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## Evidence that Demands a Verdict

<sup>3</sup>*I passed on to you what was most important and what had also been passed on to me.*

*Christ died for our sins, just as the Scriptures said.*

<sup>4</sup>*He was buried, and he was raised from the dead on the third day, just as the Scriptures said.*

<sup>5</sup>*He was seen by Peter and then by the Twelve.*

<sup>6</sup>*After that, he was seen by more than 500 of his followers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have died.*

<sup>7</sup>*Then he was seen by James and later by all the apostles.*

<sup>8</sup>*Last of all, as though I had been born at the wrong time, I also saw him.*

-1 Corinthians 15:3-8



Dear Fourth Avenue UMC Friends,

For 2000 years, the Christian Church has proclaimed that Jesus Christ was raised from death to life by the power of God. On this bedrock belief the gospel stands or falls. In our day, the resurrection is under attack by sceptics and cynics alike who criticize the claim as a mere legend, a myth, the fanciful creation of human beings needing a crutch in life and who cower under a crippling fear of death. How do we answer the critics and cynics? And how do we respond to our well-meaning friends and family who struggle to believe? As we approach the joyful festival of Easter, I want to arm you with the evidence of the truth of the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

The first word I want you to remember is **Execution**. For there to be a resurrection, there has to be a death. Jesus was surely dead. To be sure, the New Testament portrays the death of Jesus. But that is not all, so do at least three non-Christian historians around the time of Jesus, among them Josephus, Tacitus, and Thomas Arnold. Even the American Medical Association has written in a scientific journal that no person could ever survive a Roman crucifixion. And we have no historical document from the ancient world that cites a single crucifixion victim who ever survived this extreme torture. Jesus was dead. Period.

The second word I want you to remember is **Early**. The reports of the resurrection were essentially immediately after the crucifixion. Legends develop over hundreds of years, but the proclamation of Jesus' resurrection was being proclaimed from Easter Day onward. The early church developed a creed within months that is recorded for us by the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 15:3-8. To put this into perspective, scholars believe the



## Pastor's Page (Continued from page 1)

### Prayer Chain

If you need prayer for any reason, there is an active group in our congregation committed to praying for you.

Contact **Carole Evans** at 507-210-6971 or e-mail her at [caroleannjean@gmail.com](mailto:caroleannjean@gmail.com).

You are welcome to join the prayer chain. Just call Carole.

biographies of Alexander the Great are true. Yet, those works were written 400 years after Alexander the Great's death. But here, in Paul's letter written 22-25 years after the resurrection, we have cited a creed penned years before. As historical standards go, this early account is practically gold. The early accounts of the resurrection are solid.

The third word I want you to remember is *Empty*. Though each Gospel tells the story of Jesus' resurrection from a slightly different vantage point, they all speak of the empty tomb. The lifeless body of Jesus was buried in a tomb sealed with a mammoth heavy rock with well trained guards assigned to make sure there wasn't any funny business. But early on that Sunday, the heavy rock (3000-4000 pounds) was rolled away and Jesus's body was missing! The Romans practically conceded this fact by spreading the rumor that the disciples stole the body. But why or how would these disciples do that? All the Romans or the Jewish leaders would have had to do is produce the body of Jesus, but they could not do it. The only rational explanation for the empty grave is that Jesus was raised.

The fourth word I want you to remember is *Eyewitnesses*. The Risen Jesus appeared to many who believed. Scripture records Jesus appearance no fewer than 12 times. Those who saw him were women and men, skeptics, believers, and doubters. They touched him, ate with him, and talked with him. He appeared during the day and at night. One appearance happened to 500 people at once. Some skeptics suggest that these appearances were mere hallucinations, but any serious psychologist knows that such visions happen to individuals one at a time (like a dream) and not groups. Even the apostle Paul, once a great persecutor of the Church, saw the Risen Jesus and his life was changed 180 degrees! And having seen him, the once cowardly disciples became bold witnesses in the face of persecutions and threats of death and gave their lives literally to join the mission to proclaim the message. The witness of so many eyewitnesses is incontrovertible evidence.

Remember these key words: *Execution, Early, Empty, Eyewitnesses*. Each one tells a consistent story of evidence that brings you to one consistent, inescapable conclusion: Jesus Christ was raised from death to life. This is evidence that demands a verdict. And it is worthy of your life! So the next time you encounter a skeptic, a cynic, or a well-meaning person who struggles to believe, you have evidence to present. And when your doubts creep up, review the evidence for yourself. And because Jesus lives, you have an indestructible peace, a holy calling to fulfill, an astounding message to proclaim, and the robust hope of everlasting life.

For the truth of the resurrection, I am sincerely yours,

Pastor Greg Ciesluk

### Worship services online!

- [www.fourthaveumc.org](http://www.fourthaveumc.org)
- click on the "VIDEO" menu—
- OR on HOME page
- Scroll down right side - see options for the worship service. OR go to **YouTube** and search for 4th Avenue UMC to find several videos—choir, special music and entire worship services.

# Holy Week Schedule 2021



## **Holy Thursday**

**Thursday, April 1 at 7 pm**

*A Celebration of the Institution  
of the Last Supper and Holy Communion  
Dramatic Stripping of the Church*



## **Community Good Friday**

**Friday, April 2 available at 12 noon**

Find Faribault Community Good Friday 2021 on YouTube  
Public Television (FCTV) and KDHL 920 AM  
*The wider Faribault community gathers online  
to commemorate the death of our Lord Jesus Christ  
with the solemn reading of the Passion from John's Gospel,  
hymns, a brief meditation, and offering our prayers  
for the world and our community.*



## **Easter Sunday**

**Sunday, April 4 at 9 am**

*Message: "Evidence that Demands a Verdict"  
Joyful Songs of Praise and Holy Communion*

The virtual Community Good Friday Service will be available on YouTube beginning at 12 noon on Good Friday, April 2<sup>nd</sup>. Search YouTube @ Faribault Community Good Friday 2021 for the link. You may also view the service on that day on Faribault Community Public Television (FCTV), Spectrum/Charter 181/Consolidated 10, at 12 noon or listen on KDHL Radio 920 AM at 12 noon and 3 p.m.

**Jesus Came Back and So Will We!**

## Thank You

Marlin and I would like to thank all of you who have sent cards, letters, phone calls and prayers to us during our recovery from COVID 19. It has been a long road to recovery. Marlin is at Three Links Care Center in Northfield, MN room 246.

Thanks again to all of you.

**Marlin and Phyllis Wegner**

If you would like to send a card to Marlin, you can mail it to:

Marlin Wegner  
815 Forest Avenue  
Room 246  
Northfield, MN 55057



## Upcoming Events & Committee Meetings

### Worship

April 1—Maundy Thursday— 7:00 PM Service in Sanctuary

April 2—Good Friday Community Service at noon — Via YouTube, Public Television and KDHL

April 4—Easter Sunday — 9:00 AM Worship in Sanctuary

April 11—9:00 AM Worship in Sanctuary

April 18—9:00 AM Worship in Sanctuary

April 25—9:00 AM Worship in Sanctuary

### Events

April 2, 16 & 30—Girl Scouts 5:30 to 7:00 PM Fellowship Hall

April 7, 14, 21 & 28—Church Council & SPRC Joint Study 6:30 PM Parlor

April 8—Trustees 6:30 PM in Parlor

## The Joy of Living in Faith

### *A Testimony from Marcia Grundman*

Have you thought about joining a Bible Study group? Take my advice and join the next one offered at our church. This is my second class with Pastor Greg and I encourage you to take advantage of the next one offered. Our friendly group is now in the 5th week of the 6 week Growing Disciples series. This study focuses on the book Pray In Faith. We are developing a meaningful, well-balanced, and daily prayer life along with the skill of effectively praying with others. Our time together is full of easy conversation, shared experiences and genuine Christian fellowship. We do have a bit of pen to paper brain exercise. Let me share one of my assignments with you. We were asked to make a daily prayer request journal. To make mine easy to remember I took a spin off the jingle Taco Tuesday. Nothing like a simple rhythm to spark my memory. Here is my daily prayer request.

*Sunday My church family*  
*Monday Ministry to those in need*  
*Tuesday Two by Two. Animals and the Environment*  
*Wednesday Wedded Couples*  
*Thursday Thankful Heart*  
*Friday Forgiveness*  
*Saturday Spread the love of Jesus to others*



### **40 Days of Resurrection Faith**

Fresh on the heels of 40 Days of Prayer, we will enter 40 Days of Resurrection Faith. After Jesus was raised from death to life, he appeared to his many over the course of 40 days giving many convincing proofs that he was indeed alive. The resurrection of Jesus is the great game changer in our lives and it gives power to the Church. Our messages during the Easter season will be based on some of these post-resurrection appearances in the Gospels, the book of Acts and the writings of the Apostles. Through this concentrated season, we will develop resurrection faith. Here's to 40 Days of Resurrection Faith!

### **Scholarship Info—Bequest and Gift Committee**

More information concerning the application paper work and due date will be announced soon. Please check the next newsletter and our church web site. Thankyou.

Kirsten Strnad  
Bequest and Gift Chair

## APRIL MEMORY VERSE

During the forty days after he suffered and died, he appeared to the apostles from time to time, and he proved to them in many ways that he was actually alive.. And he talked to them about the Kingdom of God.

- Acts 1:3-4



### It's Time To Register For Camp!

Registration has started for the 2021 camping season! Check out the camp sessions at **Camp Minnesota** website and pick your favorite camp location: Northern Pines, Koronis Ministries, or Kowakan Adventures.

Registration and all information for the 2021 camping season will be digital and available on **camp@campminnesota.org**. With the potential for changes to schedules and events leading up to summer due to the coronavirus pandemic, the Dakotas and Minnesota Camp & Retreat Ministry team chose to forgo the traditional printed camp brochure this year. Instead, all camp listings and registration information are on the Camp Minnesota website where details will be updated quickly, and changes made in real-time. This ensures you will always have the most up-to-date information.

The early bird incentive, bring-a-friend discount, and camperships are all still available.

Space may be limited this season, so sign up soon!

There will be more information at the church office. Call Sue, or come in for further information. There will also be a flyer on the bulletin board at church.

Register by April 30th to receive the Early Bird Camp Store Credit of \$25 to be used during the time at camp. Bring-A-Friend Incentive is back in 2021! Each new camper you bring to camp you can earn a discount of \$25 off the price of your camp.

**Scholarship money IS available through Fourth Avenue's Memorial Fund.**

**Website: [camp@campminnesota.org](mailto:camp@campminnesota.org)**

# Ruth's House

In 2020, Ruth's House provided over 7,000 nights of safe shelter and supportive services for sixteen women and twenty-three children. 2020 was not an easy year for the shelter. We struggled with the challenges of operating a shelter during a world pandemic and ended the year with a kitchen fire on New Year's Eve. Despite the obstacles, we continued to provide much needed services to families in need with the assistance of our dedicated staff, generous donors and helpful volunteers.

\*Amelia\* shares her story –

*"I came to Ruth's House with five young children, and I was pregnant with my sixth child. I came jobless, with minimal supplies, and feeling hopeless. Ruth's House welcomed my family with open arms. They provided my family with clothing and personal hygiene items and set us up in our own private bedroom. Staff worked with my younger children to make sure they were meeting their developmental milestones as they had some learning disabilities. They connected me with local resources and helped me develop a plan for childcare as I looked for employment. Volunteers from Ruth's House provided childcare for me so I could attend AA meetings. Ruth's House helped me build within our community, connecting me with tools and resources to help my family succeed."*

Ruth's House continues to grow and serve women in our community with the opening of Sarah's House. Sarah's House is a safe sober living space designed to help women transition to healthy independent living. A caseworker helps residents set goals, locate resources, find employment, and develop coping skills. Sarah's House provides a structured step-down approach after in-patient treatment.

Thank you again for your ongoing support of the families living at Ruth's House and women living at Sarah's House.

Sandy Varley  
Outreach and Communications Coordinator

## **A Thank You From Jan Barbo:**

Pastor Greg,

On behalf of the residents of Faribault Senior Living I want to thank you for the Ash Wednesday Service you provided for them. Thanks to Doug for the music as well. Our residents felt blessed to be able to have God's word and communion. Once again, thank you.

Jan Barbo



Dear 4th Ave UMC,

Thank you so much for the invitation to worship and share about Ruth's House. Your Congregation was welcoming to me. We appreciate all your support!

With gratitude,

Suzanne Fox  
Ruth's House

## Memorials



Our sympathy to Karen and Dale Doehling and family on the death of Karen's aunt, **Loraine Doris Irene (Simonson) Erickson**. Loraine was born November 24, 1928 in Chippewa Falls Township and passed away February 5, 2021 at Bethesda Grand/CarrisHealth-Rice Hospice in Willmar, MN at the age of 92.

Loraine was a great cook and loved making huge meals for extended family and friends. She enjoyed family vacations, camping, fishing, playing Whist and caring for animals. Loraine was very active at First Lutheran Church in Alexandria where she was baptized, taught Sunday School, was married and raised her children.

Also, Loraine's son – David Lee Erickson (cousin to Karen Doehling) passed away December 15, 2020 at the age of 54.



Our sympathy to Sharon Sikkink and family on the death of her husband, **Elton Eugene Sikkink**. Elton was born January 7, 1938 in Harmony, MN and passed away on March 3, 2021 in Rochester, MN at the age of 83.

Elton's working years were filled with variety from farming, construction, working in a creamery, barber, school bus driver, hog farmer, and postal carrier. Elton and Sharon have kept in touch with many of the children (now adults) that were a part of Sharon's daycare. More recently Elton loved spending time

fishing and being at their Lake Mazaska cabin.

Fourth Avenue UMC has been blessed to have Elton and Sharon as part of our congregation during the summer months while they were at the lake and at other visits throughout the year. A private funeral service was held in Wykoff, MN.



Our sympathy to Pat's children: Jesse (Amanda) Armbruster, Jeremy (Samantha) Gehrke, Tony Gehrke and their families on the death of their mother. Also to Joe Purfeerst and family on the death of his wife, **Patricia Jean Armbruster Purfeerst**. Patricia was born on July 6, 1955 in Austin, MN and passed away on March 15, 2021 in Faribault, MN at the age of 65. Pat died peacefully at her home surrounded by her family.

Pat and Joe enjoyed their time together and made many trips throughout the world with family and friends. She loved reading, arts and crafts, fishing, cooking and baking treats for her family. She enjoyed gardening, taking photos, playing softball, pool and bowling. Spending time with her children and grandchildren was a blessing to Pat.

She earned her photo technology degree and her boiler's license. She enjoyed working at Twiehoff Gardens, volunteering at church, involvement with the American Red Cross and spending a month in the Florida Keys assisting with hurricane Katrina clean up efforts.

Pat was diagnosed and suffered with COPD since 2005. Joe and her youngest son, Tony, were her primary caregivers. A celebration of Pat's life will be held at a later date. In lieu of flowers and memorials, the family wishes for donations to be made to the Rice County Humane Society, Fourth Avenue United Methodist Church or Allina Hospice.

**Let the church office know if:**

You would like Pastor Greg to contact you.

You have an updated address, phone number or email address.

Call 507-334-4308



**APRIL Birthdays**

Lois Christen	03
Donald Kleeberger	03
Brad Prange	08
Donna Schuenke	08
Karen Hauptli	09
Bonnie Hammer	10
Richard Michel	15
Jean Vincent	15
Kathy DuChene	18
Steven Twiehoff	20
Brody Hatfield	30

*Happy Birthday*



**APRIL Anniversaries**

David & Kathy DuChene	07
Ronn Kotsmith & Donna Schuenke	13



**Students in the News**

**FARIBAUT SENIOR HIGH**

**A Honor Roll**

9th Grade

Landon Hatfield

10th Grade

Ella Prange

**B Honor Roll**

10th Grade

Comfort Sonpon

11th Grade

Aubrey Hatfield

**FARIBAUT MIDDLE SCHOOL**

**A Honor Roll**

8th Grade

Annabel Schiffer

**B Honor Roll**

8th Grade

Brody Hatfield

**CONGRATS EMERALDS**

Congratulations to the Emeralds Dance Line Team for taking 3rd place honors at the State High School Competition on March 13, 2021. We are very proud of Ella Prange for being one of these very talented young ladies.

Fourth Avenue United  
Methodist Church  
219 4th Ave NW  
Faribault, MN  
55021-5170



“RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED”

◆ Sunday Worship/9:00 AM

Website:

[www.fourthaveumc.org](http://www.fourthaveumc.org)

Like us on Facebook

Join us at 2:42 PM daily as we pray our church's Breakthrough Prayer.

## April 2021 Fourth Teller

### Community News

**The Society of St Vincent de Paul (SVdP)** is a nonprofit and all volunteer organization that operates a food shelf and free clothing store for local families in need. SVdP is participating in the 2021 Minnesota FoodShare March Campaign. All monetary donations received from March 1 thru April 11 will count toward a proportional match. Donations can be mailed to 617 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave NW, Faribault MN 55021. Volunteers are needed, call 507-334-2100. Your continued support is greatly appreciated.

**Rural Development** - the United States Department of Agriculture has a program offering loans and grants to low income families, providing the opportunity to repair homes, making them safe to live in, or to help purchase a home. You do not need to live on a farm to take part in this program. For more details or to see if you qualify, contact Jonathan at (507) 332-7418, ext. 119 or email him at [jonathan.sanford@usda.gov](mailto:jonathan.sanford@usda.gov)

More information is available on the bulletin board near the entry or from the church office.



**Pastor Greg Ciesluk**

Phone: 218-310-8813

[Pastorgreg.fourthaveumc@gmail.com](mailto:Pastorgreg.fourthaveumc@gmail.com)

**Contact for Church Office &  
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Sue Allen & Kathy DuChene

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Tuesday-Thursday

**Staff**

**Choir Director:** Kelly Landsverk

**Accompanist:** Doug Madow

**Nursery Attendant:** Kim Luedke

**Custodian:** Ken Harren

**Secretary:** Sue Allen