

Easter Eyes

Christmas really wasn't all that long ago, the boxes of decorations haven't even had time to gather dust yet. St. Valentine's day was just a couple of weeks ago, and still, we're already fairly deep into the season of Lent. And of course, you know what that means - Easter is merely weeks away. We haven't even had to endure a harsh winter, and spring is already here. Already so many signs of the new life of spring are visible. Lawns

are turning green, trees are beginning to awaken from their sleep, and we've even had tornadoes this February. Doesn't it seem like it would be okay if Easter waited a few more weeks before showing up? After all the Groundhog promised us six more weeks of winter. Easter should wait. We'll get to it, just not right away. Let's enjoy the cold and gloom a little bit longer, right? No?

Okay, maybe it IS time for Easter to remind us, once again, of God's mercy and grace. It is good for us to be ever mindful of the gift of eternal life that we celebrate every Easter season. And God, in His great providence has given us so many visual reminders of the New Life that we have in the Resurrection of Jesus. In the emerging green of Lent, we see the beginnings of life returning from the cold dead earth – just as Jesus returned to us from out of the earth. We see plants sprouting, new leaves covering the trees, we feel the warmth, we welcome the spring rains – all of which are signs of life, and reminders of our Christ-given eternal life. You have only to observe the beauty of God's creation, in the glory of springtime, to be reminded of His love for you. Enjoy this season with the eyes of Easter. See in the beauty nature that ours is a God of life and love. Allow the sights of Spring to point you to the One who created you, redeemed you, sustains you, and loves you. Easter eyes see the lifegiving God, who brings new life back from the dead, in the splendor of nature. He is Risen Indeed!

Pastor John



Dr. Brian Crawford



Brian grew up in San Diego, CA in a loving evangelical Christian home. His parents instilled into Brian's childhood a love for God and a passion for God's Word.

When he was 16, he had a radical experience of the grace of his Messiah, and he became born again. While in college, Brian visited Israel with his church.

That 2005 trip opened his eyes to the need for Jewish evangelism. When he returned to California, he continued studying Structural Engineering, but his heart was focused on getting the Gospel to Jewish people.

After three years of practice as an engineer, Brian joined staff with Chosen People Ministries and moved to Brooklyn with his wife, Liz, in 2011.

Brian graduated with his Master of Divinity in Messianic Jewish Studies in 2015, and is currently studying for his Doctor of Ministry degree at Talbot School of Theology. (Dr. Crawford recently received his doctorate.)

However, his primary focus is on reaching Jewish people in the next great missions' frontier - the Internet.

Brian's focus in ministry is Messianic Apologetics - defending our faith in Jesus to a Jewish audience. Dr. Crawford is the Project Director for Chosen People Answers, a soon-to-be-released online community focused on making a case for Jesus as the Messiah of Israel. This evangelistic website is not yet published, but is currently under active construction.

Brian loves original language study, church history, eschatology, computer technology, photography, soccer, and being a dad to his two kids.

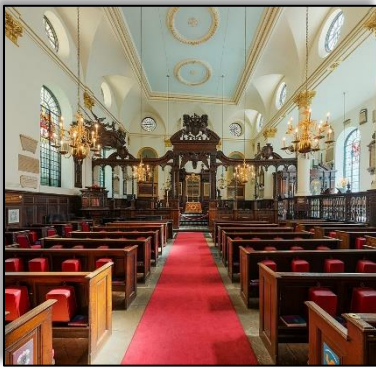
Learn more about Chosen People Answers at www.chosenpeopleanswers.com.



SPECTATOR OR PARTICIPANT

By Penny Lee

In the Adult Bible Study on Sunday mornings, we are studying the various denominations in Christianity as well as some of the other well-known religions around the world. This study has led us on a LONG look at the



Reformation and what it really meant to Christianity and to the world in terms of influence. I don't know about anyone else, but I can say I have learned a lot! One thing that really surprised me and that I can't seem to get out of my head is the fact that the Roman Catholic Church, during the medieval period actually had a separation between the

congregation and the Chancel area where the priest was. They also had a choir sing the responses in certain churches. The congregation would quite literally come to church and WATCH was what going on, but they couldn't understand a word of it because it was all in Latin. They were spectators of



the service, not participants. I was quite surprised to find that out. Yet, they were required to go to Confession and Communion. What really shocked me was the fact that if there was a Bible in someone's home that was in any other language besides Latin, Hebrew or Greek, the owner of that household, and possibly the entire household could be put to death! In the video that we've been watching, they told of 7 people were burned at the stake for teaching their children the Lord's Prayer in the local vernacular! I'm just astounded at the lengths people will go to, to maintain power!

Anyway, back to that separation. It made no sense to me that people would go to Church just to watch it – they couldn't and didn't participate in the Service at all other than to receive Communion.

Then I started thinking about COVID and what that has done to Church attendance. I began to see a real similarity between the church of the medieval period and the Church today.

Today, so many people stay home and WATCH the Church service on their phone, or computer or other device. They have gotten out of the habit of getting up and going to church. And Churches are helping in this by streaming and/or recording the Service so people can “attend” at their leisure.

I understand why they do it, but I have to say, it only enables those who don't want to attend to stay home. Like I said, I understand it, but does it really help?

So many people have fallen away from Church. Why? Are they just out of the habit? They felt like they were being judged? They work 6 days a week and need one day to sleep in? They have a hectic life and it's just too hard to get up and go to Church? They don't like the Pastor? I don't know. There are as many reasons for not going to Church as there are people. (Aren't you glad doesn't apply that same concept to you and your prayer life? I know I am.)

Last night was Ash Wednesday Service. I so did not want to go. I had chemo the day before and was really tired. Then I thought – if Jesus were here, what would He do? He'd go. So...I went. I enjoyed the fellowship time before hand and I enjoyed the Service and Pastor's Sermon. I'm glad I went.

I also thought about worship. Worship is not a spectator's sport. If you read the Old Testament the entire nation was involved in Worship. God set it up that way. When we watch the Service on our devices – as convenient at that may be – we are stepping back in time, putting that wall back up and not participating in the Service. We're spectators. God would love to have you come and join those in the pew – letting the songs of praise fill your heart and mind. He would appreciate your smile coming to Him from inside the Sanctuary during corporate worship. You know, He really does love you so much. Seeing you worship Him brings joy to His heart, just as much as you receiving joy from Him encourages your faith. What a blessing! God's so good!!!

So, this week, instead of thinking of Sunday as a day off, why not consider it a day to fill up – fill up on God's attention. See you Sunday.

March , 2023

DATE	LAY READER
5	Chuck Gray
12	Bill Heierding
19	Gary Jo Lee
26	Michelle Brennan

DATE	USHER
5	Carol Gray
12	Joan Heierding
19	Penny Lee
26	Jim Wackerly

Communion Deacon:

Chuck Gray

Alternate:

Bill Heierding



April, 2023

Communion Deacon:

Bill Heierding

Alternate:

Chuck Gray

DATE	LAY READER	DATE	USHER
2	Bill Heierding	2	Joan Heierding
9	Gary Jo Lee	9	Penny Lee
16	Chuck Gray	16	Carol Gray
23	Michelle Brennan	23	Jim Wackerly
30	Chuck Gray	30	Carol Gray

Happy Birthday – March, 2023

6 – Hayden Mathis

12 – John Horn

19 – Sharon Billeg

31 – Mattie Monroe

8 – Karen Rogers

13 – Shirley Bell

30 – Sierra Lee-Smyth



Happy Birthday - April, 2023

9 – Michelle Brennan

19 – Elaine Chard

23 – Haliegh Kiene

15 – Mary Forsberg

22 – Matthew White

30 – John Ray

March, 2023

March 1 – Bible Study – 6:30 p.m.
March 2 – Bible Study – 10:30 a.m.

March 5 – Communion Service – 11 :00 a.m.
March 8 – Bible Study – 6:30 p.m.
March 9 – Bible Study – 10:30 a.m.

March 12 – Worship Service – 11:00 a.m.
March 15 – **NO** Bible Study – Spring Break
March 16 – **NO** Bible Study – Spring Break

March 19 – Communion Service – 11:00 a.m.
March 22 – Bible Study – 6:30 p.m.
March 23 – Bible Study – 10:30 a.m.

March 26 – Worship Service – 11:00 a.m.
March 29 – Bible Study – 6:30 p.m.
March 30 – Bible Study – 10:30 a.m.



April, 2023

April 2 – PALM SUNDAY
Communion Service – 11:00 a.m.

APRIL 5 – GUEST SPEAKER
DR. BRIAN CRAWFORD 7:00 P.M.
(Christ in the Seder Meal)

April 6 – MAUNDY THURSDAY
Communion Service – 7:00 p.m.

April 7 – GOOD FRIDAY
Tenebrae Service – 7:00 p.m.

April 9 EASTER SUNDAY
Communion Service – 11:00 a.m.

April 12 – Bible Study – 6:30 p.m.
April 13 – Bible Study – 10:30 a.m.

April 16 – Worship Service – 11:00 a.m.
April 19 – Bible Study – 6:30 p.m.
April 20 – Bible Study – 10:30 a.m.

April 23 – Worship Service – 11:00 a.m.
April 26 – Bible Study – 6:30 p.m.
April 27 – Bible Study – 10:30 a.m.
April 30 – Worship Service – 11:00 a.m.

MARCH

March Evening Bible Study
March 1, 8, 22, 29

March Morning Bible Study
March 2, 9, 23, 30

March Communion Service
March 5, 19

March Worship Service
March 12, 26



HOLY WEEK EVENTS/TIMES

April 2 – Palm Sunday

April 5 – Guest Speaker:
Dr. Brian Crawford
Christ in the Seder Meal

April 6 – Maundy Thursday
Communion Service

April 7 – Good Friday
Tenebrae Service

APRIL 9 – EASTER SUNDAY
COMMUNION SERVICE

3/1 Hosea 3 The Higher We Climb, The Deeper We Fall

3/2 Hosea 4 Prayers To Idols Are Unanswered

3/3 Hosea 5 Out Of Affliction, Prayer Finds God Ready To Help

3-4 Hosea 6 Prayer Is Useless Without Penitence For Sin.

3/5 Hosea 7 Prayer Must Be Sincere – From The Heart

3/6 Hosea 9 Prayer Can Be Brief And Swift.

3/7 Hosea 10 Prayer Must Be Sincere – From The Heart

3/8 Hosea 11 Prayer Has Its Root Sin The Past

3/9 Hosea 14 Prayer, When Accompanied By Penitence, Is Expressive

3/10 Joel 1 Habitual Prayer Prepares Us For Crises

3/11 Joel 2 Under Grace, It Doesn't Matter Where You Pray

3/12 Amos 5 Seeking God Is Seeking Good

3/13 Amos 7 Israel's God Is The God Of The World

3/14 Obadiah

3/15 Jonah 1 Prayer Of The Heathen Sailors

3/16 Jonah 2 Prayer Out Of Hell

3/17 Jonah 3 Prayer of a Repentant City

3/18 Jonah 4 Prayer of a Displeased Prophet

3/19 Micah 1 Tarry in God's Presence

3/20 Micah 3 Micah Denounces False Prophets

3/21 Micah 5 Without Prayer One Cannot Stand and Feed on The Strength of The Lord

3/22 Micah 7 Looking to the Lord and Waiting for Him

3/23 Habakkuk 1 Prayer of Complaint and Vindication

3/24 Habakkuk 2 God's Faithfulness to His Word

3/25 Habakkuk 3 Persevering Patient Faith

3/26 Haggai 1 Doing What You've Been Called to Do.

3/27 Haggai 2 God's Covenants are Eternal

3/28 Zechariah 1 Divine Messages Are Mediated to Men by Angels

3/29 Zechariah 3 Zechariah Testifies to Christ's Sufferings and Glory

3/30 Zechariah 4 Zechariah Speaks to The Angels Sent by God.

3/31 Zechariah 6 Those who Love the Lord are "Prisoners of Hope."

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4/1	Malachi 1: Prayer Protest 1 (despised love = first love in Rev. 2:4) Prayer Protest 2 (despised name = "who say they are Jews but are not" Rev 2:9) Prayer Protest 3 (despised order = prefer man's order to God's. Rev.2:14)
4/2	Malachi 2: Prayer Protest 4 (despised patience = had space to repent but did not. Rev. 2:21)
4/3	Malachi 3: Prayer Protest 5 (despised welcome had a name they lived but were dead (Rev. 3:1-3) Prayer Protest 6 (despised portion = those who deemed themselves rich, but were not. Rev. 3:15)
4/4	Matthew 5:22-26; 6:12, 14-15: Prayer and the Necessity of Forgiveness
4/5	Matthew 6:5-7; Luke 11:1-4: Prayer and Hypocrisy
4/6	Matthew 6:9-13: Prayer as Taught by Christ The voice of the...Son ... the Saint ... the Subject ... the Servant ...the Supplicant ... the Sinner ... the Sojourner
4/7	Matthew 7:7-11 Prayer as Specified by Christ: Ask, Seek, Knock
4/8	Matthew 8:1-4; Mark 1:40-45 Luke 5: 12-14: Prayer of a Leper
4/9	Matthew 8:5-13; Luke 7:1-10: Prayer of the Centurion
4/10	Matthew 8:23-27; Mark 4:36-41; Luke 8:22-25: Prayer in Peril
4/11	Matthew 8:28-34; Mark 1:1-20; Luke 8:26-37: Prayer of Maniacs
4/12	Matthew 9:18-19, 23-26; Mark 5:22-24, 35-43; Prayer of Jairus Luke 8:40-42, 49-56
4/13	Matthew 9:20-22; Mark 5:25-34; Luke 8:43-48: Prayer of the Diseased Woman
4/14	Matthew 9:27-31: Prayer of Two Blind Men
4/15	Matthew 11: 25-27: Prayer of Christ's Gratitude to God.
4/16	Matthew 14:23: Prayer on a Mountain
4/17	Matthew 14:28-30: Prayer of Peter in Distress
4/18	Matthew 15:21-28; Mark 7:24-30:n Prayer of the Syro-Phoenician Woman
4/19	Matthew 17: 14-21; Mark 9:14-29; Luke 9:37-43: Prayer of a Lunatic Son
4/20	Matthew 18: 19-20: Prayer in Unity
4/21	Matthew 18:23-35: Prayer in a Parable
4/22	Matthew 20:20-28; Mark 10: 35-45: Prayer for a Privileged Position
4/23	Matthew 20:29-34; Mark 10:46-52; Prayer for Healing Blindness See Luke 18:35-43
4/24	Matthew 21:18-22; Mark 11:22-26: Prayer of Faith
4/25	Matthew 23: 14, 25; See Mark 12:40 Prayer of Pretense Luke 20:47
4/26	Matthew 25:20, 22, 24: Prayer of Accountability
4/27	Matthew 26:26, 36-46; Mark 14:32-42 Prayer of a Resigned Will

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Luke 22:39-46

4/28 Matthew 27:46, 50; Luke 23:34, 46: Prayer at Calvary

4/29 Mark 1:23-28; Luke 4:31-37: Prayer of a Demon

4/30 Mark 1:35; 6:41, 46: Prayer Habits of Christ



Operation Christmas Child

Joan, Bill, Jim and I attended an Operation Christmas Child event on Saturday March 4th, at Portland Avenue Baptist Church. A couple spoke who have been to Honduras twice for the giving out of shoeboxes and they told of the wonderful things that they witnessed. Some of these children had never received a gift before. They also received the book, *The Greatest Gift* in their native language. It was a treasured possession.

We were also given some facts for the 30 years of shoeboxes: The 200 millionth shoebox was packed and sent in 2022; **the Midwest area packed 726,313**; and the United States packed 9.3 million!

We may be a small church, but **our boxes have the same impact as every other church!** It's **never too early to start looking and picking up items for next November.**

Go through your **old t-shirts** and bring them **to church**. Joan is kind enough to cut and prepare these shirts and several of us make them into jump ropes. **The brighter the t-shirt the brighter the jump rope!** Keep up the good work.

Sue Wackerly