

# THE MESSENGER

## Franklin United Brethren Church

7171 Central College Road  
New Albany, OH 43054

WWW.FRANKLINUB.ORG

Sunday Service 10:15 am

## APRIL 2023

“WIN – TRAIN – SEND”

### EASTER: WHY I AM NOT A UNIVERSALIST

This month Christians celebrate the most important holiday of the year: Easter. I know some of you may debate me about equality with Christmas, that's okay, you have the right to be wrong (just kidding). If you see both of them equally important, you have a good case. Also, when I say Christians will be celebrating Easter, I know many non-Christians will as well. Almost everyone loves candy, although I have no idea how candy or the Easter Bunny came to be associated with Easter.

What is a Universalist? A Universalist is someone who believes everyone goes to heaven when they die. It does not matter whether you are a Christian, Buddhist, Jewish faith, Islam, or no religion at all – everyone goes to heaven. Maybe you have heard about or seen a Universalist Church. I know more about Buddhism, Judaism, and Islam than I do about Universalism. One thing I am certain about Universalism – you can have any concept of God you want and you can go to heaven. Also, Jesus was just a great teacher and he did not rise from the dead – it is just a made-up story.

There are perhaps as many Universalists in America as there are Christians. There are perhaps millions who call themselves Christians but in practice and belief they are Universalist. This perspective is a by-product of what is called Post-Modernism; Post-Modernism is Universalism (particularly in religious beliefs). Both world views see heaven as “the mountain top” and there are many religious paths to the top. In many cases to those who want nothing to do with religions see themselves on the mountaintop when they die. I have a very good friend who professes to be a Christian but has the “many paths” religious belief. He often encourages me to watch videos on YouTube of Easter Philosophical teachers. I have watched just two, and that was two too many!

Easter explodes Universalism. Why? Simple: it boils down to one thing – Jesus rose from the dead and while he lived, he repeated these words in several different ways, “I am the way, the truth, and the life, no one gets to the father except through me.” That's it, period. Not many paths, one “mountaintop”. Not, “Just follow your heart or believe whatever you want – you will go to heaven if you just stay true to your beliefs.” The Christian faith rises and falls on the resurrection. Most of you, but maybe not all, believe this. It is crucial; it is critical. This is the hard truth: if grandma or grandpa, mom or dad, sibling or friend did not accept the resurrection as fact and did not establish a personal relationship with Jesus Christ through repentance and demonstrated it in their life, the Bible is clear: he or she did not go to heaven when they died. Like the billboard says on the Northbound side of I-71, “Hell is real.” Hell is real and that should make it all the more important for us to share the good news of our resurrected savior, Jesus Christ.

Want a great book about the Resurrection? Read Lee Strobel's book *The Case for the Resurrection*.

In Christ's Love,

*Pastor Mike*

## PRAYER NEEDS

Pastor Dan Kopp, Debbie Williams, Pat Twomey, Cathy Cooley, Marilyn Holmes (cancer). Praise report: Midge Gathers (no lung cancer), Kate (3 year-old girl had successful kidney transplant)

Missionaries of the Month – Brian and Rachel Glunt, Milton and Erin Pacheco. Brian and Rachel are the lead missionaries of our mission post in Northern Thailand. Their duties encompass basically everything: teaching, cooking, visiting, hosting any short term teams that visit, governmental affairs. The Glunts do it all as well as raising a family of five. Milton and Eric Pacheco are the Glunt's "assistants", and they are Honduran. It was quite a challenge for them to take classes taught in English to learn how to speak the Thai language. After many years of prayers they were finally allowed to adopt a child. Pray now they can soon return to Thailand from Honduras. One of their main duties in Thailand is middle and high school ministry.

Shut-Ins: Helen Smith, Melvin Burdette, Barb Pittenger, Midge Gathers, Trish Dolejs, Clarabell Harlan, and Margaret Jewett

Shut-In of the Month – Melvin Burdette: Melvin and his wife Midge (deceased) attended Franklin Church for nearly 10 years. Their connection came through Midge's sister, Katherine Yank. Katherine was a 50+ year member of our church. Melvin currently lives at Avalon Assisted Living on Main Street in New Albany. Melvin is a military veteran, and he loves to play cards. If you know Melvin, you know he always greets you with an extra firm handshake. What to write him a card? Mail it to Melvin Burdette

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## SCRIPTURE OF THE MONTH

*The angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay." - Matthew 28:5-6*

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chocolate Easter Eggs! Pick up eggs on Sunday, April 2<sup>nd</sup> after church.

Easter Sunrise Sunday School: The "Praying Dangerously" class will be at 7AM on Easter Morning. We will be having breakfast and fellowship after class.

A BIG PRAISE GOD: Our 2023 Building Fund goal was \$25,896 but praise God the goal was well exceeded, perhaps the largest ever! Giving commitment promised to God: \$30,180. Thank you to all who are making the sacrifice!

"Aspire" Special Event: Final Call! We are buying tickets the week of April 2nd. A special women's event. Friday, April 21<sup>st</sup> at 7PM held at the Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church. Tickets: \$25 – See Tamie McVay - THIS WILL REPLACE THE APRIL THURSDAY WOMEN'S MINISTRY MEETING

Prayer Board: Check out the OUTSTANDING Prayer Board on the wall in the office/classroom wing. Leave a prayer request, share a praise, share answered prayers. Make this a priority please.

Still Looking for Bible Study Readers: Each Thursday morning at 10:40AM we read a Bible story to some children in the preschool. We are in real need of readers! See Pastor Mike.