

# THE MESSENGER

April 2022

The newsletter of Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church

## LENTEN WORSHIP

### “THE CRUCIAL HOURS: A Part for the Whole?”

with Pastor Willitz

Wednesday, April 6 at 6:30 pm in the traditional format

## HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE:

**April 14** Maundy Thursday Worship (Holy Communion)  
6:30 pm (Traditional Format)

**April 15** Good Friday Worship  
6:30 pm (Traditional Format)

**April 17** 7:30 am Easter Worship (Holy Communion)  
with Guidelines (masks, spacing, etc.)

9:00 am Easter Worship (Holy Communion)  
Traditional Format

10:30 am Easter Breakfast

### In this Messenger:

- 1) Lent & Holy Week
- 2) Pastor's Devotion
- 3) Calendar
- 4) Men's Bible Study
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- 4) Called Worker Tuition Assistance
- 4) VBS Theme & Dates
- 4) Birthdays and Anniversaries
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- 4) Worship Livestream
- 4) Services on the Air
- 5) Open Forum
- 5) Voters' Meeting
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# Easter Is No Joke

*While the women were on their way, some of the guards went into the city and reported to the chief priests everything that had happened. When the chief priests had met with the elders and devised a plan, they gave the soldiers a large sum of money, telling them, "You are to say, 'His disciples came during the night and stole him away while we were asleep.' If this report gets to the governor, we will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble." So the soldiers took the money and did as they were instructed. And this story has been widely circulated among the Jews to this very day. (Matthew 28:11-15).*

Unlike Christmas that is always celebrated on December 25, Easter can be as early as March 22 and as late as April. This means sometimes Easter could fall on April 1 which is known as April Fools' Day. Unfortunately, some people view Easter as being a joke and the message of Jesus' resurrection to be foolish. They have come up with various theories to disprove Jesus' resurrection, and I want us to briefly look at these theories.

One theory is the one we see above from Scripture. The theory is that the disciples stole Jesus' body and claimed he had risen from the dead. Think of how foolish this theory is! These are the same disciples who, a few days earlier, quickly deserted Jesus when he was arrested. Only one disciple was willing to be seen at Jesus' crucifixion. Is it likely that these disciples would be willing to either fight against Roman soldiers guarding the tomb or trying to sneak past them to steal Jesus' body? Not at all! It's only when Christ appeared to his disciples after his resurrection that the disciples became bolder for Christ simply because they had seen him risen from the dead.

Another theory is that Christ didn't actually die but only became unconscious on the cross and woke up later on and left the grave. Think of how foolish this theory is! There is no way that Roman soldiers who were experts in executing people would be fooled to think Jesus was only unconscious. They even pierced Jesus' side to prove that he was in fact dead. But even if we grant the idea that Jesus didn't actually die on the cross, how likely is it that someone who was crucified would wake up, and after being injured through crucifixion would be able to remove the stone blocking his tomb, sneak past the guards, and appear to the people as if nothing happened to him? It's impossible.

A third theory is that the people hallucinated seeing Jesus risen from the dead. Think of how foolish this theory is! It is possible for a person suffering from great personal grief and pain to hallucinate things. But Jesus didn't just appear to one person. On Easter Sunday he appeared to the women who came to the tomb, he appeared to two men traveling to Emmaus, and he appeared to his own disciples. Not only that, but Jesus also appeared to 500 people at the same time later on. Is it possible for all of these people to hallucinate seeing Jesus in the same way? It's not.


One final theory is that Jesus had a twin and the people confused Jesus' twin as Jesus himself. Think of how foolish this theory is! Even if Jesus had a twin, is it likely that the disciples would have never figured out that this was Jesus' twin? Is it even possible that Jesus' own mother wouldn't have been able to tell the difference? It's simply impossible.

I don't know if you ever met someone advocating these different theories, or possibly you never heard of them, but notice very carefully what each of these theories still admit. They all admit that the tomb is empty. If Jesus had not risen his enemies could easily point to him still being in the grave, but they can't. **The tomb is empty, and for us who believe what Scripture says this is proof of Jesus' resurrection.**

**Since he is risen, our faith is not a foolish joke; it's a reality.** Since Christ is risen we know that he is the Son of God (Romans 1:4), we are saved from our sins (Romans 4:25), and we will rise from the dead as well (John 14:19). This is the confidence of our faith for he is risen! **He is risen indeed! Alleluia!**

- Pastor Neal Behm

# April 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					<b>1</b> 1:45 pm <b>Worship @ Bell Tower</b>	<b>2</b> 10:00 am–2:00 pm <b>Merrill Children's Fest @ MARC</b>
<b>3</b> 8:00 am Worship w/ Guidelines (Holy Communion) 9:00 am Worship (Holy Communion) 10:00 am Fellowship 10:20 am Children's Group Time 10:30 am Education Hour <b>1:00 pm Bowling @ Lincoln Lanes; 4:00 pm Meal</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b> 9:00 am Adult Bible Study 6:30 pm Lenten Worship 7:30 pm Choir	<b>7</b> 6:30 pm Catechism Class	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b> 9:00 am Men's Bible Study
<b>10</b> 8:00 am Worship w/ Guidelines 9:00 am Worship 10:00 am Fellowship 10:20 am Children's Group Time 10:30 am Education Hour 11:30 am Open Forum	<b>11</b> 6:30 pm Women's Bible Study	<b>12</b> 6:30 pm Council Meeting	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b> 6:30 pm Maundy Thursday Worship (Holy Communion) 7:30 pm Choir	<b>15</b> 6:30 pm Good Friday Worship	<b>16</b>
<b>17</b> 7:30 am Worship w/ Guidelines (Holy Communion) 9:00 am Worship (Holy Communion) 10:30 am Easter Breakfast	<b>18</b> 6:00 pm Board of Elders Meeting	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b> 9:00 am Adult Bible Study	<b>21</b> 6:30 pm Catechism Class	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>24</b> 8:00 am Worship w/ Guidelines 9:00 am Worship 10:00 am Fellowship 10:20 am Children's Group Time 10:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am Voters' Meeting	<b>25</b> 5:00 pm Board of Christian Education Meeting	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b> 9:00 am Adult Bible Study	<b>28</b> 6:30 pm Catechism Class	<b>29</b> <b>Teen Retreat @ Camp Phillip (Fri-Sun)</b>	<b>30</b>

8:00 am Sundays - worship service on the radio (**96.3FM, 730AM**)

9:00 am Sundays - worship service on **Christ Ev. Lutheran Church :: Merrill, WI :: WELS** YouTube channel

**MEN'S BIBLE STUDY** about the book of Job will be held **Saturday, April 9 at 9:00 am.**

**WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY** will be held **Monday, April 11 at 6:30 pm** and will focus on **Deborah**. All women are welcome to attend. Paper copies of past studies are available to the right of the Christian Education bulletin board at the top of the steps; feel free to take one home.

**CALLED WORKER TUITION ASSISTANCE:** Applications for those preparing for full time ministry are due **May 1** and may be turned into the Board of Christian Education mailbox.

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR** for **Road Trip - Route 3:16 Vacation Bible School** every **Wednesday evening in June** (open to adults and children).

### APRIL BIRTHDAYS

- |                |                 |
|----------------|-----------------|
| 1 Sandra A.    | 22 Trina G.     |
| 9 Preston C.   | 22 Jacob M.     |
| 9 Don P.       | 23 Steve H.     |
| 12 Derek S.    | 23 Christina W. |
| 14 Grace G.    | 24 Lisa K.      |
| 17 Marion S.   | 24 Laura P.     |
| 20 Pastor Behm | 27 Rachel B.    |
| 21 Dick S.     | 30 Willi H.     |
|                | 30 Lois W.      |

### APRIL ANNIVERSARIES

- 24 Alan & Diane Z.
- 30 Leon & Jennifer M.

### CONTACT INFORMATION CHANGE?

Please write your current address, phone number(s), and/or email address on the Friendship Register page next to your name or on a colored paper found in the pew rack. Thanks.

Please submit items for next month's Messenger by the 20<sup>th</sup> of this month to [Messenger@ChristMerrill.com](mailto:Messenger@ChristMerrill.com) or place them in the Messenger slot located in the top row of church mailboxes in the narthex.

**ASSISTED LISTENING DEVICES** are available for use during church services or meetings (headsets and earbuds are available or bring your own with 1/8" plug). The system has been improved so now the pastor, organ, congregation, and choir can all be heard through the devices. Those with family members with hearing problems or anyone wanting to know more about the technology are welcome to try them out at any time. Pick up a bag from one of the lower left mailboxes or ask an usher for assistance. Each bag includes a receiver, batteries, earbuds, headset, and sanitizing wipes. Bags may be returned to the labeled bin for cleaning and/or battery replacement.



**WORSHIP LIVESTREAM:** Christ Ev. Lutheran Church provides an internet livestream broadcast during many of the **Sunday services** (9:00 am). Subscribe to the YouTube channel (Christ Ev. Lutheran Church :: Merrill, WI :: WELS) to get updates about the live streaming schedule. The videos are available on the channel to watch at one's convenience.



**SERVICES ON THE AIR:** A Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church worship service is on the air **Sunday mornings at 8:00 am** on 96.3FM, 730AM, and streaming at [bluejay963.com](http://bluejay963.com), Alexa, and TuneIn (for mobile streaming).



## Open Forum

On **Sunday, April 10** there will be an open forum in the church basement starting at **11:30 am**. An open forum is an avenue to have an informal discussion on various topics. The main topic will be information that the Hymnal Committee researched about the new hymnal. All are welcome to attend.

Comments from Ken Cerney, Hymnal Committee chairman:

The hymnal committee started researching the new *Christian Worship Hymnal* published by NPH as an update to the current hymnal. One of the goals of the committee is to keep the congregation well informed of its findings and its recommendations to the Board of Elders. Currently the committee is in the information gathering phase.

The new blue *Christian Worship Hymnal* Pew edition was released last fall and many churches have already started using it. The core of this *Christian Worship* suite is the hymnal, *Accompaniment for the Service*, and *Accompaniment for Hymns*. There are also expanded resources, support resources, preaching resources, and digital resources available. More details can be found at [www.Christianworship.com](http://www.Christianworship.com).

At the open forum we will discuss and ask for input about how changing to this new hymnal may help us at Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church meet our stated congregational goals through outreach and presenting the word of God to those who want and need to hear it.

## Voters' Meeting

The quarterly **Voters' Meeting** will be **Sunday, April 24** starting at **10:30 am** in the sanctuary.

Topics to be voted on include:

**Ratify the Board of Christian Education chairman appointment** (until Jan. 2023): Mr. Scott Schult

**Ratify the Evangelism Committee chairman appointment** (until Jan. 2023): Mr. Jacob Marheine

**Delegate Elections:**

**District Convention** (Mr. Jerry Natzke is recommended by the Board of Elders.)

**Camp Phillip** (2 positions, each a 1 year term)

**Summer Worship:** Consideration to move to one traditional Sunday service at 9:00 am, starting the first Sunday in June, and one traditional Monday service at 6:30 pm during June, July and August.

## Education Updates

**Board of Christian Education** members: Scott Schult (chairman), Nick Cordova, and Al Zimmerman.

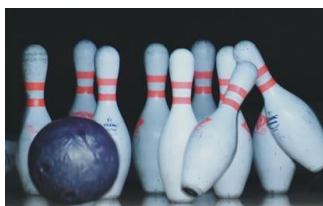
**Northland Lutheran High School Delegates:** Mr. Willi Heisinger and Mr. Tom Marheine are our congregation's two delegates. Feel free to reach out to them if you have any questions or concerns about NLHS. Elections for both seats will occur at the July Voters' Meeting.

# Game Night II



## Upcoming Fellowship Events

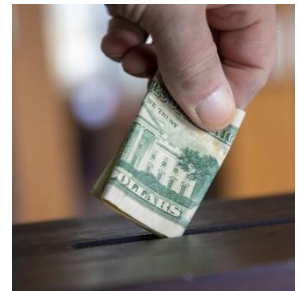
**Sunday, April 3** will be our annual **bowling** at Lincoln Lanes at **1:00 pm**. Cost is \$7.00 for 2 hours of bowling, plus \$3.00 for shoe rental if needed. Afterward, plans are to eat at a local restaurant, yet to be determined, around 4:00 pm. You can bowl, eat, or enjoy both.



On Easter, **April 17**, we will be having **Easter Breakfast** at **10:30 am**. A sign-up sheet is posted with food items to bring. Help with clean-up is always appreciated.



A **special collection** for **Melisa K.** will be taken at the **Easter Breakfast** and matched dollar for dollar up to \$500. The money will help her to pay for expenses in her battle with cancer.



**Saturday, May 14** Highway Spring Clean Up at **10:00 am**.