

Christ Lutheran Church

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May 2021

"After His suffering, He showed Himself to these men and gave many convincing proofs that He was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God." (Acts 1:3)

What an amazing time it must have been over those forty days after Jesus' resurrection until He ascended to heaven! He would appear to His disciples, giving yet more convincing proofs that He was alive. Then just as quickly, He would disappear from their sight, leaving their hearts filled with joy.

On Easter morning, the grieving women went to Jesus' tomb to anoint His body for burial. Suddenly Jesus appeared, turning their sorrow into joy. Later, two disciples were walking along the road to Emmaus, downcast over Jesus' death. A stranger joined them, who explained how Jesus' death fulfilled all that the Scriptures had prophesied about His saving work. Only later did they recognize that stranger as Jesus. Filled with joy, they ran to tell the other disciples. That evening, the disciples were hiding behind locked doors in fear. Suddenly, Jesus stood in their midst saying: *"Peace be with you."* and they were filled with joy to see Him.

Again and again, the resurrected Christ appeared to His disciples, talked with them, and even ate with them. Such appearances recurred over the next forty days until Jesus' ascension into heaven.

There are times when we are ready for a visitor, especially someone who brings good news and makes us feel good to be around them. But there are times, too, when we are not so ready. Have you ever had someone show up unexpectedly at your door, wanting to visit; but you were thinking, "My house isn't clean! I wasn't ready for this!"

What if Jesus had shown up at any given time during the past forty days? Would we have always felt ready? Were there times when our hearts would have been saying: "Go away, Jesus, for a while. I can't have you visiting while I'm thinking these

unkind thoughts, watching some of the scenes in this movie, having this argument, being selfish, or wallowing in my self-pity... Can't You just give me thirty more minutes to do my thing; and then – when I have cleaned house – then we can visit?"

When Jesus did show up with those first disciples, He needed to do some up-front housecleaning. When He appeared to those Emmaus disciples, He had to rebuke them for being foolish and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets had spoken about His death and resurrection (Luke 24:25-27).

When He appeared to the eleven behind locked doors, He needed to rebuke them for their lack of faith and stubborn refusal to believe those who had seen Him alive (Mark 16:14). When He appeared to doubting Thomas He needed to tell him: *"Do not be unbelieving, but believing"* (John 20:27). When Jesus appeared to Peter, who had denied Him, He addressed the problem by declaring His forgiveness and reinstating Peter in His service.

Yes, when the risen Savior made His unscheduled visits, there was some housecleaning to be done. But the main purpose of His visits was to fill His disciple's hearts with reassurance, joy, and peace – giving them proofs that He was alive, having won their forgiveness, salvation, and eternal life!

Our resurrected Savior still comes today, wanting to visit – to speak to us in His Word and listen to our prayers. Up front, He may need to confront our sin, doubt, and unbelief – all that would keep us from welcoming Him. But this is only so He can declare the full forgiveness He won for us on the cross. Again and again, He comes to speak to us about the Kingdom of God, to replace our guilt, fear, sorrow, and doubt with the peace and joy of His salvation. He comes to reassure us that He is near to help us. He comes to promise that just as He has risen in glory, so He shall raise us up in glory. Then, it will not be just a brief visit; for we will walk and talk and feast with our Savior in heaven's eternal joys!

Pastor Smith



Evangelical Lutheran Synod Military Monument

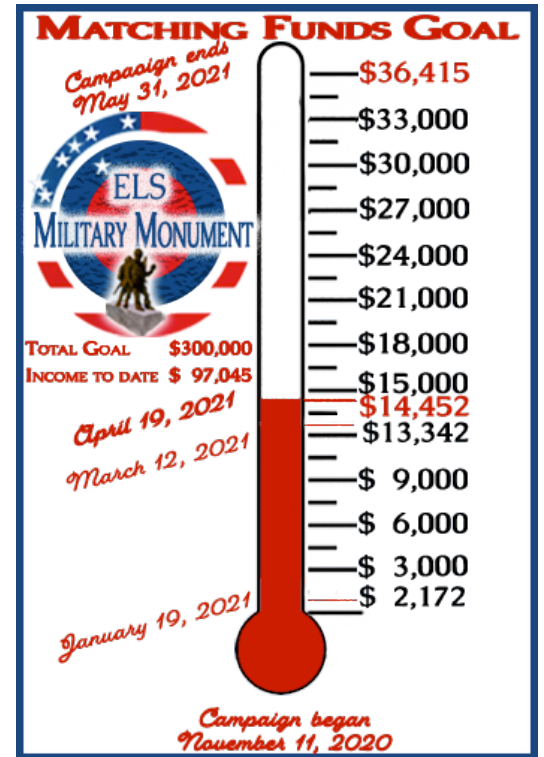
(To be constructed at Bethany Lutheran College)

We live in a very troubled world. Most recently we have faced the COVID pandemic. We face acts of terrorism at home and abroad that threaten our freedom. Yet, we enjoy many freedoms in this country.

Who do we depend on to protect us from and face these evil problems? The answer is obvious, our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Jesus died on the cross for the sins of the world and has won for us freedom from sin, the devil, and eternal death. And God the Father, who has blessed us with the divine vocation of "warrior." He calls these warriors to protect and defend the earthly freedoms with which He has blessed us.

Sadly, many times, these brave men and women who have sacrificed so much for our freedom are all but forgotten, and the freedoms they defended are taken for granted. As President Calvin Coolidge stated while he was in office, "The nation that forgets its defenders will itself be forgotten." Our active military and veterans wrote a blank check when they took the oath of service and pledged to defend our country when danger faces us. That blank check included their willingness to serve, sacrifice, and give their life if necessary. *"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends"* (John 15:13).

This is a great opportunity for you and your family to remember and honor those who served. Please consider making a contribution to the ELS military monument to remember and honor those who served. Until May 31st your gifts to the project will be matched dollar for dollar. See the graph of donations made thus far, and prayerfully consider contributing to this way of honoring those who have served or are serving – be it a father, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, neighbor, friend or any acquaintance you may have that served to protect your way of life. For more information, check out www.els.org/monument.



A Prayer During Turbulent Times

(From our ELS website @els.org/about/blog/)

Gracious God and Father, although Your Son, Jesus Christ, came to bring us Your heavenly peace, violence and conflict still rage among Your children on earth. Keep us ever faithful in a broken world spinning out of control, recognizing the signs of Your Son's eventual return – civil unrest, pestilence, natural disasters – by always trusting Your abiding Word. According to Your will bring a restoration of calm and security in our land, and heal the wounds that have been inflicted. Mercifully embrace the frightened in Your love, empower the weak with Your strength, and restrain the wicked hateful violence through Your ordained authorities, granting them strength and wisdom as they seek to mitigate the damage and provide rescue and restoration. We pray especially for our brothers and sisters in Christ. Be their strength when they are set in the midst of so many and great dangers. Help them to go forward tending to the duties of their many vocations with prudence and diligence, confident that in life or in death You are their refuge, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
2 <i>Easter 5</i> Radio Program 8:30 AM (KAGO 1150 AM) Worship with Communion 9:30 AM Sunday School & Bible Class 10:45 AM	3	4	5 <i>Happy Anniversary</i> <i>Wally & Adeena Klein</i> Youth Catechism 4:00 PM	6 <i>Happy Anniversary</i> <i>Neal & Sue Eberlein</i>	7 <i>Happy Birthday</i> <i>Christina Bednar</i>	1 <hr style="border: 0; border-top: 1px solid black; margin: 5px 0;"/> 8
9 <i>Easter 6</i> <i>Mother's Day</i> Radio Program 8:30 AM (KAGO 1150 AM) Worship 9:30 AM Sunday School & Bible Class 10:45 AM	10	11	12 <i>Happy Birthday</i> <i>Steven Currie</i> Youth Catechism 4:00 PM	13 <i>The Ascension</i> <i>of Our Lord</i>	14	15 <i>Armed Forces Day</i>
16 <i>Easter 7</i> Radio Program 8:30 AM (KAGO 1150 AM) Worship with Communion (Confirmation of Isaac Smith) 9:30 AM Confirmation Reception After Church	17 <i>Happy Birthday</i> <i>Pat Burks</i>	18 <i>Happy Birthday</i> <i>Jacob Klein</i>	19	20	21	22
23 <i>The Day of Pentecost</i> Radio Program 8:30 AM (KAGO 1150 AM) Worship 9:30 AM Sunday School & Voters Meeting 10:45 AM	24	25 Pastors Meeting (Myrtle Creek)	26	27	28	29
30 <i>The Holy Trinity</i> Radio Program 8:30 AM (KAGO 1150 AM) Worship 9:30 AM Sunday School & Bible Class 10:45 AM	31 <i>Memorial Day</i>	<p style="font-size: 1.2em; font-style: italic;">“Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”</p> <p style="font-size: 1.2em; font-style: italic;">Matthew 28:20</p>				

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