

# THE CRUSADER – APRIL 2022

## Christ United Methodist Church

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*Open Hearts. Open Minds.*

*Open Doors*

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## The Presence of Jesus in Prayer

We are continuing our journey in Lent. We are in the spiritual wilderness with Jesus and the Holy Spirit (the story of Jesus' wilderness experience is found in **Matthew 4:1-11**). In this time, we intentionally set aside the busyness of our lives to prepare and reflect on the still small voice of the Holy Spirit.

We can do this in a multitude of ways. One of these ways is prayer. Prayer, as we have said in the past two years, is not only us speaking to the Lord; it is also us taking the time to be still and listen to what God is yearning to speak to us. In listening prayer, which is called intercessory prayer, we continually "lean on the everlasting arms (UMC Hymnal #133)," of Jesus Christ. We enter into this kind of prayer for: others in local communities, our families, our nation, our world and even ourselves. We continually come back to the spring of abundant life in Jesus Christ, and we dwell and remain in God's love and presence.

I know for so many, these are challenging days. Living, especially as ones who yearn to be disciples of Jesus, is not for the faint at heart. Life is a journey of valleys, deserts, mountain tops, refreshing oases and most importantly, life is a journey with Jesus and being in his presence.



## Upcoming Events

### Lenten Study

Saturday, April 2, 10am @ Christ UMC

### Lent Sermon Series

Sunday, April 4, 6pm @ Blue Mound UMC

### Good Friday Seder Meal

Friday, April 15, 6pm @ Argenta UMC

These words from **Hebrew 4:14-16** welcome us into a fuller understanding of Jesus who is our priest, who is continually praying with us, for us, in us and through us.

*Therefore, because we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast to our confession. For we do not have a high priest who is not able to sympathize with our weaknesses, but who has been tempted in all things in the same way, without sin. Therefore, let us approach with confidence to the throne of grace, in order that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*

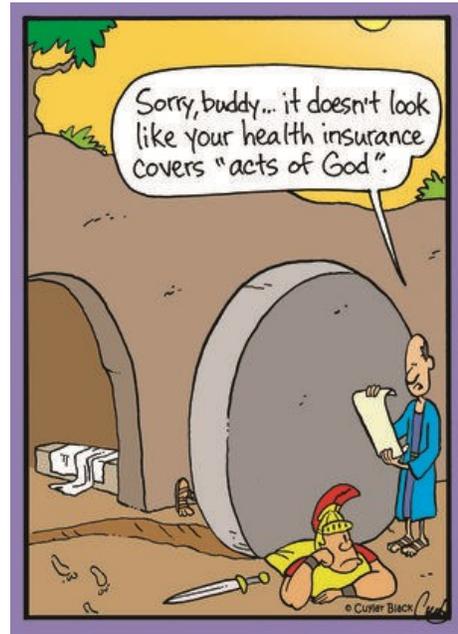
Jesus is inviting us into a continual ministry of welcoming the presence of God here on the earth. We have the opportunity to join Jesus in many ways, including silent, reflective, intercessory prayer which he does on the world's behalf.

So, I challenge us to dwell in the presence of God intentionally and purposefully through prayer in this season of Lent and each and every day of our lives. May we listen to the voice of the Holy Spirit and continually yearn to be transformed in daily discipleship as we follow Jesus.

Sincerely,  
Rev. Braden

### Prayer List

Lesley Albert & Family  
Malvia Sherwood  
Erma & Donovan Lewis  
Barbara Boyd  
Don Wall  
Matthews & Sisson Family



### UMW News

The United Methodist Women will be hosting a garage sale on May 13 & 14. They are currently collecting items to include in the sale. No TVs and no exercise equipment, please. Call Lea (home: 217-428-2868; cell: 217-454-0903) for more information, to pick up items, or to arrange a time to drop off donations at church.



### Birthdays

April 1	Laura Jones
April 3	Sandy Hawkinson
April 4	Allen Albert
April 9	Bob Patterson
April 19	Keegan Denton
April 22	Hailey Albert
April 23	Chelsea Sisson

### Anniversaries

April 19	Joel & Sandy Hawkinson
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## Maundy Thursday

by Jenny Garver

We are in the midst of the Easter season, so I thought that I would share my favorite holiday. It is the non-commercialized holiday of Maundy Thursday. It is one of those religious holidays that is not celebrated with much fanfare, but to me it is amazing and unique.

What is Maundy Thursday? It is the day that commemorates the Last Supper (Mark 14: 12-26). Even though Jesus knew what lay ahead of him, He took the time to commune with His disciples. He showed them how much He and His Father loved them and loved us (John 13:34). As an expression of that love, He taught the disciplines what we now call communion.

One of my favorite Maundy Thursday memories was from my old country church (Oakley United Methodist Church). It was the last Maundy Thursday service before the church closed, so it fell on the evening of April 13, 2006. Instead of having the service in the sanctuary, it was held in the basement (which was small by most church standards). If I didn't duck on the stairs and in the basement, I would see stars. There were four tables set-up in a "u" shape. We ate by candlelight and we were served several courses of foods that may have been typical during the Passover. We ate bitter herbs, unleavened bread, and grape juice. I think there may have been a few other items, but they escape me at this point. We ate a solemn meal with each course being presented one at a time with the meaning of what that course represented. At the end Pastor Gene Ramsey led us through Holy Communion and we partook of the bread and cup. To me experiencing what the Last Supper may have been like gave me a new perspective on the sacrifice of Jesus, God's

amazing love, and humanized the disciples.

It is a pretty amazing blessing to be able to participate in communion, so don't take it for granted. In some faiths, outsiders are not allowed to participate. In some countries, Christians cannot openly practice their faith. Some people, like myself, cannot participate in communion due to food allergies, but I know that the Big Guy Upstairs understands. The United Methodist Church practices that ALL are invited to the table. Anyone who truly wants participate is welcome to join in. What an amazing blessing that is sometimes overlooked by routine. Next time you partake of the bread and cup, take a moment to give thanks to God for His unfailing love and the opportunity to share His table.

### 7 CARDINAL RULES FOR LIFE

1. Make peace with your past so it won't disturb your present.
2. What other people think of you is none of your business.
3. Time heals almost everything. Give it time.
4. No one is in charge of your happiness, except you.
5. Don't compare your life to others and don't judge them. You have no idea what their journey is all about.
6. Stop thinking too much. It's alright not to know the answers. They will come to you when you least expect it.
7. Smile. You don't own all the problems in the world.

ContemplativeMonk.com

*Articles for the May issue of the Crusader will be due on April 18. Please email articles to NewsletterChristUMC@gmail.com or turn in to Jenny Garver. Thank you.*