

The St. John Lutheran Church
Volume 74 — Number 04
April 2025 Jottings

“We lift up Jesus Christ in our lives, our church, and our community.”



Pastor Michael's Musings

April 2025

The angel said to the women, “Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples: ‘He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you to Galilee. There you will see him.’ Now I have told you.”
--- Matthew 28: 5 – 7

How forgetful and contrary we can be! We wonder about something, someone gives us the answer, we are excited for a moment or three, and then we abruptly, or over the space of a little time forget the answer we were craving for so long and need to be told all over again. Such is the curse of the human mind.

Scripture tells us that Jesus tried to talk to his disciples THREE times about his death and resurrection. The third time we read that the disciples were so afraid of what they were hearing that not only did they not want to hear it, but they were afraid to ask Jesus questions. On and on they plodded to Jerusalem, dreading what might lie ahead. Maybe they thought if they didn't talk about it, it might not come true. We can be like that too when we say, “Shhh! You're gonna jinx us!” after someone says something we don't want to hear.

The passage above from Matthew is actually kind of funny if you think about it. Notice what the angel says as he begins to talk to the women about the fact that Christ is no longer in the tomb. "...he has risen, just as he said." Just as he said. One can almost hear the angel's tone of voice. "We've been over this before, but let's recap..." And it doesn't stop there! "He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you to Galilee. There you will see him." The angel can't help it as the words are spoken, "Now I have told you." The angel feels the need to put that little qualification at the end. What could be the motivation be, *after having told the women* that Jesus is no longer there, of saying, "Now I have told you" other than to emphasize the importance of them realizing they have been told something that is *crucially* important. We do this occasionally when we say things like, "Are you listening to me?" "Did you hear what I said?" Of course, the person we are talking to has *heard* what we said. Their eardrums did vibrate as we talked. The question is, did their brain process it? Did the message sink home? One wonders how many times God has had to put up with people who didn't want to listen. It's interesting to note that Jesus says quite often things like, "...for those with ears to hear."

This year, April is the month in which we celebrate Easter. It can pop up in March, but this year we get to enjoy it in April. April is also the month in which we playfully celebrate April Fools Day. Unlike the disciples who had such a hard time hearing and then responding, let us celebrate Easter with confidence, wonder, and openness of heart. Let us not be foolish! Listen to what God is saying to you through the power of the empty tomb. Death has been defeated. Eternal life is ours! That is a message worth listening to!

Lent continues—OPEN your life!

Easter is late this year, so much of April remains in the season of Lent. It's not too late to come to the remaining Wednesday evening Lenten suppers and services. We're enjoying delicious soup and sandwich suppers at 5:45 each week, followed by very meaningful worship at 7 pm. We're using the theme "Open Your Life" and each week we've heard scriptures and sung songs related to how we can be open to God's will. Then, Pastor's dramatic presentations top things off nicely. Here's what's coming up:

Week 4 of Lent: Open My Heart, Lord

Listening to Paul's teaching, Lydia opened her heart to God and was baptized. Her willing, trusting faith echoes down through the centuries as we witness her "open heart procedure."

Week 5 of Lent: Open My Life, Lord

Moses presents us with a choice: death and adversity, or a life cracked open to the love of God. Writing to the Galatians, Paul tells us that we have died to the law so that we might live to God. It is no longer we who live, but Christ who lives in us.

Holy Week is coming...are you?

The Lenten season wraps up starting with PALM SUNDAY on April 13th. This is also confirmation day for our confirmands. On that day, we remember Jesus's triumphant entry into Jerusalem, when his followers cheered as he rode into town on a donkey. "BLESSED is He who comes in the name of the Lord!" they cheered...and yet, just 4 days later, they were cheering "CRUCIFY HIM". The services in that holiest of weeks recount the tragedy of those events and our worship goes from "HOSANNA" to music better fitting a funeral. Unfortunately, many people choose to avoid Maundy Thursday and Good Friday worship, opting to stay in that "happy" Palm Sunday mood until Easter Sunday, but in so doing, you're missing the emotion and meaning of the events of those fateful days. The beautiful and emotional music at the Maundy Thursday and Good Friday services remind us of the supreme sacrifice Jesus made for each of us. Don't skip those two important services! For those who should not be driving at night, we will offer communion services on Maundy Thursday (April 17th) at both 10:30 AM and 7 PM. The services are identical, except the choir sings at the evening service.

EASTER—April 20th!

After the seemingly long Lenten Season, the wondrous Easter Season arrives on April 20th. HE IS RISEN! HE IS RISEN INDEED we will shout as we pull out all the stops and sing the joyful songs of the resurrection. The liturgy songs will change back to ones of JOY as we bring “Hallelujah” out of hiding (we purposely avoid songs containing that word during Lent), and our weekly “hymn of praise” returns, with the appropriate words “This is the feast of VICTORY for our God, HALLELUJAH”. Easter is actually a “season”, not just one Sunday, so we’ll be singing Easter-oriented songs until Pentecost, which is on June 8th this year.

If you’re looking for a good time to invite your unchurched friends to join you in worship, the Easter Season is the perfect time. Everything is BRIGHT and the sanctuary should smell amazing with the fragrance of (hopefully) dozens of Easter Lilies. We’ll have an Easter Egg hunt for the kids at 9:45 on Easter Sunday, and lots of coffee-and-donut fellowship for the adults between services. See you there!



Women’s role in the Easter Story

We read a lot about the men in the Bible: The Apostles and the Disciples and prophets, but don’t discount the important roles that women played in this story. It was an unnamed woman who anointed Jesus with costly ointment for which he said her act was important because it prepared him for burial (Matt 26). In Matt 27, we read that there were many women at the crucifixion who had followed Jesus and had provided for him. On that first Easter Sunday, it was two women (Mary Magalene and “the other Mary”) who first went to the tomb and were told by an angel that Jesus had been raised and they were told to “Go quickly and tell his disciples”. Yes, it was the women who first preached the Gospel of the resurrection!

Until Next Month...

As we move into the Easter Season...the words of the Hymn of Praise become ever relevant:

“For The Lamb who was slain has begun his reign, HALLELUJAH”

From “This is the Feast” in our liturgy

Soli Deo Gloria (To God alone be the Glory)

Donald L. Bauer Director of Music

Look what is happening in Sunday School.

3 years old-PreK	Kathy Ellis
Kindergarten-3rd grade	Becky & Shannon Sanders
4th-6th grade	Patti Riley
Middle School	Fred Rosenbohm
Adult	Eric Jones

Starting Sunday, March 9th and throughout the spring months, our lessons will follow the Year C Lectionary to connect with Pastor's sermon.

April 6 th	Mary Anoints Jesus
April 13 th	Holy Week
April 20 th	The Empty Tomb
April 27 th	Doubting Thomas
May 4 th	Saul to Paul
May 11 th	Peter & Tabitha
May 18 th	Peter's Dream
May 25 th	Lydia
June 1 st	Paul & Silas
June 8 th	The Holy Spirit
June 15 th	Praise God

4th – 8th grade aged children are learning about Bible History, The Creed, and the importance of establishing their own unique faith journey.

As always, all Sunday School age children are welcome to join. If you have questions and/or would like to enroll your child, please contact me at your convenience.

John Wetterauer
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678-1736-cell

Homebound List (as of February 10, 2025)

Jim & Nadine Bartell	2705 S. Hilton Ln. Bartonville, Il. 61607	Barb Dickerson	2422 S. Daycor Divide Bartonville, Il. 61607
Jay Baumgardner	Swan Special Care Center 109 Kenwood Champaign, Il. 61824	Pat Janssen	12615 Lancaster Rd. Hanna City, Il. 61536
Art Campen	4169 King St.	Joyce Jones	Villas of Holly Brook 5301 W. Dirksen Pkwy. Apt. 24 Peoria, Il. 61607
% Carrie Campen	Denver, Co. 80211		
Jeffrey Campen	Lennox Guest Home 2875 W. 33 rd Ave. Denver, Co. 80211	Debra Look	Timber Ridge 2125 Veterans Rd. Morton, Il. 61550
Millie Carlson	Villas of Holly Brook 5301 W. Dirksen Pkwy. Apt. 48 Peoria, Il. 61607	Jo Ann Lambie	Lutheran Hillside Village c/o Pepper Bauer 5220 S. Cameron Ln. Mapleton, Il 61547
Sally Catterall	Villas of Holly Brook 5301 W. Dirksen Pkwy. Apt. 28 Peoria, Il. 61607	Jane Look	Heartis Village Peoria 8201 N. Il. Route 91 Peoria, Il. 61615
Evelyn Cool	Lutheran Hillside Village 6901 N. Galena Rd. Acorn Way Apt. A1 Peoria, Il. 61614	Jerry Pitzer	Independence Village 1201 N. Northmoor Rd. Rm. 242 Peoria, Il. 61614
Shirley Cramer	7815 W. Plank Rd. Peoria, Il. 61604	Sharon Resler	The Loft 1500 W. Northmoor Rm. 415 Peoria, Il. 61614

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Easter Lilies: The Altar Guild is selling memorial/celebration Easter lilies to decorate the church at Easter. They will be taking orders in the church library on the Sunday mornings of March 30th and April 6th before the 8am service and between 1st and 2nd services. The cost is \$18 each. If you will not be able to attend church, you can call Carol Super (309) 712-3914 or Jodi Miller (309) 678-0852 to order one.

Leisure Group: Leisure Group will be meet the 4th Wednesday in April (April 23rd) at noon. Anyone bringing a guest (a non member St. John or a member who has not attended in the past year) will have their name put in a drawing for a gift.

Adult Bible Study: Adult Bible Study will be starting again April 30th. If you need materials, see Jane Rosenbohm at (309) 645-9009.

Thank you!

Help: Sewing ladies need help. Can you tie a knot, iron, and any other help you can give us, like putting squares together for a top. We meet about 9:00am on Thursday mornings. We would enjoy your company.

Church Altar Flowers: HEADS UP: Sunday is the day we check our Flower Calendar & if you sign up for flowers during the week for the following Sunday you need to call Sue Moore @309-397-0507 to give her your order or they will be on the Altar the following Sunday. In order for the florist to give us their best service we need to give them ample time. Altar Guild Flowers are \$36. & make checks payable to Becks Florist & give to Jo Ann Brooks or the Altar Guild mailbox which is located in the Reception Room by the elevator. Sign up calendar for the flowers on the bulletin board in the West Entrance. You may take your flowers home after the 10:30 church service. Thank you for your help & beautifying our Altar.

Altar Guild,
Secretary Sheryl Bruninga

Sunday School Holy Week Activities

Sunday, April 13th: PALM SUNDAY-All Sunday School students are needed for the palm processional for both the 8:00 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.

Sunday, April 20th: EASTER SUNDAY-The Annual Easter Egg Hunt will take place at 9:45 a.m. on the east lawn of the church. PLEASE bring your own basket and/or bag

Holy Week (upcoming dates)

Sunday April 13 8:00am Palm Sunday
 10:30am Confirmation - 1st Communion

Thurs. April 17 10:30am Maundy Thursday Service
 7:00pm Maundy Thursday Service

Friday April 18 7:00pm Good Friday Service

Sunday April 20 8:00am Easter Service
 9:45am Easter Egg Hunt
 10:30am Easter Service

Readers:

Apr. 06	LaVonne Sammis
Apr. 13	John Wetterauer
Apr. 20	Teri Sammis
Apr. 27	Carol Alwood

Ushers:

Apr. 06	(8:00) Dave & Teri Sammis (10:30) Shirley Schmitt
Apr. 13	(8:00) Tim & LaVonne Sammis (10:30) Alex Heuermann
Apr. 20	(8:00) John Grafelman (10:30) Shirley Schmitt
Apr. 27	(8:00) Dan & Deb Sammis (10:30) John & Jane Rosenbohm

Greeters:

- Apr. 06 (8:00) Teri Sammis
 (10:30) Marilyn Hartseil
- Apr. 13 (8:00) LaVonne Sammis
 (10:30) Brenda Heuermann
- Apr. 20 (8:00) Allison and Addison Grafelman
 (10:30) Leora & Ivy Day
- Apr. 27 (8:00) Deb Sammis
 (10:30) Jessica Rosenbohm

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Year Round Worship Schedule :

8:00 a.m. Worship With Holy Communion
9:15 a.m. Sunday School for All Ages
10:30 a.m. Worship with Holy Communion

UPCOMING EVENTS THIS MONTH

Sunday, April 13th, is Palm Sunday at 8:00am and at the 10:30am service is Confirmation and 1st Communion Service.

Thursday, April 17th at 10:30am and at 7:00pm is Maundy Thursday Service

Friday, April 18th at 7:00pm is Good Friday Service

Sunday, April 20th at 8:00am is the Easter Service, at 9:45am is the Easter Egg Hunt, and at 10:30am is the Easter Service