

RUTHFREDHERALD

April 2023

Volume 33, No. 4



From the Pastor's Desk

"Your grief will be turned into joy!"

-John 16:20



As I write this we've recently had our last Wednesday evening service of the 2023 Lenten season and are anticipating Holy Week, to culminate in a joyous celebration of our Savior's resurrection on Easter Sunday. Appropriately, given that it's still Lent as I write this, it's raining.

To those of us who aren't farmers, and who never have been, it can seem odd to thank God for rain. To us, rain can be inconvenient, causing us minor griefs like a wet walk or drive to work or class, canceled sporting events, practices, and outings with friends and family. But even those of us who aren't farmers love and appreciate green grass and beautiful, blooming flowers and trees. So, with some reluctance and despite the minor griefs and inconveniences, we thank God for the rain (and even intermittent snowfalls this time of year), anticipating with joy to the rewards we'll soon receive from a healthy (if at times inconvenient) amount of precipitation.

This particular time of the Church year, the end of Lent, anticipating Holy Week and Easter, is similar. Lent is a somber season focused on the suffering and death of our Savior, Jesus Christ. We remember what He endured to rescue us from the guilt of our sin. Lent is a time to focus on repentance, and what it cost our Savior, God's Son, to reconcile us with the Father. Lent's focus on repentance of sin and the suffering and death of our Savior can cause us grief.

That grief continues through Holy week to the end of our Tenebrae service on Good Friday, as we leave the darkened sanctuary, the cross draped in black, reflecting upon Christ's death on the cross. We leave that service quietly, reverently, honoring our Savior for His suffering and death on our behalf. As we leave that service, there's grief in our heart for what He endured.

But we somberly leave the sanctuary on Good Friday in anticipation of the amazing, joyous transformation we'll witness when we re-enter the sanctuary on Easter Sunday! On Easter Sunday the sanctuary will have been transformed, filled with light, beautiful flowers, celebratory music, and the miraculous message of the Gospel; the resurrection of our Lord, Jesus Christ, from the dead! We'll open our service on Easter Sunday, joyously proclaiming, "He is risen!" It's then, on Easter Sunday, when the grief and tears of the somber Lenten season are turned into joy by the light of the Gospel!

While the rain is falling, the trees are bare, the nights are still cold, and it's still Lent, our minds and hearts can be overwhelmed with grief and sadness. We think of our sin, the depth of our guilt, of our own responsibility for and contribution towards His suffering and death on the cross, and, Lord willing, we feel a sense of conviction,

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Ruthfred Lutheran Church

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The submission deadline for the next Herald is
Wednesday, April 26th, 2023

The email publication date is
Monday, May 1st, 2023

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which we don't enjoy. By God's grace and through the power of His Word and Spirit, we're driven to repent, turning away from our sins, and we look to our Savior. Our joyous celebration of His resurrection on Easter Sunday and the sweet, soothing balm of the Gospel are made all the more joyous, all the sweeter, and all the more soothing after we've experienced the solemnity and grief of the Lenten season.

Whatever you're enduring in life, whatever causes you grief, if you're a Christian, then just like with the Lenten season, you don't have to wonder or worry about whether your grief will ever end and be turned to joy. That is the promise of the Gospel! You have God's sure, Living Word upon which you may depend! Your grief *will* be turned into joy!

The fulfillment of that promise on Easter Sunday, at the resurrection of our Lord, Jesus Christ, is the most joyous blessing of the entire Church year! May God bless you, your family, and our entire congregation, as our grief is turned into joy in this beautiful, exciting, new season!

Love in Christ,

Pastor McMinn



Life Quotes from Lutherans For Life



“The God who chose to give us life at the moment of fertilization is the same God who chose to rescue us and redeem us and give us salvation. And He did it by sending His Son, Jesus, to experience every stage of human life so we could be forgiven and given life everlasting with Him!”

Rev. Craig Michaelson, Faith Community Lutheran Church, Las Vegas, Nevada
A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • lutheransforlife.org

Member Profile:

by Mettelise Ziegler

Bob & Gladys Reith

During a call committee process at a former church, the pastoral candidate made a statement I will not forget. He suggested that the DNA of a church cannot be changed. What is Ruthfred's DNA? I knew Bob and Gladys Reith could tell me.



The couple has been married for nearly seventy years. They have been Bethel Park residents since they built their home in 1958 and there was still a farm across from their residence on Logan Road. Their four children, Susan, Janet, Linda, and David were raised at the church. Susan Swan, married to Tom, and Janet Pacich, married to Ed, are still members.

The Reiths met in New York City at the U.S. Steel Corporation. Gladys was employed as a secretary. Bob worked there for the summer. From German Lutheran background, Bob's father was a talented church musician playing several instruments leading to Bob's training as a trumpet player, a skill he has shared widely over the years. Gladys recalls how difficult it was to be German during World War II. Her grandmother was fearful their ethnicity would mark them as Nazi sympathizers, (which they were not).

Bob and Gladys were married in 1953. Two years later, Bob enlisted in the U.S. Navy. Afterward, he was employed by U. S. Steel which took him to Pittsburgh. Our long-time church member, Andy Kovac, connected the Reiths to a building lot. They had plans to construct a new house without a general contractor. They broke ground on September 1 and moved on December 15, 1958.

A "lady with an apple pie", AKA their neighbor, Ida Mae Collins, introduced the family to our church. Ida Mae had a strong reputation as a Bible scholar with a kind spirit. At that time, the sanctuary was only the tiny chapel at the rear. There was a much larger, better-established church nearby. But then, it wasn't like Ruthfred. "Loving and caring unlike any other" is how Gladys describes Ruthfred. She and Bob agree that there was a "top-down" congenial hospitality that flowed from Pastor Dennis and trickled down to everyone in the church. Whether sharing pie and coffee or tears of sorrow, the members were family to one another. It was true then and is still true today. It is half of the DNA. The second half of the DNA concerns the Word of God. There was once a vicar (intern) from Pastor Dennis' alma mater, Capital University, well before the American Lutheran Church (ALC) merged with the Lutheran Church in America (LCA), who believed the Bible "contained the Word of God" but was not inspired or inerrant. This debate is still prominent in Christian churches today, but Ruthfred has always been confident in the inerrancy of Scripture.

As members for over 60 years, Bob and Gladys have served in just about every capacity from teaching Sunday School to singing in the choir, playing trumpet, serving on the church council, the Board of Elders, and so much more. In fact, I would not be writing this monthly column had Bob, as editor of *The Herald*, not asked me many years ago.

Our weekly bulletin used to print the words, *The light at the corner of South Park and Patterson Roads*. Bob and Gladys pray that Ruthfred will continue as the loving, Biblical church to the community that it has always been to them.

Preschool News



March was a fun month of learning for our preschoolers. We learned about the Wise man and the Foolish man, Samson, & Jesus feeding the 5000. We had fun celebrating St. Patrick's Day with lots of color activities. We continue to work on our alphabet and numbers by incorporating a variety of hands-on activities.

Registration is open for both the 3-year-old and 4-year-old classes for the 2023-2024 school year. Visit ruthfred.org/preschool to register online and to see more pictures of our classes in action. Any questions can be directed to preschool@ruthfred.org



Dates:
July 24 - 28th

Interested in helping with decorating for VBS?
Decorating sessions are scheduled for April 11th, 18th, and 25th, 7 - 9 PM. See Jason Weighley for details.

Official Acts -- March 2023

Baptisms

* Elizabeth Ann Sovitski -- 3/12/23

Funerals

* Alfred E. (Fritz) Motzer -- 3/6/23

* Rebecca Elizabeth (Norton) Lindner -- 3/11/23

New Members -- Received 3/12/23

* Kristy Lea Balzer

* Samuel Robert Bostaph

* Vincent Louis Conti and Deborah Lea Klein-Conti

* Santino Michael Dalessandro and Sydney Lauren Dalessandro (daughter Zoe Rose)

* Chris Lynn Desiderato

* Kevin Frank Klein

* Brandon Ryan Morrow and Katie Ann Morrow (sons Brycen and Reid)



Song of the Month

By Tom Glasser

The Strife Is O'er

Lyrics: Original Latin unknown

Tr. by Francis Pott

Music: Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina

*Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!
The strife is o'er, the battle done;
Now is the Victor's triumph won;
Now be the song of praise begun,
Alleluia!*

So goes the first verse of the hymn that appears first in the Easter section of our SBH hymnal. The original lyrics of "The Strife Is O'er" were in Latin and the author is unknown. The English words we know and love were translated from the Latin by Francis Pott in 1861. The lyrics were then set to music using an existing melody called "Victory" which was composed by 16th century musician and composer Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina who "had a long-lasting

influence on the development of church and secular music in Europe, especially on the development of counter point." (Wikipedia) The "Alleluia's" in the hymn were not actually part of the original melody, but added later by William Henry Monk.

Perhaps "The Strife Is O'er" was selected to be the first hymn in the Easter section because it focuses, at least initially, on the battle victory aspect of Jesus' life and final passion. The Bible provides us enough information about that final passion, and we know enough about crucifixion, that not much needs to be left to our imagination. And if there is any doubt about the agonies Jesus had to face, we only need to look to the Garden of Gethsemane where he sweat drops of blood pleading with the Father whether this "cup" could be removed.

As we know, the cup of suffering was not removed. In his final moments on the cross we hear Jesus cry, "It is finished!" According to Luke, he also uttered "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit." I think we can assume that that was the moment when the "strife was o'er", "the battle done!". Here, however, is where our imagination may perhaps be allowed to roam a bit. Other than a cryptic verse in I Peter about Jesus going to preach to spirits in prison, the Bible is silent about Jesus' spirit between Friday afternoon and Sunday morning.

We've all experienced that sweet feeling of relief after an illness, like that 24-hour stomach virus that has been going around, for example; or following a clean bill of health after a more serious health challenge; or when an unpleasant task has finally been completed and is behind us. Magnify those feelings by orders of magnitude beyond our comprehension and perhaps we can come close to what Jesus experienced after those final words on the cross. Thinking about this reminded me of the following devotional poem by Max Lucado that I had read many years ago:

Continued on next page ...

TAKE ME HOME

"Father, into your hands I commit my spirit."

Luke 23:46

Were it a war – this would be the aftermath.
Were it a symphony – this would be the second between the final note and the first applause.
Were it a journey – this would be the sight of home.
Were it a storm – this would be the sun, piercing the clouds.
But it wasn't. It was a Messiah. And this was a sigh of joy.

"Father!" (The voice is hoarse.)
The voice that called forth the dead,
the voice that taught the willing,
the voice that screamed at God,
now says, "Father!"
"Father."

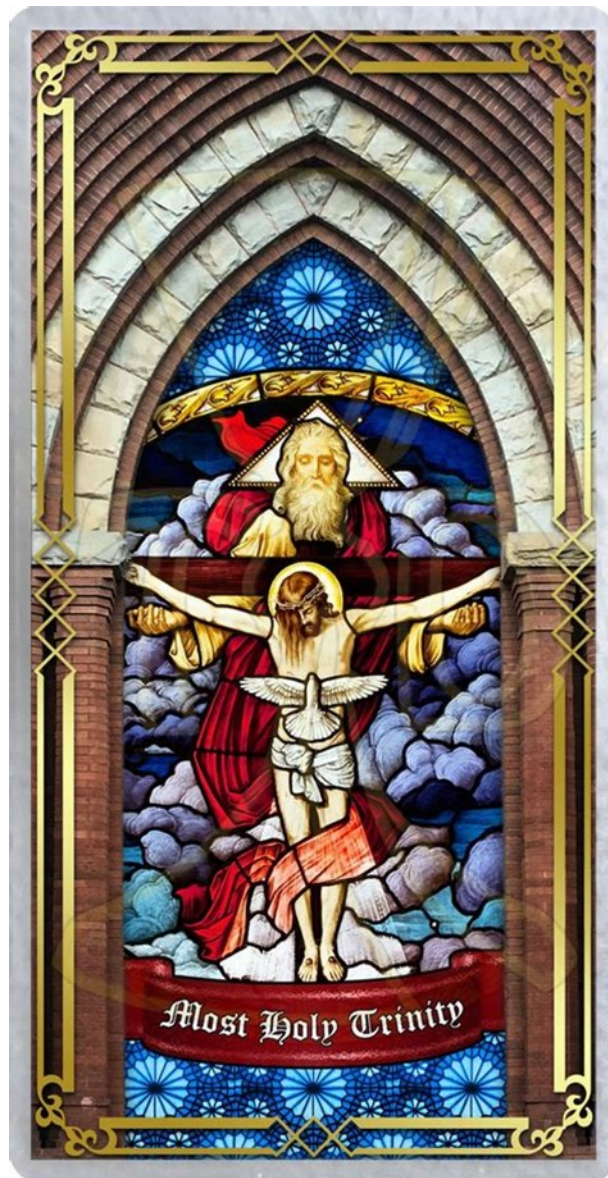
The two are again one.
The abandoned is now found.
The schism is now bridged.

"Father." He smiles weakly. "It's over."
Satan's vultures have been scattered.
Hell's demons have been jailed.
Death has been damned..
The sun is out,
The Son is out.

It's over.
An angel sighs. A star wipes away a tear.

"Take me home."
Yes, take him home.
Take this prince to his king
Take this son to his father
Take this pilgrim to his home
(He deserves a rest.)

"Take me home."
Come ten thousand angels! Come and take this wounded
troubador to
the cradle of his Father's arms!



Continued on next page ...

"Take me home."

Come ten thousand angels! Come and take this wounded
troubador to
the cradle of his Father's arms!

Farewell manger's infant
Bless You holy ambassador
Go Home death slayer
Rest well sweet soldier

The battle is over.



from "No Wonder They Call Him the Savior" by Max Lucado

So, in closing, what does this all mean for us? Consider stanza 5 of "The Strife Is O'er":

*Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!
Lord, by the stripes which wounded thee,
From death's dread sting thy servants free,
That we may live and sing to thee,
Alleluia!*

Sources: Wikipedia; hymnary.org; "No Wonder They Call Him the Savior"



COUNCIL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

March 13, 2023



Elders: The Elders will be helping with Confirmation training and Adult Sunday School after Pastor Carlson's resignation.

Sunday School: Sunday School teachers participated in the first session of the Ministry Safe child protection training. Plans are to hold another session for Council members at the April Council meeting.

Trustees: Council approved payment of the \$2250 bill for the RotoRooter work done in the parking lot. The municipality paid the other half.

Personnel: Mason Mitchell's temporary full-time Youth Director term and salary were finalized for approval. He will serve from May 15 to August 7, 2023.

Other Business:

The Direction Committee was formed to study **trends or changes to** the church's financial position, evaluate staff and pastoral duties, workload, job descriptions and to **explore options/alternatives for a second pastor**. Bill Ward will prepare a formal charter for the committee's work. Council approved establishment of the committee with members Bill Ward, Rich Kleiser, Mark Killinger, Dan Groves, and Chris Stout.

Ponderable Quote:

"The only direct statement of Jesus which is simple enough for me to comprehend when my heart is breaking or when I'm discouraged or scared is: 'Follow me.' I cannot understand life because life is not understandable. But I can grasp 'Follow me.'"

Eugenia Price

Worship Team Members for April 2023

Acolytes & Crucifers:

		<u>Acolyte</u>	<u>Crucifer</u>	
4/2	8:30 AM	Asher Manzo	-----	
	11:00 AM	Ryan Handshue	Courtney Felicetti	
4/6	2:00 PM	Elliot McMinn	-----	(Maundy Thursday)
	7:30 PM	Ryan Handshue	Holly Miller	(Maundy Thursday)
4/7	7:30 PM	Evan Gusky	Courtney Felicetti	(Good Friday)
4/9	7:00 AM	Elliot McMinn	-----	(Easter Sunrise)
	8:30 AM	Asher Manzo	Morgan Dolence	
	11:00 AM	Ryan Handshue	Courtney Felicetti	
4/16	8:30 AM	Asher Manzo	-----	
	11:00 AM	Ryan Handshue	Holly Miller	
4/23	8:30 AM	Josh Cimarolli	Holly Miller	
	11:00 AM	Ryan Handshue	-----	
4/30	8:30 AM	Evan Gusky	-----	
	11:00 AM	Ryan Handshue	Courtney Felicetti	

Ushers:

8:30 AM	Bernard Paterra
	John Ruzicka
11:00 AM	Will Charlton
	Mark Sheatsley
	Jason Weighley (4/9)

Counters:

8:30 AM	Tom Glasser
	Roger Kurtz
11:00 AM	Marty Rieck
	Kevin Boehme

Altar Guild

Eileen Bernish



Coffee Hour

Tom & Peggy Glasser

April 2023



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 Assembly of Easter Baskets for Shut-Ins 10 AM Delivery of Easter Baskets 11 AM
2 Palm Sunday Holy Communion 8:30 Fellowship Breakfast 9:45 Holy Communion 11:00 Family Easter Festival 4-6 Holy Communion 6:00 City Mission Food Sunday 	3 Craft & Sew 9:30 (Crafters Only) Elders Mtg 7:00	4 Worship Team 7:00	5 Children's Choir 5:45 Bell Choir 6:30 Confirmation 6:45 Senior Choir 7:30	6  Communion Service 2:00 Communion Service 7:30	7 Various Meditations 12:30 - 3:00 Tenebrae Service 7:30  Good Friday	8
9 Easter Sunday Worship Service 7:00 Worship Service 8:30 NO SUNDAY SCHOOL Worship Service 11:00 (Holy Communion after 8:30 & 11:00 sves) 	10 Church Office Closed Elders Prayer Time 7:00 Council 7:30	11 Worship Team 7:00 VBS Decorating 7:00 - 9:00	12 Esther Noon Children's Choir 5:45 Bell Choir 6:30 Senior Choir 7:30	13 Knit Wits 10:00	14 Men's Prayer Group 7:00 am (Fireside Lounge)	15 Mary Bible Study 9:30 am (Fireside Lounge) Contemporary Liturgical Worship 6:00 pm
16 Worship Service 8:30 Sunday School 9:45 Worship Service 11:00 	17 JTTW Leaders 9:30 Craft & Sew 9:30	18 Worship Team 7:00 VBS Decorating 7:00 - 9:00	19 JTTW 9:15 (End-of-Year Brunch) Children's Ch. 5:45 Bell Choir 6:30 Confirmation 6:45 Senior Choir 7:30	20 Ruth 2:00	21 Men's Prayer Group 7:00 am (Fireside Lounge)	22
23 Church Anniversary Worship Service 8:30 Sunday School 9:45 Worship Service 11:00 GIFT Bible Study 6:30 Young Adult Bible Study 6:30 (A&C Vogels')	24	25 Worship Team 7:00 VBS Decorating 7:00 - 9:00	26 Children's Choir 5:45 Bell Choir 6:30 Confirmation 6:45 Senior Choir 7:30 Herald Deadline	27 Knit Wits 10:00	28 Men's Prayer Group 7:00 am (Fireside Lounge) XYZ Noon	29
30 Worship Service 8:30 Sunday School 9:45 Worship Service 11:00		 Rejoice! He Lives!				



2023

Youth Ministry Calendar

Sun**Mon****Tue****Wed****Thu****Fri****Sat**



						1
2  PALM SUNDAY Fellowship Breakfast 9:45 Family Easter Festival 4-6	3	4	5	6  MAUNDY THURSDAY	7 Tenebrae Service 7:30  GOOD FRIDAY	8
9 EASTER SUNDAY NO SWAP  EASTER Sunday	10	11	12	13	14	15
16 Sunday School 9:45 SWAP @ Church 6 - 7:30	17	18	19	20	21	22
23 Sunday School 9:45 SWAP @ Church 6 - 7:30	24	25	26	27	28	29
30 Sunday School 9:45 SWAP @ Church 6 - 7:30						

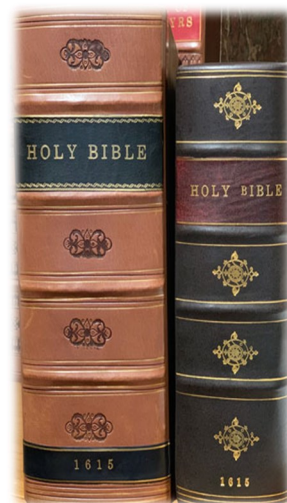
Reading Through the Bible 2023

"One Story that Leads to Jesus"

Schedule for April

1st	2 Samuel 16	2 Samuel 17	2 Samuel 18	Psalm 91		
2nd	2 Samuel 19	2 Samuel 20	2 Samuel 21	Psalm 92		
3rd	2 Samuel 22	2 Samuel 23	2 Samuel 24	Psalm 93		
4th	1 Kings 1	1 Kings 2	1 Kings 3	Psalm 94		
5th	1 Kings 4	1 Kings 5	1 Kings 6	1 Kings 7	Psalm 95	
6th	1 Kings 8	1 Kings 9	1 Kings 10	Psalm 96		
7th	1 Kings 11	1 Kings 12	1 Kings 13	Psalm 97		
8th	1 Kings 14	1 Kings 15	1 Kings 16	Psalm 98		
9th	1 Kings 17	1 Kings 18	1 Kings 19	Psalm 99		
10th	1 Kings 20	1 Kings 21	1 Kings 22	Psalm 100		
11th	2 Kings 1	2 Kings 2	2 Kings 3	Psalm 101		
12th	2 Kings 4	2 Kings 5	2 Kings 6	2 Kings 7	Psalm 102	
13th	2 Kings 8	2 Kings 9	2 Kings 10	2 Kings 11	Psalm 103	
14th	2 Kings 12	2 Kings 13	2 Kings 14	Psalm 104		
15th	2 Kings 15	2 Kings 16	2 Kings 17	Psalm 105		
16th	2 Kings 18	2 Kings 19	Psalm 106			
17th	2 Kings 20	2 Kings 21	2 Kings 22	Psalm 107		
18th	2 Kings 23	2 Kings 24	2 Kings 25	Psalm 108		
19th	Isaiah 1	Isaiah 2	Isaiah 3	Isaiah 4	Psalm 109	
20th	Isaiah 5	Isaiah 6	Isaiah 7	Isaiah 8	Psalm 110	
21st	Isaiah 9	Isaiah 10	Isaiah 11	Isaiah 12	Psalm 111	
22nd	Isaiah 13	Isaiah 14	Isaiah 15	Isaiah 16	Isaiah 17	Psalm 112
23rd	Isaiah 18	Isaiah 19	Isaiah 20	Isaiah 21	Isaiah 22	Psalm 113
24th	Isaiah 23	Isaiah 24	Isaiah 25	Isaiah 26	Isaiah 27	Psalm 114
25th	Isaiah 28	Isaiah 29	Isaiah 30	Psalm 115		
26th	Isaiah 31	Isaiah 32	Isaiah 33	Isaiah 34	Isaiah 35	Psalm 116
27th	Isaiah 36	Isaiah 37	Isaiah 38	Psalm 117		
28th	Isaiah 39	Isaiah 40	Isaiah 41	Psalm 118		
29th	Isaiah 42	Isaiah 43	Isaiah 44	Psalm 119:1-32		
30th	Isaiah 45	Isaiah 46	Isaiah 47	Isaiah 48	Psalm 119:33-64	





So do not fear, for I am with you;
do not be dismayed, for I am your God.

Isaiah 41:10

bibleinspirations.org

A joyful heart is good medicine.

Proverbs 17:22a

Did February March? I don't know, but April May.



When my little boy tells me he'd like to talk to Mommy, it's like one of my customers saying "I'd like to see your supervisor."

The philosopher Plato was talking with his grandson one day. The grandson asked why everyone called him the the wisest man in the world. Plato replied, "Because I know that I really know nothing."

"But how do you know that, Grandpa?", asked the boy.

"My wife told me," replied Plato.

