



REFLECTIONS

4725 South Bradley Road
Santa Maria, California 93455
(805) 937-1116
Fax: (805) 937-2107
E-Mail: lcsoffice@lcos.net
Web site: www.lcos.net
<http://www.facebook.com/LCOSSantaMaria>
Stephen A. Eckert, Pastor

Lutheran Church of Our Savior

Volume 57 – Number 4

April 2019

FROM THE PASTOR...

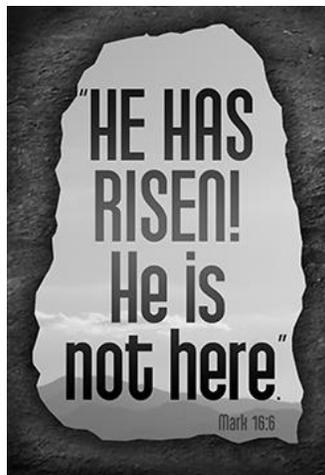
He is risen! And with these three little words we come together around the heart, the center, of the Christian claim to truth. He is risen! And in three words we witness to a hostile world: the Son of God died a godforsaken death on the cross but rose to life again. He is risen! And in three words the truth about God and about us and about human destiny is revealed.

Author Loren Eiseley says men and women are cosmic orphans. “Man” she said “is the only creature in the universe who asks, why? Other animals are guided by instincts but man has learned to ask questions. That is why he is an orphan.” For thousands of years people believed the universe was created by God and he put people on the earth. But his world view broke apart when outer space suddenly widened into infinity. People started to think of earth as a tiny speck drifting in the pull of a minor star, rotating around an enormous galaxy billions of light years away. Galaxies upon galaxies and man knew he was alone in an indifferent and immense universe. Who am I? The orphan cried. And science answered back. “You are a changeling. You are linked by a genetic chain to all the vertebrates. The thing that is you bears the still aching wounds of evolution in body and brain. Your hands are made over fins, your lungs come from a creature gasping in a swamp. You are a rag doll re sewn from the skins of extinct animals. Long ago you were smaller. You were the size of a rat. You ate insects. Now you fly to the moon.” As the cosmic orphan looked to his past, he saw only the purposeless, blind processes of mutation and natural selection. Now as he looks to his future, he sees—death. This is a perfect picture of the problem of humanity without God or the Easter promise. Lost in a universe without God people are thrown into life as an accidental product of nature and facing the inevitable extinction of death. This is made worse by the fact humans of all creatures know it. In killing God people reduce themselves to accidents of nature. And when they ask why? Their cry is lost in the silence of cold space. When they die, they die without hope. In killing God modern man has killed himself. Here is the horror of modern man. Because he ends in nothing, he is nothing.

But Easter says something different. Easter says Jesus is risen. And because he lives, we shall live also. We are not cosmic orphans but God’s beloved children. Jesus is either risen, or he is dead. If he’s dead, then life beyond the grave is dead. If his body is rotting away behind the stone; then your hopes are rotted away in there with him. The entire faith of Christianity stands or falls on the truth of Easter morning. And the Easter

message is: Life beyond the grave is real and your hopes and dreams are real because He is risen!

The women set out early to his tomb. They came carrying spices to prepare his body for the long sleep of death. But their hurry and pain was so heavy they forgot about the stone. Someone would have to roll it away. But when they get there, the stone **is** rolled away...and the tomb is empty... and a man dressed in white says, “*Don’t be surprised; you’re looking for Jesus who was crucified. He is risen! He is not here! See the place where they put him!*” The stone is rolled away! Forever life breaks into our world!



Easter says He is risen! It is fantastic news! And in faith we embrace this truth and in faith we confess and believe this truth. But our faith is not without foundation. Mark Twain said, “Faith is believing what you know ain’t true.” But in this he is wrong. Faith in this Easter truth is not irrational faith. Our believing “he is risen” is not some illogical exercise in wish fulfillment. Paul says, “Christ has indeed been raised from the dead.” Paul shouts it out as a fact. He is risen! Jesus, who claimed to be the Son of God, was crucified, dead and buried, and on the third day he rose. The tomb was empty. He is alive. Paul can say that because he saw Jesus himself. And because of what he saw, Paul’s life did a 180 degree turn. How else can you explain what happened to him? Paul devoted his whole life to destroying Christians and what he thought was the Easter myth. So what else would cause him to flip-flop and start preaching the truth of the Easter message? What else, except he saw Jesus alive?

When the disciples started saying the tomb was empty, Jesus’ enemies didn’t answer, “You’re wrong. He’s in the tomb. You’ve got the wrong grave. The body is over here.” They would have loved to haul out Jesus’ corpse and show everybody and put an end to this Jesus talk right away. But they didn’t because they couldn’t. For 40 days after Easter morning Jesus appeared over a dozen times to over 500 people. He talked with people. He ate with people. He even invited the skeptics to touch him. 500 eyewitnesses! That’s a lot of people! And think about what happened to the disciples. Before Easter they were discouraged and depressed because they thought Jesus was dead and gone. They hid behind locked doors

because they were afraid they'd be crucified too. But after Easter, these same guys were publicly saying Jesus is alive. Something big happened to them. Something as big as seeing one who was dead, come alive again. Most of those disciples died violently because they told people about Jesus. None of them ever recanted their testimony. People will die for their beliefs if they are convinced their beliefs are true. But no one will die for what they know to be a lie. The disciples knew first-hand Jesus had risen from the dead because they were there, and they saw him. Because they knew it was true, they were willing to die for it.

These things can lead you down the path toward Easter, but faith doesn't come through reason and deduction. Faith comes from God the HS. Faith comes when God comes to us. And today he comes bringing the promise of resurrection through the words of his Gospel and in His Body and Blood in, with, and under bread and wine. He comes in the waters of baptism where he calls us home once more and makes us part of God's family. He comes in the love we see in the eyes of others. He comes in every word of forgiveness we speak to others or hear from them.

Jesus says, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock." Open your heart to him. He says, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies." What does this really mean? It means your faith has substance. You've placed your trust in one who lives. And when you pray, he hears you. When you worship, it brings joy to his heart. It means your sins are forgiven. It means you have a certain hope. It means when you talk about heaven, you're talking about something that is going to happen, for you are going to see Jesus! It means you are not and never will be a cosmic orphan. How can I say this? Because He is risen! ✨

...Pastor Steve Eckert



- Apr 03 Molly Williams, Drew Schofield
- Apr 04 Alice Allen
- Apr 07 Alex Foley
- Apr 09 Becky Zielke
- Apr 11 Riley Olney
- Apr 13 Courtney Rust
- Apr 17 Daniel Lehman
- Apr 19 Dave Block, Nathan Vandrey
- Apr 20 Jamie Martin, Julie Martin
- Apr 22 Jill Murdock
- Apr 23 Todd Martin
- Apr 24 Rex Van Den Berg
- Apr 25 Art Atrops
- Apr 26 Margaret (Peggy) Payne
- Apr 29 Shaena Allred
- Apr 30 Ellen Olson, Jesse Wobrock



- Apr 11 Paul & Debra Mattson

TIME TO *SPRING* INTO HOUSECLEANING



**Annual Spring Clean-Up -
Saturday - April 13, 8:30 AM -
12:30 PM - It's time for LCOS's
annual spring housecleaning**

inside and outside in preparation for the great feast of the Resurrection—Easter (April 21). All are welcome to come and help. Please bring your own cleaning and/or gardening supplies. Questions: Call Jane (937-5241). ✨

APRIL SUNDAYS

- Apr 07 - Christian Education Board
- Apr 14 - Dawn Schofield
- Apr 21 - Lee Family
- Apr 28 - Linda Bornhoff/Vicki Amaral



The LCOS Council appointed Evie Cronan as Kitchen Coordinator. Among her duties are maintaining paper goods and eating utensils. If you are planning an event using Stahnke Hall's kitchen, either for the church or privately, please contact Evie prior to purchasing any paper or plastic serving items. The church wishes to maintain matching plates, cutlery, and napkins, and Evie can advise on which specific items to buy. If you choose to use a different style, please take your items home with you. Also, please do not leave serving bowls or trays as the church is unable to store them. For any questions, please contact Evie at (805) 714-7249 or Email: eviesew1@gmail.com. ✨



Easter Egg Hunt!



Plan to bring your kids, grandkids and neighbor kids to our annual Easter Egg Hunt on:

Easter Sunday, April 21.

Children up to age 10 are invited to participate. We will meet in Stahnke Hall at **9:30 AM** for a short presentation by the Sunday School children before the "hunt." Children should bring a basket, bucket, or bag to hold the eggs. Parents and grandparents be sure to bring a camera to capture this Easter memory. It's going to be eggstra fun! ✨

- Apr 04 7:00 pm Elders' Mtg.
- Apr 07 8:15 am Comm. Svc.
- Apr 07 9:30 am SS/Bible Study
- Apr 07 10:45 am Comm. Svc.
- Apr 08 6:00 pm Men's Club
- Apr 11 7:00 pm Council Mtg.
- Apr 13 8:30 am Annual Spring Clean-Up
- Apr 14 8:15 am Worship Svc.
- Apr 14 8:30 am SS/Bible Study
- Apr 14 10:45 am Worship Svc.
- Apr 15 April Ministry Schedule Due**
- Apr 16 9:30 am Tabitha Quilting Group**
- Apr 18 7:00 pm Maundy Thursday Svc.**
- Apr 19 7:00 pm Good Friday Svc.**
- Apr 20 April Newsletter Deadline**
- Apr 21 6:30 am Sunrise Svc.**
- Apr 21 7:00 – 8:15 am – Easter Breakfast**
- Apr 21 8:15 am Comm. Svc.**
- Apr 21 9:30 am Easter Egg Hunt**
- Apr 21 10:45 am Comm. Svc.**
- Apr 28 8:15 am Worship Svc.
- Apr 28 9:30 am SS/Bible Study
- Apr 28 10:45 am Worship Svc



Lent Worship – 7:00 pm

(Soup Suppers precede worship at 6:00 pm)
April 3 April 10

Maundy Thursday- April 18 - 7:00 pm
Good Friday - April 19 - 7:00 pm

EASTER – April 21

Sunrise Service – 6:30 am
(Breakfast served from 7:00 – 8:15 am)

8:15 am and 10:45 am
Communion Services

9:30 am
Easter Egg Hunt

DECORATE THE EASTER CROSS

Celebrating the Resurrection

with Flowers—An Easter cross will be displayed outside in the terrace Easter morning. You are asked to decorate this cross with fresh flowers from your garden. Make sure the stems are long enough to insert into the wire and remain on the cross. Please bring your flowers Easter morning for this traditional beautiful symbol of the Resurrection of Our Lord, Jesus Christ. ✨



Easter Cross

ORDER EASTER LILIES



Remember your deceased loved ones or thank the Lord for blessings received with an **Easter Lily. Cost: \$8.00** **Order Due: No later than Monday, April 15, if you wish to be acknowledged in the Easter bulletin.** **Checks**

payable to: Altar Guild. Plants may be claimed after late service on Easter. Plants will not be saved. ✨

DO YOU OR DON'T YOU?

Do you wish to subscribe to or renew *The Lutheran Witness*? LCOS offers a free subscription to interested members for this monthly magazine. Whether you wish to renew your subscription or become a first-time subscriber, **it is necessary** to call Anne at the Church Office (805) 937-1116. **All renewals and new subscription must be submitted to the Church Office no later than Monday, April 29.** ✨

ELDER'S CORNER

Have the Land Promises God Made to Abraham Been Fulfilled?

I found this article by **Hank Hanegraph** to be a concise, factual explanation of what the Promised Land is, what it was, and what it will be. Hank shows how every promise God gave Israel has already been fulfilled.

Christian Zionists are convinced that the land promises God made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are as yet unfulfilled. They are convinced that Israel must gain control of a land mass roughly thirty times its present size. Here is how John Hagee explains it: "The Royal Land Grant that God, the original owner, gave to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and their seed forever, includes the following territory which is presently occupied by Israel: the West Bank, all of Lebanon, one half of Syria, two-thirds of Jordan, all of Iraq, and the northern portion of Saudi Arabia." But is this really true?

First, the land promises that God made to Israel were fulfilled in the fore future when Joshua led the descendants of Abraham into Palestine. As the book of Joshua records, "The Lord gave Israel all the land he had sworn to give their forefathers, and they took possession of it and settled there" (21:43). Even as the life ebbed from his body, Joshua reminded the children of Israel that the Lord had been faithful to His promises: "You know with all your heart and soul that not one of all the good promises the Lord your God gave you has failed. Every promise has been fulfilled; not one has failed" (23:14). Solomon, during whose reign the glorious temple was constructed, was equally unambiguous: "Not one word has failed of all the good promises [the Lord] gave through his servant Moses" (1 Kings 8:56). In fact, at the height of the Solomonic kingdom, "The people of Judah and Israel were as numerous as the sand on the seashore; they ate, they drank and they were happy. And Solomon ruled over all the kingdoms from the River [Euphrates] to the land of the Philistines, as far as the border of Egypt."

Furthermore, the land promises were fulfilled in the far future through Jesus, who provides true Israel with permanent rest from their wanderings in sin. The writer of Hebrews made clear that the rest that the descendants of Abraham experienced when they entered the land is but a type of the rest we experience when we enter an eternal relationship with the Lord. The land provided temporal rest for the physical descendants of Abraham, but the Lord provides eternal rest for his spiritual descendants. The land was never the focus of our Lord; instead, our Lord is forever the focus of the land. The quintessential point of understanding for the disciples began to dawn at the time of Christ's post-resurrection appearances. Previously, they had been under the same misconceptions as modern-day Christian Zionists. They had expected Jesus to establish Jerusalem as the capital of a sovereign Jewish empire. The notion was so ingrained in their psyches that, even as Jesus was about to ascend into heaven, they asked, "Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?" (Acts 1:6)

Jesus not only corrected their erroneous thinking but expanded their horizons from a tiny strip of land on the east coast of the Mediterranean to the farthest reaches of the earth: "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8). In effect, Jesus left His disciples with instructions to exit Jerusalem, embrace the earth, and never again entertain the thought of establishing a Jewish theocracy.



Finally, the land promises will be fully and completely consummated when paradise lost is reconstituted as paradise restored. Canaan is thus typological of a renewed cosmos. Accordingly, Abraham was anything but a Zionist. Like Isaac and Jacob, he viewed living in the Promised Land in the same way that a stranger would view living in a foreign country. Why? Because as the writer of Hebrews made plain, "He was looking forward to a city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God" (11:10). Abraham looked beyond binding borders and boundaries to a day in which the meek would "inherit the earth" (Matt. 5:5; cf. Ps. 37:11, 22). ✿

Prayerfully submitted by: **Rudy Stowell**



MOWING IN APRIL

Apr 06 **Art Atrops**

Apr 13 **Mark Hathaway, Terry Morgan, Dick Scholar**

Apr 20 **Ernie Heuchert, Corey Maddison, Harold Oliver**

Apr 27 **Bill Williamson, Arlin Weiting**

CALVARY CROSS (GRADED CROSS)

This Latin cross with three steps symbolizes both Jesus' climb up Calvary's mountain and the three gifts of faith, hope and love. Those gifts are intrinsically connected to Jesus' death and resurrection and are ours by sheer grace. "And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love" (1 Corinthians 13:13, NIV). ✿





Do Ushers and Greeters at LCOS make you feel welcome? Have you considered lending your talents in that area? LCOS is in need of additional Ushers and Greeters to ensure that all who attend services on Sunday are made to feel welcome in God's House. No applicant will be discriminated against on the basis of age or gender. For further information, contact Jim LaBelle (805-937-0257) for Ushering or Art Atrops (805-937-0485) for Greeting.

CHRIST HAS TRIUMPHED!

Tomb, thou shalt not hold him longer;
 Death is strong, but life is stronger.
 Stronger than the dark, the light;
 Strong that the wrong, the right.
 Faith and hope triumphant say,
 Christ will rise on Easter Day.

...Phillips Brooks

**CHILDREN'S
 ACTIVITIES**



Jesus gives us *life*

Through his death and resurrection, Jesus offers the free gift of eternal life.

Directions: Match each clue from Holy Week with the correct image. If you get stuck, look up the Bible verses.

People spread these on the road for Jesus. (Matthew 21:8)



Mary pours this on Jesus' feet. (John 12:3)



Jesus shares this with his disciples. (Matthew 26:26)



This is placed on Jesus' head. (John 19:2)



Soldiers may have used these to compete for Jesus' coat. (John 19:23-24)



Jesus carries this himself for a while. (John 19:17)



Marks caused by these help Thomas identify Jesus. (John 20:25)



While on the cross, Jesus is thirsty and is given this. (John 19:28-29)



This is rolled away from Jesus' tomb. (John 20:1)



These are used to prepare Jesus' body for burial. (Luke 23:55-56)



These remain in the tomb after Jesus rises. (John 20:6-7)



Judas betrays Jesus for this. (Matthew 26:14-15)



Lutheran Women in Mission

Spring Rally – Saturday – April 27

Trinity Lutheran Church, Paso Robles

9:30 AM Registration \$8 – Luncheon

Speaker: Dr. Bonnie Lyon – “We Walk by Faith and Not by Sight”

RSVP: 805-238-3702, x205

Annual Spring Tea – Saturday – May 18 – 2-4 PM
 San Luis Obispo Country Club

STEWARDSHIP CORNER

In 1 Corinthians 15, the Resurrection Chapter, the Apostle Paul writes, *“What I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins...that He was buried, that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures...”* (1 Corinthians 15:3). Through Christ's Resurrection, God assures us that we are forgiven and that we, too, will rise again. Surely this is the message of first importance that we as stewards of our Risen Lord and Savior will desire to pass on. Christ is risen!

**“The angel said, ‘He is not here,’
 He has risen...go quickly and’
 tell” “ (Matthew 28:5-7)**

Answer: palm branches, perfume, bread, crown of thorns, cross, nails, vinegar on a sponge, stone, spices, linens, silver coins

Lutheran Church of Our Savior
4725 South Bradley Road
Santa Maria CA 93455



Our Mission

“Responding to God’s love, Lutheran Church of Our Savior desires to reach more people for Christ by proclaiming Him, by growing in faith, and by caring for all people.”



Sunday Worship – 8:15 AM & 10:45 AM
Sunday School & Bible Class – 9:30 AM

*For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that
whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.
John 3:16*