

St Matthew's Messenger – April 4, 2009

Easter dawns...

We hear again and again the stories of Jesus' appearances; all the stories the disciples and first communities remembered and wrote down so that they won't be forgotten.

All the gospels are written in the light of the Resurrection, in the light of Easter. Without Resurrection there wouldn't be any New Testament at all. Only in the light of Easter did everything make sense.

Can you believe in Easter, in the Resurrection, that He is being alive in midst of us?

Can you see Him?

There are many things we don't see with our eyes but know they are there: The sun on a cloudy day, the love of someone who is far away, even something as taken for granted as electricity.

We'll surely notice when it's not available. Results or changes that occur make you sure it's there. Resurrection tells us to look for the results, for the changes.

Look at the lost group of disciples: they run away, hide, deny that they have ever known Him, give up and despair. What made them turn around so they can overcome their fear and desperation, gather again as a community and find peace and joy? From where did they get new hope and strength?

Can you believe them? Can you believe in Easter, in the Resurrection, that He is alive in midst of us?

Belief in Resurrection takes time, is a slow process. Therefore we have all the many appearance stories. The disciples have to see Jesus again and again, always at daybreak, very early in the morning, at dawn. English (German as well) can use dawn as a verb. It dawned on them, it took some time. It takes a while to get from night to day, from Good Friday to Easter.

What does Jesus do to convince them He is alive? He opens their eyes, their minds, their hearts, their hands, their doors and windows. Not only a grave opened, that's only the beginning. He opens their eyes. Look at my hands, my feet, my wounds. The tortured one is also the Risen one. He opens their minds so they understand Scripture. To the disciples on the way to Emaus He explains all of it, Torah and Prophets and Writings. He opens their hearts, takes away fear and gives them peace, a peace the world cannot give but also not take away. He opens their hands by giving them a peace of bread and fish to share. He opens their doors and windows, enters where everything is shut down. And they all get another chance: Peter who betrayed Him, Thomas who doubted Him, all the ones who deserted Him, his family who abandoned Him, Paul who persecuted Him.

And then it all ends with singing and worship and amen. "Worthy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain ... power and riches, wisdom and strength, and honor, blessing and glory are his. Amen". What else could they do? What else can we do?

Can you believe this? What else is worth believing?

May it dawn on you that He is alive among us,

Vice-Pastor Birgit Solano

Prayer Corner with Deacon Paul Bellan-Boyer

Prayer grounds us. Prayer lifts us. Prayer sustains us.

Prayer is one of the things which forms us as a community. In prayer, we bring ourselves, our lives, our hopes and fears before God. And we ask that our prayer be taken into God's own life.

We also pray together, that our individual prayers may be our community's concern, and may be lifted up to God in our united voice.

The prayer list at St. Matthew's represents all those people and things for which we seek prayer, which we remember before God, which we place in God's care, seeking help, healing, justice, and blessing. As we pray for all people in their need, we have special concerns for those known to us.

In my own prayer, I find it helpful when I can to know what it is I am praying for. I know this is true for others as well, so with the permission of those requesting prayer, we will occasionally share names and news from our ongoing prayer list, that they might better be part of our prayer life together.

Patrick is Stephanie Sheppard's brother in Trinidad, seeking a match for a kidney transplant

Larry is Lydia Brown's brother in Virginia, recovering from a stem cell transplant, and his wife Pat who has been caring for him

Aunt Sarah, Kim Aycox's aunt, lives by herself in Jersey City

Melissa & Caprice are daughter and grandson of Phil & Nancy Thomas, and recently relocated to Florida

Emily & Albert are long-time members who, following a recent heart attack, just celebrated Emily's 73rd birthday with their great-grandchildren

Almighty God, your care is boundless. Watch over those dear to us, supporting them in need, sustaining them in grace, and being ever-present in love, through Jesus Christ, who lived and prayed for us. Amen.

Sign up for Coffee Hour.

Anyone who is interested in serving on any given Sunday for coffee hour can do so by signing up on the coffee hour sheet posted above the microwave in Banvendam Hall.

Coffee hour consists of you providing a refreshment for the other members of the congregation. Coffee and tea are provided by the church. After the church service is over you go down to the hall and set out the cold beverages, milk, and eats on the table and oversee its distribution. After members are finished then you clean up and put away the things on the tray inside the pantry. Please see Stephanie Sheppard if you have any questions.

Upcoming Events:

Holy Week

Sunday April 5: **Palm Sunday.**

-Procession at 10:45, worship at 11:00

Wednesday April 8: **Last Lenten Wednesday Meditation**

-Light supper at 7pm. Meditation with scripture at 7:30

Thursday April 9: **Maundy Thursday.**

-Worship at 7:30pm.

Friday April 10: **Good Friday**

-Tenebrae Service at 7:30pm.

Sunday April 12: **Easter**

-Breakfast at 10am. Easter Egg Hunt at 10:15. Worship at 11:00.

Monday April 13: **Council Meeting.**

-Pizza and fellowship at 6:30. Meeting at 7:00. All are welcome to attend.

Friday April 24: **Family game night.**

-Come join us for food and games at 7:00pm in Bavendam Hall.

Sunday April 26: **Set up for Rummage Sale**

Sat/Sun May 2,3,9,10: **Rummage Sale**

Mon-Wed May 4,5,6: **Annual Synod Assembly**

Thursday May 7: **National Day of Prayer.**

If you have anything you would like to contribute to St. Matthew's Messenger, please talk to or email Paul Ellis. (gupert.mcsportstien@gmail.com)