



Peace Lutheran Church

3340 Eleventh Avenue South,
Great Falls, Montana 59405

The Rev. Steven Schlund, Pastor

Office: 761-7343

Home: 952-4567

www.peaceluthrangreatfalls.org

Pastor Schlund: Peacepastor@bresnan.net

Peace's secretary: Peacesecretary@bresnan.net

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When Should We Celebrate Easter?

April 2016

Maybe you've noticed that Easter is an odd holiday. Unlike Christmas, which is always on December 25th every year, Easter not only doesn't fall on the same date every year, it doesn't even always fall within the same month from year to year. It can all be very confusing.

How do we determine the date of Easter? According to the Council of Nicea in 325 AD, Easter falls on the first Sunday following the first full moon after the vernal equinox. Easter can fall as early as March 22nd and as late as April 25th. That's HOW Easter is determined and not WHY it's determined that way. (That could be the subject of a whole other article.) But the question with which *this* article began was not when should we *determine* Easter to be but when should we *celebrate* Easter.

We naturally celebrate Easter on the day determined to be Easter. We had a nice festival service this year on March 27th with many uplifting and inspiring Easter hymns. But Easter is more about a message than a date or even than uplifting music. And what is that message? Death has been defeated and eternal life has been obtained through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, for all who have faith in Him. Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die." (John 11:25-26)

People die because we live in a broken world. Our world is broken because of sin. Sin is our rebellion against the will of a holy and almighty God. Death is the punishment for sin. Jesus paid the price for our sin by dying on the cross on Good Friday. Jesus won eternal life for us by rising from the dead on Easter Sunday. Jesus doesn't promise us that we who believe in Him will not die but that, despite dying, we shall live after death and will never die eternally in hell.

Therefore, Easter and all that it entails should be celebrated every time death rears its ugly head and tries to frighten us or make us sad: when a family member faces serious cancer surgery; when a five-year-old boy is diagnosed with leukemia; at a loved one's funeral; and any time any of us faces death personally. Then read the Easter Scriptures, sing the Easter hymns, and pray the Easter prayers. Death and the grave will not and cannot overcome us who are in Christ Jesus for He has already defeated them and He gives us the victory. Rejoice in that victory any time death seems to be winning or seems to have won.

The early Christian Church changed its day of worship from the Sabbath (Saturday) to Sunday in order to celebrate Easter and the resurrection of Jesus every week. Death does not win. The grave cannot hold us. And hell cannot have us.

That's a reason to celebrate Easter all the time!

In Christ Jesus, our living Lord,

Pastor Steven R. Schlund

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Everyone who cooked, helped set up, clean, serve and donated rolls, crackers or bread for the soup suppers during Lent.
All of the ladies who go to Park Place, Benefis Extended Care Center and Highgate House to sing hymns and read devotions and minister to the shut-ins.
The youth who cooked, helped set up, clean, and serve the Easter breakfast.
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.

Confirmation Day

Confirmation Day will be on Sunday, April 24th. We have two young people to be confirmed this year – **Alicia Fletcher and Andrew Onstad**. Please remember them in your prayers and join us for that day of celebration.

New Bible Study: *Applied Christianity*

Many people believe Christianity is all about faith – believing, teaching, and confessing the correct teachings of Holy Scripture. Other people believe Christianity is all about doing the right thing – loving and serving our neighbor. Is Christianity all about believing the right thing or doing the right thing? What is the relationship between faith and good works in the life of a Christian? Join us in our Sunday morning Adult Bible Class at 11:00 AM as we take up the topic, *Applied Christianity*, and study the relationship between faith and good works in your life.

Voters meeting set

Mark your calendars now for the next congregational voters meeting and potluck on Sunday, April 17 at 12 noon. We will have election of officers and discuss some important issues. If you are interested in serving the Lord as an elected official of Peace Lutheran Church, please contact Darrell Greenwood or Kevin Aguiar.

LWML

- ♥ **The Convention Committee will have a meeting on Sunday, april3 at 12 noon at Peace.** If you are interested in helping in any way, please feel free to come and join us!
- ♥ **The LWML Montana District Convention is fast approaching!** Registration fee is now \$80 per person. The opportunity for ladies of Peace to host this convention comes around every 12 to 14 years, so we would like as many people as possible to be involved! The dates are April 29 – May 1. Servant events begin on Friday at 1:00 p.m. Convention begins at Peace at 6:30 p.m. and there will be an opening Worship Service at 8 p.m. On Saturday the convention resumes at the Hampton Inn and there will be many exhibits, a CPH store as well as an LWML store, among other things! The banquet will be at the Hampton Inn and will begin at 5:00 p.m. The entertainment will be the Trinity Bell Choir. On Sunday we resume our meetings at Peace Lutheran at 8:00 a.m. and will have our Worship Service with Holy Communion and dedication of Gifts from the Heart as well as installation of newly elected officers at 9:30 a.m.
- ♥ **Our next meeting will be Tuesday, May 10 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 14, 2016.** 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:

John Birkholz

Tami Birkholz, John's sister-in-law who is battling a rare skin tissue disorder

Jane Hering

Connie Juden

Bill and Dorothy Neuman

Our members who are away serving in the military are **Kurt Mueller and Michael Lewis**.

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 May 12, 13 and 14 at the church, 3340 11th 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.

Ushers for April

April 3 ----- Tyler Denning
 ----- Greg Franczyk
 April 10 ----- Eric Fletcher
 ----- Mitch Martin
 April 17 ----- Jeff Blomgren
 ----- Matt Schlund
 April 24 ----- Pat Lewis
 ----- Darrell Greenwood

Finances

JANUARY 1 - FEBRUARY 29, 2016		
CHURCH INCOME	YTD ACTUAL	YTD BUDGET
Regular Offerings	\$23,734.50	\$23,386.66
Other Income	\$210.00	\$30.00
Total Income	\$23,944.50	\$23,416.66
Church Expenses		
Personnel/Benefits	\$13,465.46	\$13,789.14
Administrative	\$1,343.70	\$1,395.00
Buildings & Grounds	\$6,147.34	\$4,133.36
Missions	\$2,270.78	\$1,916.66
Christian Education	\$946.78	\$833.34
Total Expenses	\$24,174.06	\$22,067.50
Net Church Income	\$(229.56)	\$1,349.16

Ladies Bible study schedule

Ooooo -- April! The beginning of the wildflower season! Take a drive to the nearby foothills and see the gorgeous flowers the Lord has planted in unplowed fields: pasque flowers, yellow bells, spring beauties, shooting stars, and many others.

The FRIDAY LADIES BIBLE CLASS continues their study of II Corinthians. They will meet from 1-3 pm on April 1st (no foolin') and the 8th at the home of Ann Nimmick 2327 15th Ave. So. There's always a study booklet, and a cup of hot tea or coffee waiting for you at Ann's. Do feel welcome!

Assisted Living Ministry with hymn singing and a devotion will meet at the following locations.

Tuesday, April 12th at 11 a.m. the ladies and gentlemen will gather at Bee Hive Home #2, where our LWML sister from Power, Almeda Pheifle, is a resident. How happy she is to see some of her Lutheran friends! On Friday, April 15th the group will meet for a no host lunch at 11:45 a.m. at the 3-D International Restaurant, 1825 Smelter Ave, Black Eagle. After lunch many will go to Highgate House, 3000 11th Ave So, where Peace Lutheran members, Bill and Dorothy Neuman, are residents. Come and join these folks and other residents singing the joyous Easter hymns and hearing God's comforting word!

Applying Biblical Teachings

“He said to them, ‘You are the ones who justify yourselves in the eyes of men, but God knows your hearts. What is highly valued among men is detestable in God’s sight’” (Luke 16:15).

These words, spoken by Jesus to the Pharisees, were stinging, for they revealed the Pharisees for what they really were. Jesus saw beyond their thin wrapper of self-righteousness and pointed out all their flaws and their sinful covetous hearts which were full of corruption.

These same words which were spoken to the Pharisees also stand as a warning to us today as Satan often tempts us to put on self-made robes of pious self-righteousness. To the sinful nature, this is most alluring as Satan provides the perception of great comfort and consolation to a guilty conscience as we seek the approval of our actions from those around us.

Yet, the heart is full of corruption. For example, we may talk a lot about reading the Scriptures, when in reality, God’s Word is seldom picked up except for the occasional times the coffee table needs dusting. We might convey the impression to others of the importance of prayer, when all the while, prayer is only the last resort in times of crisis. We might even talk about how essential it is to be a positive encouragement to others in God’s family, even volunteering to teach and help others. In reality, though, our inner attitudes are negative and result in the bearing of gossip and bad news.

When it comes to our giving, these same words of warning apply. It is tempting to use our giving to gain the favor of those around us. It is tempting to talk about good stewardship, only to have all pretense of proportionate giving stripped away when the checkbook is tallied for charitable contributions at tax time.

God knows our hearts! He knows if we have put on self-made robes of self-righteous deceit or if through the power of Water and the Word, our hearts have been made clean and we wear the robes of Christ’s righteousness.

The Apostle Paul understood the harm and damage self-righteousness can do to our faith and the faith of those around us when he wrote in 2 Corinthians 1:12, “Now this is our boast: Our conscience testifies that we have conducted ourselves in the world, and especially in our relations with you, in the holiness and sincerity that are from God. We have done so not according to worldly wisdom but according to God’s grace.”

Paul boasts, not of himself, but of the power of the Gospel over his life and of God’s power over sin, death and the devil. Paul was not playing “let’s pretend” as he preached and taught. Rather, by the power of the Gospel, he conducted himself in all aspects of his life — including his preaching and teaching — in God’s holiness and sincerity by God’s grace.

When Satan tempts us to put on robes of self-righteousness with our study of God’s Word, in our prayer life, with our abilities, and, yes, with our checkbooks, remember, by the power of the Gospel, with a pure and contrite heart created by God, we conduct ourselves in all aspects of our lives, robed in God’s holiness and sincerity by God’s grace.

