

Valley Views



VOLUME 28, NUMBER 4

APRIL 2021



Pastor Mike Hill



The Amazing Story

by Dr. Ralph F. Wilson

Our regular waitress at a Tuesday morning Bible study breakfast is a professional clown on the side. "I'm getting ready for Easter," she said. Yes, she had a bunny suit and bunny ears for various parties where she would be asked to clown. And candy Easter eggs. Lots of Easter eggs.

If you ask children what Easter is about, they'd probably say something about the Easter bunny. It's a pervasive story. Not very persuasive or compelling, but cute and seemingly harmless enough.

But the story of the Easter bunny tends to displace a much more compelling Story. A true Story. An Amazing Story that I'd like to tell you right now in a few words.

The Amazing Story concerns a man, a carpenter who lived 2,000 years ago in an obscure Roman province in a town called Nazareth. At age 30, the Man hung up his leather carpenter's apron and began to speak publically up and down the countryside.

Religious leaders were ambivalent at best. Most felt deeply threatened, because this ex-carpenter taught in huge outdoor meetings with compelling authority -- and he healed people. Not just colds and fevers, but crippled limbs and blind eyes. On two occasions, he even brought people back from the dead.

The religious leaders saw their orderly world spinning out of their control. And so they determined to eliminate the Man. They infiltrated his inner circle so they could grab him away from public view. And once in custody, they engineered a trial behind closed doors, and then put huge political pressure on the Roman governor to execute him immediately. Within 12 hours of his arrest, the Man hung on a cross. Six hours later he was dead -- seemingly a martyr to a glorious but hopeless cause.

But there's more. The Man did not resist his arrest and crucifixion -- in fact, he had predicted it to his followers again and again. And he taught that his death would have incredible meaning -- that he would give his life as a ransom for many. That is, his death would pay the ransom price for a multitude of people who were enslaved by their own sins -- and set them free. That's what he said. And on that cross he prayed for his crucifiers -- certainly enslaved in *their* sins -- "Father, forgive them, for they don't know what they're doing." And he died. A Roman centurion who saw him die said, "Surely, this man was the Son of God."

He died on a Friday at just about three in the afternoon. By dusk he had been buried by a rich follower in a tomb hollowed out of solid rock, a tomb protected by a huge stone that rolled into place along a channel in the rock, then clunk! The tomb was secure. Friday night and all day Saturday his cold body lay there.

But Sunday morning, the Sunday we call Easter, some women had come to complete the hasty burial and they found the stone rolled back and the tomb empty. An angel appeared to them saying, "He is not here, he has risen." This, too, the Man, Jesus, had foretold to his followers.

Over the next 40 days, he appeared to his disciples and others, to even 500 at one time. And then he left planet earth promising to return. His Spirit was poured out on his followers a few days later. Within a single generation his followers travelled with the Amazing Story to all of the known world. Our world has never been the same. Because where people believe the Story, they find forgiveness and freedom and meaning. They receive the Spirit of God themselves and they began to love.

The Story we tell is a life-transforming Story. If we would tell it to our children and grandchildren, they would find that it is much more compelling than any Easter bunny tale. The only appeal it lacks to your children -- and to our desperately needy world -- is a few pastel candy Easter eggs. Tell the Amazing Story. It changes lives.



March 4, 2021

Elimsport
16145 S Hwy 44
Allenwood, PA 17810

"Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to obey everything that I've commanded you"

Matthew (28:19-20)

Dear Friends in Mission,

Thank you!

Your financial support is enabling Global Ministries missionaries to fulfill the mission of the Church.

Through your financial support you are serving within a vital network of interactive relationships in more than 60 countries around the world.

Nearly 400 United Methodist missionaries come from many places and backgrounds, witnessing and serving in dramatically different locales and cultures, engaging in a range of activities and professions as pastors, educators, congregational and leadership developers, regional coordinators for UMCOR, agriculturalists, health coordinators, and doctors.

On behalf of the people who are recipients of the love of God through the direct ministry of a Global Missions missionary – *Thank You!*

Grace and Peace,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Roland Fernandes".

Roland Fernandes, General Secretary

Supporting
James Keech
Date Received 02-09-21

Gift Amount
\$ 83.33

Account #17960

Please retain this letter as your receipt. In compliance with IRS regulations, no goods or services were provided by the General Board of Global Ministries in consideration of your contribution.

Maundy Thursday service is on Thursday, April 1st at 6:00 at St John's UMC.



Good Friday service is on Friday, April 2nd at 7:00 at Elimsport UMC.



Sunrise service at 6am on Easter Sunday at the pavilion at Elimsport church. Please bring your own chair.



Easter Services are at regular times at each church.



Pastor Mike is working on resuming confirmation class for this year. If you are interested and your child is currently 13 to 18 yrs of age, let Pastor Mike know.



Good News, preparation for the annual Easter Egg Hunt is under way! We will be stuffing the eggs after church during

the season of Lent. If anybody is interested in volunteering, please feel free to reach out to Jenn Springman. As always, we will gladly accept any donations (money or candy), to help with this community event! Please help make the children aware, the event will take place on Saturday, 4/3/21 at 10am at the church ball field. If you have any questions, feel free to call/text Jenn at (570)412-6141. Thank you in advance!!

Various means to keep updated:

website: evpumc.org
Face book: Elimsport United Methodist Parish
Electronic sign at Elimsport church
email Pastor Mike: hjebm@comcast.net
email church: elimsportumc@gmail.com
Call Pastor Mike: 570-547-1386
Text Pastor Mike: 570-974-8590 (please identify yourself when texting)

Be pro-active in getting the word out to others in the church.

Please be sure to check the church website evpumc.org and Elimsport United Methodist Parish face book for up to date church news.



- Items for May's newsletter are due April **20th**.
- Items for the weekly bulletin's need to be to the church office by **Wednesday morning** each week.

(Items received after these dates are not guaranteed to be printed.)

Community breakfast is on hold until further notice.



Elimsport Administrative Council will meet Monday, April 12th at 6:30.



St. John's Administrative Council will meet Thursday, April 8th at 7:00.



Kid's Corner



Have a
blessed
Easter

ELIMSPORT VALLEY UNITED METHODIST PARISH

Worship Schedule:

Elimsport UMC

Worship 9:00 am
Sunday School 10:30 am

St. John's UMC

Sunday School 9:15 am
Worship 10:30 am

Parish Youth Group

Check weekly Bulletin for current schedule and events
(at Elimsport)

Parish Bible Study

Varies according to the season.

Parish Office:

16145S. RT 44 HWY
Allenwood, PA 17810

Parsonage Phone:

(570) 547-1386

Pastor Mike's Cell:

(570) 974-8590

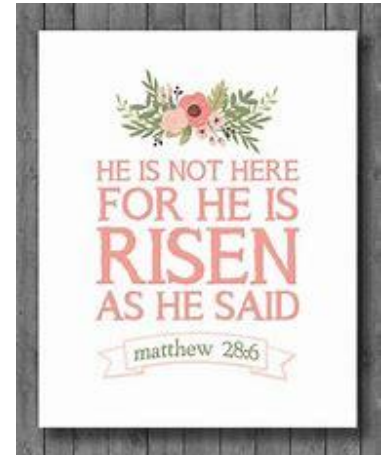
Parish Website:

www.evpumc.org

Parish email:

elimsportumc@gmail.com

www.evpumc.org



Our Mission Statement at Elimsport UMC



We gather together as a community of Christian believers to worship, fellowship, and to learn more about God. By the unity of the Spirit and the support of each other, we are able to reach out to the community and the world.

Our Mission Statement at St. John's UMC



The purpose of St. John's is to both evangelize and nurture. We are called to show God's love in our world by giving aid and by spreading the Good News of Christ. We in turn provide an atmosphere for nurturing where Biblical truths are shared enabling people to become spiritually enriched. By providing this, people will learn and through learning, become more effective witnesses.