

John 20:18

“I’ve seen
the Lord.”

Dear Friends,

Some time ago, I learned what “winter wheat” is. Farmers sow the seeds in the early fall when there’s still enough warmth, so that the wheat grows up fresh and green, but it’s only a few weeks before the cold weather sets in. When winter comes, the whole crop “dies” beneath the snows. But when Spring returns, the wheat comes back to life, and it’s ready to be harvested by the middle of April.

Jesus must have had this phenomenon in mind when He said, “Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies it remains just a single grain, but if it dies, it bears much fruit. (Jn 12:24) When Jesus shared this verse, He was telling His disciples about His impending death. He was saying that giving His life was like the planting of winter wheat. At Easter we celebrate that Jesus came back to life like the wheat does, only more fruitfully than we can imagine when it was planted.

Imagine the disciples running to the tomb on Easter morning, and the risks that they were taking. If they found Jesus’ body in that tomb, it meant losing everything they’d come to believe. It would have meant that Jesus’ promises about resurrection and everlasting life weren’t true. But if Jesus really was alive, suddenly everything He taught them presented them with the choice we all must make if we will be His followers. Will we lose our lives for His sake, in order to find the real, abundant life He promised?

There is a genuine faith that is involved in planting seeds, because it is always done in *hope* that fruit will grow in the future. Sometimes having faith means that we must overturn the soil - overturn whatever is hard-packed on the surface, so that new life can be planted. It may be painful to break through the hard-packed soil of our comfortable routines, and solid fears of what changes may come. But doing so is the only way the seeds God gives us to plant, can find purchase and grow. The question is, “What risks of faith and love are we willing to take? For our own lives? For the life of our church? What next steps of devotion and service are we willing to try in order to experience spiritual growth? What new ideas and approaches are we willing to try?” How we answer such questions will make a difference in how we proceed as individuals and as a congregation. The promise of Easter is, there’s a fruitful harvest we’ll reap from faithfully planting God’s seeds of faith and growth, and *it will be worth the risks*. Alleluia!

Peace and Blessings, Ed

TOWER CHIMES



Vol. 14 Issue 4

April 2023

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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HOLY WEEK & EASTER SCHEDULE

2023

Easter Offering

For those receiving the newsletter via mailing, a Special Offering envelope is included, however, for those receiving it electronically, you can scan the QR code to make an online offering—just include that it is an Easter offering in the 'NOTES' field. Envelopes are also available in the Narthex, or call the church office and request that one be sent to your home.



Editor:
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Palm Sunday, April 2nd @ 10:30 am, we will reflect on the choices that Palm Sunday offered both to those who were present on that day, and indeed to every person of all time, regarding Christ.

Thursday, April 6th, there will be a Passover (Seder) meal at 7:00 pm. The service will explore the meaning of the Passover meal as we celebrate that memorial together. The Seder is the Last Supper that Jesus celebrated with His first disciples, and that He endowed with a new meaning for His church in Holy Communion. Following the Passover ritual, we will have a brief worship experience that will conclude with Holy Communion.

Easter Sunday, April 9th, there will be an Easter morning breakfast served before worship at 9:30 am, featuring fresh hot bagels beverages and more. (There will not be a coffee hour after the Easter service.) Come to break bread together as we gather to celebrate the resurrection of Christ!

Easter Service @ 10:30 am, this service will focus on the new day - the new reality - for all time, for all the world, that began with the resurrection of Christ!

Easter Flowers—the deacons will be decorating the altar with a mix of tulips, daffodils, and perhaps a few other varieties for Easter Sunday, April 9th. After the service, the flowers will be available for purchase @ \$5 per plant. If you are interested in a plant, be sure to see Gail after the Easter service so you can choose a plant to take home. Any plants that are not purchased will be planted on church grounds.

Joyous News!

Congratulations to Sean & Andrea, big brother, Lucas, and grandmother, Linda on this beautiful new addition to the family:

Juliet Mireya
Feb 20, 2023
7lbs 12 oz. / 19 in.



&



Congratulations to Samantha & her husband, and great grandmother, Jean on the arrival of this handsome little man:

Cameron Stanislaw
March 11, 2023
7lbs 2 oz. / 20.5 in.

Church Angels

The church angels have worked on these areas of the church: the Library, the Sacristy and the Kitchen. There is still a lot more work to do in the kitchen and we have an entire bookcase of books that we need to work on as well. There are many more areas of the church that need our attention also. However, with our spring flea market fast approaching, we need to focus on helping the flea market crew to prepare for this important fundraiser. We will resume working on various projects around the church at the end of April. If you didn't volunteer earlier, but would like to help, please let JoAnn Roesch or Gail Anderson know.



Apr.

- 4 - Carleigh Grace R.
- 4 - Andrew Bruce R.
- 12 - Jean K.
- 14 - Alex S.
- 14 - Eric C.
- 16 - Jacob Francis R.
- 17 - Daniel James M.
- 19 - Olivia P.
- 25 - Katelyn Elizabeth C.



Apr.

- 12 - Melinda & Doug
- 13 - Allison & Eddie
- 22 - Jennifer & Jim
- 28 - Marisa & Richard
- 29 - Rev. Erin Hayes-Cook & Lawrence Cook

The CHOSEN

Join us to watch "The Chosen" and

participate in the discussion. You can come and go, according to your schedule. Don't feel you have to begin at the beginning or complete the episodes in order. The show is easily accessible if you would like to watch each episode in order. Drop-ins are welcome!

We will meet to view and discuss "The Chosen" at the manse at noon on the following Sundays:

- April 2 - Season 1 Episode 5
- April 30 - Season 1 Episode 6
- May 7 - Season 1 Episode 7
- May 21 - Season 1 Episode 8 (final episode for this season)



Spring Flea Market

April 22

9am-2pm

Our annual spring sale will be coming up at the end of April. As always, we need volunteers to help, but **1 & 3** are the ones we could use the most help with since it requires many hands to get these tremendous jobs done. We'd so greatly appreciate any time you can spare. Let Carol or Jake know you'll be able to help.

1. *Bringing items up from the downstairs area on Sunday, April 16*

Please consider staying after worship and lending a hand as we move items from downstairs into Davis Hall and the hallway. The more help there is, the easier and quicker this gets done.

2. *Setting up during the week, Monday - Friday*

Setup will be from approximately 10a-2p; Lunch is provided.

3. *Workers on the day of the sale, April 22, 7a-3:30p*

One of the biggest jobs is getting the outside ready, which begins at 7am. We've been blessed with a lot of help over the last few flea markets. Please consider helping at that time and throughout the day, if possible. Lunch is provided. *The end-time noted above includes helping with some cleanup by putting the outside items away.*

Operation Warm Heart - First Pres Volunteers

Zion Lutheran posted this picture on Facebook along with a thank you to First Pres for cooking & providing food for the shelter one weekend.

From right to left: Cheryl Martin (member), Susan Krivenko (member), Robin Shipley (member), Diane Hoener (Pastor Ed's wife), and a gentleman who was also there helping. Cheryl Anne Cammann (member) also helped but is not included. Thank you all!



Did you know...



Earth Day was started by Wisconsin Senator Gaylord Nelson in 1970 to promote environmental policies on a national scale. Following the first Earth Day, Congress authorized the creation of the Environmental Protection Agency; it also led to the passage of the Clean Water and Endangered Species Acts. In 1990, Earth Day went global and mobilized 141 countries to participate in protecting the environment. The date April 22nd was chosen for Earth Day to maximize the number of university (and K-12) students that could participate in celebrating the holiday.

Earth Day, Every Day - Show Mother Earth Some Love...

St. Patrick's Dinner Recap

We were very happy to host our first St. Patrick's Dinner since the pandemic began. It was wonderful to see some folks who we haven't seen in quite a while. We served fifty-four adults and fourteen children that evening. In addition we made fifteen take-out dinners for people who were not able to join us and after the dinner, some people took home some of the leftovers. We were delighted with the turn out! If you weren't able to join us, we hope that you come out for our next church dinner. This dinner would not have been possible without the help of the following people (sincere apologies if anyone has been accidentally left out in the acknowledgements below).



Thank you to our shoppers: Gail Anderson, Diane Hoener, Barbara O'Loughlin, Robin Shipley, and JoAnn Roesch

Thank you to our chefs: Ted Padavano, and Andy Roesch

Thank you to our bread makers: Flo Oppmann, Ted Padavano, and Robin Shipley

Thank you to our bakers: Helene Haith, Joan Pender, Debbie Russell, and JoAnn Roesch

Thank you to our entertainer: Evan O'Donovan

Thank you to our wall and table decorator: Gail Anderson

Thank you to those who helped serve and clean up: Gail Anderson, Linda Anderson, Cheryl Anne CammannRyan Crowley, Helene Haith, Katie Haith, Robin Haith, Jake Hayes, Diana Nwosu, Joanne Padavano, Ted Padavano, Andy Roesch and JoAnn Roesch



Helpers Wanted for Coffee Hour

It is so nice to see so many church members serve as pulpit assistants each week. It would also be nice to have church members help out for coffee hour. Before the pandemic each committee was assigned to host coffee hour two months of the year. During the pandemic we didn't have coffee hour. We are very happy that it has been reinstated. We now gather in Davis Hall after our service to enjoy fresh coffee, tea, water or juice and some treats as we enjoy fellowship with each other. Each week Andy Roesch makes the coffee, takes down the chairs from the tables after Food for Friends luncheon on Saturday, and sets up for coffee hour. The coffee hour supplies are provided by funds from our Outreach Committee and donations from several church members. Most weeks JoAnn Roesch brings in some homemade baked goods. Afterwards Gail Anderson, Jake Hayes, and Andy Roesch clean up and put everything away. It would be nice to have others in our congregation help with coffee hour. There will be a sign-up sheet in Davis Hall on Sunday, April 2nd. Please consider signing up to help one Sunday during the next three months. Your help would be sincerely appreciated.



Easter Story Cookies

To be made the evening before Easter



You will need: (makes about 2 dozen)

1-cup whole pecans (Cookies can also be made without nuts.)		
1 teaspoon vinegar	measuring spoons	electric mixer
3 egg whites	measuring cups	parchment paper
pinch of salt	zipper baggie	cookie sheets
1 cup of sugar	wooden spoon	tape
Bible	mixing bowl	

Preheat oven to 300° F – This is important. Do not wait until you are half done with the recipe!

Notice that the recipe has no flour. During Passover, Jewish people don't eat cookies made with flour. Jesus celebrated Passover with his followers. Read Matthew 26:17-19.

Place pecans in zipper baggie and let the children beat them with a wooden spoon to break them into small pieces. Explain that after Jesus was arrested, Roman soldiers beat him. Read John 19:1-3.

Let each child smell the vinegar. Pour 1 tsp. Vinegar into a mixing bowl. Explain that when Jesus was thirsty on the cross, he was given vinegar to drink. Read John 19:28-30.

Add egg whites to vinegar. Eggs represent life. Explain that Jesus gave his life to give us life. Read John 11:25-27.

Sprinkle a little salt into each child's hand. Let them taste it. Put a pinch of salt into the bowl. Explain that this represents the salty tears shed by Jesus' followers, and the bitterness of their own sins. Read Luke 23:27.

Add 1 cup of sugar. Explain that the sweetest part of the story is that Jesus died because he loves us. Read John 3:16.

Beat with a mixer on high speed for about 15 minutes until stiff peaks are formed. White represents purity. Our sins have been cleansed away by Jesus. Read Isaiah 1:18.

Fold in broken nuts. Drop by tablespoons onto parchment paper covered cookie sheet. Explain that each mound represents the rocky tomb where Jesus' body was laid. Read Matthew 27:57-60.

Put the cookie sheet in the oven, close the door and turn the oven OFF. Do not open oven door until morning. Give each child a piece of tape to seal the oven door. Read Matthew 27:65-66.

On Easter morning, open the oven door and give everyone a cookie. When you take a bite, you will notice that the cookies are hollow. On that first Easter morning, Jesus' followers were amazed to find the tomb empty. Read Matthew 28:1-9.



Please consider either calling or sending a card to church family who are homebound; call the church office (732-382-0803) if you need phone numbers and/or addresses.

Prayer Requests

Alyne B., Briele, Bruce & family, Carlos B., Christine H., Debbie C., Diane W., Ed L., Eileen P., Eric & Judy R., Gail, Gladys B., Isaiah, his wife, and baby, Jane S., Kristen & family, Mary Ann, Mary Ann R., Matt P., Michael & Marty, Molly, Nancy T., Patty-Travis & family, Patrick W., Pete S., Robert, Russ G., Savannah B., Tina Marie, Ukrainian Sisters & Brothers. Whitney S.

Those that are homebound—Caroline Balla, Doris Kapus, Beverly Woolley



Our heartfelt condolences to...



The Pender family on the passing of **Richard Pender**, who entered eternal peace on March 13, 2023.

Helene Haith & family on the passing of Helene's sister, **Leslie**, who entered eternal peace recently.

May God's comfort & love surround them during this most difficult time. Please keep the families in your thoughts & prayers over the weeks ahead.



Prayer Persons

APRIL

- Apr. 2nd** - Jennifer, Ashley & James Clemens
- Apr. 9th** - Ryne Ludington
- Apr. 16th** - Lauren Davis
- Apr. 23rd** - Patrick Weaver
- Apr. 30th** - Aleya Daye Hall

MAY

- May 7th** - Carlos Browne
- May 14th** - Debbie Cornwall
- May 21st** - Eric, Tara, & Ryan Crowley
- May 28th** - Jay Beam

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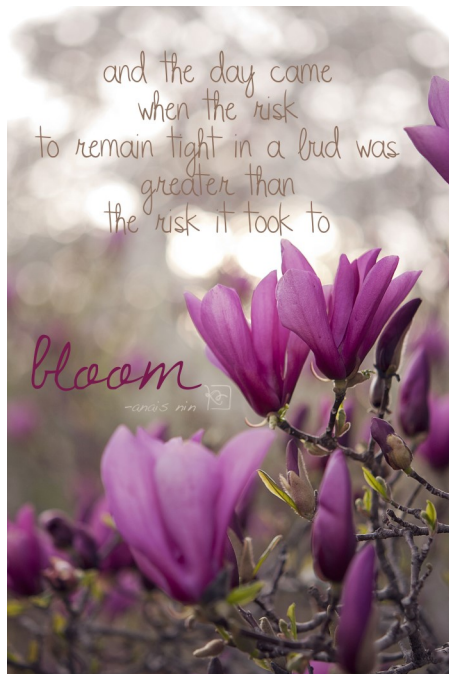
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**DATED MATERIAL
PLEASE RUSH**



**Worship with us
Each Sunday at 10:30AM**

**In-person / Facebook & YouTube Live Streams
Recorded Video Available Also**

**Office: office@1stpresrahway.org
Rev. Ed Hoener: edhoener1@gmail.com**



1stpresrahway.org



He Is Risen! Have a Blessed Easter!