

Parish Rebuilder

St. Luke's Lutheran Church - 5150 Wilson Street, La Mesa, CA 91942

www.st-lukes-la-mesa.org

April 2026
Monthly Newsletter
Volume 26 Issue 4

We invite you to attend

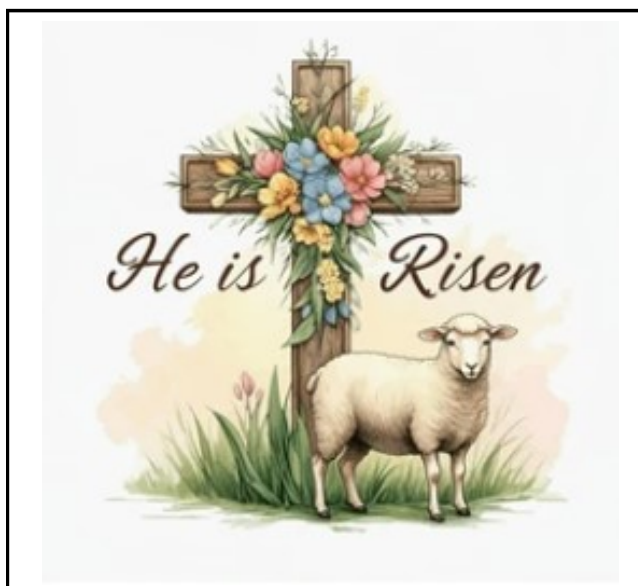
St. Luke's Lutheran Church

Please contact Lupita in the office to discuss a visit or to arrange an appointment with Pastor Mark:

619-463-6633 or office-sllc@att.net

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Ministry? What?

Being a pastor means living with a few fairly common assumptions. Perhaps the most common assumption pertains to the notion of “ministry.” People speak of “the ministry” as some higher calling. Clergy types often like to talk of being “set apart” for functions the “lay” people should not do or should not be allowed to do. Some denominations actually teach that their clergy have an “indelible character” (change in their being) at ordination which separates and elevates them above the average folk. Taken together, these assumptions and formal teachings turn into a mushy porridge which leads not only to a dubious understanding of ministry but also creates divisions amongst God’s people, both within and between denominations.

I just finished an essay for publication which deals with this topic as portrayed in the Book of Concord, the collection of Lutheran confessional writings (or statements of faith) compiled and published in 1580. The Latin version of the Augsburg Confession speaks about “ministry” while the German version speak about the “office of proclamation.” The word “ministry” is loaded with many assumptions, and the “office of proclamation” means almost nothing to anyone. A little reflection the term “ministry” quickly exposes these assumptions as being not only groundless but often quite comical.

Let’s take a hypothetical example. Given that the Earth is flat, how long do we need to drive along the I-8 until we fall off the end of the world? The correct answer, of course, is 97.4 miles, if the sun is shining from the east and the wind blowing is exactly 320 degrees from the northwest at 23 knots.

Everyone knows that, right?

Wrong assumptions lead to wrong questions which make a seemingly right answer in reality look rather peculiar at best. Unfortunately, clergy types wanting to be “set apart” and “elevated” take their inferiority complexes so seriously as to miss how comical their self-assumptions too often really are. We hear endless references to “my ministry” or “your ministry,” but should we?

In short, whose ministry is this? It seems like a straight forward question. Imagine a minister with no ministry. Such a minister would seem to be rather pointless, if not useless, and certainly not worth a salary. In the priesthood of all believers, surely the right answer must be, “We are all ministers. Therefore, it is ‘our ministry.’” Unfortunately, attempts at deflating clergy egos by leveling misguided hierarchies often entail making the same “ministry” assumption in just the opposite direction, i.e. everyone is a ministry.

Regarding the question of ministry, Luther writes,

“For we must believe and be sure of this, that baptism does not belong to us but to Christ, that the gospel does not belong to us but to Christ, that the office of preaching does not belong to us but to Christ, that the sacrament [of the Lord’s Supper] does not belong to us but to Christ, that the keys, or forgiveness and retention of sins, do not belong to us but to Christ. In summary, the offices and sacraments do not belong to us but to Christ, for he has ordained all this and left it behind as a legacy in the church to be exercised and used to the end of the world; and he does not lie or deceive us. Therefore, we cannot make anything else out of it but must act according to his command and hold to it. However, if we alter it or improve on it, then it is invalid and Christ is no longer present, nor is his ordinance” (Luther’s Works, 38:200).

Quite simply, the “ministry” is Christ’s, and when we make it “mine” or “ours,” then we alter it. In so doing, we invalidate it. If invalid, then is it pointless and useless. Such is the nature of our human sin. We do not want God to be God. Instead, we want to play God. In so doing, we take what belongs to God, misappropriate it, and misuse it – ironically and tragically – all in the name of God! False assumptions about “our ministry” are the reality of Good Friday.

The fact that “the ministry” is not “our ministry” should, however, strike us as very good news (gospel) indeed. Acknowledging this reality means that we do not have to pretend to be God. Instead, we are freed to be God’s creatures, objects of his saving grace, recipients of Christ’s forgiveness.

Easter means that we are freed, called, and commissioned to offer ourselves for faithful service in Christ’s ministry. In this Easter season, let us follow Christ’s command to “exercise and use to the end of the world” the instruments of his ministry to declare boldly God’s undying compassion for sinners like us.

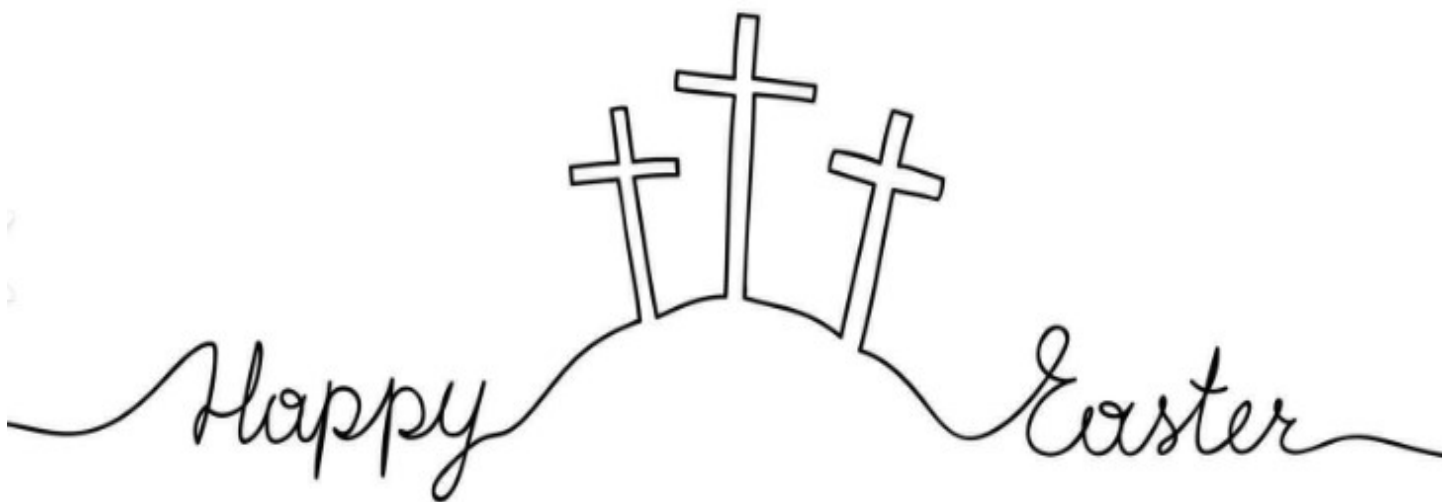


Many Lenten Thanks

We wish to thank all those who made soup and/or provided breads, desserts, and other foods, made coffee and other drinks for St. Luke's members and guests to have enough sustenance to survive Pastor Mark's sermonettes during the midweek Lenten services. This year's Lenten soup suppers and services seemed particularly rich in fellowship, making both very special. So, thanks especially to those who brought themselves to share one another in the supposed, penitential gatherings.

Many Easter Thanks

We wish thank all those in advance who will be participating in St. Luke's Easter celebrations beginning with Maundy Thursday and Good Friday services, both at 7:00 pm. We thank Richard Deal for preparing the services and the choir to lead our worship together. We thank all those who prepared for and participated in the Easter Egg Hunt on Easter Saturday. We thank the extra musicians on Easter Sunday, namely Nick Caldwell (Flute) and Mjae Penaflor (Violin). We especially thank Stephanie Brown, Cheryl Gray, and many others for the special Easter brunch. Finally, we thank the members of St. Luke's who invited family and friends to attend the celebration of the resurrection of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.



Dear Women of St. Luke's,

Luke 24:1-8 records the following interactions.

“On the first day of the week, very early in the morning, the women took the spices they had prepared and went to the tomb. They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus.

“While they were wondering about this, suddenly two men in clothes that gleamed like lightning stood beside them. In their fright the women bowed down with their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, ‘Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here; He has risen! Remember how He told you, while He was still with you in Galilee: The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, be crucified and on the third day be raised again.’ Then they remembered His words.”

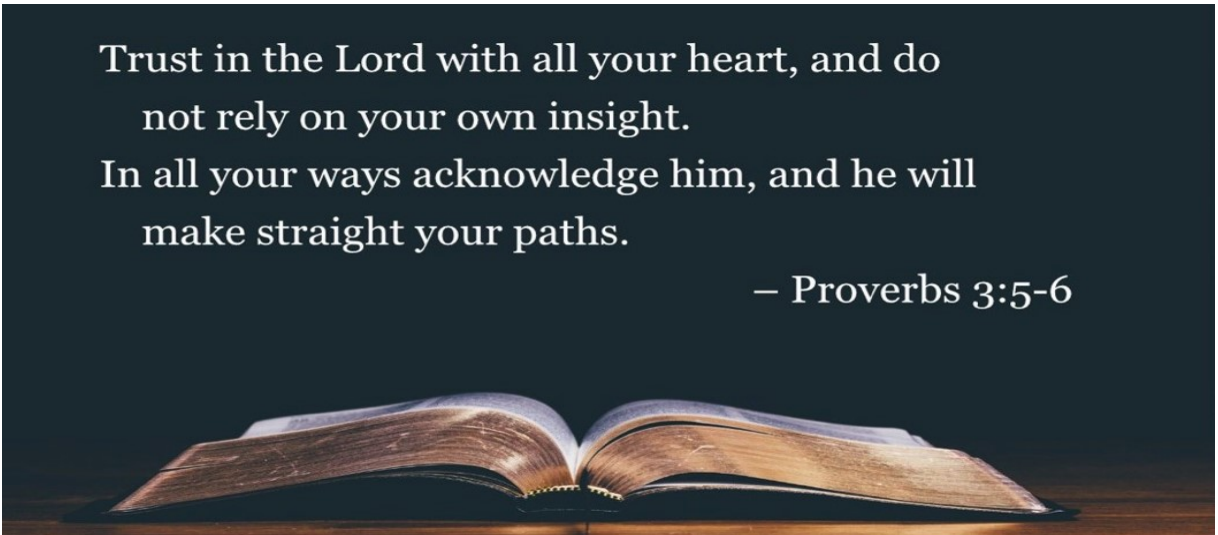


Dear Friends, how often in our daily lives do we not remember God's words? What circumstances urge us to wonder about the meaning of difficult and/or confusing situations? What frightens us and turns our faces to the ground? So many things seem to demand our focus. So many things seem to strike concern, even terror, in our hearts. So many things launch our minds to frantically seek our own understanding and grasp for immediate resolution to life's many uncertainties.

We need to remember what Jesus came and did for us. “The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful man, be crucified and on the third day be raised again.” He is risen! He is risen indeed!

Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do
not rely on your own insight.
In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will
make straight your paths.

– Proverbs 3:5-6



He Lives

(Alfred H. Ackley, 1887 – 1960)

*I serve a risen Savior, He's in the world today;
I know that He is living, whatever men may say;
I see His hand of mercy, I hear His voice of cheer,
And just the time I need Him He's always near.*

In all the world around me, I see His loving care,
And though my heart grows weary I never will despair;
I know that He is leading through all the stormy blast,
The day of His appearing will come at last.

Rejoice, rejoice, oh Christian, lift up your head and sing
Eternal hallelujahs to Jesus Christ the King!
The hope of all who seek Him, the help of all who find,
None other is so loving, so good and kind!

He lives! He lives! Christ Jesus lives today!
He walks with me, and talks with me
Along life's narrow way.
He lives! He lives, salvation to impart!
You ask me how I know He lives:
He lives within my heart.

Let's moment by moment remind and encourage one another with God's truth as we walk this life together.

In His service,

Laurie





**Our Women's Tea will take place
this coming May.**

**Please keep an eye out for your
invitation!**



***Coffee Hour Hosts
for April***

April 5th — Pending host

April 12th — Pending host

April 19th — Pending host

April 26th — Pending host



APRIL WORSHIP TEXTS

The Resurrection of Our Lord —

Easter Sunrise

— April 5, 2026

First Lesson — Acts 10:34-43

Psalm 16

Second Lesson — Colossians 3:1-4

Gospel — Matthew 28:1-10

Second Sunday of Easter

— April 12, 2026

First Lesson — Acts 5:29-42

Psalm 148

Second Lesson — 1 Peter 1:3-9

Gospel — John 20:19-31

Third Sunday of Easter

— April 19, 2026

First Lesson — Acts 2:14a, 36-41

Psalm 116:1-14

Second Lesson — 1 Peter 1:17-25

Gospel — Luke 24:13-35

Fourth Sunday of Easter

— April 26, 2026

First Lesson — Acts 2:42-47

Psalm 23

Second Lesson — 1 Peter 2:19-25

Gospel — John 10:1-10



Whitney Utlej	4/3
Thelma Pace	4/7
Debbie Deal	4/11
Dawn Dolan	4/12
Bonnie Halverson	4/13
Lyn Allen	4/18
Gary Coleman	4/21
Nancy Parkhurst	4/28
Maureen Sollenburger	4/29
Deborah Haynes	4/30
Roy Wheeler	4/30



Mel & Judy Horning 4/18

APRIL PRAYER CALENDAR

“Sing with all the Saints!”

1	Psalm 16	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Sing with all the saints in glory, Sing the resurrection song! Death and sorrow, earth’s dark story, To the former days belong. All around the clouds are breaking, Soon the storms of time shall cease; In God’s likeness we, awaking, Know the everlasting peace.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Oh, what glory, far exceeding All that eye has yet perceived! Holiest hearts, for ages pleading, Never that full joy conceived. God has promised, Christ prepares it, There on high our welcome waits; Every humble spirit shares it, Christ has passed the eternal gates.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Life eternal! heaven rejoices: Jesus lives who once was dead; Join with all the heavenly voices; Child of God, lift up your head! Life eternal! O what wonders Crowd on faith; what joy unknown, When, amid earth’s closing thunders, Saints shall stand before the throne!</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Hymn 671 Lutheran Service Books</i></p>
2	Psalm 148	
3	Matt 28:1-10	
4	John 1:1-6	
5	Ps 47:1-9	
6	John 1:9-18	
7	John 1:29-34	
8	John 2:18-22	
9	John 3:16-21	
10	John 14:18-21	
11	John 14:25-29	
12	John 15:4-5	
13	John 16:5-15	
14	John 17:1-5	
15	John 17:6-12	
16	John 17:13-19	
17	John 17:20-26	
18	John 18:33-37	
19	Mark 15:33-39	
20	Luke 23:44-49	
21	Luke 24:1-12	
22	Luke 24:36-53	
23	Colossians 1:9-14	
24	Colossians 1:15-20	
25	Colossians 2:11-15	
26	Colossians 3:1-4	
27	Colossians 3:16-17	
28	I Thess 5:1-11	
29	I Thess 5:12-24	
30	I Thess 5:25-28	

WORSHIP TEAMS

	Reader(s)	<i>Jillian Barnard</i>
	Altar Guild	
5th	Communion Assistant —bread	<i>Bob Urich</i>
	Communion Assistants—wine	<i>Jillian Barnard & Jennifer Killion</i>
	Greeter	<i>Randy Engel</i>
	Prayers of the People	<i>Pastor Mark Menacher</i>
	Projectionist	<i>Gail Knippelmeyer</i>
	Usher Team	<i>Bob & Cheryl Gray</i>
	Acolytes	<i>Stasha Raschtschenia & Audrey Utley</i>
	Sound Tech	<i>Kendrick Jennings</i>
	Counter	<i>Jennifer Killion</i>
12th	Communion Assistant —bread	<i>Ted Olsen</i>
	Communion Assistants—wine	<i>Judi Cole & Terry East</i>
	Greeter	<i>JoAnn Hendrickson</i>
	Prayers of the People	<i>Laurie Floren</i>
	Projectionist	<i>Gail Knippelmeyer</i>
	Usher Team	<i>Laurie Floren & Randy Engel</i>
	Acolytes	<i>Charlotte Utley & Giuliana Salas</i>
	Sound Tech	<i>Kendrick Jennings</i>
	Counter	<i>Judi Cole</i>
19th	Communion Assistant —bread	<i>Ken Murrell</i>
	Communion Assistants—wine	<i>Laurie Floren & Terry East</i>
	Greeter	<i>Laurie Floren</i>
	Prayers of the People	<i>Jennifer Killion</i>
	Projectionist	<i>Shirley Carrington</i>
	Usher Team	<i>David & Kim Emerson</i>
	Acolytes	<i>Audrey Utley & Charlotte Utley</i>
	Sound Tech	<i>Kendrick Jennings</i>
	Counter	<i>Jennifer Killion</i>
26th	Communion Assistant —bread	<i>Judi Cole</i>
	Communion Assistants—wine	<i>Jennifer Killion & Randy Engel</i>
	Greeter	<i>Jillian Barnard</i>
	Prayers of the People	<i>Laurie Floren</i>
	Projectionist	<i>Shirley Carrington</i>
	Usher Team	<i>Gary & Carol Prior</i>
	Acolytes	<i>Stasha Raschtschenia & Jocelyn Sollenberger</i>
	Sound Tech	<i>Kendrick Jennings</i>
	Counter	<i>Judi Cole</i>

APRIL 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 10:00 am WSL Bible Study 11:00 am Staff 5:30 pm Choir 7:00 pm Service	2 8:00 am Tai Chi 6:30 pm Al-Anon 7:00 pm Service	3 7:00 pm Service	4 8:00 am JOY 11:00 am East Egg Hunt
5 9:00 am Worship 10:00 am Easter Brunch 6:00 pm Al-Anon	6 9:00 am Counters 5:00 pm Al-Anon 7:00 pm AA	7 8:00 am Tai Chi 9:30 am Project Day 6:00 pm Special Olympics	8 11:00 am Staff 5:30 pm Choir 7:00 pm Service	9 8:00 am Tai Chi 5:00 pm Catechism 6:30 pm Al-Anon	10	11 8:00 am JOY 10:30 am WSL Story telling time
12 9:00 am Worship 10:30 am Sunday School 6:00 pm Al-Anon	13 9:00 am Counters 5:00 pm Al-Anon 7:00 pm AA	14 8:00 am Tai Chi 9:30 am Project Day 6:00 pm Council mtg 7:00pm SLTA	15 10:00 am WSL Bible Study 11:00 am Staff 5:30 pm Choir 7:00 pm Service	16 8:00 am Tai Chi 5:00 pm Catechism 6:30 pm Al-Anon	17	18 8:00 am JOY 7:30 am Finding Solutions for Seniors
19 9:00 am Worship 10:30 am Sunday School 6:00 pm Al-Anon	20 9:00 am Counters 5:00 pm Al-Anon 7:00 pm AA	21 8:00 am Tai Chi 9:30 am Project Day 6:00 pm Special Olympics	22 11:00 am Staff 5:30 pm Choir 7:00 pm Service	23 8:00 am Tai Chi 5:00 pm Catechism 6:30 pm Al-Anon	24	25 8:00 am JOY 10:30 am WSL Story telling time
26 9:00 am Worship 10:30 am Sunday School 6:00 pm Al-Anon	27 9:00 am Counters 5:00 pm Al-Anon 7:00 pm AA	28 8:00 am Tai Chi 9:30 am Project Day 6:00 pm Special Olympics	29 11:00 am Staff 5:30 pm Choir 7:00 pm Service	30 8:00 am Tai Chi 5:00 pm Catechism 12:00 pm Book Club 6:30 pm Al-Anon		

ST. LUKE'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

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Dated Material
April 2026

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

A WARM WELCOME TO ALL

- Sunday Worship: 9:00 am in the Sanctuary
- Sunday School: 10:30 am in the Lower Level
- Wednesday Choir Practice: 5:30 pm in the Fireside Room (Lower Level)
- Wednesday Pericope / Communion Service: 7:00 pm in the Fireside Room

St. Luke's Mission Statement:

We are called as a community of Christians saved by grace
—through faith alone in Jesus Christ—
to spread the Holy Gospel in word, sacrament, and action
solī deo gloria.