

FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH  
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*Embraced by God through Jesus Christ our Lord, we share this gospel of hope and healing within and throughout our community within and throughout our community*



## Road Closed?

So, when he (Jesus) heard that Lazarus was ill, he stayed two days longer in the place where he was.<sup>7</sup> Then after this he said to the disciples, "Let us go to Judea again."<sup>8</sup> The disciples said to him, "Rabbi, the Jews were just now seeking to stone you, and are you going there again?"<sup>9</sup> Jesus answered, "Are there not twelve hours in the day? If anyone walks in the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world.<sup>10</sup> But if anyone walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him."<sup>11</sup> After saying these things, he said to them, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I go to awaken him."<sup>12</sup> The disciples said to him, "Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will recover."<sup>13</sup> Now Jesus had spoken of his death, but they thought that he meant taking rest in sleep.<sup>14</sup> Then Jesus told them plainly, "Lazarus has died,<sup>15</sup> and for your sake I am glad that I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him."<sup>16</sup> So Thomas, called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, "Let us also go, that we may die with him." (John 11:6-16)

It's that sign we all dread to see. Road Closed. After that initial sinking feeling, comes that good Lutheran question, "What does this mean?" Will there be a delay, a detour, can we get where we thought we were going, how long will this road be closed and what impact will it have on the future?" Often these days, we have a GPS to redirect us, but there are still those landslide situations that leave a giant stone in our path and we find ourselves forced to pause.

It's not just closures and other detours, like the ones we have had around church over the years, that cause us to pause and consider our direction and what lies before us. Any number of events and conditions in our families, work, and the rest of our lives can also cause us to pause. Yet before we get anxious or frustrated, I want us to consider three things.

**There are good reasons for closures and detours:** We can't keep driving across a failed or damaged bridge without dire consequences. Both repair and building something new or better often require a pause, a change in course, and some temporary pain.

**The pause itself can be invaluable:** I'm often tempted to just keep going or find a way around a problem without pausing or seeking guidance (even from my GPS). Yet we can miss a great deal and even get ourselves into trouble when we don't pause. We all need to just stop to take a breath and take stock.

**Stops and detours can lead us places we never expected:** There are benefits to stops and detours that may seem entirely unrelated to what we thought we needed. The scenic drive, and new destination that was better than our old one, developing perseverance, trust, and character through hardships and suffering. Not all unexpected things are easy or even pleasant, but God does indeed work all things for good for those who love him.

So what does this have to do with Lent, Easter, or whatever other season of life you are in right now? Consider the events surrounding the death of Jesus's friend Lazarus, and the time leading up to Easter. At one point, Jesus allows himself to be detained while caring for those in front of Him. At the same time he teaches us a few things about the trust in the Lord and his timing. Apparently Jesus's delay had not been too upsetting to some of the disciples. If anything, they saw traveling to Jerusalem as the potentially dangerous distraction. After all Lazarus would probably just recover, so why risk going where people wanted to kill them? At this point, Jesus pauses to share that Lazarus has died and also a little bit about God's timing. "Lazarus has died,<sup>15</sup> and for your sake I am glad that I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him." I'm not sure whether Thomas's following remark of "Let us also go, that we may die with him." is one of mourning, cynicism, or an indication that now he really thinks going to Judea is a bad detour. Yet, one thing is clear. It would take Jesus raising Lazarus and many more stops, detours, and "delays," before many of the disciples would begin to arrive at a better understanding of who Jesus really is. It would take the pain of Jesus's suffering of death and what seemed like an insurmountable rock in the road slamming shut in front of His tomb, before Easter morning would arrive. Only then would an even bigger rock called death be moved and something new and glorious would appear before all of us in the form of the risen Christ. Through God's plan that had been taking place since the garden of Eden... through all the twists and turns, pauses and detours leading up to and during the crucifixion and resurrection... God had new and amazing things under construction! And this was a good!

Whatever events in your life may have you at a pause, a dead stop, or feeling like you just need to keep on going full speed ahead lest you lose your momentum, I urge you to pause and consider the story of Lazarus and Christ's path to the cross. Stop and spend some time with God, look at what He has accomplished with the empty tomb. Then consider what that means for the future and the place God will and wants to take you. Some roads may be closed, but the path to eternity and life-giving relationship with the Lord is open to you right now. In Jesus name. Amen.



### HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

Bill Schoech	March 14
Michelle Grossnickle	March 20
Joy Martinsen	March 20
Laura Allwardt	March 21
Lisa Koronec	March 24
Carolyn Klodzen	March 24
Dora West	March 25
Kathy Lund	March 26
Daisy Fryman	March 28
Cora Grossnickle	March 29

*\*\* New members—please send us your birthday if we do not have it listed. Email to [office@faithmemorial.net](mailto:office@faithmemorial.net)*

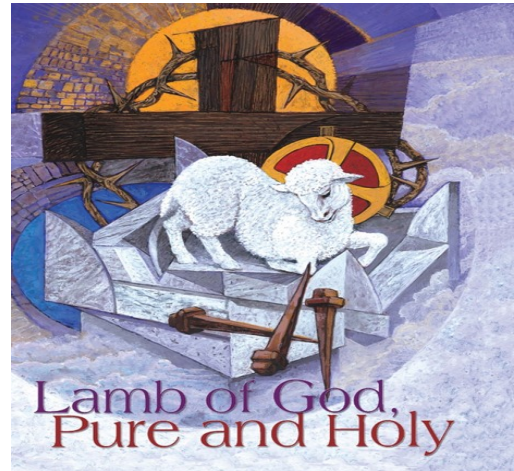
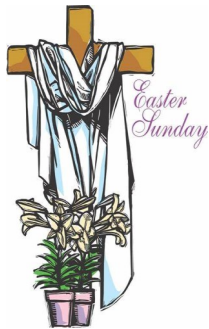


A good time was had by all — bowling at Inman’s last month

### EASTER BREAKFAST

Please join us after worship service on Easter Sunday for our traditional Easter Breakfast in Fellowship Hall.

Watch the weekly bulletin announcements for more details.



This month our theme—*Lamb of God, Pure and Holy*—continues during Wednesday night services and Sunday Bible Study.

### LENTEN SUPPERS

Following our tradition here we will meet for a Lenten supper preceding the Wednesday evening Lent service. Please speak to Paul Grossnickle with any questions.

The supper begins at 6:15 followed by Holden Evening Prayer at 7:00pm.



### LILIES AND TULIPS FOR EASTER

Would you like to purchase an Easter Lily or tulip plant to help decorate our sanctuary for Easter? If so, please do so and bring it to the church by Good Friday or on Saturday. (We would like to be able to arrange the flowers before Easter Sunday morning)







## Holy Week Calendar

Sunday, March 24 9:00am	<i>The Sunday of the Passion</i> Holy Communion
Thursday, March 28 7:00pm	<i>Maundy Thursday</i> Holy Communion
Friday, March 29 3:00pm 7:00pm	<i>Good Friday</i> Liturgy of the Cross Tenebrae
Sunday, March 31 9:00am	<i>The Resurrection of Our Lord</i> Holy Communion



Whether you are interested in being a cantor or singing as part of the choir for Easter there are lots of opportunities to sing in church! You may sign up for available services in the Assisting Minister book. For questions please speak to Pastor Schoech or Mary Dunlap.



*This article is reprinted from the Lutheran World Relief website and is edited for space. For more information or to make a donation visit [lutheranworldrelief.org/environment](https://lutheranworldrelief.org/environment).*

On February 6, 2023, a massive earthquake in Türkiye left thousands of families in crisis. In faith and generosity, Lutherans like you rushed help and hope during this time of unimaginable loss. Over the past year, much of the world has since turned its attention elsewhere. But your compassion has persisted, easing suffering and meeting critical needs as families and communities work to recover.

These children, families and older adults lost their loved ones, homes, belongings, livelihoods, EVERYTHING. The destruction was some of the worst we've ever seen. You provided urgently needed supplies. There was almost no food or water for weeks afterward. Aftershocks made it unsafe to go inside any building. As rain poured down on families who had no supplies and no where else to go, the comfort of your love provided hot meals, clean water, tents, clothing and LWR quilts and kits. **Jobs remain scarce**, and it is still challenging for many families to buy food and essentials. Through your generosity, we are launching a new initiative to **help women start and operate small businesses** to provide for their families.

When disaster struck in Türkiye, your quick response saved lives and brought comfort where it was needed most. You don't have to wait until the next emergency to make a difference. Every gift you give helps us stay longer — and prepares us to act quickly when the need arises.

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*FAITH WORSHIP SCHEDULE*

The Third Sunday in Lent, March 3, 9:00am Holy Communion  
The Third Wednesday in Lent, March 6, 7:00pm Evening Prayer  
The Fourth Sunday in Lent, March 10, 9:00am Morning Prayer  
The Fourth Wednesday in Lent, March 13, 7:00pm Evening Prayer  
The Fifth Sunday in Lent, March 17, 9:00am Holy Communion  
The Sunday of the Passion, March 24, 9:00am Holy Communion  
Maundy Thursday, March 28, 7:00pm Holy Communion  
Good Friday, March 29, 3:00pm Liturgy of the Cross  
Good Friday, March 29, 7:00pm Tenebrae  
The Resurrection of Our Lord, March 31, 9:00am Holy Communion



**CHRIST** THE **LORD**  
**IS RISEN TODAY!**