

# RESURRECTION NEWS



May 2023

## Pastor's Letter

May 2023

Brothers and sisters in Christ,

The season of Easter in which we find ourselves for the month of May has a distinct and important structure. It is worth remembering, first, that in the church Easter is not primarily a calendar date, it is a season of the church year. We celebrate Easter for a full week of weeks (seven weeks) leading up to and culminating in Pentecost. There are three distinct parts of the Easter season: 1.) The celebration of our Lord's resurrection, 2.) The celebration of who our Lord is, and 3.) The anticipation of the Holy Spirit being poured out on Pentecost.

The first two weeks of the Easter season invite us to celebrate the resurrection of our Lord. As such, the Gospel Readings focus on the accounts of our resurrected Lord's appearances on and after Easter morning. If you pay attention closely, you noticed that the Gospel Reading on Easter Sunday (Mark 16:1-8) does not include the appearance of our Lord. We simply hear the announcement of an angel, but we do not see or hear from Him yet. This might strike us as an odd way to celebrate Easter Sunday. But for the early church, this was quite appropriate. After all, Jesus did not appear to the disciples until much later in the day. As such, we are invited to hear the announcement of His resurrection on Easter morning and joyfully anticipate His appearance to the disciples, in essence, re-living their experience. Historically, the church would not wait an entire week to gather again to hear of our Lord's appearance to the disciples. The Festival of our Lord's resurrection was historically celebrated with Divine Services every day of Easter week because our forefathers in the faith understood and found true joy in celebrating Jesus' resurrection. So, on Easter Monday and Tuesday, the account of our Lord's appearance to the Emmaus disciples and the rest of the disciples from Luke 24 is read. On Easter Wednesday, Jesus' appearance to the seven disciples at the Sea of Galilee (John 21:1-14) is read. On Easter Thursday and Saturday, Saint John's Easter account is read (John 20:11-18 and John 20:1-9 respectively). And on Easter Friday, Saint Matthew's account of the Great Commission is read (Matthew 28:16-20). This week of celebration beautifully anticipates our Lord's appearance to the disciples and the "Doubting Thomas" story (John 20:19-31).

As the third Sunday of the Easter season comes, we celebrate who our Lord is. He is "*the Good Shepherd [who] gives His life for the sheep*" (John 10:11). This "Good Shepherd Sunday" is one of the most beloved Sundays in the church year because we all love the beautiful Psalm 23 imagery. However, within the context of the Easter season, this third Sunday of Easter invites us to see our Good Shepherd as the one who lays down His life (John 10:15) so that He might take it up again (John 10:17) and give new life to us sheep who so often go astray.

The fourth Sunday of Easter marks the final turning point in this season, as we joyfully anticipate our celebration of Pentecost. Throughout these four Sundays, the text of John 16 is read one section at a time. Our Lord's words in this great chapter were as much intended to prepare His disciples for His death and resurrection as they were intended to prepare them for the coming of the Holy Spirit. And so, we join the disciples in learning from our Lord how the coming of the Holy Spirit to us is the culmination of His resurrection. He rose from the dead so that the same Spirit which raised Him from the dead might dwell in you (Romans 6:10-11). Notice that after we celebrate our Lord's Ascension with the reading of Mark and Luke's ascension accounts (Mark 16:14-20 and Acts 1:1-11), our prayerful expectation of Pentecost reaches its height as our Lord reminds us that the Holy Spirit comes to testify of Him (John 15:26).

Finally, the season of Easter culminates with the celebration of Pentecost. While we do read of the events of that first Pentecost from the book of Acts (2:1-21), our Gospel Reading for that day invites us to meditate on our Lord's words from John 14:23-31, where Jesus speaks of coming to make His home with us (John 14:23). This is what our Lord suffered and died for. This is why His resurrection is such good news for Christians. Our Lord has sent His Spirit to dwell with in us. He has made His home with us! This is the true joy of our Lord's resurrection. Alleluia! Christ is risen. He is risen indeed. Alleluia!

Peace in Jesus,  
Pastor Akers

## *Notes from your Deaconess*

Dear Brothers and Sisters of LCR,

I have been thinking of growing things recently, and of thorns and how they relate to our fallen world.

The Lord God cursed the ground because of Adam's disobedience, leading to its yielding of thorns and thistles. (Notice that neither Adam nor Eve is cursed, only the serpent and the ground...lots of hard consequences for the first couple and all mankind though!)

When the prophet Isaiah speaks of the people of Israel as a vineyard which has not produced fruit, he says that briars and thorns will grow in it, and it will be a waste. (Isaiah 7)

Jesus mentioned thorns in his parable about the sower and seeds—the thorns choke the growing seeds so that they do not bear fruit.

St. Paul wrote of having a thorn in his flesh which caused great suffering.

The gospel writers Matthew, Mark, and John let us know that the Roman soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns which they placed on Jesus' head before the crucifixion. I once cut my scalp on a large thorn and could not believe its profuse bleeding. Imagine how much Jesus bled from his head—and this *after* the scourging, and before the nailing to the cross. He literally wore an emblem of the curse as he went to his throne, the cross.

I *had* planned to hold two Saturday women's Bible studies in May, but due to the church work day scheduled for 5/13 (and the Walk for Life in Waterville on 5/20) I now think I will only hold one—on 5/27 from 8:30 a.m. to 10 a.m. in a downstairs classroom at church. We will continue to examine texts about the women we are encountering as we move through the scriptures following the schedule from Pastor Akers. If the portions we have been reading don't include named women, I entertain recommendations for other texts to study. Let me know if you'd like to join via a Zoom link and be included on my email list before each meeting. You are welcome to join in at any time! We enjoy the fellowship of sisters in Christ, and we also share prayer concerns with each other.

Under his mercy,  
Sharon M Conover

*"No more let sins and sorrow grow, Nor thorns infest the ground;  
He comes to make His blessings flow Far as the curse is found."* LSB #387:3

### **Thursday Bible Study**

For the remainder of the academic year, Thursday Bible Study is looking at the book of Ecclesiastes. Because we are taking a thematic approach to the book, you'll be able to jump right in even if you've missed a week or two. We meet at **10:30 a.m. in Room 201** or at **6:30 p.m. via Zoom**. Contact Pastor Akers for a Zoom link. Here's the schedule for the remainder of the academic year:

- May 4 - Ecclesiastes: Christian, Enjoy Life
- May 11 - Ecclesiastes: Worship and Wisdom
- May 18 - *NO CLASS - Ascension Day Divine Service at Noon*
- May 25 - Ecclesiastes: The Bad and the Good

### **Altar Guild Meeting**

The Altar Guild will meet on **Tuesday, May 9, at 6:30 p.m.** in Room 201. All current members and anyone interested in finding out more or joining the Altar Guild are invited to attend. Please speak with Pastor Akers if you have questions.

### **Spring Cleanup Day**

LCR workday is **Saturday, May 13, 8 a.m.** - come pitch in to help spruce up for spring!

### **Ascension Day Divine Service**

An Ascension Day Divine Service will be held at **noon** on **Thursday, May 18**. The service will be live streamed on Facebook.

### **Installation Service at Hope, Bangor**

Glory be to God for the work and partnership between LCR and Hope Lutheran Church. Pastor Akers in humble service toward this joint mission to advance the Gospel will be installed as pastor of Hope Lutheran Church on **Sunday, May 21, at 4 p.m.** The service will be held at the Hampden VFW (41 Canoe Club Rd., Hampden, ME 04444), where Hope currently holds Divine Services. District President Beinke will officiate the installation. A dinner and time of fellowship will follow the service and all members and friends of Hope and LCR are invited to attend. **If you plan to attend, please RSVP to the church office** (lcroffcemgr@gmail.com or 207-872-5208).

### **Summer Schedule**

The summer schedule will begin Sunday, May 28. Please note that the **Divine Service time will remain 10 a.m.** with fellowship following the conclusion of the service. Feel free to join Pastor Akers for an informal **Bible discussion time at 8:45 a.m. in Room 201** to discuss the current Read the Bible readings and to preview the Propers/readings of the day.

### **27th Annual Paddle for Pine Tree Camp**

Join the LCR paddle team to raise money in support of the Pine Tree Camp's mission to serve hundreds of Maine kids and adults with disabilities. There are two different ways to be involved:

#### **1. Paddle on the Kennebec River on June 3rd**

Join the LCR fundraising team at 9:30 a.m. as we paddle the Kennebec River for Pine Tree Camp on Saturday, June 3. The adventure starts at the Evergreens Campground in Solon and ends in North Anson.

#### **2. Donate funds to the LCR paddle team**

Each paddler is asked to raise a minimum of \$100, so if you aren't paddling, you can still support the cause by helping the paddling team raise money.

Please contact Kemp Anderson for more information about joining the team at 207-313-8636 or kempla71@gmail.com.

### **Raising Funds for First Choice Pregnancy Center in Waterville**

**Date:** May 20, 2023

**Time:** Registration 8:15am | Welcome & Walk 9:00am

**Location:** Getchell Street Baptist Church | 3 Getchell Street | Waterville



### **Thank You's**

We, at the Seminary, would like to thank you for your recent contribution to the Student Food Co-Op. Gifts, such as yours, allow us to provide the finest theological education to the future pastors, deaconesses, and missionaries.

Your servant in Christ,

Rev., Dr. Lawrence R. Rast Jr., President

Concordia Theological Seminary

Thank you for your generous donation of \$500 to the Waterville Area Soup Kitchen. We are now serving over 200 hot meals daily, Monday through Friday.

Sincerely,

Marie McDonald

Thank you for your gifts to Concordia Seminary for the Adopt-A-Student and Deaconess Adopt-A-Student.

Most cordially yours,

Vicki Biggs, Sr. VP of Seminary Advancement

Concordia Seminary

We are grateful for your renewal and continued support for Garuna Kid sponsorships.

Thanks again and God bless,

Tamie Worthington, Program Coordinator

Garuna Ministries

## **May Stewardship**

	<u>May 7</u>	<u>May 14</u>	<u>May 21</u>	<u>May 28</u>
<u>Acolyte</u>	Elizabeth Akers	Matthew Akers	Callum Goldsmith	Evan Farr
<u>Worship Assistant</u>	Charlie MacPherson	Mark Larsen	Chris Batson	Dan Callahan
<u>Usher</u>	Rick Drageland	Mo Cote	Brad Fitzpatrick	John Ayotte
<u>Greeters</u>	Dorothy McAllister	The Wilson Family	Kemp & Rachel Anderson	Sharon Klipp
<u>Altar Care</u>	Lydia Bendas	Katie Huesers	Avis Grant	Amber Akers
<u>Flowers</u>	Christine Thomas	Christine Thomas	Dorothy McAllister	Dorothy McAllister
<u>Fellowship</u>	Open	MacPherson/Carrano	Open	Open

### **Defending the Faith**

#### ***Sometimes the Best Defense is a Good Defense***

Talking with our LGBTQ neighbors and friends about Christianity can be hard. After all, both sides of this discussion have historically been adamantly and sometimes very loudly opposed to each other. There has been mutual anger and distrust between both sides.

I think that Jesus would show us a better way.

First, recognize that every gay person you encounter is a child of God and is loved by Him.

As you talk with someone in the LGBTQ community, it's important to get some baseline understanding into place.

First, we follow Sacred Scripture. It is our sole rule and norm for daily living. We hold it to be the inspired Word of God and therefore, 100% authoritative. You can expect that your LGBT friend won't share the same

foundation for their beliefs, but it's important that they know yours. You should also listen carefully to theirs as they express it.

One point to emphasize is that in modern day Christianity there seems to be a widespread belief that homosexual sin is worse than other sins. That belief is simply false.

In fact, Paul addresses this in 1 Corinthians 6:9-11 where he talks about those who will not inherit Heaven. *Or do you not know that wrongdoers will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor **adulterers** nor **men who have sex with men** nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God.*

Adulterers (heterosexual) are right there in the same pile of sinners with "men who have sex with men". Sexual relations between unmarried heterosexuals are every bit as sinful as those between homosexuals.

Guess who else is in that pile of sinners? If you guessed you and me, you're right. We all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God! (Romans 3:23)

Every single one of us, gay or straight needs the grace given to us by our trust in Jesus.

So we stipulate that gay or straight, we're all sinners, we're all loved by God and we should love each other. (John 13:34-35).

Does that mean that we should suddenly expect to perform same-sex weddings here at LCR?

Absolutely not. According to God's Word, marriage is to be between one man and one woman. *For this reason, a man will leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife and the two shall become one flesh.* (Gen 2:24)

Should our church (or any other faithful Christian church) be "open and affirming"?

Open and affirming is half right. We absolutely should be open to sinners of any kind, gay or straight. What we cannot do is affirm a sinful lifestyle, gay or straight.

How about temptation? Is it sinful to be tempted into sexual immorality? Well, it depends on what you do with that temptation. Temptation is common to every single one of us. Sometimes it's sexual. Sometimes it's greed. Sometimes it's gossip, lying or slander.

Temptation takes on lots of different forms – but take heart. *No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it.* (1 Cor 10:13).

So no, temptation itself is not a sin – but embracing it is. Fantasizing and letting your imagination run wild with that temptation – and Heaven forbid, acting on it? That's sinful.

When your gay friend (or straight friend) tells you that they still suffer sexual temptation, that verse can give strength and comfort. That's something they can latch on to for support, straight from God Himself.

With those baseline positions in place, we can talk with our LGBTQ brothers and sisters. We can talk about our non-negotiables (because they're dictated by Sacred Scripture) and then listen to what they have to say. It may be difficult, but it's a conversation worth having.

Next month, we'll talk about how to have those discussions, bearing in mind the second part of 1 Peter 3:15. *But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. **But do this with gentleness and respect...***" Genuine gentleness and genuine respect will go a long way.

As always, I'm open for comments, questions and especially criticisms (hopefully with gentleness and respect!) at [Charles.j.macpherson@gmail.com](mailto:Charles.j.macpherson@gmail.com).

Defending the Faith,  
Charlie MacPherson, SDG

## **BIBLE QUIZ**



### **Monthly Worship**

May 7

The Fifth Sunday of Easter

Psalm: 66:1-8

First Reading: Isaiah 12:1-6

Epistle: James 1:17-21

Holy Gospel: John 16:5-15

May 14

The Sixth Sunday of Easter

Psalm: 107:1-9

First Reading: Numbers 21:4-9

Epistle: James 1:22-27

Holy Gospel: John 16:23b-30

May 18

The Ascension of Our Lord

Psalm: 110

First Reading: 2 Kings 2:8-15

Epistle: Acts 1:1-11

Holy Gospel: Mark 16:14-20

May 21

The Seventh Sunday of Easter

Psalm: 51:1-12

First Reading: Ezekiel 36:23a, 23c-28

Epistle: 1 Peter 4:7b-11

Holy Gospel: John 15:26-16:4a

May 28

The Day of Pentecost

Psalm: 143

Old Testament: Genesis 11:1-9

Second Reading: Acts 2:1-21

Holy Gospel: John 14:23-31a

1. What was Elisha doing at the time Elijah called him to follow him?
  - A. Fighting the fearsome Assyrians as an Israelite soldier.
  - B. Plowing a field with twelve teams of oxen.
  - C. Helping a poor widow feed herself and her two sons.
  - D. Offering an unblemished lamb sacrifice to the Lord God.
2. Why did King David murder Bathsheba's husband?
  - A. He was found to be a traitor plotting David's assassination.
  - B. His lineage was of Esau and a hated enemy since times of old.
  - C. To hide the fact that the baby Bathsheba carried was his and not her husband's.
  - D. He was a foreigner in Israel's army and therefore not to be trusted.
3. When Jesus died, how many pieces was the temple curtain torn into?
  - A. Two
  - B. Four
  - C. Seven
  - D. Eleven
4. How does someone guarantee getting into heaven?
  - A. Believe in Jesus and pray and read the Bible regularly
  - B. Believe in Jesus and do good things for others regularly
  - C. Believe in Jesus and go to church regularly
  - D. Believe in Jesus and nothing else
5. Who was the last ruling king in the northern kingdom of Israel (or Samaria) before Assyria overtook it?
  - A. Hoshea
  - B. Elah
  - C. Ahab
  - D. Uriah



5/1 Brian Watson  
 5/3 Don Pryor  
 5/4 Emily-Lynn Carlson  
 5/12 Carl Mattson  
 5/14 Kitty Carlson  
 5/16 Kenneth Zahner  
 5/18 Rick Dostie  
     Fenn Ouellette  
 5/19 Joshua Schiebel  
 5/20 Tyler Wilson  
 5/22 Sasha Fitzpatrick  
 5/23 Michelle Hein  
     Anna Rowe  
 5/24 Amanda Goldsmith  
 5/27 Christine Thomas  
 5/29 David Morris  
 5/30 Rev. Ted Evertsen  
 5/31 Jared Goldsmith



5/4 Gail & Art Carrano  
 5/5 Mo & Becky Cote  
 5/25 Chris & Yvonne Batson

#### **BIBLE QUIZ ANSWERS**

1. B (1 Kings 19:19-21)
2. C (2 Samuel 11:4-14, 23-24)
3. A (Luke 23:45)
4. D (Ephesians 2:8-9)
5. A (2 King 17:1-6)



5/1 Bill Schiebel  
 5/8 Mo Cote  
 5/10 Angie Carlson  
     Matthew Esculano  
     Amanda Goldsmith  
     Jared Goldsmith  
     Krys Paules  
 5/11 Avis Grant  
 5/14 Steven Bendas  
 5/18 Peter Doran  
 5/20 Joshua Schiebel  
 5/21 Rick Drageland  
 5/27 Rev. Benjamin Akers  
 5/31 Lee Anne Larsen  
 5/?? Sharon Callahan  
     Lois Doran



5/1 Ruth Milhous  
 5/2 James Pryor  
 5/3 Sharon Kinter  
 5/11 Avis Grant  
 5/10 Jared Goldsmith  
 5/13 Karen Mattson  
 5/17 Callum Goldsmith  
 5/20 Allison Farr  
 5/24 Fenn Ouellette  
 5/28 Miriam Schiebel  
 5/30 Joshua Schiebel  
 5/?? Gail Carrano  
     Rick Dostie  
     Carl Mattson



## Lay Advice

A successful layman was in a great deal of business trouble.

In no uncertain terms the enterprise was failing. Even though he put in every penny he and the bank had, he owed everybody. It was so bad, he contemplated suicide. As a last resort he went to a pastor and with many tears asked for help.

When the businessman finished his story, his pastor said, "Here's what I want you to do: take a beach chair and your Bible and head down to the beach. When you get there, take the beach chair and your Bible and sit at the water's edge.

Next, you shall open your Bible; the wind will riffle the pages, but finally the breeze will die down. Look down at the page and read the first thing you see. From that you will know what to do."

A year later the businessman went back to the pastor and brought his wife and children with him. The man was in a new custom-tailored suit, his wife wore a mink coat, and the children looked like fashion plates. The businessman pulled out an envelope stuffed with money and gave it to the pastor as a thank you gift.

The pastor recognized the businessman and was curious. "You did as I suggested?" he asked.

"Absolutely," replied the businessman.

"You went to the beach?"

"Absolutely."

"You sat in the beach chair with the Bible in your lap?"

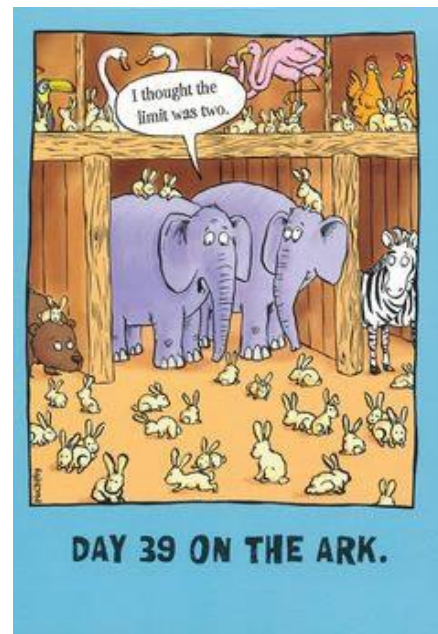
"Absolutely."

"You let the pages riffle until they stopped?"

"Absolutely."

"And what were the first words you saw on the page?"

"Chapter 11."



\*\*\*\*\*

One evening Pastor Steve asked how many had followed his instructions of the past week and read Mark 17 and every hand went up. The pastor said, "Mark has only 16 chapters. Let me begin my sermon on the sin of lying."

\*\*\*\*\*

When Amber's mother took her to visit family graves on Memorial Day, Amber was keenly interested in inscriptions on tombstones, as well as the names and dates. Her mom explained that the dates indicate the day of birth and death. When they got to one pair of tombstones, a husband's and a wife's, Amber asked why there was no death date for the wife. Her mother explained that the woman hadn't died yet. Amber looked horrified and demanded, "Why did they bury her, then?"

\*\*\*\*\*

An old man had passed on. A wonderful funeral was in progress, and the country preacher talked at length of the good traits of the deceased, what an honest man he was, and what a loving husband and kind father he was. Finally, the widow leaned over and whispered to one of her children, "Go up there and take a look in the coffin and see if that's your pa."