



A Message from Pastor Mathew

Why Holy Week

When I was 16 years old, I went for a flight lesson. Getting into the plane with my instructor we spent the day doing pattern work, taking off, circling the airport, and landing. Halfway through our lesson, I was taxiing back to the end of the runway and he told me to stop so he could get out. He told me to go ahead and take a few laps on my own. I was terrified. He assured me that I would be fine. With all of the training I had up to this point, being nervous was part of the deal but all of that would go away as soon as I made that first landing by myself. So, I took his word for it, flew my first pattern alone and landed safely. In fact, since that time I've managed to land safely every single time.

Following Palm Sunday where everything is cheerful and praiseworthy, Holy Week takes the church year to a new low right before bringing back to the high of Easter. But, I tell you, that low is absolutely necessary. Holy Week is uncomfortable. We're tasked with the activities of Holy Week as if we don't know what to do. Yet, our great teacher tells us that we will be fine. Our understanding of faith has grown and we will be fine. The discomfort is normal, expected even, but the joy that comes when we first hear of that resurrection story will make Easter seem oh, so much better.

Can you imagine what my experience would have been like if my instructor got out of the plane and told me to go really fast down the runway without taking off, slow back down again and taxi back around and do it again? This is what Easter is like without Holy Week. It's like going down the runway, picking up speed and then just slowing down again. It's easy, but it doesn't make as much sense.

If we want Easter to matter more for us and have a greater impact on our faith, we need to acknowledge and experience what matters about the unfortunate events of Holy Week. The sheer power of the resurrection is only as great as the sheer power of the crucifixion.

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*“In His great
mercy he has
given us new
birth into a
living hope
through the
resurrection of
Jesus Christ...”*

1 Peter 1:3

OUR MISSION: WHY WE EXIST

To bring people into a covenantal relationship with the Lord (*Matthew 28:19-20*), and to equip them for personal growth and impact.
Ephesians 4:11-26

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Holy Week gives us the opportunity to experience his passion. There are no shortcuts to the empty tomb and the message of the resurrection. We must go through the cross. It opens up our emotions of sadness, fear and anger. It leads our hearts and minds on a journey that brings up many of our own life events when we have suffered. When this happens, our suffering becomes Christ's suffering.

That is why Holy Week matters. It is about experiencing the point where it looks like Jesus bottoms out completely, but it is also about experiencing the point where we are assured there will never again be consequence for sin. Holy Week matters because it frees us. It frees us because it shows us the pure consequence for sin but at the same time reminds us that this consequence is no longer ours but is only Christ's. Holy Week makes Easter that much better.

Don't ignore Holy Week this year. It will make your Sunday morning proclamation that much bolder. "Christ is risen! He is risen, indeed! Alleluia!"

God's peace,

Pastor Mathew

A Message from Pastor Beck

Christ is Risen! Alleluia!
Christ is Risen indeed. Alleluia.

This is the age-old cry Christians have been making for nearly 2000 years, ever since word first spread that death could not hold onto God's chosen One. To those of us who have grown up in the church, the Easter acclamation is as familiar as it is ancient.

Yet, I wonder whether we say this too easily and too quickly.

Have you ever noticed, for instance, that this was decidedly not the first response of Jesus' earliest followers? In fact, the Four Gospels are uniform in their description that the news of Jesus' triumph over the grave was met initially not with shouts of acclamation and praise but rather with skepticism, doubt, and disbelief. Take Luke's account for instance. Not only do the disciples dismiss the witness of the women who were greeted by angels with the news of Christ's resurrection, but even after Jesus meets them in the flesh they believed he was a ghost and continued to doubt and wonder as they were simultaneously overcome by joy.

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Why was it so difficult for Jesus' earliest followers - those who knew him most intimately and had heard him speak of his death and resurrection on several occasions - to believe their own eyes? Simply because death and fear were so present in their lives that they had a hard time believing God could overcome them. They failed to see and grasp God's wondrous act of re-creation and renewal.

Such is also often the case, I would suggest, with us. Many leave the joy of Easter services only to return home to headlines about terrorism, difficulties in relationships at work or home, or fear for a loved one struggling with illness or addiction. And these omnipresent realities overwhelm us to the point that while we confess that Christ is risen at church, we live in the world as if he had remained in the tomb.

Which is why I wonder if we utter the words of the ancient acclamation too easily. For the cry that "Christ is Risen" is not only a confession about something that happened long ago, it is also testimony to our confidence that God's love continues to transform the world, that fear is not the dominant reality in our world, and that death is no match for the abundant life Christ brings.

So in the weeks after Easter (Easter is a seven week-long season), pause before you join your voice to those around you to contemplate the fierce courage of believers who have confessed that God's love and life are stronger than hate, fear, or death. And then say those words with abandon, trusting that God continues to create light from darkness and breathe life where death once dominated.

But don't stop only at church. When you watch fearsome headlines, say those words again, even out loud. And when you struggle with a relationship or worry about a loved one, repeat them to yourself. These words were not meant to just adorn our liturgy but to transform our lives. For Easter not only marks Jesus' triumph over the grave but also invites us to enter into an entirely new reality where God's grace makes all things possible, where the future is forever open, and where life and light promise to illumine even the darkest of roads.

For Christ is Risen, Alleluia!

Christ is Risen indeed. Alleluia!
and Thanks be to God.

Alive in Christ!

Pastor Bill+

Christ is Risen, Alleluia!

In Our Prayers

Joshua Alukonis
Family of Benjamin Augenstein
Kevin Barrett
Lynn Broman
David Detwiler
Mary Ann Dunlap
Corey Fischer
Jon Galland
Marshawna Hill
Casey Hirsh
George Langford
Glenn Ribblett
Suzanne Roberts
Dave Sheridan

Worship Times
Saturday 5 PM
Sunday 9 AM



Faith Education
10:30 A

ConnectFor
Families with children in
pre-K—5th grade

Confirmation
6th-8th grade

High School

Adult

See Zion's Website or
the worship bulletin for
more information about
faith education and
small group bible study.

Easter Week Services

PALM SUNDAY	March 28-29	
MAUNDY THURSDAY	April 2, 2026	7 P.M.
GOOD FRIDAY	April 3, 2026	7 P.M.
No Service , Saturday	April 4, 2026	
EASTER SUNDAY	April 5, 2026	8 A.M. 10:30 A.M.

APRIL BAPTISMAL BIRTHDAYS

Taytum Kutscher	April 6, 2025
Bradley Moore	April 11, 2021
Ryder Moore	April 14, 2024
Kenzie Banahasky	April 25, 2021

*If we are missing your child's baptism date, please advise the church office.





Join us for food, fellowship and worship.

2026 Senior Spring Brunch

May 13 - 10:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Bloom In God's Promises

Register at zlbrentwood.org or by calling the church office by May 6, 2026.



Usher Zachary Glenn wearing purple during Lent to honor those who suffer with epilepsy. March 26, 2026 was epilepsy awareness day.

SAVE THE DATES

First Communion
April 26, 2026

Mother's Day
May 20, 2026

NALC Disaster Relief
Packing Day
May 17th, 2026

Confirmation
May 24, 2026

Community Clothes Exchange
May 30, 2026

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL
Adventure that roots them in relationship
with God; a safe place in life's storms.
June 22-26, 2026

YOUTH MINISTRY



**MARDI GRAS
PANCAKE
DINNER**



**THANKS FOR
SUPPORTING
OUR YOUTH!**

RETRO VIDEO GAME & PAINT EVENT

SUNDAY APRIL 26, 2026 following worship

LUNCH provided

Youth (6th-12th grade) are invited

RSVP to Sandy Oeler at oeler.ds@verizon.net

Resurrection Walk



SATURDAY, APRIL 4TH

10:00 AM

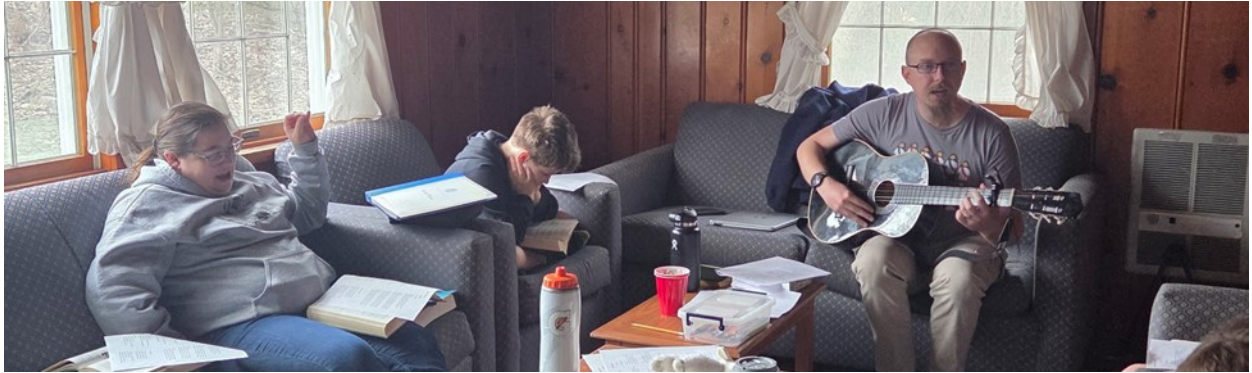
SOUTH PARK - MAPLE SPRINGS GAZEBO

YOUNG ADULT GAME NIGHT



CONFIRMATION RETREAT

Jumonville Camp & Retreat Center



Thanks from Zion's Community and NALC

FROM BRENTWOOD SCHOOL DISTRICT

"We are humbled to be the recipient of the \$4,000 donation. Your generous donation will help Brentwood Borough School District's students. Please relay to the congregation our deep gratitude for the generous gift and thank you for thinking of our families."

FROM BRENTWOOD MEALS ON WHEELS, INC.

"How many ways can the staff and volunteers of Brentwood Meals on Wheels find to thank you! Pastor Mathew and John Thatcher delivered a wonderful gift of \$4,000 from all of you at Zion Lutheran. Many, many thanks from all of our members.

Last year, after receiving some significant gifts through the Pittsburgh Foundation, we decided that we could reduce the cost to our clients. Many of them live on a fixed income and with the rising cost of food, fuel and other necessities, we hoped that reduction would help them makes ends meet.

Of course, we find our program experiencing the effects of the same increases in overall expenses. However, we are committed to keeping the costs to them as low as possible. And your gift will greatly facilitate that effort.

We all pray that the turmoil in the world will cease and our lives will return to some sense of normalcy."

FROM THE NORTH AMERICAN LUTHERAN CHURCH (NALC)

"Grace and peace to you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

As we reflect on this past year, we give thanks to God for the many ways He has worked through the NALC to proclaim the Gospel and strengthen His Church. Your generous support has been an essential part of this mission. Because of your faithfulness, we have been able to welcome new congregations, renew existing congregations, equip pastors and future seminarians, support local and global missions, and provide resources that nurture discipleship across North America and beyond.

Please know that every gift you have given is a tangible expression of your commitment to Christ and His Church. We are deeply grateful for your partnership in the Gospel and for the trust you place in us to steward these resources faithfully. May the Lord bless you and keep you in His grace and peace."