

# WESTERN SPRINGS CRC

## A Joyful Word

March 2024

### FROM THE ELDERS

#### A Commitment to Communicate

Let's focus during this time of pastoral vacancy on the joy and fellowship we share as members of WSCRC. ***"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope."*** (Romans 15:13)

#### The Joy of Easter

How often over the past few weeks have you heard someone use the phrase, "I am looking forward to..." and then sharing an anticipated event? Usually, it results in someone declaring they are waiting or hoping for something that will happen soon that will be pleasurable, exciting or enjoyable. I heard declarations like, "I am looking forward to the first day of spring." Or, "I am looking forward to spring break." Then, there were those who cited a sporting event such as March Madness or the start of another baseball season.

As Christians we look forward to Easter, signifying the fulfillment of God's plan for redemption and offering us the promise of eternal life. It is a day of immense joy and hope, as we celebrate the victory of light over darkness, life over death, and the triumph of God's love for humanity.

I like what A.W. Tozer says about this blessed time of the year. *"There is an exquisite appropriateness in our celebrating the resurrection of Christ in the spring. When nature is waking to life again after her long winter of sleep, it is then that the thoughts of Christians everywhere are turned to the wonder of the Savior's coming out of the tomb after His ordeal with sin and death. Christ's resurrection was an act once accomplished at a given moment in history. It does not in any sense depend upon seasons or celebrations, nor does the miracle of the springtime add anything to the glory of the once-done deed. The workings of God in nature do, however, cast a warm light upon His workings*

*in redemption and the springtime of life in the earth illustrates the miracle of life in the new creation."*

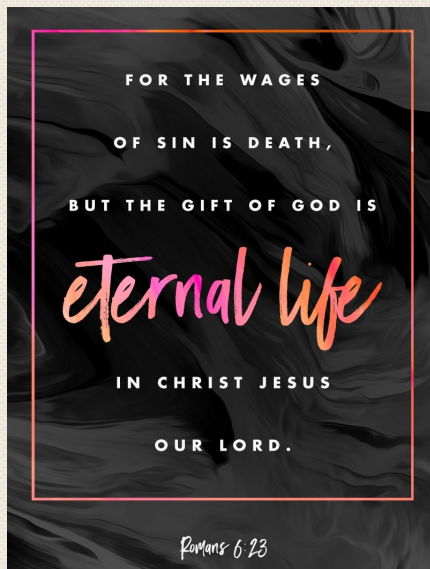
Just as the responses heard in conversations anticipating an upcoming exciting and pleasurable event, may we too take a fresh look at the glory of Easter and praise our Heavenly Father for His love and faithfulness. What a joy we can experience with the assurance that the hope of Easter overcame and still overcomes the power of death and suffering.

#### A Joyful Word - Worship

The Worship Committee has planned spiritually meaningful services for this Holy Week. Beginning with a an uplifting Palm Sunday service, Pastor Ben, Renee and Becky have prepared and coordinated our services for Maundy Thursday, Good Friday (communion) and Easter Sunday.

Thursday evening begins the Easter Triduum, the three-day celebration to bring Lent to its climatic conclusion. Join us, as we participate in these unfolding events, moving through the wonder of Jesus' last night, the sadness of His crucifixion, the silence of the tomb, and the joys of His resurrection.

Gary Smit



In case you missed a Sunday morning worship service in March, here are the links to our Church YouTube channel:

March 3 - Rev, Gerry Erffmeyer  
Sermon: *Jesus' Suffering: It Really Happened!*  
<https://youtube.com/live/rNfYQQHunQI>

March 10 - Pastor Phillip Leo  
Sermon: *Jesus Is Greater Than*  
<https://youtube.com/live/x0XA0WYVkw4>

March 17 – Rev. Michael Kooy  
Sermon: *God's Remedy for Life*  
<https://youtube.com/live/p7sKFexStRo>

March 24 – Palm Sunday  
Rev. Ted Boswell  
Sermon: *Three Kings on a Donkey Named Irony*  
[https://youtube.com/live/mnxOpJ5s\\_C4](https://youtube.com/live/mnxOpJ5s_C4)

## A Joyful Word - Pastor Search

If you were to ask members of the search committee as to what they were looking forward to, there is no doubt the response would be a new pastor who will be a good fit for WSCRC.

The committee members have spent time with Sam Hamstra preparing questions to ask candidates while listening to sermons they have shared. A second interview was held on March 12 with one of the candidates.

The members of the Search Committee request your prayers for wisdom to discern God's leading in the process.

**John De Young and Al Bilthouse, co-chairs, Lynn Veldman, secretary, Liz Casseday, Jim Buiter, Adrian Breems, Melissa Gardner, and Sam Hamstra, representing the Rukes Group**

## Being Joyful In Christ Alone

The theme of "In Christ Alone" by Keith Getty and Stuart Townsend, is a song reflecting on the life, death and resurrection of Christ and that He is God whom even death cannot hold.

*There in the ground His body lay,  
Light of the world by darkness slain.  
Then bursting forth in glorious day  
Up from the grave He rose again.  
And as He stands in victory  
Sin's curse has lost its grip on me.  
For I am His and He is mine,  
Bought with the precious blood of Christ.*

*No guilt in life, no fear in death,  
This is the power of Christ in me.  
From life's first cry to final breath,  
Jesus commands my destiny.  
No pow'r of hell, no scheme of man,  
Can ever pluck me from His hand.  
Till he returns of calls me home,  
Here in the power of Christ I stand."*

We have the opportunity to join fellow believers in proclaiming Jesus' victory from the grave by shouting, "Christ is risen! He is risen indeed!"

Because He is risen, our lives have purpose. He is alive in us. His power resides in us to extend the influence of His kingdom and push back the darkness of the enemy He defeated on the cross.

May the glory of Christ alone shine through us in all that we do.

## ANNUAL EASTER EGG HUNT

**Saturday, March 30th  
at 10:00 AM**

Bring your children, grandchildren, neighbors and friends to hear the Easter Story, enjoy donuts, juice, coffee and fellowship.

## Trusting God

There are many opportunities before us — one of the most important is a renewed invitation to trust God to direct our paths. As we move in earnest through our pastoral search, Pastor Ben has chosen a verse to memorize each month that reminds us of God's promises while calling us to deeper trust in our faithful Lord.

## Our memory verse for April is:

*Whether you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear a voice behind you, saying, "This is the way; walk in it." Isaiah 30:21*

**If you have any questions, pastoral concerns or spiritual care needs, please contact your District Elder or reach out to Gary Smit as Chair of Council.**

