

# Gates Presbyterian Church

April 2023  
Harbinger

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## From Rev. Laura Bachmann

*The LORD is my strength and my might;  
he has become my salvation. Psalm 118:14*

As we have journeyed through Lent this year, our GPC community has experienced some deep losses, places where the pain of the cross resonates especially poignantly with our own distress. Even as I have wondered sometimes what we can possibly say into these spaces, I am aware of the deep heart of God's compassion welling up in our community to be present with those who hurt. And even as I hear the anguish of those who cry out to our Creator, I am also so aware of the powerful presence of the God who is our strength and might, our hope for salvation in the darkest times.

As we enter holy week and travel with Jesus from that final dinner with his friends, through the unbearable pain of his death, and into the mouth of that empty tomb, we know that the good news is coming – the good news of rebirth, of wholeness, of joy that follows sorrow. This is the good news promised to us even in the darkest places of our lives where we don't believe there is any hope at all – in those places where the stone rolls shut across the tomb and we are left in the stillness and the silence, sitting with a grief we cannot process or understand.

Leonard Cohen, in his song "Anthem" reminds us "there is a crack, a crack, in everything. That's how the light gets in." When we engage in a life characterized by courage and a willingness to love and to engage with the world, we cannot escape the price of that love – which inevitably includes the pain of loss. The beauty and the mystery of Easter is that it is into precisely these broken places, that God's powerful Spirit surges on the day of resurrection. Against all odds, in the face of all discouragement and despair, into the places where we no longer feel able to hope, the Holy Spirit remains present – ready to surge into new life, ready to renew even those things we believe to be completely lost, ready to transform despair into joy, hurt into comfort, discouragement into hope and brokenness into wholeness.

One of the reasons we worship and practice our faith in community is so that when one of us can only feel the desolate isolation and cold finality of the tomb, others can sense the light getting ready to break through. When one of us can feel only despair, others can draw on their own hope to sit with us in these broken places so that we do not suffer here alone.

The joy of Easter does not erase the anguish of Good Friday. It does not remove the deep hurt felt by a mother who has lost her child, a sister who has lost her sibling, a friend who has lost his companion, a student who has lost her rabbi. It does not insist that we pretend we are okay with such loss or that we ignore a suffering we cannot seem to escape.

The joy of Easter simply invites us to find those cracks where the light of God's transforming love can begin to slip through. It invites us to seek out and find the others in our community who need to hear the good news of this light's slow dawning. It encourages us to seek the transforming power of the Spirit's presence in our broken places. It reminds us that Jesus has risen and continues to walk with us through all the challenges of life; that resurrection follows death; that love continues to transform and shape us far beyond the grave; that each of us matters deeply to a God who will not let us go.

As we emerge from Holy Week, let us lean into the power of this transformed spirit to embrace the new life that is surely coming. Let us seek the light in our broken places and the joy of a new day. Let us sit together in love and peace and imagine a community where the transforming love of God's deeply present spirit can fill us with the creative energy of new life.

In hope and joy and love,

*Laura*

### *Mid-day Worship Service - April 24*

This service will begin at 12:10 p.m. and will be followed by a time of fellowship (bring-your-own lunch). If you would like to come to this service, but need a ride, please contact Deacon Paula Sousa (748-1920, [psousa0728@gmail.com](mailto:psousa0728@gmail.com)) or our Office Administrator, Karen (247-5292, [office@gatespres.org](mailto:office@gatespres.org))

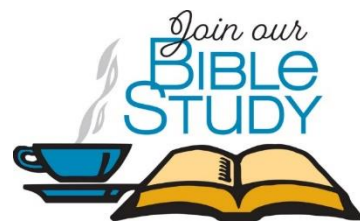


## From the Office ...

- May Harbinger articles are due Wednesday, April 19.
- If you haven't yet contributed your Per Capita for 2023 (\$36.45 per member), please consider doing so. There are envelopes available in the literature rack for your convenience. You can also contribute online [here](#) (choose 'Give to Per Capita' from the dropdown).

## Bible Study

Whether you are new to Bible study or consider yourself well versed, we welcome you to our small group for a time of wondering about the word and sharing our wisdom and our lives together. This year we are following the Revised Common Lectionary, studying texts which will be used in worship on the following Sundays. Tuesdays at 4:00 p.m. in room 1.



Date	Scripture		
April 4	Acts 10:34-43 OR Jeremiah 31:1-6 AND Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24 Colossians 3:1-4 OR Acts 10:34-43 Matthew 28:1-10	Easter Evening:	Isaiah 25:6-9 Psalm 114 1 Corinthians 5:6b-8 Luke 24:13-49
April 11	Acts 2:14a, 22-32 AND Psalm 16 OR Exodus 15:1-11, Psalm 111	1 Peter 1:3-9 John 20:19-31	
April 18	Acts 2:14a, 36-41 AND Psalm 116:1-4, 12-19 OR Isaiah 51:1-6 AND Psalm 34:1-10	1 Peter 1:17-23 Luke 24:13-35	
April 25	Acts 2:42-47 AND Psalm 23 OR Ezekiel 34:7-15 AND Psalm 100	1 Peter 2:19-25 John 10:1-10	



## Weekend Food Ministry

The Weekend Food Ministry is very thankful for the positive response and generosity of our GPC Family. As the need continues to grow due to many dealing with food insecurity, so do the students' weekend food bags. Our ministry started with 12 students in November, and we now are preparing food bags for 28 students! What a blessing for us to be able to do this, thanks to your generous donations. Please continue to donate food/money, as we feel the number will only increase.

Some people have asked what specifically is needed. We are always looking for high nutrition/ low weight items that are easy to pack and prepare. Here are some suggestions: fruit or veggie cups, Jiffy to Go peanut butter cups, tuna, individual microwavable cups of SpaghettiOs or ravioli, and any pouches of food (it makes it easy to pack ...even Mac and cheese has pouches!) However, these are just suggestions, and whatever you donate is very much appreciated!!! No donation is too small, and your caring is far reaching!

## Easter Notes

- ❖ Reminder to bring fish banks & jars.
- ❖ Thanks to those who are helping to brighten the sanctuary with flowers for our joyous celebration of Easter.
  - Reminder to those who purchased flowers to collect them after worship.
  - Extra thanks to those who are donating their flowers and/or offered to help deliver them to our home-bound members and friends.



**Rebecca Circle** will meet on Wednesday, April 19 from 10:30-12:30. Bring a lunch and something to drink. We will continue our Bible study "Group Hug". Great reflection and discussion! We meet in the Junior High Lounge. Hope to see you there!

## From the Deacons



### Please keep in thought & prayer ...

- Alyssa Marquez, cousin of Jim Renfrew's grandkids, is recovering from being hospitalized for internal bleeding and heart issues.
- Dorothy Mundt's neighbor, Rita, who is now entering hospice.
- Megan Barnes, prayers for healing for some serious health issues.
- Angelika Alvarez's mom, Beverly, dealing with new health concerns.
- Bill Dassero's cousin Cathi, battling with stage 4 lung cancer.
- Bill Dassero's friend Jeff Rose, now home in recovery mode, after a double bypass at age 38.
- Bill Dassero's Aunt Phylis - Admitted to hospital for pneumonia, in her late 80's.
- Mary and Allan Waugh friends Peter, Amy and their three young boys as Peter is fighting cancer.
- The community of East Palestine OH as they try to recover from the environmental disaster that occurred there following the train derailment.
- Prayers of thanksgiving for the Prayer Shawl Ministry and the blessing their beautiful shawls bring to those needing encouragement.
- Prayers of thanksgiving for the organizers of GPC's Blue Mountain Coffee House, and the talent and fellowship we enjoyed.

**Continued prayers for ...** Buz Bauman, John Belt, Debbie Schnabel, Hannah Walker, Angelika Alvarez's brother, E.J., Janice Bilohlavek's niece, Tyanna, Peter & Irene Derry, Fran and Bob Paro's sister-in-law, Patricia Withrow, Whit Beckett's brother, Bob, Eric Paquin, Art Brooks, Julie Seide, Paula Sousa's sister-in-law, Maureen Munroe, Debbie Incardona, Robert Reynolds, Ed Coons friend, John Reatz, Cam Mossgraber's friend, Jim Terhune, and Tim, from the St. Joe's Community.

### Our sincere sympathy to ...

- Angelika Alvarez and family on the loss of her 42-year-old cousin, Jay Richards. Prayers for the Richards family, especially his father and his children.
- Tom and Irene Ward on the passing of Tom's cousin, Debbie.
- Andrea Unson, her cousin Petra and her family on the recent death of Petra's husband, Al.
- Andrea Unson's mom's best friend, Jean Allyn, passed away. Prayers for all her family and friends.
- Jared, Katie, Gia & Ian Steinmiller, Ron & Alison Steinmiller on the loss of their son, brother & grandson Kaius Lee.



**Do you or someone you know need a ride to church on Sundays?** Contact Paula Sousa to get your name added to the list (748-1920 or [psousa0728@gmail.com](mailto:psousa0728@gmail.com)). Anyone willing to help with picking people up are also asked to contact Paula.

## Prayer Shawls

Anyone who needs a prayer shawl for themselves or for a friend or family member, can contact Dorothy Mundt at 247-3782 or email [quilter2@twc.com](mailto:quilter2@twc.com).

## Worship Services Schedule for April

Date	Liturgist	Elder Greeter	Usher Team	Trustee Lock-Up
April 2 <i>Palm Sunday</i>	Katie Steinmiller	Eric Vail	5	Roger Best
April 6 <i>Mauudy Thursday</i>	Whit Beckett	Cam Mossgraber	6	
April 7 <i>Good Friday</i>	Andrea Unson	Jan Beutner-Shirtz	1	
April 9 <i>Easter Sunday</i>	Larry Wakeman	Debbie Dassero	2	
April 16	Adam Switzer	Betty Blystone	3	
April 23	Claudia Weber	Jan Beutner-Shirtz	4	
April 30	Evelyn Henderberg	Mary Beth MacKenzie	5	

## MISSION NEWS

The Mission Team has been busy! Here's a snapshot of what's going on...

- At our monthly food collections, we also receive donations of hygiene products. This month, the women's toiletries were delivered to the YWCA, and the men's toiletries to St. Joe's. Our plan is to alternate where we donate: women's toiletries to either YWCA or Coldwater House; men's toiletries to either St. Joe's or Grace House. Thanks so much for your donations, they make a difference. As Laura put it, "It makes such a difference for people to have these personal hygiene items available to them- it's so connected to basic human dignity." The next collection is April 22 from 11:00 – 1:00.
- The Lenten Wall of Food continues to grow, and we are thankful we can help stock SWEM's food cupboard. Again, thanks go out to our GPC family for their generosity!
- Cameron Ministries is holding a Gala on April 28<sup>th</sup> at the German House to celebrate their 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. All proceeds will be directed to new and exciting youth programming. The mission team will pay for a half-page ad in the program to support their continued efforts in helping individuals, youth and families succeed. If you're interested in attending the Gala, contact Linda Sidore at 314-4437.
- After experiencing gun violence in her family firsthand, Lenty Johnson initiated the Generational Engagement Matters Essay contest. This opportunity is for children in all schools in the City of Rochester, grades 4<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup>. The essay gives them an avenue to reflect on the impact of gun violence in the family, neighborhoods, and society, and express their hopes, dreams, and practical solutions for safe and harmonious neighborhoods. It also gives adults an opportunity to receive their witness and wisdom. Since the essay winners will receive a monetary prize, the mission team is sending a financial donation to add to the pool of prize money.
- Other budget decisions included distributions to Presbytery Mission Support, Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Fund to aid those affected by the Turkey/Syria earthquake, and St. Joseph's.
- We recently were in contact with Rev. Sam Kinsman, chaplain at U of R. Plans are being made for the mission team to join the U of R students on Sunday, April 23 for worship followed by dinner, prepared and served by the mission team.
- Our next meeting is Monday, April 3<sup>rd</sup>, via zoom. All are welcome to join us. Email Linda Sidore for link. [lmsidore@yahoo.com](mailto:lmsidore@yahoo.com)



What are you doing that enriches the Rochester community? Maybe you are involved with children, the elderly, a music organization, a food ministry, an environmental cause, or animal welfare - your friends at GPC are interested in hearing Your Story. It only takes a few minutes to write a few paragraphs for The Harbinger about your volunteer activity. Please contact Sally Christensen at [sjmcc02300@gmail.com](mailto:sjmcc02300@gmail.com) or 585-703-6238. We would love to hear from YOU!

### **Salem Nutrition Center, Whit Beckett**

Before the COVID pandemic, Salem Nutrition Center at Salem UCC operated two meal programs staffed by two separate groups of volunteers. Every Monday, a hot meal was served. A group of GPC volunteers led by Tracy Burkovich and including myself helped with this program the last Monday of each month. A separate group, not involving GPC, served a sit-down sandwich meal every Tuesday.

In response to the pandemic, the Monday program shut down completely. Many of the GPC volunteers, not including me, began making bag lunches on Mondays for "St Joes".

The Tuesday program responded by handing out bag lunches. Guests were not allowed to enter the building, and the number of volunteers was limited to 6, so "outsiders" were not welcome.

In mid-2020, I received a phone call asking if I would be available as a substitute on Tuesdays if one of the regulars was sick, or away, and I agreed.

As pandemic rules began to relax, the limit of 6 volunteers was lifted. For about the last year, my friend, Alyce Norder, and I have been helping with the Tuesday program the last week of each month.

A variety of sandwiches, such as peanut butter and jelly, tuna, and ham & cheese is prepared. Each guest walks along the distribution table while volunteers fill their bag with their choices of 2 sandwiches, and whatever other supplies have been donated, such as chips, cookies, fruit and drinks.



### **Thank you to everyone that helped to make the Coffee House a success!**

Over \$1000 was raised & 10% will go to support mission programs. Participants, set up & clean-up crew, Tom Arcara & Keith Hadley for sound, Tom Ward & Keith for setting up the stage & hanging the lights, kitchen volunteers for serving desserts, GPCers providing baked goods & Kay Harder for purchasing & preparing the coffee.

**The Hospitality Team would like to extend a big thank you** to all the volunteers who helped with the parking lot valet service this past winter and early spring. This winter started out slowly but once March came Mother Nature made up some for lost time by dumping a lot of snow and many cold, icy and windy storms on or before our Sunday worship services. Once again, it was very pleasing to hear so many warm and thankful comments about this service. Coming to Church early on a cold, windy and snowy Sunday to shovel snow and put down ice melting product is not something everyone looks forward to, but the volunteers braved the elements and never hesitated when asked to help out. This extra effort offered on Sundays, some of which were pretty cold, shows just how willing the people of GPC are to step right in and lend a helping hand. This is truly a caring Church family, and we should all be very proud of the willingness these volunteers have shown to help others out. Thank You to All of You.



**Thanks, beyond words** to our snow redistribution team's efforts this winter season. Even though the first part of our winter season was largely non-existent, obviously the month of March has been a struggle for all. Through it all, our team either individually, or team efforts, has been able to keep our sidewalks clear and safe for all. If you get the chance, reach out to the team members, and express our gratitude for their work. Our team consisted of the following dedicated people: Roger Best, Jeff Weber, Tom Ward, Chris Thornton, Dan Charcholla, Keith & Mary Hadley, Eric Vail and myself. They all would appreciate it, best regards, Bill Dassero.

### **Junior & Senior High Sunday School: April 16**

For youth in 7<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> grades. The class will meet in the Junior High Lounge (room 16) right after the children's message. If you are interested and have questions please contact Pastor Laura, Mary Hadley ([maryahadley@gmail.com](mailto:maryahadley@gmail.com)) or Kecia Binko ([binkokecia@gmail.com](mailto:binkokecia@gmail.com)).

Come to one or come to them all. Whatever works for you! And feel free to bring a friend or two!



### **MEMORIAL BRICKS**

Spring is time again to order bricks for the memorial garden walkway. Please fill out the order form and send with your payment of \$100 to the church by April 30<sup>th</sup>. Hard copy forms are available at church in the literature rack, or you can download the form [here](#).

# April

Sunday, April 2	9:00 a.m. 10:00 a.m. 11:00 a.m.	Choir Rehearsal (1) Worship, <i>Communion</i> Jr. Choir Rehearsal (2,3)
Monday, April 3	7:00 p.m.	Mission (Zoom)
Tuesday, April 4	1:00 p.m. 4:00 p.m.	Prayer Shawl Group (16) Bible Study (1)
Thursday, April 6	7:00 p.m.	Maundy Thursday Service, <i>Communion</i>
Friday, April 7	7:00 p.m.	Good Friday Worship Service
Sunday, April 9	9:00 a.m. 10:00 a.m.	Choir Rehearsal (1) Easter Sunday Worship <i>(No Jr Choir rehearsal)</i>
Monday, April 10	1:00 p.m. 6:00 p.m.	Library Ministry Trustees (Zoom)
Tuesday, April 11	4:00 p.m. 6:30 p.m.	Bible Study (1) Deacons (1)
Sunday, April 16	9:00 a.m. 10:00 a.m. 11:00 a.m.	Choir Rehearsal (1) Worship Jr. Choir Rehearsal (2,3)
Tuesday, April 18	4:00 p.m. 7:00 p.m.	Bible Study (1) Session (1)
Wednesday, April 19		<i>May Harbinger Due</i> 10:30 a.m. Rebecca Circle (16)
Saturday, April 22	11:00 a.m.	Mission Collection
Sunday, April 23	9:00 a.m. 10:00 a.m. 11:00 a.m.	Choir Rehearsal (1) Worship Jr. Choir Rehearsal (2,3)
Monday, April 24	1:00 p.m.	Library Ministry
Tuesday, April 25	4:00 p.m. 7:00 p.m.	Bible Study (1) Personnel (Zoom)
Thursday, April 27	12:10 p.m.	Mid-Day Worship Service
Sunday, April 30	9:00 a.m. 10:00 a.m.	Choir Rehearsal (1) Worship <i>(No Jr Choir rehearsal)</i>

