

APRIL 2024

Issue No. 258

*Jesus cannot
forget us;
we have been
graven on
the palm of
His hands.*

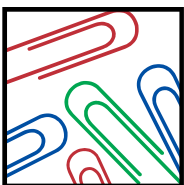
-Lois Picillo



9:00 AM—Brady 1st & 3rd week

9:15 AM—Dutton 2nd & 4th week

11:00 AM—Choteau



**Office
Hours**

Mon—Thurs 9am—Noon

The SPARK

A spark is a small thing, yet it may kindle the world. —Tupper

Newsletter of the Choteau—Brady—Dutton UM Parish

Finding Grace with Others

Blessed are we the graced.

We who don't deserve it.

Whose failures haunt us.

The things we said.

The things we left unsaid.

The decisions and additions and broken relationships
that still have ripple effects we feel still today.

Somehow, we are the recipients of this mysterious gift.

Grace doesn't erase the pain or harm we've caused.

But grace, still.

For us, the redeemable.

And if we are...that means **THEY** are too.

Yes—even them:

The rude neighbor.

The estranged father.

The unforgiving ex.

The boss who screwed you over.

The doctor who messed up.

The selfish pastor, (or her clumsy guest speaker).

The family member who did the unthinkable.

Despite all we have done and left undone.

We are graced.

Blessed are all of us who wrestle with unforgiveness and ungrace.

You who make amends.

You who reach for forgiveness.

You who say you're sorry even when sorry will never be enough.

Even when you cannot forget. Or can't go back.

Or they aren't **NEARLY** sorry enough.

Blessed are we who live here.

In this mystery, this scandal, of grace.

Amen.

for finding grace with others (and ourselves) by Kate Bowler,
The Lives We Actually Have, pp14-115



A Time of Joy!

During the month of April and for part of May, the church's liturgical calendar celebrates Eastertide. It's a time of joyful celebration of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. We are to be people who are truly and completely alive right now!

However, maybe today you are just not feeling it. That's ok. We live in mortal bodies that are breaking down. As Christians, we believe that we are transformed by Christ's death and resurrection. As we read in 1 Corinthians 15:42b-44: "What is sown is perishable, what is raised is imperishable. It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown a physical body, it is raised a spiritual body."

So what do we do now while we wait for that final transformation? We can live a life of joy and abundant life. Trials and difficulties may come your way. But living a life of joy and abundance means that God will be with you during the good days, as well as the difficult days.

Living a life of joy does relate to happiness. However, true joy from God is knowing that God will give you peace and contentment during those tough times.

During Eastertide, we will look forward with joy in our resurrection. In the meantime, let's continue to seek God together to give new life to us. Let us use what God has given us to transform our communities and the world we live in.

See you in church!
Pastor Alyssa



Monday, April 22

Be Good Stewards of the Earth!

EARTH DAY is to remind each person of his/her right, and the equal right of every other person, to the use of this global home and at the same time the equal responsibility of each person to preserve and improve the Earth and the quality of life thereon.

DID YOU KNOW?

- > More than 20% of the world's oxygen is produced by the Amazon rain forest.
- > Surfaced shaded by trees may be 20-45°F cooler than the peak temperatures of unshaded areas.
- > Trees help reduce crime. Among minor crimes, there is less graffiti, vandalism, and littering in outdoor spaces with trees as part of the natural landscape than in comparable plant-free spaces.
- > More than 180 million Americans receive quality drinking water from forested watersheds.
- > One large tree can provide a day's supply of oxygen for up to 4 people.
- > Trees increase property value.

Did You Know?

What is Pietism and what does it have to do with Methodism?

Pietism greatly influenced John Wesley. The movement got its start during the 1600's in Germany by a Lutheran pastor named Philip Jakob Spener. Spener was not an "official" pastor. He held small group meetings for Bible reading, prayer, and discussion of the Sunday sermon. Spener believed that a person needed to grow spiritually and mature in their faith. He also believed that a personal spiritual experience was required of all Christian believers, that everyone would be able to point to a time in their lives when they were going through a crisis or felt despair, and that the Lord gave the person the feeling of grace and forgiveness. In fact, Spener believed that this personal spiritual experience was more important than making a confession of faith in a congregation. Spener would argue that one needed to "feel and live their faith", in order for it to be genuine.

Spener's fellow Lutherans were not all impressed with this thinking. However, Spener argued that the Lutheran and Calvinist (Presbyterian, some Congregationalist, some Baptist) churches had become dull and lifeless. Spener's critics accused him of being over emotional and a religious fanatic.

Later, Auguste-Hermann Franke developed a set of rules for the movement and encouraged the Pietist followers to live out their faith by setting up schools for poor students, orphanages, colleges for poor students, as well as do mission work. The first Pietist missionaries were sent to Asia in the late 1600's.

In the 1700's, Pietists calling themselves Moravians came to German to escape Roman Catholic persecution. John and Charles Wesley came into contact with Moravians on their way to America to work in Georgia. They were impressed with the simple, heartfelt faith of the Moravians and John Wesley realized that head and heart knowledge were both needed to be in a relationship with God through Jesus Christ. This led to John Wesley's experience of his heart becoming strangely warmed and his ideas about holiness (also called Christian perfection).

Many thanks to Dr. Harrel and Dr. Thomas for their lectures on piety and Methodism at Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington, DC.

General Conference of the United Methodist Church

April 23—May 3, 2024
in Charlotte, North Carolina

This is the General Conference that was supposed to occur in 2020. It was rescheduled several times due to the COVID pandemic, as well as some difficulties overseas delegates had in obtaining visas to attend the conference.

During the conference, the delegates (lay and clergy) will hear reports from different United Methodist agencies. The Book of Discipline, which regulates how local churches, general conferences, and agencies are organized will be revised. Different changes or revisions to the Book of Discipline will be brought to the conference for a vote, after going through a period of study and discussion. The Book of Resolutions, a non-binding volume that describes the church's stance on social issues will also be revised by the delegates. Budgets will also be presented and approved, as well as election of members to the Judicial Council and University Senate.

Please go to the Lord in prayer for General Conference.

Mountain Sky Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church

June 20-24, 2024
in Casper, Wyoming



During this time, the Mountain Sky Conference will organize the life and ministry of the conference for the coming year. Those clergy who are being ordained, commissioned, and appointed will be recognized. Petitions for new/updated legislation for the conference will also be considered and voted on. A luncheon recognizing Bishop Karen's retirement will be held. More information and the petitions will be posted at a later date. In the meantime, you can check out the Annual Conference website at www.mtnskyumc.org. Click on the red tab on the top labeled "AC2024".

Please be in prayer for our annual conference and who will lead our conference after Bishop Karen's retirement.



Bible Readings for the Month

April 7:

Acts 4:32-35; Psalm 133; 1 John 1:1-2:2; John 20:10-31

April 14:

Acts 3:12-19; Psalm 4; 1 John 3:1-7; Luke 24:36b-48

April 21:

Acts 4:5-12; Psalm 23; 1 John 3:16-24; John 10:11-18

April 28:

Acts 8:26-40; Psalm 22:25-31; 1 John 4:7-21; John 15:1-8

Materials for your Spiritual Formation March / April

Available in the front entryway and the Upper Room rack at the top of the ramp (with a slot for donations)

► Upper Room – regular & large print

Opportunities for Your Spiritual Growth

Skyline Lodge Bible Study



Weekly Bible Study

Skyline Lodge
Every Wednesday - 10:00 am

All are welcome to join us every Wednesday as we gather at Skyline Lodge for an ecumenical Bible Study.

CCC

Coffee ~ Conversation ~ Communion

THURSDAY, APRIL 25
Skyline Lodge
1:00 pm



Skyline Study ~ *The Cross Bible Study* by John Stott

This Bible study will meet for 13 sessions, and you can join in at any time.

Christian faith is centered in the cross. And the Christian life is likewise rooted in the cross. The studies in this guide, based on John Stott's book, *The Cross of Christ*, are designed to bring us to the heart of the cross with an understanding of what was accomplished there on our behalf. We begin with an individual perspective but move on from there into a deeper understanding of what it means to live as a community under the cross. Our worship, our call to mission, our ability to love our enemies and to face the perplexities of suffering--the cross transforms everything!



Creativity

is intelligence having fun.

-Albert Einstein



Brady Methodist Church
invites you to a
Spring Dinner
Ham Dinner, Salad bar, and Dessert
Bake Sale and Bazaar
Sunday, April 7, 2024
1-3:30 PM
Brady Community Hall
Adults \$10 Children 6-12 \$5
Children under 6 FREE
TAKEOUT AVAILABLE



Trash, Treasure & Bake Sale

Saturday, May 4
8—11 a.m.



This has been a wonderful fundraising opportunity in the past to accomplish some spring cleaning and convert your trash into treasure by donating it to the church!

Drop off rummage sale items at the church by Thursday, May 2.

No clothing or large appliances please!

Drop off bake sale items at the church by Friday, May 3 by 2:00 pm.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED:
Setup and Cleanup Helpers
Bake Sale Donations

Kelly DeBruycker is the Bake Sale coordinator. She will be calling folks to inquire about donating homemade baked goods or other homemade specialties for the Bake Sale.

Please contact the church office 406-466-2641 or email umc@3rivers.net to volunteer and make this happen.

"April Fool's Day is the day to remind us what we are the other 364 days of the year."

- Mark Twain



The link below will provide you with more details and registration information for various camping opportunities.

<https://www.mtnskyumc.org/campingretreats>

Please check with your local UM Church for Scholarship availability.



Luccock Park Camp

July 21-24: Elementary Camp (3rd-6th Grade)
July 28-August 3rd: Middler/Senior High Camp (7th-12th Grade)

Flathead Lake United Methodist Camp

June 27-30: Tween Camp (Entering 4th-6th Grade)
July 14th-19th: Middler Camp (Entering Grades 7th-9th)
July 21-26: Senior High Camp (Entering Grades 10th-Grads)



to the families and friends of

Ron Thaut
Conrad / Brady

Death—March 21, 2024
Spouse of Pinky Thaut



CHRISTIANS
Caring for each other

Please remember to call

Pastor Alyssa
(office 466-2641;
cell 410-443-1115)

when one of our UMC family members needs a card or visit because of loneliness, illness or other crisis in their lives.



~ APRIL ~

- 3 ♥ Steve & Terry Haynes
- 6 Debbie Blixt
- 7 Levi Maltby
- 8 Gordon Schlepp
- 11 ♥ David & Linda Forrest
- 12 Luke Mellinger
- 13 Luke Coccoli
- 17 Bob Dauwalder
- ♥ Gerald & Collette Yeager
- 18 Rich Clough
- 19 Olin McArthur
- Paige Rasmussen
- 23 Roger Kelly
- 27 Lenore Rogers
- 28 Chase Field
- ♥ Rich & Jaynie Gollehon
- 29 Roy Inbody



☺ Pastor Alyssa and Pastor Annela for providing a very thought-provoking Lenten study, “Half Truths” by Adam Hamilton. The Sunday afternoon sessions averaged an attendance of 13. A delicious soup and bread fellowship followed each session. We are so grateful to those who provided soups and breads: Sharon Gallian, Karli Johnson, Dana Isaakson, Connie Bradley, Linda Coffland, Juli Kostelnik, Lila Dunn, Pastor Alyssa Nantt, Jacquey Cooney, Georgia Buck and Reese Hunter .

☺ Kelly DeBruycker, Sharon Haug, Diane Inbody & Lila Dunn for the preparation of sandwiches and cookies for the recent Red Cross Blood Draw on March 12.

A special thanks to Cathy Sessions, Dora Jermuson, Connie Rogers, Kelly DeBruycker and Lila Dunn for providing homemade cookies and sweet treats for the recent blood draw.

Your extra time and efforts are greatly appreciated!

☺ EVERYONE who so generously donated to the hospitality fund in order to defray the cost of sandwich makings for the recent blood draw.

☺ A Snow Angel (assuming Scot Sessions) who so graciously shoveled the church sidewalks on Friday, March 22. You are appreciated! -Lila

☺ Sharon Haug and Lila Dunn for providing the Easter Sunrise breakfast following the early worship service. We are grateful!

☺ Cleaning Angel who defrosted and cleaned the freezer in the upstairs kitchen. What a nice surprise!! - Lila and Georgia

Methodist Church,



Thank You Notes

Thank you so much for all the yummy cookies and sandwiches you made for the blood drive. It helped make it a big success! You are all very much appreciated.

Thanks again. God bless you!
Cindy Lowry



Special Offering
Sunday, April 14

Native American Ministries Sunday is one of six United Methodist special offerings collected throughout the year, this helps a variety of ministries in our Mountain Sky Conference, and around the country.

Your gift encourages aspiring leaders within the Native American Community, educates seminarians and empowers outreach within the Native American culture.

YOUR MONETARY GIFTS AT WORK

The ministries of Choteau United Methodist Church are made possible by your on-going financial contributions. Our congregation is 100% self-funded; we receive no outside funding.

Your gifts enable us to provide weekly worship, pastoral care, educational opportunities, youth group, Sunday school for children and adults, mission opportunities, the opportunity for us to provide responsible charitable contributions to help those in need, etc. I hope you will consider making a financial contribution to Choteau UMC to support our life-transforming mission. To make a tax-deductible donation you can send in a check to our church office, or contribute on Sundays during the offering. Financial statements are available upon request at the church office.

VITAL STATISTICS – Choteau

2024 Budget for Choteau	\$124,685
Needed to meet budget – March	\$ 31,171
Received through March 31	\$ 17,645

Thank you for your on-going support!



Seeking and Empowering Disciples of Jesus Christ to Love, Witness and Serve
CHOTEAU - BRADY - DUTTON
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
 BUSINESS HOURS
 CHOTEAU OFFICE HOURS
 Mon - Thur 9am-12pm

Website address: www.umchoteau.net

Bookmark the address above to your own computer (add it to your "favorites" list) so you can quickly click on it and stay connected! Use the website to check what's going on and what's coming up in the life of our parish.

Check out the new additions to the website:

- Sermons—video

And don't forget our email address:

umc@3rivers.net

Like us on Facebook:



facebook.com/choteauUMC

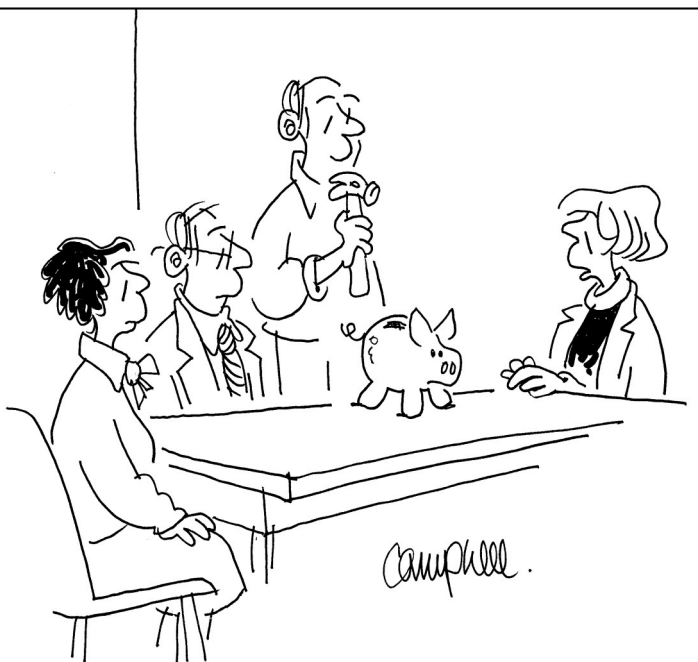
Leadership Board Meeting

Tuesday, April 16

6:30 pm

@ Choteau UMC

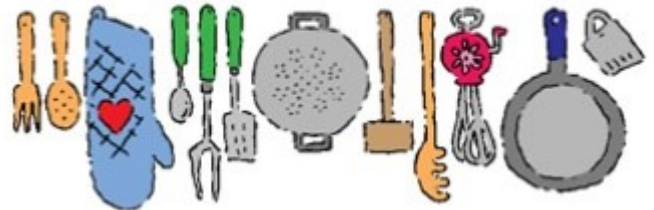
Downstairs—Dining Room



campbell.

"Now, for the treasurer's report."

FROM THE HOSPITALITY TEAM



We are so grateful over the past year for the overwhelming response of volunteers to provide food for a variety of events and functions. However, we have managed to accumulate several bowls and baking pans. These items will be displayed in the overflow sanctuary for your retrieval. Thank you!

Parishioners' Picks

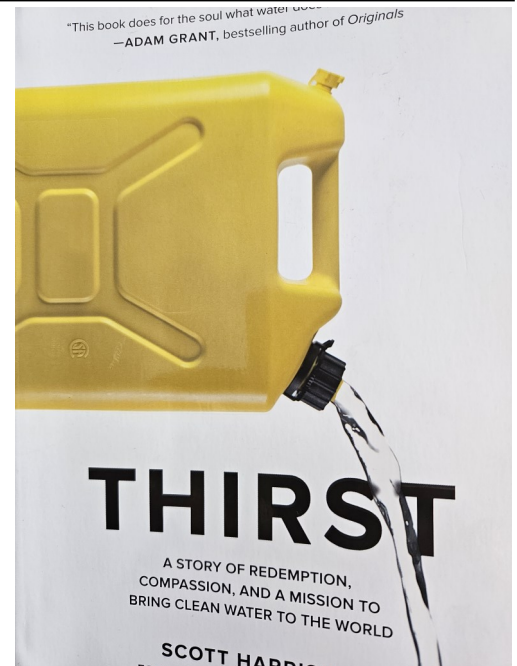
lots of
candles,
plenty of
cake

Anna Quindlen

Columnist and author Anna Quindlen offers thoughtful, fun, and humorous reflections on the passing of time. A light, breezy read with an author who does not take herself too seriously!



**Find these and may
other reads
in the Chateau
UMC library,
located behind the
sanctuary!**



THIRST is a fast-paced read documenting a young man's search for purpose after finding the high-rolling entertainment life disenchantment. Inspiring and relevant.

A batch of 'Resurrection Rolls'

For the coffee time following the sunrise service at the Dover (DE) United Methodist Church, one creative church lady brought in a batch of her "Resurrection Rolls" she had baked.

Rev. Dr. Karl R. Kraft asked her why she called them "Resurrection Rolls," and she simply told him to take a bite and find out.

The roll was an ordinary-looking pastry baked to a golden-brown, with no topping or frosting.

When Rev. Kraft bit into the roll, he discovered that the center was completely empty. "I get it," he said. "It represents Jesus' empty tomb, right?"






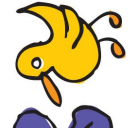



She said he was correct, but there was more. She then explained that the recipe begins with taking a marshmallow and rolling it in sugar and cinnamon. That represents the process that was done to prepare a body for burial in biblical times.

The marshmallow is then wrapped in dough, which represents the cloth in which Jesus' body was wrapped prior to being placed in the tomb. When the rolls are baked, she explained, they are "essentially placed in the tomb." During the baking process, the marshmallow disappears into the dough, leaving the empty space in the center of the finished roll — a reminder of Jesus leaving the tomb empty on Easter morning.



2024

Choteau-Brady-Dutton United Methodist Parish
 Seeking and Empowering Disciples of Jesus Christ
 to Love, Witness and Serve

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 SUNDAY WORSHIP 9:00 am - Brady 1st & 3rd week 9:15 am - Dutton 2nd & 4th week 11:00 am - Choteau	2	3 10:00 am Skyline Study	4	5	6	
7 <i>Holy Communion</i>  Spring Dinner @ Brady Community Hall 1—3:30 pm	8	9	10 10:00 am Skyline Study	11	12	13
14  Native American Ministries Sunday ~ special offering ~	15	16 Leadership Board Meeting 6:30 pm @ Choteau UMC	17 10:00 am Skyline Study	18	19	20
21 <i>Festival of God's Creation</i>  <i>Worship With Us</i>	22 	23 General Conference of the United Methodist Church April 23—May 3, 2024 Charlotte, North Carolina	24 10:00 am Skyline Study	25 CCC @ Skyline Lodge 1:00 pm	26	27
28 	29 	30 			Office Hours: Mon - Thurs 9am - Noon (406) 466-2641 umc@3rivers.net www.umchoteau.net Facebook.com/Choteau UMC	

Choteau—Brady—Dutton
United Methodist Parish
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Facebook.com/Choteau UMC

Alyssa Nantt, Pastor
Lila Dunn, Admin. Assist.

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Seeking and Empowering Disciples of Jesus Christ to Love, Witness and Serve

This month's newsletter is sponsored by:

Pastor Alyssa

**In celebration of her father, Dennis Nantt's
birthday on April 20th**

Please continue to consider sponsoring
an issue of *The Spark* for \$40, and your sponsorship will be noted in the newsletter.

What a nice recognition in honor or memory of someone, or as a gift!

Submit your sponsor information to the parish office.

Live to shed joy to others.