



# March Messenger

## ASBURY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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Why is Good Friday good, mom? What makes a day when Jesus died so good? Both of our children have asked me these very questions. I am sure at the very afternoon when Jesus died it did not seem so good. Hate and jeering and agony consumed the space of and around the cross. Even as Jesus cried out “*Eloi, Eloi lema sabachthani!*”, people below mocked him, saying he was calling out to Elijah. But there is a twist....

Even with dying breath, Jesus crying out from the cross was declaring the good in Good Friday. It was the practice of rabbis then (and even now) to go back and forth with different texts to point to a different part of the text than what they were actually quoting. Jesus does this here.

What we know as Psalm 22, beginning with Jesus’s dying words, ends on a completely different note. Through the psalmist’s agony of torment, trouble, and suffering, the words turn towards God. Starting in verse 19, we are reminded that the Lord is the deliverer – one to be praised and one to be feared. This Lord is the one who does not despise the afflicted and welcomes the poor to eat and be satisfied. This Lord, this Adonai, is to be worshipped and adored.

“future generations will be told about the Lord. They will proclaim his righteousness, declaring to a people yet unborn:  
HE HAS DONE IT!” *Psalm 22:30b-31, NIV*

Jesus is not declaring “I am done and out of breath.” Jesus, as he says “*It is finished*” in John, is declaring God has completed the task to set humanity free from bondage – to be able to live a life free in joy, hope, and peace. *God has done it!* is the good of Good Friday!

Psalm 22 holds the tension of the dark and the light of the good, as does Good Friday – holding our hearts in the void of waiting for the 3rd day, which we know now as Resurrection Day. There is something to be said about this tension in our own lives – the real of day to day struggle, but the joy of the promise of new life, new hope, and a new day. And in our culture, we would rather just soothe away the bad and not deal with it, but in reality it holds the promise so the new dawn can break forth – so the light can overcome it! This is Jesus’s declaration from the cross: God has done it!

I want to personally invite you to worship over Holy Week and into Easter – to fully participate in both the tension and the fullness of rejoicing as we declare aloud – *Jesus is alive! God has done it! Hallelujah! Amen!*

### CHURCH STAFF

**MINISTER:**

Rev. Katie Osier

**OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR:**

Sue Chaney

**INTERTWINE YOUTH MINISTRY:**

Rev. Kara Jones

**DIRECTOR OF MUSIC:**

Rev. Carol Ann Bradley

**WORSHIP LEADER:**

Peter Baylis

**CHILDREN'S CHOIR DIRECTOR:**

Natalie Ritchie

**CUSTODIAN:**

Tom Szymkowiak

# PARTAKING IN A HOLY LENT: PRAY, FAST, GIVE

## PRAYER

### 40 DAYS OF PRAYER

For those praying for families, please remember to send a card to those families during Holy Week to let them know you have been praying for them.

### SUNDAY, MARCH 24: OHIO WESLEYAN PRAYER LABYRINTH, FOLLOWING WORSHIP

After the Palm Sunday Service, all are invited to the Prayer Labyrinth at Ohio Wesleyan to shift from a loud parade to a quiet, contemplative journey through the labyrinth. There will be a written guide for you if you desire. All ages are welcome.

## FASTING

### FASTING EVENT: SUNDAY, MARCH 3 FOLLOWING WORSHIP – GREAT ROOM

What a welcome relief it would be to fast from consuming, from multi-tasking and inattention, from scarcity anxiety, and more. All ages are invited to a six station event to practice varying practices to help embrace a new way of living to invite more time to spend with God. No reservation needed, just come as you are.

Ways to fast from these vices are also found in the weekly Grow, Pray, Study insert in your bulletin.

## GIVING

### ALMSGIVING: LAUNDRY LOVE – LENTEN BOXES COLLECTION

During the Lenten season, individuals/families will pick up a Lenten Box, in which persons can make donations of quarters, dollars, or checks (made out to Asbury UMC with Laundry Love in the memo line) for Laundry Love, a local ministry that enables some of our low income or underserved neighbors to wash up to 4 loads of laundry at the Super Wash & Tan in Delaware, Ohio.

**The Lenten Boxes will be collected on March 31.** Laundry Love is held at Super Wash & Tan, 256 S. Sandusky St., twice a month (one night and one day). The cost of doing one load of laundry (wash and dry) is approximately \$60.

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## HOLY WEEK: MARCH 23-31

This year, Asbury UMC will share the journey of Jesus's final days with William Street UMC and Zion UCC. You are invited to journey with friends, new and old, as we prepare our hearts for the celebration of Easter morning!

**PALM SUNDAY – March 24:** Asbury UMC @ 10:45 AM

**MAUNDY THURSDAY – March 28:** Asbury UMC @ 7 PM

**GOOD FRIDAY – March 29:**

St. Mary's Cross Walk @ 11 AM & Service @ 12 Noon

Prayer in the Sanctuary @ 1-2 PM & 6:30-7:30 PM

Evening Service @ William Street UMC @ 7 PM

**EASTER VIGIL – March 29:** Zion UCC @ 7:30 PM – Outdoors (please dress accordingly)

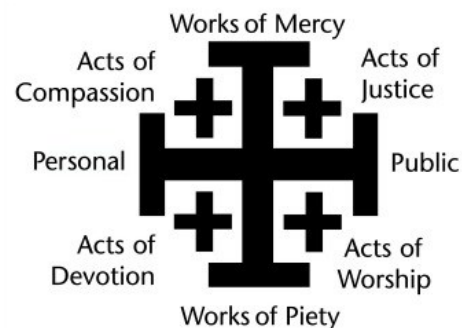
**EASTER SUNDAY – March 31:** Asbury UMC @ 10:45 AM

## SUNDAY SCHOOL FOR ALL AGES: 9:30 AM EVERY SUNDAY

### Godly Play Class - PreK-Grade 5

In March, we continue the journey through Lent towards the Mystery of Easter through these Godly Play stories:

- March 3 Jesus and the Children
- March 10 Jesus and the Women
- March 17 The Legend of the Easter Egg
- March 24 Jesus the King (Palm Sunday) - PreK-Gr 2  
Jesus and Jerusalem (The Story of Holy Week) - Older children/youth
- March 31 The Faces of Easter: The One Who Was Easter and Still Is



### Youth Class - Grades 6-12 – Middle Room of the Balcony

Students have completed their panels and will be sharing them on Sunday, March 10 during worship as part of the sermon, relating it to Psalm 107.

The class continues on in conversation about Psalms and how they connect to their lives.

### Spiritual Journey Adult Class – Asbury UMC Library

This class will take on a new study called [Bible Stories for Grown-Ups](#) by Josh Scott. Erik English is leading the class. The class will start a new Amy Jill-Levine book before Easter. You are most welcome to come and journey with this class.

### “Class With No Name” Adult Class – McCoy Room

This new group, led by Eric Osier, explores the text of the day for worship. The class delves into understanding different perspectives in the text and how it connects to life. Bring your coffee or tea and join us for an open-ended discussion. You are welcome to join us any Sunday morning!

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## INTERTWINE YOUTH MINISTRY COLLECTIVE



All high school and middle school youth - you are invited to start the new year by coming to an Intertwine gathering. There's always lots of fun for everyone, along with thoughtful conversations in age-level groups. Intertwine meets twice each month, once together and once as Middle School and High School separate gatherings. Mark your calendars for these January Intertwine gatherings, and please remember to RSVP to Rev. Kara so she can plan on how many to expect.

**Sunday, March 3, 6:30-8:00 PM (GR 6-12) @ William Street UMC**

**Sunday, March 17, 5:00-6:30 PM (GR 6-8); 7-8:30 PM (GR 9-12)**

**@ First Presbyterian UCC**

## GIVING OPPORTUNITY (GO): LENTEN BOXES – LAUNDRY LOVE

During the Lenten season, individuals/families have been provided with the opportunity to pick up a Lenten Box, in which persons can make donations of quarters, dollars, or checks (made out to Asbury UMC with Laundry Love in the memo line) for Laundry Love, a local ministry that enables some of our low income or underserved neighbors to wash up to 4 loads of laundry at the Super Wash & Tan in Delaware, Ohio.

**The Lenten Boxes will be collected on March 31, 2024.**

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### LAUNDRY LOVE—2024



**LAUNDRY LOVE**

Asbury UMC has been invited to care for the community through Laundry Love. This occurs twice a month at Super Wash & Tan, 256 S. Sandusky St. – the second Monday of each month in the evening and the fourth Monday of each month during the day. Those who attend do a maximum of 4 loads, paid for by the financial donations from area churches and organizations.

**Volunteers are needed to help connect with the neighbors that come through conversation, serving food, and various other roles. Please contact Matt Walls at 740-513-8569 with questions or to volunteer.**

**March 2024 Laundry Love Dates:**

Monday, March 11, 2024 5-8p and Monday, March 25, 2024 10a-1p

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### FAMILY PROMISE—UPCOMING DATES

Thank you to all who provided meals for Family Promise for Asbury's first 2024 Family Promise week February 4-10, 2024

**SAVE THE DATE: Asbury's remaining 2024 Family Promise Weeks:**

April 21-27, 2024

July 21-27, 2024

Sept 29 – Oct 5, 2024

December 8-14, 2024

**On Sunday, April 21 following worship**, bring a sack lunch for your family, share in conversation and connection. Following the shared lunch, we will be working together to prepare the meal for Family Promise that evening, as well as creating other items to use later in the week.

More details are to come, but save the date!

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### SANDWICH SUNDAY: FEBRUARY 25, 2024

At the February 7, 2024, Mission and Outreach Committee meeting, it was announced that individuals have been moved out of White Sands. Therefore, this ministry at White Sands has been discontinued. **Our Last Sunday for this Ministry was: Sunday, January 28, 2024**

Let us continue to hold these families in our prayers as they seek new places.

The Mission and Outreach Committee is prayerfully considering ministries through which to reach out to persons relationally, as we have done through Sandwich Sunday.

## ...TO LIGHT, THE LAY LEADER'S REFLECTION

By Peter Baylis, Lay Leader

As I was growing up, I was up and out the door to see the sunrise on every Easter morning. However, I was not at an Easter Sunrise service but, rather, my father, my sister and I were always standing in a long line with many others anxiously waiting for the BBSIB (Brightwaters, Bay Shore Italian Bakery) to open their door. The BBSIB was an actual bakery, not the kind you find today in Kroger, Meijer, or any other big named store. This was a bakery where the bakers would start around 2 or 3 in the morning (and were fortunate enough to see the sunrise everyday) while the shop would close by 2 or 3 in afternoon. This was a bakery that truly baked high quality pastries, breads and many other goodies. And on Easter morning you would wait, pray, and hope that they didn't run out of your favorite treats before you reached the counter: bear claws, New York style crumb cake which has more crumbs than cake, cannoli's, cannoncinos, Fiocco di Neve and my favorite of favorites sfogliatella. After we made our way to the counter, we would head home with our box of bakery goodies for the rest of the family to enjoy and then we would head off to church for the Easter service. If the weather was in our favor as we waited on these Easter mornings, we would be able to see the sun rise over the water on the horizon which filled the morning sky with brilliant colors first of green and then the various shades of yellows, oranges, and reds. It was and remains an awe-inspiring moment.

And on Easter morning, the darkness of Lent has not prevailed for the Light has broken through, dispersing the darkness while ushering in a new and wonderous era. However, to truly appreciate the Light of Easter, one must and one needs to have journeyed through the darkness of Lent which is why Lent, and its darkness, is so essential to our faith and our faith journey.

Darkness is not new to creation. For the first darkness was present at the creation of the world before God created light; "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. Now the earth was a formless void and God breathed over the waters and God said, "Let there be light" and there was light." By a combination of God's breath and God's spoken word, the first light was created and in this created light God's presence was revealed against the darkness. This created light not only shows the boundlessness of God's presence, but we also are able to witness the spectacular inner beauty of God's light as seen in the colors of the rainbow.

The second darkness of creation, however, is greater, deeper, more personal and grim and demonic in nature. For on Good Friday, between the sixth and ninth hour as Jesus hung on the cross, we hear the words, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" It was at this point that creation was plummeted into utter darkness for we were crucifying Jesus, we were crucifying the Son of God, we were crucifying the God of light. And this darkness that was and is still present continues to spread through creation. This darkness is a darkness of godlessness, a darkness of hatred, of paranoia, of fear, of misguided beliefs, of cruelty, of idolatry, and of violence. And in this absolute darkness, God responded, "Let there be light". The light of the resurrection of Jesus.

In the Gospel of John, we read how Jesus makes his first appearance to the disciples who had gathered in a room with the doors locked out of fear. Jesus comes to them, through locked doors

and says, "Peace be with you." And after saying this, Jesus breathes on the disciples and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit." What we are witnessing here is the creation story of Genesis. For Jesus brings light to the darkness and the darkness cannot survive. For Jesus' words of, "Peace be with you", is the resurrected Jesus way of saying, "Let there be light." And the breath of the Holy Spirit turns the darkness that is in creation into light so that hatred is turned to love, bitterness into graciousness, fear into trust, and vengeance into forgiveness.

Good Friday still happens, unfortunately, and in fact it happens every single day. For we continue to crucify the Son of God and we continue to allow this darkness to descend upon, to infiltrate, and to penetrate the very being of our lives. But the good news is that we do not need to let this darkness overwhelm us or control us. For the light of resurrection will and does penetrate every aspect of our lives. The light of the resurrection cannot be blocked out or destroyed. The light of the resurrection can never be extinguished, no matter how hard we try or what we do to impede its mission. The resurrection of Jesus is a new light held in the words, "Peace be with you". Peace which the world desperately needs in body, mind, and soul. The resurrection of light proclaims triumph over darkness, love over hate, order over chaos and hope over hopelessness. Let us choose to live and breathe in the light of the resurrection as we celebrate being children of God.

Christ Is Risen - Brian Wren <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sCUN71d7zUk>

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## UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH NEWS

Thanks to all who participated in the Chocolate Fare. Bakers, Candy Makers, and Shoppers, helped bring in \$1,960 for missions. The United Women in Faith appreciate your abundant support.

### UPCOMING MEETINGS

Hannah ~ March 20 at 1:30pm  
Program~ "Call to Prayer and Self Denial" ( Demi Badger)  
Hostess~ Sue Proper ( 230 Sylvan Drive)

Lydia ~March 21 at 7:00pm  
UWF General Meeting ~ "The Lord's Prayer" ( a Mission U Study)  
Presented by ~ Julia Foster and Mona Ray  
Hostess~ Lydia Circle in the Church Parlor

Rebekah ~ March 20 at 9:30am  
Program ~ "Call to Prayer and Self Denial" ( Jayne Marcum)  
Hostess~ Phyllis Miller in the Church Parlor



Winnie Wright  
celebrating her 94th  
birthday with friends!

### DON'T MISS THE MARCH 21 GENERAL MEETING AT 7PM!

Julia Foster and Mona Ray will be presenting the program, "The Lord's Prayer." This is from the Mission U study and Julia and Mona will present a wonderful program that you won't want to miss. Refreshments will be served by Lydia Circle following the presentation.

## TREASURER'S REPORT, *from Tom Major: Is this chart different?*

2024	General Fund Giving	Actual Budget Spending	Surplus/(Deficit)
Prepaid in 2023	\$26,393.95		\$26,393.95
2023 Christmas	\$17,104.50		\$17,104.50
January-2024	\$42,466.09	\$30,827.31	\$11,638.78
YTD Cumulative	\$85,964.54	\$30,827.31	\$55,137.23

In a nut shell ... yes. Thanks for noticing.

We will be reporting "budget related" numbers this year. Budget spending includes Apportionments, salaries, committee budgets, loan payments, office, utilities & maintenance for both the church and parsonage, etc. Only General Fund Giving can be used to cover these budgeted expenses. Giving that is designated goes directly toward the giver's specified use. Memorials, mortgage reduction, UMCOR, or a particular church need are just some examples of designated giving that we have received in the past. Hopefully, this information will give you a better view of how we are doing with what we refer to as "general operations" of the church.

Just a word on the numbers you see in the chart. Asbury has a number of congregants that choose to give their entire annual offering in one donation. The first couple of month's Giving numbers may appear to be inflated due to receiving these types of donations. Your Finance Committee will be diligently working on stretching those offerings to last as far into the year as possible. A later Messenger article will discuss this type of giving as well as other various ways of giving to Asbury. You may discover another way to give that might better fit your needs or circumstances.

### Christmas Special Offering

This past Christmas the special offering was designated to go towards Asbury's General Fund to help bolster our financial position. This was done to help prevent having to delay payment of any of our obligations due to lack of available funds in our accounts. I am delighted to report that a very generous \$19,005.00 was received. This will help our position tremendously. A big THANK YOU goes out to everyone that donated to this special offering.

As part of this special offering, we said that a tithe would be given to a local need. Turning Point was sent a check for \$1,900.50 in February. Turning Point offers free and confidential services to domestic violence victims and their families in Crawford, Delaware, Marion, Morrow, Union, and Wyandot counties. They were very thankful for your generous gift.

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### 2024 EASTER SPECIAL OFFERING: COMMON GROUND FREE STORE

This year, Common Ground Free Store announced that they needed to expand their space. They have done so by opening a donation location at 147 East Winter Street, and now have plans to build a new building starting later this year. Asbury UMC has been faithful in supporting the ministries of Common Ground Free Store, as it serves the Delaware Community. This year's Easter Special Offering will be taken and shared with Common Ground Free Store's Building Fund.

Please make checks out to Asbury UMC and mark Easter Offering on the line or place it in the Easter Offering Envelopes or an envelope marked Easter Offering. Thank you in advance for the radical generosity given towards this wonderful ministry.

## TALENT SHOW & SWEET TREATS: SATURDAY, MARCH 2 @ 6:30 PM

Share your talents with the Asbury UMC family, whether it is juggling, stand-up comedy, singing, instrumental, dance, or something of a unique variety. Following the talent, we will gather in the Great Room to sample culinary talents: homemade sweet treats. For any further questions, please contact Jim Bartha.

## SUMMER CAMP 2024: FAITH ALIVE!

“Let all that you do be done in love.” 1 Corinthians 16:14

Summer camp has always provided opportunities for campers, young and old, to have fun in the sun. Children, youth, and adults come together to learn new skills, have new experiences, and make new friends all under the guidance of trained, creative, and compassionate staff.

All three sites will be focused on the theme “Faith Alive.” We will focus on five community faith practices: reading the Bible, worshipping, praying, providing hospitality, and living a life of service to the world. These five are a great launching point for campers to incorporate faith into everyday living.

Our key verse for this summer’s curriculum is the passage from 1 Corinthians mentioned above. For both the Corinthians and us, if we remember only one thing about living out our faith, it is to let love be our rule.

For information on Summer Camps, contact your local church, visit [www.EastOhioCamps.org](http://www.EastOhioCamps.org) or call the East Ohio Camps Office at 330-499-3972 ext. 139.



## CONFIRMATION RETREAT PICTURES

February 23-25, 12 students and 2 adults attending the East Ohio Conference Confirmation Retreat, learning about UMC history, spiritual disciplines, and sacraments. Intermixed was games, a hike, and time to interact with youth from 6 other churches. Thank you for praying for the group!



### DEADLINE FOR THE APRIL MESSENGER

Articles for the April Messenger are due by March 15. Send to [asburychurchohio@gmail.com](mailto:asburychurchohio@gmail.com). Thank you!



**Bob Backus and family** in the passing of his brother, Bill Backus, on Saturday, February 3.

*With Sympathy*

**Margo & Don Litke**, in the passing of his sister, Barbara Nichols, on Sunday, February 18.

**Ann Davis** in the passing of her friend, **Leigh Rabby**.

### Prayers for the Congregation

Nancy Henkle	Mike Jones
Sandy Mead	Steve Mead
Ken Morton	Ed Powell
Winnie Wright	Lois Benton



### Limited Activities List

Lois Benton	Helen Berrisford
Norma Chidester	Paula Gordin
Rosalie Hutter	Mike Jones
Kay & David Nardin	Yvonne Potts
Janet Schwab	Jeff Viri-Dunahue
Winnie Wright	

### Friends in Need of Prayer

**Graciana Stonsifer:** 2nd cousin of Steve Dolk  
**Sue Byers:** Ann Davis's sister  
**Vivien Backus:** daughter of Bob Backus  
**Jeff Brubaker,** Dan & Heather Phillips request  
**Kathy Childress and family,** sister-in-law of Heather and Dan Phillips  
**Greg Maddox,** friend of Dan Phillips  
**Carrie Hall,** Carol & Dick Brulotte's daughter  
**Tom Ebbert,** Doris Ebbert's husband  
**Linda Potter,** friend of Carol Brulotte  
**Bonnie Slusser,** Mother of Ruth Ward  
**Jeff Campbell,** friend of Mary Jean Roach

**Our Asbury church members whose families  
are serving in the military**

## March BIRTHDAYS



- 1 Alison Alsup  
Terri Litchfield  
Brodie Ritchie  
Steve Whitmore
- 2 Samuel Gibson
- 3 Logan Bragg
- 4 Isobel Alsup  
Helen Berrisford  
Heather Phillips  
Jose Viri-Dunahue
- 5 Nate Cook  
Sandra Mead
- 6 Paula Gordin  
Vivian Haase
- 7 Susan Hetzel
- 8 Abigail Richardson
- 9 Susan Proper
- 10 Molly Michael
- 11 Joseph Lautenbach
- 12 Erik English
- 14 Sarah Miller-Warner
- 15 Alex Gibson  
Calvin Vermilion
- 16 Philip Spiegel
- 17 William Daniels  
Benjamin Villanueva-Henkle
- 18 Lynette Richardson  
Crystal Spires  
Davis Wolff
- 19 Jeffery Viri-Dunahue
- 23 Rich Edwards  
Graham Mukuha
- 23 Dan Bania
- 25 Phyllis Miller  
Alejandro Villanueva-Henkle
- 28 Abigail Kumpf
- 29 Adeline Flanery
- 30 Marly Hittepole

# MARCH 2024

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
<p>3 9am Children &amp; Youth Choirs 9:30am Sunday School for all 10:45am Worship 6:30 pm Intertwine MS &amp; HS @ William St. UMC</p>	<p>4 5:45 DCC Chorus &amp; Youth Chorale</p>	<p>5 7pm Trustees</p>	<p>6 6pm Bell Choir 7pm Adult Choir 7pm Mission &amp; Outreach</p>	<p>7 7pm DCP Board Meeting 7pm Lydia Circle</p>	<p>1 8am - Morning Prayer</p>	<p>2 6:30pm All Church Talent Show &amp; Treats</p>
<p>1 0 9am Children &amp; Youth Choirs 9:30am Sunday School for all 10:45am Worship 6:30 Confirmation Class</p>	<p>1 1 10am UWF Board 5pm Laundry Love @ Super Wash 5:45 DCC Chorus &amp; Youth Chorale</p>	<p>1 2 7pm Trustees</p>	<p>1 3 6pm Bell Choir 7pm Adult Choir</p>	<p>1 4 7pm DCP Board Meeting 7pm Lydia Circle</p>	<p>1 5 Messenger Deadline 8am - Morning Prayer</p>	<p>1 6</p>
<p>1 7 9am Children &amp; Youth Choirs 9:30am Sunday School for all 10:45am Worship 5:00pm Intertwine Middle School @ Frist Presbyterian 7:00pm Intertwine High School @ First Presbyterian</p>	<p>1 8 5pm DCP Family Yoga 5:45 DCC Chorus &amp; Youth Chorale</p>	<p>1 9 2pm Alzheimer's Group 7pm Christian Ed</p>	<p>2 0 9:30am Rebekah Circle 1:30 Hannah Circle 6pm Bell Choir 7pm Adult Choir</p>	<p>2 1 6:30pm UWF General Meeting</p>	<p>2 2 8am - Morning Prayer</p>	<p>2 3</p>
<p>2 4 9am Children &amp; Youth Choirs 9:30am Sunday School for all 10:45am Worship Ohio Wesleyan Prayer Labyrinth Experience following Worship</p>	<p>2 5 10am Laundry Love @ Super Wash 5:45 DCC Chorus &amp; Youth Chorale</p>	<p>2 6</p>	<p>2 7 6pm Bell Choir 7pm Adult Choir</p>	<p>2 8 7pm Maundy Thursday Service @ Asbury UMC</p>	<p>2 9 8am - Morning Prayer 11am St. Mary's Cross Walk &amp; 12pm Service 1-2 &amp; 6:30-7:30pm Prayer in the Sanctuary 7 pm Good Friday Service @ William Street UMC</p>	<p>3 0 7:30 Easter Vigil Service @ Zion UCC</p>
<p>3 1 9am Children &amp; Youth Choirs 9:30am Sunday School for all 10:45am Worship</p>						