



## Peace Lutheran Church

3340 Eleventh Avenue South,  
Great Falls, Montana 59405

The Rev. Steven Schlund, Pastor

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April, 2017

### Why Easter? April 2017

As we approach the annual celebration of Easter in the Christian Church, there is one thing I just don't understand. Why does the world celebrate Easter? What exactly are they celebrating?

At Christmas time, there is no such confusion. Both the world and the church have clearly defined celebrations. The world has their own story of Santa Claus, their own music ("Jingle Bells", "Deck the Halls", and so on), their own cards and presents, and their own decorations (reindeer, snowmen, and so on). The Church has its own story of the birth of Jesus Christ, its own beautiful Christmas hymns, its own cards displaying the birth of Christ, and its own decorations (nativity scenes, stars, and angels). At times, it seems that there are two parallel, but equal celebrations occurring at the same time.

At Easter, it seems much different. There seems to be no clearly defined celebration for the world to have. Sure, there is the Easter Bunny who delivers colored eggs and candy (chocolate, jelly beans, and so on). But there seems to be no clear explanation of who the Easter Bunny is, how he came to be, and why he brings all this stuff. There are no Easter movies or television specials to explain this to us. There are no Easter carols blaring through the malls for month before Easter. There are few, if any, Easter decorations. What is Easter all about for the world? Answers to that question are murky at best.

On the other hand, the Church has the best reason of all to celebrate and many ways to celebrate. We have many beautiful Easter hymns to listen to and sing. We have beautiful Easter lilies with which to decorate our homes and churches. We have the story of Jesus Christ rising from the tomb to live again. And it is that story which separates the celebration of Easter from all other celebrations in the world and even from other celebrations in the Church. If there were no Easter, then nothing else matters.

Jesus had come to rescue humanity from an eternity in hell which we had all earned and deserved by our sinful rebellion against God, our Creator. He allowed Himself to be arrested, nailed to a cross, and die as a sacrifice for the sin of humanity. If God accepted this sacrifice, then we would have forgiveness for all sin, reconciliation with God, and everlasting life in a state of perfection called heaven. If God did NOT accept this sacrifice, then it meant the continued wrath of God against us, continual conflict with God, and an eternity apart from God in hell.

If Jesus stayed dead in the tomb, we would never know our fate because we would never know if Jesus' sacrifice was enough and if it had been accepted by God. The Bible says, "If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins." (1 Corinthians 15:17) But, the Bible goes on to say, "But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep." (1 Corinthians 15:20) Because Jesus DID rise from the dead, our sins are forgiven and we, too, shall rise from our graves and live forever. That's a great reason to celebrate, to be excited, and to be eagerly waiting for this to come true.

The world has nothing at all to celebrate that can compare with this. A basket full of candy is worth nothing compared with the eternal joys waiting for us in heaven. Yet the devil continues to try and promote the world's pitiful celebration of Easter with the hope that he can distract us from the joy, the hope, and the excitement of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Don't be drawn away from this life changing event by a meaningless worldly celebration of a rabbit, eggs, and candy. (Don't be drawn away from the celebration of Jesus' birth by a man in a red suit, seven reindeer, and lots of presents, either.) Come to church and celebrate the most important event the world has even seen this Easter!

In Christ, our reason for an Easter celebration,

Pastor Schlund

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**Everyone** who cooked, helped set up, clean, serve and donated rolls, crackers, bread and desserts for the soup suppers during Lent.

**All of the ladies** who go to Park Place, Benefis Extended Care Center and Highgate Senior Living to sing hymns and read devotions and minister to the shut-ins.

**Gloria Creek and Val Martin** for playing the organ and piano during our worship services.

**All those who volunteer to teach Sunday school, Bible class, and midweek classes** on Sundays and Wednesdays.

**Idell Croskrey** for changing the banners and paraments.

**Angelika Fisher** for cleaning the church.

**Everyone on the Prayer Chain** for their time and prayers.

**Everyone** who has donated treats for our fellowship time.

**All of the men** who volunteer to usher.

**Cheri Magnuson** for cleaning the Communion linens.

This list is not inclusive. Please accept our apologies if we have missed giving you credit for serving the Lord in any fashion. We know that the Lord knows your service to Him.

## Ladies Bible study schedule

Awesome April arrives!! With it come the tulips, daffodils, and hyacinths that have been sleeping under the winter snowbanks in our yards. And in the foothills the lavender pasque flowers bloom with white spring beauties and the first magenta shooting stars. Take a drive to the Highwoods or Little Belts to see the beginning of the Lord's spring flowers.

Also enjoying the return of spring are those who attend FRIDAY LADIES BIBLE CLASS. Studying God's Word is as soothing to the soul as viewing the flowers of springtime. Come and join them for a session or two as they study the Book of MATTHEW. They will meet April 7th & 21st from 1-3 pm at the home of Marge Johnsten, 3000 8th Ave So.

Assisted Living Ministry with a devotion and hymn singing continues at the following locations. On Tuesday, April 11th at 11 a.m. ladies and gentlemen will meet at Bee Hive Home #2, 2816 15th Ave So. There will be a no host lunch Friday, April 28th at 11:45 a.m. at 5 Loaves Coffee House, 4117 2nd Ave North. After lunch, many will go to Highgate Senior Living, 3000 11th Ave So. Let's celebrate Easter with these residents!

## Voters meeting set

**Mark your calendars now for the next congregational voters meeting and potluck on Sunday, May 7 at 12 noon.** Please consider being a nominee for the following offices of Peace Lutheran Church:

Vice chairman (1 person); Elder (3 people); Trustee (3 people); Treasurer (1 person); Contact any of the Elders, Pat Lewis, Chairman Darrell Greenwood or Al Beute if you are interested. Thank you for your participation.

## LWML

- ♥ **Our next meeting will be Tuesday, May 9 at 6:30 p.m. with a Bible study.** All ladies of Peace are invited and encouraged to come and join us! We will be having election of all officers. Remember your Mite boxes!
- ♥ **Remember to bring your new soap for Soap Sunday on the second Sunday of each month.** Soap collected will go to Lutheran World Relief. Thanks for your continued support.
- ♥ **The Lutheran World Relief Drive will be May 13, 2017.** More details will be available as the time gets closer.



## April Anniversaries

April 9 Bill and Dorothy Neuman  
 April 12 Jeff and Vonnie Blomgren

## Baptismal Anniversaries

April 1 Don Brown  
 2 Karen Birkholz  
 8 Carol Thurston  
 11 Vic Scheuffele  
 12 Gary Creek  
 12 Ruth Lowden  
 26 Darrell Greenwood  
 26 Pat Bliss  
 26 Hunter Hansen  
 28 Cheryl Walker



### INCLUDE THESE PEOPLE IN YOUR PRAYERS:

The following people are experiencing health problems:

**Tami Birkholz**, Karen's sister-in-law who is battling a rare skin tissue disorder  
**Leonard Gidlow**  
**Jane Hering**  
**Connie Juden**  
**Rev. Erich Kaelberer**  
**June Meier**  
**Bill and Dorothy Neuman**  
**David Norman**  
**Kathy Politz**

One member who is away serving in the military is **Michael Lewis**.

## Ushers for April

April 2 ----- Greg Franczyk  
 ----- Tyler Denning  
 April 9 ----- Darrell Greenwood  
 ----- Bruce Clark  
 April 16 ----- Kevin Aguiar  
 ----- Lyle Onstad  
 April 23 ----- Jeff Blomgren  
 ----- Matt Schlund  
 April 30 ----- Pat Lewis  
 ----- Ed Ostlund

## Members of Christ for the Deaf sponsor rummage sale

The annual rummage sale that is sponsored by members of Christ for the Deaf will be in May at the church, 3340 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue South. If you have items to donate, you may bring them to the church and place them in the office for the deaf. If you have items that need to be picked up, please contact David Wise and he will make arrangements to come and get them. Thank you for all of your help and participation in this endeavor.

## Finances

JANUARY 1, TO FEBRUARY 28, 2017		
CHURCH INCOME	YTD ACTUAL	YTD BUDGET
Regular Offerings	\$ 21,743.70	\$22,833.34
Interest Income	\$ 198.66	\$ 166.66
Total Income	\$ 21,942.36	\$23,000.00
Church Expenses		
Personnel/Benefits	\$ 14,946.50	\$ 14,513.10
Administrative	\$ 1,409.50	\$1,368.32
Buildings & Grounds	\$ 6,075.01	\$ 7,075.00
Missions	\$ 2,374.79	\$1,916.66
Christian Education	\$ 1,584.88	\$ 891.66
Total Expenses	\$ 26,390.68	\$25,764.74
Net Church Income	\$ (4,448.32)	\$(2,764.74)

## Large Catechism Study

All of us studied and even memorized a large part of Luther's Small Catechism. But how many of you have read or studied Luther's LARGE Catechism? (How many of you even knew there was a Large Catechism?) Beginning on **Wednesday, April 19<sup>th</sup>**, the Adult Bible Class will begin looking at Luther's Large Catechism. (We will continue studying it in the fall.) If you are interested in being a part of this class and would like to pre-order a copy of Luther's Large Catechism, look for the sign-up sheet on the bulletin board in the east hall. The cost is \$12.00 each. If you have any questions, talk to Pastor Schlund.

**Picture directory** – It has been 5 years since we have done a picture directory. If anyone is interested in helping organize a picture directory with Lifetouch, please contact the church office. If you would like more information, there is a folder available in the church office.

**VBS dates are set** – VBS dates have been set for **June 12 – 16, 2017 from 8:30 AM to 12:30 PM.** Lunch and a snack will be provided. We are in need of volunteers to help with many different aspects of VBS. The first meeting will be on Sunday, April 23 after Bible study and Sunday School. Please come and join us as we plan

**Cleaning Day** – There will be a cleaning day this **Saturday, April 8<sup>th</sup> beginning at 9 AM.** Please come for as long as your schedule will allow. We will be cleaning inside and outside of the building. Many hands make light work and we could really use many hands! Lunch will be provided.

**Youth lock-in** – There will be a youth lock-in during the Easter weekend from Friday, April 14 through Sunday, April 16. For more information, please contact Jennifer Lewis or Angie Fletcher.

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## Holy Week Schedule Peace Lutheran Church

### April 9 – Palm Sunday

*Palm Sunday processional* - 9:30 AM

Children may gather at the back of the church at 9:20 AM for the procession of palms.

### April 13 - Maundy Thursday

*“Eating With God”* – 7:00 PM

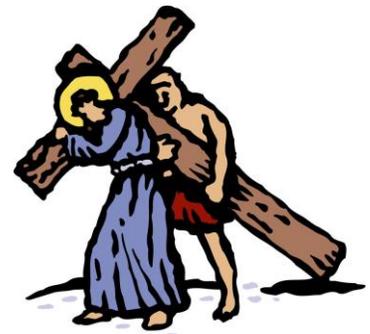
with Holy Communion (Interpreted for the deaf.)

### April 14 - Good Friday –

*“How to Die”* - 7:00 PM - Service of Darkness

### April 16 Easter –

The Resurrection of Our Lord



Sunrise Service –  
6:30 AM

Easter Breakfast –  
7:30 – 9:00 AM

Festival Worship  
9:30 AM with Christ for the Deaf and Holy Communion

**The church office will be closed on Monday, April 17.**