

The Hilltop News



"The Boy Next Door: On Another Senseless Shooting"

"Because he said, 'I am the Bread that came down from heaven,' the Jews started arguing over him: 'Isn't this the son of Joseph? Don't we know his father? Don't we know his mother? How can he now say, 'I came down out of heaven' and expect anyone to believe him?"

-John 6:41-42

He's just 'The boy next door!' they said. Some tried to make sense of who Jesus was, but they could only see him as 'the boy next door' – the carpenter's son. Maybe they would not have looked at him as someone capable of great evil, but neither could they look at him as someone connected to all the gifts of heaven. What they did do was dismiss him as just another 'boy next door.'

More often than not we still do the same thing, you and I; we dismiss one another as just another boy or girl next door without looking more deeply into the unique gifts each person possesses. In the face of this scripture and current circumstances, I am moved to ask: Do we do the same with Jesus, do we look at him as just another 'boy next door?'

In the avalanche of news about yet another mass shooting, I share a portion of Janet Hunt's commentary on John published in "Dancing with the Word." She wrote:

'I will not ever forget that day turned into night turned into day again. The call that came saying there had been a shooting.

The sound of sirens coming from all directions, those images, those experiences flood back whenever the headline of another senseless shooting reaches me. But the story that still touches my heart is this one:"

It was in the early morning hours of the next day, after the wounded had been tended and sent to home or hospital. There were still six dead young people: five students and the gunman who had shot himself. Their families were waiting to see them and make their final identifications. Cindy, an EMT, knew that someone would need to clean up the bodies before their families saw them, so she said she would do it because she didn't want her staff to carry those memories with them for the rest of their lives. All by herself, she went from room to room after room wiping away the blood from the victim's wounds. She did so for the shooter, as well. Later, talking to a reporter, she said the shooter looked like 'the boy next door' and not some monster capable of inflicting such senseless suffering.

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Pastor

Rev. Margaret Diz Philip
Council

Kelly Day, pres.

Stephanie Gelhot, vice-pres.

Neil Glaser, treas.

Kari Winchester, sec.

Dale Konneman, grounds

Janet Moehsmer, bldg. fund

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June Jones

Custodian

Neil Glaser

Office Admin.

Gail Schneider

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If you are like me, when we hear of another shooting, a great sense of helplessness overcomes us, and we find ourselves aching for the families involved and angry that it has happened yet again. And we quickly turn someone who at one time was literally 'the boy next door' into a monster. And yet it seems to me there must be something more in our response than empathy and blame. And while you can probably imagine where I might stand on the whole gun control debate, I do believe that our faith calls each one of us to make some difference in all of this!

And perhaps all we need to do to really make a difference is to simply remember that every one of those shooters was first someone's child, confirmation student, team member, student, next door neighbor.

Maybe we need to begin to take a second look at the boys and girls next door. Maybe we need to begin to really SEE all those we encounter at work, at worship, at coffee hour, in the grocery line, at a high school football game, on the bike trail, in the car next to us at the stoplight. Maybe we need to SEE them all as ones who hold great potential. Maybe we need to SEE them not with indifference or fear, but rather with a heart full of wonder, curiosity, hope and as those bearing the face of Jesus, which they all do, and then act toward them as if this is so. After all, Jesus did say, "When you have done it unto the lost and least, you have done it unto me."

What difference would it make if all of us made just a little more effort to reach out to others - especially to

others who seem angry, strange or distant? One person reaching out can truly make a huge difference. Maybe, just maybe, all of us reaching out with all our attention and care will lead to a whole new movement pushing our culture into doing what needs to be done so that never ever again will our neighbors and friends have to clean up the blood of those so senselessly killed by another 'boy next door.'

Jesus was literally 'the boy next door' to the Galileans, and they thought since he was so much like them he could be and do nothing more than what might be expected of a carpenter's son. They thought they knew him, but, of course, they didn't know him at all. He was so much more than those who gathered around him could have possibly imagined. He called them to new life! And you and I who follow him, aren't we called to be and do the same?

Aren't we called to share this bread, this hope, this promise, this life with all the world? Hands reaching out to souls who hunger and falter in hope have the power to change the world! Of course, 'One at a time' solutions are certainly not nearly enough, but surely we can all see how fully encountering the 'others' in our lives and being fully in community with and for them will make a big difference! It seems to me we need to start right next door...

*Peace,
Margaret*

GOD'S MYSTERIOUS WAYS

"God moves in a mysterious way, his wonders to perform." These oft-quoted words, from a hymn by English poet William Cowper, come with an unsubstantiated yet powerful back story.

Cowper, who struggled with depression, decided to commit suicide one night. He called a cab to go to the Thames River, planning to drown himself. Such dense fog arose that the driver got lost and finally stopped to let his passenger out. To Cowper's surprise, he was at his own door! He concluded that God had sent the fog to spare his life. The hymn he wrote in response continues:

Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take;
the clouds ye so much dread
are big with mercy and shall break
in blessings on your head. ...

His purposes will ripen fast,
unfolding every hour.
The bud may have a bitter taste,
but sweet will be the flower.

MARCH MISSION—LOS VECINOS

(formerly FAITH that WORKS)

We work with a severely underserved community in the Chesterfield Trailer Park. We are in serious need for some basic supplies to help our second semester of programming.

We could use a financial donation or things from our wish list. Here is a wish list of desired items:

PROGRAM SUPPLIES

hand sanitizer
Clorox wipes
Kleenex
hand soap
paper towels
toilet paper
napkins
tall kitchen trash bags
plastic cups
small fire extinguisher (2)
first aid kit (2)
White-out pens

tempera paint

poster board

art supplies

ball air pump

LOW SUGAR SNACKS

pretzels

goldfish

graham crackers

granola bars

trail mix

peanut butter sandwich crackers

raisins

individual drinks (box/bag and low sugar)



It is easy to feel overwhelmed when we look at all the areas of need in God's world: there is hunger, sickness, and injustice in so many communities. It is easy to feel there is nothing we can do to help. We can feel trapped by hopelessness and fear that what little we can do—won't have an impact.

But there is hope! Better yet: we are that hope!

As the Apostle Paul writes, "by the power at work within us," God is able to "accomplish abundantly more than we can ask or imagine" (Ephesians 3:20). "We are the agents of transformation that God uses to transfigure this world" (Archbishop Desmond Tutu). Wishing and dreaming of a better world means nothing if we don't realize that God gives us community to practice love and compassion. We cannot only care for ourselves, but we must also care about those around us, both near and far. Our gifts become part of a loving legacy in ways we can't foresee. Our gifts become blessings to people we don't know and blesses in ways we can't expect. We can make a difference beyond what we can imagine. We will receive the OGHS offering on March 11th.





EQUINE-ASSISTED THERAPY, INC.

Their location in Longview Farm Park in Town and Country is looking for volunteers to assist its disabled participants in achieving the greatest possible therapeutic benefit from the movement of the horse. Volunteers (must be over 14 years old) will walk alongside the kids as they ride and accomplish various activities from the back of their horse. Each rider needs 3 volunteers for a safe ride and there are 3 riders per hour, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays at 4:30, 5:30 and 6:30pm. The Spring session starts April 9th and runs 10 weeks through June 14th.

Please consider helping this wonderful program that brings so many smiles to kids who never thought riding a horse would be a possibility for them. There will be a Volunteer Orientation Open House at the barn at Longview Farm Par, 13252 Clayton Rd at Mason, from noon till 2pm Saturday March 31st. Find our volunteer application on our website: <http://eatherapy.org/>

or get more info by contacting our office in Wildwood at 314-971-0605 or info@eatherapy.org

"There is no revenge so complete as forgiveness."
—Josh Billings



- Condiments of all kinds!
- Jelly – **CRITICAL**
- Tomato Products
- Canned Chicken
- Peanut Butter
- Rice/Dry Beans/ Dry Potatoes
- Body Wash
- Bar Soap – **CRITICAL**
- Razors
- Ibuprofen – **CRITICAL**



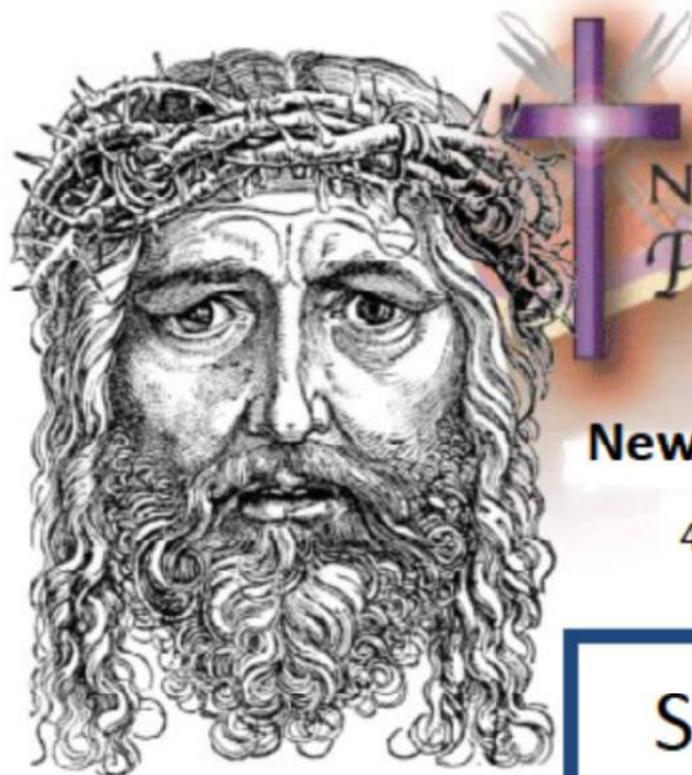
We'll meet on March 7th at 1pm for a business meeting and dessert.

BIBLE QUIZ

According to Matthew's account, what was torn when Jesus died?

- A. Mary's headdress — she tore it as a traditional Jewish sign of grief
- B. A Roman guard's sash — Peter grabbed and ripped it in anger
- C. Jesus' robe — the soldiers divided it among themselves
- D. The temple curtain — torn in two from top to bottom

See Matthew 27:51



2018

New Melle Community *Passion Play*

New Melle Sports and Recreation

4700 Hwy Z New Melle, MO 63365

Admission Free

Seating is on First-come

First-seated basis

For groups or

more information

Call 636-634-1150

Or Email

nmpassion@gmail.com

Check us out:

Facebook us at:

New Melle Community Passion Play

Or [https://](https://aleephotography3.wixsite.com/)

aleephotography3.wixsite.com/

[nmcpassionplay](https://aleephotography3.wixsite.com/nmcpassionplay)

Saturday March 17

7:00 PM



Sunday March 18

2:00 PM & 4:30 PM



Saturday March 24

7:00 PM



Sunday March 25

2:00 PM & 4:30 PM



Joyce Ponce - 4 Dec 2017

Millie Jaeger - 25 Jan 2018

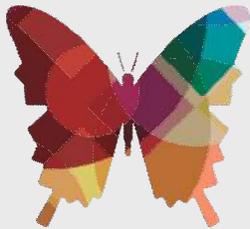
Dale Ponce - 20 Feb 2018

SPECIAL SERVICES



MAUNDY THURSDAY

March 29: **7:30pm**



EASTER SUNDAY

April 1

Sunrise Service: **6:30am**

Easter Worship: **10:00am**

Easter Egg Hunt & Fellowship

Time: **11:00am**



If you have knowledge of someone on the Prayer List who no longer needs our prayers, please let us know.

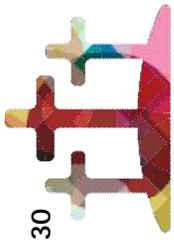
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COUNCIL CONTACTS

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MARCH 2018



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
4	5	6	7 1PM Ladies Guild	8	9	10 Daylight Savings Time Begins
11	12+Brad & Kari Winchester *Tim Jones	13	14	15+Ron Peters & Gloria Pettijohn	16	17 St. Patrick's Day
18	19	20 First Day of Spring	21	22*Rich Brueggeman *Monica Winkel	23*Carla Bopp	24
25 Palm Sunday *Alexis Schnatmeier	26	27 *Karen Bellville	28	29 *Margaret Philip 7:30pm Maundy Thursday Service	30  GOOD FRIDAY	31

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PLEASE
PLACE
STAMP
HERE



Worship: 8:30 (summer) & 10:00 am (all year)

11:00 am Fellowship Time

We are ADA Accessible.

Childcare is provided during Worship.

Office Hours: 10:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Please call first if you need to stop by!

Office Phone: 636.532.3556

About Us

Mission Statement

We are St. Thomas UCC, a caring faith community welcoming all to share with us. You will find us supportive, nurturing, and encouraging. Our worship is traditional yet contemporary, applying scripture and Christ's teachings to everyday life. Accepting all who come as family, we are St. Thomas UCC.

Value Statement

We are a close-knit welcoming community. We cherish and honor the traditions of our 100 years past. With respect and compassion we work together. We strive to grow in our faith by serving the community. We embrace and celebrate our youth and the promise of each new generation of God's children. We seek God's blessings and wisdom in the joys and challenges of our daily lives. We grow in our understanding of Christ's teachings while being respectful of our differences.

Vision Statement

We seek to :

- Invite others to join in our faith journey
- Explore worship opportunities
- Enhance our fellowship and service outreach
- Expand our use of technology
- Increase our community involvement