



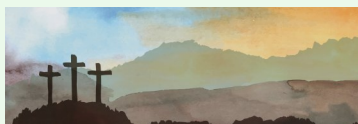
SHARING Our Faith

A Quarterly Publication of Middlesex UMC
Spring 2022

Join us for worship!

This Easter, when the eggs are found and the baskets are unwrapped, will you feel satisfied or still be searching? Sometimes, what you are looking for has been here all along. You are invited to join us this Holy Week and Easter Sunday as we travel with Jesus from the final moments with his disciples and crucifixion, to his first Resurrection appearance!

April 14, 2022
Maundy Thursday Worship
7:00pm – MUMC Sanctuary



April 15, 2022
Good Friday Worship
Noon – Online via Facebook Live

April 17, 2022
Easter Sunday Worship
7:00am Sunrise Service
9:00am Awakening Service
10:30am Celebration Service



Witnesses

April 24th - May 8th

In the days after his Resurrection, Jesus appeared to his disciples and nearly 500 others before ascending to heaven. This is why Easter is not just one day, but a season of celebration calling us to be witnesses to Christ's resurrection and the Kingdom of God. Join us April 24th - May 8th as we meet some often overlooked witnesses to Christ's resurrection and discover what they may have to say to us today.

God the Creator: From Genesis to Pentecost

May 15th - June 5th

On the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit moved through new believers with power and language that created and connected people together to form the church. But the Holy Spirit has been at work since the very beginning, from the creation of the world to the creative ways God works to connect with humanity. In the weeks leading up to Pentecost, you are invited to dig deeper into the book of Genesis with us, learning how God works creatively to redeem humanity!



Our Need for Silence

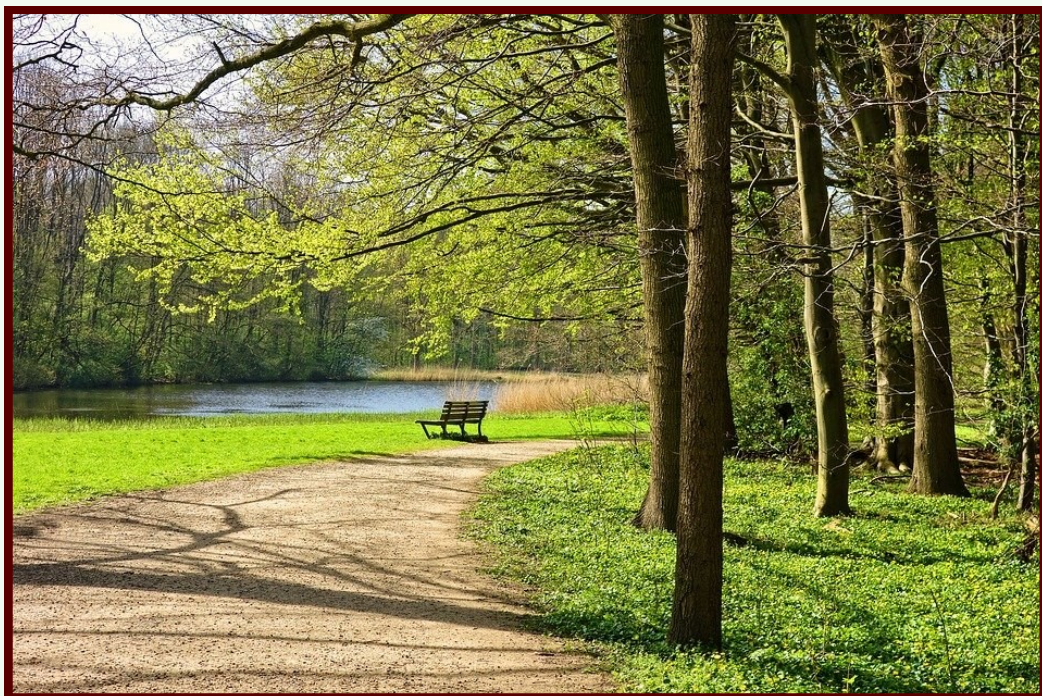
By Sandy Stuart, Office Administrator

Silence. Nowadays, silence is something we have so little of. Between our devices, social media, constant 24/7 news, and the roar of the highways (especially in Carlisle), there is very little silence. Psychologists know that silence and quiet time is important for us as humans, both mentally and physically. Silence offers us time for self-reflection and daydreaming, which allows our brains time to reset, a time to turn down outward distractions and our inner noise. Finding stillness and silence shouldn't leave us feeling afraid of "missing out" or to distract ourselves from our personal thoughts, feelings, or boredom. Learning to sit still in silence is one of the greatest gifts we can give ourselves and our children.

Jesus would find quiet time to become closer to God. Jesus would draw away from people and daily activities to be alone with his Father. This is how he made important decisions, dealt with difficult emotions, and cared for his soul. I figure, if Jesus needed solitude and silence, we probably do, too! *"Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed."* (Mark 1:35)

Quiet time for most of us is becoming a precious commodity. I encourage you to create some space each day, to find a quiet place of retreat, and listen for God. An article written by Shanté Grossett from the website dailyshepursues.com states *"If you never stop to listen, how will you know what decisions to make in life? If we believe that God guides our lives, then we need to take time to listen to His guidance. Quiet time with God helps you to do this well. While God is always speaking, we don't always have the ears to hear. We need to create space to slow down, listen, and then act according to God's word."*

So, find a quiet place and learn to be still. No distractions, no thoughts, just listen. You might be pleasantly surprised. *"Be still, and know that I am God"* Psalm 46:10





The Wide Spectrum of Mothering

By Amy Young, UUA, 2013

Mother's Day. It's supposed to be a day to thank our moms and celebrate womanhood. Some approach this day with a great sense of hope and pride. But there are others who shrink back and wonder how to engage such a triggering moment filled with hurt or tragedy. Today some of us celebrate, and others of us have more questions than answers. But none of us are alone.

May the following be our prayer for all women today.

To those who gave birth this year to their first child—we celebrate with you

To those who have ever lost a child – we mourn with you

To those who are in the trenches with little ones every day and wear the badge of food stains –
we appreciate you

To those who experienced loss through miscarriage, failed adoptions, or running away —
we mourn with you

To those who walk the hard path of infertility, fraught with pokes, prods, tears, and disappointment –
we walk with you. Forgive us when we say foolish things. We don't mean to make this
harder than it is

To those who are foster moms, mentor moms, and spiritual moms – we need you

To those who have warm and close relationships with your children – we celebrate with you

To those who have disappointment, heart ache, and distance with your children – we sit with you

To those who lost their mothers this year – we grieve with you

To those who experienced abuse at the hands of your own mother – we acknowledge
your experience

To those who lived through driving tests, medical tests, and the overall testing of motherhood –
we are better for having you in our midst

To those who have aborted children - we remember them and you on this day

To those who are single and long to be married and mothering your own children - we mourn that
life has not turned out the way you longed for it to be

To those who step-parent - we walk with you on these complex paths

To those who envisioned lavishing love on grandchildren, yet that dream is not to be -
we grieve with you

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To those who will have emptier nests in the upcoming year - we grieve and rejoice with you
To those who placed children up for adoption – we commend you for your selflessness
and remember how you hold that child in your heart
And to those who are pregnant with new life, both expected and surprising – we anticipate
with you

But above all on this Mother's Day, as mothers and non-mothers alike, remember this:
We are all daughters, a daughter birthed by our earthly parents, for sure. But also, in Christ,
a beloved daughter of our heavenly parent. So whatever you are facing on this day,
also remember this:

*You are loved. You are forgiven. You are valued.
Not because of anything you have done or can do,
but only because of what Jesus has already done.
No amount of praise or gifts on this day can compare
to the gift of Jesus' life given for you.
His work made you his, and he has given you an eternal identity.
You are his beloved daughter in whom he is well pleased.
Happy Mother's Day, Happy Daughter's Day.*



Following God

By Makenzie Healey, Ignite



Do You Think God Has Instagram?

If He did, I don't think He is the most popular. Not everyone follows Him because they either do not agree with His ways or even know He exists. But just because someone else doesn't follow Him, does not mean you shouldn't. God always knows what's best for you even when you don't agree with Him.

"Maybe God wrecks your plans when He sees your plans are about to wreck you" - Unknown

Afterwards, you'll be grateful that He stepped in before you regret doing something. As believers, we are called to be a light to show His love and ways. On the internet, everything gets passed around and eventually, the whole world knows about it. God makes a 'post' on Instagram and His followers share His word to others.

In the end, God isn't followed by everyone in the world. But that's okay. He has enough followers for them to spread the love and show that He knows what's best for you even if you don't agree.

Hosanna Branch Wavers

Supplies:

- Green construction paper- 4 sheets
- 4-8 ice-cream/popsicle sticks
- Tape
- A pencil
- Scissors
- A glue-stick

This craft takes approximately 10 minutes to make.



Instructions:



1. Outline your child's hand on the green construction paper. (Make a minimum of 6 outlines. 8-10 will make your child's waver really wave!)
2. If your child is old enough to use a pair of scissors, allow him/her to cut around the hand print outlines. Otherwise, leave this part to the adult supervising the craft.
3. Now stick the hand print outlines two on each row and build on upwards.
4. Finally tape two sticks to the bottom of the "branch" securely with the tape. (Two sticks on top of each other will make the handles thicker.)
5. Read Matthew 21: 1-11 and have the kids wave their "palms".

Courtesy of mommysnippets.com

What Makes A Good Father?

By Sherry Healey, Director of Community Engagement

Have you ever wondered what makes a 'good father'? Perhaps it's a father who is involved and present in his child's life. It could be said that a good dad is full of strength, support, and joy. His work as a parent is endless and, sometimes, thankless. But in the end his involvement will show through in the confident and well-adjusted children he raises and sends out into the world.

A good father loves his children, but he doesn't let them get away with everything. It might seem old fashioned, but tough love through the power of his words to his wayward child can be very effective. As a parent, he knows he is not his child's peer but must set boundaries, expectations and be a living example so that his offspring may become successful citizens and followers of Jesus Christ.

A good father realizes that his children are human, and that making mistakes is part of growing up. He doesn't expect them to be robots without thoughts or feelings. Bad decisions are going to be made and if they are going to fail, he knows that the place to do that is while they are still living in his home and he can effect change. A good dad is called to give grace freely and abundantly to his family members just as our Father has given grace to him.

Happy Father's Day!



Psalm 103:13

As a father has compassion on his children, so the LORD has compassion on those who fear him; (NIV)