

Cross CURRENTS

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A monthly publication to keep you informed about the ministry of Living Water and the opportunities for you to grow your relationships with the Lord and each other.

Fake News?

The article came out on Maundy Thursday (April 18) in the *Journal Sentinel*. The headline read, “For Ministers, Easter Sermons Are a Tremendous Opportunity – and a Huge Challenge.” It got me to read on.



The article quoted from multiple pastors in the greater-Milwaukee area. These pastors from different denominations talked about the approach they were trying to take in their sermon on Easter Sunday. The author summed up their thoughts, “Easter has a host of different angles... and the chance to reach people who may rarely venture into a church, and finding the right words and tone can be daunting.”

No Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) pastors made it into the article (and I don’t know if any were even interviewed), but I think most WELS pastors – myself included – would not say that preaching on Easter is “daunting” or a “challenge.” Rather, they would say it is a tremendous joy and honor, especially because there is so much good news to explore!

If anything, the challenge is to pare down the comfort that could be delivered into a roughly twenty minute message.

But that’s what the season of Easter helps us do. Including Easter Day, there are six Sundays in the church season called Easter. In the five weeks following Easter Sunday, we begin to explore just a fraction of all the deep truths that spring out of Jesus’ rising from the dead. Jesus’ resurrection speaks timeless truths that are easily readied to be conveyed not just on Easter Sunday but on the following Sundays too. We’ll worship under that theme during the coming month in worship. Our services will each have a theme that begins, “The Risen Lord Has a Message...”

Each week we’ll see how the Lord still speaks, removing doubts, sending his disciples, guiding his sheep, encouraging the faithful, and giving clarity to the confused. These messages are all rooted in the truth that Jesus died and then rose, proving that he is the Savior over sin, death, and hell. That’s the core of the Christian faith, and something that has been giving the Christian

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church enough sermon material for thousands of Easters and all the Sundays in between. It's not like pastors need to stress out about what to preach. The empty grave is filled with so much spiritual comfort!

Where do we find that comfort? In the Bible, the Word of God which the risen Lord inspired. There we have all that we need to proclaim the truths and applications of Christ's resurrection. As Christians, we do not need to rack our brains to come up with some new profound truths that will make others marvel at our novelty. As Christians, we simply read and repeat the Scriptures week-by-week and day-by-day because that is how we better know our Savior, what he has done for us, and what that means for us now and in eternity.

I'm not accusing the *Journal Sentinel* of fake news with the aforementioned article. But I will admit that it did not come close to my experiences as a pastor preaching at Easter. The truths that spring to life in the resurrection provide a pastor with plenty to comfort and encourage others with. Yet it all really comes down to this one purpose which John expresses in the Gospel reading in the Sunday right after Easter, all of Jesus' miracles, but especially the resurrection, "are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name" (John 20:31).

Preaching that resurrection message weekly in the name of the risen Lord,

Pastor Aaron Voss



Easter Outreach Recap

With the biggest Sunday of the year comes a concentrated outreach effort centered on Jesus' resurrection. Professionally prepared postcards were sent out inviting homes to our Easter Sunday services, Easter for Kids was hosted, and individual invitations were sent out by our individual members among friends, relatives, acquaintances, and neighbors. We praise God for the efforts that



he blessed! Nineteen children attended Easter for Kids and heard about how Jesus offers forgiveness and eternal life freely because he died and rose from the dead for us. The sanctuary hosted well over two hundred worshipers across the two services on Easter Sunday. We do not obsess about numbers with our outreach efforts, but they do provide

opportunities to stop and thank God for the work he lets us do. Now we continue our efforts by following up and encouraging those in our own lives to hear the gospel about Jesus Christ, descended from David, and raised from the dead!

Upcoming Worship Schedule

Due to Confirmation on Sunday, May 19, Holy Communion will not be celebrated that weekend. Holy Communion will be celebrated on Sunday, May 26. There will not be worship on Monday, May 27 due to Memorial Day.

Sunday School

With the school year winding down, the last day of Sunday School Classes will be May 5. This school year, we started with Creation & The First Sin and worked our way through the life of Moses and the Israelites while studying sections of the Book of Exodus. We also learned about Joshua, Gideon, and Ruth. At Christmas, we shared the good news to the congregation that Jesus is the Light of the World through the children's Christmas service. We finished up the year following Jesus from his birth, through different portions of his ministry to his death and resurrection. We will close year with the gift of the Holy Spirit to the disciples on Pentecost. Thank you to all of the Sunday School teachers for their service to our Lord this year. Teachers: Abby Moldenhauer, Veronica Haag, and Brian Haag. Substitutes Teachers: Sheryl Hanke, Chris Mastrocola, Kristen Moldenhauer, Janeen Roska, and Jeff Roska. What a wonderful blessing to have these people teach God's Word to the children of our congregation. We are always looking for additional teachers to help with the rotation. If this is a part of Living Water's ministry that you would like to serve in, please contact Brian Haag at 414-416-6332 or education@livingwaterlutheran.com or Pastor Voss.

Church Picnic Meeting

We will have a church picnic committee

meeting on Thursday,

May 9 at 7:00 pm. This

is a brainstorming,

informational meeting to discuss what we would

like to do at the picnic. Topics will include food,

beverages, games, music and anything else you

can think of. All are welcome at the meeting;

please come and share your ideas, even if you

don't want to be on the committee. Hope to see

you there. Mark your calendars for the picnic on

Sunday August 11.



Camp Phillip Door Offering

There will be a door offering to support the ministry at Camp Phillip on Sunday, May 12.



Camp Phillip provides "Renewal in

Christ and Relaxation in Creation"

through school field trips, summer

camp programs, and weekend

retreats. Living Water is a

congregational member of Camp Phillip which

allows our members to pay a discounted rate on

camp fees. For more information on their

ministry, visit www.campphillip.com.



We have a couple of great activities planned for the month of May. On Tuesday, May 14, we will be taking a tour of St. Peter's Lutheran

Church in Milwaukee's Walker's Point neighborhood. We will meet at 9:00 am at church to carpool to St. Peter's for our 10:00 am tour. The buildings of St. Peter's are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. It was founded in 1860 by German immigrants who built their first church on 8th and Scott Streets in 1861, and then, in 1866 built a small brick-clad Gothic-influenced church. The current church building, a Victorian Gothic style, was built in 1885. There is also an 1873 parsonage, an 1879 school, and an 1898 social hall. This should be a very interesting tour! Following the tour we will

stop for lunch at Wegner's St. Martin's Inn in Franklin. Sign up on the sheet in the narthex.

Our annual fish fry will be on Friday, May 17 at 5:00 pm at Doc's on the Fox in Waterford. Sign up on the sheet in the narthex so we can let Doc's know how many to expect.

Another one of our favorite annual activities is the Belle City Brassworks Concert at Union Grove High School. This will be Sunday, June 9 at 3:00 pm. Following the concert there is a light lunch. The concert and lunch are free, but you do need a ticket to get in. Thank you to Boyd and Marlene Recknagel for planning this and picking up the tickets. There will be a sign-up sheet later in May.

Senior Moments is a service organization to provide social opportunities for the congregation. All members, 50 and older, are encouraged to join us for fun and fellowship.



Ladies, join us for Pinterest Night on Tuesday, May 14, beginning at 6:30 pm. We're going to make wall hanging and children's church "busy bags." Please bring a snack or drink to share. Please contact Lori Moldenhauer for more information.

A meeting will not be held on Sunday, May 5. Watch for an update about a summer-time gathering. Thank you to everyone who donated items, helped set up, or worked at the Rummage Sale.



Celebration of Service

The Shoreland Lutheran High School Board of Directors, together with the faculty and staff, invite you to attend a celebration of thanksgiving and joy in recognizing Mr. Sam Kleinke, who has accepted a Call to teach at Great Plains Lutheran High School in South Dakota, and Mrs. Sarah Selle, who is stepping down and will continue to serve the Lord's ministry in other areas of life. Please join us in thanking God for these faithful servants during the Spring Concert on Saturday, May 18, at 7:00 pm. There will be an informal reception following the concert.

I AM the Bread of Life TEEN DEVOTION

Jesus said to them, "Very truly I tell you, it is not Moses who has given you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is the bread that comes down from heaven and gives life to the world." "Sir," they said, "always give us this bread." Then Jesus declared, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty. — John 4:13-14 (NIV)

What would it have been like to be an Israelite in the middle of the desert and have no food? A long time ago, the Israelites were slaves in Egypt. God freed them from their slavery and led them out into the desert. Eventually, their food ran out. There wasn't a simple solution like a nearby Taco Bell for picking up some crunchy beefy Frito burritos. I can't imagine what it would feel like knowing that if nothing changed, they would die. But God provided for them. He sent down bread from heaven called manna. The Israelites ate it and lived.

You too were in a situation where if things didn't change, you were going to die. If God had not intervened in your life to give you faith and bring you to him, you would have wandered in this world. You have wandered in this world seeking satisfaction and rescue but never finding the bread that truly satisfies.

But God sent down bread from heaven to save you. Not bread from heaven like the manna God gave to the Israelites. God sent Jesus, the Bread of Life. Because of your sin, you were going to die eternally in hell. But God sent Jesus into the world. He lived a perfect life and died on the cross for your sins. He took away your sin and gave you eternal life. Just like bread in the desert, Jesus has given you eternal life.

Do you know what is better than bread? *Free* bread! Do you know what is better than Taco Bell? *Free* Taco Bell! Do you know what is the best part of Jesus, the Bread of Life? He was freely given! Jesus said, "My Father gives you the true bread from heaven." God knew the tremendous cost of your sin. Instead of having you pay the full price, it came at great cost to him. He sent his Son to pay for it. Out of his grace and mercy, God has freely given you Jesus.

There is nothing better than the free Bread of Life. There is nothing better than Jesus. Believe it.

Prayer: O Lord God, you hold all things in your hand. I ask that you give me opportunities and courage. Give me opportunities to freely share Jesus, the Bread of the Life with those who do not yet have him. Give me courage to make the most of those opportunities to your glory. In Jesus name I pray, Amen.

Prayer

Jesus Christ is our crucified yet risen Lord who delights to hear our prayers, so we pray to him:

- For Christians around the world suffering persecution for their faith in Christ's death and resurrection, especially those affected by and mourning the deaths caused by the attacks in Sri Lanka on Easter Day. May he who promises life eternal through the resurrection of the flesh comfort those we are grieving, and may he give resolve to all those who are scared.
- For our outreach efforts over the past month, that God blesses the messages presented and proclaimed, either creating or strengthening faith in those who received it.



- For students, teachers, and school administrators who are nearing the end of their school years, especially those who are members of Living Water. May God provide them with faithfulness and energy to finish their work, seeing in their labor a chance to glorify him for all he has done in their lives.

We pray these things for the sake of Jesus Christ who died and rose to give us access to the Father's throne as the Holy Spirit presents our prayers to the Father for us. Amen.

Council Corner

In an effort to be transparent about topics being discussed at the council meetings each month, we will be sharing some highlights and notes from the month's council meeting in the monthly newsletter. The council encourages members to ask questions and offer insight into any of the topics being discussed.

New Members - So far this year, Living Water has welcomed the Begotka, Maiwald, and Hanke families into membership. Additionally, Aida Gordon and Cody Kelly were baptized as infants into God's family.

January—March Financials - Offerings are approximately 10% over-budget for the first quarter and expenditures about 10% under budget. The council voted to invest \$100,000 with WELS Church Extension Fund for two years. This will serve to support the building projects of new missions across the WELS and will earn interest.

Church Picnic Date and Future Dates - The church council voted to make the second Sunday in August the Church Picnic Sunday going forward. This will create consistency in the date and allow members to plan for the church picnic far in advance.

Church Management Software - The council voted to purchase new church management and financial software. These two programs will allow the church office to more efficiently manage the membership and prospect information as well as the church financials. These products were created the same company that created the current membership management software.

May 2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 6:30 pm Handbell Practice	2	3	4
5 8:20 am Prayer Group 9:00 am Worship with Communion 10:30 am Bible Class & Sunday School	6 5:15 pm Catechism Class 7:00 pm Worship with Communion	7 8:00 am Men's Breakfast	8 6:30 pm Handbell Practice	9 7:00 pm Church Picnic Planning Meeting	10	11
12 8:20 am Prayer Group 9:00 am Worship 10:30 am Bible Class	13 5:15 pm Catechism Class 7:00 pm Worship 8:00 pm Elders Meeting	14 9:00 am Senior Moments Tour 6:30 pm Pinterest Party	15	16	17 5:00 pm Senior Moments Fish Fry	18 Spring Work Day
19 <i>Confirmation</i> 8:20 am Prayer Group 9:00 am Worship 10:30 am Bible Class	20 6:00 pm Jesus Cares 7:00 pm Worship 8:00 pm Church Council Meeting	21	22	23	24	25
26 8:20 am Prayer Group 9:00 am Worship with Communion 10:30 am Bible Class	27 <i>Memorial Day</i> NO Evening Worship	28	29	30	31	

