

# GraceNotes



A Monthly Publication of the Congregational Activities of Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church in Newton, NC  
Volume 220, Number 4 April 2017

## *Holy Week Worship*



*Palm Sunday*  
April 9<sup>th</sup>

*Second Sunday Breakfast at 9:00 AM*

*Learning Hour at 9:30 AM*

*Worship Celebration at 10:30 AM beginning on Front Lawn*

April 13<sup>th</sup>  
*Holy Communion*  
*at 7:00 PM*



April 14<sup>th</sup>  
*Good Friday Observance*  
*at 7:00 PM*



April 15<sup>th</sup>  
*2:00 - 4:00 PM*



*Easter Egg Hunt*

*RESURRECTION*  
*DAY*

April 16<sup>th</sup>

*Son Rise Worship at 7:30 AM in Union Church*

*Easter Breakfast at 8:30 AM in Fellowship Hall*

*Learning Hour at 9:30 AM*

*Worship Celebration at 10:30 AM*



## From the Pastor's Pen...



Dear Brothers and Sisters at Grace...

With just a couple of weeks before Easter, many of you are preparing for the special services that day. Please don't forget to use the best outreach tool you have – the people of Grace Church! Grace is the most loving, friendliest, and most welcoming congregation I have ever served. Why not share that with other folks in the community? I have already invited 5 people to worship that day as we celebrate the Resurrection. Who have you invited?

Most at Grace are feeling the fear of an inevitable future with no new guests and no new members. We know what it means for the congregation not to experience any growth. We wring our hands about it, we worry about it, we fret when we don't see new faces coming to Grace. We sit on our hands and worry and don't invite anyone to worship! Or we convince ourselves someone else will do it!! So why don't we invite friends, relatives, co-workers and neighbors to the greatest worship celebration of the year – Easter!

It is a wonderful opportunity to share what God has given us at Grace, and to hear the greatest promise of all – the gift of eternal life through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, our Lord. It's almost guaranteed that if you bring those you care about to Easter worship at Grace, they will come to know Jesus. Who of your relatives, neighbors and co-workers do you want to see come to Christ this Easter? People are more likely to be open to your invitation at Easter than at any other time of the year. So don't miss this once-a-year opportunity to invite them to Grace Church celebrations on Easter Sunday! I hope to see you and your guests/friends at Grace on Easter!

Resurrection Blessings!

Pastor Gil Gilbert, STS



### WORSHIP ASSISTANTS FOR APRIL

- ❖ Communion Assistants - Johnny Moss, Mike Pisko
- ❖ Ushers - Eric Martin, Brian Matthews, Todd Setzer
- ❖ Greeter - Faye Lane
- ❖ Altar Preparation - Jane Moss, Debi Pisko
- ❖ Children's Church and Nursery - Carrie Setzer, Susan Setzer
- ❖ Offering Tabulators - Johnny Moss, Mike Pisko, Herb Travis

*Please be mindful of your commitment to serve. If you are unable to fulfill that commitment, be reminded that it is your responsibility to find someone to serve in your place.*

### FLOWER CHART FOR APRIL



- |                     |                               |
|---------------------|-------------------------------|
| 4/02 - OPEN         | 4/09 - Lula Ingle             |
| 4/16 - Grace Church | 4/23 - Jarrett Family Reunion |
| 4/30 - OPEN         |                               |

If you wish to give the flowers for a given Sunday, please list your name on the chart in the narthex. *You are responsible for ordering the flowers from a florist of your choice; we do not have a standing order with any florist.* The liturgical color of the day is listed to assist you in selecting flowers appropriate for that Sunday. You should contact the Church Office so that the correct information is placed in the bulleting for that Sunday. Please notify the Church Office the Thursday prior to your selected Sunday. You can call the Church Office between 9 AM and Noon each weekday, leave a note on the desk, or send an email to let us know the occasion or memoriam for this wonderful gift of beatification of the worship.

### ATTENDANCE AND GIVING TO OUR LORD'S WORK FOR FEBRUARY/MARCH 2017

	2/26/17	3/1/17	3/5/17	3/8/15	3/12/17	3/15/17	3/19/17
SCS	29	n/a	47	n/a	15	n/a	44
Worship	72	34	78	37	49	36	81
General Fund Offerings	2,046.00	157.00	6,056.00	146.00	915.08	157.00	2,115.00

General Fund **Offerings, February** 2017 = \$11,996.63  
 General Fund **Expenses, February** 2017 = \$12,454.55  
 Difference = \$ -457.92 (expenses exceeded offerings)

Needed Each Week = \$3,257.94

**THE FRED T. FOARD SENIORS** will meet at Noon on Wednesday, April 5<sup>th</sup>, at Grace. They will also meet at Sardis Lutheran Church on April 14<sup>th</sup> at Noon for a Good Friday Service and lunch. Everyone is invited to these gatherings.

**FIRST SUNDAY LUNCH** will be held April 2<sup>nd</sup> following Worship. The meal will be furnished by the Christian Education/Learning Ministry Team and it will be a taco bar, nachos, salad fixings, and dessert. Suggested freewill offering - \$3.00.

**MEN OF GRACE PRAYER BREAKFAST** will be held on Saturday, April 8<sup>th</sup>, at 9:00 AM at the Blue Moon. We invite all men of Grace to join us for discussion, prayer, and great food.

**SECOND SUNDAY BREAKFAST** will be held Sunday, April 9<sup>th</sup>, at 9:00 AM. Providing the breakfast will be Pastor Gil and Karen Gilbert. Suggested freewill offering - \$3.00.

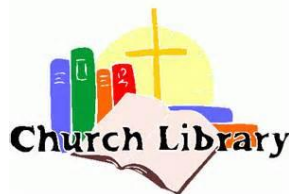
**THE GRACE SENIOR LUNCHEON GROUP** will meet in the Fellowship Hall on Wednesday, April 19<sup>th</sup>, from noon until 2:00 PM. Please invite a friend and come join the fun and fellowship!

**THE NALC NEWS FOR MARCH** is available in the Narthex or online at <http://thenalc.org>. This issue has a meaningful message from Bishop Bradosky on LENT. This issue also highlights the Pastors Conference held in Orlando, the speakers for the 2017 Braaten-Benne Lectures in Theology, new director of the NALC Disaster Response, missionaries, and several other interesting articles. Take and read about God's work through the NALC.

**THANK YOU** to Jodi Martin, Jill Matthews, and Jackie Jarrett for putting together the Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper. Attendance was great and the food was delicious. We appreciate all those that helped and those that attended.

**THE NEWLY APPOINTED HISTORIAN** for Grace Church is Herb Travis. Anyone that has anything to help research the history, please speak with Herb.

## **New Items for April** **IT OUT!!!!**



### BOOKS FOR CHILDREN

1. Princess Stories  
Real Bible stories for God's princesses
2. The Prince Warriors by Priscilla Shirer  
Book 1 (fantasy)
3. The Prince Warriors and the Unseen Invasion by Priscilla Shirer  
Book 2 (fantasy)

### BOOKS FOR ADULTS

1. Jesus An Illustrated Life by Jean-Pierre Isbouts (National Geographic)  
A modern reconstruction of the life and times of Jesus
2. Ultimate Bible Guide  
A complete walk-through of ALL 66 books of the Bible
3. Where Yesterday Lives by Karen Kingsbury (fiction)

***Special thanks to Lynette and Joe Momier for all the help working in our library and their many donations of books. Thank You!***

## BOARD NOTES FOR MARCH

The Leadership Ministry Board met March 12 @ 4:00 pm.  
Absent/Excused: Michael Pisko

Devotions: were given by Rick Bivens and Communion with Pr. Gilbert as Celebrant

### Old Business:

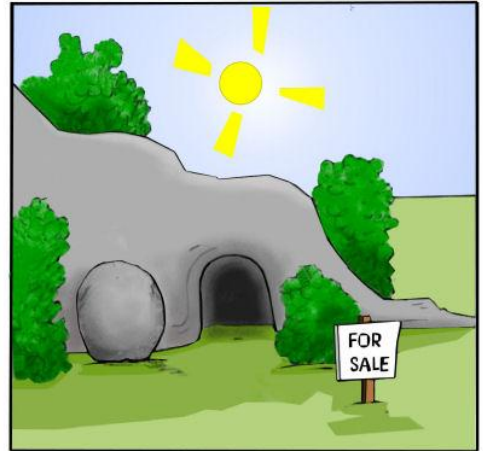
- \* Contract returned and signed by Michael Whisenant to lease the 14 acre tract next to Union Church to grow/harvest hay and/or crops.
- \* CD from BB&T Bank has been cashed and funds placed into the General Fund.
- \* Lower Level Entry Security System is working well and has proved to be a great investment.

### New Business:

- \* Request for any records from the Department of Statistics in Raleigh NC has been answered. Raleigh has church records from Grace and we will order a copy on CD to be recorded in our Church Office and CD to be kept in bank lockbox.
- \* 12 x 12 bricks (\$100) are being ordered for cemetery. To order see Joy Heavner.
- \* Monitoring of propane gas usage is being audited by Rick Bivens. Usage is unusually high.
- \* Pastor reported on the NALC Gathering in Orlando. Very worthwhile. NALC now has over 450 congregations and growing. Time of worship, prayer, fellowship and NALC news from Bishop Bradosky, David Wendel and Mark Chavez.
- \* Lenten Worship will be a pulpit exchange for the mid-week Wednesday Worship; Pastors preaching will be: Prs. David Hefner, Randall Cauble, Steven King, Marty Ramey and Pastor Gilbert
- \* Memorial Funds designated for improvements to audio system were discussed and tabled until bids are received.

Next Meeting: April 9 @ 4:00 PM. Pastor Gilbert closed the meeting with prayer.

## The Back Pew - Jeff Larson



**FOR SALE** - Single owner tomb. Only used three days, and still has that new tomb smell. Reason for sale.. resident was resurrected.

## EASTER EGGS

A Joyful 'toon by Mike Waters



But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

- JOHN 20:31 NIV

**FIRST SUNDAY LUNCH AND SECOND SUNDAY BREAKFAST**

Those listed below are ones that served those months the past year. Please look at the list below and *contact the Church Office by email, a phone call, or a note on the desk to verify that you will prepare the meals, or sign the list on the bulletin board across from the Pastor's Office.* If you will **NOT** be serving again, we need to know that as well so another group can be recruited. It has been requested that the menu for each meal be listed in the newsletter and bulletin. They are due in the office by the 22<sup>nd</sup> of the month prior to the event. (KH)

	<b>FIRST SUNDAY LUNCH</b>	<b>SECOND SUNDAY BREAKFAST</b>
April	Christian Education/ Learning Ministry Team <b>(CONFIRMED)</b>	Pastor Gil & Karen Gilbert <b>(CONFIRMED)</b>  Easter Breakfast 4/16/17 - Dennis & Nancy Leonard & Family <b>(CONFIRMED)</b>
May	Mr. Biven's Learning Hour Class <b>(CONFIRMED)</b>	Via de Cristo Ministry <b>(CONFIRMED)</b>
June	No Lunch Served	No Breakfast Served
July	No Lunch Served	No Breakfast Served
August	No Lunch Served	No Breakfast Served
September	No Lunch - Labor Day	Learning Hour Classes - Rally Day
October	Christian Education/ Learning Ministry Team <b>(CONFIRMED)</b>	Lorene Heavner, Gary Leatherman, Dan & Tricia Panek
November	Chancel Choir <b>(CONFIRMED)</b>	Pastor Gil & Karen, Joy Heavner, Don & Nicky Jarrett, Mike & Debi Pisko
December	Christian Education/ Learning Ministry Team <b>(CONFIRMED)</b>	Allen Biggerstaff

**BRICKS MAY BE PURCHASED FOR PLACEMENT IN MEMORIAL GARDEN.** Recently a Grace family requested purchase of an additional brick in honor/memory of a member. Rather than cut the bricks in the existing walkway, placement of additional bricks will take place in front of each Memorial Bench. The size of this particular brick will be the 12"x12" brick at a cost of \$100.00, which was the original cost of bricks utilized at our Columbarium project. There is room for 3 bricks at each bench location, or possibly more for a total of at last 12 bricks. This special project to further enhance our Memorial Garden is now open to anyone having an interest in a memorial/honorarium to someone. Even if there are already bricks currently in place in the Memorial Garden walkway, there can certainly be additional bricks with the same names located at these other sites. Please contact Joy Heavner for an order form and additional information.

**DONATE YOUR INK CARTRIDGES** from printers and copiers to the Humane Society of Lincoln County. They can trade them for items they need for the many creatures in their care. If you do not want to take them to the Humane Society yourself, you can give them to Joy Heavner and she will deliver them for you.

## **STEPHEN MINISTRY TRAINING TO BEGIN**

There have been several members of Grace who have come forward to indicate their interest in the Stephen Ministry. Just to keep you informed about the Stephen Ministry, it is a one-to-one caring lay ministry of persons within the congregation who have received Stephen Ministry training by a certified Stephen Leader. Future SMs begin with 12-weeks of training in all aspects of pastoral care and developing skills such as how to be present, listening to others, grief, divorce, handling crisis situations, confidentiality, speaking truth in love, making hospital visits, the authority of a Stephen Minister among many others topics. Here are some comments from other Lutherans who have been trained and are currently Stephen Ministers:

*"This is the most rewarding thing I have ever done in my life for Christ's church."*

*- Linda Retzlaff, Fayetteville Georgia*

*"I thought it was just another class on visiting, but it is so much more. I have grown as a Christian in caring for others as Jesus would."*

*- Eloise Taylor, Charlotte NC*

*"It is the training that is truly from the Holy Spirit. Thanks to Pastor Jim for encouraging me to be a Stephen Minister. It has enriched my life tremendously."*

*- Robert Weller, Houston, Texas*

The Stephen Ministry at Grace will begin with its first training class sometime after Easter. Pastor Gilbert has been trained as a Stephen Leader with the extensive two-week course taught by Stephen Ministry founder, Dr. Kenneth Haulk.

If you are interested in giving back to the church in the form of this rewarding caring lay ministry, please contact Pastor Gilbert for a pre-training interview.

## **MONEY...MONEY...MONEY**

With so many things for us to try and keep up with these days, money is right there on top. Not only do I have to concentrate on stretching my retirement money, I am also charged with watching your money as you give to Grace Lutheran Church. So friends I am asking for help. I do not want to think that a church is just about money. A church is a place to worship our God, give thanks for all we have, spread the good news, help all people, and learn how to live on earth so we can spend eternity in heaven. But there is a reality that we must face and that is money. I am the Leadership Board appointed contact for the Finance/Stewardship Ministry Team. This team currently does not exist. So I am trying to organize one. If you feel the calling, want to learn about finances, have ideas, and want a voice in expenditures and purchases for the church, please put a note on your Worship Today Form and I will contact you. If you have questions or concerns talk to me. You can refer to the constitution for information on this Ministry Team as well as the other ones that also need to be organized. Pulling a wagon is so much easier and will go farther, when everybody is helping and going in the same direction.

*-Rick Bivens*

**"CONNECTIONS" BIBLE STUDY CONTINUES** Thursday mornings at 10:30 AM. This study focuses on upcoming lessons for Sunday's worship as well as ideas and interpretations concerning scripture. For us to offer this type of Bible study digging into God's Word seems to be the best way to begin the new year! Come and bring a friend!

**LILY ORDERS** are now being taken for Resurrection Sunday. Please complete the form in the bulletin and place it, along with your money, in the offering plate, or call the Church Office. The deadline for orders is Sunday, April 2<sup>nd</sup>.

**THE ANNUAL GRACE CHURCH EASTER EGG HUNT** will be held Saturday, April 15<sup>th</sup>, from 2 - 4 PM. Jodi Martin and Jill Matthews are organizing the event. Donations of individually wrapped small candy to be placed in the eggs would be welcomed. Snacks will be furnished. Everyone is welcome to come and join in the festivities. Volunteers to help with placement of flowers in the cemetery around the same time would also be appreciated.

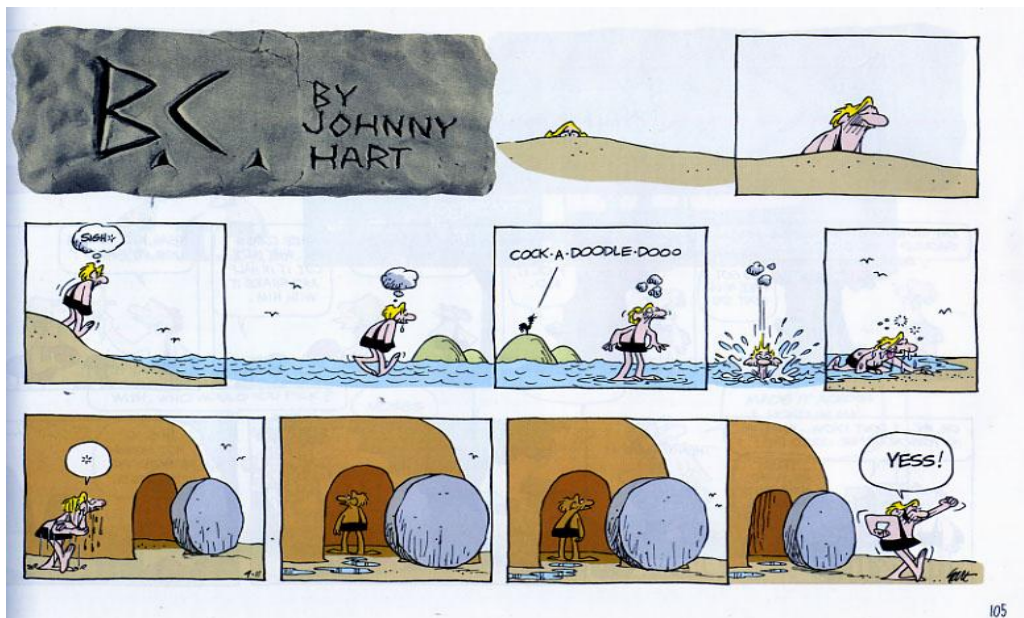
### **REMEMBER YOU ARE ON HOLY GROUND**

When a congregation gathers for worship, it is vitally important for the people to remember where they are when entering the sanctuary of God.

There have been suggestions that the worship bulletin give direction to this rubric. The bulletin states that we are "to observe silence for meditation" before the Order for Confession and Forgiveness. The Board suggested that a sign be placed in the narthex to remind us to observe such reverence - which was met with some criticism by a few. OK, so some don't want to meditate! But let's be mindful of those who wish to do so!

The commentary on the Lutheran Manual on the Liturgy states that "the sanctuary prior to worship should be a place of quiet and peace, remembering that we are inviting the Spirit of God to be present as we prepare for worship. Worship begins, not just with the prelude or first hymn, but worship begins the moment we enter into the sanctuary of God. There is a time of preparation for worship as the people of God gather to pray, mediate, and to invite the presence of God to come and enter in."

**YOUR WORSHIP TODAY FORM** has an option for you to request the Pastor to call on you if needed. Please check this item and Pastor Gilbert will call you directly. Or call the Church Office to request a Pastoral visit.





### **THANK YOU AND KUDOS TO:**

- ❖ Carl Beam for supplying the poles and erecting the rest of our GRACE-NALC directional roads signs in the community. Look for these signs and thank God for Carl when you see them. You will also want to make note of where the signs are so you can tell others how to get to Grace!
- ❖ Harvey Leatherman for installing a new outdoor light in the rear of the church building. This provides light to the darkest part of our property to the sidewalk behind the church and was badly needed. Thank you, Harvey!
- ❖ Jo Doris and family for providing the breakfast on the Second Sunday which became the Third Sunday due to the snow on the 11<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup>. It was a breakfast that warmed our souls and our stomachs!
- ❖ And we give thanks to the Board Members for their hard work since the Board Planning Retreat in January and for the First Sunday luncheon on March 5<sup>th</sup>. The hot dogs and all the extras were delicious!

### **GRACE SPRING CLEAN-UP DAY SCHEDULED**

The church needs your attention! It has been a while since we have scheduled any type of Clean-Up Day. On April 8<sup>th</sup> from 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM (the Saturday before Palm Sunday /Rain Date will be the morning of April 15<sup>th</sup>). ALL members are to come with rakes, trimmers, and other lawn tools to clean up the parking lot, walkways, and yards of church and parsonage and plant flowers. Let's have Grace looking good for Palm Sunday and Easter!

**AGAPE KURE BEACH MINISTRIES** is having a work day at their camp on Saturday, April 1<sup>st</sup>. Breakfast and lunch are provided. Work will start after breakfast between 8:30 AM and 9:00 AM. For more information or if you are willing to help, please speak with Herb Travis.

**OVER THE PAST SEVERAL YEARS,** Carl Beam has crafted crosses for the Grace congregation. Some were ones that could be placed in yards and gardens. Another was the palm cross that many have received in time of need. Carl also crafted the one that we use at the Union Church during Lent and Easter. We have added one of the yard crosses to the bulletin board in the Narthex. Thanks, Carl, for this wonderful ministry, and the reminder of God's love for us in the gift of his Son on the cross.

**TO KEEP UP WITH THE LATEST NEWS** around the Church there are several online resources. If you do not have access to the internet maybe a family member or friend could show you some of the resources. The following links are very informative.

North American Lutheran Church - NALC <http://thenalc.org>

Carolinas Mission District <http://carolinasnalc.org>

Carolinas Lutheran Women <http://carolinaslutheranwomen.org/>

Women of the NALC - WNALC <http://thenalc.org/congregationally-focused-womans-ministry>

Samaritan's Purse [www.samaritanspurse.org](http://www.samaritanspurse.org)

**THE ORDINATION SERVICE** for Christopher Metze will be Sunday, April 2<sup>nd</sup>, at 4:00 PM at St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Columbia, SC. Christopher has received a call from St. Luke's Lutheran in Monroe, NC. His installation service will be there on Sunday, May 7<sup>th</sup>, at 4:00 PM.

**OUR SAVIOR LUTHERAN CHURCH** (NALC/LCMC), Dallas, NC, has called Rev. Peter Feige to be their pastor. Peter was ordained and installed as an LCMC Pastor on March 4<sup>th</sup>. Congratulations to both pastor and congregation!

**"GRACE YOUR TABLE"** cookbooks are still available. Just a few cookbooks remain at \$15.00 each. Please contact the Church Office if you wish to purchase one. All proceeds go to the Sanctuary Project Fund (carpet, painting, removal of bee hives, etc.).

**THE PREGNANCY CARE CENTER** is in need of a volunteer IT support person to assist us 1-2 times a month as the need arises. If you know someone, please have them contact Renee Bentley, Executive Director of the PCC at 828-322-4272 or at [execdir@pcchickory.com](mailto:execdir@pcchickory.com). Thank you. Philippians 4:19 (NKJV) "And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus."

Janet Shores RN  
Assistant Director of the Pregnancy Care Center  
828-322-4272 ext: 108



### **PIERCING NORTH KOREA'S SPIRITUAL DARKNESS**

So much is hidden beneath the surface in North Korea. The government hides military technology and quietly persecutes Christians. Yet, our Christian brothers and sisters there stand ready for battle, armed with prayer and covered by the full "armor of God."

The picture here shows a tunnel where North Korean Christians hide for discipleship training and spiritual enrichment. In a nation where neighbors are expected to report any suspicious activity to authorities, studying the Bible underground is a dangerous attempt to grow in Christ.

Voice Of the Martyrs supports this secret training site, as well as evangelism efforts and the distribution of Bibles and Christian literature in North Korea. We cannot share the details of this work with you without risking the lives of our North Korean coworkers.

Bibles are being smuggled into the highly restricted nation. Christian literature is also being distributed in print and in electronic formats. We're not only helping North Korean Christians survive – we're also equipping them to share the gospel with their countrymen.

We are thankful for American Christians who partner with VOM in this work. We don't take lightly the trust you place in us to support covert operations in North Korea, knowing we'll never be able to fully report the nature and extent of the work they are sponsoring. We invite you to partner with us in this vital, dangerous, secret work.

For more information you can call Voice Of the Martyrs at 877-337-0302, write them at PO Box 443, Bartlesville, OK 74005-0443, or visit their website <http://www.persecution.com>.



## WHY DO WE CALL EASTER “EASTER”?

Well, people argue over it, but wherever “Easter” (the name) really came from, there definitely seems to be numerous connections between the spring equinox, sunrise, new life, spring, bunnies, eggs, fertility rites, and a sex goddess. So when then did the church adopt the practice of referring to the day Jesus rose from the dead as “Easter”? Some Christians, of course, refuse to call it “Easter” and refer to it instead as “Resurrection Sunday”. They do this because they know about the pagan roots of “Easter” and think that it detracts from what the significance of the resurrection of Jesus. But does it? Is it wrong to refer to “Resurrection Sunday” as Easter?

I don’t think so. To the contrary, I think that “Easter” is a perfect name for the day we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus. I also think that when the church chose “Easter” to celebrate the day Jesus rose from the dead, they did this intentionally because of what the resurrection of Jesus signifies. So what is the explanation? Why did the church choose to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus on Easter Sunday, which is named after a pagan sex goddess?

The point is that, 2000 years ago, Christians decided to combine some of the sex goddess traditions of their culture with the celebration of the resurrection of Jesus. Why? Well, for one reason, the resurrection of Jesus and the sex goddess holiday occurred right around the same time of year. Some Christians are aware of where the “Easter” traditions came from, and, thinking of passages like Jeremiah 10:2 (Do not adopt the ways of the Gentiles...), refuse to say “Happy Easter!” Instead, they say “He is Risen!” Or “Happy Resurrection Day!” Those are good things to say today, because, of course, this is the day we celebrate the historical event of Jesus rising from the dead.

The simple fact that most people don’t know the origins of the word “Easter” shows that a shift has happened over the past 2000 years. The day has been redeemed! Though Easter is a commercialized holiday, most people still associate it with Jesus and His resurrection from the grave. Of all the days in the year that people “go to church,” Easter is in the top two (the other being Christmas Eve). People associate “Easter” with Jesus; not with Ishtar. The very fact that people think of Jesus rather than Ishtar when they say “Happy Easter!” is proof that this sex goddess holiday has been redeemed.

Because of this, Easter reminds me of what Paul says in 1 Corinthians 6:9-11. Though his readers used to be adulterers, fornicators, slanderers, thieves, drunkards, idolaters, and swindlers, they were not this way any longer. They were washed. They were cleansed. They were purified, sanctified, justified. They were no longer who they used to be. In a word, they were redeemed.

Sure, we might eat ham, look for Easter eggs, and give Easter candy. But when we do these things, nobody thinks about Ishtar. Most are just enjoying a fun day with the family (a wonderful Christian practice), and many others of us are remembering the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ (the most important event in human history).

Jesus is in the business of redemption. He not only redeems people, but He also redeems history, culture, places, events, customs, and holidays, “until all things are placed under His feet” (Eph 1:22-23; 1 Cor 15:27). Jesus has redeemed Easter.

So, this Easter, when you wish someone “Happy Easter!” remember that just as Jesus has redeemed a pagan sex goddess holiday, He has redeemed you as well.



# Grace Notes

Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church N.A.L.C.  
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