

# OCKER BRETHERN CHURCH

Serving Christ, Serving Our Community

APRIL 2023

## HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE

*Palm Sunday*

*Worship Service*

*April 2 @ 10:15 am*

*Maundy Thursday  
Service*

*April 6 @ 6:30 pm*

*Easter Sunday*

*Worship Service*

*April 9 @ 7 AM*

Followed by  
Pancake Breakfast  
And Egg Hunt



Happy April Ocker Brethren Church!

As many of you know, we are in the season of Lent (and have been since last month). Lent, the time set aside for Christians, before Resurrection Sunday, to center our lives on the sacrifice of Christ.

The last week of Lent is called Holy Week. Holy Week begins with Palm Sunday and Jesus' dramatic entrance into Jerusalem and ends with his subsequent death on the cross and resurrection three days later.

In order to commemorate what Jesus did on the last week of his earthly life, Ocker will hold a special Maundy Thursday Service and gather together like the followers of Jesus did on the night he was arrested.

Some Christians also follow Jesus' progression through the rest of Thursday night and Friday by observing what we call — *The Stations of the Cross*.

This ancient practice, observed especially on Good Friday, serves more than one purpose. It walks Christians through the events of Jesus' betrayal, torture and death on the cross...and, it also invites reflection on the way suffering continues among the innocent, inflicted by the ignorant—the way, as Catholic writer Caryl Houselander put it, the "Christ-life continues in the world."

Ocker won't hold a service to commemorate the stations of the cross where we ask our members to spiritually consider what each station means...BUT, I thought you might like to see what each station is in this newsletter article.

So, I have taken the liberty of combining my own musings about each station, along with other common prayers and Lenten readings that are designed to make us ponder each point of Jesus' journey to the cross.

And who knows, this month, you might decide to read through each station and God might teach us all something.... So, here they are:

**1. Jesus prays in the Garden of Gethsemane.** He wanted desperately to be saved from his hard destiny. He didn't deserve it. So God...we pray that you spare the innocent the bitter cup of suffering, violence and trauma. Where they do suffer, we pray that healing light will surround them and that in your mysterious will and ways they will be sustained, comforted, and healed.

**2. Jesus is betrayed and arrested.** May all those betrayed and arrested— find refuge, restitution, and justice. Jesus knew what it was like to be betrayed. May we act like he acted, when our betrayer comes.



**3. Jesus is condemned by the Sanhedrin.** For all those who have been falsely condemned in any setting... Jesus knows what that is like. To be at the center of a fake trial. God help us to support all those, like Jesus, who have been beaten and condemned by faux authority.

**4. Jesus is denied by Peter.** Lord, we recognize and repent of our own betrayals, and ask your pardon, as Peter did. And may that pardon fuel lasting care for the safety, health, and spiritual healing of all who have been abandoned.

**5. Jesus is judged by Pilate.** May we always remember who the real king is...Lord, help us not to be led astray by false kings.

**6. Jesus is scourged and crowned with thorns.** May all victims of torture find swift healing and compassionate care, even in the unlikeliest of places. We know God, that torture is more than just physical pain. Our heart's and mind's can be ravaged and tortured. Jesus knows how that feels.

**7. Jesus takes up his cross.** May all who carry heavy burdens—laborers, victims of violence whose families are shattered, prisoners whose efforts seem futile, caregivers with few resources and little rest—be sustained on their journeys. And may we be the hands and feet of the Sustainer.

**8. Jesus is helped by Simon of Cyrene to carry his cross.** May we, when we witness others' suffering, have the will and the courage to offer immediate and unstinting help, even when our efforts involve risk.

**9. Jesus meets the women of Jerusalem.** May we, indeed, weep for ourselves and for our children, seeing Christ's own suffering among and around us, keeping our hearts and imaginations open to their pain. May our tears deepen our motivation to seek peace, offer shelter, and sit with those who mourn.

**10. Jesus is nailed to the cross.** May we recognize in his death the cost and magnitude of redemptive love, "broader than the measures of the mind," amazing and mysterious and new every morning, even in this troubled world.

**11. Mary and the beloved disciple stand at the foot of the cross.** May we love those given into our care, widen our sense of family, and receive all guests, refugees, strangers, and friends as God's own.

**12. Jesus dies on the cross.** May the rent veil remind us of the One who witnesses all our wanderings, all our errors, all our evil impulses and acts, and remains utterly and ultimately faithful.

**13. Jesus' body is taken down from the cross.** May we deal tenderly with the dead and those who mourn them. In each death may we remember that we live into a promise, that the story we are given, by the grace of God, continues.

**14. Jesus is laid in the tomb.** May no death be in vain, but each one a teaching, an occasion to learn trust, and a time to remember, await, and practice resurrection.

I hope this helps you in your devotional time as we all prepare for the wonderful Resurrection Sunday! It is shaping up to be a great day.... Service starts at 7 AM and pancakes will be served after worship. I will save a seat for you!

I will see you on Easter...Amen.

Brad

## ----- SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS-----

1 John 1: 3-4 says, "We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ". Sunday School is a great place to fellowship and grow in your love for Jesus. Sunday School is a great place to help us understand God's word. It's not just for kids. The whole family can enjoy Sunday School!

### Mark your calendars:

Sunday, April 2nd - Assembly at 9:00 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall.

Sunday, April 9th - Easter Sunday, *No Sunday School*

Sunday, April 16th - CEC Meeting after church - **(ALL ARE ENCOURAGED TO ATTEND)**

Sunday, April 21-22nd - Ocker Craft Retreat sponsored by Sunday School - *We need lots of help to pull this off! Lunch and dinner on Saturday are covered. We still need dinner for Friday night and desserts. We will also need help with set up and clean up.*

Looking ahead...

Sunday, May 7th - Muffins with Mom in celebration of Mother's Day

Sunday, May 21st - Graduation luncheon

Lastly, please let me know if you are able to fill in as a substitute teacher for our children and youth. Occasionally, things come up and our teachers need a sub.

Tracie Malovets, Sunday School Supt.

### **CHRISTIAN SISTERS NEWS**

Christian Sisters met Tuesday, March 21. We shared a meal and a devotion was given by Deanna Naivar. Christian Sisters will provide Palms for Palm Sunday and Lillies for Easter. They also plan to purchase a food processor for the church.

Christian Sisters provide support to the Church through volunteering and financial support. One of the many things they do is sending greeting cards to our shut-ins.

The next meeting will be Tuesday, April 18, 2023. We welcome all ladies to join us.



### **FATHERS DAY FUNDRAISER**

Please mark your calendar for  
June 18, 2023!

Sign ups will be available soon.  
Please consider ways you can help.

### **●CHOIR●**

**The Sanctuary Choir will be presenting  
two special numbers at the  
Easter Sunday Service.  
Please join us for rehearsal on  
Wednesday, March 29 &  
Wednesday, April 5  
at 6:30 pm in the Sanctuary.**



# **OCKER BRETHREN CHURCH SKATING SOCIAL**

**All ages are invited and you can bring friends!  
We have rented the entire Wheels Family Skating Center in Temple  
(814 North 31<sup>st</sup> Street, just past Temple High School).**

**SUNDAY, APRIL 23  
5:30-7:30pm**



## **YOUTH ACTIVITIES:**

**Every Wednesday** youth 6-8pm. Family game night is the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday. Beginning Wednesday, April 12, youth will be at Jenn & JPs. Be sure to check the BYF remind for updates. (If you would like to join the remind, text @ockerb to 81010.)

- **YOUTH VOLLEYBALL RETREAT** (ages 12-21) June 3-4: Forms due May 15. We will have a volleyball team, but anyone interested in hanging out that doesn't plan to play volleyball is also welcome to attend. **MAKE SURE TO REGISTER BY THE DEADLINE OF MAY 15.**

## **Summer Camp 2023**

**Register online at HUSCAMP.ORG. Use the coupon code: OCKER. Each camper is responsible for a \$50 deposit. Ocker Church pays the remainder of the fee for those that register by the deadline.**

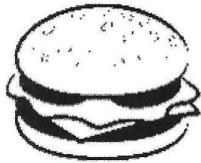
Hus School (ages 16 & older): June 4-16

Discovery (ages 14-15): June 18-23

Pioneer (ages 12-13): June 25-30

Encounter (ages 7-9): July 9-12

Alpha (ages 10-11) July 16-20



## **Hamburger Dinner & Silent Auction**

**Saturday, April 1, 2023 at the Hus Encampment**

**Fellowship begins- 3pm. Meal served- 6pm. Silent Auction ends- 7pm.**

Everyone is invited to enjoy hamburgers, chips, dessert, and tea. Meal will be served at 6pm. A free will-offering will be collected. There will also be a silent auction that will run throughout the afternoon and close at 7:00pm. Funds will benefit the summer camping programs and facility improvements.

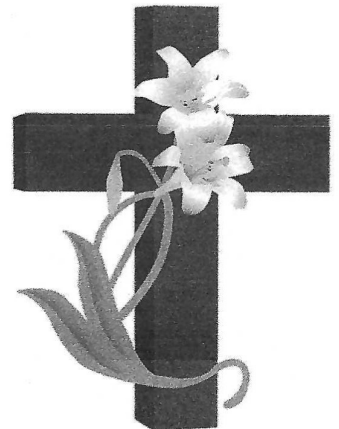
If you cannot attend but would like to make a donation or need more information, please contact Kayla Marek (512) 944-2619 or Jennifer Chervenka (254) 913-1244. All checks should be made payable to "State BYF".



# Operation Christmas Child Why?

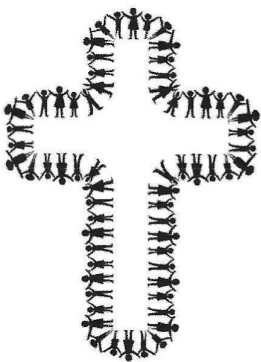
This month's newsletter will be different but I encourage you to read it through, you won't regret it. Every month we talk about Operation Christmas Child but someone may not completely understand it. Let us explain. **There is a spiritual and physical aspect to OCC.** This month, we will discuss the spiritual aspect of OCC while the month of May will discuss the physical aspect. But first we must ask one question. **What is OCC?** In 1993, Franklin Graham (President of Samaritan's Purse) was asked by a man in England to provide shoeboxes filled gifts for children in war-torn Bosnia. Through Samaritan's Purse and Calvary Church of Charlotte, a total of 28,000 shoeboxes were provided at Christmas time. Thus Operation Christmas Child was started. **Since then, more than 198 million boxes have been sent to over 170 countries and territories.** (A percent of these boxes came directly from Ocker!!)

So what spiritual aspect does OCC provide for the millions of children who receive a box? It is quite simple. **OCC provides the truth of Jesus Christ!** *"Let the children come to me; do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God"* Mark 10:14. The mission of OCC is to demonstrate God's love to the children. They are taught about who Jesus is, what he did on the cross, and how much he loves each and every one of us. **"Every box is an opportunity to reach a child with the Gospel of Jesus Christ" – Franklin Graham.** Through the shoeboxes, millions of children accept Jesus into their lives.



But it doesn't stop at a shoebox. OCC is partnered with thousands of local churches around the world who host the outreach events of gifting the shoeboxes. Through these churches, millions of volunteers teach a 12-lesson program called **The Greatest Journey** to any child who wants to grow their relationship with Christ. Started in 2009, over **30 million children** have enrolled in this discipleship course to **learn how to follow Christ and share Jesus with others.** *"Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age"* *Matthew 28:19-20.* **These children are now sharing their faith with family and friends, causing an ever-expanding growth on God's kingdom.** So OCC is more than a box, it is an opportunity to accept Jesus Christ into a child's life and share Jesus with others.

So this month as we celebrate Easter and think about what Jesus did on the cross for us, Ocker OCC wants **you to be inspired to share Jesus both locally and globally.** We encourage you to bring in any type of donations for the OCC shoeboxes: toys, hygiene items, school supplies, shoes, clothes, etc. When you place an item into the donation box, think about a child somewhere within the world and what a shoebox will do for them in their lives. **Think about how one shoebox has to potential to change countless lives.** Then we encourage you to have **no shame for the gospel** and go out into **your world** among friends, family, co-workers, neighbors to **share the good new of Jesus Christ.** *Together we are*



*working to see "a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb"*  
*Revelations 7:9-10.*

**\*Please place all donations into the OCC box located under the OCC bulletin board in the fellowship hall or give to Erin Brinkley or Tracie Malovets.**



# April 2023



SUNDAY

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY

							1
 PALM SUNDAY Sunday School 9 am Worship 10:15 am	2	3	4	5 YOUTH BIBLE STUDY 6-8 PM <i>Adult Bible Study 6:30 pm</i>	6 Senior Adult Fellowship 9 am – 1 pm <b>MAUNDY THURSDAY</b> <b>6:30 PM</b>	7	8
 HAPPY EASTER <b>WORSHIP 7 AM</b>	9	10	11	12 YOUTH BIBLE STUDY 6-8 PM <b>BOARD OF ELDERS 6:30 PM</b> <i>Adult Bible Study 6:30 pm</i>	13	14	15
16 Sunday School 9 am Worship 10:15 am	17	18	19 YOUTH BIBLE STUDY <i>Adult Bible Study 6:30 pm</i>	20 Senior Adult Fellowship 9 am – 1 pm	21	22	<div data-bbox="1094 822 1490 864" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">           -Craft Retreat sponsored by Sunday School-         </div>
23 Sunday School 9 am Worship 10:15 am	24	25	26 FAMILY GAME NIGHT 6 PM	27	28	29	
30 Sunday School 9 am Worship 10:15 am							

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[www.ockerbrethrenchurch.org](http://www.ockerbrethrenchurch.org)  
Twitter: @ockurchurch  
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Facebook!

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- APRIL BIRTHDAYS**
- 4/2 - Emily Sebek
  - Scott Cummings
  - 4/7 - Kim Dillard
  - 4/9 - Karly Powell
  - 4/10 - Kolbi Caldwell
  - 4/11 - Frances Harper
  - 4/12 - Dillon Barbisch
  - Erin Brinkley
  - 4/17 - Jordan Barbisch
  - 4/18 - Tamela Paddenburg
  - 4/24 - Jordan Sebek
  - Grant Jungmann
  - 4/25 - Jerry Dillard
  - 4/28 - Kyler Caldwell
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Maundy Thursday has been part of the Christian calendar as early as the late 4th century. The word *maundy* comes from the Latin word *mandatum*, which means "*command*." Specifically, this word emphasizes the command that Jesus gave to his disciples at the Last Supper. However, before the meal even started, Jesus set a radical example for his disciples when he washed their feet. This act underscores that serving Christ meant being a servant to all people. In addition, Jesus commanded his followers that night to continue the act of communion in remembrance of him.

Every year, Christians around the world gather on this night to commemorate and remember Jesus' greatest commandment and to continue the sacred tradition of communion. In short, the service is meant to recreate the feelings and emotions of that pivotal night before Jesus died. Typically, the mood of a Maundy Thursday service is somber and serious...and that heavy mood is meant to hover over the service and each worshipper as we consider the great price that was paid for our salvation and the way our slain savior has asked us to live.

**Join us - Maundy Thursday at 6:30 pm**