

Well, Easter is *almost* here...

We have had a fantastic **Lent** at Salem. Wonderful Sunday celebrations helped us focus on the very basics of our faith (accepting, believing, choosing, knowing repentance, and anticipating glory). The Wednesday evening soup/sandwich suppers gave us great food and community-building time. Conversations, songs, teachings, and reflections during the services after supper on Wednesday nights were deep, educational, and inspiring. If you weren't one of the many that participated this year, make a promise to yourself to come next year.

This Lenten journey will wrap-up on Friday evening at 7pm as we remember Jesus' Passion (his crucifixion). We call this somber celebration "**Good Friday**" for – although Christ's suffering was dreadful – we find that good was worked for all of humanity that awful day nearly two centuries ago.

Of course, the Resurrection is what put an explanation point on the "good" of Good Friday. Come proclaim with us that "Jesus is risen indeed!" on **Easter Sunday**. The service is at 9:30 with Alleluia songs, the renewal of our baptism in Christ's death/resurrection, and Holy Communion. We will celebrate the community formed out of the Cross and the Empty Tomb; that community is the Church! All are welcome to feast with the community after the service as we have our **Easter Brunch**; bring something to share with the others who have been saved by Jesus Christ.

The Easter Season is not just on Sunday, of course, but extends throughout the spring until the Feast of Pentecost on June 9th. During this time, we celebrate how the Church "bursts forth" with new life. To help us do this, we will share communion for the first time with some of the young members of our community on May 19th; if someone is in at least 2nd grade and would like to celebrate **First Communion**, please let me know. We are also planning to baptize Oscar Olson (son of Jenna and Scott) sometime during this season (still to be scheduled).

Spring clean-up day for the Church's building and grounds is slated for May 18th (time to be determined); this is refreshing and renewal in a very practical way! Questions can be directed to Lee Debele (651.674.8204) or Duane Bengtson (651.706.4235).

For the ladies of the parish, the **Women's Bible Study** will start meeting again on alternating Wednesdays at 7pm (April 24th, May 8th, and May 22nd); all women are welcome to attend. Pr. Ellen Erdman facilitates this group, if you have questions (612.325.1250 or erdman@usfamily.net).

The **Men's Spirituality Group** will meet (as they do on the second Saturdays of each month) at 8:30 on May 11th; for those who are interested and who have a fishing license, a group will be going out to a local lake to cast a line after the morning meeting. Again, all men are welcome. For questions, contact Hans Erdman, facilitator (612.695.5059 or traveler@twowheeledexplorer.org).

Heritage Day is planned for Pentecost Sunday, June 9th, during the 9:30 service. We will be honoring the Koecher and Tacheney families this year. More details will be forthcoming.

Though not a part of the Easter Season, please mark on your calendars **Vacation Bible School** (to be held Mon-Thurs, July 29th- Aug 1st). A survey is available to express interest and gather information at https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSe-D5rjDD9csijeBrrQg8r_YqG6Ad6JVAXcApSD_hcgVvPsKg/viewform?usp=sf_link. If you haven't yet filled it out, please do so. Additional questions or comments can be directed to either me or Deb Stenberg (651.497.4171 or deborah.stenberg@isd15.org).

Finally, another calendar item: the annual outdoor service and **parish picnic** is scheduled for Aug 4th at 10:30. If you'd like to help out or have questions, Vicki Bengtson is coordinating it this year, and her phone number is 651.462.1178. Make plans to attend this fun community event!

As always, you are more than welcome to contact me with questions, pastoral needs, or comments. You may call/text me at 651.261.7333 or email me at robkrajewski72@gmail.com. Blessings of renewal and hope during this Easter season to you. Pr. Rob.