

The Scroll

Mallard Creek Presbyterian Church
www.mallardcreekchurch.org | 704.547.0038
 1600 W. Mallard Creek Church Road



From Pastor Rob

This year, April is a truly significant month for us within the Church. It begins with Holy Week, the pinnacle of the year for the followers of Jesus. Of course, everyone knows the two Sundays of Holy Week—Palm Sunday and Easter, and some know well the last two weekdays—Maundy Thursday and Good Friday, but all of us may need a bit of a refresher on the meaning of these days, including those we do not necessarily know much about.

Palm Sunday is the commemoration of Jesus' final entry into Jerusalem before his death. Having spent years traversing Galilee, Samaria, and Judea, performing miracles, preaching, teaching, and encountering various individuals, a large segment of the population is ready to name him the Messiah, but as tradition taught, not as Jesus did. They hailed him as a revolutionary who would lead the liberation of the Jews from the Roman Empire. We hear that in their cries of 'Hosanna!'—Hebrew for 'Save us!'—as well as the symbolic tree branches and the clothes on the road. Jesus, of course, knows he is heading for a far different act of redemption, one no one present could have understood. So, it was a mixed day of celebration and solemnity.

We will mark it with a cantata and the Sacrament of Holy Communion, capturing both themes, remembering the full scope of who and what Jesus was.

Holy Monday is the commemoration of Jesus cleansing the temple. In this single act, Jesus up-ended the entire tradition of worship according to Jewish practice. Leviticus makes clear that worship is done through ritual sacrifice with different sacrifices offered for praise, thanksgiving, repentance, atonement, healing, intercession, and so on, all of which had to be interpreted by a priest to determine if they worked or not. By driving out the sellers who offered all the necessary items for sacrifice, Jesus reduces worship to the simple act of prayer—direct communion with God—available to anyone who faithfully offers themselves to God. No priest nor even temple was needed—just pray.

We can mark this day by spending time in prayer, celebrating the freedom of prayer for anyone and everyone.

Holy Tuesday is the commemoration of Jesus' prediction of his own death. In the face of growing acclamation to name him leader of the revolution, Jesus attempts to correct the popular vision, redefining his liberation as a sacrificial death that reconciles all humanity with God, replacing the Passover lamb with himself. Even his own disciples had a hard time grasping this message, but Jesus wants it clear just what sort of savior he is.

We can mark this day by reading and reflecting on Isaiah 53—the Song of the Suffering Servant.



From Pastor Rob

Spy Wednesday is the commemoration of Judas' choice to betray Jesus. The Gospels never fully explain why Judas chose to sell out Jesus to the religious authorities—perhaps he was disappointed the revolution was not coming; or he became disillusioned when Jesus did not go far enough in his favoritism of the poor. What we do know is that Judas offers to turn Jesus over to his enemies for thirty pieces of silver—the price to redeem a slave from bondage according to the Torah.

We can mark this day by reflecting on the times when we have acted contrary to the compassion, grace, and mercy of Christ, offering confession and repentance for the times when we have been less than we needed to be as followers of Jesus.

Maundy Thursday is the commemoration of the Last Supper. Jesus completely reworks the Passover Seder Meal wherein faithful Jews walk through the different parts of the Exodus through which God formed them as a covenant people. Instead, Jesus offers himself in the symbols of bread and cup, declaring that anyone who partakes of these sacred gifts binds themselves to God and vice versa. The glorious good news is that Jesus offers it to all the disciples, even Judas, even Peter who will deny him, and even those who will run away from him. It is pure grace. This becomes the new mandate (Maundy)—the command to love one another as Christ has loved us.

We will mark this day by gathering for worship at 700 pm for our own celebration of the Lord's Supper.

Good Friday is the commemoration of Jesus' death on the cross. It is 'good' only in that through the events of this day, God reordered all humanity, accepting Christ's atoning sacrifice as cleansing for anyone and everyone who turns to God for help, hope, and healing. Otherwise, it stands as the epitome of human arrogance wherein we sought to murder the Son of God, freeing ourselves from him.

We can mark this day by both admitting how often we humans turn selfishly inward, wanting nothing but to aggrandize our own being, but also accepting the redeeming grace of God that makes us more than we ever imagined as we enter the communion of saints.

The Easter Vigil is Holy Saturday, a day of prayer, reflection, and being still. The Gospels tell us that the first community of Jesus did nothing. They prayed, grieved, and sat together.

We can mark this day in holy rest, sitting still and seeking the presence of God with us.

Easter is the commemoration of Jesus' resurrection. God did not abandon Jesus to death, but recreated him as the Risen Lord, breaking the bonds of sin and death forever. His empty tomb is our lasting hope. There is nothing and no one beyond redemption. There are no truly lost causes. There is no one beyond hope.

We mark this day by celebrating the empty tomb at sunrise and celebrating the New Creation in our 10:00 am worship.

Join us for the holiest season we mark.



Hunter's Thoughts

The last few days, I have been watching events in France - for no other reason than that my daughter, Caroline, has been there for a couple of weeks. I've checked on the weather; I've followed the protests over changing the national retirement age; I've paid attention to the garbage workers strike; and I've noted the transportation strike. Normally, I would have paid little notice to any of these things, but because Caroline is there, and I am vicariously enjoying her trip, it has been of interest to me.

This caused me to reflect on how much is going on in so many places in the world that we never notice unless we have some connection with the people or the place. I notice things going on in the state of Kerala, India because we spent time studying there and I still know some residents. But I don't pay as much attention to events in the other Indian states, or in other countries for that matter. I hear about the challenges throughout our nation - financial crises, poverty, immigration. But until I talk to someone who is specifically part of those problems, they seem distant and less important to me. When I get to know some of our neighbors at Room In The Inn - their names and how they feel about things and some of the struggles they may have had - it makes me worry more about anyone out on the street on rainy, cold nights.

Last year, Susan and I watched a movie on Netflix called "The Swimmers". It is a true story of two sisters who are Olympic caliber swimmers in war-torn Syria. The danger is all around them; friends are dying in random violence. Finally, after one of the sisters is attacked and almost raped by some militants, their parents tearfully agree that they should try to flee the country. Since there is no way to do so legally, they have to pay smugglers to get them out under cover of darkness. Their story is both horrifying and inspirational. As they struggle through Europe as refugees, they put a very human face on the difficult issues of immigration and refugees and the hard questions that arise for all of us. (One of the sisters eventually competes as part of the Refugee Olympic team in the 2016 Rio Olympics.) I had not learned much about all the refugee struggles in Europe before seeing that movie. It caused me to read more and better understand the issues that drive people from their homes and families.



Hunter's Thoughts

I think sometimes it is easy to see people only as "other" until we have more understanding of who they are as actual people. Not long after I watched that movie, I was looking back through some genealogy that some members of my family have compiled. As I was reading about my seventh great-grandfather, William Hunter, I noted that he had been born in 1650 in Northumberland, England. At some point, he came to the colonies and died in 1728 in what is now Gates County in the far northeastern part of North Carolina. There were two nicknames listed for him. The first was "The Weaver", so I can imagine he had something to do with the weaving and fabric trade. But the second was significant - he was known as "The Immigrant". At some point, that was how he was seen by other people. Was it a name of affection or derision?

Most of my ancestors that I know anything about came from England, Scotland, and Ireland during the 17th and 18th centuries. But I don't know why they came or what it was like for them. Did they emigrate because they wanted to find a better life? Was it a choice? Or were they refugees from the wars in England or the religious strife in Scotland or the famines in Ireland? Maybe someday I can find out. But it has really caused me to reflect on what it was like for them - probably easier for the English immigrants than for the Irish, who were looked down upon for centuries.



The refugee and immigration situation in our country and throughout the world is so complicated and I have no idea how to solve any of it. But I have to remember that at many points in my family history, we have been part of it. We have been the "other" or "The Immigrant".

In Matthew 25, the Son of Man will say to some, "I was hungry and you fed me, I was thirsty and you gave me a drink, I was homeless and you gave me a room, I was shivering and you gave me clothes, I was sick and you stopped to visit, I was in prison and you came to me.....for whenever you did one of these things to someone overlooked or ignored, that was me - you did it to me." I don't mean to ignore the tremendous issues that are part of immigration and refugees and homelessness, among many other problems. But it helps me to remember that there are real people with real hopes and dreams and fears and families behind the issues we read about every day.



Enrollment for our June 2023 Summer Camps is OPEN!

If you have a 3 to 5-year-old, we would LOVE to have them join us for our theme-based camps for some outdoor and water fun, art, crafts, Bible stories, music and movement, and much more. All remaining openings are on a first come first served basis so

do not delay, call 704.549.9741 or email paulab@mallardcreekchurch.org to get more information.

If you love children and have some spare time, WE NEED YOU! Our Pre-K classes are having a **Carnival on Thursday, May 11th**, and we need volunteers to help from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. so the teachers can enjoy the games and fun with their students. If you would like to help us out that day, please email kristym@mallardcreekchurch.org or call 704-549-9741.

Our March Reading Program was a huge success! The children enjoyed visits from the Chick-fil-A cow, and each student received a reading certificate and a gift card for a free treat from Chick-fil-A at University Place. **Help us show them our appreciation by joining us on Thursday, May 18th, between 5 and 8 p.m., for our Chick-fil-A Spirit Night at the University Place Chick-fil-A.**

A big THANK YOU to Pastor Rob, Ms. Andrea, Ms. Amanda, and Mr. Clyde Benfield for reading to our classes during the month of March! The children really enjoyed having them visit and read to them in their classrooms!

A very big THANK YOU to Mr. Harvey Alexander for driving our Pre-K classes on their field trips last month to the Sea Life Aquarium at Concord Mills! The students had so much fun!

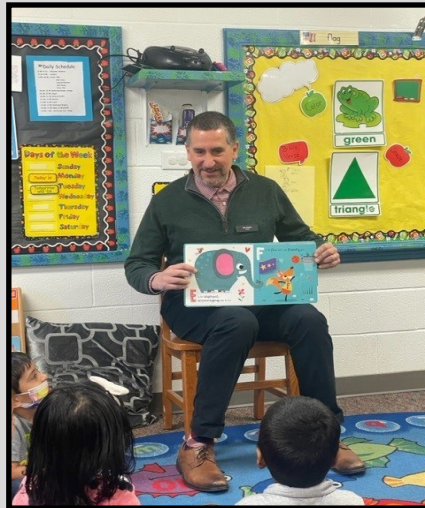
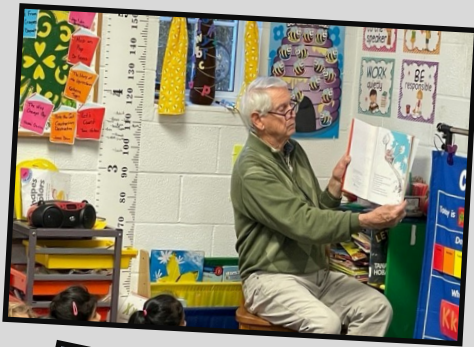
This month the children will learn about: Easter, Spring, Taking Care of Our World, and Zoo Animals. We will have our annual Spring Fling Event on the lawn, the children will have their spring pictures taken, and the Pre-K students will have graduation pictures taken.

Our Pre-K students will also have a Lemonade Stand on Thursday, April 20th, so feel free to drop by for a refreshing cup of lemonade. The cost for each cup of lemonade is 50 cents and all the proceeds will go to the Colin Courageous Foundation. This foundation was started by a former preschool family whose son, Colin, was diagnosed with Neurofibromatosis. It helps children diagnosed with NF1 and supports the Children's Tumor Foundation.

The Bible Stories that the children will learn about this month in Children's Church are the Easter Story, The Tower of Babel, and Zacchaeus.

The preschool and the preschool office will be CLOSED from April 7th through April 16th for Spring Break and will re-open at 8 a.m. on Monday, April 17th.

Our Bible verse for April is: "For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son." John 3:16



To the wonderful, caring congregation of Mallard Creek ---

Thank You!!!

For all the kind words, the thoughts and prayers,
the visits, and especially the cards.

Mom always asks at least once or twice a week
if she's gotten any new cards!

God Bless You All for putting a smile on her face!

Ruby, Bill, Mack, & Jane

Youth Club and Teen Fellowship

April 2023

Sunday Afternoon Schedule:

4/2	Sabbath (Palm Sunday)
4/9	Sabbath (Easter)
4/16	Bible Study and Dinner
4/23	Family Event: Go Karts and Mini Golf
4/30	Lunch after Worship and Hike

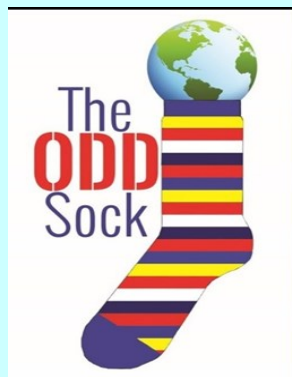
Community-wide Easter Egg Hunt on Saturday, April 1st 1-2pm!

Save the date for our annual Easter Egg Hunt for kids of all ages! Teens are encouraged to come at noon to help set up and hide eggs. It's fun for the whole family!



Confirmation Sunday on April 30th

Join us during worship for this special service of welcoming and honoring our Class of 2023 Confirmands.



Wanted: Clean, unpaired or paired, outgrown, unwanted, gently used and new socks for the homeless

Our teens are collecting socks throughout the month of April to benefit The Odd Sock in Charlotte



Don't forget!

The Neal Scholarship applications are due in hard copy by Thursday, April 27 by 5pm.

Mallard Creek will be hosting its annual Rise Against Hunger meal packing event on Saturday, May 20 at 9:00am in the Dining Hall.

We'll assemble 15,000 meals that will be distributed to third world countries. Unlike some other mission events, this is a great family activity; children of all ages can help, even those with limited mobility.

If you've joined us before, you already know what a fun, fulfilling activity this is and how we can pack this many meals in just a couple of hours! If you haven't, bring the entire family on May 20 and witness how we can make a difference in other parts of the world.

It is extremely important to register in advance for your attendance and we need a minimum of 40 volunteers. Doing so will both save time the morning of the event and allow us to plan accordingly. Please use this link:

<http://events.riseagainsthunger.org/MCPCCLT2023>

To date, we've packaged 167,922 meals throughout the course of the 10 events we've hosted! The last shipment of meals packaged in September 2021 was sent to Convoy of Hope - Haiti.

More recently, in January 2023, Rise Against Hunger sent meals and supplies to the following communities: Children of Vietnam, Salesian Missions in Haiti, ORPHANetwork in Nicaragua, Hands for Haiti, Convoy of Hope in the Philippines & International Care Ministries in the Philippines. They are currently evaluating with its impact partners on how the organization can assist those impacted by the recent earthquake in Turkey and Syria.



Rise Against Hunger has been fulfilling its commitment to end hunger across the globe since 1998, coordinating the distribution of food and other life-saving aid to crisis-burdened areas around the world. This is accomplished through popular community-supported meal packaging programs such as our upcoming event.

Rise Against Hunger distributes its meals through feeding programs operated by partner organizations in developing countries which promote education, encourage children to attend school, improve the health and nutrition of students, address gender inequalities, spur economic growth, combat child labor, and create a platform for tackling global issues. In addition to supporting school feeding programs, Rise Against Hunger also provides meals in response to crisis relief.

Learn more about the organization by visiting their website: www.riseagainsthunger.org.

State of the church as we enter 2023

Attendance data from 2023 – Year to date

- Virtual vs in-person for year to date. 61% virtual to 39% in person.
- Will be sending out details soon on how to log your attendance in Realm if attending virtually.



Breakdown by age of those attending in person (again since the beginning of the year up to 3/5):

17 & under	34	15%
18 to 24	5	2%
25 to 39	13	6%
40 to 59	45	20%
60 to 79	75	33%
80+	24	11%
other	30	13%
	226	

Weekly e-note email MCPC sends out:

- On average 179 people open the email each week. So if attendance is 211 each week on average, then 85% of the members are reading the weekly email.

Membership counts:

- The Session Administrative committee is currently in the process of cleaning up the membership roles for the church. Once we have an updated total count, we will publish it in the Scroll.

Realm login for the church directory.

- The current printed directory is now 8 years old.
- Realm is the best option for seeing the most up to date directory of church members.
- Please call the office if you need help creating a login to Realm.

How your money is designated:

Since the start of the year, over 93% of monies donated to the church have been to the General fund. Which is very helpful in managing how the bills are paid of the church and activities.

From the Finance Committee:



Financial highlights from 2022:

- December collections were outstanding at \$143,371.58. Previous December high was year 2012 \$104,469.
- However, even with that amazing December, 2022 expenses were \$66,072 more than 2022 collections.
- Overall, we spent 88% of our budgeted amount in 2022.

New ways to give at Mallard Creek



Scan
QR
Code

WE GIVE because GOD GAVE FIRST

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son...
John 3:16

Text
MCPC
to 73256



Lunch Bunch
Tuesday April 18
noon



Come join us for **Lunch Bunch on April 18** for our program **"What It's Worth"**.

Keri Wass will be presenting the program which is similar to the Antique RoadShow on TV. Keri needs to have your item and description by March 31, so she can do the research on its value.



Save the
Date!
Vacation
Bible School
June 25-29,
2023

Thank you for all the prayers, cards, food and visits during my health issues. God has truly blessed me to have such a wonderful church Family to nurse me back to health.
God Bless. **Linda Wallace**

Active Shooter Training on
Sunday, May 7 at 1:00 pm at
the Sanctuary Building

Red Cross Blood Drive
In the Dining Hall @ MCPC
Saturday May 13th - 10:00 am -
2:30 pm

www.redcross.org



Walk In's are welcomed.

Mark your calendars for our upcoming
Bonclarken Retreat - May 10 11, 12
"Those Were The Days."



Come and enjoy a walk down memory lane to the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s.

It will be a very uplifting and fun time for all attendees. Please see Carl Hatton, Margaret Hatton, Polly Walker or Jimmy Walker for details and reservations. A sign-up sheet will be available at Lunch Bunch activities.

Deadline for your reservation is Tuesday, April 18

Backpack Blessings will continue to collect clothes thru the rest of the year so if you have clothes that your child has outgrown please bring them to church; we have bins in the gathering space. Maria Menconi 704-560-3961

Holy Week Services

April 2 @ 10am: **Palm Sunday Cantata**

April 6 @ 7pm: **Maundy Thursday** Communion Service

April 9: **Easter Sunday:**

7am: Sunrise Service in Amphitheater

9am: Sunday School

April 05 @ 1 pm: Online Service

April 07 @ 1 pm: Online Service

8am: Coffee Hour

10am: Worship Service in Sanctuary


Special Prayers



Nancy Moore - mother of Rob Moore	Elizabeth King	Bobby Brown	Caroline Williams
Jimmy Rodgers - son of Frances Christenbury	Shirley Hunter	Cecil Massey	Donna Seaford
Donna Garrison — wife of Eddie Garrison	Juanita Untz	Roy Kinnamon	Elaine Lord
Larry Carroll - husband of Ann Carroll	Ruby Downing	Dennis Lord	Guy Eberhart
Andy Marcus - brother of Rachel Rodden	Donnie Oehler	Ken Christenbury	Carolyn Sheehan
Chrissy Rhodes - niece of Margaret Hatton	Frances Christenbury	Hope Moon	Mack Downing
LaVern Winter - father of Tammy Alford	Suggie Christenbury	Joana Lovette	Cy Alexander
Matthew Lee - friend of Karen Kosmoski	Dale McLaughlin	Ann Brown	Betsy Killian
Steve Arnold - son-in-law of Marleen Alexander	Carlita Hunter	Kelly Oehler	Ned Blackwell
Mike Drake - friend of the congregation	Lynn Kelley	Judith Rankin	Jane Geracimos
Barry Henson - brother-in-law of Perry Deaton	Ronnie Oehler		

Elder duty for April: Rodney Smith , Clay Scholand, Kerri Wass

Deacon duty for April: Christine Shankey , Robin McCraw , Joe Crapster, Phil Ashely, Wendy White

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
 <h2>May Birthdays</h2> 						
	1 Elisa Hansen	2 Debbie McCrary Miller Gupton Hunter Roddey John Adams	3	4 Lynn Welsh Andrew Rainstein Jonas Sheehan Chesnee Sheehan Lee McConnell	5 Robin McCraw Katie Moore	6 Doris Dixon Amanda Booth Savannah Dixon
7 Donny Brown Donna Stephens Kenneth McCraw Marti McCoy Ryan Oehler Kevin Kirk	8 Caitlin Holt Peter Schultz	9 Calvin Caldwell Judy Brown Kelly Oehler Abby Tucker	10	11 Natalia Messina	12 Larry Oeher James Harry Killian Jarrett Farmer	13
14 Carey Armistead	15 Jordan Maddux	16	17 Beth Massey Bih Ndingwan	18 Caroline Williams	19 Waylon Gullede George Kochappan	20 Lisa Kirk
21 Mike Stubbs Rose Oehler	22 Hannah Sheppard Ava DeKam	23 Andy Spittle Jennifer Zevan	24 John Craver Viviane Avant	25 Don Killian Hope Moore Helena Moore	26 Sara Haynes Hope Moon	27 LeAnn Ashley
28 Donnie Oeher Linzie Rosenberger Carson Shoupe	29 Craig Estes Maya Halter Ruby Wallace	30 Steve Misenheimer Sam Rodden	31 Jane Marshall Harvey Alexander			

Mallard Creek Presbyterian Church
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The Rev. Rob Watkins
The Rev. Hunter Roddey
Mrs. Andrea Thomas
Mrs. Claudia Perez
Mr. David Barnaba
Mrs. Kristy Maddux

Senior Pastor
Transitional Associate Pastor
Director of Children & Youth Ministry
Administrative Assistant
Director of Music
Preschool Director