

St. John's Journal

Volume 49, Issue 4

EASTER CHALLENGE

711 Court Street, Pekin, Illinois 61554-4735
 www.stjohnpekin.com
 Email: stjohsec@grics.net
 (309) 347-2136

Easter is all about the bodily resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. The radical claim that Jesus was dead but is now alive issues an important challenge to one and all: to believe or to reject. There can be no middle ground. Either this claim is true, and Christians have been proclaiming a unique and monumental message for centuries; or else this claim is false, and Christians have been perpetrating a massive fraud, or at best, have been massively deluded.

Unfortunately, many people have chosen to reject the claim of Easter. In spite of the mountain of evidence pointing to its veracity, many have attempted to debunk the Easter message by proposing alternate ways to explain the central fact of our Lord's empty tomb.

For example, some have speculated that Jesus was not really dead, but had only become unconscious on the cross, and then had gone into a coma-like condition. Then, after a period of rest in the cool of the tomb, He revived and escaped. But what about the consistent eyewitness testimony that He was dead? (Mt. 27:30; Mk. 15:37-45; Lk. 23:46; Jn. 19:30,33) And what of the water and blood that flowed from His side when it was pierced by the soldier's spear? (Jn. 19:34) And how would a severely injured man, recently comatose, be able to free Himself from the burial wrappings? And would He possibly be able to roll away from the inside the large stone that blocked His exit?

Others have claimed the women went to the wrong tomb on Easter morning, and that's why it was empty. The women, they allege, in their emotional condition just assumed that Jesus had risen, and started the rumor that He was alive. But what is to be made of the clear testimony that these women saw where Jesus was laid? (Mt. 27:61; Mk. 15:47; Lk. 23:55) If they had mistakenly gone to the wrong tomb, would it not have occurred to them that they might be in the wrong place? Wouldn't they have kept looking until they found the right one? After all, there couldn't have been too many tombs sealed with a large stone and the governor's seal, and guarded by Roman sentries!

And what about the message of the angels, that Jesus had risen from the dead? What about Jesus' numerous post-resurrection appearances, at least one of which was to over five hundred people at the same time? (1 Cor. 15:5-8) And, if Jesus' body were still lying in some other tomb, why wouldn't the Jewish authorities simply produce it and immediately stop the rumors of His resurrection?

Still others have claimed someone stole the body of Jesus. This is the oldest of the bogus explanations, and just as ill-conceived as the rest. Who besides Jesus' disciples would possibly have any motive for doing such a thing? And how would they have gotten past the guards? And how could so many of them maintain such a hoax, without even one of them "cracking"? And above all, why on earth would they lay down their lives for a message they knew to be a lie, when there was no personal gain in it whatsoever, only ridicule and persecution?

Clearly the claim that Jesus rose from the dead rests on solid testimony. All attempts to explain away the evidence are fraught with numerous difficulties and absurdities. To reject the central claim of Easter is to reduce oneself to unreasonable foolishness. Clearly the claim of the resurrection is to be believed!

And if this radical claim of Easter is to be believed, then what? Isn't this the greatest event that has happened among mankind? Doesn't this fact have powerful implications for my life?

For if Jesus is alive – if He has in fact risen from the dead, just as He predicted – then the chances are very great that everything else He said is true, as well. That means, among other things, He is coming again to be my Judge. I have to stand before Him and give account for my life. And that means, I have to rely on His mercy alone. And, thankfully, I can rely on His mercy in His word of forgiveness, which is substantiated by His atoning death on the cross!

The point is, Easter is not just bunnies and candy and flowers and eggs. Christ's resurrection is the supreme fact of human history. We dare not ignore it, distort it, or dismiss it as trivial. The challenge for us is to *believe*, and to live with joyful hope in our risen Savior.

Pastor Bishop

Matthew
Mark
Luke
John

Christian Education

Sunday School

Perfect Attendance

February 2023

None

**APRIL
ANNIVERSARIES**

April 02

Jeff & Leslie Norman

April 05

Joe & Trina Szadkowski

April 10

Greg & Wendy McDonald

April 13

Eric & Paula Jensen

April 17

John & Althea Geiser

April 18

Jacob & Sarah Adkins

April 19

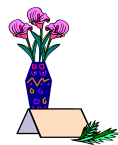
John & Ronda Adkins
Tim & Sandy Gay

April 25

Don & Valerie Dobbelaire

April 30

Dan & Florence McClure



**APRIL
BIRTHDAYS**

April 01

Randy Couch
Dan Rees



April 02

Brittany Allen
Randi Becker
Edward Gaitros

April 03

Dave Drockelman
Iris Gaitros
Greg Hall

April 04

Lindsey Dixon
Carter Stevenson

April 07

Lilly Daniels
Florence McClure

April 08

Darrell Hansen
Dan Watson

April 09

Edyn Kammeyer
Jackie Nauth
Alicia Turner

April 11

Wilma Garber
Logan Schoch
Dane Watson

April 13

Jeff Norman

April 14

Shayla Kesselmayr

April 15

Bobby Gregory
Mark Scott
Mike Wagner

April 16

Dawn Bohannon
Jon Bolt

April 17

Alex Schmidgall

April 19

Mike Dixon, Sr.
Ron Reising
Doug Vogel

April 20

Cathy Ashbaker



April 21

Dave Becker
Kevin Dupent
Addison Nelson

April 22

Jim Buster
Michelle Gregory

April 23

Dan Dobbelaire
Lois Jarvis
Vanessa Watson

April 24

Lucille Benker
Ray Garber
Drew Jackson
Shirley McCoige
Maxine Oliverius
Paul Tackmann

April 25

Josh Donovan
Kingston Hamlet
Kathy Heisel

April 26

William Wiker III

April 27

Chris Ashbaker

April 28

Elaine Hapke
Andrea Yergler

April 29

Chris Bitner
Mikayla Wilson

April 30

Jon Becker
Diane Fornoff
Amy Swibold

**Transferred To The
Church
Triumphant**

Larry Turner
11/5/1948
3/6/2023

Patricia Joann Sego
5/23/42
3/22/23

PARISH NOTES

Church Attendance

Feb 2023 **561** 13 services
 Feb 2022 **409** 12 services
 Feb 2021 **426** 14 services

Sunday School Attendance

Feb 2023: **293**
 Feb 2022: **260**
 Feb 2021: **291**

Videographers - April
 Zane Dobbelaire

Worship Committee - April

Julie Wagner

April Communion Assistance

April 2

8:00 a.m. Tom Ivey
 10:30 a.m. Jon Bolt

April 6 - Maundy Thursday

7:00 p.m. Ross Gould

April 9 - Easter Sunday

7:00 a.m. Jon Bolt
 10:30 a.m. Ross Gould

April 16

8:00 a.m. Randy Couch
 10:30 a.m. Steve Depew

April 30

8:00 a.m. Tom Ivey
 10:30 a.m. Jon Bolt

Acolytes—April

April 6 - Maundy Thursday

7:00 p.m. Elizabeth Sayles

April 9 - Easter Sunday

7:00 a.m. Elizabeth Sayles
 10:30 a.m.

April 23

8:00 a.m.
 10:30 a.m. Elizabeth Sayles

Ushers - April

8:00 **10:30**

Jim Lonergan Brian Ford
 Jim Widby Nate Ford
 Merle Wiseman Trent Hoover
 Brian Unbach

HOLY WEEK SERVICES

April 6 - 7:00 p.m.
 Maundy Thursday Service with
 Holy Communion

April 7 - 12:00 N & 7:00 p.m.
 Good Friday Service

April 9 - **7:00 a.m.** & 10:30 a.m.
 Easter Festival Hymn Service
 w/Holy Communion

*The Easter Breakfast will be served
 after the 7:00 a.m. Easter Sunrise
 Service.*

*There will be an Easter Egg Hunt after
 The Easter Breakfast for children thru
 eighth grade.*

*There will be no Sunday School or
 Adult Bible Class on Easter, and no
 7:00 p.m. service.*

#####



to all who donated Easter
 Lilies for our Easter ser-
 vices.

Ray Barnes
 Don & Valerie Dobbelaire
 Michelle & Zach Ferguson
 Sandy Ferguson
 Valerie Ferguson
 The Hoover Family
 Tom & Cheryl Ivey

TREASURER'S REPORT

February 2023

	<u>February</u>	<u>Y-T-D</u>
INCOME	30,994.00	61,650.00
EXPENSES	41,398.66	60,174.91
INCOME- EXPENSES	(\$310,404.66)	(\$ 1,475.09)
General Fund		(18,111.29)
General Fund Total		(18,111.29)
Ed Grant Fund Checking	2,948.56	
Ed Grant CD LCMS 12/21	51,928.87	
Ed Grant CD LCMS 12/22	51,900.80	
Ed Grant Fund #2-Vanguard	62,337.24	
Educational Fund Total	169,115.47	
East Bluff Property-Vanguard	37,959.92	
East Bluff CD LCMS 12/21	53,808.61	
East Bluff CD LCMS 12/22	53,837.70	
Cat Stock at FMV	88,394.96	
East Bluff Property Fund	234,001.19	
Memorial Fund Checking	29,221.92	
Memorial Vanguard	95,819.37	
Memorial Fund Total	125,041.29	
Building Fund Checking	24,933.51	
S S Fund Checking	12,177.34	
TOTAL ASSETS	583,380.09	
Checking Account Balance	87,392.62	
TOTAL	87,392.62	
LIABILITIES		
Payroll Liabilities	2,635.60	
Misc LCMS Orgs Fund	13.72	
TOTAL LIABILITIES	2,649.32	
FUND BALANCE		
Net Income (Loss)	35.51	
Capital Accounts	580,695.26	
TOTAL FUND BALANCE	566,721.87	
TOTAL LIABILITIES & FUND BALANCE	\$583,380.09	

Steve & Faye Kesselmayer
 Jim & Joyce Lonergan
 Carol Long
 Ruthanne Scott
 Barb Theleritis
 Julie Wagner
 Linda Wagner



HI-LITES OF ST. JOHN'S VOTERS ASSEMBLY
March 13, 2023

Mike Nauth called the meeting to order. A quorum was present. Pastor Bishop opened with devotions.

A motion was made by Tom Ivey, seconded by Ross Gould, to approve the February Parish Report. Motion carried. Pastor Bishop noted that this is the first time that he can remember that he has not had someone in the hospital to visit.

The February meeting minutes were reviewed. A motion was made by Cheryl Ivey, seconded by Randy Couch, to approve the February meeting minutes. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report – Daryl Dagit presented the February Treasurer's Report. Daryl noted that beginning next month the packet given out at the meeting will not contain the breakdown of checks that Sandy Ferguson includes as the same information is displayed in the information the CPA provides. Bob Oliverius asked several questions about the display of the information. Gary Pool asked about the 2 payments to Good Shepherd School. The January payment had not been withdrawn so one payment was for January and one was for February.

A motion was made by Randy Couch, seconded by Cheryl Ivey, to accept the February Treasurer's Report. Motion carried.

Board of Trustees – Dave Kesselmayer reported that the men's restroom is almost done! Partitions for the stalls have been ordered and when they arrive will be installed. The city can then be contacted to do a final inspection.

Board of Elders – Tom Ivey reported that the Elders helped 2 or 3 people with bills this month.

Board of Finance – No report.

Board of Christian Education – Leslie Hauk is the new chairman of the committee, with Tisha Daniels acting as secretary and continuing on as treasurer. Leslie reported that the committee had sent out a card to parents and Sunday School attendance has picked up over the past few weeks. The Parent/Teacher conferences at Good Shepherd took place last Friday. At the last youth event there was 1 youth and 2 adults present. March 26th is the date of the next event. The Christian Education committee provided the Lenten meal last week. The Vacation Bible School representative from St. John's will be Sandy Tennell. Mike Nauth reported that the Pre-K to Kindergarten round-up had about 25 families attend with 13 children signed up so far.

Board of Worship – Diane Gould reported that the Worship Committee would like to follow the process used for the third Sunday of the month where the entire service, excluding hymns, will be printed in the bulletin. This should make it easier for guests and new members to follow along with the service.

Board of Evangelism – Pastor Bishop reported that the committee would like to consider a request from the Central Illinois District to put a container out for Dollars for Missions if there are no objections. The idea is that each week people could voluntarily put a dollar in the container and the funds will go to support special missions, the first of which is to get a vicar for a congregation in the Springfield area. They are trying to get a congregation going on the west side of town. No objections were stated. Pastor stated that this will probably be something that will be on-going. Pastor indicated that a video was produced explaining the concept that could be shown at Bible study.

Board of Stewardship – No report.

Long Range Planning Committee – No report.

Educational Grant Fund Committee – Ross Gould has volunteered to be on the committee. A motion was made by Bob Oliverius, seconded by Tom Ivey, to approve Ross for the Educational Grant Fund Committee. Motion carried.

East Bluff Property Committee – No report.

Constitution By-laws Committee – No report.

Unfinished business – Bob Oliverius questioned where we stand on the topic of using money from the Educational Grant Fund to use for scholarships for students of Good Shepherd. Ross indicated that he will have an update on this at next month's meeting. Ross asked about the Easter breakfast. Gary Pool indicated that he will check into this and get something in the bulletin.

New business – Since we had a quorum this month, Mike Nauth asked if we should have a motion to suspend the July and August Assembly meetings. Ross Gould motioned, seconded by Julie Wagner, to suspend the assembly meetings in the months of July and August. Motion carried. Mike Nauth also reminded everyone about the upcoming auction for Good Shepherd. If you sign up by the end of the month, your name will be entered into a drawing for \$200.00 in auction bucks.

A motion was made by Tom Ivey, seconded by Cheryl Ivey, to close the meeting. Motion carried.

The meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Wagner
Secretary

Thank You - The Peoria Area Lutherans for Life would like to thank your congregation for its participation in the 2023 "Pennies for Life" collection. Thanks to the generosity of several local Lutheran churches, we have collected \$1,989 thus far. This will help us buy, display, and distribute materials to educate Lutherans of all ages about life issues. With your help we sponsored our yearly "Life Essay Contest" for the four Lutheran schools in our area - with monetary gifts going to the winners. We also made contributions to pro-life charities in and around the Peoria area with this money i.e. Women's Care Center, Lutheran Heritage Foundation, Living Alternatives Pregnancy Resource Center, Empower Life Center, Students for Life, Lutheran Hillside Village Benevolent Fund, Central Illinois Right-to-Life, Esther House, and the LCMS Northern IL District Maternity Home. We truly appreciate all your support and prayers as we serve the Lord of Life together.

#####

SHUT-INS for the MONTH: Even though some of our members cannot attend church, we want to keep them in our thoughts and prayers and let them know they are not forgotten. Please send a card or pay a visit to these shut-ins this month.

Shut ins for April are: Flo McClure, Hallmark Healthcare of Pekin, 2501 Allentown Rd., Pekin; Ellen Morrison, Villas of Hollybrook Memory Care, 2720 S. 14th St., #18, Pekin; Loretta Newman, Sunset Rehab & Health Care, 129 S. 1st Ave., Canton 61520 and Hazel Nichols, 1106 S. 8th, Pekin.

Thank you from your St. John's Ladies Guild.

Just Desserts Bake Sale

Save your fork. Are you ready for dessert? Mark your calendars for the next bake sale at Lutheran Hillside Village. Please bring your donated baked goods – cupcakes, cookies, pies, small loaves of bread, candies – to the main entrance of LHV 6901 North Galena Road, Peoria *before* 11am on Thurs, May 11.

Putting your items in a container that you do not need back is recommended. It is also very helpful if you label your donation: Banana Bread (no nuts) made by _____ from _____ Church for LHV Bake Sale.

Just Desserts opens at 8am on Friday, May 12 until 1pm. Proceeds benefit The Benevolent Fund for those residents who have outlived their resources.

Questions? Contact Lisa Mack (309) 360-2669 or LisaDMack14@gmail.com off Nehemiah 8:10 Go and enjoy choice food and sweets...for the joy of the LORD is your strength.



Lutherans for Life sent a thank you letter for our donation to them.

Thank you again for your wonderful gift and also for keeping the Seminar and its future servants of Christ in your prayers. Vicki Biggs, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis.

MARCH LIBRARY CORNER

By Eileen Tiona



"Jesus thus revealed his glory, and his disciples put their faith in Him." John 2:11.

I haven't any new books to report on this month, but would like to invite everyone to come into the library and check out all the wonderful books that are available.

Camp CILCA

Saturday, April 1 is our Spring Work Day from 8 to 11:30 a.m. We would appreciate your help in opening up the camp for the season. Thank you.

GSLs Exterior Maintenance for 2023: March, June and September are the months that St. John's is on the schedule to help out at GSLs with yard work:

- Mow every 1-2 weeks as needed
- Trim ditches, around building, etc. once/month
- Pick up trash 1-2 times/month
- Sweep mulch around playground.

If you can help, there is a sign-up sheet in the gym for June. Thank you.

VOLUNTEERS: We are currently looking for "driving volunteers" to help pick up and take home members who have difficulty getting a way to church. We are hoping to get enough volunteers to drive rotating shifts one Sunday a month, and you can choose either early or late service. Please contact Tom Ivey or Joyce and Jim Lonergan if you can possibly help out. Thank you so much.

ORGANIZATIONS

YOUTH GROUP

will help set up for the Easter Breakfast on Saturday, April 8, at 8:30 a.m. Then will help serve the Easter Breakfast at 8:15 a.m. Easter morning.



In May the Youth Group will help senior members of the congregation with spring cleanup and other helpful chores. So watch for the date and contact us if you would like help with yard work, etc.

#####

LCMS Foundation:

A faithful husband and wife created a sizable estate planned gift for the future, when they were much younger. Today, they are closer to the day when the Lord will call them from this earth. Their attitude has changed about their earthly possessions. Several years ago, they decided that they were going to start giving now the things they had planned to give in the future. But they comprehended the mistake of doing this too hastily. They wanted to be careful. One by one, they began looking at the pieces of their original gift plan and asked themselves the question, "What would we have to do to give this now?" In some cases, the gifts have been a stock transfer using the LCMS Foundation. Some of the assets are qualified retirement assets like IRA's. Being older, they can take advantage of the Qualified Charitable Deduction (QCD) that allows those over 70 1/2 to transfer up to \$100,000 per year to charity. But they realized this was throwing their overall estate plan out of balance, that also included some gifts directly from their will. Giving God's gifts to family is also important to them. They had to rebalance as they went. At one point, they asked their LCMS Gift Planning Counselor for some advice and struck the balance they were seeking.

Was it some work? Yes, it has involved some effort. But for this couple, they celebrate the joy of seeing God's gifts in action. They also have a sense that ministry gifts today can make a big difference. If you want to investigate the possibility of doing the same thing, your LCMS Foundation Gift Planning Counselor can help. Contact Scott Radden at scott.radden@LFND.org or call 618-977-4049.

#####

IN OUR PRAYERS

If you know of anyone who needs to be added, please let the church office know.

All our shut-ins

Pastor Niemann
Billie Jackson
Rosetta Turner
Rhonda Lappie
Jeff Ferree
Paula Jensen
Julie Rilea
Eileen Tiona
Lois Becker
Debi Thome
Suzanne Reising
Mark Reising
Lee Morgan
Lois Niemann

Sandy Morgan
Flo McClure
Robert Rilea
Peggy Farlin
Marlana Montgomery
Addie Burling
Gabriella Kesselmayer
Jack Hall
Virginia Tackmann
Pat Proehl
Kellen Norman
Kevin Dobbelaire
Carol Long
Wilmadean Habberfield

GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN SCHOOL

- April 1 - 10 Spring Break -No School
- April 11 Students & Staff return/classes resume
- April 14 Jog a Thon/PTL Carnival
- April 19 School resumes
- April 21 School Improvement Day (PK-8 Early Dismissal Pre-K 12 p.m. k-8 12:30 pm.)
- April 23 GSLS Students sing @ St. John's, Pekin @ 10:30 a.m.

GSLS DINING OUT FOR APRIL will be an Ice Cream Night on Tuesday, April 11 from 3:00 to 8:00 p.m. at Double D's Ice Cream. You will need to show a flyer (see bulletin board in gym) and a portion of your sale comes back to GSLS!

Double D's is located at 1434 N. 8th St.

Watch bulletins regarding Good Shepherd Lutheran School's 17th Annual Benefit Auction.—"Run for the Roses wit Ewe!" Make your reservations now for this year's auction **Saturday, May 6, 2023** at the Par-A-Dice Hotel Ballroom. Ticket prices are \$50 per person; forms are available at our churches and at GSLS.

Hope to see you there!!!

(Address Service Requested)

Bible Wordsearch

Wordsearch 251

Matt.9:33-10:10

H	B	A	P	O	S	T	L	E	S	S	H	E	E	P
C	I	N	U	T	Y	E	N	R	U	O	J	G	S	E
A	S	U	E	A	D	D	A	H	T	E	A	A	N	T
E	D	I	S	E	A	S	E	I	S	S	M	D	A	E
R	W	E	L	A	E	H	S	U	S	O	E	U	E	R
P	O	T	K	Y	N	C	S	E	H	Z	S	O	L	U
O	R	L	D	O	A	D	M	T	A	E	G	O	C	R
E	C	N	I	R	P	M	A	M	D	A	N	F	H	Z
S	M	A	I	H	E	S	A	L	V	L	I	R	A	E
I	E	O	I	L	T	H	T	T	S	O	H	E	N	B
A	T	L	D	I	E	W	P	I	T	T	C	E	D	E
R	I	M	R	G	E	A	M	E	J	H	A	L	R	D
P	E	I	R	L	N	O	R	O	H	C	E	Y	E	E
Y	P	O	V	N	N	I	H	S	M	S	T	W	W	E
S	H	E	A	V	E	N	K	E	I	J	U	D	A	S

Apostles Chosen

AMAZED	ANDREW
FREELY	APOSTLES
HEAL	CLEANSE
HEAVEN	CROWDS
ISRAEL	DISEASE
JAMES	ISCARIOT
JESUS	JOURNEY
JOHN	KINGDOM
JUDAS	PREACH
PETER	MATTHEW
PHILIP	MESSAGE
PRINCE	SANDALS
RAISE	SHEPHERD
SHEEP	TEACHING
SIMON	THOMAS
SPIRITS	ZEBEDEE
SPOKE	TWELVE
TUNIC	ZEALOT
THADDAEUS	

After you find all the hidden words the left over letters spell out a Bible verse reading from the top left to the bottom right

MORE PUZZLES AT:

<http://biblewordgames.com>

COPYRIGHT 2016

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED