

# March 2024



The  
Pachyderm

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## CHAIR'S CORNER

**What** does it look like to have success in the realm of politics specifically regarding the Barry County Republican Party? First, let's paint a picture of what's going on and then we can move towards the solution.

**During** this time, we are experiencing what seems to be a very volatile time in the party as a whole. By that, I mean the national and state parties are in such disarray that it naturally affects the county parties and creates rifts and tensions for everyone who is involved. This is detrimental as it distracts us from our cause and instead of uniting under the banner of conservatism, we find ourselves eating each other alive and by default destroying the very party that we are trying to build. The uneasiness and stress that some feel are also natural as we feel helpless to actually have a significant effect on the situation. So, what is the solution for BCRP?

**First**, we need to recognize that this is a normal state of affairs in the world of politics. Most people are ignorant of history and therefore have an unrealistic perspective on the natural state of politics. We need to remember that politics by nature is littered with power struggles traditionally resulting in murder, wars, genocides, and much more. To think that humans have changed in the last 3,000 years is a naïve point of view and requires a radical change of perspective. Thankfully the American Christians ushered in a new era of how power is transferred in the realm of politics, but the fact remains that it will always be nasty business.

*"We know that no one ever seizes power with the intention of relinquishing it" -George Orwell*

**Once** we understand the reality of the situation, we can embrace the chaos and start working towards the solution. First, we need to understand that we will not win every battle and at times there needs to be compromise. Not of principles but of strategy. We need to stay focused on the long game and see things all the way through to the end. Only when we know what our long-term goals are can we have a sense of stability and focus that allows us to handle the problems that arrive along the way.

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# Solar Panel Townhall

*We are not opposed to renewable energy sources.  
We are opposed to the usurpation of local control  
by an ever-growing State.*

On February 13, the Barry County COW convened a townhall style meeting at Hastings High School to address the issue of the recently passed ACT by the Michigan legislature that seeks to extend the power of the State through an unelected board to govern the ordinances that regulate the installation of renewable energy sources like solar farms, wind farm, and the like. In addition to the Commissioners, the stage was also host to Jim McManus, the Planning and Zoning Director, attorney Bradley Fowler with Mika Meyers PLC, Charles Gould, an educator with the MSU Extension in Ottawa County, and the lead representative from Citizens for Local Choice, Kevon Martis. The subject at hand was both to inform the public about the current ordinance procedure at the county and state level, as well as the consequences of the upcoming Act taking effect in November of this year. Currently, local townships and counties still possess the ability to regulate the installation of these renewable energy projects, but this will undergo a radical change by the end of this year unless the citizens of Michigan make their voice heard.

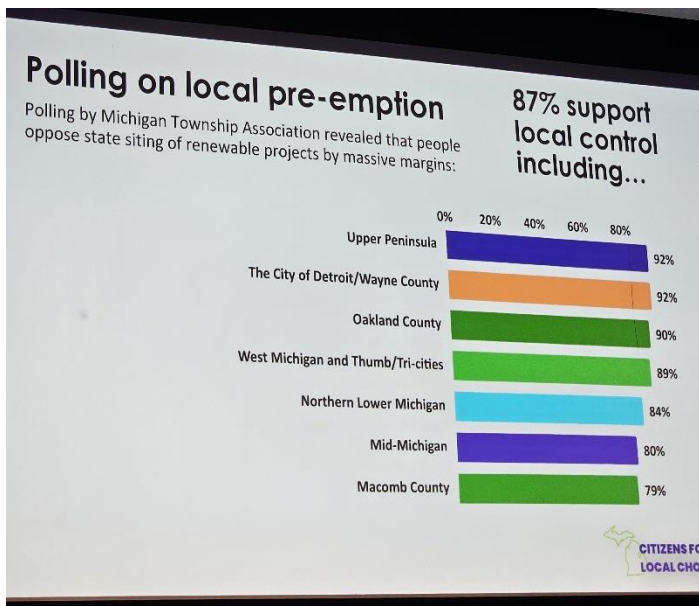
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Proponents of the future Act speak to the language that the State will only have preemptive power over local zoning control if the project is a “large scale” solar or wind energy generator and/or storage facility. While this level is set at any project that exceeds 50 Megawatts of energy output, it is important to note that the average size to produce 1 MW of energy would consume 5-8 acres of land. This means that a “large scale” project would consume 200-400 acres! Hidden in the structure of this Act is the language that allows for the land used as part of any individual project to be non-contiguous, that is that it does not have to be all part of the same parcel in order for it to be part of the same “project.” What this means is that the land across the street from you, five miles down the road, and partly in another county, if described in the scope of the project by the contractor as being all of one project, is no longer under the jurisdiction of the local county ordinances, but is now controlled by the State and its unelected Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC), a group of three individuals hand-picked by the administration.

A contractor seeking to install a “large scale project” would have to seek approval from this board and must provide a sum of \$75k to be held in escrow for the affected communities to cover the legal costs to challenge the provisions of the proposed project. Once the project is approved, the affected communities would each receive a one-time payment of \$2k each to use as those communities see fit. Here is the catch however, if the local county or township has an ordinance already in place that regulates renewable energy projects, they forfeit not only the monies held in escrow, laying the cost of any litigation on the county or township, but also the back-end payment once the project is approved. Additionally, any challenge is adjudicated by the unelected MPSC who may or may not have their own personal agendas regarding the project. This style of payoff, for all practical purposes has the taste and flavor of a bribe and should be treated as such.

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Not much double use going on here!  
Photo credit -G Weedmansee and S. Stanton



Minimal Set-back and no Screening!

Calhoun County

Photo credit -G Weedmansee and S. Stanton

Impact on the Roads!



Calhoun County

Photo credit -G Weedmansee and S. Stanton

Transmitting Station Impact!

Calhoun County

Photo credit -G Weedmansee and S. Stanton



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**This** then is where the Citizens for Local Choice have stepped in. This coalition is expressly not against any renewable energy source, nor against the implementation of solar panels or wind farms. The purpose behind their petition is to go after the Draconian measures inherent in the structure of the Act which give the State power to regulate and control issues that affect the local townships, and ultimately place that power into the hands of unelected bureaucrats. Providing pictures of the limits of the distance required for setbacks and its influence on the community, as well as addressing the lack of provisions for screening or the environmental and economic impacts were important elements of the presentation by Kevon, and are available by visiting the coalition's website at [www.micitizenschoice.org](http://www.micitizenschoice.org). They are currently circulating a petition that aims to secure 357k signatures by May 29, 2024, in order to secure a spot on the ballot for the current election year. If this fails it will not be able to return to voter choice until 2026, by which time thousands of acres of prime Michigan farmland, and the control of local counties and townships will have been seized. It is important to recognize that this is a bi-partisan issue. Recent polling by the coalition has revealed that overwhelmingly, individuals who represent both the left and the right are opposed to having the local choice on how to regulate these renewable energy projects consolidated in the hands of the State.

**You** can make a difference. Find a petition and sign it. Talk to your neighbors and coworkers about this issue. Visit the website and discover how you can become involved. Call your local county commissioners, township supervisors; attend your local meetings and let them know how you feel about this issue. The feedback from the people at this townhall, in addition to the varied constituency of Barry County voicing their concerns has led our county COW to decide to continue to pursue a path of crafting a local ordinance that will regulate these projects, an act of bravery and conviction that should serve as an inspiration for we the people and other counties across the state to stand up and say that this power is not the State's! Not the bureaucrats! It is the peoples!



LOCAL VOICES MATTER

# Representative Smit &

## CITIZENS FOR LOCAL CHOICE

Invite you to a

**Community  
Town Hall and  
Petition Drive  
for Local  
Control of  
Wind and Solar  
Operations**



**Free &  
Open to  
the Public**

**Thursday  
March, 7th**

**Time:** 6:00 - 7:30PM

**Location:** Allegan  
Township Hall

**Address:** 3037 118th Ave.  
Allegan, MI 49010

Join Representative Rachelle Smit & Citizens for Local Control as they discuss current energy laws and gather petition signatures to restore local control of large-scale wind and solar operations.

To RSVP and for more information, go to [www.micitizenschoice.org/events](http://www.micitizenschoice.org/events)

Paid for with regulated funds by Citizens for Local Choice P.O. Box 14309 Lansing, MI 48901

# CALENDAR OF MEETINGS

## MARCH 4, 2024

City of Hastings Library Board **4:30 pm**

City of Hastings Planning Commission **7:00 pm**

Assyria Township Board Meeting **7:30 pm**

## MARCH 5, 2024

Village of Middleville COW **4:30 pm**

Village of Middleville Planning Commission **7:00 pm**

Village of Nashville Planning Commission **7:00 pm**

Orangeville Township Board Meeting **7:00 pm**

## MARCH 6, 2024

Castleton Township Board Meeting **1:00 pm**

## MARCH 11, 2024

Village of Freeport Board Meeting **7:30 pm**

Village of Woodland Board Meeting **6:30 pm**

City of Hastings City Council Meeting **7:00 pm**

Carlton Township Board Meeting **7:00 pm**

Hope Township Board Meeting **6:30 pm**

Thornapple Township Board Meeting **7:00 pm**

## MARCH 12, 2024

Village of Middleville Village Council **7:00 pm**

Baltimore Township Board Meeting **7:00 pm**

Barry Township Board Meeting **7:00 pm**

## MARCH 13, 2024

Johnston Township Board Meeting **6:30 pm**

## MARCH 14, 2024

City of Hastings DDA **8:00 pm**

## MARCH 16, 2024

St Patrick's Day Parade

Downtown Hastings **5:30 pm**

## MARCH 19, 2024

Village of Middleville DDA **6:00 pm**

City of Hast. Zoning Board of Appeals **7:00 pm**

Irving Township Board Meeting **6:30 pm**

## MARCH 20, 2024

City of Hastings Park and Rec Committee Meeting **10:30 am**

City of Hastings Joint Planning Committee Meeting **5:30 pm**

## MARCH 25, 2024

City of Hastings City Council Meeting **5:30 pm**

## MARCH 27, 2024

City of Hastings City/County Airport Authority Meeting **4:30 pm**

# State Caucus March 2, 2024

**On** Saturday, March 2nd, alongside the other 20 counties of the 2nd District of the Michigan Republican Party, Barry County Delegates met in Grand Rapids, Michigan for the second part of the presidential nominating process, our district caucus. Michigan is **blessed to have 55 delegates** to represent the Great Lakes State.

**The** vote earlier in this week around the state was to award 16 delegates to the candidates, in which **Trump won 12 and Nikki Haley won 4**. However, in this second half of the nominating process, the precinct delegates elected at county convention 2 weeks ago gathered to vote in their districts yesterday for the remaining 39 delegates.

**What** an **AMAZING turnout** yesterday at the District Convention! *District 2 had the largest presence* of any of Michigan's 13 district, and the largest voting delegation! This is a testament to YOU, the delegates and supporters of Barry County who represented with 19 delegates and alternates and 1 at large Delegate.

**It** was amazing to see so many **incredible patriots** filled with smiling faces and enjoyment that helped create a very thorough smooth Convention. As the largest delegation, **we had 185 voting delegates** cast their votes for: Presidential Nominee, RNC Committeeman and Committeewoman, and 3 Delegates and Alternates for the **Republican National Convention that takes place in Milwaukee, Wisconsin** this summer. The votes of over 1600 delegates plus additional alternates were successfully certified:



**\* Trump took all 39 delegates with a win of 97.7%**

(1575 delegates voted for Trump, 39 voted for Nikki Haley)

**\* Dr. Rob Steel is the victorious RNC Committeeman**

**\* Hima Kolanagireddy is the victorious RNC Committeewoman**

**\* Our 3 District 2 Delegates Representing us in Milwaukee are:**

**Tim Ross, Ionia County**

**Randy Guppy, Newago County**

**Renee Jeffords, Clare County**

and our 3 alternate Delegates are:

**Kim Southwick, Kent County**

**Joel Johnson, Clare County**

**Tom Johnson, Mason County**

**Thank you again** for all that are committed to winning in November here in Barry County and turning Michigan RED for our State and for President Trump!



# State Caucus March 2, 2024 Grand Rapids, MI





# St Patrick's Day Parade

Saturday March 16, 2024

Line up @ 5 pm

Parade @ 5:30 pm

Come Walk with Us!

Contact April Taggart @

(269) 804-1313

Let her know if you want to participate!



**BARRY COUNTY REPUBLICAN PARTY'S  
NEW TRAILER!**



**BARRY COUNTY REPUBLICAN PARTY'S  
NEW TRAILER!**



*Volunteer*  
*\*no experience required*

**Judge at  
a high school  
speech & debate  
tournament!**



**Time Commitment**

*2-3 Hours for 1 Round*  
Watch a training video.  
Watch the speeches or  
the debate.  
Complete a ballot.



**Register now!**



**Dates and Location**

Grace Christian University  
1011 Aldon St SW  
Grand Rapids, MI 49509

March 7-9, 2024

**Questions?** Please contact our Judge Coordinator: [GrandRapidsJudges@NCFCA.org](mailto:GrandRapidsJudges@NCFCA.org)

To learn more about our league, please visit [NCFCA.org](http://NCFCA.org).

**Happy St. Patrick's day**



**Jesus said to her,**  
"I am the resurrection and the life.  
He who believes in me will live,  
even though he dies;  
and whoever lives and believes in  
me will never die."

*Happy a blessed Easter*

*He is risen!*

# REPUBLICANS, DEMOCRATS, INDEPENDENTS!

## LEND ME YOUR EARS!

It is so important to vote. It is how we ensure that our voices are heard. From the national spotlight to our local townships, this is our duty! To Help encourage this we are providing you with an easy way to encourage people you know to make sure that they are registered, can request an absentee ballot if they know they cannot make it to the polls, and find out how and where to vote.

Simply Print this page and hang it up at your work, your church, your local gym. Ask friends who own shops to post it in the windows and doors of their businesses. Hand them out to friends and family.

Encourage everyone you know and the people you meet on the street to get out and vote!

Let's make 2024 a record year for Barry County, the State of Michigan, and the country!

**Register to Vote**



**Request Absentee Ballot**



**Voter Information: Poll Place, Early Voting, Drop Boxes, Sample Ballot**



Paid for with regulated funds by BCGOP



**We want YOU to VOTE!**

Scan QR codes on back to  
Register to Vote,  
Request an Absentee Ballot,  
and Find Your Voter Info

Barry County Republican Party  
PO Box 22, Hastings, MI 49058

## CHAIRS CORNER

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*“Peace if possible, but truth at all costs” –Abraham Lincoln*

**Every** one of us got involved to help create a better system, community, and society. We CANNOT give up and walk away just because we lose a battle or have disagreements within our organization. Even if we lose 100 battles it's still not acceptable to give up the cause and leave our fellow republicans.

**We serve** the creator of the entire universe. The creator of the stars in the heavens, the earth itself, and all living things on it. And yet God created us in his image! We are not created for mediocracy but for greatness. We are representatives of the God on high. The one that calls us to have grace, forgiveness, and love. But he also calls us to be strong, bold, and administrators of justice.

**I'm calling** all Barry County Republicans to remember their calling and dig in for the long haul. Remember to forgive each other and build up instead of tearing down. To take a step back from the situation that seemed so big at the time and remember that we are called to weather the storm. We are strong when we are united and weak when scattered. If we can do that, then we will have success.

**In Liberty,**

Phillip Joseph  
Chair  
Barry County Republican Party.

From the Barry County Republican Party to all of you.

**He is Risen!**

**He is Risen Indeed!**

Happy Resurrection Sunday to you and yours!



### **An Interview with Sherrif Dar Leaf.**

-don perry

**When** the Sherrif shows up at your front door, oftentimes that pit in the center of your stomach becomes a gapping maw, but on the rare occasion that you have invited him over, the encounter is both pleasant and in this case enlightening. I had heard about Sherrif Dar Leaf back in 2021 when he became internet and media infamous for his inquiries into the 2020 election, earning him several vicious monikers and the ire of Michigan's attorney general at large. I had expected him to be outspoken and passionate. What I didn't expect was that he would be so well versed in the Constitution and take his role as Sherrif of Barry County so seriously. My goal was to find out his stance on the recent gun legislation that "took effect" on February 13<sup>th</sup>, 2024; what I gained was a wealth of information on our responsibilities as citizens, our duty as Americans, and how fortunate we all are to have him as our Sherrif.

**Sherrif Leaf**, eyes a twinkle with insight and his brush mustache not quite hiding his lips was quick to assert that this recent legislation is "not a law. It's an act," borne out by its name, the Public Acts 16 and 17. "First of all, any time they do an Act," he continued, shifting slightly

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on the recliner by the fireplace, “they can amend it anytime. So, it’s a foot in the door, and we need to stop it now. Personally, I have always been more protective of my citizens here than most other Sherrif’s around the country and that’s because sometimes I question why government is even getting involved with tragic events...When you pass a law, or an ACT like that you are trying to control the future behavior of men.” He went on to indicate that in previous years the number one danger to a child in the house was not a firearm but a 5-gallon bucket, yet we had no legislation requiring citizens to lock up their buckets, nor any registry for the large number of dangerous chemicals or poisons that are in almost every home, highlighting that this legislation is targeting a particular group of individuals. I asked him whether he felt that this legislation would make Barry County safer or more dangerous.

**“We** have more red flags now than before 9/11. Right now is not the time we should be disarming. Right now is the time we need to be protecting our kingdom. That’s what the 2<sup>nd</sup> Amendment is all about, our well-regulated militia.” Pressing on this matter we discussed the Dick Act from the earliest years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century that allowed the national government to form the National Guard, a multi-state unit that many have come to believe are the state’s militia. Dar with a keen eye and understanding of the Constitution quickly countered this narrative. “The Federal Government doesn’t have any authority to start a militia because the militia is already here. Our Constitution just recognizes that militia; it doesn’t create one it just recognizes one that has existed for centuries!” A history lesson ensued during which the depth and scope of the time Sherrif Leaf has spent making sure he possesses a thorough understanding of not only the law, but the intent of that law became increasingly evident.

**In** response I had to ask about how his department was going to handle the situation regarding this law, citing the Sherrif of Livingston County, Mike Murphy who has stood in

opposition to enforcing the law because he “doesn’t believe (it) is constitutional,” versus the Sherrif of Ingham County, Scott Wigglesworth who has publicly stated “I don’t feel like I get to pick and choose the laws I like or don’t like, or which laws I feel I do or don’t want to enforce.” At this point Dar laughed, a sharp bark that punctuated the small room and he leaned forward to emphasize his words.

**“Murphy** is 100% correct! Wigglesworth is.... wrong. Its our job, when we see something coming down the pike.... its our job to nullify and interpose.... Our job here even at the local level, even at the State level from the Federal government, and the Federal government is supposed to be doing it from all the Global governance. Its called nullification and interposition.” Sherrif Leaf seem ready to stand in the breach and push back against these and any Acts that he believes to be “repugnant to either the state or the Constitution,” stating that if it falls into that category, “it can’t be law,” as cited in the case of Marbury v. Madison in 1803. For his instructions to his deputies, his “number one instruction is ‘Don’t you dare violate anyone’s due process of law!’ We will investigate it, but we are not going to go over and violate someone’s due process.” A comforting reassurance in light of unsubstantiated reports of Sherrif’s in adjacent counties both willingness and intent to enforce these Acts in spite of their apparent repugnancy to the Constitution.

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## Michigan Citizens United



Norman Stephens · 2h ·

Please make sure completed petitions are not accessible at businesses/stores and not left on the counter and not visible to wind lease holders, wind energy reps, the Governor, present PSC chair, Dan Skripps and the sponsor of the bill, Abraham Aiyash.

# Man with ties to Honey Creek Wind developer accused of stealing anti-wind petitions

*Bloomville resident faces theft charge; wife works for energy company*



**Gere Goble**

Bucyrus Telegraph-Forum

Published 12:02 p.m. ET March 11, 2022



The theft of [anti-wind petitions](#) from a local eatery has resulted in criminal charges against a Bloomville man. His wife, an employee of the wind farm developer [Apex Clean Energy](#), has been placed on administrative leave by the company.

According to the [Bucyrus Police Department](#), the theft was reported shortly after 1 p.m. Feb. 25 at [LuLu's Kitchen, 1640 Marion Road](#).

On Wednesday, John Stockmeister, 35, of Bloomville, was charged with theft, a first-degree misdemeanor, according to Bucyrus police Capt. Kevin Wert, who investigated the case. Stockmeister faces up to six months in jail and a \$1,000 fine.

His wife, who was with him at the time of the incident but was not charged, has been listed as a contact person for several events sponsored in the community by Apex.

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**As** a former resident of other counties in Michigan, I commented on the difference that I had seen in the few interactions I had with the Barry County office versus the behavior I had experienced elsewhere, and I wondered what Sherrif Leaf had brought to the table. His answer is one that I hope other Sherrif's would take to heart.

**“Back** in 2005, I (Dar Leaf) was on a mission. I wanted to learn more and more about the office because I knew it was more than just being a police chief. And the more and more I looked at it, I went ‘Wow! This is a very important office.’ And Thomas Jefferson...said the Sherrif is the most important office in your state government...The Sherrif represents the sovereignty of the State.” This importance is coupled with a surprising amount of humility and responsibility, two characteristics that Sherrif Leaf tries to instill in all his deputies. In fact, while he avers that he would never give his deputies orders to break the law in the process of their duties, he holds them accountable to push back on him should he ever fail in this practice. It is this combination of talents and skills that has allowed the county to retain him for the last 20 years.

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**I** couldn't let the opportunity slip past and ask if he was planning on running for office again this year. "I'm not answering that yet," he replied, his eyes shining and his lips quirking towards a smile. "We'll save that for another newsletter."

**Finally**, I asked if he had any advice for the citizens of Barry County. What he said is both timely and timeless. "We don't know how many millions of illegals we have here, how many millions of soldiers we have over here from countries that don't like us. Its time for you to prepare. That's everything obviously from your arms, but you need a good food source, you need a water source. You need to communicate with the community that you are in right now. Now more than ever! The more you prepare the less I have to worry about you. We're spread out over 576 square miles with 31 deputies....so the public out there will be on their own for a while until we can get there."

**I** had taken enough of the Sherrif's time and as I knew he had a date with his wife lined up for after our meeting, and I definitely did NOT want to upset her, I thanked him for his generosity and his insight. Watching him pull out of my driveway I was both proud and grateful that we have Dar Leaf and hoped that he would continue to be a force for good in Barry County.

(To hear the full hour interview visit our website at [www.barrycountyrepublican.org](http://www.barrycountyrepublican.org))



# LOOKING FORWARD

-Publius

**In** the early history of the Christian Church, long before the establishment of the seat in Rome, before the council of Nicaea, the most important day in the Christian calendar was Resurrection Sunday. Not Easter. Not Christmas. Not the celebration of the feast days of the various saints. The date set aside to honor the resurrection of the Christ. This date seems almost an afterthought nowadays, eclipsed during the spring months by St. Patrick's Day, and the ubiquitous self-serving Spring Break. It is almost an affront that we dedicate so much time for gathering and feasting at Christmas. And let me be perfectly clear in stating that I do not for any reason begrudge the time off, the family, and the infusion of goodwill that accompanies that time of year. However, when the air turns warmer, and the crocuses and daffodils begin poking their heads above the frost line, too often the solemnity and celebration of what should be the most joyous and revered moment in the history of everything is subdued, or absent behind the guise of bunnies, colored eggs, and the obligatory visit with the extended family to Sunday morning service before whisking off to an over priced brunch with brisket and mimosas.

**This** year I propose something different. In my household, on Good Friday we try to make it a point to watch "The Passion of the Christ." If you have not seen it yet, I would encourage you to do so this year. Our modern-day churches are glib in the holiday; this film brings it back to a sense of sanctity. Watching the Son of God stand blameless before Pilate and yet be condemned to torture and death, and then being subjected to seeing that torture carried out is humbling and painful. In interviews, Jim Caviezel who was charged with portraying the Son of Man on film testifies to being accidentally struck by the whips used one time and it drove him to his knees, and yet our Savior was lashed repeatedly until his back was laid open to the bone and his muscles torn. And then.... forced to carry, read drag, the instrument of his own demise to the place of his execution will break the strongest of hearts. Lee Strobel in his book "The Case for Christ" outlines the sheer violence and agony that is involved with a crucifixion, from the crushing weight on the chest that suffocates the victim to the exposure to the miserable Israeli sun.

**The** moment that our Lord cries out "Eloi! Eloi! Lama sabachthani!" as His Father, in agony, turns His back on His Son because the weight of my sin, of our sin is overwhelming sends me into uncontrollable tears every time. And yet it is important to remember that this is the suffering He endured for us. "He was wounded for our transgressions; He was bruised for our iniquities." (Isaiah 53:5) Even more humbling is realizing that even if I were the only person alive in the history of the earth, even still God would descend from on high to suffer and die for my redemption!

**There** are many churches that hold Good Friday services, yet many of them close with 'But Sunday's coming!' While this is true, I cannot help but think what his disciples endured on that long and lonely Sabbath. For them it was the end of their three-year journey with the man they believed to be the Messiah, and now, suddenly, everything that they had hoped for, all that they had learned and held on to was gone, crushed beneath the heel of the world. I imagine them huddled in darkness, not daring to seek each other out lest they be discovered or recognized as followers of the one who was just executed as a traitor and a heretic by their own people's lust for death. Waiting through that agony until early on Sunday morning a few women went to administer the burial dressings they were denied after his ignominious death on the cross to discover an empty tomb.

**This** is our victory. While it is important to remember the moment that God stepped down from grace to give us His Son, it is in the suffering and death that the penalty of our sin is sanctified. It is in the Resurrection from death that we are reunited with our Maker, so that we may proclaim "Oh Death! Where is your sting! Oh Grave! Where is your victory." (1 Corinthians 15:55)

**I urge** you to take some time this year to spend your final week of March leading up to the celebration of Resurrection Sunday to live fully in each moment as His disciples did. Share in the agony and the suffering, that you may better appreciate His resurrection.

**He is Risen! He is Risen Indeed!**