

Northwoods STAR Ministries Newsletter

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670 Main Street
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Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

APRIL
2020

From Pastor Evelyn...

Unprecedented. We all have heard and read that word many times in recent weeks. What is happening in our nation and around God's world is unprecedented. You may have lived through some kind of disaster in your own life. I expect all of us have witnessed disasters near or far away. But there hasn't been anything quite like the Covid-19 pandemic during our lifetime.

We were halfway through Lent when Covid-19 started to impact Wisconsin. It derailed our Lenten services and soup suppers, affected many local businesses and jobs, and put a stop to gathering for worship on Sunday mornings. It sounds like this will continue through April, at least. So Covid-19 is our backdrop for Holy Week 2020.

As I follow the news, I hear about two potential treatments that may help people. Those who survive being infected with Covid-19 may have immunities in their blood, which may make it possible for them to help other people without a danger of getting sick again. The plasma from their blood also may help others develop those immunities. Another treatment would be a vaccine that would prevent the virus from making people sick.

Hmmm. All of us already are infected with something else that is deadly— sin. Jesus has given us two sacraments that give us forgiveness of sin— Holy Baptism and Holy Communion. God washes away our sin through the water of baptism, often when we are too young to remember it. We are baptized once but receive Holy Communion again and again. Each time, we hear the words of

Jesus, his body and blood "given for you" and "shed for you for the forgiveness of sin."

So even though someday all our bodies will die, our Lord Jesus promises that we will live with him as part of God's family forever.

Holy Communion strengthens us to be faithful in this life here and now, for our sake and for the sake of those God calls us to serve. The body and blood of our Lord Jesus strengthens us for the journey we are on.

Even though this year we cannot gather at our churches to receive the Lord's Supper on Maundy Thursday, I think we need that tangible reminder of God's deep and abiding love for us, "for you." In the midst of this pandemic, we need that reminder right now. God loved us so much that he was willing to send his Son to show us that undying love.

This Maundy Thursday, April 9, we pastors invite you to gather with your "faith family," (actual family or chosen church family... following distancing guidelines) at your home table. All are welcome— anyone who wishes to receive Holy Communion may join you.

One of you will need to bring an internet device (laptop, tablet, smartphone, etc). WASH YOUR HANDS! Please have some bread to share, and wine or grape juice (individual glasses, please!). We all will gather through Zoom for "home Communion" at 7pm, along with the faithful "of all times and places."

May our faithful Lord forgive you, strengthen you, and bless you, as we all continue to serve God every day.

Pastor Evelyn Weston

From Bishop Laurie Skow-Anderson...



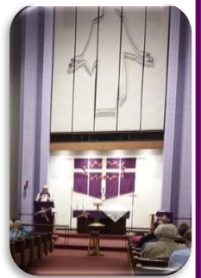
Cookie Cutter Jesus: An Easter Message

I visit a different church in our Synod nearly every Sunday. This Sunday I discovered a 15 foot cookie cutter outline of the figure of Jesus hanging high above the altar.¹ I kept staring at the shape during the first hymn thinking about the outstretched arms of Jesus and realized this as an *Easter* cookie cutter. This is the resurrected Jesus who showed the wounds of the nails in hands when he appeared to Mary Magdalene and the other women. These are the women who became the first witnesses to announce that Jesus had risen from the dead to the other disciples.² I was still thinking about the cookie cutter shape of Jesus when the last hymn was sung. After worship I visited with a long time member of that congregation, Shirley.³ I remarked how I appreciated the 15 foot cookie cutter Jesus

above the altar. Shirley smiled and then told me this story: The church sanctuary was built in the 1970s. Everyone was so excited for the first worship service. The construction workers were busy putting the finishing touches on the sanctuary. The metal shape of Jesus was lying flat on the floor in the church waiting to be hung above the altar. At the time Shirley's daughter, Kari was about 3 ½ years old. Shirley and little Kari were checking out the progress in the sanctuary. Kari, a normal curious child, stepped into the cookie cutter frame and stood in the middle of the Jesus shape. Kari said to Shirley, "Look mommy, I'm standing in Jesus' hand." It was a sweet memory of that long ago moment. Shirley then went on to finish that story. She told me that her daughter Kari died of complications from cancer treatment two years ago. She was only 46. Shirley said that she finds comfort in knowing that her daughter is now resting forever "in Jesus' hands." She often thinks about Kari when she sees the shape of Jesus above the altar. She envisions her daughter in Jesus, resting in Jesus. This Easter, remember we are "in Jesus." We have been baptized into his death and resurrection. We are people who believe "in Jesus."

Friends, as I write this I realize that we are living in complicated times, COVID-19 frightens, cancer kills, politics are ugly, wars rage, immigrant and refugees suffer, racism, gun violence, sexism, climate change, drug abuse are real concerns and yet here we are standing "in Jesus." During this season of Easter, no matter where you are on your spiritual journey, know that the resurrected Jesus reaches out his nail scarred hands to us all, appearing to us in our grief, in our scariest moments, in our despair. This Easter Jesus walked on the road to Emmaus with the two grieving disciples. This is the resurrected Jesus who appeared to the terrified disciples in the locked room and said "peace be with you." This is the resurrected Jesus who ascended into heaven and says to us all, "Go and make disciples of all nations and remember I am with you ALWAYS to the end of the age." You are "in Jesus." Go in peace and share this Easter good news with the world.

Bishop Laurie Skow-Anderson



¹ I bake and decorate hundreds of rolled out cookies every year and have a collection of old cookie cutters.

² The women at the tomb were the first witnesses to the resurrection. 2020 is the 50th Anniversary of the ordination of women pastors in the United States. Save the date, November 7, 2020 is the Synod's Day of Celebration for the 50th Anniversary at Luther Park's new ministry center.

³ Thank you to Shirley Bostrom for giving me permission to share this part of her story.

Romans 6:3-4 Do you not know that all of us who have been **baptized in Christ Jesus** were baptized into his death? ⁴Therefore 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.

2 Corinthians 5:17 So if anyone is **in Christ**, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!

Offering Information...

Our ministry continues. Even when we are prevented from gathering in the flesh, all of us can reach out by phone, through the internet, and by remembering people who need our support in our prayers. However we can help God, that can be part of our offering.

Your financial offerings also are important to the survival of your church. Checks can be mailed to your church. At this time, only Prentice is set up for online giving; contact Bev Hartmann. Your church will continue paying for things like heat, electricity, property insurance, and staff.

Addresses to send offerings:

FLC-Westboro, P.O. Box 214, Westboro, WI 54490

Zion LC, c/o Karin Kivela, W2476 US Hwy 8, Brantwood, WI 54513

FLC-Prentice, 670 Main Street, Prentice, WI 54556

FLC-Ogema, W4950 State Hwy 86, Ogema, WI 54459

Some people may have changes in what they can give, so please pray about whether you can do more to support your congregation and our ministry. God bless you for your prayerful support!

April 2020 Calendar of Events

Sun	Mon	Tu	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
29	30	31	1 7-8 am Zoom Morning "Coffee" Chat 2 pm Zoom Bible Study	2 10 am Zoom Bible Study	3	4
Palm/Passion Sunday 5 8 am to anytime Online Worship 9-11am Parish Zoom Fellowship time with pastors 11:30 am Westboro Zoom Council Mtg	6 Pastors' Day Off	7	8 7-8 am Zoom Morning "Coffee" Chat 2 pm Zoom Bible Study	Maundy Thursday 9 10 am Zoom Bible Study 7 pm Zoom Online Worship w/Communion @ your home table	Good Friday 10 Noon to anytime Online Worship	11
Easter Sunday 12 8 am to anytime Online Worship 9-10 am Zion Zoom Fellowship 9-10 am Ogema Zoom Fellowship 10-11 am Westboro Zoom Fellowship 10-11 am Prentice Zoom Fellowship	13 Pastors' Day Off	14	15 7-8 am Zoom Morning "Coffee" Chat 2 pm Zoom Bible Study	16 NO ZOOM BIBLE STUDY	17	18
19 8 am to anytime Online Worship 9-11am Parish Zoom Fellowship time with pastors	20 Pastors' Day Off	21	22 7-8 am Zoom Morning "Coffee" Chat 2 pm Zoom Bible Study 6:30 pm Zoom Confirmation Class	23 10 am Zoom Bible Study	24	25
26 8 am to anytime Online Worship 9-11am Parish Zoom Fellowship time with pastors 7 pm Parish Zoom Council Mtg	27 Pastors' Day Off	28	29 7-8 am Zoom Morning "Coffee" Chat 2 pm Zoom Bible Study 6:30 pm Zoom Confirmation Class	30 10 am Zoom Bible Study	1	2

April Birthdays & Anniversaries

	8 Colton Cummings	19 Olivia Nehls	
	9 William Cummings Kristen Swenson	21 Peggy Gullickson	
	10 Sadie Jensen Yvonne Rief	22 Sandra Wiles	
	11 Megan Enders Lincoln Schafer	24 Jamie Hawkins	
	12 Payton Carlson	25 Jed Ecker	
	13 Cindy Dering	27 Terry Haubert	
	16 Melinda Peterson Megan Pipkorn	28 Myrt Justice Melissa Raab Derek Foster	
17 Ayriel Foster Tim Griebel	29 Gary Makovsky Devyn Raab		
1 Brian Cleveland Linda Dahlke Carlina Hora Dale Wiles	5 Dan/Candy Zutavern Carl/Vicky Peterson		
2 Kevin Hawkins Dawn Seeger	18 Bill/Joanne Peterson		
3 Braden Foster Allen Rinehart Wendy Gebauer			
4 Harlow Frahm			
5 Danielle Cleveland			
6 Nicole Peterson Joshua Wilms			
7 Scott Brehm Jean Anderson Shawna Annala			



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WORSHIP SCHEDULE FOR APRIL 2020

Sunday, April 5 Palm/Passion Sunday
8 am to anytime Online worship

Thursday, April 9 Maundy Thursday
7 pm Zoom online worship
with Communion at your home table

Friday, April 10 Good Friday
Noon to anytime Online worship

Sunday, April 12 Easter Day
8 am to anytime Online worship

Sunday, April 19 2nd Sunday of Easter
8 am to anytime Online worship

Sunday, April 26 3rd Sunday of Easter
8 am to anytime Online worship