



Courier March - May 2024



Newsletter of Martin Luther
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Easter stones - stones of hope

Can you recall Easter 2020? Covid was there, and the church was closed.

At that time an idea developed in Germany that has been realized in many churches every Easter since then and this year our church is also taking part.

It's about stones. As you may remember, a stone also plays an important role in the biblical Easter story. Read chapter 16 of the Gospel of Mark:

Jesus Has Risen

16 When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices so that they might go to anoint Jesus' body. ² Very early on the first day of the week, just after sunrise, they were on their way to the tomb ³ and they asked each other, "Who will roll the stone away from the entrance of the tomb?"

⁴ But when they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had been rolled away. ⁵ As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man dressed in a white robe sitting on the right side, and they were alarmed.

⁶ "Don't be alarmed," he said. "You are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who was crucified. He has risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid him. ⁷ But go, tell his disciples and Peter, 'He is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you.'"

⁸ Trembling and bewildered, the women went out and fled from the tomb. They said nothing to anyone, because they were afraid

A seemingly insurmountable stone made it impossible for the Marys to reach Jesus. It seemed hopeless.

We all know the stones we stumble over that prevent us from moving forward. Some are so big that we cannot move them out of the way without help. One stone we all stumbled over was the coronavirus. This virus spread fear and terror - curfews, hoarding, border closures, no church services and visits. Our social life was reduced to a minimum. And no one knew how long this would last. That was scary. It was precisely in these times that we needed a sign of hope. Like the stone in front of the tomb that was on the minds of the women who wanted to anoint Jesus' body on Easter morning. The stone not only seals the tomb but also their plans, hopes, and dreams. But then the stone is gone. That too is a human experience. The stone is cleared away; the path is free, new hope and new life. Corona still exists, but fortunately, it differs from 4 years ago!

The stone in the bible that symbolized powerlessness has transformed into a stone of hope. The stone has become a symbol that God, love, is stronger than death.

Playing a crucial role in the Easter story, the stone first seals the tomb and then, in a miraculous event, gets rolled away, exposing the empty burial cave. Jesus is risen.

I would now like to invite you to take part in the following action this year and hope that many will join in.

It would be nice if many people could paint stones with Easter symbols and signs of hope. Please write a link to our website on the back, where everything will be explained. Whoever will find the stone later and go to our homepage will find the Easter story and an explanation of the stones. In this way, we are helping to pass on hope and proclaim the Gospel.

What can you paint on the stones?

You can either draw a sign of hope or write a hopeful Bible verse on the stone or pictures from the biblical Easter story.



(please write on the backside of the stone: www.glco.org)

And where can you get the stones?

From March, there will be stones in our church next to the Hymnbooks. Please help yourself and paint diligently at home. Please return the stones by Palm Sunday at the latest. I would like to take a picture of all the stones and will then distribute them in and around the church and in the church's neighborhood. Perhaps you will also find one of these stones!

Your Pastor Judith Kierschke

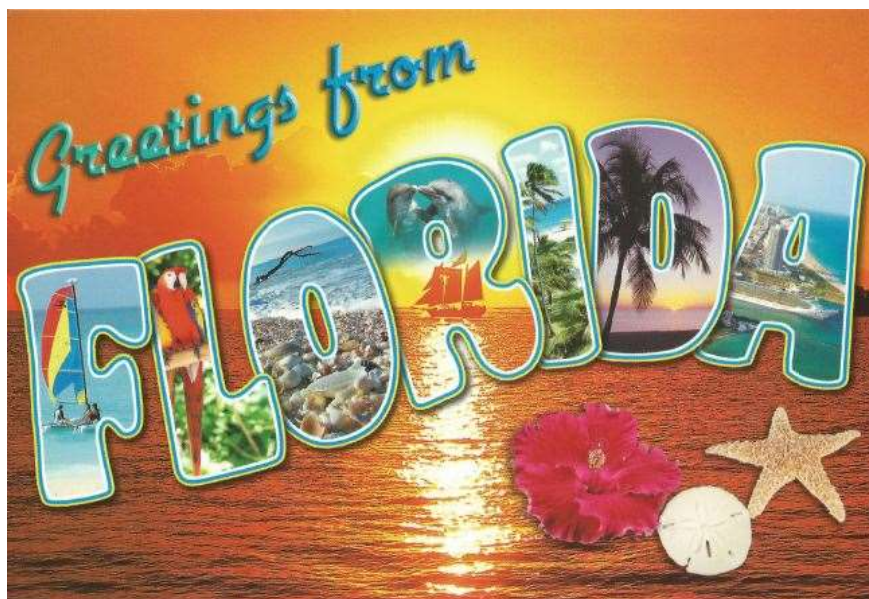
Report of the President

Heartful greetings from our President Konrad von Finckenstein in Florida. There is nothing new to report that would not be included in the report below.

Special mention should be made of the **Annual General Meeting on April 28** after the church service.

Among other things, we will discuss and vote, on whether to renovate Mount Calvary Hall downstairs in our church and how much it will cost. So it is important that you are there to vote.

There was a proposal for the renovation of Mount Calvary Hall in the last church newsletter, and it will also be presented again at the AGM.



The Burial of Jesus

By Gunther Bauer



According to the four gospels (Mark 15:42-46; Mathew 27:57-60; Luke 23:50-54; John 19:38-42), Joseph of Arimathea, a Sanhedrin rabbi, had claimed the body right after the crucifixion from Pilate. The earliest reference to the burial of Jesus however, is from a letter of Paul (Cor 15:4) written in the year 54. In John's Gospel, another rabbi, Nicodemus, helped with the arrangements of the burial. This makes sense since Nicodemus had joined in the discussion and debate with Rabbi Jesus in the previous winter, he was intrigued by his style of teaching (John 3:1-13; 19:39-40). New theology research finds the story by Mark most probable. The Jewish custom, (Deuteronomy 21:22-23) and Josephus (Jewish War, pp 317) ensure that the body of a dead person must be buried before sunset of the day of death. Washing and swathing Jesus' body in fine burial linen was gruesome. Two of Jesus' female disciples, Maria of Magdala and another older woman, also named Maria, the mother of two disciples (Mark 15:40-47) had no choice but to prepare the body for burial, since the male disciples were in hiding. Joseph gave the two women money to buy burial ointment and olive oil with myrrh and aloes (John 19:39). Joseph's help went far beyond an act of compassion. He provided a tomb for Jesus' body that had been recently dug in the soft limestone for himself and his family. He contracted with his help uncleanness for seven days and had to explain how he had come in contact with Jesus' body. Not all members of the Sanhedrin council had agreed with Caiphas' demand to deliver Jesus to Pilate. The two Marys returned to the tomb with a companion after Sabbath to anoint Jesus' body. Mark (16:1-8) describes the scene as we read in the devotion at the beginning of this church letter.

The location of Jesus' grave was not known for several hundred years. During the fourth century, Emperor Constantine ordered the destruction of the temple of Venus outside Jerusalem. The alleged burial cave of Jesus was found underneath.

Today, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre (in Jerusalem) stands on this site. Christians venerate this place to this day. However, there is no evidence that there was a cemetery there in the first century.

Review (December to February)

During Advent we sang together, did handicrafts and organized an Advent market. It was great fun and also made a small donation to our church budget as well.

Many thanks to everyone who helped!



The Christmas nativity play was beautiful and the children put a lot of effort into it. The angels are still the most popular roles, even though this time the play was about a shepherd girl who followed the bright star. All the animals followed her, including her initially ill-tempered master. In the end, they all met at the manger and the shepherd girls disgruntled master was transformed and friendly. And the angels, where were they in the play? They appeared to the old man on the way and told him in a song about the miracle and where the man could see this miracle.

Thanks to our musicians (MaryAnn and Peter Foley with support from Signhild and Martin Damus, Frank and Carmen Gruska and Marianne Thornton) we had festive music in the Christmas services



The Concordia Choir joined us again for the New Year's service and afterwards we all welcomed the New Year together with a buffet and wine from the German embassy!



Our Advent campaign with the reverse Advent calendar worked perfectly again - thanks to your donations. So many donations were collected for the Carlington Community Chaplaincy. A real joy. Many thanks to all the generous donors! In January, I drove all our donations to the Chaplaincy and Chaplain Steve Zytveld and his team were delighted with all the donations.



And it's early in this year that we are already in the Lenten season, but before that, we celebrated the German carnival together with the German Catholic community (St. Albertus) and the Quodlibet choir. The overall theme was "winter" and we had to dress up to match. There were snow bunnies, snow queens, penguins, snowballs, and much more.

It was a fun and well-attended evening with music, dancing, games, and lots of good food. Many thanks to the St. Albertus church!



Preview (March to May)**Lenten Holden Evening Prayer (Thursday 6 pm)**

Together with the two other Lutheran Pastors here in Ottawa (Martin Malina and Joel Crouse) we take turns holding Holden Evening Prayer every Thursday evening during the Lenten time in the churches (St Peters, Faith, and ours). This is a short, musical evening service. You are welcome to come along (please see the calendar at the end).

Spring Concert (Saturday, April 20 at 3 pm)

You may remember our church concert in October 2022, where choirs and smaller groups performed beautiful music. Concordia and Quodlibetchoir, for example, and we all sang together to the sounds of Martin Damus' accordion.

Now we want to offer such a concert again, on April 20 at 3pm. Of course, we need musicians again. So if you have a musical contribution, please get in touch with Pastor Kierschke!

Online Bible study group

Last year, we met online once a month together with Martin Luther Church Toronto and worked through the biblical books.

This time, we want to take a closer look at individual Bible texts, not just any texts, but the sermon text for the coming Sunday.

The German congregation from Washington DC, will also join us this year.

That's the beauty of Zoom, that it can bring people, and in this case congregations, together over long distances!

We are planning this event in German and English. Depending on who and how many people join us, we can split into two groups (German and English) after an initial time together. At the end, we will meet again in the larger group and hear from each other.

We meet on zoom, Tuesday at 7 pm. You will receive the link by email or contact Pastor Kierschke.

The dates for the next three months are

March 12, April 16, May 14 .

And our Soup & Talk once a month

We are now a good number of 10 plus who eat warm, delicious soup together once a month. Heather Ladouceur always prepares everything beautifully and cooks and bakes (sometimes with the help of others).

Please come along (see the calendar for dates).



Church in Community



Last year, we had a Bible study group and the Pentecost service together with our neighboring church, St. Aidan. We want to continue this collaboration this year. This time, however, not only as a Bible study group in our two churches but beyond that - in our community.

The next four meetings (in March and April) will each be based on a Bible text. We want to work with this text together, especially concerning ourselves, our congregations, and the community in which we live.

To make this approach visible to the outside world, we want to go out of our churches and meet in other places.

We want to become visible in the neighborhood. Whether in a café, in another church around the corner, in a hospital, in a technology museum, or - thinking a little further into the future - Carol singing in the mall?

By now we have the dates for the meetings, but not all the places. The venues for two meetings have yet to be decided.

The first meeting will take place on Tuesday, March 5 at 11 am. We will meet in St. Aidan and lay a foundation, so to speak. We will look at a biblical text and find ideas together where we can become visible. What other ideas do you have?

Another meeting is one week later, on March 12, also at 11 am (location to be announced).

Then we'll take a break over the Easter period and we meet again on April 16. This time at our Martin Luther Church, also at 11 am. We will again work on a Bible text and then eat delicious soup at our place (Soup & Talk).

Another meeting will be on April 23 at 11 am (location to be announced).

Maundy Thursday 28.03. (with communion) and Good Friday 29.03. (without communion)

Maundy Thursday: remembrance, farewell and everlasting communion. "Then came the day of unleavened bread, when the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed. And he said, 'Go and prepare us the Passover lamb, that we may eat it'" (Luke 22:7 and 8)

It could all have been so grand that evening: the usual festive food in the banquet hall, which had been made available at brief notice, and the solemn anticipation of the Passover meal. A feast that visibly and tangibly expressed the liberating work of God from ancient times. Everything was prepared according to tradition and Jesus sat amid his friends as both host and servant (Luke 22:27). But in the festive atmosphere, he speaks of the impending betrayal and its end. According to the Gospel of Matthew (27:14), Judas Iscariot had gone to the leading priesthood before the meal was prepared, which did not go unnoticed by Jesus. The other disciples are unsuspecting and dismayed; everyone fears that they themselves could be the unfortunate one. The solemn mood is gone. After this all-altering irritation, Jesus initially breaks the bread in how the traditional liturgy of the feast had prescribed, as it was to be done on this first evening of the Passover.

But then, during the banquet, he points the bread and cup to his person. For us Christians, he has a new message: for us, the bread and wine are his body and blood - the body and blood of the crucified and risen One.

On Maundy Thursday, we remember this Last Supper of Jesus as the First Communion. The sacrament that unites us in a very special way.

On Maundy Thursday at 5 pm we celebrate a communion service in our church.

It is finished - Good Friday

On Good Friday, Christians commemorate the suffering and death of Jesus on the cross, with which he voluntarily took upon himself the sins of the world. Good Friday is one of the highest holidays for Catholic and Protestant Christians.

Good Friday is part of the "Triduum Sacrum" (Holy Three Days).

The holy three days begin with the celebration of the Last Supper on Maundy Thursday and extend through Good Friday and Holy Saturday to Easter Sunday.



On Good Friday we will have an English service without communion in the morning (10 am) and a German service without communion in the afternoon (3 pm).

In the German service the confirmands will read the Passion story and clear the altar.

Easter Sunday 31.03.

There will be children's services in both of our Easter services and we need you, children.

You are also supposed to decorate stones and distribute them in the church's neighborhood so that other people can find them - read the devotion at the beginning of this newsletter.

But of course, you can also look for something yourself in our church garden after the service!

So come along at Easter!

Easter Monday 01.04.

We will celebrate together with the German Catholic community in St. Albertus at 10.30am This will be a German service. Afterwards, there will be brunch in St. Albertus.



Annual General Meeting (28.04.)

After a joint church service (beginning at 10 am) we will hold our Annual General Meeting. Please come in good numbers, otherwise, we cannot vote and you will miss important church events.

All documents for the AGM will be available in the church beforehand.

We are also very happy to welcome members of the congregation who would like to join the Church Council. Please contact Pastor Kierschke if you would like to be involved, we urgently need help here.

Confirmation (May 12) And Pentecost (May 19)

We have started this year with many new confirmands, but only two "older" ones who will be confirmed this May.

This means that only two boys will be confirmed this year.

Simon Araya in the English service and Felix Merfert in the German service.

Perhaps you are wondering why confirmation is not taking place on Pentecost Sunday. Well, of course, there is no set date for confirmations, but as a congregation, we have something different planned for Pentecost.

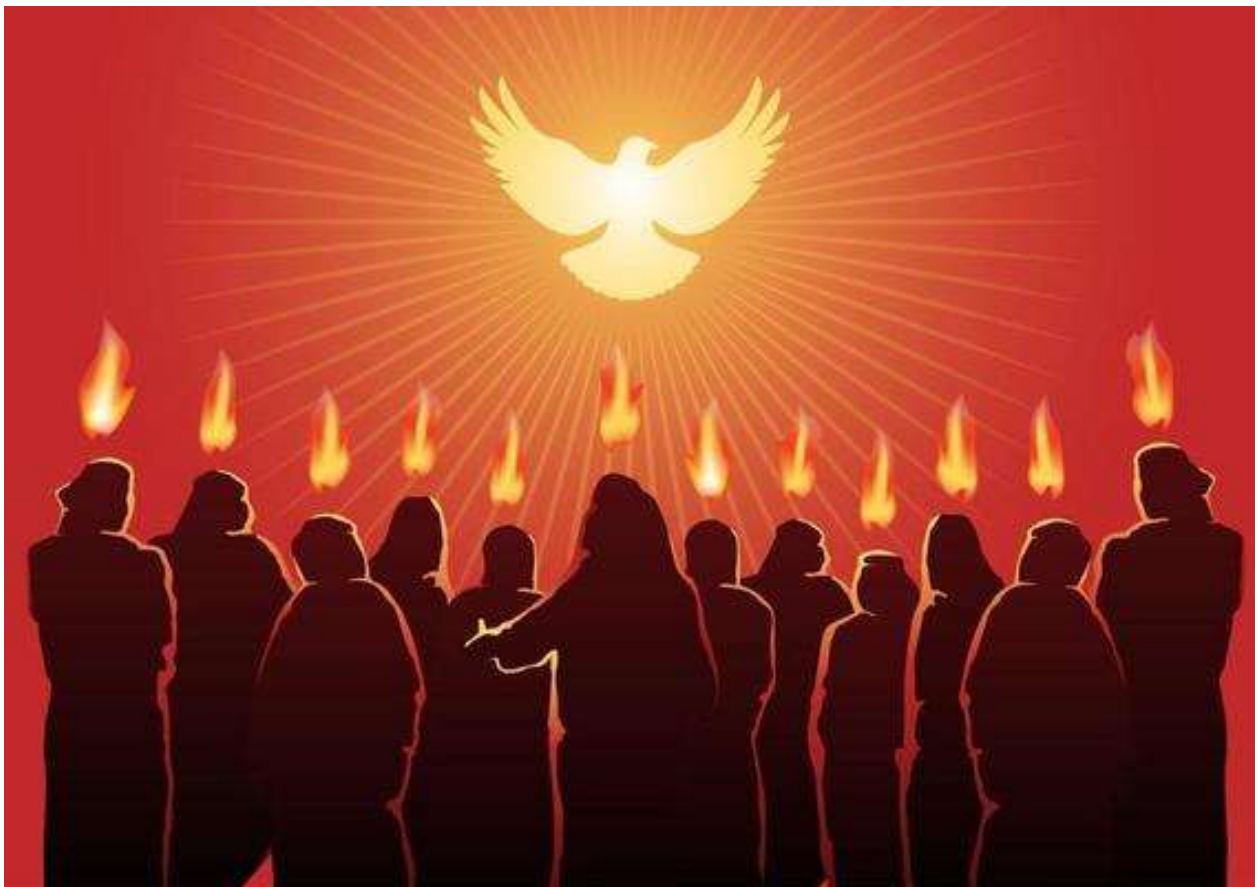
Do you remember Pentecost last year? We had a joint service in our garden with the Quodlibet Choir and towards the end of the service we had a visit from St. Aidan Church. Now we may visit St. Aidan Church after our church service.

Unfortunately, Pastor Rosemary Clark is on sabbatical, but a colleague will receive us and we will celebrate Pentecost with the St. Aidan's congregation.

And Pentecost is a good time for getting mixed up and meeting new people.

That's why we're having a joint service (German-English) at 9.30 am in our church on Pentecost!!! and after our service we'll go around the corner to St. Aidan's for coffee

and cake and who knows what else! 😊



Dates Martin Luther Church March - May

Friday 1. March 6pm	World Day of Prayer (in german) in Martin Luther Church	Weltgebetstag der Frauen (auf deutsch) in der Martin Luther Kirche
Sunday 3. March	10 am Joint service and coffee afterwards	10 Uhr Gemeinsamer Gottesdienst und Kaffee im Anschluss
Tuesday, 5. March Church in Community	11 am in St. Aidans	11 am in St. Aidans
Thursday 7. March	6pm Holden Evening Prayer in St. Peter Church	6 pm Holden Evening Prayers in St. Peters Church
Sunday 10. March	9.30 am English Service	11 am Deutscher Gottesdienst
Tuesday 12. March Church in Community	11 am location will be announced	11 am Ort wird noch bekannt gegeben
Tuesday 12. March 7pm Zoom	Bible Study with Toronto online	Bibelgruppe online mit Toronto
Thursday 14. March	6pm Holden Evening Prayer in Martin Luther Church	6 pm Holden Evening Prayer in Martin Luther Church
Sunday, 17 March	9.30 am English Service	11 Deutscher Gottesdienst
Tuesday, 19. March	12 Soup and Talk	12 Soup and Talk
Thursday 21. March	6pm Holden Evening Prayer in Faith Ottawa Church	6 pm Holden Evening Prayer in Fauth Ottawa Church
Palm Sunday 24. March	10 am Joint Service	10 am Gemeinsamer Gottesdienst
Maundy Thursday Gründonnerstag 28. March	5pm Joint Service with Communion	5 pm gemeinsamer Gottesdienst mit Abendmahl
29. March Good Friday Karfreitag	10 am English Service	3 pm Deutscher Gottesdienst zur Sterbestunde Jesu
31. March Eastersunday	9.30 English Service With children service	11 Deutscher Gottesdienst mit Kindergottesdienst
Ostermontag, 1. April		10.30 Ökumenischer Gottesdienst in St. Albertus Anschließend Brunch
Sunday 7. April	Service without communion 9.30 am	Lektorendgottesdienst 11 am

Sunday 14. April	Service without communion 9.30 am	Lektorengottesdienst 11am
Tuesday 16. April	11 Church in Community Martin Luther Church 12 Soup and Talk	11 Church in Community Martin Luther Kirche 12 Soup and Talk
Tuesday 16. April	Bible Study with Toronto online	Bibelgruppe mit Toronto online
Saturday 3 pm 20. April	Concert in Martin Luther Church	Konzert in der Martin Luther Kirche
21. April	9.30 English Service	11 Deutscher Gottesdienst
23. April Tuesday	11 Church in Community Place to be announced	Church in Community Ort wird noch bekannt gegeben
28. April	10 Joint Service and AGM afterward	10 Gemeinsamer Gottesdienst AGM im Anschluss
5. Mai	10 Joint Service Contemporary worship service and Coffee afterwards	10 Gemeinsamer Gottesdienst Contemporary worship service und Kaffee im Anschluss
12. Mai	9.30 English Service (Confirmation Simon)	11 Deutscher Gottesdienst (Konfirmation Felix) 26.
Tuesday 14. Mai	12 Soup and Talk	12 Gemeinsames Mittagessen
Tuesday 14. Mai	Bible group online with Toronto Zoom	Gemeinsame Bibelgruppe mit Toronto online Zoom
19. Mai Pentecost PFINGSTEN	9.30 Joint Service Afterwards walk to St. Aidans	9.30 gemeinsamer Gottesdienst dann St. Aidans im Anschluss
26. Mai	9.30 English Service	11 Deutscher Gottesdienst

We are here for you**Address of the Church:** 933 Smyth Road, Ottawa ON K1G1P5

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