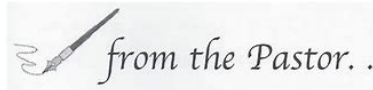




New Era Lutheran Church

April 2022 Newsletter

Pastor Kirsten Lee
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Sunday School: 9:30 am (Sept-May)
Worship Services: 10:30 am

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each week
Newsletter Items due by the 20th of the
month

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[NewEraLutheranChurch](https://www.facebook.com/NewEraLutheranChurch)

Dear friends in Christ,

As our calendar turns from March into April, we have only a few weeks left in Lent. It is nearly time to celebrate the triumph of Christ's resurrection and the promise of eternal new life for all of us...but not yet. We have two weeks left of Lent, during which I pray you can find space for prayer and worship.

We are also blessed to go through Holy week together. While many of our friends and neighbors celebrate with us on Easter, Holy Week is often overlooked. In my opinion, great meaning is lost when we skip over Holy Week. We miss important parts of Christ's story if we jump over his crucifixion and what his final days and moments reveal about God. Even if you've heard these parts of Christ's story before, never underestimate the power of the Holy Spirit to reveal new insights that God gives just to you because God knows what you need to hear.

So, what is Holy Week?

Holy Week is most often equated with the triduum (three days) of Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday but entails the entire week from the Palm Sunday through Holy Saturday. The week begins joyfully we welcome our Lord who rides into Jerusalem on a donkey. The week quickly turns with grief, anxiety, and confusion diminishing the joy.

What kind of name is Maundy Thursday? Do you mean Monday Thursday?

Maundy comes from the Latin word, *mandatum*, which means commandment. When Jesus celebrates his final Passover with his disciples, he gives them a new commandment: ³⁴I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. ³⁵By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

Jesus commands his disciples to love one another as he is demonstrating this kind of love. Imagine for a moment...these disciples have been learning incredible lessons and witnessing miracles and healings from their Messiah. In their final moments with their Messiah, he doesn't command them to wash his feet- he washes their feet. Jesus humbles himself to serve them and then gives them and the rest of the world for all of time the ultimate sacrificial love in his death on the cross. Every time we participate in Holy communion (which we will celebrate on Maundy Thursday), we remember this commandment as we hear "Do this in remembrance of me".

Why do we call Good Friday good if we focus on Jesus' death on that day?

Good Friday marks the most important three days in the history of the world for Christians. The glory of Easter, which forever changed the world, could never happen without Jesus' death on the cross. Even as the cross held our beaten and suffering Lord, the cross is also a cross of life, forgiveness, salvation. We can remember the horrific pain and death our Lord went through to save ourselves from death and sin. Our Savior knows deep suffering and willingly joins us in our suffering to lead us through. "Good Friday marks the day when wrath and mercy met at

the cross. That's why Good Friday is so dark and so Good." (Christianity.com)

But wait, there's more! Don't forget about Holy Saturday....

This holy day marks the in-between time and fragile thin space between our Lord's death and resurrection. The sadness of our Lord's death is still fresh, and the celebration of Easter Sunday has not yet occurred. Even beyond these holy three days, much of our life is spent in the in-between. We live in the promise of Christ's resurrection but have yet to fully receive this promise while we live on earth. The challenge is we don't often wait well. Our society thrives on immediate gratification and there is a rush to many parts of our lives. On this Holy Saturday, we are tempted to rush through this day and begin the celebrations of Easter, but God beckons us to wait. To pause and find meaning in the in-between time. There is a long history in the church of observing this day with silence, fasting, prayer, and reading of scripture. How might you spend this day waiting and reflecting? What might God reveal to you in the waiting of the in-between? In this year like nothing any of us have experienced in our lifetimes, how might this timeless truth, this cycle of life to death to life, and the profound promise captured in this season, draw you closer to God and deeper in faith this year?

With prayer for you,

†Pastor Kirsten†





Remember in Prayer

Bruce Jackson, Marvin Leach, Luke Probasco, Avery Cole, Tahlor Baxter, John Powell, Catherine Dittmer, Emogene Sorgenfrey, and loved ones who are in need of prayer support.

Congratulations and prayers to Brad Cole and Kirsten Glover to the birth of Avery Cole born Thursday, Mar 3.



Birthdays

1-Linda Schneider
3-Jerry Lichtenwald
3-Justin Wulf
4-Bev Hull
8-Lynn Bendt
11-Sara Perales
17-Grady Wulf
19-Eric Leacox
23-Dan Petersen
30-Mike Hermann

Anniversaries

20-Chuck & Candace Harland

May the good Lord continue to shower you with happiness, good fortune, prosperity and good health all the days of your life.

Happy Birthday and Anniversary!

April

Ushers – Dan Petersen & Paul Mayes

Alter Guild – Shirley McDaniel

Communion Asst. – Dan Petersen & Paul Mayes

Readers

4/3 Eric Leacox
4/10 Becki Petersen
4/17 Dan Petersen
4/24 Shirley Petersen

Flowers

No flowers
No flowers
Easter Lilies
Easter Lilies

Fellowship Hostesses

4/3 Vicki Hampton, Becki Petersen
4/10 Lynne Leacox, Lynn Bendt
4/17 Easter Breakfast
4/24 Joyce Rudbeck, Janie Swails



Congratulations to Lydia Anderson as runner up at the 41st Dispatch-Argus

Regional Spelling Bee on Saturday, March 19. See article on the Fellowship Hallway bulletin board or in the Sunday QC Times (March 22).

New Era Lutheran Church Council Meeting Minutes – Feb 8, 2022

The council meeting was called to order at 6 pm. Attending were Pastor Kirsten, Joyce, Adam, Dick, Josiah, Eric, Gloria, and Vicki. Devotions were given by Eric. Minutes were read and approved.

Treasurer's Report – Was given by Eric with the most current month-end updates.

Property Report – Dick reported. He cleared snow on property walkways and had the furnace checked. Checked on leaking fixtures in men's restroom and called a plumber. New

fixtures were installed. Dick visited with Randy and Bill Halling. Dick made arrangements for the windblown soffit to be fixed after insurance adjuster came to inspect the property damage above fellowship doors.

Care & Concern – Gloria reported that cards were sent for the month to members. Care & Concern visited with Phyllis Beck and Tom Kindler. Janet Hull had been ill, so did not visit her. Pastor has stopped in to see others homebound and Betty McMahon.

Stewardship – Council discussed the possibility of having dinner theater in the fall of 2022. This will be discussed with members.

Muscatine County Historic Preservation Committee sent out a letter saying a sign will be placed on the property to designate the church being a historic property.

Basement cleanout will begin soon. Members with personal property should make arrangements to collect their items.

Youth – Confirmation class is taking place during Sunday School. Youth interested in church camp may approach the council requesting half of the camping fees as Council discussed in favor to help the parents.

Worship & Music – Members have requested choir and more music be brought back into the services. Council discussed to make calls and inquire into this.

Upcoming Events

Ash Wednesday Service at New Era @ 7 pm

Midweek services during lent at 7 pm

New Era March 9 and 23 – Soup supper
5:30-6:30 pm

Worship 7 pm (sign-up sheets will be in the fellowship hall)

Easter Lilies – sign-up sheet - \$10 each

Good Friday Service @ New Era – 10:30 am

Easter Breakfast – April 17 @ 9 am

Biscuits and gravy will be provided by Dick & Carolyn. Members can sign up for casseroles, fruit or pastries.

Pastor will be on vacation March 3-6. Pastor Meyer will officiate March 6.

Next meeting will be Tuesday, April 5 at 6 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Vicki Hampton

Life and light



Easter is the assurance that no matter how hopeless and dark things appear, God is alive and actively working. Our heavenly Father births life out of death, transforms brokenness into wholeness and shines light into darkness.

In the words of the poet Christian Wiman
(from *Every Riven Thing*):

When the time's toxins
have seeped into every cell ...
somehow a seed of belief sprouts ...
tugged upward by light ...

Why Christ calls us to worship

Easter services are usually well attended, but what about other weeks? What draws you to worship on an "average" Sunday, and what might Jesus have in store for people in the pews?

Consider this from Pastor Charles Aaron: "Did we come to church this morning thinking it was a safe thing to do? Did we come with some expectation of receiving a blessing, a bit of comfort, but no real challenge? Did we think about the possibility that encountering Jesus would rearrange our lives, explode our priorities, cause us to give more than we ever

expected? Did we think we could get a little something from Jesus, a dose of grace to help us through the week? Did we come for the fellowship, the music, the spiritual boost? No one can argue with those reasons."

He continues: "The risen Christ, however, may have had other plans for this worship service. Christ may want to come under our skins and transform us. Christ may see through us so that something we have well hidden comes to the surface. Christ may kick out from under us the things we use to prop ourselves up but that we don't really need. Are we ready for that? Did we bargain on that when we walked through the door today?"—from *The Wired Word*

Why Friday is good



To participate in the sacrificial life and death of Jesus Christ is to live already in his kingdom. This is the essence of the Christian message, the heart of the Good News, and it is why the cross has become the chief Christian symbol.

A cross of all things — a guillotine, a gallows — but the cross at the same time as the crossroads of eternity and time, as the place where such a mighty heart was broken that the healing power of God himself could flow through it into a sick and broken world. It was for this reason that of all the possible words they could have used to describe the day of his death, the word they settled on was "good." *Good Friday*.—Frederick Buechner

A eucharistic hymn

Bread of the world, in mercy broken,
Wine of the soul, in mercy shed,

By Whom the words of life were spoken,
And in Whose death our sins are dead.
Look on the heart by sorrow broken,
Look on the tears by sinners shed;
And be Thy feast to us the token,
That by Thy grace our souls are fed.
—Reginald Heber

"Christ did not come into the world that we might understand him, but that we might cling to him, that we might simply let ourselves be swept away by him into the immense event of the resurrection."—Dietrich

Bonhoeffer

* * *

"Lent is spring training. Easter is opening day!"—seen on a church sign

* * *

"We are each a God-carrier and a sanctuary of the Holy Spirit."

—Archbishop Desmond Tutu

* * *

"An effort made for the happiness of others lifts us above ourselves."

—Lydia M. Child

Palm Sunday as an advent

When a king came to town during Greco-Roman times, citizens held an adventus ceremony, which led to the word Advent. Liturgy specialist Chan Gyu Jang writes, "On an Advent-oriented Palm Sunday, we know not only that we face fierce opposition and ridicule in this world, but that salvation comes in the least expected, most unforeseen way: a baby born of a virgin and laid in a manger, a man from Nazareth riding on a donkey, a 'King of the Jews' crucified between thieves, an empty tomb, wind and fire,

bread and wine, a trumpet call out of nowhere, yet heard in ever year."

Puzzle!

Using the code, complete this passage based on Ezekiel 34.

Puzzle!

Using the code, complete this passage based on Ezekiel 34.

CODE

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
Z	Y	X	W	V	U	T	S	R	Q	P	O	N	M	L	K	J	I	H	G	F	E	D	C	B	A

"As a _____ looks after his

_____ when _____ is

_____ them, so will I _____ after my _____.


I will _____ them and _____ them.

I will _____ for the _____ and bring back

the _____ . I will _____ up the _____

and _____ the _____ . You are my

_____ ... and I am your _____."



Answer: shepherd, scattered, flock, he, with, look, sheep, rescue, pasture, search, lost, strays, blind, injured, strengthen, weak, sheep, God

A love-filled victory

It's tough to read about Jesus' agony on the cross, where he felt "forsaken" by God (see Matthew 27:46). But as Philip Yancey explains

in *Where Is God When It Hurts?* The Father didn't desert Jesus — and doesn't desert us:

"God was not 'up there' watching the tragic events conspire 'down here.' God was *in Christ*, reconciling the world to himself," he writes. "If Jesus was a mere man, his death would prove God's cruelty; the fact that he was God's Son proves instead that God fully identifies with suffering humanity. On the cross, God himself absorbed the awful pain of this world.

"To some, the image of a pale body glimmering on a dark night whispers of defeat," Yancey continues. "But another sound can be heard: the shout of a God crying out to human beings, 'I LOVE YOU.' Love was compressed for all history in that lonely figure on the cross, who said that he could call down angels at any moment on a rescue mission, but chose not to — because of us."

He concludes: "Any discussion of how pain and suffering fit into God's scheme ultimately leads back to the cross."

The majesty of God's creation

Earth Day offers a reminder to be wise stewards of God's creation. Former U.S. Senate chaplain Lloyd Ogilvie wrote about how the universe reveals the greatness of its Maker. "If we were to drive a car day and night at top speed without stopping," he writes, "it would take us nine years to reach the moon, 300 years to reach the sun, 8,300 years to reach the planet Neptune, 75 million years to reach Alpha Centauri, and 700 million years to reach the Pole Star.

"This is the reason the Psalmist, even with his limited cosmology, could say, 'When I consider

the work of Thy fingers, the moon and the stars which Thou hast ordained; what is man, that Thou dost take thought of him? And the son of man, that Thou dost care for him? Yet Thou hast made him a little lower than God, and dost crown him with glory and majesty!' (Psalm 8:3-5)." Astonishing indeed!

Gratitude, all year long

It's not Thanksgiving time. But what if we made a point to practice gratitude all year long?

In her book *Grateful*, theologian Diana Butler Bass writes: "As human beings, we possess an intuitive awareness that we depend on others to survive. We are safer and happier when we care for each other in community, when we do things for each other. ... How we live together in and with gratitude makes all the difference in the world. Indeed, living gratefully makes the world different."

Bible Quiz

As Jesus entered Jerusalem on a donkey, crowds praised him loudly. When Pharisees told him to silence the people, what did Jesus say would shout if his followers didn't?



- A. Stones
- B. Palm branches
- C. Trees
- D. Hillsides

Answer: A (See Luke 19:40.)

Held in God's love

We would like to think that once we turn our lives over to Christ, everything will run smoothly. When such is not the case, we might question whether our faith is strong enough or what we are doing wrong. The fact is, we live in

a broken world, and sufferings come upon all people.

In the words of 14th-century mystic Julian of Norwich: "If there is anywhere on earth a lover of God who is always kept safe, I know nothing of it, for it was not shown to me. But this was shown: that in falling and rising again we are always kept in that same precious love."

We might take comfort in the fact that our struggles are not so different from those experienced seven centuries ago. We are "normal," after all! But the greatest assurance is that no matter what we face in life, Jesus walks with us, the Holy Spirit strengthens us, and "we are always kept in [God's] precious love."

A dose of humor

On the Sunday after Easter, some churches incorporate joy into worship through "holy humor." During his four decades in ministry, Thom Rainer has collected these funny gems heard by real-life pastors:

"Is it okay to lie if I ask for forgiveness in advance?"

(during the offertory) "Pastor, do you have change for a twenty?"

(during an ordination council) "What's your view on Christian missions in space?"

"My husband's ashes are in two different places. Will Jesus be able to find him?"

"Pastor, will you pray for my son? He's wild and out of control." (Pastor: "Sure, what's his name?") "Maverick."

Christian symbol



PASCHAL CANDLE—This large, white candle is an ancient symbol for Christ, the light of the world. The candle contains a cross and/or an Alpha and

Omega to symbolize that Jesus is eternal and always present with his people. Also called the Easter candle, it plays a prominent role during Easter vigils and celebrations. Some churches also use the candle during baptisms and funerals.



Carrot Casserole

(Betty McMahon)


- 2 lb carrots, sliced
- 1 small onion chopped

Place in pot with water and cook until tender. Drain well.

Melt together the following:

- 1 stick margarine or butter melted
- 8 oz Velveeta cheese
- 2 T milk

Place carrots in buttered 8x8 casserole. Pour melted cheese mixture over carrots. Top with ½ C Rise Krispies. Pour two teaspoons melted butter over Rice Krispies. Bake at 350° for 25 minutes. May be doubled for 9 x 13 pan.



PUZZLE

Resurrection refresher

All four gospels confirm Jesus' resurrection, and each one offers important details.

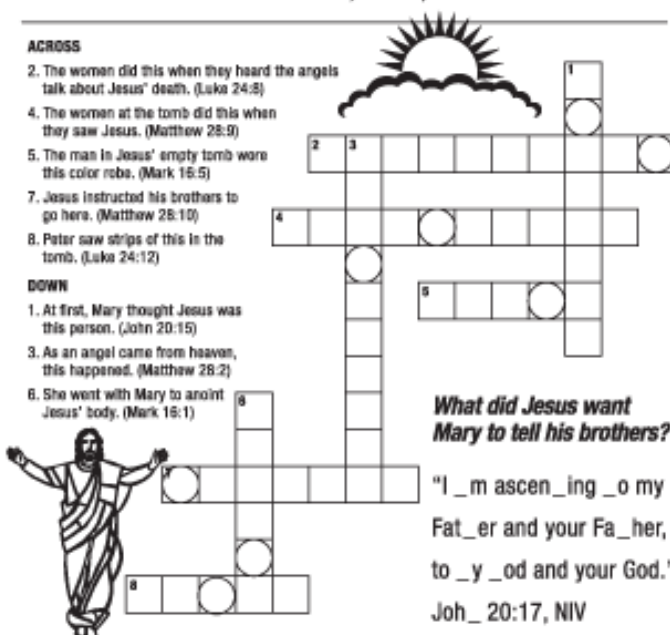
Directions: Complete the crossword. Then insert the circled letters (in order of the clue numbers) to complete John 20:17 below.

ACROSS

- The women did this when they heard the angels talk about Jesus' death. (Luke 24:8)
- The women at the tomb did this when they saw Jesus. (Matthew 28:9)
- The man in Jesus' empty tomb wore this color robe. (Mark 16:5)
- Jesus instructed his brothers to go here. (Matthew 28:10)
- Peter saw strips of this in the tomb. (Luke 24:12)

DOWN

- At first, Mary thought Jesus was this person. (John 20:15)
- As an angel came from heaven, this happened. (Matthew 28:2)
- She went with Mary to anoint Jesus' body. (Mark 16:1)



What did Jesus want Mary to tell his brothers?

"I _ m ascen _ ing _ o my Fat _ er and your Fa _ her, to _ y _ od and your God."

Joh _ 20:17, NIV

Answer: ACROSS 2. remembered, 4. worshipped, 5. white, 7. Galilee, 8. linen; DOWN 1. garden, 3. earthquake, 6. Salome, 6. Salome; "I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God." John 20:17, NIV

HOLY WEEK i-spy

Create this craft to share the events of Holy Week with a younger sibling or friend.



What you need:


- Clear bottle or jar with lid
- White rice
- Small items that symbolize Holy Week events

What you do:

1. Pour rice into bottle or jar so it's about two-thirds full.
2. Add the small items. Ideas: leaf, donkey, cup, towel square, praying hands, coin, bird, nails, thorn, cross, dice, stick, lamb, stone, white fabric.
3. Fasten the lid. Then shake and turn the bottle to "spy" each item.

April 2022

March '22							May '22						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
27	28	29	30	31			29	30	31				

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
27	28	29	30	31	1	2
3 *	4  9:30 am - "Classic Stretch" w/Lynne Leacock	5  6 pm - Council Meeting	6 New Era Wed. evening 5:30- 6:30 - Lent soup supper 7 pm - worship service	7	8	9
10 *  12:30 pm - Easter Egg Hunt @ Durant	11  9:30 am - "Classic Stretch" w/Lynne Leacock	12 9 am - Sewing group meets at church. Bring sack lunch. Everyone welcome.	13 9:00 am - Care & Concern- Meet @ McDonald's	14  7 pm - Maundy Thursday Worship @ Gloria Dei	15  7 pm - Good Friday Stations of the Cross Worship @ New Era	16
17 No Sunday School  6:30 am - Sunrise Service @ Gloria Dei 9-10:30 am - EasterBreakfast @ New Era 10:30 am - Easter Worship Service @ New Era	18  9:30 am - "Classic Stretch" w/Lynne Leacock	19 Pastor Kirsten away	20	21	22  April 22	23
24 *	25  9:30 am - "Classic Stretch" w/Lynne Leacock	26	27 	28	29	30
1	2	*Every Sunday: 9:30 am - Sunday School 10:30 am - Worship Service				