

THE STAR



Stony Creek United Methodist Church

Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Doors

April 2017 STAR

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Reed's Reasonings Continue

As we celebrate Easter I am struck by how easy it is to forget either the simplicity of the message, or the excitement of the message. I think both are captured in an event I heard about in the late 1990s:

Several years ago some real preaching talent had gotten together for a Holy Week service in Philadelphia. As they all tried to show each other what they could do, a famous preacher by the name of Tony Campolo had just closed and seemingly had the congregation in the palm of his hand. He smiled and turned to the last preacher S.M. Lockridge as if to say, "Good luck beating that!"

Lockridge stood up and began:

It's Friday
Jesus is praying
Peter's a sleeping
Judas is betraying
But Sunday's comin'

It's Friday
Pilate's struggling
The council is conspiring
The crowd is vilifying
They don't even know
That Sunday's comin'

It's Friday
The disciples are running
Like sheep without a shepherd
Mary's crying
Peter is denying
But they don't know
That Sunday's a comin'

It's Friday
The Romans beat my Jesus
They robe him in scarlet
They crown him with thorns
But they don't know
That Sunday's comin'

It's Friday
See Jesus walking to Calvary
His blood dripping
His body stumbling
And his spirit's burdened
But you see, it's only Friday
Sunday's comin'

It's Friday
The world's winning
People are sinning
And evil's grinning

It's Friday
The soldiers nail my Savior's hands
To the cross
They nail my Savior's feet
To the cross
And then they raise him up
Next to criminals

It's Friday
But let me tell you something
Sunday's comin'

It's Friday
The disciples are questioning
What has happened to their King
And the Pharisees are celebrating
That their scheming
Has been achieved
But they don't know
It's only Friday
Sunday's comin'

It's Friday
He's hanging on the cross
Feeling forsaken by his Father
Left alone and dying
Can nobody save him?
Ooooh

It's Friday
But Sunday's comin'

It's Friday
The earth trembles
The sky grows dark
My King yields his spirit

It's Friday
Hope is lost
Death has won
Sin has conquered
and Satan's just a laughin'

By the time he had finished the crowd was on their feet joining in every time the words “Sunday’s coming” were spoken. Lockridge turns to sit down and just winks at Tony as if to say, “nice try.”

You see we know in our minds that Jesus wins in the end, but we need to be reminded. We see the cynicism and darkness in the world. We see how cheap human life has become. We see society devolving into a “gang mentality” and it is too easy to forget; this has all happened before.

We need to remember that we stand between times. We stand between the first coming of Jesus, and his second coming. We are essentially standing in another Good Friday. It is dark and foreboding but Jesus promised; Sunday is coming. We need to live with that assurance. When we do Christ’s light reflecting through us will give others hope.

Always remember Sunday IS coming,

Pastor Reed

An Easter thought from one of my favorite authors

On the third day, the friends of Christ coming at daybreak ... found the grave empty and the stone rolled away. In varying ways they realized the new wonder; but even they hardly realized that the world had died in the night. What they were looking at was the first day of a new creation, with a new heaven and a new earth; and in a semblance of the gardener, God walked again in the garden, in the cool not of the evening but of the dawn.

—G.K. Chesterton

Group’s KidMin Conference is the “unconventional” conference for children’s ministry and is the most intimate conference you’ll ever experience

We’ve created a setting that feels more like a family reunion than a conference. At KidMin you’ll find a place where you’re seen and heard... Where you can learn and actually leave with a plan... Where you can make meaningful connections with other children’s ministers...Where you can be spiritually fed.

From the beginning, we didn’t follow the traditional big-event format. We simply trusted God and followed our passion for loving Jesus, loving children’s ministers, and loving kids to build a conference around what we know best—children’s ministry. We prayerfully plan and prepare throughout the year, but we know we can’t do this without Jesus.

<https://www.facebook.com/kidminconference/>

<https://www.group.com/category/training-and-events/conferences/kidmin-conference.do>

Ann Arbor Lay Leadership Day

Chuck Luscomb went to the Ann Arbor Leadership Day. Here are a few thoughts from the workshop he attended on small groups.

When you are starting a group ask yourself:

How is your life?

How is your walk with Christ?

What/How is your ministry?

Discipleship groups have two purposes both support (nurture) and ministry/mission.

Small groups are a way to bring Jesus home with you.

Small groups are for evangelism, 75% of people who come to Christ are invited by a friend.

If you struggle with leading a small group there are resources such as the Serendipity Bible that are specifically made for groups and have many great "ice breakers" and conversation starting questions.

The Future Of Stony Creek

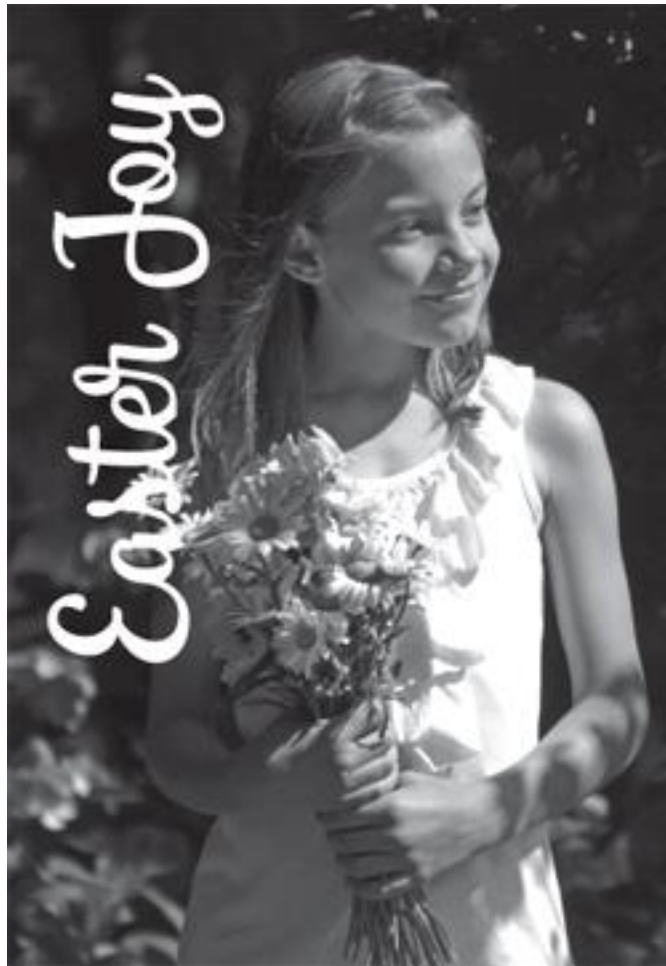
I have been asked many, many times what I see as the future of Stony Creek. As we have gone through the Vital Church Initiative (VCI). We have looked at several things churches need to be healthy. The number one thing that continues to be mentioned is, "Do you have any kids?"

If Stony Creek falters in the future it won't be because we didn't get an opportunity. With Becca Ward's announcement on Easter morning that Conner will be a big brother soon, the future couldn't be much brighter.

Zack Davis, Teyha, Patin, and Easton Thelen; Reid Harwood; Malachi Gilbert; Haley and Michael Brown; Emerson and Theodore Neal; Jeremy and Nicole Shuke, Jacob and Luci Bunyea; Emma Mickel; Kaylen, Sam, and Aaron Starkey; Conner Von Voightlander; Conner Ward and his brother or sister; Dean, Drew, and Caroline Wojtowicz; whoops and I almost forgot Liam and the Banotai's granddaughter Anna.

I'm sorry and apologize if I missed anyone but I think the point is clear, God has blessed Stony Creek more than we could have asked. We need to revitalize the Sunday school program and Vacation Bible School, and start to see Stony Creek through their eyes. The real question is, will we be faithful in caring for the gift that God has given us.

Pastor Reed



APRIL 2017 BIRTHDAYS

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 2 Dave Bannick | 14 Bev Berry |
| 2 Lucy Bunyea #10 | 16 Rebekah Ward |
| 2 Teresa Neal | 22 Malachi Gilbert #6 |
| 2 Larry Wilson | 22 Anita Parks |
| 7 Ethan Hays Wood #17 | 26 Emily McCullough |
| 8 Reid Harwood #8 | 28 Karl Myers |
| 11 Tammy Thayer | 29 Kari Bonds |

APRIL 2017 MEMBERSHIPS

9 Lisa Bartley, 1995	17 Steve & Joan Fracassa, 2003
9 Jim & Gilda Chie, 1995	17 Jason Neal, 2005
10 Sandy Scalise, 1960	17 Nathan & Teresa Neal, 2005
10 Fonda Heikka, 1988	23 Dave & Nancy Mongson, 2003
16 Regina Miller, 2000	28 George & Phyllis Throne, 1957

APRIL 2017 WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

2 Harry & Anita Parks	18 Bill & Doris Myers
5 Homer & Oma Turner	25 Pastor Reed and Juliana Swanson # 25
8 Nathan & Teresa Neal	26 Randy & Kristin Adamski Lovett #2

Contact MCB Sue Adamski if any discrepancies.

MAY 2017 BIRTHDAYS

(first week)

3 Shirley Ellicott #80	7 Jessica Neal
5 Oma Turner #80	7 Steve Guck
6 Gretchen Guck	

MAY 2017 MEMBERSHIPS

(first week)

1 Ken & Belinda Husse, 1988

1 Lola Roome, 1988

MAY 2017 STAR WDG. ANNIVERSARIES

5 Joe & Shirley Tarvis

8 Bob & Jan Hall

Please notify MCB Sue Adamski if any errors or inconsistencies.

Christian Sympathies are extended to Midge Fahndrich & Family upon the passing on February 22, 2017, of her sister Ruth Ann Hewitt.

A tweet from Pastor Reed

As part of my Lenten discipline (and to procrastinate a little bit) I was re-reading C.S. Lewis' Screwtape Letters. In it a senior demon writes to an apprentice demon on how to deceive humans into Hell.

During Lent it might be interesting to think, what if he had written the letter about you? Thinking about your spiritual strengths and weaknesses, how would a demon go about tempting you astray?



When we can't find Easter

Easter is the most joyous Christian holy day ... except when it's not. What do we do when our mood isn't what we think it "should" be? The kids are sugared up, we're juggling family gatherings (and conflicts), everyday challenges remain, and festive hymns — however rousing — fail to lift our spirits. We wonder, "What's wrong with me, that I can't seem to find Easter?"

Been there, done that. And it's okay. You're okay.

Jesus' resurrection doesn't scoop us out of our troubles, but the death-defying Christ walks through them beside us, on our own Emmaus road (Luke 24). We aren't alone. When we can't find Easter, Easter somehow finds us — if not on this designated Sunday, perhaps two days from now, or next week or mid-May. Watch for it; keep your heart open. Christ is risen indeed — and you shall be too.

—Heidi Mann

Forsaken for us

Church reformer Martin Luther considered Jesus' cry from the cross, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Matthew 27:46) as "the greatest words in all of Scripture," writes Timothy Keller. In *Walking With God Through Pain and Suffering* (Penguin Books), Keller notes, "Luther knew personally about what he called *Anfectungen*, a word that means the 'assaults' that the world, the flesh and the devil make on human beings through the evils and suffering of life."

Jesus suffered *Anfectungen* "in infinite degrees, beyond anything any other human being will ever experience," Keller writes. And he did it all for us. As Luther said, "In Christ, the God-forsaken sinner has a Savior who has taken on himself the full depths of human estrangement from God — and overcome it."

Expanding our view of service

We often think of serving in terms of Matthew 25: supplying food and clothing; caring for the sick, incarcerated and other "least of these" members of society — serving Jesus in the process. But we also can serve him with our unique talents and by doing things we love.

For example, Ged King, a barber in England, devotes some of his time off to giving homeless people free haircuts. Imagine Jesus saying, "For my hair was long and scraggly, and you cut it" — or "My heart was lonely, and you played music to lift my spirits. I could no longer read small print, and you read to me. I have to work two jobs, and you invited my child to spend afternoons crafting with you. My car broke down, and you repaired it." Then the King will say, ... "Come, you who are blessed by my Father ... whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me" (Matthew 25:34, 40, NIV; emphasis added).

The role of the cross



If the cross is the place where the worst thing that could happen happened, it is also the place where the best thing that could happen happened. Ultimate hatred and ultimate love met on those two crosspieces of wood. Suffering and love were brought into harmony.

...

To be “saved” requires a severance from the former life as clean and sharp as though made by a knife. There must be a wall of separation between the old life and the new, a radical break. That means death — death to the old life, in order for the new to begin. ... This wall of separation, this barrier, is the cross.

—Elisabeth Elliot, *A Path Through Suffering*



1 PETER 1:23, NRSV

Easter lifts the fog

A friend stood one day where he could view the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco. At first it was completely shrouded in early morning fog. But as the sun rose, the fog lifted between the upright piers of the bridge, leaving the land anchors still unseen.

Is it not so with life? We see only what is between the great piers called birth and death. But Easter lifts the fog from both. Easter is the time when we see more completely the anchorages that sustain life.

—George Mecklenberg

Lacquered with love

Japanese artisans practice a 500-year-old Japanese art called kintsugi, or “golden joinery,” to reassemble broken pieces of pottery using a lacquer mixed with gold, silver or platinum. The premise is that brokenness doesn’t render something useless or ugly. Indeed, another Japanese term, wabi-sabi, means “to find beauty in broken or old things.”

We come to Jesus broken, but he doesn’t discard us. He heals us, though our scars do often remain visible — just as the spear and nail prints remained in his own body when God raised him from death. The Holy Spirit coats our wounds and fractures with the lacquer of divine love, and we become uniquely beautiful, appealing to others so they can find support for their own healing. Our scars tell them they aren’t alone, while the brokenness that’s part of another’s faith journey assures us that we, too, have companionship along the way.

Curing vs. healing

In *We Know How This Ends* (Univ. of Minnesota Press), Bruce Kramer writes about “living while dying” from Lou Gehrig’s disease. While not denying his impending death, Kramer focuses on getting as much out of life as possible. Part of that involves the following distinction:

“Know the difference between curing and healing,” he writes. “Curing implies that things will be brought back to the way they were. ... Expecting a cure will only result in frustration and disappointment. But healing can take place.”

In Scripture, curing and healing are generally used interchangeably, yet one can happen without the other. We know people with disease or disability whose spirits are vibrant and faithful. Though they haven’t been cured, their lives are marked by God’s healing touch. Even in the Gospels, Jesus’ curing of ailments was often a sign of his greater healing: sins forgiven, community restored, faith embraced.

For what have you prayed for a cure? Might healing be the greater need?

Christ risen and realized

Author George Thompson tells of a Jewish rabbi’s appeal to Christians during the tumultuous 1930s. On Easter Eve, the rabbi wrote in a newspaper: “I challenge the Christian world to measure itself by the standards of Christ. As long as any group is judged by its creed or color or country in place of its character, Christianity is a sacrilege rather than sanctity. To this end, I summon Christians everywhere to make this Easter to signify Christ realized and not merely Christ risen.”

Christian Symbol

Agnus Dei

This image is known as the Agnus Dei, Latin for “Lamb of God.” When pictured standing and with a banner, it represents the risen Christ, victorious over death. John the Baptist, seeing Jesus approach, famously declared, “Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!” (John 1:29, NIV). In Revelation, too, Jesus is portrayed as a lamb who was slain but now reigns triumphant.

GOOD NEWS HOUSES 2017

1509 Harvest Lane

1513 Harvest Lane



Stony Creek Church has agreed to provide volunteers for work days. We are asked to provide lunch on our work days (Sandy Scalise did this in 2016). The meals are coordinated with the other church/churches who are working the same days. Stony Creek will also be pledging to raise funds for the construction costs. Jim Potter supports by selling his jams, jellies and peanut brittle. Keep an eye out for more news coming in the newsletters, bulletins and sign-up sheets.

WHERE DO YOU THINK YOU CAN HELP???

