



Holy Cross Lutheran Church

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Making peace by the blood of his cross — Colossians 1:15-20

Grace, peace, and mercy to you from the Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!

This newsletter comes out on Maundy Thursday, 2021. I love how we celebrate Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter. There is so much happening that last week of Jesus' life before death. It is impossible to contain it in one service or one sermon. Over the course of three days, we harvest so much fruit in our Triduum (three-day) service. Part of the experience of Holy Week is in the unfolding.

Palm Sunday starts us with all the triumph and provincial hope tied up in Jesus' ministry. He was a miracle worker who showed such mastery! Who couldn't He defeat? Yet, the crowds had aimed too low in their hopes. Rather than defeating earthly tormenters with limited lifespans, Jesus would save them from death and sin, giving eternal life. We wave our palms and lay them down awkwardly. Putting them down so soon is a reminder of the false hopes we continually learn to lay down, to hear what Jesus is really working for us.

Still, there is a whiplash when in that same week of children crying, "Hosanna!" Judas lights the match of betrayal. He is arrested. There is a weak attempt to fight back in Gethsemane, but Jesus is never a part of the fighting. He submits. We join our prayers feebly, too, "Not my will but yours be done."

The meal He lays out takes up the Passover. Slaves would be set free. It is still for Him a meal of triumph. There is a cost, nevertheless. "This is my body." He pays the cost. Imagine the confusion of the Apostles. On the one hand, there are notes of triumph and freedom. On the other hand, there are notes of submission and sacrifice.

Good Friday brings both of those themes together. Our Lord dies for us. He defeats the tempter. He suffers for what I had done. He defeats death to give me life. It is dark. It is good. We still struggle to wrap our minds around it all today. For as Christians, our victories will follow His. We triumph while bearing crosses. We bear one another's burdens. We sacrifice. These offerings bring good. A martyr will give his life and inspire belief anew. We learn again and again what it means to "lift high the cross."

Come Easter we will sing and rejoice and love. It is glorious. It is even more glorious when we have walked through the whole week, giving each day its place as a movement in the symphony. For to hear He is risen is to feel how all He gave is restored and given back a hundredfold. All He gave is still giving.

I hope and pray the message of Holy Week does not just come to you in this short letter. I hope and pray you come and join us, tasting and seeing that the Lord is good! Maundy Thursday and Good Friday services are at 1 and 7 PM. Easter service is at 9 and 11 AM. The 9 AM service will be outdoors with FM transmission to those who wish to stay in their cars.

Your servant in Christ,

Pastor Daniel Guagenti



Celebrations in April

BIRTHDAYS

- 2- Bill Adams
- 4- Karen Hite
- 9- Monica Yaroma
- 10- Abby Gehrman
- 10- Brady Gehrman
- 10- Caitlin Gehrman
- 11- Kelsey Shreve Carton
- 12- Allen Whitehouse
- 12- Shelah Shreve
- 12- Donna Saltzman
- 18- Charlie Adams
- 18- Emily Crawhorn
- 21- Bill Heeg
- 24- Joshua Lancaster
- 24- Jonathon Lancaster
- 25- Adam Runner
- 25- Alex Shreve

ANNIVERSARIES

- 19- Mark & Marilyn Murray (1985)
- 20- Steve and Lorie Rusch (2002)

ADULT BIBLE STUDY: APRIL 11, 9AM.

Adult Bible Study will begin the Sunday after Easter, April 11, at 9am. They will cover Zachariah and the rebuilding of Jerusalem after the exile. During that time they will gather information regarding the weekly zoom meetings.



*Easter Lilies
Given to the glory and
praise of God by...*

Shelah Shreve- 3 lilies in memory of Rod Shreve and in prayer for the Shreve family as they mourn. In honor of Beth Shreve, beloved "sister" and in prayer for her family. In celebration of Zoe Shreve and her continued spiritual growth.

Charlie & Brenda Moody- 2 lilies in memory of loved ones and in honor of our son-Charles.

David & Lori Franke- 1 lily in memory of loved ones.

Rutledge family- 1 lily in memory of Mike and Betty Rutledge.

Kathy Adams- 3 lilies in memory of loved ones, in honor of my sons and in celebration of my church family.

Julie Dillard- 2 lilies

Jason VanEvera- 2 lilies in memory of Richard Van Evera.

Barbara Eaton- 1 lily in memory of loved ones.

Rita Whitehouse- 1 lily in celebration of God's love and forgiveness.

John & Merrie Feole- 2 lilies in honor of our sons and parents and in memory of departed loved ones.

Pastor & Alena Guagenti-1 lily in celebration of Isaac's upcoming confirmation.

Thank you to everyone that sent cards, brought food and said prayers for my recovery while I was in the hospital battling Covid. I certainly discovered the power of prayer during that time.

Although I was in a hospital room with a door closed except when medical staff entered I never felt alone or afraid. I knew I was not walking this journey alone, that my God was there with me guiding me and also guiding my caregivers. Never lose faith, it can carry you through more than you can imagine.

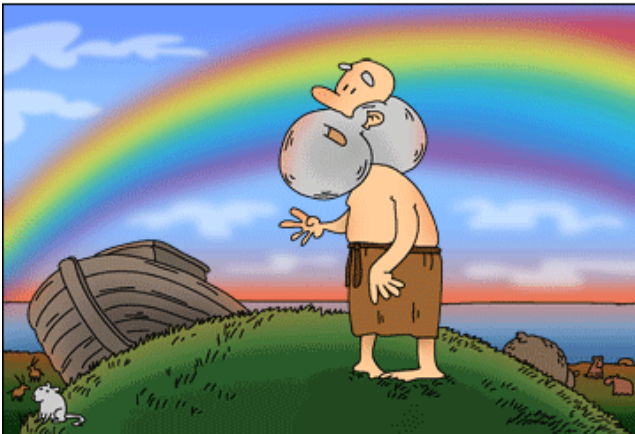
Rita Whitehouse.

AMERICAN RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE - TO BE PLANNED

The need for blood products has not lessened since the pandemic started. Accidents, operations, and disease still happen. Let's help by hosting a Blood Drive for the American Red Cross. Corrie Brian, as a part of Helping Hands, will organize it in conjunction with the Red Cross some time in the next few months. Anyone who wants to be a part of planning and execution of the drive just needs to let Corrie know via email, text, phone call, or just some Sunday morning (301-580-4693 or cdbrian@hotmail.com).

If you know anyone who has fully recovered from having COVID-19, there is a huge need and a shortage of COVID convalescent plasma. More information can be found at www.redcross.org.

REVERENDFUN.COM COPYRIGHT BIBLE GATEWAY



(See Genesis 6-8)

03-04-2013

THIS IS A PRETTY BIG PROMISE ... WE REALLY DON'T NEED PAPERWORK OR LEGAL?



EQUIPPING THE PRIESTHOOD OF ALL BELIEVERS...

Issues, Etc. is a radio talk show and podcast produced by Lutheran Public Radio in Collinsville, IL and hosted by LCMS Pastor Todd Wilken. You can listen on-demand at www.issuesetc.org, the LPR mobile app and your favorite podcast provider.

YOUTUBE CHANNEL

The link for our YouTube channel is:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCyEYS2vyKx1PLc45wHJcjinw/videos>

SUNDAY SCHOOL

New Sunday School packets are available for anyone interested. These packets consist of activity sheets as well as a small lesson. We will have a number of activity sheets per packet so please take one packet per family. If we run out of packets and you would like one for your family please let Max or Danielle Themer know and we will create additional copies.

LUTHERAN HOUR MINISTRIES

Lutheran Hour Ministries is a Christian outreach ministry supporting churches worldwide in its mission of *Bringing Christ to the Nation—and the Nations to Church*. Lutheran Hour Ministries produces Christian radio and TV programming for broadcast, as well as Internet and print communications, dramas, music, and outreach materials, to reach the unchurched in more than 30 countries. LHM's flagship program **The Lutheran Hour**, is the world's longest-running Christian outreach radio program. It airs Sundays at 9am on 102.7FM. For more information, visit www.lhm.org (<http://www.lhm.org>) or call 1-800-876-9880.

YOU MIGHT BE A LUTHERAN IF...

- You think tuna hotdish is a gourmet meal.
- Your idea of an affirmation is "This is most certainly true."
- You feel guilty about not feeling guilty.

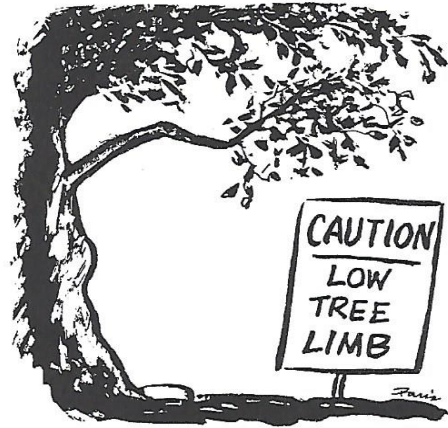
LIFE QUOTES

"As we gather this Easter just with our household, or perhaps all alone, we will undoubtedly miss some of the traditions that we have embraced over the years. Do not lament the loss of what does not last. Rather, embrace the enduring message that 'He is risen! He is risen indeed!' It changes everything!"

Rev. Robert Fleischmann, Christian Life Resources –

A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • lutheransforlife.org

KNOW YOUR BIBLE



Trapped by Hair

Who caught his hair in an oak tree and was killed by King David's army?

Look for the answer in the May Newsletter
March's Answer: Jericho (see Joshua 6:1-20)



VOLUNTEER SCHEDULE

SUNDAY	ACOLYTE	READER	USHERS	CLEAN	NURSERY	ALTAR GUILD
April 4	n/a	n/a	Corrie Brian Greg Rutledge	Dave Pontius Don Williams	n/a	Jennifer Harrod Nancy Kovach
April 11	n/a	n/a	Cindy Alvano John Feole	Charlie Adams	n/a	No communion
April 18	n/a	n/a	Don Saltzman Bob Myers	Franke family	n/a	Rita Whitehouse Nancy Kovach
April 25	n/a	n/a	Charlie Moody Rita Whitehouse	Sandy Runner	n/a	No communion
May 2	n/a	n/a	Alex VanPelt Charlie Adams	Don Saltzman Bob Myers	n/a	Brenda Moody Jennifer Dillard
May 9	n/a	n/a	Corrie Brian Greg Rutledge	Theresa Tippet Jennifer Harrod	n/a	No communion
May 16	n/a	n/a	Cindy Alvano John Feole	Roxanne Pontius Guagenti family	n/a	Rita Whitehouse Jennifer Dillard

If you cannot serve on the appointed day, please call someone to serve in your place.

A WORD ON THE EQUALITY ACT
TO THE PASTORS, CALLED WORKERS AND MEMBERS
OF THE 6,000 CONGREGATIONS OF
THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD

The words of the apostle Peter apply to us now:

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, so that the tested genuineness of your faith — more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire — may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory. (1 Peter 1:3–8)

The church's task is not political. It is the proclamation of the Gospel of free salvation in the cross and resurrection of Jesus for all (1 Cor. 1:23; John 18:36). "The Church is the congregation of saints in which the Gospel is purely taught and the Sacraments are correctly administered" (AC VII 1).¹

God rules His church by His infallible Word, the Holy Scriptures (John 17:17; 2 Tim. 3:15–16). God rules the state by His eternal law, reason and reasonable laws for the common welfare. "Our churches teach that lawful civil regulations are good works of God" (AC XVI 1; see Rom. 13:1–7). The church should not meddle in government affairs, especially in matters upon which the Word of God is silent. It is also wrong when governments act against God's eternal law, reason and the basic civil rights of all people. The First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution enshrines this truth. "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances."

Throughout history, governments have acted unjustly — sometimes in the name of race, atheism, communism, religion and even Christianity — and curtailed or denied the rights of conscience and the free exercise of religion. And governments continue to do so. Our Lutheran and biblical confession is that "it is necessary for Christians to be obedient to their rulers and laws. The only exception is when they are commanded to sin. Then they ought to obey God rather than men (Acts 5:29)" (AC XVI 6–7; see 1 Peter 2:13–14).

St. Paul made use of his legal right as a Roman citizen ("I appeal to Caesar" Acts 25:11). "Christ's kingdom allows us outwardly to use legitimate political ordinances of every nation in which we live, just as it allows us to use medicine or the art of building, or food, drink, and air" (Ap XVI 54). Our Lutheran Confessions commend the seeking of public remedy for injustice. "Public remedy, made through the office of the public official, is not condemned, but is commanded and is God's work, according to Paul (Romans 13)" (Ap XVI 59). Our God-given right to act as citizens is very important, especially now.

The Equality Act is before Congress.² It sounds innocent. All Americans should enjoy equality and the protections of the U.S. Constitution. But in elevating sexual orientation to a protected class, the Equality Act will bring sweeping changes to current laws, to the great detriment of the religious and constitutional freedoms of biblically faithful churches, institutions, Christian schools and individuals.

Jesus referred to Genesis 2:24, when He stated:

"Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, 'Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate." (Matt. 19:4–6)

In fact, those churches and institutions that are bound by the Word of God to the truth of marriage between a man and a woman, and that sex outside of that institution is contrary to the word of Christ and the apostles in the New Testament (1 Cor. 7:2), could be punished for simply standing on our consistent, ancient Christian beliefs. The Equality Act effectively outlaws the words of Christ, the sublime doctrine of Creation, the First Article of the

Creed, and our “free exercise of religion” based upon the Bible and Apostles’ Creed. The biblical teaching that marriage is between a man and a woman is to be labeled forever a mere “sex-based stereotype.”³

The Equality Act expands the definition of “public accommodation” and puts an ultimatum to individuals, religious non-profits, food banks, schools, charities, adoption agencies and others: “Change your faith-based practices or face government punishment.”⁴

Religious schools (K-12 and universities) are a prime target of the Equality Act, which will make it difficult to maintain standards for admission and codes of Christian conduct for students, faculty and staff.⁵ The Equality Act will forbid college students from using federal tuition assistance at schools that maintain standards of conduct on the basis of the Bible regarding sexual orientation and gender identity.

Sex-specific facilities and female-only spaces could be eliminated. Biological males will have the right to participate in female sports, unjustly denying female athletes at our schools a fair competition and the due rewards of accomplishment.⁶

The Equality Act will eliminate the significant protections of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, passed by Congress and signed into law in 1993.⁷ This law has provided strong protections for “free exercise of religion” in the face of overzealous officials.

The Equality Act contains no conscience protections for medical staff who choose not to perform abortions, even if they have religious objections. Because of its broad definition of “health” services, the Equality Act threatens the Hyde Amendment, which limits public funding for abortion. It also threatens Christian hospitals with elimination of funding for not performing “health” services, including abortion or genital mutilation.

The Equality Act was recently passed by the House and is currently pending in the Senate. The margin is razor thin. If it does not become law now, we can be assured that it will be pressed again. We encourage all LCMS people to:

1. Treat all people with kindness and respect (“You shall love your neighbor as yourself” Mark 12:31), while holding firmly to “the faith once delivered to the saints” (Jude 3).
2. Become informed about the Equality Act and the issues of gender dysphoria. (See “Additional Resources” below.)
3. Consider your role as Christian citizens and make your voice known to your elected officials, particularly in the U.S. House (house.gov/representatives) and Senate (senate.gov/senators/index.htm).
4. Pray for our officials, government and the church in these challenging days.

Martin Luther once said, “Christ dwells only in sinners.” We recognize ourselves as sinners constantly in need of Christ’s forgiveness. We recognize the truth of the apostle Peter’s words, “For it is time for judgment to begin at the household of God” (1 Peter 4:17). We know that Jesus’ opponents grumbled against Him by saying, “This man receives sinners and eats with them” (Luke 15:2). This comforting verse applies to us sinners, and we welcome all others to join us at the feet of Jesus, the sole Savior of all (John 3:16). As Christians, we believe that God has created all people, and all are infinitely valuable and accountable to Him. As Christian citizens, we recognize and demand basic God-given civil rights for all people, even as we insist on the First Amendment rights of Christians.

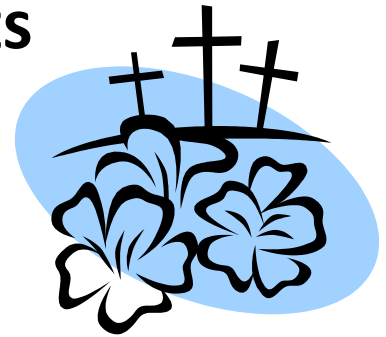
No matter the course of this or any legislation, Christ will sustain His church. Our hope is not in laws, Congress or courts. Our hope is Christ. “And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age” (Matt. 28:20).

Finally, all of you, have unity of mind, sympathy, brotherly love, a tender heart, and a humble mind. Do not repay evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary, bless, for to this you were called, that you may obtain a blessing.

Now who is there to harm you if you are zealous for what is good? But even if you should suffer for righteousness’ sake, you will be blessed. Have no fear of them, nor be troubled, but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect, having a good conscience, so that, when you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame. For it is better to suffer for doing good, if that should be God’s will, than for doing evil. (1 Peter 3:8–9, 13–17)

Rev. Dr. Matthew C. Harrison
President
The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

RESURRECTION COOKIES



To be made the evening before Easter.

You need: 1c. whole pecans, 1 tsp. vinegar, 3 egg whites, pinch salt, 1c. sugar, zipper baggie, wooden spoon, tape, Bible.

Preheat oven to 300 BEFORE BEGINNING.

Place pecans in zipper baggie and let children beat them with the wooden spoon to break into small pieces.

Explain that after Jesus was arrested He was beaten by the Roman soldiers. Read John 19:1-3.

Let each child smell the vinegar. Put 1 tsp. vinegar into mixing bowl.

Explain that when Jesus was thirsty on the cross he was given vinegar to drink. Read John 19:28-30.

Add egg whites to vinegar. Eggs represent life.

Explain that Jesus gave His life to give us life. Read John 10:10-11.

Sprinkle a little salt into each child's hand. Let them taste it and brush the rest into the bowl.

Explain that this represents the salty tears shed by Jesus' followers, and the bitterness of our own sin. Read Luke 23:27.

So far the ingredients are not very appetizing.

Add 1 c. sugar.

Explain that the sweetest part of the story is that Jesus died because He loves us. He wants us to know this and how to belong to Him. Read Ps. 34:8 and John 3:16.

Beat with a mixer on high speed for 12 to 15 minutes until stiff peaks are formed.

Explain that the color white represents the purity in God's eyes of those whose sins have been cleansed by Jesus. Read Isaiah 1:18 and John 3:1-3.

Fold in broken nuts. Drop by teaspoons onto wax paper covered cookie sheet.

Explain that each mound represents the rocky tomb where Jesus' body was laid. Read Matt. 27:57-60.

Put the cookie sheet in the oven, close the door and turn the oven OFF.

Give each child a piece of tape and seal the oven door.

Explain that Jesus' tomb was sealed. Read Matt. 27:65-66.

GO TO BED!

Explain that they may feel sad to leave the cookies in the oven overnight Jesus' followers were in despair when the tomb was sealed. Read John 16:20 and 22.

On Easter morning, open the oven and give everyone a cookie.

Notice the cracked surface and take a bite. The cookies are hollow! On the first Easter Jesus' followers were amazed to find the tomb open and empty! Read Matt. 28:1-9

THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD

LCMS STEWARDSHIP MINISTRY

NEWSLETTER ARTICLE – APRIL 2021

Our Father in heaven sent His Son, Jesus, to be our Savior. His atoning sacrifice is the first fruits of all the dead, a pleasing aroma to His Father, so that His perfect life and death count for all who believe in Him. He claimed us as His own children in Holy Baptism. He sustains and strengthens our faith with His Holy Word and His Body and Blood.

As new creatures, who have put on Christ, we bear good fruit. We do the good works prepared for us, which He makes known to us in His Word. By faith then, trusting in the Word of God, we do what he says because He does not lie and always keeps His promises. For “without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him” (Heb. 11:6).

And so the Lord promises: “Honor the Lord with your wealth and with the first fruits of all your produce; then your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will be bursting with wine” (Prov. 3:9-10). How do we honor the Lord with the wealth that God has given us in His generosity? By giving generously to those whom the Lord has called us to love and support your family, your society, and your church. And His promise is that, in so doing, you will never lack.

A common counterpoint is: “But that’s from the Old Testament!” Our Lord Jesus Himself gives us similar promises in the New Testament. He says, at the conclusion of the parable of the talents: “For to everyone who has will more be given, and he will have an abundance” (Matt. 25:29).

And then at the end of the parable of the dishonest manager, he says: “One who is faithful in a very little is also faithful in much, and one who is dishonest in a very little is also dishonest in much. If then you have not been faithful in the unrighteous wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches? And if you have not been faithful in that which is another’s, who will give you that which is your own? No servant can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money” (Luke 16:10–13).

And in His sermon on the mount, he says: “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also” (Matt. 6:19–21).

We have become conditioned against these promises because of their misuse by the peddlers of the prosperity gospel – the guys on TV who say you get rich by putting God in your debt. And thus, we miss out on the fact that God does reward temporal faithfulness in temporal matters with temporal blessings. It’s no quid pro quo. It’s all from God’s grace and His fatherly divine goodness and mercy. But those Bible passages do in fact say what they say! It’s not the Old Testament’s problem. It’s ours. It is almost as if we have become so jaded against this that we think it a virtue to be stingy with our offerings.

But our Father in heaven still loves to bless those who bless others. He loves to give to those who give freely and generously. In fact, he challenges us to challenge Him: “Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. And thereby put me to the test, says the Lord of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you a blessing until there is no more need” (Mal. 3:10).

And so, while we don’t give so that we would get, we do receive from the Lord in order to give, and He will bless your giving with more receiving. As St. Paul wrote in Rom. 8:32: “He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?”



SHARING THE POWERFUL GOSPEL!

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EVERY SUNDAY
BIBLE STUDY AND SUNDAY SCHOOL-9:45AM
DIVINE SERVICE-11:00AM

APRIL NEWSLETTER 2021



The Resurrection of Our Lord
Sunday, April 4, 2021 9am / 11am