

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

As I write this short article, all of us have been informed that Vladimir Putin and Russia have invaded Ukraine. It is yet unclear what the full meaning of this reckless and murderous act may be, but pray for peace in this world. We should not be surprised when this kind of immoral action is taken by some of the world's leaders. Some may be emboldened by Putin's decisions, but Christians should be sad, angry and praying for peace.

I have been walking through I Peter in a preaching series and in the context of horrible government in the 1st century under the evil control of emperors like Nero, the Apostle Peter tries to reassure the Church that God is in control. Peter also reminds us that this earth is not our home. The Devil (Satan) is allowed by God to have influence and power in the world. And because Evil is in charge bad things happen to good people. Here is a reminder of what we have been studying as a faith community. Peter is addressing the Church (those who have placed their faith in Jesus as Savior).

I Peter 2:9-12 ESV ⁹But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. ¹⁰Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. ¹¹Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul. ¹²Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation.

In this world that is passing away, it is easy to focus on the physical and what we might experience through our senses. As horrible as physical war can be (and we need to pray for all the people involved), there is another war we are involved with even now, and really until Jesus returns for the Church when He will sit in court to conduct a judgment of "everyone." This spiritual war between good and evil is currently waging and our weapons are described in spiritual terms.

Ephesians 6:10-18 ESV ¹⁰Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. ¹¹Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. ¹²For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. ¹³Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. ¹⁴Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, ¹⁵and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. ¹⁶In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; ¹⁷and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, ¹⁸praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints.

I am convinced that Paul is correct that our struggle is not against flesh and blood. I am also convinced that what is called “Armageddon” in the *Revelation* is not some future physical battle, but a current and on-going war against the spiritual forces of evil. There are people who follow the Devil and there are others who follow Jesus. My neighbor is not the enemy; we are to love our neighbors.

I am pleading with those who follow Jesus to actively enter this conflict against the forces of evil. And at the end of our days when we face the Ancient of Days, we can truly say we were involved and not sitting by while the Devil was actively trying to destroy God’s good creation, that we were not absent from Church and encouraging our fellow soldiers in this war.

Lord willing, we can repeat the Apostle Paul’s words when we get to the end: **II Timothy 4:7-8 ESV**
⁷ I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. ⁸ Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing.

For those of us who are actively in the fight, don’t lose heart, but persevere. For those back in the barracks waiting, the time is now! We need everyone helping and supporting each other.

Blessings,

Gary

P.S. Hope to see everyone at the “Special Congregational Meeting” when I and the Elders will be talking about “battle plans.” This meeting is to be held about 11:00am right after morning worship on March 13th.

Stewardship Statistics							Total Money And Average Attendance
	1/30/22	2/06/22	2/13/22	2/20/22			
Attendance for in-person services.	36	41	42	52			43
General Fund	\$1845.00	\$2984.00	\$1664.00	\$1373.00			\$7866.00
Weekly Budget	\$2464.71	\$2464.71	\$2464.71	\$2464.71			\$9858.84
+ or— Budget	(\$619.71)	\$519.29	(\$800.71)	(\$1091.71)			(\$1992.84)
Designated Giving							
Birthday Money		\$55.00					\$55.00
Kay Tolles Memorial	\$780.00	\$100.00					\$880.00
Food Bank							
Total Giving's	\$2625.00	\$3139.00	\$1664.00	\$1373.00			\$8801.00

<p>Prayer List</p> <p>U.S. government leaders Krause's-Philippines Duane Rupe (stroke/prostate) Doris Rothenbuhler (cancer treatments) Shelly Sharp (friend of Peggy's/cancer) Norm Murphy (home with health issues) Jim Fouts (lung cancer) Erin Cooper (Stage 4 cancer) Janet Riesenbeck (prayers for health) Jeremy Prowant (prayers for health) Grace Barnes - 4 yr. old (cancer treatments) Kim Huffman (cancer/pain) Darryl Krause Becky Repasz (health issues) Larry Frost (doing better) Family of Alex DePue (killed in an auto accident in Mexico) Tammy Kuzio (cancer) Family of Doug Conkey Family of the Mother of Diana Sinoras Sue Mazey (recovery from gall bladder surgery) Family of Phil Higley (Lee's brother)</p>	<p>Prayer list continued</p> <p>Kevin Roe (recovering from pneumonia and blood infection) John McKenzie - Botox treatments started for facial neuralgia Bill Dennis (cancer returned)</p>	<p>Remember our Shut-ins</p> <p>Tom & Mary Ann Hillier - B. G. Manor Rose Mary Gensen - Arbors of Oregon Rick Bruielly - Wood Haven</p>
		<p>Those in Service</p> <p>Lt. Col. Elijah Ward – Korea Ron Burkhardt - Stateside Jon Walker - 180th TFW Active duty Michelle Metzger - Army Nat'l Guard Daryl Trail - U.S. Navy Luke Millican - USAF Walker Polsinelli - Pakistan</p>

- “Faith is the first factor in a life devoted to service. Without it, nothing is possible. With it, nothing is impossible.”
—Mary McLeod Bethune

- “I alone cannot change the world, but I can cast a stone across the waters to create many ripples.”
—Mother Teresa

- “Better to do something imperfectly than to do nothing flawlessly.”
—Robert Schuller



BOARD MEETING
Tuesday, March 1st
7:30pm

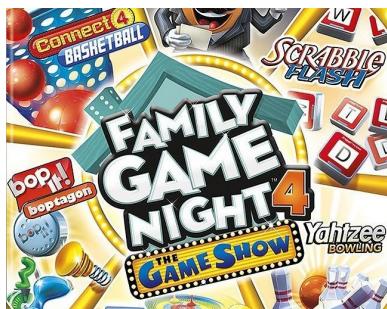
**SMALL GROUP BIBLE STUDY
WEDNESDAYS AT 7:00PM
AT THE PARSONAGE**

We are at lesson 5 in the study
“Intentional Choices: Discovering
Contentment in Stressful Times”.



**2 Fridays
March 11th and 25th
6:30-9:00pm**

Bring food to share. Games are provided.



Food Pantry Open

2 Saturdays

March 5th and 19th

10:00am - Noon

Thanks for helping!

March Sermons

March 6	The Model of a Godly Woman	1 Peter 3:1-7
March 13	How to Live the Christian Life	1 Peter 3:8-22
March 20	Gentleness	1 Peter 3:15-16
March 27	An Apology for the Gospel	1 Peter 3:15-22

Sunday, March 13th, 11:00 am

Special Congregational Meeting and Luncheon

You need not bring anything for the luncheon. Together, we can determine the next steps and an agreed-upon plan for moving through the rest of 2022. Everyone is needed, so please make it a priority to attend. Members should have received a letter from Gary and the Elders explaining more. See you on the 13th!

Facing Life's Giants

During the NCAA basketball tournaments, many fans enjoy rooting for an underdog, hoping a Cinderella story will emerge. First-round March Madness matchups often are billed as David vs. Goliath events, with perennial powerhouses facing off against little-known schools.

Underdogs play key roles in the Bible: Moses takes on Pharaoh's army, Daniel defies a king and David squares off against an actual giant. Being an underdog didn't faze David, who knew the source of his strength: "For the battle is the Lord's," he says in 1 Samuel 17:47. What assurance as we battle life's "giants"!

In *Goliath Must Fall*, Louie Giglio writes, "Our giants keep taunting us, so we need to hold God at his word: that he is already victorious." Instead of "staring at our giant," we must "lock eyes with Jesus" and remember that "life is short and God is big." With bold hearts, adds Giglio, we can worship with "holy urgency" while giants fall.

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An Ancient Prayer

Lord Jesus, think on me
and purge away my sin.
From earthborn passions set me free
and make me pure within.

Lord Jesus, think on me,
that when the flood is past,
I may th' eternal brightness see
and share your joy at last.

—Synesius of Cyrene (4th century)



40—In Scripture, this number often indicates a time of trial or testing, or simply marks significance. It rained 40 days and nights during the Flood. Israel wandered in the wilderness for 40 years. Jesus fasted for 40 days and was with the disciples for 40 days between his resurrection and ascension. The Christian church has long observed 40 days of Lent (not counting Sundays).

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The Power of Let

I once crafted a trendy sign that read “Make it happen.” It reminded my high-achieving self to take the bull by the horns and work hard. Though that message isn’t necessarily harmful, I’ve come to appreciate a different approach.

On her podcast *The Next Right Thing*, Emily P. Freeman shared the concept of “Let it count.” She decided to trade out the word *make*, which implies forceful effort and control, for the word *let*, which is surprisingly more powerful. Consider Colossians 3:15, which begins, “*Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts*” (NIV, emphasis added). *Let* involves an intentional decision to set aside my selfish desires to *make* and to allow God’s way and will to play out instead. When we *let* Christ’s peace rule, we can truly “let go and let God,” relinquishing control to the One who ultimately holds it.

Although I still have my sign, now it’s a reminder to let God and his peace happen — and to let him take the reins of my days and my life.

—Janna Firestone

Wounded Healers

“Nobody escapes being wounded,” writes Henri Nouwen. “We all are wounded people, whether physically, emotionally, mentally or spiritually. The main question is not ‘How can we hide our wounds?’ so we don’t have to be embarrassed, but ‘How can we put our woundedness in the service of others?’ When our wounds cease to be a source of shame, and become a source of healing, we have become wounded healers.”

He continues, “Jesus is God’s wounded healer: through his wounds we are healed. Jesus’ suffering and death brought joy and life. His humiliation brought glory; his rejection brought a community of love. As followers of Jesus, we can also allow our wounds to bring healing to others.”

How might viewing Jesus as a wounded healer affect your relationship with him? What roles have wounds and healing played in your own faith life? How can you minister to other people from a place of brokenness?

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March 6 - Mission Moment

Training Christians for Ministry

TCM International develops Christian leaders for significant service through higher learning. The vision is that every nation will have effective leaders of disciple-making movements impacting their churches, cultures, and countries for Christ.



Our Stain Remover

From sanitizers and soaps to solutions and sprays, many products promise to eliminate germs and grime. Unfortunately, they often fall short. Just think how many items in your closet or kitchen have been ruined by stubborn stains.

What if we were that concerned about ridding our lives and hearts of sin? What if we spent as much time confessing and repenting as scrubbing and laundering? The good news is that with one “application” (the cross), Jesus makes us “whiter than snow” (Psalm 51:7). Praise be to our unblemished Lamb, the perfect stain remover!

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Jesus Has Gone There First

Whether we gaze with longing into the garden or with fear and trembling into the desert, of this we can be sure — God walked there first! And when we who have sinned and despoiled the garden are challenged now to face the desert, we do not face it alone; Jesus has gone there before us to struggle with every demon that has ever plagued a human heart. Face the desert we must if we would reach the garden, but Jesus has gone there before us.



—James Healy

A Prayer for Lent



This year, Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent, falls on March 2. During worship services that day, pastors in many Christian churches dip a finger in ashes (often made by burning branches from the previous Palm Sunday) and make a cross on parishioners' foreheads.

Why ashes? Traditionally, they're a sign of mourning, humiliation and penitence. Ashes also represent the frailty and temporary nature of human life ("You are dust, and to dust you shall return," Genesis 3:19). Christians are pained because our sins led to Jesus' death. With repentant hearts, we begin the season of Lent, knowing that it leads to Jesus' resurrection on Easter Sunday.

For Ash Wednesday — and throughout the 40 days of Lent — ponder this prayer from an Italian sacramentary, or liturgical book: "O God, you know how fragile is our human nature, wounded as it is by sin. Help your people to enter upon the Lenten journey strengthened by the power of your word, so that we may be victorious over the seduction of the Evil One and reach the paschal feast in the joy of the Holy Spirit."

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Complete Serenity

Many of us have heard the first part of what's called "The Serenity Prayer," attributed to theologian Reinhold Niebuhr. But we would do well to learn the rest of it as well:

"God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference, living one day at a time; enjoying one moment at a time; taking this world as it is and not as I would have it; trusting that you will make all things right if I surrender to your will; so that I may be reasonably happy in this life and supremely happy with You forever in the next. Amen."

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Puzzle!

Complete the Scripture verses (NIV, unless marked) using letters found in the words



See! The winter is ____; the rains are over and gone. Flowers appear on the earth; the season of singing has come. (Song of Solomon 2:11-12)

"Therefore, if your whole body is full of light, and no part of it ____, it will be just as full of light as when a lamp shines its light on you." (Luke 11:36)

When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the _____, which you have set in place, what is mankind that you are mindful of them ... ? (Psalm 8:3-4)

We all, like sheep, have gone _____, each of us has turned to our own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. (Isaiah 53:6)

So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the _____ and members of the household of God. (Ephesians 2:19, ESV)

Answer: past, dark, stars, setey, salts

Thank you for allowing me to speak during your worship service! It was a wonderful morning filled with warm welcomes. We are so grateful for the support and encouragement we receive from Weston Church of Christ!



God Bless, Angel Henry
Bowling Green Pregnancy Center

Mary's Yes Calls Us to Love

On March 25, we remember the Annunciation, when the angel Gabriel visits Mary to tell her she is to bear the Son of God, and she says yes.

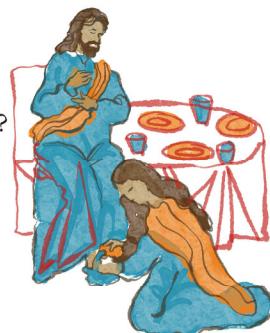
In *Wholehearted Faith*, Rachel Held Evans writes: "I am a Christian not because of anything I've done but because a teenage girl living in occupied Palestine at one of the most dangerous moments in history said yes — yes to God, yes to a wholehearted call she could not possibly understand ... yes to a vision for herself and her little boy of a mission that would bring down rulers and lift up the humble, that would turn away the rich and fill the hungry with good things, that would scatter the proud and gather the lowly, yes to a life that came with no guarantee of her safety or her son's. ... And through Mary's example, God invites us to take the risk of love."

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Bible Quiz

All four Gospels tell of a woman anointing Jesus. Details vary; clearly, she isn't the same person in all accounts. In John, who is she?

- A. Jesus' mother, Mary
- B. Mary Magdalene
- C. Mary of Bethany (sister of Martha and Lazarus)
- D. None of the above



John 12:1-8.)
Answer: C (See Matthew 26:6-13; Mark 14:3-9; Luke 7:36-39.)

An illustration of a bar of soap. The word "SOAP" is printed in large, bold, sans-serif letters across the center of the bar. Above the bar, there is a decorative flourish or scrollwork design.

Answer: blot, wash, cleanse, wash, hide, blot, create, renew, restore, great



9	Kristin Foster	17	Anthony Soto
9	Harleigh Foster	20	Pat Higley
10	Beverly Murphy	23	Robert Tolles, Jr.
11	Krista Saylor	26	Sandy Miller
13	Garry Lehman	31	Nicole Spoerl
16	Sherry Phillips		

2 Garry & Deb Lehman
12 Larry & Nancy Frost
15 Jerry & Nancy Snyder



MARCH 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 7:30pm Board Meeting	2 First Day of Lent  7:00pm Small Group	3 7:00pm Let It Rise Band Practice	4	5 FOOD PANTRY 10AM - NOON 
6 9:30am Worship Fellowship Break Adult S.S. Mission Moment: TCM/Ed Tolles	7 6:00pm Elders Meeting	8	9 7:00pm Small Group	10 7:00pm Let It Rise Band Practice	11  6:30-9:00PM GAME NIGHT	12
13 Daylight Savings Time begins 9:30am Worship 11:00am Special Congregational Meeting and Luncheon	14	15	16 7:00pm Small Group	17  7:00pm Let It Rise Band Practice	18	19 FOOD PANTRY 10AM - NOON  Feeding the Community
20 9:30am Worship 11:00am Adult S.S.	21	22	23 7:00pm Small Group	24 7:00pm Let It Rise Band Practice	25  6:30-9:00PM GAME NIGHT	26
27 9:30am Worship 11:00am Adult S.S.	28 7:00pm LCF	29 April news articles due	30 7:00pm Small Group	31 7:00pm Let It Rise Band Practice		

“Trust in God. He will see you through; glorify His Name in 2022!”

Weston Church of Christ
PO Box 344
13355 Center Street
Weston, Ohio 43569



April newsletter articles due Tuesday, March 29

Sunday Worship Times

9:30am Worship Service

10:45am Sunday School



Weston Witness

Minister: Gary L. Wackler, 336-280-5311

Elders: Ed Tolles, 419-409-1622;

John McKenzie, 419-806-5775

Bob Walker, 419-262-8006

March 2022

Pat Higley, Editor

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Website: westonchurchofchrist.org

Check us out on Facebook

**The purpose of the Weston Church of Christ is to glorify God by reaching the lost,
strengthening the saved and serving as one body for Jesus Christ our Lord.**