



The Churchman

Sts. Peter and Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church

250 Woodside Road, Riverside, Illinois 60546 * (708) 442-5250

"Faith Active in Love"

www.stspeterandpaulriverside.org

Volume 45

May 2023

Issue 5

We are called together by the Holy Spirit around Word and Sacraments to glorify God the Father, creator of all things, through our Lord Jesus Christ. We trust God to nurture lives of faith and hope, as we serve and give witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ for the salvation of the world.

Images of the Season for Easter



Floral cross at the corner of 31st and DesPlaines after worship on Easter Day 2022.

What image comes to mind when you think of Easter— Jesus getting up and walking out of the tomb? Actually, none of the resurrection stories gives a detailed description of what happened in the tomb, other than to say that the Crucified One was raised. We are not told that the hand of God reached into the tomb to jostle Jesus from his death sleep, or that the Holy Spirit came into the tomb to give him mouth to mouth

resuscitation. Whatever happened in that tomb was something beyond human understanding. So the primary image for Easter is a profound absence: just the empty tomb itself.

Matthew gives additional details about the entombment of Jesus that enhance our understanding of the resurrection. He relates how the Jewish religious authorities requested that the tomb be sealed and that guards be posted, so that the body could not be stolen and the claim made that Jesus had been raised. Jesus became a prisoner of the tomb. But it is death itself, not the guards, who is the jailer. Fittingly, in the Easter hymn "Come, you faithful, raise the strain" (LBW 132) we sing that "Christ has burst his prison" (st. 2).

Of course the rolling away of the stone did not release Jesus from the tomb, for he had already been raised and gone ahead of the disciples to Galilee. In the resurrection Jesus transcended time, space, and death—those things that limit human existence. So the stone was not rolled away for Jesus, but for the disciples and for us. We need to see the evidence that the "right hand of the Lord has triumphed" (Psalm 118:16) in raising Jesus so that we might believe, and through believing "have life in his name" (John 20:31).

Jesus' victory over death is but a foretaste of God's final victory over death in the age to come. Isaiah anticipates God's ultimate defeat of death (25:7) when he speaks of God destroying "the shroud that is cast over all peoples" and swallowing up death forever. Death having been defeated, the only thing left for God's people to do is to throw a

big celebration, replete with the best food and wine. Each repetition of the Lord's supper anticipates the new life of the end-time, and the risen Lord comes again to share with us the gifts of eternal life in the bread and wine, which are his own body and blood.

Other images for the Easter season remind us that Jesus' victory over death was not for his sake alone—a divine tour de force—but was for us and for our salvation. Jesus' resurrection is the precondition for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and the forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:38). It is also the precondition for our new birth as God's sons and daughters destined to receive a permanent inheritance (1 Peter 1:4), and for our being ransomed from the ways of sin and death with Christ's own blood (1 Peter 1:18-19).

The good shepherd image of John 10 is also one that we associate with Easter, specifically, the fourth Sunday of Easter. Why Easter? The reason is that Jesus can only be our good shepherd insofar as he himself has conquered death. He lays down his life (that is, sacrifices himself) for his sheep, but he takes it up again, and he can share the power of eternal life with the sheep who hear his voice (10:10, 28). Only the one who has conquered death can be the guardian of God's sheep.

Jesus' victory over the grave is completed in the ascension and at the sending of the Spirit at Pentecost. Jesus ascends not just to another place, but to another age, the future reign of God where sin and death have no power. As the one who conquered death, Jesus ascends to take his rightful place in the dominion where the power of eternal life has full sway. Jesus takes his place in the future reign of God for us. He pours out his Spirit on the church to empower it for mission in the world (Acts 1:8), and through the sacramental means of grace—proclamation of the word, the meal of thanksgiving, and the cleansing and renewing bath—Jesus comes in the power of the Holy Spirit to incorporate us into the reign of God. The risen Lord, death's conqueror, gives us a share in what will be our future glory with him.

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—submitted by Pastor Dennis





From the Worship and Music Committee

The members of the committee would like to thank everyone who was involved with preparing and serving the Thursday evening soup suppers during Lent as well as those who served as cantors and music leaders during Evening Prayer services that followed the soup suppers.

Thanks also goes out to everyone who was a part of making the Holy Week and Easter services so meaningful this year. Special thanks to Linda Painter for coordinating the bell choir anthem which was offered on Easter.

We continue to ask God's blessings upon both Pastor Lauritsen and Parish Musician David Richards for their inspiring work in leading the Lenten and Holy Week services.

We have ordered, received, and begun using the new *All Creation Sings* pew edition hymnal supplements. For those who have offered donations to cover the cost of the hymnals, we thank you. We have received enough donations to cover our initial order, but will be ordering more copies, so you can still memorialize or honor a loved one with a donation. See the form included in April Issue of *The Churchman* for more information.

Dealing with Our Pain

By Jacob W. Owensby

Some things wear my little introverted self out, and I just have to rest. Mainly, those things involve being with people. Don't get me wrong. I like being with people. But, introverts like me expend tons of energy when we're with others.

Besides, I feel and intuit my way around this planet. Despite the time I spend studying and reflecting, I don't come at life from an intellectual distance.

Stick me in a room with a dozen or so people, give me a minute, and I'll tell you the emotional temperature of the place. I don't collect data and draw conclusions. I just sense it. It's like my inner life gets hooked up by invisible cables to the inner life of the people around me.

So it probably makes sense to you when I say that faith, at least for me, is not first and foremost about thinking the right ideas about God. Faith is a sincere and intimate connection with and commitment to a person.

Faith comes down to sharing our life with a friend. In my case, that friend is the risen Christ. As the late Marcus Borg once put it, believing is actually be-loving. And Jesus was pretty clear about how to love him.

Shortly before the Last Supper, some Jews from the Diaspora—from someplace outside Israel—came to see Jesus. When Andrew and Philip came to check if he wanted to meet with some potential followers, Jesus reminded them what loving him was going to look like:

“Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. Those who love their life lose it, and those who hate their life in this world will keep it for eternal life. Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there will my servant be also.” (John 12:24-25)

As Richard Rohr puts it, we love Jesus by living a cruciform life. “Christians are meant to be the visible compassion of God on earth.... They agree to embrace the imperfection and even the injustices of our world, allowing these situations to change themselves from the inside out, which is the only way things are changed anyway” (The Universal Christ, p. 147).

As is often said, hurt people hurt people. Our common strategy for dealing with our pain is to find somebody to blame for it. We try to fix our pain by causing pain in someone else. Instead of healing our pain, blame multiplies and intensifies it.

Jesus invites us to join him in the only truly effective way to mend our lives. The way of love. We can acknowledge that we are all hurt people.

When we recognize that my pain is our pain, we take the crucial step away from blame to compassion. To use Henri Nouwen's phrase, we become the wounded healer instead of the wounded victim.

We love Jesus by loving other people. Real people. Without exception. In all the messiness of their lives. And, yes, that means sharing their sorrow and suffering as our own. Elsewhere, Jesus called this loving your neighbor as yourself.

Sometimes, this will just wear us out. At the end of a long day, we may have nothing left to give. Now and then, we will need a mid-afternoon nap, a long weekend, or a walk in the woods with our dog.

That's okay by Jesus. He knows that love is hard work. We need a rest. And as it turns out, that's an act of love as well. Sometimes the hardest one. The act of loving yourself.

This essay originally appeared at Looking for God in Messy Places. Reprinted with permission by The Rt. Rev. Jacob W. Owensby, Ph.D., D.D. Bishop of The Episcopal Church in Western Louisiana.

—submitted by Pastor Dennis



News from the Riverside Preschool at Sts. Peter and Paul

Dear Friends,

The year is just about over. We have had a “flamazing” year!

The month of May will be filled with a celebration for the preschool moms and fun crafts. We will end the year with a program filled with colorful songs and a graduation ceremony for our graduates.

—Lisa Manganiello, Preschool Director

Birthdays

- | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------|
| May 1: Dennis Lauritsen | May 18: Brian Bucz |
| May 5: Henry Quest | Colin McShane |
| May 6: Jonathan Drahos | May 19: Sean Jones |
| May 7: Charlene Patula | May 27: Kristina Patel |
| May 11: Jake Collins | May 28: Timothy Sender |
| Karole Gaydusek | Sarah Wilson |
| Jane Lauritsen | May 29: Thomas Myers |
| May 12: Caitlin McShane | May 31: Thomas Murray |
| May 13: Joseph Hassel | |
| Kenneth Hurbanis | |

Anniversaries

- May 8, 1971: Walter and Judith Cudecki
- May 15, 2010: George and Catherine Pagurko
- May 16, 2009: Jeffrey and Lisa Triska
- May 20, 2006: Paul and Jessica Drahos
- May 23, 1993: Earl, Jr. and Rita Mika
- May 25, 1968: John and Shirley Kostelny
- May 28, 1995: Jennifer and Benjamin Smith
- May 28, 2017: John and Valerie Borysek
- May 28, 2021: Ekatarina and Nick Riha
- May 29, 1994: Jillian and James Collins

For more information, news, photos, worship videos and sermons, visit us on the web at:

www.stspeterandpaulriverside.org



A Mother’s Day Prayer

Heavenly Father, to you I pray...
 On this day called, “Mother’s Day.”
 Let all mother’s on earth give praise,
 To you... for the children that you gave.

For you have blessed them from above,
 with little souls to nourish and love.
 Let them mold each one with care...
 And teach them to be kind and share.

Forgiveness is the special key...
 Start early on, to help them see.
 Their fragile minds are easily impressed.
 Please teach them ways, so they’ll be blessed.

Sow godly seeds into their minds.
 With careful pruning, you will find...
 Young adults with such strong roots,
 all through life, will bear rich fruit.

And then have faith for God to show...
 Them all the rest they have to know.
 Remember they’re His children too.
 For they were only lent to you.

—author unknown



Thank you!

Thank you to everyone who contributed in any way toward making the Spring Rummage and Bake Sale a wonderful community outreach and fellowship event as well as another successful fund-raising effort. Thanks especially to event coordinator Vera Borysek for her months of preparation and hard work!



March 2023	
Current, Benevolence and Freewill Offering	
Budgeted Offering: \$2,527.00	
Date	Offering
3/5	\$1,091.00
3/12	\$2,865.00
3/19	\$ 975.00
3/26	\$1,255.00

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DATED MATERIAL



Lux Cantorum Presents

Celestial Theater



May 5, 7:30pm

Resurrection Lutheran Church
3309 Seminary Avenue, Chicago, IL

May 7, 4:00pm

Sts. Peter and Paul Lutheran Church
250 Woodside Road, Riverside, IL

May 13, 7:30pm

Pilgrim Congregational Church
460 Lake Street, Oak Park, IL

Tickets: \$25



A reception celebrating the 75th Anniversary of LCC will be held following the concert on Sunday, May 7th, at St. Peter and Paul with the recognition of the 15th anniversaries of Artistic Director Wilbert O. Watkins and Accompanist Joan Hutchinson.

MAY WORSHIP SERVERS

May 7th:

Greeter: Ann Kmet
 Assisting Minister: Charles Matthies
 Lector: Tom Michaels
 Live Stream: John Broussard
 Usher: Janet Broussard

May 14th:

Greeter: Karyn Bute
 Assisting Minister: Tom Myers
 Lector: Carrie Watkiss
 Live Stream: Paul Watkiss
 Usher: Walter Cudecki

May 21st:

Greeters: John and Shirley Kostelny
 Assisting Minister: John Broussard
 Lector: J. T. Tarbox
 Live Stream: Charles Matthies
 Usher: John Kostelny

May 28th:

Greeters: Walter and Judith Cudecki
 Assisting Minister: Carrie Watkiss
 Lector: Beverly Tarbox
 Live Stream: Fred Kuzel
 Usher: Rafael Martinez

Sacristan and Altar Care:
 Carole Pollitz and Jane Lauritsen

JUNE WORSHIP SERVERS

June 4th:

Greeter: Carole Pollitz
 Assisting Minister: Beverly Tarbox
 Lector: John Kostelny
 Live Stream: John Broussard
 Usher: Janet Broussard

June 11th:

Greeter: Edward and Joanne Sefara
 Assisting Minister: Brandon Michaels
 Lector: Fred Kuzel
 Live Stream: Paul Watkiss
 Usher: Rafael Martinez

June 18th:

Greeter: John and Shirley Kostelny
 Assisting Minister: Vicki Michaels
 Lector: Jane Lauritsen
 Live Stream: Charles Matthies
 Usher: John Kostelny

June 25th:

Greeter: Larry Crachy and Karen Kubik
 Assisting Minister: Charles Matthies
 Lector: George Valek
 Live Stream: Fred Kuzel
 Usher: Walter Cudecki

Sacristan and Altar Care:
 Kristine Boike



Memorial Flowers

March 26th: In loving memory of dear wife +Deanna Oklepek+ on the thirteenth anniversary of her death on March 29th by remembering husband Milan.

April 23rd: In loving memory of dear father +John Skaritka+ on the 100th anniversary of his birth on April 19th by remembering daughter and son-in-law Betty and Curtis Mitchell.

In remembrance of the 74th wedding anniversary today of +Steve+ and Beverly Podzamsky from daughter and son-in-law Diane and Ben McGee.

Thank you!

Thank you to the following persons who donated Easter lilies for the chancel and Lord's Table.

Ruth Bakalich
 Ann Kmet
 John and Shirley Kostelny
 Fred Kuzel

Esther Meksto
 Marty and Ann Pennino
 Paul and Carrie Watkiss
 and Family

Memorials and Honorariums

✧ For the Church ✧

Susanne Gomez, in memory of the Bartek, Cuvala, and Hluchy Families.

Esther Meksto, in memory of husband +Edward+ on the anniversary of his passing on March 20th, 2018.

Charles Matthies, in memory of +Theodore+ and +Elizabeth Matthies+ on the 80th anniversary of their wedding.

John and Shirley Kostelny, in memory of +Celia Martinez+.

Jan Small, in memory of mother +Suzanne Janocik Bartizal+ on the anniversary of her birth on April 10th and grandmother +Zuzanna Janovic Pribula+.

Betty and Curtis Mitchell, in memory of dear father +John Skaritka+ on the 100th anniversary of his birth on April 19th.

Diane and Ben McGee, in remembrance of the 74th wedding anniversary of +Steve+ and Beverly Podzamsky on April 23rd.



Mardi Gras and Benefit Luncheon 2023



Photos by Emil Galdun. Bulletin board by Jane Lauritsen.

Palm Sunday Coffee and... 2023

