Manito Community United Methodist Church

• OPEN HEARTS
• OPEN MINDS
• OPEN DOORS

Ideas and/or Opinions expressed within this newsletter are those of the article author and/or editor and are not necessarily those of the MCUMC.

APRIL 2018

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Vision

TO PROVIDE SPACE AND OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL GOD'S CHILDREN TO EXPERIENCE HIS LOVE AND MATURE BY HIS GRACE.

Mission

WE WILL PARTNER WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT IN WORSHIP, PRAYER, STUDY, SERVING AND SHARING GOD'S LOVE WITH OTHERS

"Do all the good you can.
By all the means you can.
In all the ways you can.
In all the places you can.
At all the times you can.
To all the people you can.
As long as ever you can."
John Wesley

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

"Follow the Living Christ"

On Sunday morning we sang an Easter hymn called "Christ is Alive!." It was written for Easter Sunday 1968. Just 10 days earlier, on April 4, 1968, the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. had been assassinated in Memphis, Tenn. The author of the hymn, Brian Wren, was faced on the one hand with the devastating news of the violent assassination of the leader of the non-violent movement for Civil Rights for African Americans, and on the other a responsibility to preach the good news of the resurrection.

"Christ is Alive!" was originally titled, "The Crucified Lord." Dr. Wren wrote it for Hockley and Hawkwell Congregational (now United Reformed) Church in Essex where he was serving as minister on that Easter Sunday. He notes that "I tried to express an Easter hope out of that terrible event, in words which could be more widely applied, and wrote 'Christ is alive!' because our available hymns spoke of Easter as a glorious event long ago, far away, and high above."

Here are the lyrics:

"Christ is alive! Let Christians sing.
The cross stands empty to the sky.
Let streets and homes with praises ring.
Love, drowned in death, shall never die."

"Christ is alive! No longer bound
to distant years in Palestine,
but saving, healing, here and now,
and touching every place and time."

"In every insult, rift and war,
where color, scorn or wealth divide,
Christ suffers still, yet loves the more,
and lives, where even hope has died."

"Women and men, in age and youth,
can feel the Spirit, hear the call,
and find the way, the life, the truth,
revealed in Jesus, freed for all."

"Christ is alive, and comes to bring
good news to this and every age,
till earth and sky and ocean ring
with joy, with justice, love and praise."

May you follow the living Christ that brings hope to all of life's circumstances.

Pastor Gregory

2018 SEDER MEAL SERVICE

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Two Montana rednecks are out hunting, and as they are walking along they come upon a huge hole in the ground.

They approach it and are amazed at the size of it.

The first hunter says, "Wow, that's some hole; I can't even see the bottom. I wonder how deep it is!"

The second hunter says," I don't know. Let's throw somethin' down there, listen and see how long it takes to hit bottom."

The first hunter says, "Hey, there's an old automobile transmission over there. Give me a hand, we'll throw it in and see."

So they pick it up and carry it over and count one, two, three and heave it in the hole. They are standing there listening, looking over the edge, when they hear a rustling behind them. As they turn around, they see a goat come crashing through the underbrush, run up to the hole and, without hesitation, jump in headfirst.

While they are standing there staring at each other in amazement, peering into the hole, trying to figure out what that was all about, an old farmer saunters up.

"Say there," says the farmer, "you fellers didn't happen to see my goat around here anywhere, did you?"

The first hunter says, "Funny you should ask, but we were just standing here a minute ago and a goat came running out of the bushes doin' bout a hunnert miles an hour and jumped headfirst into this here hole!"

The old farmer said, "Naw, that's impossible! I had him chained to a transmission."

MARCH 2018

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1 COME WORSHIP with us! Easter Sunday School 9:00 Worship/Communion 10:00	2 Peanut Butter & Jelly Day	3 Tweed Day	4 Bible Study 10:30 A.M.	5 Bible Study 6:30 P.M.	6 Walk to Work Day	7 World Health Day
8 COME WORSHIP with us! Sunday School 9:00 Worship - 10:00 Children's Sunday	9 Winston Churchill Day	10 Trustee's Meeting 6:00 P.M.	11 Bible Study 10:30 A.M.	12 Bible Study 6:30 P.M.	13 Scrabble Day	14 Reach as high as you can Day
15 COME WORSHIP with us! Sunday School 9:00 Worship- 10:00	16 Patriot's Day	17 Ad Council 6:00 P.M.	18 Bible Study 10:30 A.M.	19 Bible Study 6:30 P.M.	20 Volunteer Recognition Day	21 Earth Day
22 COME WORSHIP with us! Sunday School 9:00 Worship- 10:00	23 Take a Chance Day	24 FMF Meeting 6:30 P.M.	25 Bible Study 10:30 A.M.	26 Bible Study 6:30 P.M.	27 Arbor Day	28 Kiss your mate Day
29 COME WORSHIP with us! Sunday School 9:00 Worship- 10:00	30 Honesty Day					

April is "Keep America Beautiful Month"

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

1 - Dot Talbott
3 - Maggi Charlton
3 - Barry Spraggs
3 - Jerry Spraggs
6 - Mike Buck
7 - Daniel Meeker
19 - Larry Whitehouse
20 - Amy Bernshausen
20 - Jim Bernshausen
22 - Carly Abbott
25 - Doug Abbott
25 - Trevor Hayden

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

3 - Ed & Teresa Buck
4 - Allen & Ruth Messman
7 - Dale & Marcia Meeker
21 - Bree & Calvin Kerley
23 - Uhl & Brenda Boss

Family Mission Fund

- Financial Assistance with housing, utilities, and transportation
- Financial Counseling
- Financial support to area programs - school supplies, children's ministry and gospel outreach.

With your help we can offer the love of Jesus through this mission. To donate, make your check payable and mail to:
Community United Methodist Church
PO Box 447
Manito IL 61546
309-968-6228 • manitocumc@gmail.com

United Methodist Women

April 5, 2018

INVITE A FRIEND

Information about UMW

Time: 9:00 in Opening room

Refreshments - Bring something to share

Devotional - Doris Strawbridge

Evening

Time 6:00pm

Opening room - Devotional

Snacks - Diana Budke

EASTER

Earth Day is the day designated for fostering appreciation of the earth's environment and awareness of the issues that threaten it. Actually, Earth Day is one of two days, depending on when you choose to observe it. Some people celebrate Earth Day on the first day of Spring, which is the vernal equinox that occurs on or around March 21st. In 1970, U.S. Senator Gaylord Nelson proposed a bill designating April 22 as a national day to celebrate the earth.

Since that time, Earth Day has been officially observed in April. At present, Earth Day is observed in 175 countries, and coordinated by the nonprofit Earth Day Network. The passage of the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act, and the Endangered Species Act are considered to be products associated with the 1970 Earth Day.

The first Earth Day was in 1970. Nelson, after seeing the damage done by a 1969 massive oil spill in Santa Barbara, California, was inspired to organize a national "teach-in" that focused on educating the public about the environment.

Nelson recruited Denis Hayes, a politically active recent graduate of Stanford University, as national coordinator, and persuaded U.S. Rep. Pete McCloskey of California to be co-chairman. With a staff of 85, they were able to rally 20 million people across the United States on April 20, 1970. Universities held protests, and people gathered in public areas to talk about the environment and find ways to defend the planet.

"Groups that had been fighting against oil spills, polluting factories and power plants, raw sewage, toxic dumps, pesticides, freeways, the loss of wilderness, and the extinction of wildlife suddenly realized they shared common values," according to a history of Earth Day by the Earth Day Network, which was founded by the event's organizers to promote environmental citizenship and action year-round.

Reflecting on the 10th anniversary of Earth Day, Nelson wrote in an article for EPA Journal, "It was on that day that Americans made it clear that they understood and were deeply concerned over the deterioration of our environment and the mindless dissipation of our resources."

In 1995, President Bill Clinton awarded Nelson the Presidential Medal of Freedom for being the founder of Earth Day. This is the highest honor given to civilians in the United States.

Modern Earth Day

Earth Day continued to grow over the years. In 1990, it went global, and 200 million people in 141 countries participated in the event, according to the Earth Day Network.

Earth Day 2000 included 5,000 environmental groups and 184 countries. Hayes organized a campaign that focused on global warming and clean energy. "The world's leaders in Kyoto, Japan, in late 1997, acknowledged the scientific fact that the leading cause of global warming is carbon emissions from fossil-fuel consumption, and that something must be done to address those rising emissions," Hayes told National Geographic.

In 2010, for the 40th anniversary of Earth Day, 225,000 people gathered at the National Mall for a climate rally. Earth Day Network launched a campaign to plant 1 billion trees, which was achieved in 2012, according to the organization.

Last year on Earth Day, the United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon asked world leaders to sign the Paris Climate Agreement aimed at keeping planet warming below 2 degrees Celsius (3.5 degrees Fahrenheit). (Then U.S president Barack Obama signed the treaty that day.)

Today, more than 1 billion people across the globe participate in Earth Day activities, according to EDN.

The impact of Earth Day

Although Earth Day has become mainstream, surveys show that environmentalism may be stumbling. According to recent Gallup polls, 42 percent of Americans believe that the dangers of climate change are exaggerated, and less than half say that protection of the environment should be given priority over energy production.

But Earth Day is still important because it reminds people to think about humanity's values, the threats the planet faces and ways to help protect the environment, said Susan Clayton, a professor of psychology and environmental studies at The College of Wooster in Ohio.

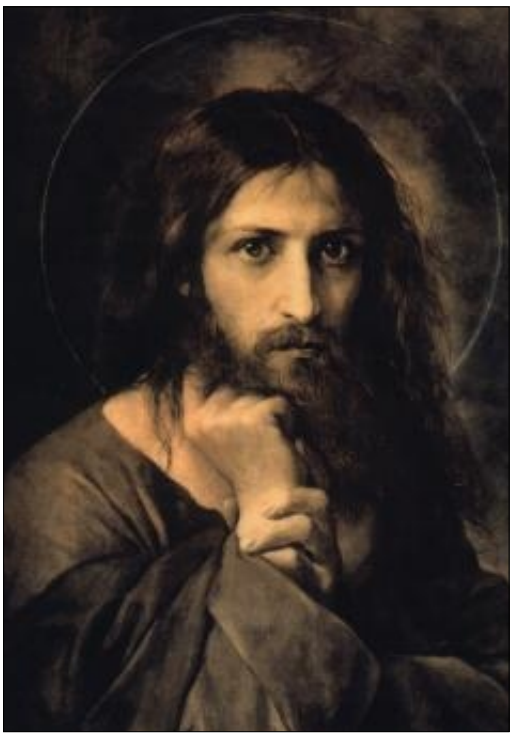
"Thinking about the history of environmental activism and the way individuals have worked together to change policy can make us more optimistic about the ability to make positive changes in the future," Clayton said.

Mia Yamaguchi, outreach coordinator at the CoolClimate Network at the University of California, Berkeley's Renewable and Appropriate Energy Laboratory, agreed. "There are many, many things that any one person can do to manage their own environmental impacts, which I think makes it really different from worries like the national debt or U.S. foreign policy," Yamaguchi told Live Science in 2011.

In those cases, "I can probably write a letter to a politician, maybe donate to a cause," she said. "But if I actually start looking at what it would take to improve my vehicle's fuel efficiency by 5 miles per gallon, that makes a big difference."

The CoolClimate Network has a variety of online widgets for people interested in calculating their own energy footprint.

Ask the UMC: Was Jesus Christ without sin?



I was taught that all humans are born with original sin. Was Jesus born with the human condition so he *could* have sinned?

The doctrinal standards of The United Methodist Church confess Jesus was fully human, fully divine, and without sin, either original or actual. Wesley's Notes upon the New Testament affirm the sinlessness of Jesus explicitly. The Articles of Religion and the Confession of Faith, two of the other three doctrinal standards of The United Methodist Church, affirm it implicitly.

John Wesley's Notes upon the New Testament for Hebrews 4:15 confirms the teaching of Hebrews that Jesus was "without sin."

"15. He sympathizes with us even in our innocent infirmities, wants, weaknesses, miseries, dangers. Yet without sin — And, therefore, is indisputably able to preserve us from it in all our temptations." It would have been possible for him to sin, but he did not.

Article II of the Articles of Religion indirectly addresses concerns about original sin.

"The Son, who is the Word of the Father, the very and eternal God, of one substance with the Father, took man's nature in the womb of the blessed Virgin, so that the two whole and perfect natures, that is to say, the Godhead and the Manhood, were joined together in one person, never to be divided."

The human condition of Jesus is understood to be "perfect… Manhood." This involves, among other things, freedom from original sin.

Augustine most fully articulated the doctrine of original sin embraced by the Western churches in "On Merit and the Forgiveness of Sins." There, Augustine writes sin is transmitted by the act of human procreation (see especially chapter 23).

While this background isn't stated in the Article itself, it lies behind it and every similar affirmation along these lines since at least the fifth century. Because Jesus did not have a human father, and was born of a virgin, original sin was not transmitted to him. This is why the Virgin Birth is regarded as essential in Christian doctrine, and not merely as a miracle pointing to divine intervention in some way.

Article VIII of the Confession of Faith ("Reconciliation through Christ") states:

"We believe God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself. The offering Christ freely made on the cross is the *perfect and sufficient sacrifice* for the sins of the whole world, redeeming man from all sin, so that no other satisfaction is required." (Emphasis added).

While again not explicitly stated in the article, the biblical requirement for a sacrificial victim was that it be whole, without defects of any kind (Deuteronomy 17:1). Since Jesus is here understood as a sacrifice for sins, he must be without sin — original or actual — in order to be such a sacrifice.

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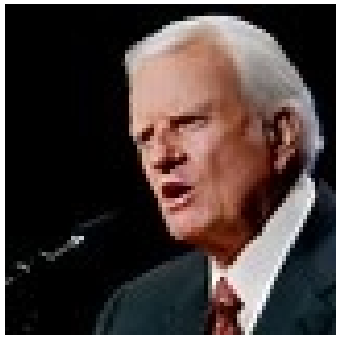
CHRISTIAN ONE LINERS

If you're concerned about global warming, then ask God who controls the thermostat.
It's not how high we jump for joy that counts, but how straight we walk after coming down.
God is so big He can cover the world with his love and so small He can curl up inside your heart.
Worry is wasting today's time to clutter up tomorrow's opportunities with yesterdays troubles.

A complaint in a letter to Billy Graham:



Maybe I'm just old-fashioned, but from time to time our church's music director introduces new songs into the service, and I don't care for them. I like the old hymns, and wish he'd just stick with them. Should I complain to our pastor?

Rev. Graham's response:

I know this has been a controversial issue in many churches, and I don't pretend to have all the answers, especially since I'm not particularly musical! But we have a singing faith, and God has given us the gift of music to praise Him. The Psalmist declared, "With singing lips my mouth will praise you" (Psalm 63:5).

Instead of complaining to your pastor (or anyone else), I urge you to ask God to help you be grateful for all music that points us to God, new or old. No, you may not like some of it, but others do, and God can use it in their lives to encourage them and bring them closer to Christ. Remember: The old hymns you like were once new, and someone probably didn't like them, either!

Sometimes, I'm afraid, a hymn can become so familiar to us that we sing it without even thinking about the words. But this is wrong, because then our singing becomes empty and meaningless. Don't let this happen to you, but meditate on the words of the songs you sing, and even turn them into a prayer.

Your music director has probably been wise to introduce new songs slowly; completely changing everything all at once can be disruptive. Pray for him and encourage him, letting him know that you're grateful for his gifts. Yes, let him know you appreciate the old hymns, but support him also as he seeks to reach a new generation through music.

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A man went to the Pastor of his church and said, "I won't be attending Church anymore." Pastor said, "May I ask why?"

He said, "I see people on their cell phones texting and typing during the service, some are gossiping, some just aren't living right, some are sleeping, some are staring at me, they are all just hypocrites."

The Pastor was silent. Then he said, "Can I ask you to do something for me before you make your final decision?" He said, "Sure, what's that?"

He said, "Take a glass of water and walk around the church two times and don't let any water fall out of the glass." He said, "Yes I can do that!" He went and got the glass of water and walked around the church two times. He came back and said proudly, "It's done."

The pastor asked him these questions; "Did you see anybody on their phone?; Did you see anybody gossiping?; Was anybody living wrong?; Did you see anyone sleeping?"

He said, "I didn't see anything because I was so focused on this glass, so the water wouldn't spill out" He told him, "When you come to church , you should be just that focused on God , so that you don't fall. That's why Jesus said, 'Follow Me', He did not say follow them."

Don't let your relationship with God be determined by how others relate with God. Let it be determined by how focused you are with God.

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An old geezer in a small town on the lake always went fishing, every Sunday. Even in "dry" months when nobody else is catching a thing, he always came back with a limit in his rickety old rowboat.
Naturally, this was cause for some curiosity and speculation in a small town. One Sunday, the local game warden arrived on the dock, and very flatteringly asked the old-timer if he'd honor the warden by taking him fishing. "I've always thought of myself as a skilled fisherman", he told the gaffer, "but in all my years on the lake, I've never seen anyone with your luck. Any chance I could come along and see how a real pro does it?"
The old man just nodded, and indicated with a gesture where the warden was to sit in the rowboat. Slowly, but with little effort, the old man navigated the boat around an arm on the lake to his "secret spot", and dropped anchor.
While the warden was putting his fishing gear together, the old-timer reached under his seat, lugged out a heavy old tackle box, and pulled out a stick of dynamite. He lit the fuse, tossed it well away from the boat, and ... KA-WHOOM! Hundreds of stunned and dead fish, of all sizes, floated to the surface, belly-up.
The warden was in a state of shock and nearly speechless at such a brazen act. "But ... But .. how AWFUL! You - you just can't do that! I'm afraid I, I'm going to have to arrest you!"
The old-timer reached under his seat, pulled out another stick of dynamite, and lit the fuse. He tossed it at the terrified warden, who caught it.
"There, boy ... now, are you gonna fish ... or complain about the tackle?"

A Time to Laugh

During a visit to the mental asylum, a visitor asked the Director what the criterion was which defined whether or not a patient should be institutionalized.
"Well," said the Director, "we fill up a bathtub, then we offer a teaspoon, a teacup and a bucket to the patient and ask him or her to empty the bathtub."
"Oh, I understand," said the visitor. "A normal person would use the bucket because it's bigger than the spoon or the teacup."
"No." said the Director, "A normal person would pull the plug.
Do you want a bed near the window?"

Well two days ago I was out for an evening with friends and had several cocktails followed by some rather nice red wine. Feeling jolly I still had the sense to know that I may be slightly over the limit. That's when I did something that I've never done before - I took a cab home. Sure enough on the way home there was a police road block but since it was a cab they waved it past. I arrived home safely without incident. This was a real surprise as I had never driven a cab before, I don't know where I got it and now that it's in my garage I don't know what to do with it !

One day a cat dies of natural causes and goes to Heaven. There he meets the Lord himself. The Lord says to the cat, "You've lived a good life and if there is any way I can make your stay in Heaven more comfortable, please let Me know."

The cat thinks for a moment and says, "Lord, all my life I have lived with a poor family and had to sleep on a hard wooden floor." The Lord stops the cat and says, "Say no more," and a wonderful fluffy pillow appears.

A few days later six mice are killed in a tragic farming accident and go to Heaven. Again the Lord is there to greet them with the same offer. The mice answer, "All of our lives we have been chased. We have had to run from cats, dogs, and even women with brooms. Running, running, running; we're tired of running. Do you think we could have roller skates so we don't have to run anymore?" The Lord says, "Say no more," and fits each mouse with beautiful new roller skates.

About a week later the Lord stops by to see the cat and finds him in a deep sleep on the pillow. The Lord gently wakes the cat and asks him, "How are things since you arrived?"

The cat stretches and yawns and replies, "It's wonderful here! Better than I could have ever expected. And those little Meals on Wheels you've been sending by are the best!!!"

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A G I N G

Do you realize that the only time in our lives when we like to get old is when we're kids? If you're less than 10 years old, you're so excited
about aging that you think in fractions. "How old are you?" "I'm four and a half!"You're never thirty-six and a half. You're four and a half, going on five! That's the key.

You get into your teens, now they can't hold you back. You jump to the next number, or even a few ahead. "How old are you?" "I'm gonna be 16!" You could be 13, but hey, you're gonna be 16! And then the greatest day of your life . . . you become 21. Even the words sound like a ceremony . . . YOU BECOME 21... YESSSS!!!

But then you turn 30. Oooohh, what happened there? Makes you sound like bad milk. He TURNED; we had to throw him out. There's no fun now, you're just a sour-dumpling. What's wrong? What's changed? You BECOME 21, you TURN 30, then you're PUSHING 40.. Whoa! Put on the brakes, it's all slipping away! Before you know it, you REACH 50 . . . and your dreams are gone. But wait!!! You MAKE it to 60. You didn't think you would! So you BECOME 21, TURN 30, PUSH 40, REACH 50 and MAKE it to 60. You've built up so much speed that you HIT 70!

After that it's a day-by-day thing; you HIT Wednesday! You get into your 80s and every day is a complete cycle; you HIT lunch; you TURN 4:30; you REACH bedtime. And it doesn't end there. Into the 90s, you start going backwards; "I was JUST 92." Then a strange thing happens. If you make it over 100, you become a little kid again. "I'm 100 and a half!" May all of you make it to a 100 and a half!

MARK SCHULTZ

Read the Bible in a Year

New International Version (1984):
Beginning To End

Read the Bible from start to finish,
from Genesis to Revelation

Apr 1: 1Sam 18-20
Apr 2: 1Sam 21-24
Apr 3: 1Sam 25-27
Apr 4: 1Sam 28-31
Apr 5: 2Sam 1-3
Apr 6: 2Sam 4-7
Apr 7: 2Sam 8-12
Apr 8: 2Sam 13-15
Apr 9: 2Sam 16-18
Apr 10: 2Sam 19-21
Apr 11: 2Sam 22-24
Apr 12: 1King 1-2
Apr 13: 1King 3-5
Apr 14: 1King 6-7
Apr 15: 1King 8-9
Apr 16: 1King 10-11
Apr 17: 1King 12-14
Apr 18: 1King 15-17
Apr 19: 1King 18-20
Apr 20: 1King 21-22
Apr 21: 2King 1-3
Apr 22: 2King 4-5
Apr 23: 2King 6-8
Apr 24: 2King 9-11
Apr 25: 2King 12-14
Apr 26: 2King 15-17
Apr 27: 2King 18-19
Apr 28: 2King 20-22
Apr 29: 2King 23-25
Apr 30: 1Chron 1-2

What is the kingdom of God? Where is the kingdom of God?

The kingdom of God is a way of describing the reign of God. United Methodists, with other Christians, recognize that the reign of God is both a present and future reality.

John Wesley recognized both of these aspects of God's reign: "The kingdom of heaven and the kingdom of God are but two phrases for the same thing. They mean, not barely a future happy state, in heaven, but a state to be enjoyed on earth. … In some places of Scripture, the phrase more particularly denotes the state of it on earth: in others, it signifies only the state of glory: but it generally includes both."

Early Christians believed that God's kingdom had come in Jesus. When the Pharisees asked when God's kingdom was coming, Jesus replied, "God's kingdom isn't coming with signs that are easily noticed. Nor will people say, 'Look, here it is!' or 'There it is!' Don't you see? God's kingdom is already among you." (Luke 17:20-21, CEB)

We believe that wherever God's will is done, the kingdom or reign of God is present. It was present in Jesus' ministry, and it also is present in our world whenever persons and communities experience reconciliation, restoration and healing.

"Wherever persons are being made new creatures in Christ, wherever the insights and resources of the gospel are brought to bear on the life of the world, God's reign is already effective in its healing and renewing power." (The Book of Discipline, Basic Christian Affirmations)

Jesus spoke of the kingdom of God when he taught the disciples to pray, "Your kingdom come. Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven." (Matt. 6:10)

Wesley writes that in this prayer, we implore, "May Thy kingdom of grace come quickly, and swallow up all the kingdoms of the earth!" That hasn't happened yet. The kingdom is still to come.

Early Christians anticipated the fulfillment of the kingdom when Jesus returned. (Revelation 11:15)

Christians today continue to look to the end time in which God's work will be fulfilled. "Living in a covenant of grace under the Lordship of Jesus Christ, we participate in the first fruits of God's coming reign and pray in hope for its full realization on earth as in heaven." (The Book of Discipline)

Rev. F. Belton Joyner Jr. sums it up, "One can almost open the Gospels at random and find some image, some forecast, some announcement of the kingdom. And the kingdom does not look like business as usual! The values and systems of the world are turned upside down.

"These various biblical references to the kingdom lead to the conclusion that the kingdom's life could be seen in Jesus Christ, that even now in the 21st century we get glimpses of God's reign, and that in a time that seems good to God, the full reign of God will restore a future that we have already seen in Christ. "Death and evil will not only have lost their power but will be destroyed."