GOOD NEWS

FROM CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH

APRIL 2022

FROM THE PASTOR

1 Thessalonians 4:13

But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope.

This short verse speaks volumes for the multitudes of believers. Recently we have had more funerals than we have in quite a while. With each of those funerals there is much grieving and struggle. Family and friends have lost someone that they love dearly. In a time of great emotional stress, many decisions are needing to be made. There may be people involved in that process who have little or no idea why we as Christians have the worship service that we have. Many people today believe this is a service about how grand of a person this was and let's make sure we tell everyone. Many people are just fine with no mention of sin or Jesus. After all that just makes us feel bad at a sad time.

For years (about as long as I have been a pastor) I have told people one of the best things you can do for your family is to prepare your funeral before it's time. That way your children will not need to make choices that may or may not be what you wanted, in the midst of their grief. If they are not members of our congregation, they may not know or understand our guidelines for what goes into a funeral service. The message of your faith and your Savior's mercy, may not be shared with those who attend and may or may not have the same hope as you.

I would like to take this opportunity, as we approach the remembrance of the death of Jesus (events that were planned before the foundations of the world were laid), to invite you to look through the hymnal and your Bible. Think about what hymns you would like to be sung and Bible verses read and preached on that will share your faith and your Savior's mercy with those sitting in the pews. Then come on in and visit, so that I to might better know how you wish to encourage your friends and family after you have left this life to be in paradise with Jesus.

In Christ, Pastor Nix

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BIRTHDAYS

April

04 Sarah Deutsch
10 Matthew Arlton
11 David Wetzel
14 Sadrine Na Kirindo
14 Jay Wehking
17 Cherie Zehendner
22 Dustin Preheim
22 Ruth Meyer
23 Alia Robison
26 Jordan Brack

ANNIVERSARIES

April

19 Les & Vickie Britson
24 Melanie & Ryan Hericks

FLOWER CHART

The 2022 Flower Chart is pinned to the bulletin board in the Narthex for those who would like to provide altar flowers for a particular Sunday.

If you have any questions about providing flowers, please contact Cheri Zehendner.



Sacred Music 24/7



lutheranpublicradio.org

LIFE THOUGHTS IN THE CHURCH YEAR FROM LUTHERANS FOR LIFE

April 3 – Fifth Sunday in Lent "You and I are God's workmanship as well. In and of ourselves we have nothing to offer God. But He gave us His Son, eternal life, forgiveness of sins, as well as the grace to serve Him. By God's tender-mercies we are qualified to serve Him now and forevermore!" *Daily Devotion, Redeemer Lutheran Church, Sister Lakes, Michigan – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • lutheransforlife.org*

April 10 – Palm Sunday "The temptation among Christians is to take the temperature of the chaotic and dysfunctional culture and to imbue ourselves with a sense of despair and discouragement. But despair and discouragement, we know from Scripture, is a sin because it negates the hope of Jesus Christ. We are not seeking an earthly victory; as Christians, we know that the most important victory of all of history has already been won by our Lord and Savior." *Timothy S. Goeglein, vice president of government and external relations at Focus on the Family in Washington, D.C. – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • lutheransforlife.org*

April 15 – Good Friday "The unconditional, sacrificial love of Jesus makes this day good. When your sins condemn you, He intercedes for you. When Satan seeks to devour you, Jesus defends you. When you are feeling spiritually empty, totally unworthy of God's love, remember what Jesus has done to save you. He will never leave you or forsake you. He has ascended into heaven to prepare a place for you. If all of this sounds too good to be true, if you are looking for proof of this amazing love, then all you need to do is look to the cross. Look to Jesus. Look at your living Savior's nail-pierced hands." *Rev. Peter Sulzle, St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church, Redwood Falls, Minnesota – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • lutheransforlife.org*

April 17 – Easter "So how's life? Are you stuck? Are you burdened? Are you troubled? Are you afraid? Do you think you've got nothing to live for? Stop acting like Jesus is dead because He's not. Look again at His life-giving hands. Jesus is alive! Let's act like it. Let's pray like it. Let's believe like it. Let's embrace His call, 'I am sending you' (John 20:21), and bring the Gospel to everyone, one soul at a time. Live life like there is no death because Easter means there is no death. Easter makes life really worth living." *Rev. Peter Sulzle, St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church, Redwood Falls, Minnesota – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • lutheransforlife.org*

April 24 – Second Sunday of Easter "Just as He did on the embryonic leg of your journey, the Lord is guiding you still. Just as He did when you cascaded down the fallopian tube, the Lord carries you still. You were created to listen to the words of the Lord. Listen to the One who knows you, who knows your entire journey." *Rev. Gary Blobaum, St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church, Oregon, Illinois – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • lutheransforlife.org*

STEWARDSHIP

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod LCMS Stewardship Ministry

Newsletter article – April 2022

Blessed Shall You Be

"Blessed shall you be in the city, and blessed shall you be in the field. Blessed shall be the fruit of your womb and the fruit of your ground and the fruit of your cattle, the increase of your herds and the young of your flock. Blessed shall be your basket and your kneading bowl. Blessed shall you be when you come in, and blessed shall you be when you go out." (Deuteronomy 28:3-6)

This is God's promise to the Israelites as they stood beyond the Jordan outside of the Promised Land. He promises blessing to His people. He will make them prosper, whether they are in the city or the field. He will make their fruit of their work to prosper, whether from the ground, their wombs, their flocks, or their herds. He will make them to prosper in all things, whether upon their coming in or their going out.

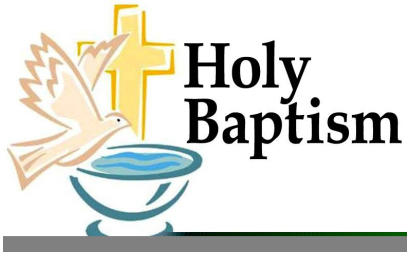
But there's a catch. He would do this for Israel only "if you obey the voice of the LORD your God." (Deut. 28:2b) If they did that, He would cause that "all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you." (Deut. 28:2a). If they didn't obey the voice of the Lord, if they didn't keep the commandments of the Lord and "walk in his ways" (Deut. 28:9), they would be met with curse and woe. The blessings would be replaced with curses. Everything that the Lord promised to prosper and bless would be cursed and fail.

Thanks be to God that our Lord Jesus Christ has come into our flesh and fulfilled the law for us – in our place and for our benefit. Our Lord Jesus Christ died for us – in our place and for our benefit. Our Lord Jesus Christ is risen from the dead for us – in our place and for our benefit. By this we have justification before God. We are forgiven, clean, holy, and righteous. The blessing of God is promised to us in Christ Jesus. It depends upon his work, not ours.

All this is ours in Holy Baptism. For in Holy Baptism, God claims us as His own, makes us His children, His heirs, and His holy people. And so it is that the work of our hands and its fruit is holy because we are holy in Christ. It is pressed into His service, and it thereby becomes a blessing to us and to our neighbor.

For this great gift, our reception of the blessings of God because of Christ Jesus our Lord, it is our duty to thank and praise, serve, and obey Him. This is not in order to receive the blessings but because in Christ we already have. With this in mind, we sit down on the first day of the week and set aside as He has prospered us to give to His church for His work of blessing in our midst (1 Cor. 16:2).

– LCMS Stewardship Ministry: lcms.org/stewardship



WELCOME TO THE FAMILY OF CHRIST

We are pleased to welcome Ruth Loretta Meyer into the family of Christ. Ruth is the daughter of Kirk and Lawanda Meyer. She was born on March 22nd and baptized on Sunday, March 27th.



NEW CHURCH DIRECTORY COMING SOON

Its been a while since our last Church Directory. Members have changed since then, to help with getting to know each other better we are planning to put together a new directory. We will have family pictures taken in April and May. Please watch for sign-up sheets in the Narthex to sign up for a family photo time that works for your family. We would also like to have you update your contact information at that time as well. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Pastor Nix.

CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH
TREASURER'S REPORT
March 25, 2022

	01/2022	03/2022	03/2022
Deposits:	$ 22,453.57	$ 24,546.75	$ 18,017.98
Disbursements:	$ 19,119.64	$13,795.83	$13,245.98
Deposit Breakdown:			
General Fund:	$ 24,329.82	$ 24,388.75	$ 17,656.97
Designated Funds:	$ 7 3.00	$ 158.00	$ 361.01
Interest:	$ 0.67	$ 0.66	
Monthly Budget Requirement:	$ 16,096.00	$ 12,876.80	$ 12,876.80
Mortgage Balance as of 03/25/2022			$251,288.56

LITURGY

Confession and Absolution

We can indeed approach God with confidence. And yet, because we stand on this side of our Lord's final return, we still have with us the devil, the world, and our sinful flesh. We have not yet faced the final judgment.

And so, with sin still working in us, the condemnation of God's Law must still confront us, lest we have any delusions that we might have something to boast of before our mighty Judge.

Above all else, Confession and Absolution keep us honest — honest with ourselves and honest before God. The act of confession is not some work that we lay before the Father's throne; rather, it is the simple acknowledgment that God's Word is true and right and that when we measure ourselves against its demands, we come up short.

God's Word says "you shall not give false testimony," but in truth we have lied and gossiped and slandered. And so, the Christian confesses: "Lord, Your Word is true; I have sinned."

There are three basic ways to handle sin and guilt. One is to ignore or minimize them. We've all been tempted in that direction more than a few times. Isn't that, after all, what our sinful human nature is all about?

Another way is to institutionalize them, especially the guilt part. After all, if you can keep people feeling just guilty enough, you will keep them coming back for more.

The third way is to give sin and guilt their proper due, and then to silence them. That is the way of God's absolution. With his forgiveness, our sin is removed from us as far as the east is from the west.

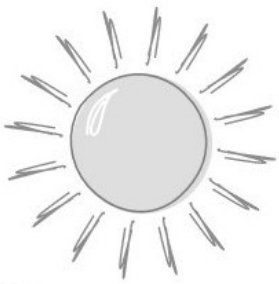
Christians know that, but they also need to hear it often. We need to be reminded that those familiar words, "I forgive you all your sins," are not just some impersonal announcement. They say what they mean and accomplish what they promise. Jesus himself said to his disciples that the sins they forgive are forgiven (John 20:23).

In the Confession and Absolution we are being readied for our appearance before Christ on the Last Day. And hidden behind those comforting words that our sins are forgiven is the invitation, "Come, you who are blessed by my father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (Matt. 25:34).

When our Lord speaks those words to us at the Last Day, Confession and Absolution as we know it will cease, for we will then bask in the eternal absolution of the Lamb.

Continues on page 6

KIDS IN THE DIVINE SERVICE



What is "Matins"?

Today we receive our Lord's gracious gifts through the Order of Matins. The word "Matins" comes from the Latin word "matutinus" which means "of the morning." Matins is a service of prayer that is used by the Church in the morning.

Why do we use the Order of Matins?

The Order of Matins has been used by Christians since almost the beginning of Christianity. At the beginning of the day, Christians prayed the Order of Matins because it started their day off right! You can use the Order of Matins too! When you wake up in the morning, grab your hymnal and try it. What better way than to begin each morning deep in God's wonderful Word? If you're not sure how to do it, then ask your pastor. He'd be glad to help you!

Parents: It can be quite easy for children to learn and enjoy the liturgy of the Church when a parent shows them how. Children rely upon routines in their lives, which are put in place by parents. Matins can become a part of the morning devotional routine at your house.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

2022

- Apr 14 Maundy Thursday Divine Service, 7pm
- Apr 15 Good Friday Tenebrae Service, 7pm
- Apr 17 Easter Sunrise Matins Service, 7am
- Apr 17 Easter Breakfast, 8am
- Apr 17 Easter Festival Divine Service, 9:30am
- May 8 Mothers' Day Breakfast
- May 26 Ascension Day Divine Service 7pm
- June 12 Voters Meeting
- July 24-28 VBS
- Sept 11 Voters Meeting
- Nov 24 Thanksgiving Day Divine Service, 9:30 am
- Nov 30, Dec 07, 14, Advent Services, 7pm
- Dec 21 Children's Christmas Service 7pm
- December 24 Christmas Eve service, 5pm
- December 25 Christmas Day Service 9:30 am
- No New Year's Eve/Day Service

HYMN OF THE MONTH ~ *O Lord, We Praise Thee – LSB 617*

The first stanza of *O Lord, We Praise Thee* dates from the 5th century and was unchanged by Luther. This stanza was sung in the Roman church after the Epistle reading on Corpus Christi Day. Luther composed the 2nd and 3rd stanzas and used it as a post-Communion hymn. Luther's hymn first appeared in 1524 in the Erfurt *Enchiridion* and Johann Walter's collection of hymns. While this hymn focuses on the Lord's Supper, it does not correspond as closely with Luther's explanation of the Sacrament of the Altar in the Small Catechism as Jesus Christ, Our Blessed Savior does. In many ways, this hymn expounds on the gifts received in the Lord's Supper.

The Son born of Mary is the same One whose body and blood we receive in Holy Communion. It is this same body and blood that was shed on the cross for the forgiveness of sins that strengthens and nourishes our souls. Out of His great love for us, Christ fully paid the debt of our sin so that we are at peace with God. As a result of the forgiveness that Christ has earned and that we receive in the Lord's Supper, we live under God's grace and favor. In Holy Communion, we are not only in communion with our Lord, but also with each other so that by God's grace we can live in harmony with fellow members of the body of Christ.

Kyrie

In this world of sin and death, Christians have plenty of opportunities to join in the brief, yet all-encompassing prayer of the Kyrie: "Lord, have mercy."

All around us we see the results of hatred, envy, lust, and greed. Surely, the world is in need of God's mercy. It's no wonder that the church, in her worship, pleads before God on behalf of the whole world. It's a prayer that no one else is going pray.

Yet, when we cry out, "Lord, have mercy," there is confidence in our voices because we know that God is indeed merciful. He desires to bring relief to the suffering that is all around us.

Our prayer may not always bring an immediate response — at least, not the response that we are seeking — but even then, we commend ourselves and the whole world to a merciful God.

Like the confession of sins, however, our cry for mercy will be silenced in heaven. There we will see the results of God's mercy, as before the throne and in front of the Lamb will stand all the redeemed — not one of them worthy of the honor.

GLORIA IN EXCELSIS

On the night of Jesus' birth, the angels let loose their earth-shattering song of praise: "Glory be to God on high, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men."

On that specific occasion, their praise gave utterance to the good news that the Son of God had come in the flesh. Heaven had come down to earth! And ever since, the Church has continued to rejoice in this miracle of our salvation.

The opening words of the Gloria in Excelsis are followed by a hymn of praise to the Triune God. One can imagine the faithful singing these words in heaven: "We praise you, we bless you, we worship you, we glorify you, we give you thanks for your great glory."

Our focus is on the incarnate Son of God, the only-begotten Son, the Lamb of God, and only Son of the Father. And if that isn't enough to name this One who is the object of our worship and praise, twice we sing, "you take away the sin of the world."

There it is, the heart and substance of the Christian faith. In heaven we will be gathered around the throne and the Lamb, confessing that he alone is holy, he alone is the Lord.

During the penitential seasons of Advent and Lent, the Bride of Christ denies herself the exuberance of the Gloria in Excelsis. The feasts of the Nativity of Our Lord and the Resurrection of Our Lord see the Gloria in Excelsis restored to the liturgy, sounding forth once again.

WORD OF GOD AND SERMON

Frequently we conclude the reading of Holy Scripture with the phrase, "This is the Word of the Lord!" More than just a "word" from God, this is his revelation in which he makes known to us his will, most specifically, his merciful will that desires our salvation.

Ultimately, this word points us to the Word, the incarnate Son of God. He is God's final and full revelation to us, the mirror of the Father's heart.

That is the point that the writer to the Hebrews makes in the opening verses of his epistle: "In many and various ways God spoke to his people of old by the prophets, but now in these last days, he has spoken to us by his Son" (Heb. 1:1-2a).

Only through him — God's only Son — are we able to know the Father's favor and grace.

In the sermon, the Word of God is brought to bear on the lives of the hearers. This is the equivalent of sitting at the feet of Jesus. But it's more than mere instruction.

Through the sermon, God speaks to us with his two-edged sword of condemnation and promise, Law and Gospel. The subject of the sermon is both God and us.

Through the sermon we come to a better understanding of ourselves, especially our need for God's forgiveness. But we also come face to face with God's mercy and love.

Week after week, God's faithful hear the voice of their Good Shepherd, preparing them, in a sense, for that final day when Jesus calls them to their eternal reward.



VOTERS' MEETING UPDATE

The voters' meeting has approved the Elders bringing on a part-time secretary and assembling a website committee. More details to come.

All Glory, Laud, and Honor 442

Appointed for Palm Sunday, Processional (ONE-YEAR) study by John G. Fleischmann

Introduction

It was an exciting day. Jesus — the one who had taught with authority, performed miracles and recently raised Lazarus from the dead — was coming to Jerusalem.

The crowds wanted a glimpse of this one whom they thought would make a fantastic king of Israel. They knew of no other person like Him. So, they greeted Him as He entered Jerusalem for the last time, crying for Him to save them and lavishing Him with a royal greeting of palms and praises.

The hymn "All Glory, Laud, and Honor," traditionally used as the processional hymn on Palm Sunday, recaptures the scene of the "multitude of pilgrims" greeting Jesus at His triumphal entry, joining our praise with theirs as we hail Jesus as our King.

- What are some of the images that this hymn draws in your mind?
- What is the significance of the triumphal entry for Jesus?

Exploring the Scriptures

Read the account of the first Palm Sunday in John 12:12–15.

- What kind of king did the people assume Jesus to be?
- When they cried, "Save us now" (the meaning of the word "Hosanna"), what do you think they meant?
- In verse 13, there are some very familiar words. Where are they found in our liturgy?
- What do we mean when we sing them? How is this different from what the crowd meant?

Read John 18:33–38, which is the exchange between Jesus and Pontius Pilate.

- What does Jesus say about His kingdom?
- What kind of king was truly sitting on the donkey's colt?

Palm Sunday is also known as the Sunday of the Passion. On this day, the Church reads one of three Passion accounts (Matt. 26:1—27:66; Mark 14:1—15:47; or Luke 22:1—23:56). These accounts reveal to us the true reason that Jesus came into this world — to suffer and die for us so that our sins are forgiven. Read Matt. 27:23; Mark 15:14; and Luke 23:20.

- What word is the crowd shouting now? How is this different from what they said at the triumphal entry?
- What does this tell you about the tide of public opinion when it comes to Jesus?
- How have you done the same in your life?
- How do we live sanctified lives that avoid the sin of denying Jesus?

Exploring the Hymn
Background

This hymn, written by St. Theodulf (762–821) of Orleans, France, has been sung in varying forms in the Church since the ninth century.

- How does singing this ancient hymn on Palm Sunday link us to the Church of all time?
- Why is this important?

According to legend, Theodulf, imprisoned for complicity in a plot to overthrow King Louis I, composed this hymn in his jail cell and sang it as the king processed through the town. Upon hearing it, Louis ordered the release of Theodulf.

While this legend cannot be confirmed, the hymn beautifully paints the picture of the triumphal entry.

The crowds in Jerusalem did not comprehend that Jesus' kingdom is not of this world. We do. This is reflected in each stanza as Theodulf beautifully weaves the uninformed praises of the Hebrews with those whom the Holy Spirit has now called, gathered, enlightened and sanctified. We blend our voices with the Church in heaven and the Church on earth because Jesus is King of kings and Lord of lords.

- What are the three kingdoms of Jesus? (Hint: Refer to the explanation of "The Offices of Christ" in the Second Article in Luther's Small Catechism with Explanation, pp. 124–7.)
- How are you a part of each?

Text

In stanza 1, Jesus is called "the King of Israel / And David's royal Son."

- What is the prophetic meaning of Jesus being the King of Israel and David's royal Son?

The first stanza not only declares that Jesus is the Christ, but that He is our King and Blessed One.

In stanza 2, the chorus of angels is joined with the voice of the Church in praise. Such cosmic worship leaves no confusion as to who this King is. Read Ps. 24:10.

- Who is the "King of glory"?
- How does all of creation join us in praising Jesus on high?

The third stanza cites the praise of the people on the first Palm Sunday. They did not understand that Jesus was the King of glory.

- How are "our praise and prayer and anthems" different from theirs? How are they the same?

In stanza 4, we get a glimpse of the true reason Jesus came into Jerusalem: His Passion. This parade will end in a much different way than it began.

Contrary to popular opinion, the cross, not earthly glory, awaits Jesus. To the world, the cross is folly — nothing good could come of it; it makes no sense (1 Cor. 1:18–25). For us, it is everything. Read the Epistle for the Sunday of the Passion: Phil. 2:5–11.

- What does it mean that Jesus is "now high exalted"?
- What hope does this give?

In the final stanza, we pray with confidence that Jesus would receive our praises as He received the praises of old. Acknowledging that our "good and gracious King" does receive them, the hymn ends in powerful adoration just as it began: "All glory, laud, and honor, / To You, Redeemer, King."

Making the Connection

There is an irony in this hymn. While the people hailed Jesus as their king on Sunday, they had no idea what the following Friday held.

This irony is expressed in our liturgy on Palm Sunday, where we quickly turn from the entrance Gospel to our main Gospel and hear the account of Jesus' Passion and death.

This irony is also expressed in our lives. Because of the resurrection, we know how our personal "story" will end — living and reigning with Jesus forever in heaven. And yet, we face the suffering and struggles that each day brings.

- What are some of the things that keep your heart from singing?
- What comfort does this hymn offer you?

We sing the word "king" nine times in this hymn in the refrain and the verses.

- How is Jesus "king" in your life right now?
- Are there areas of your life where you're still the king? If so, what are they? How can they be changed with the power of the Holy Spirit?

In Closing

The multitude of pilgrims in Jerusalem were excited that Jesus came to their city. They wanted to make Him king. Without realizing it, they did! They saw to it that He was crucified. All hope of an earthly reign was dashed by the cross. But this is precisely where Jesus' reign begins. After becoming obedient unto death, He is exalted by God the Father above everything.

Jesus' reign is now in heaven. There, He sits at God's right hand for His Church. His reign is present in the Church today through the forgiveness of sins brought to us in Word and Sacrament. And His reign is over the world to which He will one day return to judge the living and the dead.

On that day, the devil and everything connected with sin, death and evil will be vanquished in hell, and we will give our eternal King glory, laud and honor forever in heaven.

- Sing or read aloud together LSB 442.

Prayer

Almighty and everlasting God, You sent Your Son, our Savior Jesus Christ, to take upon Himself our flesh and to suffer death upon the cross. Mercifully grant that we may follow the example of His great humility and patience and be made partakers of His resurrection; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen (Collect for Palm Sunday).

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