



# The Anchor

Morton Grove Community Church

anchored in Christ, reaching out in love

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## April 2020

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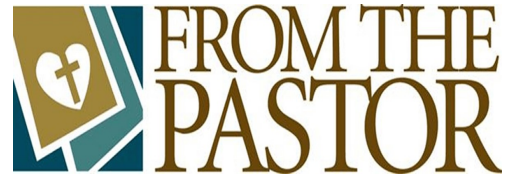
### **A Prayer for Holy Week**

Inspire our hearts, O God,  
to follow where Christ walked,  
for Christ has marked us as his own.

Let us all take new willingness  
to carry our cross  
and be led through sacrifice and suffering,  
but also to the glory and triumph of the Risen Life of the Savior.

Grant us all your good graces,  
through Christ our Lord. Amen.

May the Spirit of Christ carry us through the trials ahead,  
that together we might experience resurrection  
and proclaim the glory of the our Risen Lord. Alleluia!



### **Worship in April**

The Session has decided, based on the continuing shelter in place order and the need for physical distancing, that there will be no meetings or worship services in the church building through the month of April 2020. However, **we will continue to worship** in our homes and via video, to meet using Zoom and touch base using email and phone calls.

The Threefold Cord Churches have committed to creating worship videos for each service through Holy Week and the Sundays throughout April. A link to these worship services will be sent out to you through Constant Contact and added to our website. We need to hear from you if you are not able to access these services due to the lack of technology or challenges with the technology. We will seek to find other ways for you to participate in the worship life of the church. You may contact Pastor Debbie or call the church office.



April 5	Palm/Passion Sunday	Matthew 21: 1-17, Matthew chapt. 26-27
April 9	Maundy Thursday	Matthew 26:1-46
April 10	Good Friday	The Seven Last Words
April 12	Easter Sunday	Matthew 28:1-15

### **Wednesday Zoom Meeting for Checking In and Prayer**

We would like to experiment with gathering in small groups for checking in and prayer using Zoom. Zoom is a program that enables us to meet via video and audio. It requires participants to have a computer, tablet, or phone (preferably a smart phone). The first meeting will be Wednesday, April 8, at 10 a.m. If you would like to be included in this gathering, please email me, Pastor Debbie at [dlpaton@yahoo.com](mailto:dlpaton@yahoo.com). I will send you an invitation, a link for the meeting, and instructions on how to join the group. Remember that this is an experiment and we expect there will be some challenges. However, this can be fun and may be important to the life of our church. The Worship Team and the PNC have already met using Zoom.

## **The Session has decided to enter into conversation about merger with the Carter-Westminster and Niles Churches**

There has been some talk about merger but not a lot of clarity. It is impossible to provide clarity until there has been serious conversation about what a merger might look like if we come together in a new way. As we consider our options for the future, the Session has agreed it would be to our benefit to enter into a period of exploration and planning with our sister churches. This allows us to have input in what could be, to consider all our options, and be open to what God might be calling us to do and be. Please understand that no other decision has been made beyond conversation and planning. A merger requires time, openness, discernment, and ultimately a vote by each of the congregations. Merger can mean a variety of things depending on the groups involved. The extent of merger is determined by the participants.

Most often in the context of churches it means two or more congregations combining their assets to meet the challenges of being the church today and to engage in some new mission or ministry. It is often an option considered by churches declining in members, resources and capacity. Merger can also be about bringing together different people to create a more inclusive and equipped church and/or networking people and finances to respond to a greater need. Merger can mean the selling of buildings and the loss of pastors as well as the loss of some members who choose not to make the transition. Merger can also mean the addition of new people who catch the vision and excitement for what the church is doing and being. Typically, those congregations considering merger begin by gathering for worship and fellowship to build relationships much as we have done already. As relationships grow, they may choose to appoint a team of members from each church to do some dreaming, to identify challenges, to gather input from the congregations, the Presbytery, and the communities, and to create a plan, all the while seeking God's will. As has been said, this work takes time, energy, openness, and faith. The plan would then be presented to each congregation for discussion and vote. If approved, it goes to the Presbytery for approval. If not, it could go back to the team for further work or it may not be the way forward. As you know, entering the dreaming and planning stage does not mean merger is inevitable; but it does require that we enter the process with true openness to where God is calling us and what the community needs from us. The Session has agreed to accept the invitation of Niles and Carter-Westminster Churches to enter this process of conversation and planning with them.

Some may ask if now is the best time, in the midst of the COVID-19 challenge, while we are not gathering as we usually do. It is indeed a time of learning how to be the church in new ways; and in all times, we are called to be faithful, to be engaged, and to be open to where God is calling us. The Session invites your prayers for our churches and for God's leading in our conversations and planning.

If you have questions, if you are feeling fearful and uncertain, if you have ideas, please contact me.

Peace,  
Pastor Debbie

*"Therefore, beloved, while you are waiting for these things, strive to be found by him at peace, without spot or blemish, and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation ... Grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord, our Saviour Jesus Christ." (2 Peter 3:14-15a,18a)*



## News from the PNC

The PNC has not been able to meet in person, but thanks to technology we have had the opportunity to meet and begin our work.

We have reviewed the results from the CAT assessment that each of you completed. The plan was to gain additional feedback from the Pot Luck that was planned for March 29th. Following that event we planned to meet with small groups to hear what you had to say.

The Covid-19 has challenged us to change our plans. We have decided now to reach out to folks by phone. You may have already received a phone call from one of the PNC members. We will be making calls in the next two weeks. If you do not receive a call and would like to talk with us, call one of the committee members.

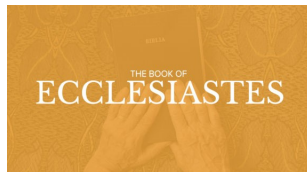
The questions we will be asking you to think about and answer are the following:

- What is it that you need from/want from a pastor?
- What do you believe our church needs in a pastor?
- What do you say is the mission of our church?

Please help us to choose the very best pastor for our church.

Your PNC,  
Val Barrett  
Judy Lucas  
Sam Wyand

Lea Beaubien  
Eric Schulte  
Joyce Sienkowski, Chair



## Bible Study Series

Beginning Thursday, May 7 @ 1pm

Everyone is Welcome!

The book chosen for our study is **Ecclesiastes**. It is a part of the Old Testament and one of the "Wisdom Books."

Have you ever been curious about the saying: "There is nothing new under the sun?"

How about: "A time to be born, and a time to die?" Take a look at the book of Ecclesiastes; it is fascinating.

Let's study together under our wonderful teacher Rev. Debbie Paton.

No need to register; just come!



## Lily Orders:

If you purchased an Easter lily and indicated on the order form that you want it, it will be available for pickup the week after Easter Sunday. You will be contacted with more details.





The Mission Outreach Committee will be assembling hygiene kits for The Night Ministry in May. We accept travel sized items for the kits since this works best by those being ministered to.

*Items needed are:* shampoo, conditioner, soap, toothpaste, toothbrushes, shaving cream, mouthwash, lip balm, body lotion, disposable shavers, deodorant, moist towelettes, combs and small brushes.



As you travel in the next few months please keep these needs in mind. There is a box in the church office for any items you collect. Thank you.

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ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING  
SPECIAL OFFERINGS

In 1950, the title “One Great Hour of Sharing” was used for the first time. The goal was to make the love of Christ real for individuals and communities around the world who suffered the effects of disaster, conflict or severe economic hardship and for those who serve them through gifts of time and money.

From the beginning this has been an ecumenical effort. Currently the One Great Hour of Sharing committee is comprised of eight Christian denominations. All work is coordinated through Church World Services, the relief, development and refugee assistance arm of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America.

The purpose of One Great Hour of Sharing remains the same: to collect special gifts and to assist those in need. Today projects are underway in more than 100 countries, including the United States and Canada.

Our participation in One Great Hour of Sharing began the week of March 22nd and will continue until April 12th, Easter Sunday. A letter explaining our involvement has been sent to the homes of church members. A speaker is planned and bulletin inserts and video will share the successes of the program as well as areas of constant need.

Today, as we continue this tradition, we stand with our partners in the face of suffering, and we walk with God’s children toward a more hopeful future. Sharing our resources will change and bless both our lives and theirs. We invite you to give generously.

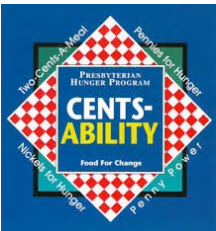


Wow! In just a week and a half enough household goods were brought to fill the whole back of the Lucas' car. Thank you all for your kind generosity. Thank you, also, to Dick Jensen, who brought in some things from his mother Ethel's home as they begin to sort through things. Refugee One is very grateful to have household goods to help furnish homes for those coming to the U.S.A.

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### **Mission Outreach Committee Financial Report**

The budget for 2020 is \$6,000.00. After disbursement of the \$3,000.00 for the Boyds' annual mission support and \$1,000.00 for Puerto Rico Disaster Relief, the balance in the Designated Funds account is \$2,000 as of March 3, 2020.



The offering for Cents-ability (the fight against hunger) will now be presented on the last Sunday of each month along with food offerings you have brought that day. Recently another \$208 has been sent to the Chicago Presbytery. Also, many jars of peanut butter and jelly were taken to the Niles Township Food Pantry after the Threefold Cord worship service at MGCC.



Another successful workshop was held on February 29 that supports Phil's Friends. Sixteen people came out to help tie twenty-six blankets. This effort will go a long way to comfort and encourage cancer patients. Thank you all! Watch for another summer workshop.



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### **Food Container Collection**

If you have any leftover plastic food containers that you want to donate to the Feed My Sheep program, please place them in the tall beige plastic container in the hallway outside of our church office. They will be delivered on the first Wednesday of each month.

Our efforts are greatly appreciated. Thanks so much for your continued support.

- The Feed My Sheep Volunteers

We hope that during May we can resume worship services and the other activities from which you take enrichment such as Women's Circle, Book Club, Prayer Group and breakfasts.

Please stay tuned to Constant Contact emails and the church website [www.mgccpresbyterian.org](http://www.mgccpresbyterian.org) for updates and information. Please contact the office or Pastor Debbie with any questions or requests.



## ***Christ the Lord Is Risen Today!***

Charles Wesley wrote this hymn in 1739, less than a year after his Aldersgate conversion. It was first sung in the Foundry Meeting House, an old iron foundry in London that Wesley converted to religious purposes.

Wesley's original version had eleven stanzas, but did not have the Alleluias that distinguish it today. Some modern hymnals include this hymn without the Alleluias (and sometimes without the verse that starts "Christ the Lord is Risen Today"). There are at least three different hymn tunes associated with that version: "Orientis Partibus," "Savannah," and "Resurrexit."

Some hymns perfectly capture the spirit of their season, and that is true of this hymn. Both hymn tunes associated with this hymn ("Easter Hymn" and "Llanfair") have strong, driving rhythms that make us want to "raise the rafters" with joyful singing. The first line, "Christ the Lord is risen today," sets the tone and tells us what we are celebrating. "Raise your joys and triumphs high," suggests how to celebrate. The Alleluias soar.

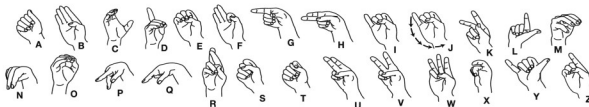
The hymn portrays not only the resurrection, but also the crucifixion. It tells us that "Love's redeeming work is done, Fought the fight, the battle won." It says, "Death in vain forbids him rise." But the resurrection is the dominant theme, as we would expect in an Easter hymn. (NOTE: The words vary from hymnal to hymnal, so check your hymnal.)

But the hymn that we have today is quite different from the one that Charles Wesley wrote. The original hymn had no Alleluias. It seems as if the hand of God directed what came next. Someone whose name has been lost in time decided to set the words to the tune that we now use—a tune by a composer whose name has also been lost in time. But the words didn't fit the tune, so he added the Alleluias to make it fit. The perfect Easter hymn, then, came into being through the work of three different people who probably never met. It is unlikely that any of the three had any idea how much their hymn would add to our celebration of Easter.

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# Puzzle!

Hands play a key role in the biblical accounts of Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection. Use this sign-language alphabet to retell what happened.



Jesus' \_\_\_\_\_ were \_\_\_\_\_  
to the tree. Two criminals were also crucified,  
one on the \_\_\_\_\_  
and the other on the \_\_\_\_\_ of Jesus. Jesus  
cried out with a loud voice, "\_\_\_\_\_,  
into your \_\_\_\_\_ I commit my spirit."  
(Luke 23:46) Jesus' friends \_\_\_\_\_  
him from the cross to the tomb. Jesus showed  
\_\_\_\_\_ his \_\_\_\_\_ to prove  
he was Christ. Bring your \_\_\_\_\_ together  
in \_\_\_\_\_, and thank God for his  
Son, Jesus!

Answer: hands, nailed, right hand, left, Father, hands, carried, Thomas, hands, hands, prayer



Debbie Dunkleberger	2
Abraham Kim	3
Laura Priban	19
Carol Edwards	20
Kim Priban	20
Pat Mathis	25
Michela Kott	29
Kara Priban	29

## ?? ? Bible Quiz ? ? ?

Three of the Gospels tell that when Jesus was crucified, darkness covered the earth from noon until three in the afternoon. Which Gospel does not mention this event?

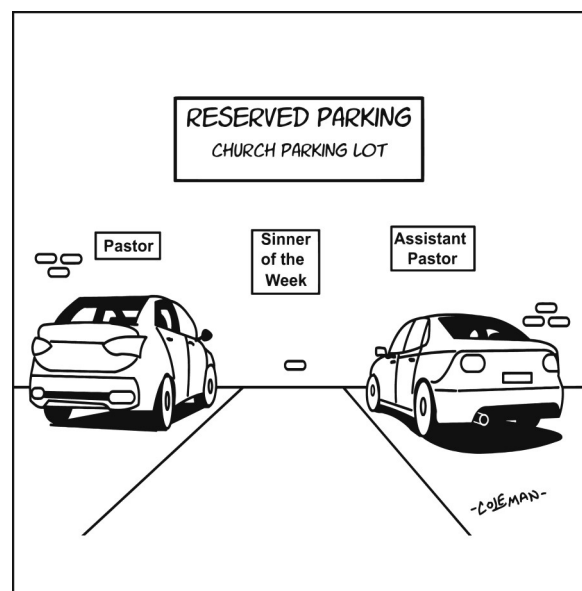
A. Matthew  
B. Mark  
C. Luke  
D. John

Answer: D (See Matthew 27, Mark 15, Luke 23, and John 19.)

## Nails



Nails symbolize Jesus' passion and suffering because they were used at his Crucifixion. They are often depicted in groups of three because two nails were used to secure Jesus' hands, and a third was used to secure his feet. Three nails are also used to identify Jesus as a member of the Holy Trinity.







## Special dates

- Holy Week, *April 5-12, 2020*
- Palm/Passion Sunday, *April 5, 2020*
- Maundy Thursday, *April 9, 2020*
- Good Friday, *April 10, 2020*
- Easter Sunday, *April 12, 2020*
- Administrative Professionals Day, *April 22*

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 4:15 PM Living Faith Mission Group Serving Opportunity 7:30 pm Session Meeting - Zoom	2	3	4
5 3:00 PM PNC Meeting - Zoom	6	7	8 10:00 AM Prayer Meeting - Zoom	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18 Newsletter Deadline
19	20 7:30 PM Finance Team Meeting – Conference call	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

We are on the Web!  
[www.mgccpresbyterian.org](http://www.mgccpresbyterian.org)

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During April of 2020 we will not  
be meeting for worship services  
and other gatherings. Please check  
our website for updates.

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Rev. Deborah Paton, Pastor  
Jason Nelson, Minister of Music  
John Frake, Administrative Assistant and Custodian

Church Office Hours	Monday through Friday	9 am-2 pm
Jason Nelson's Hours	Wednesday Thursday	9 am-Noon Evening-Choir Practices

Articles for the May issue are due April 18

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Thank you!