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April
2023

Thoughts from Pastor Stites:

Which is MORE Important: CROSS or EMPTY TOMB?

As we approach the holy week celebration, we divide up the great event of our salvation over several days, rejoicing in all the steps Christ took to win our salvation. But this raises an important question, which is more important to our salvation, is it Christ's death upon the cross, or His resurrection on Sunday morning? Which really is the highest of high holy days: Good Friday or Easter?

We do believe, teach, and confess that Christ was victorious on the cross, that our salvation was completely won when Christ died for us. As Christ Himself said before He took His final breath, "It is finished." (John 19:30) There was nothing left to do, Jesus had defeated sin, death and the devil, He won forgiveness, life and salvation for all mankind. **IT IS FINISHED!**

BUT, we also confess that the resurrection is where we SEE the victory, that is where we see that Christ has been victorious, most notably over death, as He rose to never die again. As St. Paul argued in 1 Corinthians 15:17-19, "If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied." This is because Christ said He would rise from the dead, as in Mark 9:31, "The Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men, and they will kill him. And when he is killed, after three days **HE WILL RISE.**" If Jesus did not rise from the dead as He said He would, we cannot trust anything He said, let alone about His death. Therefore, our entire faith is MEANINGLESS if Christ did not rise from the dead!

So which is the highest of high holy days? Is it Good Friday, the day Christ our Lord suffered and died to win the victory? Or is it Easter, the day we see Christ our Lord has destroyed the power of death and risen victorious?

The great Lutheran answer is ... YES! You cannot divide these days. As I said, if Christ did not rise from the dead, everything else does not matter, Jesus' death would be meaningless, and our entire faith would be worthless. But also, how could Jesus rise from the dead, if He did not die in the first place? The resurrection can only happen if there is death.

In reality we see them as two sides of the same coin, the ONE story of our salvation, as we see Christ BOTH die and rise for us! They are one celebration, we just play the part of the faithful on Good Friday, seeing our Lord and Savior die for us and outwardly we mourn, while in our hearts we are screaming, "It is not over yet!"

Join us as we celebrate the death and resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ Good Friday and Easter, and every time we gather. Amen!

Pastor Jonathan Stites

Announcements & Upcoming Events

Phone numbers and addresses will no longer be published. Please use the church directory or call the church office @ 928-345-9694, if you need someone's number or address for an event



Online Services & Bible Studies

Sunday's Services and Bible Studies are available on our YouTube Channel. Just click on the following link: [Shepherd of the Hills Yuma YouTube page](#) or search "Shepherd of the Hills Yuma" on YouTube.



HOLY WEEK WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Maundy Thursday Service: April 6th @ 6:00pm

Good Friday Service: April 7th @ 6:00pm

Easter Sunday Service: April 9th @ 9:30am



Women's Bible Studies

Wednesday, April 5th @ 7:30am at Sharie Jasper's*

Thursday, April 13th @ 9:30am at Karly Dockter's*

Wednesday, April 19th @ 7:30am at TBD

Thursday, April 27th @ 9:30am @ TBD



Thank you to everyone that shared their love of music and their dedication to enhance our services throughout this past season. We hope to have more voices join us next fall even if you're only here for a short time. We will not have any more Wednesday rehearsals this spring. Our last rehearsal is at 5:30pm on Good Friday, April 7th prior to our 6:00pm service. See you again next fall. *Sharie Jasper*



Our next meeting is April 12th @ 11:00am.



Thank you to everyone that donated food and helped serve for the LWML Celebration and to all that attended. We had 28 ladies that attended the morning session and 2 more came for the afternoon session.

Jessica Castro gave a very informative presentation on the services that the Saguaro Foundation offers in Yuma County. They were founded in 1975 to provide services to individuals with developmental disabilities and the behavioral health community through residential style group home settings. They also provide transportation within the community and the state of Arizona to elderly, handicapped and developmentally disabled individuals. They have day care for adults and children. The Saguaro Foundation focuses on protecting the rights of the individuals it serves by promoting their well-being and enhancing their quality of life. They are a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation.

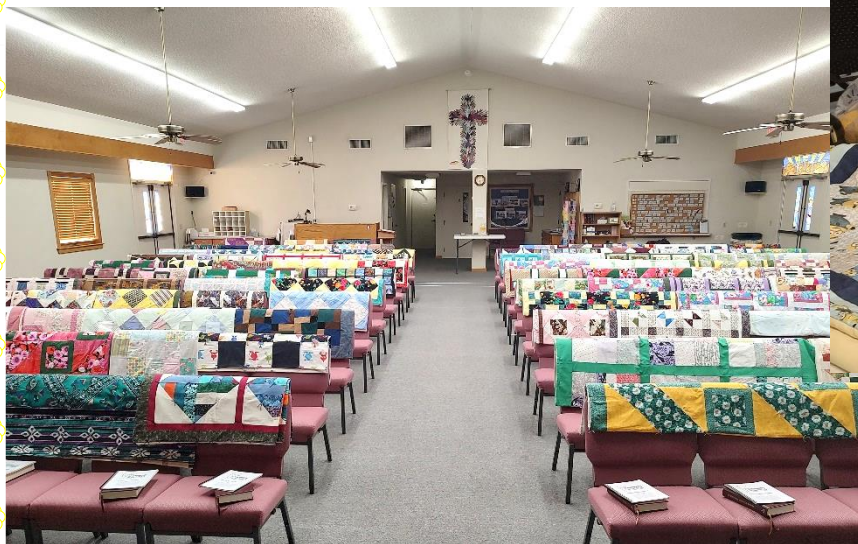


There is still time to purchase quilt drawing tickets. The drawing will be at our April 12 meeting. The first ticket drawn gets their choice of quilt and the second name drawn gets the other quilt.



"Quilting for Charities" finished 92 quilts this season that will be donated to local charities. Thanks to everyone that helped make the tops and tie the finished quilts. Also, thanks for donations of fabric to make tops and sheets to use for backing.

Quilting for Charities 2022-2023



PillowCase Dresses 2022-2023

"The Lord Will Provide" Genesis 22:14

"The time goes so fast", we all say. Every year it seems that there is not enough time to do all that we want to do. However, this year seemed to fly by even faster. I prayed that we would have at least 4 helpers to do pillowcase dresses. God provided 4 dedicated women who worked very hard every Monday to complete our dresses. We put together 139 dress kits that I took home and sewed together. There was another lady that sewed 5 dresses. I thought I wouldn't have time to sew them all, but God provided the time. When we decided to put small crosses in the pockets, God provided several people who volunteered their time to make them. Then there is the question every year of "How do we get the dresses to Orphan Grain Train?" God provided someone to take them to Nebraska to the OGT center in Lincoln.

A BIG "Thank You" goes to everyone that helped put the kits together and to all the generous people of the congregation who donated pillowcases as well as all kinds of trims. Our supply seems to grow every year. What a Blessing!!

Thanks again,

Carol Rice





SOTH Evangelism News

*Lord,
Hear Our
Prayer*

Easy Evangelism:

If you know someone who tells you about their friend or relative who is sick, or some other circumstance or trouble, ask the person the name of their friend or relative, and ask if you can pray for (name of friend/relative). If possible, share a comforting Bible verse and see if you can open a casual discussion.



For the month of April we will be collecting bath towels, wash cloths, dish towels and dish cloths for "Right Turn for Yuma Veterans". Boxes will be set up in the back of the sanctuary. All donated items may be lightly used or new. We thank you and appreciate you for your love and support of our veterans!



The SOTH Evangelism Team



STEWARDSHIP JOY

Oh how we waited and longed for this day. Easter. The empty tomb. A new beginning. Christ made all things new. He made ME a new person in Christ Jesus, my Lord and Savior.

Easter

Joy

Peace

At the beginning of Lent, we folded up all our alleluias and stored them in a box. We walked with Christ as He travelled the road to the cross. We wept at His feet. We tried to suffer with him as best we could. BUT, and this is a big BUT, deep down inside, we knew the end of the story and could not silence that niggling sense of anticipation. The absolute joy that would arrive on the first Easter morn when the empty tomb was revealed.

Of all the gifts we as Christ's stewards possess, this is the greatest of them all. The gift He won for us on that cross. His

gift of eternal life with Him. The righteousness he wraps us in. The love of God that no one can take from us. The gift of being a beloved child of God.

Time. Talent. Treasure. For sure, the undeserved gift of salvation through Jesus Christ is the greatest treasure we can claim. It must be shared. In fact, it is something that cannot be hoarded. That Joy, that Peace, is always bubbling deep within us. I have many times found myself hurting or discouraged or angry, spouting off without thinking. Then, with His Word in my hands and my heart, I realize that these "problems" are nothing. A blink in my earthly life. The Lord takes my hand, smiles and says: "Be still, and know that I am God." (Psalm 46: 10) And that little bubbling brook of joy springs up inside me and His peace talks me down from the ceiling and his joy warms me.

Is that not an astounding gift, my Christian stewards? No one can take it away from you. Others can see it when they are with you but may not know where it comes from. Share it. Shout it. Give a person a smile because Christ has risen! He has risen, indeed! Alleluia!

Soli Deo Gloria!

Shannon Cady – Stewardship



To be reviewed and approved at the Council Meeting in May.
SHEPHERD OF THE HILLS LUTHERAN CHURCH
COUNCIL MEETING
March 21, 2023

Attendees: Jon Weeks, Pastor Stites, Dick Koppe, Sharie Jasper, Kelly Hinrichs, Shannon Cady, Kathy Richardson, Pete Dryer, Brad Erickson, Barbara Koppe, Donna Urquhart

President Weeks called the meeting to order at 9:56 a.m.

Pastor Stites opened with prayer.

Secretary's Report: Minutes from the February 21, 2023, meeting were reviewed. Dick Koppe moved to accept the Minutes. Shannon Cady seconded. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report: Treasurer's report for February 2023 was presented. Sharie stated that there were no significant items to review. Discussion followed on moving Memorial Funds to the Organ Fund. Council members will contact Memorial Fund family members regarding this transfer. Dick Koppe moved to accept the Treasurer's Report for February 2023. Pete Dryer seconded. Motion carried.

Pastor's Report: Pastor reported that the switching of pulpits for Lenten services seems to be going well. The 11:00 a.m. video sermon is not ideal but still attendance at the 11:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. runs about equal. With winter visitors starting to leave, Pastor suggested that one service be held on Maundy Thursday and Good Friday. Times for the services were discussed. Pete Dryer made a motion to hold the service at 6:00 p.m. on both Maundy Thursday and Good Friday. Brad Erickson seconded motion. Motion carried. Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday services will be at 9:30 a.m. as normal. Pastor next addressed the upcoming Synodical Convention. Pastor and Theresa are registered. They are alternates and will only attend if the pastoral or lay delegate cannot attend.

President's Report: President Jon reminded Council members that the Voters' meeting will be held on March 26 after Church service.

Vice President's Report: No report.

Elders Report: Dick Koppe reported that the Elders are still making quite a few calls to members. At least 40 had been made this month. Winter visitors starting to leave.

Trustees Report: Pete Dryer reviewed maintenance items taken care of since the February meeting. A copy of Pete's report is on file. Pete reported that he met with Sign Masters on site and looked at locations for the new sign. Pete shared various designs for the sign including digital and nondigital. The most expensive sign costs \$38,000. Our new sign would probably cost between \$12,000-\$15,000. Since this will need Voter approval, a display board with the different signs will be put up at the back of the church. This will allow members to see their choices prior to voting. In discussing funding options for the sign, the household items donated by the Kaisers are in storage and a yard sale could be held in the Fall with the proceeds going toward the new sign purchase. Also, Memorial Fund families should be given a choice of moving funds to either the Organ Fund or the New Sign fund. Another option that would require Voter approval is to transfer sign costs from the New Building Fund that has a balance of \$74,519. Sign Masters requires a 50% down payment for the sign.

Evangelism Report: Barb Koppe reported that next Sunday is the last to collect sheets for Right Turn for Vets. In April we will be collecting bath towels, wash clothes and kitchen towels for Right Turn for Vets. They can be new or gently used.

Stewardship Report: No report.

Administrative: Kelly shared information from Christ Lutheran on their Easter Eggstravaganza.

Information on the event will be posted on the bulletin board. As of right now with no one to head up an Easter brunch at SOTH, no formal breakfast will be held. Attendance cards are running low and Yuma Printing who has produced the cards in the past is no longer in business. Costs of the cards was discussed. Kelly presented a new card she designed that can be printed in house. Pete Dryer will also get

estimates from another source.

Old Business: None

New Business: The next Council meeting will be held on May 16, 2023. There will be no April meeting. Sharie Jasper moved to adjourn. Shannon Cady seconded. Motion passed.

Jon Weeks adjourned the meeting at 10:54 a.m.

Pastor Stites led us with the Lord's Prayer.

To be reviewed and approved at the Voters' Meeting in December.

SHEPHERD OF THE HILLS LUTHERAN CHURCH

VOTERS' MEETING

Sunday, March 26, 2023

President Jon Weeks called the meeting to order at 11:10 a.m.

Pastor Stites opened with prayer. There were 43 voting members in attendance.

Secretary's Report: Copies of the Minutes from the December 18, 2022, Voters' Meeting were distributed for review. Sharie Jasper moved to approve the Minutes as presented. Dick Koppe seconded. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report: Copies of the February Treasurer's Report were reviewed. Sue Cairns moved to accept the report. Kris Haugh seconded. Motion carried.

Pastor's Report: Pastor Stites reported that the switching of pulpits during Lent has overall been well received. Since El Centro does not have a pastor right now, they have been included in the rotation and really appreciate it. For Holy Week, Maundy Thursday and Good Friday services will be held at 6:00 p.m.

President's Report: President Weeks noted that the Church owns 10 acres off of 40th Street. We are looking for ideas on what to do with the property since building a new church is not an option now. If you have ideas, talk with Jon, Brad, or Pastor. The congregation's input is wanted. Our goal is to figure out ways to grow the church.

Vice President's Report: No report

Elder's Report: Dick Koppe commented that with the end of the Winter season, Elders are starting to leave. They will be missed.

Trustee's Report: Pete Dryer noted that proposals for a new church sign are posted on Pastor's window. He is working with Sign Masters on the project and with Kelly on design and colors. In answer to questions on the specific designs, see Pete following the meeting. Joyce Viether asked when we were voting on the sign. Pete replied that a special meeting could be held for the vote. Pete continues to work on regular maintenance. The light replacement project will hopefully decrease our electric bill.

Evangelism Report: Barbara Koppe thanked everyone who participated in collecting sheets for Right Turn for Veterans. In April we will start collecting towels. The committee is working on some other ideas for evangelism.

Stewardship Report: No report

Administrative Report: Kelly reported that the new online directory has been well received. If anyone needs help to sign up, Kelly would be glad to walk you through the steps.

Old Business: None

New Business: Sharie Jasper thanked everyone who helped clean out and pack up the Kaiser's home over Thursday and Friday, March 16th and 17th. Gary Kaiser is now out of rehab and has joined Linda at the assisted living facility.

Sharie Jasper moved to adjourn. Kelly Hinrichs seconded. Motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:40 a.m.

Pastor Stites led us with the Lord's Prayer.

April Birthdays



LARSON, Christopher	04/07
LEE, Ann	04/07
MOSLEY, Evelyn	04/07
WEEKS, Jon	04/18
HAUGH, Kristopher	04/25
POST, Martha	04/28

April Anniversaries



KUEBLER, Ervin & Ora (10)	04/06
PARKER, Gerry & Gladys (53)	04/18
KOPPE, Dick & Barb (58)	04/24

Stewardship Corner

As God's people, we are called to be part of His divine plan to share the life-saving Gospel with our families, friends, neighbors, and co-workers. It is God's plan that we take responsibility to share the Good News of the Gospel. God *"desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth"* (1 Timothy 2:4). He gives us the privilege to be His channels through which He works, and we become His hands, feet, and mouth to the world. We are His instruments, but He is the one Who changes the hearts and minds of those to whom we tell of God's love and grace.

FOOD BANK

February
\$221

SEASON TOTAL
January - December
\$710



Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the LORD your God which He has given you. Deuteronomy 16:17

Treasurer's Report for March 2023

General Fund

Offerings Received: \$22,126

Offerings Needed: \$21,458

\$668- over

(The Offerings Needed per month is the Annual Budget divided by 12)

Fiscal Year to Date 2023

Offerings Received YTD: \$61,324

Offerings Needed YTD: \$64,374

\$3,050- short

April 2023 at SOTH

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Sunday's Online Service available after 1:00pm - click on following link: Shepherd of the Hills Yuma YouTube			Wednesday's Online Bible Study – click on following link: Shepherd of the Hills Yuma YouTube			
						1 10:30am Christ Lutheran Easter Eggstravaganza @Gateway Park
2 Palm Sunday 8:15am Adult Bible Study 9:30am Worship w/Communion 10:30am Fellowship 5:00pm Sunday Night Cards	3	4 8:00am Men's Bible Study 9:00am Elder's Mtg	5 7:30am Women's Bible Study @ Sharie Jasper's 9:30am Adult Bible Study	6 Maundy Thursday 6:00pm Maundy Thursday Service	7 Good Friday 5:30 Choir Rehearsal 6:00pm Good Friday Service	8
9 Easter Sunday 8:15am Adult Bible Study 9:30am Worship w/Communion 10:30am Fellowship 5:00pm Sunday Night Cards	10	11 8:00am Men's Bible Study 9:00am Pastor Circuit Mtg.	12 9:30am Adult Bible Study 11:00am LWML Monthly Mtg.	13 9:30am Women's Bible Study @ Karly Dockter's	14	15
16 8:15am Adult Bible Study 9:30am Worship w/Communion 10:30am Fellowship 5:00pm Sunday Night Cards	17	18 8:00am Men's Bible Study 10:00am Council Mtg. Cancelled	19 7:30am Women's Bible Study @ TBD 9:30am Adult Bible Study	20	21	22
23 8:15am Adult Bible Study 9:30am Worship w/Communion 10:30am Fellowship 5:00pm Sunday Night Cards	24	25 8:00am Men's Bible Study	26 9:30am Adult Bible Study	27 9:30am Women's Bible Study @ TBD	28	29
30 8:15am Adult Bible Study 9:30am Worship w/Communion 10:30am Fellowship 5:00pm Sunday Night Cards Mite Box Collection						