

The Martin & Shelbyville CONNECTION

Newsletter for Martin & Shelbyville UMC

April 4, 2025 – Volume 4, Number 1

“Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Doors.”

In Case You Are Wondering

March 2, 2025

Shelbyville UMC:

General Collection: \$1,016.06

Food Pantry: \$200.00

Martin UMC:

General Collection: \$2,087.00

Building Fund: \$10.00

Attendance:

Shelbyville UMC:

Worship: 36

Martin UMC:

Worship: 66

March 9, 2025

Offering:

Shelbyville UMC:

General Collection: \$1,381.86

Food Pantry: \$55.00

Missions: \$30.00

Martin UMC:

General Collection: \$1,970.00

Building Fund: \$10.00

Attendance:

Shelbyville UMC:

Worship: 30

Martin UMC:

Worship: 47

March 16, 2025

Offering:

Shelbyville UMC:

General Collection: \$851.00

Martin UMC:

General Collection: \$1,030.00

Food Pantry: \$260.00

Attendance:

Shelbyville UMC:

Worship: 32

Martin UMC:

Worship: 55

March 23, 2025

Offering:

Shelbyville UMC:

General Collection: \$1,310.25

Building: \$40.40

Martin UMC:

General Collection: \$1,271.00

Attendance:

Shelbyville UMC:

Worship: 31

Martin UMC:

Worship: 60

Hello!

For those who may not know me, my name is Pastor Reva. I retired from active ministry in 2005. It is an honor and a pleasure to now be worshipping with Pastor Maggie and my new friends at Martin and Shelbyville and to be given this opportunity to share some thoughts with you.

The calendar says that we are in the season of Lent, a time of preparation in anticipation of the celebration of Easter. It is a period of 40 days (not counting Sundays) when we are invited to take a serious look at ourselves and our faith. We may ask, “how am I living out daily what I say I believe?” Or from another perspective, “how can I live a deeper, more spiritual life?” We may question, “what in my daily living should I subtract; what should I add?”

How will my own self-reflection during Lent bring me closer to the joyous, momentous celebration that is Easter? My experience has been that taking a deeper, quieter look at my attitudes and actions is essential. Then comes Palm Sunday and its celebration and excitement which is crushed by the solemn meal of Maundy Thursday and the desolation and death of Good Friday without which I cannot fully feel the jubilation of Easter Sunday. So, if at all possible, I attend all 3 pre-Easter services where I am blessed to sense the presence the Holy Spirit and to feel the highs and lows of Holy Week. Without death, there cannot be resurrection. Without resurrection, there is no Easter.

As an illustration of sorrow and joy, let me share the story behind the writing of the hymn “In the Garden” by C. Austin Miles, a pharmacist, who became a photographer, poet and song writer. In 1912, while waiting for some film to process, he picked up his Bible and began to read by the red light of his dark room. The book fell open to John 20 and he began to read the story of Mary Magdalene coming to the garden and the tomb of Jesus. Suddenly, Miles felt as if he himself had joined the scene. He felt Mary’s deep sorrow at the loss of her friend and the total despair of the empty tomb. Then Jesus spoke. Mary’s overwhelming joy was boundless! Miles felt it, too. It was not an event of 2000 years ago; it is today! “He walks with me and He talks with me!”

May it be so in your life this Easter. Amen!

Office Hours:

Closed Monday, Tuesday thru Friday 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.



KINGDOM KIDS
Every Sunday following the
Children's Sermon!

Please read if you like to sing!

If Easter makes you feel like singing, come join the choir on Easter Sunday. We will be singing "In the Garden." Practice will be after immediately after worship on April 13 - during fellowship time. Warm-up will be at 8:55 on the 20th.

APRIL Food Pantry Focus

Toilet Paper

All food & other items are always needed

*Martin UMC
Sunday School
For ALL ages!
11:00 a.m.
Please join us!*

Did you know that you can give thru our website? Go to martinumc.org or shelbyvilleumc.org for more information.

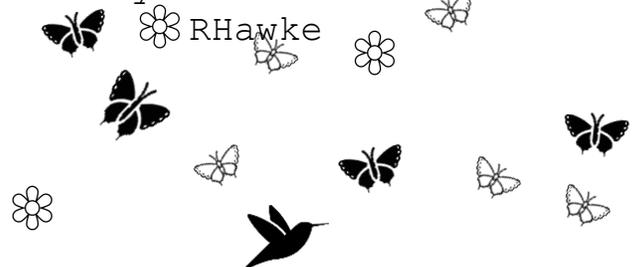
Important Dates

- April 6th – Holy Communion
- April 9th – Lenten Study MUMC- 2:00 & 7:00p.m.
- April 13th - Golden Cross Offering
- April 16th – Otsego UMW – Lenten Breakfast - Otsego 9:30 a.m.
- April 17th – Maundy Thursday Service @ Martin 7:00 p.m.
- April 18th – Good Friday Service @ Shelbyville 7:00 pm.
- April 20th – Easter Sunday –
 - ❖ Sunrise Service at 7:00 a.m. Martin UMC
 - ❖ Easter Breakfast – 8:00 a.m. Martin UMC
 - ❖ Easter Worship – 9:30 a.m. Martin UMC
 - ❖ Easter Worship – 11:00 a.m. Shelbyville UMC



RETURN

Hatched new in Spring,
Each Monarch lives a little while.
Six weeks and he is gone.
Gathering at summer's end,
The novitiates journey to Mexico,
Never missing the wintering place
Of their ancestors
By more than fifteen miles.
If Monarch Butterflies can find
Their way to uncharted
Other homes,
Then it must be
My soul can find
Its way to heaven.



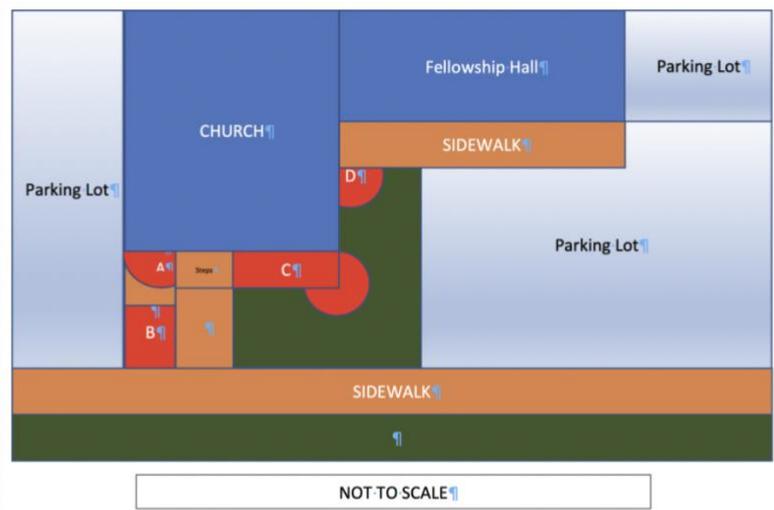


UMCOR Bucket Project

On Sunday February 23, parishioners from Allegan, Hopkins, Martin, Shelbyville and Wayland UMCs gathered at Hopkins UMC to fill five-gallon buckets with items to aid in cleanup after floods, tornadoes, hurricanes or other disasters. After prayers of blessing, the 38 buckets are now on their way to the UMCOR Midwest Distribution Center in Illinois. It was a day of food, faithfulness, and fun! Thank you to all who donated labor, supplies or money to support this project. Imagine you have lost nearly everything in a storm and someone delivers a bucket that shows you there are people of God who care! May God bless those who gave and those who will receive.

(Thank you to Mitzi Crowe of Hopkins for the photos)

Adopt a Flower Bed at Martin UMC



It's that time of year! Time to take care of the grounds. Please let the office know if you would like to accept responsibility for one of the flower beds at MUMC. Flower Bed C will be a group effort and will be coordinated by the Trustees. We would like to complete all by Memorial Day.



Outlook Academy



Join us as we celebrate and embrace 11 graduates from Outlook Academy with love and gifts, showcasing the compassion of Jesus Christ. Let's come together to shower these graduates with blessings and support as they embark on a new chapter in their lives. Your generosity will make a lasting impact on these young individuals as they transition into the next phase of their journey. Let's spread love, joy, and faith as we uplift and empower these graduates in the name of Christ.

4 girls and 7 boys make up the graduating class of 2025. MUMC Missions Committee are putting together graduation gift bags and snack boxes for each graduate. MUMC will be purchasing Bibles for each of them.

Each graduate will receive a "snack box". You are invited to add to the snack boxes with the snack of your choice!

Please join in this celebration by taking a tag from the bulletin board in fellowship hall and provide one or more of the following:

- Graduation Tumblers
- Socks
- Jolly Ranchers
- \$25 McDonalds gift card

Please fill the tags and bring to church no later than May 4, 2025.

\$\$. We will joyfully do the shopping if you would like to donate money! **\$\$**

About Outlook Academy: Outlook Academy offers Middle and High School education for students who are suspended, expelled, court-ordered, or placed through the IEP process. These students are often from broken homes, dysfunctional homes, or homes that lack parental guidance.

Outlook Academy Mission: To empower our students to reintegrate into their communities and graduate as competent learners and responsible citizens through having the freedom to make positive choices

Outlook Academy Believes: A safe, orderly, and positive environment is necessary for learning. Diversity is key to meeting the unique needs of all students. Community service builds belonging. The ability to self-monitor leads to healthy minds, bodies, and lifelong learning

WERE YOU MISSING THE CONNECTION? KEEP IT ALIVE!



Keeping Our Church Newsletter Alive: We Need Your Help!

Dear Church Family,

We believe our church newsletter is more than just a collection of announcements—it's a way to connect, inspire, and grow together as a community. But to keep it alive and thriving, we need your help! Here are some fun ways you can get involved and make our newsletter even better:

Share Your Stories - We want to hear from you! If you have a testimony, a story of faith, or an experience that inspired you, please consider sharing it with us. Your stories can uplift and encourage others in our congregation.

Submit Photos and Art - Have you captured moments from church events or activities? Or perhaps you've created a piece of art or a craft? Send those our way! Visuals add a vibrant touch and help us all feel connected.

Stay Involved - The newsletter is filled with opportunities for you to get involved. Whether it's volunteering for an upcoming event, joining a small group, or participating in community outreach, we want to help you connect with these opportunities. Make sure to check out our calls to action!

Give Us Feedback - We want to hear your thoughts! What do you enjoy reading? What would you like to see more of? Your feedback is invaluable in helping us create content that resonates with you.

Celebrate Together - Let's use the newsletter to celebrate our milestones—baptisms, confirmations, anniversaries, and other special moments in our church family. If you have something to celebrate, let us know, and we'll share it!

Together, we can keep our church newsletter vibrant and engaging. Your contributions and involvement are what make our community so special. Let's work together to create a newsletter that reflects the love and unity we share at the Martin and Shelbyville UMC's!

Blessings,

Pastor Maggie & Crystal

PALM SUNDAY

READ MARK 11:1-11 & REVELATION 7:9

- GO ON A FAMILY NATURE WALK AND SEARCH FOR BRANCHES. LET YOUR KIDS WAVE THEM IN THE AIR AND SHOUT "HOSANNA". TEACH THEM THAT HOSANNA MEANS, "PLEASE DELIVER US OR I BEG YOU TO SAVE US" DISCUSS HOW THE CROWDS ACKNOWLEDGED JESUS AS THE MESSIAH.
- RE-ENACT THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY AS A FAMILY. LET THE YOUNGEST FAMILY MEMBER RIDE ON DADS BACK AS JESUS ON THE DONKEY.
- TRACE HANDS ON PAPER AND COLOR THEM GREEN. WRITE DOWN REASONS TO PRAISE JESUS.

Bible Literacy
for parents and kids

HOLY MONDAY

READ MARK 11:12-25 & 1 CORINTHIANS 3:16

- AS A FAMILY DISCUSS WHY JESUS SAID, "MY HOUSE SHALL BE CALLED A HOUSE OF PRAYER FOR ALL THE NATIONS, BUT YOU MAKE IT A DEN OF ROBBERS."
- ACCORDING TO 1 CORINTHIANS 3:16 WE ARE NOW GODS TEMPLE AND HE DWELLS INSIDE US. WHAT NEEDS TO BE CLEANSED IN OUR TEMPLES?
- DRAW A HEART ON A PIECE OF PAPER AND WRITE DOWN THINGS THAT YOU NEED TO ASK GOD TO CLEAN UP. EXAMPLES: ANGER, BAD THOUGHTS, UNFORGIVENESS, PRIDE, SELFISHNESS, WORRY.

Bible Literacy
for parents and kids

HOLY TUESDAY

READ MARK 12:41-44

- AS A FAMILY DISCUSS THE WIDOW'S OFFERING
- THINK OF WAYS YOU AS A FAMILY CAN SECRETLY GIVE GENEROUSLY TO SOMEONE THIS WEEK.
- CONSIDER DROPPING OFF A EASTER LILY OR FERN ON SOMEONE'S DOORSTEP, A BAG OF CANDY, A NEW SPRING DOORMAT, OR EVEN A FUN EASTER BASKET FOR KIDS.

Bible Literacy
for parents and kids

HOLY WEDNESDAY

READ MARK 14: 3-9 & ROMANS 10:14-15

- PASS AROUND A BOTTLE OF PERFUME FOR YOUR KIDS TO SMELL. READ THE STORY OF JESUS BEING ANOINTED.
- JESUS SAYS THE WOMAN DID A BEAUTIFUL THING. HER ACT OF LOVE FOR JESUS WILL ALWAYS BE REMEMBERED.
- ROMANS 10: 14-15 TELLS US WHAT WE CAN DO THAT GOD SEES AS BEAUTIFUL -SHARING THE GOSPEL WITH OTHERS. PRAY FOR GOD TO LAY ONE PERSON ON YOUR HEART AND START ASKING GOD TO OPEN DOORS FOR YOU TO SHARE THE GOSPEL.

Bible Literacy
for parents and kids

MAUNDY THURSDAY

READ MARK 14:22-26 & JOHN 13:3-17, JOHN 13:34-35

- AS A FAMILY READ ABOUT THE LAST SUPPER. HAVE A PIECE OF BREAD AND GRAPE JUICE TO BREAK AND DRINK. READ THE SCRIPTURES AND DISCUSS THE MEANING.
- JUST AS JESUS WASHED HIS DISCIPLES FEET- PARENTS WASH YOUR KIDS FEET. WHILE WASHING THEIR FEET DISCUSS THAT "MAUNDY" IS LATIN FOR COMMAND. MAUNDY THURSDAY REFERS TO THE NEW COMMAND JESUS GAVE FOUND IN JOHN 13: 34-35 TO LOVE AND SERVE ONE ANOTHER.
- READ PHILIPPIANS 2:1-11

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GOOD FRIDAY

READ MARK 15:16-20, 33-39

- WHY IS SUCH A SAD DAY CALLED GOOD? BECAUSE WE KNOW THE END OF THE STORY! DEATH DOES NOT WIN!
- READ ROMANS 5:8 & 1 PETER 3:18
- IF YOUR CHILDREN ARE OLD ENOUGH WATCH THE PASSION OF CHRIST. IF THEY ARE LITTLE DRAW A RED DOT IN THE CENTER OF THEIR HAND AS A REMINDER OF WHAT JESUS DID ON THE CROSS.

Bible Literacy
for parents and kids

HOLY SATURDAY

READ MARK 15:46-47 & MATTHEW 27:62-66

- DISCUSS HOW THE TOMB WAS SECURELY GUARDED. PULL UP A PICTURE OF WHAT A TOMB WITH A LARGE STONE LOOKED LIKE
- CONSIDER HOW THE PEOPLE THAT LOVED JESUS FELT ON SATURDAY WHEN HE WAS "RESTING" IN THE TOMB.
- JOURNAL HOW GRATEFUL YOU ARE FOR THE SACRIFICE OF JESUS AND HIS PASSIONATE LOVE FOR US.

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RESURRECTION SUNDAY

READ MATTHEW 28:1-6, JOHN 20:11-18, JOHN 2:19-22, & 1 CORINTHIANS 15:20-22

- ATTEND CHURCH AS A FAMILY
- CELEBRATE AND THANK GOD FOR THE GIFT OF HIS SON JESUS-FOR HIS DEATH, BURIAL, & RESURRECTION
- WRITE OUT MATTHEW 28:18-20 AND ASK GOD DAILY TO USE YOU AND YOUR FAMILY TO SHARE THE GOOD NEWS OF JESUS CHRIST.

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Holy Week Schedule

April 13, 2025 - Palm Sunday
Martin UMC - Worship at 9:30 a.m.
Shelbyville UMC - Worship at 11:00 a.m.

April 17, 2025 – Maundy Thursday
Martin UMC – Worship at 7:00 p.m.

April 18, 2025 – Good Friday
Shelbyville UMC – Worship at 7:00 p.m.

April 20, 2025 – Easter
Martin UMC – Sunrise Worship at 7:00 a.m.
Martin UMC – Worship at 9:30 a.m.
Shelbyville UMC – Worship at 11:00 a.m.

*All services in person and
live on Facebook!*

Easter breakfast served at
8:00 a.m. – Martin UMC
All are welcome!

Martin & Shelbyville UMC Food Pantry is searching for a Food Pantry Coordinator

Please reach out to Pastor Maggie to discuss

Food Pantry Coordinator Volunteer Job Description:

Summary:

The Food Pantry Coordinator Volunteer is responsible for overseeing the operations and activities of the food pantry program. This individual will work closely with volunteers, church staff, and community members to ensure the effective and efficient distribution of food to those in need. Food Pantry Coordinator is a member of the Martin UMC Mission Committee.

Key Responsibilities:

- Coordinate and schedule volunteers to assist with food pantry operations, including stocking shelves, food pick up, sorting donations, and distributing food to clients.
- Oversee accurate record keeping of food inventory, donations, and client information.
 - Oversee that food pantry operations comply with health and safety regulations and guidelines.
- Complete weekly orders from partners for food stocking
- Communicate with community partners, donors, and volunteers to coordinate food drives, donations, and fundraising efforts.
- Collaborate with Missions Committee, staff and volunteers to plan and execute special events, such as holiday food drives or community outreach initiatives.
- Stay informed about food insecurity and hunger-related issues in the community and make recommendations for program improvements.
- Attend regular meetings with staff and volunteers to provide updates on food pantry activities, challenges, and successes.
- Uphold the values and mission of the organization while representing the food pantry program in a positive and professional manner.

Qualifications:

- Must have a strong desire to be the hands and feet of Jesus Christ
- Must love people, all people
- Strong organizational and communication skills
- Must be willing to delegate
- Ability to work effectively with diverse populations
- Knowledge of food pantry operations and procedures (training provided)
- Commitment to serving others with compassion and respect
- Safe Serve Certification Required (will train and schedule the right person for this certification)

Martin UMC Graduates

We will be honoring 2 (possibly 3) graduates at Martin UMC this year! We are excited for an opportunity to celebrate the accomplishments of these young women.

If you would like to help us to celebrate and to honor them, please feel free to pick up a gift or write a note to place in their “graduation gift bags.” Bags will be on the counter in the church office. Please bring gifts no later than May 25th, 2025

Thank you for help us to celebrate!

Dear Friends and Family,

We want to take a moment to express our heartfelt gratitude to each and every one of you who have been praying for Jumbo and me during this time. Your love and support mean the world to us.

Thank you for the delicious meals, thoughtful cards, and encouraging words. Each gesture has brought us comfort and strength when we needed it most. We are truly blessed to have such wonderful people in our lives.

With all our love,
Pastor Maggie and Jim Stoken



Being the Hands and Feet of Jesus Through Volunteering

Volunteering is a fantastic way to live out the teachings of Jesus and make a real difference in our communities. It's about being the “hands and feet” of Christ—serving others and sharing love wherever we can.

Jesus showed us what it means to serve. He washed His disciples' feet, fed the hungry, and cared for the marginalized. When He said, "Whatever you did for the least of these, you did for me," He highlighted the importance of helping those in need.

Volunteering can take many forms, whether it's working at a food pantry, mentoring kids, or helping at a homeless shelter, volunteering at church, leading a small group, leading a Bible study, teaching Sunday school, or working at VBS (just to name a few). Each small act of service reflects Christ's love and can inspire others to join in!

Plus, volunteering helps build community. When we come together to help others, we form connections and support one another. It's a great way to grow in faith and make friends along the way.

And let's not forget the personal rewards! Serving others teaches us new skills, helps us empathize with different experiences, and gives us a deeper appreciation for what we have. The joy it brings when we do it for the right reasons is indescribable! It is a blessing to be a blessing.

In a world that can feel heavy, being the hands and feet of Jesus through volunteering offers hope and joy. So, let's get out there and make a positive impact—one small act of kindness at a time!

Blessings, Pastor Maggie