



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

Greetings of joy and peace in the name of our risen and victorious Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

The message and meaning of Easter is found in the words of the angels to the women who were terrified by their appearance. The angel said, "Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here; he has risen!"

Good Friday found our Lord on the cross that we deserved. He came into our world as one of us, true man but also true God. He would live a perfect life on our behalf keeping the law perfectly in our place. He would defeat the devil on the field of battle in every circumstance and in the face of every temptation. He would experience the agony of death and the horrors of hell in our place. Paul would explain it this way, "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Max Lucado, in his book, "Six Hours One Friday," tells the story of a missionary in Brazil who discovered a tribe of Indians in a remote part of the jungle. They lived near a large river. The tribe was in need of medical attention. A contagious disease was ravaging the population. People were dying daily.

A hospital was not too terribly far away — across the river, but the Indians would not cross it because they believed the river was inhabited by evil spirits. And to enter its water would mean certain death.

The missionary explained how he had crossed the river and was unharmed. But they were not impressed. He then took them to the bank and placed his hand in the water. They still wouldn't go in. He walked into the water up to his waist and splashed water on his face. It didn't matter. They were still afraid to enter the river.

Finally, he dove into the river, swam beneath the surface until he emerged on the other side. He raised a triumphant fist into the air. He had entered the water and escaped. It was then that the Indians broke into a cheer and followed him across.

Isn't that what Jesus did? He entered the river of death and came out on the other side so that we might no longer fear death, but find eternal life in Him.

The resurrection of Jesus Christ, the meaning of Easter, proves that Jesus is indeed the Son of God, His word is true and reliable, the Father has accepted His sacrifice for our sins, and because He rose we will also rise again.

Join us as we celebrate our Lord's victory over sin, death and the power of the devil this Easter. Join us as we are lifted beyond the struggles of this life to new life in Christ our Lord, a victorious life for time and eternity. Join us as together we proclaim, "He is risen! He is risen, indeed!"

We wish each of you the joy, peace and all the blessings of Easter now and always in Jesus name.

Continued blessings,
Pastor Raether

Pastor Raether

Having the Right Priorities

What are your top priorities in life? To whom or to what do you give the most time and attention? Jesus said, "*For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also*" (Matthew 6:21). Where we prioritize our time and money will reveal our most important priorities and the condition of our hearts.

By God's grace, we see that the priorities the world promotes contrast with God's priorities. The world's focus is on self-promotion, power, and the accumulation of an abundance of possessions. Success is of utmost importance. The world tells people that happiness and security are found only in having more stuff. The acquisition of things demands a person's time, attention, and money to obtain and maintain.

God's Word does not condemn material wealth, but it does provide a warning that the riches of this world will not provide long-lasting peace, contentment, security, joy, or hope. In Luke's Gospel, Jesus said, "*For what good does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses or forfeits himself?*" (9:25).

Scripture provides numerous examples of people who had the wrong priorities. An example of having wrong priorities with time is the story of Mary and Martha. In Luke 10:40, we read, "*But Martha was distracted with much serving.*" Mary and Martha were hosting Jesus. Martha became so preoccupied with preparing food and serving that she was distracted from the opportunity simply to sit and listen to Jesus' teaching. Mary "*chose the good portion*"; she sat at Jesus' feet to learn from Him. This highlights the importance of prioritizing spiritual growth and connection over mere physical acts of serving.

An example of having a wrong priority with money is the parable of the Rich Fool. The Rich Fool wanted to build bigger barns to store his crops. His goal was to "*eat, drink, be merry*" (Luke 12:19). Jesus called him a fool because he gave no credit to God for his success, nor did he show any interest for the welfare of others. He lived only for himself. In

this parable, Jesus said, "Take care, and be on your guard against all covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions" (Luke 12:15).

Jesus directs us to "...seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you" (Matthew 6:33). We are called to prioritize God's will and purpose above everything else. With the faith that God gives us, we are enabled to distance ourselves from the attitude of the world that glorifies the earthly life and its possessions, and we can trust that God will provide for our needs.

FROM: Stewardship Advisors

Why We Believe Jesus Rose from the Dead:

If Jesus did not rise from the dead, the Christian faith is a foolish fantasy. However, if the resurrection of Christ did occur, it confirms His life, message, and atoning work. It is the basis of our hope of life beyond the grave. Christ is alive, and the evidence is overwhelming. Here are some of the reasons we can be so sure.

1. Jesus predicted His resurrection (Matt 16:21; Mark 9:9-10; John 2:18-22).
2. The Old Testament prophesied it (Psalm 16:10; compare Acts 2:25-31; 13:33-37).
3. The tomb was empty and the grave clothes vacant. If those who opposed Christ wished to silence His disciples, all they had to do was produce a body, but they could not (John 20:3-9).
4. Many people saw the resurrected Christ. They looked on His face, touched Him, heard His voice, and saw Him eat (Matt. 28:16-20; Luke 24:13-39; John 20:11-29; John 21:1-9; Acts 1:6-11; 1 Cor. 15:3-8).
5. The lives of the disciples were revolutionized. Though they fled and even denied Christ at the time of His arrest, they later feared no one in their proclamation of the risen Christ (Matt 26:56, 69-75).
6. The resurrection was the central message of the early church. The church grew with an unwavering conviction that Christ had risen and was the Lord of the church (Acts 4:33; 5:30-32; Rom. 5:24).
6. Men and women today testify that the power of the risen Christ has transformed their lives. We know that Jesus is alive not only because of the historical and biblical evidence but also because He has miraculously touched our lives.

Kurt E. DeHaan.



Holy Week

Holy Week begins with our Lord's triumphant entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday and walks with Him through the week. We see Him in the upper room on Maundy Thursday, on the Cross of Good Friday, and bursting forth from the grave on Easter. Following is a tentative schedule for Holy Week:

SUNDAY AND HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE

- 4-6 Fifth Sunday In Lent - April 6 – "Thirst" – John 19:28
Pastor Raether
- 4-13 Palm Sunday – Deuteronomy 12:36-39 "A God Who Cares"
Holy Communion Celebrated
- 4-17 Maundy Thursday (1:00p) – Matthew 26:26-28 "A Word of Invitation" – Holy Communion Celebrated
- 4-18 Good Friday (1:00p) – John 19:30 "It is Finished"
- 4-20 The Feast of the Resurrection -Matthew 28:1-10
Holy Communion Celebrated

Following our celebration of our Lord's resurrection, you are invited to join us for a time of fellowship as refreshments will be served.

MIDWEEK LENTEN SCHEDULE

We will conclude the series title "The Lord's supper – The Salutory Gift." This series has looked at the blessings of Holy Communion. We thank the LC-MS pastor from the area for rotation and leading our mid-week services.

- Mar. 26 "Nuptial Feast" – Pastor Meyer – St Lutheran Church and School
- April 2 "Bread From Heaven"
- April 9 "Blest Communion" – Pastor Raether

WEDNESDAY MORING BIBLE STUDY (10 am)

The weather has not cooperated with our Wednesday Moring Bible Study, as we have canceled three of the first four weeks. 'One Week' is the title of this study. The study examines Holy Week and the "Greater Passion" of our Lord. We will walk with our Lord as He enters Jerusalem on Sunday, confronts the religious leaders on Monday, and teaches on Tuesday. Wednesday was a day of rest. Thursday, we walk with our Lord to the Upper Room and Gethsemane. Friday included our Lord's arrest and His trials before the religious and political leaders of the day. We will follow Jesus to Calvary and being laid to rest in a new Tomb. Saturday Jesus rested in the tomb and His disciples were filled with despair. Then comes Sunday and the empty tomb and our victorious Lord's resurrection, announcing that He had conquered our enemies, sin death and the power of the devil.

DUAL PARISH UPDATE

Both congregations have approved the Dual Parish Agreement, and it has been submitted to the District President. Representatives from both congregations are to interview four candidates. The call service for the candidates will take place at the end of the month. That is when we will know if we are going to receive a candidate to fill our position.



You are invited to join Kaleb Johnson and Cael Lindner as they confess their faith and renew their baptismal vows through the Rite of Confirmation on May 11, 2025. Prior to their confirmation, they will be questioned by Pastor before representatives of the congregation. Please remember them in your prayers as they prepare for this important day in their spiritual journey. They, with their families, and the congregation will receive Holy Communion.

Board of Education

March 5, 2025

Due to inclement weather the Board of Education meeting was cancelled. We will meet on April 9th at 6:15 pm.

Sue Macek, Chairman

Lutheran Women's Fellowship

February 6, 2025

Due to inclement weather the LWML meeting was cancelled. They will meet on April 3rd at 1:00 pm

ORGAN FUND UPDATE

Received in 2024	\$28,453.15
2025 YTD Received	\$ 2,288.60
Reimbursed to Foundation	\$26,000.00
Organ Fund	\$ 4,741.75



Violet Fischer -(4/2), Keiarrah Brookshire -(4/7), Angie Vinson -(4/7), Don Peters -(4/8), Sharon McPherson -(4/11), Harlan Peterson-(4/18), Caitlin Trushcheff -(4/20), Ron Brown -(4/24), Whitney Clawson -(4/24), Daniel Martinson -(4/27), Jennifer Valley -(4/28), Elara Thanupakorn -(4/29).

Attachai & Jeanette Thanupakorn

4/14

34rd

Membership Report for March 2025

GAIN

Confirmed +

Baptized +

LOSS

Confirmed -

Baptized -

Communicant =155
 Baptized (not confirmed) =50
 Total baptized souls =205

ATTENDANCE

<u>Sunday</u>	<u>Worship</u>	<u>Communion</u>
3/2	34	
3/9	41	36
3/16	35	
3/23	42	36
3/30	36	
<u>Lent</u>	<u>Worship</u>	<u>Communion</u>
Ash Wednesday	cancelled due to weather	
3/12	26	
3/19	cancelled due to weather	
3/26	30	

Financial Report March 2025

Income (Offerings)

Home/Current \$9,137.30, Missions Budget \$227.50, Loose Offerings \$4.00, Ash Wednesday \$ 129.00, Lenten \$484.24, Special \$175.00, Miscellaneous \$618.06, Organ Fund \$445.20.

Total Offerings \$11,220.30

Expenses

Pastor \$2,000.00, Payroll \$1,018.08, Organist \$420.00, Pastoral Expenses \$438.20, Ministry Expense \$231.70, Television Ministry \$51.01, Portals of Prayer \$214.17, Office Supplies \$1,526.67, Computer/Internet \$190.60, Water \$112.40, Pest Control \$41.00, Gas & Electric \$615.00, Sanitation \$49.22, Snow Removal \$330.00, Insurance \$3,786.50, Property Repairs \$141.84, W/H Tax \$166.08, Missions \$227.50, Charities \$175.00, Advertising \$240.00.

Total Expenses \$11,974.97
Net Income \$ -754.67

