



The Christ Messenger

Christ Lutheran Church
Vienna, West Virginia

April 2022

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Our Mission:

As Children of God, nourished
by the Word, Sacrament and
Fellowship of loving, forgiving,
and hopeful believers—

WE are guided by the Holy
Spirit to WITNESS to Christ's
saving presence in the World!

24-25 "Listen carefully: Unless a grain of wheat is buried in the ground, dead to the world, it is never any more than a grain of wheat. But if it is buried, it sprouts and reproduces itself many times over. In the same way, anyone who holds on to life just as it is destroys that life. But if you let it go, reckless in your love, you'll have it forever, real and eternal. (John 12:24-25, THE MSG)

This year Easter came a little later than usual. I used to determine the timing of Easter to be around the opening of Trout season, or around the first weekend in April, but this year it comes on the third weekend, right before we are all compelled to have our income taxes filed on April 18. It has always been my experience with Easter, as well as Christmas, that when the day is over, its kind of a let down. We just expend so much energy into both seasons that when they are over, its back to life as normal. But this should not be that way. At Christmas we celebrated God coming down and lining with us, and Easter is our living resurrection promise. Both of these holidays are about God who loves us, who has dreams for us, who has arms for us and will not let us go. Both of these holidays are about our Creator who comes down to us and meets us in our joys and in our sorrows and walks with us as well as carries us, if need be, through our life's journeys.

The new life of Easter is so profound that we even find it in nature. Just look around you now and you will see the bulbs you planted last fall beginning to come up from the ground, or maybe even blooming. You will see the farmers plowing their fields which will soon receive the seeds of summer harvest. In a way, I feel, that those fields are much like our lives during the season of Lent. We have taken the time to ready ourselves, drawing closer to God while

recognizing that we all fall short of God's glory. Then, we like the crocuses break, through the ground to receive the new life of the Resurrection Spring. With plants its so natural that it becomes part of their rhythm of life.

Yet we do have the option to choose another rhythm. We can and often do choose our own avenues of gratification and so the joy of Easter becomes something that happens on April 17, this year, and it's a new day. Maybe during this upcoming Easter season we should reflect on how the resurrection has met you in your life. Always during the second Sunday of Easter we find the disciples behind the locked doors of the Upper Room in fear for the lives for following Jesus. Yet it was in that fear that Jesus met them and assured them that he was very much alive in their lives.

My biggest fear for our communities and most especially our churches is not that we fear witnessing about how Jesus has impacted our life, but that we have nothing to talk about. I believe the greatest danger to spreading the good news of Jesus is indifference. When we live that way we become different from the bulbs of nature. Those bulbs have no choice but to bud and spring up as

a result of being nurtured from above. But we can ignore that nurturing and without the elements necessary for our growth our faith will wither.

Considering that fear of indifference, I would like to add a portion of an article written by Anthony Robinson, a United Church of Christ pastor in his article called, "The Ukrainian Challenge to the U.S." "Clearly the focus of the Ukrainian anger and resistance is Russia. They are the invading power. They are the enemy, and the United States has taken the side of Ukraine both through military and humanitarian aid, as well as sanctions. We are sharing in the cost of this war. But there is a way in which the do-or-die Ukrainians and their "I need ammunition not a ride" President are a challenge to the United States and other modern western nations. They are engaged in as clear a good versus evil struggle as we have witnessed in a long time. They are putting their lives on the line in a cause they believe is just. In doing so, they remind us the observation of Martin Luther King Jr. 'If there's nothing worth dying for, then there's nothing worth living for either.'" The great preacher William Sloane Coffin once observed that 'its only a hop, skip and a jump from cool and laid back to dead and buried.' The Ukrainians are challenging us to remember what we have been too happy to forget, that life is a battlefield, a struggle of good and evil, of truth and lies."

So this Easter season, may we let the Spirit of Christ work within our lives. May we not be indifferent, but live in His presence so each of us can help bring new life to those around us. Allow Christ to be the life that dwells in you and be the driving force which will bring you to joy and happiness. May this time be for you a groundbreaking experience full of the Resurrected life.

Have a glorious Easter,
Pastor Tom

April Schedule at a Glance

Sundays:

April 3rd

8:30 & 10:45 – Communion Service
9:30 – Sunday School

April 10th – Palm Sunday

8:30 & 10:45 – Communion Service
9:30 – Sunday School

April 17th – Easter Sunday

8:30 – Potluck Breakfast
9:30 – Cross Decorating
10:00 – Communion Service

April 24th

8:30 & 10:45 – Worship Service
9:30 – Sunday School

Elderberries – April 14th at noon at the NET

Holy Thursday – April 14th at 7pm

Good Friday – April 15th at 7pm

Church will be open on Good Friday from 12pm-3pm for silent meditation and prayer.

On May 1st there will only be one service (10am) with a guest speaker. Following the service there will be a pot luck lunch and a meeting. There will be more information in the following weeks.



Birthdays

April 9 – Melissa Bannister

April 9 – Al Behnke

April 12 – Fran Williams

April 14 Kristopher Welch

April 21 – Terry Wilson

April 30 – George Volker

Anniversaries

April 7 – Avery and Erin Phillips

April 18 – Ron and Judi Clampitt

Help Wanted

Christ Lutheran is looking to put together a list of those who are willing to help prepare meals for those in our congregation who may want or need a meal after hospitalizations, illnesses, or a funeral.

There will be a sign up sheet in the narthex for anyone who feels that they are able to help with this ministry.

Thank you, Fran Williams

Quiet Moments with Liz

Dearest Friends,

There is so much unrest in the world, especially in the Ukraine. I read this meditation during my prayer time today and wanted to share it with you all. It is a call to action, but I need God's direction and intercession to determine what that should be.

This was written by Elizabeth Goudge (1900-1984) from England:

O Lord Jesus Christ, whose anger was once terribly kindled against those who hurt the children, we beseech You to bring to repentance all those who through cruelty, lust, or carelessness bring the innocent to harm. We are among them, O Lord, and confess with sorrow and shame that every failure of our love in thought, word, or deed immeasurably increases the sin of the world and the unhappiness of the children. Lord, have mercy on us, increase our love and consecrate it, making it active in deed and prayer for all children in danger of body, mind, or spirit, all who are hungry or homeless through war or disaster, children of broken homes, frightened or lonely children, children who look for love and do not find it. What can we say, O Lord, what can we ask? They are the innocent sufferers for our sins, as You were in Your life on earth, united to You more closely than we can understand. Lord have mercy upon them in their suffering and have mercy upon us in our sin.

Blessings, Liz

Elderberries

"Where do you want to eat?" "I Don't Care." So, Elderberries met on Thursday, March 10, 2022, at the I Don't Care Restaurant in Vienna! Eight people were signed up but due to health reasons, only five were able to attend. They were: Kay Rowan, Fran and Tom Williams, and Jenny and Mike Knotts.

My source tells me that Mike entertained everyone with his repertoire of funny jokes and everyone had a good time. They were still given a big table and served delicious food.

Our next meeting will be Thursday, April 14, at the NET (North End Tavern) at noon. We hope everyone will be able to attend. There will be a sign-up sheet in the Narthex.

Delores Steege 304 428-2056

Good Samaritan

Item of the Month



Evaporated Milk

Church Address:

4513 Grand Central Avenue
Vienna, WV 26105

Church Phone Number:

304-295-9241

Church Web Page:

<https://christlutheranviennawv.org/>

Church Facebook Page:

[Facebook.com/christlutheranchurchviennawv](https://www.facebook.com/christlutheranchurchviennawv)

We keep the following people in our prayers:

Tamar Allen; Jeff Amos; Russell Behnke; David Bills; Jerry John DiNicola; Sally Ebeling; Becky Ferguson; Pam Goots; Heather; Judy Lawson; Laura Lemley; Family of Joel McGuier; Rob Miser; Gary Miller; Sharen Nicholas; Sharon Niday; Rosemary Padgett; Gean Secreto; April Sowards; Tim and Lora Swarr; Caren Thomas; Donna Vincent; Brooke Wilson; Terry & Vicki Wilson; Tiffany Wilson; police and first responders; our troops; Christians and other minorities in the Middle East; people in the Ukraine and eastern Europe; pray for peace; and for our military, especially for Airman Elijah Modesitt (U.S. Airforce); Jon Shorr serving in Afghanistan; Conner Allen serving in China; families of all those who serve in the military; for all who have been diagnosed with COVID 19 and/or hospitalized for the virus, for all who have died from the virus, for all of our medical personnel and first responders who are treating patients, for all families and loved ones separated by quarantines, for people who do not have access to medical care to be treated, for folks who are unemployed and the underemployed.

Church Office Hours: Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday from 9:00-12:00

Easter stewardship: Resurrection reset

Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? Therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. -Romans 6:3-4

Christ is Risen! Risen, indeed! Alleluia!

The triumphant words we cherish every Easter signal more than just Jesus' victory over the grave. They announce for us the end of deadness and the start of a new life, a fresh beginning, in our earthly pilgrimage. Jesus was raised from the dead so that we, too, might walk in newness of life.

From Jesus' resurrection, our lives take on a new trajectory, a turn away from the values and precepts of the world and toward the kingdom of God. As we journey, our lives progressively align with the purposes and mission of God.

For a steward-disciple of our Lord, the implications are many. As we walk in newness of life, we might find ourselves

- Re-examining our relationship to “stuff” – our money, our possessions, the things that might have given us a sense of security or worth. Jesus is our security and our worth.
- Drawing closer to family and friends. True wealth is measured by the love we give and receive. Our lives effervesce with the love we receive from God.
- Contributing more to church and charity. Jesus frees us from the grip that possessions have upon us. We can more freely give.
- Gathering into our lives what Paul calls the fruits of the spirit: “Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control” (Galatians 5:22-23).

May your lives as steward-disciples take a resurrection reset. Christ is risen! Risen indeed! Alleluia!

--Rob Blezard

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