

WEEKLY SCRIPTURE READINGS (April 28, 2024 – May 4, 2024):

(Scripture passages are from the New International Version (NIV) Bible unless otherwise indicated)

Sunday April 28

Scripture Reading Acts 8:26-40; Reflection Verses: Acts 8:34-35

“The eunuch asked Philip, “Tell me, please, who is the prophet talking about, himself or someone else?” Then Philip began with that very passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus.”

Reflection Question/Action for the Day: How can you leverage Scripture to tell others about the good news about Jesus?

Monday April 29

Scripture Reading: John 15:1-8; Reflection Verses: John 15:7-8

“If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. This is to my Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.”

Reflection Question/Action for the Day: I will bear much fruit as evidence of my discipleship.

Tuesday April 30

Scripture Reading: John 15:9-17; Reflection Verse: John 15:16

“You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last—and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you.”

Reflection Question/Action for the Day: In what ways are you bearing lasting fruit to honor God’s name?

Wednesday May 1

Scripture Reading: Isaiah 53:1-11; Reflection Verses: Isaiah 53:10-11

“Surely he took up our pain and bore our suffering, yet we considered him punished by God, stricken by him, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed.”

Reflection Question/Action for the Day: How are you honoring the sacrifice of Jesus that brought up peace with God?

Thursday May 2

Scripture Reading: Ezekiel 34:1-16; Reflection Verse: Ezekiel 34:12

“As a shepherd looks after his scattered flock when he is with them, so will I look after my sheep. I will rescue them from all the places where they were scattered on a day of clouds and darkness.”

Reflection Question/Action for the Day: I will join Jesus on search and rescue for lost sheep.

Friday May 3

Scripture Reading: Luke 15:1-10; Reflection Verse: Luke 15:7

“I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent.

Reflection Question/Action for the Day: Why do you think there is more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents?

Saturday May 4

Scripture Reading: Luke 15:11-32; Reflection Verses: Luke 15:31-32

“My son,’ the father said, ‘you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’”

Reflection Question/Action for the Day: How can you relate with the story of the prodigal or lost son told by Jesus?

Sunday, April 28, 2024

10:30 a.m. Sunday Worship

Wednesday, May 1, 2024

10:00 a.m. Bible Study (Chapel)

Saturday, May 4, 2023

7:00 a.m. Weekly Prayer Huddle (see details in announcements)

Sunday, May 5, 2023

10:30 a.m. Sunday Worship

FOR THE MONTH OF APRIL 2024

Birthdays

30 Jerry Raymond

Anniversaries

28 Jan & Connie Cox

FOR THE MONTH OF MAY 2024

Birthdays

4 Connie Cox
5 Nathan Trogus
6 John Mongold
6 'Lola Onabanjo
9 Justin Chaffin
9 Samuel Onabanjo
14 Alan Fick
14 Karen Trogus
16 Abby Tener
18 Sam Strawn
19 Emily Maiden
19 Ayden Thress
21 Ralph Bay
24 Shirley Mowery
25 Elizabeth Singer
25 Grace Singer
27 Ruth Bowland
29 Lura Goff

Anniversaries

19 Jerry & Donna Dickson
26 William & Doris Shauger
28 Ed & Sandy Gurile
28 John & Lou Ellen Reef
30 Pete & Kara Reed



Bennington Glen: Jane Patterson

Edgewood Manor (Lucasville): Alan Fick, C3

LanFair: Mary Chilcote, 313
Donna Ballmer, 119

Luxe: Elaine Hill, Sheridan Wing, 108
Jim Robertson (Billie's brother), Sheridan Wing, 305
Jim Funkhouser, Eckert Wing, 207A

Main Street Terrace: Marilyn Lawson, 36

Primrose: Bill & Doris Shauger, 121

The Ridge: Fred Beougher, 140
Barb Cook, 103

Continued prayers are requested for:

Amanda Baker, Dave Bash, Sharon Byerly, Barbara Cook, John Cook, Ken Cook, Walt Fawcett, Sharon Funkhouser, Clara Herrick, Cindy, Lloyd & Diann Helber, Mykel Henderly, Dixie Hoskinson, Joan Irwin, Elizabeth Jones, Jill Jubach, Eleanor & Bob Kane, Marilyn Lawson, Carl & Sharon Mathias, Jingur Nichols, Vicki Oatney, Beth Patton, Mark & Donna Shouldis, Rod Shouldis, Kathy Starner, Don Taylor, Carl David Tripp, Kara Whitmer-Beatty, Ralph Bay, Greg & Sandie White.

If you have a prayer concern or praise to share, please fill out a green prayer card found in the pew and give it to an usher before the worship service begins. Thank you for allowing us to pray for and with you!

Pastor's Bible Study: This holds on Wednesdays at 10:00 a.m. in the Chapel. As we continue in the Season of Eastertide, we will continue to explore some of the short Letters of the New Testament. We will conclude **Paul's 2nd Letter to the Thessalonians** this week with **Chapters 2-3** and if time permits, we will start **1st Timothy Chapters 1 & 2**. Please read the chapters for this week in advance. The Bible Study is open to all members of the community. In addition to the joy of worship and fellowship on Sundays, our time together during Bible Study is always a blessing. We also spend some time to pray at the end of the Bible Study for personal and general prayer requests. Please invite a neighbor or friend and thanks for making time to attend.

Lancaster Charge to Host Clergy Guest from Africa: We are excited to share with members that the Lancaster Charge (Zanesville Circuit) of the Allegheny West Provisional Conference of the GMC comprising Sixth Avenue GMC and Mt. Zion GMC will be hosting one of the guests that will be visiting our Conference next month as part of the partnership with the Kenya/Ethiopia Provisional Annual Conference. Rev. Wilton Odongo, the President Pro-Tempore of the Kenya/Ethiopia Provisional Conference of the GMC will be itinerating through the Zanesville Circuit while two other guests will be visiting other parts of our Conference. The event for our Lancaster Charge will be held at Sixth Avenue GMC on Monday, May 20, 2024 starting at 6:30pm. Please check out the information Desk for the flyer but note the summary of activities for our Circuit below:

- Sunday May 19th from 5-7pm: Rolling Plains GMC, 3350 Moxahala Park Rd, Zanesville, OH 43701. Picnic on the lawn, Praise & Worship and Puppet Ministry.
- Monday May 20th from 6:00pm: Sixth Avenue GMC, 1004 W. Sixth Avenue, Lancaster, OH 43130 – Mission Night with Rev. Wilton Odongo as Guest Speaker. There will be refreshments.
- Tuesday May 21st from 6:00pm: Hocking Hills Church, 13580 Maysville Wiliams Rd, Logan, OH 43138 (Across from Logan-Hocking MS) – Praise & Worship and Dessert Bar.

During their visit to our Conference, Rev. Wilton Odongo, Rev. Bonface Ghero Wanyama and Jacklyne Atotso Kezia (recently ordained a Deaconess in the GMC in Kenya) will be opportuned to visit a number of Churches across different Circuits. Please keep the expected guests and their families, churches and Conference in your prayers for a successful visit to the US to build new missional partnerships. Please contact Pastor 'Debo for additional information. Thanks!

Weekly Online Prayer Gathering: Please join our weekly online prayer gathering on Saturday mornings from **7:00-7:30am**. During the prayer huddle, we pray together for our church, local community, our nation, worldwide and personal concerns. Simply dial the Free Conference Call # **425-436-6200** from your phone and when prompted, enter the access code **603577** followed by the # key and you will be able to participate in this special time of prayer. The gathering is open to members of Mt. Zion GMC and Sixth Avenue GMC and members of the public. Text prayer requests to Pastor 'Debo at **614-296-1081** ahead of the prayer time.

Strategic Planning Team – Request for Prayers: As part of measures to help our community of faith discern the preferred future that God has for us, a **Strategic Planning Team** has been set up and is headed by our Lay Leader, Dr. Gregg Witham. Please keep this team and our church leadership in your prayers and be on the lookout for ways to support this important work. If you have any questions or concerns in the interim, please contact Dr. Gregg Witham or Pastor 'Debo. Be on the lookout for regular updates from Dr. Witham.

Allegheny West Provisional Council April Prayer Requests: Please help to lift up all the following prayer requests for the month of April:

- That all plans, procedures and venues for our Allegheny West Annual Conference from May 22nd - 25th emanate from the throne of God.
- That all those God desires to be at the UMC General Conference (April 23rd –May 3rd) from the Central Conferences be able to get the proper visas, finances, and paperwork to be able to participate and “cast their votes.” Please pray in particular for the special gathering in Nairobi, Kenya by the WCA and the GMC with clergy and other leaders in Africa from April 8-11.
- That each Global Methodist Church Pastor will have a fresh anointing of the Holy Spirit as they minister and share the good news of Jesus Christ.
- That the Lord would infill our GMC congregations with children and young people to find genuine faith and fresh, vibrant hope in a strong Gospel-centered family of God! Also pray for the following:
 - AWAC Youth Conference – April 26-28, 2024
 - God would raise up youth leaders to “live Him” in front of our young people

Pastor's Corner:

The Open Secret to Fruitfulness (John 15:1-8)

“I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch in me that bears no FRUIT, while every branch that does bear FRUIT he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful.

(John 15:1-2, NIV)

Today's focus text from John is one of the most intimate teachings of Jesus where He bears His heart (and by extension that of His Father) to the disciples and shares with them a fundamental truth about our purpose as disciples. In the first eight verses of the chapter, Jesus uses the word FRUIT six times. The Greek word “karpos” translated “fruit” is not really fruit like we understand fruit but a metaphor for the expected result of our efforts as disciples. In John's gospel, the word is used only seven times and the only other place where it is used Jesus makes it clear that the fruit He is talking about is not apples and oranges: *“The harvesters are paid good wages, and the FRUIT they harvest is PEOPLE BROUGHT TO ETERNAL LIFE. What joy awaits both the planter and the harvester alike.”* (John 4:36)

Jesus frequently used farming or agricultural metaphor or imagery to convey profound truths about our mission as His followers - to make disciples of others. The purpose of a Vine is to bear fruit for its owner just as the purpose of disciples or followers of Jesus (in this case the branch) is to bear fruit – to bring others into the fold or kingdom. God is the Vinedresser or Gardener, and Jesus is the Vine. The Holy Spirit is the unseen SAP that flows through the Vine to the Branches to nourish them and make them fruitful. Branches that fail to fulfil their purpose – which is to bear fruit are not left on the Vine – they are ultimately cut off or taken away by the Vinedresser. **This tells us that unfruitfulness will not be condoned.**

Just like any reasonable employer will not keep an unproductive staff member on their payroll, anyone who claims to follow Jesus and is not making disciples of others will eventually be removed. Unlike the unproductive branches that are cut off – a permanent action, the fruitful branches are pruned. The Greek word “*kathairos*” translated as “pruned” means “to cleanse of filth or impurity.” The desire of the Vinedresser is for each branch on the Vine to produce the greatest harvest. The purpose of the pruning is to remove anything that may impede fruitfulness or growth – Jesus explains that this process of pruning, cleansing or purification is accomplished not be self-effort but by the WORD (Greek “*logos*”) which has been spoken by Jesus. The WORD of God when obeyed makes us pure. The pruning results in variable results – harvest of thirty, sixty or even a hundred times as much of what has been planted (see Matthew 13:23 about the parable of the four soils).

How then do we accomplish our purpose as branches? Jesus again reveals the secret when He tells us: *“Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear FRUIT by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear FRUIT unless you remain in me.”* (John 15:5-6) When we stay connected to the Vine by practicing regular spiritual practices of worship, prayer, communion, fellowship, service, and other means of grace, we are going to produce fruit. The benefit of abiding in the Vine is FRUITFULNESS, while failure to abide in the VINE results in FRUITLESSNESS. When we fail to abide in the Vine, we can do untold damage to ourselves and others around us.

I am positive that just like the Vine desires us to be fruitful, all of us as branches want to be fruitful but there is a process that leads to fruitfulness. That process is to intentionally abide in Jesus. Jesus also tells us that when we take the time to abide in Him – to have an intimate relationship with Him just as the branch has with the vine, we can ask for whatever we wish, and it will be done for us. However, we need to be careful not to misunderstand this to mean that we can ask for things that do not align with the will of the Father. If our request aligns with the will of the Father and will advance our purpose which is to bear fruit, we can be sure that God will grant the request in His own perfect timing.

We have no other work but to make disciples of Jesus. But to make disciples of Jesus, we must first become devoted disciples of Jesus because we cannot help others to become what we have not taken the time to become. What are the results of your abiding in the Vine? Are you an unproductive branch that is taking valuable space on the Vine? Heed the warning of Jesus and become fruitful so you will not be cut off. And if you are a branch that is producing minimal fruit and is undergoing pruning, endure the ongoing pain of pruning so that you can maximize your potential – become even more fruitful.

So, take intentional time to be holy today and everyday by regularly praying to the Lord. Make abiding in Jesus your only desire by feeding on His living Word. Stay connected with other branches that share a common purpose and desire with you – to be fruitful, and if you see other branches that are weak or not maximizing their potential because of distractions, help and support them by speaking the truth in love. Above all, in all that you do, never forget to seek the blessing of the Lord. When we all have done all this, we will bring glory and honor to God and thereby prove our discipleship.

Pastor 'Debo

Acts 8:26-40

New International Version

Philip and the Ethiopian

²⁶ Now an angel of the Lord said to Philip, "Go south to the road—the desert road—that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." ²⁷ So he started out, and on his way he met an Ethiopian^[a] eunuch, an important official in charge of all the treasury of the Kandake (which means "queen of the Ethiopians"). This man had gone to Jerusalem to worship, ²⁸ and on his way home was sitting in his chariot reading the Book of Isaiah the prophet. ²⁹ The Spirit told Philip, "Go to that chariot and stay near it."

³⁰ Then Philip ran up to the chariot and heard the man reading Isaiah the prophet. "Do you understand what you are reading?" Philip asked.

³¹ "How can I," he said, "unless someone explains it to me?" So he invited Philip to come up and sit with him.

³² This is the passage of Scripture the eunuch was reading:

"He was led like a sheep to the slaughter,
and as a lamb before its shearer is silent,
so he did not open his mouth.

³³ In his humiliation he was deprived of justice.

Who can speak of his descendants?

For his life was taken from the earth."^[b]

³⁴ The eunuch asked Philip, "Tell me, please, who is the prophet talking about, himself or someone else?" ³⁵ Then Philip began with that very passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus.

³⁶ As they traveled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, "Look, here is water. What can stand in the way of my being baptized?" ^[37] ^[c] ³⁸ And he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip

and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him. ³⁹ When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord suddenly took Philip away, and the eunuch did not see him again, but went on his way rejoicing. ⁴⁰ Philip, however, appeared at Azotus and traveled about, preaching the gospel in all the towns until he reached Caesarea.

John 15:1-8

New International Version

The Vine and the Branches

15 "I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. ² He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes^[a] so that it will be even more fruitful. ³ You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. ⁴ Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.

⁵ "I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶ If you do not remain in me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. ⁷ If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. ⁸ This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.

Sixth Avenue Global Methodist Church

(Fifth Sunday of Easter)

April 28, 2024

10:30 a.m.

"If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples."

[John 15:7-8]



PRELUDE

WELCOME

Pastor 'Debo

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Liturgist

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

L: Jesus the true vine describes His Father as the gardener who cuts off every unfruitful branch.

P: Lord, help us to abide in Jesus the vine by developing an intimate relationship with the Spirit's help.

L: Jesus warns us that no branch can bear fruit by itself unless it remains in the vine.

P: Lord, prune us as we abide in Jesus so that we can be even more fruitful as we are cleansed by His Word.

***ENTRANCE TO THE LIGHT OF CHRIST**

***OPENING HYMN**

73

"O Worship the King"

AFFIRMATION FROM 1st Timothy

889

Leader:

There is one God and there is one mediator, Christ Jesus, who came as a ransom for all, to whom we testify.

People:

This saying is sure and worthy of full acceptance: That Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, and was manifested in the flesh, vindicated in the Spirit, seen by angels, proclaimed among the nations, believed in throughout the world, taken up in glory.

Great indeed is the mystery of the gospel. Amen.

***Gloria Patri**

Hymn # 70

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, World without end. Amen. Amen.

SCRIPTURE READING

Acts 8:26-40

CHILDREN'S MOMENTS

Pastor 'Debo

HYMN

"Blessed Assurance"

369

OUR TIME OF PRAYER

BREAKTHROUGH PRAYER (in unison)

Amazing God, we pray that through the Holy Spirit your preferred future for Sixth Avenue Global Methodist Church will be made known to us. We ask that you use us to bring the Good News of Jesus Christ to our friends, family, and community. Give us the courage to follow the leading of your Holy Spirit wherever that may take us. Open our eyes so that we may see the new things you are already doing among us. AMEN.

~Joys and Concerns

~The Lord's Prayer (in unison)

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done; on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, forever. Amen.

OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS (We encourage you to share beyond your regular offering. The loose offering received today will go to The Evangelism Fund.)

OFFERTORY

***Doxology** *"Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow"* # 95

"Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise Him, all creatures here below; praise Him above, ye heavenly host; praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen."

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Accept our tithes and offerings, O Lord, together with our lives, to be used by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, for the expansion of your kingdom, in our local Community, and around the face of the earth, that many shall come to know your Son, Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, Amen.

SPECIAL MUSIC

SCRIPTURE READING

John 15:1-8

MESSAGE

Rev. Dr. 'Debo Onabanjo

Roadblocks to The Victorious Easter Life – Failure to Abide in Christ

*CLOSING HYMN

419

“I am Thine, O Lord”

*SENDING FORTH/BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

*For those who are able, please stand.

MINISTRY STAFF

Ministers: The People of This Congregation

Media Team: Phyllis Flowers & Paul Jassogne

Media Team (Live Streaming): Lee Ann Whitmer

Church Secretary: Lee Ann Whitmer


Custodian: Jeff Byerly

Pianist: Jackie Howard

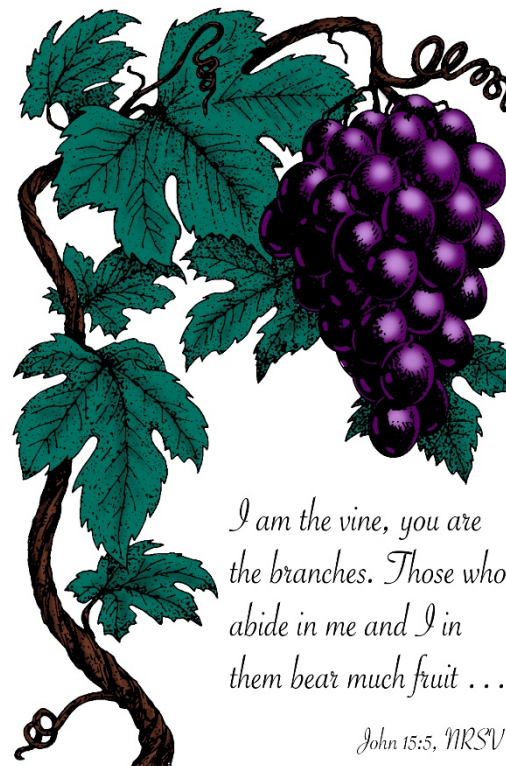
Liturgist: Greg Howard

Pastor: Rev. Dr. 'Debo Onabanjo

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**GLOBAL**
METHODIST CHURCH
Sixth Avenue Global Methodist Church
1004 West Sixth Avenue
Lancaster, OH 43130

April 28, 2024
(Fifth Sunday of Easter)



*I am the vine, you are
the branches. Those who
abide in me and I in
them bear much fruit . . .*

John 15:5, NRSV

Worship

Service

starts at 10:30 a.m. every Sunday.

Children's Church (ages 5-13) starts at 10:45 a.m.

Church Office Hours: 8:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Monday through Friday

Evangelism Upcoming Events

May 11 – Mother's Day Tea Party @ 1pm with Mt. Zion

There is a Sign-Up sheet in the Narthex.

June 15th – Father's Day Breakfast @ 10 am with Mt. Zion

There will be a Sign-Up sheet in the Narthex.

July 1st – begins collecting school supplies for the community children.

Aug ? (TBD) – will be distributing the collected school supplies.

We are looking and hoping for a huge turnout for the Mother and Father's Days events.

We are also looking to a big collection of school supplies. There is a box in the Narthex already. We also will take donations.

Thank you very much!



The Evangelism Team has 3 boxes in the Narthex: one for the OCC (Operation Christmas Child) shoebox ministry, another for Back-to-School supplies, and another for Baby Supplies. These will be available all year round. Hopefully this will be easier for everyone. If at any time you would like to donate to either ministry, just add it to your offering envelopes and please write on the front of the envelope what the special donation is for and how much.

**May God bless you always,
The Evangelism Team**

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