



## A Message from Pastor Mathew

One of my favorite hymns is "My Hope is Built on Nothing Less." It's a great one that I've begun to cherish over the years. As we go through the season of Lent, its opening words are of significant value to us. "My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness." We follow Jesus to Jerusalem and we follow Jesus to the cross where he would die for our sins. That act right there is so significant that our eternal state depends on what takes place. The blood of Jesus becomes that which gives us everlasting hope of forgiveness or the everlasting condemnation of our impending doom. That sacrificial blood of Jesus is pivotal to our faith. We talk about it but I think we often take it for granted. If it worked, we're forgiven. If it didn't, we're condemned. Our hope hinges on that blood.

Lent brings to mind the sacrifice of Jesus and just what he would go through to bring us forgiveness, eternal life, and salvation. It draws us closer to understanding the mission of Christ to redeem and restore all people. The Bible tells us over and over that Jesus' blood is satisfactory for our sins.

It begins in Luke 22:20 and Matthew 26:28. It continues in Acts 20:28, Romans 3:24-25, Romans 5:9, Ephesians 1:7, Colossians 1:20, Hebrews 9:14 and 17, Hebrews 10:6-9, Hebrews 10:19, Hebrews 13:12, 1 Peter 1:18-19, 1 John 1:7, Revelation 1:5, Revelation 7:14, and Revelation 12:11 just to name a few. Check them out yourselves. The New Testament writers point to the blood of Jesus as that which saves, a sacrifice worthy of your salvation. But, notice when you read these verses that blood is it. It's not blood AND.. something else. It's just the blood of Jesus.

That in mind, as I thought about this truth, the hymn I mentioned above, I was reminded of some powerful words spoken by our NALC Bishop, Dan Selbo who said, "My hope is built on nothing less, but my hope is also built on nothing else." These are good words to hear as we walk with Jesus to Jerusalem, to know of the power in blood, the power of his sacrifice, that our hope is built on nothing less than what Jesus did to make our salvation possible and that we are assured our hope is built on nothing else. There is no earning it. It's not Jesus' blood and daily Bible reading. It's not Jesus' blood and weekly worship attendance. It's not Jesus' blood and volunteer work. It's Jesus' blood and nothing else. Those things we do we do in response to this grace. We immerse ourselves in the Word of God that speaks freedom to sinners like us. We immerse ourselves in worship where we hear once again that though we are not worthy, in Christ we are made worthy. We immerse ourselves in our neighbor, imitating the same love through which Christ first loved us.

May this be on your mind as we go through Lent and endure the cross of Good Friday, making that Easter celebration all the more palpable.

God's peace,

Pastor Mathew

*For by grace you  
have been saved  
through faith.  
And this is not  
your own doing;  
it is a gift of God.  
Ephesians 2:8*

### **OUR MISSION: WHY WE EXIST**

To bring people into a covenantal relationship with the Lord (Matthew 28:19-20), and to equip them for personal growth and impact.  
Ephesians 4:11-26

## HOLY WEEK AND EASTER SERVICES

### *Holy Week Services*



### *Maundy Thursday*

*March 28 - 7:00 PM*

*with Holy Communion*

### *Good Friday, March 29*

**7:00 PM Tenebrae**

## *He Is Risen!*

### *Easter Sunday Services*

**Festival Communion**

**8:00 and 10:30 AM**

# JOIN US FOR THE RESURRECTION CAVE WALK



*Resurrection Cave Walk*  
*Saturday, March 30*  
*10:30 a.m.*

South Park:  
Maple Springs Gazebo  
Invite your neighbors,  
family, and friends



## Prayer Concerns

Kevin Barrett  
Family of Marty Galland Demsky  
Marilyn & David Detwiler  
Corey Fischer  
Casey Hirsh  
Pat Jason  
George Langford  
Jennifer Meyer  
Delores Pfefferman  
Glen Ribblett  
Dani Richey  
Pat Sheridan

In Him we have redemption through His blood,  
the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to  
the riches of his grace.

Ephesians 1:7

### MARCH BAPTISMAL BIRTHDAYS

Lukas Buechel  
Grace Douglass

March 3, 2018  
March 12 2023

\*If we are missing your child's baptism date, please advise the church office.

## ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL

STARTING MARCH 3, 2024  
9 A.M.  
Heritage Chapel

"Justification by  
Faith Alone"  
By R.C. Sprul

9 week class

No class on Palm Sunday  
or Easter Sunday

## GRACE

God's  
Riches  
At  
Christ's  
Expense





## Lenten Midweek Prayer Services

Wednesdays thru March 20  
7:00 PM—Heritage Room

Following Prayer Services, (7:30 PM) Pastor Mathew will be leading a class on the Story of the Bible. Please stay!



## JOIN US FOR LENTEN MEALS

The following Wednesdays at 6:00 PM  
March 6, 13 & 20



Sign up to bring a soup, salad, dessert or bread on Mealtrain or call Karen Stoddart at 412-580-5814

## MAPLE SYRUP SEASON has arrived at CAMP AGAPE



Because the production of Maple Syrup is so weather dependent, they cannot schedule which days they will be collecting sap or processing the sap into syrup at the Sap Shack. However, this much they do know, many hands make the work light! They are encouraging you to come and help, and thereby experience the process of Maple Syrup production. Please contact the camp office with your name, phone number and email address. Camp Office Ph: 724-356-2308 Email- [Marketing@campagape.org](mailto:Marketing@campagape.org).

SAVE THE DATE (Details Pending)  
**2024 Maple Syrup Festival**  
March 16, 2024; 10 AM—3 PM

## Benevolent Memorial Fund *by John Thatcher*

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Pastor Magera and I delivered the Aldi gift cards to the police departments for Jefferson Hills and Pleasant Hills Boroughs on Tuesday, January 23, 2024. The police deliver these gift cards to families in need around their respective communities. Typically, these cards are given to families who lost their home due to a fire, single mothers with several children, couples with domestic disputes over money, and other families or individuals experiencing difficult health and /or financial issues. The BMF committee considers the local police departments to be one of our best resources to get gift cards into the hands of residents that most need them. The police chiefs also see this as a means to better engage the community on a positive note, and very much appreciate the donations.



Pleasant Hills Police Sargent Sean Greene & Chief Brian Finnerty receiving cards from Pastor Magera.



John Thatcher & Pastor Magera delivering gift cards to Jefferson Hills Police Chief Ron Dziezgowski

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## Easter Blessings

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you this day and always.