

Emmanuel United Church of Christ

April 2025 Newsletter

Starting Sunday, May 4
Worship Service time changes to
10:30am



Consistory Members 2025

Elders: Logan Fruchey, Nick Shepler, Jaret Geiser, Kelli Fruchey
Deacons: Jerilyn Neeper, Jane Agner, Sara Music, Erin Burkholder

Emmanuel UCC 8375 Phillips Rd, Bluffton, OH 45817
419-358-1561

 Facebook: Emmanuel United Church of Christ
Bluffton OH

 Twitter: EmmanuelUCC Bluffton
(@EmmanuelUCC1561)

 <http://www.emmanueluccbluffton.com/>
(Today's and past Sermons can be heard on the
Emmanuel UCC Bluffton website under media)

 Instagram #EmmanuelUcc
E-Mail: emmanuelucc8375@gmail.com

National Volunteer Week April 20-26

**“Volunteers do not necessarily have the time; they have the heart.”
– Elizabeth Andrew.**

Thank you to all who volunteer, You make a difference!

As we near the end of our Lenten Journey, traveling with Jesus to Jerusalem and The Cross, it is heartening to see the flowers begin to break the soil in our gardens, the buds on the trees begin to form, and even the return of our feathered friends who continue to bring joy to our hearts and frustration to my gutters and porch light at the parsonage. There are plenty of trees, I'm not sure why these robins think our porch is the 'perfect spot' for their homes every year, but I digress. This long winter is coming to a close as we near the sacrifice which Christ will make upon The Cross and the new life we see in nature reminds us of that New Life we have in Jesus.

It never ceases to amaze me how, when I look out the window in Emmanuel's church office, I see barren trees, which look as if they have given up the hope of life, only to become so verdant once again over, seemingly, so brief a time. I cannot imagine how much despair and hopelessness the disciples must've felt as they watched their greatest hope and dreams come crashing down upon Jesus' arrest, trial, execution, and burial. A friend, betrayed and abandoned, lost to them, seemingly in so short and abrupt a time. Yet somewhere within the dead-looking bark and barren limbs I see out my window, there is an unseen biological and molecular process which is constantly bringing forth a new and renewed life. Those same disciples who only saw loss and death could not see within the rock tomb that something invisible and powerful was at work doing the same for humanity.

And just as the flowers bloom, the insects stir from their hibernation, the limbs on trees bud and leaf, and life returns in nature around us, that New Life is constantly springing forth within us as well. The question which remains is this, "What will you do with that New Life?" Will we nurture the New Life we have been given or will we squander it? Will we use our New Life, our second, third, and fourth chances at being a Child of God in order to attack, abuse, and accuse others, causing innocents to suffer, or will we stand with and beside those in this life who have been victimized? Will we remain hypocrites who preach and teach that children are the greatest and most sacred gifts from God, worthy of approaching Jesus, examples of the Kingdom of Heaven, only to deny them some of the basic necessities in this life, clothing, food, shelter and education?

What will this New Life in Christ bring to you in the coming season? And what will you bring about as a result of it? These are the many questions we face as Christians in a world which would see us tear one another apart. A world which would see us use our New Life in order to raise ourselves to positions of power, authority, and influence, rather than bringing praise to the One who gave this New Life to us in the first place. It feels at times that I am a broken record when I say this, but I truly feel that the core of Christ's message, the main thing we are to take away from his life, his teachings, and his example, is to "love our neighbor as ourselves." To go to extremes, even potentially at the threat to our own sense of safety and security, to make sure that our neighbors know that they are loved, supported, and cared for. Because when we are looking out for one another, when we are supporting one another, and when we truly express love for one another, our safety and security can be assured.

So as new life springs forth in the environment around you in these coming months, breathe deeply the New Life which Christ brings to you from an empty tomb. As life comes from death in the coming Easter Season, allow for those things in your life which have passed and have had their season, to be left behind; "burned with the chaff" as Jesus says in Matthew and Luke. Look to the future with new eyes and be invigorated by the Holy Spirit to find new ways of reaching out, of stepping outside of the tomb of shadows and death to the light of God and New Life. Seek out the Gardener who spoke words of comfort to Mary and know that while the Lord lives, we yet live. Walk in the Lord's way of peace, justice, mercy, and love. Know that you are a Child of God and that nothing will ever take that away from you nor distance you so much so that you cannot find your way back to God. Thanks be to God.

Blessings, Pastor Jeremy

From the consistory

Thank you to all who helped and donated to the fish fry. It was a great time of fellowship, food, and fun. 328 Dinners were served: 149 dinners dine in and 179 dinners carry out. We made \$2,348.60 which will go into the improvement fund.

There is some fish available to buy; small bags \$18.00 large bags \$35.00

Financial Updates

January and February 2024

Current Fund

Income/Expense

YTD Income \$12,520.28

YTD Expenses \$16,182.48

Benevolence Fund

YTD Income \$605.00

Budget \$875.00

Overall

YTD Income \$28,007.92

YTD Expense \$17,391.76



April 6

John 12:1-8

April 20

John 20:1-18

April 13

Luke 19:28-40

April 27

John 20:19-31

*Basket and Gift Card pick up will be
Thursday, May 8
between 6:00pm and 7:00pm
Averey Rumer
567-825-8193*



Church Upcoming Dates

April 6 – Worship 9:00am

April 9 – Lenten Meal 6:00pm at St. John's

April 13 – Worship 9:00am Palm Sunday, Confirmation Sunday, Communion

April 17 – Maundy Thursday Service 6:00pm at St. John's

April 18 – Crosswalk 11:30am starts at English Lutheran Church (Carry the Cross)

April 19 – Easter Egg Hunt 10:00am

April 20 – Worship 9:00am Easter Sunday, Communion

Confirmation Sunday, Palm Sunday, April 13



Charlie Boblitt

daughter of Todd and Becky Boblitt

Mentor: Abbie Sautter

Sarah Klingler

daughter of Amy New

Mentor: Jen Mann

Kenedeye Scoles

daughter of Jeff and Ashley Scoles

Mentor: Jayne Caskie

Levi Shepler

son of Nick & Onalee Shepler

Mentor: Jeff Bowlus

Reese Stark

daughter of Steve and Erin Stark

Mentor: Sami Yoder

Emmanuel Easter Egg Hunt

Saturday, April 19 at 10am

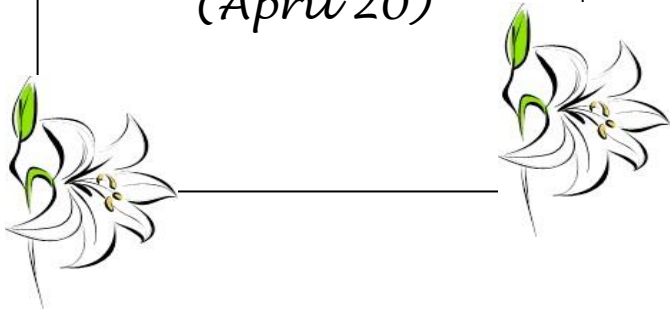
Invite your friends and family for a time of fun, fellowship, and food. There will be Easter crafts, snacks, and, of course, lots of eggs to hunt!

If you're interested in helping on the day of the event or by donating food items in advance, please use the sign-up sheet on the bulletin board or talk to Jen Mann for more information.

CHRIST THE LORD HAS RISEN!

*The Easter Lilies on
the alter are in
Honor of Our Risen
Lord!*

*by the Faith
Formation Classes
Easter Sunday
(April 20)*



If you would like to bring in a lily or spring flower to add to the alter on Easter Sunday. Please do and remember to take it home after the service.



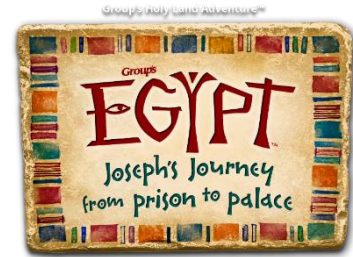
VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL 2025

Joseph's Journey

At Egypt, everyone gets to explore first-hand the culture of Joseph's world. Alongside Joseph, they'll experience the heartbreaking trials, joyous victories, and tear-filled celebrations of this unique Bible hero.

Sunday, July 13 - Thursday, July 17, 2024
(6:00 to 8:00pm)

Bluffton Family YMCA (BFR)



SUMMER CAMP

It's that time again: Church Summer Camp

Summer Camp: If you are planning for summer camp 2025 there is information on the bulletin board. I will be glad to answer any questions. Renee Caskie – 419-890-6213

April Birthdays

1 Jase Kiene	10 Connie Baker
2 Becky Leiber	12 Dick Baker
Deb Leiber	13 Landen Worcester
3 Jason Chatelain	16 Larry Eikenbary
4 Isabella Sampson	Reese Stark
Rowen Sampson	17 Jill Rumer
6 Dennis Caskie	18 Karen Kopp
Makenzie Frankhart	19 Corbin Klingler
7 Jay Stratton	20 Charlotte Burkholder
9 Roxanne Chatelain	Renee Caskie
Rick Krumrey	

Church Staff

Pastor, Jeremy Mann	419-420-5052	Jaret Geiser, Consistory President	419-957-1319
Kristen Parkins, Fin. Sec.	419-302-3969	Teresa Pinks, Treasurer	419-234-1817
Jen Mann, Faith Formation	717-813-1485	Dick & Connie Baker, Maint.	567-712-0119
Renee Caskie, Secretary	419-890-6213	Church Number	419-358-1561