

April, 2024

**MARK: MY WORDS**

 “And I, when I am lifted up from the earth will draw all people to Myself.” (John 12:32) That powerful declaration of Jesus from our Gospel reading on the Fifth Saturday/Sunday in Lent foreshadows one of the key themes of the Fifty Days of Easter in this year of St. Mark. We were taught that “Jesus died on the cross for *my* sins.” While that is true, there is a more inclusive and universal aspect to His being “lifted up.”

 Jesus’ death and resurrection is meant to heal and restore our broken and dying world and begin to fulfill God’s great promise to create a “new heaven and a new earth, to make *all* things new” (Revelation 21:1, 5). We see that promise already being fulfilled in the account of The Resurrection in Mark.

 Of the four Gospel accounts of Easter Mark is the only one in which the risen Jesus does not appear to either the women at the tomb or the disciples. The messenger tells the women that “He has been raised; He is not here. Look, there is the place they laid Him.  But go, tell His disciples and Peter that He is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see Him, just as He told you.” (Mark 16:6b-8)

 “The Galilee” is the place where most of Jesus’ ministry takes place in Mark. It is where He calls the disciples and travels the region teaching, welcoming, and healing the sick, possessed, the dying, and the outcast. Now His story begins all over again as He ceaselessly seeks out the lost and hurting of our time and world to “draw them to Himself.”

 That ongoing mission is central to our celebration of these holy Days. An essay from our worship planning resource, *Sundays and Seasons,* captures well that seasonal thrust:

An overarching theme of the Easter season is one of belonging. From Thomas still finding his place despite, or perhaps because of, his doubts, to our place in the sheepfold and on the vine, to the embrace of the Spirit, we are reminded repeatedly about our place in God’s family. Russian nesting dolls may be helpful in illustrating this theme. Jesus is within God, and we are in turn within Jesus as his sheep, his fruit, his people. Just like those smaller dolls inside the larger doll, we are embraced and protected at every level.

We are not just *with* Jesus but *within* Jesus, as much a part of him as he is of God. The security that knowledge brings can be a springboard for action in the world: sharing the good news, spreading the love of Jesus, and working for justice…There is always a place for us in the fold or on the vine. Jesus does not ask us to be perfect but to abide in him and to bear fruit.

When we find our place and sense of belonging within the abiding, triune God, we are also reminded that there are others who belong to God with whom we are encouraged to build community despite our differences. The Easter texts use multiple images of “the many”: a flock of sheep (Easter 4), the branches of a grape vine (Easter 5), and a multitude of strangers of various nationalities and languages gathered on the Day of Pentecost.

There is a push for unity within the body of Christ throughout the Easter texts. As we move through them, the images of what binds us together become more and more abstract. The resurrected Jesus gathers his followers around him behind locked doors (Easter 2) and then around a beach fire and breakfast (Easter 3). Images of physical gathering give way to metaphorical nonhuman images of flocks of sheep (Easter 4) and vineyard branches full of grapes (Easter 5). Then the invisible but powerful Holy Spirit begins to move and push us together (Easter 6 and 7).

It all builds to Pentecost, when we are brought together through language and deeper understanding. Through this journey, we are taken from the very familiar group of disciples to images out of nature that show unity without diversity and then finally to an image that is highly relatable: a large group of people who go from only seeing their differences to being unified by the Holy Spirit. It is this unity, within God and within the body of Christ, that drives our Easter season and should continue to drive our efforts to live out our roles as disciples in the world.

 Jesus’ “drawing” continues through *us* as we “abide in Him and bear the fruit” of His undying life and love to those in our neighborhood and community. Such work, of course, goes far beyond the fifty days of this season. But we go confident that the Risen Jesus accompanies and empowers us as we travel with Him in “the Galilees” to which He leads us.



Pastor Reshan will be taking some time off after Easter to recuperate after all the Lenten/Holy Week services. If a pastoral emergency arises, you may still reach him on his cell phone at 630-450-1894.

 Also, Pastor Pamela will be taking some vacation time beginning April 21. Therefore, please send all items for the May newsletter to her at splcgoodnews@gmail.com no later than April 15. She intends to get the newsletter out before she leaves for vacation.



**ORGANIST UPDATE**

 Last month, I mentioned a candidate for our organist/choir director position that had been recommended to me by Dr. George Karst from Trinity Episcopal Church. Since then, I have had several conversations with her and here is where things stand. It is a bit complicated so please bear with me.

 Her name is Mizue Fukushima. She is currently living in Tokyo. She has a Master’s Degree in Organ from the Liszt Academy in Budapest, Hungary. She is in the United States to apply for acceptance into a doctoral program in Organ at either the Yale School of Sacred Music or the University of Indiana, both of which have outstanding programs.

 She auditioned at the schools at the beginning of the month. She has been told that she will be notified if she has been accepted into their programs between April 1-3. But even if she is accepted into one or both, there are some challenges involved.

 Financially, she needs a full scholarship, and she is unsure whether either program will offer that to her. If not, she may not be able to afford to complete a 4-5 or so year course of study. She is also of an age where she is wondering whether she wants to commit that much time to get such a degree.

 She very much wants to move here to the United States; and is thinking that if she does not get accepted into either program, she would like to work in a congregation at least for a year to make some money. She is very interested in our position and seems to have made some contacts with people here and in the Chicago area. She does have a years’ worth of experience playing in a congregation when she was studying in Europe, but she has no choral conducting background. There is also a bit of a language barrier at times; but she is aware that whatever she does, she will need to improve her English.

 I invited her to play for our Palm Saturday service, which took place after my material was submitted to the newsletter; so I do not know how she did. During one of our conversations, I took her over to the church so she could see and play the organ; and she did play a piece for me that was beautifully done.

 At this point, we left things in this way: we will wait to hear whether she was accepted into either Yale or the University of Indiana and then see what she wants to do from there. If she is still interested in applying for our position, I will have her interview with our search committee and get their recommendation to Church Council. As far as the choir director part of the job is concerned, for now we will try to work something out with Maggie Martin to get the choir through the end of their season at the end of May.

 Hopefully, by next month’s edition, we will have a better grasp on how things look; and we can move forward from there. Thank you for your patience and understanding as we search for someone who will enrich our worship and bless our music program.



**HOPE CIRCLE**

Hope Circle at St. Paul is part of the Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (WELCA) and meet on the second Monday of each month at 1 p.m. at the church. We share and learn using the guidance of the lessons presented in the *Gather* magazine published by WELCA.

 Our annual project are the Sunshine Bags. We visit and honor the homebound of our congregation with small gifts and treats.

 We have also shown God’s love by participating in the ELCA Good Gifts program. It was wonderful that our Circle could donate money for goats, hens, and roosters for God’s Barnyard.

 We would love to have you join us! If you have any questions, please contact Susan Bagby at (219) 872-7126 or Diane Waltz at (219) 221-7643.



**POP MACHINE**

Please help us empty out our pop machine (just outside the kitchen in the church basement) so that we can buy new inventory! All pop is 75 cents, and proceeds go to Capital Improvement.



**EDITOR’S NOTE**

Right after I finished putting together the April newsletter, my desktop computer crashed (during Holy Week, of course). I think I have been able to recreate everything using my laptop; but if I have missed anything, please forgive me and let me know **by April 15** so that I can include it in the May *Good News.*



 As this is being written we are moving toward Palm Saturday/Sunday and the liturgies of Holy Week and Easter morning. Although there are two less services this year than in the past there is still an enormous amount of work that goes into preparing for all those worship services. Like the services around Christmas we just assume (and expect) that the worship space will be decorated beautifully; the music will be uplifting and inspiring; and that the services will run smoothly and flawlessly.

 All of that takes place because of the efforts of so many of our volunteers who selflessly give of their time, effort and energy to make our worship special. At the risk of overlooking someone here is a list of those who participated in preparations and our worship during Holy Week:

Deacons/Ushers Craig Hunt, Bob Kiser, Rich Fleming, Tim Crozier

Assisting Ministers Donna Knoll, Sarah Payne, Trish Sprague, Sue Koziel

Lectors for the Easter Vigil Donna Knoll, Trish Sprague, Susan Bagby, Jeff Timmrick

Lectors for Palm Saturday/Sunday/ Trish Sprague, Sue Koziel, Sarah Payne, Doug Kienitz,

Maundy Thursday/Good Friday Donna Knoll

Altar Guild All of the members, especially Judy Hunt, Judy Mutchler,

 Marge Bockover, Sandy Galinowski, Bernadette Krueger, Karen Steinborn, Norma Milzarek, Virginia Murray,

 Stacie Crozier

Video Paul Brooks, Mike Bockover

Musicians Dr. George Karst, Mizue Fukushima, Maggie Martin,

 John Carington, The Senior Choir

Flowers and decorations Sue Koziel, Karen Steinborn, Kerry Steinborn,

 Terry Wolter

Bulletins Libby Pollock

 As always, we owe them a huge debt of gratitude for all their faithful and hard work. Even if this edition arrives after Easter, please make sure that you thank these people when you see them for enriching our worship during the most holy time of the year.



 **MEMORIALS FOR EASTER PLANTS & FLOWERS**

In memory of her parents, Walter & Dorothy Liebig, and her husband, John Mauman, from Nancy Mauman and family.

In memory of her husband, Sonny (Henry) Robbins, from Sandy Robbins.

In memory of John Foldenauer from Laura (Gayle) Childers.

In memory of John Foldenauer and Christine Leslie from Carey Howard.

In memory of Paul Leffew from Gail Leffew.

In memory of Mom & Dad from Judy Mutchler.

In memory of my husband, Norman Egilske, from Diane Egilske.

In memory of loved ones from Janice White.

In memory of my husband, Lee Timm, from Sally Timm.

In memory of my husband, Joseph Koziel, and my parents, Roger & Lucille Storey, from

Sue Koziel.

In memory of our father, Ronald Johnson, from his daughters, the Johnson Women.

In memory of my wife, Carol, and our son, Donald, from Fred Weiss.

In memory of my loving parents, William Manning and Joyce Manning, from Bethany Manning.

In memory of loved ones from Marge & Mike Bockover.

In memory of my husband, Roger Milzarek, from Norma Milzarek.

In memory of loved ones from Virginia Murray.

In memory of Laurence and Norma Wolgast, Violetta Raschka, David Hapke and Katie Gill, Elizabeth Hapke, Ceann Smith, and Teri Raschka from Stephen & Lauretta Hapke.

In memory of Maxine and Clinton Powell from Gayle and Rev. Ralph Kuespert.

In honor of Tim & Stacie Crozier’s 35th wedding anniversary from Stacie Crozier.

In memory of loved ones from Chip & Audrey Claussen.

In memory of my husband, George. and my parents, Pearl & Jack Latham, from Donna Ottersen.



**JANUARY, 2024, SUMMARY OF ACTIONS**

* Pastor updated the Council on the search for an organist. His report also noted 1 funeral and 13 new members.
* Fred Hart and Lynn Nevils resigned their Council positions. The Council elected Judy Hunt to fill Fred’s term as Vice-President and Diane Waltz and Jean Kleinschmidt to fill the two open Council seats.
* Synod Assembly will be held June 7-9 in Louisville, Kentucky. St. Paul’s delegates will be Pastor Reshan, Janet Bakken, and Donna Knoll.

Please note that copies of Council meetings are placed in the Narthex after approval at the monthly meetings.

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**IN MEMORY OF BETTY YOURIST**

**Hope Circle** from JoAnn Kring

**IN MEMORY OF HUSBAND, ALLEN KRING**

**General Fund** from JoAnn Kring

**IN MEMORY OF PASTOR ALAN LORENTZEN**

**General Fund** from Clara Lorentzen, Mr. & Mrs. Larry Lorentzen,

friends and colleagues at First Source Bank



**April Birthdays April Anniversaries**

 1 Steve Baker 2 David & Nancy Zummak

 Marjory Bockover 8 Gary & Nan Larson

 Jana Thomas 16 Jacob & Monica Tannehill

 3 Sarah McNabb 22 Timothy & Stacie Crozier

 5 Connie Burgess 24 Stephen & Lauretta Hapke

 7 Kathryn Glanz

 10 Jeffrey Albertson

 13 Drew Robbins

 15 Richard T. Cains

 Nancy Hawkins

 16 Karen Kiser

 17 Megan VanGemeren

 19 Diane Sunde

 20 Jeffrey Furness

 Melania Roberson

 23 Jean Kleinschmidt

 25 Marie Protas

 26 Timothy Crozier

 Karen Fleming

 28 Virginia Murray

 Ryan Krueger

 29 Jason Howard

 30 Bill Wilson

 Sharon Hutchcraft

 Sheryl Lubke



**Long-Term Prayer List**

Laura Dovey Marla Furness Sue Granacki

Jayla Jacobi Jess Kalvaitis Christine Kiser

Bethany Manning Christian Martinez Virginia Murray

Shane Nevels Jan Paholski Kay Peglow

Joan Seifert Jary Tannehill Mark Tannehill

Kathy Thielman Jana Thomas Margie Torres

Venia Wendt Brian Wiseman



 Monday 8:00 a.m. – 5 p.m.

 Tuesday 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon

 Wednesday 8:00 a.m. – 5 p.m.

 Thursday 9:00 a.m. – 12 noon

 Friday 8:00 a.m. – 12 noon

**St. Paul Lutheran Church Staff**

 Pastor Rev. Mark Reshan

 Secretary Libby Pollock

 Accompanists Jary Tannehill, Mark Tannehill, Jacob Tannehill

 Custodian Mark Kloess

Thank$ for $haring

Thanks to all who participated in the give back at Holly’s in March. The church received $188 as a result of the event.

We invite you to join us for an lakeshore cruise on the Emita II on Tuesday, June 4. The cost is $35 per person with $10 of that going to the church (no coupon required). Children up to age three are free. The link for making a reservation is:

<https://app.bookingcentral.com/book/product/harborcountryadventures?location=5cb18b14-6f6a-46ba-a655-0d19a685fc47&product=21a85c71-60f2-4e91-ae49-75182f98bd2c&referer=&clearcart>

 For now, the day is blocked out on their main page, so the above link is the only way to book a reservation for this particular cruise. The cruise will be made public two to three weeks prior to the cruise date, so the earlier you make your reservation, the better.

This month,we will see you at Leed’s Public House on Wednesday, April 10! Here are two coupons: one for you and one for a friend.

 