

The LINK



UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF PATCHOGUE

Since 1791

April 2023

Renewal Time

Springtime is in the air. Birds are singing, trees are budding, warmer weather, misty mornings and soft wet smells fill the air. The earth is awakening or should I say the earth is resurrecting?

The word resurrect means to bring back to life that which is dead. Did you realize that each year nature goes through the process of death and resurrection.

The process of death begins as fall approaches. The flowers, leaves and grass begin to wither and die. However, the process of resurrection begins when spring approaches.

The flower, leaves and grass begin to come to life again. Guess what. It's a time for renewal.

Springtime is here.

When I think of springtime, I can't help but think of Jesus' death

and resurrection. What does springtime have to do with Jesus' death and resurrection? The Torah's prominence on the Passover as a springtime event provides a natural correlation between Christ's sacrifice and His offer of new life—God's re-creation.

The Bible reminds us in John 3:16 that God so loved the world that He gave his only begotten son that whosoever believes in him should not perish but have everlasting life.

Jesus died for the sins of the world but all praise to God that He rose on the third day with all power in his hands and now we can have life and have it more abundantly. It's a time for renewal; Springtime is here.

Easter is fast approaching and it is important for us to know and understand what Jesus went through just

for us. The Bible tells us how Jesus made a triumphal entry into Jerusalem.

Shortly after, His disciple Judas agreed to betray Jesus and deliver Him to the chief priests for thirty silver pieces. After attending the last supper with His apostles and visiting the garden of Gethsemane to pray to

Continued on Page 2

WORSHIP IN APRIL

Apr. 2—Palm Sunday, Joan Curtis, Psalm 118:1-2,19-29

Apr. 6—Maundy Thursday, at Sayville UMC, Psalm 116:1-4,12-19

April 7—Good Friday, Rev. Dr. Debbie San Pablo, Psalm 22

Apr. 9—Easter, Rev. Dr. Debbie San Pablo, Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24

Apr. 16—Barbara Becker, Psalm 16

Apr. 23—Rev. Dr. Debbie San Pablo, Psalm 116:1-4,12-19

Apr. 30—Rev. Dr. Debbie San Pablo, Psalm 23



Circle of Concern

Bereavement

The family of **Darlene Shervington**.

Healing

Jim McHugh, son-in-law of our Sexton, who had seizures and is struggling with medical problems due to a brain tumor. (Dave Hollowell)

Ray Henson, our Sexton, who is recovering at home after an episode of feeling faint. (Dave Hollowell)

Justin Morrissey, grandson of Linda, who will have surgery on his foot. (Linda Werner)

The father of **Rhonda Nelson** who has been diagnosed with bone cancer. In the past he has survived both prostate and pancreatic cancer.

Continued Prayers

Richard Rubino (Cancer), Marie Georges (Heart Attack), Rob Confortid (Pancreatic Cancer), Donna Logurcio (Pancreatic Cancer), Ron Lyons (Cancer), Cheryl Keeley (Surgery), Claudia Mirzalli (Injured), DeAnna D'Amelio (ALS), Yvette (ALS) John (Lung Cancer), Jane Reid (Hospital), Ray Somerlad (Cancer), Baby Jude Cosimo (Retina Cancer) Gary Blackmore. Lucy Loris. Cindy Amodeo (Foot surgery), Jessie (15 y/o Girl Emotional), Louise Russo, Mary Morova , Kimberly Helfst (RSD), Eddie Weiss (severe leg injury), Brian McMurray (pancreatic cancer), Mary Prince (heart), Jill Kiefer Chaskin (Cancer). Allen Barth (stroke), Leslie Gray (diabetes complications),

Roberta Young, James McHugh
Elvis Victor, Patricia Walsh, Jim Cornwell, Nolan Horn (child with brain cancer), Brenda Gibbs, Mark Barasch.
Danielle (brain tumor). Suzanne Tierney

—**Kathy Keating**
Keats1002@gmail.com

An Easter Prayer

Dear Jesus,

Thank you for the gift of eternal salvation that we get to celebrate on Easter morning. Your love is so great! Come close to me and renew my mind to let go of everything I've held on to that hinders me and entangles me. I ask you to draw near to me as I draw near to you and purify my heart.

Thank you for being the example of mercy when you ministered to and saved a thief while you suffered your own death. Your love covers a multitude of sins! I repent of my sins and ask you to cover me with your love and help me love others deeply.

Help me to forgive those who have offended me and give me the courage to bless my enemies.

Thank you for the anchoring of peace the Cross gives us. When difficult times find me, help me keep my eyes on you. Help me calm and quiet my soul so I can find full contentment in You alone.

Thank you for the promise of joy and the restoration to the Father through the work of the Cross. Let me remember to take active steps in rejoicing together in fellowship with family and friends. May we never forget the good works You have done in our lives.

I praise you that you are the gift of HOPE. Nothing can separate me from your love for not even death could do it. Amen.

—**dayspring.com**

Renewal (from Page 1)

God, Jesus was delivered to Pontius Pilate and sentenced to death. Jesus took His final steps walking through a crowd of angry people while carrying a cross. He was crucified, and with His last breath He committed himself to His father's hands.

Shortly after, Jesus' body was returned to His followers, and He was buried in a tomb. However, on the following Sunday, Jesus' followers went to His tomb to find it open. Jesus' body was not inside. They knew that Jesus had risen. As we approach Holy week, let's remember Jesus.

Palm Sunday represents Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem. (Matthew 21:1-11)

Maundy Thursday (Holy Thursday) remembers the celebration of the Last Supper Jesus shared with his disciples and the humility he showed through foot washing. (Matthew 26:17-30) (John 13:1-17)

Good Friday represents the events of Christ's crucifixion—his greatest act of love so that all may receive forgiveness and eternal life. (Matthew 27: 32-56)

Easter Sunday represents the day Jesus arose from the dead, three days after being crucified.

It's time for renewal! Springtime is here! Christ is risen, Christ is risen indeed!

—**Pastor Debbie**

United Methodist Church of Patchogue

April 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2 10:00 a.m.- Palm Sunday Worship/Sunday School 6:30 p.m.- Pentecostal	3 Office Closed 7:00 p.m.-AA	4 10:00 a.m.- Noon-Food Pantry 7:00 p.m.-AA	5	6 7:00 p.m.- Maundy Thurs- day service at Sayville UMC 7:00 p.m.-AA	7 10:00 a.m.- ESL 7:00 p.m.-Good Friday Service 7:30 p.m.- Pentecostal	8
9 10:00 a.m.- Easter Worship/ Sunday School 6:30 p.m.- Pentecostal	10 Office Closed 7:00 p.m.-AA	11 10:00 a.m.- Noon-Food Pantry 7:00 p.m.-AA	12	13 7:00 p.m.-AA	14 10:00 a.m.- ESL 7:30 p.m.- Pentecostal	15
16 10:00 a.m.- Worship/ Sunday School 6:30 p.m.- Pentecostal	17 Office Closed 7:00 p.m.-AA	18 10:00 a.m.- Noon-Food Pantry 7:00 p.m.-AA	19	20 7:00 p.m.-AA	21 10:00 a.m.- ESL 7:30 p.m.- Pentecostal	22
23 10:00 a.m.- Worship/ Sunday School 6:30 p.m.- Pentecostal	24 Office Closed 7:00 p.m.-AA	25 10:00 a.m.- Noon-Food Pantry 7:00 p.m.-AA	26	27 4:30-6:30 p.m.-Wesley Dinner 7:00 p.m.-AA	28 10:00 a.m.- ESL 7:30 p.m.- Pentecostal	29
30 10:00 a.m.- Worship/ Sunday School 6:30 p.m.- Pentecostal						

Joyful, Joyful

Picture Jerusalem on that long ago day—blue sky, sunny, warm, maybe even hot. People running to see this person, Rabbi, teacher, riding into the walled city on a colt. Excitement runs high.

Some realize the significance of his manner of entry. They see the prophecies being fulfilled—that the Messiah is here, bringing peace, restoring Israel to the glory of David and Solomon. And, incidentally, throwing out those miserable Romans. Hosanna!

Still others revere him as a wonderful healer and teacher. Probably there are some who haven't a clue who Jesus of Nazareth really is—but, so what—they're caught up in the moment. He's a good guy, isn't he, maybe a hero of some kind.

Still, he does have some radical ideas—Love thy neighbor as thyself; take care of the poor; don't worry about the splinter in your brother's eye, when you've got a plank in yours; pray in secret, not showing off in public., loudly proclaiming your piety. All that stuff about being humble, and merciful, non judgmental. Kind of out there. But still, he's ok. So all joined in the singing and dancing and waving of palms. Hosanna! Hosanna!

Now picture Jesus. The Gospel doesn't describe his demeanor or behavior as he rides through the waves of acclamation swirling around him. Surely his heart was filled with love for all those people. Perhaps he was calm in the midst of all that public exhilaration.

Mark 11: 11 then says, "And Jesus went into Jerusalem and into the

Temple. When he had looked around at all things, as the hour was already late, he went out to Bethany with the twelve."

Wait a second. Where's the big celebration? The 1st century equivalent of back slapping and high fives. The post big game, Oscar night festivities. We took Jerusalem in triumph. On to Rome!

Only Jesus, of all that multitude, understood the terrible duality of that day—understood that, for all those moments of exhilaration, he would soon face disheartening betrayal, degradation, and terrible physical pain. Only he was aware of the sorrow and confusion that would soon surround his followers and all who loved him. Perhaps only Jesus had his attention on the Kingdom rather than the crowd, and only He understood that true joy is grounded in God's steadfast love, not in the high emotions of the moment. He was all too aware that true joy is often paired with struggle and adversity.

Henri Nouwen, in his book, *Road to Peace*, put it so well: "This joy does not necessarily mean happiness. In this world we are made to believe that joy and sorrow are opposites; that joy excludes pain, suffering, anguish and distress. But the joy of the Gospel is born on the cross. It is not the sterile happiness of victory parties, but the deep joy hidden in the midst of struggle."

So, as we enter this month of Easter celebration, let us not be fooled by superficial happiness masquerading as joy. Let us find true joy even in the midst of sadness and struggle. True joy grounded in God's unflinching all

encompassing Love. Let us follow Jesus through our daily lives and try our very best to manifest His teachings through the way we live those lives.

—Barbara Becker

Court Rules On General Conference

The United Methodist Church's highest court has opened the door of some new delegates to be elected to the long-postponed and potentially momentous General Conference, now set for next year. The majority of the Judicial Council also ruled that to put the General Conference's quadrennial schedule back on track, another session of the denomination's top lawmaking assembly must be scheduled between Jan. 1, 2025, and Dec. 31, 2027. Four of the nine members dissented from that part of the ruling.

In Decision 1472, the church court addressed questions from the denomination's Council of Bishops arising from the unprecedented length of General Conference's pandemic-caused postponement. The Judicial Council released that decision and two other unrelated rulings on March 21.

"Annual conferences are permitted to hold elections to fill vacancies in the General Conference delegation due to death, resignations, or otherwise, up to the maximum number of allocated delegates," the decision said, "provided vacancies cannot be filled with reserve delegates."

United Methodist annual conferences — more than 130 church regional bodies around the globe — are responsible for electing the lay and cler-

gy delegates who vote at General Conference.

The coming legislative assembly — typically held every four years — was initially planned for May 2020 before COVID shut down the meeting's venue and world travel. Now, the global gathering that draws delegates, bishops and others from four continents is slated for April 23-May 3, 2024, in Charlotte, North Carolina.

The Judicial Council previously ruled that annual conferences "are not required" to hold new delegate elections for the postponed General Conference. The number and allocation of delegates among annual conferences would remain unchanged. In practical terms, this meant that the same delegates elected in 2018 or 2019 to a General Conference facing multiple proposals for a denominational split or reorganization could continue to serve when the session finally convenes.

But a lot has changed in the interim. Some delegates can no longer serve for various reasons including disaffiliation from the denomination amid what is already a slow-motion separation. Some delegates have seen their status change from lay to clergy or vice versa. Some conferences that were separate entities when elections took place have since merged into one.

Bishops wanted to know what these changes mean for delegate elections.

The Judicial Council clarified that its previous ruling saying elections are not required "does not mean 'not permitted.'"

However, the church court emphasized that the precondition for any new elections is that an annual conference has depleted its pool of reserve delegates including reserve delegates to the jurisdictional or central conferences (the church bodies that elect bishops).

"When that point is reached, and only then," the church court said, the denomination's constitution "grants annual conferences 'the right to vote...on the election of clergy and lay delegates.'"

The church court further clarified that if a delegate's status as clergy or lay has changed since their election, that person is no longer eligible to serve.

The denomination's constitution — part of the Book of Discipline, the denomination's law book — establishes that half of General Conference delegates must be laity and half must be clergy. The constitution also mandates that an annual conference's clergy members elect the clergy delegates, and lay members elect the lay delegates.

As with other gaps that now exist in General Conference delegations, the church court said, annual conferences can hold a new election "if the vacancy cannot be filled with reserve delegates."

With the postponed 2020 General Conference now scheduled for when the 2024 General Conference was to occur, the Council of Bishops had one more question: Does another legislative assembly need to be scheduled? The denomination's constitution in Paragraph 14 says General Conference "shall meet once in four years."

But the coming General Conference is now scheduled eight years after the last regular General Conference session in 2016. The special General Conference held in 2019 is not part of the regular schedule.

"Since ¶ 14 stipulates one session per every four years, another regular session of General Conference is therefore required," the church court majority said in Decision 1472.

"Under this provision, a regular session of General Conference must be convened after the adjournment of the postponed 2020 General Conference, between January 1, 2025 and December 31, 2027."

However, Judicial Council members the Rev. J. Kabamba Kiboko, the Rev. Dennis Blackwell and Lidia Gulele issued a joint dissent to this part of the ruling.

"There is no point in using a language other than what is already in ¶ 14," their dissent said. "This puts Judicial Council in danger of legislating rather than upholding the Book of Discipline."

In a separate opinion, Judicial Council member Beth Capen said the meaning of the constitutional paragraph is unequivocal — not "at least once in four years" nor "at most once in four years."

She wrote that the denomination's very structure is quadrennial.

Any attempt to hold a regular session of General Conference in less than four years, she wrote, "will have a chaotic structural effect and the consequences will likely be far more egregious" than the difficulty caused by General Conference's delay.

—Heather Hahn, UMNS

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Remember Your Pledge

Save Your Old Magazines

Dave Hollowell would very much appreciate your saving the magazines you have read and passing them on to him. He takes them for the enjoyment of adult and nursing home residents and shut ins. They can be dropped off in the church office.

The deadline for the May issue of **The Link** is April 21.
Please email your copy to gbhoag@optonline.net.

Is The United Methodist Church Really?

With some congregations considering leaving The United Methodist Church or just wondering about its future, Ask The UMC offers a series of questions and answers to help clear up some common misperceptions or misinformation around disaffiliation.

Is The UMC really...?

Allowing congregations to re-vote if their church conference vote to request disaffiliation failed to reach the mandatory two-thirds majority?

For the most part, no.

The Book of Discipline does not provide for a re-vote on this question. Exceptions may be made at the discretion of the district superintendent if there is evidence that an irregularity in the process of the original vote may have led to a different outcome.

A failed disaffiliation vote is generally the worst of all possible outcomes. The failed vote tends to create angry and hurting people on both sides, more of whom are likely to leave the church, or simply drop out, than if no vote had happened or if the motion to request disaffiliation had prevailed. Those who do not leave often feel demoralized as they watch the fallout of the failed vote unfold. Asking a congregation in this condition to hold another vote is more likely to increase polarization, dropouts and departures than bring the resolution those asking for a vote may seek.

So as hard as a failed vote is on a congregation, there is wisdom in the fact the Discipline does not provide for a re-vote on this matter.

If your congregation has experienced a failed re-vote, seek support from your district superintendent and conference staff to find pathways toward healing, reconciliation and, in time, renewed focus on the mission of the congregation that remains.

Teaching things in its seminaries that are contrary to the doctrinal standards of The United Methodist Church?

Yes, but not to undermine United Methodist doctrinal standards.

Indeed, the reason for doing this is exactly the opposite.

In the real world where United Methodist church members live, all kinds of beliefs, including some that are contrary to the doctrinal standards of The United Methodist Church, not only exist but are strongly defended by their advocates. Those preparing to be clergy in The United Methodist Church need to know that other doctrines exist, what they are, and how to articulate and support United Methodist doctrines in the face of them so they can help those they serve do the same.

Going to require local churches to host same-sex weddings? What if their appointed clergy are allowed to and willing to do so?

No. And no.

There are no proposals before the next General Conference to require local congregations to host same-sex weddings or union ceremonies, not even if their appointed clergy are permitted and willing to do so. Existing proposals would allow clergy to choose about presiding and congrega-

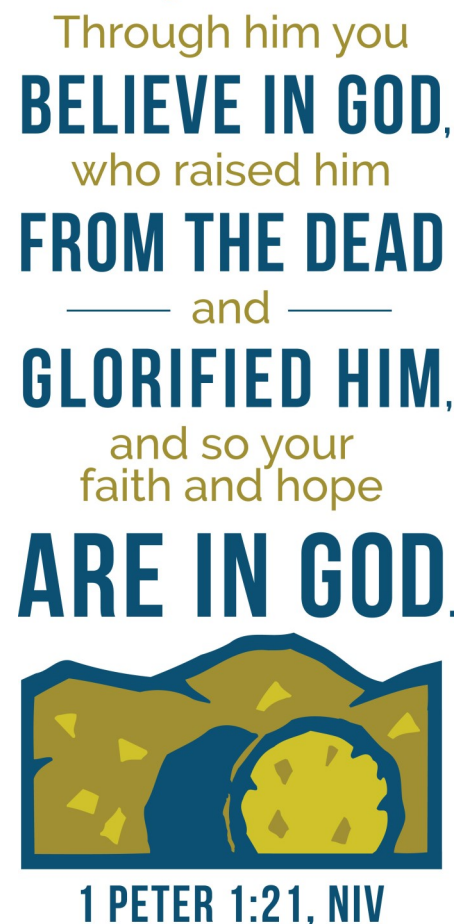
tions to choose about hosting, but neither would have control over the other's choices.

Endorsing critical race theory or about to endorse it?

No. The United Methodist Church has never made any statements about critical race theory. Nor have any such statements been submitted for consideration by the next General Conference (2024).

The United Methodist Church has stood firmly against the sin of racism in all its forms (interpersonal, corporate and systemic) from its founding in 1968. These commitments pre-date the development of critical race theory in law school curricula beginning in the 1980s.

—Ask The UMC, UMNS

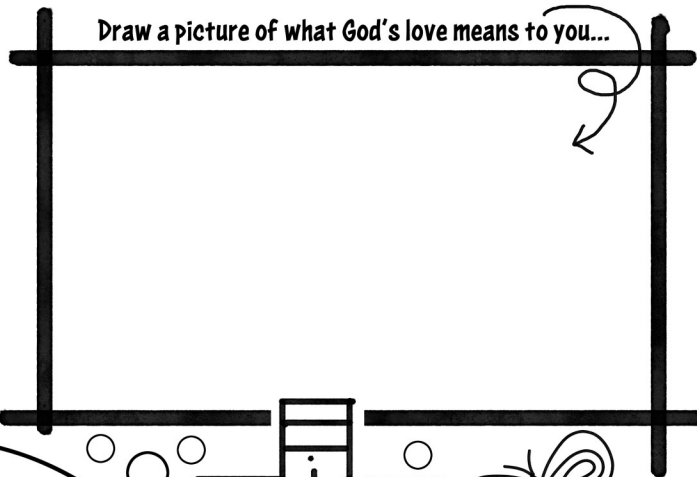


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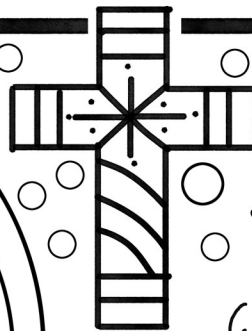
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