

APRIL

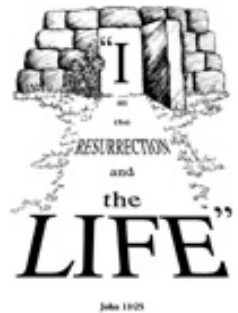
The Ugly Duckling Becomes a Beautiful Swan

The Phoenix rises from the ashes. Cinderella rises from the cinders to become a queen. The Ugly Duckling becomes a beautiful swan. Pinocchio becomes a real boy. The frog becomes a prince. The Cowardly Lion gets his courage, the Scarecrow his brains, and the Tin Woodman a new heart. They are all transformed into the very thing they never thought they could be.

Why are we enchanted by tales of transformation? I can't think of a movie or novel or fairy tale that doesn't somehow turn on this. Why is it an essential part of any great story? Because it is the secret to Christianity, and Christianity is the secret to the universe. "You must be born again" (John 3:7). You must be transformed. Keeping the Law, following the rules, polishing up your manners — none of that will do. "What counts is whether we really have been changed into new and different people" (Gal. 6:15). Is this not the message of the Gospel? Zacchaeus the trickster becomes Zacchaeus the Honest One. Mary the loose woman becomes Mary the Last of the Truly Faithful. Paul the self-righteous murderer becomes Paul the Humble Apostle.

And us? I doubt many of us would go so far as to say we're *transformed*. Perhaps we have changed a bit in what we believe and how we act. We confess the creeds now, and we've gotten our temper under control . . . for the most part. But "transformed" seems a bit too much to claim. How about "forgiven and on our way"? That's how most Christians would describe what's happened to them. It's partly true . . . and partly *untrue*, and the part that's untrue is what's killing us. We've been told that even though we have placed our hope in Christ, even though we have become his followers, our *hearts* are still desperately wicked. And of course, so long as we believe that our hearts remain untouched, unchanged, we will pretty much live untouched and unchanged. For our heart is the wellspring of life within us.

During this Easter season, may you move from "changed a bit" to truly transformed. May you know the resurrection power as you never have – and thus be transformed! Happy Easter!



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Thank you

"To All at the church who knew "Gillie". Thank you to you all for your kind warm words, thoughts and prayers. He so enjoyed his time with you and loved telling stories. Thank you for remembering.

Jerry & Nancy Harramis

Ann & David Palmateer,

Jerry & Suszie Stalder

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Town Hall of Hope

The Town Hall of Hope is all set! On April 23rd, 8:00-9:30 pm in the fellowship hall, there will be a Town Hall of Hope. This is a broadcast by Dave Ramsey who can be seen on many Christian TV stations, Fox News as well as heard on numerous radio stations. Dave Ramsey will share some straight talk on what's going on with our economy, share a Biblical understanding and then share real stats and the steps to take to hope.

This event is free. Please plan to attend and bring a friend – especially one who's been impacted in a negative way by the economy.



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Directory

Thank you SOO much to everyone who came in and had a picture taken! We needed everyone to participate to make it truly representative of our church. It helps show our unity and will allow us all to get to know each other better (NOW you can put a name to that face!) So thank you to each one who came in, braved the hassles and had a picture taken. Some of you have already received your pictures and everyone who had a picture taken will receive a church directory.



Thank you Judy Barber who had to handle everything on picture day (while the pastor buried her dog) and to Marianna Holtel who laid out our activity pages. Together – we did it!

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Nothing sets a person so much out of the devil's reach as humility. – Jonathon Edwards

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Evangelism Goal

Everyone at FUMC is challenged to pray for at least one unchurched person for at least one minute every day at 1:00 pm. If you cannot possibly pray for one minute at 1:00 pm, you may want to choose another time. The important thing is to pray! After you've prayed for a person for a few weeks, consider inviting them to worship with you.

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FUMC Shut-ins

Charles Harris – Hickory Creek Continuing Care, 51 East Fourth Street, The Plains, Ohio 45780
Eileen Burchfield, Charlotte Smathers – Logan Health Care, 300 Arlington Drive, Logan, 43138
Alberta Hellyer - Reflections, 2750 W Fair Ave, Apt 226, Lancaster, Ohio 43130
Lucille Steenrod, Ray (Doc) Howe, Crestviw Manor, 925 Becks Knob Road, Lancaster, 43130
Nellie Haynes – Brown Memorial, 158 E Mound St, Circleville, Ohio 43113
Dorothy Colwell, 1658 Connett, Nelsonville 45764
Mary Smith, 371 W Franklin, Nelsonville, 45764
Shirley Howard, 103 ½ St Charles St, Nelsonville 45764
Chuck Mohny, 96 Mill St, Nelsonville 45764
Clara Mae Pitts, 504 W Washington St, Nelsonville
Ronnie Townsend, 187 Watkins St, Nelsonville 45764
Dan Cox, 8561 Victoria Meadow Lane, Reynoldsburg 43068
Geneva Johnson, *we need an address - if you have one, please let us know!*
David Lovsey, 4369 Davis Road, Macon, GA 31217

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Help the Pastor

As you probably know, the Ohio Legislature passed a bill a few years ago, prohibiting hospitals from providing lists of patients to anyone (including pastors). They no longer call a pastor when you are admitted to the hospital. If you're admitted to the hospital, please have a family member call the pastor (in most cases, a chaplain will call for you too). *There is no other way for the pastor to know you are in the hospital, unless you call.* It is helpful as well to let the pastor know when you're released - a trip to a hospital following your release takes time away from helping someone else. If you go to a rehab center, the pastor will not know unless you call Rev Walters and let her know.



If you'd like the pastor to make a call (to your home), please mark the attendance pad or call the office to schedule.

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Services for Shut-ins

Tapes of our morning worship services are available each week. They can be picked up on the vestibule table or delivered to shut-ins by Bill & Joan Cox. Call the office at 753-1939 to make arrangements or for more information.

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Live in such a way that those who know you will come to know God because they know you.

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Ministry to a Soldier

Interested in helping a soldier be a bit less lonely? Check out www.mysoldier.com and make a difference in someone's life.

Tom & Marge Riley's grandson's address is: GySgt Riley, MJ 1st PLT, TASK FORCE MP's, 1st BN, 12th MAR, D Company, Unit 44121, FPO, AP 96607-4121

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Bring a Friend

Been to worship lately? The weather has gotten some of us out of the habit. Here's a quick catch-up on what's going on at First...

At 9am we have a traditional service. That means it looks a lot like what "church" has always looked like. We sing traditional hymns, the choir sings a number, there's a children's church, candles are lit – church much like it's been done since the 1950s. This service appeals to those who are listeners.

At 10am we have Sunday School. The Queen Esther Class always welcomes new members (a class for women) as does the men's class which meets in the chapel. We have classes for kids - nursery through high school too. We have a class for adults which is currently doing a study of prayer.

At 11am we have a worship service in the fellowship hall. It's more informal – we join hands to pray and children are present. Music has various formats from a soft rock beat and we've even done bluegrass!

This service has video and other media presentations for those who are more visual than aural.

If you've been missing through the winter, get back into the groove – we miss you and God misses you!

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Worship Thoughts

Many Christians seem to feel that somehow it can't be right to complain to God in the context of corporate worship when we should all feel happy. There is an implicit pressure to stifle our real feelings because we are urged, by pious merchants of emotional denial, that we ought to have "faith" (as if the moaning psalmists didn't). So we end up giving external voice to pretended emotions we do not really feel, while hiding the real emotions we are struggling with deep inside.... So, in reaction to some appalling disaster or tragedy, rather than cry out our true feelings to God, we prefer other ways of responding to it.

It surely cannot be accidental that in the divinely inspired book of Psalms there are more psalms of lament and anguish than of joy and thanksgiving. These are words that God has actually given us. God has allowed them a prominent place in his authorized songbook. We need both forms of worship in abundance as we live in this wonderful, terrible world.

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Office Hours

The office hours are Monday-Thursday, 9am-2pm. The pastor is in the office each day but attends many



community meetings, performs funerals, visits shut-ins, etc. If you'd like to speak to her, call the office and if she's not in, Mrs. Barber will have her call or make an appointment for a talk.

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Sign Up!

Are you willing to provide flowers for the sanctuary? Please indicate that by signing the flower chart. Live fresh flowers enhance our worship and we appreciate having them. Check out the chart to see which dates are available.

Want to serve as an usher or greeter for the 9am service? You can sign up to serve behind the welcome center.



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Newsletter Articles

Please turn your newsletter articles in to Judy Barber by April 20. Thanks for helping to make *The Common Line* more informative and helpful! If you have information people need, be SURE to get it to Judy (schedules for service, etc).

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I have found the paradox that if I love until it hurts, then there is no hurt, but only more love.

-Mother Teresa, "The Simple Path"

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Benefit Bank

First UMC is now a site for the Ohio Benefit Bank. That means folks can make an appointment to come in and find out what state assistance your family qualifies to receive. It provides all the forms you need to submit to the state to receive assistance if you qualify. Programs for which we can provide information include: children's health care insurance, home energy assistance, child care assistance, food stamps, tax assistance. If you know someone who could benefit from this program, please have them call the church office. We feel this will be a nice compliment to the Caring Ministry we've been providing for the last year.

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Care Corner

Check out the Care Corner while at worship! On the Canal Street side you'll find blood pressures, blood glucose checks and an opportunity to sign cards to those are under the weather. You can sign a card – or – pick one out just from you! Be sure to stop over and send your Christian greetings to those in our congregation who need an encouraging word.

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April Special Days

Some of the special days celebrated in April are:

- Palm Sunday — April 5
- Maundy Thursday – April 9
- Good Friday – April 10
- Easter – April 12
- Secretary Day – April 22



Say thank you to Judy!

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In Our Prayers

We have a lot of people traveling during Spring Break – please keep all travelers in your prayers!

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Faith never knows where it is being led, but it knows and loves the One who is leading.

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Palm Sunday

Palm Sunday is April 5th. We'll begin the service in the narthex and have a palm parade – wear your walking shoes!

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Bible Study

There is a Bible Study sponsored by Virgil and Nina McKnight every Wednesday night at 6:00. The study is a video course which is led by Les Feldick. All are welcome to join in the fellowship and the opportunity to learn from God's Word. The class meets in the chapel.

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Maundy Thursday

Maundy Thursday is April 9. We will celebrate Holy Communion together and remember the events of Jesus' last meal with his disciples. The Maundy Thursday service is at FUMC at 7:00. The choir will rehearse at 6:30 that night to prepare for Easter.

Maundy Thursday

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When you focus on being a blessing, God makes sure you're always blessed in abundance.

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Good Friday

The Good Friday service is a community service at First Presbyterian Church (on Washington Street). The service begins at 7:00 pm.

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Baptism

Come and celebrate with Layla McCollister! She will be baptized on Sunday, April 5 at 9:00 am. She is the daughter of Jeff and Anne McCollister (and sister of Donovan).

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Congratulations

Brian and Kathy Bailey welcomed a beautiful baby girl – Kelly – on March 17th. Her big sisters – Emily and Lily – are very proud and great big sisters. May God bless the Bailey family.

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Easter

On Easter morning, we'll join the community Sunrise Service at the cross at 7am and then hold our regular services at 9:00 and 11:00. There will be a special fellowship time between the services. Order your Easter flowers for \$9.

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Book Signing

Gina D'Andrea has written a book! Celebrate with Gina on Saturday, March 28 at Nelsonville Wesleyan Church. There's a reading at 10am and Gina will sign copies of the book until noon. Congrats!

