

# April 2025 Newsletter



## Easter Hope Welcomes Us In

Soon, the lilies will bloom, the hallelujahs will ring out again, and we'll gather to tell the story that centers our faith—of life springing from death, of love stronger than the grave. We are leaning into that hope even now, as the signs of spring slowly unfurl around us.

This season always feels like a deep breath after a long winter. The days grow longer, the ground softens, and green shoots push their way through the soil. Spring has a way of preaching its own kind of sermon: one of resilience, renewal, and hope.

In the same way, the Easter message isn't just about something that happened long ago in a garden tomb. It is about what God is still doing—raising us up, calling us forward, stirring up new life in places we thought were long dead. Easter reminds us that God is not done with us—not with our lives, not with our church, not with our world.

That gives me hope as we look to the future of your ministry here at UIC. We have walked through some difficult seasons. We have had to let go of some things. We have seen how the world around us is changing. But resurrection teaches us that loss is never the last word. God specializes in transformation. And in this new season, we are invited to listen for how the Spirit might be nudging you forward—into new partnerships, deeper relationships, and fresh expressions of God's love.

Where do you see new life springing up in our congregation? What possibilities do you sense on the horizon? How might God be calling us to grow?

Let's step into this Easter season with open hearts and willing hands, ready to be surprised by grace all over again. Because if resurrection is real—and it is—then there's no telling what God might do next.

+Pastor Jason

## United in Christ Lutheran Church

Rev. Jason Poole-Xiong, Pastor

(608) 846-5902

[www.unitedinchristlutheranchurch.org](http://www.unitedinchristlutheranchurch.org)

4650 County Rd DM, Morrisonville, WI 53571

[worship@unitedinchristlutheranchurch.org](mailto:worship@unitedinchristlutheranchurch.org)

A congregation of the



Evangelical  
Lutheran Church  
in America

**Regular Office Hours:** Tuesday-Thursday 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

**Weekly Worship:** Sundays @ 8:30 a.m.

# All We Need

## Final Weeks of Lent Worship Schedule: "All We Need"

- + Midweek Worship\*, Wednesdays April 2 & 9 @ 5:30 p.m.  
*\*Dinner Church format with meal & worship together.*
- + Regular Sunday Worship @ 8:30 a.m.

## Holy Week Worship



### Sunday, April 13

*Passion/Palm Sunday*

Worship @ 8:30 a.m.

Following worship we will gather for a delicious **breakfast\*** provided by Rodeside Grill. This will be a celebration & blessing of the items we have collected for Lutheran World Relief and a time to just enjoy a meal together. (Meal funding provided by a Thrivent Grant).

\*Menu: Scrambled Eggs, Sausage, Roasted Potatoes, Cinnamon Rolls, & Fresh Fruit



### Thursday, April 17

*Maundy Thursday Community Worship*

Joint Holy Communion worship with the five ELCA congregations in the DeForest Area @ 6:00 p.m. at the DeForest Cornerstone Community Center (505 N. Main St., DeForest) with Rev. Jen Christenson, Associate to the Bishop – South-Central Synod of WI preaching.



### Friday, April 18

*Good Friday*

Worship @ 1:00 p.m. - Tenebrae Service of Solemn Intercessions

Worship @ 7:35 p.m. - Outdoor Service of Increasing Darkness



### Sunday, April 20

*Easter Sunday*

Festival Worship @ 8:30 a.m. with "Now the Feast & Celebration" Liturgy

Special "Bagels & Coffee" Fellowship Following Worship

## Continue Collecting for Lutheran World Relief Care Kits

As part of our Lenten theme we also turn our focus outward to the world around us by collecting items for and assembling personal care kits. Cleanliness may not actually be next to godliness, but it certainly helps a person feel more human. When families find their homes destroyed, or must flee for their safety, soap and a towel rarely make the cut for what they can carry. Arriving in a refugee camp or other place of safety, they are scared, vulnerable and dirty from the travel. The simple items included in a Personal Care Kit provide much-needed self care, critical germ fighting supplies and the chance for our neighbors in need to regain dignity amidst fear and uncertainty.

Throughout Lent we will be collecting items that go into making these kits. You may bring items to church anytime through Palm Sunday, April 13 where we will share a breakfast together after worship provided by a grant from Thrivent. We will also accept monetary donations to purchase items.

Each Personal Care Kit Includes:

- One darker colored lightweight cotton or cotton blend bath towel. (20" x 40" to 27" x 52").
- Two or three bath-size bars of soap equaling 8-9 oz. total, in any brand, and in original packaging.
- One adult size toothbrush.
- One sturdy comb.
- One metal nail clipper (w/ or w/out nail file).



Here are some tips from Lutheran World Relief:

- Be sure to shop for light- or medium-weight towels, which are easier for Kit recipients to hand wash and air dry, take up less storage space and are considerably less expensive than the fluffier towels we may prefer to use.
- Bath towels vary in size. The 27" X 52" size listed above is the maximum size. 20" x 40" is a good minimum size.
- Please give new items only.
- Please do not donate items with any religious symbols.
- Please do not donate any items decorated with a U.S. flag, patriotic or military symbols, or references to the armed forces including camouflage.
- All items should be new and in good condition.



**LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF**

## From the Congregation President

The Church Council met on March 18th. By now you have learned that Pastor Jason notified the Council that he had decided that he would be leaving our congregation as he will be moving out of the area. He will continue serving us for a while after his move, commuting a distance too far to continue for very long, but giving us more time to prepare for what comes next. While the situation could change, we may be working to arrange for pulpit supply pastors for at least part of the summer after Pastor Jason concludes his ministry with us.

Far sooner than we would have liked, the congregation will need to begin the process of considering what comes next, what we will be searching for in our next pastor, and planning for the years ahead. We anticipate that this won't be as big a task as it was last time and hope that the interim period will be a shorter one. I don't actually know his shoe size, but our next pastor will have "big shoes to fill". I am sure you join me in expressing appreciation for his service to us the past two years and in wishing Pastor Jason well in his move and whatever comes next for him (at this time, he does not have call, but will be looking for a congregation to serve closer to his new home).

Paul obtained 5 estimates for the cost of cleaning the carpets and also what it would cost if we also had the pew cushions cleaned. The range of quotes was pretty extreme with the highest being about double the lowest. The Council decided not to spend the money for cleaning the cushions at this time, but to have the carpet cleaned by Zerorez. The cost for that will be about \$250 to do the sanctuary, the rug in the front entry, and the office spaces. The plan is to have this done during Holy Week in time for the carpet to dry before Good Friday's service.

- Bob Harm

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## Financial Update - As of Sunday, March 23, 2025

Offerings YTD	=	\$22,983.00
[Expected/Budgeted Offerings YTD	=	\$25,000.00]
Expenses YTD	=	\$24,888.40

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## Easter Flowers

We are still accepting orders for Easter flowers to help adorn the sanctuary on Easter morning. Orders may be placed in honor or memory of someone. There is a sign-up sheet in the Fellowship Hall or you can email the church with order information. The cost is \$15.00 per plant and we are planning on ordering a mix of tulips, hyacinths, and daffodils this year. Payment can be made by cash or check in the offering plate on Sundays or online via credit card.

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## April Calendar

- April 2 Lent Midweek Dinner Church Worship (5:30 p.m.)
- April 6 Sunday Worship (8:30 a.m.) – 5th Sunday in Lent: “Beauty”
- April 8 Worship Committee Meeting (1:00 p.m.)
- April 9 Final Lent Midweek Dinner Church Worship (5:30 p.m.)
- April 13 Passion/Palm Sunday Worship (8:30 a.m.)  
Following Worship: Breakfast & Blessing of LWR Personal Care Kit Donations
- April 16 Lunch Bunch (11:30 a.m.) @ B.B. Jacks – DeForest
- April 17 Maundy Thursday Community Worship (6:00 p.m.) @ DeForest Community Center
- April 18 Good Friday “Tenebrae” Service (1:00 p.m.)  
Good Friday Outdoor Service of Increasing Darkness (7:30 p.m.)
- April 20 Easter Sunday Worship (8:30 a.m.)
- April 22 Church Council Meeting (5:00 p.m.)
- April 27 Sunday Worship (8:30 a.m.) – 2nd Sunday of Easter
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### Working For Christ in April

**Altar Guild:** Rona Anderson

**Head Usher:** Dale Molnar

#### **04/06/2025**

Ushers: Chet Gabris & Darryl Horton

Reader: Chandra Diring

Communion: Paul Anderson

#### **04/13/2025**

Ushers: Dennis Stephenson & Bob Harm

Reader: Dennis Stephenson

Communion: Chet Gabris

#### **04/20/2025**

Ushers: Rona & Paul Anderson

Reader: Julie Molnar

Communion: Bob Harm

#### **04/27/2025**

Ushers: Karen & Ron Millard

Reader: Bob Harm

Communion: Karen Millard

### April Birthdays

- Thomas Smith April 3
- Karen Millard April 12
- Joe Gilles April 12
- Tim Schepp April 18

## January Church Council Meeting Highlights (January 7, 2025)

- Financial Treasurer Report: Motion to approve Financial report by Pastor, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Dennis
  - Secretaries Report: Motion to approve by Pastor, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Dennis with corrections.
  - Pastor's Report: Motion by Dennis, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Karen to accept Shirley Smith Back into Membership.
  - Old Business
    - The cleaning of the church was discussed and at this time the volunteers will continue to do what is needed.
  - New Business:
    - Discussion regarding Annual Meeting:
      - Motion to accept the 2024 Statistic Report & set quorum to 13. Motion by Karen 2<sup>nd</sup> by Dennis
      - Motion to accept the proposed Agenda for the Annual Meeting by Marie, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Karen
      - Motion was made by Dennis, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Bob to approve the 2025 Continuing Resolution to Postpone the Audit.
      - Motion to approve by Dennis, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Marie the Resolution to Dissolve Women of the ELCA Chapter of United in Christ.
    - 2025 Budget Discussion
      - Motion by Karen, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Marie to approve the Expense portion of the Budget. Motion by Marie, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Darryl to approve the Income portion of the Budget
      - Marie made a motion to have Bob Harm present the budget to the congregation on January 26, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Pastor.
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## February Church Council Meeting Highlights (February 18, 2025)

- Financial Treasurer Report: Motion to approve Financial report by Pastor, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Chet. MC
- Secretaries Report: Motion to approve by Karen, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Chet with corrections.
- Pastor's Report:
  - Discussion to Adjust the 2025 Pastor's Housing Allowance Designation to \$49,800 for 2025 from \$23,902 in 2024. Motion by Chet 2<sup>nd</sup> by Karen MC
  - Discussion to ask members of the Council to assist with the Offering Deposit on a weekly basis. Council affirmed following constitution established guidelines as listed under the Financial Secretary section.
  - We welcome Noreen Schmidt as a new member
  - Motion made by Bob, seconded by Marie to accept Pastor's report MC.
- Old Business
  - None

## February Church Council Meeting Highlights Continued

- New Business
    - Buildings & Grounds:
      - The new insurance policy book has arrived.
      - Snow removal seems to be going okay.
      - A Smoke & Water detector will be arriving from Lightwell to be installed.
      - Looking into carpet cleaning options, pricing to be reviewed in March
    - Approved selection of designees for the year:
      - Treasurer – Paul Anderson,
      - Financial Secretary – Julie Molnar,
      - Buildings & Grounds – Paul Anderson
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## Prayer Concerns

*Please continue actively praying for those listed below on our prayer list:*

**Rev. Elizabeth Eaton**, Presiding Bishop of the ELCA

**Rev. Joy Mortensen-Wiebe**, Bishop of the South-Central Synod of Wisconsin – ELCA

The **Evangelical Lutheran Church of America**

For the **people of United in Christ Lutheran Church**

**John Kincaid** – brother-in-law of Chet Gabris – at St. Mary's Care Center

**Betty Bader** – at The Legacy, DeForest

**Bill Mitchell** – friend of the Anderson's – liver cancer

**Clifford Netzer** – stem cell procedure

**Heather Fjelstad-Bunce** – niece of Dennis Stephenson – has Leukemia

**Dorothy Hasey** – at Columbus Health & Rehab

**Joanne Quam** – continued rehabilitation at home

**Geno Lainberger** – at Madison Health & Rehab Center

**Wyatt McLaughlin** – Ivy McLaughlin's brother – recovering at home from an accident

**Kathy Olsen** – sister-in-law of Dick & Ann Olsen – lung cancer

**Monique Duerst** – Chandra Diring's mother – recovering from blood clots & infection.

**Chandra Diring** – Navigating new health challenges following a short stay in hospital.



United in Christ  
Lutheran Church

P.O. Box 185

Morrisonville, Wisconsin 53571-0185