

The First United Methodist Church of Lowell

Tele-Christian April 2025 Edition

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

Mark's Remarks...



We are fast approaching Easter. Finally, we arrive at Holy Week. Palm Sunday is pretty self-explanatory. Then comes Maundy Thursday. Maundy is a very old word that comes from the Latin word, "mandatum." As you can guess, it means mandate or command. We are to look at bread differently at this meal. For the Jews the Passover bread was made without yeast. It was bread made in haste, symbolizing the fact that the Jews were forced to leave Egypt in a speedy fashion.

For us we focus on breaking the bread; tearing it in half. We remember that Jesus gave up His body to whip and thorns and nails and beatings and the cross for us. During the Passover meal four cups of wine are used, each representing a different aspect of God's redemption of His people. The first signifies God's Word, "I will bring out," the second, "I will deliver," the third "I will redeem," and the fourth, "I will take." Jesus used the third cup, the cup of redemption, to say, "This is a New Covenant in my blood, poured out for many for the redemption of sin." Jesus commands us to take Holy Communion in memory of what He has done for us; forgiving our sins and redeeming us to God. Jesus also commanded us to love one another at the Last Supper. There's a lot of Good News in one mandate to observe this meal.

Next comes Good Friday. How can we call it good if Jesus was killed on this day? There is a very old definition of good which meant, "pious or holy." We still often call the Bible, the good book. It's that same old meaning. Bibles can't be good or bad. They are books. They do contain the Word of God and in that way they are holy. It is the same with Good Friday. It is a pious and holy day, because on that day Jesus paid the price for our sin and made us right with God.

We have finally arrived at Easter. We celebrate Jesus being raised from the dead. The word, "Easter," comes from the time before the English people knew Christ. They celebrated a goddess called Eostre. She was the goddess of Spring and new life. They celebrated "easter" with symbols of new life, (think flowers and bunnies). The church used Easter to celebrate new life that comes through Christ. They even adopted flowers and the bunnies into that celebration.

Pastor Mark



April Sermon Title and Scripture Schedule

April 6:	Scripture: John 21:15-17	Sermon Title: 'Peter: A Coward Turned Courageous'
April 13:	Scripture: Luke 19:28-40	Sermon Title: 'The Singing Stones'
April 20:	Scripture: Luke 24:1-12	Sermon Title: 'Looking for the Living Among the Dead'
April 27:	Scripture: John 20:24-29	Sermon Title: 'Blessed Are Those Who Have Not Seen'

WORSHIP NEWS FOR HOLY WEEK

PALM SUNDAY



On **Sunday April 13** 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, April 17**, we'll have our Maundy Thursday Service. We'll have this as our LYFT service that night. 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 focusing on Communion. All are invited to LYFT for a potluck supper, worship and communion.

GOOD FRIDAY SERVICE



April 18 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. It will be a powerful Tenebrae service. Don't miss this chance to really prepare your heart for Easter. If you are able to take part in this service by reading a prepared scripture, please contact Pastor Mark.

EASTER SERVICES



Sunday, April 20, is our Easter worship. There will be special hymns, the choir will sing and the bell choir will ring, there will be fragrant spring flowers throughout the Chancel. Everything will be a celebration of the Resurrection. You are encouraged to bring a flower (fresh or artificial) to church with you. 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.

EASTER FLOWERS

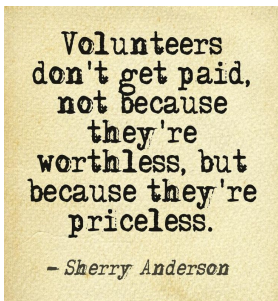
Easter lilies, tulips and hyacinths will fill the sanctuary Easter morning. Envelopes to order the flowers will be in the worship bulletin through Sunday, April 13 (the order will be placed Monday morning on April 14). You may purchase the flowers in honor of, in memory of, or to the Glory of God. Please contact the church office with any questions 219-696-9219.

EASTER PICTURES

Don DeFrance will again be available Easter morning to take pictures. An area will be set up west of the sanctuary to take Easter pictures. Don will be available starting at approximately 9am prior to the start of service and immediately following worship. The Easter pictures then can be ordered at Walgreens. The only cost is at Walgreens for the print.



Don't miss the Opportunity Fair on Sunday April 6!



On Sunday, April 6, the church will be hosting an Opportunity Fair. The narthex will be filled with displays created by our church committees and groups explaining what they do. This Fair is a way to present the many different opportunities you have to be involved in our church's work for the Lord.

It can be ushering, singing in the choir, helping with Vacation Bible School, sending cards, donating food, replacing light bulbs, cooking at LYFT or pulling weeds. The opportunities are numerous and varied. Some must be done at the church at a particular time; some can be done at home on your time. There are so many opportunities for each of us to be the hands and feet of Jesus!

The booths will open before worship on April 6 beginning at 9 am. They will also be open after the worship service. So come early, or stay after, to become informed of the many ways we as a church family can do the work of God together.

Christ has no body now on earth but yours; yours are the only hands with which he can do his work, yours are the only feet with which he can go about the world, yours are the only eyes through which his compassion can shine forth upon a troubled world. Christ has no body on earth now but yours.

St. Teresa of Avila from The Little Book of Prayers, edited by David Schiller

On Palm Sunday there will be many activities. Following our 9:30 worship service we will have a **Hymn Sing**, the **Chili Cook Off** contest and lunch, and a **Dessert Auction**. Read the details below:

CHILI COOK OFF



Dust off your chili pot. The Outreach Committee is having a Chili Cook Off! Who has the best recipe? Is white chili the best or traditional? Hot or mild? Come on April 13, Palm Sunday, to let your voice be heard. We of course need volunteers to make chili. You can sign-up in the narthex or call the church office. We just need a description or name for your chili. (Don't use your name, it's not a personality contest, it is a taste contest.) We also need all in the church to come and eat a sample of all of the chili and vote for your favorite. It will be a regular meal as well. There will be chili, corn bread, crackers, fixings, drink and dessert. We'll see you all on Palm Sunday!

DESSERT AUCTION



On Palm Sunday, the Outreach Committee will also host a dessert auction. Dust off those cupcake tins as well. Sign up your dessert with a description in the Narthex or call it in to the church office. After the Chili Cook Off, the desserts will be auctioned off to the highest bidder. Whose dessert will bring the highest price? You may gain a pound or two just looking at all of the treats. Don't worry, we'll have another dessert for the Chili dinner. You don't have to share what you buy. All the proceeds from the auction will go to future Outreach ministries.

PALM SUNDAY HYMN SING



Immediately after our Palm Sunday service we will have a hymn sing in the sanctuary as we allow the Chili Dinner workers to get everything prepared. Michelle Mishlove will play the piano and Peggy Hendricks will lead hymns. It will be a fun time instead of sitting around waiting for lunch to be served. It will be in the sanctuary.



We are excited to be hosting the Easter EGGstravaganza for the fourth year in a row!

The Easter EGGstravaganza will be on Saturday, April 5 from 11:30-1:00 pm in the church Fellowship Hall (basement) for all elementary children of our community. We will serve a free lunch, play games, make crafts, and have story time.

We will need many volunteers to make this event happen. If you are available to help on April 5 please sign up. We will need help in the kitchen, assistants for games and crafts, registration and greeting, crew leaders...there is a job for everyone! Be on the lookout for a volunteer sign-up sheet in the Narthex.

We will also need cookies donated for dessert. There will be donation cards on the table in the Narthex. If you are interested in donating cookies, please sign-up. Most importantly, please pray for this event and the families it brings into our church. And be sure to spread the word to the children in your life to join us for this fun day of Easter activities.

Vacation Bible School

Save the Date
June 17 - 18 - 19
Noon - 2:30 pm

We have some exciting changes for Vacation Bible School. We are going to host VBS for three days this year on Tuesday, June 17, Wednesday, June 18, and Thursday, June 19. We are going to "throw back" to the old days and have VBS during the day, rather than the evening. We plan to start each day by serving lunch to all attendees.

The theme this year is 'True North - Trusting Jesus in the Wild World'. It will be so much fun guiding kids on the ultimate Alaskan adventure. While we navigate mountains, rivers, glaciers, and tundra, kids will learn that Jesus is their faithful friend who they can always trust. Even in a world that has gone wild, Jesus is our true north!

Save the date so you can join the fun! More information and volunteer opportunities to come.



STEWARDSHIP

Managing God's Gifts To Us

Finance Committee What is Stewardship?

When you think of stewardship, what comes to mind?

It's the first assignment God gave the human race in Genesis 1:28. That's when God told Adam and Eve to "have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth" (NKJV).

Stewardship is managing God's blessings God's ways for God's glory. See, the Bible tells us in Psalm 24:1 that He owns it all: "The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof" (KJV).

And if He's the owner, that means we're not. Instead, we're His stewards—His managers. It changes our perspective on our family budgets, our daily decisions, even our purpose in life. When we understand true, biblical stewardship, the trajectories of our lives change with every decision we make.

But it's up to all of us to make sure every believer understands God's role as owner and our role as stewards. When we get to heaven and have to give an account of how we managed God's resources (1 Corinthians 4:2), I hope God will reply to all of us, "Well done, good and faithful servant." ~ From Ramsey Solutions



1st & 3rd Wednesday Country/Gospel Music Jam...

Beginning this April, there will be free music jams in the Fellowship Hall, on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of every month from 1-3 p.m. Local musicians from around the area will gather to play and sing your favorite country gold, gospel greats, bluegrass, old rock 'n roll, folk, and more. Bring an instrument and play along, or just come to listen.

Our very own United Women in Faith will be on hand with refreshments for purchase. As with all of their projects, the proceeds will go to help others through missions. We really hope to see you there.

Mark the following dates on your calendars: April 2, 16; May 7, 21; June 4, 18; July 2, 16; August 6, 20; September 3, 17; October 1, 15; November 5, 19; December 3, 17. **Just remember 1st & 3rd, 1 to 3.**



College Boxes Congregational Care

Thank you to all who donated items to the college finals box in March.

During the month of April, please consider writing a note of encouragement and continue to pray for the college students who will receive a college finals box. The names of the students receiving a finals box are located in the Narthex.

In addition, we will be packing the college finals boxes on Friday, April 25 at 11:30 in the library. Everyone is welcome to participate in this ministry.

Our college students are very blessed to have such a caring congregation!



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.

It's a busy time for our church. Committees are scurrying around getting all kinds of ministry accomplished. The Worship Committee is working with the Mission Committee, gathering items for flood buckets in the Narthex. The Outreach Committee is working with the Worship Committee to host a chili cookoff/dessert auction on Palm Sunday. This mouse just loves desserts. Finally, all of the committees and the UWF are working together to host an Opportunity Fair on a Sunday morning. What's with all the teamwork? I thought church committees were suppose to zealously guard their territory and attack any committee that intrudes in their area. What's going on here? It seems like folk are working together for the glory of Christ not for their own glory. Imagine that.

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



SENIOR



Senior Bingo

Young at Heart Sr. Bingo meets on the fourth Tuesday. The next gathering will be April 22 at 1 pm in the Fellowship Hall. Invite someone to come along with you. This is a free Bingo with dessert and snacks and prizes for the winners. It's a fun time!



Project Love 

Mission of the Month

In April we are supporting a nearby United Methodist mission. **Cedar Lake UMC 'Project Love' Food Pantry** serves our area with free food for those in need. They have greatly expanded their food pantry over the years. They now have a separate building housing the pantry. If you ever have an opportunity, stop by and see the good that they are doing for the area. On April 13 there will be envelopes in the bulletins and we will accept donations all month to help this mission. Giving to missions should be above and beyond your giving to the ministries of the church. It is called second-mile giving. Don't feel bad if you don't feel you can afford to support any of these monthly missions.



Lent Mission Project UMCOR Flood Buckets



We hope your Lenten journey has been meaningful as you have participated in the collection of items needed for the flood buckets that will be donated to UMCOR (United Methodist Committee on Relief) for distribution to those facing natural disasters.

As our Lenten journey continues, there are still opportunities to participate in the flood buckets Lenten project.

Mark your calendars:

Sunday, April 6

The last day to collect items for the flood buckets.

Wednesday, April 9 at 11am

We will be packing the cleaning items into the buckets. We will gather in the Narthex and EVERYONE is welcome.

Sunday, April 27

During worship we, the church, will be praying over the packed flood buckets.

WEEKLY EVENTS

Sunday - Adult Sunday School 8:15am ~ WINGS (300), FRIENDS (304) *Worship* ~ 9:30am (in Sanctuary), **Mon.** - A/A 12pm (303) **Wed.** - A/A - 8pm (Fellowship Hall), Al/Anon - 8pm (library) **Thursday** - Dulcimers 10am (303), *LYFT* Dinner 5:30pm/ *Worship* 6:00pm (F.H.), Godsbells practice 4:30pm, Chancel Choir practice 7pm (sanct.) **Sat.** - A/A 11 a.m. (303)

April 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2 Lent Study 10 am (304) Country/Gospel Jam 1-3 pm (FH) UWF Exec. Mtg. 5:30 pm (lib.)	3	4 Working Together Circle 1:30 pm (library)	5 Children's Easter Party 11:30 am (FH)
6 Communion Sunday Opportunity Fair (before and after service in the Narthex)	7 Women's Book Study 3 pm (lib.) Tri-Kappa 6 pm (FH)	8	9 Lent Study 10 am (304) **Ministry Opportunity** Help fill Flood Buckets 11 am Education Mtg. 7 pm	10	11	12
13 Mission Sunday (Cedar Lake UMC Food Pantry) HymnSing 10:30 am (Sanct.) Chili Cook-Off/ Dessert Auction 11am	14 Susanna Wesley Circle 1 pm (lib.) Women's Book Study 3 pm (lib.)	15 Household Pantry 9-12 & 5-6 (curbside)	16 Country/Gospel Jam 1-3 pm (FH)	17 Maundy Thursday Pot-Luck @ LYFT and Worship	18 Good Friday/ Office Closed	19
20 Easter! He Is Risen!	21 Office Closed	22 Senior Bingo 1 pm (FH)	23	24	25 **Ministry Opportunity** Pack College Boxes 11:30 am (library)	26
27 United Women of Faith Sunday Blessing of Flood Buckets	28 Women's Book Study 3 pm (lib.) Ad-Council 6 pm (FH)	29	30			