



OUR REDEEMER MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD
TO KNOW CHRIST AND TO MAKE HIM KNOWN

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The Light of Christ

"Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, 'I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.'"

-John 8:12

Child of the Light,

The image of light and darkness has long been a theme of the Christian Church. It is certainly widely used in the Bible, but Jesus as you can see from the above quote of John 8:12, as well as elsewhere. It became a major theme of early Christian hymnody, especially in the early, fourth century Greek church where we find the oldest Christian hymns outside of the Bible. We actually sang the oldest Christian hymn outside of the Bible that we have on Wednesday nights throughout Lent as we sang the "Phos Hilaron" (Joyous Light). There is a reason that there are so many morning and evening hymns in our hymnal beyond convenience or coincidence of service times. For the early Church, it was also a helpful symbol, like that of the fish (the ichthus), because it could be used and talked about openly and publicly even when Christianity was illegal under the threat of death without "outing" oneself as a Christian. It was a beginning point and stepping stone of conversation in their culture and society with the prevalence of "sun gods" and the natural rising and setting of the sun, darkness and light.

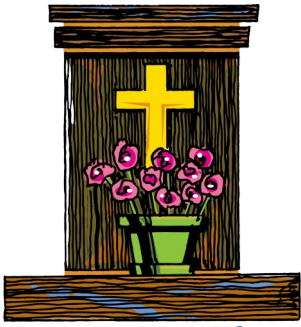
The Bible and Church tradition continues this theme and contrast even to today. Two of my favorite services, Christmas Eve and Good Friday, are favorites because of our use of light and darkness in them. The glowing lights of candles throughout the church on Christmas Eve as "Silent Night" is sung is a favorite moment. The onset of darkness throughout the Good Friday Tenebrae service as candles are extinguished and lights are turned off, finishing in total darkness is a moving and powerful transition.

This year, not for the first time but for the first time in a while, at Our Redeemer, we will celebrate another of these services of the Church that make dramatic use of the theme of darkness and light. The Easter Vigil Service dates back to at least the fourth century (300s A.D.) if not before as a time when the Church would "keep watch" or "keep vigil" for our Lord's resurrection. This service fell out of use for a while and changed over time to develop into its more modern form of an Easter Sunrise service. Before we Westernized and modernized it into the Sunrise service, the Church historically began her Easter celebration with the Easter Vigil service. Since, in the days of Jesus, time was kept from sunset to sunset ("there was evening and there was morning" as we hear in the creation account), rather than sunrise to sunrise as we do, Easter more properly begins at sundown on Saturday rather than sun up on Sunday (just as we celebrate Christmas in the darkness of sundown on December 24 with a Christmas Evening service).

The service is used for many different purposes, but its overall theme is that of the coming of light, salvation, and hope to the Church. As Good Friday ended in darkness, the Easter Vigil begins in darkness. We will gather (God and weather willing) outside of the church around a bonfire to bless and light our new Christ candle. This light of Christ that was extinguished on Good Friday returns to the Church just as life returns to the resting body of Jesus.

Throughout the service, we will hear a number of readings recounting God bringing life and salvation into the world, this year especially, we will hear the accounts of creation, where God brings life into the world; the flood, where God saves Noah and his family from the evils of the world; Israel's deliverance through the Red Sea, where God saves His people from slavery and death at the hands of the Egyptians; and the fiery furnace, where God saves three men from fire and death.

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FROM THE
Pulpit

Hymn of the Month | *Jesus Christ is Risen Today* (LSB 457)

4/2 | Holy Thursday

Title: Pierced for You
Text: Matthew 26:17-30

4/3 | Good Friday Tenebrae

Title: Crucified for You
Text: Matthew 26:30-27:61

4/4 | Easter Vigil

Title: Keeping Vigil
Text: John 20:1-10

4/5 | The Resurrection of Our Lord

Title: Risen for You
Text: Matthew 28:1-10

4/12 | The Second Sunday of Easter

Title: Physical Forgiveness
Text: John 20:19-31

4/19 | The Third Sunday of Easter

Title: Sorrow to Joy
Text: Luke 24:13-35

4/26 | The Fourth Sunday of Easter

Title: The Door, The Shepherd
Text: John 10:1-10



ORGANIST/ACCOMPANIST

4/2	Rev. Howard Shane
4/3	Mary Sandbulte
4/4	Rev. Howard Shane
4/5	Rev. Howard Shane
4/12	Rev. Howard Shane
4/19	Mary Sandbulte
4/26	Jeff McQuistan



CRUCIFERS AND ACOLYTES

4/2	Ellis Dewitz
4/3	James Lafrentz
4/5	Crucifer: Joel Simek Acolyte: Elijah Simek Crucifer: Jacob Rieck Acolyte: Lucas Birger
4/12	James Lafrentz & Lydia Lafrentz Elliott Leonard
4/19	Jacob Rieck <i>Acolyte Needed</i>
4/26	James Lafrentz & Lydia Lafrentz <i>Acolyte Needed</i>



ALTAR FLOWERS

4/5	<i>Easter Flowers</i>
4/12	<i>Jim & Margaret Wosje, in celebration of their anniversary</i>
4/19	<i>Rieck Family, in memory of April Jo, Jody's Sister</i>
4/26	<i>None</i>

If you'd like to provide flowers for the altar, please see the sign up sheet in the narthex.

Then, traditionally, the Church would have Baptisms and Confirmation rites as appropriate. Since we have neither, we will remember our baptisms through the rite of Baptism without the use of water. Then we will use an ancient litany of prayers to cry to God for mercy. Hearing our cry, we will hear of how He comes to us in the Word. Through a "Service of the Word" similar to Sunday services, we will celebrate life returning to the Word made flesh, proclaim the joyous Easter acclamation, light the whole of the church and begin our Easter celebration.

After a "Service of Light," "Service of Readings," "Service of Holy Baptism (and Confirmation)," "Service of Prayer," and "Service of the Word," the Easter Vigil usually concludes with a "Service of the Sacrament." In an attempt to introduce this service rather than overwhelm with it, we are abbreviating this service that has well earned the nickname of "the longest mass of the year." In addition to using only four of the appointed twelve readings in the "Service of Readings," we will also not be celebrating the Sacrament on this Saturday evening service, to hopefully make it a somewhat more manageable and reasonable length. Do not worry, we will certainly be celebrating Easter morning with the Sacrament.

I do hope and pray that you will join us for this great "undoing" of Good Friday. I think it has the potential to be a wonderful and powerful service of darkness to light, salvation that comes through Word and Sacraments, and a pointing to the hope we have in the return of Christ and the resurrection of all the dead.

In the light of Christ,
Pastor Simek



"Main Street Living" is a liturgical worship service broadcasting a different local pastor each Sunday morning. It airs along with the classic Lutheran Hour program, "This is the Life." Both can be viewed on KDLT (NBC).

This program is interpreted and closed captioned for the deaf and hard of hearing. For more information visit: www.mainstreetliving.com

<p>Sun 4/5</p>	<p>10:00 AM - "A Child's Easter Sermon" - A child shares the joy of Easter with an old shoemaker.</p> <p>10:30 AM - Rev. Randy Sturzenbecher, President of the South Dakota District LCMS in Sioux Falls, SD, presents a message titled, "Helpless, fearful and hopeless no more, Christ is risen!"</p>	<p>Sun 4/19</p>	<p>10:00 AM - "A Girl's Best Friend" - Focusing on the here and now creates problems for a mother and her daughter and prompts spiritual questions for all.</p> <p>10:30 AM - Rev. Joseph Greenmyer, pastor at Faith & St. Peter's Lutheran Churches in Parkston & Emery, SD, presents a message titled, "Where can Jesus be Found?" The sermon is based on Luke 24:13-35.</p>
<p>Sun 4/12</p>	<p>10:00 AM - "Finders Keepers" - A man finds a large sum of money and struggles with the consequences of keeping it.</p> <p>10:30 AM - Rev. Timothy Schleusener, pastor at Zion Lutheran & St. John's Lutheran Churches in Canistota & Montrose, SD, presents a message titled, "But these are written..." The sermon is based on John 20:19-31.</p>	<p>Sun 4/26</p>	<p>10:00am - "Song of the Night" - A son's accident causes his family to question everything.</p> <p>10:30 AM - Rev. Daniel Grimmer, pastor at Zion Lutheran Church in Mitchell, SD, presents a message titled, "Are You Prepared?" The sermon is based on John 10:11-16.</p>

NATIONAL STRESS AWARENESS MONTH

April is recognized as National Stress Awareness Month to bring attention to the negative impact of stress. Managing stress is an essential component of a healthy lifestyle. Knowing how to manage stress can improve mental and physical well-being as well as minimize exacerbation of health-related issues.

More and more people are feeling stressed and anxious in recent years, according research published by the American Psychiatric Association.

There are many reasons for these heightened levels, from increasing costs to political uncertainty to our reliance on smartphones with near-constant notifications. But experts say the phone-based interconnectedness, in particular, is raising “low-level stress,” which can have major impacts on both our mental health and physical health. Low-level stress is stress that essentially constantly simmers under the surface. You may not even clock it as stress at all; it feels more like stimulation. This type of stress is “something that’s becoming more apparent, especially with how interconnected we are,” said Dr. Jace Reed, the director of emergency psychiatry at Cedars Sinai in California.

Think about it: You likely wake up to an alarm on your phone. A phone that has near-constant news alerts and social media pushes. You also then likely use your phone for work, where emails and requests from co-workers come in at all hours. “And so this just adds to our baseline stress levels,” Reed explained.

How can you tell the difference between low-level stress and just the day-to-day life stress?

“I think when we talk about low-level stress, it’s when you’re unable to manage day-to-day processes, challenges or changes without an increased or heightened sense of emotion,” said Dr. Dwight Owens, a psychiatrist and owner of [Peach State Psychiatric Services](#) in Georgia. Perhaps you’re finding yourself feeling irritated over little issues or overwhelmed by tasks that didn’t always overwhelm you, but you continue to function and push through your day. That may indicate that you may be dealing with low-level stress.

Low-level stress can cause physical health issues, in addition to disruptions to your mental health. You probably don’t often consider how stress impacts your physical health — but every system in our body responds to the emotion.

“When stress is persistent and we’re not getting the breaks that we need, we’re having increased firing of our sympathetic nerves and changes in our stress hormones, which can lead to changes in our cardiovascular health, which includes increased blood pressure, increased heart rate,” Reed said. “Most of our illnesses are both psychological and physiological to a degree,” Owens noted.

Low-level stress can cause appetite changes, sleep changes, headaches and even general body aches. Skin problems, such as eczema, can also be a result of underlying stress and anxiety, Owens said. You may also experience different GI issues, according to Reed. Stress, for example, can lead to stomach pain, diarrhea, and worsen issues like irritable bowel syndrome. “When all of these things are chronic in nature, they increase our risk for other disease processes as well — and, overall, it impedes our ability to get better after we’re sick,” Reed said, noting that low-level stress can increase inflammation in the body as well.

You can’t completely eliminate stress, but you can keep low-level stress in a healthy range. Nothing you do will erase all stress from your life, and that’s OK. You shouldn’t want that to happen. “Inherently, stress is good for us,” Reed said. “It helps us be productive. If we weren’t stressed, we wouldn’t do our work, we wouldn’t take a test, we would just sit there and do nothing.” But there does come a time where persistent, underlying stress — even if you don’t think it’s that big of a deal — needs to be addressed. Both experts said there are a handful of practices you can employ to lower your stress levels and better handle high-pressure moments in the future.

First, “everything starts with diet and exercise,” according Owens. Eating a balance of nutritious foods and working in some movement (such as walking, jogging, biking, dancing or gardening) throughout the week can help you feel better. Practicing self-care is also important, Owens added. “If you can, protect that self-care time. It may be just taking a long bath or a long shower, it may be just sitting and clicking through Netflix and doing nothing,” he said.

There are also some small habits you can add to your day to be a little less stressed. Take five minutes a day to practice mindfulness, whether that’s deep breathing, meditation or going on a short walk to disconnect from everything around you, Reed said. “Also we constantly are getting pinged or getting notifications, and sometimes it’s actually better for our productivity to take a little bit of a pause between different tasks,” Reed said.

It’s worth noting that day-to-day interventions won’t be enough for everyone to manage their stress. “Low-level stress can move into generalized anxiety disorder or major depression. Those are clinical illnesses that have to be treated,” Owens said. “If you notice that you’re stressed more days than not or if you find yourself unable to get out bed, uninterested in hanging out with friends or notice a loss in appetite, that’s a sign that you may need more support,” Owens added. “Please reach out to someone....”

Feel free to see or call Karen Morfitt, RN, ORLC Parish Nurse for resources.

Content from the American Institute of Stress and the National Institutes of Health, article written by Jillian Wilson

"How can I get involved?"

Children:

Sunday School—We have Sunday School for PreK-High School on Sunday mornings at 9:15AM. Our Sunday School teachers are:

Preschool: Mrs. Kristy Eden & Mrs. Kris Leonhardt

5 yrs-2nd Grade: Mrs. Deb Huntsinger

3rd-5th Grade: Mr. Bryan Eden

6th-8th Grade: Mr. Tim Eden

9th-12th Grade: Mr. & Mrs. Craig & Stephanie Eden

Kids 4 Christ—Mrs. Janelle Lafrentz, Mrs. Jody Rieck, and Mr. Derek Greenwaldt lead our children

Kindergarten—5th grade at Kids 4 Christ (K4C) every 1st and 3rd Friday. A meal will be served at 5:30 p.m., followed by our K4C program. The program ends at 7:30 p.m.

Middle School Youth:

Catechesis Classes—We have catechesis classes every Wednesday during the school year from 6PM-7PM for 5th—8th graders except during Advent and Lent. Mr. Bryan Eden teaches the 5th grade class, and Rev. Brett Simek teaches the 6th-8th grade class. There is a church family meal before class at 5PM for anyone who may wish to eat at the church.

Junior and High School Youth:

Youth Group—Mr. and Mrs. Craig & Stephanie Eden lead our youth group on Wednesday evenings 6PM—7PM for 8th—12th graders, as well as monthly activities throughout the year for 6th—12th graders.

High School and Adults:

Vocal Choir—Choir rehearsals are each Wednesday evening at 7PM (7:30 during Advent and Lent). If you are interested in joining choir, please speak with or email Rev. Shane—HShane101@gmail.com.

Handbell Choir—We meet each Tuesday at 6:45PM. If you are interested in joining the handbell choir, please contact Matt Nussbaum.

Adults:

Sunday Morning Bible Study—Sunday morning Bible study is led by Rev. Brett Simek each Sunday at 9:15AM. Join us in the Fellowship Hall downstairs!

Wednesday Adult Bible Study—We have Bible Study each Wednesday at 6PM except during Advent and Lent, led by Rev. David Morfitt.

Healing Hearts—Healing Hearts is a group of men and women who are at any stage of grieving the loss of a loved one. The purpose is to share in loss, get to know others, and find support within our church family. We meet monthly on the first Thursday at 10AM.

S.A.I.L. Classes—Parish Nurse Karen Morfitt leads our SAIL class, an exercise class focused on strength and balance every Monday and Thursday at 1:30PM.

Senior Members:

Senior Saints Bible Study—We meet the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of each month at 1PM.

Senior Saints Brunch—We meet at Perkins on 41st Street the second Thursday of every month at 9:30AM.

Men:

Guys' Garage—Mr. Tim Goetsch leads the Guys' Garage group. They meet the first Monday of each month at 6PM. There are different activities each month.

Women:

LWML—We have two LWML groups at ORLC. Evening LWML meets the second Tuesday of each month at 6:30PM. Ebenezer LWML meets the third Thursday of each month at 1:30PM.

Women's Bible Study—We meet the 1st and 3rd Thursdays of every month at 6:30PM.

All members:

Volunteering—We are always looking for people of all ages to help serve on Sunday mornings - greeters, ushers, altar guild members, acolytes, and help running presentations. If you are interested, contact the church office!

IN OUR PRAYERS

MEMBERS

Dorene Cink	George Sagissor
Harlan Fauth	Larry Sroufe
Mike Gabel	James Streyle
Duane Genzlinger	Julie Suter
Duane Hartmann	Rhoda Thomas
Don Hennies	Jeanne Toay
Ella May Kelly	Kendra Voss
Louise Lafrentz	Mary Warns
Carole Lang	Jim Wosje
Mary Muchow	

HOMEBOUND MEMBERS

Betty Berry	Roberta Mathiason
Dan Clauson	Dorothy Oleson
Mary Clauson	Maxine Owens
Dorothy Dueis	Mariea Warns
Cib Gaffer	Audrey Wintersteen

SERVING IN THE MILITARY

Joshua Bohling	Luis Martinez
William East	Matthew VanTassel
Curtis Furry	Tyler VanTassel
Jordy Martinez	

LOVED ONES

Glenda; Mother of Jason Consoer
 Nicole; Aunt of Ashley Consoer
 Lorraine; Mother of Carol Daniels
 Matt; Barb Ewoldt's Son
 Brian; Grandson of Mavis Fritz
 Richard; Son-in-Law of Mavis Fritz
 Mark; Son of Bob Graham
 Pat; Friend of Bob Graham
 Chuck; Family of Ed & Jean Harmdierks
 Mark; Brother-in-Law of Jean Harmdierks
 Ruby; Ed Harmdierks' Sister
 Dan; Duane & Helen Hartmann's Son-in-Law
 Joan; AJ Holtz's Grandmother
 Dennis; Son of Phyllis Joyce
 Byron; Roberta Mathiason's Son
 Kolbe; Friend of Roberta Mathiason
 Michael; Son of David Olson
 Bernice; Mother of Nathan Sandbulte
 Susie; Daughter-in-Law of Helen Schauer
 Aislyn; Daughter of David Wacker
 Barb, Sister-in-Law of Sandra Weissenburger
 Jim Wegehaupt; Former Member

Please Note: Those on the prayer list will be removed after 3 months unless we are otherwise notified.

Spring Cleaning at Our Redeemer

April 25 • 9 AM-12 PM
Lunch will follow



Sign up to help!

APRIL WORLD WATCH LIST COUNTRIES

ERITREA

Eritrea is one of the world's most difficult places to be a follower of Jesus. The government recognises only four religious groupings. These exclude most Evangelical and Pentecostal groups, who are treated as illegal. Christians who worship outside state-sanctioned churches face intense surveillance, violent police raids and indefinite imprisonment – often in brutally shocking conditions. Converts from Islam or the Eritrean Orthodox Church also risk rejection by their families and social exclusion, in addition to state persecution.

The militarised nature of society compounds repression. People who are forcibly drafted into the military face an indefinite period of service. There is no leniency for anyone unwilling to serve, and Christians in the military caught worshipping are punished severely. Christians face a devastating dilemma: endure persecution and forced service or flee the country through routes made hazardous by trafficking, danger and the risk of torture.

- There are many Christians stuck in Eritrea's notorious prison system – some detained simply for practicing their faith. Pray they will keep their hope alive and be set free.
- Ask God to protect and provide for the daily needs of Christians who are arrested or detained for their faith. Pray they will know they aren't forgotten, and that their families will be comforted.
- Eritrea is ruled by a brutal dictatorship. Pray that President Afwerki's heart would be turned away from oppression and towards the love of Jesus.

SYRIA

The situation in Syria for Christians has grown more dire in the last year. Since the fall of the Assad regime in December 2024 – after ruling Syria for more than 50 years – the country has been mostly controlled by forces led by Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS). This is an Islamic extremist group with roots in Al Qaeda. The group has made overtures towards moderation and held talks with representatives of Syria's traditional Christian communities, but it is too soon to know what will come of the new leadership.

Since the regime change, widespread instability has led to deadly clashes that have affected other religious minorities, particularly Druze and Alawites, with Christians caught in the crossfire. The resurgence of military operations by the Islamic State group since October 2024 reinforces a sense of insecurity. These include a deadly attack on a church in Damascus in June 2025.

- In the aftermath of the fall of the Assad regime, many Christians live with constant uncertainty. Pray that believers would lean on God as their 'Rock eternal' (Isaiah 26:4).
- Pray for converts from Islam, that they would find love and fellowship even when they encounter rejection by family and friends.
- Pray for the victims of the Damascus church attack, that their wounds would be healed, and they would feel God's closeness as they decide how best to live out their faith.

Find more information at: <https://www.opendoors.org/en-US/persecution/countries/>