



# 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](http://www.stspeterandpaulriverside.org)

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*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.*

## An Easter Message from Bishop Kucharek

by Bishop Wilma S. Kucharek



The Risen Christ is with Us!  
There are many accounts of Jesus’ life and ministry before his passion and death. Jesus was present with the people; he was known among them: by his family, by his followers, and even by those who felt threatened by him. He was known for being a compassionate healer, insightful preacher, wise teacher, and prophetic leader.

He was known by Mary who anointed Jesus’ feet, Peter who struggled with who Jesus was, and those in authority who feared him. Nevertheless, Jesus was present with his people, even when fear, human frailties, and uncertainties got in the way.

We can only imagine what it must have been like for those women at the tomb and for the other followers of Jesus in those first days after the crucifixion. Their hopes and dreams had been turned upside down, while grief, doubts, uncertainties, and fear weighed heavily upon them. Everything they thought they knew and could count on in their lives had disintegrated into the realm of the unknown with Jesus’ death on the cross.

We can understand something about how life can so suddenly be turned upside down. A year ago, we would never have imagined how much a global pandemic could affect us and the whole world. The hopes and dreams we took for granted were replaced by uncertainties. We lamented the loss of livelihoods and the church and community life we knew and loved. We grieved those whose presence death removed from us. Our plans had to be refashioned and our lives had to adapt.

The accounts of that Easter morning and the days following Jesus’ resurrection tell us about the women at the tomb, the disciples who were behind locked doors, and the disciples on the road to Emmaus. The women at the tomb were afraid; the disciples locked themselves in out of fear; Thomas was full of doubt; and the disciples walking to Emmaus were discouraged.

Nevertheless, precisely when they were most afraid, most uncertain, and most discouraged, Jesus came and was present with them, just as he had been before, although at first they didn’t recognize him. Even though he was right there with them, their fears and

uncertainties got in the way of knowing it was Jesus. Only later, did they recognize him as he greeted them with God’s peace and shared with them his presence, the holy scriptures, and a meal.

Just as Jesus was alive and present with his followers when they didn’t expect it or recognize him, Jesus is alive and present with us, his beloved ones, often at times we least expect it. For it is precisely at those times, when we are uncertain, vulnerable, or disheartened, that Jesus is right there with us. And Jesus continues to be with us through God’s word, in prayer, and in our care for others, whether it be providing for those in need, or rising to the challenges during this pandemic to do what is needed to keep our congregations, communities, and one another safe.

The angel told the women to tell the disciples that Jesus is alive, and that “...he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him, just as he told you” (Mark 16:7). This reminds us that Jesus leads the way, and there is nowhere we can go, or situation we can endure, that Jesus has not already been there, and because he has been there, he understands us and all our human frailties and burdens. Indeed, let us rejoice that Jesus loves us, Jesus is alive, and Jesus is present with us! For “...neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, [nor pandemic], nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Rom. 8:38-39).

When Jesus commissioned his disciples, he gave this promise: “And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age”(Matt. 28:20b). May you find comfort in these words, so that even when you are challenged by the uncertainties of life, you may rejoice that the resurrected Christ Jesus is present with you and gives you life and salvation.

Rejoice, beloved in the Lord! Christ is risen! He is risen, indeed! Hallelujah!

+ Bishop Wilma S. Kucharek

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For more information, news, photos, videos,  
sermons, and live stream of  
the worship services  
visit us on the web at

[www.stspeterandpaulriverside.org](http://www.stspeterandpaulriverside.org)

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## 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*

## Passages

Richard J. Hurbanis, 78 year old husband of Ruth, and father of Kenneth, Kevin and Karen, passed from this life on April 10<sup>th</sup>. Services were held at Hitzeman Funeral Home in Brookfield on April 14<sup>th</sup>.



### 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.



March 2021	
Current, Benevolence and Freewill Offering	
Budgeted Offering: \$2,597.00	
Date	Offering
3/7	\$3,315.00
3/14	\$1,520.00
3/21	\$1,905.00
3/28	\$1,083.00

## News from Riverside Preschool at Sts. Peter and Paul

Dear Friends,

We can't believe the school year is almost over. It's been a challenging year but we are so glad to have had a program all year.

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

—Lisa Manganiello, Preschool Director

## Friberg Mission Update Tanzania, March 2021

Dear Mission Partners and Loyal Friends,

Because of your generous support, we were able to continue working in Tanzania during 2020 with minimal disruption. This was a huge blessing. We know, however, that many of you were very restricted in work and activities. We have seen first-hand the worldwide economic impact of the pandemic. We know many of you experienced financial shortfalls. We pray that the vaccinations will bring a rapid turnaround.

Tanzanians lost their president unexpectedly this month from illness. There was a smooth and peaceful transition of power when Vice President Samia Hassan assumed her new role as President. She is confronted by a second wave of COVID which is more serious than the first. The pandemic shut down Tanzania's biggest industry which is tourism. The recovery will be long.

We are in Minnesota for 3 months while renewing our Tanzania work permit. Lord willing, we will continue working in Tanzania two more years.

Steve greatly appreciates your prayers for his prostate cancer treatment. He is on hormone blockers and there has been no progression of his disease over the past two years. We will all encounter challenges in life which can only be faced with the help of Jesus.

Our daughter Shalai is in her second semester at the University of Minnesota. She is thankful to be in the dorm and have friends despite the restrictions. We are thankful Nyika and Zaka were employed throughout the pandemic. Zaka and Meagan bought a rural home and are settled near Somerset, Wisconsin. Nyika has big changes ahead, the best of which is marrying Becca in May!

With our thanks,  
Steve and Bethany



### 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, 2009: Jeffrey and Lisa Triska  
May 15, 2010: George and Catherine Pagurko  
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 29, 1994: Jillian and James Collins

## Memorials and Honorariums

### ✝ For the Church ✝

Anne Gavac and Family, in loving memory of husband, father and grandfather +Samuel Gavac+ on the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his birth. In memory of parents +Paul+ and +Zuzanna Hluchy+ and brothers +John+ and +Sam Hluchy+ by remembering daughter and sister Anne Gavac and Family.

In memory of father and grandfather +Samuel Gavac+ on the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his birth on April 18<sup>th</sup>, 1921 by remembering daughter Susan Hassel and grandchildren Joseph, John and Sheryl Hassel.

Jan Small, in memory of mother +Suzanne Janovic Bartizal+ and grandmother +Zuzanna Janovic Pribula+.

Mike and Tamara Wood, Sue and Larry Kusch, Ken and Pam Wood, and Debbie and Dave Bark, in memory of mother +Shirley Wood+ on the anniversary of her passing.

### ✝ In Memory of Robert Skudrna ✝

The Skudrna Family

Bob and Kelly Hetzler and Elizabeth, in memory of uncle.

Benjamin and Jennifer Smith and Family

Edward and Joanne Sefara

Peter and Sandra Spilotro

Lois A. Michaels

Mark and Liz Rouck

The Kavicky Boys

John and Shirley Kostelny

Vera Borysek

William Boor

John and Janet Broussard

Charles Matthies

Frank and Ann Kmet

Ann Vana

Janice Hapgood, Jon Hapgood, and Christopher and Laura Teter

Mildred Mendel

Blue Moon Senior Counseling

### ✝ In Memory of Sheryl Hallmann ✝

Edward and Joanne Sefara

Peter and Sandra Spilotro

Lois A. Michaels

Richard and Ruth Hurbanis

Mark and Liz Rouck

William Boor

Suzanna Skudrna

John and Janet Broussard

Vera Borysek

Charles Matthies

John and Shirley Kostelny

Martin and Ann Pennino

Mildred Mendel

## Memorial Flowers

*March 28<sup>th</sup>:* In memory of +Robert Nowak+ on the first anniversary of his passing on March 27<sup>th</sup> by remembering Drahos Family.

*April 4<sup>th</sup>:* In loving memory of dear wife +Deanna Oklepek+ on the 11<sup>th</sup> anniversary of her passing on Easter Sunday, April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2010 by remembering husband Milan.

*April 18<sup>th</sup>:* In memory of +Paul Predny+ on the anniversary of his passing on April 15<sup>th</sup>.

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**DATED MATERIAL**

**MAY WORSHIP SERVERS**

**May 2<sup>nd</sup>:**

Greeter: Ann Kmet  
Assisting Minister: Charles Matthies  
Lector: George Valek  
Usher: John Kostelny

**May 9<sup>th</sup>:**

Greeter: Karyn Bute  
Assisting Minister: Vicki Michaels  
Lector: Carrie Watkiss  
Usher: Janet Broussard

**May 16<sup>th</sup>:**

Greeters: Edward and Joanne Sefara  
Assisting Minister: Brandon Michaels  
Lector: Joanne Sefara  
Usher: John Kostelny

**May 23<sup>rd</sup>:**

Greeter: Fred Kuzel  
Assisting Minister: John Broussard  
Lector: Brandon Michaels  
Usher: Janet Broussard

**May 30<sup>th</sup>:**

Greeter: Sandy Garvey  
Assisting Minister: Carrie Watkiss  
Lector: Tom Michaels  
Usher: Walter Cudecki

**Sacristan and Altar Care:**  
Carole Pollitz and Kristine Boike

**JUNE WORSHIP SERVERS**

**June 6<sup>th</sup>:**

Greeter: Carole Pollitz  
Assisting Minister: Charles Matthies  
Lector: John Broussard  
Usher: Fred Kuzel

**June 13<sup>th</sup>:**

Greeters: Walter and Judith Cudecki  
Assisting Minister: Vicki Michaels  
Lector: Fred Kuzel  
Usher: Walter Cudecki

**June 20<sup>th</sup>:**

Greeter: John and Shirley Kostelny  
Assisting Minister: Brandon Michaels  
Lector: Charles Matthies  
Usher: John Kostelny

**June 27<sup>th</sup>:**

Greeters: Larry Crachy and Karen Kubik  
Assisting Minister: John Broussard  
Lector: Carrie Watkiss  
Usher: Janet Broussard

**Sacristan and Altar Care:**  
Kristine Boike and Esther Meksto



**Worship Servers Please Note...**

...that if you are unable to keep your scheduled date, please arrange for a replacement and call the church office with the change. Thank you.