

GREENSTONE GAZETTE

Nottingham Presbyterian Church PC (USA)
497 W. Christine Road
Nottingham, PA 19362-9760

April 2019

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We the people of Nottingham Presbyterian Church strive to be Christ-centered, friendly and faithful followers of Jesus Christ. We are called to surrender our individual desires in order to do God's will. We are led by God to be a light in this world by: • Bringing the love of Jesus to our community with an accepting, nurturing and compassionate environment. • Expanding our missions and worship experiences to meet the needs of the community and the world. • Passionately and enthusiastically developing opportunities for personal and spiritual growth. • Seeking to develop partnerships with local and global organizations in pursuit of God's vision.



Label

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Put this next to your calendar:

Easter Egg Hunt—Saturday April 6

Worship (communion)

Sunday April 7—10am

Palm Sunday

Sunday April 14—10am

Maundy Thursday Service

Thursday April 18—7pm

Good Friday Service

Friday April 19—7pm

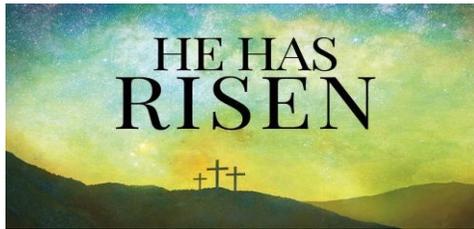
Easter Sunrise Community Service

April 21—7am on the Green

Easter Resurrection Service

Sunday April 21—10am

**Nottingham Presbyterian
Church
GREENSTONE GAZETTE**



**April
Volunteers**

Readers:

7 Ruth Ann Sumner
14 Cindy Sudnikovich
21 Bill Moore
28 Lizzy Dewees

Greeters:

7 Marlene & John Lloyd
14 Dewees Family
21 Ed and Kim Squires
28 Brooke and Becky

Deacon of the month:
Mark Roney

Communion Prep Team:
Nina Hansen
Cindy Sudnikovich

Communion Servers:
April 7
Connie Lewis
Jim Lewis
Jerry Jackson
Nina Hansen
April 18
Nina Hansen

**May
Volunteers**

Readers:

5 Dar Gray
12 Gerry Davis
19 Nina Hansen
26 Brooke Glover

Deacon of the month:
Dar Gray

Communion Prep Team:
Nina Hansen
Cindy Sudnikovich

Our website:
Nottinghampc.org

**Easter Egg Hunt—
Saturday April 6
(rain date-April 13)**



This is a big community event!
The Easter Egg Hunt starts at 10:30 with a free lunch to follow. Deb Roney needs help to hide the eggs, help with the hunt, help with lunch and help with clean up. Please see Deb or Mark Roney to volunteer. Last year we had over 250 kids!



**The Story Adult Bible
study continues on
Tuesday at 11am.**

Adult Bible Study Classes:

Tuesday Mornings
@ 11:00 a.m.

In the Foundation Room

Current schedule of study:

| | |
|----------|------------|
| April 2 | Chapter 24 |
| April 9 | Chapter 25 |
| April 16 | Chapter 26 |
| April 23 | Chapter 27 |
| April 30 | Chapter 28 |

Join us anytime!

**Back-to-School Fair Fundraiser
Split Garden Sale
Saturday May 11th 8am-1pm**

Have plants that we can split from to supply the sale? We are looking for (in order from top left to bottom right): Bee Balm, Cone Flower, Daisys, Stone Crop (Autumn Joy), Bleeding Hearts, Lilies, Hostas, Irises, Liriope (Money Grass), Phlox, Black Eyed Susans, Yarrow, and any other perennials you may have that split well. House plants like aloe, hens and chicks, and spider plants are also great.

Set an appointment with Tenille on May 4th, and she and her work crew will come do the digging for you. Need another day, just let us know what works for you, and we'll see what we can do.

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

What plants you have to split: _____

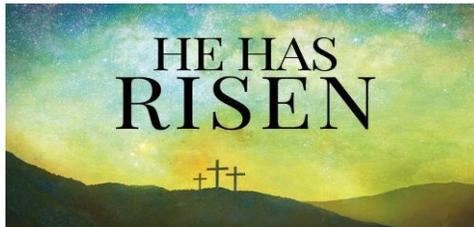
Time frame on May 4th we can come: _____

**The Book Bird
House** was built by John Lloyd and dedicated by Pastor Merritt during worship March 10.

Placed on Church grounds when the weather gets warmer, it will be registered with The Little Free Library. This allows folks to know we have the library. Anyone can borrow the books. Barb Jackson will be tending the library. Donations of books can be brought to the Church. Thanks to John and the Worship Team!



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April 2019 Newsletter Pastoral Letter

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,
It is beginning to look a lot like Spring!
As we inch our way past the puddles of
March showers into April, we are seeing
signs of flowers budding, some even
blooming, and warming temperatures
(despite the old adage of April showers
bringing May flowers!) We become frus-
trated with the occasional cloudy day set-
backs, but overall our spirits are rising and
our anticipation of the days of sunshine to come is growing. Still, too often we be-
come impatient with these last days of Winter. We do not want the cold, dank days
to continue. We want Spring to come now!



No wonder the Church long ago set aside this time of year for the season of Lent.
The name itself comes from the old word for lengthen, acknowledging the growing
length of light for each day (despite daylight savings time which simply shifts when
that daylight occurs!) Lent is a time for growing through reflection on: the shad-
owed parts of our lives when we have failed to live as God calls us to live; the light
which came into the world which the world could not see, understand or overcome;
the “lengths” to which God has gone in Jesus Christ to reach out to us and all crea-
tion; and the miracle of new life offered in Jesus Christ through his birth, life, death
and resurrection. Too often, we want to skip these days of reflection. We want to
jump from acknowledging our sins (and can we do this quickly please?) to the joys
of the resurrection and Easter. This would be a mistake.

Indeed, where would our spring flowers be if there was no fallow time for the bulbs
to regenerate and soil to be replenished by the snow and rain of winter? Likewise,
with our souls, we need time to reflect and meditate on all aspects of our lives with
God and with one another. Left to our own devices, we too often dwell on one as-
pect or another – too much time spent flailing ourselves with our sins and not
enough on forgiveness and grace; or too much time celebrating the gifts of grace
without opening ourselves to the transforming, though sometimes painful, gift of the
Holy Spirit. We rush from the chaotic frenzy of Palm Sunday to the heights of stun-
ning Easter, without pausing at Maundy Thursday to hear God’s call to us to love
one another or spending time focusing on the deep cost to God of our salvation
through Christ’s presence on the cross on Good Friday. It is not comfortable to hear
the words of rebuke and suffering on Good Friday. We know about it. We admit it
happened. We acknowledge that it was horrible. What more do we need to do? Why
should we dwell on this event year after year? Besides, attend four services in eight
days? Who has the time? We’ll just watch the highlight reel!

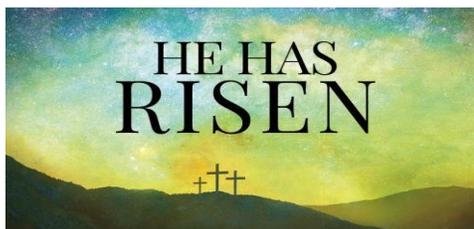
This is not a guilt trip. This is an invitation. It is an invitation to dive into the depths
of your souls so that you can reach the joyous heights of salvation. From Palm Sun-
day to Maundy Thursday to Good Friday to Easter, come to worship to be stretched,
molded, shaped, comforted, challenged, renewed, inspired and prepared for joy.
Stand in the presence of God, bringing all of who you are – broken, gifted, tired,
excited, sinful, forgiven – and know that you are loved. May the more difficult of
these services remind you all the more just how much you are loved by God so that
on difficult days of daily life you may hold fast to that secure knowledge.

May God bless you as we head through these final days of Winter into Spring,
through these final weeks of Lent to Holy Week – and the joy of time spent with
God, rain or shine!

In Christ’s Love—Merritt

Our Sunday School enjoyed
acting out the story of John the
Baptist and the baptism of Je-
sus. Sunday School also follows
The Story, collecting character
cards of important individuals
each week.

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What We Believe, The Sacraments and our “Furniture”

The early Church, following Jesus, took three primary material elements of life — water, bread, and wine — to become basic symbols of offering life to God as Jesus had offered his life. Being washed with the water of Baptism, Christians received new life in Christ and presented their bodies to be living sacrifices to God. Eating bread and drinking wine they received the sustaining presence of Christ, remembered God’s covenant promise, and pledged their obedience anew.

The Reformed tradition understands Baptism and the Lord’s Supper to be Sacraments, instituted by God and commended by Christ. Sacraments are signs of the real presence and power of Christ in the Church, symbols of God’s action. Through the Sacraments, God seals believers in redemption, renews their identity as the people of God, and marks them for service. (Directory for Worship, W-1.3033)

Is it an altar or a table?

The sacrament that Christ instituted for the remembrance of him takes the form of a simple meal — a sharing of bread and wine. In addition, Presbyterians consider that Christ’s sacrifice was the final sacrifice; there is no further need for an altar. In the Lord’s Supper, we remember Christ’s sacrifice. Therefore, it is Presbyterian practice to refer to the Lord’s Table rather than an altar. In the Lord’s Supper, we experience not only a vague remembrance of Jesus Christ, but the living presence of the risen Christ. By the power of the Holy Spirit, Christ is present and we are changed as we eat the bread and drink the wine/juice.

Is it the Lord’s Supper, Eucharist or Holy Communion?

Each of these terms may be appropriately applied to the church’s ancient practice of sharing bread and wine. However, each term highlights a different facet of the meaning of the feast. The Lord’s Supper, particularly prominent in Presbyterian/Reformed tradition, emphasizes Christ’s institution of the sacrament, and connects the meal with its celebration on the Lord’s Day (Sunday) as a day of celebrating Christ’s resurrection and Christ’s offer of new life. Eucharist, from a Greek word meaning “to give thanks,” emphasizes the essential nature of the sacrament as an offering of thanksgiving for the gift of God’s grace in Jesus Christ; this term tends to have more currency in ecumenical and Roman Catholic discussion. Holy Communion originally referred to a specific part of the eucharistic liturgy — the sharing of bread and wine — and a particular aspect of its theological meaning — the fellowship of the Body of Christ through the Holy Spirit; over time and in some circles, however, this term has come to stand in for the sacrament as a whole. (continued on next column)

What we believe (cont)

What items belong on the communion table?

It is common in many Presbyterian congregations to find a brass standing cross and a pair of candles on the Lord’s Table. Some churches will include a large Bible, sometimes on a book stand. Occasionally one even sees arrangements of flowers and other items. The cross, the light, and the Bible are central symbols of the Christian faith (not so for flowers, as beautiful and meaningful as they may be). However, as these objects accumulate they can begin to crowd out and obscure the primary meaning and purpose of the Lord’s Table — a place for a meal — a place for eating and drinking with the risen Christ, in thanksgiving for the gifts of God and in anticipation of that great feast to come in the realm of heaven. The 2006 Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) sacrament study *Invitation to Christ* makes this recommendation: “Set cup and plate on the Lord’s Table on every Lord’s Day.” The paten and chalice help us to remember the primary function of the Lord’s Table, and can serve to whet our appetite for the spiritual nourishment we receive from Christ in the Lord’s Supper — even on Sundays when the sacrament is not celebrated. Elaborating on this point, the authors of *Invitation to Christ* advise: “Be sensitive to what the presence of other things on the Lord’s Table says about the meaning of the meal.”

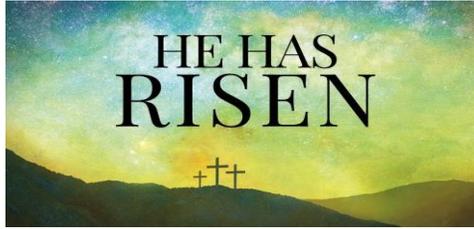
An analogy might be helpful: when the dining room table in your house becomes cluttered with other objects, no matter how important (tax forms, books, computers, children’s toys) it’s a good sign that you may be neglecting the primary purpose of that table: gathering together for regular nourishment. Reserving the Lord’s Table for symbols of the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper can help us to remember the very special nature of the meal we share when we participate in this sacrament.

What is baptism?

We are reminded, especially in infant baptisms but true for all baptisms, that we do not earn our baptism. Baptism is a sign and seal of what God has already done — offering us new life cleansed from sin and grafted into the Body of Christ — which we cannot do for ourselves. Baptism in the Reformed Tradition is offered only once. It does not need to be repeated because our baptism stems from God’s actions not our own. We do, however, sometimes “remember” our baptism. That is, we remember what God has done for us in our baptism through special litanies. In such remembrances we are called home again, since we are still prone to wander. In baptism we are “justified” — made right with God as Jesus takes our sins upon himself. (continued on next page)

Our Website: Nottinghampc.org

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What we believe (cont)

We are also joined to Christ and the Holy Spirit continues to work with us, to “sanctify” us, a process of making us holy. We are works in progress who continually need to repent, confess our sins, and turn back to God.

Where should we place the baptismal font?

Most importantly, the baptismal font belongs in the sanctuary, or wherever the people of God regularly assemble for worship. The presence of the font in worship should serve as a constant reminder of the new life that is ours in Christ Jesus, through our dying and rising with Christ in baptism, the forgiveness of sin, the gift of the Holy Spirit, our incorporation into Christ’s body and the promise of life eternal and abundant in the kingdom of God.

A second issue is the placement of the font within the worship space. Protestant Reformers brought the font out of secluded baptistries and into the sanctuary, sometimes attaching bowls of water to the pulpit to emphasize baptism’s relationship with the word of God (see Matt. 28:19-20). Others have positioned the baptismal font in such a way that a visual connection is made with the table of the Lord’s Supper, demonstrating the relationship between these two sacraments in Christian initiation as well as the ongoing sacramental life of the church. Some churches underscore the ongoing influence of our baptism by having water poured into the font at the beginning of each service.

The Worship Ministry Team will be considering these concepts on Presbyterian Sacraments, as we continue to seek ways to enhance our worship, and further glorify God.

2019 Easter Flower Offering

The Board of Deacons will accept orders for Easter flowers to adorn our sanctuary on Easter Sunday. Orders will be accepted through **Sunday, April 14.**

These flowers may be placed in honor of or in memory of your loved ones with the names listed on a special bulletin insert on Easter Sunday. After the Easter Worship Service, the flowers may be taken home or directed to others whom you can designate.

Please fill out the form below and place in the offering plate or hand to a Deacon with your check made payable to **NPC. Include the notation “Easter Flowers” in the memo area on the check.**

I wish to order: _____ Lilies @ \$6.75

I wish to order: _____ Tulips @ \$5.50
 _____ Pink _____ Purple _____ Yellow

Total Amount Due: \$ _____ My check for \$ _____ is enclosed.

Your Name:
 Phone/Email:

Given in: _____ Honor of _____ Memory of (check one):

Designated Recipient of Flowers:

Me _____ Name of Recipient if other than me:



Look at our February Food Drive!

Thanks to the Deacons for organizing this food drive for our friends at Devine Sent Food Cupboard. Thanks to everyone that contributed, sharing our blessings with others. Next food drive—June

On the lighter side:

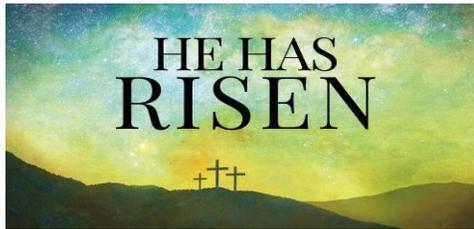
What Kids Pray For (No wonder God loves hearing from kids when you see his mail!)

Dear God,
 If you watch me in church on Sunday, I'll show you my new shoes. - Mickey

Dear God,
 Instead of letting people die and having to make new ones, why don't you just keep the ones you've got? - Amy

Dear God,
 I went to this wedding and they kissed right in church. Is that OK? - Neal

- taken from “kids prayers” tea towel; Auckland, New Zealand



Holy Week Services

April 14 – 10:00 a.m. Palm Sunday Service

Join us for the triumphant entrance of the palms and a service that follows the Gospel of John's depiction of the first part of the week in Jerusalem. Consider what the Mind of Christ might have been during that time, and what that means to us as we have been called to have the same mind as that which was in Christ Jesus.

April 18 – 7:00 p.m. Maundy Thursday Service

The Lord's Supper

On a night filled with tension, Jesus gave his disciples a commandment that summed up the whole of the law and the whole of Christ's teachings:

Love the Lord with all your heart, mind, and soul; and love one another.
Come, experience the fellowship of those who are under Christ's command.
Share the bread. Drink the fruit of the vine. Be embraced by the Spirit.

April 19 – 7:00 p.m. Good Friday Service

The tensions of the week have reached a peak. That which was feared is now happening.

The worst that could happen must now be faced.

Face the worst you can be as we meditate on the Nails of the Cross:

Pride; Betrayal; Envy; Indecision; Cruelty; Hatred

Feel your sins lifted and nailed to the Cross

Receive the Promise of Mercy, Forgiveness and Hope

“Were You There?”

April 21 – 7:00 a.m. Easter Sunrise Community Service

The Green in Oxford

April 21 – 10:00 a.m. Easter Resurrection Service

“The Day of Resurrection, Earth Tell It Out Abroad

The Passover of Gladness, the Passover of God!

From death to life eternal, from sin's dominion free

Our Christ has brought us over, with hymns of victory!”

Can it be? Is it true? The startling good news that we take for granted.

The grace behind this preposterous story!