

In the Mail—

Dear Friends,
There is perhaps nothing more humbling than knowing prayers are being offered for me by name on a regular basis. When I am told that, or when I receive a card in the mail telling me that, I am brought to tears each time.

Thank you for all your concerns, your well wishes and especially your heartfelt prayers during this challenging time in my life. You will never know how very much they are appreciated. Every single one!

Much love to you all,
Noreen

Dear Friends,

Thank you for all the cards, phone calls, visits, and food during my hospital stay and recovery. I am very grateful to have such a loving and caring church family. Blessings to each of you. Love,
Nancy

EASTER MORNING SCHEDULE

7:00—Sunrise Service at the Barney
Residence

Followed by Brunch
(please bring a dish to share)

9:00—Easter Egg Hunt on the Barney
Lawn

(kids and parents should meet at church
a little before 9:00 to walk over
together)

10:00—Easter Worship Service in the
Sanctuary

First Christian Church
(Disciples of Christ)
P. O. Box 295
Dexter, MO 63841



THE CHRISTIAN CRIER FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH (DISCIPLES OF CHRIST)

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It is almost impossible to believe. Holy Week is already here. The forty days of Lent are about to come to an end. The disciplines that we undertook are about to come to an end. Over the next few days we are going to experience the journey from Palm Sunday to Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter. Despite my best intentions, I am not ready. There was supposed to have been

more time to prepare.

There are lots of excuses that I could come up with. Military duty has taken a lot of energy. The church calendar is full this time of year. Pastoral care needs abound. Family obligations require regular phone calls and coordination of tasks and responsibilities. There is always something to do. This year distractions have hit me worse than normal. Quite simply, I am not as prepared to mark Jesus' death and resurrection as I should be. Perhaps you have experienced similar seasons in your own life.

These periods of difficulty and distraction can be frustrating. Challenging times leave us battered and exhausted. We do not perform at our peak abilities. Prayer, Scripture reading, worship, and service all begin to take a backseat to the crises we face at any given moment. We are so busy putting out fires that our relationship with God and God's world begins to suffer. It is not the way we like to live. It is not the way we are designed to be. Ironically, we find ourselves trapped in the same vicious cycle that Lenten disciplines are supposed to prevent. As painful as it is, we can find ourselves buried too deep to conceive of any other alternative.

Unfortunately, this temptation is nothing new. The Bible is full of stories where God's people allowed themselves to be distracted even as divine promises are fulfilled. Slaves were freed from Egypt, yet when the journey got hard, they yearned for the familiar. After settling the promised land, Israel's kings get caught up in the trappings of power. Shortly after returning from exile, leaders allowed their rebuilt temple to become co-opted by the Roman occupiers. Faithfulness is hard. Turning away is easy. It happens to all of us eventually.

Fortunately, that is not the end of the story. Easter is proof that God's love is bigger than our neglect. Jesus came into a world that was not ready for him. God's son appeared to a culture utterly unprepared for grace. Temple leaders, the Roman Empire, and even his own people were taken by surprise. Prophets had proclaimed his coming, but it proved easier to believe in the status quo.

Holy Week is now here. Ready or not, Jesus has come. Over the next few days I invite you to dig into the array of special services. Allow yourself to be surprised by grace. The story of death and resurrection is unlike anything you have ever encountered. Let the barrage of emotions shake you out of your comfort zone. Take comfort in a Savior who came and dwelt with people just as distracted as us. The cross was proof that they were not ready to hear what he had to say. He said it anyway. He forgave them anyway. Easter is proof that God's faithfulness is everlasting. As

April Serving Schedule

Elders: Eddie Pope & Sarah Moore
Deacons: Angie Duncan & Kerri Kruse (communion prep.), Scott Kruse, Gregg Miller, Mark & Kristi Booker
Greeters:
 4/1 Mark & Debbie Stidham; Marrine Grobe
 4/8 Ron & Bonnie Yersak; Susie Grobe
 4/15 Ron & Elvena Martin; Sue Christian
 4/22 Tommy & Pam Horton; Carolyn Carrier
 4/29 Debbie Ellinghouse & Donna Speck; Sandy Edwards
Welcome:
 4/1 Susie Grobe
 4/8 Lisa Thrower
 4/15 Melanie Miller
 4/22 Tommy Horton
 4/29 Nancy Wright
Worship Leader:
 4/1 Nona Robinson
 4/8 Eric Basham
 4/15 Angie Duncan
 4/22 Kristi Booker
 4/29 Pam Horton
Acolyte: ?
Computer & Sound Board: Lily Williams & Sean Vanslyke
Pianist:
 4/1 Kim Williams
 4/8 Julie Rybolt
 4/15 Kim Williams
 4/22 Brandy Mouser
 4/29 Kim Williams
Special Music:
 4/1 Eric Basham
Open/Close Church: Gregg Miller
(If you will not be able to serve on the Sunday listed, please find your replacement and notify the church office who will be serving in your place.)

PRAYER LIST— Kay Ables, David Adams, Reverend Tom Bass, Mary Ellen Blankenship, Bill & Dee Boesen, Carolyn Carroll, Caryl Clippard, Maxine Daniel, Family of Tom Dawson, Ginger Evans Dill, Shirley Edwards, Sue Waggoner-Flowers, Janet Hammock, Friend of Eric & Sandra Basham, Raydean Hendrix, Josephine Hueckel, Noreen Hyslop, Debbie Lewis, Bonnie Logan, Elvena Martin, Betty & Bob Mayer, Lola Montgomery (sister-in-law of Carolyn Montgomery), Winnie Morgan, Diana Orr, Barb Owens, Mae Pope (Mother of Debbie Wilson), Betty Russell, Scott Russell, Marty Thompson, Jerry Thrower, Danielle Wunderlich, Bonnie Yersak's son, Tyler



CAMP OPPORTUNITIES

2018 Summer Camp dates have been announced. All camp information including dates can be found at <http://www.mid-americanadisciples.org/summer/> or contact the church office for additional information.



**Thursday, Friday and Saturday
April 12, 13 and 14**

Gather up your items for the spring yard sale! You can drop items off on Sunday afternoon, April 8. If you have large items that you need help with, contact Debbie Crane to arrange pick up.



SHUT-IN OF THE MONTH

Josephine Hueckel
 Winchester Place
 400 Winchester Drive
 Bernie, MO 63822
 A visit or card would mean so much.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 7:00 Sunrise Service at the Barney Residence 8:00 Brunch 9:00 Easter Egg Hunt 10:00 Worship Service	2 12:00 CWF Meeting at Airway's 6:00 Zumba	3 8:00 Prayer Group	4	5 6:00 Zumba	6	7
8 8:15 Elder's Meet 9:00 Sunday School 10:00 Worship Service Yard Sale Drop Off in Afternoon 5:00 Meet for Newsboys Concert	9 6:00 Zumba	10 8:00 Prayer Group	11	12 7:00-4:00	13 7:00-6:00	14 7:00-12:00
15 9:00 Sunday School 10:00 Worship Service 6:00-7:30 Youth Meet in Disciple Center	16 6:00 Zumba	17 8:00 Prayer Group <i>Deadline for May Newsletter articles and calendar entries</i>	18	19 6:00 Zumba	20	21 Co-Host of Project Prom Breakfast at the Methodist Church
22 9:00 Sunday School 10:00 Worship Service 5:00-7:30 Youth Movie Night at Methodist Church	23 6:00 Zumba	24 8:00 Prayer Group 6:00 Evening Ladies Meet at Morina's	25	26 6:00 Zumba	27	28
29 9:00 Sunday School 10:00 Worship Service	30 6:00 Zumba	1 8:00 Prayer Group	2	3 6:00 Zumba	4	5