



CROSS WORDS

A newsletter published by First Christian Church of Warren

Volume 12, Number 3

March 1, 2024

PUTTING OUR FAITH
INTO ACTION

Monthly Matters with Pastor Troy

Reversing the Curse!

The empty tomb story in John's gospel begins in darkness. Mary Magdalene is going to the tomb *"while it was still dark"* (John 20:1). The other gospel stories begin later when there is daylight. Mary arrives at the tomb and is jolted with fear when she finds that the stone had been removed from the entrance.

She runs off and finds Peter and the other disciple, "the one who Jesus loved" (20:2) and frantically tells them that someone has taken away Jesus' body and she doesn't know where they put him.

I want to pause for a second because something beautiful is emerging in this story that I don't want us to miss. John is showing us how Jesus' resurrection is a re-creation story. He's giving us some hints that point back to both the beginning of his gospel and also to the beginning of Genesis, the first book in the Bible.

How does Genesis open? *"In the beginning..."* (Genesis 1:1). And how did John open his gospel? *"In the beginning..."* (John 1:1).

What does Genesis say about the earth? "Darkness was over the surface of the deep" (Genesis 1:2). And how does our story open? *"While it was still dark,"* Mary went to the tomb (20:1). We have darkness in Genesis, and darkness here in John.

And where is Mary standing? Where is the tomb located? *In a garden.* And where does the account of Adam and Eve take place? *In a garden.*

The story of Adam and Eve is one that began with life, but because of sin, ends with death. The story in this garden began with a death, but because of the goodness of God, ends with resurrection life.

The resurrection of Jesus reverses the curse from Genesis and re-creates the world.

And what did God do after he removed Adam and Eve from the garden? He placed a flaming sword and something else in front of the Tree of Life to protect it. What else did he place there? Angels! And who do we have sitting in the empty tomb dressed in white asking Mary why she is weeping? Angels!

Wouldn't it be cool if they were the same angels? Like God said to them, "Hey you two, I'm reassigning you. Your work here is done because I've abolished the barrier to the tree of life. In fact, **my Son is the tree of life**. Why don't you head on over to this new garden where something incredible just happened..."

We have been given the opportunity to help write the story of our world. The question is then...will we? It is my hope that over the last few weeks you have been able to own one or two of the helpful hints you can use in your relationship with Christ and then be able to share them with those that need to hear the Good News of Jesus Christ.

Blessed Easter to all,
Troy and Mindy Drayer



GOD'S ANSWERS TO LIFE'S DIFFICULT QUESTIONS

- How Can I Cope with Stress?
- How Can I Rebound from Failure?
- How Can I Be Confident in Christ?
- How Can I Live above Average?
- How Can I Overcome Loneliness? (March 6)
- How Can I Ever Change? (March 13)

Don't miss the last two week of this amazing bible study!
Join us Wednesday nights at 6pm for our Refresh Bible Study!

This 6 weeks bible study can help you find the simple, straightforward answers in ancient Scripture that lead to purpose, peace and joy.

FCCW Sponsored
KBC Basketball Team
Schedule for 2024

Don't miss the last three games!!

- March 5, 6pm
- March 11, 7pm
- March 19, 6pm

Where your FCCW gear and join our cheer block at the game!

Need a mid-week refresh? Our Wednesday evening "Refresh" bible study may be just what you are looking for. The evening starts at 5:45pm with a meal followed by a bible study and great fellowship time. Not sure what to do with the little ones? We have got you covered! Our youth group is at the same time!



Special thank you to Jane, Justin, Jessica, and Brandan for helping me out in the month of February.

YOUTH DIRECTOR
TAKARRA MYERS



WEDNESDAY
NIGHT
LIVE

WNL: EVERY WEDNESDAY
AT 6PM
PRE-K ~ 5TH GRADES

You BELONG Here!

202 East 2nd St, Warren
260-375-2102

FOUR:12 YOUTH
MEET ONCE A MONTH
6TH ~ 12TH GRADES

YOUTH

Scripture
Power

But for this purpose, I have raised you up, to show you my power, so that my name may be proclaimed to all the earth. (Exodus 9:16)

NEWS

Easter is right around the corner! We have some special easter goodies to give out to all the kids. I also have a special craft to do with the kids easter Sunday.



Owen! He is always full of energy and ready to jump right into whatever activity we have going on! We are all learning the B-I-B-L-E song and he is doing great! We love having your enthusiasm with us Owen!

A PURPOSE FOR PAIN

Pain is an unescapable part of life but there are certainly some good things about it too. The bible also tells us there is a purpose for our pain. And it is up to us to decide what we are going to do with the pain that we are given. Imagine God as the gardener and yourself as a giant lavender plant. Pain is like a big pair of garden shears. If you know anything about lavender bushes you would know that it is necessary to cut them back so that they can bush out and grow thicker. Pain is like a learning tool that God uses to cut back the bad parts, like dead wood. Dead wood are things like spiritual immaturity, sin, and weakness.

Every time we experience a painful situation, we can see it as an opportunity for growth. Suffering can help us build trust and reliance on God if we let it. Suffering builds mental toughness. "For because he himself has suffered when tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted." (Hebrews 2:18) When we choose to do hard things, we get better at exercising self-control. God designed our bodies to benefit from doing hard things too. Our brain makes synonymic connections that make it easier to do hard things again. We can conclude that a mind and a body that is not trained becomes weak.

I think we can learn a lot from looking inward at ourselves and our own feelings. Think of every pain as an opportunity for growth. What are your weak areas as a Christian? Do you struggle to be kind to others? Are you angry? What can we learn from that anger? What is anger trying to teach us? Maybe that anger is teaching you unconditional love for self and others. Anything you fear is teaching courage. Anything that has power over you can teach you where it is that your power lies, which should be in Christ.

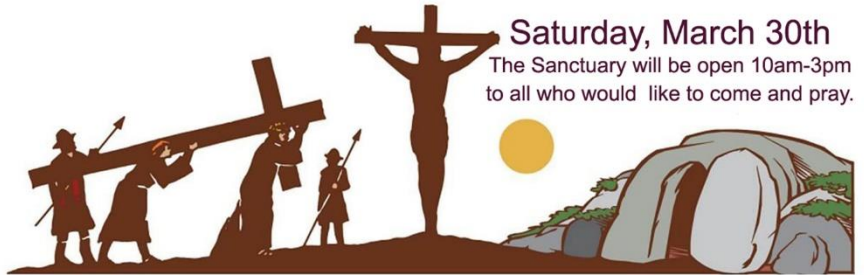
Sometimes when we ask in faith God will take away our pain. Other times, he uses pain for our growth. The only choice that we have is to have faith and rely on the Lord because his ways are higher than our own understanding.

Takarra

Holy Week Activities

PALM
SUNDAY

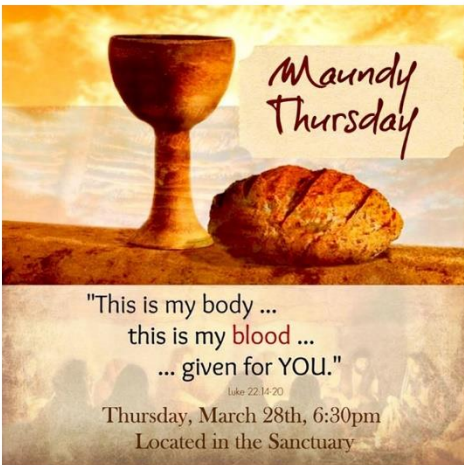
March 24th
Service begins at 9:30am



Saturday, March 30th
The Sanctuary will be open 10am-3pm
to all who would like to come and pray.

Stations of the Cross

This is a devotional exercise of visiting and praying
in front of each of the stations and meditating on the events of
Jesus' Passion and death on the cross.



Maundy
Thursday

"This is my body ...
this is my blood ...
... given for YOU."

Luke 22:14-20

Thursday, March 28th, 6:30pm
Located in the Sanctuary

Join us Easter Sunday, March 31st

HE IS RISEN

CELEBRATE THE RESURRECTION

Breakfast served 8-9am, Service 9:30am, Choir will perform during service.

Share
the
Warmth

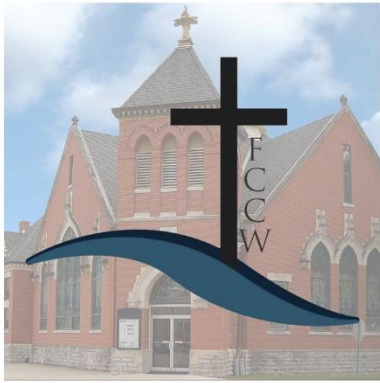
As we are nearing the end of winter, stores have begun clearance sales on their winter coats. Help us get a head start on next year's coat drive by building up our inventory! All sizes of children's coats are needed, especially size 10/12 and larger. All sizes of adult coats, especially women's small. Coats can be dropped off in the church office. Please talk with Shayna Stucky if you have any questions or would like to volunteer to help with this project. Thanks for your support.

EASTER BASKETS FOR FOOD PANTRY!



Our Christian Education Committee is teaming up with the Food Pantry and other local churches to provide Easter Baskets to the families who rely on the food pantry. We are tasked with providing 10 families with a basket with fun items as well as things to help the kids learn the true meaning of Easter. Items such as small toys, activity pads, crafts, books, and stickers. Monetary donations to support this project can also be dropped off in the church office. We will be collecting items through March 10th. Thank you for your continued support of all the FCCW projects!

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First Christian Church of Warren

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Pastor Troy Drayer Cell Phone: 260-228-0064

Church Email: office@firstccw.net



Stay up to date on all of
FCCW's news and activities!

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INTO ACTION



A LOT CAN HAPPEN IN SEVEN DAYS



2024 March

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1 Claire Eckert Gary Yount	2
3 Sunday Service Communion 9:30am McKenna Stucky Nick Stucky	4	5	6 Refresh & Youth 5:45pm	7 Cindy Fitch	8	9
10 Sunday Service 9:30am	Caden Brubaker	Ava Green	12 Refresh & Youth 5:45pm	Roselyn Poulson	Karen Johnson	16 Mercedes Stucky
17 Sunday Service 9:30am Joy Class Party 11:30am	18	18 AB Board Meeting 6:30pm Marsha Walton Troy Drayer	19	20 Refresh & Youth 5:45pm	21	22
24 Palm Sunday 9:30am Sharon Gebhart Linda Shuttleworth	25	26 Holly Villanueva	27	28 Maunday Thursday Service 6:30pm	29 	30 Stations of the Cross Sanctuary Open Robert Jones
31 Easter Sunday Breakfast 8-9am Service 9:30am						

Church Operating Cost
\$3550 Weekly

Offering Totals

- 2/4 - \$2881
- 2/11 - \$1763
- 2/18 - \$1395
- 2/25 - \$1870



The Town of Warren will host the "Total Eclipse in Warren" Viewing Event at Riverside Park on Monday, April 8 from 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. They will offer food for purchase, viewing areas, music and fun activities to pass the time.