

**AND THE PEOPLE CAME...**

- Week of March 3, 2024 -

Sunday School .....	17
Sunday Morning Service .....	28
Sunday Evening Service .....	16
Wednesday Eve., 03/06/24 Service .....	12

**AND THE PEOPLE GAVE...**

- Week of March 3, 2024 -

<u>Undesignated</u> Tithes & Offerings .....	\$ 5,819.51
<b>TOTAL RECEIVED FOR WEEK OF 03/04/24:</b>	<b>\$ 5,819.51</b>

- Week of February 25, 2024 -

<u>Undesignated</u> Tithes & Offerings .....	\$ 9,595.18
Church Sign Restoration Fund .....	\$ 1,803.00
Missionary Love Offering (children's SS) .....	\$ 5.71
<b>TOTAL RECEIVED FOR WEEK OF 02/25/24:</b>	<b>\$ 11,403.89</b>

- Week of February 18, 2024 -

<u>Undesignated</u> Tithes & Offerings .....	\$ 1,244.70
<b>TOTAL RECEIVED FOR WEEK OF 02/18/24:</b>	<b>\$ 1,244.70</b>

- Week of February 11, 2024 -

<u>Undesignated</u> Tithes & Offerings .....	\$ 1,229.93
<b>TOTAL RECEIVED FOR WEEK OF 02/11/24:</b>	<b>\$ 1,229.93</b>

- Week of February 4, 2024 -

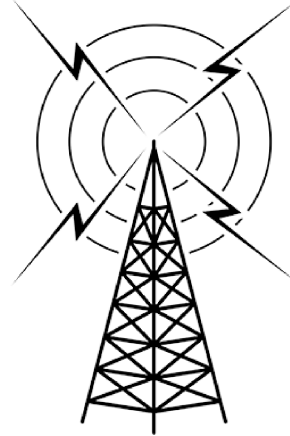
<u>Undesignated</u> Tithes & Offerings .....	\$ 2,268.68
Church Sign Restoration Fund .....	\$ 5.00
<b>TOTAL RECEIVED FOR WEEK OF 02/04/24:</b>	<b>\$ 2,271.68</b>

Average amount of Undesignated Offerings needed for church operating expenses EACH WEEK, as a minimum = \$ 1,600.00



**WHAT IT MEANS TO BE SAVED**

1. Admit that you are a sinner.
2. Admit that God says all sins must be paid for.
3. Accept the fact that Christ took upon Himself the suffering necessary to pay for all your sins.
4. You must change your mind about sin and sinning (God calls this repentance).
5. By an act of your will, accept by faith the Lord Jesus Christ, Who can save you from the penalty of sin. Then, tell God about this in a simple prayer. Believe that God keeps His promise to save you, and thank Him for His salvation.



**PLEASE PRAY FOR  
UPCOMING RADIO  
STATION MINISTRY -  
THAT THERE WILL  
BE NO "HANG UPS"  
WITH THE CITY OF  
SAPULPA IN GETTING  
EVERYTHING  
APPROVED SO WE  
CAN BEGIN  
CONSTRUCTION.**

Thank You!

**Church Directory**

Todd W. White .....	Pastor
Debra Carlton, Mickie Shatwell, Lois Mae Floyd .....	Pianists
Derek Quinnelly .....	Greeter
Kim Phillips; Shirley White/LeAnna White; Berdena Bergman/Debra Carlton; Daniel Avery/GiGi Avery; & Keith Shufelt .....	Teachers
Larry & Mary Byars .....	Outreach
Keith Shufelt .....	Men's Prayer Group
GinaMarie Shufelt .....	Ladies Bible Study/Flowers
Seth White .....	Sound/Video
Larry Byars, Derek Quinnelly, David Smith .....	Trustees

REMINDER



**Should Christians Celebrate Easter?**

Many Christians are unaware of the origins of Easter, which is actually a pagan festival held in honor of idols. In fact, Easter was celebrated hundreds of years before the birth of Jesus Christ. It wasn't until at least 300 years after the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ and the establishment of Roman Catholicism that the official celebration of his resurrection began to be intermingled with the pagan practices of Easter.

Here are some interesting facts:

**The Word "Easter" and the Goddess it Represents -**

The word "Easter" is derived from "Eostre," the pagan Anglo-Saxon goddess, and/or "Eostare," the Norse pagan festival of spring. When God gave the law to the Israelites in the Old Testament, He clearly instructed them to refrain from even uttering the name of other gods (*Exodus 23:13*). Names like Aphrodite, Asherah, Ashtoreth, Astarte, Diana, Eostre, Ianna, Ishtar, Isis, Ostara, Semiramis, Venus, . . . call her what you will, but she is one and the same - a false goddess, an idol, worshiped by pagans, and God declares that she is detestable.

Asherah is mentioned in the Old Testament quite frequently (*Ex. 34:13; Deut. 7:5; Deut. 12:2-4; Deut. 16:21; etc.*). Ashtoreth (the Babylonian goddess of the woods and nature) is also mentioned by name in the Bible (*Judges 2:11-13; I Samuel 7:3; I Kings 11:5, 33*). In every instance, she is an idol which greatly angers God. Inanna, the Sumerian patron of the temple prostitutes (also considered the merciful mother who intercedes with the gods on behalf of her worshipers), is represented with a star inscribed in a circle. There are several scriptures which clearly show that worship of any of the celestial elements (sun, moon or stars) is forbidden by God (*Deut. 17:2-5; II Kings 21:3-7, II Kings 23:4-15; Ezekiel 8:15-16*). Ishtar [pronounced "Aes-tar"] (the Babylonian/Chaldean goddess of love and war) and Semiramis (an Assyrian goddess) were both known as the "Queen of Heaven." And the "Queen of Heaven" is specifically mentioned in the Bible (*Jer. 7:18; 44:19, 25*).

What, other than the obvious connection of the words "Easter" and "Eostre" does this goddess have to do with the modern celebration of Easter? Plenty.

☐ **Spring and Nature.** Diana (the Ephesian goddess of sex, fertility, virginity and motherhood) was said to be the source of nature. Eostre (an Anglo-Saxon/Teutonic goddess) was the goddess of the sunrise and spring. Ostara (a Norse/Saxon goddess) was the maiden goddess of spring.

☐ **Sunrise Services.** The book of Ezekiel shows rather clearly what God thinks of sunrise services: ". . .there. . .were about five and twenty men, with their backs toward the temple of the LORD, and their faces toward the east; and they worshipped the sun toward the east" (*Ez. 8:16*). We know that the sun is only in the east at sunrise. God will not spare those who observe this practice, look upon them with pity, or even listen to them (*Ez. 8:1-18*). Besides, if it is the Christian's intent to observe the resurrection of Jesus Christ, one should take note that he arose before, not during, sunrise (*John 20:1*)!

☐ **Bunnies and Eggs.** According to Teutonic myth, the hare was once a bird whom Eostre changed into a four-footed creature. Thus, it can also lay eggs. The hare is also the sacred companion and sacrificial victim of Eostre. Astarte (a Phoenician/Syrian goddess), on the other hand, was believed to have been hatched from a huge egg which fell into the Euphrates.

☐ **Good Friday.** Did you ever wonder why Good Friday is recognized as the day Jesus died and Sunday as the day He arose, but yet had trouble explaining how he could thus be buried for three days and three nights (*Matt. 12:40; 27:63; Mark 8:31; 9:31; 10:34*)? The answer is simple: He didn't actually die on "Good Friday." The Chaldeans offered cakes to Ishtar on the equivalent of the day we know as Good Friday. When the Roman Catholic Church wanted to appease the paganistic people in order to "convert" them to Christianity, they moved the dates accordingly! He was actually crucified on a Wednesday.

☐ **Hot Cross Buns and Fires.** Cakes bearing a cross-like symbol representing the pair of cow-horns on the moon goddess, Isis, (continued inside)

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were offered by ancient Egyptians. The cakes which Greeks offered to Astarte and other divinities were called *bous* or *boun*, from which the word “bun” is derived. The Babylonians/Chaldeans offered similar cakes to the “Queen of Heaven.” Fires were lit on top of mountains and had to be kindled from new fire, drawn from wood by friction. The fire was then used to bake cakes in sacrifice to Semiramis, the “Queen of Heaven.” This practice, along with burning incense, was used in conjunction with baking the cakes and is mentioned specifically in the Bible (***I Kings 11:8; II Kings 17:7-16; 18:4; 23:4-15; Isaiah 17:8***). In addition to the cross imprinted on these cakes representing the horns of the goddess, it also sometimes represented the four seasons or four phases of the moon. Cakes were also offered to or eaten in honor of Apollo, Diana, Hecate, and the moon (also Diana’s symbol).

❑ **Lent.** The word “lent” is of Anglo-Saxon origin meaning “spring.” Lent developed from the pagan celebration of weeping, fasting, and mourning for 40 days over the death of Tammuz (one day for each year of his life). Tammuz (the son/husband of the Babylonian idol Ishtar) was killed by a wild boar and then allegedly resurrected. This mourning of Tammuz is specifically prophesied by Ezekiel in the Bible and is characterized by God Himself as being detestable (Ez. 8:13-15).

❑ **Lily.** Asherah (a Sidonian goddess) was frequently represented as a nude woman bestride a lion with a lily (symbolizing grace and sex appeal) in one hand and a serpent (symbolizing fecundity) in the other.

❑ **New Clothing.** The tradition of wearing new clothing for Easter comes from the superstition that a new garment worn at Easter means good luck throughout the year.

❑ **The Festival.** The timing of the festival of “Eostar” (the festival of spring) predates the birth of Jesus Christ, and the festival was always celebrated in conjunction with pagan idol worship. In 325 A.D., it was conveniently linked to the full moon on or following the spring or vernal equinox, March 21, when nature is in resurrection after winter. This is also when Easter is celebrated in modern times. Of course, there isn’t anything wrong with remembering and observing the death, burial, and resurrection of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

❑ **Who celebrates Easter?** Witches, who base their celebrations (including Halloween) on the phases of the moon, celebrate Easter. Christians, however, are clearly forbidden from observing this pagan celebration (***Deut. 12:30-31; Luke 4:8; I Cor. 10:20-22; Eph. 5:11***). There is a good reason why the early church never spoke of Easter and why there is absolutely no indication of the observance of the Easter festival in the New Testament (***NOTE: in the KJV, “Easter” is mentioned in Acts 12:4, not as a Christian observance of the Resurrection, but as a reference to the pagan holiday that was about to be observed by the people in the area at the time***).

**SO - SHOULD CHRISTIANS CELEBRATE EASTER?** If it means having Easter egg hunts, bunnies, and such, **NO**. But we **CAN** use this specific day to remember and celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus Christ! In truth, we do that every time we get

together on Sunday - ***for EVERY Sunday is RESURRECTION DAY!***

Like Christmas, the Bible-believing Christian must be diligent to ***“Abstain from all appearance of evil” (I Thess. 5:22). Unlike Halloween, Christmas and Easter have almost totally lost their original, pagan meanings, and it would seem that if a Christian can keep things focused on the REAL REASON for the celebration, there would be no need to “throw the baby out with the bathwater.”***

In a word, let we, as believers in the Risen Christ, ***“Observe RESURRECTION SUNDAY, rather than Easter.”***

## ***NEWS OF INTEREST TO CHRISTIANS***

❑ ***FRANCE BECOMES FIRST COUNTRY TO ENSHRINE ABORTION IN CONSTITUTION; APPLAUDS MURDER OF THE UNBORN*** - The following is excerpted from “France Becomes,” Christian Post, Mar. 5, 2024:

“France became the first nation to enshrine abortion in its national constitution in an overwhelming vote that prompted a standing ovation from the French Parliament in Versailles on Monday. French lawmakers overwhelmingly voted 780-72 in favor of the bill to amend Article 34 of the French constitution. ... When the final vote was announced, the room in Versailles Palace erupted with sustained applause, and many who were gathered in Paris’ Trocadéro Square to watch the vote on a large screen also cheered as the amendment passed, according to The New York Times. On Monday evening, the Eiffel Tower was emblazoned with the words ‘My body, my choice.’”

**CONCLUSION:** The legalization of abortion is a fulfillment of Bible prophecy. ***“This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves ... Without natural affection ... incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good ... lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God” (II Timothy 3:1-4)***. What could better illustrate “without natural affection,” what could better illustrate incontinence and fierceness, what could better illustrate “lovers of pleasures” than a mother conceiving a child and killing it and a nation applauding the act? The hour is very late.

❑ ***JEWISH RABBIS EXPECTING THE MESSIAH IMMINENTLY*** - A report in 2022 stated that “biggest rabbis are afraid to leave the country lest they miss Messiah’s coming” (Israel Today, Sept. 29, 2022). Rabbi Chaim Kanievsky, one of two or three top rabbis of the ultra-orthodox, “claimed to be in direct contact with the Messiah and had been tasked with informing the public of the Messiah’s imminent arrival” (Ibid.). Rabbi Yaakov Zisholtz told Radio 2000, “The process of redemption is about to start happening very quickly and at a fast pace. It is important that people remain calm and steady to act properly in the right time.

... Getting the word out now that the Messiah is closer than ever is a matter of life and death. Haven’t you heard of Gog and Magog? That is what is going to happen very soon.” Decades ago, Rabbi Yitzhak Kaduri and Rabbi Menachem Schneerson predicted that Benjamin Netanyahu would be Israel’s last prime minister

prior to the Messianic Age (“Netanyahu Holding the Keys for the Messiah,” Israel365News, Nov. 19, 2018). Rabbi Levi Sudri suggests that Netanyahu is the Jonathan who is preparing for the return of the house of David. He bases this on a rabbinical interpretation by Rabbi Shmuel Bornshtain from the early 1900s (“Netanyahu Will Hand Scepter to Messiah,” Israel365News, May 28, 2018).

Rabbi Schneerson, who died in 1994, was considered the Messiah by hundreds of thousands of Jews in the 1980s and 1990s. Even since his death, many are waiting for his resurrection, and some don’t believe that he is dead. Schneerson was the seventh rebbe or rabbi leader of a kabbalistic ultra-orthodox Jewish sect called Lubavitch (also called Chabad and Habad), a sect that focuses on the return of the Messiah. Schneerson “transformed it from a small movement into the largest and most widespread Jewish movement in the world today.” Schneerson’s photo is plastered on signs and walls in many parts of Israel. It is often accompanied with a crown and the Hebrew word Mashiach (Messiah).

According to ultra-Orthodox thinking, the Messiah is the man who will build the third temple.

Rabbi Nachman of Breslov (1773-1810), who lived in Uman, Ukraine, taught a mantra based on his own name that is supposed to help bring the Messiah into the world. It is Na Nach Nachma Nachman MeUman. The movement that follows Nachman is called “Na Nach” after this mystical chant. Tens of thousands of Jews make an annual pilgrimage to Nachman’s gravesite, even in the midst of the Russian-Ukraine war (32,000 visited in 2023). The recital of certain psalms (Psalms 16, 32, 41, 42, 59, 77, 90, 105, 137, 150) at his gravesite is thought to bring “general remedy” for sins and damages and salvation from hell.

What most Jews do not know, because their minds are blinded by rabbinical tradition, is that the next “messiah” is the anti-christ who will step forth as a man of extraordinary ability with an unprecedented peace plan. He will indeed build the third temple (we see it being measured in Revelation 11), but he will reveal his true character by entering it and declaring himself God. “... the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God” (II Thessalonians 2:3-4). See also Daniel 9:27; Matthew 24:15-22; Revelation 13:5-8.

❑ ***ANOTHER ANCIENT SYNAGOGUE FOUND IN MAGDALA*** - In 2009, the foundation of a large first century synagogue was discovered in ancient Magdala on the northwestern shore of the Sea of Galilee, about four miles north of Tiberius. Mary Magdalene got her name from this city and Jesus preached here. ***“And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues...” (Matt. 4:23)***. In one room of the synagogue a coin was discovered dating to AD 29, which was at or near the time of Jesus’ public ministry. The synagogue had pillars and mosaic floors. One of the surviving images depicts a Galilee fishing boat with a sail and three oars. Also found in the synagogue was a carved stone that appears to be a depiction of the temple in

Jerusalem. On the front is the image of a seven-branched menorah. In December 2021, the announcement was made that a second synagogue had been discovered in Magdala about 100 meters west from the first one. It is smaller and less elaborate. “The newly excavated synagogue is a simple, square-shaped building, constructed out of basalt and limestone. It consisted of a central hall with a bench along one side and two small rooms. One room is thought to have been used to store scrolls. Each of the rooms and the bench were coated with plaster” (“Archaeologists Discover New First-century Synagogue,” Biblical Archaeology Society, Dec. 15, 2021). Josephus, the Jewish warrior leader turned historian, who operated out of Magdala, said the city had a population of 40,000 and a fishing fleet of 230 vessels.

❑ ***FEDERAL COURT RULES BIDEN ADMIN CAN’T FORCE CHRISTIAN DOCTORS TO PERFORM TRANS SURGERIES*** - The following is excerpted from “Biden can’t force,” Christian Post, Mar. 5, 2024:

“A federal court has ruled that Christian healthcare workers cannot be forced to perform elective, body-disfiguring surgeries for individuals who identify as trans despite a mandate from the Biden administration. In an order released on Monday, the United States District Court of the District of North Dakota granted partial summary judgment in favor of the Christian Employers Alliance. At issue were two mandates from the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services that interpret Title VII antidiscrimination protections based on ‘sex’ to include sexual orientation and self-declared gender identity. It would require religious employers to provide health insurance that covers body-mutilating trans surgeries and force surgeons with religious objections to perform such procedures as castration for males and elective double mastectomies for females or face charges of discrimination based on gender identity. The court concluded that ‘CEA will succeed on the merits,’ adding that ‘if CEA had to comply with these mandates, its members would have to violate their sincerely held religious beliefs which is an impermissible exercise under the First Amendment and [the Religious Freedom Restoration Act].’ ‘CEA’s sincerely held religious belief is that male and female are immutable realities defined by biological sex and that gender reassignment is contrary to Christian Values,’ reads the order.” ■



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