



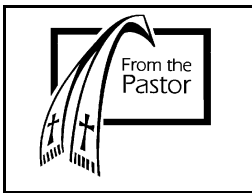
The GOOD NEWSLETTER

of
Saint Matthew Lutheran Church
Springfield, Pennsylvania

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From Our Pastor

“Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted.” Matthew 28:16-17

Christ is Risen! He is Risen indeed! This declaration we make each Easter is an amazing statement. Jesus is risen from the dead. He lives, after he was killed on a cross. It seems impossible to believe. It seems too good a claim to be true, particularly when we say that “because he lives, we shall live also.” How can this be?

Many in our day find this claim to be nothing more than a fairy tale. They see it as a simplistic story to which the weak-minded subscribe to give themselves a sense of comfort in a complex and fast-changing world. For many people, unless it can be proven, it must be disbelieved.

Other people see this story as one path among many, and that we are in no place to make a claim that this is the way God acted for the salvation of the world. They will say, “If Jesus works for you, fine, but you can’t actually claim that Jesus is **the** way that God gives new life.” For them, anyone’s belief about God, life and death are equally valid. It only matters that you believe something.

Still others will have an overly simplistic, formulaic hold on their faith. For them, “God said it; I believe it; that settles it!” Or “Holy Mother Church has decreed” become the basis by which they make decisions. Inside they see a disconnect between a world view of certainty and an experienced world of change and ambiguity. Sometimes, though they may not dare say it out loud, they are not sure what to believe.

This declaration we make each Easter, indeed each Sunday as we worship, and each day we live in relationship with Christ, is real. It is true. It is the way in which God has acted to bring salvation and new life to the world. Through Jesus, sin and the broken relationship we have with God and with each other has been forgiven. Through Jesus, we have the chance for new life here, and a life that continues beyond death to the place where God

reigns and to which Jesus calls us home.

It is an amazing claim for us to make. It was an amazing claim for the first followers of Christ to make. Yet they made it because of what they, like we who follow today, had experienced. They experienced the risen Jesus meeting them in their lives. They experienced his love in action through healing of body and spirit. They experienced the power of God in ways tangible and in ways that were only felt profoundly in the core of their being, and they, like we, worshiped him.

Perhaps, though, we can understand how hard this is to believe when we see the reality of the first Christians. “They worshiped him, but some doubted.” Even the earliest followers, even the ones to whom Jesus appeared bodily after he rose from the dead, were not fully sure what it was they were seeing. They could not fully describe it. They had their questions. They doubted, and yet, they worshiped him. They believed.

As we make the amazing claim that Christ is risen, we may have differing levels of confidence, understanding or conviction in our words. We may not have all of this worked out. Indeed, I do not believe that this side of heaven we will ever have it all figured out. We have experienced the risen Jesus, and Jesus reaches out to us again so, in the midst of our questions, we can worship him. We can believe.

As we come again to the Easter season, may you be reminded of the truth we proclaim. May you experience the presence of the risen Christ in your life. May you know the power of God’s love and forgiveness. May you be filled with worship. May you believe.

- Pr. Karl M. Richard

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Christian Education Committee

Easter blessings to everyone. There will be no Sunday School classes on Easter Sunday, April 20. We encourage families to attend one of the church services at 8:00 or 11:00 a.m. Vacation Bible School plans are just around the corner.

It will be held during the mornings the week of July 28. Please contact Julie Cirillo if you can help that week.

- Carol Penjoke

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Important Notes from the Worship and Music Committee

The Worship and Music Committee would like to thank everyone who wrote a devotion for our Lenten Devotional Booklet this year. The season of Lent was made more meaningful to us all by your sharing of prayers and thoughts on scripture. If this was your first time writing a devotion, what a deeply personal and heartfelt offering you have given us. For those of you who have written before, we thank you for again sharing your feelings and prayers. A grateful membership has benefitted from your generosity!

The Community Good Friday Service will be held at Noon on April 18 at Covenant United Methodist Church, Springfield Road and Saxer Avenue.

Holy Week Services at Saint Matthew are listed elsewhere in this newsletter. Just a reminder that Easter Sunday services have a slight change:

8:00 a.m. - Service with Holy Communion and First Communion

9:30 a.m. - Easter Breakfast

11:00 a.m. - Service with Holy Communion and First Communion

The committee wishes you all a most Blessed Easter! See you in the pews!

- Jeff Wesley

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Men's Breakfast

Our April Men's Breakfast will be held at The Court Diner, 140 E. Baltimore Pike, Media, on Saturday, April 12, at 7:15 a.m. We are meeting the second Saturday this month since Easter falls on the third weekend of April. All men are invited to join us for morning devotions, a great speaker, an excellent breakfast and good fellowship.

Please come and enjoy an excellent way to start the day.

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Social Ministry

Thank you to all who donated items for the Aid for Friends breakfast bags. Your gifts enabled us to assemble 24 bags that were delivered to Media for distribution.

We continue to collect non-perishable food, gently used kitchen items, and children's books for the Loaves and Fishes Food Pantry. We thank you for your ongoing support of this worthy organization.

- Cheryl Morrell

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Children's Corner

Dear Children,

Wow! As I write this article for you, the temperature is below freezing and snow is falling - **again!** As we passed Saint Francis Church this morning on our way to Saint Matthew, the sign on the marquee said "Whoever is praying for snow - Stop!" We have had quite a winter - dark nights, icy roads, power outages, and more. On one particularly cold morning, I went to Target; and, as I was checking out, the cashier said to me, "Would you think that I am crazy for buying a sun dress?" I, of course, said that I was glad to hear that she was thinking of warmer days with sunshine, flowers, and blue skies.

The whole theme of darkness transforming into light was beginning to percolate in my mind. As you receive this newsletter, the season of Lent is coming to an end. We tend to think of Lent being rather dark and gloomy - black for Good Friday, traditionally parishioners would give up something that was a regular part of their lives, remembering that Christ died for us, church music written in a minor key (sad melody,) etc. With all that sadness lurking in our minds, what do we have to look forward to - why, the resurrection of Jesus on Easter Sunday - the happiest day in the church year. "He is Risen!" "He is Risen Indeed!" God promised us - way back in the Old Testament with the rainbow - you remember - the one that Noah saw - that he would always look after us - and he did! Nature is beginning to come back to life in the way of warmer weather, buds on the trees, and bulb flowers springing forth. Way back in early times, people named this time of year after the "goddess" of spring - "Eostre" - therefore the name "Easter." So - as you think of bunnies, chocolate eggs, and spring flowers, remember the real meaning of the Easter season - the resurrection of our Lord.

Dear Parents,

This month's offering is a two-step process which may be challenging for your children - the overwhelming sadness of Holy Week and then the joy of Easter. The book *The Very First Easter* by Paul Maier is a wonderful story about a mother and father

explaining the teachings of Jesus, his trial, and crucifixion - all of which led up to the glorious news of the resurrection of Jesus. Once again, a map is always helpful to point out the places where Jesus preached.

“Gardening is a way of showing you believe in tomorrow.”

- Sylvia Yost

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Family Ministries Event

Family Ministries invites you to our annual Easter Egg Hunt on Saturday, April 12, at 10 a.m. Please join us for crafts, treats, and a lot of “egg-citement!” RSVP to Heather Markland by April 8 at hmteach@hotmail.com with names and ages of each child.

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Saint Matthew Christian Nursery School

We enjoy singing songs for Spring and watching for the first buds of a flower. The children have been busy with fun activities as they await its arrival. They are anxious to ride their bikes, and play more in the school yard. The children will also be planting seeds to celebrate new life.



School will be closed for Spring Break on Thursday, April 17, and Friday, April 18. We are also very busy preparing for our Annual Art Show which is Wednesday, May 7 (5:30 - 7:30.) Please stop by and visit all of the special creations! Our school will be closed that Wednesday for set up.

We would like to wish everyone a safe and happy Spring season.

- Linda M. Maylie, Director

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Colors of Grace

I always think of Lent as a journey and find the lessons during this season profoundly moving. I also find it difficult to narrow down the hymn and anthem selections as so many of the choices are hauntingly beautiful. So this year, the 7:00 p.m. Good Friday service will be the *Colors of Grace* cantata performed by our choir with assistance from our youth. The *Colors of Grace*, written by Joseph Martin with narration by Pamela Martin, follows Christ’s footsteps through his final days. With the focus on

service, obedience, humility and forgiveness - the greatest lessons of Christ’s ministries - the cantata illustrates how this season known for its suffering and darkness is also a source of great joy. After all, this is the ultimate example of God’s Grace.

Please plan to make this journey with us through Lent and through Holy Week, and then on to the glorious celebration of Easter. Remember, Easter is not just one day, but through God’s love is ours to celebrate every day.

- Pat McHugh

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Women of the ELCA News

Greetings to all! As I mentioned in the March newsletter, the month of April is a busy time for the women of Saint Matthew Church and friends. We hope you plan to attend the different activities coming up in April - we look forward to seeing you!

On Saturday, April 5, the Women of the ELCA Delaware Spring Conference will be held at Grace Lutheran Church, Drexel Hill. Registration is at 10 a.m. Brunch is at 10:30 a.m. followed by meeting and speaker, The Rev. Alina Gayeuski, Associate Pastor of Reformation, Media. Theme: “Enough.” Sign-up sheet is on the table in the hallway.

On Saturday, April 12, the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Philadelphia will hold their eighth annual Women’s Day Retreat (9 a.m. - 4 p.m.) This is a full day of Rest, Refreshment, and Renewal - an enjoyable time. The cost of the day is \$45.00. You may contact the Seminary at 215-248-4616 to make your reservation for the day. There is more information on the table in the hallway -a great time to be there and enjoy the day!

On Sunday, April 27, we will be having our annual Women’s Sunday at the 8 a.m. service and the 10:15 a.m. service. Pastor Richard will be the Presiding Minister. There will be a guest speaker and the positions of Lector, Communion Servers, Greeters and Ushers will be held by women. If you are interested in assisting, please speak to any woman from the Sarah or Esther Circle. Thanks for your help!

Of course, the everyday work of the circle ladies and the quilting groups goes on as scheduled. We are a busy group and we enjoy working together to do good for the less fortunate. Come out and join us at one of the circles or one of the quilting groups - you will be welcomed with open arms. See you there!

Schedule for April:

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| April 5 | Women of ELCA Del. Conf.
- Grace Lutheran, Drexel Hill |
| April 9 | Ronald McDonald Quilting -
10 a.m. - Parlor |

- April 9 Board Meeting - 3:30 p.m. - Library
- April 12 LWR Quilting - 10:30 a.m. - Parish Ed. Bldg.
- April 12 LTSP - Women's Retreat Day - 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
- April 20 Easter blessings to all
- April 22 Sarah Circle - 7:30 p.m. - Parish Ed. Bldg.
- April 23 Esther Circle - 10 a.m. - Parlor
- April 27 Women's Sunday - 8 a.m. and 10:15 a.m. Church Services

Love,
Muriel Wagner

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Dear Friends,

Frank "Beansie" Russel was such a great presence in our lives, and in the lives of so many others. When life hits you hard, it is people like you who truly make a difference. Beansie would have been honored and proud at the outpouring of support shown to his family. We hope these words will convey our sincerest thanks for being there during this sad time.

Sincerely,
Janice, Stephanie, and Jennifer Russel

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To Pastor Karl and the Congregation,

Thank you so much for your hospital visit and the many cards and telephone calls I received during my recent illness. The altar flowers were especially beautiful and helped to cheer me.

Sincerely,
Joe Thorn

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Dear Members of Saint Matthew,

Thank you for a beautiful baptism service. I really love the blanket and shell. I feel like I have been welcomed into the house of God. Thanks!

Sincerely,
Sabina Bahnsen

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Dear Friends at Saint Matthew,

Thank you for the cards and prayers and the beautiful flowers and the visit from Pastor Richard. I'm coming along slow but sure.

Thanks again,
Dan and Janet McLaughlin

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To all our friends at Saint Matthew,

Wow! What a difficult winter for you all. Thank you for the Lenten Devotions - makes me feel **home**. We are sending out prayers, good thoughts and lots of wishes for a wonderful Easter and a great Spring. We have thought of you so often; and, while

- Dee Bratz and the Executive Board

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Wednesday Bible Study Resumes



Bible study will resume April 30 and continue through May. As is our pattern, we will meet Wednesdays at 6:30 a.m. in the library and noon in the parlor. May 21 we host the Springfield Ministerium at noon, so the noon class will meet Tuesday, May 20, that week. In these weeks instead of

looking at a book of the Bible, we will explore some of our favorite Bible stories and passages. Join us as we look at some familiar words to find even more depth and meaning for us as we live with Jesus today.

- Pastor Richard

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Monthly Mailbag

Dear Friends,



Truly the lovely altar flowers at my birthday were the bright spot of this miserable, challenging winter of 2014!

They lasted for so long - and they remained beautiful. They sat on the coffee table and continued to brighten our home.

Thank you so much. What good friends you are - such a great, caring church.

we are happy that we were able to get to Florida before the onslaught of the Winter of 2014 (or any Northern winter for that matter,) we sorely miss our brothers and sisters at Saint Matthew. Please know that we continue to keep you in our prayers. Wait! It is coming - the Resurrection of our Blessed Lord and a truly wonderful Spring.

Sincerely,
Gail and Bill Healy
(Venice, Florida)

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Fortune Cookie Wisdom

“ A day is a span of time no one is wealthy enough to waste.”

“Minutes are worth more than money. Spend them wisely.”

“If you understand what you’re doing, you’re not learning anything.”

“A bargain is something you don’t need at a price you can’t resist.”

(Source and authors unknown)

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Vital Statistics

Baptism: **Joseph Francis Berardocco**
Son of Ron and Cheryl Berardocco
Born November 8, 2013
Baptized February 23, 2014

25th Wedding

Anniversary: **Paul and Becky Halko**
April 22, 2014

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Health and Healing

We ask you to remember all those who are ill, as well as those who mourn the loss of a loved one, in your thoughts and prayers. We also remember and pray for the homeless, the hungry, and all the men and women serving in our armed forces.

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