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# April Newsletter

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8:30AM ADULT  
SUNDAY SCHOOL  
9:30AM WORSHIP



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
*Living in God's amazing grace*

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## Comments and Reflections

Several days ago as I sat decorating Easter bunnies for the cafe, I wondered what do Easter bunnies have to do with Jesus? They are so much fun and we tend to be serious and reflective during Lent. So being a woman of the electronic age, I said to myself...."I need to Google that". I am sure someone has researched and written a deeply religious piece about the connection.

I remembered that eggs are a symbol of Jesus' resurrection and new life. I found lots of information about eggs and fertility. Of course, baby chicks goes along with that same symbolism. And lambs fits right in with other small animals, as Jesus is the leader who sacrificed himself for his flock. The fish as an Easter symbol was a new idea. After Jesus' death and resurrection, he appeared to the disciples while they were fishing and then feeds them fish. Maybe I should be making Easter fish.

But now back to the bunny. I did find that many of these symbolic animals including the bunny (hare) have pagan roots...interesting. I also found that the hare was a symbol of abundant life as well as a symbol for death and rebirth. Thus, rabbits were put on tombstones representing fertility, life, death and rebirth. I found in more recent times that stories of egg-laying bunnies was brought to the US by German immigrants to Pennsylvania (eggs & bunnies –double symbolism). Part of the German tradition was for children to build a nest for the bunny to lay her eggs in. So now we are getting the Easter symbols we see today.... straw, bunnies, chicks, and lambs.

But the connection I like best is that the fertile bunny represented the church and her ability to produce lots of new disciples. So the Easter bunny isn't just another cute marketing trick. I will be making Easter bunny cookies every day until Easter but now I will be seeing a new disciple in each one.

Happy Easter to all you bunnies,

Phyllis Rieser

Church Council President

P.S. I also found that a new clothes at Easter is a symbol for rebirth. I'm using that one as related to my most recent shopping trip. Sorry Ed, it's a religious thing.



## Highlights from March Council Meeting

Pastor Ryan is working with Baptist and Methodist pastors to plan the ecumenical Palm Sunday Service.

Deacons will prepare Easter baskets for the Engers.

Flyers will be distributed at Palm Sunday advertising the Youth Breakfast following sunrise services at the Rock Church.

Community Vacation Bible School has been set for the week of June 25<sup>th</sup>. St. Olaf is in charge this year. Day Camp has been set for second week in July.

Trees donated in memory of Donald Tergerson have been planted at the Rock Church and watered on a regular basis until irrigation system has been installed. Donation also covered the cost of the irrigation system.

New contract for our printer was approved at same cost as we are presently paying.

The meeting at Norse with Bosque County churches was discussed. At this point, we will find ways to work together. There is an interest in joint youth activities. Faith indicated that they need help with their annual fish fry on May 19<sup>th</sup> as it was cancelled last year. I indicated that we could use some volunteers for our Community Breakfast. Our Saviors could use some help with Smorgasbord and Trinity needs volunteers for their living nativity in December. All those attending agreed to support each other activities. It was also reported that Alan Amundson (Norse) came to volunteer this past Saturday at the Community breakfast.

The newsletter was discussed. Our mailing list needs to be reviewed with hope of either using email or regular US mail instead of bulk mail, which slows down delivery. We also discussed family highlight stories and the need to make the newsletter more interesting.

### Kids' Kloset

Just a reminder that St. Olaf continues to provide a source of clothing for kids at the school once a month on the second Wednesday of each month. If you have grandchildren or know others whose children have outgrown clothes they would like to donate, we would be happy to receive. Elementary age children or younger are most appreciated. We are unable to take adult clothes. Slightly worn shoes and toys are also appreciated. Bags of items may be left in the Sunday School Building or call 254-597-2453, if the door is locked. We appreciate the generous contributions that have been made during the past five years we have been providing clothes for Kids.

### **Newsletter update:**

The bulk mail process is not working for the newsletter as the postal system is sending our mailing to Ft. Worth before distributing to our recipients. It currently takes over a week to deliver from the time we drop our mailing. At the most recent council meeting, we decided to send paper newsletters via first class mail while delivering most newsletters by email. This would significantly cut the cost for our newsletter

We realize that everyone does not use email to communicate. If you want to receive the newsletter in paper form only, please leave a phone message with Angela at the church office.

We hope this change will insure that you receive your newsletter in a more timely manner.

Thank you,  
Phyllis

## Miracles Among Us

By Jami Edwards



Just over seven years ago was one the scariest times in my life. I had given birth to a baby at 25 weeks one day. He was the smallest thing I have ever seen. He was 13 inches long and only weighed 1 lb 11.4 oz (775 grams). As I looked at him lying in the incubator with his chest vibrating so quickly, I did not know what to feel; or maybe I just could not feel at all.

Over the next few weeks, many emotions came over me. I was mad at myself for not getting to the doctor sooner to stop the labor. I felt sorry for myself for not getting to "enjoy" the last 15 weeks of pregnancy. I felt guilty for spending time at the NICU away from my older kids. I was nervous about missing so much work to make sure I saw Cade every day.

As the weeks passed, I realized those feelings were not necessary. I needed to focus on the positive aspects of our journey. I was able to witness firsthand God working a miracle through *my* child. I was able to see the miracle unfold before my eyes instead of just knowing it was happening in my body; so did Rudy. Rudy and I bonded on a level I did not even know existed. I gained friendships with the staff and other parents through my NICU experience that I will forever treasure. I have also become a stronger woman/mom because of my 107 days without my baby at home.

I would not wish the experience on my worst enemy, but I also would not change a single day of it. I think that in the craziness of life, we sometimes forget to notice the miracles that happen every day. I am thankful for the reminder that blessed our family 7 years ago. I am so grateful for all the blessings God has given me. Especially the one who is as stubborn (or more) now as he was those first few months.

We serve an Amazing God!





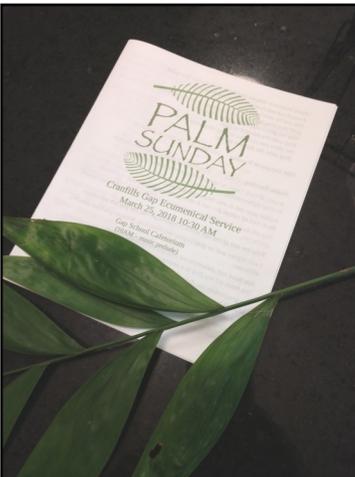
## ROCK CHURCH CEMETERY

14<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL MEETING

SATURDAY, APRIL 7, 2018

11 A M

St Olaf Lutheran Rock Church Cemetery will hold the 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Cemetery Meeting at 11 a.m. on Saturday, April 7<sup>th</sup> 2018 at the Rock Church Gathering Place. Everyone is invited to attend and meet the cemetery board members, Kenneth Wiese, Terry Finstad and Geneva Finstad, for a financial update, and to discuss ideas regarding ways to improve our cemetery. Your comments and suggestions are welcome. For more information contact any member of the cemetery board or call 254-597-2453.



# Mary, Martha, & Ruth

**M**ary Circle: Will meet April 11,  
Heckmann Hall at 2:00pm

**R**uth Circle: Will meet April 12,  
Katherine's House at 2:00pm



## Mothers, Daughters, and Friends



The next WELCA meeting will be the Mothers, Daughters, and Friends Pot-Luck Dinner and Program on Friday, May 4 at 6:30pm in the church basement.

## Ruth Circle

Ruth Circle met at Katherine's House on an almost-Spring day with six present. We missed Anna Fortier and hope she is recovering, and as she said, will have her "get-up-and-go" back soon!

Our group discussed several business items, and talked of memories of our long-time member, Mary Ann Stokely. Mary gave a great lesson on a new session of multiple meanings of being a good Samaritan, with lots of interaction from the group. Wanda always puts forth delicious and homemade goodies – too good! In April, Naomi will give the lesson, and Betty T will be hostess.

**PRAYER LIST:** Heather Christensen, Margret Turpin, Brady Warrick, Kathy Johnston, Ronnie Ogle, Cooper Brown, Martha & Helena McCormick, Dacey Patrick, Josh Wilhelm, Raymond Bailes, Chris Lujan, Larry Barger, Charles Osborn, Daniel Smith, Makayla Pierce, Rev. C. A. Mangham, Tom Pierce, Nikki Stone, Tracy Finstad, Henrietta Medina, Jamie Dittrich, Donna Boelter, Bob Bowers, Don Hoffman, Lark Rayburn, and **The Lutheran Church Sierra Leone, Persecuted Christians**

**SERVICE MEN AND WOMEN:** Matthew Medina, Justin Barnes, Kevin Moore, Michael Crackhome, Alex Saborsky, Kirk Luedeke, Daniel Ramirez.

## WELCA News

Our Spring gathering of the WELCA will be held at First Lutheran in Temple on Sat., April 14.

## Mary Circle News

The Mary Bible Study was held on March 14 at 2:00 at Heckman Hall and was led by Maranna. Attending the meeting were Elaine, Lucy, Elsie, Patricia, Charlene and Barbara.

"Multiple Meanings" is the third part of the series we are studying. It concerns the Good Samaritan and how it is seen by different people. It was enlightening, a good discussion.

Refreshments were served and fellowship continued.

Our circle collected funds of \$190.88 toward Lutheran World Relief which will purchase blankets to be sent the first part of April. The next meeting will be April 11, and study will be led by Elsie about the Prodigal Son. It is the last lesson in this series.

Offering amounted to \$70.00

Remember our Spring gathering of the WELCA will be held at First Lutheran in Temple on Saturday, April 14.

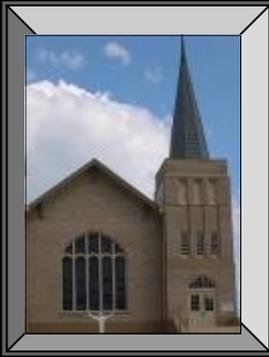
Financial Report	Receipts	Disbursements	Net
Budget through Feb 28, 2018	\$ 13,501.67	\$ 13,500.00	\$ 1.67
Actual through Feb 28, 2018	11,425.48	11,369.93	55.55



# April 2018

Assisting Minister: Teresa Christensen  
 Head Usher: Virgil Tindall  
 Altar Guild: Darla Kinney & Paula Perschke

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 - Sunrise Service, 7am (Rock Church); Youth Breakfast; Regular service, 9:30am; Easter Egg Hunt	2	3	4	5	6	7 Rock Church Cemetery Meeting, Gathering Place, 11am
8 Adult & Children's SS, 8:30am Worship, 9:30am	9	10	11 Mary Circle, Heckmann Hall, 2pm; Kids Kismet at Gap School, 2pm	12 Ruth Circle, Katherine's House, 2pm	13	14 WELCA Spring Gathering, First Lutheran, Temple
15 Adult & Children's SS, 8:30am Worship, 9:30am	16	17	18	19	20	21 Community Breakfast 8:00-9:30am
22 Adult & Children's SS, 8:30am Worship, 9:30am	23	24	25	26	27	28
29 Adult & Children's SS, 8:30am Worship, 9:30am	30	<b>Birthdays:</b> Natalie Koehler (1), Guy Taylor (6), Dale Patrick (11), Linda Thiele (13), Dalton Moore and Lexi Barrer (14), Shirley Thompson (16), Jill Wiese (21), Karen Sharp (23), Geraldine Jensen (25), and Mary McGowen (30) <b>Anniversaries:</b> Rudy & Jami Edwards (3) and Kenneth & Iris Reierson (24)				



## *St. Olaf Lutheran Church*

Worship, teach, nurture and  
share Christ's love.



I am writing to you early in Holy Week, a week that begins with the lightness and excitement of Palm Sunday, but which becomes more serious on Maundy Thursday, and turns tragic on Good Friday. However, you are probably reading this soon after Easter, the day we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus, the savior of the world. Though our celebrations of Easter are infused with joy, it is interesting to note that our Gospel lesson for Easter Sunday, from the Gospel of Mark, does not share this joy. Instead, the dominant mood of the reading is fear. It begins with Mary Magdalene, Mary, the mother of James, and Salome, all followers of Jesus, leaving the other disciples, who have locked themselves up in a room out of fear, to go tend to the body of their loved one. They leave the confines of the disciples' fear, only to meet with more fear, when they find the empty tomb. Their unmet expectations, and the presence of a mysterious stranger, have them flee the scene in terror. Mark tells us that the women do not tell the disciples about what they see because they are afraid.

Throughout the season of Easter this year, our readings touch on this fear. We read John and Luke's version of the story of Jesus coming to his disciples after his resurrection. In both stories, the disciples are still locked up in their room, for fear of what may be on the other side of the door. In both stories, the disciples' joy at being with Jesus again is mixed with fear and their hesitancy to believe their senses, to believe that Jesus really is with them.

What are we to make of this persistence of fear, especially in stories that we understand to inspire such joy in us as we celebrate the Easter season. First, the disciples experience something that is far outside of the common human experience. Second, impossibly good things can be frightening. Finally, and because of this, perhaps it is not really too surprising for fear and great joy to be experienced at the same time. If we think about it, some of the most joyful events in our lives are also accompanied by fear: moving away from home, completing something that has required great work and dedication, marriage, children...the list goes on.

As we celebrate Easter, and throughout the rest of our lives, may we not be surprised when our joy is seasoned by fear, and when, overcome by fear, may we be open to the joy of God's presence in our lives and in the world

~ Pastor Ryan

**Happy Anniversary!!!**

**Rudy and Jami Edwards (April 3) and Kenneth and Iris Reiersen (April 24)**