

# LIFE IN CHRIST

Receiving God's Gifts — Sharing God's Gifts

*The Newsletter of Christ Lutheran Church, Jackson, MS*

+ Easter 2024 +



On the Cover:

*Christ in the Realm of the Dead*

Joakim Skovgaard

1891-1894

Born into a deeply religious Danish family, Joakim Skovgaard took up his parents' artistic mantle and is remembered especially for his frescos in the Viborg Cathedral. He was influenced by both Realism and Symbolism, which can be seen in this issue's cover painting: a realistic rendering of Christ harrowing the gates of Hell, coming to His parents Adam and Eve and all their offspring in bondage; and yet He treads upon the symbol of sin, death, and the devil as depicted in the skull and writhing serpents beneath His feet, as well as the ethereal demonic spirits of the background grasping their faces in flight. Surrounded by light and adorned in the clothes of the grave, He strides triumphant into the bowels of Hell, for it has no power over Him, and He has come to free the captives, to bring salvation to those lost in darkness.



*Life in Christ*

is the monthly publication of

**Christ Lutheran Church, LC-MS**

4423 I-55 North  
Jackson, MS 39206

(601) 366-2055

[www.ChristLutheranJacksonMS.org](http://www.ChristLutheranJacksonMS.org)

Rev. George Fields  
Sr. Sara Fields



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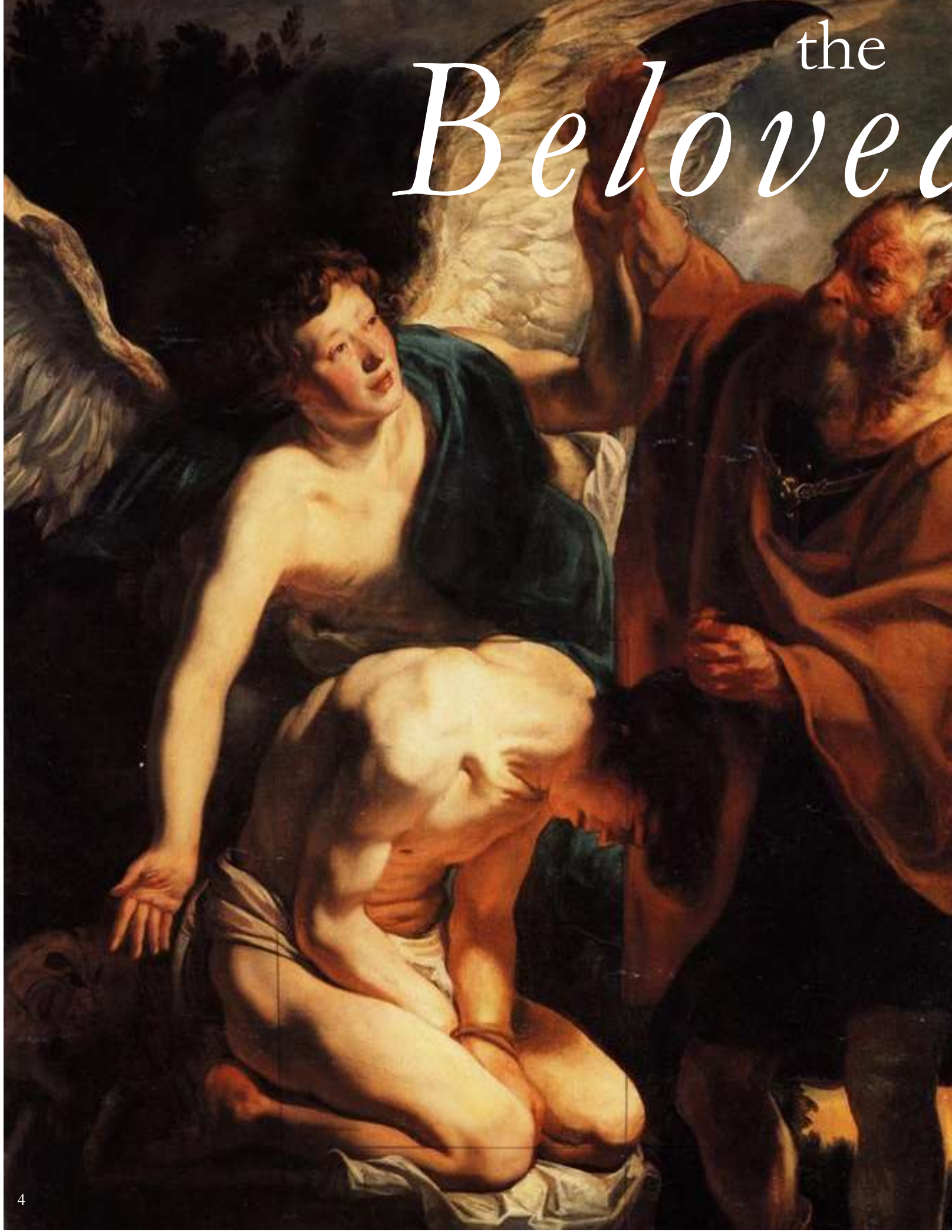
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the  
*Beloved*





# SON

*Pastor Fields*

In ancient times, a man was asked to take *his son, his only son, whom you love* to a mountain, there to be sacrificed to fulfill the will of the Almighty. This man did exactly as he was told. He took his son Isaac and led him to the height of the mount. The son asked the father, *'I see the wood and the fire, but where is the sacrifice.'* The father answers simply, *'the LORD will provide the sacrifice, my son.'*

It is important to note that the Hebrew Bible has no punctuation. Therefore there are two ways to read this passage. One is that Abraham is trying to fool his son, telling him that the sacrifice is somewhere up ahead. However, the traditional understanding is to read the passage as saying, *'the LORD will provide the sacrifice, that is, you, my son.'*

Why is this second understanding important? It is important because it shows us that Isaac went to his death willingly; that no one took his life, but that he gave it by his own accord; which is to say, that he was a type of the Christ that was to come, who speaks as it is written: *'No one takes my life from me, but I lay it down of my own accord.'*

Isaac was given back his life by the angel, though it was commanded that he lose it. In this sense, he was raised from the dead, for he was spared from the death to which he was condemned. Yet after this episode, Isaac is no longer referred to as *the son whom Abraham loved*. He is merely Abraham's *son, his only son*, and nothing else. This is not to say that Abraham no longer loved his son: it is to say that the *true* beloved son was yet to come; a son who, like Isaac, would become a sacrifice at the will of His Father; a son who, like Isaac, would accept this charge, and go to the altar of Golgotha.

But unlike Isaac, Jesus, the Christ, would not be spared by the word of the angel. He would indeed die, even die for the sins of the world, and descend into hell.

And yet, He would mirror yet one more thing about his ancestor Isaac: His life would be given back to him. Because of His sinlessness, and the righteous judgment of the Father, He would rise from the dead, and be glorified before the face of all creation. This the Father and the Son did accomplish on the day that we call Easter.

Isaac was spared this fate, because he was an unworthy sacrifice; for he, like us, was a sinner.

Now the worthy sacrifice has come, who has died for the sins of every wretch in this world, and has been raised unto everlasting life, that we too, who are baptized into Him, might also be raised and live forever.

So now we rejoice, this day, this season, and forevermore.

*Christ is risen!* ■



Meet Our New Member!

# Linda Kirtley



On Saturday, March 30th, Linda Kirtley was confirmed in the Christian Faith!

A Mississippi native, Linda was blessed with two sons (one of whom is our very own Glen Hansford!). She devoted almost three decades of her life to teaching, finally putting up the chalk in 2006; though she loved teaching a variety of grades and subjects, she says her favorite part was the association she had with her students.





welcome

Glen invited his mom to join us in worship at Christ Lutheran, and though it was quite different from her Baptist upbringing and experience in the Methodist church, she found it reverent and solidly rooted in Scripture. Before long, she felt she belonged here. Once catechized, Linda was confirmed during the baptismal service of the great Easter Vigil.

When she's not spending time with her grandsons (her favorite pastime, of course!), Linda enjoys gardening, genealogy, and reading. By now you have probably met her, but if not, introduce yourself!

We rejoice with her in her Christian life, and we shall pray for her as she continues to grow in the baptismal Faith. ■



“Having been buried with [Jesus] in baptism, you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead.”

(Colossians 2:12)



# WORK

---

On Saturday, March 23rd, a band of plucky souls set out to tame the wilderness of the church grounds in preparation for the rapidly approaching Holy Week. The Lord spared us the glaring sun and sent an overcast sky to ease our labors. The grounds were left fresh and springy, ready for our Lord's resurrection!



# DAY

These plants don't prune themselves!  
Thank you, Mark and Michelle. 😊



Chuck never ceases  
to blow us away!



Nancy is inside,  
doing the fun job...



Margaret subdues the kitchen and prepares communion for Palm Sunday!



Even on non-Work-Days, we have hard workers who tend the house of God. And as the summer months approach, that work is truly a labor of love. A giant thank-you to Chuck, David, and the Pedersens for their faithful service!



Aaaaaaall the pinestraw!!

Mark scolds all unruly overgrowth: "Zer must be order!"



The shrubbery put up a good fight, but it's no match for our men.







Thank you, to all who came,  
for your beautiful work! ■

CHRIST  
LUTHERAN  
CHURCH  
1958









# Christ Lutheran Quilters



Our quilters have been hard at work! Cutting, stitching, and tying, they continue to churn out beautiful blankets for our community. You might have noticed piles of folded quilts on the table in the Fellowship Hall after they meet—these await the Stewpot, where they are given to those in need!

If you are ever interested in joining them, our quilters love company! Just watch the bulletin for quilting dates each month, and come enjoy a cup of coffee and a pleasant morning of fabric and fellowship! ■





The choir rehearses for the holiest of weeks...



One of the many responsibilities of the Altar Guild, they prepare the palms for Palm Sunday.



Excitement builds as we gather in the narthex for the procession of palms!

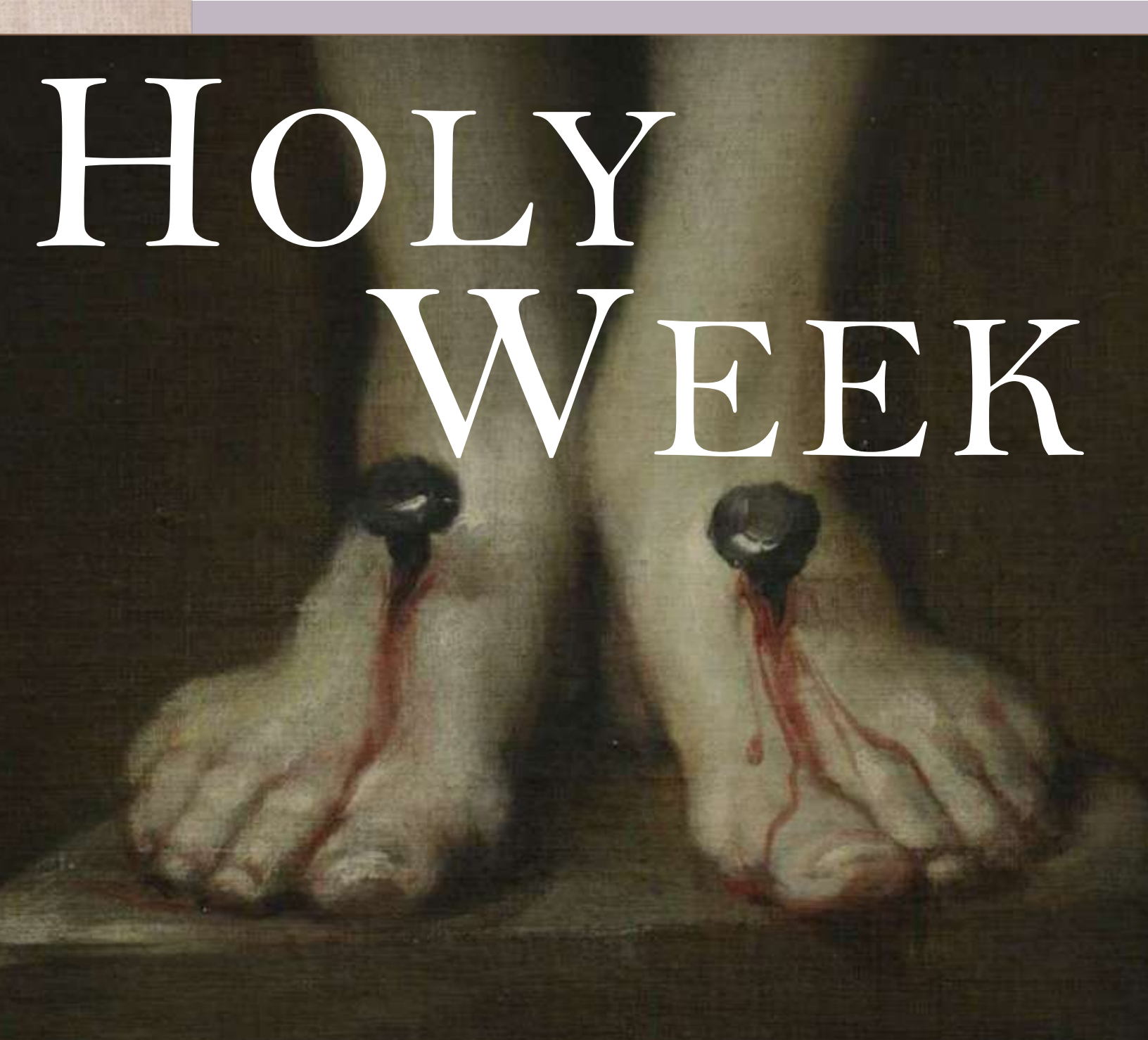
Pastor rehearses the Gospel procession with the acolytes.



The Gospel procession of Palm Sunday. "Praise be to Thee, O Christ."



# HOLY WEEK

A close-up photograph of two hands, likely representing the hands of Jesus, with visible wounds and blood. The hands are positioned in the center of the page, with the text 'HOLY WEEK' overlaid in large white letters. The background is dark and textured, possibly a wall or a piece of fabric.

This is the week of our Lord's Passion. This week is set apart from all other weeks; these days are the holiest of days. On Palm Sunday, the Messiah is greeted in Jerusalem with palms and shouts of "Hosanna." On Maundy Thursday, the night of the Passover of God, Christ the Lamb gives us His own Flesh to eat and Blood to drink. And, having given Himself for our salvation, He is delivered into the hands of wicked men. Our Lord is lifted high upon the cross on Good Friday: a shame before the eyes of men; but to those who see, the cross is His throne and the thorns, His crown. Descending to the heart of Hell on Easter Vigil, Jesus proclaims His triumph over the Kingdom of Death, binds the strong man, and leads the saints out in His victorious train. It is because of all this, our Lord's dear sacrifice and glorious victory, that we and all the redeemed may cry,

**"Christ is risen! Alleluia!"**





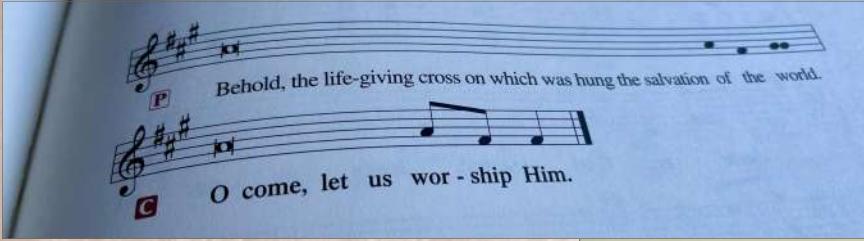
Maundy Thursday's Divine Service ends with the stripping of the altar as the cantor sings Psalm 22.

[Shoutout to our interpreter, Denee!]

The Altar Guild rehearses before the service...





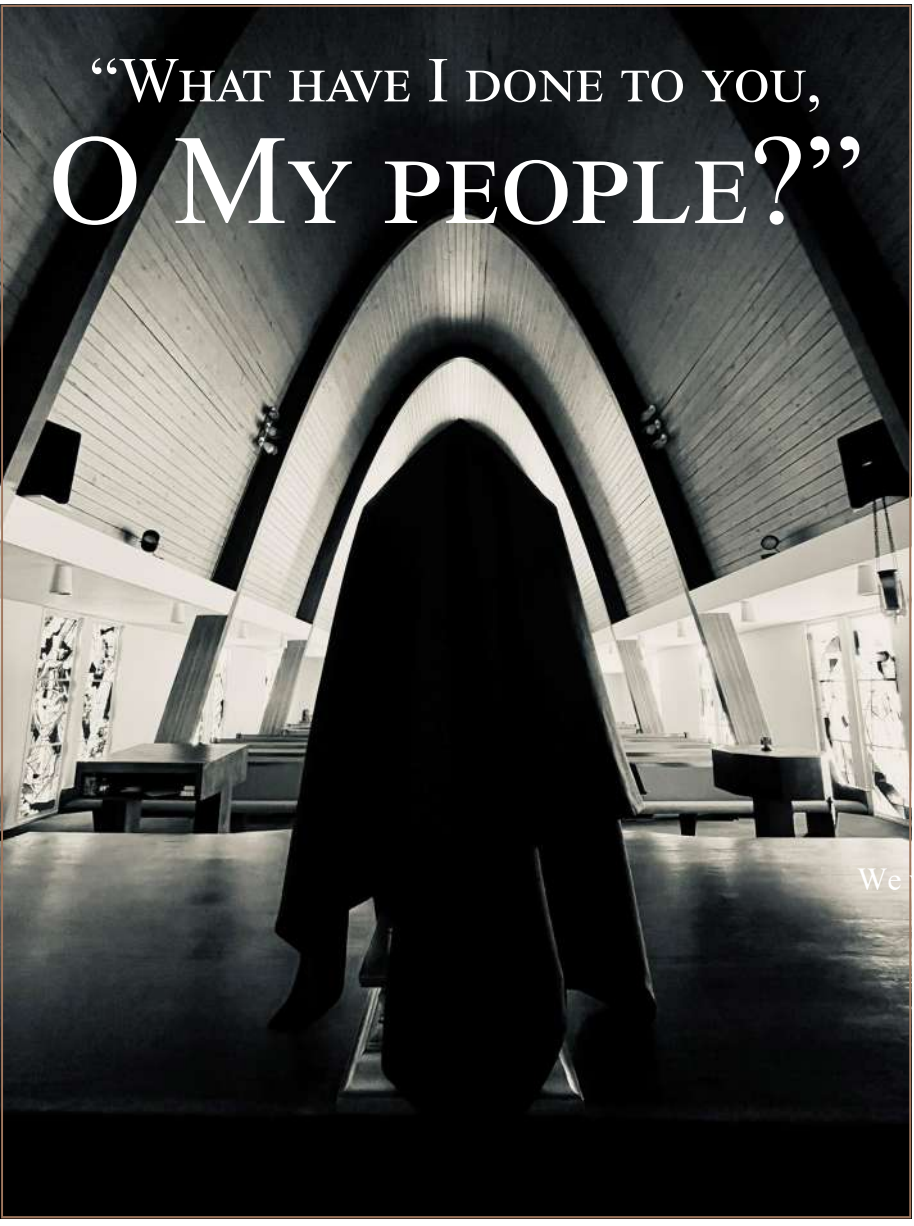


The Church traversed the Triduum during Holy Week: the three days of our Lord's betrayal (Maundy Thursday), death (Good Friday), and descent into Hell (Easter Vigil).

Sing my tongue, the glorious battle!



On Good Friday, the only day of the Church year on which the altar is bare, the engraved stigmata (five wounds of Christ) are revealed on the naked wood of the altar.



We wait ou



Chuck, master of the bonfire!



We end Holy Saturday with the Easter Vigil... a service which begins outside in the darkness, slowly illumined with the Light of Christ as we process into the House of God.



The Light pierces the darkness!





The saints process from the outer darkness into the sanctuary, led by the Light of Christ. "Rejoice now, all you heavenly choirs of angels...!"



The baptismal font awaits the Service of Baptism, wherein we remember that we are clothed in Christ by the water and the Word.

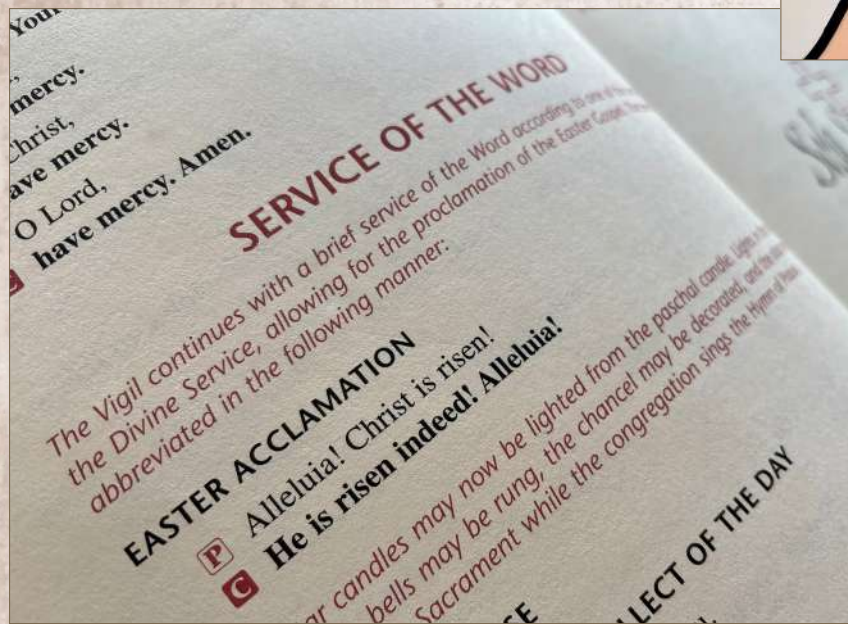
"The Light of Christ!"



During the Service of Baptism, the elder sprinkles us with the water from the font, recalling our own baptism into Christ.

We traverse the many readings of the Old Testament, awaiting the promise of salvation...





Christ is arisen! From  
the grave's dark  
prison...



Earlier in the day, a certain Allen and Sabrina decorated the Fellowship Hall for the Feast Brunch to come...

Meanwhile, Easter lilies awaited the resurrection with unparalleled patience.



And late at night, long after everyone departed from the Easter Vigil, the Altar Guild stayed behind to prepare for the Feast of the Resurrection! ■



ly right to shine with the  
the spirit of ad...









## On the Name...

One often hears that Easter is a pagan holiday, and pagan season, due to the fact that the word 'Easter' derives from the Anglo-Saxon word '*Eostre*,' the name of a pre-Christian goddess worshipped in what is now England. It is true that *Eostre* was the name of a goddess, but that has very little to do with the Feast of Easter. Many days and seasons in pre-Christian England were named after gods and goddesses, even as now Tuesday is named after *Tiwaz*, known better as *Thor*; Wednesday after *Wodin*, known better as *Odin*; Thursday after *Thunr*, known better as *Thor*; Friday, after *Frigg*, known by some as *Freya*; and Saturday, named after *Saturn*, the god of time.

Such ancient naming conventions are not restricted to days, but also to months. Even now, our month of July is named after the deified Emperor *Julius Caesar*, and our month August after his nephew, *Augustus*. January is named after *Janus*, the god of doors, gates, entrances, and beginnings. March is named after *Mars*, the god of war.

I need not go on.

This is to all say that when we say 'Thank God it's Friday!' we are in no way commending ourselves to the goddess *Freya*.

So in the same way, when we celebrate Easter, we are in no way commending ourselves to the goddess *Eostre*.

It just so happens that the month of April in ancient England was named after *Eostre*, and since Easter usually falls during the month of April, it came to be named after the month, not the goddess: hence Easter.

In nearly every non-English language, the Feast of Easter is named simply 'Passover.' In French, it is '*Pasque*,' in Greek, '*Pascha*,' in Russian, '*Pashka*,' in Amharic, '*Fasika*,' in Gaelic, '*Pasg*,' all derived from the Hebrew word for Passover, '*Pesach*.'

So away with this godless speculation that Easter is really just a pagan holiday. It is nothing but Passover, the day when the lamb was slaughtered and eaten that the people of God might be saved from death and set free from slavery. For indeed the Lamb was slain, upon the Holy Cross; and indeed, we have been saved by His blood.

Identities of  
Easter

*Pastor Fields*



## On the Egg...

People tend to think that anything in Christianity that is eccentric must be pagan in its origins. This is just a case of bigotry, because they assume that anything that is fun cannot be godly. This applies to the case of the 'Easter Egg' and its associated 'Hunt.'

The egg has since ancient times been associated with Easter for a simple and obvious reason; an egg is a symbol of birth, and since in ancient times new converts were baptized (their rebirth by water and the Holy Spirit) on the Eve of Easter (Holy Saturday), the egg became easily attached to the date.

Dying the egg also sprang from this. These days, we dye eggs on Easter all sorts of colors, but traditionally eggs were dyed red by boiling them together with the skins of red onions. This is because Holy Saturday falls between Good Friday and Easter Sunday. Thus they are red, to symbolize the blood of Christ, and they are, well, *eggs*, to symbolize the Resurrection of Christ on Easter, and with it the new birth of the Christian by baptism.

As for the hunt, its origins are more obscure, but seem to come from the idea of 'remembering one's baptism,' that is, searching for and finding one's new birth and new life in Christ in a garden, which is usually now-adays someone's backyard, but still remains a symbol of Eden.

This is the history of the Easter Egg.





# On the Bunny...

Another lovely tradition often accused of being of pagan origin is the Easter Bunny. Far from being pagan, it is one of the oldest symbols of Christianity.

The most ancient churches still extant in all the world, from India, Persia, and Iraq, to France and England, often have the symbol of three hares chasing each other in a circle. This was a symbol of the Trinity, as there are three persons in the trinity, none preceding or succeeding the other: and being presented as rabbits, since it was

believed in ancient times that rabbits produced offspring without mating, just as the persons of the Trinity flow from one another without a mate.

The rabbit being associated with God, during the Middle Ages, it was common in stain-glass paintings representing the Resurrection of Christ to have in the corner a depiction of a rabbit coming out of a hole as a picture of Jesus rising out of Hell.

So now even your pet bunny declares the victory of Christ over sin, death, and the devil. ■









# He is Risen alleluia



After a week of tracing Christ's steps through His Passion, all the drama burst forth into the beautiful alleluias of Easter Day. The church was clad in white, from its paraments to its lilies (and even some of its people!), and the sanctuary surged with song. We thank God for our salvation, bought in His own Blood, and we rejoice with shouts of alleluia on this eternal Easter day!





The Feast of the Resurrection was celebrated on March 31st, replete with joyous voices, resounding brass, and glorious descants. But most importantly, we joined in the Marriage Feast of the Lamb, ascending the steps of the chancel to receive the food of immortality upon our lips on this most holy day.

Pale in comparison, but sublimely scrumptious nonetheless, was the “hors d'oeuvres” to the Feast, if you will! We enjoyed a heavenly spread of brunchy goodness during the Sunday school hour, with various meats and casseroles, fruits and egg dishes, and of course, a tableful of carb-alicious sweet breads (thank you, cooks and bakers!). While the adults savored and chatted, the kids inhaled their food and flew outside for the Easter egg hunt. The older kids hid the chocolatey treats and the younger ones enjoyed finding them. Thank you to all who organized and participated in the festivity of this holy Easter Day! ■









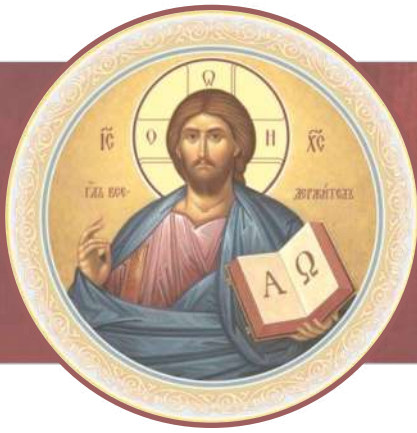
Jesus  
Christ





is risen today!





# THIS MONTH

## *At Christ Lutheran*

### ~ Altar Flowers ~

Sign up on the Fellowship Hall bulletin board to provide altar flowers in 2023. They are \$45, and you may take them home after the worship service.

Thank you for beautifying the Lord's house!



### **Saints' Days in April**

- 4 St. Ambrose, Bishop and Confessor
- 6 Sts. Lucas Cranach & Albrecht Durer, Artists
- 10 St. Daniel the Prophet
- 16 St. Aaron, Brother of Moses, High Priest
- 17 St. Philipp Melancthon, Confessor
- 20 St. Johannes Bugenhagen, Pastor
- 21 St. Anselm of Canterbury, Archbishop, Confessor
- 23 St. George, Martyr
- 24 St. Johann Walter, Kantor
- 25 St. Mark the Evangelist



### **Saints' Days in May**

- 1 Sts. Philip & James, Apostles
- 2 St. Athanasius, Bishop & Confessor
- 4 St. Monica, Mother of Augustine
- 4 St. Friedrich Wyneken, Pastor & Missionary
- 5 St. Frederick the Wise, Christian Ruler
- 7 St. C.F.W. Walther, Theologian
- 9 St. Gregory Nazianzus, Bishop & Confessor
- 9 St. Job, Confessor
- 11 Sts. Cyril & Methodius, Missionaries to the Slavs
- 21 Emperor Constantine, Christian Ruler
- 21 St. Helena, Mother of Constantine
- 24 St. Esther, Queen
- 25 St. Bede the Venerable, Confessor & Theologian
- 31 The Visitation





**Artwork in This Issue:**

Cover: *Christ in the Realm of the Dead*, Joakim Skovgaard, 1891-4.

Page 4: *The Sacrifice of Isaac*, Jacob Jordaens, 1630.

Page 15: *The Crucifixion*, detail, Alonso Cano, 1646.

Page 24: *Orthodox Nun Painting Easter Eggs*, unknown.

Page 25: *Three Hares motif in the replica of the Gwozdziec synagogue ceiling*, photo by Ruth Ellen Gruber.

# Issues, Etc.



Christ-Centered Cross-Focused Talk Radio

[www.issuesetc.org](http://www.issuesetc.org)

## Calling All Quilters! (And Non-Quilters, too!)

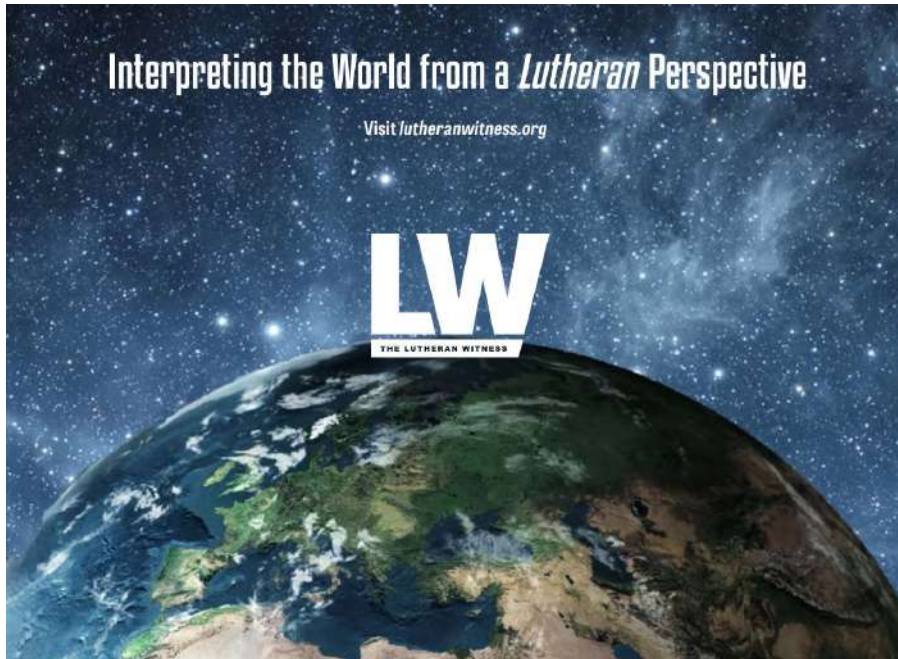
We will be quilting on  
**Thursday, April 18**  
**Friday, April 19**  
**at 9:00 a.m.**

Come for a relaxed morning  
of fellowship.

Interpreting the World from a *Lutheran* Perspective

Visit [lutheranwitness.org](http://lutheranwitness.org)

**LW**  
THE LUTHERAN WITNESS



JOIN US FOR  
**BIBLE STUDY**

bible & breaky | fridays @ 6:30 a.m.



**FEAST OF ASCENSION**

+ May 9 +  
7:00 p.m.





Center for  
Pregnancy  
Choices  
Metro Area



# Life Walk

2024

**SATURDAY, MAY 4TH**

Trustmark Park

Registration begins at 8 am | Walk begins at 9 am

Must be a registered fundraising walker to attend.  
Register as a walker or create a team.

[www.cpcmetrofriends.org/lifewalk](http://www.cpcmetrofriends.org/lifewalk)



## FEAST OF PENTECOST

+ May 19 +  
10:30 a.m.

Peter: John, why you running so fast?? It's not a race, no one will ever know you even won!!

John:



## HOLY TRINITY

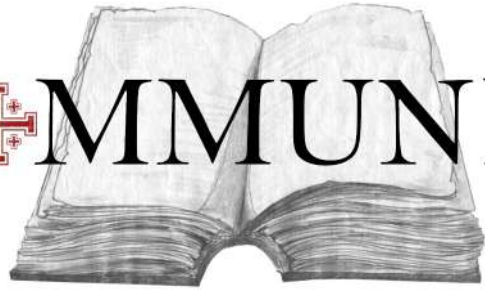
+ May 26 +  
10:30 a.m.



## VOTERS' MEETING May 19

The regular bi-annual Congregation Voter's Assembly will convene immediately following the worship service **Sunday, May 19<sup>th</sup>, 2024** to approve the slate of council officers. All members are encouraged to attend.

# C<sup>+</sup>MMUNIO



Various & Sundry  
— Topics for Today —  
April 28, May 19  
5:00 p.m.

Shoutout to my cheerleader  
as I work on the  
“infernal” [beloved!] newsletter!  
You know who you are. ☺



JOIN US FOR

*ladies night out and a*  
**DIAPER SHOWER**

*as we celebrate the mommy-to-be*

**Christa Kettler**



Wednesday, May 15th @ 6:00 PM

Newk's @ The Township  
Ridgeland, MS

RSVP: Allison @ 601.842.6878



# May 2024

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>PRAYER FAMILIES and BIRTHDAYS</b> <i>Will Pickering</i> 1—Sister Sara	28 Easter V 9:00 a.m. Sunday School 10:30 a.m. Divine Service	29	30	1 <i>Sts. Philip &amp; James</i>	2 <i>St. Athanasius</i>	3 6:30 a.m. Bible Study	4 8:00 a.m. CPC Life Walk <i>St. Monica</i> <i>St. Friedrich</i>
	<b>Serving this month:</b> Elder—Eric Held Ushers—Bruce Bodkin, Mark Ochs						
<b>Ramsey Family</b> 9—Nancy Teal	5 <b>EASTER VI</b> 9:00 a.m. Sunday School 10:30 a.m. Divine Service <i>St. Frederick the Wise</i>	6	7	8	9 <b>FEAST OF ASCENSION</b>  7:00 p.m. Divine Service <i>St. Gregory Nazianzus</i> <i>St. Job</i>	10 6:30 a.m. Bible Study	11 <i>Sts. Cyril &amp; Methodius</i>
	<b>Laura Rawson</b> 16—Andy Evers 16—Mimi Bradley 17—Elysia Fields 17—James Hansford 18—Ben Rudzenske	12 <b>EASTER VIII</b> 9:00 a.m. Sunday School 10:30 a.m. Divine Service	13	14	15 6:00 Ladies Night Out—Kettler Diaper Shower	16	17 6:30 a.m. Bible Study
<b>Leslie Ridlehoover</b>	19 <b>FEAST OF PENTECOST</b> 9:00 a.m. Sunday School 10:30 a.m. Divine Service 11:30 a.m. Voters Meeting 5:00 p.m. Communion	20	21	22	23	24 6:30 a.m. Bible Study <i>St. Esther</i>	25 <i>St. Bede the Venerable</i>
	<b>Keeley Rimoldi</b> 30—Alaena Ramsey	26 <b>FEAST OF THE HOLY TRINITY</b>  9:00 a.m. Sunday School 10:30 a.m. Divine Service	27	28	29	30	31 6:30 a.m. Bible Study <i>The Visitation</i>