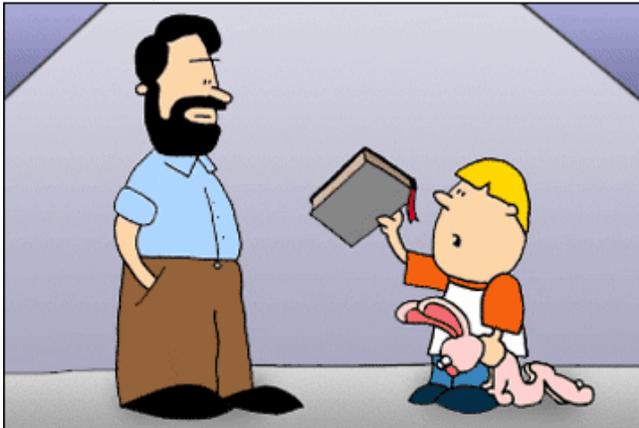


# GOOD SHEPHERD NEWS

April 2012

## Easter Celebration

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DAD, I NEED YOUR HELP TO FIND OUT WHERE  
IT TALKS ABOUT THE EASTER BUNNY IN THE  
BIBLE

Because of our marketing-intensive society, we don't give it a second thought to promote that a 6-foot tall, hairy rabbit comes to our house to see our kids and deliver candy on Easter. But is that what Easter is all about? It's also sad that some think that the Easter Bunny story (tradition) can be found in the Bible.

Easter is not only a wonderful time to share the Gospel message with the unchurched, but also to share it with small children who are learning about God and His Son Jesus.

Before your Easter Egg hunt and family gathering, make sure to set aside time to explain to your child or grandchild what this celebration is about. We are celebrating because:

Once, we were separated from God because of our sin, which began in the Garden of Eden when Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit. So, we are now sinful -- when we lie, when we take things that aren't ours, when we are selfish with our toys, when we hit others, when we say mean things to others. This sin caused us to be separated from God.

But, God who loves us so much and only wants to be close to us -- always -- sent His one and only innocent Son, Jesus, to die on the cross to take on our sins. He took our sins away from us to make us clean; and He overcame darkness and death!

Jesus died on the cross for us. But, guess what? He is God; and He rose again from the dead. Easter was the third day when Jesus was in the tomb and He rose from the dead! That is what we are celebrating. He lives. And, we will live and be with Him for eternity.

Happy Easter

*Pastor Dan*

# Loving the Law

It would seem that people have a love / hate relationship to law in general. Many folks love laws that protect or help them, but bristle when those laws restrict their interests. Everything from traffic lights and speed limits, to insider trading and investment fraud... we like the laws that serve us, and hate the ones that hinder us.

God's Law is different from man's law, though. When God speaks His Law, He speaks something about Himself—something that, like Him, doesn't change. Men set up laws based on what they want, or what they understand, but God establishes Law as an expression of Himself. Part of how we know God, is through His Law.

And what does God's Law reveal about Him? He is holy, pure, and righteous. As St. John would write, He is the Light of the World which no darkness can overcome—indeed, in Him there is no darkness at all. He is good, and has never compromised with evil. He has created all things according to His good will, and has placed them all into their order and place, to do what He has created them for. God is holy, and thus we find that His Law is holy, as well.

But we human beings, saddled as we are by sin and death, tend to react badly to God's Law, particularly when it hampers our own interests and desires. When I want to do what the Law of God forbids, I look for a

way around it. When I want to act outside the created order I have been placed in, I try to find ways to do so apart from God's Law. When I want to pursue things that are not given to me, to leave my duties and God-given vocations behind, I seek for ways to abandon my responsibilities and take what I want. And when my rationalizing fails, or I get called to repent of my dodging of God's Law, the first and most natural response that I feel is to rebel and curse the Law of God—which is really to curse God Himself. In dodging God's Law, what I'm really saying to God is, "Who are you to curtail me? Who are you to bind me? Who are you to control me? Don't you know that I am the master of my own fate—that I am my own god?"

Ah, and there it is. The Law shows me that I'm a sinner—and a sinner of the worst kind. I'm an idolater, a breaker of the very first commandment, to have no other gods but Him. I show myself to not love God above all things, but rather, that I love myself above all things—God and neighbor included. The Law shows me that I am condemned, because I condemn myself in things done and left undone, things spoken and left unspoken. The holy and righteous Law of God works like a mirror, to show me my frightful image of depravity, and the end I have earned. How can I love such a Law? How can I sing with David such words as he writes here? How can I love what justly condemns

me to hell, for the sinful and wretched man that I am?

The answer, is the gift of God in Jesus Christ. Where the Law shows us our hopelessness before the righteousness of God, Jesus shows us the Love He has for us in this, that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Knowing our self idolatry and evil, and knowing that we had no way to save ourselves, the Son of God took on flesh and dwelt among us, that we might behold His glory—the glory of the Only Begotten. Being found in our flesh, He took upon Himself the sin and evil of the whole world, that He might be the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. Having suffered and died on the bloody Cross, He satisfied the holy Law of God, bringing peace to men. What the Law could not accomplish because of our sinfulness, Christ Jesus accomplished through His own precious Blood, poured out as our ransom and propitiation. In Christ we are washed clean, so that if we have been united to Him in a death like His, we shall most certainly be united to Him in His life forevermore. Where the Law of God condemned us, Christ Jesus has saved us. In Jesus we are no longer slaves of sin, death, and the devil—but rather we have been set free by the Son who abides forever. O, what victory Christ has won for us, who could win nothing on our own!

And here we see in retrospect by faith, what blessed David foresaw by faith: the Law is no longer a terror to those who have died and live in Christ. The Law is our guide, our correction to the sinful flesh, a reflection both of the goodness of God and of our own depravity, just as it always has been. But now set free from the curse of the Law by the Blood of Christ, we can love that perfect and holy Law just as we can love that perfect and holy God. For our God is not against us, but for us—He has gone through hell and back to save us, taking upon Himself the judgment which was our due. Knowing the love of God in

Christ Jesus, we can sing with David:

<sup>7</sup> *The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul;*

*The testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple;*

<sup>8</sup> *The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart;*

*The commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes;*

<sup>9</sup> *The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever;*

*The judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether.*

<sup>10</sup> *More to be desired are they than gold,*

*Yea, than much fine gold;*

*Sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.*

<sup>11</sup> *Moreover by them Your servant is warned,*

*And in keeping them there is great reward.*

<sup>12</sup> *Who can understand his errors?*

*Cleanse me from secret faults.*

<sup>13</sup> *Keep back Your servant also from presumptuous sins;*

*Let them not have dominion over me.*

*Then I shall be blameless, And I shall be innocent of great transgression.*

<sup>14</sup> *Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart Be acceptable in Your sight, O LORD, my strength and my Redeemer.*

Amen.

*Pastor Brad*

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## COMING JUNE 2<sup>nd</sup>

### Seminar BY DR. PAUL MAIER:

#### ARCHAEOLOGY and the BIBLE

#### Digs Provide Powerful Support for the Old and New Testaments

**Saturday, June 2<sup>nd</sup>**

**9:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.**

**Reserve your spot soon!**

**Cost :** Pre-register: **\$15 per person** (includes lunch)

At the Door: **\$20 per person** (includes lunch)

Sign up in the narthex or contact the church office (253-473-4848).



## Worshipping with Intention, Part II

Last month we began exploring ways in which we can prepare ourselves more fully for the blessings that God prepares for us in our corporate worship time together. We discussed the value of reading the scripture lessons for each Sunday in advance of the service as well as using the moments before worship for prayer, rather than for socializing and prayer.

Both of these acts underline our intention to truly dedicate this time to our loving God. Just as the space that we have dedicated for worship is a special space, worthy of respect and care, so is the time that we set aside for worship. From the moment that the Pastor utters the words of the Invocation to the moment that we are dismissed by the Benediction is a holy time, set aside for the worship of God and worthy of the same respect, concern and protection.

The primary actor in our worship time together is God. It is He who has called us here, it is He who has promised to provide Grace through Word and Sacrament and it will be He who supplies all the blessings that come from Worship. That being said, our offering in Worship is in fact a “Sacrifice of Praise” (to quote the *Psalms*) and a dedication of time to God’s service.

If we look at this time as an offering placed upon the Altar of God, the picture becomes clearer. We would never (*proudly*) give an offering, only to take it back when we realized that we didn’t really want to give it up. Yet that is exactly what we do when we dedicate an hour or so to worship, only to take back some of that time for ourselves by focusing on other things.

To be sure, we are human and easily distracted. There are, however, concrete steps that we can consciously take to focus on the gifts of God while in worship: We may be using our cellular phones to access digital Bibles but we can guard against the temptation to text or surf during the service. We can refrain from reading the bulletin during the sermon. And, yes, the Children’s Message is just as much for the adults as it is for the children!

Again, it is simply a matter of making a choice, of intentionally coming to worship. God has laid out a wonderful banquet of Word. May we always endeavor to relish every morsel.

Blessings!

*DVP (Denes Van Parys)*

*Next Month: What is the Offertory for anyway?*

### **Men’s Breakfast / Bible Study April 21<sup>st</sup>**

Join us **Saturday, April 21<sup>st</sup> at 7 am** for a delicious breakfast, wonderful fellowship, and in-depth Bible Study. We are going through the series “Stuff They Didn’t Teach Me in Sunday School.” This month our topic is: “That’s a Wrap!” (Genesis 42-50). *Pastor Dan*

### **Vision Builders Breakfast – Thursday, April 26<sup>th</sup>**

Join us for the **VISION BUILDERS BREAKFAST** on **Thursday, April 26<sup>th</sup>**.

Please join us as we celebrate the ministries of Concordia Lutheran School and Mount Rainier Lutheran High, hear life-shaping testimonies, and learn more about Sharing Values and Shaping Lives. The Vision Builders Breakfast is our largest fundraising event to support the annual budgets of the schools. The breakfast is a free event. Guests will have an opportunity to make a donation during the program. Check-in starts at 7 am. The program will run promptly from 7:30 – 8:30 am. It will be held at the Landmark Convention Center. Reservations are required. If you would like to be a part of this event, call the Church Office (253-473-4848) to reserve a spot.

**Mark Your Calendars!** Pierce County Prayer Breakfast is May 4<sup>th</sup> at the Tacoma Dome Exhibition Hall. The speaker is **Jon Kitna**. The cost is **\$30 per plate**.



## Preschool News

[www.littlelambstacoma.com](http://www.littlelambstacoma.com)

Wow! We are excited to see the handiwork of God budding and blossoming in our 19 students. The love of God shines through as these students show more compassion and care towards one another on a daily basis. It is wonderful to see the blessings of God come alive in these children!

Our Spring Break will be the week of April 9-13. The preschool office will be closed during this time. Please check out our new look on our website at [www.littlelambstacoma.com](http://www.littlelambstacoma.com). The songs the children sang for Lutheran Schools Sunday are available to view from our website too.

The Spring Flower Sale for the preschool will begin in April. Orders will be taken April 22<sup>nd</sup> – May 6<sup>th</sup>

with delivery of flowers in time for Mother's Day! Order forms with prices and types of flowers will be available by April 22<sup>nd</sup>.

We are currently registering students for the 2012-2013 school year. If you would like more information please visit our website, call the office (253-473-4848), or come in for a personal visit or tour Monday – Friday. Thank you!

Please continue to pray for our preschool students, families, staff, and board members. Your prayers are welcomed gifts!

Serving our Savior,

*Bonnie Jean Huset*

Preschool Director / Teacher



## Women in Mission

Weekly Bible Study on Tuesdays at 9:15 am.

Weekly Quilting on Tuesdays at 10 am.

Mites collected on April 8<sup>th</sup> (Easter)

Seafarers Auxiliary – April 24<sup>th</sup>

Spring Rally – April 21<sup>st</sup>

Easter greetings! HE IS RISEN!

Tuesday Bible Study continues to work through the Catechism. When is the last time you really went through *all* of it? Come and share with us – all are welcome.

Quilters are still working. Can't sew? Doesn't matter...there is a place for you even just to visit.

World Relief shipping is May 4 & 5 so we will need someone to transport quilts to Seattle one of those days.

Where are you going to be on Saturday, April 21<sup>st</sup>? At the Rainier Zone Spring Rally at Prince of Peace, Lakewood of course! Theme: Mirroring Christ; James 1:22-25.

Sisters, mothers, daughters, aunts, cousins – all confirmed teen through? Are invited to attend the Washington – Alaska District LWML Convention June 22-24, 2012 at the Red Lion Hotel in Olympia. Theme: "Follow Jesus – Walk the Path." Join the interest session led by Phyllis Wallace – "There's a Broadcast in All of Us." She will also be the keynote speaker – "Watt's UP!" Sessions on "Faith Talk – Faith Walk," Bible Study I – "The Race of a Lifetime" and II "Pathways of the Bible." This is for you!!

Serving the Lord with Gladness

*Jane Oberg*

## Brunch & Bible Study and Pink Shoe Club

The Women's Brunch & Bible Study and Girls' Pink Shoe Club will meet on **Saturday, April 14<sup>th</sup>** at **9:30 am** with a shared breakfast followed by a Bible Study for the ladies and activities with

Miss Sue for the girls. We will end promptly at 11:30 am. If you need babysitting, please call the office at 473-4848 in advance. All ladies "young" through "old" are welcome to attend.

## Lunch Bunch News

We will meet on **Tuesday, April 3<sup>rd</sup> at 11:30 am**. After Pastor Dan's devotion we will have a shared meal (Bring a dish).

Our program in March will be **PROTECTING YOURSELF FROM SCAMS AND FRAUDS**, presented by **Officer Don Williams**. Invite your friends and join us **April 3<sup>rd</sup>**.

*Pastor Ken Boetcher*

## Summer Sunday School News

Hello – sheep of the flock. Our lambs will be having Summer Sunday School this June – August. We are using the Growing in Christ curriculum in conjunction with a Missions theme. Some of the highlighted Missions will be:

**Mission Military** – our brothers and sisters listed in the bulletin each Sunday.

**Mission Shauen** – and although he is already one of our Missions they have had a new baby and our children will be addressing that fact.

**Mission Teachers** – this is a mission outreach to thank our Christian Day School and Public School teachers.

**Mission Tacoma** – an outreach to the various needs out and around Tacoma.

These are just a few of the things we have planned for summer.

More information to come in future bulletins and newsletters.

Any questions please call the church office, or Katie Reinitz–VanVolkenburg at 253-304-7893, or [katlee23@yahoo.com](mailto:katlee23@yahoo.com).

Your Summer Sunday School Coordinator,  
Katie

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## Easter Program & Egg Hunt

**Saturday, April 7<sup>th</sup>**  
**2 pm in Annex Chapel**

We will celebrate our Lord's Resurrection with the Easter story, a small craft project and an egg hunt.

This event is geared for small children up to the 5<sup>th</sup> grade.

Please join us with your child for this 35-45 minutes of Easter joy and fun.

Sponsored by the Board of Education.

