

April 16, 2025

Dear CONNECT Family,
Family Spiritual Practice

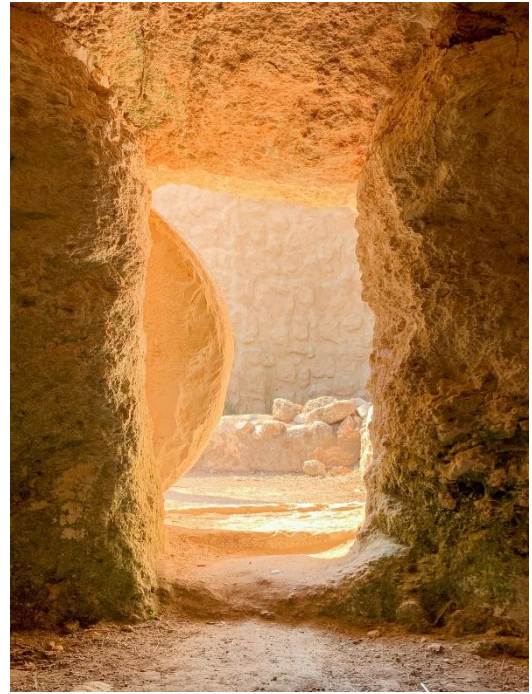
Faith Talk:

This week, I invite you to take a moment to reflect:
Griefs come to us in ways big and small.

But here's the good news:

It's Holy Week.

Holy Week invites us into the good, hard work of grief. And we don't walk this road alone—we are invited into it with the church around the world and the church throughout history. A whole company of saints walks beside us and has gone before us.



Maundy Thursday reminds us to wash one another's feet and then points us toward the sleepy disciples who nod off in the garden when Jesus needs them most. It puts us in touch with the grief over our frailty. We have such good intentions—and yet.

Good Friday invites us to walk the path of the cross, to witness the anguish of our crucified Savior and Lord. To acknowledge how very much has gone wrong here in our world. Discord between us and God. Rifts between us and our neighbors. Fear of the stranger, the immigrant, the refugee. War against God's good creation.

And then there is the weird, brutal silence of Holy Saturday, when we live in the liminal space between devastating grief: *Christ has died* and resurrection hope: *Christ is risen*.

Holy Saturday shows us how to exist within this ache. The ache of the already and the not-yet. Pain even as we hope. Joy tinged with an undercurrent of despair. Comfort that finds us somehow, though we grieve.

Holy Week is an open invitation:

Bring it all to Jesus.

It doesn't need to make sense or be figured out yet.

He welcomes the mess.

– Courtney Ellis

What I am reading/listening:

Together We Rise - An Easter Story for All of Us by Paul Raushenbush

(You can find it anytime in the Children's Library)

What I am watching:

We Go With Jesus

Someone to Believe in You

Sarah Bessey: Faith that Survives

Quote, I've Been Thinking About...

"Resurrection is a verb. It creates possibility with every small step toward courage and truth."

-Rev. Cameron Trimble

WHAT WE ARE WONDERING ABOUT

April Practice Theme: Everything in Between!

In April we will focus on the Series Everything (in) Between. This series, allows the Gospel of Luke to guide us through Lent. Many of these stories are well-known in both sacred and secular imagination, carrying cultural relevance and lore. Jesus intentionally highlights the cultural and political polarities of his time to emphasize the radical, inclusive, and surprising love of God. This Lent, we're trusting that God shows up in shades of gray, rainbow hues, and everywhere in between.

Last Sunday:

Last Sunday, was **PALM SUNDAY, April 13!** We celebrated the start of Holy Week with a Palm parade at the 9 am service. Kids, youth and adults participated in the parade waving palm branches.

The focus was on the Scripture reading of Luke 19:29-40 - Speaking up is as important as listening.





This Sunday:

This Sunday is EASTER!!!

When we look around at the tiny transformations and resurrections that happen within us and around us, we're reminded afresh that we can trust Jesus' resurrection. We see that all beautiful transformation into new life, from what we see in nature to what we experience within our souls, comes from Christ.

We will start together in Worship and children will be invited for some time of wonder, where they'll be invited to step into the beauty of the Easter story—a story that reminds us all that love is stronger than death, and that light will always find a way.



WONDER ROOM - CHILDREN'S LIBRARY & SPIRITUAL PRACTICE ROOM

We're excited to share with you a special new space created just for our children—the **Wonder Room**, a Children's Library and Spiritual Practice Room that was introduced to them this past Sunday. The children responded with awe and joy as they explored this new sacred space, filled with books to stir the imagination and prayer stations designed to help them connect with God in creative, hands-on ways.

The Wonder Room will remain open as a quiet and welcoming place for children to spend time—reading, reflecting, or experimenting with different ways to pray and practice their faith. Whether it's curling up with a story, lighting a candle, or creating something at one of the stations, our hope is that this space becomes a sanctuary for wonder, curiosity, and spiritual growth.

We've also set aside a small corner with **resources for parents**—books and materials to support you as you nurture faith at home, create meaningful rhythms, and walk alongside your children on their spiritual journey.

We can't wait for you to see it—and for your children to make it their own.





Coming Up

April 20 CONNECT - 9 AM
EASTER SUNDAY

Luke 24:1-12 - God made all our feelings.

April 27

CONNECT - 9 AM

Freedom to Sing

May 4

No CONNECT - 9 AM

All Worship Together - Communion Sunday

Freedom to Follow

May 11

CONNECT - 9 AM

Freedom to Rise Again

May 18

CONNECT - 9 AM

Freedom to Love

May 25

CONNECT - 10 AM (One Service)

Freedom to Heal

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

MESSY CHURCH



May 11, 2025



Easter Bags Deliveries- Congregational Care Team

In March, our children generously helped fill Easter goody bags for some of our congregation members. Now, the time has come to deliver these thoughtful gifts—and we need your help!

This is a meaningful mission that we undertake in partnership with the Congregational Care Team. It's a wonderful opportunity to show love and care for members who, for various reasons, may not be able to attend church in person. Your involvement in delivering these bags would truly brighten someone's day and strengthen our sense of community.

We still have some bags ready for delivery that need your help, and we would love for you and your children to be a part of this special mission. If you're available to help, please reach out to me via email at sadamrita@chelseaumc.org, and let me know when you're able to assist.



Thank you for considering this opportunity to make a meaningful impact!

PARENT/CAREGIVER GROUP

A promotional graphic for a Parent/Caregiver Group. On the left is a book titled 'THE HOPEFUL FAMILY: Raising Resilient Children in Uncertain Times' by Amelia Richardson Dress. The background is a teal color. In the center, the words 'PARENT GROUP' are written in large, bold, white letters. To the right of this text is a circular portrait of a woman, Susan Adam-Rita, with the text 'LED BY SUSAN ADAM-RITA' below it. Below the portrait, the schedule is listed: 'MONDAYS @ 6:30 - 7:30 PM', 'APRIL 7 - JUNE 9', and 'IN PERSON AND ZOOM'. At the bottom, a paragraph states: 'This group will explore nine spiritual practices that help parents foster a framework of abundance and optimism, even in uncertain times.'

We would love for you to join us as we come together to explore the powerful book, *The Hopeful Family - Raising Resilient Children in Uncertain Times*. This is a wonderful opportunity to connect with fellow parents and caregivers, share experiences, and build a supportive community where we can all grow and learn together.

We can't wait to spend time with you and build a stronger community together. Bring your thoughts, your questions, and your hope!

- Child-care provided
- In person and/or Zoom

Wonderful online classes

Michigan State University Extension

Child and Family Development Offerings

April and June 2025 Lunch and Learn Classes:

- Friday, 4/18/25: RELAX: Alternative to Anger for Parents and Caregivers
- Friday, 6/20/25: The Birds and the Bees: Talking with Kids About Sex
- **Class Times:** 11:30AM-1:00PM
- **Registration:** https://msu.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_FWmqgzZ_R1e2CcHVvLK47A
- Attached are flyers and social media graphics for these workshops
- For more information contact Courtney Aldrich at aldric82@msu.edu

The Parent Talk System

Do you feel like the children in your care aren't listening to you? Do you find yourself constantly repeating yourself trying to gain compliance? This 6-week series is for parents and caregivers of children of all ages and is designed to improve communication and provide practical verbal strategies for raising confident, caring, responsible children. Topics include eliminating unwanted behavior, setting limits, teaching about consequences, giving effective feedback, promoting independence, and developing character. Certificates of attendance are available. **This class is eligible for MIRegistry Credit!**

- **Class dates:** Fridays, May 2, 9, 16, 23, 30, June 6
- **Class times:** 11:30am-1:00pm ET
- **Registration:** https://msu.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_9ymsFvepoXP3cFw
- Attached is a flyer and graphics for social media

For more information, contact Courtney Aldrich, aldric82@msu.edu

WATCH:

Online CONNECT Services:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9hbXk_dzFLU

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC-oDHg9zalmC42npYW0EvTA>

Follow us on Instagram

- **Instagram** - follow us on Instagram <http://instagram.com/chelseafumc.children>

Love and Peace,
Susan



Ordinary people learning to love like Jesus.

