

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 46

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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



Easter morning 2024 at Sts. Peter and Paul. Photo by Rafael Martinez.

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



A Poem for Good Shepherd Sunday

The 4th Sunday of Easter, April 21st, 2024

By Andrew King

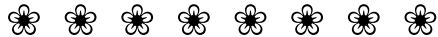
There is a place we can find, a good place
like quiet meadows where flowers spread,
like green grasses by gentle streams;
a place where the heart feels nourished,
where the mind is hopeful, unhurried,
where the spirit is glad and at peace.
We'll name this place fulfillment,
we'll name it healing and thankfulness,
we'll name this good place pasture
for there we seek to feed.

And there is a voice we can hear that calls us,
a gentle voice, melodious,
a voice like songbirds and laughter,
like a mother comforting her children,
like a shepherd calling his sheep.
We'll name this voice acceptance,
we'll name it mercy and forgiveness,
we'll name it the voice of God's love,
inviting us gently to feed.

It invites us to enter pasture
when we think we're too hurting to listen,
too angry or grieving or fearful
to hear the voice that calls us to peace.

It invites us to enter pasture
when we're sure we're too busy to listen,
too burdened or worried or pressured
to hear the voice that calls us to peace.

It says: Come in and go out and find pasture.
It says: We are safe with the shepherd of all sheep.
It says: Meadows await us, in this moment.
It says: Rest in love. Where you are. Joyfully feed.



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.

—Charles Matthies, *Worship and Music Chair*



Birthdays

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

Welcome, Kenzie Ann and Sophie Lynn!

Our prayers of thanksgiving and joyfulness are with Ahmed and Rachel Arif and their families on the birth of beautiful twin baby girls, Kenzie and Sophie, on Thursday, March 21st! Grandparents and great grandparents are Tom and Vicki Michaels, Lois Michaels, Kenneth Hudnall, and the parents and grandparents of Ahmed. "O Lord our God, creator of all that exists, we thank you for the joy of watching new life begin and for the privilege of sharing with you in your continuing creation. In your mercy grant that these blessings may continue to us and even to our children's children, that generations yet unborn may bless your holy name; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen."

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



Congratulations, Graduates!

On Sunday, June 9th the congregation will remember in prayer and recognize those related to the congregation who are completing courses of study and graduating this spring from middle school, high school, college, graduate and professional schools. We would like to have a complete list of the names of our graduates, the schools from which they are graduating, and a little about their future plans—all of which could be included in the Sunday bulletins and the summer issue of the newsletter. Please speak with Pastor Dennis or Karen Rouleau if you know of graduates and can provide some information about them. We also would hope that as many of our graduates as possible could be present at worship that Sunday.



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



March 2024
Current, Benevolence and Freewill Offering
Budgeted Offering: \$2,615.00

<u>Date</u>	<u>Offering</u>
3/3	\$2,175.00
3/10	\$1,005.00
3/17	\$3,665.00
3/24	\$1,747.00
3/31	\$ 885.00

"We are always on our way from darkness into light..."

Some years ago in a homily at an Easter Dawn Mass in the ruins of the abbey at Corcomroe, County Clare, the late John O'Donohue said:

"We are always on our way from darkness into light.
Every morning, we come out of the dark territories of dreaming
into waking awareness of the day.
Every night, no matter how long, breaks again
and the light of dawn comes.
At birth each of us made a journey from darkness into light,
from the warm secure darkness of the womb
into the light of the world.
So we are no strangers to darkness
and we are special friends of the light..."

"One of the beauties of Easter morning is that the light
that comes with Christ is a gentle but penetrating light.
There is no hurt anywhere within us no matter in what crevices
it might be buried, but that the light of Easter
can reach it and heal it..."

"So on this Easter morning, let us look again at the lives
we have been so generously given
and let us let fall away the useless baggage we carry—
old pains, old habits, old ways of seeing and feeling—
and let us have the courage to begin again."

From *Walking on the Pastures of Wonder*, John Quinn, Estate of John O'Donohue, Veritas, 2015, p. 107- 109.

Thank you!

Many thanks to Ann Vana, Ann Kmet, Shirley Kostelny and any others who have given me birthday and anniversary greeting cards they received from various organizations. I am also grateful to dear Karyn Bute who creates cards that I will be sending out. Thank you very much Karyn! As we all know greeting cards have become expensive even at lesser card stores. Hope everyone enjoys receiving cards as well as I enjoy sending them. Blessings and thank you!

—Joanne Sefara



News from the Riverside Preschool at Sts. Peter and Paul

Dear Friends,

The year is just about over. We have had a "turtley cool" 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

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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DATED MATERIAL

**Lux Cantorum Chicago
Spring Concert**

“SACRED CLASSICS”

These extraordinary compositions,
crafted by the greatest masters of the genre,
have stood the test of time as they transport
listeners to a realm where the sacred and the sublime converge.



In concert here on Sunday afternoon, May 5th, 4 p.m.
Brandon Michaels and Pastor Dennis of our congregation sing with Lux Cantorum Chicago.
Ticket information at luxcantorum.org.

Palm Sunday "Coffee and..."



Beverly Podzamsky and Pastor Dennis enjoy conversation during the Palm Sunday coffee hour.

Thank you!

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

Ruth Bakalich
The Gavac Family
John and Shirley Kostelny
Fred Kuzel

The Lauritsen Family
The Mocek Family
Marty and Ann Pennino
The Watkiss Family



Easter Sunday 2024



MAY WORSHIP SERVERS

May 5th:

Greeters: Larry Crachy and Karen Kubik
 Assisting Minister: John Broussard
 Lector: Philip Painter
 Live Stream: Charles Matthies
 Usher: Rafael Martinez

May 12th:

Greeter: Karyn Bute
 Assisting Minister: Beverly Tarbox
 Lector: Brandon Michaels
 Live Stream: Paul Watkiss
 Usher: George Valek

May 19th:

Greeters: John and Shirley Kostelny
 Assisting Minister: Vicki Michaels
 Lector: Paul and Carrie Watkiss
 Live Stream: Fred Kuzel
 Usher: John Kostelny

May 26th:

Greeters: Walter and Judith Cudecki
 Assisting Minister: Brandon Michaels
 Lector: George Valek
 Live Stream: John Broussard
 Usher: Walter Cudecki

Sacristan and Altar Care:

Carole Pollitz and Jane Lauritsen

JUNE WORSHIP SERVERS

June 2nd:

Greeter: Carole Pollitz
 Assisting Minister: Tom Myers
 Lector: John Broussard
 Live Stream: Charles Matthies
 Usher: Janet Broussard

June 9th:

Greeters: Edward and Joanne Sefara
 Assisting Minister: Charles Matthies
 Lector: Jane Lauritsen
 Live Stream: Paul Watkiss
 Usher: Rafael Martinez

June 16th:

Greeters: Bettye Harden and Staci Harden
 Assisting Minister: Carrie Watkiss
 Lector: Gary and Jocelyn Drahos
 Live Stream: Fred Kuzel
 Usher: George Valek

June 23rd:

Greeter: Ann Kmet
 Assisting Minister: Beverly Tarbox
 Lector: Fred Kuzel
 Live Stream: John Broussard
 Usher: John Kostelny

June 30th:

Greeters: Walter and Judith Cudecki
 Assisting Minister: John Broussard
 Lector: Tom Myers
 Live Stream: Charles Matthies
 Usher: Walter Cudecki

Sacristan and Altar Care:

Kristine Boike

Memorials and Honorariums

✦ For the Church ✦

Esther Meksto, in memory of husband +Edward Meksto+ on the 6th anniversary of his passing on March 20th.
 Adolf and Ellen Heimann, in memory of +Anna Gavac+.
 Edward and Joanne Svancara, for *The Churchman*.
 Suzanna Skudrna, in memory of husband +Robert+.
 Audrey Bucz, in memory of husband +John+.
 Brian Bucz, in memory of father +John+.
 Diane and Ben McGee, in remembrance of +Steve+ and Beverly Podzamsky's 75th wedding anniversary on April 23rd.
 Pat and Sarah Gavac, in memory of mother-in-law and grandmother +Anne Gavac+.
 Martha Klein-Larsen, in memory of nephew +Joshua Nardulli+.
 Debbie and Dave Bark, Ken and Pam Wood, Michael Wood, and Sue and Larry Kusch, in memory of mother +Shirley Wood+ on the 8th anniversary of her passing.
 Jan Small, in memory of mother +Suzanne Janovic Bartizal+ and grandmother +Zuzanna Janovic Pribula+.
 Gerald and Carol Vovis, in memory of +Anna Gavac+.
 Michael Wood, in loving memory of dear mother +Shirley Wood+ and grandparents +John+ and +Anne Small+.



Susan Greeley, Sr. Director of Donor Relations at Lutheran Social Services of Illinois addresses the congregation on Good Shepherd Sunday, April 21st, the day of the Mission Dinner. The special offering and dinner raised over \$1,300 to benefit LSSI. Photo by Rafael Martinez.