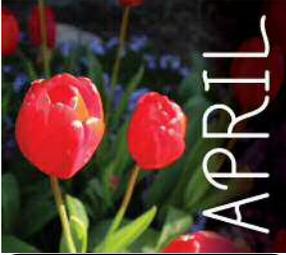




The Messenger

Our Savior Lutheran Church
The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod
Paradise, California

April 2017



The Sign of all Signs

There are signs everywhere. When we are driving, signs guide our way and protect us from potential dangers. When we go shopping, signs identify items we are looking for and how much they cost. There are things happening all around us that are signs of things to come. When the weather begins to warm and trees begin to bud, these are signs that spring is near and soon it will be summer. As crime and corruption continue to make the headlines this is a sign of sin in the world.

Then there are also signs that are specific to God and His promises for us. Old testament prophets spoke God's Word to the people often in conjunction with a sign that they were speaking on behalf of God. The rainbow is a sign of God's covenant with His people that He will never again destroy the earth or the people in it.

And God said, "This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: I have set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds, I will remember my covenant that is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh. And the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. *Genesis 12:9-15*

The thing about signs is that they can also be ignored or misinterpreted especially when it comes to God and His revelation. God gave us free will and we are free to turn from God and His messages and Word for us. God's people have historically ignored God's signs alongside His Word and have suffered for it. Then came Jesus who was not a prophet, but God Himself sent to rescue God's people by shedding His blood for the forgiveness of our sin. The problem was that no one believed Jesus even though He produced some of the biggest, most miraculous signs of His divinity that man had ever seen.

Then some of the scribes and Pharisees answered him, saying, "Teacher, we wish to see a sign from you." But he answered them, "An evil and adulterous generation seeks for a sign, but no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. For just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. *Matthew 12:38-40*

The Jews were expecting a different version of the Messiah than the one who was dwelling among them in Jesus. The truth is that Jesus could have performed

Rev. Brandon Merrick
Pastor

Cheryl Mock
Day Care Director

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Office Manager

Marc Grosso
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thousands of miracles and signs to testify alongside God's own voice that declared Him to be His Son with whom God was well pleased. The greatest sign that the world was ever given which reveals not only the nature of Jesus Christ, but proclaims His true purpose in the world was an empty tomb. If Jesus were just a man or prophet sent from God, the non-empty tomb would have testified to it. The fact is that the tomb was empty as the sign that God had fulfilled His promise to deliver a Messiah that would free God's people. In Jesus God gave us the greatest of signs in declaring His love, mercy and promise of salvation to us.

Pastor Brandon



Lent and Easter Services

Join us for the following services

Midweek Lent

Wednesday, April 5

11:00 a.m.

6:00 p.m.

the morning service is followed by
a soup/bread/dessert lunch

Palm Sunday

April 9

8:00 and 10:30 a.m.

Maundy Thursday

Thursday, April 13

6:00 p.m.

Communion Service

Good Friday

Friday, April 14

7:00 p.m.

Easter Sunday

April 16

8:00 and 10:30 a.m.

Breakfast between services

Mission Behind Bars

Thank You

Dear Brothers and Sisters of Our Savior Lutheran Church and everyone involved in the prison out reach (benevolence/package fund),

I would like to say thank you all and may God greatly bless your church and ministry. It's one thing, like the Apostle James said in James 2:14, 'What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him? If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you says to them, "Depart in peace, be warmed, and filled", but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit?' Brother James gave us a great illustration of putting our faith into action through our works, and your ministry has and is greatly modeling this biblical principle through your outreach. Myself along with every recipient thanks God for you.

You guys can't imagine how good it feels to know that God hasn't forgotten us, and to know He's using ministries such as yours to reassure us that He's still ever present and faithful.

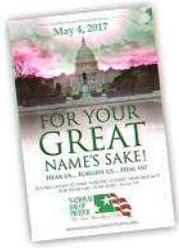
Quick testimony: I hadn't had a new pair of shoes in years (approximately 5 years). Brother Kevin approached me one day to fill out a package form to buy myself some shoes and other necessities I may be in need of. This action nearly floored me, then I immediately began to thank God for His mercy and grace. Please don't misunderstand me, God provides for our every daily need and care, but He greatly humbles us and goes the extra mile through brothers and sisters such as yourself, and we forgotten men (or so it seems at times) are forever grateful.

Praise God and thank you.

Fellow brother in Christ,

Maurice





National Day of Prayer

Early in May, Christians across this country will join together in prayer during the National Day of Prayer on Thursday, May 4. This year we will offer a sheet or two of prayer ideas and prayer needs to aid you in lifting your thoughts and prayers to God for our country, schools, churches, government, military and media. You will also have prayers for your friends, family and others we care about.

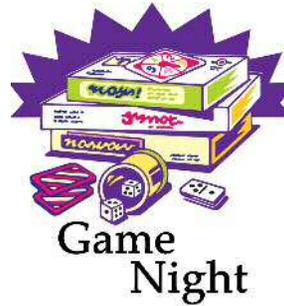
You may pick up the sheets at church on Sunday, April 30th. Take the prayer ideas home and spend time in prayer. By looking at, thinking about and talking to God you will be a blessing to many and will also be blessed.

Board of Outreach

Men's Breakfast and Work Day

On March 18th, several men gathered for breakfast that was prepared by Pastor Brandon. They then got to work on several projects for our day care. The first project was building and installing three pieces of playground equipment. It was recently determined that our "big toy" was in fact too big for our smaller preschoolers. They really needed something to help with their motor skills as well something that was fun. Thanks to a generous donation we were able to purchase these items. The first is a play structure that is similar to our big toy, but on a much smaller scale. Additionally, we were able to get a small curved climbing "wall" and a balance beam. The children were so excited to see this, something that was just for them to play on. The men also finished the play areas, by placing wood along the top of the "boxes" to give them a more finished appearance and a small bench on which to sit.

Thank you to the men who participated. Your hard work is definitely appreciated.



Game Night = A SUCCESS

On March 11th around 20 people gathered for a light meal and of course we had sundaes for dessert. An assortment of games were played, with the older folks playing with the young and the guys with the gals. The consensus was that we all had fun and we got to know our fellow church members just a little bit better. We are all looking forward to doing this again.

Day Care News

I think most of the hard rain has come to an end. The children are enjoying being outside more and using their energy for riding bikes, climbing on the big toys and playing ball. As some of you may have noticed, we have a new toy for our two to five year olds thanks to all who helped install it in March. The little ones are enjoying it so much. It has given them many more activities to do, such as, balancing on the balance beam, a small climbing wall to give them large motor dexterity and the new little, "big toy". It looks more like the big kids' toy and it accommodates more children than the small piece of equipment we had in the play area.

The school age children are looking forward to Easter break April 10th through April 17th. During the month of April, all the children will be learning about the Resurrection of Jesus and how He died for them on the cross. They will also have many fun crafts and activities for the month.

I pray you all have a blessed Easter.

Love In Christ,
Miss Cheryl

Greetings from the Phebians:

A question was asked at our meeting: How did the name Phebians come about?



The Greek meaning of Phoebe is *"The Shining One"*. In the first century a Christian woman was mentioned by the apostle Paul in his epistle to the Romans (Romans 16:1-24). Her name was Phoebe from the Church of Cenchrea. She was trusted by Paul to deliver his letter to the Romans.

In the early days at Our Savior, the LWML women named our particular women's group "Phebians". The meaning of Phebians is "The shining ones". I certainly hope that is and will be the case.

March 6 was our recent Phebian meeting. Linda Johnson visited us for the first time. We were pleased to have her. Our business meeting lasted about ½ an hour and we had to talk the rest of the time until 10:30 when

Jennifer Arbuckle from Northern Recycling arrived. We managed to fill the time with a few items that were on our minds. One item we discussed was that it would be a good thing to have a nice sign to designate LUTHER HALL and we also thought it would be equally important for a sign on the left door showing our Bible Study group on Sunday at 9:15. We are hoping that the council will discuss this. (Editor's note: check out the Luther Hall sign that is now in place.)

Our next Phebian meeting will be April 3 at 9:30 a.m. and Pastor Brandon will lead a Bible study.

We thank our hostesses Ruth Hantelman for her delicious soup and Bev Knaak for the great quiche and cupcakes.

Blessings to all,
Judy Klaves

Remember to check the Phebian's bulletin board that is in Luther Hall for the most recent information. Also, for those who have ordered Quarterly's, the current edition is on the piano by the bulletin board.

Planning Ahead:

Monday, April 3rd, 9:30 a.m.

Bible Study
Human Care: Day Care
Hostess: Wendy
Devotion: Judy J.

Monday, May 1st 9:30 a.m.

Business Meeting
Conservation Corps
Presentation
Human Care: Conservation
Corps
Hostess: Judy K.
Devotion: Bonnie

Monday, June 5th, 9:30 a.m.

Jesus Center Presentation
Human Care: Jesus Center
Hostess: Ethel
Devotion: Wendy

Monday, July 10th

Paradise Lake Picnic
Human Care: SHOR
Hostess: Potluck/Finger Foods
Devotion: Ethel

Wed. - Sat., August 1 - 5

Rummage Sale
More details to follow

Monday, Sept. 11, 9:30 a.m.

Business Meeting
Johnny Appleseed Presentation
Human Care: Evie K.
Hostess: Carol/Judy J.
Devotion: Judy K.

Monday, October 2nd 9:30 a.m.

Business Meeting
Reformation Bible Study
Human Care: LWML Zone Rally
Hostess: Mickey/Wendy
Devotion: Pastor Brandon

October 5th

Smiles Lunch

Mid October

Zone 12 Rally

Monday, Nov. 6th, 9:30 a.m.

Craft & Bake Workshop
Sunshine Boxes
Human Care: Catalyst
Hostesses: Sharon/Cyndi
Devotion: Bev

Saturday, December 2nd

Christmas Luncheon
Human Care: Sunshine
Boxes/Shut-ins
Hostesses: Mickey/Jan/Kathy
Devotion: Kathy

Hard Questions and Biblical Answers

Question - Don't the Gospels give contradictory reports as to the time Christ was crucified?

One of the so-called contradictions that we hear brought up concerns the disagreement between the Gospel of Mark and the Gospel of John as to the time of the crucifixion of Jesus.

Mark 15:25 (KJV) states, "and it was the third hour, and they crucified him," while in John 19:14 (KJV) we read, "And it was the preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour: and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King!"

This does indeed present a difficulty, since Mark has Jesus being crucified at the third hour, or nine o'clock in the morning, according to Jewish reckoning, while John places Jesus before Pontius Pilate at about the sixth hour, or noon.

Many say this discrepancy is impossible to reconcile, while others say the difference between the two is a result of a mistake early in the copying process. Neither of these two views is plausible or acceptable.

There are two possible solutions which carry reasonable weight. One solution centers on the word "about" in John's statement of the time. He reveals that it was not exactly the sixth hour, but only *about* this time. Also, Mark's account does not force us to believe that it was at exactly 9 a.m. when Jesus was put on the cross. This can be observed by understanding the way the New Testament calculates time.

The night was divided into four watches, each consisting of three hours (see Mark 13:35), and the day was to some extent likewise divided into periods. In light of this, we can imagine that Mark's statement about the "third hour" simply meant that Jesus was crucified sometime during the third hour (between nine o'clock and noon), while John's statement that the trial ended *about* noon can mean before noon.

Thus, if the crucifixion took place between nine o'clock and noon, Mark could have placed it at the earlier period (nine o'clock) and John at the later period (noon) without there being any discrepancy. "If the crucifixion took place midway between nine and twelve o'clock, it was

quite natural that one observer should refer it to the former, while another referred it to the latter hour.

"The height of the sun in the sky was the index of the time of the day; while it was easy to know whether it was before or after midday, or whether the sun was more or less than halfway between the zenith and the horizon, finer distinctions of time were not recognized without consulting the sun dials, which were not everywhere at hand" (*The Expositor's Greek New Testament*, commenting on John 19:14).

Another possibility is that John is using a different method of reckoning time than Mark. We know for a fact, from Plutarch, Pliny, Aulus Gellius, and Macrobius, that the Romans calculated the civil day from midnight to midnight, just as we do today.

Thus John's "sixth hour" would be six o'clock in the morning. This would make 6 a.m. the time of the last of the trials of Jesus, and of His sentencing, giving adequate time for the events leading up to the crucifixion which, in Mark, was at 9 a.m. or afterward.

There is good evidence that John used this method of computing time. This is not unusual in Scripture to have different authors use different methods of measuring time and determining dates.

In the Old Testament, the writers often would state their important dates by the calendar system of the country they were serving under at that time. For instance, in Jeremiah 25:1 and 46:2, the time was by Palestinian reckoning, and Daniel 1:1 was Babylonian reckoning, the same year.

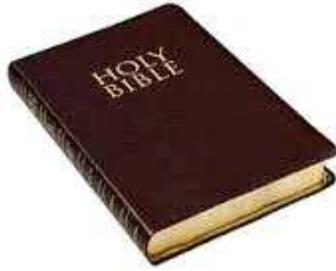
A New Testament example is John 20:19. The evening of the day Jesus rose from the dead is considered part of that same day. Apparently John is not reckoning by Jewish time. According to the Jewish system of reckoning time, the evening in question would be part of Monday, the first day of the week, since the Jewish day began at sunset.

This possible factor, along with the one previously mentioned, shows that the difficulty in these two passages is not at all impossible to solve, nor does it pose any difficulty that is without a reasonable explanation.

McDowell, J., & Stewart, D. D. (1993). [*Answers to tough questions*](#). Nashville: T. Nelson

How to Read the Bible

Beginning on Sunday April 30th during our Bible study hour from 9:15 to 10:15 am we will have a study on how to read the Bible. The women's group, Sunday morning's group and the young adult group will all be combining for a special five-week long study focused on how to read and understand God's Word for yourself. I am encouraging everyone to attend as we learn how to read the Scriptures and receive the message that God intended us to. By asking questions like, "Who wrote this," "To whom was it written," and "What was the occasion for which it was written," we can begin to discern the true meaning of the words, hear God speaking to us and receive both His corrections and blessings.



Your testimonies are wonderful;
therefore my soul keeps them.

The unfolding of your words gives light;
it imparts understanding to the simple.

I open my mouth and pant,
because I long for your commandments.

Turn to me and be gracious to me,
as is your way with those who love your name.

Keep steady my steps according to your promise,
and let no iniquity get dominion over me.

Redeem me from man's oppression,
that I may keep your precepts.

Make your face shine upon your servant,
and teach me your statutes.

Psalm 119:129-135

Town Hall Meeting

Sunday, April 23rd between services we will have our next town hall meeting. We will be discussing two matters. 1) The possibility of new electronic church information sign along Pentz Rd. and 2) have an update on where we are with our services. These meetings are designed for discussions and information about various matters. This is not a voter's meeting.

rightnow MEDIA

This month we focus on the evolution vs. creation debate. If you get a chance, I recommend watching, "Evolution's Achille's Heel." This documentary goes into great detail about how advances in science actually support the truth of an intelligent Creator. In today's world it is important for God's people to be able to talk about science as a part of God's vocation. God created all things and science continues to reveal what God's people already know to be true. Modern breakthroughs in science and the ability to know in greater detail support the truth that there is a designer and sustainer of the universe. The Bible is not a collection of fairy tales but God's Word that He passes onto us so that we might know and understand His plan for our salvation. I urge you to watch this video if you would like to know more about the science behind our universe and the impact of asking the right questions.

Blood Pressure Screening

On Sunday, April 30th, the Health & Wellness Ministry will conduct their quarterly blood pressure screening. Be sure and stop by Luther Hall after either service. This is a great opportunity to monitor it in a non-stressful situation.



Spring Clean Up



On Sunday, April 8th at 9:00 a.m. we are planning a work party to prepare our sanctuary and grounds for Holy Week. There will be both inside and outside jobs available. Be sure and bring your rakes and clippers.

April 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 Luther Hall – Set up for Evelyn's Party
2 Celebration of Evelyn Tranmer's 100 th birthday (after 2 nd service)	3 9:30 Phebian's	4 5:00 Small Group – Parsonage	5 11:00 Lent service 11:45 Lunch 6:00 Lent service	6	7	8 9:00 Spring Clean up
9	10 9:30 Large Print	11 9:30 Large Print Workshop 5:00 Small Group – Parsonage	12	13 6:00 Maundy	14 7:00 Good Friday	15
16 <i>Happy Easter</i>	17	18 5:00 Small Group – Parsonage	19 9:00 Mid week Bible Study	20	21	22
23 9:15 Town Hall Meeting	24 9:30 Large Print	25 9:30 Large Print Workshop 5:00 Small Group – Parsonage	26 9:00 Mid week Bible Study	27	28	29
30 Church Wide Bible Study Quarterly Blood Pressure Screening	Our Savior Lutheran Church 6404 Pentz Road Paradise, CA 95969 530-877-7321					

April 2017

Happy April Birthday to:

Michael Diefenderfer	4/1
Evelyn Tranmer	4/2
Hilary Fleischmann	4/7
Evalyn Kemp	4/8
David Williams	4/8
John Diefenderfer	4/9
Brian Eiler	4/9
Mike Kemp	4/10
Suzette Mathistad	4/10
Jeanne David	4/12
Linda Johnson	4/14
Michael Diefenderfer	4/20
Ruth Hantelman	4/24
Doris Zimmer	4/24
Jean Orsborn	4/28
Michael Ferretti	4/29

If your birthday or anniversary has been inadvertently omitted, please let the office know.

Elders: 4/2 John Hantelman and Dan Hall
4/9
4/23 Lee Bess and Carl Johnson

Ushers:

April 2: 8:00 Lee Bess and Mike Kemp
10:30 Curtis & Ryan Eiler
April 9: 8:00 Michael Diefenderfer and Ernie Weber
10:30 Larry & Jacque Bonesio
April 16: 8:00 Ken Scott
10:30 Jason Berg, Carl Johnson and Karen Mueller
April 23: 8:00 John Diefenderfer and Don Long
10:30 Dan and Kerry Hall
April 30: 8:00
10:30

Altar Guild: Patti Diefenderfer, Bev Knaak and Bonnie Weber

Happy April Anniversary to:

Larry♥Jacque Bonesio	4/4	Herb♥Glenda Ott	4/22
	52 years together		45 years together
Bob♥Bev Hallstrom	4/7		
	13 years together		