

CHATHAM CHRISTIAN CHURCH
9897 So. Main St., P.O. Box 527
Chatham, Illinois 62629

Church Office 217-483-3987
www.chathamchristian.org

Rick Wenneborg, Minister
cell phone 217-836-4971
Rick@chathamchristian.org

Mark Huber, Youth Minister
cell phone 217-971-3075
hubermark2@gmail.com

Sunday Worship Service 9:15 AM
Bible School 10:45 AM

The following was shared by the elders during our worship service on March 9th.

"When Jack and Bonnie passed away, they left behind a surprisingly large estate of over \$2,000,000. At Bonnie's passing approximately half of it went directly to Ozark Christian College, and around a fourth to Good News Productions. A small amount was to go to the Chatham Library, and the remaining funds and property were bequeathed to us. She did not want it to be used for the general operation of the church, and the elders were tasked with how to best use the funds in keeping with her desires, especially those that focused on her love for young people. After considering several options, the decision was made to use it to begin a totally new ministry at Chatham Christian Church.

Zach, who is currently a campus minister at ISU and very active in the sports ministry of Eastview Christian Church, has made us aware of the effectiveness of using sports as an outreach to youth in the community, and has expressed a willingness to help us lay the groundwork for such a ministry here. We have therefore decided to use the funds to build a gymnasium.

After searching for a local contractor, we found an Amish company in Tuscola, Hersberger Construction, and have signed a contract with them to oversee the building and furnishing of a gym. Our plan is to build a 60 x 120 foot heated and air-conditioned steel building that will be located behind, and attached to, our fellowship hall.

We are planning to begin ground prep for the building after VBS and a large wedding scheduled for the middle of July. Hopefully it will be completed sometime next fall, and we will then be able to use it for basketball, volleyball, pickle ball, and other sporting events, as well as a much larger place for dinners and receptions."

The elders answered questions during Sunday School, and found nothing but excitement about the new ministry this unexpected gift will make possible.

God Bless, Rick



THE CHATHAM MESSENGER

VOLUME 54

April 1, 2025

NUMBER 4



EASTER MORNING WORSHIP 9:15

No nursery or other programs or services on Easter

STATISTICS			
	3/2		
Worship		92	
Offering		\$11,708.72	
	3/9		
Worship		99	
Offering		\$3,495.72	
	3/16		
Worship		93	
Offering		\$2,744.72	
	3/23		
Worship		89	
Offering		\$7,982.72	
	3/30		
Worship		107	
Offering		\$7,165.72	



THE BEAUTY OF THE CROSS

A Communion Meditation
by Casey Blakley

In a college class one day, the professor asked, "Why might someone believe something that's clearly wrong?" I raised my hand and said, "Probably because they were ignorant." I meant it in the most literal sense—that they simply lacked information. But her reaction was immediate and sharp. She explained that in her family, the word *ignorant* was practically a slur—something equated with being stupid or worse—so she found my answer deeply offensive.

I quickly clarified that I wasn't trying to insult anyone. I wasn't making a value judgment—I just meant they didn't know something. Thankfully, she accepted my explanation, and the tension passed. But I've always remembered that moment. It was awkward...and oddly funny. It was a reminder that even the most ordinary words can carry unexpected baggage—and that sometimes, without intending to, you can deeply offend someone.

And that brings us to the cross. Because as strange as it sounds, the gospel—the good news of Jesus Christ—is offensive. Not because it's spoken with the wrong tone or misunderstood by accident, but because it confronts. It exposes our pride. It shows us our self-righteousness. It makes it clear what we are—sinners in need of grace.

In Galatians 5:11, Paul writes, "*If I still preach circumcision, why am I still being persecuted? In that case the offense of the cross has been removed.*" Paul is clear—if we try to make the gospel more palatable, giving allowance for human effort, we may remove what makes it offensive, but in doing so, remove all its power to save. The cross offends because it declares, "You are not good enough." It says your morality, your reputation, your religious activity, none of them can save you. You need a substitute. You need blood. You need a Savior crucified in your place.

Charles Spurgeon once put it this way: "There are two things which man cannot bear. The one is to be told that he is guilty; the other, to be told that he can do nothing to wash away his guilt. But the gospel tells him both." The cross is a declaration that we are worse than we think, and that we are completely dependent on righteousness outside of ourselves. That's not a flattering message—it's a humbling one. Paul said in 1 Corinthians 1:18, "*The message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.*" And this is what we remember in communion.

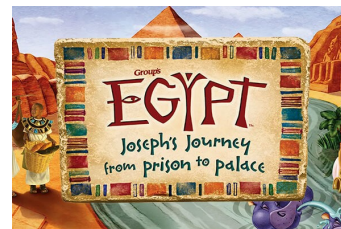
We come to the table not in celebration of how good we are, but instead confessing how desperate we are. We come, not to admire a noble death, but to receive the benefits of a brutal one. Christ's body broken—for us. His blood poured out—for us. As we take this bread and this cup, let's remember: the cross is offensive—because grace is offensive. It tells us the truth we don't want to hear, to give us the mercy we don't deserve. So maybe it's fitting that something so essential to our salvation begins with offense. Like that awkward classroom moment, the cross catches us off guard, confronts our assumptions and exposes our pride. But unlike that fleeting misunderstanding, the offense of the cross is not accidental, it is intentional. And it is glorious. Because only when we are offended by the truth of our need can we be healed by the beauty of God's grace. What once seemed abrasive becomes astonishing. What once felt like condemnation becomes our greatest comfort. The offense becomes the invitation—to come, to kneel, to receive. That's the beauty of the cross. Let's come to the table and rejoice in it.



Pre-K-5th Grade

There will be a whole bunch of eggs hidden on our property for the kids to find on the Saturday before Easter! They'll be inside, they'll be outside, they'll be everywhere! Consider bringing your kids out to the church for this fun event beginning at 10:00am on April 19th.

After the hunt, we can all gather in the fellowship hall for some treats as the kids look through all their eggs. Please feel free to invite friends and extended family who might enjoy this activity with their children. It is a great way to introduce them to our church right before Resurrection Sunday.



VBS

Vacation Bible School will be upon us soon! Within a couple weeks, I will be assigning roles to the volunteers as we prepare for the kids! And speaking of the kids, be in prayer for who you would like to invite to our VBS program this year. They will be visiting a marketplace comprised of a toy shop, jewelry shop, barbershop & salon, hieroglyphic artists shop, basket weaver's shop, food shop, and of course, the Pyramid Playground. Additionally, they will get some one-on-one time daily with Joseph whose life story leads up to the final day where the forgiveness he offers his brothers and the forgiveness we receive through the cross will be discussed.

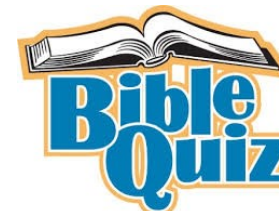


High School Students

I am proud of these students. Right now many are engaging in a morning devotion focusing on being a light in the world for Jesus. Micaiah just posted a comment a few moments ago on applying this even during trying, difficult times. Thank you to all who are participating and offering your feedback!

We are supplementing this devotional with a teaching series on spiritual disciplines during Sunday School. The goal is to draw nearer to Jesus through prayer, guided studies and Scripture so His light can then shine ever so brightly through us. I love their effort and desire to serve the Lord!

Much of the discussion has been around being a light in school, that is their "world". Who do you see often in your world? How can you let Jesus light shine through you?



Junior High Students

I am equally proud of this particular group of students. As I have mentioned, we completed a series of lessons on the Bible. One section was a simple recalling of the books found in the Old and New Testament. Every student improved in their ability to recall these books. For example, one student progressed from citing 5 books in the Old Testament to naming all 39 in the correct order. That took a lot of effort to do! Great work junior high students!