



Now Simon Peter was standing and warming himself. They asked him, “You are not also one of his disciples, are you?” He denied it and said, “I am not.” One of the slaves of the high priest, a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, asked, “Did I not see you in the garden with him?” Again Peter denied it, and at that moment the cock crowed.

John 18: 25-27

“The Via Dolorosa”
by Michael Stalcup

Like Peter we correct you Jesus
to let you know that there’s a better way:
a crown without the cross where they reject you,
an Easter with no Holy Saturday.

But you insist, so we, puffed up with pride,
all pledge to journey with you to the end,
in jail or death to suffer by your side.
And for a little while we pretend

until the rooster crows and we awake
to find that we’ve rejected you as well,
your Way of Suffering too much to take—
and so you walk alone. Three times you fell

beneath the ceaseless burden of our pride,
daring the death we said you shouldn’t have
died.



Dear Friends and Members of Union Presbyterian Church,

Jesus says we should pick up our cross and follow him. One of the reasons I am most thankful for Christ’s sacrifice and victory over sin is the fact that although my lips readily proclaim a desire to follow Christ, when following Jesus gets hard or scary or painful, it also gets much harder to keep following him. When do you most struggle at following Christ? Praise God that it wasn’t too hard for Jesus to follow through on that first Good Friday so that we could be made right with God each time we falter in following our Savior.

Sincerely in Christ,
Pastor James

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Maundy Thursday Service History of Passover Meal	2
Holy Week Schedule Worship in March	3
Church News & Goings On in March	4-5
Church Finances Celebrations PWNC Prayer List	6
Church Calendar	7
Save the Date	8

March Elders
Carol Beasley
Jason Morrison
Glenn Sparrow

Communion
March 3

Stated Session
March 17

NEW HOLY WEEK SERVICE: PASSOVER REMEMBRANCE MEAL

Isn't Passover a Jewish thing? Yes, but it is also a Christian thing since Christ celebrated Passover all the years of his life and even most importantly on the night before he died. Simply stated, for a Christian the Passover meal gives us an opportunity to reflect on who Jesus is and His ultimate sacrifice as the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.

This year we will be celebrating our own **Christian Passover Remembrance Meal on Maundy Thursday, March 28 at 6:00 PM**. To make sure we have everything needed for the meal, everyone who wants to participate will need to sign up ahead of time. **Sign-ups** will be made available each Sunday beginning on **March 3 with a deadline of March 17**.



HISTORY OF THE CHRISTIAN SEDER/ PASSOVER MEAL

Christians celebrate two major events annually – the birth of Christ and the resurrection of Christ. Christmas celebrations are tied closely to church and home with families having their own traditions as well as attending services together at church. Celebrating the Passover together provides an opportunity for Christians to share a meal together during Holy Week, step into the final week of Jesus' life, His death, and resurrection and bridge the Old and New Testaments.

On the night before Christ was crucified, Jesus shared the Passover meal with his disciples, instituting the Lord's Supper. The meal looked back on God's miraculous deliverance of His people from Egyptian slavery which brought them freedom. Today, we observe the Lord's Supper as a way of commemorating Jesus' death and burial.

As we have grown in the Christian faith, we know the importance of the imagery of "blood" –The blood of the Passover Lamb spread over the doorposts of each home brought deliverance from death, just as Jesus' blood does. This theme of Christ as the sacrificial Lamb is woven through the theology of the New Testament. But much of the rest of the Seder Meal can connect us to what Christ has done as well. By using all five senses, we can see the meaning of symbols of the Passover in a new way.

- Unleavened bread: This bread reminds us of Jesus' body as it was broken on our behalf.
- Green vegetable: Represents new life, growing and discipleship in Christ.
- Salt water: As believers, we crossed through the waters of baptism to walk into freedom and eternal life; also for the tears shed for our salvation.
- Bitter herbs (horseradish): We remember the bitterness of sin in our lives before Christ.
- Charoset (a mixture of apples, nuts, cinnamon and honey): This reminds us how our most difficult circumstances are sweetened by the hope we have in God.
- Roasted egg: As Christians, this represents new life.
- Roasted lamb bone: Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.

Our Passover Meal Celebration will also include a time to Bless the Children. Parents will be able to place their hands on each of their children's heads and repeat a blessing, calling them by name. The meal will also include a meal of chicken tenders, macaroni and cheese, and oriental slaw. We hope that you will join us on March 28th!



HOLY WEEK WORSHIP SCHEDULE

***Sunday, March 24** **Palm Sunday Service: 10 am** *

Come wave a palm, sing songs of praise, and see our children in a processional on this special Sunday that starts off Holy Week.

***Thursday, March 28** **Passover Remembrance Meal: 6 pm** *

Sign up at the church, to join us at Union Presbyterian Church for a special meal that looks back at the Passover, Jesus' Last Supper, and the significance of Jesus' death and resurrection as the promised Messiah.

***Friday, March 29** **Good Friday Procession of the Cross: 6 pm** *

Join the pastors of New Hope, Robinson, and Union Presbyterian Churches at New Hope Church as we travel to each church and hear the story of Christ's death on the cross.

-New Hope Presbyterian Church- 4357 New Hope Road, Gastonia, NC. 28056

***Saturday, March 30** **Easter Egg Hunt: 10 am** *

Bring your children, grandchildren, or children's friends for a great time of fellowship and egg hunting.

Easter Sunday **Sunrise Service 7 am w/ breakfast to follow**

***March 31** **Easter Service 10 am** *

Join us in the front parking lot by the cemetery to sing songs of praise and remember the joy of experiencing Jesus' empty tomb. Breakfast will follow. At 10:00 am, join us in celebration of the resurrection of our Lord in the Sanctuary!

WORSHIP IN MARCH

This month we will be continuing a sermon series looking at some of Jesus' Kingdom parables. Each week we also hope to hear about some Kingdom-sized Good News from a member of our church family as well!

Lent Sermon Series: "Proclaiming Kingdom-Sized News"

March 3- Matthew 22: 1-14, "Parable of the Great Banquet"

-Celebration of the Lord's Supper

March 10- Matthew 25: 1-13, "Parable of the 10 Virgins"

March 17- Matthew 25: 14-30, "Parable of the Talents"

March 24- Matthew 20: 1-19, "Parable of the Vineyard"

-Palm Sunday



Lectionary Sermon Series: Getting into the Eastertide

March 31- Mark 16: 1-8, "Party-sized News"

-Resurrection of the Lord

April 7- John 20: 19-31, "Nail-sized Holes"

-Celebration of the Lord's Supper

GOOD NEWS RISING SPECIAL OFFERING



- **GLOBAL DISASTER RELIEF**
- **GIVING TO MISSIONARIES**
- **SPREADING THE GOSPEL**

This year, our church's Special Easter Offering will be used to support Global Disaster Relief, a Christian Missionary, and the Spread of the Gospel Worldwide. The offering is called "Good News Rising," because in the same way Easter is a time we remember, with joy, the new life found in our risen Lord, we hope that this offering can also help bring the Good News of Christ and new life to people throughout the World!

- 1/3 of the offering this year will go to **World Renew Disaster Response**
- 1/3 will go to **Frontier Fellowship** to support local ministries to unreached people groups in South Asia (largely Pakistan and India)
- 1/3 will go to "C," a **missionary** connected to family in our church who is currently **servicing in South Asia.**

We also have prayer guides that you to pick up at each door of the Sanctuary that share ways you can pray specifically for this special mission of our church this Lent. There are even fish banks children can use to give as well! We hope that each of us will be able to give generously this Easter!



MEN OF THE CHURCH MARCH MEETING

The next Men of the Church Planning meeting will be at **8 AM** on **March 10th**! Come learn about and help plan future events for the Men of the Church!

MEN'S FELLOWSHIP DINNER

This year the Men of the Church plan to have a **Men's Fellowship Dinner** every other month during the year. This March will be the Men's first dinner and we will be meeting at **Amber Jacks** at **6 PM** on **Tuesday, March 12th**. Join us and bring a friend!



UNION ENSEMBLE PRACTICE

Practices for the Union Ensemble in February will meet right after church on **March 3 and 24!** We will be working on music for Easter! Join us!

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

We will have a **Congregational Meeting** on **March 10th**, right after worship. The purpose of this meeting will be to answer any questions about the 2024 Budget and the annual report and to have a brief meeting of trustees. We hope that you will join us.





SOUPER BOWL LOVE OFFERING

The youth of the church collected a special love offering on **Sunday, February 11th**. We were able to collect \$271 to donate to World Vision Organization. Thank you so much for your generous donations.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR SOME SOUP!

The Women of the Church will be hosting a church-wide event **March 16**, from **5-7 PM**. Come enjoy some Fellowship and Soup with friends! There will also be a **Talent Show, Bake Sale, and Raffle** that you can participate in as well! Donations received for the Soup dinner will be used to go towards a new sign out front of the church!



BOOK CHICKS

Do you enjoy reading a good book? How about snacks and socializing? Join us monthly during our Book Chicks book club meetings for some food, fun, and fellowship! For more information or to find out what book we are reading, please reach out to Kim Morrison. Our next meeting is **Monday, March 18th at 6:30 PM**.

PRAYER WALK

Thank you to everyone who participated in the 2023 Prayer Walk. Our next walk is **Thursday, March 21st**, at **6:30PM**. There are plans to start a 2nd group, in 2024, with more information coming soon.



BINGO

Join us for BINGO at Terrace Ridge on **Thursday, March 21st at 3 PM**. You are sure to receive many blessings from this outreach event!

WOMENS CIRCLE

The Golden Girls and the Soul Sisters Circles will meet on **Monday, March 4th** for their monthly meetings.

5 CENTS A MEAL

Our next 5 Cents a meal offering will be on **Sunday, March 3rd during worship**. The money collected will go to support our Blessing Box.

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER SERVICE

The Women of the Church invite you to attend a special service on **Friday, March 1** to celebrate World Day of Prayer. The service will begin at **7 PM**. We hope you will make plans to join us.

HAPPY YEARS

Happy Years will be on **February 20th at 12 PM**. The Women of the Church will be hosting this month. We will be having Ham, Mac and Cheese, green beans, pineapple casserole, slaw, bread, desserts, and drinks. All ages welcomed and invite a friend.

PRESBYTERY PRAYER CALENDAR & PRAYER CONCERNS

Walnut Grove
403 Old Three Mile Road
Newland, NC 28657
taylor6935@bellsouth.net

Warren Wilson
CPO 6355
P.O. Box 9000,
Asheville, NC 28815
deagle@warren-wilson.edu

Waynesville First
305 North Main Street,
Waynesville, NC 28786
firstpresalive@bellsouth.net

Wee Kirk
P.O. Box 702
Linville, NC 28646

West Asheville
690 Haywood Road
Asheville, NC 28806
info@westashepres.org

- We continue prayers for the Rev. Beth Newman, pastor of Byson City Presbyterian. Beth was back in the hospital dealing with a number of complications. A Caring Bridge website is available for communication and updates. You can reach it by clicking [here](#).
- We ask for your prayers for safety of our latest Mission Team in Guatemala as they return to North Carolina on Thursday.
- Prayers for Presbytery Associate Rev. George Thompson who broke his foot and awaiting treatment decisions.
- Hold Ronnie Puckett, husband of former PWNC staff member Marcia Puckett, in prayer as he continues immunotherapy every six weeks for his cancer.



March EVENTS

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
Sunday 9 AM Sunday School 10 AM Worship					1	2
3 11 AM Ensemble Practice 2:30 PM SOC	4 11 AM Golden Girls 7 PM Soul Sisters	5 10 AM Bible Study 7 PM B & G	6	7 8 AM HOME Co-Op 6 PM Women's Council	8	9
10 8 AM MOC	11	12 10 AM Bible Study 6 PM MOC Dinner	13	14 8 AM HOME Co-Op	15	16 5-7 PM Soup, Supper, and Talent Show
17 2:30 PM Session	18 6:30 PM Book Chicks	19 10 AM Bible Study	20 5:30 PM W & S	21 8 AM HOME Co-Op 3 PM Bingo 6:30 PM Prayer Walk	22	23
24 Palm Sunday 11 AM Ensemble Practice	25	26 10 AM Bible Study	27	28 8 AM HOME Co-Op 6 PM Maundy Thursday	29 6 PM Good Friday	30 10 AM Easter Egg Hunt
31 Sunrise Service 7 AM Easter Service 10 AM						

Union Presbyterian Church

5615 Union Road
Gastonia, NC 28056
Phone: 704-864-7681
E-mail:
unionpc5615@gmail.com
www.unionpresbyterianchurch.com

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage Paid
Permit No. 8
Return Service Requested

Reverend James Holeman
Pastor

Tammy Biddix
Administrative Assistant

Jennifer Nelson
Communications Director

Jieeun Ha
Accompanist

Church Hours
3:00 PM—6 PM
Tuesday and Thursday



March 3	5 Cents of Meal
March 16	Soup, Supper, & Talent Show
March 28	Maundy Thursday
March 29	Good Friday
March 31	Easter Sunday