



grow. pray. serve.

Reveille UMC Weekly Guide

March 26-April 1, 2018

EASTER SUNDAY

Sermon by Lead Pastor Doug Forrester: "April Fools"

Notes from sermon on 3/25:

Prayer requests:

Family Focus Question (before sermon):

How did this year's Lent change how you think and act? How will you be different going forward?

3 Questions for small groups (after sermon):

1. Paul's claim about Christ Jesus in 1 Corinthians 15 is a creed: Christ died, was buried, was raised, and appeared to many disciples and finally to Paul, who writes, "by the grace of God I am what I am" (v. 10). If you were to say those words of yourself, what would it mean that everything about you, all you are and have done, is "by the grace of God"?
2. Where is God's grace evident in your life today?
3. How can you, as an Easter person, show this grace to someone else this week?

Monday, March 26: Read John 20:1-18

We can't believe it- Easter is here. This statement may have different meanings for us. For some, it reflects how quickly the year has gone, prompting us to solidify spring break plans and pull out our "to do" lists...revealing how distracted and busy our lives have become. For others, it expresses a joy and wonder surrounding the end of a Lenten journey that has been leading us to the cross, and then, miraculously, the empty tomb. For some of us, however, it may express underlying skepticism and doubt about the miracle of Easter altogether.

There is a place for all of us, and all of our reactions, at Reveille on Easter morning - whether we are coming to the end of a faithful, personal Lenten journey or are simply planning to attend church on Easter out of family obligation. The empty tomb, first found by a stunned Mary Magdalene, is for all of us, and on Easter Sunday Lead Pastor Doug Forrester will challenge us to view our skepticism differently, putting the burden of proof on our doubt, rather than the resurrection...challenging us all to accept the gift of grace, peace, joy, and eternal life offered to us all through this miracle of Easter.

Tuesday, March 27: Read 1 Corinthians 15:1-11

Today's passage from Paul's letter to the Corinthians hits on one irrefutable fact...*something huge* happened in the days following Jesus's crucifixion. Something that caused over 500 people to give testimony to having seen a risen Christ. Something that caused people to risk death in writing accounts of what happened and producing thousands of hand-written copies of what would eventually become the New Testament. Something that prompted thousands of followers to radically change their lives, risk torture and death, and sometimes martyr themselves in order to spread the word so others will believe. Which is harder for us to believe- that a God who created the universe could raise his son from the dead, or that all of these people were willing to die to defend a lie they had made up about a seemingly insignificant Jewish criminal who died with only 12 official followers?

Wednesday, March 28: Read Exodus 12:1-14

For the next three days, we will turn our attention to some of the Lectionary readings for Maundy Thursday and Good Friday. Today's Old Testament scripture gives us some historical background for the Lord's Supper. In Exodus, God delivered the Hebrew people from death through the blood of the Passover lamb. The Jewish people celebrate Passover every year with a holy meal, shared together, that remembers God's mercy, protection, and faithfulness to the covenant with Abraham. This Thursday, we will see how Christ celebrated his last Passover – by breaking bread with his disciples and washing their feet, ready to become the perfect sacrificial lamb whose blood would save us all.

HOLY Thursday, March 29: Read John 13:1-17, 31-35

“Do you know what I have done for you?” asks Jesus in verse 12 of today's scripture. That is a perfect question upon which to reflect today. On the eve of Good Friday, we read how Jesus humbled himself to perform an act reserved for the lowest servants – washing dirty feet – to not only show us how much our Triune God loves us, but to teach us how to properly love one another. For the rest of the week, we will celebrate what Jesus did for us through his death and resurrection. Today let us celebrate what Jesus did for us through his life- both in his words and in his example. How much did he teach us about loving one another? About loving ourselves? About how much God loves us?

GOOD Friday, March 30: Read John 18:1-19:42

Last week, we read the Passion according to Matthew. Today we are faced with the longest lectionary reading of the year- the Passion according to John. Hopefully we will make it to worship tonight and, in community, hear the Passion read aloud and experience, as close as we can, what our Savior went through to save us. As we read today, we can marvel at how Christ is still teaching us, healing us, and saving us with his every agonizing step to the cross. His courage in facing the soldiers in Gethsemane. His humility when facing his accusers. His love for his mother. His unbelievable willingness to go through an excruciating death for us. For you. Whether we would have been in the crowds crying for Jesus's execution, in the shadows denying Jesus three times, or at the foot of the cross weeping for our friend or son, Jesus has died for us all, loving us all, and saving us all.

HOLY Saturday, March 31: Read Acts 10:34-43

So we come to the end of Lent- tomorrow is Easter. What are we supposed to do now? *Be a witness.* Invite others to church. Share the story of Easter. Share what “God moments” you've had in your life. Share how it feels to not fear death, not feel condemnation, and to know unconditional love. He is risen!

EASTER Sunday, April 1: Let us prepare our hearts and minds for worship in prayer our Prayer of Common Confession: *All-knowing, all-powerful God, we confess that, even on this most holy day, we are unable to believe in the victory over death shown to us in the resurrection of Jesus Christ, our Lord. We confess our utter dependence on you not only for life but also for faith, hope, and love. Without your astonishing appearance to our ancestors and your stunning presence throughout the ages, we would be lost. Forgive us and transform us, that in every way our work and prayer will make whole what is broken and give peace on earth. Amen.*