

# The First United Methodist Church of Lowell

## Tele-Christian April 2023 Edition

The mission of the United Methodist Church is to  
make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

### Mark's Remarks...



Our God died. Don't think I am spouting the nonsense from the 1960s. In April of 1966, Time Magazine published an article asking if God is dead. It reported on a branch of theology of the 1960s that was trying to write God out of religion. It was an example of the created trying to uncreate their creator. That theology is alive and well today in atheists and agnostics as well as the unreligious.

We know the truth. God is alive and well and in charge. Nothing occurs outside His knowledge. His will is going to triumph in the end. But we are still faced with that statement, "Our God died." It is the message of Good Friday. It was set up on Maundy Thursday. It was being prepared on Palm Sunday and that last week of Jesus' life. Jesus knew for months before this and was trying to prepare His disciples. It was predicted at His nativity (Luke 2:35). What a difficult concept to grasp. Jesus is God. Jesus died.

How much love did our Heavenly Father have for us? He knew from before creation that when He created all things, Jesus would have to die. It's beyond what we can comprehend.

Then we are forced to add more to this: That which was dead, overcame death. Jesus defeated death. By that defeat of death, Jesus shows us His resurrected body and gives us a glimpse of what our resurrected body will be like. How can you contain your joy over this? How can we begin to understand this?

It is easy to overlook all the significance of Holy Week. It is easy to put very little focus on eternal events, cosmic struggles, spiritual battles beyond any that have ever been. It is too easy to make sure the Easter dinner is well planned and not put much thought into all that was done for us. "For God so loved the world" has profound meaning in light of Holy Week. God, thank you that our God died.



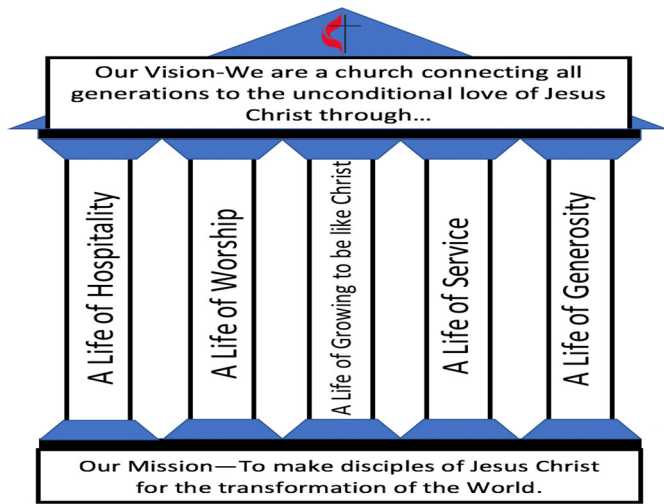
### April Sermon and Scripture Schedule


<b>April 2 ~</b>	Scripture: Luke 19:28-40	Sermon Title: 'The Singing Stones'
<b>April 9 ~</b>	Scripture: Matthew 28:1-10	Sermon Title: 'The Song that Will Never Die'
<b>April 16 ~</b>	Scripture: John 20:19-23	Sermon Title: 'The Coming of the Spirit'
<b>April 23 ~</b>	Scripture: 1 Peter 1:17-23	Sermon Title: 'New Life in Christ'
<b>April 30 ~</b>	Scripture: Acts 2:42-47	Sermon Title: 'Building the Church'



### **Mark your calendar: One Worship Service on April 30**

We will join our family together **at 9:30** to celebrate the children and youth of our church through a special service, which will include a blessing of the children. We will conclude this great morning in the Fellowship Hall with an all-church DESSERT buffet. Everyone is invited to bring their favorite dessert to share, or just come and enjoy the desserts that have been prepared! Mark your calendar now... one service @ 9:30 on April 30!



 This small pillar image that can be found throughout our newsletter designates articles related to our "Five Pillars of Discipleship." The Five Pillars are goals we strive to uphold to accomplish our mission of making disciples. The various articles give insight into the ongoing process of shifting and moving our church forward in an ever-changing world.



## **HOLY WEEK HAPPENINGS!**

### **April 6 MAUNDY THURSDAY SERVICE**

Our Maundy Thursday Service will be our LYFT service on April 6. At 5:30 we'll have a special meal. Meat, potatoes, rolls and drinks will be provided. Bring a dish to share if you are able. At 6:00 pm we'll have a time of worship to remember the event of this night and end with Communion.

### **April 7 GOOD FRIDAY SERVICE**

At 7 pm we will have our Good Friday service in the sanctuary. Through the reading of scriptures of the crucifixion and dimming lights and extinguishing candles, we remember Jesus' death with this Service of Tenebrae. Don't miss this chance to really prepare your heart for Easter.

### **April 9 EASTER SERVICES**

Sunday, April 9, is our Easter worship. We will be celebrating at 8 and 10:30. There will be special hymns, the choir at 10:30, and your flowers throughout the Chancel. Everything will be a celebration of the Resurrection.

**\*\*Bring a flower to church with you. It can be a real flower or an artificial flower. These will be placed in the mesh cross in the narthex. It is moving to see an ugly symbol of death transformed into a beautiful symbol of life.**

Smile! Easter morning our very own Don DeFrance will be taking Easter portraits! The only cost will be for the prints when picking up your pictures from Walgreens. Look for Don on Easter morning in the west foyer just outside the sanctuary by the mailboxes.

Thank you to all who have hosted and attended the Lenten Soup lunches. We pray this way of fasting helped you declutter your mind and focus on Jesus throughout Lent. Our last Soup Lunch will be Palm Sunday following the 10:30 service in the Fellowship Hall. Come and fellowship with your church family!



## **LYFT is Getting MESSY**

Messy Church is a new phenomenon that started in England. It is a way to stress intergenerational interaction in the midst of worship. It is a very informal, relaxed service focusing on keeping the interest of children and including a meal. Through multiple activities all ages interact and do things together.

Our LYFT service is going to be transformed into Messy Church on the fourth Thursday of each month. Our next Messy Church will be Thursday April 27 in the basement. We'll have dinner at 5:30. At 6 pm we'll have activities for all ages to interact together, and Communion time. Invite friends and especially the children and youth in your life.

## Two Events for Young at Heart Seniors in April: Bingo and a Program

**Bingo:** Young at Heart Sr. Bingo will continue to meet on the 4th Tuesday of each month. We will meet on Tuesday, April 25 at 1 pm in the church basement. We'll have dessert together and then play bingo (without charge). Prizes will be provided.

**Program:** We are now adding a second event on the 2nd Wednesday of the month. Our first program was a musical one given by Peggy Hendricks in March. Our program for April will be a travelogue given by Mel and Kathy Goldman on their trip to Antarctica. We will meet at 1:00 pm on April 12 for refreshments and fellowship, followed by the program.

All are welcome to attend these events. Invite a friend or neighbor and come for a fun time together. These events are open to our community.



### The Good Samaritan Fund

Kathy Nelson

*"The memory of the righteous is a blessing . . . "* Proverbs 10:7. English Standard Version.

The Generosity Tree will be available in the Narthex from May 7 through May 14 to raise funds for our Good Samaritan Fund. Has there been someone in your life who has been a blessing? Maybe it was a parent, a sibling, a very special friend, or a church member. On the label of each envelope on the Generosity Tree there will be space to make note of this person, whether it be in their honor or in memory of them.

On Sunday, May 28, those mentioned will be included in the worship bulletin. Take as many envelopes as you have memories of the blessings you have received from others!



### Buddy Bag Mission Project

From the Missions Committee



The Missions Committee would like to express our gratitude for the generosity that has been exhibited for the Buddy Bag program. Currently we have received 119 bags, a grocery cart full of food items, and \$440 in donations for the Buddy Bag mission. Feel free to continue contributing to our goal of "100" bags with all donations due by Easter Sunday. But most importantly, keep the "Buddy Bag" program and the students in South Lake County with food insecurities in your prayers as we continue the collection throughout this Lenten season.



### Music, Music Everywhere, Even in the Library!

Pastor Mark's Lent sermon series on music has helped us explore the meaning and use of many hymns. We have been blessed with special musical performances by members of our church family on a variety of instruments or sharing their gift of voice. We were even schooled on John Wesley's rules for singing!

Although libraries are known as quiet places, our church library is also full of song! The last bookcase on the east side of the room contains two shelves of music materials. One shelf is full of song books, hymnals, books that tell the history of various hymns, and more. A second shelf contains CDs by various Christian artists and groups. All of these materials are available for you to check out and read, or listen to, in your home.

The music books have borrower's cards inside the back cover that should be filled out and left on the checkout shelf on the west side of the library. CDs and any books without cards should be signed out on the notebook on the CD shelf. We hope you will enjoy them and trust you to return all books or CDs in timely manner.

Your Librarians,  
Charlene Grant & Bev Kussy



### The Nurse Is In!

Have your blood pressure checked by the nurse Sunday, April 2. She will be available in the church office conference room after the 8:00am service and before the 10:30 service.

Helping to keep you healthy,  
Your church nurses



### United Women in Faith News

All women are invited to the  
**UWF Birthday Party on Monday, April 17 at 6pm.**  
Enjoy fellowship, a meal, and musical entertainment by Peggy Hendricks.  
*Come and celebrate with us!*

### School Clothing Donations

By Betty Kelley



Susanna Wesley Women’s Circle recently filled boxes of clothing and new underwear to give to each Lowell elementary school and the middle school. Sometimes the children have accidents and need a change of clothing. The school nurses were so very appreciative. They said that the clothes not only help the children, but the parents, because they don’t need to be called when fresh clothing is needed. Susanna Wesley members were helped by Resale Shop ladies who picked out nice clothes in every size and by donations from the members themselves.



### Prayer Blanket Ministry

Congregational Care

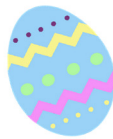


THANK YOU to all who helped replenish the blanket supply for the Prayer Blanket Ministry! Some assisted by “tying” fleece blankets, some knitted or crocheted blankets, and others donated supplies and prayed. It is all very much appreciated! This ministry now has over 30 blankets!! Thank you again for answering this need!

What happens to the blankets next? Did you know that YOU can still be a part of this ministry? Now the blankets need to cover those in need of love and warmth. Blankets are located in the library and are ready for delivery. They can be given to those who are hurting physically, emotionally or spiritually. Each has a tag attached with a prayer from our church. You may sign out a blanket on the clipboard. PLEASE use the clipboard so recipients are not duplicated.

Continue making those blankets! Continue wrapping those who are hurting in love! Continue praying for this ministry! Any questions, contact Trudy Corning or the church office.





## Children and Youth News



We will be hosting a fun **Easter EGG-Stravaganza** for the children of our church and our community on Saturday, April 1 from 11:30-1:00 in the church Fellowship Hall. We will start by serving lunch, then the kids will rotate through Easter-related stations including games, crafts, and story time. Spread the word to the children, parents and grandparents you know.

**Volunteers Needed!!!** Last year this event was very successful with 48 children and over 30 of their parents or guardians attending. We had 13 volunteers and we would like at least that many this year. Youth and adults are needed!

- If you can help by donating items needed to make this event possible, please sign up at the donation basket in the Narthex.
- If you can help by donating your time on that day, please sign your name on the sign-up sheet in the Narthex and we will let you know how you can help.

If you have any questions, please contact Amy Manier at 219-712-6157 or call the church office.



## Save the Date

**2023 Vacation Bible School**  
**June 19 – 23      6:00 – 8:00 pm**



## Upcoming Youth Group

Our next youth event will be a visit to the Shrine of Christ's Passion in St. John on **Sunday, April 16, 2023**. We will meet at noon in the church parking lot. All youth and their friends are welcome to join us on this adventure.



## Celebrating Graduates

We will be celebrating high school and college graduates in May and we need your help! Please let us know if you have a graduate in your family that you would like to have recognized. We want to celebrate this accomplishment with you. Call the church office to add your graduates name to the list.



## It's Time for College Boxes!



What is a college finals box or care package? It is a box of goodies including snacks, supplies and inspirational notes from our church family that is mailed to our college students to provide support and encouragement during final exam week. **AND GREAT NEWS!! YOU can be a part of this ministry!**

**YOU can donate goodies, snacks and supplies for the boxes. YOU can write encouraging notes to the college students. YOU can pray for the college students, the final boxes, and this ministry.**

Look for more information, including a list of our church family college students, in the Narthex starting **Sunday, April 2**. Requested donations and notes need to be **returned to the church by Sunday, April 16**.

Any questions, or if you have a college student who would like to receive a finals box, contact Trudy Corning or the church office.



## Lowell Church Mouse

I'm the church mouse. I see all that goes on in the church and I love to gossip about it. Of course being a Christian mouse, I only say positive things.

My goodness there are a lot of changes going on. We have new banners in our east entry (as well as furniture). The narthex has been recarpeted. Things are looking spiffy around here!

The Lenten soup lunches are well attended and of course the soup and bread is delicious. We have many great cooks in our church.

We have a second monthly meeting for our Senior group. For a long time there were 8 to 12 attending. Suddenly, we've been getting up around 30. It's fun watching them have fun together. We also are going to have Messy Church monthly at our Thursday LYFT service. Much is going on. So many are volunteering to make good things happen.

Be careful when you do good work for the church. I'm watching and just waiting to share that gossip.



### Pastor's Comic Corner

In case you haven't noticed, I love humor.

Below are comics that I've come across. Enjoy and smile! Pastor Mark



We have new carpet in the Narthex! We would like to give a big "Thank You" to everyone who helped move furniture and Buddy Bags out of the way for the installers, and then put everything back in place.  
Dennis Olson, Trustee Chairman

Thank you to ALL who sent me the beautiful, meaningful cards, and all the precious notes from the FRIENDS class. GOD is Amazing! All the tests and struggles I've been through these last few months. My church family has given me back "Life"!  
Ethel Devine

The Finance Committee would like to thank all of you who have donated to the "Stories of Our Church", which are those ministries that have enabled others to grow in hope. Your generosity in sharing your time, gifts, and talents is much appreciated.

#### **"Dedicated Hearts"**

***Dedicated hearts like yours are not so easy to find. It takes a special person to be so generous and kind. To care so much for your fellow man is a quality all too rare. Yet you give your time and talents for all in need to share. So, thank you for being a faithful donor and volunteer. We're privileged to work with you. We want you to know how treasured you are, not just today, but the whole year through.***

## WEEKLY EVENTS

**Sunday - Worship** ~ 8 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. (in Sanctuary), *Sunday School 9:15*: WINGS (300), F.O.M. (301), Youth (303), FRIENDS (304) Children (basement) **Monday/Tuesday** - A/A 12 p.m. (303) **Wednesday** - A/A - 8 p.m. (Fellowship Hall), AI/Anon - 8 p.m. (library) **Thursday** - Dulcimers 10 am (303), Godsbells 4:30 pm, *LYFT* Dinner 5:30 p.m./Worship 6:00 p.m. (Fellowship Hall) Chancel Choir 7pm (sanct.) **Saturday** - A/A 11 a.m. (303)

# April 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 Easter Egg-Stravaganza 11:30 am
2 Palm Sunday  Lenten Lunch 12 (FH)	3 Tri-Kappa 6pm (FH)	4	5 'The Chosen' Bible Study 10 am  Trustees 6pm (conf. room)	6 Maundy Thurs. LYFT ~ Pot-Luck 5:30 Service 6:15 pm (FH)	7 Office Closed  Working Together Circle 1pm  Good Friday Service 7 pm	8
9 Easter	10 Office Closed  Susanna Wesley Circle @ Donna Bauman 1pm  Outreach Mtg 6pm	11	12 'The Chosen' Bible Study 10 am  Young at Heart Program 1pm (FH)  Education 7pm	13	14 Congregational Care Meeting 1pm (library)	15 Mary Stuart Memorial 11 am
16 Youth Group trip to Shrine 12 pm  Basement Rented 1pm	17 Tri-Kappa 3:30pm (library)  UWF Birthday Party 6pm (FH)	18	19 'The Chosen' Bible Study 10 am  Finance Mtg. 5:30 pm (FH)	20	21 Wedding Rehearsal 6pm	22 Wedding 3pm
23	24 Administrative Council 6 pm (FH)	25 Young at Heart Senior Bingo 1pm (FH)	26 'The Chosen' Bible Study 10 am	27 Messy Church @ LYFT	28	29
30  I Service @ 9:30 am						