



ST. JOHN LUTHERAN CHURCH ELCA

MONTGOMERY, MINNESOTA

Proudly Serving One Master Since 1861

APRIL 2015

A Word or Two...by Pastor Mark

Easter....in this day and age, what is it about? Science uncovers more layers of the universe, technology connects us with every corner of the world, our lives have sped up into a continual round of running and doing. How the heck does a fantastic story about a Palestinian rabbi rising from the dead connect with our existence? How does that help me raise my kids, keep me from mortgage default, or secure medical coverage?

Answer: Nothing, if you are a skeptic. Everything, if you are a believer. There's an old saying that for unbelievers, no explanation of religious truth is possible; for believers, no explanation is necessary. In an age that worships measurable truth above all else, so that even the sacred name of God has been reduced to a meaningless oral regurgitation ("Oh, my God" etc.), you have a choice. You can throw in the towel and basically live for this material world, or you can realize with the philosopher Blaise Pascal that "the heart has truth that reason cannot comprehend." The latter is proven by the absolute truth that there is much more to the universe than we have ever touched, that love is a reality that rises above vulgar needs, or that wind is invisible but exists. Believers stake their lives and future on such things, and we are not disappointed because God brings blessings that the world, for all its charms, cannot. Those who place all their hopes on the material world only are doomed to pass away with it.

What does this mean for good old Easter, the highest festival of the church year? If you are a skeptic, it's all about bunnies, spring, brunch, and, if you are so inclined, "doing church" more or less once a year. If you are a believer, it's about an amazing God whose love led Him to become fully human as well as fully divine, and who, yes, rose from the dead. For my money, there's no comparison.

Pastor's Notes:

April Worship Helpers

Readers

April 5	Volunteers
April 12	Doreen Marcussen
April 19	Maridan Nesmoe
April 26	Tammie Pan

Head Usher

Liz Vlasak

Ushers / Greeters

April 5	Volunteers
April 12	Gerry & Dianna Smith Lynn Schuknecht Eric Schroeder
April 19	Dave & Rhonda Solberg Kay Busch Ruth Kukacka
April 26	Doug & Karen Thompson Rich & Liz Vlasak

Communion Assistants

April 5	Volunteers Needed
April 12	Ruth Kukacka Steve & Tammie Pan
April 26	Charles Richter Cheryl Schulte Rhonda Solberg

Acolytes

April 5	Alan Eotvos (9:00) Maddie Novotny (9:00) Anton Nelson (10:30) Alexys Boyd (10:30)
April 12	Gunner Domine Maggie Trnka
April 19	Miranda Crosby Jackson Nesmoe
April 26	Kayla Horejsi Jorgia Pumper

Altar Guild

Maridan Nesmoe

*If you are unable to help on the day assigned, please **EXCHANGE** with someone else and call the church office at 507-364-5002.*

Thank you for your help!

Remember in your Prayers...

Dominic Edel (Larry & Pam's grandson), Reinhold West (Carol Kiekow's father), Judy Ramlo, Don Westerman, Roy Berg, Clifford Denzer, Bev Horejsi, Alice McClune, Braden Flicek, Tom Mariska, Betty Ann Heuer, Harold Walters (Betty Jindra and Virginia Horejsi's father), Alexander Sticha, Patricia Morrill (Peggy Hentges' mother), Greg Vlasak, and Terri Pekarna (Robert & Glenda Larsen's daughter).

Remember those serving our country...

Shane Morris, Damon Athey, Nathan Kubinski, Matthew Astorino, Adam Vlasak, and Matt Nelson.

Our Sympathy

We extend our sympathy to the David Anderson family upon the death of Dave's father Jim on March 12.

We extend our sympathy to the family of Alice Hoefs who passed away March 31. Her funeral will be held here Sunday, April 12 at 3:30 p.m.

Gift Received

Gift received in memory of William Miller for the Feed My Sheep program. Thank you.

Thank You

Thank you to everyone who donated aluminum cans. The cans brought \$135.20 for the Food Shelf's March food drive. Thank you to Paul Busch for taking the cans to Mankato.

Cemetery Cleaning

Volunteers are needed Saturday, May 2, starting at 9:00 a.m. to spruce up our cemetery. Bring gloves, rakes, hoes, shovels, etc. to help get the job done.

E-Mail Address

We recently purchased a new computer for the Pastor's office. Pastor Mark's address is:
pastor@montgomerymnelcalutherans.org

Groups & Organizations that meet at St. John!

To ensure our calendar is correct and that we have the church open for your event, please inform Pastor Mark or Kay of your planned meeting dates.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Have an announcement for the bulletin or newsletter?

Drop off or e-mail (stjohnelca@frontier.com) information to the church office by:

- ◆ Thursday for the bulletin.
- ◆ The 24th of April for the May newsletter.

Financial Corner General Fund - February

	February	Year to Date
Receipt	\$ 16,220.98	\$ 27,079.63
Expenses	<u>\$ 12,784.82</u>	<u>\$ 23,947.76</u>
Cash Flow	\$ 3,436.16	\$ 3,131.87

Church Council Meeting

March 17, 2015 - 6:30pm

Present: John Krautkremer (1/16), Maridan Nesmoe (1/16), Wendy Vargo (1/17), Kathy Peterson (1/17), Dan Hardel (1/17), Eric Schroeder (1/18), Liz Vlasak (1/18), Pastor Mark Wilmes

Absent: John Helling (1/16)

The meeting was called to order by President Kathy Peterson. A devotion was lead by Pastor Mark.

Dan Hardel moved and Eric Schroeder seconded a motion to **approve the February 17, 2015 council meeting minutes.** Motion carried.

President's Report: Kathy presented the new constitution and asked council members to review.

Vice President's Report: No report.

Secretary Report: No report.

Treasurer Report: Reviewed treasurer's report ending February 2015. Motion by Eric Schroeder to approve the treasurer report. Seconded by John Krautkremer.

Pastor's Report:

1. Presented work schedule.
2. Met with Transition team and will meet again next week.
3. Started Bible study on Monday night with 13 in attendance. Will also meet on Wednesday mornings.
4. Spoke with church member on starting a Hospice and Grief Support group.
5. Was contacted by a local funeral home about "end of life" care, planning, etc. Council agreed to set up a time for them to meet with whoever is interested, possibly in April or June.
6. Will attend a continuing ed class in Farmington.
7. Informed council of the Southeastern MN Synod Assembly 2015 in Rochester on May 8-9. Will open it up to 2 others from the congregation to attend. Will put in bulletin and announce during church services.
8. Looking for any new members interested in joining St. John.
9. Will emphasis Stewardship for time and talents.
10. Discussed Pastor's Pension plan and will meet with Dan Hardel to set up pension program.
11. Motion was made by Dan Hardel to have Council designate \$2,000 from Pastor's current base salary be moved to housing allowance during the tax year 2015. Seconded by Wendy Vargo.
12. Fees were discussed for members and non-members to use the church as Pastor will be having a wedding in October. Guidelines need to be updated. John Krautkremer will meet with Facilities to get ideas on updating.

Ongoing:

A. Head Ushers:

March: John Helling
April: Liz Vlasak
Maundy Thursday-Kathy Peterson
Good Friday-Wendy Vargo
Easter Sunday (9:00) Dan Hardel
Easter Sunday (10:30) John Krautkremer
May: Eric Schroeder

B. Feed My Sheep: \$300 will be donated to a family identified as in need.

C. Can Recycling: Cans need to be taken to Mankato before the end of March as money will go toward the food shelf.

Old Business:

- A. ELCA Campaign:** John Grimm has agreed to chair this at this time
ELCA Campaign Coordinator / Committee: to manage our Church's 5 year Campaign
2015 Congregational
2016 Hunger & Poverty
2017 Global Church
2018 Leadership

B. Personnel Policy: Will be updated in April after final review.

New Business:

- A. Call Transition Task Force:** Members are Wade Young, Mary Brahs, Dave Scheffert, Dawn Anderson, Erin Krautkremer, Kathy Peterson, Allison Hardel, Pastor Mark. Also looking for one more member.
- B. Youth Committee:** Members are working on job descriptions and what is expected of board members.
(Church Council Cont.)

(Church Council Cont.)

C. Standing Committees: Discussed standing committees and will have chair report to the council after meetings. Kathy will contact members.

D. Vacant Council Position: Interested person will be contacted to fill the one vacant council position.

Committee Reports:

A. Stewardship Committee: No report

B. Evangelism Committee: Wendy Vargo

1. More “welcome” cards will be ordered.

C. Education: Liz Vlasak

1. Plans are being made for meetings with members.

D. Youth: Eric Schroeder

(See “Youth League” under new business)

E. Facility Management – John Krautkremer

1. Met with city council on handicapped parking.
2. Contacted M & M Sign in Mankato to update the church sign.

F. Church and Society: Kathy Peterson

1. Working on Food Shelf

G. Communications: Dan Hardel

1. Computer was ordered for Pastor. Email will be set up and address announced soon.

H. Fellowship: John Helling - No report

I. Worship & Music Committee: Maridan Nesmoe - Met on March 7.

1. Women’s choir met and will be ready to sing for the Easter services.
2. Bell choir will ring for Easter services.
3. Maundy Thursday service will present “Last Supper” drama with 14 cast members. Jessica Westerman will also sing.
4. Good Friday service - the 7 last words of Christ.
5. Special music for March with Sunday School children, Rock’n the Church, and Bells of St. John.
6. Next meeting will be May 2nd.

Other Business: None

Next meeting: April 21, 2015, 6:30 pm.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:29 pm and closed with “The Lord’s Prayer”

Submitted by Wendy Vargo, Church Council Secretary

Faith and Life Bible Study for April

We are back in gear with our weekly adult Bible study, going through the book of Genesis. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were the great patriarchs of Israel, but that doesn’t mean they were holy icons floating around saying or doing great things all the time. Both Abraham and Isaac deceived local rulers to avoid being killed so those rulers could take their lovely wives, the deception putting those same wives at risk. Jacob was a Momma’s boy and cheat, fooling his own aged and dying father into giving him the blessing that was due his brother. This nearly led to murder. Joseph was sold to slave traders by his brothers simply because he was annoyingly arrogant. Family dysfunction? You’ve got it in spades in the Bible. We’ll catch up on all the drama when we meet for Bible study in April and beyond.

Faith and Life meets Monday nights 6:30-8:00 in the Sunday school room next to the fellowship hall, and Wednesday mornings 9:30-11:00 in the fellowship hall itself (same content at both). We look at the historical background of the day’s text, share how it affects our lives, and enjoy coffee and treats. Give it a try!

Opportunity to Become a Member of St. John

Are you or someone you know interested in membership at St. John? All people are welcome to worship and participate in most St. John activities, and anyone baptized and believing in the real presence of Christ in the sacrament can commune, but membership is important for believers because it gives you a place to belong and an opportunity to commit yourself in a way that just “living together” does not.

In May, Pastor Mark will be offering orientation for people interested in membership. Contact him or the church office if you want more information.

Church Update

The new congregational council has been working hard in this transitional year. We appreciate the guidance of Pastor Mark in all our endeavors.

Our new members are representing the following **committees**:

Liz Vlasak - education committee

Eric Schroeder - youth committee

We are still in need of one more member to help us with stewardship

Upon request of several members, the council is working with the city to get more **handicapped parking** places. It is not a quick process.

We also have begun the first part of the call committee. The synod's process begins with what is called the **transition team**. Members are: Dave Scheffert, Mary Brahs, Wade Young, Erin Krautkremer, Dawn Anderson, Josh Kuchinka and Allie Hardel. They will work to evaluate where St. John is now and set the direction we wish to go in the future. They will be setting up many ways for members of the congregation to give input in the process. Watch for updates for more information.

There is also a committee working to evaluate our **youth program** to better understand what we are doing now and set a direction before we look for another person to be our youth director.

We have spent considerable time putting together a **personnel policy** and job descriptions for our staff. Many thanks to Cindy Westerhouse for sharing her expertise with us in this matter.

May you find peace and joy in the Easter Season that is now upon us.

Kathy Peterson
Council President

You Can Be a St. John Delegate to the Bishop's Assembly!

Every year 600 clergy and lay delegates to the Assembly of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod meet at the Mayo Civic Center to approve the Synod's budget, consider resolutions, and become informed on the many ministries of our Synod as well as the ELCA. This year it will be held Friday and Saturday, May 8-9. St. John is allowed two regular lay delegates, a young adult or teen delegate, and the pastor. The congregation will pay your registration, meal, and lodging expenses.

If you have an interest in being a delegate to this year's Assembly or just want more information, check with Pastor Mark or the church office before April 15.

Giving Emphasis Coming in May

Giving our time and our resources is a huge part of what it means to be a Christian, because it makes possible the very churches and ministries we want. But, contrary to popular belief, giving can be fun, inspirational, and possible for ANYONE, no matter what your situation. In May, some sermons, bulletin announcements, and newsletter information will encourage growth in giving for all of us. See how it fits in your life, and discover that it really is true that while receiving is fun, giving is even better!

April Music Notes

April 2 Maundy Thursday Jessica Westerman will sing "*Remember Me*"

April 3 Good Friday Lynn Wilms & John Grimm will sing verses of "*Jesus in Thy Dying Woes*"

April 5 Easter Sunday Women's Choir will sing "*A Two-Part Alleluia*"
Bells of St. John will ring "*Bell Peal on Ellacombe*"

April 12 N/P/K will sing "*Give Me Oil in My Lamp*"
Grades 1 – 4 will sing "*Lord I Lift Your Name on High*" and "*God's Not Dead*"
Don Marcussen will sing "*I Am Redeemed*"

April 19 Rock'n the Church choir will sing "*You Are My All in All*"

April 26 Bells of St. John will ring "*This Is My Father's World*"



WOTC

Marie Tesch, president of the SE MN synod women of the ELCA, is visiting Sunday, April 12 to share information about the Women of the ELCA organization. Marie will give a brief presentation prior to the church service and be available to answer questions during fellowship hour.

Newsletters!!

Would you like to receive your newsletter via e-mail. You can receive your newsletter in an easy to open PDF format. E-mailing saves money for the church by reducing the amount of paper we use, reduces the wear and tear on the copy machine and reduces the cost of postage. If interested, just notify the church office at:
stjohnelca@frontier.com

Online Giving Option!!!

We are excited to announce that you can now manage your giving online! Giving online is easy and allows you to set up one time giving or automatic recurring contributions and view your complete online giving history from anywhere you have access to the Internet. Contributions can be debited automatically from your checking or savings account or processed using your credit or debit card. Just visit our website at www.montgomerynelcalutherans.org and click on donate button, then follow onscreen instructions.

Food, Faith & Funerals Program

For the members of St. John Lutheran

Tuesday, April 28th, 6:00 p.m.

St. John Lutheran Church-Social Hall-Montgomery

We are hosting an educational program and we'd like you to join us. You'll be able to relax with your neighbors, enjoy a meal, and learn about the many benefits of making faith-filled funeral & cremation plans in advance. There is no cost to attend this program.

The following questions will be answered at this program:

- How do I preplan a funeral?
- How do I ensure my wishes will be followed?
- What are my options in choosing Scripture and hymns?
- How do I protect my funeral dollars so my service won't be a financial burden on my loved ones?
- What happens if I die away from home while traveling?
- What if I spend my final days in a nursing home?
- How can I make my funeral a testimony of my faith?

Please assist us in our food preparation by pre-registering with the form below and drop in the collection basket or simply call the church office at (507) 364-5002.

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**YES, I/we plan to attend the Food, Faith & Funerals planning program
St. John Lutheran-Tuesday, April 28th, 6:00 p.m.**

**___ NO, I/we cannot attend the program, but please see that we receive
more information about advance funeral & cremation planning.**

Name: _____

Spouse: _____

Address: _____ Apartment # _____

Phone: () _____ Number attending: _____

Interested in: Traditional Funeral Services Cremation (circle one or both)

ST. JOHN YOUTH

Flower Sales

Flower Sales will be held again this year on Friday, May 1 and Saturday, May 2. Watch for more details.

Scholarships

Scholarship applications for 2015 High School graduating seniors are available in the church office. Applications must be completed and returned by Sunday, May 10.

Coffee Sales

We have COFFEE! European Roasterie Coffees - Seasonal/Winter blends. We have several different blends left for just \$8 per bag, discounted rate! Elf Nog, Santa's Treats, Sugared Snowflake, and Peppermint Stick. You can purchase during coffee hour or at the church office during the week. All proceeds go to the youth league.



Cell Phone Fundraiser

Please donate your old phone to the Luther Leagues. We send in the old phones to a recycling program and receive money in return. These funds help keep the events held at St. John Lutheran inexpensive and available to everyone. A basket for donations can be found on top of the coat racks near the church office.



Pop Tab Collection

We will be collecting pop tabs to donate to the Ronald McDonald House charities. Containers will be available to deposit your pop tabs in the Youth Room, Sunday School office, and church office.