

Prince of Peace Tidings

Volume 26

April 2024

Issue 4

Easter: The Queen of the Seasons

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ:

Now the queen of seasons, bright

With the day of splendor,

With the royal feast of feasts

Comes its joy to render;

Comes to gladden faithful hearts

Which with true affection

Welcome in unwearied strain

Jesus' resurrection! (Come, You Faithful, Raise the Strain: LSB 487, stanza 3)

Alleluia! Christ is risen! He is risen, indeed! Alleluia!

“Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God finished His work that He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work that He had done. So God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it God rested from all His work that He had done in creation” (Genesis 2:1-3).

God died on Good Friday. Yes, I said that right. God died. The Second Person of the Holy Trinity died. The Trinity was out whack. Darkness fell. Earthquakes rocked. Dead awoke from tombs. Jesus, the Son of God, was scorned by the ones He came to save. But on that cross, the wrath of His Father was satisfied for every sin on Him was laid.

God rested on Saturday. He rested from all the work He had done. This same God who created the heavens and the earth previously rested on the seventh day of creation. This time, He rests from giving the gift of salvation to all who would believe. There in the ground His body lay.

Then bursting forth on Sunday in glorious day up from the grave He rose again! Bursting forth on the eighth day, God justifies us as He reveals His victory over our evil foes: sin, eternal death, and the devil. Since Jesus is fully man, He has atoned for the world's sins. Since Jesus is fully God, He gives eternal life. We, by grace through faith in Christ alone, share this victory!

Alleluia! Christ is risen! He is risen, indeed! Alleluia!

The Feast of the Resurrection of Our Lord has been referred as “the Queen of the Seasons.” Salvation from the powers of sin, eternal death, and the devil is the gift of Easter. But there would not have been Easter without “the King of the Seasons.” What could be the “King”? The King could only be the Incarnation, when God became man: The Nativity of Our Lord, Christmas. So, just as Christmas is celebrated over 12 days, Easter cannot be contained to just one day. Easter is a celebration of 50 days! Easter culminates in the in the Feast of Pentecost on the eighth Sunday (or the *eighth* eighth day).

Throughout the Easter festival, there is a strong focus on the resurrection appearances of Jesus. The Second Sunday of Easter features the appearance of the risen Lord on the first and eighth days, once while the apostle Thomas is absent and then again when he is present.

Later in the festival, the Lord's pastoral care for His Church is emphasized, firstly with Good Shepherd Sunday, as Jesus who laid down His life willingly to take it up again, He gives abundant life to His sheep through the ministry of the Gospel. Through the Gospel, Jesus teaches us how to pray to His Father with faith and confidence in His Name and to rejoice in His victory over sin and death, even in the midst of suffering and pain. Jesus gives us His Word and Spirit. And so, the Christian life is a life of prayer and rejoicing in the resurrection of Jesus Christ, as we too, will also rise to life on the Last Day.

Alleluia! Christ is risen! He is risen, indeed! Alleluia!

In Christ,

Pastor Adelsen

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Sunday Adult Bible Study: Back to the Basics with Luther's Large Catechism

In his *Large Catechism*, Martin Luther writes this of the catechism, "A Christian should daily exercise themselves in the catechism, which is a short summary and epitome of the entire Holy Scriptures." But what do we usually end up doing once we are catechized? We put away Luther's *Small Catechism* and it gathers dust on a shelf. Why do so many Christians do this? Well, Luther has the not-so-good answer: "[We] assume that [we] have finished learning the parts of the catechism or know it well enough in all points. But, even if [we] know and understand the catechism perfectly (which, however, is impossible in this life), there are still so many benefits and fruits to be gained." In other words, we think that we have graduated and so, we must know enough.

So, what can be gained by studying the catechism? Well, catechism study is a most effective help against the devil, the world, and all evil thoughts. It helps to be occupied with God's Word, to speak it, and meditate on it. Certainly, as Luther says, you will not release a stronger repellent against the devil than to be engaged by God's commandments and words, and speak, sing, or think them.

Come and join us each Sunday following the Divine Service and fellowship time! Each past handout is available online at <http://www.wspop.org/adult-bible-studies.html>. Past studies are also available through Pastor Adelsen.

IS IN VITRO FERTILIZATION ETHICAL?

The desire for descendants comes from God. He has given within us the holy longing to hold our own offspring. He Himself has bestowed upon us the heavenly blessing of having babies. **"Be fruitful and multiply and fill the**



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earth" (Genesis 1:28a) affixes the Lord's benediction to man and wife made in Trinity's image. This image includes the two becoming one flesh (Matthew 19:5) in the person of a third.

Pregnancy comes about only in accordance with His will. **"Behold, children are a heritage from the Lord"** (Psalm 127:3a). It does not operate as mechanical or automatic "reproduction," as if apart from our Creator. Whatever the circumstances or mechanisms of conception, it constitutes a gift of God. Zygotes, embryos, and fetuses always amount to full-fledged human beings, however they originated. **"Let the children come to me; do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God"** (Mark 10:14b). Even out of sexual assault, infidelity, or other awfulness, children bear no blame for their parents' mistakes. God's grace gets credit for every conception. Indeed, Lord God retains all

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responsibility for every opened womb (Genesis 20:17, 29:31, 30:22)—and reserves every right to close wombs (Genesis 20:18, 30:2; 1 Samuel 1:5-6).

So, unsurprisingly, the devil directly assaults procreation. Sin's intrusion into human nature significantly impacted the privilege of producing children, making it more difficult and at times impossible. **"I will surely multiply your pain in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children"** (Genesis 3:16a). Yet Almighty Maker claims even this predicament as occasion to extend His great love. Scripture and its Savior prove sensitive to the sorrows of those struggling with infertility. The Lord listens to the cries of patriarchs (Genesis 15:1-3, 25:21, 30:1) and prophets (1 Samuel 1:1-16, 2 Kings 4:8-17, Jeremiah 31:15, Isaiah 54:1) and lifts the curse from them. Jesus also intervenes with His crucifixion to roll back barrenness: **"[B]ehold, your son!"** and **"Behold, your mother!"** (John 19:26-27)

Still Satan meddles, despite divine compassion, or perhaps precisely because of it. The Ancient Serpent can use infertility as opportune time for transforming desires to idols and twist sinfulness from gifts. Not every strategy or solution for childlessness channels the good and gracious will of God. Abduction and adultery, for example, do not make God-pleasing means of obtaining family. What about *in vitro* fertilization? Certainly, many Christian couples have succeeded in childbearing utilizing this technique. The process of IVF, however, presents several ethical questions and problems.

IVF usually begins with intensive medication. These chemicals make a woman's body generate more than the normal one ovum (egg) per monthly cycle. Such a procedure aims to reduce the costs and delays associated with collecting the necessary cells. But it also endangers the would-be mother's health and safety. It can cause ovarian hyperstimulation syndrome (OHSS), with symptoms such as abdominal pain, excessive weight gain, nausea, diarrhea, blood clots, respiratory distress and fluid accumulation, cysts on ovaries and rupture thereof, and death. Gathering the father-to-be's gametes may also involve questionable methods like masturbation. Some IVF attempts use eggs or sperm from donors due to deficiencies in the man's or woman's reproductive system. Inserting a third party into the two-becoming-one and removing the resulting child from a biological parent wanders away from the good things God imparts and outlines in the sixth and fourth commandments.

After this, IVF combines the sperm and egg cells in a laboratory container. (The Latin phrase *in vitro* translates into English as "in glass.") Not every mingling of sperm and egg yields an embryo. Because of the expenses and intervals IVF entails, technicians almost always try to make multiple embryos. Not every embryo formed survives, and not every

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embryo transferred from lab to womb implants (only 35% transition to viable pregnancies). Typically, physicians transfer a few or even several embryos at a time to increase the odds that at least one makes it. From among all the embryos cultivated, doctors assess and select specimens for transfer by grading their appearance (a rather unscientific and somewhat subjective approach).

Sometimes more than one embryo does implant. Many practitioners then recommend “selective reduction” (aborting the additional babies) to improve the resources and chances available to the desired child. In addition, they either discard the “left over” embryos (as “medical waste”), donate them for experiments that destroy them, or hold them in frozen storage to preserve them for future transfers. This freezing frequently causes damage or death to the embryos. Furthermore, budgets dictate that embryos be frozen and thawed in groups of two to five (called straws) rather than individually.

Every step of the IVF sequence appears to endanger embryos. This especially holds true if the woman’s fertility difficulties derive from a womb that is less conducive or even inhospitable to gestation. Placing embryos in such hostile surroundings, even with the best sentiments, exposes them to an unsafe environment. All along the way, IVF risks laying greater weight upon adult desires (and economic concerns?) than the best interests of the child. And while taking certain careful measures (less aggressive collection methods, or fertilizing and implanting only single embryos) may mitigate some of the above moral perils, other obstacles remain intrinsic to IVF in any form. For these reasons, Lutherans For Life objects to and opposes the use of in vitro fertilization.

We also rejoice that God forgives even sins against life. None of our sins (and we all have sinned and are sinful) can lessen His love or undo His grace. Jesus Christ’s incarnation, crucifixion, and resurrection have demonstrated that He redeems also our failures and brings good from not-good. We celebrate couples who have undergone IVF and their children as persons eternally precious to God our Creator and Savior. We encourage compassionate ministry to them, not condemnation, that they may receive the comfort of Christ. Despite discomfort with IVF, Christians ought not to abandon our brothers and sisters who struggle with infertility. Along with the promises of the Gospel and the body of Christ accompanying one another under crosses, we advocate God-given medical treatment options that mediate the healing power of Jesus. Chief among these is NaProTechnology (www.naprotechnology.com). This natural procreative approach seeks to investigate, diagnose, and remedy men’s and women’s reproductive abnormalities rather than circumventing them.

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Though parts of our bodies have fallen asleep, our spirits have been awakened to Him whose voice raises from death (John 5:28-29, Ephesians 5:14). It is His way to call into being things that are not (Romans 4:17), and **“out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham”** (Matthew 3:9 NIV). He who has already done it to us will also do it for us, and the One who has begun the good work in us will carry it on to completion at the day of our Lord Jesus Christ (Philippians 1:6)!

<https://lutheransforlife.org/article/is-in-vitro-fertilization-ethical/>

Equipping Lutherans and their neighbors to be Gospel-motivated voices For Life

LIFE NEWS—APRIL 2024



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Life Newsbytes

An excerpt from “A Statement on the Alabama Supreme Court In Vitro Decision”:

Lutherans For Life has adopted a position statement on in vitro fertilization which “recognizes the pain of childlessness and that some people, desiring to have children, have used in vitro fertilization without realizing or considering the potential consequences for the embryos involved,” but also recognizes that in vitro fertilization often results in the destruction of unused embryos. The position statement therefore concludes that “Lutherans For Life at the present time objects to and opposes the use of in vitro fertilization” but “does not condemn those married couples who have used in vitro fertilization but encourages ministry to them and to all people such that they may receive the comfort of Christ and His redeeming love.”

Consistent with our position statement, Lutherans For Life applauds the Alabama Supreme Court’s decision and hopes that continued research will develop ways in which those who are unable to conceive children will be able to have families without risking the loss of unborn human life.

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You can read the complete statement and find a link to all LFL position statements, at: lutheransforlife.org/article/a-statement-on-the-alabama-supreme-court-in-vitro-decision.

Speaking up For Life

“Our true identity turns us back toward our Creator, the one who not only made us but also defines us in His Word. So, permit me to remind you of that truth once more: You are a created child of God. You are handmade by Him, loved by Him, redeemed by Him, and sustained by Him. The gifts you possess are gifts He’s given you; all that is good comes from Him. Your identity and your value are, always were, and always will be, found in Him.”
Michelle Bauman, Y4Life

“Today, we often find lines, divisions, and hate, but we hope to spread a little love and hope. Life is a valuable gift at all ages and all stages of life, and it should be protected.” *Kambria Steinhaus, Knights 4 Life*

“I encourage everyone that I meet with to check my words and teaching against God’s Word. Ask questions, challenge everything by that Word. I want them to know Jesus and to have that faith which says, ‘This is what Jesus says: I am forgiven! I am set free! I am serving and living as a disciple of Jesus! I will go into heaven because of Jesus! ... I am part of God’s family!’”
Pastor Darren Green, Redwood Falls, Minnesota

lutheransforlife.org/resources/life-quotes

Whose Is It Anyway?

If you have ever bought or sold a house, you are acquainted with the concept of a “title search.” Before you can sell your house, and before anyone else will feel comfortable putting down the money to buy it, you have to prove that you really own it. So a title company looks through the public records to ensure that you bought it from the person who really owned it, who bought it from the person who really owned it before that, all the way back to the earliest records of your state, including when your state was only a territory or colony of England.



Peak into a preschool classroom during playtime and you’ll see a simplified version of this. A child starts playing with a ball, but another child says, “That’s mine: I had it first.”

You can’t understand the Seventh Commandment without understanding this concept of ownership or title. As the Small Catechism puts it:

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You shall not steal. What does this mean? We should fear and love God so that we do not take our neighbor's money or possessions, or get them in any dishonest way, but help him to improve and protect his possessions and income.

Your neighbor's possessions are *his*: you don't have a right to take them. And likewise, your possessions are yours. Ownership and property rights are foundational to any functioning society.

But there is something deeper to know about ownership, and that is the question of who has the title and ownership *to you*? Paul says, "Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price" (1 Cor. 6:19–20).

If you yourself are owned by God, then of course everything that you own, you really only possess by God's leave: all of it, at bottom, belongs to Him since *you* belong to Him. For you were bought with the blood of Christ.

This notion is the foundation of all Christian stewardship. It all belongs to God. It should all be used for things that bring honor to His name, blessings to our neighbors and the extension of His kingdom.

LWML News:

Our next meeting will be Saturday morning, April 6, at 9 a.m.

All the ladies of the church are invited to the church as we host our zone's Spring Rally on April 20. See your News and Notes in the bulletins on Sunday for more information.

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Congregational President's Comments April 2024

Easter is the most magnificent time of the year. Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ has risen from the grave. Our sins are forgiven and salvation is ours through the suffering, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

The steering committee for the proposed new Lutheran school has recently heard from synod regarding a general outline of requirements for "phase 2" project analysis. It appears, much to my personal chagrin, that no further consideration has been given toward alternative schools such as cooperative home schools, use of existing church spaces for targeted grade levels, among other possible choices. The review of the recent communication from steering committee leaders and synod evidently focuses on a stand-alone brick and mortar, likely located in Holmen and perhaps associated with Gift of Grace Church. The study group will be discussing this information in April. Specific questions that will need to be considered by church council will be with regard to continued participation in this effort. Funding requests, if recommended, would come before our voter meeting in June. The most recent information will be posted on the information kiosk.

The trustees have been working with WisDOT, La Crosse County Highway Department, Village of West Salem, and Xcel Energy to install an overhead street light near the stop sign at Hardie Road and State Highway 16 (our entry). The light project is generally approved. Xcel is working to incorporate that light installation with the power line work necessary to accommodate Marcie's pet development south of church property.

A copy of The Large and Small Catechism is available and offered to everyone and anyone as desired. A free will offering is appreciated to offset costs of the books.

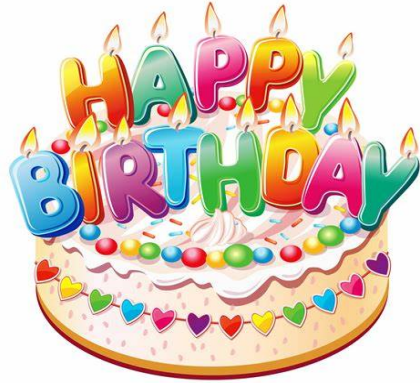
Church attendance remains relatively steady, but could be much better. It is our hope and prayer that we can grow the congregation and enjoy the mutual support of each other in our faith. Our primary mission, however, is not necessarily attendance but rather the delivery of the Gospel to everyone who will listen. The practical fact of the matter is, however, the attendance drives the support of the church. Church financial conditions remain challenging. Pray for the support of our church body!

TOGETHER IN CHRIST. ALLELUIA!

Kurt Childs, Congregational President

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Our April birthdays

Lori Schmidt	11th
Renee Schweinefus	12th
Amy Kuehn	16th
Evan Rowe	17th
Marilyn Smethurst	17th
Todd Seefeldt	20th
Jeremy Schaub	23rd
Linda Williams	24th
Kady Antony	25th
Mel Alsobrooks	29th
Margot Pyatt	29th
Barb Alsobrooks	30th
Emma Ford	30th

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April Schedules

Ushers

April 7-Willie & Leatta Danielson

April 14-Mike & Carolyn Dosland

April 21-Russ & Sharie Brunk

April 28-Elaine Schmidt & Garry Hensley

Greeters

April 7-POP Family

April 14-Christ Leis & Barb Hinds

April 21-POP Family

April 28-Randy & DeAnne Otto

Money counters

April 7-Ona Childs & Barb Alsobrooks

April 14-Elaine Schmidt & Debbie Dunnum

April 21-Barb Hinds & Lori Peters

April 28-Chris Leis & Barb Alsobrooks

Song Leaders

April 7-Patty & Nancy Horstmann

April 14-Brooklynn Scholze

April 21-Holly Ford

April 28-Sarah Kolander

Altar Guild

Ona Childs

Jodi Soto

April 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 No Monday Service	2	3 Bible study: 9:30 a.m. Catechism: 5:30	4	5 Pastor's day off	6 LWML 9 a.m.
7 Divine Service: 9 a.m. Bible study for all: 10:30 Elders: 11:30	8 Divine Service: 7 p.m.	9	10 Bible study: 9:30 a.m. Catechism: 5:30	11	12 Pastor's day off	13 Women's Bible study: 9 a.m.
14 Divine Service: 9 a.m. Bible study for all: 10:30 Church Council: 11:30	15 Pastors' Conference April 15-17 No Monday service	16	17 No 9:30 Bible study No Catechism class	18	19 Pastor's day off	20 LWML Spring Rally at POP: 8:30 a.m.
21 Divine Service: 9 a.m. Bible study for all: 10:30	22 Divine Service: 7 p.m.	23	24 Bible study: 9:30 a.m. Catechism: 5:30	25	26 Pastor's day off	27 Women's Bible study: 9 a.m.
28 Divine Service: 9 a.m. Bible study for all: 10:30	29 Divine Service: 7 p.m.	30				

EVENTS

Pastor' Conference

Pastor Adelsen will be gone April 15 to the 17. There won't be a worship service on the 15th, no Bible study or catechism class on the 17th.

All Ladies Invited

All women are invited to the LWML Spring Rally at Prince of Peace on April 20.