

April 1, 2012

The Oaks



Riverton First United Methodist Church, (217) 629-9721

Thoughts for April

The beginning of the Gospel of John tells us that the Word became flesh and lived among us (John 1:14). This Word is the one whom we call Jesus Christ. He was with God and was God (John 1:1). The eternal Word, second person of the divine Trinity, voluntarily took on the limitations of humanity in order to bring salvation to humans. His earthly body was born to Mary in Bethlehem, as we remember at Christmas. She and his step-father, Joseph, took him back to their home where he grew up as Jesus of Nazareth.

Jesus eventually became an itinerant preacher, moving about in Galilee and Judea in his earthly body to proclaim the coming of the Kingdom of God. He healed sick people and even brought some back from death. But his new teachings were considered radical. He met with opposition. Eventually he was arrested, tried, beaten and finally crucified. His earthly body was put to death. But the story doesn't end there. He arose. His body came to life again.

Now read the words of Philip Yancey, from *The Jesus I Never Knew* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1965):

Presumably [Jesus] could have had any resurrected body he wanted, and yet he chose one identifiable mainly by scars that could be seen and touched. Why?

I believe the story of Easter would be incomplete without those scars on the hands, the feet, and the side of Jesus. When human beings fantasize, we dream of pearly straight teeth and wrinkle-free skin and sexy ideal shapes. We dream of an unnatural state: the perfect body. But for Jesus, being confined in a skeleton and human skin WAS the unnatural state. The scars are, to him, an emblem of life on our planet, a permanent reminder of those days of confinement and suffering.

I take hope in Jesus' scars. From the perspective of heaven, they represent the most horrible event that has ever happened in the history of the universe - the crucifixion - Easter turned into a memory. Because of Easter, I can hope that the tears we shed, the blows we receive, the emotional pain, the heartache over lost friends and loved ones, all these will become memories, like Jesus' scars. Scars never completely go away, but neither do they hurt any longer. We will have re-created bodies, a re-created heaven and earth. We will have a new start, an Easter start.

This month, April, on Palm Sunday we observe the joy of Jesus' Triumphant Entry into Jerusalem. But we also remember the events later that week, so we also call it Passion Sunday. Our whole Lenten season of self-denial and repentance culminates in Good Friday. We call it good because of the good that it accomplished for all humankind – the possibility of salvation through belief in this Jesus, this Word (John 3:16). We can experience rebirth, renewal, a spiritual resurrection in our lives because of what Jesus of Nazareth did.

But after Easter, April continues. Life goes on. After Easter, let us remember the scars Jesus showed Thomas (John 20:24-29). And, as Philip Yancey suggests above, let us live in hope, despite the scars and hurts in our lives, living in expectation of eternal life with him.

Pastor Jonathan Dixon

RFUMC Calendar – April 2012

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 Palm / Passion Sunday 9:30 AM Worship; 10:30 AM Sunday School	2 7:00 PM Board of Trustees	3	4 9:00 AM Quilting; 7:00 PM Choir Practice	5	6 Good Friday 7:00 PM Joint Service with 1 st Baptist Church, Here	7
8 Easter Sunday 7:00 AM Sunrise Service with 1 st Baptist Church, There; 9:30 AM Worship; 10:30 AM Egg Hunt	9	10 7:00 PM United Methodist Women	11 9:00 AM Quilting; 7:00 PM Choir Practice	12	13	14 7:30 AM United Methodist Men 8:30 AM Church clean-up day
15 Guest Speaker in 9:30 AM Worship; 10:30 Sunday School	16	17	18 9:00 AM Quilting; 7:00 PM Choir Practice	19	20	21
22 9:30 AM Worship; 10:30 AM Sunday School	23 7:00 PM Staff – Parish Relations Committee	24	25 9:00 AM Quilting; 7:00 PM Choir Practice	26	27	28
29 9:30 AM Worship; 10:30 AM Sunday School	30					

Looking Ahead...

May 2, 6:00 PM Mother – Child Banquet

June 6 – 9, Annual Conference in Peoria

June 10 – 14, Vacation Bible School, in cooperation with St. James Catholic Church

September 9, United Methodist Women Sunday

October 13, Chili / Soup Supper

November 11, United Methodist Men Sunday

November 18, Community Thanksgiving Service



April Bible Readings

Below is the reading schedule to continue our project of reading through the Bible in one year. I will continue to use passages from the week's readings in our worship together (although we may vary from it some for special days like Palm Sunday or Easter). May we know God's blessing as we read and worship together using these passages.

APRIL	<i>Law</i>	<i>History</i>	<i>Psalms</i>	<i>Poetry</i>	<i>Prophets</i>	<i>Gospels</i>	<i>Epistles</i>
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
<u>April 1</u> 2-8	Num. 13-16	1 Chron. 20-24	Psalms 105-107	Proverbs 22	Joel	John 13-15	<u>2Ti.1-2</u> <u>2Ti.3-4</u>
April 9-15	Num. 17-20	1 Chron. 25-29	Psalms 108-110	Proverbs 23-24	Amos 1-4	John 16-18	Titus
April 16-22	Num. 21-24	2 Chron. 1-5	Psalms 111-113	Proverbs 25	Amos 5-9	John 19-21	Philemon
April 23-29	Num. 25-28	2 Chron. 6-10	Psalms 114-116	Proverbs 26-27	Obad- iah	Acts 1-2	Heb. 1-4
Apr30- May 6	Num. 29-32	2 Chron. 11-15	<i>Psalms</i> 117-118	<i>Proverbs</i> 28	<i>Jonah</i>	<i>Acts</i> 3-4	<i>Heb.</i> 5-7

Scrip Program

It won't be long.....maybe even before Easter! The profits from this program should be able to pay another \$1,000.00 on the church's loan principal. Everyone who orders gift cards from this program should be very proud of their contribution to aiding their church.

If you aren't familiar with how this works.....well, an order sheet is enclosed for your use. You pay the actual amount of a card, you get the card for the full amount that you paid for, the business that issued the card gives that percentage directly to the church! You get to enjoy the card and the business gets a nice tax deduction to a charity. It is a win/win situation.

Should you have any question regarding this program, please feel free to contact Rev. Dixon or Judy McCullough.



Quilting News

If you think that quilting is boring, you haven't visited with the quilt group that meets on Wednesday mornings in the church basement. It is anything but boring! At the present time, they are about to complete quilting on one quilt, with another one ready to be started on. Each quilt is a challenge; each quilt is unique; each quilt is beautiful. The conversations are usually very 'educational' or a hoot. A good time is always had by all. Come join the group and find out for yourself.

Trustee News

At the last trustee meeting it was decided to have a contractor install additional drainage pipe to allow the rain waters from the gutters to escape away from the parsonage home. More dirt work will need to be completed in the rear of the home to assist on some of the drainage. It was reported that our church's trees have been "fed" to help them retain the beauty of our property. Also it was noted that the village is to clean up the poison ivy patch on the edge of the yard.

A clean-up day has been set for April 14, 2012 at 8:30 A.M. Everyone is asked to bring some tools, as work needs to be done on the inside of the church as well as on the outside. The brick patio at the southeast corner of the church had become uneven and had caused some to injure themselves. Tom and Scott Pantier volunteered to adjust this area and the project has been completed and looks great. Thank you for a job very nicely done!

The trustees next big project will be up-dating the parsonage kitchen and the basement areas for the laundry, utilities, bath and stairs. Another concern will be collecting the money to have the parking lot sealed again in the future.

The United Methodist Women had their famous chili/soup supper in March and they heard many compliments on the renovated kitchen. The trustees again thank the Women for their generous donation toward this project.

APRIL BIRTHDAYS

Donna Petitt	4/1
Justin Koger	4/13/1990
Zachary Thomas	4/14/1992
Barry Tester	4/15
Josey Stoneburner	4/16/1997
Staci Byers	4/18
Helen Julius	4/19
Megan Mackenzie	4/19/1995
Nadine Mackenzie	4/21/1986
Kevin Scales	2/24/1962
Marsha Sutton	4/24/1951
Janet Gowin	4/29/1940



APRIL ANNIVERSARIES

Richard and Melba Blakley	4/12/1957
Craig and Connie Thomas	4/15/1989
Lyle and Harriet Beckey	4/19/1958

MISSION STATEMENT: Our mission is to draw people into relationship with Christ and the church and to lovingly challenge them to spiritual growth.

OUR VISION: A warm fellowship of Christians in the Riverton area, growing in numbers and spiritual nurture, with facilities and programs to do ministry in the name of Jesus Christ for generations to come.

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Address Correction Requested



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Next Newsletter Deadline:
April 15, 2012
carlyshank@yahoo.com

The United Methodist Women will meet:

Tuesday, April 10th 7 PM

Program: Betty Peel

Hostesses: Jeri Succesch & Evelyn Gandy

We wish to thank everyone for their donations and all the workers that made our chili soup supper a great success.

Mother-Child Banquet – May 2nd at 6:00 PM

For reservations call by April 28th: Mary Pugh 629-9021,

Patsy Skaggs 523-2239, or Barbara Rhodes 629-9247

We welcome all the ladies of the Church. Come see us in the fellowship hall.