



## From the Pastor...

I got a nice surprise when our three-year-old preschoolers brought me a resurrection roll this past week. If you don't know, a resurrection roll is a sweet cinnamon flavored roll with a hollow center – which represents the empty tomb. The trick is placing a marshmallow in the dough, which melts out during baking.

This got me thinking about different Easter traditions and their meanings. Of course, we know about decorating Easter Eggs and their symbolism of new life. American kids enjoy hunting Easter Eggs, but in Germany and Switzerland, kids hunt for entire “Easter Nests.” The nests are decorated baskets filled with chocolate bunnies, chocolate eggs and toys. So, you get an entire basket in one find.

Easter takes to the air in Bermuda as people fly kites for Easter. Families make colorful kites with wooden sticks and paper. They add a special tissue called “hummers” that make a buzzing sound in flight. So, there are both sights and sounds on Good Friday and Easter.

Another place they add sounds to the Easter celebration is the Greek island of Corfu. At 11:00 a.m., the residents all throw clay pots from their balconies. Imagine the sound of thousands of pots of all shapes and sizes shattering simultaneously. The 16th century tradition had a double purpose chasing off evil spirits while making room for new things in life.

Whatever your Easter traditions might be, I hope you make Christ central. After all, Easter is a celebration of eternal life through Christ's resurrection. We have eternal life, because Jesus conquered death and set the path for us to do the same. As Paul put it, “But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the first-fruits of those who have fallen asleep” (1 Corinthians 15:20).

I look forward to seeing you all Easter Sunday, as we celebrate Christ's resurrection together. Join us for an Easter Brunch at 9:00 a.m. and then for Easter Worship at 10:00 a.m. Bring your family and friends along for this most sacred service of the year. He is risen! He is risen indeed!

*Nolan*

## Schedule

### Sunday, April 20

9:00 a.m. Breakfast

10:00 a.m. Worship - Sanctuary & Live Stream

### Monday, April 21

Church Office Closed

### Wednesday, April 23

8:30 a.m. Pickle Ball

No Wednesday Evening Activities

### Thursday, April 24

1:00 p.m. Clothes Closet

### Sunday, April 27

9:00 a.m. Sunday School

10:00 a.m. Worship - Sanctuary & Live Stream

### Monday, April 28

8:30 a.m. Pickle Ball

### Wednesday, April 30

8:30 a.m. Pickle Ball

2:30 p.m. Wond. Wed. After-School Program

5:15 p.m. Family Night Meal

6:00 p.m. Children's & Youth Activities

6:00 p.m. Adult Bible Study

7:00 p.m. Sanctuary Choir

### Thursday, May 1

1:00 p.m. Clothes Closet



## Church Staff Directory

Dr. Nelson Granade.....Senior Minister  
Mr. James Martin.....Minister of Music & Worship  
Rev. Melissa Wilson.....Minister of Children & Youth  
Mrs. Kristina Kyles.....Children's Ministry Associate / Preschool Director  
Mrs. Elizabeth Kilby.....Minister of Young Families & Missions  
Mr. Eddie Wiseman.....Accompanist / Music Assistant

OFFICE HOURS: 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM Mon - Thur, 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM Fri  
Tel: 704-873-7231

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## Spiritual Statistics

	4/6	4/13
In Person .....	138	168
Live Stream .....	19	19
Sunday School .....	85	77

## Financial Statistics

	April	Year-to-Date
Giving Goal	88,908.00	527,414.00
Budget Receipts	31,880.00	511,515.00
Goals Not Met	(57,028.00)	(15,899.00)
Alms	3,143.00	8,787.00
Designated	1,571.00	68,367.00

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# Prayers of the People: Choose Joy

## [www.cbf.net/blog](http://www.cbf.net/blog)

**By Rick Burnette, CBF Field Personnel**

Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. -James 1:2-4

I'm not going to lie. These are challenging times. Now in our early 60s, Ellen and I have entered an interesting stage of life. We lost one parent recently and the surviving three are very elderly and increasingly frail. We feel the pain of hardships being faced by our adult children. And our farmworker neighbors in Immokalee are caught between a rock and a hard place with unbearable conditions in their homelands while facing increased hostility in the United States.

The world is on fire and it's easy to slip into some stage of despair. Despair desiccates the soul and can paralyze efforts related to my role as a husband, son, dad, grandad, neighbor, coworker and missionary. As I am not immune from despair, its prevention requires intentionality.

Joy is the opposite of despair. Joy is the antidote to despair. I used to think that joy was mostly serendipitous. But I've come to realize that as much as I might choose to expect despair, I can also nurture joy.

My black and brown friends are teaching me about joy. In recent years I've become familiar with the term "Black joy."

In a January 24, 2024, Center for Action and Contemplation post, African American theologian and teacher, Barbara Holmes, asserted that resilience is needed for our current circumstances, along with a "steadfast belief that joy is a healing inner event and a spiritual practice."

I confess that I've been holding out on joy. Unless things were just right in my personal universe, I reserved the right to express thankfulness and entertain the possibility of joy. Joy is not merely passively received. It's within reach. And it's necessary for a healthy spiritual ecosystem, allowing us to engage with a world of need and opportunity.

For me, joy has three key precursors: gratitude, awe and positive action. Gratitude is doable. Counting blessings isn't a heavy lift, starting with the low-hanging fruit of family, health, vocation and the natural beauty that surrounds me.

Thankfully, awe comes quite easily in my usual outdoor settings. During morning walks, I am awe-struck by the sunrise grandeur. The stained glass of dawn—orange, gold and pink clouds—never fails to generate wonderment. Routine garden activities induce awe as I observe everyday botanical miracles: germination, emergence, growth, flowering and fruit formation.

Even though our work is heavy, despair-destroying joy is often derived alongside coworkers, in the presence of the least of these. Lord, bless those with whom I'm privileged to rub shoulders.

The American congressman and civil rights leader, John Lewis, summed it up best: "Do not get lost in a sea of despair. Be hopeful, be optimistic. Our struggle is not the struggle of a day, a week, a month, or a year, it is the struggle of a lifetime. Never, ever be afraid to make some noise and get in good trouble, necessary trouble."

Yes, there's also that good trouble—necessary trouble—that awaits us all, if we dare.

Pray, Practice, Ponder

Walk prayerfully and meditatively along the street, in the woods, or in the garden. Allow awe, presented in any manner, to penetrate your senses to be recognized within your mind and soul. Offer it back to God in gratitude.

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## *Happy Birthday*

### **May 1**

Hannah May

### **May 2**

Angie Eubanks  
Charlotte Gordon  
Chuck Heckel  
James Johnson  
Emily Leonard  
Kaye Martin

### **May 4**

Vickie Frazier  
Ava Waugh

### **May 6**

Jewel Travis

### **May 7**

Jeannette Eller

### **May 8**

Don Hawkins  
Tom Stephens

### **May 9**

Parker Gilliam

### **May 10**

Debi Martin

### **May 11**

Kristy Mitchell  
Charlene Smith

### **May 12**

Jenevecia Acosta  
Lynn Deal  
Hilda Lee  
Brenda Wilson  
Jan Wuertz

### **May 13**

Debbie Elliott  
Nina Waters

### **May 15**

Mickey Robinette

### **May 17**

Lauren Milwood  
Web Mitchell  
Derek Osborne

### **May 18**

Grace Ashley  
Neill Pardue

### **May 19**

Rachel Beale

### **May 20**

David Deal  
Anna James

### **May 21**

Daniel Mitchell  
May 22

Jeanie Murdock  
May 23

Tom Brandon  
Suzanne Osborne

### **May 25**

Carter Hinceman

### **May 27**

Leah Johnson  
Mary Jane Rash

### **May 27**

Carolyn Dellinger  
Melissa Wilson

### **May 30**

Burwell Whittenton

## Announcements

### Joyful Noises

The Joyful Noises group is looking for people to join our ministry and help us spread the love of God through song. If you love singing or playing old hymns, come join us! We meet on the second Monday of every month at 10:00am at the Brookdale Peachtree center to fellowship and sing hymns with the residents. No experience is necessary, and there are no rehearsals. Just come and bring a joyful spirit! For more information, please contact Emily Leonard, (828) 773-4830.

### Church Office Closed

#### Monday, April 21

The church office will be closed Monday, April 21 for the Easter Holiday.

### No Wednesday Evening Activities

#### April 23

There will be no evening activities on Wednesday, April 23. We will resume our regular schedule on April 20.

