

# The First United Methodist Church of Lowell Tele-Christian March 2024 Edition

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

## *Mark's Remarks...*



I found the following Good Friday devotion on the UM website. Enjoy.

"The presence of Roman soldiers around the crucifixion of Jesus Christ indicates that this was a state-sponsored crucifixion ordered by the Jewish leaders opposed to Jesus' message. The opponents claimed that Jesus had deceived the Jews and that He was opposed to them paying their contributions to the empire, and that, in addition, He claimed to be the Messiah, King of the Jews and stirred up the people with His teachings.

But the Roman Empire didn't care. In fact, Pontius Pilate could not find a reason to crucify him. In his own words, Pilate then said to the chief priests, and to the people, "I find no crime in this man," and he said to them, "You brought this man before me as one who was misleading the people. I have questioned him in your presence and found nothing in this man's conduct that provides a legal basis for the charges you have brought against him. Neither did Herod, because Herod returned him to us. He's done nothing that deserves death." As Pilate wanted to release Jesus, he again addressed the people; (Luke 23: 1-24, VV. 4, 14,15,20).

Meanwhile the crowds continued to shout, "Crucify Him, crucify Him" (vv21) and the priests encouraged them to ask that Barabbas be set free. They wanted a revolutionary who had been in prison for murder to go free. At the same time, the Jews could not execute anyone. So, from the legal and judicial point of view Jesus' sentence was unjust and tainted with false accusations.

However, from the perspective of what God intended for humanity, and what Jesus' sacrifice would mean for the world, Jesus bore our sin, therefore, bore our guilt, our crimes, and on the cross, as Paul wrote: "God caused the one who didn't know sin to be sin for our sake so that through him we could become the righteousness of God."

At the foot of the cross are the Roman soldiers who nailed Jesus to the cross, mocked Him, tore His clothes, and were asked to watch over Him. Finally, He died and when He expired there was among the soldiers a centurion, a prominent officer, in charge of at least 100 soldiers. Surely, he saw the sign above the cross that said "King of the Jews", and he must have heard the thief standing next to Jesus who said to him: "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom" (Lk.23:42) and the assurance with which Jesus said: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do". The centurion saw and heard everything that was happening and saw when Jesus gave His last breath and died. What came out of this man's mouth was to praise God and say, "Truly this man was righteous."

As a result of his new conviction, the centurion turned against the government he served. He had a transformation of mind and heart, even though he was one of those who wounded Jesus' side and executed him. Now he could see that this Jesus was truly sent by God, that he was truly who he said he was. Let us ask ourselves: Who is Jesus for me? Should we strive for people in positions of power who are guilty of committing injustice on the innocent to change in the face of an encounter with the gospel?'



## **Sermons for March**

We will continue the sermon series on the fruit of the Spirit each Sunday in March, leading up to Palm Sunday and Easter. These nine fruits are listed in Galatians 5:22-23. The fruit of the Spirit is: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Come learn what these fruits can look like in your life.

## March Sermon Title and Scripture Schedule

**March 3** ~ Scripture: 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 Sermon Title: *'Fruit of the Spirit: Kindness and Goodness'*

**March 10** ~ Scripture: Revelation 2:8-10 Sermon Title: *'Fruit of the Spirit: Faithfulness'*

**March 17** ~ Scripture: Colossians 3:12-114 Sermon Title: *'Fruit of the Spirit: Gentleness and Self-Control'*

**March 24** ~ Scripture: TBD Sermon Title: TBD

**March 31** ~ Scripture: TBD Sermon Title: TBD



## WORSHIP NEWS

From Trudy Corning & Linda Hayden

Our Lenten journey has begun! This Lenten season Pastor Mark is leading a worship series on the Fruit of the Spirit and we, as a church, are collecting cans of fruit to donate to our very own church for LYFT and other local food pantries! Our fruit collection is growing! Continue to bring in cans of fruit weekly, as you are able, place on the shelves in the narthex and watch the fruit grow!

Following our Palm Sunday worship we have two exciting opportunities that all are invited to attend!

1. Gather in the narthex and help bag our canned fruit collection and prepare it for delivery to the local food pantries.
2. Then join us in the Fellowship Hall for a soup luncheon provided by the Worship Team.



**Easter flowers will again be a part of our Easter morning celebration. Watch for envelopes in the Sunday bulletins (and in the office) to use for ordering potted Easter lilies, tulips or hyacinths. You may take your flowers home Easter morning after the worship service.**

\*\*The second Sunday of each month, enjoy the flowers during worship that are being donated in memory of Anna Losiniecki.

## HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE



### PALM SUNDAY

On Sunday, March 24 we will begin Holy Week with Palm Sunday. We remember Jesus' entrance to Jerusalem as he started the last few days of His life. The children will be starting the service carrying in Palm branches.



### MAUNDY THURSDAY SERVICE

On Thursday, March 28 our Maundy Thursday service will take place at our LYFT service. 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 learn about and observe the Passover Meal. The service will end with Communion.



### GOOD FRIDAY SERVICE

March 29 is Good Friday. 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. Don't miss this chance to really prepare your heart for Easter.



### EASTER SERVICES

Sunday, March 31, is our Easter worship. There will be special hymns, the choir will sing, there will be 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.



We invite all able bodied attenders on Sunday morning to **not** park in the church parking lot. Please save those spots for our elderly, folks with mobility issues, those with young children and visitors. You can park at Sheets Funeral Home, Chase Bank or behind the church. Thank you for your consideration of those who have trouble.

Live  
Your Faith  
TODAY!

**LYFT** is our Thursday evening worship service. We start at 5:30 pm with dinner and go right into worship at 6 pm. Worship includes music, a lay speaker or Pastor Mark speaking, prayer and followed by communion. LYFT is a casual worship service where we look forward each week to food, fellowship and fun! Everyone is welcome! Bring a friend!

LYFT gets transformed into Messy Church on the fourth Thursday of each month. Do you know what 'Messy Church' is? We really don't get dirty or messy, it is just another way to say that we are doing church a little differently than normal. We start out as usual with dinner. After dinner, Pastor Mark divides us into 4 groups. The size of the groups depends on how many people are at LYFT that night, but it is usually around 6 per group. There is no communion or speaker on 'Messy Church' night. Try it you might like it!

The four stations that we have at 'Messy Church' are:

1. Dessert station
2. Craft or Mission station
3. Discussion station (with Pastor Mark)
4. Game station



### Mission of the Month

Our March mission of the month is our own mission, the Household Pantry. Our Household Pantry provides personal hygiene products, cleaning supplies, and paper products to the people of the Tri-Creek area. On the third Tuesday of the month those in need pull under the carport. They are greeted by a friendly face and given a bag of products. Julie Donovan is in charge of this ministry. Your donation will help many households in the community.



### From Our Bishop

I do not want to do anything but sit in my anger. Another mass shooting, and my anger overshadows my grief. Professionals would probably say that my anger is just a stage of my grief.

Why can't we have Super Bowl victory or holiday parades without casualties connected with our liberal proliferation of guns? We do not seem to care enough to change the weekly gun violence carnage in America?

U.S.A. Today author Sara Pequeño describes it this way. "Gun violence is a uniquely American problem." The death rate in 2021 was seven times that of Canada's and 340 times higher than the rate within the United Kingdom. In 2023, there were more than 43,000 gun-violence deaths, including 656 mass shootings.

Further, the United States is the only peer nation where gun violence is the leading cause of death for children. I will continue to champion that Children Matter Most despite this. The death of innocents—so often children—does not sit well with my soul. We are passing the gift of generational trauma to our children and grandchildren.

Though we may not personally know victims or their families, we are all losers in this heinous game of violence. We are all victims. "Because whatever has happened to humanity, whatever is currently happening to humanity, it is happening to all of us," wrote Alice Walker book *Overcoming Speechlessness*. "No matter how hidden the cruelty, no matter how far off the screams of pain and terror, we live in one world. We are one people." The men and women we have elected to serve in Congress have done very little to change this never-ending nightmare of easy access to guns and daily deaths due to guns.

My family had the opportunity to take a family photo with President Biden in February 2023. While shaking his hand in the Oval Office, I took advantage of my two-minute opportunity to say two things. "I am praying for you and your leadership. And please do all you can to ban assault weapons and curb gun violence."

I ask God regularly, "What would you have me to do?"

We turn to prayer, the only collective response that we all seem to agree on. As I prepare to lament and plead for change on social media and directly to elected officials, I pray for the victims and families of those killed and wounded. I pray for God to order my own steps and commitment to bring change that benefits the common good.

I'm reminded of Ruby Bridges' quote, "We may not all be equally guilty. But we are all equally responsible for building a decent and just society." Lord, help us do just that.

"The Lord is near to the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit" (Psalm 34:18).

Be encouraged,  
Julius C. Trimble, Resident Bishop Indiana Conference of The United Methodist Church

## Children's News

By Amy Manier

The Education Committee hosted a Valentine Party for the kids of the church on Friday, February 9 in the Fellowship Hall. We were entertained by 10-year old magician Brooks Bales and his handy assistant/brother Paxton Bales. The Bales brothers provided magic, jokes, and balloon creations to entertain all ages in attendance.

We played Valentine games and rounded out the evening with popcorn, snacks, and the Alvin and the Chipmunks Valentine movie. We had a great turn out with approximately 25 kids and 15 adults participating in the Valentine fun.



### Easter EGGStravaganza #3

From Amy Manier

We are excited to be hosting the *Easter EggStravaganza* again! It is hard to believe that this will be the third year for this event!

This year's *EGGSravaganza* will be on **Saturday, March 16, from 11:30 am to 1:00 pm** in the church Fellowship Hall. All children in our community - preschool age through grade 5 - are invited. We will serve a free lunch, play games, make crafts, and have story time.

We will need many volunteers to make this event happen! Be on the lookout for a volunteer sign-up sheet in the Narthex if you can assist us on March 16. There will also be a list of needed items - food, drink, paper products, etc. Donations will be greatly appreciated! Most importantly, please pray for this event and the families it brings into our church.

Be sure to spread the word to the children in your life to join us for this event of fun Easter activities.



The hills are alive with ***The Sound of Music***  
(Music by Richard Rogers, Lyrics by Oscar Hammerstein II).

Sixty students have been offering their dedication and talent to produce this timeless classic at Lowell High School. Our church family is well represented. Devan Whaley has been conducting the Pit Orchestra since December and Michelle Mishlove and Bobbie Sue Whaley are preparing the vocal musical numbers. Brad Miller has been cast as the Captain, with Lachlan Haskins as Sister Berthe and Hannah Mishlove as Sister Margaretta. Matthew Mishlove is portraying Kurt von Trapp and Aidn Chesner is sharing his talent on the trumpet.

This endearing story unfolds on the Lowell High School stage Thursday, March 7, 8, and 9 at 7:00 p.m. or you may view the matinee on Sunday, March 10 at 2:00. Tickets (Seniors and Students \$8 or Adults \$10) can be purchased at the door or secured from Patrice Martin, Theater Director.

Don't miss this opportunity to see how the power of love can transform lives.



### Adult Study Opportunity

Facilitators Don Bales and Rick Bachman

The FRIENDS class will begin a new study on Sunday, March 3. This is a six session DVD study by Adam Hamilton called, "The Walk." In the Gospels, Jesus modeled the Christian spiritual life for us. The apostles taught it in their writings. And the Church has, through the last 2,000 years, sought to pursue this Christian spiritual life. Deepen your walk with Christ as we explore the five essential practices of worship, study, serving, giving, and sharing our faith. All are welcome to join us for any of the sessions. We meet in room 304.





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.

New microphones have been installed for both the chancel choir and the bell choir. We've been told that this will enhance the sound of our live stream and online service. In addition, our sound system has been recalibrated and Sam Conley received some training, which was never given to him before, on adjusting the system. We owe a big thanks to Sam and Craig Wilson who so faithfully work with our sound system. I heard through the grapevine that the cost of this project came from Bonnie Wilson's memorial. Thank you, Bonnie, for enhancing our worship.

The Education Committee has done it again! They hosted a Valentine's party for our children. There was a roomful. The highlight of the evening for me was a magic show by Brooks Bales with comedy help from his brother Paxon. They did a wonderful job and even made balloon animals for all the kids later in the evening.

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



Young at Heart Sr. Bingo will meet on March 26 at 1:00 pm. There will be snacks, prizes for the winners and many games of Bingo all for no charge to you. Invite friends. We don't card anyone, so anyone of any age can come. See you in March.



Mark your calendars! Save the dates!



Monday, April 8: Solar Eclipse Party at 1 pm

Saturday, May 4: The Dinner formerly known as Trivia Dinner 6 pm

Friday, July 19: Kids Karnival 5-7:30

Friday, August 23: Music in the Park



### 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



\*Sorry, but the Wi-Fi password is for tithing church members only.\*



## WEEKLY EVENTS

**Sunday - Worship** ~ 9:30 a.m. (in Sanctuary), **Monday/Tuesday - A/A** 12 p.m. (303) **Wednesday - A/A** - 8 p.m. (Fellowship Hall), **Al/Anon** - 8 p.m. (library) **Thursday - Dulcimers** 10 am (303), **Godsbells practice** 4:30 pm (balcony), **LYFT Dinner** 5:30 pm **Worship** 6:00 pm (Fellowship Hall), **Chancel Choir** 7 p.m. (Sanctuary) **Saturday - A/A** 11 a.m. (303)

# March 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4 Women's Bible Study 3 pm (300) Tri-Kappa 6pm (FH) Outreach 6 pm (lib.)	5	6 UWF Exec Meeting 5 pm (library)	7	8	9
10 Daylight Savings  Mission Sunday	11 Women's Bible Study 3 pm (300)	12 Card Care Committee Meeting 10am (library)	13 Worship Mtg. 6 pm  Education Mtg. 7 pm	14	15	16 Children's Easter Egg- stravaganza 11:30am - 1pm
17	18	19	20 Finance Meeting 5:30 pm	21	22	23
24 Palm Sunday  Soup Luncheon 11:30 am	25 Ad-Council 6 pm (FH)	26 Senior Bingo 1pm (FH)	27	28 Maundy Thursday/Pot- Luck @LYFT 5:30 pm	29 Good Friday Service 7pm	30
31 Easter						