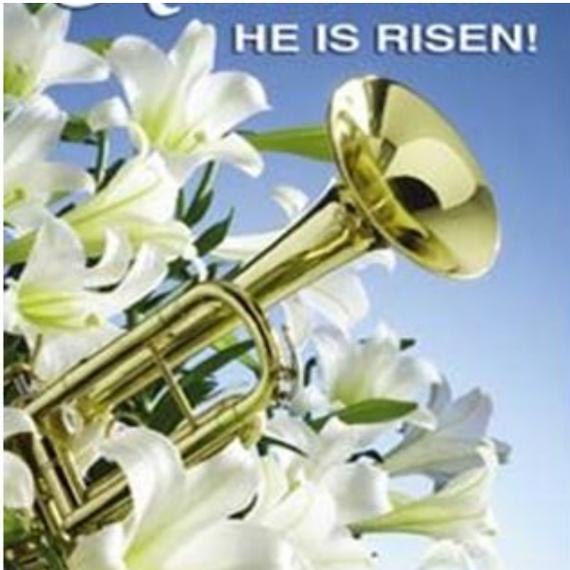


May 2019

THE WARNER MEMO



THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF
WARNER MEMORIAL
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

[May Calendar](#)

FROM THE PASTOR - Another Holy Week



As many of you know, I'm a big sports fan. Not as big as I used to be (I don't quite have the free time now that I once had), but I still love sports. University of Michigan football and basketball most of all. What can I say? I was raised on them. But that's not all. There are some other sports I try to follow. Even if they are televised in the middle of the night. Lots of times, these events aren't even on TV. I have to watch *YouTube* clips a day later. Still, while I never actually rode a bike in a race, I love watching professional cycling. Most people have heard of the Tour de France, but at this time of the year, it's all about the Spring Classics. And two classics, in particular, the Tour of Flanders and Paris-Roubaix. It's a week of cycling that falls on the first two Sundays in April, and in the cycling world it's called *The Holy Week*.

Maybe that name sounds sacrilegious. Perhaps, it is. But upon hearing it for the first time just recently, I get it. First of all, you need to know that these two races are absolutely brutal. There is weather. It can be nice, of course, but it is often not. It's just the opposite. Wind, rain, ice even. And the mud that comes with all that. But that's not even the worst of it. Because the courses are long, the roads are incredibly narrow and both races ride over long sections of cobblestones. In the case of Flanders, there are also a bunch of short but ridiculously steep climbs. Add to all this the cheering crowds all along the route, the pain endured by those racing these hellish courses and the victory at the end, and what do you get? Cycling's Holy Week.

As I thought about that moniker and think about our Holy Week (we just finished Good Friday worship here at church), I made a connection. At least a little one anyways. No, a sporting event doesn't do it justice. I understand that. "It's just a game," after all. I

know that. And there's so much more at stake in the last week of Jesus' life. Yet a week that includes so many twists and turns, a week that includes so many different emotions, a week that includes so much hurt and pain, a week that includes so many surprises, a week that includes so many ups and downs and a week that finally ends in victory, well, think about that, church.

And think about the last week of Jesus' life. Think about that Palm Sunday parade and cursed fig tree and tables overturned. Think about time spent with the closest of friends, a murderous plot, anointing for death and one of Jesus' own selling him out. Think about the last supper, the Passover meal eaten with his disciples, his fervent prayer in the garden afterward, the disciples' heavy eyes, his betrayal and arrest and all of his disciples nowhere to be found. Think about the kangaroo court proceedings and one his best friend's denial—not once or twice but three times Peter denies even knowing him. Think about the crowd's "crucify him, crucify him," his flogging, his death sentence, the washing of hands. Think about the mocking and beating, spitting and stripping. Think about the way of the cross and his crucifixion and even after all that, his continued abuse—Mark writes that even the criminals crucified on his left and right taunted him on the cross. And they weren't alone, church. Think about Jesus' death and the women there watching and his burial. Such a road to travel, church. So many twists and turns, so many ups and downs. So much life all along the way.

And yet, it all ends in, well, actually, it doesn't end, does it? I mean, the scars are still there. That's why they call them scars. Because they don't go away. And yet, there is more than just hurt, more than just tears, more than just death, more than just burial. So much more. As a matter of fact, this is just the beginning. Because at the end of this road, there is victory. *Jesus has risen!*

Peace,
Rev. Todd

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

(Subject to change, by the Holy Spirit!)

Sunday, May 5

Third Sunday of Easter

Guest Preacher

John 21:1-19

Jesus Throws A Surprise Party

Sunday, May 12

Fourth Sunday of Easter

John 20:19-23

Fear

Sunday, May 19

Fifth Sunday of Easter

John 20:24-31

Doubt

Sunday, May 26

Sixth Sunday of Easter

John 21:1-6

Fishing Story

Directory Updates

The 2019 directory is available in two formats! Print editions may be found outside the church office. Contact the office for an electronic version.

Here are a few updates for those who already have one:

Add Ina Rae Kramer to the Commission to the Community

Ted Human - humantheodore07@gmail.com

Larry Pinkus - lpinkus310@msn.com

Camern Pinkus - cam.pinkus126@gmail.com

Shervonne Johnson - 3502 Sheffield Manor Terrace, Apt #303
Silver Spring, MD 20904

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Where Faith Grows And Hungry People Are Fed!

Summer is approaching and the Christian Education Commission is hosting its annual Vacation Bible School (VBS)! This year VBS will be held the week of **June 17 – 21, 1:00 – 4:00 pm**. If you or someone you know has child who is interested in participating as a camper, the age range is 4–10 years old.

It's a little different this year with the new afternoon schedule, but we hope you can volunteer your skills in the kitchen, helping with arts and crafts, music, retelling Bible Stories, or on the playground. In addition to adults, young people in the 6th grade and older are welcome to volunteer.

All offerings and donations go to [the Society of Saint Andrew](#), a faith-based non-profit addressing food waste and hunger.

If you are interested, please register by phone: (301) 949 – 2900, or email: dce@warnermemorial.org, by June 1st, 2019.

The cost is \$25/child or \$35/family of 2 or more.

Hannah Cope

The Shape of the Cross

Morning of April 16th, the flames are finally extinguished from the Notre Dame cathedral fire; a CBS news report headline reads: “Despite fire, Notre Dame cross and altar still standing” ([here](#)).

This emphasis on a material cross in the place of worship is not new to us, but would the placement of a cross in a place of worship surprise the earliest Christians? How would the witnesses to the death of Jesus view the cross? What is the point of reference from which they interpreted the sight of that instrument of lethal torture:

would they see the cross as a symbol of Rome's demands of obedience, a sign of Roman power – how it was presented to them by the executioners – or would they see the cross as a symbol not only of the humiliation of the powers of the day but of all forces of death— even death itself – a sign of the ultimate humility and, therefore, lordship of Christ (Philippians 2:5-11)?

The gospel writers do not tell us what the direct witnesses of the crucifixion thought about the cross. In addition to reflecting patriarchal norms, the doubting of the women witnesses to the empty tomb by the male crucifixion witnesses seems to suggest adherence to the story of the Roman cross over the story of Christ's cross. It would be the direct encounter with the resurrected body of Jesus via resurrection appearances where this disbelief is overcome on their part. Without the benefit of a resurrection appearance, how did the other first century Christians see the cross through Christ's living sacrifice – *did they truly know Christ crucified by hearing the message of the apostles in faith?*

We get the earliest canonical writing about the cross from Paul, a resurrection witness – as his writings are commonly dated earlier than the gospels. Paul's writings on “the message of the cross” (1 Cor. 1:18) arguably bring the theology of the cross into center stage of our faith – as made clear by Martin Luther. Yet, they do not necessarily call for crosses to take center stage in our places of worship. When did putting a cross in church become common practice?

Given Pauline cross theology, we have reason to believe that first century Christians may have reappropriated the cross of the Roman Empire for Christian worship spaces. Archaeological evidence may also confirm this suggestion. The Baylor University Professor of Christian Origins and W. W. Melton Chair of Religion, Bruce Longenecker has recently published two books on the subject: *The Cross before Constantine: The Early Life of a Christian Symbol* (2015) and *The Crosses of Pompeii: Jesus-Devotion in a Vesuvian Town* (2016). In the first work, Longenecker argues the cross was indeed a symbol

of Christianity, Jesus devotion, before the Roman Emperor, Constantine 1, converted to the faith after having a vision of a cross before his successful battle in 312 AD. In the second, Longenecker focuses in particular on the evidence of what appears to be a first century cross in today's Southern Italy: a cross-shaped wall inscription in a bakery in Pompeii. The bakery was buried by the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in 79 CE. Conveniently, the volcanic ash preserved the cross evidence and secured the date of 79 CE as the upper limit for which this cross-shaped incision can be dated. Longenecker makes the suggestion that the shape of this cross is influenced by the Egyptian Ankh, a pagan symbol for life. This suggestion raises many intriguing questions after one not only sees the resemblance in shape but also hears the resonance in symbolic meanings. Perhaps most compelling to this argument, the Ankh is known to have been present in Christian worship spaces since an early date. For instance, it can be seen on the wall drawings of the Temple of Dendur, a pagan Egyptian temple dated to 10 BC and in use as a Christian church from the 6th century AD or earlier. That particular temple is now housed in the MET in New York City, but the Ankh type cross remains in popular use among Coptic Christians.

The suggestion of non-Christian origins of certain cross placements in Christian places of worship should not surprise us. In fact, all cross shapes have non-Christian origins as they derive their Christian meaning from the reappropriation of a Roman instrument of execution on which Jesus was crucified. It is a different question that presents a concern today: Are our places of worship open to different cross shapes? This seemingly banal question serves as an opening to a more searching inquiry: Are we open to discerning the 'shape' of the cruciform life by confronting our assumptions and taking a fresh look at our symbols within the light of the global Church and its history. There are still a variety of cross shapes in use in the global Church. In fact, the "Seal of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)" – the symbol of the denomination – is patterned after the Celtic cross due to the place of origin of Presbyterianism ([here](#)). We noted that the Ankh type cross is still in use among Coptic Christians.

The Russian Orthodox Church has a distinctive cross shape as well. This is not to deny that the cross is “the universal and most ecumenical symbol of the Christian church” (here), but to ask us to reflect upon when we may unknowingly universalize our necessarily limited experience, remembering the diversity that has long existed and remains an important part of the Church’s expression in different parts of the world or in different traditions living amongst each other.

The cross shape we are familiar with does not hold an exclusive status or privilege in the Church. As the Book of Order notes, any symbol that is present in worship is not an object to be worshipped yet “symbols from scripture, such as light, book, water, bread, cup, and cross play an important role in Christian worship” (W-1.0303). While the Book of Order states that the particular symbols used in worship are to be “contextual—emerging from a particular community and incorporating the words, images, symbols, and actions that best convey the good news of Jesus Christ in that gathering,” it also states that Christian worship is “cross-cultural,” “transcultural,” “countercultural,” and “intercultural” (W-1.0304). Recognizing ourselves as one small part within the global Church allows us to become more humble witnesses in this particular place. We become aware of how our ‘contextual’ symbols are not so clearly our own: they are often shared and mixed up with the contextual symbols of other religions and other cultures. We may ask, what is ours anyway. We can learn from Paul’s letter to a divided church in Corinth. Addressing an Us vs. Them situation, Paul upends this way of thinking by stating “all things are yours... all belong to you, and you belong to Christ, and Christ belongs to God” (1 Corinthians 3:21-23). The symbols of Christian worship are not objects to be worshipped or privatized, but rather pointers to Christ that emerge from communities of faith gathered by the Word, seeking to be “servants of Christ and stewards of God’s mysteries” (1 Cor. 4:1). Will you give shape to the cross?

Dave Grace, C.E. Director

COMMISSION TO THE COMMUNITY

Save These Dates!

There are three events scheduled for June that you will want to get onto your calendars right now, because you won't want to miss them.

First: Of course, there is the LCYC Rummage Sale on Saturday, the first of June. You will find helpful detailed information in this edition of *The Memo*.

Second: The Commission to the Community (CTC) is planning a **field trip to The Interfaith Works Clothing Center**, mid-day on Saturday June 15, and we hope you can come. We're still working out the details, such as how many persons can be accommodated, and as plans become finalized we will post information on the CTC's Bulletin Board, across from the church office. By the time you read this, a copy of the Interfaith Works Annual Report will be posted on the board, which documents what Interfaith Works does to help people who live in Montgomery County below the poverty level, and makes it clear that IW is making great strides in lifting up those in need. There will also be an article in the June edition of *The Memo* which will provide needed guidance to those who want to go with us. We will carpool if possible.



Third: On Saturday June 29, from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., the **Second Annual 1 Journey Festival** will be held on the grounds of the Washington National Cathedral in D.C. Last year two of the CTC's members had a wonderful time when they went to this festival which "celebrates the talents, stories and contributions of refugees" that have come to this country by showcasing their "art, music, dance, food, storytelling, and technology." There is no charge to

attend, but you will need to get a ticket. To glimpse some of what happened there last year, and to arrange for your ticket for this year, visit their website, <https://www.onejourneyfestival.com/>. Again, we hope to be able to carpool.

So, every other Saturday in the month of June we can have a marvelous experience which will stretch and inspire us to be God's hands in the world! Hope you are available to take advantage of these opportunities.

Ina Rae Kramer

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

Mark Your Calendar!



On Sunday, May 19th you're invited to participate in Walk 'n' Ride Sunday by getting to church via bicycle, scooter, skateboard, carpool, public transportation, or simply walking. In gratitude to God, let us take care of the home God gave us.

June Eakin

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The Nominating Committee gathered on March 24, and we began our meeting looking at a Warner Memo article that was used in 2015. The article had some references to a recent sermon and hymns that were used in a worship service. However, the message for all in our Warner membership is the same, and we wish to share it again, with some updates:

“Answering God’s Call”

We are all guided to answer God's call in one way or another; perhaps in several ways. At Warner, we have many opportunities to answer that call, and each of us searches our time and skills inventory to find ways to answer that call.

Warner Memorial Presbyterian Church carries out many forms of ministry, all of them important and dear to our hearts. Carrying out our ministry is supported by the work of the Session and the Board of Deacons. Without the leadership and guidance of these two groups, many of the other ministries dear to our hearts would not be possible.

This year, the Nominating Committee will search for candidates to serve on the Session, the Board of Deacons, the next Nominating Committee and the Pastoral Search Committee. This year we are asking each of you to pray for guidance in how you might answer the call to serve in these ways. As you pray, please consider these hymn phrases:

“Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord? I have heard You calling in the night. I will go, Lord, if You lead me.”

“Take my life...take my moments and my days; ...take my hands...take my feet...take my voice...” “Take my will, and make it Thine;... take my heart, it is thine own...”

Please pray for inspiration and discernment about how you will answer God's call this year, and for the work of the Nominating Committee as we continue to hold each of you in prayer.

The 2019 Nominating Committee



Presbyterian Women

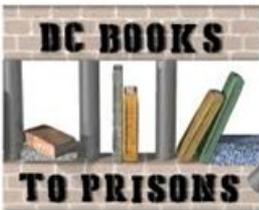
Nurture Faith, Support Mission, Work for Justice & Peace, & Build Community

2019 Birthday Offering

Just a reminder, as we do each year, throughout the month of May Warner PW will be collecting your contributions to its 2019 Birthday Offering. This year, four projects received funding through Presbyterian Women's Birthday Offering: the Disaster Response Team, Effingham Child Development Center, Presbyterian Homes and Services of Kentucky, Inc, and Wings of Refuge. We so appreciate your support and thank you in advance.

Sue Burns

Books to Prisons



Instead of books, PW decided to contribute postage stamps to Books to Prisons during the Lenten season. Postage is Books to Prison's biggest expense, as most packages weigh between one and two pounds, occasionally more.

As this issue of the Memo is going to press, \$84 has been received in stamps and money to purchase them. And it's not too late to contribute--postage stamps are always needed, and welcome. Place them in the offering plate, or in the PW box in the church office. Thank you, Warnerites, for your support of this ministry!

JoEllen LaPrade



1ST ANNUAL RUMMAGE SALE

Spring is here and time to clean out those closets! LCYC will host a rummage sale in partnership with Warner Memorial Presbyterian Church to help raise funds for the school. Families may purchase a space to sell gently used items in the Church's parking lot on Connecticut Avenue (directly across from the Church). The cost to buy a space is \$20 plus 10% of the proceeds-all to go to LCYC.

Families may choose to donate items for WMPC to sell directly. Simply price each item and deliver to WMPC and we will take care of the rest. Note that 100% of the proceeds of these items will go to LCYC. Additionally, families may opt to share a space and split the fee and proceeds. Artisans are also welcome to purchase a space.

Popular Items for sale:

- Children / Baby clothes
- Toys
- Household items
- Tools
- Books

June 1, 2019
9 am to 1 pm

Reservations due May 18, 2019. Fees should be paid to Aime Keith or Shay Cabrera. Questions? Contact RummageSaleLCYC@gmail.com

WARNER PEOPLE



MAY

- 5 Ferdinand Addo
- 7 Carl Adams, Claudia Stalker, Beatrice Winter
- 8 George Bocchetti, Charlotte Cook
- 11 Phyllis Ewald, Barbara Shaw, Ceska Sutton
- 12 Marc Brammer
- 15 Emma Recchia
- 16 Isabelle Merl
- 18 Lisa Saltzman, Michael Simenauer
- 22 Alec Burns, Barbara Jaquette
- 23 Aliyah Brammer
- 25 Taylor Bragg
- 28 Rohan Puri, Marc Henri Winter
- 30 Charlotte Jackson
- 31 Alan Schroeder

WARNER WELCOMING STATEMENT

All people are of sacred worth and God loves everyone without exception. We welcome all people into our worship, fellowship, membership, and leadership. Believers, seekers, and doubters are all welcome at Warner. We are an affirming and supportive spiritual community that celebrates God's infinite love, wisdom, and grace through worship, music, education, mission, and fellowship. Though we are all unique, we are united in loving and praising God and in loving each other. We are committed to communing together in such a way that we give witness to Christ's sacrificial life, redeeming death, and glorious resurrection. Loved and accepted by God, our congregation offers love and acceptance to all.

Warner Memorial Presbyterian Church

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Home Page: <http://www.warnermemorial.org>

Please see bulletin boards outside the Main Office

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Director of Christian Education: Dave Grace

Director of Music: Peter Smeallie

Organist: Sungho Paik

Learning Center for Young Children: Rana Oriolo

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CHANGE SERVICE
REQUESTED