

APRIL 2021

SCOTCH CHURCH



April 4—Easter Sunday

PARSON- -TO- PERSON



"⁸So the women hurried away from the tomb, afraid yet filled with joy, and ran to tell his disciples. ⁹Suddenly Jesus met them. "Greetings," he said. They came to him, clasped his feet and worshiped him. ¹⁰Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid. Go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me." (Matthew 28:8-10)

The women "hurried on their way," and ran smack into Jesus. The two Marys hit the brakes — and they may have started screaming or been struck dumb with fear. Remember, they'd been to a tomb. Think of your reaction to visiting a cemetery only to discover the headstone of your loved one overturned, someone whom you had watched suffer and die, and then, as you're running away confused and frightened, you bump into the deceased, who now does not appear to be deceased!

You can imagine the flood of emotions that must have washed over these women, causing their bodies to shudder from head to foot. The fact that they take hold of his feet shows us that he's a real person, not a ghost or a spirit. He is someone they can see, hear, touch, hold and connect with, like anyone else they would meet as they wander down the road.

If you are driving down the road and encounter a boulder obstructing your path, you'll need to change directions or have a collision. That is what the resurrection does: It forces us to slow down and change directions. All too often, we keep trying to plow our way past the resurrection by proceeding as though there is nothing there at all.

"I'm going to carry this burden myself," we say. "It's mine to bear."

"I'm going to stay with this guilt a while longer — getting used to it now."

"I'm not about to forgive her, no matter what she does. She done me wrong."

"If there was a God, then my suffering would not have happened."

And so it goes, as we slam into the resurrection rock getting nowhere at all. This is not a call to slow down or simplify our lifestyle. It's not about stopping to smell the roses, or the coffee or a ham dinner. It is about slowing down to reflect on the events of Easter. Like Mary and Mary, we are invited to come to Jesus, take hold of his feet and worship him. To the two Mary's, he says, "Go and tell." There are a multitude of missions to be carried out in the name of Jesus, and the challenge for us, as it was for the two Marys on that very first Easter, is to listen — listen to what Jesus is challenging us to do.

Perhaps Christ is calling you to fix a friendship that has been broken by a cruel or thoughtless act on your part, or to forgive a relative who hurt you very badly and strained your relationship to the breaking point.

Listen for what is being said to you. Listen for what you are being asked to do. After all, we're supposed to be on a "walk with Jesus," aren't we? No one ever talks about their "run with Jesus."

Peace, my friends, *Pastor Rich*

FAREWELL, MY FRIENDS

For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the LORD, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope. (Jeremiah 29:11)

We cannot always see clearly into the future, or what blessing may await us there. When the prophet Jeremiah spoke these words to the ancient Israelites, they were in exile in Babylon, far from home. Jeremiah was calling them to live into the future that was yet to be: Find a place to live. Plant a garden. Raise a family. In other words, even in this strange new place, remember the things you did before, the things that made you distinctively who you are. Make the best of it by keeping faith in this ambiguous, uncertain world.

Here's the paradox of what lies ahead both for Scotch Presbyterian Church and the Rev. Rich Hinkle. This may be the most important part of all. ***As we think of our future, it's not about us!***

I recall the words of Rev. Dawn Carder, a seminary classmate of mine, when she preached the sermon the day I was installed as pastor of First Presbyterian Church, Ponca, Nebraska, "The congregation may think they chose to call Rich as pastor; and Rich may truly believe he has chosen to come here a pastor; but here is the Gospel truth, 'It is all God's doing, it is part of God's plan for the church and Rich.'"

Those words rang true then in June of 1994 and they ring just as true in April of 2021. We live and move and have our being in God and God's future. And that is a future over which none of us have total control. (If you have confidence in the ability of human beings to completely control the future, just think back to a year ago.)

This passage from Jeremiah reminds us that God's vision for the future may be quite different than our own. Just prior to verse 11 above, Jeremiah spoke these words from God to a people in exile: *But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare. (verse 7)*

Can you imagine what a stunning word that was to the people in exile? Pray for your enemies, the ones who dragged you out kicking and screaming? Pray for this foreign land, the one that you would much rather despise? Pray for this city where you do not want to live? Seriously?

Yes, God says. Seriously.

We are to pray for the world in which we find ourselves. Not for it to be the way we want it to be for our own sake, but for the sake of the people as they are. This is not about our own survival. This is about what God is doing in the world, and the role we have to play.

In many ways, the state of the Christian church in the United States brings to mind a sinking ship. Perhaps it does; perhaps it doesn't. But if it does seem a grim situation, ponder these words of the Rev. Magrey deVega, senior pastor of Hyde Park United Methodist Church, Tampa.

"Well, maybe the church isn't a sinking ship, as much as it is God's way of transforming it into a submarine."

We will never return to 'normal'; but we do have a future filled with hope as we embrace the wonderful, liberating oddity of being Christians, of following Jesus in a life more challenging and adventure-some than we can possibly imagine.

May we all continue to discover who we are and who God made us to be.

Peace my friends,

Pastor Rich

Scotch Presbyterian Church
Our Faith In The Time Of COVID 19

It's been over a year
Since COVID appeared
Altering our lifestyle
When it came near

Could we weather the storm
Continue our faith
Would God guide us
Through the changes we faced

Our church doors became quiet
To keep us all safe
Our homes — now the dwelling
To ask for God's grace

Anxiety Uncertainty
In our thoughts did arise
Many pathways to follow
Which one should we try
To seek hope, reassurance
In our daily lives

Our church's foundation
In our minds a concern
Our commitment to discipleship
Could it remain steadfast and firm

Be proud you have coped
And faced the unknown
By trusting in God
Your faith has been shown

Compassion — A key word
A reminder to all
When sharing our blessings
We "Answered God's Call"

Our rural community
Our neighbors, our friends
Blessed with love and support
From your helping hands

The storm seems to be lessening
But certain protocol remains
Masks and social distancing
So important to maintain

*He's
Risen!*

On Easter Sunday
The Scotch Presbyterian Church
Joyfully opens its doors
COME — Let Us WORSHIP Together
And give thanks to the Lord

Even though our smiles will not be visible
"Let Us See The Joy"
Even though we are distancing
"Let Us Feel The Embrace"

Our Church — Once again the Dwelling
To Rejoice in God's Grace

~ Written by Trudy Fisher
March 2021



A note from the Treasurers:

We would like to express our appreciation for your faithful support of Scotch Church. The Church expenses continue to be paid.

Receiving Treasurer, Lesley Thompson requests that you mail your pledge directly to: **Scotch Presbyterian Church, 35 County Route 33, Madrid, New York 13660.** Thank you.

The 2021 Per Capita fee assessed by our Presbytery is \$31.00 for this year. Each per capita payment is divided and allocated as follows: \$8.98 for General Assembly; \$4.10 for the Synod of the Northeast; and \$17.92 going to the Presbytery of NNY.

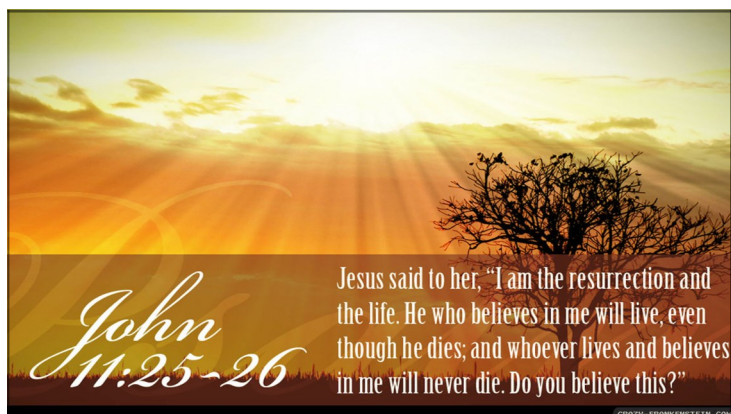
We thank those members of our church have already made their per capita payments to the Receiving Treasurer. Our church must pay per capita for each member. Your voluntary contribution helps Scotch Church cover our portion of the total assessment. Payments can be mailed to the Receiving Treasurer, Lesley Thompson c/o Scotch Presbyterian Church, 35 County Route 33, Madrid, NY 13660. Please note "Per Capita" in the memo line of your check. If you have any questions, please contact Bill Fisher, 315-323-2642 or fisherw46@gmail.com.

One Great Hour of Sharing Offering is collected at this time of year. Contributions may be sent to the Church's address above, and please note "**OGHS**" on the memo line of your check, to insure that it is allocated to this special offering.

Thank you,
Bill Fisher, Disbursing Treasurer
Lesley Thompson, Receiving Treasurer

CALL FOR CONGREGATIONAL MEETING on Sunday, April 11, 2021

A congregational meeting of the Scotch Church is called for Sunday, April 11, immediately following worship, for the purpose of electing a Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC). A slate of 7 members for the PNC will be presented, and nominations will also be received from the floor, if offered.





APRIL CELEBRATIONS

We celebrate your special
day !

HAPPY "April" BIRTHDAY to...

3 Barbara Fisher
6 Natalie McKnight
7 Noel Allen
13 Alison Appleby
20 Betty Crump
25 Marcie Barney
27 Roger Thompson
28 Robert Crump

HAPPY "April" ANNIVERSARY

**There are no anniversaries
listed for the month of April.**

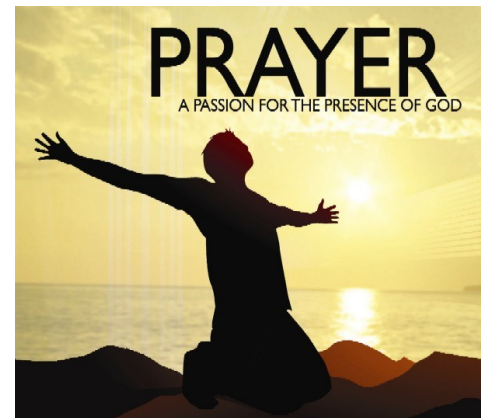
Email your dates to me to be added to the calendar so that we can recognize your family's special days. Or if you have a family member you'd like included.....

~ Mindy Fisher

Or email me at melindaf70@gmail.com

Please call or email your dates to me to be added to the calendar so that we can recognize your family's special days. Or if you have a family member you'd like included.....

~ Mindy Fisher 315-323-2642



**"Hosanna! Blessed is the one who
comes in the name of the Lord! " — Mark 11:9**



CONGRATULATIONS TO PASTOR RICH ON HIS RETIREMENT

We are returning to in-person worship beginning Easter Sunday, April 4th. Pastor Rich will deliver his final sermon with us this Sunday, and we wish both he and Carolyn the healthiest and richest of experiences in retirement as he moves forward into this next phase of life. We hope that this will include more time with family that have been about as far away in the U.S. as is geographically possible! I am sure that Tom, Steven and Kirsten are looking forward to more time with their parents in the years to come.

As Pastor Rich said in his "Farewell" note to us on page 2, "The congregation may think they chose to call Rich as pastor; and Rich may truly believe he has chosen to come here a pastor; but here is the Gospel truth, 'it is all God's doing, it is part of God's plan for the church and Rich.'"

It is my belief that we have yet to know what that plan included for us. That is yet for God to reveal.

CONGRATULATIONS to Pastor Rich and Carolyn, and thank you for the past (almost) three years of your lives that you have given the Scotch Church. Thank you for working through the past year, one of the most tumultuous in the life of Scotch Church, and helping us through to the light on the other side of the pandemic. We may not be quite out of the woods yet, but we certainly found a way to persevere.

May life bring you both joy and peace, health and happiness as you venture into new experiences together.

~ Thank you, Mindy Fisher



ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING

Can we help tell the story of:

HOPE—by providing assistance to survivors of devastation.
32% of our giving is for disaster relief.

Can we help tell the story of:

ENCOURAGEMENT—by assisting communities to address
oppression and injustice.
32% of our giving is for self-development of people.

Can we help tell the story of:

COMPASSION—by feeding the hungry?
36% of our giving is for world hunger.

In Isaiah 58, we are issued a challenge
To love one another by sharing what we have with those in need.

Let Us Pray....

Generous God, help us to remember those who still hunger and thirst, those who still search for refuge and opportunity, those who await justice and peace. For all the ways you will use our gifts, we give you thanks and praise. AMEN.

UPCOMING DATES....

April 1 ... Maundy Thursday ...

online worship this evening with Pastor Rich at 7:00 p.m. We will celebrate communion together this evening—please have your elements (juice, water, wine, etc. and a cracker or piece of bread).



Our pulpit supply in the next few weeks is as follows:

April 11 ... Rev. David Bennett, Resource Presbyter of PNNY. **Congregational meeting will be held to elect a Pastor Nominating Committee. A slate of 7 committee members will be presented. You are encouraged to attend.**

April 18	Dennis Lowe
April 25	Rev. Rich Will
May 2	Dennis Lowe
May 9	Dennis Lowe
May 16	Dennis Lowe
May 23	Rev. David Bennett
May 30	TBD

