

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

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

This month we will celebrate the resurrection of our Lord.

For many the high point of the church year is Easter and the resurrection of our Lord. Christ's victory on Easter which culminates in His ascension, His victorious return to heaven. We focus on the meaning of our Lord's resurrection.

McKenzie wasn't trying to start a theological debate, she just wanted to make a point about Jesus' resurrection. Her Sunday school teacher had tried to encourage her class with the assurance that Jesus is everywhere. But for McKenzie, that didn't sound right. So she said, "I know one place where Jesus isn't." The teacher curiously replied, "Oh, really? Where is that?"

The bright little girl declared, "He's not in the grave!" What a great reminder. Our omnipresent God has chosen to keep His presence absent from the grave. For just as the angel said, "He is not here: for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay" (Matthew 28:6).

The events of Good Friday left the followers of our Lord in despair. Their hopes were shattered, the One who announced that he was the course of life and victory over death, sin and the devil, was dead and laid in a tomb.

Two days later the women, with hearts filled with grief and sorrow made their way to the tomb where our Lord had been laid. Their concern was who would roll the giant stone over entrance of tomb away.

When they arrived, They found the stone rolled away and an empty tomb. They raced back to tell the disciples, and Peter and John raced to the tomb and found it empty. Jesus, who had been crucified, had risen from the dead. As McKenzie said, "He's not in the grave."

Our Lord's empty tomb and resurrection affirm a number of Biblical truths. First it reminds us that Jesus' word is true. He had said, destroy this body and in three days I will rise again. They hung Jesus on a cross, where He died, but death could not hold Him. Three days later the grave was empty. He had risen from the dead. We can trust in His word and promises.

The second truth is that the resurrection points to the fact that Jesus is true God. He said, "I and the Father are one." The empty shouts the truth that Jesus is indeed God.

The third truth is that the resurrection points to the fact that the Father accepted His Son's sacrifice for all mankind. Someone had to pay the price for mans', our sin and Christ went to the cross their experiencing the wrath of God that we deserve.

The fourth truth that is proclaimed by the empty tomb is the assurance that through faith in Jesus Christ, His victory becomes ours, and His resurrection points to our eternal home – Heaven. Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life, even though he die, yet shall he live"

Jesus through His life, death and resurrection conquered all our fears. He frees us from the burden of sin and empowers us to live according to His will, He frees us from the fear of being abandoned and alone in our darkest our as He promise, I will never leave you nor forsake you." He frees us from the fear of death with the gift of life that guarantees our heavenly home. We will celebrate our Lord's resurrection on April 5th.

Every time we followed a loved one's casket to cemetery, know that this is not the end because of Jesus empty tomb, we know that the body we laid to rest will one day rise, a victorious body to be joined with the soul for eternity. We know that the parting is not "goodbye" but "Adieu" until we meet again.

A story is told of an African Muslim who became a Christian. His friends asked, "Why have you become a Christian?" He answered, "Well, it's like this. Suppose you were going down the road and suddenly the road forked in two directions, and you didn't know which way to go. There at the fork were two men, one dead and one alive—who would you ask which way to go?"

We follow the living and victorious Christ and we confess that He is our personal Lord and Savior. We proclaim that "He is risen. He is risen indeed."

On behalf of myself, Barb, joy Steve, Myka and Joslyn, may the joy, peace and hope of Easter be yours now and always.

In Christ,

Pastor Raether

*Pastor Raether*

### Defining Christian Stewardship

Brief descriptions or definitions of Christian stewardship are easy to find. There are so many books or resources on the topic of stewardship that they could fill several bookshelves. Each book or resource offers its own special definition. In addition, Lutherans, Methodists, Baptists, Catholics and so forth offer their unique definition of Christian stewardship. The LCMS states the following: "Christian stewardship is the free and joyous activity of the child of God and God's family, the Church, in managing all of life and life's resources for God's Purposes."

Books and resources on stewardship are helpful, but Christian stewardship is founded upon the Word of God. The Apostle Paul's letter to Titus, chapter two, verses 11-14, gives a wonderful summary of the foundation for Christian stewardship.

For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, Who gave Himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession who are zealous for good works.

In this text, God's grace revealed through Jesus Christ empowers us to reject ungodliness and live self-controlled and upright lives. God's grace makes our stewardship possible. Grace not only opens our hearts to receive the gift of faith leading to salvation. That same grace enables us to use our time, talents, and resources for God's purposes. Grace turns our minds and hearts to Jesus, and we can live the lives that He wants us to live. Rather than live lives driven by worldly passions, He enables us to live transformed lives that are "self-controlled, upright, and godly." In verse 14 of the passage above, Paul tells us that, since Christ has redeemed us from sin and its power, we are to have a zeal or passion to do good works. We are saved by grace through faith for good works.

From Paul's letter to Titus, we understand that Christian stewardship begins with the grace of God. Everything we are and do is the result of God's grace in Christ. Our stewardship impacts our relationship with God, with our neighbors, and with all of creation. May God help us use the resources that He has entrusted to us in such way that others come to know and trust in the Lord. God's blessings on your stewardship journey!

FROM: Stewardship Advisors



April 2026

Easter Message

The Lord is risen, He is risen indeed and we celebrate His resurrection not only on Easter but every day of our lives. He gives us life, hope and assurance for life and eternity.

May the joy of Easter be yours now and always.

In Christ,

Pastor Raether

*Pastor Raether*

**WEDNESDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY (10:00 am)**  
"The Parables of Jesus"

The Wednesday Morning Bible Study continues its study of "The Parables of Jesus." This study gives us the opportunity to study the parables Jesus used to teach His people and us. We will take up a four or five part study of the Book of Ruth at the conclusion of our study on the Parables. Session titles are:

- April 1 "The Good Samaritan" - Luke 19:25-37
- April 8 "Workers in the Vineyard" - Matthew 20:1-16
- April 15 "The Ten Virgins" - Matthew 25:1-13
- April 22 Ruth - 1
- April 29 Ruth - 2

**SUNDAY WORSHIP SCHEDULE**

Following is the tentative Sunday worship schedule for the month of April.

- Apr. 5 Feast of the Resurrection - Holy Communion Celebrated - Luke 24:1-12 - "The Hands of The Lord- Who is Risen"
- Apr. 12 Second Sunday of Easter - Acts 5:29-47 - "Lord Give Us Such a Faith" - Holy Communion Celebrated
- Apr. 19 Third Sunday of Easter - Luke 24:13-35 - "A Transformation of the Heart - From Hopelessness to Joy"
- Apr. 26 Fourth Sunday Of Easter - John 10:1-10 - "The Door of Jesus' Cross" - Holy Communion Celebrated
- May 3 Fifth Sunday of Easter - John 14:1-14 - "Words for a Troubled Heart"

**Lutheran Women's Fellowship**

March 5, 2026

The Lutheran Women's Fellowship met on March 5, 2026. Eight members in attendance. Pastor opened with a prayer and Bible study titled, "Not the World's Peace". Sally led us in a mite prayer titled, "Our Love Offering".

**Committee reports:**

Treasurer, Card Counter, and Funeral Fund reports were all approved.

**Old Business**

**New Business**

Received a Thank You card from LWML in memory of Florence and Carol.

There is no Fort Dodge Zone LWML Spring Rally. District Convention is in Okoboji in June. In-gathering for the convention will be cloth or disposable diapers or "onesies". Items will be given to Judy Rozek in May. A motion was made by Jean and seconded by Julie to give \$100 offering to the District Convention in June. Motion approved.

**Shut-ins Birthdays:** Janet Lennon

**March Birthdays:** Vicki Escobedo. No birthdays in April.

**April Funeral Committee:** Vicki Escobedo and Nancy Herzberg

**April Hostesses:** Nancy Herzberg and Julie Hughes.

**April Mission:** Orphan Grain Train

Meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer and common Table prayer. Meeting adjourned at 1:55 pm.

Sue Macek  
Acting Secretary

**Board of Education**

March 4, 2026

**Members:** Rhonda Waddell, Sue Macek, and Pastor Raether

Meeting called to order at 5:15 pm. Pastor began with prayer.

**Library:** Our new book is written by Ken Ham titled, "Defending God's Existence." In this book you will learn how to refute false doctrines, recognize fallacies and inconsistencies, and disprove atheism while studying about the Trinity, God's attributes, and how the Bible stands up against other "holy" books.

**St. Paul:** Spring break is 3-9 to 3-13, classes resume 3-16, End of the Quarter is 3/25, and the 3rd Annual DJ Bingo Fundraiser is 3/27

**Catechism and Sunday School report:** Our next Bible Stories are taken from Concordia Publishing House Unit 3 starting March 1 through May 31st. Bible Stories for March include: The Good Samaritan, The Lord's Prayer, The Good Shepherd, and Zacchaeus. In March we will be learning about the Books of the Bible from Titus to Revelation.

**Family Fellowship report:** We tentatively set June 7th for the meeting date. More discussion on the theme, menu, and games.

**Wednesday Bible Study:** Working on "Parables of Jesus". Will finish in April.

**Cradle Roll:** None

**Old Business:** Just a reminder that the congregation is invited for coffee and donuts after the Easter Sunday service on April 5th served by the Lutheran Women's Fellowship.

**New business:** Continue discussion for VBS.

Meeting adjourned at 5:55 pm. Closed with the Lord's Prayer. Next meeting is April 1, 2026 at 5:15 pm.

Sue Macek  
Chairman

**ORGAN FUND UPDATE**

Received in 2024	\$28,453.15
Received in 2025	\$ 6,505.00
2026 YTD Received	\$ 610.00
Reimbursed to Foundation	\$31,000.00
Organ Fund	\$ 4,568.15

**Membership Report for March 2026**

GAIN

**Confirmed +1**  
Payton Waddell

**Baptized +**

LOSS

**Confirmed - 1**  
Madelyn Abrams  
Deceased

**Baptized -**

**Communicant =153**  
**Baptized (not confirmed) =48**  
**Total baptized souls =201**

**Financial Report March 2026**

**Income** (Offerings)

Home/Current \$8,949.65, Missions Budget \$217.50, Loose Offerings \$338.00, Lenten Offering \$610.00, Lutheran Witness \$35.00, Special Offering \$109.00, Miscellaneous \$324.92, Organ Fund \$140.00.

**Total Offerings \$10,724.07**

**Expenses**

Pastor \$2,000.00, Payroll \$1,196.86, Organist \$791.72, Pastoral Expenses \$664.83, Ministry Expense \$10.04, Portals of Prayer \$224.15, Worship Supplies \$216.93, Office Supplies \$916.11, Computer/Internet \$190.72, Water \$116.36, Pest Control \$42.00, Gas & Electric \$764.00, Snow Removal \$500.00, Sanitation \$42.80, Insurance \$4,336.50, Property Repairs \$403.95, W/H Tax \$176.26, Missions \$217.50, Charities \$109.00, Advertising \$240.00.

**Total Expenses \$ 13,159.73**  
**Net Income \$ -2,435.66**

## ATTENDANCE

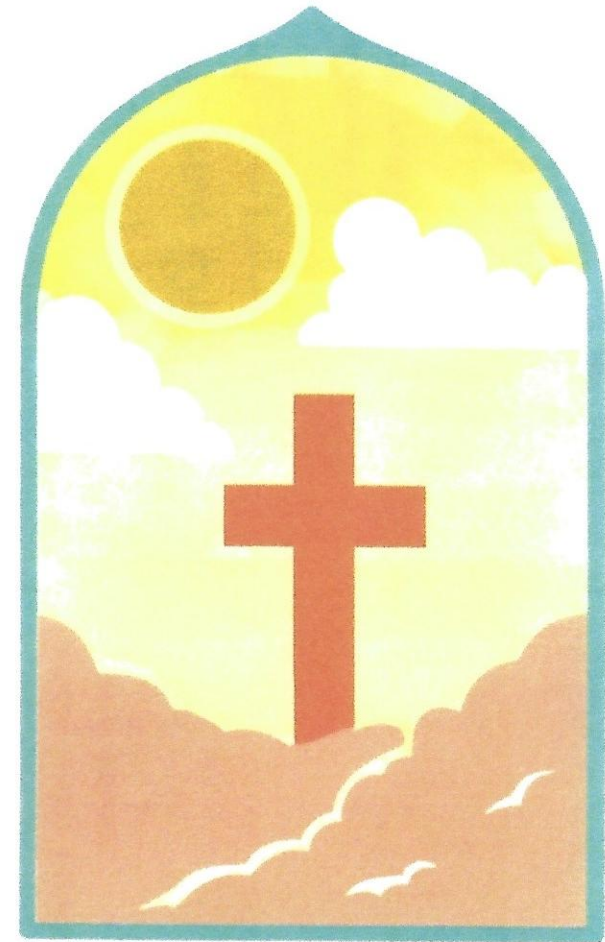
<u>Sunday</u>	<u>Worship</u>	<u>Communion</u>
3/1	36	
3/8	39	32
3/15	cancelled due to weather	
3/22	37	35
3/29	42	
<u>Lenten</u>		
3/4	26	
3/11	18	
3/18	24	

## APRIL

Birthdays Anniversaries

Violet Fischer -(4/2), Keiarrah Brookshire -(4/7), Angie Vinson -(4/7), Don Peters -(4/8), Sharon McPherson -(4/11), Lori Degelau -(4/13), Harlan Peterson-(4/18), Tom Fortune - (4/20), Caitlin Trushcheff -(4/20), Ryne Barber -(4/23), 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      35th



Christ the Lord  
is *Risen* Today