

THE MESSENGER

April 2023

Cherry Valley United Methodist Church

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Our Mission: *Making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world by loving God, connecting with others, and serving the world.*

A Word From the Pastor

Then Jesus said to them, "You will all become deserters because of me this night; for it is written, 'I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.' But after I am raised up, I will go ahead of you to Galilee." Peter said to him, "Though all become deserters because of you, I will never desert you." Jesus said to him, "Truly I tell you, this very night, before the cock crows, you will deny me three times." Peter said to him, "Even though I must die with you, I will not deny you." And so said all the disciples.

Then Jesus went with them to a place called Gethsemane; and he said to his disciples, "Sit here while I go over there and pray." He took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be grieved and agitated. Then he said to them, "I am deeply grieved, even to death; remain here, and stay awake with me." And going a little farther, he threw himself on the ground and prayed, "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet not what I want but what you want." Then he came to the disciples and found them sleeping; and he said to Peter, "So, could you not stay awake with me one hour? Stay awake and pray that you may not come into the time of trial; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." Again he went away for the second time and prayed, "My Father, if this cannot pass unless I drink it, your will be done." Again he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy. So leaving them again, he went away and prayed for the third time, saying the same words. Then he came to the disciples and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? See, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Get up, let us be going. See, my betrayer is at hand."

(Matthew 26:31-46 NRSV)

Grace and peace in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

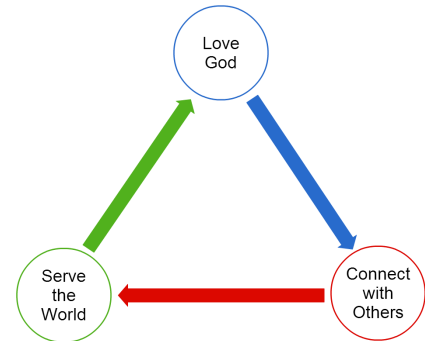
Computer technology has changed significantly from 1985 when I entered college as a computer science major. Back then, professors advised us to be vigilant about the limits of a computer's capabilities. My iPhone has more than sixteen thousand times the memory of the room-size mainframe computer that students used to complete assignments.

One example of those limits consisted of a story (I'm not sure whether it is a true story or merely apocryphal) in which a computer was tasked to translate a sentence from the passage above from English to Russian and then from the Russian translation to English. The double translation of "The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak," returned "The vodka is good, but the meat is rotten." Using Google Translate, the final result was almost identical to the source (*is willing* came back as *desires*). Such improvements encourage our confidence in computers and other tools. Therein lies the danger. How many times have people following Google maps driven into treacherous isolated areas or into lakes?

In the passage above, the one Jesus nicknamed Peter ("Rock") – having accompanied Jesus up the mount of Transfiguration and been accounted as one of his innermost inner circle – confidently declared his loyal fortitude as supper. Within hours, fell asleep three times while Jesus asked him to stand guard. By the next morning, he would three times deny that he even knew Jesus. By that next afternoon, Jesus was dead, Removing any chance that Peter might have to redeem himself or prove his loyalty; and leaving him adrift.

Staying awake while Jesus prayed seems, to us, an easy task. Was it? It was night-time after a long day and a meal. I imagine that he and the others tried to be silent lest they disturb Jesus' prayer. A prayer that went on for an hour!

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Were they too confident to ask one another for help staying awake? Were they too ashamed to share their weakness? Were they reluctant to share a nudge lest they seem too haughty? Would I have stayed awake so easily?

As I read or listen to the news, I can't help but sense that we are adrift. Much of that stems from an over-confidence on technology and public institutions to resolve conflict and privation in the world. The flesh is weak. It all gets pretty exhausting.

Although I didn't do an in-depth review of the data, I compared a graph of U.S. church attendance with a couple of charts about the trends in violence and "random" mass shootings over the past few decades. From 1982-2012, the visual correlation was striking; increases in violence corresponded with decreased church attendance. Again, it all gets pretty exhausting.

But what are we to do when the flesh is so weak? Acknowledging the love demonstrated through the church in Colossae, Paul writes, "we have not ceased praying for you and asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of God's will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so that you may lead lives worthy of the Lord, ... May you be made strong with all the strength that comes from his glorious power." (Col. 1:9b-10a, 11a) Likewise, we know that Jesus himself relied on the Spirit against the violence about to ensue; and that he would find victory.

Scripture tells us that Peter – grieving and adrift – raced to the empty tomb as soon as he heard the news. Have you ever wondered: Why did he (and John) run? For several reasons, I don't think it was to confirm the truth of what the women said. Instead, he ran to claim the redemption he couldn't earn in that place where it was revealed.

Easter – the Feast of the Resurrection – gives us that same opportunity. Easter presents us with the opportunity to renew our spirits' desire for hope against any worldly weakness, whether that be sleeping in too many Sundays so that it became habit, shame for our moments of weakness, or a reluctance to lean on one another.

Easter and the expectant hope that precedes it provides each of us with an excuse to claim the potential that God sees as one worthy of his devotion by returning to church to claim redemption, to give and receive encouragement, all as if we'd never faltered.

A willing spirit, makes even a weak body strong. Run. Don't walk. Lay claim to the promise that God has for you, and be renewed in hope all that you face in life.

Your brother in Christ,

Rev. Mark Harkness



Military Personnel

Gage Christensen
Sean Conderman
Dan Harter
Wesley Harter
Mark Kincaide

Members & Friends

Sandra Baxter
Glenn Carnine
Violet Collier
Pat Gorsuch
Joe Hunt
Trudy Hunt
Patricia Irps
Doris Kuelz
Lorraine Robbins
Kathy Sundberg

Mission

Pastor Kim & the Next
Generation Ministry

Those Who Mourn

Doris DeVries Family



PRAYER REQUESTS: If you have prayer concerns that you wish to express, please fill out a prayer request card located in the Prayer Chapel and on the small table in the sanctuary. Please indicate how you would like your request shared via the check boxes at the bottom of the card and then place the concerns in the prayer request box in the chapel or fold and put into the offering plate. Your request will be given to the pastor or forwarded to the Prayer Chain. You may also email your prayer requests to the secretary who will pass it on the Prayer Chain.



EASTER EVENTS SCHEDULE

Palm/Passion Sunday	APRIL 2 10:00 am Worship Service Celebrate with palms
MAUNDY THURSDAY	APRIL 6 7:00 pm Worship Service
Good Friday	April 7 7:00 pm Worship Service
EASTER SUNDAY	April 9 7:30 am Sunrise Service 8:00 am Easter Breakfast 10:00 am Easter Service



Scripture Readings

- April 2** Palm/Passion Sunday
 Psalm 118:19-29
 Scripture Lesson Philippians 2:5-11
 Gospel Matthew 21:1-11
 Message "Be of the Same Mind"
- April 6** Holy Thursday
 Psalm 116
 Scripture Lessons Exodus 12:1-4, (5-10), 11-14
 Gospel Lesson John 13:1-17, 31b-35
 Message "A New Commandment"
- April 7** Good Friday
 Psalm 22
 Scripture Lesson Isaiah 52:13-53:12
 Scripture Lesson Hebrews 10:16-25
 Gospel John 18:1-19:42
- April 9** Easter Sunrise
 Easter Vigil Service
- April 9** Easter Sunday
 Psalm 118:14-24
 Scripture Lesson Acts 10:34-43
 Scripture Lesson Colossians 3:1-4
 Gospel John 20:1-18
 Message "Heaven Express Card"
- April 16** 2nd Sunday of Easter
 Psalm 16:5-11
 Scripture Lesson Acts 2:14a, 22-32
 Scripture Lesson 1 Peter 1:3-9
 Gospel John 20:19-31
 Message "A Living Hope"
- April 23** 3rd Sunday of Easter
 Psalm 116:1-4, 12-19
 Scripture Lesson Acts 2:14a, 36-41
 Scripture Lesson 1 Peter 1:17-23
 Gospel Luke 24:13-35
 Message "The Kingdom Advances"
 Series: *Divine Accords*
- April 30** 4th Sunday of Easter
 Psalm 23
 Scripture Lesson Acts 2:42-47
 Scripture Lesson 1 Peter 2:19-25
 Gospel John 10:1-10
 Message "Return of the Sainted"
 Series: *Divine Accords*



Pastor Mark's Office Hours:

Mondays—9:30 am - 1 pm
 Wednesdays—9:30- noon
 Working from home
 Tue & Thurs.
 Friday is day off

Pastor Mark's Cell
331-465-9489

Parsonage
815-580-8553

Church Council Meetings

Church
Council

The following are Church Council Meetings for the coming year. The Church Council meets at 7:00 pm.

May 9
 July 11
 September 12
 November 14.

You shop. Amazon gives.
GREAT NEWS!

Cherry Valley UMC been added to the approved charity list on AmazonSmile!

If you use Amazon.com for purchases, consider signing up with smile.amazon.com and Amazon will donate 0.5% of your eligible purchases - at no cost to you. **You may choose from many charities, with CVUMC being our favorite!**

AmazonSmile offers the same products, same low prices, and same services as the Amazon you know.

To get started, visit smile.amazon.com on your web browser and sign in with your Amazon.com credentials. Choose a charitable organization to receive donations, or search for the charity of your choice. Select your charity and start shopping.

To join AmazonSmile from the mobile app, open the app and find "Settings" in the main menu. Tap on "AmazonSmile" and follow the on-screen instructions to turn on Amazon Smile on your phone.



Our women's group met on Sunday, March 19 following worship. Our group is small but anxious to serve. It was a joy to see new faces at our table.

We continued to follow our meeting routine of hearing the reports of the secretary and treasurer.

We have prepared Easter cards that we will mail to our shut-ins and those of our congregation that we miss seeing on Sundays.

We discussed the financial condition of our church and talked about what we can do to help. Many suggestions were offered and we will work with other committees to find a way.

Our next meeting will be after worship on the third Sunday, April 16, since the usual second Sunday is Easter. Come join us.

Striving to Serve



- 2 Kayte Kloss
- 5 Mike Seno
- 6 Sandra Baxter
Mary Bowling
- 7 Nancy John
- 10 Lorraine Robbins
- 14 Dawn Hollembeak
- 16 Scott Krueger
- 19 Theoren Nystrom
- 21 David Mills
- 26 Patricia Irps
- 27 Scott Layng
- 29 David Ward



Anniversaries

- 7 Gary & Carol Conderman
- 21 Mark & Susan Harkness
- 25 John & Sandra Schwartz
- 28 Mark & Holly Snyder



Informational Meeting

What's Happening in the United Methodist Church?

We will have an Informational Gathering on **Sunday, April 30th at 12:45 p.m.** following the 5th Sunday Potluck.

People have asked to know more about the news reports about churches leaving The United Methodist Church, what brought it about, and what it means for the future of the denomination and our congregation.

If you have questions about this or even want to hear others questions, this is an opportunity to get some background information and to clarify things that news reports don't always get right. This is also an opportunity to get resources to find out more.

You may also ask Pastor Mark questions any time, and he will strive to answer them or direct you to information.

Please put this in your calendar and plan to attend.

We can't help everyone,
but everyone can help someone.

Rock River Valley Food Pantry

Feeding Rockford One Meal At A Time



Thank you for your continued support of the Rock River Valley Food Pantry. The pantry currently serves approximately 6,800 clients per month. You can help by bringing your non-perishable foods and placing them in the basket located in the foyer of the church.

CURRENT NEEDS LIST

Canned Fruit	Applesauce	100% Juice
Canned Vegetables	Pasta and Rice	Cereal
Peanut Butter	Tuna	Soup

PEANUT BUTTER ENDOWMENT

The Rock River Food Pantry also has a Peanut Butter Endowment program in which charitable contributions of property, assets or funds are placed. Endowments are created for non-profit organizations in support of a specific goal. The Peanut Butter Endowment was created to purchase food to distribute to our clients. Join in this valuable cause by making a one-time or recurring donation. You may go to the web site at <http://www.rrvp.org/peanut-butter-endowment/> and view the brochure outlining the program and you can donate on line.



We are collecting peanut butter for the Rock River Valley Food Pantry during the month of April. This is an annual event that CVUMC has supported for many years.

When school lets out in June, the pantry will need to have 20,000 jars of peanut butter and jelly to ensure that every food bag that leaves the pantry has the makings of peanut butter and jelly sandwiches.

Peanut butter is high in protein, requires no refrigeration and most kids can make their own snack if there is no one to help them.

If you do not want to shop for peanut butter, a donation of \$20 will buy a case of 18 ounce jars of peanut butter that the pantry can purchase.

Our donation barrel will be in the entryway near the bulletin board all during the month of April. You may bring any size, brand or variety of peanut butter. Thank you for your compassion for those in need.

Prayer Shawl Ministry



The Prayer Shawl Group meets every third Wednesday at 10 am.

Come and bring your handwork project or come and we will provide yarn and help you learn to knit or crochet.

We often meet at one of our group's home or we sometimes go to a local restaurant and share a light lunch.

Come join us!
Lucy Powell

Wrapped in Love



Sunday, April 30th

After worship

*Bring a dish to share, a couple of your friends,
a few of your neighbors,
maybe a person you don't know...*

Enjoy Good Food - Enjoy Good Fellowship

COMING IN AUGUST

**Vacation Bible School
August 11, 12, & 13**

Ages 3 years to 5th grade.

Spread the word!



Mission Team

The Mission Team has been very busy and we have some updates to share with you about what we have planned for the upcoming months.

Mission Moments:

- Sunday, April 16. The staff of the Rock River Food Pantry will speak and we will present them with funds we collected at Christmas time.

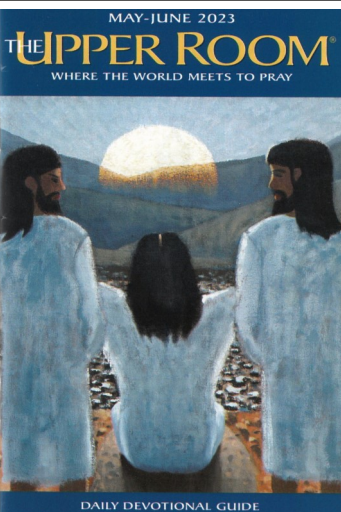
Rockford Rescue Mission:

- We continue to serve lunches at the Mission the third Thursday of each month from 10:30-12 noon. Check the signup sheet at the back of the sanctuary. We need 3 people every month. If you have time to give to this project, it is a very humbling but rewarding experience, according to those who have signed up in the past.

May Outreach Project:

- We plan to reach out to our homebound church members in May with flowers and other thoughtful gifts. If you would like to help, please let us know. We are also supporting the Worship Committee to highlight Mother's Day and Father's Day.

Our next meeting will be on *Thursday, April 13 at 7 pm.* in the Gathering room.



The May-June Upper Room is now available. You may pick up your copy from the table in the sanctuary or from the stack in the atrium.

We have 50 copies. If you know of someone to whom you might give a copy, please take one to them. There are plenty to share.

If you are visiting a person in the hospital or nursing home, consider taking a copy to them. Drop one off at your next doctor's visit. Just slip it into the magazine rack along with all the other publications there. It will make you feel good.

Thought for the day: *"Even when I don't understand how, God is working for my good."*

Our Missionary in Tanzania

Young Seon (Christina) Kim continues her mission to help bring secondary education to the people of Tanzania with the construction of The Global Mission Secondary School.

DONATIONS:

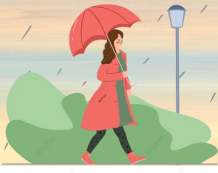
You may send a check to:
Advance GCFA
P.O. Box 9068
New York, NY10087-9068
With the advance
number on the memo line
Advance # 3022281

Contact information for Young Seon Kim
Telephone: +255 68 976 1708
Email: yskim1023@gmail.com
Facebook: Young Seon Kim
Kakaotalk: yskim1470



"The way God has been guiding my steps is amazing," says Young Seon. "The love God has been pouring out upon my heart is beyond my imagination."

April 2023



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 9:00 am GA
2 9:00 am Sunday School 10:00 am Worship <i>Palm Sunday</i>	3 6:00 Scouts BSAG	4 6:30 pm Scouts BSAB	5 9:00 am Bible Study	6 7:00 pm <i>Maundy Thursday Service</i>	7 7:00 pm <i>Good Friday Service</i>	8 9:00 am GA
9 7:30 am Sunrise Service 8:00 am Breakfast & Fellowship 9:00 am Sunday School 10:00 am Worship	10 6:00 Scouts BSAG	11 6:30 pm Scouts BSAB 6:00 pm Finance	12 9:00 am Bible Study 2:00 pm Choir	13 6:30 pm Cub Scouts 7:00 pm Mission/Outreach	14	15 9:00 am GA
16 9:00 am Sunday School 10:00 am Worship <i>Mission Moment—RRV Food Pantry</i> 11:00 am Methodist Women	17 6:00 Scouts BSAG	18 6:30 pm Scouts BSAB	19 9:00 am Bible Study 2:00 pm Choir 10:00 am Prayer Shawl Group	20 6:30 pm Cub Scouts	21	22 9:00 am GA
23 9:00 am Sunday School 10:00 am Worship 	24 6:00 Scouts BSAG	25 10:15 am Memorial Committee 6:30 pm Scouts BSAB	26 9:00 am Bible Study 2:00 pm Choir	27 6:30 pm Cub Scouts	28	29 9:00 am GA
30 9:00 am Sunday School 10:00 am Worship 11:00 <i>Potluck</i> 12:45 <i>Informational Meeting</i>						

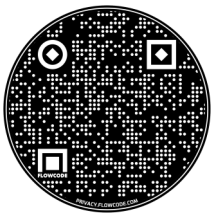
MESSENGER ITEMS ARE DUE TO THE SECRETARY ON THE 15TH OF EACH MONTH.



HAPPY EASTER!



Cherry Valley United Methodist Church
112 South Cherry Street, P.O. Box 235
Cherry Valley, Illinois 61016



Let us
WORSHIP
Together

Sunday@ 9:00 am—Sunday School all ages
(September—June)

Sunday@ 10:00 am—In-person Worship
Live You Tube streaming at Cherry Valley
United Methodist Church.

Contact us:

Office phone: 815/332-5075

E-mail: churchinthevalley@comcast.net

Web Site: cherryvalleyumc.com

Facebook: [Cherry Valley United Methodist Church](https://www.facebook.com/CherryValleyUnitedMethodistChurch)



Pastor: Rev. Mark Harkness
Deacon: Rev. Danice Loveridge
Secretary: Nancy Laurent

Church Office Hours
Tuesday – Friday 9:00 am – 1:00 pm