

"The grass withers, the flower fades, but the Word of our God will stand forever." Isaiah 40:8

Keep off the grass!

Every year when winter turns into spring, I look forward to seeing the daffodils and tulips bloom. But it won't be long before the blooms are gone. So I'll plant flowers to enjoy during the summer until they, too, are gone with the return of fall and winter. With every change of season, we are reminded of the truth of the frailty of life, the limited time we have on earth, and the passing of time into eternity. As Isaiah proclaims, "The grass withers, the flower fades. . . ."

When applied to human life, Isaiah's wisdom becomes apparent. Despite our best efforts to increase our lifespan through a healthy lifestyle or to build a legacy for ourselves through work, church, community, and family, all of us are like withering grass and fading flowers. Time marches on, things change, and the things we work for are someday gone, maybe even forgotten. Kind of a gloomy message isn't it? But no! The second half of the verse brings good news. . . "but the Word of our God will stand forever."

God's Word is found in the person of Jesus Christ whose victory over sin and death we celebrate on Easter. Jesus has promised to be with us always, calling us to follow God's ways of justice and peace, offering forgiveness, teaching us to love, and bringing us new life. Even when the grass withers and the flower fades here on earth, we look forward to the day when all things

will be made new and God's kingdom will be realized on earth. But before we receive our eternal bodies in the resurrection, what does it mean to be "grass" while we live our earthly lives in the here and now?

To be "grass" means. . .

us in our need;

- ...to recognize our finiteness, our temporary and fragile nature;
 - and to be grateful that the Almighty and Eternal God deems us worthy and calls us into relationship through Jesus Christ, AND equips us for service through the gifts of the Holy Spirit;
- ...to recognize our need for water, food, sunshine, and air
 - and to be grateful for God's provident hand;
- ...to recognize our limited power that prevents us from doing everything on our own, and to be grateful for God's unlimited power to help
- ...to recognize that we are created beings and to be grateful for the Creator;
- ...to recognize that we, like other people, are sinners. We make mistakes, hurt one another's feelings, fail to live up to our potential, do things we shouldn't, and don't do things we should,
- and to be grateful for the love of the Lord and the grace of God's Son that offers forgiveness, restoration, and a second chance.

The gratitude we feel is what inspires us to worship

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our Great and Loving God. Shortly before his death on the cross, Jesus repeated his great desire that we "love one another as I have loved you." (John 15:12)

It's much easier to love one another when we remember that, like us, they are also grass. All of us (pastors too!) are fragile, finite creatures, who sometimes make

mistakes and often need the same grace and forgiveness from each other that God shows to us. Sometimes we have to remember to forgive ourselves as well. So, even as we give thanks to the Lord for the wonderful news of God's Word, don't forget to tread gently with others and "Keep Off The Grass" as we live and love in the community of faith that is Christ's Church.

Blessings and peace,
— κευ. Δεβ

What Easter does

Jesus' resurrection from the dead is life-changing and life-giving for his followers. But, as Henry Knox Sherrill notes, Easter's "joyful news ... does not change the contemporary world." On earth, we still must deal with sin, pain, death and brokenness. And "still before us lie work, discipline, sacrifice," Sherrill adds. What Easter does, though, is provide Christians with "the spiritual power to do the work, accept the discipline and make the sacrifice."

By defeating the grave, Jesus empowers us to bear our worldly troubles with joy, peace and hope. His resurrection assures us that trials, tears and suffering are only temporary, while eternal victory and life with Jesus are permanent.



"God loves each of us as if there were only one of us." —St. Augustine



At the end of the 2018 budget year, by the Grace of God, we had a surplus of \$8,858. This is the result of unanticipated income we received, as well as our expenses being less than the amount budgeted.

Your Finance Committee recommended, and Parish Council approved the following allocation of the surplus amount: \$1,703 be included as income to balance the 2019 budget, and 10% (\$886) to be given to the two Denominations with which our church is affiliated, \$443 to each. Also, \$2,000 be added to the WIN Fund* and \$4,269 to the Building Fund.

*The "Where It's Needed" (WIN) Fund was created for when we receive donations and the donor requests the money to be used where it is needed. Expenses for non-routine purchases, such as replacing computers etc., are paid from this fund, at the discretion of Parish Council.

The net income from the Corned Beef Dinner to support our 2019 budget is \$1,008.81.

Thank you to everyone who contributed in any way to the success of this event!

— Anne Coughenour for your Dinance Committee

Food Collection

Please bring to church non-perishable food for our pantry. Please note dates on any items. Items with expired dates **cannot** be used. A basket for donations is in the narthex every Sunday. Food will be used for our holiday basket distribution.

Communications

If you would like to receive e-mail updates from the church, place your e-mail address on the Friendship pad or leave it in the office.

Special dates

- Fifth Sunday in Lent, April 7, 2019
- Holy Week, April 14-21, 2019
- Palm/Passion Sunday, April 14, 2019
- Maundy Thursday, April 18, 2019
- Good Friday, April 19, 2019
- Easter Sunday, April 21, 2019
- Administrative Professionals Day, April 24, 2019



Without any preconceived plan in action, I just happened to be reading the book of Isaiah as February rolled into March. It struck me, as we bounced between days of near 60' temperatures followed by snow and ice storms, how similar the two are. Bear with me while I try to explain what was going on in my little world of 'logic'?!

In the book of Isaiah, chapter 60:22, the Bible says: "The least of you will become a thousand, the smallest a mighty nation. I am the LORD; in its time I will do this swiftly." Huh? In its time, I will do it swiftly? In its time, sounds an awful lot like the old adage about when something was coming, whether it was to be spring or the end of school, or the ice cream truck: , 'in due time, dear'. That always meant it probably wasn't coming soon and I had better learn to be patient. So then where does the 'swiftly' fit? Swift patience almost sounds like one of those odd oxymorons.

In one of my favorite M*A*S*H episodes, an injured soldier (head trauma) believes himself to be Jesus Christ! When Father Mulcahy comes to chat with him and see if he can help this former bomber pilot, he asks him: "Is it true that God answers all prayers?" The pseudo - Jesus character answers: "Yes that is true, but sometimes the answer is 'no'"; or certainly at that particular time. In how many children's books or stories do we find one of the people trying to pray for something and when it doesn't happen right away, they are convinced that God is nonexistent.

Similarly, we ask God for help with the weather, (please end this winter, etc...) our family, SU sports or whatever the case may be. And how often do we feel dismayed when things don't work out the way we planned, in the time we wanted. God says in Isaiah that God can change the least into a power player, a few into a multitude. How many disciples did Jesus start with - 12? How many Christians are there in the world today – billions? The key part though is in its time. Times and events have been planned by God with infinite planning and wisdom, far surpassing what we could devise, no matter how devilishly clever we may think we are. God has time and places all worked out; we need to have faith in the love of a God who would not even withhold the Son, a Son so deeply loved!

So, as we approach spring, Easter or what ever else may be on your calendar, remember that God knows what we need and will accomplish it in its time, at the right time. God be praised. Hallelujah (even though Pastor Deb said to bury that word until Easter Sunday, this is my epistle for the whole month and it's time to be used here!!)

Happy Easter

—Dale H. Greabell for the Christian Education Dept.

April Adventures

7 - communion

14 - Palm Sunday and the annual Easter egg hunt

21 - Easter - no classes

28 - spring outing? perhaps...

Meanings in the meal

Jesus instituted Communion while celebrating the Jewish Passover with his disciples. The meal's ritual foods hold meaning for Christians, too, because our faith story is interwoven with that of Judaism.

Matzoh: This unraised bread recalls the Israelites' hasty departure from oppression in Egypt. Jesus used the Passover bread to symbolize his body, which delivers us from bondage to sin and death.

Salt water: It symbolizes the tears of the Hebrews and of all who suffer in any time and place. Christians believe that in Jesus, God embraced human suffering so we need never face it alone.

Parsley: Dipped in the salt water, this green, leafy vegetable represents the Hebrews' rebirth out of sorrow into the joy of freedom. Easter's celebration of resurrection proclaims a coming day when God "will wipe every tear from [our] eyes [and] there will be no more death" (Revelation 21:4, NIV).

Shankbone: A lamb slaughtered for each Hebrew household meant life for those within. The meat strengthened them for the escape journey, and the blood, swabbed on their doorframe, signaled for Death to "pass over." Jesus used wine at the Passover meal to symbolize his blood — of the Lamb of God — which he would shed for our salvation.

Egg: For Jews celebrating Passover, an egg symbolizes memory of the Exodus and renewal of faith. For Christians at Easter, eggs — especially open, empty ones — call to mind Jesus' empty tomb, renewal and abundant life.

"Easter is more than a day, an event, a remembrance. It is a way of life." — *Michael Marsh*



- 1. Steve Shorey
- 4. Norine & Henry Stephan's anniversary
- 5. Joselyn Rene Olivadoti
- 7. Elizabeth Law Post, Olivia English
- 10. Russell Lawrence Callender, Ed Dunn
- 14. Andrew Sweeney
- 17. Deborah Vankalsbeek
- 19. Linda Horton
- 20. Bob Damon.
- 24. Linda Fehlman
- 26. Amy Cooter Hill
- 27. Brian Law, Robert Karl Metz, Linda Graves
- 30. Irene Wall

Bottles For Our Budget/Cans For Our (hurch

Please bring **only clean and rinsed out New York State deposit bottles and cans** to church every Sunday.
Proceeds raised will go to our Building Fund.

Upper Room and Our Daily Bread

for the current season are available in the narthex.

Donations are appreciated to help cover costs.

Let laughter 'spring' forth!

"Spring is when you feel like whistling, even with a shoe full of slush." (Doug Larson)

"Easter is the only time when it's perfectly safe to put all of your eggs in one basket." (Evan Esar)

"Spring is the time of year when it is summer in the sun and winter in the shade." (Charles Dickens)

"The world is mud-luscious and puddle wonderful." (e.e. cummings)

"In the spring, at the end of the day, you should smell like dirt." (Margaret Atwood)

Newsletter Newsletter

Prayer and Personal Concerns



In Hospitals, Nursing Homes, Assisted Living
Nancy Bregard – Morning Star Care Center - Oswego
Juanita Coleman – Elderwood – Diane Shafer's mother
At Home

Chuck Baker

Raymond Baldwin – Dick & Diana Law's brother-in-law

Daniel Camp – friend of Christy Knowlton

Jean Troy & Debbie Kelly – Shancy Gorman's cousins

Betty Hickox - Lynn Jacques' mother

Chuck & Madeline Kieb – Horton family friends

Tim Krezmien – Nancy Miller's grandson

Eugene Lansing

Mary Pat Lavigne - Chuck & Marsha Provo's daughter

Barbara Manley

Heather Miles - friend of the Provo's

Patty Miller – friend of the Provo's

Mary Mol – Horton family friend

Christine Opera – Shancy Gorman's niece

John Novak

Mark Radley

Bob Stanton – Terri LaVergne's uncle

Judy Walters

Serving in the Armed Forces:

Tina Bearup – US Navy -Joan O'Donnell's niece

Bret Gratien – US Air Force – Dover AFB - grandson of Peggy & Ray Haynes

Jamie Jarmacz – US Air Force - Dick & Diana Law's son-in-law

Andrew Metz – In California

Austin Miller – US Navy – Linda Graves grandson

Beth and Nate Roczen – US Army - Horton family friends

Eric Spero – US Navy

*Ryan Fox – studying in the Czech Republic

Please notify the office of any changes so this list may be kept current.

Maundy Thursday Service

is being combined with our neighbors from Collamer United Church and Bridgeport UMC on Thursday, April 18th, at 6:30 pm at the Bridgeport location, 377 State Route 31, Bridgeport.

"April ... hath put a spirit of youth in everything."

— William Shakespeare



Parish Council met on March 12, 2019.

Donna Dow opened our meeting with a Spiritual Study on Christian hospitality with readings from the books of Romans and Genesis.

Standard motions were approved.

The Worship Committee is finalizing services for Holy Week. There will be a joint Maundy Thursday service with Collamer and Bridgeport Methodist Churches. Look for more details in the bulletin and weekly email updates.

Easter flower orders will be taken starting March 31st. Additional varieties of flowers will be available.

Mark your calendars for the following Fellowship and Hospitality events:

- Corned Beef and Cabbage Dinner March 16
- Ladies Tea with Christopher & Banks fashion show – May 11
- Church picnic July 14 at Ryder Park
- Pork Dinner Oct 19
- Christmas Shoppe Dec 7

More details will be available as the dates get closer to the event.

The Memorial Committee is researching new benches for the front of the church.

The Nominating Committee is looking for an Auditor. If you know of anyone who may be interested please contact Anne Coughnour.

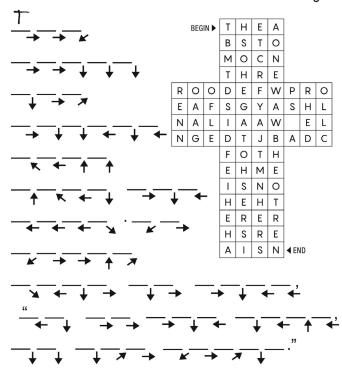
The church will be hosting a Website 101 seminar on 4/27/19 from 10am to noon. The Presbytery Communicator will lead interested participants in Website development and other areas of social media.

AED training will occur on 4/20, 9:00am-12:30pm. See Charlie Combs, the bulletin or email weekly update for further details.

Rev Deb closed our meeting with thoughts on living in the light and letting God's light shine/sparkle through you, and closed with prayer.

Puzz]e!

Follow the arrows and fill in the blanks to discover what the women found at Jesus' tomb on Easter morning.



(Answer on the calendar page)



Noon to 3pm in the Sanctuary. Come when you're able and stay as long as it is meaningful for you. Reading material will be available.

April 2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	April Fools Day	2	3	4 6:30 PM Finance Comm. Mtg. (Lounge)	5	6
7 10:00 AM Worship & Christian Ed. 2:00 PM Girl Scouts, (Lounge)	8 5:45 PM Presbytery Group (Shepherd Room) 7:00 PM Girl Scout Service Unit (Lounge)	9	10	11	12	13 10:00 AM CNYGS (Lounge 'til 1)
14 10:00 AM Worship & Christian Ed. 2:00 PM Girl Scouts, (Lounge)	15	16	17	18 6:30 PM Maundy Thursday Service (Bridgeport UMC)	19 Vigil (Sanctuary, 12 - 3 pm)	9:00 AM AED Training (Lounge 'til 12:30)
Easter Sunday 10:00 AM Worship & Christian Ed. 11:15 AM Sandwich Making	22	23	24	25	26	27 10:00 AM Presbytery Website Event
28 10:00 AM Worship & Christian Ed.	29	30	Answer: The stone was rolled away from the door. An angel said to them, "He is not here; he has risen!" (See Luke 24:1-8.) (See Luke 24:1-8.)			

First United Church of East Syracuse Events



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

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.



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, linens, silver coins

First United Church of East Syracuse 823 Franklin Park Drive East Syracuse, New York 13057

Volunteers Needed!

The church has an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) located in the church office. As always, there is hope that it will never need to be used. However, with the many activities of our church life and many community activities taking place here, we need trained operators.

Church member Debbie Hopkins has volunteered to provide training. She is a nurse (St. Joseph's Hospital) and certified instructor of emergency programs. There will be no cost. Training sessions are 3.5 hours in length. Your certification will be valid for two (2) years. We can schedule up to ten trainees in one session. Additional sessions will be considered if needed. Trainees should wear comfortable clothing and be able to stand, sit and kneel with ease.

Please speak to Charlie Combs or contact him (315-632-6334) (13ccombs@gmail.com) if you have questions. Please register as a volunteer for this important program by completing the section below and returning it to Charlie or to the church office by April 14. The training session will be Saturday, APRIL 20, at 9:00 AM.

Separate and submit	AED Training Re	gistration Form	
Name	Tel#	E-Mail	
If you l	nave certification from some other add your name to our list	r venue, please consider allowing us t of trained volunteers.	s to
Na	me	Certificate expires, 20	