

## The Messenger

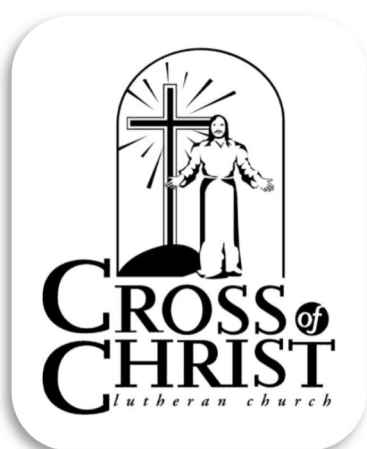
**Cross of Christ Lutheran Church**  
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**Paul Mueller, Pastor**



### **Worship Services**

Sunday: 10:00 AM

### **Communion**

1st, 3rd, and 5th Sundays

### **Bible Classes**

Sunday: 9:00 AM

Monday: 7:00 PM

Tuesday: 11:00 am & 1:15 PM

Thursday: 1:30 PM

Thursday: 7 PM

### **Men's Bible Class**

Second Saturday: 9:30 AM



## April 2023

### **KISSING AN IGUANA**

My brother Mark used to be an Emergency Medical Technician. It was his job to go out to people in distress and give them aid and/or bring them to the hospital. He's seen some scary wrecks and injuries in his lifetime. But sometimes, he sees something pretty comical.

There was the time when he was called to an apartment complex one summer day which was mainly inhabited by Hmong people. It was an address very close to where he used to live and he knew many residents there. The dispatcher said it was hard to understand, but that someone was at the bottom of the complex swimming pool.

When Mark got there, he was met by one of his former neighbors and his ten-year-old son. But instead of a person in trouble, an iguana was in need.

It seems this reptile was the boy's pet and was considered a complex pet and a good-luck charm. It had been frightened by a dog, ran up a tree over the pool, and then fallen in when the dog got too close. What was my brother to do, but try to give aid to the 'patient'. Mark strips down to his shorts, jumps in and grabs the iguana. Now what? What do you do with a drowning victim but apply CPR! Mark had done CPR on some pretty gross-looking people, but an iguana...



Are iguanas cute pets? I imagine if there was a beauty contest for animals, the iguana stood as much chance of winning as a 16 seed beating the 1 seed in March madness. Nevertheless, Mark decided to give the iguana mouth-to-mouth resuscitation and puckered up. AND, amazingly, it worked!

Now, imagine you're the iguana. A dog just chased you up a tree; you fell out of the tree into a swimming pool; then the next thing you see when you open your eyes is my ugly brother wrapping his lips around yours! A-A-A-G-G-H-H! Could your day get any worse?

There was a happy ending. Iggy recovered and Mark was a hero (just kidding about the ugly part brother.)

Guess what my friends? We're a lot like iguanas. Is there anything about us that should or would appeal to

God? Are we such beautiful people that God could overlook our sins? Are we so charming (mostly) that we get a free pass to Heaven? Surely not. But when we were drowning in our sin, Jesus dove in after us. He left the safety and glory of Heaven to come and rescue ugly iguanas like us. Satan chased

us up a spiritual tree. The strain was too much for us. We would have died forever. But Jesus saved us from our sin.

Eph. 2:1 reminds us **“You were dead in your transgressions and sins.”** We were spiritual corpses, unable to lift the tiniest pinkie to save ourselves. Jesus breathed life into us. He didn’t care how ugly our sins made us. He gave himself up for us.

There are several things we need to remember from this story. First, if you’re ever in Manitowoc, Wis. and see my brother, don’t let him get a big head over this. Second, recognize the ugliness of your sin. Third, remember that Jesus came to be your EMT. He sought you out and gave us new life through him. He’s seen thousands of horrible spiritual wrecks he could have ignored, but He didn’t. And lastly, **“Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved.”** Come celebrate Easter with us, my fellow iguanas.

## **SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT..... WHY DON'T YOU GO TO CHURCH?**

“Why don’t you go to church? The Barna Research Group asked that question to thousands of ‘unchurched’ people. Only 12% said they didn’t go because they didn’t believe in God or weren’t sure God exists. Which makes church attendance pointless for them. This, even though God made our world and gave us consciences as further evidence.

36% said they don’t go because church services are “usually boring.” 34% said church was “irrelevant to the way I live.” That first response is a strange one. How would you know it’s boring if you never go? The second, I wonder if they have not made church irrelevant because they have made it so in their own life. Isn’t this person really saying he/she decided not to let church influence the way he lives? People do that, and it’s too bad (they could probable use it), but that’s not churches’ fault.

48% said, “I don’t have time.” Again, that’s odd. Doesn’t each person choose how they spend their time? That really means, ‘I choose to spend my time at other places/activities.’

That’s the trouble with all these numbers. Researchers do these surveys to help churches attract more people. But when we analyze the data, surveys get us nowhere.

So that got me thinking. Rather than ask why some people don’t go to church, why not ask those who do go, why they attend?

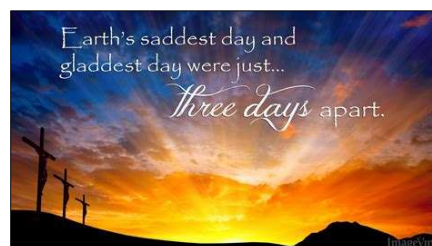
I can’t tell you how every church-goer would answer that question. But, I do know what God would—and did—say. Grab a Bible; open it around the middle; read Psalm 95. God’s people come to church to worship. That means to thank God for his blessings; to ask him to bless us and care for us; to seek a relationship with the One who made us. **“He is our God, and we are the people of his pasture, the flock under his care.”**

We come because, frankly, we can’t help ourselves. What God has done for us in Christ makes us want to **shout aloud to the Rock of our Salvation and Extol Him with music and song.”** Jesus’ death in our place and his rising to life assures us of forgiveness and eternal life.

We come to church because most of us would feel pretty silly doing these things at home alone in our living rooms. But singing God’s praises with other grateful Christians at church is the most natural thing in the world. We wouldn’t miss the opportunity to do it.

Not everyone feels that way. Many people find church very miss-able. But if you want an explanation for that—one that makes sense—don’t ask me. Don’t ask unchurched people either. That’s the lesson of the Barna survey.

Pastor Ken Cherney



### LWMS 2023 NATIONAL CONVENTION

The convention will be held at the  
**La Crosse Center**  
**300 Harborview Plaza**  
**La Crosse, WI.**  
**June 22 – 25, 2023**

The theme is "Peace Like a River." Please visit <http://www.lwms.org> for more information. While you are on the site, check out the [Trip Advisor's 15 Best Things to Do in La Crosse](#) and the [Frequently Asked Questions](#) page.



**LWMS GRAND CANYON  
CIRCUIT – WEST: Spring  
Rally: April 15, 2023**

Deer Valley Lutheran Church  
220 W Union Hills | Phoenix, AZ 85027  
Registration & light continental breakfast at 8:15 am  
Rally starts at 9:00 am  
The theme will be  
**"Hearts Ablaze, Sparked by the Spirit"**  
**2 Timothy 1:6 NIV**



Mission Mites for  
'Vicars in Mission Settings'

### Foundations of Faith

Pastor is leading these interesting classes where you can ask any questions you want about the Bible. He compares different churches so you can figure out which church is right for you. Nearly everyone who has taken this study series enjoyed it. These classes are a no pressure opportunity to deepen your faith and satisfy your curiosity. Classes are at either 1:15 PM Tuesday afternoon or Thursday evening at 7 PM.

## Holy Week Services

**Palm Sunday**, April 2<sup>nd</sup>, 10 AM

**Maundy Thursday**, April 6, 4 PM with  
Communion

**Good Friday**, April 7<sup>th</sup>, Service of Darkness, 7 PM

**Easter Sunday**, April 9<sup>th</sup>. 8 AM (outside) and  
10:00 AM (Sanctuary)

Everyone is invited to enjoy breakfast between  
Easter Sunday services.



### April Tidbits

- ❖ Pastor Mueller will be retiring this summer. Working with our synod, we called Pastor Silas Schmitzer to be our next Pastor. After a period of discernment, Pastor Schmitzer decided he would not be accepting our call. Our Call Committee is reviewing candidates and will be sure to share any information about a new call with us.
- ❖ We need a volunteer – male or female - to prepare our Sunday bulletins. Reach out to Pastor Paul, Julie Mueller, or Shari Bishop if you know how to use Microsoft Word and would like to serve in this important ministry.
- ❖ Construction of our new shed is nearly completed; however, there is still work to do. Our yard needs to be landscaped. Call Gene Bishop if you would like to help beautify our yard.
- ❖ We always need coffee (regular and decaf), powdered creamer, and paper towels for our fellowship meals. Your contributions are always appreciated.
- ❖ The Sunday meal schedule for April, May, and June is posted by the coffee counter in the Fellowship Hall. If you would like to help set-up or clean-up, contact Christine Hanson, Committee Chair or Trish Olson, Ladies, Circle President.



## Mark your Calendar

Our next semi-annual rummage sale will be Friday, May 12, and Saturday, May 13. It runs from 8:00 – 2:00 each day. We have a ton of stuff. Like they say, 'If we don't have it, you don't need it'. Donations are welcome. Drop donations off or call church at 757-3543 for details.

## Christian Humor



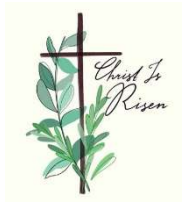
A Christian named Bill saw an ad online for a Christian horse, so he went to check it out. The horse's owner said, "It's easy to ride him. Just say 'Praise the Lord!' to make him go and 'Amen!' to make him stop."

Bill got on the horse and said, "Praise the Lord!" Sure enough, the horse started to walk. "Praise the Lord!" he said again, and the horse began to trot. "Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord!" he yelled, and the horse broke into a gallop.

Bill was enjoying his ride so much that he almost didn't notice the cliff he and the horse were about to go over. Bill shouted "AMEN!" at the top of his lungs, and the horse stopped right at the edge of the cliff. Relieved, Bill said, "Phew! Praise the Lord!"

- ☺ **Which nursery song would Jesus have heard the most?** "Mary Had a Little Lamb."
- ☺ **What is Easter Bunny's favorite kind of music?** "Hip-hop, of course!"
- ☺ **What is seen in the middle of March and April that can't be seen at the beginning or end of either month?** "The letter R."
- ☺ **How do you prevent a summer cold?** "Catch it in the winter!"





## LADIES CIRCLE

### Our Next Monthly Meeting

**When:** Saturday, April 8<sup>th</sup>

**Time:** 9:30 AM

**Place:** Education Building

**Devotion series:** **God is in the Laundry Room**

Monthly meetings are held on the 2nd Saturday of each month from September thru May.

All ladies of the congregation are invited to join in the fellowship, devotion topics, planning future activities, and the WELS Missions we support.

## ELECTION of LADIES CIRCLE OFFICERS

### ATTENTION! ATTENTION! ATTENTION!

It is time to nominate and elect Ladies Circle Executive Officers for the 2023-2024 Business Year.

Your participation in the nominating and voting process is very important! Submit your nomination for each of the executive positions: President, Secretary and Treasurer.

Ballots and a ballot collection box are in the Narthex. Talk to the person you would like to nominate to make sure she is interested in running for the position.

The final date to submit nomination ballots is Friday, April 7<sup>th</sup>. The elected officers will be announced during our May 13<sup>th</sup> monthly business meeting.

## ALTER FLOWERS

If you would like to provide fresh flowers on the altar for a Sunday service or special occasion, a sign-up sheet is in the Narthex.

## WOMEN'S SOCIAL GROUP

The new weekly women's afternoon social and fellowship group is postponed until Wednesday, June 7<sup>th</sup>. Contact Pat Toth with questions or ideas.

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY

### APRIL BIRTHDAYS

1 <sup>st</sup>	Vern Peglow
4 <sup>th</sup>	Bradley Wood
10 <sup>th</sup>	Susan McMillin
22 <sup>nd</sup>	Sarah Maczuga
27 <sup>th</sup>	Annette Peglow
30 <sup>th</sup>	Bob Boyd
30 <sup>th</sup>	Merissa Wood



17 <sup>th</sup>	Ken and Susan Henry
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### APRIL FELLOWSHIP MEALS

DAY	MAIN DISH
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Mexican
9 <sup>th</sup>	Breakfast (meat provided)
16 <sup>th</sup>	Casseroles
23 <sup>rd</sup>	German



### APRIL USHERS

Michael Coffin
Gene Bishop
Leo Galvan
Mark McCoy



# April 2023



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1
2 <b>Palm Sunday</b> 9:00 AM Bible Class & Sunday School 10:00 AM Communion Worship Service 11:15 AM Fellowship Meal 4 PM Choir	3	4 8:00 AM Workday 11:00 AM Bible Class	5	6 <b>Maundy Thursday</b> 4 PM Communion Worship Service	7 <b>Good Friday</b> 7 PM Service of Darkness	8 <b>Easter Saturday</b>
9 <b>Easter Sunday</b> 8:00 AM Worship Service (Back yard)) 9:00 AM Breakfast 10:00 AM Celebration Service (Sanctuary)	10 6:00 PM Council Mtg 7:00 PM Bible Class	11 8:00 AM Workday 11:00 AM Bible Class 1:15 PM Bible Class	12	13 1:30 PM Bible Class 7 PM Foundations in Faith	14	15 9:30 AM Men's Bible Breakfast 9:30 AM Ladies Circle Meeting
16 9:00 AM Bible Class & Sunday School 10:00 AM Communion Worship Service 11:15 AM Fellowship Meal	17 7:00 PM Bible Class	18 8:00 AM Workday 11:00 AM Bible Class 1:15 PM Bible Class 4:00 PM Choir	19	20 1:30 PM Bible Class 7 PM Foundations in Faith	21	22
23 9:00 AM Bible Class & Sunday School 10:00 AM Worship Service 11:15 AM Fellowship Meal	24 7:00 PM Bible Class	25 8:00 AM Workday 11:00 AM Bible Class 1:15 PM Bible Class 4:00 PM Choir	26	27 1:30 PM Bible Class 7 PM Foundations in Faith	28	29
30 9:00 AM Bible Class & Sunday School 10:00 AM Communion Worship Service 11:15 AM Fellowship Meal						