

April 30, 2025

Dear CONNECT Family,
Family Spiritual Practice

Faith Talk:

This week, I invite you to a wonderful practice guide from Christine Valters Painter on breath prayer:

Quieting Myself to Hear My Heart

I breathe in peace,

I breathe out love.

We begin just sitting quietly, savoring a few moments of stillness in our day. This might be first thing in the morning or at the end of day. Choose a time when you won't be interrupted for ten minutes....

As you inhale, you whisper to yourself: *I breathe in peace.*

You might add an element of visualization to this as well. Perhaps images are a more potent form of prayer for you, in which case, as you breathe in, see yourself drawing in the gift of peace into your body. Notice what color it is or texture. Pay attention to your body's response as it fills you.

As you exhale, you say softly: *I breathe out love.*

Imagine inviting love to fill the world with each out-breath, see it filling every crack and corner. Again, notice any colors or textures. How does your body respond knowing love is being sent out to the world?

What I am reading/listening:

[What Is the Bible? by Rachel Held Evans & Matthew Paul Turner and Illustrated by Ying Hui Tan](#)

[BIG by Vashti Harrison](#)

What I am watching:

[Being Kind: the Music Video that Circle the World](#)

[The Physics of a Bright Smile](#)



Quote, I've Been Thinking About...

"When you create a difference in someone's life, you not only impact their life, you impact everyone influenced by them throughout their entire lifetime. No act is ever too small. One by one, this is how to make an ocean rise."

-Danielle Doby, poet

WHAT WE ARE WONDERING ABOUT

Practice Theme: The Cup of Freedom

Easter is a time of "alleluias!" When death seems to have had the last word and rising up feels locked down, we call on the power of love and life. We take up Jesus' cup of freedom, we call on the name of the One Who Is Truly Sovereign, and we claim the freedom to move forward, to sing, to follow, to rise again, to love, heal, and be opened. In the end, we are filled with the freedom of the Spirit of God.

Last Sunday:

Last Sunday, we started a new worship series called *The Cup of Freedom*. While the grown-ups heard about it in the service, the children also explored the story from the Bible—Acts 5:27–32.

It's a story about Jesus' friends who were very brave. Even when others told them to stop talking about Jesus, they kept sharing His love, because they trusted God with all their hearts.

Sometimes doing the right thing isn't easy. The friends of Jesus, called the apostles, were told to stop talking about Him—but they didn't stop. Why? Because they trusted God more than anything else.

Even when they were scared, they remembered what Jesus did—how He died and rose again to bring us forgiveness and new life.

We can be brave like the apostles, too. We can tell others about God's love, even when it's hard. And just like the butterfly shows us how things can change, Jesus gives us the power to become strong, kind, and full of courage.

We made megaphones to spread the good news and tell others of God's great love for them.



This Sunday:

This Sunday, we will gather for worship in the Sanctuary as we celebrate Communion together. Our theme, **"Freedom to Follow,"** is rooted in Acts 9:1–6, 7–20.

Throughout his ministry, Jesus used familiar images—"tend my sheep," "feed my lambs," and "cast your nets on the other side"—to call his disciples to follow him into a life of freedom. Similarly, in this week's Scripture, we encounter Saul, whose eyes were opened to the liberating call of Christ. We, too, are invited to set aside our hesitations and boldly claim our discipleship.

We look forward to worshipping with you.

WONDER ROOM - CHILDREN'S LIBRARY & SPIRITUAL PRACTICE ROOM

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.



Coming Up

- | | |
|---------------|--|
| 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

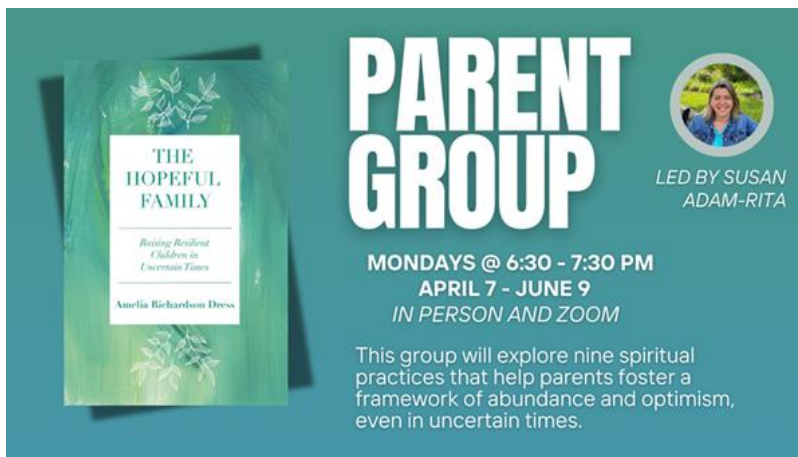


May 11, 2025



PARENT/CAREGIVER GROUP

You are invited to joy us-anytime!



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=TGewrnexEk>

<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.

