

Evangelical Covenant Church
Of Stromsburg, NE

April 2019
Volume 1, Issue 3



Stromsburg Cov News

A WORD FROM THE PASTOR

When you've seen enough Facebook posts or Vimeo videos or TV reports of the devastation of the flooding in our state, you realize that you're part of a larger drama that has implications for you if you choose to engage.

Already, so many heart-wrenching stories of how folks have suffered from the floods have been juxtaposed with the feel-good stories of people reminding those in plight that they're not alone in their struggle. The story of Easter is no different.

In Mark 15:21, that gospel writer briefly tells us about: **"A certain man from Cyrene, Simon, the father of Alexander and Rufus, was passing by on his way in from the country, and they forced him to carry the cross."** It comes off almost as an afterthought, though Simon's kids are mentioned. However, the disciple Matthew gives a little different version in Matthew 27 of his gospel, an account that's detailed enough for us to discern that he witnessed a few things.

Matthew sets up the context by telling his audience that the governor's soldiers took Jesus into a Praetorium within the city of Jerusalem; there they stripped him, put a scarlet robe and a crown of thorns on him, mocked him, spit on him, struck him on the head again and again, then put his regular clothes on him then led him away to crucify him. Then we're told in Matthew 27:32, **"As they were going out, they met a man from Cyrene, named Simon, and they forced him to carry the cross."**

The most graphic telling of the event itself is from Luke, this gospel writer having not actually been there but years later able to write about it with more meaningful details from other eyewitnesses. Here's what we're told in Luke 23:26-31: **"As the soldiers led him away (from the Praetorium), they seized Simon from Cyrene, who was on his way in from the country, and put the cross on him and made him carry it behind Jesus."**

There's more to this, though. "A large number of people followed him, including women who mourned and wailed for him. Jesus turned and said to them, 'Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me, weep for yourselves and for your children. For the time will come when you will say, 'Blessed are the childless women, and wombs that never bore and the breasts that never nursed. Then

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UPCOMING SERMON TEXTS

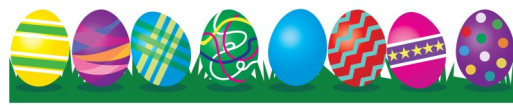
Apr 7	Luke 17
The Kingdom of God	
Apr 14	Luke 19:28-40
Palm Sunday	
Apr 21	Luke 24:1-12
EASTER Sunday	
Apr 28	Luke 24:12-49
Road to Emmaus	

Strengthen Faith,
Cultivate Community,
Care for Neighbors



Continued on Page 2

A WORD. . .(CONTINUED)



they will say to the mountains, ‘Fall on us!’ and to the hills, ‘Cover us!’ For if people do these things when the tree is green, what will happen when it is dry?”

And here is this Simon the Cyrene just ‘happening’ into this whole drama, but the ripple effects are felt much later on.

That’s the thing about the act of carrying the cross of Jesus – whether it be the ACTUAL cross or some other cross like whatever burden God puts in front of us after a flood or a crisis of some other sort – we’re part of something SO much larger than the part we might get to play in the drama before us. There are things that we get out of doing whatever it is God has placed in front of us. And there is the learning that may occur as we’re part of that event or situation.

There will be any number of things that will threaten to flood the landscape of your mind and your calendars this Lenten season. So my challenge for you in the three weeks before Easter Sunday is this:

(1) Read the four gospel stories of the events of Holy Week...chapters 21-28 of Matthew...the book of Mark, chapters 11-16...chapters 19-24 of Luke...and John, chapters 12-20...a little over a chapter each day and a few events occur before Holy Week but a little context is helpful and lessons Jesus teaches within these sections are great. Perhaps the story of Simon the Cyrene might not resonate with you, but there are any number of other characters in the story of Christ’s death and resurrection. Who might speak most audibly to you?

(2) Ask the Lord to help you find ways to contribute to the larger story of our community (region) this month and give time to reflect upon what God might be teaching you through those experiences.

Back when I was in seminary, I wasn’t much of a reflective person, though I was always busy. I explained to my non-seminary friends that my life’s ebb and flow was, “Bumping your head against the wall and then asking why you did that.” A teacher challenged our class to engage in a theological process called “Praxis,” which has one formal definition as “the act of engaging, applying, exercising, realizing or practicing ideas.” Maybe a better way to think of it is by asking, “Who are you becoming (as a Christ follower) as a result of what you are doing or being asked to do?”

I’m sure Simon the Cyrene had a lot to think about at the end of the day he carried the cross of Christ. What will come to mind for us as we bear whatever cross Christ gives us to bear this season?

In Christ,

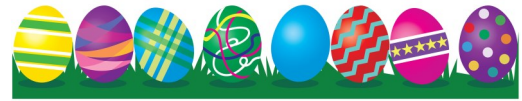
Pastor Craig



The Evangelical Covenant Church has set up a fund for donating for flood relief efforts. Here is the link: <http://www.covchurchgiving.com/p-174-disaster-relief.aspx>

Volunteering: A group from our church will be going to Fremont on April 9 to help relief efforts through Samaritan’s Purse. You will need to register online at: <https://www.samaritanspurse.org/article/samaritans-purse-on-the-ground-in-wake-of-nebraska-floods/>

CHURCH FAMILY



Heidi Weibe	Apr 1
Alex Noyd	Apr 3
Jay Platt	Apr 3
Nathan Hennessy	Apr 6
Joliene Anderson	Apr 16
Ruth Hanson	Apr 16

Julie Hennessy	Apr 18
Chris Martin	Apr 18
Ray Nelson	Apr 25
Lorrain Nielsen	Apr 25
Julia Schram	Apr 26

Brian & Shayla Hier Apr 3



DATES TO REMEMBER IN APRIL

Sunday, Apr 7 6:00 pm	Lenten Series—Part III GRACE video series—by Max Lucado
Tuesday, Apr 9 All Day	Flood Relief Trip to Fremont With Samaritan's Purse
Sunday, Apr 14 6:00 pm	Lenten Series—Part IV GRACE video series—by Max Lucado
Wed., Apr 17 7:00 am	Easter Week Prayer Breakfast At The Rose Colored Glass (ticket information TBA)
Thurs., Apr. 18 7:00 pm	Maundy Thursday Seder In the Fellowship Hall
Sunday, Apr. 21	Sunrise Service 7:00 a.m. At Salem Lutheran Church Easter Breakfast At Salem Lutheran Church Easter Worship 10:30 a.m. At Stromsburg Covenant



APRIL MINISTRY PARTNERS:

Sunday, April 7

Nursery: Shayla & Korah Hier
Greeters: Mark & Judy Hanson
Coffee Time: The Hier Family
Scripture: Pat Everingham

Sunday, April 14

Nursery:
Greeters: Doug & Linda Johnson
Coffee Time: The Rystroms
Scripture: Eleanor Greenwall

Thursday, April 18

Rescue Mission Meal:
Lori Rystrom

Sunday, April 21

Nursery: Shayla Hier & Ellie Pinley
Greeters: The Hennessys
Coffee Time: Easter
Scripture: Jan Randell

Sunday, April 28

Nursery:
Greeters: Gaylen & Jeannie Ahlquist
Coffee Time: Pat Everingham
Scripture: Dennis Nuttelman

KEEPING YOU IN THE KNOW:

Lunch with the Pastor: Pastor Craig will be offering a short Bible study over lunch on Wednesdays at 4th Street Coffee House. Order your meal ahead at 402-764-6000.



Ministry Teams! We would like to see every active member on a ministry team. There are ministry team posters in the fellowship hall. Please consider which team you'd like to be a part of and sign up.



Taylor Ostrom, one of our college students, is seeking prayer and financial support as she plans on being part of a mission team headed to Tanzania this July. Taylor, a freshman at Wayne College, is part of an on-campus ministry called CRU (formerly Campus Crusade for Christ). She had felt called to seek a mission ministry opportunity ever since attending our denomination's high school conference (CHIC) last summer in Tennessee.

On February 17th, Taylor spoke about her upcoming trip at the end of our worship service. The cost of the trip will be around \$4,500. While our church's mission ministry arm is pursuing ways to help Taylor, she has also sent out support/prayer letters to local families and others in our church community. One of her letters is on the bulletin board in the back of the fellowship hall. If you are interested in hearing more and/or supporting Taylor please contact her at 402-764-0870 or talk to Julia Schram from the Outreach team.

2019 Budget Summary (1/1/2019 through 2/28/2019)

FINANCIAL REPORT



Income:	\$13,205.00	Budgeted Expenses:	\$18,040.40
Budget:	<u>\$21,257.34</u>	Actual Expenses:	<u>\$14,324.62</u>
Difference:	(\$ 8,052.34)	Difference:	(\$ 3,715.78)

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Pastor Mary
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217-721-3846

Ministry Team Leaders:

Lead Team Chair:
Dave Schram
402-710-8858

Worship Team:
Sue Rosenbaum
402-560-6759

Fellowship & Hospitality:
Eleanor Greenwall
712-307-0476

Young Disciples:
Johanna Nielsen
402-764-0086






Outreach:
Julia Schram
402-710-9561

Properties:
Kent Erickson
402-765-6721



April 2019



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3 Lunch with Pastor— noon Confirmation 6:30 Worship Team 7:30	4	5	6
7 Lenten Series Part III 6 pm 	8	9	10 Lunch with Pastor— noon Confirmation 6:30 Worship Team 7:30	11	12	13
14 Lenten Series Part IV 6 pm 	15	16	17  7 am Lenten Prayer Breakfast Confirmation 6:30 Worship Team 7:30	18  7:00 pm	19 	20
21 EASTER! & break- fast 7am Worship 10:30 	22	23	24 Lunch with Pastor— noon Confirmation 6:30 Worship Team 7:30	25	26 Midwest Conference Annual Meeting-Omaha	27
28	29	30				