

Enter the Story

Annually the church the world over traces Jesus' "triumphal entry" into the city of Jerusalem. A donkey and colt symbolize Jesus' rule, humble and lowly. Nothing is shaped as expected, yet everything is as needed. To enter the scene, we'll use many senses.

Listen! The braying of humble animals mixes sweetly with boisterous shouts of praise: "Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest heaven!" (Matt. 21:9).

Smell! People young and old, doves and goats, spices and spring blooms. The crowd is filled with the scents of fishing nets and barns, of vineyards and hostels.

Open-eyed, look around! See colorful cloaks and branches spread on the ground, creating a pathway for the donkey and its rider. See children hoisted above their elders, each straining to catch sight of Jesus, on whom all their hopes are pinned for a better life and a lovelier world.

This Holy Week, we are invited to enter into the story with senses newly awakened. As you listen to the gospel today, what do you hear that you've never heard before? What parts of the narrative come to life that in earlier years you may have missed? Today as you wave a palm and perhaps join in a procession, can you imagine yourself in the crowd that surrounded Jesus?

Are you asking anything of the people beside you? Do you know the dreams of freedom dear to them? Have you shared your hopes for a better world rooted in Jesus' way of humility? Are you willing to risk making something of a scene today, in ways that might attract some attention, prompting neighbors to echo the question in Jerusalem so long ago when "the whole city was in turmoil, asking, 'Who is this?'" (Matt. 21:10). Then, in words and actions may we all respond that the one at our center is "the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee" (Matt. 11:11).



True Presence

Are you truly present in your life? Are you truly present to others or even to yourself? Are you truly present in this moment, as you come into this space for worship? As the Three Days of Holy Week begin, we are called to a deeper, truer presence—to the story of Christ’s passage through death to new life, to God’s continued presence and activity in our world, and to being more deeply present to the needs of others.

This evening, Jesus comes to be truly present to his disciples as they sit down for their final meal together. As everyone is seated at one another’s sides in this intimate space, many thoughts go through their minds. *What will transpire here in Jerusalem? What will become of Jesus? Is it all over?* Thoughts of fear, betrayal, and denial already carry them away from their places at the table. Yet Jesus has not left them. Jesus is as present as ever, present first and foremost to their needs. As he has done countless times before, he serves them. But then, stooping to his hands and knees to wash their dirty feet, Jesus calls them to practice the same kind of presence to those around them, attending to their needs, serving them, and making God’s love tangible through their actions.

Beginning with Maundy Thursday, the Three Days call us into a rich, sensory, and storied experience of the final moments and mysteries of Christ’s life. They invite our presence to every detail of Christ’s words and actions, the movements of his disciples, the crowds and leaders, the smells, sounds, sights, tastes, and feel of the paschal mysteries. Yet tonight our presence in the story begins with Christ’s presence with us. As we gather at his table, he gives us his whole and true presence, his very body and blood, to free us so that we, too, may offer our whole and true presence to others.

The Cross at the Center

At the center of Good Friday stands the cross. Even as the day’s gospel opens with Jesus and his disciples in the garden, the cross stands in the background and looms larger with each passing moment: abandonment, betrayal, trial, humiliation, chanting crowds. Finally, the cross is flung aloft, bearing Jesus. Liturgically, many assemblies will find themselves today confronted with a cross at the visual center of their gathering, all the more apparent in a sparse and stripped sanctuary. In some places the cross will be made even more prominent through a procession or space for adoration of the cross.

In a world where we witness far too much senseless violence, some may wonder whether we should spend a day so focused on an instrument of torture and pain. Yet, the message of this day is not despair, but hope. “That which Christ has not assumed he has not healed,” wrote St. Gregory of Nazianzus in the fourth century, “but that which is united to his Godhead is also saved.” On this day, God comes in the person of Jesus Christ to assume the pain and suffering of our human existence. Here the cross draws into God’s plan of salvation all the injustice, terror, anxiety, and death that we fear so much in our lives and our world.

So on this day, the church lifts high the cross as a symbol of the victory of God’s love and proclaims the mystery of hope that through this cross, “it is finished” (John 19:30). All things that destroy the fullness of life are finished; all the work of salvation is finished. At the foot of the cross, you are invited to find your sin, your pain, and your fears folded into God’s promise of salvation. On this day, you are invited to bring every part of you that longs for healing and hope and to place it with Christ on the cross, for that which he takes on he will surely heal.

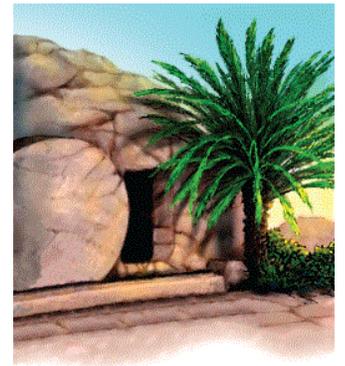


Be Not Afraid

Filled with great joy *and fear*? This is how Matthew's gospel describes the disciples in the moments just after they learn that Jesus Christ has risen from the dead. As churches across the world today fill with people, flowers, and music, an almost palpable sense of joy seems to fill the air . . . but fear? Where does fear fit into today's celebration?

Below the surface of the festivities, we all harbor far more fear than our Sunday best might reveal. As you take your place among this Christian assembly, the community around you is full of other people who struggle with fear, worry, and anxiety. Today in this assembly, there is fear about money, fear about relationships, fear about the larger changes taking place in our world, fear about belonging and being loved, fear about being good enough, smart enough, or talented enough, fear about illness and death, fear of being judged, even fear of religion and the church. Today's gospel shows us that we are not alone in our fear. Even as they rejoiced, the first disciples were afraid—afraid of the unknown, afraid of ways they had let Jesus down, afraid of what was coming next for them.

But to all of us, both the angels and Jesus himself say, "Do not be afraid!" In his human life, Jesus experienced the great fears we all live with every day. On the cross he faced the pain and suffering our greatest fears bring. But when he emptied that tomb on Easter morning, he also emptied death of its sting and our fears of their bite. Strengthened by each other, we are bold to proclaim that in Christ's victory, every path of death has been opened to new life. In every action of today's worship, we build up one another's faith and confidence that because Christ lives, our fears are coming to an end.



Ladies of Grace Activities :

NO ACTIVITIES UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE.

Women of the
ELCA

Birthdays & Anniversaries

Notes from the Office: I hope everyone is safe and healthy!!! We will keep in contact with everyone in regards to the situation with COVID 19 and let everyone know when worship can restart at the Church.

If anyone needs shopping done or transportation please let Suzanne know, there are members who have volunteered to help with this.

Our 'Noisy Offering' will be restarted when worship can begin again.

The sign up sheets for worship servers is in the narthex please take time to sign up for any service you can help serve. Thanks!!!

Newsletter updates due April 20th.

Our condolences to Jim Dallman, his Aunt passed away.

Mia Longoria	2
Mike Thorn	5
Suzanne Sanchez	9
Constantine Poulos	11
Orville Nelson	13
Louis Villa	21
Kelly Galloway	22
Stan Vincent	22
Becky Morken	24
Betty Longoria	25

If we missed anyone PLEASE contact the office.

AMONG THOSE FOR WHOM WE PRAY ARE:

Congregation members: **Sherry Brooks, Edna Gross, Gary Albertson, Jeana Lute, Wally Krueger, Shanna Longoria.**

Family members: **Connie Dawe, Mason Lomelino, Karen Carmichael, Frances Ballard, Darwin Gunderson, Shane Gray, Diane Frei, Lydia Gutierrez, Helen Gray, Barb Lute, Barb Fitzpatrick, Brandie Sherry, Larry Gutierrez, Penny Cook, Joann Fuller, Cleo Lute, Frank Fuller, Gaston Meza, Abel Longoria.**

Congregation friends: **Jason McGinnis, Mason Spradling, Al Lundy, Cheryl Dear, Luanne Ruffle, Judy Schorman, Sandi Jaeger, Emilio Zuniga, Ro MacMillan, Marsha Guerrero Brown**

Those who serve: **Dustin Dunbar, Adam Troy Gutierrez, Pfc Devon Zepeda, Ben McCormick.**



PRAYER CHAIN 2020

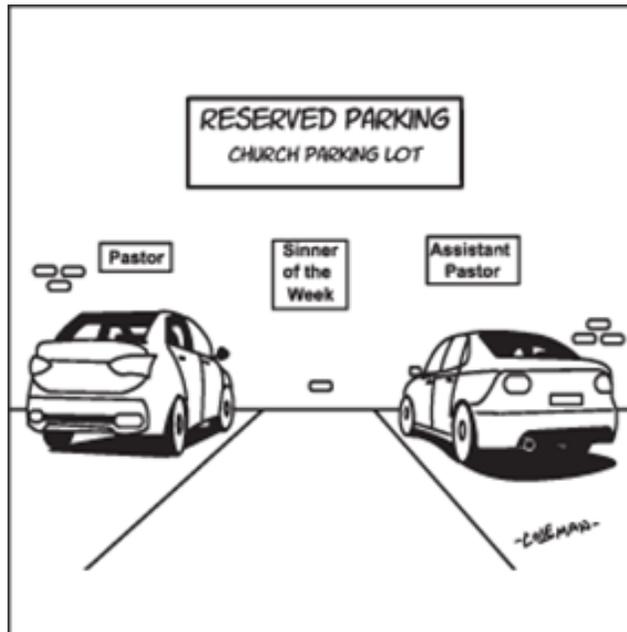
Phyllis McKee	425-5776	Elaine Krueger	428-2895
Carol Heesch	564-1031	Betty Longoria	970-2053
Barbara Lomelino	357-1490	Sherry Brooks	797-2615
Jeana Lute	402-720-9431	Pastor Ann Schlossnagle	503-707-7406



Nails symbolize Jesus' passion and suffering because they were used at his Crucifixion. They are often depicted in groups of three because two nails were used to secure Jesus' hands, and a third was used to secure his feet. Three nails are also used to identify Jesus as a member of the Holy Trinity.

Sunday School—After worship restarts

Confirmation Class— TBD



PANTRY NEEDS

- Canned Fruit
- Macaroni & Cheese
- Box Dinners
- Peanut Butter
- Juice
- Granola Bars
- Toilet Tissue



**GRACE EVANGELICAL
LUTHERAN CHURCH
ELCA**

Pastor Ann Schlossnagle
1001 E Jackson
Harlingen TX 78550

Ann Schlossnagle
503-707-7406 or
Email: prairiesage57@hotmail.com
Office: 956.423.0314
E-mail: secretary@gelelca.org

Deadline for the May Newsletter is Monday April 29. Please get all information to the church office, secretary@gelelca.org, or the office mailbox.

THANKS

The May Newsletter will be ready by email Friday April 24th and in the Narthex Sunday April 26th.

2020 COUNCIL MEMBERS

Schlossnagle, Ann	Pastor	503-707-7406
Demro, Jan	President	956-497-6950
Morton, Ron	Vice-President	956-873-1312
Ramsey, Pam	Secretary	956-454-1036
Morton, Bonnie	Treasurer	956-226-7301
Longoria, Mia		956-970-2017
Lomelino, Barb		956-357-1490
Longoria, Betty		956-970-2053
Kester, Debi		956-202-5958



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

We're on the Web
<http://www.gelelca.org>
We are also on face book!!



APRIL SERVICE SCHEDULE

MISSION STATEMENT

God's purpose for Grace Lutheran Church is:
Welcome to Grace,
Welcome the Message.

Principle Values:
Jesus is Lord
Everyone is welcome.
All serve in different ways.
Seek and share the message.
God's love is life changing.

	April 5	April 12	April 19	April 26
Ushers	Ron & Mike	Ron & Mike	Ron & Mike	Ron & Mike
Lector	Bonnie Morton	Bonnie Morton	Bonnie Morton	Bonnie Morton
Acolyte	Congregational Youth	Congregational Youth	Congregational Youth	Congregational Youth
Altar Guild	Becky Rislove	Becky Rislove	Becky Rislove	Becky Rislove

PUZZLE PAGE

Bible Wordsearch

Wordsearch 295

Matt.28:1-20

He Has Risen

N I A T N U O M H R D R O L J
K N O W S T O N E T E E F E E
E M A N T P L A N D A H O G S
B W O R S H I P E D K B T N U
G A L I L E E I M R G E B A S
T N H E L Y F L A O N K E A F
S O I D S I A U G N I T E W S
R O E H C T T W D R N D I E S
G R L U C H O C A E T M R T P
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R N C Y Y D G N I Z I T P A B

AWAY ANGEL
DAWN AUTHORITY
FEET BAPTIZING
FIRST CRUCIFIED
HOLY ELDERS
KEEP FATHER
KNOW GALILEE
LORD GOVERNOR
MARY GUARDS
NAME HEAVEN
OBEY JESUS
PLAN LIGHTNING
RISEN MAGDALENE
SPIRIT MOUNTAIN
STOLE SABBATH
STONE SOLDIERS
TOMB TEACHING
TOOK VIOLENT
WEEK WORSHIPED

After you find all the hidden words the left over letters spell out a Bible verse reading from the top left to the bottom right

MORE PUZZLES AT:

<http://biblewordgames.com>

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Each day remember this: "I am a child of God.
That is how God sees me in Christ."