

THE PASTOR'S MESSAGE

There Is a Way

"You know the way to where I am going."

"Lord," Thomas said, "we don't know where you're going. How can we know the way?"

Jesus told him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." (John 14:4-6 CSB)

Thomas speaks up after hearing that Jesus is going away. He is not so sure about this: *How can we know the way?* Jesus answers Thomas' confusion about destination and route with the sixth of his seven "I Am" sayings in John's gospel. Let's review these sayings.

The first one comes after the feeding of the five thousand. *"I am the bread of life," Jesus told them. No one who comes to me will ever be hungry, and no one who believes in me will ever be thirsty again. (6:35; see also 6:41, 38, & 51)*

The second one comes in the midst of the candle-lighting celebration as a part of the Feast of Booths. *Jesus spoke to them again: I am the light of the world. Anyone who follows me will never walk in the darkness but will have the light of life." (8:12; also 9:5)*

The third and fourth ones come after a great dispute concerning his healing of an adult man who had been born blind. The lingering question is whether the religious leaders are willing to believe in Jesus. *Jesus said again, "Truly I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. ... I have come so that they may have life and have it in abundance. (10:7, 10b) I am the good shepherd. I know my own, and my own know me, just as the Father knows me, and I know the Father. I lay down my life for the sheep. (10:14-15)*

The fifth one comes before the familiar story of the raising of Lazarus from the dead. *Jesus said to [Martha], "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me, even if he dies, he will live. (11:25) And he adds, Do you believe this? (11:26b)*

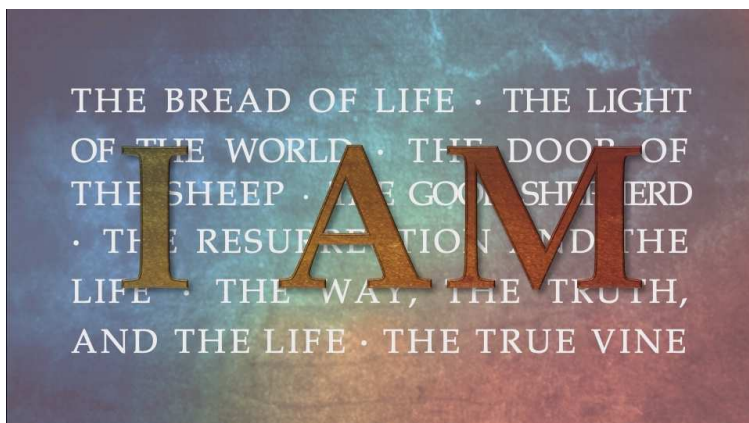
The well-known sixth one listed above, *"I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me (14:6).*

The seventh one presupposes a faith-filled response to the first six. As he instructs his disciples about the coming Holy Spirit, he interjects this teaching about the spiritual union between Christ the Mediator and his redeemed people. *"I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. ... Remain in me, and I in you. Just as a branch is unable to produce fruit by itself unless it remains on the vine, neither can you unless you remain in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. The one who remains in me and I in him produces much fruit, because you can do nothing without me. ... If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you want and it will be done for you. My Father is glorified by this: that you produce much fruit and prove to be my disciples." (from John 15:1-8) "Abide in me," says Jesus. The apostle Paul would sum up this message of union with Christ in two words we find sprinkled throughout his letters: *in Christ.**

All of these "I Am" sayings show how Jesus fulfills all the Old Testament promises. He is the true spiritual manna. He is the light that overcomes our spiritual darkness. Jesus is in himself that door onto the narrow road that leads to life. He is the actual shepherd of the twenty-third psalm in the flesh. He has the power of life in his very person and words. And in the upper room he describes himself further. He is the end of the spiritual quest! He is the road that leads to God the Father. He is the fulfillment of all the Old Testament teaching, revealing God to us. And within him is life itself and life eternal to all who believe in him.

We live in a culture that finds Jesus' claims offensive. But they had already found Jesus offensive after his first "I Am" statement! (See 6:61.) *From that moment many of his disciples turned back and no longer accompanied him. So Jesus said to the Twelve, "You don't want to go away too, do you?" Simon Peter answered, "Lord, to whom will we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and know that you are the Holy One of God." (John 6:66-69) What about you?*

Thankful for the Great I Am,
Pastor Josh





SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
						1 B-day: Chonda Griffith
2 Palm Sunday Sunday School: 9:30am Worship: 11am (in the sanctuary and via Zoom)	3 Game/Fellowship Time: 9:30am	4 WM Circle Study: 9:30am or 6:45pm	5 No Wednesday Events B-day: Billy Symon, Sr B-day: Meredith (Mackin) Cole	6 Maundy Thursday Communion Service: 6pm	7 Good Friday	8 Community Easter Egg Hunt: 9am (at Foscue Park) B-day: Isabella Dukes Anniv: TJ & Cindy Keasler
9 Easter Sunday Sunrise Service: 6am Sunday School: 9:30am Worship: 11am (in the sanctuary and via Zoom)	10 Game/Fellowship Time: 9:30am	11 WM Circle Study: 9:30am or 6:45pm	12 Dessert Fellowship: 6pm Study/Prayer: 6:15pm	13	14 B-day: Kelly McClure	15 B-day: Bess Weltin
16 Sunday School: 9:30am Worship: 11am (in the sanctuary and via Zoom) Fellowship Potluck	17 Game/Fellowship Time: 9:30am B-day: Chaney Rimes	18 Presbytery Meeting (at FPC Demopolis) B-day: Talon Rimes	19 Dessert Fellowship: 6pm Study/Prayer: 6:15pm	20	21	22
23 Sunday School: 9:30am Worship: 11am (in the sanctuary and via Zoom) Wedding Shower: 2-3:30 pm for Mary Hoffman	24	25	26	27 B-day: Emily Mackin	28	29
30 Deacons Fund Special Offering						

UPCOMING EVENTS FOR APRIL

DEACONS OF THE MONTH: David Coddington and Ray Evans

FOOD MINISTRY LEADER OF THE MONTH: Katy Basinger

RECURRING WEEKLY EVENTS:

- Sunday School at 9:30 am.
- Sunday Worship at 11:00 am, in the sanctuary and via Zoom.
- Monday, Game/Fellowship Time, 9:30 am in the Fellowship Hall.
- Wednesday, Dessert Fellowship and Bible Study/Prayer Time. Dessert fellowship at 6:00 pm and study with prayer time at 6:15pm.

<u>2023</u>	<u>FEBRUARY</u>	<u>2023 YTD</u>
Gen. Fund Contributions	\$ 7,580.36	\$ 16,511.86
Gen. Fund Expenses	\$ 8,534.14	\$ 24,592.68
Net Gain (Loss)	\$ (953.78)	\$ (8,080.82)
<u>2022</u>	<u>FEBRUARY</u>	<u>2022 YTD</u>
Gen. Fund Contributions	\$ 5,239.00	\$ 14,407.00
Gen. Fund Expenses	\$ 6,931.21	\$ 16,582.38
Net Gain (Loss)	\$ (1,692.21)	\$ (2,175.38)

FEBRUARY AVERAGE ATTENDANCE: 38

DEACONS: Glenn Basinger, David Coddington, Mike Cork, and Ray Evans

APRIL EVENTS

April 2: Palm Sunday.

April 5: No Wednesday Evening Events.

April 6: Maundy Thursday Communion Service, 6:00 pm.

April 7: Good Friday.

April 8: Community Easter Egg Hunt, 9:00 am, at Foscue Park.

April 9: Easter Sunday.

- Easter Sunrise Service, 6:00 am, at Spillway Falls - Lower Pool (Foscue Park).
- Sunday School, as regularly scheduled.
- Worship Service, as regularly scheduled.

April 16: Monthly Fellowship Potluck. Setup/Clean-up Committee: Lashley and Cannon families and Thelma Brown.

April 18: Warrior Presbytery Meeting. Our church will host this meeting and will provide refreshments and lunch for all participants. For more information, please contact Scott Kirkpatrick.

April 23: Wedding Shower, 2:00 to 3:30 pm for Mary Hoffman in the Fellowship Hall

April 30: Deacons Fund Special Offering.



IT'S TIME TO CELEBRATE!

We are happy to announce the upcoming wedding of Mary Hoffman and Kris Harbin who will be united together on Saturday, May 13, 2023.

A Wedding Shower in honor of Mary and Kris will be held on Sunday, April 23rd, 2:00 to 3:30 pm, in the Fellowship Hall.

A church-wide potluck will be held on Sunday, June 18th to celebrate their marriage. Please join us!



HAVE YOU TALKED TO GOD TODAY?

APRIL 2023

PLEASE PRAY FOR OUR FAITH PROMISE MISSIONARIES

Robert & Lisa Stewart	Mission to the World — Japan
Andy & Bev Warren	Mission to the World — Ethiopia
Doug McNutt	Trinity Center for World Missions — Central Africa
Aaron & Leticia Zapata	Mission to North America — Mexico
Jimmy & Nadia Dukes	Reformed Evangelistic Fellowship — Peru
Joy Ayabe	Wycliffe Bible Translators — Papua New Guinea
Clete Hux	Apologetics Resource Center — Birmingham, AL
Jonah & Jennifer	Frontiers — Undisclosed Muslim Country
General Support	The Lighthouse Women's Center — Demopolis, AL
General Support	Palmer Home for Children — Hernando, MS
Chaplain Ministry	Presbyterian and Reformed Commission on Chaplains and Military Personnel (PRCC)

HOOKED ON PRAYER (HOP):

Abrams, Riddell	Hocker, Jeannie
Acton, Beth	Hoggle, Judy
Allinder, Kate	Huizenga, Fran
Bazuin, Caiden	Hux, Karen
Beale, Amy	Ivy, Kendall
Beard, Ronnie	Jennifer (Missionary)
Beeler, Peggy	Lane, Barbara
Belcher, Samuel	Lawson, Connie
Brantley, Maggie	Ligon, Brandon
Bridges, Ida Lee	Mackin, Jimmy
Brooker, Chrissy	Mader, Rebecca
Brooker, Jan	McIntier, Jodie
Brown, Walt	Morgan, Laura
Busby, Rhae	Morris, Seth
Butler, Douglas	Mutisya, Cecilia
Bynum, Linda	Parr, Higley
Cooper, Clarence	Phillips, Ronnie
Craig, Noah	Plummer, Kaegan
Curry, Walter	Renner, Elizabeth
Davidson, Karen	Reynolds, Christy
DeWitt, Robert	Sakon, Ethan
Duncan, Conner	Sharp, Chris
Dyer, Doug	Sims, Anna Katherine
Emerson, Saundra	Telmont, Jose
Espy, Emily	Thornton, Alaina
Farst, Sharon	Tipton, Carolyn
Finley, Betty	Tulipan, Amelia
Graffeo, Anthony	Tulipan, Hansen
Hall, Jimmy	Turner, Becky
Hart, Sarah Elizabeth	VanderMolen, Popko
Haubert, Chloe Belle	Womble, Caleb
Hayes, Betsy	Zimmerman, Steve
Headley, David	

If you have a heart to pray for the critically, chronically or terminally ill, HOP needs you.

**Can you pray?
WE NEED YOU!**

**Can you knit or crochet?
WE NEED YOU!**

**Can you write note cards?
WE NEED YOU!**

HOP is a prayer shawl ministry. We give shawls, throws, or blankets to the critically, chronically, or terminally ill to let them know we are praying for them. You do not need to know how to knit or crochet to be involved.

Any monetary gifts or donations of supplies, yarn, note cards and/or postage is greatly appreciated.

Please contact Eloise Harris or Joy Mackin for more information on how you can get involved.



OTHER PRAYER REQUESTS

Cancer:

Luke (Jonah's son)
Scott Kirkpatrick
Jimmy Mackin
Rick Wilson
Kendall Ivy
Jimmy Hall

Illness:

Laura Morgan
Neal Bules
David Headley
Linda Dunning

Special Needs:

The Hutton Family
Sharon Farst

Other Needs:

Christina & Danny Addison
Abigayle Kircharr
Harry Jeong

Military Personnel:

Chaplain William Broderick
Sam Brasfield
Steven Mackin
Victor Resto
Joseph Wilson
Josh Tyson
Blake Ivy
Austin Griffith
Kaleb Brown

If you know anyone who needs to be added or taken off any of these lists, please provide Ann Resto with the information to keep the prayer lists current.