APR 2016

First Things
The Newsletter of First Evangelical Lutheran Church

Gather | Grow | Go

561 Chestnut Street, Taylors Falls, MN 55084-1110 651-465-5265 • www.tflutheran.org

Did Easter Change Anything?

By Linda Buxa

It doesn't feel like Easter changed anything.

Death didn't end simply because it was Easter. Many people spent recent weekends burying loved ones who died from old age, terrorist attacks, heroin overdose, illness, suicides, and car accidents.

Troubles didn't magically disappear either. Bills continue to mount, couples are still getting divorced, teens are trying to release their pain by cutting, addictions are being fed, depression is darkening.

Maybe, like Mary in the garden on Easter morning, you find yourself crying because you can't seem to find the Savior. Instead of rejoicing and saying, "He is risen, indeed!" you might want to cry (like King David and Jesus), "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" You want to ask the God who inhabits the whole earth, "Where are you?"

Like Mary standing in the garden, let Jesus wipe your tears away and hear him call you by name. Even though your situation might not change because it was Easter, because of Easter, you are changed. Your Jesus willingly stood between you and the wrath of God and promised that it is finished. By rising from the dead, he changed your status from dead to alive, from slave of Satan to heir of the Father.

Still, because we are not yet in heaven, how can we live with Easter peace in this world when it still feels like Good Friday?

1. **Adjust your expectations.** Jesus tells us that in this world we will have trouble. So why are we surprised every single time we have trouble? A man named Job lost everything all in one day—his whole livelihood, his wealth, and all ten children—and yet he asked, "Shall we accept good from God, and not trouble?" (Job 2:10).

2. **Take heart.** Jesus has overcome the world, so it is well with your soul. It may not seem like it right now, but the peace that Jesus gives does not come because you have no trouble. If it does, then you might need to ask if you are worshiping God or if you simply want to worship a god who does what you want. Your God knows what you need, and he will not fail you.

3. **Look ahead.** St. Augustine knew the truth that God has made us for himself and that our hearts are restless until they rest in him. Say the truth like Job did, "I know that my redeemer lives, and that in the end he will stand on the earth. And after my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God; I myself will see him with my own eyes—I, and not another. How my heart yearns within me!" (Job 19:25-27).

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(By the way, these are not meant to diminish the pain of real world struggles. By all means, please share your burdens with the people God has placed in your life and let them help you carry them. Also, find a trusted pastor for spiritual counseling and a mental health professional to support you through the trials you face.)

Do you need another reminder that God hasn't actually left you or forsaken you? Let yourself be reminded daily in his word, the Bible, that God is still near you, even when it doesn't feel as if he is answering your cries.

Linda Buxa is a writer, Bible study leader, and retreat speaker. She's hoping that even if you didn't have a happy Easter, you had an Easter with the peace that only Jesus can give. For more blogs and devotions visit: http://www.timeofgrace.org

Linda Buxa. "Did Easter Change Anything?" *Time of Grace Blog.* March 28th, 2016 1:00PM. Copyright © 2016 Time of Grace All Rights Reserved. http://www.timeofgrace.org/blog/DidEasterChangeAnything

You are invited
to join First Evangelical Lutheran Church
in celebrating our 156th anniversary
with a potluck and fellowship.

Sunday, April 10th
Worship at 9:00
Potluck celebration to follow.

As part of our anniversary celebration we will
also be showing appreciation for the wonderful disciples
who serve our Lord and each other at this place
and in our community.
Please invite friends and neighbors to celebrate with us.

SCRAPBOOKINGDAY!

Are you interested in a scrapbooking day? We are hosting one at First Lutheran on **Saturday, April 30th from 8am-5pm**. We provide the space. You bring your own supplies. There will be a potluck lunch. Anyone and everyone is welcome. Hope to see you there. Contact the church office with questions at 651-465-5265.

Safeguarding God's Children

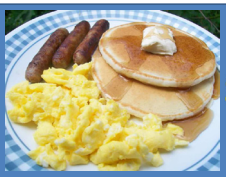
Saturday, April 9, 2016 - 11:30am to 3:30pm
at Trinity Lutheran, Lindstrom.
Training for best practices for child sexual abuse prevention for anyone who is interested. Call Trinity to register. Lunch included. Please register with Trinity by calling 651-257-5129. Will begin with lunch at 11:30; $5 each for lunch. Please let us know if you're joining us so we have enough food & training materials.

INSURANCE DISCOUNT

55+ Driver Improvement

Do you or someone you know need certification to get a discount on auto insurance premiums? If so you can now get your 4 or 8 hours at home on your own computer. (How neat is that!) No more travel and sitting in a classroom. The certification website: www.mnsafetycenter.org

Join Us For a Delicious



Pancake, Sausage & Egg Breakfast

Benefiting the American Cancer Society's Relay For Life of Chisago County

Saturday, April 16, 2016

8:30 am – 11 am

Trinity Lutheran Church

38460 Lincoln Trail - North Branch, MN

Cost: FREE WILL OFFERING

RELAY FOR LIFE American Cancer Society

For more information, please contact:
Martha Arnold at 651-428-1795 or marthaarnold@me.com
Tara Leivian at 763-267-1887 or TRLeivian@gmail.com

www.relayforlife.org/chisagomn

MONTHLY GIVING REPORT

Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. —2 Cor. 9:7 (NIV)

Budgeted Weekly Expenses: $3114.

03/06 Giving:	4,269.70
03/13 Giving:	4,212.75
03/20 Giving:	3,170.34
03/27 Giving:	3,081.00

Thank you for your faithful giving. Please contact FELC Treasurer, Joe Landgreen with any questions or concerns at: 715-417-1429 or jlandgreen.jl@gmail.com.

OFFICE HOURS @ FELC

Monday—Tuesday—Thursday
9:30a-12:30p

April COUNCIL MEETING

Council will meet again, **Sunday, April 10th, at 4:00pm**.

Thrivent CHOICE GIVING

THANK YOU!

First Lutheran Thrivent Choice® participants chose to direct $503 "Choice" dollars to First Lutheran in 2015. The Thrivent Choice program helps Thrivent members make a positive impact in their communities.

APRIL BIRTHDAYS

Carlson, Amanda	04/01
Schrock, Ashley	04/01
Agar, Tristen	04/02
Lindgren, Marvin	04/03
Heyers, Justyne	04/05
Braucks, Sharna	04/06
Olson, Rod	04/06
Bisel, Jenni	04/07
Keto, Drew	04/07
Swenson, Silas	04/07
Hasselquist, Gunner	04/08
Vitalis, Kristian	04/08
Miller, Nicholas	04/09
Nelson, Mark	04/09
Moberg, Molly	04/11
Vitalis, Carol	04/14
Casterton, Josiah	04/16
Tverberg, Vincent	04/16
Vodenka-Reed, Dustin	04/18
Olson, Paul	04/24
Vitalis, Andrew	04/24
Fick, Jeanne	04/26
Heyers, Terrance	04/27
Stolp, Loretta	04/28
Lundholm, Carver	04/30

Please contact the church office if there are any errors or omissions. Thank you.

Thank You

Palm Sunday Breakfast Fundraiser

Thank you to all who attended and gave your time and support to the Palm Sunday fundraiser for the upcoming youth mission trip to Cass Lake again this year. Over $700 was contributed. This is a great help in getting our youth on their way. Thank you!

HEALTHY
Body, Soul & Spirit

CHRISTIAN WOMEN'S CONNECTION
a ministry of stonecroft.org
Mon • April 18th • 11:30am
$10.00—inclusive • Camp Wapogasset
738 Hickory Point Lane, Amery, WI

— Speaker —
Sherian Foster
What's the Good News?

—Music—
Sharon Hawksford

—Special Featuer—
March Hover
Essential Oils for Health Benefits

RESERVATIONS AND CANCELLATIONS NECESSARY.
Please call for reservations at least one week prior.
651-592-7416 (Betty)
715-554-2330 (Mary)

THRIVENT EVENT

"Maximizing Social Security"

Thursday, April 14, 2016
6:30 p.m.
Chisago Lake Luthern Church
1 Summit Avenue
Center City, MN

To reserve your place call:
Chisago Lakes Lutheran
651-257-6300

Men's BIBLE STUDY

Our Saturday morning Men's Bible Study is growing and want to invite you too. Join us at the **Chisago House** each **Saturday morning at 8:00am.** Contact Jerry Rhoads with any questions.

Adult CHOIR SCHEDULE

Rehearsals:
Tuesdays Apr. 5, 12, 19, 26
7:00-8:30pm
Special Dates:
We will plan to sing for worship on **April 10th, 17th, & 24th**. Looking ahead to May we rehearse the 3rd, 10th, and 17th with a tentative date for our rhubarb dessert party on May 24th.

2016 LENT GIVING

Lenten offerings for this season will be split between Together-with-Friends summer day-camp program and the ELCA World Hunger Appeal.

SARAH CIRCLE

Sarah Circle will meet **Tuesday, April 5th at 9:30am** and will be hosted by Edna Curry. All are welcome!

SAP UPDATE

As of this printing, 520 gallons of maple syrup has been cooked—the result of the labor of love of so many. Thanks to all who help support this ministry!

First Lutheran Youth

YOUTH, GRADES 6-12 WELCOME!

CONNECT
to a Christian Community;
INVITE
into the life and love of God;
EQUIP
to make God-honoring choices in their lives and to put their faith into practice.

FLYS chedule

Wednesdays, April 6, 13 & 20
6:30-8:pm - Youth Activities
Wed, April 27
7p Adult Leader Mtg. @ CoffeeTalk

The GREAT BUCKET BRIGADE will be scheduled on a Saturday morning in April when the Sap Season is finished. Please keep this in mind as we will need 30-40 people on hand and we should be finished by noon. This is mandatory attendance/help for youth & families because the Maple Syrup Ministry funds ALL of the youth activities, trips, camps, programs throughout the year. Your help is greatly needed for this big project. Thank you so much!

End of the Year Youth Picnic! WEDNESDAY MAY 18TH 6-8;30pm tentatively at Lundholm's home. ALL 5th -12th graders are welcome and all college youth that are home! Mighty Mighty Scoop Noodle, bonfire, and cookout!

Senior Baccalaureate Worship Service: SUNDAY JUNE 5th 9am; Honoring our 4 graduates: Dalton Langer, Marinda Carlson, Ryan Rogers, and James Goranson. Each graduate will receive a handmade quilt from the church.

RESERVE OUR YOUTH WINTER RETREAT DATES FOR 2017!! The Winter Retreat at Luther Point Bible Camp has already been reserved for February 3-5th, 2017! Get it on your calendars!

Summer Bible Camp at Luther Point: AWESOME camp opportunities abound at Luther Point for children, youth, and famiies. Go to www.lutherpoint.org to see the huge variety of camps they offer; easy registration on-line; and then see Michelle Lynch, Youth Minister, for how the maple syrup funds can assist you with camp costs.

Finding God in our community?

GODWATCH

Cheiko Rogers
Where I come from: Japan
Who are my family members:
Ryan (17) and Luke (15)
What is my occupation: Paralegal

Why do I belong to First Lutheran?
Because it is where my deceased husband Tim's family belongs.

What ways have I been involved in my church or in my greater community?
Even though we live in the cities (an hour away), I have been trying to attend Sunday services and have my sons involved in the youth group activities as much as possible. The Mission Trip and Maple Syrup Ministry have been major parts of my sons' church commitment.

Why am I involved to the extent that I am? Since Tim's passing, I have felt it is very important for my sons to be part of the community in which their father grew up, and learn with people who know the family history and background. We feel 'home' here at First Lutheran.

What is my vision for how God can work through First Lutheran? I have been impressed how close the community is and how everyone is dedicated to serve and help each other. I have seen a lot of good changes in the recent 10 years. I believe our lives are guided to the way we supposed to go.

What is my favorite Bible verse? Corinthians 10:13 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.

What sound reminds you most of God? Soft breeze – When I want to clear my mind, I go to the cemetery in Balsam Lake where Tim and Lee, my father-in-law, are buried. It is the best healing spot for me especially when there is sun shine and soft breeze. I sit in front of their stones and listen for a while – and always get calm and comforted.

Do you think that prayer matters in your life? I believe prayer matters, it gives us togetherness and brings chances to think of others as well as ourselves.

Church Office
651-465-5265
www.tflutheran.org

First Evangelical
LUTHERAN CHURCH of TAYLORS FALLS

Pastor Mary Kaye Ashley
c: 612-532-7083
felcpastor.mk@gmail.com

Michelle Lynch,
Youth Minister/Choir Director
c: 715-220-2782
felcyouthminister@gmail.com

Caroline Greene
Ministry Coordinator,
parishc@tflutheran.org

2015-2016 Council/Officers:

Don Hansen—President

Sharna Braucks—Vice President

Joe Landgreen—Treasurer

Gayle Langer —Secretary

Julie Valez

Duane Olson

Pastor Mary Kaye Ashley

Financial Secretary
Jerry Rhoads

Please hold the ministers and council members in your prayers that God would give them the wisdom, strength, courage, patience and perseverance to serve this community of faith as they lead us in our mission for the sake of the world and the glory of God.

Next council meeting is Sunday, April 10th, 4:00pm in the Library.

Mission Statement

Gather. Grow. Go.

Gather–all people into the saving faith through Jesus Christ and to worship together;

Grow–through the Word of God in faith, understanding, and love with God and one another;

Go–as the Holy Spirit sends us to care, serve, and witness;
For the sake of the world & for the glory of God!
(Mission Statement approved 2009)

"Lord, you have been our dwelling place in all generations." Psalm 90:1

Please send submissions to: parishc@tflutheran.org
Articles Due the 15th of each month.

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651-465-5265 www.tflutheran.org

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