



## Lead Us Safely

“Lead us not into temptation.”

About 5 years ago, Pope Francis commented on this phrase of the Lord’s Prayer, saying that he found the English translation problematic. His straight-forward objection was that God doesn’t lead us into temptation in the first place: “It’s Satan who leads us into temptation, that’s his department.”

Pope Francis is right. We don’t need to implore God, “Please don’t trip us up with temptations.” Surely, the original meaning of the text is better translated “save us from the time of trial.”

In the Gospel accounts of Jesus’ temptation in the wilderness, even though it is the devil who tempts Jesus, it is the Holy Spirit who leads him to the place of temptation. This, however, does not contradict Pope Francis’ defense of the goodness of a Father who does not want to see us fall.

The point of telling us that Jesus is led by the Spirit is not to claim that the Spirit is responsible for the temptation.

It is to demonstrate that even in this time of testing, God is still in charge and still guiding and supporting Jesus.

In other words, Jesus is not left on his own to be ambushed by the devil. He is not the hapless victim of evil; he is coming to grips with temptations that will face him throughout his life and ministry.

The devil represents the very real power of evil and the very real tendency of all humans to choose the ways of self-centeredness and satisfaction over sacrifice and trusting obedience to God. But God and the devil are not superhero rivals locked in some kind of ‘battle of the titans’ with you and me as the contested prize of their fight. God’s sovereignty over the universe is never in question.

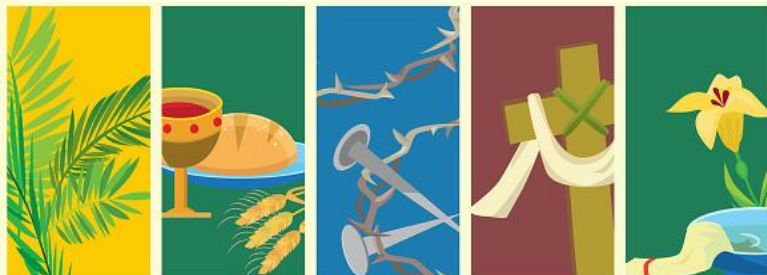
In the worst of our temptations, God is present, not to give us a good shove to see if we’ll stumble and fall, but to support us in the struggle. It’s up to us to reach out for help.  
-Pastor Lynn

**Prayer:** *You know my weakness; keep me from temptation. You know my pride; keep chipping away at it so I can reach out to you for help when trouble comes. Amen.*

Our last *Soup Supper and Lenten Evening Service* is Wednesday, April 6.



## Holy Week Schedule



Palm Sunday, April 10  
10:00am Worship Service

Maundy Thursday, April 14  
7:00pm Service

Good Friday, April 15  
7:00pm Service

EASTER SUNDAY, April 17  
10:00am Celebration Service

# Potluck Lunch

Sunday, May 15  
following worship

A sign-up sheet will be on the table in the Narthex, or, call the church office; Michelle will sign you up (649-1532).



## Thank you coffee hour hosts!

March 6: LaDonna Painter  
March 20: Zdrojewski's  
April 3: Beth Stormer  
April 24: Sandy Morgan  
May 1: Chrissy Mellerski & Kerry Shearer  
June 5: Pat McDonald  
June 12: Dawn & Chris Goetz



Jeff Cotton, Jane Duewiger, Rev. David Felton, Jack Gertner, Paul Hayes, John & Karen Kaitanowski, Ron Larson, Jewell McFarland, Helen Mellerski, Molly N., Jean Roth, Peggy Scales, Kelly Thien, Helen Wilson

We have a new church custodian ... Carl Waible! Carl is semi-retired; also cleans professionally with his company, Squeaky Kleen. His daughter Carrie and her husband Craig live in Long Island.

He maintains the church building Monday through Friday in the mornings. His contact information is in the church directory.



Birthdays &  
Anniversaries

## Happy Birthday!

Tyler Myers (4/1), Ben Hamm (4/2), Chrissy Mellerski (4/5), Nancy Williams (4/5), Linda Ferraro (4/8), Vanessa Rich (4/8), Grady Hamm (4/9), Diane Whytas (4/14), Donesse Lindsay (4/15), Robin Federmann (4/16), Ken Haberman (4/19)

## Happy Anniversary!

Ron & Cheryl Larson (4/8/1978)

Tom & Janet Kromer (4/14/1971)

## Carried Home

After Mother Theresa died, her private journal was discovered and its contents became public. People were astounded to learn that her journal chronicled long years of spiritual dryness, of a sense of great distance from God. Shouldn't a person like her who had dedicated her life to prayer and service be in a state of constant awareness of God's benevolent presence? Well, maybe if we wrote the rules, but this is clearly not how things work with God.

Those of us in the spirituality business should be more frank, more often about the lackluster quality of our own spirituality. No one who takes the spiritual life seriously lives in a state of constant bliss. In fact, the more one tries to live intentionally in the presence of God the more one is likely to become aware of failings and faults that hinder that relationship.

We don't get through these times of dryness alone. We make it because we are part of a community of faith.

In Mark 2:3-5, some friends of a man who was paralyzed tried to bring him to Jesus for healing. The crowd was too thick to wedge their way to the front, so they climbed up on the roof and dug their way through. They lowered their friend on his cot right into the lap of Jesus, so to speak. Jesus made him whole.

That paralyzed man couldn't get to Jesus alone. He needed his friends to make a way, and they didn't stop until they got him to the place where God's healing power could reach him.

That's what the community of faith does for us. Sometimes it is the word of wise counsel or a shoulder to cry on. Often it is just being in the midst of the congregation singing and praying words that you just can't quite feel yourself at the moment. That's ok. When we can't pray, the Church prays for us.

The Church, at its best, is a community of cot-carriers and roof-diggers.

**Prayer:** Thank you for every hand that has grabbed a shovel and made a way to bring my helpless soul to you.



It's that time of year again when members and friends of St. Matthew's volunteer their time to deliver meals through FeedMore (Meals on Wheels) to the homebound in Hamburg.

Pamela Kaznica is organizing volunteers for April. There are only 2 days left to fill on the April calendar, April 5 and 6. If you are interested in giving of your time on either or both of those days, please contact Pamela at 913-7504.

Senior Wishes' annual fundraiser, "Sips, Suds & Sweets" will be at home again this year. They had very positive feedback from those of you who bought "to-go boxes" last year containing beer, wine, baked goods, candy and other treats. Hopefully, they will be back in person next year, but in the meantime, please support Senior Wishes in their largest fundraiser of the year by purchasing a Sips, Suds & Sweets box to enjoy at home with friends and family or tickets for the wine pull or virtual basket raffle! For more details on this fundraiser or Senior Wishes, go to [www.seniorwishes.org/](http://www.seniorwishes.org/).



*Senior Wishes enriches the lives of deserving seniors in Western New York by granting them a meaningful wish. The goal of the program is to honor and recognize the lifelong contributions of Seniors and promote their quality of life by granting them a wish that brings them joy.*

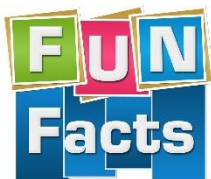
## Bible Easter Scavenger Hunt



1. What everyday item, also associated with the Easter story, is found in Luke 24:1?
2. What family member is mentioned in John's account of the Easter story in John 20:21?
3. What piece of furniture is mentioned in Luke 22:21?
4. What item(s) associated with Jesus' torture can be found in Jeremiah 10:4?
5. What day is mentioned in Luke 23:56?

The United Church of Christ is appealing for support for refugees who have fled Ukraine to neighboring countries and for elderly and other vulnerable people who are displaced within Ukraine and unable to leave. As a member of the ACT Alliance, UCC support is being targeted to people most in need through humanitarian relief partners with a history of working in the region.

All donations will be deposited into the International Disasters fund designated for "Ukraine Relief." Your generous financial support will be used by our partners in the areas of greatest need. You can mail a check made payable to the United Church of Christ, PO BOX 71957, Cleveland, OH 44194. Please note "Ukraine Relief Fund."



Sheep do not have teeth in their upper front jaw. Instead, the lower teeth press up against a hard upper palate to breakdown food.

Billie Holiday was Billy Crystal's babysitter.

Certain pinecones only release their seeds when they are opened by fire.

*Thank you* for your continued generous support of the day-to-day operations and ministries of St. Matthew's. Your financial support for St. Matthew's is still needed. The disruption of the pandemic has been hard on our budget and so, if you can, please make a gift to support the ministry of St. Matthew's.

### Bible Hunt answers:

1. Spices
2. Father
3. Table
4. Hammer, nails
5. Sabbath

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