

# *First Lutheran Church*

300 West Third Street Prophetstown, IL 61277

Phone: 815-537-2758

*Newsletter for Members & Friends*

*April, 2017*

## **Take A Step Back...And Put Easter In Perspective**

My son Nathaniel turns 13 on Easter this year. It seems fitting then that a favorite character of his from when he was little is a perfect illustration for experiencing the Easter story. This character was Diego, from Go Diego Go. If you've never heard of Diego, he was an educational cartoon character for preschoolers, and was a cousin (or Primo) to Dora the Explorer. Diego lived in a Rain Forests and went about rescuing animals who were in trouble. When he heard of an animal that needed help, he got his telescope out and located the animal. From the view inside the telescope we are able to identify the animal, but because of the close up image, we do not know what kind of help the animal needs. So then Diego takes the telescope and (with our help) zooms out so we get a bigger picture. We then discover that the animal is stuck in a tree, or beached on an island, or stuck in the mud or whatever situation. Diego would then go and rescue the animal in trouble (with our help of course). As simple as this preschool program was, I think it is a useful metaphor as we look to the events that happen during Holy Week. If we look to the Resurrection as if through a telescope that only sees close up like Diego does when he finds an animal in trouble, we really are missing a lot of important details. Some things cannot be absorbed from up close. Diego would not know what kind of trouble an animal was in and when it comes to the Resurrection, we would miss out on the events that run from Palm Sunday to Easter.

Luke understands, perhaps better than any of the other Gospel writers-that we can't take in these events if we only have our telescopes on zoom in without zooming out. Luke loads the drama of the passion with a catalog of emotions. The trial of Jesus. The complicity of the religious establishment. The contempt of Herod and his soldiers. The way in which, in the face of a common enemy, Herod and Pilate become friends. The release of a man who deserves execution. The daughters of Jerusalem weeping. The crucifixion. The prayer, "Father, forgive them..." The soldiers mocking Jesus. The Darkness. The death.

It can be so tempting to want to chop this drama into little bits-to choose one theme in order to make telling the story more manageable. Yet if we step back we discover that the events and the attempt to articulate the drama are larger than the sum of its various parts. Because when we step back and zoom out...we realize it's God stuff, and God the Father is in charge here-not the disciples, not Pilate, not us, not even Jesus. Only those who stand back and zoom out will be able to receive the impact of this story in the way the Creator intended for it to be. Luke even has a zoom out moment in the story...Luke writes in chapter 23:49 "But all his acquaintances, including the women who had followed him from Galilee, stood at a distance, watching these things."

There is an important perspective that comes with distance, and Luke has a singular appreciation for this. So often in his Gospel, insight and distance go together. In today's Gospel reading, we discover that it is not someone from the inner sanctum-one of the disciples-who runs from the empty tomb with the first news of resurrection. No, it's one of those same women, who from the distance that comes with being marginalized is able to believe what the disciples have trouble believing.

It often takes such distance- of purposefully zooming out far enough to discern the hand of God in the patterns of the world. If we are zoomed in too close, we see nothing but a narrow perspective and paradoxically two things happen at the same time. The world loses its ability to terrify, and the gospel loses its power to redeem.

Luke challenges us to find our places next to these people standing there on the edge of things, and to take in, with them, all of the events of this story, each in turn, as the powers and principalities deliver the worst they can summon upon the cross of Jesus Christ. The challenge is to zoom out far enough to overcome the numbing familiarity that attends our knowing this story backward and forward. The challenge is to see it-in both its terror and redemption-as if for the first time; and then observe that at the end of it all, God is still in charge. God's ongoing drama with history and human life is still unfolding. May we all be able to zoom out and grasp the big picture.

Christ is risen! Alleluia! Amen. Pastor Katie

## February Financial Report

|                          |                     |
|--------------------------|---------------------|
| Beginning . . . . .      | \$ 17,080.99        |
| Deposits . . . . .       | 13,251.20           |
| Disbursements . . . . .  | - 18,451.81         |
| Correction . . . . .     | - 0.00              |
| <b>Balance . . . . .</b> | <b>\$ 11,880.38</b> |

## Council Highlights: 3-14-17

The council met with twelve members. Devotions were given by Jason Robshaw. The minutes and treasurer's report were approved.

Christian Education: Reviewed information about best practices/ guidelines for child safety, as well as our current policy. Once changes are completed to the guidelines, it will need to be adopted by council.

Evangelism & Social Ministry: Card ministry continuing. Held first family game night and another is being planned. FLC Easter service will be advertised on Aroundptown.com and in the Echo. Discussed the upcoming Sept. 30<sup>th</sup> craft and vendor show. Completed details for the 5<sup>th</sup> grade communion reception on Sunday, April 9<sup>th</sup>.

Property: No Report

Stewardship & Finance: Discussed how they can present different ideas on stewardship that focus on ideas other than just money and the fall stewardship program, "Giving in Generosity" and planned dates.

Worship & Music: Discussed plans for the Lenten dinner they will serve on April 5<sup>th</sup>. Randy would like to have the band play for Easter, but more people are needed to play. The committee discussed possibly having communion every week. The topic will be discussed further by the entire council at the April meeting.

Old Business: The council bonding/retreat was well attended and great experience. Thrivent choice dollars have been switch to the general fund from the youth fund.

New Business: Jason Robshaw attended a CRE workshop about social media, and would like volunteers for a social media committee to help maintain the FLC Facebook page. The council briefly discussed goal setting, and will continue to discuss what they hope to accomplish this year and in the next few years.

## Next Church Meetings:

Tuesday, April 11<sup>th</sup>

Comm. Mtgs.-7pm      Council Mtg.-8pm

Tuesday, May 2<sup>nd</sup> - Change of Date

Comm. Mtgs.-7pm      Council Mtg.-8pm

**Online Giving to FLC** - Please use [www.firstlutheran-ptown.org](http://www.firstlutheran-ptown.org) to give through the company VanCo. You choose the options on your account.

## FLC March Prayer Concerns

Betty Reichard, Jan Carlson, Annulka Shipp, Michelle Wetzell, Dick & Carole Minssen, Amber Davis, Connie Johnson, Scott Lyman son-in-law of Ken & Ellen Pannier. Community members: Sammy Hodgett. Serving in the military: Gabe Larson son of Ed & Kim Larson, Sean Pratt son of Drew & Becky Emery, Donnie Appleman son-in-law of Larry & Lynda VanDyke, Lyndsey Gardner niece of Gwen Gardner, Anna Helmkamp fiancée of Kent Olsen.

The passing of Patrick Hinrichs on March 17<sup>th</sup>, son of Gary & Cathy Hinrichs, brother of Sarah and Staci and families.

## 5<sup>th</sup> Gr. Holy Communion Classes

The final Holy Communion instruction for fifth graders will be held on Sunday, April 2<sup>nd</sup> at 10:30 - Noon. Their First Communion will be at 9:00 a.m. worship on Palm Sunday, April 9<sup>th</sup> followed by a reception in the students honor. Please join us in congratulating them in this milestone.

## FLC Lent Dinners

Lent dinner are served on Wednesday at 6:00 p.m. Each group will work as a team to do the dinner, for approximately 50. The recipes are available at church. The committee is responsible for purchasing the ingredients, cooking, set up, serving, drinks, desserts, and clean up. Thanks for your support, skills and service!

Apr 5: Worship & Music - Baked Spaghetti, Bread, Fruit/dip

## **FLC Lenten Worship Evening Series: Luther's Small Catechism**

The final worship service will at 7:00 p.m. on the Wednesday, April 5<sup>th</sup>. Pastor Katie will be leading us on Holy Communion.

## **Community Lent Service**

The final community service will be held at 12:00 noon on Wednesday, April 5<sup>th</sup> at Fenton Methodist Church. Following the service, a light meal of sustenance soup, bread and water will be offered. This is a simple meal for those who might be observing the discipline of fasting.

## **FLC Holy Week Services**

April 9 Palm Sunday – 9:00 a.m. Worship with First Communion for fifth graders will be celebrated followed by a reception in the fellowship hall in honor of the students.

April 13 Maundy Thursday - 7:00pm: Ecumenical Worship and Communion at Methodist Church with a community choir.

April 14 Good Friday – 7:00 p.m. Ecumenical Worship service here at FLC

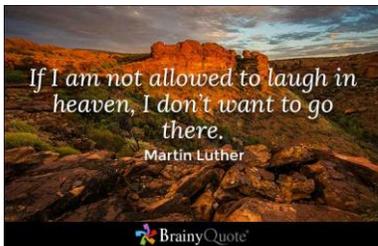
April 16 Easter – 7:00 a.m. Ecumenical Sunrise Service at Congregational Church with breakfast to Follow 9:00 a.m. Worship and Communion at FLC

## **Easter Garden and Lily Forms**

You are invited to bring fresh flowers and blooming or green plants in our "Easter Garden" along with Easter lilies to adorn the sanctuary on Easter morning. Please have your contribution to church by 9:00 a.m. Sat. April 15<sup>th</sup>. Be sure to fill out a form, which are available on the tables at church, and return to the office by Monday, April 10<sup>th</sup> to have your plants listed in the Easter bulletin. After worship please take your donations home for planting and enjoyment.

## **Easter Cross+Gen EPIC Hour**

Please join us after worship on Easter for a special EPIC Hour! We are excited to share the story of Jesus' resurrection with you! A short lesson and activity will be shared, and we encourage ALL AGES AND STAGES to join us in the Fellowship Hall. Then we will join together in an Easter Egg Hunt! (Outside if the weather cooperates!) We know this is a special day that many families share together, so why not start at EPIC Hour? See you there!



## **Holy Hilarity Sunday**

In the very earliest days of Christianity a tradition arose to celebrate the Easter Season by means of a "Holy Hilarity" Sunday. The custom is rooted in early church theologians who reasoned that God had played a tremendous practical joke on the devil by raising Jesus from the dead. They called it *risus paschalis*—the Easter laugh! First Lutheran will continue this custom on April 23, the first Sunday after Easter. Start thinking about funny stories, jokes, talents, skits, etc. (church appropriate) that you would like to share then call or email the church office to let us know. This is a light-hearted continuation of our Easter celebrations. So join us! Easter is worth celebrating with all the joy that is within us. We look forward to seeing you there!

## **N. IL. Synod Assembly**

The Synod Assembly will be held on June 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> at Augustana College Rock Island. Registration is due by April 18<sup>th</sup>. The In-Kind offering will be smoke/carbon monoxide detectors and gift cards, in any amount, to help LSSI with the foster care services. For complete details go to their websites: nisynod.org and/or lssi.org

## **Garage Sale**

Do you have extra stuff at your house? Clothes, furniture, jewelry, decorations, books, kitchen utensils/appliances, toys... Jr League would love to accept these (and more) as donations for this annual sale! They use this sale to raise money to offset cost of a trip every year. Because of your donations, (and purchases) we usually raise around \$900 after a donation to the Food Pantry. Please look around and see what you might be able to part with. The sale is Sat May 13<sup>th</sup>, and we have started accepting donations. Please note - we will **not** be accepting TVs this year. Please call the church and talk to Amanda if you have questions or need help getting your items to church. Thanks to everyone!

## **FLY Breakfast Fundraiser serving on Town Garage Sale Day**

To help raise funds for our trip this summer, FLY will be serving breakfast the morning of the town garage sales, Sat. May 13<sup>th</sup>. We will serve biscuits and gravy, eggs, and a variety of baked goods. Drinks will also be provided. Cost is by donation. Please watch the church bulletin, Echo, and online information for more details as it gets closer! We will be asking the congregation for donations of baked goods. Thank you for all of your generous support of our youth!

## **WELCA**

The general meeting will follow a bible study on Monday, April 10<sup>th</sup> at 1:30 p.m. at the Good Samaritan Riverview Estates. All women members of the church are invited. The hostess will be Vicki Ottens. Bible leader will be Lynda VanDyke.

## **Plant Sale: In conjunction with the Jr League Garage sale**

We will be having a plant sale again this year. I know lots of you “green-thumbers” out there will be looking at their gardens this spring and thinking about what to add or move or get rid of. Many plants can be divided, and spring is a very good time to do it! If you are interested in donating plants to the plant sale, please contact Amanda. She will coordinate with you on how and when to bring in your plants.

## **Scrapbooking Day**

Scrappping, and crafting, and knitting, oh my! First Lutheran Youth will be your host for a day of getting in touch with your creative spirit! Whether you scrapbook, knit, or do other kinds of crafts, you’re invited to come, set up shop, and let your imagination run wild. Thank you for helping us in our fundraising efforts to help pay for our summer trip! Saturday, April 22<sup>nd</sup> from 8am-11pm. The \$50 entry fee includes: 1 table and chair, goodie bag, 3 meals (breakfast, lunch, dinner), snacks and drinks. Power can be provided if notified in advance. Relax in our “lounge” or eating area. If you want to share a table with someone, the fee is \$30 per person. Please register together. Please call Amanda if interested for registration information.

## ***April Birthday Celebrations***

We wish to send a “Birthday Greeting” to all of our members celebrating this month. A special greeting is extended to our members who are 80 or over.

Faye Finck – 21<sup>st</sup>

Shirley Jensen – 28<sup>th</sup>

Nan Plautz – 30<sup>th</sup>

Please refer to your church directory for the entire birthday list of our members.

## **Used Batteries Collection**

On the narthex table there is a container to collect your used batteries of any size and this is a good way to help the environment. For more details please talk with Paul McCracken as he will take our collection to his work place and

add to their recycling program.

## **Men in Mission & Video Study**

Sunday, April 2<sup>nd</sup> at 7:30 a.m. all men, members of the church or not, are welcome to join us for breakfast, bible study, discussion and how we can live out our belief in God every day.

The evening video study “Walking With Jesus in a Weird World” will be held on Thursday, April 6<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. For information contact Dave Meyer at 563-650-6149 or email at [ptowndave54@yahoo.com](mailto:ptowndave54@yahoo.com).

## **Assisting in April**

**Ushers:** Rick & Anna Woolums, Drew & Becky Emery

**Greeters:** Donna Roland, Sue Skelton, Dave & Pam Strike

**Altar Committee:** Carole Minssen, JoAnne Cocking, Heather Minssen, Darlene Proeger

## **Assisting Minister:**

9 – Vicki Ottens, Gary Hinrichs

16 – Cathy Hinrichs, Ellen Pannier, Donna Roland, Lynda VanDyke

**Cantor:** Cathy Hinrichs

## **Readers:**

2 - Megan Thompson

5 – Marilyn Skromme

16 – Joan Johnson

23 – Lynda VanDyke

30 – Jasmine Haggard

## **Acolytes:**

2 - Emyli Sandrock

5 – Sabrina Soleta

9 - Max Vahle

14 – Tinley Wetzell

16 – Rubey Gallentine

23 – Dawson Haggard

30 – Max Jones

## **Contact Us**

### **Pastor & Staff**

Pastor Katie Gallagher

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Parsonage: 815-537-2425

Cell Phone: 630-200-3288

Pastor’s Office Hours:

Monday, Wednesday, Thursday

10:00 a.m. to Noon, or by appointment

Youth & Family Ministry

Amanda Schanze

Cell Phone: 309-236-1920

Secretary Office Hours

Monday-Friday: 9:00 - Noon

Sunday Schedule

Sunday Worship . . . . . 9:00 a.m.

Epic Hour Sunday School . . . 10:15 a.m.

How to Reach Us

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