

What difference does Easter make if it is celebrated with the Easter Bunny as the central figure or Jesus? I mean, C'mon... who REALLY believes someone can rise from the dead? And what does it matter anyway 2000 years later?... Isn't it much easier, nicer and cleaner to believe in a Bunny that brings candy and rolls eggs....and it certainly looks a whole lot more attractive on an Easter card than a cruel Roman cross.

Well, it makes all the difference in the world to those who have been forced to navigate the reality of deep loss and death. Perhaps a mother who mourns over the unexpected loss of a child, a spouse who lost the love of their life after many years, a parent whose child is struggling through the deep throes of addiction.... these are the dark nights of the soul when it matters. Those who have suffered this type of loss this past year will not do much contemplating about the Easter Bunny on Easter Sunday.

There once was a woman named Mary who understood this type of painful loss.

Mary had the dark privilege of washing the dried blood from Jesus' lifeless body as two other followers prepared his tomb. Oh, how Mary must have cried in anguish as she washed the body of one she loved so deeply....

Mary had been born in the lap luxury. She was a native of Magdala, a town along the coast of Galilee. But money had brought Mary the exact opposite of happiness. She recalled her early years as a painful blur of compulsive behavior. Her parents had thrown up their hands in despair, she recalled. She recollected the gnawing fear, the self-loathing that ate at her very core. And she could remember the bold, but loving penetration of Jesus' eyes as he had confronted the demons that tormented her for so long. And how could she forget the way He commanded them to be gone forever?.....and wonder of wonders... *THEY OBEYED!* That had been the last of the old, anxious Mary. A gentle, peace-filled Mary had taken her place. But today a fresh new anguish would visit her soul.

Today she had seen her Lord die an excruciating death; his body hanging limp from the nails driven through his hands and feet, suspended from a cross like a common criminal. Her heart was beating in her throat as she remembered His voice and His eyes.... But now she wept and washed away the clotting blood with her tears.

Was all her hope for naught? What of all the diseased bodies he had healed? The broken lives he had restored? The promises of the Kingdom of God?

....It was early Sunday morning when she returned to the tomb to finish anointing his body. When she arrived, the tomb stood open, stone pushed to the side, ashes of the Roman guards' watchfire still smoldering. "How can they be so rotten?" she must have felt as she ran to tell the apostles.

But it wasn't the cruelty of Roman soldiers that rolled away the stone that Easter morning. It was the powerful hand of God as Jesus Christ stepped forth brimming with Life.

Mary saw him, mistaking him for the gardener. But there was no mistaking his familiar voice--"Mary." With one word from her Master she fell at his feet, tears of grief melting into tears of joy. "*Rabboni,*" she said, as she looked into his face.

In an instant history changed forever! Where once the human mortality rate had held steady at 100%, it now skipped a beat as Jesus broke through the statistic and created a new way for all would confess Him. Death is no longer the last word for those who follow him; He has come to bring life and to bring it more abundantly. Hallelujah for the Cross!

"*Believe in Buddha*", some still insist amid the marketplace of the world religions. "*Confucius is the one*", say the Chinese. "*Mohammed*", cry the Muslims. "*Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh*", shout his followers; and the list of adherents to worldly philosophies in the name of their leaders goes on and on.....but their leaders are ALL dead, buried and decomposed.

"Jesus changed my life", Mary would say in response. And millions of believers around the globe will echo in unison this Easter, "Mine, too. He touched my life, too."

While religious leaders have come, and gone, only One stepped forth from the tomb victorious. Only one has risen from the realm of death *exactly as He promised*. Only One has conquered death. Only One offers the promise of eternal life to those who follow him.

The Easter Bunny may bring candy, but he brings no eternal hope!

But Jesus said, "*I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live*"; *John 11:25*
Have a blessed and Joyful Easter!

In Christ's love and service,

Pastor George Augustine Palombo



EASTER WEEK SERVICES

A Fellowship Gathering will be held on May 7th right after church. A light lunch will be provided followed by a learn-to-paint session with Sandy Hughey as the instructor. All materials will be provided as well as lunch for a fee of \$20.00. Come learn to paint and spend the afternoon visiting with both old and new friends.

Dear Franklin Park Baptist Church, Thank you, thank you, thank you ! The cakes and 4 dozen cookies that you donated to North Country Meals on Wheels were thoroughly enjoyed by our clients. We are grateful for your continued support and our clients enjoy your special treats. Thank you for your thoughtful kindness in helping our neighbors.

Denise Stack, MOW Volunteer

THANK YOU

Special dates

- Fifth Sunday in Lent, April 2, 2017
- Palm/Passion Sunday, April 9, 2017
- Holy Week, April 9-15, 2017
- Maundy Thursday, April 13, 2017
- Good Friday, April 14, 2017
- Holy Saturday, April 15, 2017
- Easter Sunday, April 16, 2017
- Administrative Professionals Day, April 26, 2017



Maundy Thursday 7:00 p.m.
Service at Fairmont Presbyterian Church



Good Friday 7:00 p.m.
COMMUNION Service here at
Franklin Park with
Little Hill and Fairmount Churches



Easter Sunrise Service 6:30 a.m.
followed by coffee hour and fellowship
Breakfast 7:30 a.m.



Easter Worship Celebration Service
10:30 a.m.
Ordinance of Baptism – Olivia O’Leary
Children’s Time
Easter Story and Egg Hunt

Food Drive – March 26 – April 9th

We are collecting non-perishable food and items for the Mount Nebo Food Pantry which serves those in our surrounding communities that are in need. Your church council **Mission Team** is sponsoring this outreach and will deliver the food to Mt. Nebo the week before Easter.

Easter flower orders can be given to Laurie Dauer by Palm Sunday.

Lilies (\$8.50), hyacinths and tulips (\$8.00) will be purchased from Soergel's Market.

They will decorate our sanctuary at our Easter Celebration Service at 10:30 a.m. Please be sure to mark on your order form if your flowers are

“In Memory Of”

or

“In Honor Of”

a loved one.

During the month of March

we received the

America For Christ Offering

which funds ministries and resources that vitalize our congregations and communities across the United States and Puerto Rico with the hope of Jesus Christ. This year we set a goal of \$950.00. Thanks to your generous hearts we surpassed that goal and our final total is \$1,239.00. Praise God !

April 22 from 9 a.m. until noon – we are going to the World Vision Warehouse in Glenfield to sort, fold and pack clothes that are delivered around the world to those in need. Let Marcy Hofstetter know you are planning to attend. There is something for everyone to do !

DIRECTOR SEARCH - We are looking for persons interested in becoming part of the Music Director Search Committee. Contact any member of council of your desire.



BAPTISM / MEMBERSHIP

Any person professing Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior desiring baptism or having a letter of transfer or statement of faith requesting membership please contact Jane Myers or Scott Cunningham of your intent in person, by email or phone. We welcome you to join our fellowship.



FROM ERIK!

Hello everyone -Yes,we will be having an Easter Choir this year. Practices will be after services on Sunday April 2 and April 9.We have two songs we're working on. Please stay for rehearsals after the services on April 2 and 9th.

Address: 2470 Nicholson RD. Sewickley, PA 15143 [View On Google Maps](#)

Phone: 724-935-3950



APRIL

- 6 Paul Merriman
- 7 Richard Frankenstein
- 8 George Green (93rd)
- 11 Jenny Merriman
- 12 Isaac Spurling (his 5th !)
- 15 PAUL and CINDY MERRIMAN
- 17 Chris Keefer
- 20 HANK and ANGIE COCHRAN
- 20 BETHANY FRAZIER & MIKE KEARNS
- 21 Asher Kearns (his 4th !)
- 22 SHAWN and ELLEN McKENNA
- 24 Rachel Raraigh
- 25 Melissa Maxwell
- 25 Millie Cress
- 29 Ron Cress
- 29 Ryan McGinnis
- 30 BUCK and PEGGY BUCKLEW



Saturday, April 29 from 8 a.m. until 1 p.m.

we will be having the biggest fund raiser for our summer mission group here at the church.



We will be offering lots of treasures along with Amish doughnuts, pies, cinnamon rolls, cookies and dinner rolls along with a lunch special. We would like you to look around and see if you have any treasures you would like to donate. Either drop them off at the church or call for pick-up (412.719.9307) We would like to see if any of you would be available to help the day of the sale as check out people. Throughout the week before the sale we need help in setting up the room, sorting and pricing items.

ANY HELP YOU CAN GIVE WILL BE GREATLY APPRECIATED !

Karen Ott will be glad to talk to you about a scheduled time (412.952.1110) or call Ralph (412.719.9307) or the church office (724-935-3950).



On the third day, the friends of Christ coming at daybreak ... found the grave empty and the stone rolled away. In varying ways they realized the new wonder; but even they hardly realized that the world had died in the night. What they were looking at was the first day of a new creation, with a new heaven and a new earth; and in a semblance of the gardener, God walked again in the garden, in the cool not of the evening but of the dawn.

REV. PAUL AIELLO'S GREATER CRANBERRY MEN'S CHORUS
*will be presenting "WBOG Is On The Air" an original musical
comedy on May 21, 2017 at the Cardinal Wuerl High School in
Cranberry. Tickets are \$10.00 (\$12.00 at the door.)
Rev. Paul will be glad to take your order !*

On Easter Sunday morning there will no Adult / Youth Sunday School classes. The children will have their time during the worship service at 10:30 a.m. They will hear the Resurrection Story with special eggs and then enjoy an Easter Egg Hunt. It will be a special time for everyone.

