



# NEWSLETTER

"Sharing the hope of Jesus in a troubled world"

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May 2025

## Signs of New Life

As we step into the month of May, the signs of spring are unmistakable. The grass grows greener each day, flowers begin to bloom with vibrant colors (thank you to Norm Harris for tending to our tulips), and the longer daylight hours offer a renewed energy that seems to lift our spirits after the long winter. There is something sacred about the way creation wakes up in spring—a gentle reminder that change is not only constant but also a gift.

Spring is often described as a season of hope, of new beginnings. But it is also a season of change, and change, even when it is good, can be unsettling. In nature, we see how change brings beauty: the trees bud, the fields are planted, the birds return with their morning songs. And yet, underneath that beauty, there is a process at work—a letting go of the old to make room for the new. Seeds must break open to grow. The soil must be turned. Life doesn't just appear; it emerges from transition.

As a community of faith, we also find ourselves in a season of change. Some of us may be experiencing personal transitions; a move, a shift in family life. As a congregation, UIC is beginning to discern where God is leading us next, how we are being called to grow, and what needs to be nurtured in our life together. It's natural to feel a mix of excitement and uncertainty in times like these.

But here is the good news: just as God is present in the turning of the seasons, God is with us in every change we face. The resurrection we celebrated on Easter is not a one-day event—it is a promise that new life keeps breaking in, even when we don't expect it, even when we can't yet see it. We are a people of resurrection hope, living in the assurance that nothing is ever truly lost in God's care.

So as we enjoy the beauty of spring and the changes it brings, may we also trust that God is at work in our lives, planting seeds of hope, peace, and renewal. Let us embrace this season with open hearts, knowing that the same Spirit who breathes life into the world is breathing life into us, too.

+Pastor Jason

## United in Christ Lutheran Church

Rev. Jason Poole-Xiong, Pastor

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A congregation of the



Evangelical  
Lutheran Church  
in America

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

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

## From the Congregation President

As I write this, Pastor Jason is probably getting settled in his new house (the main move took place this past weekend). Not only is this a time of change and adjustment for him, but it is for our congregation too! For a while, things will continue pretty much as normal, except that Pastor Jason will be doing some of his work from home and spending a day less per week at the church office until his time with us ends in June. I am in communication with Marie Leafblad, Associate to the Bishop for Leadership Support for the South-Central Synod of Wisconsin and she will begin working with us on deciding next steps along the way to finding a new pastor.

I'm working on plans for pastors to lead worship services over the summer months, checking with pastors that we know. Pastor Derek was with us last Sunday and he is checking his plans for the summer to see what Sundays could work for him. Another hospice chaplain who has led our worship before, Pastor Mikayla Koop, is another that I'm checking with (Pastor Derek sent her a note to let her know I'd be in touch). I've talked with Pastor Rick Bursh from Spring Prairie Lutheran Church and he has indicated that he would be able to lead services some Sundays for us this summer before his service at Spring Prairie. He is also going to be our contact after Pastor Jason leaves for any urgent pastoral needs, such as hospital visitation. Pastor Jason has arranged with Pastor Rick and the other area ELCA pastors to help us with these needs during the time we are between pastors. I also plan to talk to Pastor Bruce to see if he has time available to do services this summer. Hopefully, between the 4, I can get all of the services through August scheduled well in advance.

It could happen that the synod would find an interim pastor to serve us sooner than that, so plans would be subject to change, but I think that it could work well for us to have a rotating team of pastors we know lead us in worship for a time. Over the summer, working alongside the synod, we should be able to figure out how the process of looking for our next pastor will take place. We do anticipate that we won't need to go through nearly as complicated a process as the last time around (many things done two years ago are still current), but it is hard to know how long the process of finding a pastor may take. We may be able to identify what we are looking for, but finding a matching pastor could take time.

- Bob Harm

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## Financial Update - As of Sunday, April 20, 2025

Offerings YTD	=	\$29,877
(Expected/Budgeted Offerings YTD	=	\$32,500)
Expenses YTD	=	\$32,817

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## May Calendar

May 1	LWR Care Kit Assembly (10:00 a.m.)
May 4	Sunday Worship (8:30 a.m.) – 3rd Sunday of Easter
May 11	Mother's Day Sunday Worship (8:30 a.m.) – 4th Sunday of Easter
May 16–17	Pastor Jason @ Synod Assembly in Middleton
May 18	Sunday Worship (8:30 a.m.) – 5th Sunday of Easter
May 20	Church Council Meeting (5:00 p.m.)
May 21	Lunch Bunch (11:30 a.m.) @ B.B. Jacks – DeForest
May 25	Sunday Worship (8:30 a.m.) – 6th Sunday of Easter
May 26	Memorial Day

In the Gospel story in the last Sunday in Lent, we hear about Jesus visiting with his dear friends, Martha, Mary and Lazarus. This happened just after Jesus had raised Lazarus from the dead. And Mary was anointing Jesus' feet with pure nard, this incredibly costly, precious substance. And then she dried his feet with her hair. Nard is a very powerful, pungent substance, and the Gospel says the room was filled with the fragrance.

Now I did a little research on nard, and some people would describe the smell as being pungent or earthy, or musty, or musky or like feet. So it was an interesting choice that people had in those days. And they did two things with nard. One, they would use nard to anoint the bodies of the dead in order to offset the stench of death, which Jesus had only encountered with his friend Lazarus a few days before. And it was also used for kings as a sign of royalty because of the luxury of this whole thing.

Well, Jesus was himself, like us, like the first Adam, an earth creature — pungent and full of life, dense in this sense. And this earth creature was obedient to death, reversing the work of the first Adam, who disobeyed and brought sin into the world. And we've suffered the consequences. The chief consequence is death, separation from God.

And now Jesus, the new Adam, the new earth creature, he's anointed, he says to Mary, for his burial and so that he will be using this incredibly pungent substance, while at the same time being very clear that he is, in fact, part of this incarnation, this earth creature. But instead of it being oil put on him to remove the stench of death, it became the anointing of a royal king. Through the death and resurrection of Jesus, the usual cycle of life and death has been disrupted forever. Jesus' death and resurrection promises new life and brings us new life.

*Happy Easter, dear church.*

*Elizabeth A. Eaton*

Elizabeth A. Eaton, Presiding Bishop  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America



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## Working For Christ in May

**Altar Guild:** Donna Gilles

**Head Usher:** Bob Harm

### 05/04/2025

Ushers: Julie & Dale Molnar

Reader: Rona Anderson

Communion: Paul Anderson

### 05/11/2025

Ushers: Mark Harris & Norm Harris

Reader: Chandra Diring

Communion: Chet Gabris

### 05/18/2025

Ushers: Marie Rasmussen-Hall & Hank Lipke

Reader: Dennis Stephenson

Communion: Marie Rasmussen-Hall

### 05/25/2025

Ushers: Chet Gabris & Darryl Horton

Reader: Julie Molnar

Communion: Bob Harm

## May Birthdays

- Dale Molnar            May 5  
    & Dennis Stephenson
- Geno Lainberger      May 14
- Pastor Jason            May 29

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## March Church Council Meeting Highlights (March 18, 2025)

- Financial Treasurer Report: Motion to approve Financial report by Pastor Jason, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Dennis S.; Approved.
- Secretaries Report: None
- Pastor's Report: The council received a letter of resignation from Pastor Jason effective July 5, 2025. His last Sunday will be June 8 and then he will take his accrued vacation time (4 weeks minus two (2) Sundays) until the date of his resignation. Pastor Jason will be moving to the Appleton area as of the end of April. Discussion about making accommodations for Pastor Jason to continue his service with us through Sunday, June 8 wherein he will commute to the office two days a week + Sunday worship and work from home. Motion by Dennis S., 2<sup>nd</sup> by Marie R. to accept Pastor Jason's resignation and accommodations for service through July 5, 2025; Approved.
- Committee Reports:
  - Bldg & Grounds: Several quotes obtained for carpet cleaning in the sanctuary and offices. Approved moving forward with ZeroRez at a cost of \$247.50 to be done during Holy Week just prior to Easter.

- Worship & Music: Next committee meeting set for April 8, 2025 to discuss summer worship plans and the future of our Open Table Dinner Church ministry.
  - Old Business
    - None
  - New Business:
    - Discussion of Palm Sunday Breakfast sponsored by a Thrivent 'Action Card' Grant for April 13, 2025 which will also be the end and blessing of our collection for Lutheran World Relief during Lent.
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## LWR Care Kits Thank You

Thank you to everyone who donated items for our in-gathering for Lutheran World Relief Personal Care Kits. 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 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.

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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.



United in Christ  
Lutheran Church

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