

Circuit Writer

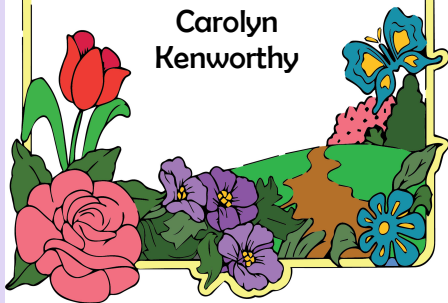
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April Showers

The sky shed tears of joy
today.
They huddle in puddles
So little feet can jump and
splash.

Carolyn
Kenworthy



- Solar Eclipse - April 8
- Coffee & Chat - April 11
- Tax Day - April 15
- United Methodist Women Meeting - April 16
- Church Council Meeting - April 21
- National Arbor Day - April 26

Blountstown United Methodist Church

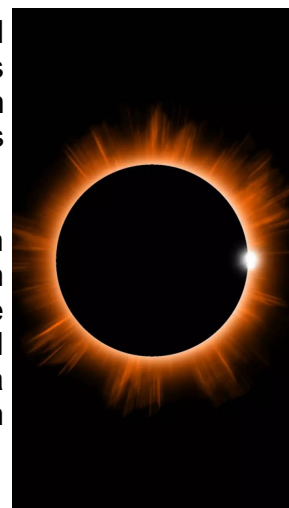
Superimposed Love

Maybe you've heard how salvation is like a total solar eclipses: God doesn't see our sins because Jesus' holiness covers them completely. Or maybe you've heard how trials can cause an "eclipse of faith."

At WorldChallenge.org, Pastor Gary Wilkerson explains that in Greek, eclipse means "I am absent" or "I cease to exist," because people once thought the gods temporarily extinguished the sun. "For Christians, a 'spiritual eclipse' is a dark hour when God seems to be absent from our lives," Wilkerson writes.

Wilkerson points to Peter being sifted like wheat, Elijah and Jeremiah facing extreme discouragement, and David collapsing morally. Amid Satan's attacks, "God seems completely absent," writes the pastor. "in that dark moment of eclipse, the devil has created such chaos we can't possibly see a way out." During times of testing, Christians must cry out to God and trust his faithfulness.

Completing the eclipse analogy, Wilkerson shares Titus 3:4, the "love of God our Savior appeared" (NIV). The Greek meaning of *appeared* here is *superimposed*, he writes. God looks on our fraught-filled times of eclipse and "superimposed his divine love over us."



2024 Total Eclipse

On Monday, April 8, a partial eclipse will be visible throughout all 48 contiguous U.S. states. The total solar eclipse will be visible along a narrow track stretching from Texas to Maine. More information may be found at science.nasa.gov/eclipse.



Luke 20:23-26

²³ He saw through their duplicity and said to them,

²⁴ “Show me a denarius.

Whose image and inscription are on it?”

“Caesar’s,” they replied.

²⁵ He said to them, “Then give back to Caesar what is Caesar’s, and to God what is God’s.”

²⁶ They were unable to trap him in what he had said there in public. And astonished by his answer, they became silent.

Tax time is tough, always has been. Questions about paying taxes have been with us from time immemorial. In the last week of Jesus’ life, the Herodians, the political party that favored Roman occupation of the Jews, came to Jesus with a question. “Is it right to pay the imperial tax to Caesar or not? Should we pay, or shouldn’t we? Jesus recognized the plot. “Show me a coin. Whose image is on it?” When they responded, Caesar, Jesus simply replied, “Give to Caesar what belongs to him and to God what belongs to God.” Earlier, when Jesus and his disciples were criticized for not paying the temple tax that supported the maintenance and work of the temple, Jesus told Peter to go fishing. When he caught a fish, Peter was to open its mouth, take the coins from it and pay the temple tax.

As Christians and citizens, we are to support both the civil governments and the religious entities that give us purpose, protection and direction. As Americans we have the unique belief that our rights and freedoms are from natural law. That natural law comes from God and does not flow from our government. Our government derives its power from us, the citizens, not vice versa. Our rights and freedoms are not to be infringed upon by any governmental agency. Our freedoms come from our God who has created us in His image, adopted us into His family and called us into His service. We belong to our Heavenly Father. We do have the direct instruction and distinct obligation to pray for our governmental leaders

Our nation is clouded with confusion and beset with division, bitterness and hatred. The cracks in our social foundation began a few generations ago, when we began to ignore the idea that our rights are from God, and we, the citizens, have little or no responsibility or obligation to shore up the foundations upon which our nation is built. Because of our lack of attention, our foundation has weakened to the point that it is beginning to crumble.

As surely as our obligation is to pay our taxes on April 15, and we will not forget that deadline, we must recognize and meet our obligation to remember and defend our natural rights, to maintain our commitment to our Creator and to cherish the blessings that have come to us through the natural rights granted us as American citizens. It is our duty to pray our leaders that they uphold and defend what is honorable, just, moral and righteous. Equally, it is our duty to pray that they be held accountable for allowing that which is unjust, immoral, unrighteous and unlawful to flourish and expand. Jesus had called us to be the light of the world, and to let our lights shine so others can see our good works and glorify our Heavenly Father. Dust off your light bulbs, make sure your batteries are charged. Our nation needs our light.

Brother John King



Mighty Metaphor Machine

While moving to a new parish, Rev. Watt A. Hardworker lost his metaphor machine. His friend, Rev. Hesa Goodpastor, wondered how Watt could preach without metaphors. Another pal, Rev. Blooming where I.M. At, remarked, "There isn't enough skill in all of us clergy to preach week after week without some metaphors! The 'Old, Old Story' has been told so often that people tune it out without metaphors to help them hear it afresh." He suggested organizing a metaphor collection to sustain Watt.

Hesa was open to the idea but worried that, with Easter approaching, Watt would be at a total loss. "What a catastrophe, especially starting out in a new church," said Bloomingwhere. "How can the poor pastor possibly preach Easter without any metaphors?"

Hesa added, "No 'butterflies emerging from the cocoon,' no 'awakening of daffodil bulbs after the long winter,' no 'flight of the Phoenix,' no 'resurrection as an image for a fresh start.'"

"He'll be left with nothing to say but that Jesus arose from the grave," Bloom exclaimed. "Just imagine!"



Keep on Shining

Charles W. Naylor (1874-1950) was a traveling evangelist until misfortune struck. First a tent-pole fell on him as he prepared for a meeting. A year later, a bus accident left him partially paralyzed.

Despite experiencing chronic pain, Naylor became a prolific author and hymnist, dictating almost 150 songs. He often wrote about God's loving care and adversity. One of his hymns begins:

When the winds of persecution blow,
When the streams of hatred tow'rd you flow,
When your foes in number seem to grow,
Just keep on shining.

"God's comfort in our times of sorrow is not an imaginary thing," Naylor wrote. "It can be so real that it is a balm for our wounded spirits. Having passed through the experience more than once, [I know] how real and vital and sustaining the comfort of God can be."

When it Rains

The skeleton flower, a perennial native to Japan, has delicate petals that change from opaque white to almost transparent when wet. After it rains, only the flower's intricate, skeleton-like veins are visible.



When the rains come (and they will!) in our lives, the same can be said. Amid difficulty and struggles, our true selves often become more transparent. During a parenting challenge, criticism might emerge. Or while we tackle a tough work project, impatience might rear its ugly head.

Hosea 6:3 (NIV) proclaims: "Oh, that we might know the Lord! Let us press on to know him. He will respond to us as surely as the arrival of dawn of the coming of rains in early spring." the rains will come. Whether you're experiencing light rain or a downpour, ponder what the water reveals. Then ask God how you can be more open to his work in that area.

— Janna Firestone

APRIL

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Communion Donna Corbin Offering One Great Hour of Sharing	1 🎵 April McCaskill	2	3	4	5 🎵 Mary Catherine Hayes	6 🎵 Christina Sheppead Futrell
7 🎵 Alton Carpenter	8	9	10	11 Sister Friends' Study 10:00 am	12 🎵 Finlay Corbin	13
14	15 🎵 Kristopher Jordan	16 UM Women 10:00 am	17	18	19 🎵 Andrew Bennett	20
21 Church Council 12 Noon	22 🎵 Jared Weiler 🎵 Norma Failes	23 🎵 Jerry Register	24 ♥ Sally & Mike Mayo	25	26	27
28	29 🎵 Alva Martin	30	Ushers Russell Scholz David Murrell Standby Laddie Williams	Weekly Schedule Wednesdays Bible Study 10:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. Chior Practice 5:30 p.m. Thursdays Healthy Living Group 5:00 p.m		

Our Caring Ministry List

Short Term Concerns

Rhett Bozeman
Joel Butler
Louise Harrison
Iann Kollarik
Heather Leonard
Scott Snyder

Intercessory Prayer

Eric Alford
Bonnie Hall
Mary Schrufer
Hannah Stephens
Sarah Lynn White
Laura Williams
Virginia Williams

Those Battling Cancer

Robert Hughes
Iann Kallarik
Heather Leonard
Luke Melvin
Karen Pilcher

Our Shut – Ins

Betty Ann Cayson
Bonnie Hall
Owen House
Ann Weiler

Our Military

Ukraine soldiers and citizens
Israel Citizens
Middle East

Persecuted Christians

UM Missionaries

Caregivers

Please contact the office with any updates to this list — Thank You!

Just a reminder names placed on Our Caring Ministry List must be submitted through the church office. Requests can be done by emails, or phone calls.

The Joy of Jesus

The joy that Jesus offers his disciples is his own joy, which flows from his intimate communion with the One who sent him. It is a joy that does not separate happy days from sad days, successful moments from moments of failure, experiences of honor from experiences of dishonor, passion from resurrection.



This joy is a divine gift that does not leave us during times of illness, poverty, oppression or persecution. It is present even when the world laughs or tortures, robs or maims, fights or kills. It is truly ecstatic, always moving us away from the house of fear into the house of love, and always proclaiming that death no longer has the final say, through its noise remains loud and its devastation visible. The joy of Jesus lifts up life to be celebrated.

—Henri J.M. Nouwen, *Lifesigns*

April Flower Calendar

April 7 Mr. & Mrs. Jimmy Cox
April 14 Jimmy & Powel Adams Family
April 21 Mr. Bill Gaskin
April 28 Mr. & Mrs. Tommy Edwards



Blountstown United Methodist Church

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Family Prayer List

volume 1 • number 2

1. Diane & Russell Scholz /
Shelia Shelton
2. Ken Sheppard Family /
Stacy Sims /
3. Brittany Smith Family /
Rodney Smith Family
4. Donald Stanley Family /
Sue & Don Stanley
5. Mert Stephens /
Scott Stephens Family
6. Virginia Szrowicz /
Chris & John Tomlinson
7. Ann & Mike Tucker /
Ann Weiler
8. Janis & Jack Weiler /
Jarred Weiler Family
9. Cherie White Family /
Doug Whitfield Family
10. Drew Whitfield Family /
Vicky & Steve Whitfield
11. Marvin Williams /
Mary Ann Williams
12. Mary Beth Williams /
Laura & Roger Williams
13. Virginia & Laddie Williams /
Barbara Wilson
14. Ester Alford /
Dresa Barfield
15. John Barfield Family /
Wynelle Bateman
16. Mary Margaret & Bob Barsch /
Alton Carpenter
17. Betty Ann Cayson /
Finlay Corbin Family
18. Peggy & Jimmy Cox /
Tyler Cox Family
19. Joe Durden Family /
Debbie & Tommy Edwards
20. Gale & Joe Ferguson /
Dottie & Bob Fleck
21. Mary Flowers /
Frank Gates
22. Gina Gates Family /
Montez Golden
23. Bonnie Hall /
Peggy Hall
24. Pam & Ronnie Hand /
Norah Hanley
25. Louise & Sonny Harrison /
Eileen Hatch
26. Trevor Haser Family /
Brooks Hayes Family
27. Cheri & Quentin Henderson /
Mark Herndon Family
28. Jackie & David House /
Owen House
29. Nick Hughes Family /
Laurie James Family
30. Sandra & Jim Jines /
Billy Jordan Family