



# THE VINE

**I Am the Vine; You Are the Branches."**

"If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit: apart from me he can do nothing."  
John 15:5

A Newsletter for the Benton, Waller, & Town Hill United Methodist Churches

Welcome to the March / April newsletter produced by the Tuesday afternoon Women's Bible Study group. We will endeavor to print on a regular basis a variety of articles and pictures that pertain to Our Church Family.

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As we approach the season of warmer weather and new beginnings, let us pray, read God's Word, and prepare our hearts for Lent and Easter.

## PASTOR'S CORNER

### LENT

Lent is a season of forty days, not counting Sundays, which begins on Ash Wednesday and ends on Holy Saturday. *Lent* comes from the Anglo-Saxon word "*Lenten*," which means "spring." The season is a preparation for celebrating Easter. Historically, Lent began as a period of fasting and preparation for baptism by converts and then became a time for penance by all Christians. The First Sunday describes Jesus' temptation by Satan; and the Sixth Sunday (Passion/Palm Sunday), Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem and his subsequent passion and death. Because Sundays are always little Easters, the penitential spirit of Lent should be tempered with joyful expectation of the Resurrection.

The Great Three Days - sometimes called the Triduum or Pasch - from sunset Holy Thursday through sunset Easter Day are the climax of Lent (and of the whole Christian year) and a bridge into the Easter Season. These days proclaim the paschal mystery of Jesus Christ's passion, death, and resurrection. During these days, the community journeys with Jesus from the upper room, to the cross, to the tomb, and to the garden. They should be seen as a great unified service beginning with a service of Holy Communion on Holy Thursday and concluding with the services of Easter Day. These services may be connected with a prayer vigil lasting from Holy Thursday evening (or Good Friday) until the first service of Easter and may be accompanied by fasting.

## EASTER SEASON

The Easter Season, also known as the Great Fifty Days, begins at sunset Easter Eve and continues through the day of Pentecost. It is the most joyous and celebrative season of the Christian year. It focuses on Christ's resurrection and ascension and on the giving of the Holy Spirit on the first Easter (John 20:22-23) and the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2). Lessons from the Acts of the Apostles replace readings from the Old Testament because the early church, empowered by the Holy Spirit, is the best witness to the Resurrection. The ancient Christian name for this festival is *Pasch*, derived from the Hebrew "*Pesach*" ("deliverance" or "Passover"), thus connecting the Resurrection to the Exodus. The origin of the English word *Easter* is disputed but may come from the Anglo-Saxon spring goddess *Eastre* and her festival. *Pentecost* comes from the Greek "*pentekoste*", which means "fiftieth." It refers to the Jewish Feast of Weeks, which Greek-speaking Jews called the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1). Early Christians also used the term Pentecost to refer to the Great Fifty Days as a season.

## LAY LEADER'S CORNER

### JESUS – GIVEN OR BROKEN, THE LORD'S PRAYER

Many, if not most, of us were brought up with the King James Bible and so were led to believe that Paul said in 1 Corinthians 11:24, And when he had given thanks, he brake [it], and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me.

However, most modern translations (including the NASB, NRSV, ESV, and NIV) with the exception of the NKJV and a couple of others leave out the word broken. John MacArthur says in his NKJV study Bible that "There is weak manuscript evidence for the existence of this word in the original Greek." It is my belief that Paul never said this and so most modern translations which are based on more recent manuscript discoveries say, "...which is for you." In Luke 22:19 almost all English translations (including the KJV and NKJV) use "given for you."

Why is this important? Biblically, if His body was broken it would not have qualified as the Passover lamb, which I think we all believe pre-figured Christ's ultimate sacrifice as the Lamb of God. When Moses was given the instructions for the first Passover, the Jews were instructed with regards to the lamb in Exodus 12:36 "...nor are you to break any bone in it." This is reaffirmed in Numbers 9:12, "nor break a bone of it." In John 19:36 we are told that the prophecy of Psalm 34:20 that "Not a bone of Him shall be broken." is fulfilled. This is an important connection to the Passover lamb. When the Romans went to break the legs (John 19:33) of the men on the crosses they found Jesus already dead. (The Jews had asked the Romans to do this so the bodies would not be left on the crosses on the Sabbath of the Passover (John 19:31). Jesus chose the moment of His death (John 19:30) when He gave up His spirit. According to John 19:37, the soldier that pierced Him was fulfilling the prophecy of Zechariah 12:10, "They will look upon Him who they have pierced." This spilling of His blood was a necessary part of His sacrifice just as spreading the blood on the doorways in

Egypt protected the Jews from the Angel of Death and the spilling of blood on the altar to wash away sins in the sacrificial system established thru Moses.

Perhaps even more important is the fact that while Jesus was fully man, he was also fully God and was the omnipotent creator of the universe, including mankind. So, in what way do we say that He was broken? Jesus gave His body for us of His own free will, for no one could possibly have done anything to Him that He did not allow. Saying He was broken gives the idea that perhaps what happened to Jesus was out of His control, when in fact nothing was done to Him that He did not allow, even to the point of deciding the instant of His death. Yes He was beaten, battered, tortured, drug through the street, humiliated, taunted, belittled, crowned with thorns, nailed to the cross, died for us, and bore all of our sin from the beginning to the end of time; but how could Jesus who was still fully God ever be “broken” either spiritually or physically? Even though Jesus felt pain far beyond anything we can ever comprehend and bore the burden of all that sin including all the pain that it caused, He is still infinitely powerful and so must be capable of bearing an infinite load. Therefore, by saying that He was broken, are we not diminishing what we believe about His deity?

Certainly, I’m sure that many good Christians may disagree with my belief on this, but I wonder if all that refer to Jesus being broken have really prayed, studied and thought about what that means. I try to tune it out when this is said in preparation for Communion and when one of the several hymns is sung which say things like, “Jesus was broken....” I sing it as “Jesus was given...” The Bible in the original manuscripts was certainly inerrant, but there are a very few cases where a word or two may have been added, deleted, or changed over the centuries. Sometimes a single word can make a big difference in what is being said. I would like to know what you think, and please feel free to share this as you see fit. May the Lord and His Spirit bless you and the congregation of believers.

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BENTON-WALLER-TOWN HILL CHARGE

# Youth Ministry Spring Calendar

MARCH-MAY 2022

We send out weekly text updates! To register for our weekly updates, just text "@wellumcpa" to 81010. Standard message and data rates apply.

## March

2nd- NO YOUTH GROUP MEETING

- Ash Wednesday Service, 7pm @Jerseytown UMC

9th- NEW SERIES: This Sounds Familiar (Bible stories we think we know)

23rd- Spring Challenge Begins (details TBA)

## April

3rd- DEADLINE to sign up for Skirmish Paintball Trip

20th- NEW SERIES: The Letter of James

23rd- Skirmish Paintball Trip

## May

25th- Spring Challenge Finale

## Skirmish Paintball Trip

Date: April 23, 2022

Time: 11am-6pm

Cost: Basic entry and paintballs covered by church, any special upgrades (if desired) will be paid by youth/parents. Youth will need to either pack a lunch or bring money for lunch (menu at skirmish.com).

**DEADLINE TO REGISTER APRIL 3RD!!!**

Scan the QR code to register.

