



Dear Friends in Christ,

As we journey through the Easter season, we are reminded of the transformative power of Christ's resurrection and the call to discipleship. Discipleship is not just a one-time commitment but a lifelong journey of faith, service, and growth in Christ.

We believe that we are saved by God's grace alone, through faith in Jesus Christ. As we reflect on this truth after Easter, we are called to live out our faith in response to God's abundant grace. Discipleship becomes a way of embodying God's grace in the world, extending love, forgiveness, and compassion to all.

Discipleship involves serving our neighbors and extending the love of Christ to all people. It urges us to consider our unique vocations and how we can use our gifts and talents to further God's kingdom. During lent this year we focused on midweek time on things like acts of service, advocating for justice, or caring for creation, discipleship involves living out our faith in tangible ways.

We emphasize the importance of community! We gather in worship, fellowship, and service to support and encourage one another on our discipleship journeys. After Easter is over is a great time for us to think about discipleship and how and who we might go and tell of the good news of the empty tomb. Who we might share the good news with of what God has done in our lives.

Together, as a community of believers in our congregation and the wider community, we bear witness to the love and mercy of God in the world.

If you have any pastoral care needs, please let me know. You can reach me by phone/ text at 419-215-8370 or email at pastorjacitiell@aol.com

In Christ,

Pastor Jaci Tiell



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The Values We Share...

Worship weekly.

Invite others to join us.

Embrace one another.

Keep on learning.

Give regularly and generously.

Be good stewards and willing servants.

April Gospel Readings...

April 7 John 20: 19-31

April 14 Luke 24: 36b-48

April 21 John 10: 11-18

April 28 John 15: 1-8



Happy Birthday to those having a birthday in April:

April Hille	4/5
Daryl Damschroder	4/10
Jill Damshroder	4/17
Robert Sondergeld	4/18
Donna Foss	4/23
Dee King	4/23
John Marik	4/23
Dawn Class	4/24
Willard Buhrow	4/27
Lisa Gerwin	4/28



Happy Anniversary to those celebrating in April:

Brad & Michelle Timbrook



Lenten Gifts for 2024...

The Witness & Mission Board has designated this year's Lenten Special Offerings to be dedicated to purchasing Hygiene Kits. These gifts are available through the ELCA Good Gifts program. Each kit provides sanitation supplies and education for households, schools, clinics and other public spaces. This is a very simple way to help conquer disease.

DEACON & LECTOR Sign-up...

The forms are on the Narthex table to sign-up for Deacons and Lectors for the next couple of months.. **Deacons** are needed for **April 14th & 21st**. Please check your schedules and sign the forms

Ruth Ann Anderson Memorial Service

Thank you to all the members of our Christian community who have extended their love, prayers, support, condolences and compassion during our time of loss. Our healing continues as we strive to replace our grief with memories and thankfulness for the gifts Ruth Ann's life gave to us and to so many. Ruth Ann's memorial service and celebration of life will take place at Grace Lutheran Church on Saturday, 20 April, with visitation beginning at 11:00 AM, the worship service, with communion, at 12:00 and a celebration of life and fellowship meal after the worship service. Pastor Jaci will officiate; Dan Boyle will be the organist for the service; Tony Packo's is catering the fellowship luncheon after the service. *Gary Anderson, Kirsten Georgi and Erik Anderson*

Thank You...

...from HopeWood Outdoors... Thank you for your support. This year thanks to your generosity, we served nearly 4,00 individuals. Your partnership enabled us to connect thousands of people to faith and nature in ways that bless our changing world. Research shows that people who experience camp are more likely to have a lasting faith that makes a positive impact on their communities. You can see the full calendar of summer, retreats, and events at www.hopewoodoutdoors.org.

...from ELCA Good Gifts Program... Thank you for your gift of \$650.00 to ELCA Good Gifts. Through your gifts to the ministries of the ELCA you share this amazing grace with others and help people around the world feel the transformational power of God's love. Your generosity provides access to clean water, health care, agriculture, livestock, education, and peace and justice. Through your gifts you are working toward a just world where all are fed.

...from Christy's Corner Cafe... On behalf of Engaging Opportunities Foundation, we would like to thank you for your generous contribution of \$760.00. Your generosity demonstrates the support our students and adults with disabilities receive to feel accepted and appreciated for all they do and can accomplish within our community and beyond.

...from Mission Cry... Thank you for your gift of \$400.00. Through your support we have been able to reach 179 countries with your donations of Bibles and Christian Literature. The Bible helps us learn who God is, how He saves us from sin, and what He wants from us. Your gifts and support have enabled endless possibilities for the less fortunate people of the world.

Deacons & Lectors for April

Sun. April 7	Jean Weng/Becca Rickman	Mary Schlievert
Sun. April 14		Mary Lou Kohli
Sun. April 21		Jean Weng
Sun. April 28	Bruce King/Pr. Wietelamnn	Rachel Beeler

OPERATION OREO NEEDS YOUR HELP

Our Operation Oreo fund has run out of money. If you are interested in supporting this great ministry – please mark “Op Oreo” on the memo line of your check. Shipping price for one ‘flat rate’ goody box has gone up in price again – price is now \$18.40 per box. Cash donations will help with shipping costs along with the contents of the goody boxes. We currently have 5 military members on our roster.

Operation Oreo sends packages & cards to military personnel. During the odd months we send a hand written letter/card. During the even months we send a goody box with Oreos and various snack & toiletry items.

Please keep all of the military in your prayers, but especially: **SGT Stephen Simkus**, U.S. Army Special Forces; **Cadet Julian Sanchez**, U.S. Military Academy; **2LT Eli Gerkensmeyer**, U.S. Air Force, **SGT Ted Orzanski**, U.S. Marine Corps and **MA2 Esteban (Donovan) Reyes**.

If you have a name to add to our list or if you have any questions about Operation Oreo, please contact Jennifer Marquardt

***God Bless Our
Soldiers***

Exciting Announcement!



We will be hosting a Community Concert in our sanctuary on **Sunday, April 7 at 4 p.m!** A Gospel Trio called “*Avenue*” will be traveling here from Nashville, Tennessee to perform for our community. We will be offering a light dinner after the concert, and we'd love your help! Instead of preparing a

dish for a potluck, we would like to suggest that you make a donation to the **Dinner Fund**. We will do the cooking for you! If you have any questions, please see Karen Hammel. Thank you for your support!
Board of Congregational Life.

Prayer List Changes...

Beginning in APRIL, the prayer list that is printed in the bulletin will be cleared at the start of each month. This means that names will not automatically stay on the prayer list month after month. If you would like a name to stay on the prayer list for the next month, you must contact the church office by text or email at GraceELC@gmail.com by the 25th of the current month. New names may be added during a month by contacting the church office or Pastor Jaci. Pastor Jaci will also ask for prayer requests each Sunday during the announcements. This change was made at the council meeting on March 21st. Please see Mary Schlievert if you have questions.

Attn Ladies of Grace...

Bethlehem (Pemberville) and Hope Lutheran Churches are sponsoring a gathering for the Women of the North Central Conference of ELCA Synod, on Saturday, April 27th from 8:30 to 12:00 in Pemberville. This year's theme is “Be The Light”. Guests: Chris Budke - Bible Study Leader, Sonfire by the River Praise Band, and NAMI of Wood County staff for QPR Training. The registration cost is \$10.00 Check in: 8-30– 9:00. Breakfast will be provided. Registrations must be in by April 15th. Check the bulletin board in the Fellowship Hallway for a registration form. Registration can also be done with the QR code on the flyer

SENSORY SENSITIVE SERVICE:

A Sensory Sensitive Services at Trinity Lutheran, Elmore to celebrate the Resurrection of our Lord will be held Monday, April 25 beginning at 7:00 PM. The service is primarily spoken, however, hymns are sung acapella. Everyone is welcome to attend but are asked not to wear perfume or cologne as well as refrain from bringing any food, drink or chewing gum. If you know anyone who would benefit from this service, please invite them.

A FOCOS on Coaching

Once a year we enroll a group of new participants in the FOCOS (Foundation Coaching Skills) Training. The training mostly takes place virtually over the course of 9 months, but during it there is a 1 week, in-person intensive training. It is my (Zina) second year to help with training with FOCOS but my first time to be at the in-person week in Romania. We had 15 participants from Belarus, Romania, US, and Moldova and among them there were also 3 non-believers. I had already coached 2 of the participants for 3 months, so I was glad to meet them in person during this week, and here is what they had to say:

“Coaching has helped me in two big ways, first, giving me tools to communicate with people. Since I started, I have been applying my skills in communication with my family, church, and volunteers. It has lifted my communication to a higher level. It has made a tremendous change in how I approach people, and it really helps me to see people as God sees them, and to listen to people how God listens us. And secondly, it’s a great opportunity to influence people. When I offer a coaching session, people are much more open to partner with me.”

- Liuba, mom of 4, Cru staff from Moldova

“Coaching brings up a lot of awareness about yourself, and you bring out the best in the other people by helping them establish objectives, or giving them constructive feedback. I have seen how it helps us both to develop and it has been very useful. I can see improvement with my family too, because I can give feedback that actually helps them, and so I have noticed I have a better relationship with my family now.”

- Ioana, business owner, Romania

Vision Board Meeting for Women

In February, I organized a little event for the women at church and some of my friends to create our own vision boards. I have done this for myself every year and this year I wanted to invite others to join me & encourage each other in being intentional and sharing our dreams and goals. I had two moms & their daughters come, and two other friends. It was so life-giving to see how excited they were to create a visual board of their desires, goals, and dreams. Everyone had something on their board about growing in prayer, reading the Bible, or developing a hobby that they wanted to do for so long. My non-believer friend Erika said “I am very busy but I still want to make space for God.” My other friend, Neža, who is a believer that I had studied the Bible with a few years ago, expressed interest in coming to our “MyFriends training” we will have in March.

Please pray for our My Friends training at the end of March! We are hoping to have people join us from across Slovenia who desire to both walk more closely with the Lord, and help the people around them know Him as well. We are very excited for it, please pray that God would make a way for everyone to come, that He would protect them from the schemes of the enemy, and that He would help them to see great fruit in their own lives.

Sent with love from *Jay & Zina* thank you for your partnership in God’s work in Slovenia!

A BIBLE STUDY ABOUT JESUS' RESURRECTION

About this Month's Bible Study. Last month's Bible Study used a crucifixion image from the 16th century Isenheim Altar to help us understand how Jesus and those closest to him suffered during Jesus' crucifixion. That image is visible when the Altar is closed. This month's Bible study considers an image on the Altar when it is opened. The Altar's second opening displays images of the Annunciation, Concert of the Angels, the Virgin and Child, and Jesus' Resurrection. For this month after Easter, we will use the Altar's remarkable image of Jesus' Resurrection to explore this central event in our Christian faith that we have just celebrated as last month ended.



John 20:11-17 (translation by Father Raymond E. Brown, S.S.)

¹¹Meanwhile, Mary (Magdalene) was standing (outside) by the tomb, weeping. Even as she wept, she bent down to look into the tomb ¹²and saw two angels in white, one seated at the head and the other at the foot of the place where Jesus' body had lain. ¹³"Woman," they asked her, "why are you crying?" She told them, "Because they took my Lord away and I do not know where they put him." ¹⁴She had just said this when she turned around and caught sight of Jesus standing there. She did not realize, however, that it was Jesus. ¹⁵"Woman," he asked her, "why are you crying? Who is it you are looking for?" Thinking that he was the gardener, she said, "Sir, if you are the one who has carried him off, tell me where you have put him, and I will take him away." ¹⁶Jesus said to her, "**Mary!**" She turned to him and cried out (in Hebrew), "Rabboni!" (which means "Teacher"). ¹⁷Jesus said, "**Do not cling to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and tell them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God!'**" ¹⁸Mary Magdalene went to the disciples. "I have seen the Lord!" she announced, reporting what he had said to her.

This dialogue is the Apostle John's record of humankind's first encounter with the resurrected Jesus. Mary Magdalene's words about this seminal event, "**I have seen the Lord,**" confessed that Jesus, who "was crucified, died, and was buried" (Apostles Creed), is "**risen indeed**" (Luke 24:34). Mary was the first person to see proof that God had conquered sin and death.



The Isenheim Altarpiece with its second display opening

What this dialogue says about the resurrected Jesus is fascinating. Perhaps it also tells us something about the form of resurrection reality. When Mary first saw Jesus standing beside the empty tomb, "**she did not realize that it was Jesus.**" Remember how the two men who walked together with a stranger on the road to Emmaus after Jesus' crucifixion, also did not recognize that this stranger was Jesus until "**they were at table...he took the bread...and gave it to them and their eyes were opened**" (Luke 24:30).

(Bible Study continued)



Matthias Grünewald's 16th century image of the resurrected Jesus is an artist's rendition of the resurrected Lord that helps us visualize what Mary Magdalene might have seen on Easter morning.

This scripture tells us how Mary only recognized Jesus when he called "**Mary**" by her name in the same way that Jesus' good shepherd "**calls his own sheep by name**" (John 10:3). After Mary recognized Jesus, he instructed her to not embrace him. This says that "*the risen Jesus had undergone a change from the Jesus of the ministry...that (his) body is changed so that it is no longer physical but spiritual.*"^{*}

The fact that the Biblical accounts of Jesus' post-resurrection appearances provide few details about the resurrected Jesus has, over the centuries since, allowed artists to interpret the resurrection in different ways. Grünewald's interpretation of the resurrection on the Isenheim Altar fits well with what the Apostle John reported that Mary Magdalene had seen on that Easter morning. In the Altar painting, Jesus' whole body has become light. That reminds us of Jesus' "**dazzling white**" appearance during the transfiguration (Mark 9:3). Indeed, the artist seems to have created a visual union of the mysteries of the transfiguration, the resurrection, and the ascension.

Jesus' physical appearance in this painting is different. Except for the visible scars from the crucifixion nails and the piercing wound on his side, the marks of torture are gone. His arms are extended out as he rises upward in ascension while his burial shroud trails behind him. Mary Magdalene's eyewitness account and Grünewald's portrayal of the resurrection tell us that "**Christ is risen indeed,**" and that the resurrected Jesus embodies the "**new creation**" that we read about in the Book of Revelation.

Mary Magdalene's dialogue with the resurrected Jesus leaves us with two additional lessons. When Jesus called "**Mary,**" by her name, she did not, however, call Jesus by his name. She called him "**Rabboni,**" **my Teacher**. Mary's recognition of Jesus as her Teacher was a call for her and for us to learn and live the teachings of Jesus in our lives as well.

Jesus' instruction to Mary Magdalene, "**go to my brothers and tell them**" was a command not just for Mary, but for Christians everywhere. Mary responded by going to others to tell them, "**I have seen the Lord!**" This becomes a call for Christians who have seen the living Lord's redeeming work in their lives to also tell others, "**I have seen the Lord!**"

^{*}Brown, Raymond E., *The Gospel According to John XIII-XXI*, p. 1009.

April 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
 <p><i>The Gospel Trio "Avenue" from Nashville will be in concert here at Grace April 7th at 4:00pm with a light lunch to follow.</i></p> <p>www.shutterstock.com · 1659822598</p>						
	1 	2 6:00pm– Choir	3	4	5	6
7 9:30am– Property Board Meeting 9:30 am Sunday School 10:30am Worship 4:00pm– Avenue Trio Concert	8	9 6:00pm– Choir 7:00pm - Worship Board	10 10:00am– Witness & Mission Meeting	11 7:00pm– Council Conference Room	12 9:00 - Noon FOOD PANTRY	13
14 9:30 am Sunday School 10:30am Worship Temple Talk - Liberty Center Margaret Weisz	15	16 6:00pm– Choir 7:00pm - Congregational Life	17	18	19	20 Ruth Ann Anderson Celebration of Life 11:00am
21 9:30 am Sunday School 10:30am Worship Clyde Bame - preaching	22 	23 DEADLINE for PARISH REPORTER 6:00pm– Choir	24	25	26 April's Food Pantry Item toilet paper, any size package	27 
28 9:30 am Sunday School 10:30am Worship	29	30 6:00pm– Choir				