

The News of Grace

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April 2018

“For Pete’s Sake”

“When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, ‘Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?’ He said to Him, ‘Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.’ [Jesus] said to him, ‘Feed my lambs.’ [Jesus] said to him a second time, ‘Simon, son of John, do you love me?’ [Peter] said to Him, ‘Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.’ [Jesus] said to him, ‘Tend my sheep.’ [Jesus] said to him a third time, ‘Simon son of John, do you love me?’ Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, ‘Do you love me?’ and he said to Him, ‘Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Feed my sheep.’” (John 21:15-17)

Alleluia! Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

We rejoice and celebrate once again, the Resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, whose work on our behalf was acceptable to God the Father who raised Him from the dead! So we have made our yearly pilgrimage to Jerusalem and joined our voices with those who welcomed Jesus to the Holy City on that first Palm Sunday. Many of those who welcomed Him were Jewish pilgrims from Galilee who had come to celebrate the Passover. Messianic expectations were always highest around the time of the celebration of the deliverance of the Children of Israel from their slavery to Pharaoh and the Egyptians. At this point in their history they were hopeful that a Messiah would come and rescue them from the Romans. We have journeyed to the upper room where our Lord stooped to serve His disciples before the Passover meal by washing their feet. This He did for them because they were not willing to serve one another which is still problematic in the church of today. At the table Jesus reminded the twelve that one of them would betray Him which caused them much consternation and then Jesus instituted the Lord’s Supper giving Himself for the forgiveness of sins and the strengthening of faith. So we also journey to the Lord’s Table to be refreshed with that forgiveness because we too have betrayed the Lord by our actions and our inaction. We call that sins of commission and sins of omission. And of course we are also guilty of sins of no mission.

After the Passover meal we journeyed with Jesus and the twelve, less Judas who had left them to arrange the betrayal, to the Mount of Olives, to the garden of Gethsemane so that Jesus might have a time of prayer. There Jesus prayed fervently as His disciples fell asleep. It was also at this time that Jesus related to the disciples, “You will all fall away because of me this night. For it is written, ‘I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.’ But after I am raised up, I will go before you to Galilee.” Peter then boldly told the Lord, “Though they all fall away because of you, I will never fall away.” Some words are difficult to take back, aren’t they? Then Jesus shared with Peter, “Truly, I tell you, this very night, before the rooster crows, you will deny me three times.” And so it was that the disciples fled after Jesus’ arrest. Peter followed the Lord and those who arrested Him as they led Him to the high priest. It was there in the courtyard that Peter denied knowing Jesus three times and upon the crowing of the rooster, “Peter remembered the saying of Jesus, ‘Before the rooster crows, you will deny me three times.’ And he went out and wept bitterly.”

It does us well to remember what happened before the Resurrection so that we might cherish the gift of forgiveness that comes through Jesus’ suffering and death and further rejoice in everlasting life because Jesus is the firstborn from the dead! What Good News, though mixed with astonishment and fear, it must have been for the women who first went out to the tomb on the first day of the week to finish the task of Jesus’ burial. The stone that gave them great concern as they made their walk to the tomb had been rolled away and then as they entered the tomb they saw a young man dressed in a white robe which alarmed them. He said to them, “Do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has risen; He is not here. See the place where they laid Him. But go, tell His disciples and Peter that He is going before you to Galilee. There you will see Him, just as He told you.” (Mark 16:6-7)

St. Mark’s Gospel account is said to be based on the teaching and preaching of St. Peter, whom Mark served as an assistant while Peter was in Rome where he ultimately would be martyred. Being an assistant to Peter, John Mark would have heard his proclamation of the life and ministry, the Passion and death, and ultimately the Resurrection of Jesus from the dead. More than likely they would have had conversations about Peter’s role as a disciple, a forgiven one at that. With that influence we find that Mark notes that the angel who appeared to the women at Jesus’ tomb told them to go and tell Jesus’ disciples and Peter. While Peter was known to be the leader of the disciples, here he is mentioned secondarily rather than primarily. At that point was there a question as to Peter’s discipleship? That could have been said of all of

Jesus' disciples, but Peter had boasted that "Though they all fall away because of you, I will never fall away," and after his denial "he went away and wept bitterly." Mark is the only Gospel writer to mention these things in this way. Considering Peter's denials of Jesus and his failure to stand up for the Lord personally as he fled with the others at Jesus' arrest, maybe, just maybe there was some question about his remaining a disciple, at least in Peter's mind, as he had shared things with his young assistant.

For Pete's Sake is an expression that is used from time to time. It's origin is unknown but some have suggested that the *Pete* is St. Peter. Rather than using stronger oaths such as *For Christ's Sake* or *For God's Sake* this saying using *Pete* came into use. Its use appears to start showing up in the early twentieth century.

As you revisit the passage from St. John's Gospel account that I used at the beginning of this 'first page' clearly the Lord Jesus, *For Pete's Sake*, spoke words of comfort and pardon to him restoring him to his discipleship of Jesus, soon to become an apostleship. Gently leading Peter by His questions "do you love me more than these," Jesus leads Peter to repentance and grants him forgiveness *For Christ's Sake* as He entrusts him with feeding and caring for His lambs and His sheep.

Thankfully *For Your Sake* and *For My Sake* the Lord Jesus speaks words of comfort and hope, forgiveness and peace. For all of the times that we have denied knowing Jesus or being known by Jesus through our actions or inactions, the Lord graciously and tenderly offers us words of Absolution. He declares us not guilty through His suffering and death. He reminds us of our Baptisms in that "we were buried therefore with Him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life." (Romans 6:4) For all the times we have doubted that He even cares for us, let alone that He gave His life for our sins and was raised for our justification, His Word and Sacrament feeds us to grant us forgiveness and to strengthen us in our faith. For all the times we have fled the responsibility of being His disciples, confessing His name, serving our neighbor, he comes to us stooping to serve us who should know that we are the least of these ourselves. It was *For Our Sake* and *For The World's Sake* that He came to give us life so that we might use our forgiven and redeemed lives in service to Him and His Church to the glory of God the Father.

So *For Pete's Sake* let's rejoice in His resurrection and gladly serve Him! **Alleluia! Christ Is Risen! He Is Risen Indeed! Alleluia!**

A Blessed and Joyful Eastertide - Pastor Walter

“The Day of Resurrection”

Greetings in Christ and a blessed Easter!

When we are about to sing a hymn, how many of us look to the bottom of the page to find information on the hymn’s author and composer? This is one of the habits that I have developed over the years. Before becoming more involved in church music, I did not pay much attention to who wrote a hymn and when. I simply assumed that most of our hymns were old and had been sung for years!

As I began studying hymns in college, I constantly heard the following statement: “The hymns of the church are not written in a vacuum.” This simply means that hymns are not separated from what goes on in the world, either at the time of their composing or in the present day. In other words, just because a hymn was written in 1647 does not mean it has no application for us today.

One of the hymns sung in congregations of many traditions and denominations during the Easter season is “The Day of Resurrection.” This is one of the oldest hymn texts in our hymnal, being written by John of Damascus, a Syrian monk and father of the Greek church who lived in the seventh and eighth centuries. Given his role in the Byzantine (Eastern) Church, this hymn was first written in Greek.

John of Damascus is known for composing in what was a newer form of Christian poetry at the time- the *kanōn*. This style of writing supplemented earlier hymns, which were mostly linked to biblical canticles, such as the Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis.

In this hymn, we are reminded that Easter is in fact another Passover, just as Paul reminds us in 1 Corinthians: “For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed.” As we sing, we are reminded that through Christ, we are brought from death to life eternal, and that His light purges all evil from our hearts. Appropriately, the final stanza is a doxology, reminding us that our song on earth is joined with those in heaven! The truths that John of Damascus wrote of in this hymn have remained unchanged, being sung in confidence by Christians ever since its writing.

John Mason Neale, the noted translator of Latin hymn texts to English, includes a description of a nineteenth-century singing of this hymn in *Hymns of the Eastern Church* (1862). He writes that during an Easter Vigil in Athens, as midnight approached, the archbishop, his priests, and the King and Queen would stand on a platform above the people. When midnight struck, the Archbishop would announce: "Christ is risen!" Those gathered would repeat the glad announcement, after which they would light their candles and sing "the glorious old Hymn of Victory," or "The Day of Resurrection."

May we all sing these words with joy and confidence, for we know that our Lord is risen and that we have everlasting life in Him!

In His Service,

Charlie Russell, Director of Parish Music

NOON DEVOTIONS WITH PASTOR

April 19th – 12:00 noon

Parker Hall

NOON DEVOTIONS WITH PASTOR is Thursday, April 19th, at 12:00 noon in Parker Hall. (Please note the change in the date from the second Thursday to the third Thursday.)

Pastor Walter shares a devotional Bible study with us so bring your Bible and a sandwich. Drinks, chips, and dessert are provided.

This is a wonderful opportunity for fellowship and Bible Study.
Come and bring a friend with you!!



HOLY WEEK SERVICES

March 29th – 7:00 p.m.

Maundy Thursday Service
with Holy Communion

A Dinner will be served at 5:30 p.m. in Parker Hall
by the Cline, Junkans and Schnackenberg families.

Dinner – Swedish meatballs over rice with
green beans, salad, rolls and desserts

March 30th – 7:00 p.m.

Good Friday Tenebrae Service
with Holy Communion

April 1st – Easter Sunday

No Easter Sunrise Service

8:15 a.m. – Easter Divine Service with Holy Communion

9:00 to 10:30 a.m. - Easter Breakfast will be served

10:00 a.m. – Easter Egg Hunt

10:45 a.m. – Easter Divine Service with Holy Communion

(There will be no Sunday School on Easter Sunday.)

The children up to 8 years old are invited to the Easter egg hunt at 10:00 a.m.)

THOSE WHO SERVE IN APRIL

ACOLYTE SCHEDULE

8:15 a.m. April Services – Heidi Litwa

10:45 a.m. April Services — Elias Found

Easter Sunday – April 1st – 8:15 a.m. Acolyte – James Junkans
Crucifer – Emma Schnackenberg
10:45 a.m. Acolyte – Elias Found
Crucifer –Elijah Goodrich

COMMUNION ASSISTANTS

Easter Sunday – April 1st – 8:15 Service – Richard Sanders
10:45 Service – Gervais LeBlanc
April 8th – 8:15 Service – Claude Riggan
April 15th – 10:45 Service – Jonathan Cline
April 22nd – 8:15 Service – Joel Junkans
April 29th – 10:45 Service – Raymond Harrill

USHERS' SCHEDULE

8:15 a.m. Services – Roy Bullard's team
Roy Andrews, John Ketcher, Gary Proud

10:45 a.m. Services – Chris Pils' team
Jon Cline, David Faulkner, Wes Mainard

CANTORS' SCHEDULE

8:15 a.m. Services – Joel Junkans

10:45 a.m. Services – Jonathan Cline

GREETERS' SCHEDULE

8:15 a.m. Services –Ame Andrews

10:45 a.m. Services – Andrea Faulkner

Maundy Thursday & Good Friday Services – Debbie Penny

ALTAR GUILD SCHEDULE

8:15 a.m. Services – Linda Riggan, Pat Funk

10:45 a.m. Services – Ginny Ralston

Wednesday Mid-Week Services – Suzanne Raddle, Wilma Richter

STEWARDSHIP BUDGET RE-CAP

2018 budget totals \$560,751
which is an average weekly
General Fund contribution requirement of \$10,784

Budget needs through March 18	\$129,408
Actual expenses through March 18	\$130,205
Contributions to General Fund from all sources	\$105,797*
Average weekly contribution through March 18	\$9618

In summary, General Fund giving for the year is \$ 24,409 less than actual expenses.

Non-budget giving to designated funds through March 18	\$7122
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*These contributions include a monthly payment from ECDC to help offset expenses. They also include some memorials and honorariums which are not designated to specific funds.

FELLOWSHIP CLUB

**Tuesday, April 17th
12:00 noon**

The Fellowship Club will meet on **Tuesday, April 17th at 12:00 noon** in Parker Hall for lunch served by our ACTS friends.

Join us for fun, food, and fellowship!! Call the church office if you need more information.

SUNDAY MORNING COFFEE

COFFEE HOST SIGN UP

Volunteers Needed to Serve - Please take a minute and sign up for the Sunday on which you wish to serve. The sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board by the Parlor.

The schedule for **April, 2018** is:

April 1st Easter Sunday – Easter Breakfast

April 8th Bryants and Wilimzigs

April 15th Sammye Harrill and Myrna Smith

April 22nd Gary and Angie Proud

April 29th Jim and Florence Marvin

The schedule for **May, 2018** is:

May 6th _____

May 13th _____

May 20th _____

May 27th _____

Thanks! We appreciate your help.

BIBLE STUDY OPPORTUNITIES AT GRACE

Our nursery, downstairs in the church, is also available to take care of the infants and toddlers on Sunday morning not only during both Worship Services but also during Sunday School and Bible Class time. Mary Ann Dyer is our nursery attendant.

ADULT BIBLE CLASS – Pastor Walter’s class meets each Sunday morning at 9:45 a.m. upstairs in the Family Life Center in Parker Hall. Pastor Walter will complete the study of the Book of Acts and then begin a study of St. Peter’s Epistles.

SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES for children ages 3 through 6th grade are held in the lower level of the Family Life Center. Parents are invited to join us for the opening service at 9:45 each Sunday. If you have questions, contact Colleen Moorman for more information.

JUNIOR HIGH YOUTH - Their class meets at 9:45 a.m. on Sunday in their classroom downstairs in the church. Joel Junkans will lead the class each Sunday morning.

SENIOR HIGH YOUTH - Their class meets each Sunday at 9:45 a.m. in their classroom downstairs in the church. Dave Roberts leads the class each Sunday morning.

MEN’S BIBLE STUDY class meets each Wednesday morning at 6:30 a.m. at St. Vincent Hospital in the 4th floor conference room (off the main elevator). Pastor Walter leads this Bible Study each week.

BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

HAPPY BIRTHDAY & GOD'S BLESSINGS to Grace Family members in the month of APRIL:

- 2 – Roy Andrews, Marc André LeBlanc
- 4 – Hunter Goodwin, Greg Pils
- 5 – Ashley Worden
- 6 – Edward Allen, Nancy Hickey
- 7 – Edwina Atkinson, Rick Camacho
- 7 – Joel Junkans, Stacy Johnson, Carmen Stewart
- 9 – Brandt Cline
- 9 – Kestin Schulz-Christie
- 10 – Suzanne Hardman
- 11 – Grover 'Bud' Evans, Angie Proud
- 13 – David Raddle
- 14 – C. C. Cate, Annaleigha Davis, Connor Stephens
- 15 – Abby Buchanan
- 16 – Daniel Mainard
- 17 – Joshua Bryant, Aiden Pervaiz
- 18 – Cecillia Gelzine
- 20 – Kenneth Spann, Miles Spann
- 21 – Karen Bullard, Cecelia Hammond, Angie Stephens
- 22 – Jo Hanna Worden, Abby Litwa
- 24 – Jeremy Camacho
- 25 – Jude Goodrich
- 27 – Carroll Holzhauer, Robert Rawlings
- 28 – Karen Klein, Nancy Orpin
Henry Schluterman, Bob Schmidt,
- 29 – Willie Eustice, Mike Morrison, Ginny Ralston
- 30 – Linda Riggin

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY to these couples in APRIL:

- 21 – Alison and Michael Metzler

We apologize if we have missed your birthday or anniversary; please let us know in the church office so we can update our records. Thank you!!



ECDC News & Notes . .

• Happy Easter Season! What a joy to know that my Redeemer lives and through Him so do we!

What a busy month March was! We had all sorts of fun with nursery rhymes and fairy tales, celebrated Dr. Seuss' birthday. On the warm days we played outside and the wet and cold we love the gym!

April is the month we learn about creepy, crawly critters—a Spring thing, and hopefully not too much show'n'tell! We'll celebrate Earth Day with special nature activities – hopefully outside! The Junior/Senior Class will even go to Pinnacle State Park to hike, explore, play, and have a great Spring picnic—can't wait!

And, of course we complete our Easter journey. We traveled in story and song through Holy Week to our Savior's glorious resurrection—don't be afraid, JESUS IS ALIVE! Our Resurrection Eggs and the story of a little boy named Benjamin took us on our journey of activities celebrating the death, burial, rest in the tomb, and resurrection of our Savior. Our celebration culminated with our annual Resurrection Biscuits on Maundy Thursday and we were off on Good Friday.

*Do not be afraid—
Jesus is alive!*



We began our Better Beginnings recertification process completing one of the three assessments. We've yet to get results but prayerfully we passed! April will find us finally installing the Nursery emergency exit door mandated by the Little Rock Fire Marshall. We think we have a plan to make it a smooth and successful project. We ask that you continue to keep us in your prayers as we minister to so many little ones and their families!

Until next month—a joyous Easter season to each of you — *Colleen*