



MAGNIFY THE MESSAGE

“O MAGNIFY THE LORD WITH ME, AND LET US EXALT HIS NAME TOGETHER.” PSALM 34:3

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PARADING THE LOVE OF CHRIST



POINT PLEASANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH PARTICIPATES IN THE TOWN'S EASTER PARADE WITH THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT FLOAT EACH YEAR.

Point Pleasant Presbyterian Church enjoys sharing the love of God with the community. Always involved in numerous ministries, members of the congregation are particularly busy during the Lenten Season. From the community Easter Egg Hunt and Parade to weekly luncheons with worship, and a cantata, it is undeniable that Point Pleasant Presbyterian enjoys spending time with their brothers and sisters in Christ.

Twenty-three years ago, Point Pleasant Presbyterian Church began participating in the city's egg hunt. The church partnered with the City of Point Pleasant as the lead sponsor. On average, the Easter Egg Hunt sees 300 kids each year. Twelve years ago, churches in Point Pleasant came up with the idea to host an Easter Parade. Each spring, churches come together on floats decorated to depict the life of Jesus from his birth to the resurrection. Point Pleasant Presbyterian has always been assigned the Sermon on the Mount.

“Bringing Christ’s life to the community is the most rewarding part of this ministry,” said the Reverend Claire Butler Bass. “The best part of acting out scenes from the life of Jesus is the community fellowship between the churches.”

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EACH YEAR, POINT PLEASANT PRESBYTERIAN PARTNERS WITH THE CITY AS THE LEAD SPONSOR FOR THEIR EASTER EGG HUNT.

Another way Point Pleasant Presbyterian comes together with the community is through a Lenten Lunch and Worship series which began in 1990. This luncheon series is sponsored by the Mason County Ministerial Association and hosted by Trinity United Methodist Church, but a dozen churches all across Mason County are involved. Weekly, this group sees 70-90 attendees. Pastors from the county alternate by preaching a short homily on a theme of their choice.

While all of these events are special, the congregation at Point Pleasant Presbyterian have favorites.

“The Easter Parade and Easter Egg hunt are the two the congregation most looks forward to during Lent,” said Butler Bass, “but the connection with the larger church community is the most enjoyable aspect.”

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“So, let’s make this Lent our competition season. Let’s hone our compassion and practice our faith. Let’s build the strength of our spirits. Let’s put in the work to get closer and closer to Christ. **Let’s train like our lives depend on it, because they do.** The good news is we’re not competing against each other. There is more than one wreath at the end of this race. Yes, in this case, everyone really can get a trophy, like it or not. And everyone should.”

-Pastor Andrew Rice, Minister of Word & Sacrament

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On Fridays throughout the Lenten Season (with a few extras during Holy Week) staff and members of the Presbytery will be providing a short devotion/ reflection on Facebook.

Follow along with us by clicking the logo below.



STUDYING THE SEASON

Each Lenten Season, Gilbert Presbyterian Church comes together for a special Bible Study. This year, the congregation is studying *Lent in Plain Sight* by Jill Duffield after Commissioned Pastor Susan Perry won a copy from WJK Publishing.

“It is written in the format of a daily devotional, which makes the readings simple for our busy congregants to use,” Perry explained.

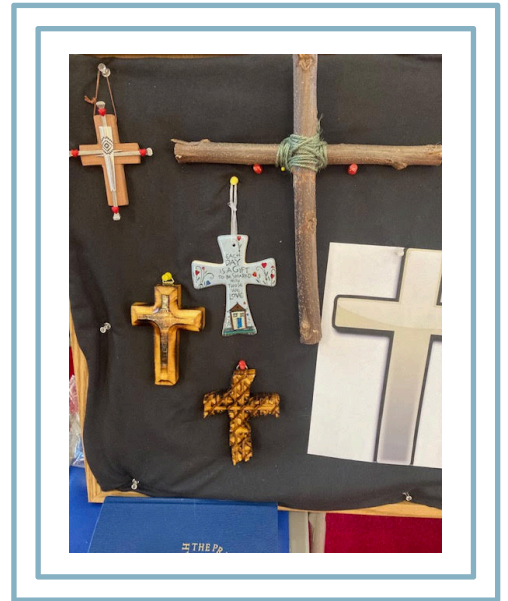
Meeting on Thursdays at 6:00 p.m., 11 people join in person, with a few joining on Zoom. This year, they have participants from Kansas and North Carolina joining, thanks to the perks of technology.

Gilbert Presbyterian looks forward to anything that leads to thoughtful conversation, be it a Christian Education class, Presbyterian Women’s group, or book study, which is one of the reasons they enjoy coming together for their annual Lenten Study. The conversations that flow from the readings are meaningful and help others grow spiritually.

“With the book’s focus on common objects that we encounter daily – coins, shoes, dust, etc. – it is easy for us to relate to these objects, while sometimes coming to see them in a different light. Living in an area primarily known for coal mining, I felt our discussion on the topic of dust had a distinctly local flavor and meaning,” said Perry, who truly enjoys when others speak up about their unique journey of faith.

Perry encouraging congregations that have never considered hosting a Bible Study during a specific season to try it since not everyone can attend on Sunday mornings. Offering studies throughout the week allows Gilbert Presbyterian to reach people who otherwise might not attend. Her greatest hope through these studies is that everyone pauses to reflect on how much is taken for granted in daily life.

“I hope it’s a reminder to us that signs of God’s love and grace can be found in everything if we simply look”



EVERYONE ATTENDING GILBERT PRESBYTERIAN'S BIBLE STUDY WAS INVITED TO BRING A CROSS AS A VISUAL REMINDER THAT WHEN CHRIST WENT TO THE CORSS, HE CARRIED EVERYONE'S SINS WITH HIM.

HUNTING FOR THE TRUE REASON FOR EASTER

Every child loves hunting Easter Eggs during the Lenten Season. For numerous years, First Presbyterian Church, Kenova, has hosted an Easter Egg Hunt immediately following Easter Service for the children in their congregation, except for 2020 due to the Covid Pandemic.

Meeting on the Saturday before Easter, four or five adults oversee the children who dye dozens of eggs. The church provides stickers, glitter, and other decorations for the eggs once they have dried. Prior to the fun beginning, they hold a short devotion.

“Our children, and adult children, love to color the eggs. The adults always try to color one or two eggs,” said Karen Yost, Clerk of Session. “Our teenagers usually hide the eggs for the younger children. It is almost a rite of passage to move from egg finder to egg hider, and the teenagers seem to enjoy hiding the eggs and watching (and sometimes helping) the younger children.”

With the egg hunt held at the church, the children hear a brief devotion during Children’s Church prior to the egg hunt. While the hunt is for the children attending church on Easter Sunday, everyone is welcome to participate. First Presbyterian likes to incorporate the Resurrection Eggs in children’s classes to include the youth in telling the story of Easter.



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, KENOVA, MEETS THE SATURDAY BEFORE EASTER TO COLOR EGGS FOR THE EASTER EGG HUNT FOLLOWING EASTER SERVICE.

“The children enjoy opening the eggs to find the different symbols of the Easter story, which they get to show during the reading of the story,” Yost said.

Each year, the adults in the congregation always look forward to watching the children’s excitement as they rush around looking for the eggs, laughing, and showing their parents if they find a colored or decorated egg. As for Yost, she believes the most rewarding part of the Easter Egg Hunt is the children.

“Any activity that includes our congregation’s children and adults is rewarding. Special activities for our children are enjoyed by everyone in our congregation,” said Yost.

The Easter Egg Hunt will be at First Presbyterian on Easter Sunday immediately following the service, usually around noon.

MAKE A JOYFUL NOISE

Those who grow up in church know the hymns by heart. There are seasonal hymns and productions that everyone looks forward to hearing and attending. First Presbyterian Church, Huntington, is known for one of these Easter traditions.

For nearly a quarter of a century, First Presbyterian has hosted an Easter Orchestra. Because of the Covid Pandemic, from 2020 through 2022, Jim Beaty, First, Huntington's esteemed A/V Tech, put in over 100 hours to produce a video of several choir members singing the "Hallelujah Chorus" virtually.

Under the direction of Nick Blain, music director since 2023, there are 25 church members in the choir and 7 to 10 church members who play instruments in the orchestra. The remaining musicians in the 20-piece orchestra are professional musicians from the community. Several members of the orchestra have a teaching background. Students and personnel from the Marshall University School of Music also participate. Blain chooses the music after consulting with the Rev. Mark Boyd about worship order.

"I try to get the music out for the musicians in advance, but we have one full rehearsal the Wednesday before, as well as Easter Sunday morning before the service," Blain said. "The choir begins rehearsing several weeks in advance, typically about 6 weeks. I also make practice tracks for the choir to listen and practice at home."

EASTER IS A CELEBRATION OF CHRIST'S RESURRECTION, REDEMPTION OF OUR SIN THROUGH GRACE, AND CONQUERING DEATH ON THE CROSS. WE 'MAKE A JOYFUL NOISE' FOR THE LORD ON EASTER SUNDAY MORNING. -NICK BLAIN

A special component of Easter Worship at First Presbyterian, is that the final hymn is always Handel's "Hallelujah Chorus" from the Messiah. Anyone who would like to join is welcomed to the choir loft to sing with the choir and orchestra. Blain acknowledges how special Easter is and how the community can see the love of God through the Easter Orchestra.

"Easter is a celebration of Christ's resurrection, redemption of our sin through grace, and conquering death on the cross. We 'make a joyful noise' for the Lord on Easter Sunday morning," Blain said. "It is also a time for families to come together and share an hour in worship on Sunday morning. Very often, some of these families only come out to church on high holidays."

In recent years, 180-200 people have attended the performance, which is always held during morning worship on Easter Sunday. This year, Easter Worship begins at 10:45 am.

2024's performance of "Hallelujah Chorus" may be viewed [here](#).

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FIRST PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH OF
HUNTINGTON, WV

APRIL 5TH

2026 - 10:45 AM

EASTER ORCHESTRA

INCLUDING WORKS BY:
G.F. HANDEL
JOSEPH MARTIN
HAL HOPSON
JOEL RANEY
& ALLEN POTE



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