

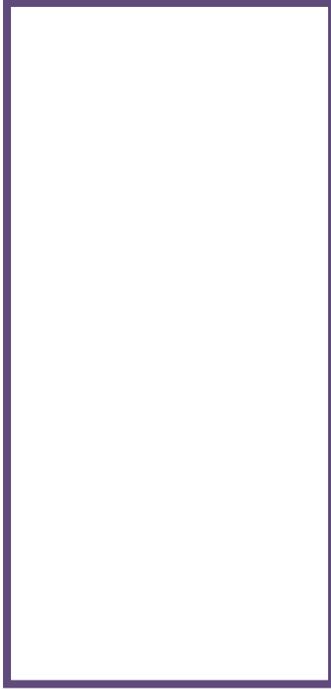
St. John Lutheran Church  
203 E. Church Street  
P.O. Box 36  
Royal, Illinois 61871

*Return Service Requested*

Josh Frerichs, Council President, Property,  
Bryce Frerichs, Council Vice-President, Hunger-Stewardship  
Debbie Ackerman, Council Secretary, Worship  
Tracy Britt, Council Treasurer, Hunger-Stewardship  
Mike Heidle, Worship  
Whitney Highfill, Parish Life/Evangelism  
Rick Aden, Property  
Melinda Huls, Parish Life/Evangelism  
Stacy Smith, Youth  
Laura Ketchum, Youth  
Sarah Wolken, S.S. Superintendent, Parish Ed  
Tracey Mathis, Assistant S.S. Superintendent, Parish Ed  
Church Office Secretaries:  
Valerie Birge, Tammy Olson,  
Custodian: Kathy Waller



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# ROYAL CHURCH NEWS

## St. John's Newsletter

*That all may know Christ and the power of his resurrection.*  
based on Philippians 3:10

# MARCH 2026



### St. John Lutheran Church

203 E. Church Street, P.O. Box 36  
Royal, Illinois 61871

**(217) 583-3295 or 583-3805**

*Emil Blobaum*, Visitation Pastor  
email: [churchoffice@stjohnroyal.org](mailto:churchoffice@stjohnroyal.org)  
church website: <https://stjohnroyal.org>

From Mike Heidle

### Keeping Scripture with Your Children (and you!)

Dear Friends in Christ,

Don't you just love seeing the children of St John's sitting on the steps in front of the altar learning about God's love during the Children's messages? ...and hearing them sing regularly? God's Word (and subsequently many church teachers, like Martin Luther) have a lot to say about parent's duty to teach their children about Jesus. Consider these verses:

***“Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.” - Deuteronomy 6:5-9***

Furthermore, listen to this amazing message from Luther:

*When children are old enough to begin grasping the concepts of faith, they should make a habit of bringing home verses of Scripture from church. They should recite these verses to their parents at mealtimes. Then they should write the verses down and put them in little pouches or pockets, just as they put pennies and other coins in a purse. Let the pouch of faith be a golden one. Verses about coming to faith, such as Psalm 51:5; John 1:29; Romans 4:25; and Romans 5:12, are like gold coins for that little pouch. Let the pouch of love be a silver one. The verses about doing good, such as Matthew 5:11; Matthew 25:40; Galatians 5:13; and Hebrews 12:6, are like silver coins for this pouch.*

*No one should think they are too smart for this game and look down on this kind of child's play. Christ had to become a man in order to train us. If we want to train children, then we must become children with them.*



### ONGOING PRAYER LIST

Dan Frerichs  
Sandie Osterbur  
Tammy Olson  
Mike Heidle  
Bryce Frerichs  
Kendra Manselle  
Belva Osterbur  
Betty Huls  
Ella Frerichs  
Chris Huls  
Anna Wentzloff  
Delmar Hadden  
Michelle Sjuts (*daughter in Law of Jan Sjuts*)  
Camille Wissmann  
Jennie Uken  
Chloe Birdsell (*friend of Hilary Whitt*)  
Ryan Gernentz (*son of Jim Gernentz*)  
Hannah Worley (*daughter of Doug & Miki Wesley*)  
Abby Lundquist (*friend of Ray Manselle*)  
Peyton McDonnaugh (*friend of Marsha Osterbur*)  
Hannah Nirider (*friend of Parker Poole*)  
Amy Dufelmeier (*sister of Hilary Whitt*)  
Aleyah Carley (*daughter of Teresa Thornton Carley*)  
Darrel Jacobs (*friend of Tracy Wahlfeldt*)  
Samantha Hutchinson (*cousin of Hilary Whitt*)  
Rhonda Miller, Jane Cress (*friend of Hilary Whitt*), Janey Huls (*sister of Susie Schleuter*)  
Lois Henderson, Mary Crider, Carol Doman (*friends of Ray and Kendra Manselle*)  
Stoney Wireman, Frank and Mary Kay Kimell, Kerry Blankenbegher (*friends of Gloria Grant*)  
**Family of:** Stanly Osterbur, Carol Gear (*mother of Karla Duitsman*)  
**Nursing Home, Assisted Living Residents:**  
Mary Lou Ackerman, Berniece Aden, Sharon Ault, Regina Gronewald, Betty Huls, Harold and Darlene Hovel, Janis Loschen, Dorene Pflugmacher, Myron Sage, Norma Sherfey  
**Homebound:** Dorothy Buhr, Eldred Cornelius, Marvin and Alice Duitsman, Florence Frerichs, Lois Frerichs, Marilyn Frerichs, Herb Thompsen  
**Our Members (80+):** Ray and Loretta Aden, Brenda Alsip, Erna Amerman, Carl Beard, Dale and Virginia Behrens, Emil and Carolyn Blobaum, Wilma Buhr, Billie Busboom, Chuck & Judy Carl, Marge Clingan, Ron Duitsman, Gloria Ehmen, Kay Fiscus, Carolyn Frerichs, Rita Frerichs, Barbara Fruhling, Bernice Fruhling-Cash, Janis Loschen, JoAnn Lynch, Betty Osterbur, Ella Osterbur, Gene Osterbur, June Osterbur, Kenny Osterbur, Marvin and Belva Osterbur, Rodney Osterbur, Sandie Osterbur, Denver Phelps, Linda Post, JoAnn Rademaker, Roxie Sage, Aleta Schlueter, John and Donna Thompsen, Judy White

## REFOCUS FOR LENT

Give up complaining – focus on gratitude.  
Give up harsh judgments – think kind thoughts.  
Give up worry – trust God to provide.  
Give up discouragement – be full of hope.  
Give up bitterness – turn to forgiveness.  
Give up hatred – return good for evil.  
Give up anger – be more patient.  
Give up pettiness – become mature.  
Give us jealousy – pray for trust.  
Give up gossiping – control your tongue.  
Give up sin – turn to virtue.  
Give up giving up – persevere.

- Author Unknown



*St. Patrick used the shamrock to teach people about the Godhead.*



*Holding up a shamrock, he challenged them,  
“Is this one leaf, or three?”*



*Inevitably, people replied that it was both,  
prompting St. Patrick to draw the analogy that so, too, is God:  
one God in three Persons—the Holy Trinity.*



### Council members for 2026

**Josh Frerichs, Council President**  
**Bryce Frerichs, Council Vice-President**  
**Debbie Ackerman, Council Secretary**  
**Tract Britt, Council Treasurer**  
**Mike Heidle, Council member**  
**Melinda Huls, Council member**  
**Whitney Highfill, Council member**  
**Rick Aden, Council member**  
**Laura Ketchum, Council member**  
**Stacy Smith, Council member**  
**Sarah Wolken, Sunday School Superintendent**  
**Tracey Mathis, Assistant Sunday School Sup**

from Mike (cont.)

*I wish this kind of child’s play was more widespread. In a short time, we would see an abundance of Christian people rich in Scripture and in the knowledge of God. They would make more of these pouches, and by using them, they would learn all of Scripture.*

*As it is now, people go to hear a sermon and leave again unchanged. They act like a sermon is only worth the time it takes to hear it. No one thinks about learning anything from it or remembering it. Some people listen to sermons for three or four years and still don’t learn enough to respond to a single question about faith. More than enough has been written in books, but not nearly enough has been driven into our hearts.*

(Faith Alone: A Daily Devotional from the writings of Martin Luther, compiled by James C. Galvin.)

Friends, think about the many opportunities we have to teach and discuss God’s Word and reflect on the sermons we hear: at the dinner table; walking/driving; while doing housework; while fishing (and other recreational activities; etc). Do any of us do this adequately? Probably not, but that’s not the point; God is **encouraging** us to strive to do more, to do better, to use more opportunities throughout our lives to teach our children about Jesus and to make significant growth in our own faith!

That’s certainly worth thinking about how we can do better and striving to keep God’s Word before our eyes and in our minds and hearts! Oh, and let’s start using “pouches of Scripture”!

God bless you and yours!

Mike Heidle (council member)



## EXPRESSIONS OF THANKS

*St. John Church Family,*

*Thank you so much for your prayers, support, calls and memorial gifts to honor Edwin's passing. A special thank you to Pastor Blobaum and all others that helped during the funeral. A special thank you to all the women that prepared the lunch.*

*Bless all of you,*

*The Rademaker Family*



Church Family,

Thank you to everyone who participated in the Youth Souper Bowl fundraiser! Whether you donated ingredients, prepared soup, or contributed financially, your generosity is truly appreciated. Thanks to your support, \$1,238 was raised to help fund our youth mission trip and activities. We are so grateful—thank you for supporting our youth!



### Birthday Celebrations in March

(members 80+ years):

Ella Osterbur celebrates her 97<sup>th</sup> birthday on the 27<sup>th</sup>.

*Remember all who celebrate March birthdays with greetings and in your prayers.*



### DESIGNATED BENEVOLENCE

During the month of **March**, the designated benevolence is for **Local Benevolences** to help those in need. **Lent offerings** are designated for NALC Seminaries. Please use the center portion of the offering envelopes for your gifts.



### 2026 LENTEN SEASON

Our Midweek Lenten services will be held **each Wednesday** evening at **7:00** with supper served in the church basement at **6:00** by our committees and council.

March Sunday services:

March 2<sup>nd</sup> – Mike Heidle

March 9<sup>th</sup> – Pastor Greg Smith

March 16<sup>th</sup> – Pastor Vic Baderschneider

March 23<sup>rd</sup> – Pastor Richard Lewis

March 30<sup>th</sup> – Wally Holt



During Lent the pulpit will be filled by:

March 4<sup>th</sup> - Pastor Greg Smith

March 11<sup>th</sup> – Josh Frerichs

March 18<sup>th</sup> – Pastor Greg Smith

March 25<sup>th</sup> – Ryan Sage



### Lent Dinner Menus for March

**Mar 4<sup>th</sup>** – Midweek Lent

Dinner: Council – Pizza, salad, desserts, and drinks

**Mar 11** – Midweek Lent

Dinner: Property – Chicken Noodle Soup, desserts, drinks

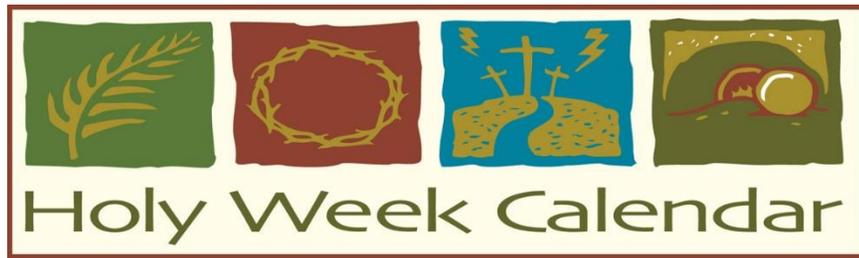
**Mar 18** – Midweek Lent

Dinner: Worship – BBQ, desserts, drinks

**Mar 25** – Midweek Lent

Dinner: Parish Ed – Nacho Bar, desserts, drinks



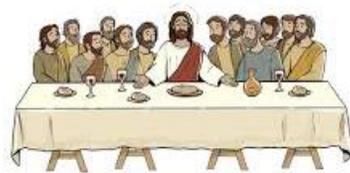


# Holy Week Calendar



**Palm Sunday** is March 29th.  
Worship begins at 9:45 a.m.  
with Procession of Palms.

**Maundy Thursday** is  
April 2<sup>nd</sup>.  
Worship with Holy Communion  
and altar stripping,  
begins at 7:00.



**Good Friday** is April 3<sup>rd</sup>.  
Worship begins at 7:00



**Easter Sunday** is April 5<sup>th</sup>.  
A Sunrise Worship begins at 6:30 a.m. with the  
procession of altar furnishings and Holy  
Communion, followed by breakfast.  
Easter Festival Worship with Holy Communion  
begins at 9:45 a.m.



“designated benevolence” (*continued*)

The Hunger – Stewardship Committee would like to highlight the organizations we are donating to with our monthly benevolences. For the month of March, the three Local Benevolences the committees have chosen to contribute to are: Empty Tomb, Restoration Urban Ministries, and Salt and Light. The following is information about what these organizations offer to the community. Please consider donating to help those in our communities.



**EMPTY TOMB**  
***Christian Health Services***

Christian Health Services work helps meet the health needs of financially poorer people by providing limited funds for medical needs, primarily prescriptions; also, layettes and other items are provided to needy families, generally the mothers.

***empty tomb® , inc.***

***Clothing Work***

Clothing can be dropped off, and then is sorted and made available free in Jesus’ name. Now accepting Fall-Winter clothes through March 15. Help is needed in sorting clothes and greeting people. Hours are Monday – Friday, 9 AM to 4:30 PM, and Saturdays, 9 AM to 1 PM. Closed on posted holidays.

***Free Food Work***

Congregations receive calls from empty tomb and then deliver groceries provided by the church to the family or individual in need. More congregations who are able to deliver food are needed.

***designated benevolence (cont.)***

***Furniture Work***

Donated furniture is picked up and delivered to households that have expressed a need in the Champaign, Urbana, and Savoy area. Volunteers are needed both to pick up and deliver the furniture in empty tomb’s furniture truck.

***Helping Work***

Helping Appointments: Mondays, 9 AM for up to 10 callers. Up to \$30 is available for various needs, such as rent, power bills, bus tokens, and automobile gasoline. Call (217) 356-2262. Helping Referrals: Agencies can refer a need for an individual for larger amounts. Funds available through donations.

“designated benevolence” (continued)



### **RESTORATION MINISTRIES**

Providing a loving and safe Christian environment for homeless or nearly homeless individuals and families

Our Transitional Housing Program provides restorative classes such as:

- \*GED (if needed)
- \*Financial management
- \*Employment counseling
- \*Parenting skills (if needed)
- \*Emotional healing and spiritual guidance

In addition, we freely provide for friends in the community.

- \*Food Pantry
- \*Clothing Room
- \*Men's/Women's groups
- \*Bible Study groups
- \*Substance Abuse Recovery groups
- \*Household goods and small appliances (as available from our donors)



### **SALT AND LIGHT**

At Salt & Light, we help community members gain access to food, clothing, and household goods, despite any financial obstacles. More importantly, we offer a COMMUNITY of people to empower, affirm, and encourage those we serve. As our Executive Director, Nathan Montgomery, says, "We don't want to make the condition of poverty more bearable for those suffering in it; we want to help them overcome it. We believe that people struggling with poverty are not projects. As a relational ministry, we invite you to partner with us by shopping in our stores, volunteering your time, and donating your goods and finances."

At Salt & Light, we help community members gain access to food, clothing, and household goods, in spite of financial obstacles. More importantly, we offer a COMMUNITY of people to empower, affirm, and encourage. Together, we are changing lives and transforming our community.



## **CHURCH OFFICE NEWS**



...**Church Office Hours** are Monday through Friday, **8:30 - 3:00**, lunch break typically between **12:00 - 1:00**.

...The **church office** second landline number **217-583-3805** has been changed to a **cell phone** and is able to **receive/send texts**, so please feel free to use this number if it is easier for you to send a message to the office.



... **The church email** is a really good way to get the office information. It is email: **churchoffice@stjohnroyal.org**

...**The deadline for the April Newsletter is Friday, March 13<sup>th</sup>.**



Information needs to be in the office by the deadline to be printed in the newsletter.



...**The office has been working on the church directory for 2026**, and it is printed. You can pick up your copy in the **Map Room**, at the church.

... **Have you ever had a chance to visit our church website?** If not, you should! It has some useful information! On the website you will find the monthly newsletter and calendar, ways to contact the church, pictures, and a cool video of church and the village of Royal. Check it out at: [stjohnroyal.org](http://stjohnroyal.org)



**March 11- Lenten Worship & Bible verse discussion**

**Blake Lackey**

Old Testament Verse- Psalm 32:8

*“I will instruct you and show you the way to go; with My eye on you, I will give counsel.”*

New Testament Verse- Matthew 21:22

*“If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer.”*

**Devin Loschen**

Old Testament Verse- Proverbs 22:6

*“Train a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it.”*

New Testament Verse- Matthew 6:21

*“For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”*

**March 18- Lenten Worship & Bible verse discussion**

**Blair Mathis**

Old Testament Verse- Psalms 40:3

*“He put a new song in my mouth, a hymn of praise to our God. Many will see and fear and put their trust in the Lord.”*

New Testament Verse- Mark 10:27

*“Looking at them, Jesus said, “With men it is impossible, but not with God, because all things are possible with God.”*



1. The council met on **Monday, January 26<sup>th</sup>**, at 7:00pm. Devotional and Prayer: Was given by Debbie Ackerman on Lamentations 3:22-23  
*“My compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.”*
2. Present: Josh Frerichs (President), Bryce Frerichs (Vice President) Debbie Ackerman (Secretary), Melinda Huls, Whitney Highfill, Mike Heidle, Tracy Britt (Treasure), Stacy Smith, Sarah Wolken, Laura Ketchum, Rick Aden.  
Guests: Keith Cunningham, Valerie Birge
3. Parish Ed – First Communion – will be held on March 1<sup>st</sup>. Parish Ed are opting out of summer Sunday school due to not enough attendance and finding teachers to help. They will schedule Service Events with different activities for the kids during the summer. VBS is scheduled for 7/6/26-7/10/2026.
4. Youth – Will have an Easter Egg Hunt on March 29<sup>th</sup>. They are needing candy donations.
5. The **February** council will meet on **Monday, February 23<sup>rd</sup>**, at 7:00 p.m. The **March** council meeting will be on **Monday, March 16<sup>th</sup>**, at 7:00 p.m.

**Student Pastor Hire Update:**

Council will be hosting informational discussion / Q&A sessions during coffee hour after worship on **Sundays, March 1** and **March 8**, to talk about moving forward with a one-year contract with Ryan Sage for pastoral services.

A congregational meeting will follow after worship on **Sunday, March 15**. Additional details will be shared prior to the meeting. If you have questions or would like to learn more, please plan to attend one of the information sessions.

## SOME OF “THIS AND THAT”

...Flock Group Shepherd for April is **Susie Schlueter**. She will be contacting her flock group for volunteers. *Thank you to all that volunteer!*



...The Flock Group Shepherd for May is **Shelley Brey Meyer** and June is **Judy Carl**.



...Monthly Women of St. John Bible Study will meet on the third Thursday afternoon of this month at 1:30 here in the church basement for study and fellowship. This month they will meet on **March 12<sup>th</sup>**. **Judy White** will host.



*Altar Flowers*

...**Altar Flowers** are provided each weekend by donations from members of the congregation. House of Flowers in Rantoul provides and delivers them. You can sign up on the chart posted on the north office door for one or both vases and indicate whether it's for a special occasion. **The cost per vase is \$20.00. Payment is to be made to the church and earmarked for flowers.**

...**Offering envelopes** for 2026 are still available to be picked up. **PLEASE, pick them up from the MAP ROOM.** If you cannot find your boxed set and would like to use the envelopes, please contact the church office. If your boxed set is there but you **do not use the envelopes**, also **contact the church office**, or leave your boxed set in the office with a note, “do not use”. **PLEASE throw away old envelopes!**



“Parish Ed / Youth News” (*continued*)

**BIBLE SCHOOL** will be Monday, July 6th through Friday, July 10th, with the program on Sunday, July 12th. There will be a meal followed by activities. The theme for **VBS 2026** will be **Rainforest Falls**. More information to come.



Lenten Confirmation Scripture Discussions – During the Lenten season, the 8th grade confirmation students invite the congregation to join them on Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m. in the church library for a brief, 20-minute discussion of their individual scripture verses. These conversations will help students better understand their verses and what they mean for their faith journey.

### March 4- Lenten Worship & Bible verse discussion

#### **Brady Ramm**

Old Testament Verse- Isaiah 30:21

*“Whether you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear this voice behind you: “This is the way. Walk in it.”*

New Testament Verse- Philippians 4:13

*“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.”*

#### **Lincoln Meier**

Old Testament Verse- Jeremiah 29:11

*“For I know the plans I have for you,” says the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”*

New Testament Verse- Philippians 4:13

*“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.”*

## PARISH ED / YOUTH NEWS

**Sunday School Kids** will be helping with greeting, and ushering during worship on Sunday, March 8<sup>th</sup>.



**First Communion Sunday** will be held on Sunday, March 1<sup>st</sup>. Please, keep these students and their families in your prayers.

**The Annual Easter Egg Hunt** will be held on Sunday, March 29<sup>th</sup>, during Sunday School. If you can donate candy, please, drop it off in the Sunday School office by March 22<sup>nd</sup>. It is greatly appreciated!



**There will not be Sunday School for the youth on April 5, Easter Sunday.**

### Cooking Class for Pre-K - Junior High Students

Students are invited to learn cooking skills from members of our congregation. Adults: If you are interested in teaching a no-bake recipe, please contact Sarah Wolken.



**Youth Sunday School will take a break this summer.** The last day of Sunday school will be Sunday, May 24<sup>th</sup>. Classes will start again on Rally Day, Sunday, September 13<sup>th</sup>.

**Mission Trip 2026** – Mission Trip 2026 – We will once again partner with Prince of Peace and travel to Wausau, WI, July 12–18. In a world filled with pressure from school, social media, and division, this year's theme, *Illuminate*, invites us to discover Jesus as the unstoppable Light (John 1:1–18). Join us this summer to grow in faith, build real community, and shine Jesus' brilliance in a world that needs it. Participants must be graduating 8th grade or older. Please contact Laura Ketchum for more information.



“this and that” (*continued*)



...**Education Trust Fund** is set up in the Multiple Funds account. Donations may be given to this fund through your offerings marked “Education Trust” (divided equally between the Gossett and Ramm families or you may give specifically to one family). These funds are used to help with their school fees, supplies and expenses.



...**If you are interested** in becoming a member of St. John, please, reach out to Pastor Emil Blobaum or let the church office know. We would love to have you!

...**The Fair-Trade** cabinet is stocked with coffee, English Breakfast tea, and milk chocolate bars! The price is as marked. All proceeds will go to Pay It Forward.



... **The water and pop** in the refrigerator in the kitchen are each \$1.00. **Please**, make sure that if you are getting one that you are paying. Thank you!



...**Memorials and gifts** to St. John Lutheran Cemetery may be given by cash, or checks made out to **St. John Lutheran Cemetery**, and given to **Ron Duitsman, John R. Thompson, or Chuck Carl**.



“this and that” (continued)



...There are **old cassette tapes and VCR recordings** that need to be disposed of. These recordings are from past years' sermons, funeral services, and programs. If you are interested in any of these recordings, please, let Josh Frerichs know.



...The **Call Committee** is asking for photos and videos from congregation members. Do you have photos or videos of St. John activities you are willing to share for St. John media? If so, please send them to **[StJohnRoyal61871@gmail.com](mailto:StJohnRoyal61871@gmail.com)**



...**St. Joseph Methodist Church Food Pantry** does not have any dates for the month of March. The **next dates** will be **April 2<sup>nd</sup> & 30<sup>th</sup>**.

...**Confirmation Reunion** will be held on Sunday, June 7<sup>th</sup>. The Confirmation Classes of **1951, 1976, and 2001** will be honored for celebrating their 75, 50, and 25 years anniversary. If you are in these classes **SAVE THE DATE** and plan to attend church service that Sunday and stay afterwards for cake and refreshments in the church basement. More information to follow.



... **An Easter Breakfast** will be held between the services on Easter morning. Congregation members are being asked to sign up to bring casseroles/pastries. Sign-up sheets will be placed out. More information to come. If you have any questions or would like to help, please contact Stacy Smith or Laura Ketchum.

