



# Mount Calvary Connected

April 21, 2022

*Mount Calvary Connected is a weekly newsletter sent out at the end of each week. Our goal is to keep you connected to your church and your faith with messages from our pastors, information about upcoming activities at Mt. Calvary and more!*

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## LIVE STREAMING WORSHIP SERVICE INFORMATION

Mt. Calvary hosts live broadcasts of the liturgy at 8:45 AM Sunday mornings. The broadcast can be heard by tuning your radio to 88.3 FM if you are near the church. We also stream these services live over the internet. Simply visit [www.mt-calvarylutheran.org](http://www.mt-calvarylutheran.org) and click "Live Radio Broadcast" from the home page on Sunday mornings.

Weekly worship bulletins can be found at: [www.mt-calvarylutheran.org/bulletins/](http://www.mt-calvarylutheran.org/bulletins/)

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### A Message from Bishop Paula Schmitt

Alleluia! Christ is risen! He is risen indeed!

We say those words with gusto on Easter Sunday. For weeks in Lent we have been refraining from using the word alleluia and have been focused on repentance and mending our sinful ways. When we get to Easter Sunday, we are more than ready to shout, Alleluia! and celebrate with joy the risen life of Jesus. When we finally get to Easter, I always enjoy the hymn Christ Has Arisen, Alleluia (ELW 364). I don't know if it's the catchy tune or the words that have meant so much to me. It is one of those hymns that could have you tapping your foot—yes, even in church! Perhaps that is part of the reason I love the hymn. Too often, we find ourselves being stoic or reserved in church. We seem to forget the true joy of the story we have been invited into. The refrain of the hymn says: "Let us sing praise to him with endless joy. Death's fearful sting he has come to destroy. Our sin forgiving, alleluia! Jesus is living, alleluia!"

Friends, Jesus IS living—in you and in me. That is a reason to celebrate. I pray you will find endless joy in the great love poured out for you on the cross; and that your celebration of that love is contagious. May your celebration of Easter joy last throughout the year. Alleluia!

+Bishop Paula

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### Adult Sunday School

Adult Sunday School is ongoing! We were happy to see some new faces and hope that even more join us! We meet in the conference room/library each Sunday after worship.

### **Upcoming Meetings**

Social Ministry Committee: April 21st at 6:30 p.m.

Youth Committee: April 21st at 6:30 p.m.

WELCA: May 16th at 6:00 p.m.

Council: May 17th at 6:30 p.m.

The Property Committee will meet on the second Tuesday of every month at 6:00 p.m. in the old lounge. \*No meeting in May.

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### **2022 Offering Envelopes**

Offering envelopes for 2022 are available in the narthex. Thank you in advance for your contribution!

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### **Help Wanted**

The Property Committee is looking to recruit a number of small job volunteers. Tasks might include replacing light bulbs, changing hardware on a commode, getting a lawnmower or snowblower ready for use, etc. The Committee believes we have a lot of talent in the congregation and wants to make greater use of it. Every small job handled by a member equals one less call that needs to be made to a vendor who may have a minimum visit charge or an hourly rate of \$50 or more.

Volunteers who can be available on short notice are needed to help with set-up, serving, and tear-down after funeral luncheons.

Interested parties should contact Mark Rychak or one of the pastors. A message could also be left with the church office at 814-266-4859. Thank you!

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### **Annual Flea Market**

May 7, 2022

Please no clothing or shoes at this time. Items must be dropped off at the church during office hours, Monday through Thursday between 9:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m.

We would like to have volunteers to set up the Flea Market on Friday, May 6 at 6:00 p.m. Thank you!

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### **Bake Sale**

Attention bakers! Start pulling your favorite cookie and baked good recipes because WELCA is hosting a bake sale on May 7, 2022. Sure hits are anything chocolate, peanut butter, snack or trail mix baggies. Donations can be dropped off at the church on Friday, May 6th. If you need ideas, call Joan Hunter at 814-955-2737.

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### **Yarn Collection**

While everyone is cleaning out and getting ready for the flea market, if you find leftover yarn of any size, the Prayer Shawl group would appreciate it if you would bring it in and donate it to our cause. There will be a bin in the narthex where you can place it. Our supplies are getting low and we could use your help. Thank you so much!

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## Annual Weed and Feed

We will be having our annual weed and feed on Tuesday, May 10th at 5:30 p.m. Please bring your favorite gardening tool and mark your name on it so that we can get it back to its proper owners. There will be vittles served afterwards. This will be in place of our normal property meeting, so there will not be a property meeting in May.

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## Scheduled Worship Help

### Saturday, April 23:

**Greeters/Ushers:** Tom & Kathy Rohrbaugh

**Communion Assistants:** Pat Bittner & Debbie Ferrin

### Sunday, April 24:

**Greeters/Ushers:** Volunteers needed!

**Communion Assistants:** Ray Leverknight

### Saturday, April 30:

**Greeters/Ushers:** Volunteers needed!

**Communion Assistants:** Deb Rychak & Chris Koshute

### Sunday, May 1:

**Greeters/Ushers:** Volunteers needed!

**Communion Assistants:** Volunteers needed!

There are sign up sheets in the Narthex for Greeters/Ushers and Communion Assistants. Please sign up for the dates that would suit you best. We appreciate you volunteering. If you have questions about these roles, please contact Christine Koshute at 814-421-4921 or Chris Oleksa at 814-244-9851.

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## Youth News

**Holy Communion:** Is your child ready to learn about Holy Communion and receive the sacrament for the first time? Information was sent out this week about a series of First Communion “retreats” with the hope of helping children to join us at the table during Holy Week and the Easter season. If you’re interested in having your child participate but haven’t already been in touch with Pastor Jonathan, let him know!

**Youth Committee:** Volunteers are needed to help plan and coordinate events for children of all ages, especially this summer as Pastor Jonathan will be unavailable for a period due to major surgery. If you’re willing to help out (even just for one event) please let Pastor Jonathan, Pastor Scott, or any member of church council know!

**Summer Camp at Sequanota:** We are blessed to have a GREAT Lutheran church camp practically in our backyard just twenty-five minutes away at Camp Sequanota near Jennerstown. Registration is now open, with programs for all school-aged kids. Talk with Pastor Jonathan to brochure, or visit [www.sequanota.com](http://www.sequanota.com) for more information.

**Childcare is now available during Sunday morning worship:** Hannah Salamon is a Richland Learning Center staff member who will be joining us each Sunday along with Pastor Jonathan and other volunteers to provide childcare for infants through age 5. For the time being, drop-off for this service will take place in Sander Hall. Speak with Pastor Jonathan for more information.

**Pastor Jonathan LOVES to get out and see our Mount Calvary youth in action doing the things they enjoy!** Be sure to share your schedules for sports, concerts, recitals, etc. You never know where he might show up!

Pastor Jonathan's office hours at Mount Calvary are Mondays & Wednesdays, 10am-3pm. He is available outside of those hours via email ([RevJonoAdams@gmail.com](mailto:RevJonoAdams@gmail.com)), cellphone (412-817-6704), or Facebook.

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### **Family Cookout**

Save the date! Saturday, May 14th, the youth and family ministry team will be sponsoring a cookout picnic for all families with school-aged children after the 5:30 p.m. worship service. There will be food, friends, and games. We hear that Pastor Jonathan may even make some of his famous smoked pulled pork.

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### **Afghan Blanket Drawing**

Anita Brodt donated a beautiful afghan for our Good Gifts campaign. Chances are \$1.00. Since Anita is an educator, it would be wonderful if we could raise at least \$40 to send a girl to school in honor of Anita. The drawing will be held at the end of April.

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### **The Greater Johnstown Community Chorus presents: *The Rhythm of Life***

Directed by Michael Meketa, accompanied by Jeff Hornick

Saturday, May 7th at 1:00 p.m.

Christ Lutheran Church  
337 Elknud Lane  
Johnstown, PA 15905

Donation \$10 at the door

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### **Easter Flower Dedications**

In Memory of Zakary Lonsinger and Linda McQuaide, from Mark, Shari, Kelsie and Jared McQuaide

In Memory of Loved Ones From Susan & Rachael Brandau

In Memory of Luther and Kathleen Horner and Jenneal F. Crowley

In Memory of Jim and Dorothy Pozun by Bob & Cindy Solarczyk

In Memory of Bob & Clara Solarczyk by Bob & Cindy Solarczyk

In Memory of Loved Ones by Hadley, Harper, Hudson & Penelope Pozun

In Memory of Jim & Dorothy Pozun by children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren

In Memory of Paul Swartz by Gayle Swartz & family

In Memory of Our Parents by Brent & Ida Mary Williams

In Memory of Eva Eschrich by Bill Eschrich

In Memory of all Departed Loved Ones

In Memory of Loved Ones by Karen Giunta & Kathy Ling

In Memory of Jake Moore by Nancy Moore

In Memory of Loved Ones from Noelle Berkey

In Memory of Loved Ones by Dan & Sue Osborn

In Memory of Lloyd & Wilma Gindlesperger

In Memory of Robert Culp by Michael & Ashley Kozak and Family

In Memory of Our Parents by Jerry & Ruth Pozun

In Memory of Pete, Janette, Komet, Kiersten, Grandma, Grandpa & Sashi by Gary, Dawn & Hailea Morningstar

In Memory of Catherine Oleksa and Albert Sojak

In Memory of Zakary Lonsinger & Linda McQuaide

In Memory of Glenn & LaVerne Trent by Joyce & Brittany Spangler

In Memory of Parents, William and Helen Lauf

In Memory of Stan & Kayleigh Tallyen

In Memory of Patricia Custer by Brian & Linda Custer Family

In Honor of Children & Grandchildren by Bob & Cindy Solarczyk

In Honor of Our Grandchildren by Jerry & Ruth Pozun

In Honor of Family by Bill & Jan Layton

In Honor of Grandparents Jim & Ruth Pozun by Hadley, Harper, Hudson & Penelope Pozun

In Honor of Lt. Hunter Bergman

In Honor of Jean Pellon by Nancy Moore

**Give now for Eastern Europe Crisis Response**

*Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God” (Matthew 5:9).*

Friends, I write to you again about our neighbors in Eastern Europe. First, I thank you for your outpouring of prayers and generosity — you are making a difference in the lives of people impacted by the war in Ukraine.

Your gifts to Lutheran Disaster Response during this crisis are already at work. Because of your generosity, \$1 million will support the Lutheran World Federation and these member churches:

German Evangelical Lutheran Church of Ukraine  
Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in Poland  
Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in Slovakia  
Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in Romania  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in Romania

They are distributing hygiene supplies, food, medicine, bedding and psychosocial and pastoral care to refugees and internally displaced people, most of whom are women and children.

**Your support has made this possible, but more work remains. Your gifts to “Eastern Europe Crisis Response” will be used to in full (100%) to address the humanitarian crisis in Ukraine and neighboring countries.**

Additional responses through partners in these countries and others in the region are expected in the coming weeks and months, and Lutheran Disaster Response is committed to accompanying those partners as the situation evolves. We pray for the Roma communities and foreign nationals who are facing racial and ethnic discrimination at the borders as they flee Ukraine. Our companions are ensuring that people in these marginalized groups will be treated with respect and dignity as they seek safety.

We know there are many organizations that you can choose to support, but it is only by giving to Lutheran Disaster Response that guarantees your gift will fund ELCA-supported work through faith partners in the region.

I invite you to watch this [video](#) from Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton about the situation in Eastern Europe and the ELCA’s response. To share this information with your congregations, download this [bulletin insert](#).

Together we pray for our siblings in Ukraine and Eastern Europe. May God be with them in their time of need.

In Christ’s service,



The Rev. Daniel Rift  
Director, ELCA World Hunger and Lutheran Disaster Response Fund  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

**Birthdays and Anniversaries for the  
Week: April 21 – April 30, 2022**

**April 21** - Cathy Prisk

**April 23** - Sally Hessler

**April 26** - Cassidy Eash

**April 27** - Stacy Pollino

**April 28** - David Carney, Martina Glessner, Penelope Pozun, & Logan Rickley

**April 29** - Timothy Bassett, II

**April 25** - Charles & Caroline Palm (76 years)

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**Remember those that prayer has been requested for:**

Jennifer & Ryan, Linda & Dick, Dolly & Chiz Palm Family, Claudia Plows, Maddie Pierce, Gladys Haupt, Bill & Linda, Jose & Family, Dave, Tom, Lt. Hunter Bergman, and Lt. Dylan Merchant, Harold, Rick, Midge, Shirley, Debbie, David, Lauren, Billy, Barb, Sara Solarczyk, Jackie Janak, Jack, Corinne, Joan, Dan, Natalie Zerby, Pastor Scott Custead, Luella Koontz, Al Lindner and Family, Bob, Dawn, Stacy & Josh, Bob Trotter, Bill Layton, Deb Zilch, Bennett, Cassy Sojak, Paul Miller, Keith Mayket, Ruth, Pete, the Teplitza Family, Ethel Warshel, Melanie, Ken, John Nerone, Dane Wisner, Jeff, Dorothy, Irene, Karen, Erin, Susan Dyers, Bob McMullen, Wyatt George, Larry Hockensmith, Jean Pellon, Mike, Corey, John Rychak, Pastor Jonathan & Family, Roxanee Horner, Lynn Palm and son, Alex, and Alex's wife, Becky Lilja, Kathy P., Al Johnson, Chris, Donna & Danny, Cheryl, Jennifer & Family, Jaime, Dorothy, Matt & Ashley, Landon, Max Lawn, Linda Haberkorn, Lorraine, Joe, Donna, Danny & Family, Becky Jo, Bill, Linda & Family, Mary, Cheryl, Mary Jane, Janice, Dennis, Rick, Don, the Chavis Family, Mabel Ann, Betty, Cathy, Cindy, Jill, Theresa & Family, Dean, Madi & Family, Patty & Family, Williams Family, and Sydney & Family.

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**Financial Update**

Due to teamwork and consistent effort, the finances of Mount Calvary remain in good shape. Since last March, our overall financial position has improved by over 12%. Through the end of this March, actual gifts and receipts are ahead of budget in three categories and behind budget in three other categories. Thankfully, the three categories which are lagging behind account for less than 8% of our total revenues and receipts. If there's a place to be behind, it's in these categories.

As for expenses, we are running 5% ahead of budgeted expectation, with almost all the difference related to some one-time, computer expenses paid in March.

The big picture thing to keep in mind is that our positive financial position finds us making do with less than we have had to use in the past. Moves out of the area have removed significant resources from our budget in recent years; as in over \$40,000 a year. As council and stewardship and administration continue to work hard to make the most of our resources, we will eventually have to start to make up some of the resources we've lost due to moves through bringing in new disciples and increasing our own giving when possible.

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## Condensed Worship for Sunday, April 17, 2022

### Prayer of the Day

P: God of mercy, we no longer look for Jesus among the dead, for he is alive and has become the Lord of life. Increase in our minds and hearts the risen life we share with Christ and help us to grow as your people toward the fullness of eternal life with you, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

### First Reading: Acts 10:34-43

Peter began to speak to [the people]: "I truly understand that God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ—he is Lord of all. That message spread throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John announced: how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power; how he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. We are witnesses to all that he did both in Judea and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree; but God raised him on the third day and allowed him to appear, not to all the people but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses, and who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one ordained by God as judge of the living and the dead. All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name."

P: The word of the Lord,

**A: Thanks be to God!**

### Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24

P: Give thanks to the Lord, for the Lord is good; God's mercy endures forever.

**A: Let Israel now declare, "God's mercy endures forever."**

P: The Lord is my strength and my song, and has become my salvation.

**A: Shouts of rejoicing and salvation echo in the tents of the righteous: "The right hand of the Lord acts valiantly!"**

P: The right hand of the Lord is exalted! The right hand of the Lord acts valiantly!"

**A: I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord.**

P: The Lord indeed punished me sorely, but did not hand me over to death.

**A: Open for me the gates of righteousness; I will enter them and give thanks to the Lord.**

P: "This is the gate of the Lord; here the righteous may enter."

**A: I give thanks to you, for you have answered me and you have become my salvation.**

P: The stone that the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone.

**A: By the Lord has this been done; it is marvelous in our eyes.**

P: This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.

**Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 15:19-26**

If for this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied. But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have died. For since death came through a human being, the resurrection of the dead has also come through a human being; for as all die in Adam, so all will be made alive in Christ. But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ. Then comes the end, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father, after he has destroyed every ruler and every authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death.

P: The word of the Lord,

**A: Thanks be to God!**

**Gospel: Luke 24:1-12**

On the first day of the week, at early dawn, [the women] came to the tomb, taking the spices that they had prepared. They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they went in, they did not find the body. While they were perplexed about this, suddenly two men in dazzling clothes stood beside them. The women were terrified and bowed 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, but has risen. Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, that the Son of Man must be handed over to sinners, and be crucified, and on the third day rise again." Then they remembered his words, and returning from the tomb, they told all this to the eleven and to all the rest. Now it was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them who told this to the apostles. But these words seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe them. But Peter got up and ran to the tomb; stooping and looking in, he saw the linen cloths by themselves; then he went home, amazed at what had happened.

P: The gospel of the Lord.

**A: Praise to you, O Christ!**

**Sermon by Pastor Scott Klimke**

At Christmas, we hear an angel of the Lord say, "For you, for you, for you is born this day in the city of David a Savior who is Christ, the Lord." Even though it's written by the same evangelist, we get nothing similar in Luke's Easter account. There's no "for you, for you, for you" in what the women are told at the empty tomb. Might this be rectified? Can we all know and celebrate today and all days that Christ has died and risen "for you, for you, for you?"

Already on the level of language this is more difficult than we might think. The "for you, for you, for you" we hear on Christmas Eve is plural not singular. If you go to the words of Scripture being repeated, the same is true of the "for you, for you, for you" during holy communion. I'm afraid our individualism, our what's in it for me, is often out of step with God's interest interest in the group. God's gifts are for the Church of which I am a part, not for me apart from and independent of the Church. If we've come to think of religion as God and me, then the Bible calls us to cease and desist; getting back to how Scripture tells us that if we say we love God and ignore our brothers and sisters at church and around the world, we're liars. But in spite of the potential for the profound misunderstanding I've accentuated, let's get back to the project I identified from the start today. Can we all know and celebrate that Christ has died and risen "for you, for you, for you?"

Like it or not, our reading from 1st Corinthians warns us not to be too hasty about this. St. Paul's language tells us he was writing to people who weren't all that excited about the resurrection. Today, we hear St. Paul as he writes, "If for this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied." Just a couple verses earlier, St. Paul exclaims, "How can some of you say there is no resurrection of the dead? If there is no resurrection from the dead, then Christ has not been raised; and if Christ has not been raised, then our proclamation has been in vain and your faith has been in vain." Quite clearly, some or all of the Corinthians thought there was other stuff that might be "for you, for you, for you," but not Good Friday and Easter.

At least some at Corinth were also embarrassed by Christ's crucifixion. Early on in his first letter to the Corinthians, St. Paul comes out strong, saying, "The cross is foolishness to those who are perishing and the power of God for those who are being saved." Later, he writes that his awareness of the Corinthians' trouble with the cross led him to know nothing but Christ crucified when he was there physically rather than writing letters from afar. At Corinth, there was no "for you, for you, for you" to Christ's death and resurrection for at least some.

The fundamental problem was that some or all of the Corinthians didn't think the world was broken or that they personally were broken. Starting with the world, if life is generally good and the world isn't all that broken in your estimation, you don't need Christ crucified and risen. You just need a few tweaks, not a Savior who dies to conquer sin, death, and the devil for you. It's a position with which we flirt or maybe even adopt without realizing it. These days it's not uncommon to hear people say that if the government just got out of the way, everything would be okay. What's being called for here? A tweak or a Savior? The answer is a tweak. The world is fixable, not deeply and stubbornly broken. The same goes for those who say everything would be okay if the playing field was just leveled with good education for all, safe streets and neighborhoods for all, and equal opportunity for all. What's being called for here? A tweak or a Savior who turns everything upside down through his shameful, self-sacrificial death and his equally surprising resurrection from the dead? Here too, though the fix called for is different, the world is still fixable rather than deeply and stubbornly broken. If all we need are fixes and tweaks, we don't need Christ crucified and risen.

Turning now to the degree to which we personally are broken, the going can be tough here too. On the day my sister Amy and her husband Bill got married, the minister told them they were going to spend the rest of their lives with damaged goods. Everyone who knew about some of the tensions that preceded their wedding knew it was a good reminder. It may even have been a reminder that in its own small way enabled Bill and Amy to have a marriage that both lasted and often flourished until the time of my sister's death. But for those not in the know the minister's comments went over like a lead balloon.

Particularly when it comes to those we know and love, we have a tendency to think most of us are pretty decent and only a few of us are deeply and stubbornly broken. The Bible teaches that all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. But when passions flare and rubber hits the road, this is often forgotten or ignored. We all have our prejudices, our blind spots, and our hierarchies when it comes to sin. We may have our blemishes. We may have our warts and our wrinkles, but it's only others who break the mirror. If this is your perspective and it was a perspective current in ancient Corinth, if you're fixable, not deeply and stubbornly broken, Christ may have died and risen for somebody, but not "for you, for you, for you."

It's here where we might want to remember that our reading from Acts says that God shows no partiality; being one hundred percent impartial. If God is impartial, no sin or sinner is overlooked or excused. If God is impartial, we can't hide behind the self-congratulatory thought that we're better than others. If God is impartial, no sin or sinner is overlooked or excused. And remember! We all sin and fall short of the glory of God; meaning an impartial God will distribute the wages of sin to all of us as uniformly as uniform can be, with the wages of sin being death. With God one hundred percent impartial and distributing the deathly wages of sins as uniformly as uniform can be, maybe there is a "for you, for you, for you" component to Christ's death and resurrection after all.

Here's where God's lack of partiality becomes Good News. If God wasn't impartial, we couldn't be so sure that it was "for you, for you, for you" that Christ went to the cross and rose from the grave. If God played favorites, maybe God would reserve the forgiveness of sin, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting won by Christ's death and resurrection for those God likes more than us. But God doesn't play favorites. We play favorites. We've got a dollar for some, but not all. Whereas, God, has grace for all who own up to their brokenness, are baptized, and then blessed with the Holy Spirit's faith-making presence. The second chapter of Acts tells us God had this kind of grace even for those who brutalized and killed his Son Jesus. God is impartial. It's Bad News for all who have sinned, whether a lot or a little. It's also Good News for all who have sinned, whether a lot or a little, because God forgives the sins of all who own up to them, are baptized, and then are remade through the Holy Spirit's faith-making presence in their lives. And what's the tell-tale sign that this has happened; that Christ has died and risen "for you, for you, for you?"

The ability to own up more readily to how broken we and our world are and then to get down to making things as better as mere mortals like us can make them. This kind of honest, get-to-itiveness is what the Bible has in mind when it speaks of good works. These works are good because they do what's necessary rather than returning to the same old complaints and grievances or recycling the same old excuses and rationalizations. Again, we're talking about honest, get-to-itiveness. This is our version of the divine impartiality which every sinner in need of grace celebrates today. We don't pass the buck. We don't let ourselves off the hook. We don't favor old over new or new over old. We just get down to business. And my, oh my, does life get a whole better and easier when we put away the same old grievances and complaints and refrain from the same old excuses and rationalizations so that we can truly call a spade, a spade and respond accordingly. Then, is God's will done on earth, as it is in heaven. Amen!

### **Prayers of Intercession**

P: On this day of resurrection joy, let us offer our prayers for ourselves, our neighbors, and our world.

P: Renewing God, the good news of your resurrection changed the world. Give church leaders and all the baptized the same excitement as the women at the tomb, and inspire us to share your abundant life. Merciful God,

**A: receive our prayer.**

P: Sustaining God, your creation abounds with signs of new life in budding trees and newborn creatures. Provide fertile soil, ample sunlight, and nourishing rain for the growth of plants, and provide farmers with a plentiful harvest. Merciful God,

**A: receive our prayer.**

P: Sheltering God, strengthen and sustain all who support vulnerable people across the world (especially). Empower government agencies and international organizations that provide for refugees and migrants forced to leave their homelands. Merciful God,

**A: receive our prayer.**

P: Encouraging God, you do a new thing among us. We pray for those gripped by fear and anxiety or who suffer in any way (especially). Send us as your healing presence to places of hunger, pain, illness, or overwhelming sorrow. Merciful God,

**A: receive our prayer.**

P: Surprising God, you offer endless ways for us to delight in your grace. Give this community of faith a sense of joy and wonder in exploring new avenues of faith formation, worship, and discipleship. Merciful God,

**A: receive our prayer.**

P: Resurrecting God, you make us alive in Christ. Thank you for blessing us with faithful witnesses who now rest in you (especially). Merciful God,

**A: receive our prayer.**

P: We offer to you these petitions and those we carry in our hearts, trusting in your abundant and ever-present mercy.

**A: Amen.**

### **Blessing**

P: May the One who brought forth Jesus from the dead raise you to new life, fill you with hope, and turn your mourning into dancing. Almighty God, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever. **Amen.**