

From the Pastor...

I sometimes wish that God would inspire me on my timetable and not God's. It's harder to respond to God's spirit moving in my life when I'm busy doing other things.

This last Ash Wednesday, I was working on getting the ashes ready for that evening's worship service, when I had an inspiration. I had, for many years, been thinking I would try offering ashes to the community on Ash Wednesday, by standing outside our church building bright and early that morning and offering ash and prayer to any people driving by who would like to stop. I had a vision for how it would go, how we would advertise with a large sign for a week in advance, how I'd recruit people to be there with me, praying and offering ashes, how we'd offer coffee to all comers. But the ideal of offering 'ashes to go' doesn't fit the reality of the cold Minnesota winter weather in late February and early March and I'd given up the idea of 'ashes to go.'

Until this Ash Wednesday, when I was mixing the ash from burned palm branches with a drop or two of olive oil, when I realized I could give 'ashes to go' at my 'office' at The Nesting Grounds! I quickly devised a plan and made a sign with block letters: "Free Ashes. Blessed Ash Wednesday," and brought the ashes in a plastic cup to The Nesting Grounds. I spoke to the Catholic couple I often see there about my offer of ashes and they quickly accepted. A little later on, another friend from The Nesting Grounds came to my table and asked for ashes, saying, "I've never done this before, what do I do?" I spoke the words "Remember you are dust, and to dust you shall return," pressing my thumb into the cup of ashes and marking the cross on his forehead. It wasn't the sort of Ash Wednesday offering I had imagined, but it was a way to celebrate Ash Wednesday with the community in a way I had never thought of before.

Another instance where I wished God would inspire me ahead of time was in Book Club at the library. We were talking about this month's book when it came to me that these women love to read and maybe some of them would be interested in joining our program of Reading Buddies at Wyoming Elementary School. I briefly told the group what we were doing as Reading Buddies and asked anyone who was interested to talk to me later. Two women approached me and we agreed that this summer we'd figure out how they can be Reading Buddies starting in the Fall.

God doesn't always come to us at our bidding, nor does God's inspiration hit us on our timetable. I still wish God would give me more warning sometimes, but sometimes it's best to be surprised and be open to whatever the next moment brings to you.

Surprised by joy,
Holly



Saving Lives

Feed My Starving Children MobilePack is coming up April 20-22 at Hosanna Lutheran Church in Forest Lake. It's not too late to sign up to attend! Please contact Jane Rylander with your interest in participating. At least a half a dozen people from Wyoming Church are signed up to attend on Saturday, April 22 from 9-11am, but we could always take more people!

Feed My Starving Children (FMSC) saves lives of children like Jascent in Uganda. Before FMSC, Jascent was a twelve pound two-year-old, who because of lack of nutrition was half the size she needed to be and was unable to sit up on her own. Her great-grandmother Benareta fed her what she could, but couldn't bear to name the child, knowing she would die. Thanks to FMSC, Jascent has been eating meals every day for three months and has gained 9 pounds. Benareta gave her great-granddaughter her name and says, "I believe God exists. He remembered me and my children and brought life to us through this food."

You can help support this worthy life-saving ministry by donating to FMSC through church. Please write FMSC in the memo portion or on the envelope in which you put your offering. Thanks!

April Celebrations

Birthdays

4-01	Mary Jo B.	4-15	Pat R.	4-28	Lynne C.
4-07	Shurene E.	4-17	John H.		Paul S.
4-08	Nancy H.	4-19	Bea Z.		Betsy W.
4-09	Brian B.	4-22	Barb L.	4-29	Max H.
	Karen K.	4-24	Cyndi T.		Makenna H.
	Elizabeth R.	4-25	Craig R.	Anniversaries	
4-10	Lisa I.	4-26	Alyssa K.	4-17	Eric & Julie R.
4-11	Molly B.				



This is just a few of last year's humorous ensembles...

Holy Humor Sunday

April 23 is Holy Humor Sunday! It's the Sunday that we celebrate the Resurrection Laugh and remember God's triumph over evil, God's ability to draw the greatest good out of the greatest evil. As we set free the joy-filled power of life lived in God's grace, we laugh in the face of all that threatens to undo us, to believe that with God all things are possible. Please come wearing something that will make someone smile. We had a great time last year dressing in baseball gear and Hawaiian shirts and floppy hats and all sorts of entertaining outfits to make one another smile.

Come with a heart open to have some fun. The Easter laugh is a foretaste of the heavenly banquet, so let the party begin. Our God reigns, the power of evil has been broken and of all people, Christians have the most reasons to laugh and live the Easter joy that Christ came to bring.



UMCOR Sunday (formerly known as One Great Hour of Sharing)

Thanks to your generosity, we raised \$715 to send to UMCOR (United Methodist Committee on Relief) which helps pay the administrative costs of United Methodist relief efforts across the world. Because of this offering in United Methodist Churches, whenever we have a special appeal for funds for an earthquake or flood or other natural disaster, one hundred percent of the funds raised at those times go to those in need. Our UMCOR Sunday offering pays all the administrative costs needed.

FoodShare Month

March is Minnesota FoodShare month and thanks to all you generous people, we were able to collect \$2105 which, because it was given in March, will be doubled and designated to continue our backpack food program for students in need at Wyoming Elementary School.



Hugo Homeless Shelter

We are one step closer to the reality of having a permanent homeless shelter in the town of Hugo! The St. Paul Archdiocese approved the plan to have their former rectory in Hugo converted into a homeless shelter for families. The St. Andrew's Community Resource Center (of St. Andrew's Lutheran Church in Mahtomedi) will continue to work to bring all the stakeholders together to make the shelter a reality and will continue working with the Forest Lake Area Mission for Families (FLAMF). Thanks to our own Jane R. and others on the FLAMF Board for their continuing hard work to make this shelter a reality!



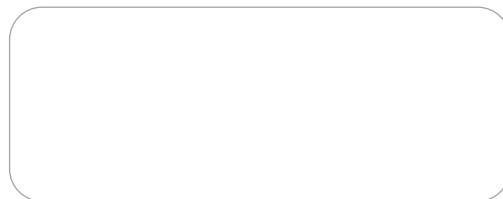
Our sign is risen! It is risen indeed!

Stormy Gales

On Monday, March 6, wind gusts of up to 33 miles per hour toppled our church sign on the northwest corner of our property. We need to wait until the ground thaws before we can finish replacing the sign.

He isn't here! He is risen from the dead, just as he said would happen. Come, see where his body was lying. ~Matt. 28:6

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Wyoming United Methodist Church Messenger



Easter is Coming!

You can help make our worship space beautiful through purchasing plants for our Easter garden. If you would like to purchase a flower or flowers, please sign up in the nook, the counter which is in the narthex (lobby) of the church. Depending on what is available, your choices include azaleas, hydrangeas, tulips, daffodils and other spring plants. As always, you are invited to take your plants home following Easter Sunday worship. Please look at the sign-up sheet for more information. Please sign up for your Easter flowers no later than Palm Sunday, April 9.



Worship Services in April

We conclude our series on Half Truths on the first Sunday of April then move into our celebration of Holy Week, where we hear the whole truth of God's great love for us, sent to us in Jesus and are encouraged to share this good news of God's love.

At the end of April we begin a new series—Given Another Chance—where we look at the people in Jesus' life who were given a second chance to get things right. It brings us hope that God always gives us another chance to get things right, too.

April 2
Half Truths: Love the Sinner, Hate the Sin
Matthew 7:1-5

April 9
Palm/Passion Sunday
The Whole Truth
Matthew 21:1-11; 27:33-35, 45-46, 50-51, 54

April 16
Easter Sunday
Truth Be Told
John 20:1-18

April 23
Holy Humor Sunday
Who is Telling the Truth?
Matthew 1:1-17; Luke 3:23-38

April 30
Given Another Chance:
Hiding and Afraid
John 20:19-31



Holy Week Services

Holy Week begins with Palm/Passion Sunday, April 9, where we will remember Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem and the subsequent events of Jesus' last week on earth.

On Good (or Holy) Friday, April 14 at 7 pm, we will share in communion as we remember Christ's Last Supper with his disciples, then go into a service of descending darkness, or Tenebrae service, where we remember how, one by one, people abandoned Jesus in his final hour.

Easter Morning, April 16, we will have a joyous Easter celebration at church! Here is our Easter morning schedule:

- 8:30-9:30am** Easter breakfast, served by our Saturday Men's Ministry group. You are invited to start your Easter celebrations with a delicious breakfast. If you would like to bake a dozen muffins, there is a sign up sheet in the nook.
- 9:15am** Easter Egg Hunt (outdoors, weather permitting!)
- 10:00am** Easter Worship with the Flowering of the Cross and Communion.

You are invited to this Holiest of Weeks as we remember the depth and the height of God's great love for us.

Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here; he has risen! ~Luke 24:5-6