

# Croton Capers

APRIL 2011



<sup>19</sup>And this is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. (John 3:19, NRSV)

Dear Friends in Christ,

Judgment is a big issue in the Bible. There is not a single view of judgment in scripture. Judgment is contextual.

What does that mean?

It means that judgment before Abraham and Sarah was different from judgment after Abraham and Sarah. It means that judgment before Jerusalem was destroyed and many Jews were taken into captivity was different than judgment after captivity. It means that judgment before Jesus was different than judgment after Jesus.

All of that means that judgment today is not exactly like judgment in other times of history. Judgment is dependent upon the context of people and the world.

In the Hebrew scriptures judgment is almost always corporate. Samuel related to all of Israel. Nathan was prophet to the King, David, but he was also prophet for the entire nation. When Samuel and Nathan spoke they spoke to the entire nation.

Even in the prophets that came after Samuel and Nathan, (i.e., Hosea, Amos, Isaiah of Jerusalem, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, etc.) spoke to the community at large.

Judgment was not nearly as personal and individualized as we tend to hear it in our day.

However, judgment became more individualized as we moved into the New Testament and throughout the New Testament. Such individualization did not leave out the corporate nature of judgment. It just added judgment of the individual to the mix.

We see this in John's Gospel. The quotation above speaks both of individuals and society. We see that Jesus does not point fingers and shout out judgments. Rather his very existence called for a decision. As Jesus tells us we "saw the light or lived in darkness."

Whenever judgment is talked about we need to determine who is the judge? Clearly the ultimate judge is God. In God's very nature is judgment. However that judgment is not always negative. In most of scripture God's judgment is for those who are poor, oppressed, lost and needy.

God's judgment created the universe. We see a Psalm celebrating that in Genesis 1-2:4a. We see God's judgment moving us toward salvation in the story of Abraham and Sarah found in Genesis 12 through Genesis 25.

That same judgment is what caused God to hear the cries of the slaves in Egypt. God's judgment caused Moses to bring the people out of slavery in Egypt into a promised land. That judgment gave us the law summarized in the Ten Commandments. In that law we see God's judgment as a teaching judgment. Those laws are to teach us how to get along.

However, throughout history when we got rich and powerful we forgot the very poor, oppressed, orphan and widow from which we came. God saw these actions of neglect and oppression as a living atheism. We spoke belief, but did not live it. Such neglect and oppression led to the destruction of Jerusalem as God's judgment. That judgment was a loud "NO" to our living out of touch with God.

It was also God's judgment that brought us Jesus. God wanted us to see the depth of God's love. God also wanted us to see the quality and large quantity of God's love.

The image of Jesus as light is appropriate. For in Jesus we can see what we need for a right relationship with God.

Jesus lived, died, was resurrected and returned to God just for us. If we receive, see and live the light he is, our relationship with God is cared for by God. It is a free and abundant gift, this right relationship with God we call salvation.

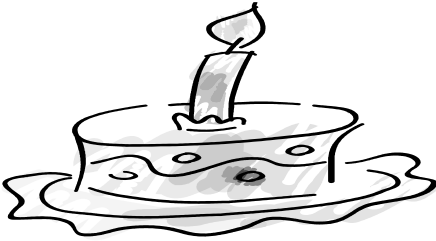
We can see this gift if we admit we need some help from God. We can see this light if we look beyond ourselves to God and put God at the center of all our living, all our decision making. To put Jesus (God) in the center of our living causes us to love neighbor and want a relationship with others who love God. Try it and you will like it!

In Christ,  
Pastor Ron



### FAITH CLASS

Faith Class is making their delicious coffee cakes again. Be sure to order yours today from any member of the class. \$3.50 each. You can pick up your order at the church on Wednesday, April 6.



### April Birthdays & Anniversaries

- 3 Ben Nelson
- 4 Chuck Cilano
- 5 Nathan Brown  
Glenn Spaulding
- 6 Taylor Heasley
- 7 Michelle Lum
- 9 Barbara Exposito
- 12 Matt Salomon
- 13 Robin Malinchak
- 16 Nancy McQuiston
- 17 Becky Post
- 19 Blake Thomas  
Bertie Nelson
- 21 Jerry Brown
- 22 Sophie Gardner
- 29 Bob Donston

25 Joe & Shawna Palladino

### LINE DANCE, LINE DANCE

Have you ever tried it? Why not give it a go? We will teach you with specific instruction and **pa-tience**, no worries, no goals or tests to be met, and with laughter all mixed in.

We dance each Thursday evening from 5 pm to 8:30 (or later). Beginners start at 5:00 to about 7:00, prayer circle at 7, then dances become more difficult and with less instruction.

Line dancing is good mental exercise as well as physical. Within three months you'll be doing dances you thought were going to be impossible (**YES, YOU WILL!!!**) I've heard all the reasons not do dance before. They are not good reasons. Ask anyone who now line dances.

There is no age limits (young or old), no size limits, no costumes, no special abilities, just have a good time and enjoy. You will sleep good that night.

The cost for each night is \$3.00 per person and all monies go to the church's general fund.

Come to line dance, get exercise you will enjoy, great fellowship you will enjoy, and support the church, all at the same time.

**DON'T BE SHY  
GIVE IT A TRY**

Jesse "Joe" Heasley, Instructor

### ATTENTION LADIES

Ladies, Young Ladies and Little Girls!! It is time to be looking for your Easter Bonnet to wear to Church on Easter Sunday, April 24th. You may also be a greeter, to welcome those coming to worship at 10:45 AM, if you wish.



JOY Circle is ready for their annual flea market on April 9 from 9 am to 1 pm. A light lunch will be served also.

Mandy Knauf of New Creation Church is also a member of the JOY Circle. Mandy's church had a mission project to collect blankets and gloves for the homeless in the Pittsburgh area. JOY Circle was able to collect 17 blankets and some gloves to contribute to this project. All total they are taking 67 blankets and various winter items to be distributed to the homeless in Pgh. On Friday, March 25, they will be taking these items and attending a service with the homeless and serving them food and drink.

JOY Circle is also looking forward to hosting the annual Spring Fling Banquet on May 3rd at 6:00 p.m. Reservations are due by Easter Sunday, April 24 to Joyce Burns, Pauline Brophy or Betty Jane Majors. The cost is: Adults \$6 Children 3-12 \$4 and children and babies under 3 years of age, no charge. Be sure to get your reservations in by April 24.

### DUTCH TREAT LUNCHEON

The monthly Dutch Treat Lunch will be held at Faraone Brother's Restaurant on Tuesday, April 26. Hostesses are Janet McHattie and Betty Patch. Everyone is welcome to join in the fun.



**BRING-A-FRIEND**  
**SUNDAY**

**WORSHIP LINE-UP**

**April 3, 2011 – 4th Sunday in Lent**  
**One Great Hour Sharing**

**Holy Communion**

*Thesis: There is a difference between looking & seeing. In a Biblical sense to see is to have understanding of. Do we see Jesus?*

**Sermon:** Can You See?

**Scripture:** 1 Samuel 16:1–13; John 9:1–41 (NRSV)

**April 10, 2011 – 5th Sun in Lent**

*Thesis: The raising of Lazarus was both a sign of the power of Jesus & cause for his crucifixion.*

**Sermon:** The Raising of Lazarus

**Scripture:** Ezekiel 37:1–14; Romans 8:6–11; John 11:1–45 (NRSV)

**April 17, 2011 – Palm Sunday**  
**Bring-a-Friend Sunday**

*Thesis: The people praised him as the great king to save them. They did not know both how wrong & how right they were.*

**Sermon:** God's Party

**Scripture:** 2 Samuel 6; Philippians 4:4-9; Matthew 21:1–11 (NRSV)

**April 21, 2011 – Passover/Seder**  
**Meal – 6:00 PM – Fellowship Hall**

*Thesis: Passover Freedom*

**Scripture:** John 13

**Ex 12**

**April 22, 2011 – Good Friday**

**Service 6:00 PM**

Scripture, hymns & silence will be the service with no sermon.

**Scripture:** Isa 52:13–53:12; Heb 10:16–25; John 18:1–19:42 (TNIV)

**April 24, 2011 - Easter Sunday**

*Thesis: The tomb was empty & the Beloved Disciple believed. Mary Magdalene in her grieving heard him say her name & knew his love would never die. That is the resurrection!*

**Sermon:** First Sight & the First Word  
**Scripture:** Jeremiah 31:1-6; Colossians 3:1–4; John 20:1-18 (TNIV)

***The Great Commission***  
***Matthew 28:19-20***

**Jesus said,**

***“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 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always to the very end of the age”***

By now, all of you should have invited a friend, relative, or acquaintance to come to church for our special service on Palm Sunday, April 17th. If you don't know who to invite, pray the prayer printed on this page for God to show you the way.

Remember that the success of this endeavor depends on each individual member's prayer, invitation and dedication.

Be sure to turn in your reservations for the catered luncheon to follow our worship service to Joyce Burns 724-652-8022.

If you have any questions about Bring-A-Friend Sunday just ask. Our task force is Mary Davidson, Joyce Burns, Leslie Eve, Betty Jane Majors, Dianna Esposito and Pastor Ron Wanless.

We are looking forward to this special event.

See you there!

**WE ARE BECOMING A**  
**FELLOWSHIP**  
**THAT MAKES**  
**DISCIPLES OF JESUS.**

**BRING-A-FRIEND**  
**PRAYER**

*Dear God,*

*Help me & Croton United Methodist Church members discover friends, relatives, & acquaintances to invite to Bring-A-Friend Sunday, Palm Sunday, April 17th. Guide us by your Holy Spirit to grow into a fellowship that makes disciples of Jesus.*

*In Jesus' name, Amen.*

**PEOPLE TO INVITE**

Friends  
Relatives  
Neighbors  
Paper boy  
Receptionists  
People who bug you  
People who you bug  
Grocery store clerks  
Bus drivers  
Bored people  
Happy people  
Pizza guy  
Co-worker  
Unemployed



## CHUCK & KRISSIE CILANO



When Krissie and Chuck were visiting us this past fall, Sally Vernon asked if our kids could have pen pals from Thailand where Chuck and Krissie are serving. Krissie teaches school there and her schoolchildren became pen pals with our kids. In February, the Kings Kids received 20 Valentine cards from Krissie's kids. King's Kids are given a couple of children in Thailand to write to and love that the Valentines they received were written in both English and Thai. Kings Kids realize that other children in the world also worship Jesus and love Him.

Thank you, Krissie. We may be a world apart physically but we certainly do feel close to you. This is a great experience for all the children involved.



## FINANCES

As I work on our church's finances, I am amazed. For our size and type of congregation we have our pledge and special giving is impressive. We all have been hit with financial changes in our lives at sometime, and yet, we try hard to be faithful to our giving to the church. Just as our home expenses, utilities especially, have increased this winter, so have our church's. So far this year (three months) a combined total for church and parsonage utilities is \$6,730.69. Yes, that is a correct figure. Add in the rest; insurance, salaries, payroll, taxes, hospitalization and pension (pastor only)...well, you do the math. Oh, don't forget about the building fund. I guess what I am saying is that now is the time to be "super faithful" in your giving plan. Any additional giving will certainly be a blessing.

Les Eve,  
Church Treasurer

## PRAYER CHAIN

I would like to advise everyone of a change in our Prayer Chain organization.

For many years, Ruth (Gardner) Whitlatch was our "starter person". Her faithfulness to allow our prayers to be offered for those in need was greatly appreciated. Thank you, Ruth

Leslie Eve has now taken over this task and has come to realize just how important that first call is. Please call Les for setting

prayers into motion. Nothing else has changed. All members of the prayer chain just need to call the next person as soon as possible, keep it brief, don't call after 9-10 p.m. unless it is an emergency, and most important, do not add anything to the request.

**Call Leslie Eve at**  
**724-652-4864**  
**To start the**  
**prayer chain.**



Les has an answering machine, leave a message and she will return your call. Also call if you wish to be added to the prayer chain callers.

## NOW Committee

We hardly know how to begin to make a report on our "gathering for the City Rescue Mission". To shout Halleluiah! And jump up and down and shout "Thank you! Thank you! Thank you! Sums it up best. We did so well with the four items they especially needed, we thought you would like to know what we collected.

Toothpaste 145  
Toothbrushes 175  
Razors 82 packages  
Soap 84 bars

Our toothbrushes and toothpaste were helped with a generous gift from Dr. Gary Snow. We also received many miscellaneous items such as deodorant, shampoo bodywash, combs, shaving cream, etc. some of which will be used at the Ladies House. A special thank you to Marjorie Trover who helped in counting and packing and to Joe Heasley and Pastor Ron for bringing the boxed downstairs for the Mission truck. A humble "Thank You" to all of you! The NOW Committee



**MICHAEL SNOW**

*June Snow would like to share some of the e-mail she has received from her grandson, Mike Snow who is serving in China.*

Michael is in China teaching English at a middle school. There are 50+ students in each class. Mike loves it and is making friends and he shares the Good News with them.

Mike plays soccer at 6 am and has made most of his friends that way. He “hangs out” with them off of the soccer field. Some have no interest in talking about Jesus, but he says he loves them and he prays that God will work in their hearts. He asks us to pray for boldness for him and gave us names of friends to pray for. He says they are great guys.

He is using the New Testament to study Chinese with a tutor. He hopes his tutor will experience the living power of the word of God. He says it breaks his heart to see them following something that is a lie.

The people are Uyghur, therefore are Muslim and believe in God but trying to find someone that knows what they believe is very difficult. He says they do not know what their prayers mean.

He has been invited to the home of one of his Muslim students for one of their holidays. There was an Imam and three assistants who spoke in Arabic. He bought a Koran and has studied it and cannot believe some of the things it says.

Michael’s last e-mail says that he loves the local believers. Seeing how their lives have been transformed and how they crave for their families and friends to know is greatly encouraging. He says “I teach English, I make friends, I pray and pray and pray and wait for God to do a work in this area through me.

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**REPAIRS OF FELLOWSHIP HALL**

**NOTICE, NOTICE, NOTICE**

The Fellowship Hall is in need of some repairs. The most immediate need (because of summer rentals) is repairs to the floor with an estimated cost of \$1200.00. This, we believe can be met with the present balance of the Hoagie Sale Fund.

The second repair is a replacement of one of the two heating units with an estimated cost of \$8500.00. This heating unit should be replaced by the next heating season. This will require a fund raising project along with an unexpected expense (to the Trustees) for needed roof repairs of the church. This fund raising can be accomplished with appeals, of additional commitments, and projects, while remembering our first commitment is to the meeting of our church budget.

The most immediate, easiest reliable and rewarding project to do, is the quarterly Hoagie Sale. In the past our sales were in excess of 1000 hoagies, but has fallen off to between 450 to 600.

If we could increase our sales to the numbers of the past sales we will realize a profit in excess of \$4000.00 a year.

This project would require additional commitments of helping with the selling, making, and delivering of the hoagies.

As in the past, this requires about three hours Wednesday evening in preparation and about three and a half hours on Thursday morning making and delivering.

This is a much needed and do-able project that will go a long way in meeting the physical building needs of the church.

**What da ya think??**

Fellowship Hall Co-ordinator  
Jesse “Joe” Heasley

**SCHEDULING OF FELLOWSHIP HALL**

Summer is fast approaching. Do you need the use of the Fellowship Hall? Check with Jesse “Joe” Heasley and get your reservation on the church calendar.

Donations are:  
Church Members \$100  
Plus 15 for the custodian  
Non-Members \$200  
Plus \$15 or the custodian  
Kitchen for serving,  
refrigerator, stove top  
is included in the above.

For Members and Non-members  
Additional cooking in the kitchen is \$40 to \$60 depending on the amount of cooking.