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THE SPIRIT - ISSUE 04 - APRIL 2026

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF CHENEY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Thoughtful - Holy Week "The Innocent One"

Friends, last week we were reflecting on Cain and Abel.
 And there is something deeply unsettling about the story of Cain and Abel.
 Not just the violence. Not just the jealousy. But what comes after.
 Fear grows. Violence escalates. And very quickly, it becomes a system.
 Lamech (the son of Cain) sings about revenge...seventy-seven times.
 Strength becomes safety. And the one who can harm the most appears to be the one who is most secure. It sounds ancient.
 And yet, it feels very familiar.
 Because we still live in that same story.
 We build systems to protect ourselves.
 We justify harm in the name of security.
 We learn, quietly or explicitly, that survival sometimes requires someone else to lose. And then, we come to the cross.

Jesus does not die because he was guilty. He does not die because he was dangerous. He dies because he refused to play the game.
 He did not retaliate. He did not prove himself. He did not fight back.
 And that is precisely what made him unbearable to the system.
 The cross is not just a religious symbol.



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It is what happens when human fear meets divine love and cannot understand it.
 Jesus stands in the middle of our world of comparison, fear, and violence and refuses to participate.
 He does not become Cain. He becomes the innocent Abel.
 And once again, the innocent one dies. But this time, something is different.
 Because on the cross, Jesus exposes the lie we have believed all along: That peace can be achieved through violence. That safety comes from strength. That life must be defended at all costs.

On the cross, God absorbs that violence without returning it. And in doing so, God reveals something radical: That the cycle can end.

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Not through greater force. Not through better weapons.
Not through winning.
But through a love that refuses to mirror the violence it receives.
“Father, forgive them,” Jesus says.
Not because it was okay.
But because they did not understand what they were doing.

And maybe that is still true today. Maybe we, too, often do not fully understand how deeply fear shapes our world, our relationships, even our faith.
But the cross invites us to see. To see what violence really does.
To see what fear produces. To see what it costs when we believe we are not enough.
And then to choose differently.

The innocent one dies.
And in his death, he shows us a different way to live.
A way that does not begin with fear but with trust.
A way that does not need to defeat the other but sees the other as human.
A way that dares to believe:
You are already loved. You are already enough.
And that changes everything.
Because when we no longer have to prove our worth,
we no longer need to destroy one another.
And maybe that is where peace begins.
Not out there, in systems and nations first but here.
In the quiet, often difficult decision to step out of the cycle.
To follow the one who chose love even when it cost him everything.

Peace and grace be with you,
Pastor Damian

Hey Friends,
Holy Week is here: a time at the very heart of our faith. The United Methodist Church has created a Holy Week Quiz, and I thought it might be a fun way for you to test your knowledge. So go ahead and give it a try! Maybe even read the questions to a partner, a friend, or a family member and see how they do.

You'll find the answers later in this newsletter. Have fun and may this playful challenge also draw you a little deeper into the story of Holy Week. The schedule for special services on page 8.

The United Methodist Holy Week Quiz



1. What do palm branches symbolize on Palm Sunday?

- They symbolized victory in the Roman Empire.
- Palm is the Latin word for 'return.'
- Hearts of palm were considered 'kingly food.'
- All of the above.

2. What was Judas paid for identifying Jesus to the Roman soldier?

- 20 pieces of gold
- 20 pieces of silver
- 30 pieces of gold
- 30 pieces of silver

3. The Upper Room Chapel in Nashville displays a carved wooden representation of...

- The Nativity Scene
- The Last Supper
- Christ's Crucifixion
- Christ's Resurrection

4. What was not said by Jesus the night before he died?

- "All those who use the sword will die by the sword."
- "The spirit is eager, but the flesh is weak."
- "Physician, heal thyself."
- "Friend, do what you came to do."

5. What are the Stations of the Cross?

- Place in Jerusalem where prisoners were sentenced
- Moments in Jesus' journey from his trial to the tomb
- Officially approved places for crosses in churches

6. What does a Tenebrae service consist of?

- A drama about the last seven words of Jesus
- A reenactment of the Last Supper
- Extinguishing of candles
- The receiving of ashes

7. What does INRI mean on a crucifix?

- Pontius Pilate, Prefect of Rome
- Nazareth, Kingdom of Jerusalem
- Sign of the Cross
- Jesus the Nazarene, King of the Jews

8. Why are eggs associated with Easter?

- They symbolize new life.
- They have a shell around the body inside, like the tomb of Jesus.
- They can be dyed pretty colors to represent the joy of Easter.
- All of the above.

9. Which of these Easter hymns did Charles Wesley write?

- "Because He Lives"
- "Christ, Whose Glory Fills the Skies"
- "Lift High the Cross"
- "Sing with All the Saints in Glory"

10. Why do some churches hold Easter sunrise services?

- Easter prayer vigils often ended as the sun rose.
- Three women visited the tomb early in the morning.
- Jesus is often called the light of the world.
- All of the above.

Take one of our other quizzes at www.UMC.org/quizzes



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The people of The United Methodist Church®

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- | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| 8 Violet Lincoln | 20 Kathy Sawtells |
| 12 Janet Satchwell | 22 Dorothy Dishman |
| 13 Gary Glaze | 24 Brooklyn n Pope |
| Ty Mansfield | 25 Matt Wilkey |
| 14 Keith Kriegh | 27 Cheryl Reagan |
| Lori Tomko | Carter Lincoln |
| Tom Janson | Linda Janson |
| 15 Tristan Stone | 28 Rob Wickenhagen |
| 16 Martha Clark | 29 Kayla Willms |
| 17 Nels Cordill | |
| 19 Carolyn Dyer | |
| Sheri Zapf | |



- | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| 6 Dave & Colleen Leontovich | |
| 8 Rob & Anna Meyer | 11 Jim & Cathy Almekinder |

If you do not see your name please let the office know and we will put you in our database.

Easter Breakfast

Please join us for our Easter breakfast which is scheduled for Sunday April 5th at 8:15. A sign up sheet is on the door of opportunity for both food to bring and set up/clean up help. Please let Kathy Sawtells or Margie Lindner know of any severe food allergies so we can avoid those items.

Cheney United Methodist Church Schedule

Church Office Hours - Tuesday and Wednesday 4:30 to 7:00 p.m. and Thursday 4:30 to 6:30 p.m.

Meals on Wheels every Tuesday and Thursday from 11 am to 1 pm at our Church.

Choir Rehearsal Wednesdays from 7:00 -8:30 p.m. .

Bible Study with Congregational Church - we are meeting weekly on Thursdays from 1:15 to 2:15 pm. For the month of April we will be meeting at the Cheney United Methodist Church

Sassy Senior Society meets on April 15 from 2 pm to 3:30 pm

Bible Studies:

Mondays from 2:00—3:00 led by Margie Lindner

Mondays from 7:30—8:30 led by Carol Kriegh

Wednesdays from 7:00—8:00 led by Saralynn Kerr

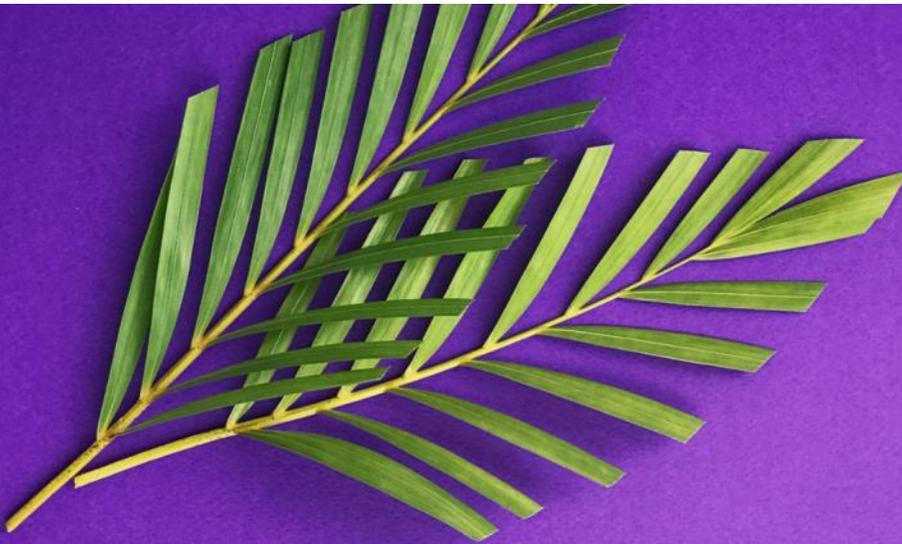
Contact the office for the addresses, please.

Adult Fellowship

If you missed the **March** fellowship time you missed out on an assortment of delicious chilies and some pretty awesome talent, too. Seven pots of chili were sampled and voted on with Sonia Bertsch's contribution being declared the winner. The talent show offered singing, dancing, comedy, and music from a variety of ages and a co-host who came all the way from Germany to participate. Ok, our intern Henning didn't come just for the talent show but he was absolutely a delightful addition to the show. Start practicing now for next year's big event.

April showers bring board game powers! We'll have a potluck and game night for fellowship on April 12. Just bring a dish to share and your favorite game to the church at 6 p.m. Enjoy the food and fellowship for sure and maybe even learn a fun new game.

Looking ahead to **May** fellowship please join us for our annual Bloomsday BBQ at 6 p.m. at the church on Sunday May 3. You don't need to participate in Bloomsday to come and enjoy the fellowship time. Burgers will be provided. Just bring some side dishes and share in the potluck. Note - fellowship is a week early because of Mother's Day on the second Sunday of the month.



**Holy Week
Services**

**Holy Thursday, April 02, 7 pm
Luke 22:1-27**

**Good Friday, April 03, 7 pm
Matthew 27:31-50**

**Easter Sunday, April 05, 10 am
Colossians 3:1-4**



**Easter Breakfast
at 8:15 am**



Invitation

You are invited to join one of two projects that the Creation Care Group is offering this April.

PRAYER GARDEN TEAM

On ***Sunday, April 12th at 9:00 a.m.*** the **PRAYER GARDEN** team will be meeting to discuss next steps. If you are interested in this project, please come to the meeting.

EARTH DAY CLEAN UP DAY

Earth Day is on April 22nd but Cheney UMC will be celebrating it on ***Saturday Morning, April 18th from 9 :00 a.m. to 12:00 noon*** by serving people in our congregation and community to clean up their yards. We would like to form teams to clean up yards of those who cannot physically do it themselves or who need some assistance. If you are interested in being on a team or a team leader sign up on the door of opportunity. If you know of anyone who might be interested in having help cleaning their yard let Ronda Cordill know.

Ask Ronda Cordill, at (509) 993-6753 or r_cordill@hotmail.com if you have any questions

Germany 2027: A Journey of Faith, Friendship, and Adventure

Friends... it's really happening - we're going to Germany!

In the **summer of 2027**, Cheney United Methodist Church is planning a 16-day journey across Germany, and you're invited to be part of it. While we're still working on locking in exact dates (likely sometime between May and July), the heart behind this trip is already clear: connection, discovery, and shared faith.

If you're wondering how this idea came about... well, let's just say having two amazing German interns and a German pastor might have had *something* to do with it.

This won't be your typical sightseeing tour. Yes, we'll experience some of Germany's most beautiful and historic places: Frankfurt, the Black Forest, Nürnberg, Munich (including a visit to Dachau), and Hamburg. But this trip is about more than just the views.

We're planning a meaningful blend of:

- Exploring German culture and history
- Building relationships with German United Methodists
- Experiencing everyday life through host families

That's right, many participants will have the opportunity to stay with Methodist host families during part of the trip. Not only does this create a deeper, more personal experience, but it also helps keep costs significantly lower. (And don't worry, hotel options will still be available for those who prefer them.)

Our hope is simple: **we want everyone who feels called to go, to be able to go.** We'll be organizing fundraisers to help make this trip accessible, regardless of financial situation because journeys like this are meant to be shared.

Right now, we're in the "dreaming and planning" stage and we need your input on things we might not think of! Also, we hope to get some ideas from the group that is interested in doing some fundraisers. If you're even a little bit interested, please sign up at the Door of Opportunities or send Pastor Damian an email. Your availability will help us choose dates that work for as many people as possible.

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Want to learn more?

Join us for an informational meeting on **Sunday April 26, right after Church at 11:30 in the Sanctuary**. We'll share more details, answer questions, and enjoy a simple lunch together.

So... are you ready for bratwurst, beautiful landscapes, meaningful connections, and maybe a few unforgettable stories along the way?

Germany is calling and we'd love for you to be part of the journey.

Pastor Damian

**We have a table at the Mayfest on May 09th!
Save the DATE!**

CHENEY MAYFEST



Ready to Say "Yes?" Join Our Membership Class!

When we baptize children, we joyfully proclaim God's "yes" over their lives. And when someone chooses to become a member of Cheney UMC, they get the opportunity to say their own "yes"—to God, to a life of faith, and to our church family.

Whether you were baptized as a child or are still exploring baptism, this is your moment to step into something beautiful. At Cheney United Methodist Church, we describe ourselves as a "community of believers and seekers"—people walking together in faith, with open hearts and a readiness to grow. Becoming a member is more than just a formality. It's a way to say, "I belong here. I want to be part of what God is doing in and through this church."

Interested? We'd love to have you with us for a series of three relaxed, no-pressure classes. It's a chance to ask questions, get to know others, and discover what being part of the UMC—and this specific congregation—is all about.

We will start the classes probably during the last week of April. Please sign up at the door of opportunities if you are interested in becoming a member or send me an email. And mark your calendars! We'll be celebrating our new members and offering baptisms too! This year we are doing an inside baptism in the sanctuary. **And we have a date for that: May 24, 2026.**

If that date does not work for you, we can find another date to welcome you as a member during a Sunday morning worship. If you're feeling that gentle nudge, that quiet invitation from God—come. Just show up.

We're excited to walk this journey with you.

Pastor Damian



CUMC Window Wall Update

The Trustees have hired Fusion Architecture of Spokane to assist them with the Window Wall Project. It was found that the Window Wall on the south side of the church was failing.

Through the bidding process other concerns such as lighting, space requirements and movement throughout the building and parking lot were identified. The survey confirmed the need for these and other concerns.

Stage 1: The project is a facility feasibility study to evaluate potential improvements to the existing church facility and conceptual solutions that address structural concerns, lighting and future technological needs. The study will help the Trustees understand potential renovations considerations and a preliminary budget.

The scope of Stage 1 includes:

1. South entry and interior refiguration
2. Sanctuary lighting and technology evaluation
3. Fellowship hall improvements
4. West entry improvements
5. Structural assessments
6. Phasing, budgeting, and fundraising support.

The completion of Stage 1 will provide us with the direction we want to proceed with designs and cost information.

Stage 2: The members of the congregation will have reviewed and approved the building design to move forward with this project. Once permits and final construction plans have been completed, the Trustees will present the final project plans to Church Council for their approval and blessing.

This is a whole church project, and we want and need your support. It is not just a Trustee Project. We will need members to serve on building and fundraising committees. More information about the project will be in the monthly newsletter and if you have questions please contact Nelson Cordill (ncordill1892@gmail.com, 509-309-5460) or Stan Kerr (stankerr241@gmail.com, 509-723-3277).

Our first planning meeting with Fusion Architecture will be on Thursday, April 24 at 5 p.m. at our church

Spring Cleaning Day 2026

Once a year we like to turn the church upside down and clean it thoroughly from the dust on door frames, crumbs under the cupboards and dirt on windows. We also like to declutter and clean up rooms and storage closets. The outside of our church property is important too. If you have a green thumb or like playing in the dirt, then this task is for you! We need many volunteers to help with getting our church shiny and inviting to new and current church members.

The Cleaning Day is planned for Saturday April 25th From 9 am to 12 pm. There will be snacks: feel free to bring something to share.

Patti Sooy-Chair of Trustees is organizing. There is a sign up sheet on the door of opportunity- so please sign up in advance. Otherwise just show up and lend a helping hand. You will be pointed in a needed direction. All help is appreciated. Many hands make the tasks go quickly. We will see you there!



We are hiring!

Friends,

God is doing wonderful things at Cheney United Methodist Church and there is a new chapter ahead of us. Part of that change is due to the retiring of two great staff people who have served our church together for over 48 years: Laurie Murphy as our office manager for 28 years and Mary Jane as our Choir Director for 20 years! And we are grateful for all that they have done at and for this church!

Therefore, we are looking for two new people on our staff:

Administrative & Communications Director

(also known as our Office Manager)

This role is at the center of keeping our church life organized, connected, and well communicated. From coordinating schedules to sharing the story of what God is doing in our community (website, newsletter, social media, and beyond), this position helps ensure that no one misses out on the good stuff.

If you love bringing order to chaos, enjoy working with people, and maybe even get a little excited about a well-crafted email or post—this might be your calling!

Music Director

(aka: the one who helps us lift the roof musically speaking!)

Music is such a powerful part of our worship life. We're looking for someone who can lead, inspire, and collaborate; helping create meaningful and engaging worship experiences for all generations.

Whether it's traditional, contemporary, or something in between, this role helps our congregation connect with God through music in ways that are joyful, heartfelt, and sometimes even a little fun.

Could This Be You—or Someone You Know?

We believe that God often works through invitations. So even if this isn't for you, maybe it's for someone you know. Feel free to share!

You can find full job descriptions and application details here:

<https://cheneyumc.org/job-opportunities>

At Cheney UMC, our mission is **to seek, serve, and share Jesus Christ** and these roles are a big part of how we live that out in everyday, practical, and creative ways.

We're excited to see who God is calling next. Maybe it's someone sitting in the "pews"... or reading this newsletter right now .

Answers to the United Methodist Holy Week Quiz



1. What do palm branches symbolize on Palm Sunday?

The correct answer is they were a symbol of victory in the Roman Empire.

2. What was Judas paid for identifying Jesus to the Roman soldier?

The correct answer is 30 pieces of silver.

3. The Upper Room Chapel in Nashville displays a carved wooden representation of:

The correct answer is The Last Supper.

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The correct answer is all of the above.

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The correct answer is "Christ, Whose Glory Fills the Skies."

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The correct answer is all of the above.



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**FREE HOT MEAL
SEED PLANTING WITH FFA**

WHEN

**5:30 PM MONDAY,
APRIL 27, 2026**

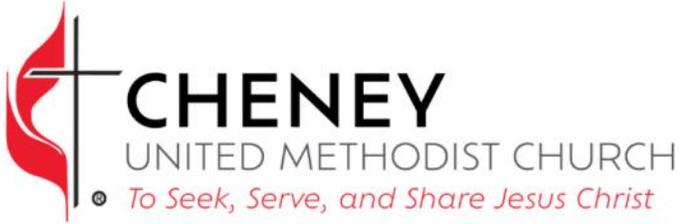
**FOR ACCOMMODATION CONTACT CHENEY PARKS AND
RECREATION AT 509-498-9250 BY APRIL 24.**

WHERE

**Wren Pierson Building
615 4TH STREET, CHENEY**

FOR MORE INFORMATION

509.498.9250 WWW.FEEDCHENEY.COM



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