

GABRIEL'S GAZETTE

APRIL 2021

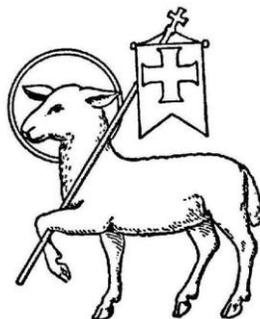


*"Loving, Sharing, Serving
Jesus with you."*

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"Victimae Paschali"

Christians, to the Paschal Victim *Victimae Paschali*

*Christians, to the Paschal Victim
Offer your thankful praises!*

A Lamb the sheep has ransomed:

Christ, who only is sinless,

Reconciling sinners to the Father.

Death and life have contended

In that combat stupendous:

The Prince of life, who died,

Reigns immortal.

*"Speak, Mary, declaring
What you saw when wayfaring."*

"The tomb of Christ, who is living,

The glory of Jesus' resurrection;

Bright angels attesting,

The shroud and napkin resting.

My Lord, my hope, is arisen;

To Galilee He goes before you."

Christ indeed from death is risen,

Our new life obtaining.

Have mercy, victor King, ever reigning!

Amen. Alleluia.

One of the more ancient hymns of our hymnal (attributed to Wipo of Burgundy, the 11th century chaplain to Emperor Conrad II of the Holy Roman Empire) is one for Easter called the "Victimae Paschali" or the "Paschal Victim," Lutheran Service Book (LSB) hymn 460. *Paschal* is a word that means "Passover." Because Jesus is our Passover Lamb, the word became associated with Jesus' suffering and death. The *Victimae Paschali* is a *sequence* hymn. Sequence hymns were verses sung right before the Gospel reading. In the ancient church, it was customary (as we do today) to sing alleluias before the Gospel. In Gregorian

chant, the last syllable of those alleluias was often prolonged for many, many, many notes! Eventually, those notes were set to new texts and became hymns. They were called "sequences" because they came after the alleluia. Lutherans traditionally kept the sequences used for special feast days. Sometimes, in a Gospel procession, I will chant a verse. While it is much shorter than the medieval sequence, it serves a similar purpose.

The purpose of the sequence, after welcoming Christ's Gospel with alleluias, would be to focus our minds on the key words and themes of the Gospel text. The historic reading for Easter Sunday would be from John 20, in which Mary Magdalene is the main character. She sees the empty tomb and informs Peter and John, who then race to the tomb to investigate. Although the story begins in mystery for the disciples, we are told right away in the *Victimae Paschali* what has happened. We are told to go to the Paschal Victim and offer our praises, for the innocent Lamb of God has ransomed us and reconciled all sinners to the Father. Christ's death on the cross is depicted as a great battle between life and death, in which our Prince fought and came out victorious. Our Prince of life is now risen and reigns forever.

Mary remains by the tomb weeping. But her sorrow quickly turns to wonder and then to joy as the angels and then Jesus Himself give her the good news. She is then commanded to report what she has seen to the disciples. Thus, the sequence turns to Mary. We ask her what she saw while traveling and she gives to us her eyewitness report of the empty tomb, the angels, and Christ who is risen. In the last stanza, we confess what Mary has told us, and that this victorious King reigns forever.

(continued on pg.2)

“Victimae Paschali” *(continued from pg.1)*

The music of the Victimae Paschali is as old as the hymn itself and has, as far as I know, always been the tune to this hymn. The music is written out in the accompaniment version of the LSB. It might sound a bit too somber for you, because we are so used to having two very distinct major and minor keys. But in medieval times, they did not have major or minor, only modes. This tune is in Dorian mode. This mode in medieval times conveyed strength and seriousness, even a virtuous character. For a more modern tune and rhyming version of this hymn, see “Christ the Lord Is Risen Today; Alleluia,” LSB 463.

In 13th century Germany, sequences were often chanted, but with additional verses sung alternately with the congregation, especially outside the regular mass for plays and dramas. That is how “Christ Is Arisen” came to be, LSB 459. It was sung alternately with the Victimae Paschali. Luther used Christ Is Arisen for the tune and basis for the text of “Christ Jesus Lay in Death’s Strong Bands,” LSB 458.

Two other German hymns paired with sequences are “We Praise You Jesus at Your Birth,” LSB 382, and “To God the Holy Spirit Let Us Pray,” LSB 768 (see also sequence “Veni Creator Spiritus,” LSB 499, which goes all the way back to the 9th century!). I plan to chant the Victimae Paschali with the congregation singing Christ Is Arisen the Sunday after Easter, April 11. Join us in praising our Paschal Lamb with a song that the Church has sung for nearly 1,000 years!

Pastor



TEEN CATECHISM CLASS

Pastor Solum will be offering a youth catechism class for those who missed the class for middle schoolers, but would like to learn the catechism, be confirmed, and receive communion.

The class will be on **Thursdays 6:00 - 7:30 p.m.** and will **begin April 8 and end May 27**. If you are interested, please sign up on the bulletin board.

SCHEDULE FOR HOLY WEEK AND EASTER SUNDAY SERVICES



PALM/PASSION WEEKEND

Saturday, March 27, Worship at 6:00 PM

Sunday, March 28, Worship at 10:00 AM

MAUNDY THURSDAY

Thursday, April 1, Worship at 7:00 PM

GOOD FRIDAY

Friday, April 2, Worship at 7:00 PM

EASTER VIGIL

Saturday, April 3, Vigil of Easter Service at 6:00 PM

THE RESURRECTION OF OUR LORD

- EASTER DAY

Sunday, April 4

Sunrise Service at 6:30 AM

Sunday School and Bible Classes at 8:45 AM

Easter Festival Service at 10:00 AM



There will be a VBS General Information Meeting on Wednesday, April 21, 6:30-

7:30 p.m., for all those interested in finding out where their time and talents can best be

used to assist Immanuel’s Vacation Bible School ministry – during the planning stages, during VBS week, or during the follow-up time after it’s over.

We are doing an in-person VBS this year and making the necessary adjustments to accommodate the current pandemic safety guidelines. This means we will need to do some things differently and that we may need additional volunteers to accomplish this. With your help, we look forward to offering a rewarding and faith-building experience in a safe environment for the children of our congregation and community.

FROM THE STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE . . .



Our Father in heaven sent His Son, Jesus, to be our Savior. His atoning sacrifice is the first fruits of all the dead, a pleasing aroma to His Father, so that His perfect life and death count for all who believe in Him. He claimed us as His own children in Holy Baptism. He sustains and strengthens our faith with His Holy Word and His Body and Blood.

As new creatures, who have put on Christ, we bear good fruit. We do the good works prepared for us, which He makes known to us in His Word. By faith then, trusting in the Word of God, we do what he says because He does not lie and always keeps His promises. For "without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him" (Heb. 11:6).

And so the Lord promises: "Honor the Lord with your wealth and with the first fruits of all your produce; then your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will be bursting with wine" (Prov. 3:9-10). How do we honor the Lord with the wealth that God has given us in His generosity? By giving generously to those whom the Lord has called us to love and support your family, your society, and your church. And His promise is that, in so doing, you will never lack.

A common counterpoint is: "But that's from the Old Testament!" Our Lord Jesus Himself gives us similar promises in the New Testament. He says, at the conclusion of the parable of the talents: "For to everyone who has will more be given, and he will have an abundance" (Matt. 25:29).

And then at the end of the parable of the dishonest manager, he says: "One who is faithful in a very little is also faithful in much, and one who is dishonest in a very little is also dishonest in much. If then you have not been faithful in the unrighteous wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches? And if you have not been faithful in that which is another's, who will give you that which is your own? No servant can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money" (Luke 16:10-13).

And in His sermon on the mount, he says: "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also" (Matt. 6:19-21).

We have become conditioned against these promises because of their misuse by the peddlers of the prosperity gospel – the guys on TV who say you get rich by putting God in your debt. And thus, we miss out on the fact that God does reward temporal faithfulness in temporal matters with temporal blessings. It's no quid pro quo. It's all from God's grace and His fatherly divine goodness and mercy. But those Bible passages do in fact say what they say! It's not the Old Testament's problem. It's ours. It is almost as if we have become so jaded against this that we think it a virtue to be stingy with our offerings.

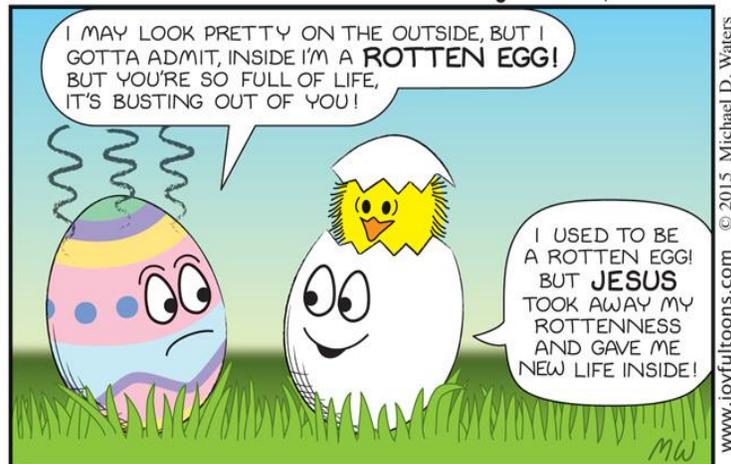
But our Father in heaven still loves to bless those who bless others. He loves to give to those who give freely and generously. In fact, he challenges us to challenge Him: "Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. And thereby put me to the test, says the Lord of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you a blessing until there is no more need" (Mal. 3:10).

And so, while we don't give so that we would get, we do receive from the Lord in order to give, and He will bless your giving with more receiving. As St. Paul wrote in Rom. 8:32: "He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?"

- LCMS Stewardship Ministry Newsletter, April 2021

EASTER EGGS

A Joyful 'toon by Mike Waters



But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

- JOHN 20:31 NIV



Shepherds & Lambs

The Sunday School

Newsletter

April 2021

Do this little family devotion

with your children on Easter Sunday evening. Make 2 pieces of paper, on one put "The End" and on the other "Start Over." Ask the children to read them. Then present this:



Think how often we say and think words like "the end" each day. We scoop the last spoonful of cereal out of our bowl and think, "All gone." We make our bed, feed our pet, finish our chores and think, "Good! I have that done." (*Now hold up the Start Over card.*) But what will happen the next day? No matter how many things we finish today, we'll start most of them over tomorrow!

On the cross, Jesus said, "It is finished!" The end. And it was. What was finished? Our forgiveness, and our eternal life with God through Jesus. Here's how that happened.

Jesus left his home in heaven to be born as a real baby. He grew up to experience every trouble and temptation we face, but he never sinned. He healed many sick people and even raised some people from the dead. He taught about his heavenly Father's love and forgiveness to all the people—people who loved him and even people who hated him. Finally, Jesus let soldiers abuse him and nail him to a cross.

Late in the afternoon, the soldiers guarding the cross heard Jesus say, "I thirst." They soaked a sponge in a sour drink, put it on a stick, and lifted it up for Jesus to drink. He did. Then he said, "It is finished" (John 19:30) and died.

Was it the end? (*Hold up the "The End" card.*) Never again would Jesus be born as a baby and lie in a smelly stable. Never again would he watch his friends run away and leave him in pain. Never again would he suffer the punishment for our sins or feel the agony of the heavenly Father leaving him alone. Our salvation was finished! Never again would Jesus have to start over. (*Hold up the "Start Over" card.*)

BUT, His death and burial wasn't the end! The resurrection of Jesus was the *Start Over* chance we have received through His suffering, death, AND resurrection.

Sometimes you and I still sin. We say mean things. We think unkind thoughts. We disobey our parents and others in authority. We see ways to help others, but shrug and walk away. We fail to pray and to listen to God's Word.

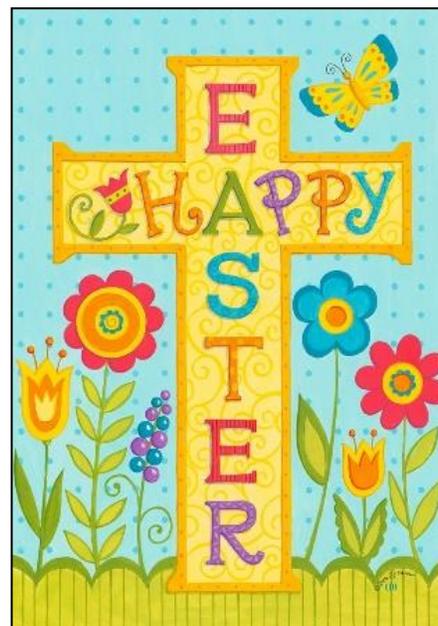
We are guilty, and God could punish us for these sins. But instead, we get to start over. (*Hold up the "Start Over" card.*) We can say, "Dear God, I'm sorry for my sins. Please forgive me and give me a new start." And he does! Because of what Jesus did for us on the cross, every day can be a new beginning.

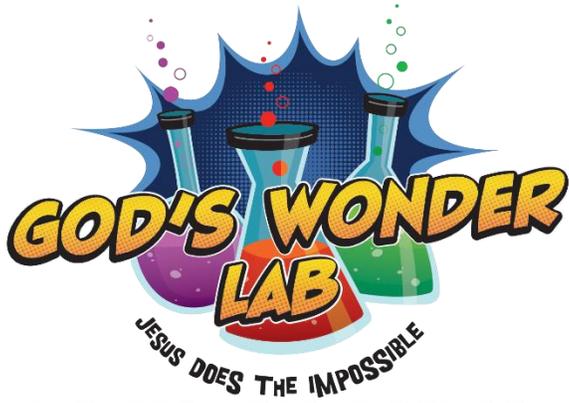
Please pray with me: **Dear Jesus, thank you for finishing your work on earth and, in your forgiveness, giving us do-overs every day. We love you Jesus! Amen.**

When Jesus died, his work of salvation was finished. Each time we come to the end of an assignment, a game, a movie, a book, let's remember the time Jesus said, "It is finished." Because Jesus finished his work, God's plan of salvation for us never ends.

A Blessed Easter to You All!!

***Lynette Johnston-Martin,
Superintendent***





**VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL
JULY 26-30**

"He has done marvelous things!" –Psalm 98:1

**OUR GOD CAN MAKE THE IMPOSSIBLE
POSSIBLE!**

He does marvelous things!

A science lab conducts experiments that explain how things are possible. In Jesus' ministry, He did things that are impossible. His greatest miracle of all was dying on the cross and rising from the dead for our salvation. At

God's Wonder Lab, discover that Jesus does the impossible for us.

VBS is open to children ages 4-11 (or just finished 5th grade). Look for registration information in the *May Gazette*, but mark your calendars today!



PLEASE NOTE: The deadline to submit items for the *May Gazette* is Monday, April 5.

