



Acts of Faith

Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church
The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod
Kewanee, Illinois



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Ah, April! Spring is here again, and I'm excited about the new season! As I've said before, this is when I get reacquainted with my grill and barbecue tools (though, I really didn't take the winter off from grilling), and I can wear my shorts and not get weird looks, because it's actually warm enough for shorts now. I really enjoy watching the trees bud in spring, too. Yes, spring is about rebirth. The waters the earth receives in the form of snow in the winter and rain in early spring, lead to new life in late spring and summer. Actually, spring reminds me of Baptism.

In the book of Colossians, the apostle Paul really drills home the importance of Baptism. He writes in 2:12, that we have "been buried with Him in Baptism, in which you were also raised with Him." Paul uses the themes of life and death in speaking about Baptism and the Christian life.

He begins with death. As the earth seems dead during the winter months when the trees are bare, the sky is gray, and many animals hibernate or go south, so we begin our lives in spiritual death. In our liturgy, during the confession of sins, we admit, "Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean." Genesis 6:5 says, "The Lord saw how great man's wickedness on the earth had become and that every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time." Paul says in Ephesians 2:1, 3, "As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins... Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath." Though we're physically alive when we're born, we're spiritually dead, capable of nothing spiritually good. This lost person we're born as is referred to in Lutheran circles as the "Old Adam." Your Old Adam is unredeemable, unchangeable, and unable to be rehabilitated, because he is hopelessly devoted to his own desires, as trapped in his desire to serve himself as a man encased in solid rock. He is God's enemy, hating all things good and holy, rejecting grace, and doing whatever he can think of contrary to God's will. In short, it's useless to try to please God by curbing individual sins because our entire nature is corrupt. Old Adam is a lost cause. He needs to die.

That's exactly what Baptism does. Paul says many times in Colossians (2:20, 3:3), in reference to Baptism, "You died." Your Old Adam was incapable of anything good, so God killed him. This occurred at your Baptism. At the same time, the Lord raised up a new person, a New Adam. In Colossians 2:12 and 3:1, Paul says, again in reference to Baptism, "You have been raised up." As the waters of snow and rain bring new life in spring, so the waters of baptism bring new life to the baptized. You once dwelt in winter, but now you're in the springtime of life. You're now a new person. You're redeemed, forgiven, alive. Baptism kills the old condemned person, and puts in its place a new, clean saint who's wearing Christ.

In chapters 3 and 4 of Colossians, Paul encourages his readers to live a life pleasing to God. He does this on the basis of their Baptism. You're not the same person you used to be. You're not Old Adam anymore. He's dead. You are New Adam, and New Adam *wants* to do God's will because the Lord has redeemed and forgiven him. To pursue sin and the desires of the flesh is to deny who you are now, to push away the Lord's gift of new life. Yes, you're still tempted and sinful sometimes because that sinful flesh still clings to you, but you're no longer controlled by sin and an enemy of God. In essence, Paul says, "You're different now. Live like it."

So, in Baptism, we're killed and then resurrected. Sound like anyone else we know? Absolutely: Jesus! Colossians 2:12 says we have "been buried with HIM in Baptism, in which you were also raised with HIM." "Him," of course, is Jesus. Only through the death and resurrection of Christ, which we undergo in Baptism, are we saved. Baptism connects us with Christ. We undergo His death, and are raised up a new person, just as He was raised up.

Baptism also looks forward. Since we're connected to Christ through Baptism, we also will be resurrected bodily as He was, when He returns again on the last day. We died and were buried with Christ, and will be raised to new life as He was raised. We are saved, forgiven, and given life through this connection with Christ.

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The forgiveness and life He won for us on the cross is delivered to us in Baptism.

In 1 Peter 3:21, Peter says, "Baptism now saves you," not because of the outward act of being baptized, but because Baptism connects us to our Savior, Jesus. If someone ever asks you how you know you're saved, you can say with complete confidence, "Because I am baptized." In baptism, you were connected to your Savior, you were killed, and you were made alive again. Happy spring! In Christ, Pastor Bushre

Worship Schedule
5:00 PM, Saturday Worship Service
with Adult Bible Class, 4:00 PM

April's Calendar

- Apr. 01 **Happy Easter 9:00 AM**
Worship
- Apr. 07 **First Sunday after Easter**
Worship with Holy Communion
Bible Class at 4:00 PM
- Apr. 12 WOF Meeting 10 AM
- Apr. 14 **Second Sunday After Easter**
Worship with Holy Communion
Bible Class at 4:00 PM
- Apr. 16 LifeLight Study starts 1:00 PM
- Apr. 21 Elders Mtg. 2:30 PM
Church Council 3:00 PM
Bible Class 4:00 PM
Third Sunday after Easter
Worship with Holy Communion
- Apr. 23 LifeLight Study 1:00 PM
- Apr. 28 **Fourth Sunday after Easter**
No Communion
Bible Class 4:00 PM
LWML District Convention
- Apr. 30 LifeLight Study 1:00 PM

Altar Guild Schedule

April 01	Kari Tavares	White
April 07	Sharon Larson	White
April 14	Marilyn Sturtevant	White
April 21	Mary Hahn	White
April 28	Kari Tavares	White
	No Communion	

Weekly Ushers:

- 1st Sunday: Ray Heinrich & Kevin Hull
- 2nd Sunday: Eric Cervantez & Nick Leezer
- 3rd Sunday: Nick Philips & Randy Stockner
- 4th Sunday: Mike Leezer & Wendell Hier
- 5th Sunday: Kevin Hull & Ted Sturtevant

Elders List:

- Wayne Becker: 309-853-8783
- Kevin Hull: 309-852-0801
- Ron Larson: 309-853-5111
- Mike Leezer: 309-286-3014
- Ted Sturtevant: 309-853-8203
- Wendell Hier 309-853-8388

REMEMBER: Please contact the office and inform us of any changes of name, address, marital status, e-mail, phone, and cell phone.

If you have an article, a thank you, an idea, a suggestion, or a request for the next newsletter, give the information to the church office or send an e-mail to hahn.gary@comcast.net before April 28, 2017.

Those For Whom We Pray Please include the following in your thoughts and daily prayers.

Our Faith family: Pastor Weber and family, Cari Bridgewater, Betty Godke, Tootie Godke, Lois Novotny, Joyce Long, Mona Kubiak, Bonnie Nuding, and Carol Schwefel

Friends: Jeff Bowman, Karen Wright, Judi Umbarger, Steve Peart, Rev. Ken Wegener, and our troops abroad.

Our prayers and thoughts go out to Wendell Hier and the Michael Verschage family upon the passing of Lynn Verschage, Wendell's daughter, to her heavenly home on April 3rd in Waupaca, Wisconsin.



Prayer Requests: Have someone or something that you would like Pastor Bushre to include in either his personal prayers or in our public Prayer of the Church on Sunday morning, please fill out a prayer request, place in an envelope, and leave it in the office or hand it to Pastor.

April Birthdays

April 1	Emma Cox
April 4	Lacey Leezer
April 4	Andrew Yarger
April 7	Marcelene Godke
April 10	Lauri Cochran
April 10	Yancy Gillespie
April 12	Peggy Faber
April 14	Rev. Paul Weber
April 15	Raymond Heinrich
April 15	Lorie Townsend
April 16	Abigail Clapper
April 17	Vanda Hallock
April 21	Logan Hernandez
April 25	Kelly Gillespie
April 25	Larry Gillespie
April 28	Marlin Gillespie

Baptism Dates

Joy Hernandez Butler	Apr. 4
Julie Carpenter	Apr. 19
Abigail Clapper	Apr. 27
Mary Duncan	Apr. 21
Michael Estes	Apr. 16
Charles Heinrich	Apr. 23
Jaxson Hicks	Apr. 20
Marvin Newman	Apr. 20
Fred Stapel	Apr. 18
Milton Stapel	Apr. 5
Kari Tavares	Apr. 1

Wedding Anniversaries

Peggy and Steven Faber	April 3
Sandra and Nicholas Phillips	April 8
Carol and James Cook	April 16

Lutheran Hour Ministry Radio Program

Station	City, State	Freq.	Day & Time
WKEI	Kewanee, IL	1450 AM	Sun 5:30 AM

Birthday wishes to **Tootie Godke** on her **95th** birthday this month, and **Pastor Weber** who celebrates with his comrades in the Middle East. God's blessings on these special people in our lives.

Women of Faith will be meeting on Thursday, April 12th, at 10:00 AM at the church. Mary Hahn will be the host, and will lead a Bible Study from the Spring LWML Quarterly magazine entitled, "Comfort Ye, Comfort Ye My People." All ladies of the congregation are encouraged to attend. A Hobo soup Lunch will be served so bring a can of soup for the pot with you.

The LWML Central Illinois District Convention will be held on April 28th in Bloomington, IL.

This month's LWML Mite Box collection supports the mission grant, "Christian Hope Through Mass Media in Egypt." LHM broadcasting from Cairo, Egypt provides Christian television for millions in the Middle East without hope living in refugee camps and others in this war torn area of the world. Thank you for your donations and prayer support to bring news of Jesus Christ, Our Risen Savior!

Thanks to everyone who sponsored *Easter lilys* in memory of or in honor of a loved one. You helped create a beautiful worship space! This includes Mike and Paula Leezer, Ron and Sharon Larson, Ray and Sandy Heinrich, Bill and Claudia Croegaert, and Sue Cervantez.



LifeLight study "Book of Hebrews" will begin on Monday, April 16, 2018 at 1:00 PM in the fellowship hall. Like pilgrims who need a word of encouragement; Hebrews encourages us to listen to the Word of God revealed in the Son of God, Jesus. The nine session topics are:

- Listen to the Son (Hebrews 1-2)
- Listen Today and Believe (Hebrews 3:1-4:13)
- Our Great High Priest (Hebrews 4:14-6:20)
- Better and Forever (Hebrews 7)
- A New Covenant (Hebrews 8)
- Draw Near (Hebrews 9:1-10:18)
- Now Faith Abides (Hebrews 10:19-12:22)
- The Unshakable Kingdom (Hebrews 12:3-29)
- Pilgrim's Worship (Hebrews 13)



Please consider joining us for this nine week session. Contact Gary Hahn for more details and a study guide.

Portals of Prayers for April thru June 2018 are available in the Narthex on the information stand. Please take one home and another for a friend to use in your daily devotions.

Remember to please put your name and date on all “generic offering” envelopes. We want to give you credit for all your contributions. We appreciate your assistance to all the various activities we sponsor. We want to make sure you get credit for your year-end records.

Care Packages: There are only two months, April and May, left in our National Guard comfort boxes campaign. Please leave your care package items in the box located in the Narthex. Boxes must be packed and addressed by the 14th of each month. Thank you for all your support and prayers and sharing God's love with those protecting us! These are soldiers that do not have good support from home and will truly be encouraged by these boxes!

Pastor Weber's tour is half way completed and we lovingly await his safe return to his family and ours.

Thank you Rev. Bushre, we appreciate your extra effort so that we were able to have a worship service on Easter Sunday and services during Holy Week. We join you in thanking our Lord for your successful surgery and quick recovery. All praise to Him! Christ has risen! He has risen indeed! Alleluia!

Our Father in heaven sent His Son, Jesus, to be our savior. His atoning sacrifice is the firstfruits of all the dead, a pleasing aroma to His Father – and ours – so that His perfect life and death count for all who believe in Him. He claimed us as His own children in Holy Baptism. He sustains and strengthens our faith with His Holy Word and His Body and Blood. As new creatures, who have put on Christ, we bear good fruit. We do the good works prepared for us, which He makes known to us in His Word.

By faith then, trusting in the Word of God, we do what he says because He does not lie and always keeps His promises. For “without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him” (Heb. 11:6). And so the Lord promises: “Honor the Lord with your wealth and with the firstfruits of all your produce; then your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will be bursting with wine” (Prov. 3:9-10).

How do we honor the Lord with the wealth that God has given us in His generosity? By giving it generously to those whom the Lord has called us to love and support: your family, your society, and your church. And His promise is that in so doing, you will never lack.

Lord Jesus Himself gives us similar promises in the New Testament. He says, at the conclusion of the parable of the talents, “For to everyone who has will more be given, and he will have an abundance” (Matt. 25:29).

Jesus says: “One who is faithful in a very little is also faithful in much, and one who is dishonest in a very little is also dishonest in much. If then you have not been faithful in the unrighteous wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches? And if you have not been faithful in that which is another's, who will give you that which is your own? No servant can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money” (Luke 16:10–13).

“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also” (Matt. 6:19–21).

But our Father in heaven still loves to bless those who bless others. He loves to give to those who give freely and generously. In fact, he challenges us to challenge Him: “Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. And thereby put me to the test, says the Lord of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you a blessing until there is no more need” (Mal. 3:10).

And so, while we don't give so that we would get, we do receive from the Lord in order to give, and He will bless your giving with more receiving. For “He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things” (Rom. 8:32)?