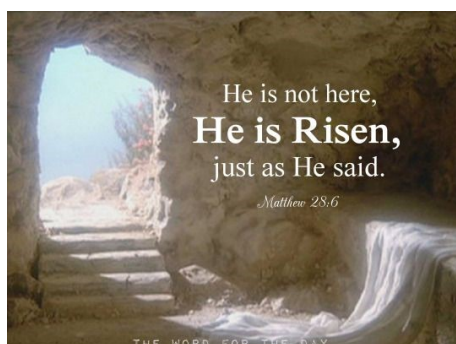


Easter Sunday Events

Sunday April 4th, 2021

Sunrise Service & Light Breakfast

We will be having a Sunrise Service at
6:55 in the Cemetery. This will be
followed by a light breakfast and
fellowship in the new life center from
7:15 AM till 8 AM.



Worship Service and Sunday School

The Worship Service will be at 8:15AM in
the sanctuary and Sunday School will be
held at
9:30 AM