

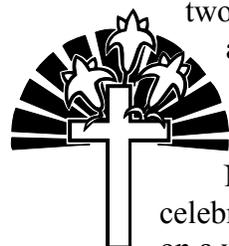
FAITH NEWSLETTER

April 2006 / May 2006

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,



The season of Spring has officially arrived. Baseball, peanuts, and Cracker Jacks are back. The 2005 World Series Champions are trying for two in a row. Chocolate bunnies, marshmallow chicks, and dyed eggs are once again enjoyed. For Christians, Spring is a time of celebrating the life and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ on Easter.



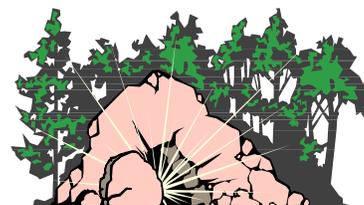
Early in Christianity, Easter was observed on the same day as Passover (14-15 Nisan, a date governed by a lunar calendar). In the 2nd century, the Christian celebration was transferred to the Sunday following the 14-15 Nisan, if that day fell on a weekday. Originally, the Christian Easter was a unity celebration of the death of Christ and His resurrection, but in the 4th century Good Friday became a separate commemoration of the death of Christ and Easter was thereafter devoted exclusively to the resurrection. Currently, Easter Day is determined as the first Sunday after the full moon on or after March 21. As for the Eastern Orthodox churches, they follow the Julian rather than the Gregorian calendar, so their celebration usually falls several weeks later than the Western Easter. [Reginald H. Fuller *Bibliography: Torvend, Samuel, ed., Passage to the Paschal Feast (1993); Williams, Rowan, Resurrection: Interpreting the Easter Gospel (1994)*].

One of the things linked to Easter that is traditional for Christians are familiar Easter hymns, such as *Jesus Christ Is Risen Today*, *Crown Him with Many Crowns*, and others. In Exodus 15, there is a song known as the Song of Moses that has an Easter ring to it. It celebrates God's spectacular victory over the pharaoh of Egypt and his army, then proceeds to look forward to the establishment of God's reign over the nations and His presence among His redeemed people. Verse 2 emphasizes that **"The LORD is my strength and song, and He has become my salvation; He is my God, and I will praise Him; My father's God, and I will exalt Him."**

Indeed, this song in Exodus 15 is of tremendous importance to the whole biblical drama. Emerging from the Red Sea not only marked Israel's independence as a nation – no small step in God's saving plan – but also has long been viewed by the church as a foreshadowing of the Easter event of Christ's resurrection.

There is, however, a wonderful difference between God's deliverance at the Red Sea and God's deliverance on Easter. At the Red Sea, God used the forces of nature to overcome a mighty enemy. On the day of Christ's resurrection, God Himself won the victory over sin, death, and the power of the devil. Therefore, we joyously sing with the psalmist, **"This is the day the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it"** (Psalm 118:24).

"Now after the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week...and behold, a severe earthquake had occurred, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled away the stone and sat upon it. 'He is not here, for He has risen, just as He said'" (Matthew 28:1a,2,6a). He has risen indeed! Alleluia!



Yours in Christ,

Pastor Steve Bocklage

In and Around Faith Church

LWML

The LWML Spring Rally is on April 1st at St. Paul's Church. Registration is at 8:30 AM and lunch will be provided.

Also on April 8th, Lenten Inspiration Day will be held at Salem Lutheran Church in Homewood. Please call me if you want more information.
Grace Scott

Faith Ladies Aid

Our Annual Rummage & Bake Sale is April 29th from 9:00 AM until 2:00 PM. On Thursday the 27th the ladies will be setting up tables from 6:30 – 7:30 PM. Friday the 28th the ladies will be sorting and displaying the donations. Plan on dropping off your items on either of the above mentioned days or anytime after Easter.

Don't forget we also need baked goods.

Our regular meeting will be April 6th at 7:00 PM. Anna Bocklage will be involving everyone in a cake decorating demonstration. Our May 4th meeting will be followed by an ice cream social.

Remember joining Faith's Ladies Aid gives you fellowship in Christ, helps you help others and our church, and the benefit of working and laughing with a great group of ladies. All this for \$3.00 a year! Come join us!

Faith Seniors

Although we are a small group, we voted to keep this organization going. We had a delicious corned beef sandwich and green sherbet at our March meeting in recognition of St. Patrick's Day. Join us at our next meeting.

Church Picnic

We're trying something new this year. The church picnic is set for June 11th, so mark your calendars so you can join us.

Altar Guild

The Altar Guild would like to express their appreciation and gratitude for the tremendous support the Praise Concert received from the Faith Community. In addition to a \$300 donation from Thrivent Financial for Lutherans, the Altar Guild received very generous donations from Donna Beckett, Barb and Gene Tebo, Erma Johnson, Lucille Henson and many others who attended the concert and showed their support. More than \$1000 was donated to help the Altar Guild continue to serve the Lord and His congregation.

Thank you all!

Watch for information about purchasing flowers for Easter Sunday.



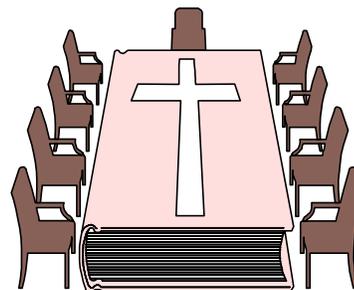
Schedule of April 2006 / May 2006 Events

| <u>Date</u> | <u>Time</u> | <u>April Event</u> |
|-------------|-------------|--|
| 1 | 9:00 AM | Food Pantry Distribution |
| 2 | 9:00 AM | Worship / Communion |
| | 10:15 AM | Sunday School Adult Bible Class |
| 5 | 7:00 PM | Lenten Service |
| 9 | 9:00 AM | Worship / Children's Msg. |
| | 10:15 AM | Sunday School Adult Bible Class |
| 13 | 7:00 PM | Maundy Thursday Worship / Communion |
| 14 | 3:00 PM | Good Friday Service |
| | 7:00 PM | Good Friday Evening Service |
| 15 | 9:00 AM | Food Pantry Distribution |
| 16 | 7:00 AM | Worship / Communion |
| | 10:00 AM | Worship / Communion |
| 23 | 9:00 AM | Worship / Children's Msg. |
| | 10:15 AM | Sunday School Adult Bible Class |
| 30 | 9:00 AM | Worship / Communion |
| | 10:15 AM | Sunday School Adult Bible Class |

| <u>Date</u> | <u>Time</u> | <u>May Event</u> |
|-------------|-------------|--|
| 6 | 9:00 AM | Food Pantry Distribution |
| 7 | 9:00 AM | Worship / Communion Adult Bible Class |
| 14 | 9:00 AM | Worship / Children's Msg. |
| | 10:15 AM | Sunday School Adult Bible Class |
| 20 | 9:00 AM | Food Pantry Distribution |
| 21 | 9:00 AM | Worship / Communion |
| | 10:15 AM | Sunday School Adult Bible Class |
| 28 | 9:00 AM | Worship / Children's Msg. |
| | 10:15 AM | Sunday School Adult Bible Class |

Weekly Meetings

| | |
|-------------|--------------------------|
| AA Groups | M & F - 6:00 PM |
| | Sat - 8:00 AM |
| Girl Scouts | Tu - 6:00 PM F - 6:00 PM |
| ALANON | Tu - 7:00 PM |
| Choir | W - 6:30 PM |
| Seniors | (Third) - Th. - 12:00 PM |
| Ladies Aid | (First) - Th. - 7:00 PM |



April / May Elders, Ushers & Lay Readers

Worship 9:00 AM Sunday

Apr. 2 Frank Oslakovic
Ed Neaves
Gail Henson
Mary Slepiski

Apr. 9 Richard Clark
Glen Werth
Gene Tebo

Apr. 16 7:00 AM
Bill Weems
Al Skopec
Andrea Skopec
Colleen Weems

Apr. 16 10:00 AM
Gene Osmanski
Frank Oslakovic
Bob Stegman
Dory Moeller

Apr. 23 Alden Ketchum
Christina Trojanowski
Elise Trojanowski

Apr. 30 Ed Neaves
Richard Clark
Nick Trojanowski
Mark Trojanowski

Lent 7:00 PM

Apr. 5 Wednesday
Gene Osmanski
Gene Tebo

Apr. 13 Maundy Thursday
Alden Ketchum
Frank Oslakovic
Glenn Werth
Bob Stegman

Apr. 14 Good Friday 3:00PM
Richard Clark
Ed Neaves

Apr. 14 Good Friday 7:00 PM
Frank Oslakovic
Bill Weems

Worship 9:00 AM Sunday

May 7 Frank Oslakovic
Ed Neaves
Gail Henson
Mary Slepiski

May 14 Richard Clark
Glenn Werth
Gene Tebo

May 21 Bill Weems
Al Skopec
Andrea Skopec
Colleen Weems

May 28 Alden Ketchum
Christina Trojanowski
Elise Trojanowski

Lay Readers 9:00 AM Sunday

Apr. 2 Ed Neaves

Apr. 9 Alma Rissky

Apr. 16 7:00 AM Bill Weems
10:00 AM Gene Osmanski

Apr. 23 Mark Trojanowski

Apr. 30 Nick Trojanowski

May 7 Debbie Hochgesang

May 14 Alma Rissky

May 21 Bill Weems

May 28 Christina Trojanowski



Pastor's Corner

“...Christ has triumphed! Alleluia! Be to the Father and our Lord, To Spirit blest, most holy God, All the glory, never ending! Alleluia!”

Lutheran Worship - Hymn 131, v.4

Newness and Renewal

Spring is a time of season for newness and renewal. Nature that was lifeless during winter is now transformed into beautiful colors, fragrant aromas, and harmonious sounds. For Christians, spring is also a time of celebrating the transforming life and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Christ is Alive!

The Season of Easter consists of seven Sundays (the first on Easter Day – The Resurrection of Our Lord), and the days that follow leading up to Pentecost. The terminology “Sunday of Easter” is used for the second through seventh Sunday that follows Easter Day and is intentional since “The Lord has risen” continues to be the theme for this season.

Out Of This World!

Between the sixth and seventh Sunday of Easter is a very important day in the Church year that seems to come and go rather quietly each year. Forty days after His resurrection, our Lord gathered His disciples on a hillside in Galilee and after final instructions, left this world with His visible presence and re-ascended to heaven. It is important to note that ascension refers to the exalted human nature of Jesus. He did not discard His human nature, but took it with Him! Although He is no longer visibly present with us, He still lives and reigns as God and Savior and is one with us.

The Old...

Ten days after our Lord’s ascension is the festival of Pentecost. The word *Pentecost* means *fiftieth* and was originally associated with the fiftieth day after the beginning of Passover. In the Old Testament, Pentecost was also a Jewish feast known as the Feast of Weeks (*Shavuot*), an agricultural festival celebrating and giving thanks for the "first fruits" of the early spring wheat harvest (Leviticus 23; Exodus 23 & 34). The festival began to take on another religious role around the time of the Israelite Exile. Because Exodus 19:1 describes the arrival of the Israelite people at Sinai as being at about that time of year, Pentecost was used to mark the giving of the Torah at Sinai.

The New...

The early Christians connected the old celebration of the fruits of the earth's harvest with the fruits of the Spirit's blessing. Reminiscent of the tongues of fire by which the Holy Spirit manifested His presence to the disciples (Acts 2:3-4), Pentecost has become in a sense the birthday celebration of the New Testament Church. For Christians, Pentecost Sunday ends the season of Easter and is fifty days after the celebration of our Lord's resurrection. It is traditionally known as Whitsunday, which refers to the white garments worn in ancient times by those seeking baptism on this day.

Newness and Renewal

The empowering presence of God through the work of the Holy Spirit in the church is a powerful driving force for churches doing mission work in the world (Acts 2; John 14:8-17; 16:5-15; 20:19-23). A sense of newness and renewal of mission outreach emphasizes the restoration of community and unity of purpose that had been disrupted by sin and selfishness. By the work of the Holy Spirit, a tremendous opportunity is at hand for the people of Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church to reach out in Christian love and call people to the newness or renewal of God’s love and purpose in their lives.



We continue reviewing various parts of Luther's Small Catechism. Enjoy!

The Sacrament of the Altar:



In a simple way in which the head of a house is to present it to the household.

What is the Sacrament of the Altar?

Answer:

It is the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ under the bread and wine, instituted by Christ himself for us Christians to eat and to drink.

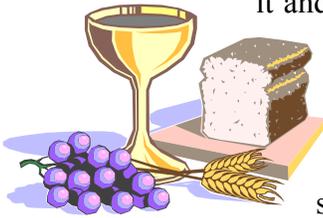
[It is also known as The Lord's Supper, Holy Communion, and the Eucharist]

Where is this written?

Answer:

The holy evangelists, Matthew, Mark, and Luke, and St. Paul write thus:

“Our LORD Jesus Christ, on the night in which he was betrayed, took the bread, gave thanks, and broke it and gave it to his disciples and said, ‘Take; eat; this is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.’”



“In the same way he also took the cup after the supper, gave thanks, and gave it to them and said, ‘Take, and drink of it, all of you. This cup is the New Testament in my blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.’”

What is the benefit of such eating and drinking?

Answer:

The words “given for you” and “shed for you for the forgiveness of sins” show us that forgiveness of sin, life, and salvation are given to us in the sacrament through these words, because where there is forgiveness of sin, there is also life and salvation.

How can bodily eating and drinking do such a great thing?

Answer:

Eating and drinking certainly do not do it, but rather the words that are recorded: “given for you” and “shed for you for the forgiveness of sins.” These words, when accompanied by the physical eating and drinking, are the essential thing in the sacrament, and whoever believes these very words has what they declare and state, namely, “forgiveness of sins.”

Who, then, receives this sacrament worthily?

Answer:

Fasting and bodily preparation are in fact a fine external discipline, but a person who has faith in these words, “given for you” and “shed for you for the forgiveness of sins,” is really worthy and well prepared. However, a person who does not believe these words or doubts them is unworthy and unprepared, because the words “for you” require truly believing hearts.¹

¹ Kolb, R. 2000. The Book of Concord: The confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church. Fortress Press: Minneapolis

A Biblically Proper Belief in Holy Communion

Holy Communion is an expression of church fellowship and a confession of the unity of faith. An important truth to remember is that while Holy Communion is always a personal matter, it is never a private matter. Those who commune at the same altar are publicly declaring that they are united in the doctrine of the Apostles (Acts 2:42). Fellowship in the Lord's Supper is church fellowship taught in Holy Scripture in 1 Corinthians, chapters 10 and 11.

While some might view the word “body” in 1 Corinthians 11:29 as referring to the church, it is clear from 1 Corinthians 10:6 that the bread and the wine are a “participation” (communion) in the body and blood of the Lord. If someone views these elements as *only* bread and wine – mere symbols – he or she is guilty of viewing holy things as ultimately unimportant and so becomes guilty of failing to recognize what is being received. Whenever we regard holy things in this manner, we are sinning, and sin always involves judgement. Since Holy Communion is an expression of our fellowship with one another, it is also a statement concerning our common faith.

This relates to those who commune in churches that do not recognize the Real Presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper. In reality, one might question whether their practice can be considered *Holy* Communion. Even though they use the same words of consecration as we do, the words have a different meaning. These words must be understood in the manner in which they are meant.



Thus, a Lutheran can hardly be in fellowship with a church that does not proclaim the Real Presence of the Lord in Holy Communion (compare Transubstantiation in the Roman Catholic Church and Symbolism in various Protestant denominations). A Lutheran church cannot in good conscience commune someone who sees these holy elements as the actual body and blood of Christ or merely the representation of the body and blood of Christ. The same understanding of altar and church fellowship is true for a Lutheran not to commune at a church that **does not** believe in the Real Presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper.

As for anyone being condemned by a flawed understanding of the Lord's Supper, it is important to remember that only lack of faith or trust in the saving work of Christ on the cross, in His resurrection, and in His ascension condemns a person. (1 Cor. 11:26-29) A lack of understanding of Holy Communion, even though it is important, will not condemn a person.

Hopefully, this brief explanation will help in understanding that our love for our Lord and His Sacrament, and our love for each person is the reason why we seek to have a profession of confessional unity in faith. Sensitive pastoral care always needs to be exercised so that each of us can give a joyful witness to our unity in faith in the Real Presence of Christ in Holy Communion.



Pastor Steve Bocklage

Notes from NID Pastor's Theological Convocation

Theme: "The Congregation's Ministry and Mission: Who's in Charge Here?"

Background: Too often the ministry of a congregation gets put on hold because of a power struggle between the Pastor and congregation leaders. Well-publicized example of need: Newspaper Headline: "Minister arrested in mid-sermon." NID, Zion Ev. Lutheran Church, Chicago, east side 109th St., Feb. 5, 2006. (Not very far from Faith Oak Lawn.)

Thoughts to keep in mind

Cycle of Reconciliation:

1. Admonition
2. Repentance
3. Forgiveness
4. New Life

"We don't develop and grow by trying to be who we are not."

"I can only control my thoughts about my feelings and how I deal with my feelings."

Who is in charge? -- Christ

God's design for his Church:

1. Worship
2. Nurture
3. Team ministry – Pastor and congregation leaders

We must not place ourselves in the way of God's purpose. Focus on what you can do, not what you shouldn't do.

Role of Pastor in congregation's Ministry and Mission

Distinctive functions: Preaching, Teaching, Administer Sacraments, Absolution.

Christian vocation – servant in the Kingdom, shepherd.

Mutual accountability together with congregation leaders *to and for each other* including shortcomings with an attitude of service, support and love.

(Observations: Most Pastors disliked the concept of undergoing a yearly evaluation. Question of "Hire and Fire" business world mentality vs. having a Divine Call. What has changed over time is that the Pastor is no longer the most educated person in the community.)

Traits:

1. Nothing hidden! (What people don't know, they tend to make up, i.e. fill in the blanks.)
2. Consistency
3. Trust
4. Remember "Tradition counts."
5. Good for integrity to admit when wrong.

Role of Lay leaders in congregation's Ministry and Mission

Understand the reason for the Pastoral Office.

Accept your Pastor's instruction.

Support your Pastor

Assure that your Pastor fulfills his role and carries out his responsibilities.

Do not forfeit the Church's responsibilities