



St. John's Lutheran

MESSENGER

A Publication of St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church located in Miamisburg, Ohio, Established in 1819

April 2023

After the Sabbath, as the first day of the week was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. And suddenly there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord, descending from heaven, came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. Matthew 28:1-2

I have never experienced being in an earthquake myself, but I know people who have. One of my seminary classmates was in San Francisco in October of 1989 when a 6.9 magnitude earthquake hit that city. A former colleague was in Haiti in January of 2010 when a quake registering 7.0 rocked that country. As I remember the stories these friends told about living through an earthquake, it is clear that it is an experience that one never forgets.

One detail that stands out is the fact that during an earthquake the ground moves. We grow accustomed to the ground being rock solid. We expect the earth to behave the way it's supposed to, by providing sure footing and stable grounding for us. And most of the time it does. But not always.

As Matthew tells the Easter story he mentions that there was an earthquake, which is a detail the other Gospel writers do not mention. This earthquake was not caused by shifts in tectonic plates, however. This earthquake was caused when an angel rolled back the stone in front of the tomb where Jesus was supposed to be. Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were on their way to the tomb when the earthquake happened. I wonder if they stumbled as the earth beneath their feet began to move. Suddenly their sure footing wasn't so sure anymore. What they thought they could count on was no longer reliable.....and I'm not just talking about terra firma, here.

Suddenly their rock solid understanding of how life and death work was rocked to the core. Dead people are supposed to remain dead. And most of the time they do. But not always. Jesus puts a crack in that long held belief for those women as they encounter the empty tomb, and then later in the story as they encounter the risen Lord, himself. The solid footing of "dead means dead" began to shift, thanks be to God!

I wonder if the two Mary's ran from the tomb on wobbly legs as they tried to regain their balance. They were filled with fear and great joy, Matthew tells us, as they ran to tell the disciples that the ground of their beliefs was shaken. God was bringing new life from death. The sure footing of their faith would have to be adjusted to accommodate all that God can do.

I doubt there will be an earthquake when we gather to celebrate the empty tomb on Easter. But the morning will rock our world as we hear once again that God has set us on new footing. The ground beneath us contains new promise that even when death seems to have won, life indeed continues to burst forth. That solid rock is where we find our footing as disciples of the Risen Lord.

See you in Church! Pastor Heidi Johns

PRESIDENT'S CHAPEL

Dear Siblings in Christ,

April 1st, 2023

You should be receiving this month's Chapel Meditations near the beginning of Holy Week 2023. This is the most important part of our church year, where we see, in full view, the raw story of Christ's passion.

Palm Sunday opens the week with Jesus's entry into Jerusalem seated on a donkey, with throngs welcoming him, even placing their cloaks and garments on the road for him to walk on. The religious leaders are wary of his arrival and worried about his followers. They want to arrest him, but didn't dare to in public for fear of the crowds. So they plot and wait, hatching a plan that would whisk Jesus away in the middle of the night. **Our Maundy Thursday service** recreates the intimate moments of the last supper. At one point before they partake of the bread and wine, Christ washes the feet of all his disciples as a sign of his, including the one he knew would ultimately betray him. The disciples all ask Jesus... am I the one---the betrayer---surely not I Lord? Ask yourself, what you would have said had you been in that room, having spent years with Jesus travelling throughout Galilee and Judea, watching miracles being performed, and witnessing Jesus rebuke the Jewish religious leaders for focusing on "rules" instead of "love". In the evening after the Supper, Jesus retires to the Garden of Gethsemane, where he prays fervently to his Father in anticipation of the suffering and humiliation that is surely coming. In his time of greatest, even his closest disciples can not stay awake and give him comfort. As the evening passes, in a flash he is greeted and kissed by Judas and immediately arrested. His friends and followers flee in all directions. Jesus is truly alone and in the hands of those who wish him dead.

Our Good Friday service picks up the story, as Jesus is interviewed and question by the Chief Pharisee and his council of advisors. Some of his disciples watch from a distance, including Peter. When Peter is confronted in the shadows, he swears three times that he doesn't know Jesus, denying a friendship exactly as foretold by Jesus the night before. A rooster crows after the 3rd denial, and Peter retires to weep bitterly realizing he had abandoned his Lord. When the Council was done with Jesus, he is turned over to the Governor Pilate, who really didn't want anything to do with him. Under intense pressure from the Pharisees and a growing crowd of boisterous and angry residents, Pilot condemns Jesus to die on the cross. From that moment, Jesus is tortured, ridiculed, beaten, flogged, and ultimately dies in agony. Never forget, crucifixion was an agonizing and painful death created by the Romans to maximize pain and shame. The end of Good Friday sees the only act of kindness that day – Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemis get permission to retrieve Christ's lifeless body, burying him by Jewish custom before Good Friday's sunset and the onset of the Sabbath. It looks like the "end of Jesus' story...yet God's master plan had a different ending in mind. On the third day – what is our First Easter Sunday – Jesus arises and is gone from the very tomb closed up and guarded by the Romans. **Easter Sunday**, first witnessed and reported by Martha and Mary, made clear that death had no power over Jesus, and furthermore as believers has no power over his followers. Easter is all about recognizing that while we all share Christ fate in death, *we also share his resurrection into life everlasting*. This story is core to our Christian beliefs. If you are able, I hope you join us in viewing these important holy week worship services in person or on zoom. Never forget that we cannot have Easter Sunday without Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, and Good Friday. He died on the cross – yet He is Risen --- *indeed!*

Take care, and God's Blessings to all.

Brian Kent, President



Maundy Thursday, April 6 – 7:00 pm
Good Friday, April 7 – 7:00 pm

Both services are in-person or available via ZOOM.

The link below is for both Maundy Thursday & Good Friday worship only.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83949168196?pwd=bW0xN3Vob0xLRi85RDJ2SDJGeTkWUT09>

Meeting ID: 839 4916 8196

Passcode: 125482

Dial by your location

+1 309 205 3325 US

Meeting ID: 839 4916 8196

Passcode: 125482

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83949168196?pwd=bW0xN3Vob0xLRi85RDJ2SDJGeTkWUT09>

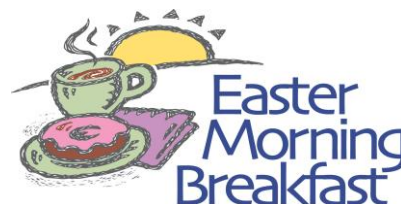
EASTER EGG HUNT

We will have our annual Easter Egg Hunt on Saturday, April 8 at 2:00 pm. Invite your family and neighbors!

EASTER BREAKFAST

We will gather Easter morning, April 9th at 9:00 a.m. for breakfast in the fellowship hall.

Signup is posted in the narthex if you would like to bring something.



Doug McCabe took this picture one morning of the reflection of the stained glass onto the pulpit.

To see this in color, go to www.stjohnsmiamisburg.com and click on newsletter.

2023 ENVELOPES ARE FINALLY HERE

The 2023 envelopes are available for pickup in the narthex.

If you cannot find your envelopes and want a box, please contact Judy Kuemmel or the church office. Thank you."

Save the Date - VBS will be June 19-23, 6-8pm at Parkview. Please let Brook or Beth know if you are interested in volunteering. More information to come.

DISCIPLESHIP UPDATE

Last fall when I took the quilts that Gail Braun made and the school supplies that the congregation gave for Lutheran World Relief, Gail also sewed the backpacks for them. I took them to a truck at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Kettering. They were put on a truck. The truck went to the East coast and the many boxes were put a ship. We never know where the supplies go. Below is an article from Lutheran World Relief. It had a picture of a boy holding up 2 pencils with a very wide smile.

The Grace of Jesus

The grace of Jesus was sung with swelling pride by young schoolchildren and teachers, filling the small room. The community had come together for a recent school kit distribution in the southern highlands of Tanzania, and their response to receiving your generous gifts brought tears to the eyes of all present. To thank Jesus first and foremost for his grace. Dear friends in Christ, with each kit you pack with love, you are sharing the grace of Jesus Christ with your neighbors. It's a love that is so known that it overflows from the hearts of moms and dads in joyful dance and song. It's a love witnessed in the smiles of preschoolers. It is the love of Jesus and his all-encompassing heart. Thank you for sharing this love with our brothers and sisters around the world. May we continue to share the grace and love of Jesus until it reaches every neighbor.

Cheryl Page

Cheryl Page delivered all the gifts that were collected at Christmas to Jeremiah's Letter, along with a check for \$1,160, to Dennis Hawley. He was very much appreciative for everything our congregation does for his organization.



Thank you so much for your very generous donation of \$900. Your support of our mission means more supplies can be sent to troops throughout the world. On behalf of our active duty military serving the United States of America and our Veterans, we sincerely thank you.

Blue Star Mothers of America, Miami Valley – Chapter 3

**THANKS FOR
DONATING!**
WE APPRECIATE YOUR GENEROSITY

Helping Hands sent a thank you to the church for the donation of \$1480. The generosity of this gift allowed Helping Hands to offer five days of groceries to Miamisburg School district families needing food assistance.

In 2022 we served 1943 households consisting of 5930 individuals.



On March 1st, several congregation members met at Bob Evan's to help Barb Hoffman celebrate her retirement from Miamisburg City Schools.

Congratulations Barb! Enjoy your retirement!





DIGGING DEEP INTO GOD'S WORD FOR LENT

There will be a couple of opportunities for you to dig deeper into scripture during the season of Lent. Both will focus on the scripture readings assigned for Sunday mornings during the weeks leading up to Easter.

You can engage in reading the Scriptures at home during the week from the provided weekly schedule listed below, or you can join us for four weekly sessions of Bible study via zoom on these same scripture readings. Of course you can also take part in BOTH of these opportunities!

The schedule for weekly **at home** bible reading is as follows:

March 26-April 1

Ezekiel 37:1-14
Psalm 130
Romans 8:6-11
John 11:1-45

Maundy Thursday-April 6

Exodus 12:1-14
Psalm 116:1-2, 12-19
I Corinthians 11:23-26
John 13:1-17, 31b-35

Easter Sunday-April 9

Acts 10:34-43
Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24
Colossians 3:1-4
Matthew 28:1-10

April 2-April 5 (Palm Sunday)

Isaiah 50:4-9a
Psalm 31:9-16
Philippians 2:5-11
Matthew 21:1-11
Matthew 27:11-54

Good Friday-April 7

Isaiah 52:13-53:12
Psalm 22
Hebrews 10:16-25
John 18:1-19:42

Join Zoom Meeting on Sundays

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85711628176?pwd=V0dOK21vekJqNTIwM3hOT2UyNzkyQT09>

Meeting ID: 857 1162 8176

Passcode: 071964

One tap mobile

+19292056099,,85711628176#,,,,*071964# US (New York)

+13017158592,,85711628176#,,,,*071964# US (Washington DC)

Dial by your location

+1 929 205 6099 US (New York)

Meeting ID: 857 1162 8176

Passcode: 071964

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85711628176?pwd=V0dOK21vekJqNTIwM3hOT2UyNzkyQT09>

REMINDER

You can always find the Zoom link for the simulcast Sunday services on St. John's website:

www.stjohnsmiamisburg.org

Click on the "In-Person Worship and Simulcast Link" menu option near the top of the home page.

Budget Report for February 2023

Income for February 2023:		\$6,492.21
Expenses for February 2023:		
Outreach	\$333.00	
Staff	\$4,613.71	
Conference	\$33.99	
Facility Upkeep/Administration	\$790.53	
Property Insurance	\$0.00	
Utilities	\$1,070.41	
Committees	\$29.19	
		\$6,870.83
February Budget Balance (income - expenses):		(\$378.62)
YTD Income:	\$14,962.28	
YTD Expenses:	\$14,943.04	

Description of categories:

Outreach: Benevolence, special benevolence.

Staff: Pastor's pay and expenses, staff salaries and benefits, FICA, worker's comp.

Facility Upkeep/Administration: Maintenance/repair and office expenses.

Property Insurance: renewed in April.

Committees: Discipleship, Learning, Worship & Music.

Utilities: Gas, electricity, water and trash services.



- April 1
Brook Ñauta
- April 4
Marge Abner
Kendall Ring
- April 6
Gary Naylor
- April 8
Brody Lamb
- April 12
Ida Geary
- April 13
Amy Ñauta
- April 17
Alexandra Bell
- April 30
Tom Settle

Congregational Contacts

Pastor Heidi Johns Interim Pastor 513-255-6279

Council Members

Brian Kent	*President	937-885-3529/937-572-3025
Everett Morris	*Vice President	937-760-1099
Linda Kent	*Church Treasurer	937-885-3529/937-572-7815
Cathy Zimmer	*Secretary	937-212-9283
Judy Kuemmel	*Financial Secretary	937-321-1198
Garry Andrews		937-848-2090
Ida Geary		
Cindy Kemper		937-840-8182

***Executive Committee**

Organizations, Boards and Staff

Karen Doyle	Church Secretary/Messenger Editor	937-866-3780
Tom Hoffman	Board of Trustees Chairman	937-859-8871/937-654-1218
Cheryl Page	Discipleship Committee Chairman	937-602-7952
Brook Ñauta	Learning Committee Chair	513-217-0564/937-367-1473
Ida Geary	WELCA President	937-626-7765
Doug McCabe	Organist	937-866-8669
Brook Ñauta	Children's Choir	513-217-0564/937-367-1473

Christian Education

Barb Hoffman	Pre-k through 1 st Grade	937-859-8871/937-231-6341
Brook Ñauta	2 nd Grade through 6 th Grade	513-217-0564/937-367-1473
Robin Skelding	Confirmation	937-748-5405

Ministry Contacts

Nancy McCabe	Prayer Chain	937-866-8669
Beth Knight	Son-Rise Breakfast @ First Lutheran	330-692-2092



- April 10
Ken and Sandy Yeazel
- April 23
Garry and Nancy Andrews
- April 30
Tom and Barb Hoffman



St. John's Lutheran

St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church

470 S. Gebhart Church Road

Miamisburg, OH 45342

Phone: 937-866-3780

Office Hours: M-T-T-F 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon

Web: www.stjohnsmiamisburg.org

Email: secretary@stjohnsmiamisburg.org

HAPPENING'S IN APRIL

- April 1 10:30 a.m. Dayton Tamil Academy
- April 2 1:00 p.m. Area 56
- April 3 6:30 p.m. WELCA Monthly Meeting @ Church
- April 6 7:00 p.m. Maundy Thursday Service
- 7:00 p.m. Girl Scout Leaders Meeting
- April 7 7:00 p.m. Good Friday Service
- April 8 10:30 a.m. Dayton Tamil Academy
- 2:00 p.m. Easter Egg Hunt
- April 9 9:00 a.m. Easter Breakfast
- April 11 6:00 p.m. Girl Scout Troop #3330-2023
- 6:00 p.m. Girl Scout Troop #35159
- April 12 6:30 p.m. Girl Scout Troop #30200
- April 15 10:30 a.m. Dayton Tamil Academy
- April 16 6:00 a.m. SonRise Breakfast
- April 22 10:30 a.m. Dayton Tamil Academy
- April 25 6:00 p.m. Girl Scout Troop #3330-2023
- 6:00 p.m. Girl Scout Troop #35159
- April 29 10:30 a.m. Dayton Tamil Academy

Sunday's at 7:30 p.m. - AA/Al Anon meets in Fellowship Hall

Monday's & Friday's at noon - AA Group meets in Fellowship Hall

Please notify the office of any meetings and/or events that need to be included in the calendar.

This will ensure rooms are not double booked.