

*Message from Pastor Lynn...*

## Christus Victor

Too often the celebration of Easter is essentially self-centered. The focus of way too much preaching and even some of our hymns amounts to this: because Jesus rose from the dead, that means I get to rise from the dead too. Now that is good news, but it may not be the most important thing about Easter.



The victory of Easter is real, but it is a lot more comprehensive than just making a way for us to enjoy eternal bliss. The victory of Easter is inseparable from the victory of the Cross. The illustration to the left is an example of Christ victorious on the Cross. The early church used the Latin phrase *Christus Victor* as short-hand to indicate that Jesus' death was not a tragedy, but a paradoxical victory. We know it was a victory, in part, because we don't consider Christ's death in isolation. We always think of it as paired with Christ's resurrection. But it is more than that. His suffering and death itself is a victory – even though it is not what we ordinarily envision as a victory.

When we think of someone defeating the powers of evil, we tend to think of John Wayne, tall on his horse and quick with his six-shooter, cleaning up the town. In other words, we imagine Goodness defeating Evil with power. We imagine the forces of Good destroying Evil. In all the westerns I watched, the good guy doesn't defeat the bad guy by getting tortured and killed. That doesn't look anything like victory in the ordinary sense of the word. So, obviously, Jesus' victory is not ordinary. His is the extraordinary victory that vanquishes enemies by making them friends.

This is what the scripture means when it says: "God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself." Reconciliation is peace-making: turning enemies into friends, turning rejection and alienation into a loving relationship.

The gun that movie lawmen like John Wayne used was a Colt Peacemaker. Victory over evil with a Colt Peacemaker often meant that another bad guy ended up in a grave on boot hill. Jesus stretched out his arms of love on a cross and his broken body became the ultimate peace-maker. Victory over evil by Jesus the peace-maker meant an empty tomb.

On the Cross, Evil itself is defeated through the power of Christ's freely-chosen powerlessness. God, in Christ, absorbs all that human evil can assail him with and accepts the full weight of human rejection. In his willing self-sacrifice he destroys hate and evil by surrounding them with a love that goes to the uttermost – even to death.

When we declare with joy that: "Christ is Risen! He is Risen indeed!" we are echoing the Divine exclamation of victory. Christ's resurrection is the affirmation that the Cross was not a defeat. It affirms that God's sacrificial love in Christ is the unending power that destroys hatred and violence with love and answers human rejection with unending acceptance and forgiveness. This has the happy side-effect that we can look forward to sharing in Christ's resurrection in a heaven that is beyond our imagining, but Easter is not about us; it is about God's unquenchable love that has overcome evil and has caused a new creation to dawn.

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10:30am Easter  
Morning Service

**April**  
**Worship Participants**



**Altar Guild**

Robin Federmann

**Lay Readers**

- 4/1 Debbie Zdrojewski
- 4/8 Gail Vara
- 4/15 Kara Corlett
- 4/22 Jacob Zdrojewski
- 4/29 Linda Velazquez

**Ushers: Team 1**

- Andy Federmann—Leader
- Clayton Errington
- Kurt Rich
- Donn Mergenhagen
- Jeff Rich

**Coffee Hosts & Greeters**

- 4/8 Bob & Linda Velazquez
- 4/15 Dawn Goetz
- 4/22 Jeff Rich & Family
- 4/29 Dave & Pamela Kaznica

**Childcare Volunteers**

- 4/1 Lauren Zdrojewski
- 4/8 Tammy Kruszka
- 4/15 Pamela Kaznica
- 4/22 Jillian Szafranski
- 4/29 Lauren Zdrojewski

***Note of thanks from  
 Hospitality Committee...***

I would like to thank Dawn Goetz and the Mission Committee for hosting Coffee Hour and greeting in April.

-LaDonna Painter  
 Hospitality Committee



**Maundy Thursday** (March 29)

7:00pm Service with Communion

**Good Friday** (March 30)

7:00pm Service

7:00am-7:00pm Prayer Vigil *The church will be open for those who wish to come pray in the Sanctuary or Parlor. Resources will be available. Someone will be in the church at all times.*



*Come celebrate our risen Savior, Jesus Christ!*

10:30am Worship Service with Holy Communion



There will be a breakfast meeting for Ushers on **Saturday, April 14, at 9am**

Whether you are a long-time usher or interested in becoming one, come enjoy fellowship and a good meal. Join us in the meeting room down the hall and on the right.



June 24<sup>th</sup> Annual **Worship & Church Picnic** at Dunkirk Camp & Conference Center!

# THE EASTER STORY

by Pamela Kaznica

Easter falls on a Sunday in spring.  
A very beautiful message it brings.  
It tells the story of a man named Jesus  
Who came to earth to preach and teach us.  
He performed many miracles in three years.  
He brought faith to the downhearted; he dried people's tears.  
To the weak and sick he gave renewed health;  
They paid him not; he knew no wealth.  
Jesus named twelve men that were to follow in prayer,  
To spread the Good News of his teachings everywhere.  
They traveled by boat, through the desert they trod  
So all of the people could know about God.  
He told his stories to every race,  
And brought a smile to every face.  
He met all kinds of people; he loved them dear.  
They came from far, they came from near.  
When Jesus told the beatitudes during the Sermon on the Mount,  
Hundreds flocked to hear them it was difficult to count.  
This is just one of his many remarkable teachings  
He set an example for others who someday would be preaching.  
But through all his works and wonders, he knew that some despised him,  
So he prepared his disciples to carry on his work  
After his earthly life had finished.  
He did this because he loved them and his love never would diminish.  
Roman soldiers nailed him to a cross;  
To them it was without shame,  
But a very cruel death it was indeed  
Our dear LORD suffered pain.  
People who believed he was the Messiah  
Fell to their knees and sobbed,  
Oh, how could such a senseless death  
Happen to the Son of God!  
But Christ forgave them in his heart  
As only he could do.  
"Father forgive them", he prayed  
"They know not what they do."  
Jesus died on a cross.  
He died for all our sins.  
He died that our losses  
Might turn into wins.  
Today he lives in believers' hearts;  
And in those who believe, he will never depart.  
He reigns with God in heaven above.  
**Easter does bring a message;  
It brings the message of LOVE!**



## Choosing a Future

As St. Matthew's travels through this time of transition, we are challenged to think and to make choices about the future of our ministry. Beginning April 15, we will commence a new adult class to think together and discuss the ways we are being led by God as a congregation. We will consider what it means for us to choose life over death; community over isolation; fun over drudgery; to be bold not bland; to live on the frontier rather than in a fortress; to choose to act now rather than later. We will look at the scriptural foundations for these issues and examine our congregational life in light of them and consider how to strengthen and grow our shared ministries in light of what we discover together.

This class will meet for 8 weeks. There will be two sessions of the class running simultaneously. One class will meet on **Sunday mornings** (beginning April 15, 9:30am) and one will meet on **Wednesday** (beginning April 18, 7:00pm) evenings. Choose whichever time makes more sense for your schedule.



We will be utilizing a book to help guide our discussions. If you plan to attend this class, please sign up on the landing so we can be sure we have sufficient books for all participants.

-Pastor Lynn

## Church Council Update

At our March meeting, the Council appointed the following persons to serve on the Pastoral Search Committee: Gail Burdick, Kara Corlett, Mary Hamm, Perry Kaupa, Devon Rich, Jay Rich, Doug Stormer, Linda Velazquez and Jacob Zdrojewski.

The committee will be commissioned at the April 8<sup>th</sup> service and their first meeting will be April 10<sup>th</sup>. We are grateful for their commitment to serve and ask that you keep them in your prayers.

Jean Roth  
Shirley Jones  
Family of Ken Myers (Tammy Kruszka's father passed away)  
Daneen Carloni (Mary Hamm's friend)  
Those in the Military & Veterans  
St. Matthew's Church



*If you would like prayers publicized here, and/or prayers communicated through the text/phone chain, please contact the church office or text Michelle Kemp at 245-1692 to begin the chain.*

## Happy Birthday!

4/1	Tyler Myers	4/14	Diane Whytas
4/5	Nancy Williams	4/15	Donesse Lindsay
4/7	Chris Kluckhohn	4/16	Robin Federmann
4/8	Vanessa Rich	4/19	Ken Haberman



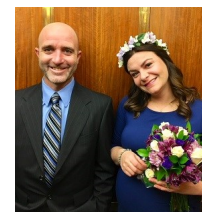
Cheryl & Ron Larson  
April 8, 1978

*We have good news to share with the church family.*

*Andrea Larson and Timothy Hacic were married March 1<sup>st</sup> at Buffalo City Hall. We were there along with Tim's parents and his children Ethan and Addie. Andrea and Tim are expecting a baby girl June 5<sup>th</sup> and will be living in Hamburg.*

*We are all feeling blessed by this union and excited to welcome our first grand baby in June.*

*Cheryl and Ron Larson*



## Activity Group

Join us for food (potluck lunch), fun and fellowship on the third Thursday of every month. This is an ecumenical group and open to the community.

**Come celebrate Spring!**

**April 19, at 12noon**

## Hospitality Committee

Do you like to bake? Are you willing to help out at church gatherings such as special coffee hours, celebrations or funerals? LaDonna Painter, Chair of the Hospitality Committee, and Darleen Nistor need you!

Please contact LaDonna (715-7310) or the church office if are able to serve on this important committee.



Prayer Shawl Ministry

First Saturday of the month, 9:30am, Parlor

Join us April 7th!

*Our Prayer Shawl Ministry is a way of showing our church's concern for people going through crises or at a place in life when a warm shawl may bring them comfort. Shawls are knitted/crocheted, blessed in worship service and then given out. Our hope is that they would be comforted by the shawls, as they remember St. Matthew's is praying for them.*

*Come be part of this new ministry. All skill levels are welcome! If you have any questions or know of anyone in need, please contact Alva Looze (716-866-5121).*



St. Matthew's  
Caregivers

There are behind-the-scenes volunteers — “Caregivers” — who give of their time to help friends in the congregation by making/delivering a meal; driving to a doctor’s appointment; cleaning house/yard and other ways. The Caregiver Volunteer Form lists ways we support those in need. (Look for forms in the red folder posted on the Missions & Outreach bulletin board near the Fellowship Hall.)

If you’d like to volunteer to do any of the above, please fill out the form and give to LaDonna Painter (or put in mailbox #67).

Also, if you or someone you know could use help by receiving a meal or ride, etc., please contact LaDonna, Pastor Lynn or the church office.



MEALS ON WHEELS

Volunteers from St. Matthew’s deliver meals during the month of April with Meals on Wheels. If you’d like to volunteer, please contact Gail Vara (649-4910).



**Friends of  
Night People**

Sign up and be part of St. Matthew’s monthly outreach to FoNP on the first Wednesday of every month.

Volunteers from St. Matthew’s prepare a meal at the church, then deliver and serve it to the visitors at the mission site. We also deliver your donations of brownies/cupcakes.

**Join us on April 4 and/or May 2. The sign-up sheet is on the landing.**

### WAYS TO SUPPORT OTHER MINISTRIES

(Friends of Night People, Blasdell Food Pantry, Matthew 25: Ministry)

**\*Seasonal clothing, children’s books, toiletries** for FoNP.

Collection bins in classroom near Fellowship Hall.

**\*Plastic bill bottles** go to *Matthew 25: Ministries*. They meet the dual needs of improving medical care in developing countries and caring for our environment.

**\*Canned/nonperishable food items** go to Blasdell Food Pantry. Food items can be brought to the church on the first Sunday of the month (to be delivered that week). Volunteers are needed to deliver the items once a month. Please sign up on the bulletin board.



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716-649-1532; stmattucc@verizon.net  
Website: stmattsucc.org

*Transitional Pastor:*

Rev. Lynn R. Morgan  
716-866-3085  
lrmorgan@live.com

*Director of Music:*

Norman D. Wahl  
716-440-5176  
normwahl@gmail.com

*Administrative Assistant:*

Michelle Kemp  
716-245-1692  
Office Hours: Mon. & Wed. 9am-2pm,  
Thurs. 9-12, & Fri. 12:30-3:30pm

*Custodians:*

David & Pamela Kaznica  
716-913-6927 (David)  
716-913-7504 (Pamela)

*Mark your Calendars!*

**DCC Flea Market & Craft Sale**

June 1-2; 8am-4pm; rain or shine

**Donations will be accepted until May 1.**

To arrange for pick-up of donations, call  
the camp at 716-366-1900, ext. 12.

**WORSHIP  
ATTENDANCE**

**MARCH**

4<sup>th</sup> 73  
11<sup>th</sup> 56  
18<sup>th</sup> 77  
25<sup>th</sup> 90



**Morning of Saturday, April 28<sup>th</sup>**

Join the fun of sprucing up the church property after the winter months. Bring your favorite gardening tools and work gloves.



**Mission of DCCC...**

*We are called by God to enrich people through fellowship, learning and fun in a welcoming Christian environment.*

**Want to know more about Dunkirk?** Here is an excerpt of Jay Rich's recent Mission Moment during worship:

*St. Matthew's has a long history with DCC going back to the very early years as an ecumenical training center. We have supported the center with campers, volunteers, counselors, directors, and on committees and the Board of Trustees.*

*DCC currently serves approximately 1,000 campers per summer season. We hold week-long youth camps, family camps as well as outdoor adventure and soccer camps.*

*This is a terrific local ministry with long standing ties to the St. Matthew's membership.*

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT THIS YEAR'S CAMPS ...**

**The \$25 Early Bird Discount for Dunkirk Week-long Camps ends April 15<sup>th</sup>, so get your registration in soon.**

Timm Scholarship money is available for one third of the cost for kids going to week-long youth or family camps. Pick up an application form from St. Matthew's Church Office.

For Family Camp, those families coming for the first time are eligible for a very generous discount, thanks to the Klaiber Family. *Children of first-time families can come free and parents would pay half price.* Through another scholarship given by Family Camp 2 campers: People who have been to camp but have a financial need this year may receive some scholarship help. For either of these scholarships, contact Gary Burdick at 381-8079.

**Brochures are available at the Church  
but to register for camp, please go to  
the DCC website - [dunkirkcc.com](http://dunkirkcc.com).**

# April 2018



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>1</b>  <b>Easter!</b> 10:30 Worship	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>  Folk Group 6:30pm	<b>4</b> AA 10:30am  Friends of Night People Outreach	<b>5</b>  Praise Band 6:15pm Choir 7:00pm  OA 7:30pm	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>  <b>Prayer Shawl                      Ministry</b> 9:30am
<b>8</b> Sunday School 9:30am <b>WORSHIP</b> 10:30am Search Committee Commissioning BCE 11:30pm	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>  Search Comm. 7:00 PM  Folk Group 6:30pm	<b>11</b> AA 10:30am  Spiritual Life 7:00 PM	<b>12</b>  Praise Band 6:15pm Choir 7:00pm  OA 7:30pm	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>  <b>Ushers                      Breakfast</b> 9am  Scrapbooking 9am-9pm
<b>15</b> Sunday School (+Adult Class) 9:30am <b>WORSHIP</b> 10:30am	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>  Council 7:00 PM  Folk Group 6:30pm	<b>18</b> AA 10:30am  Adult Class 7:00pm	<b>19</b> <b>Activity Group</b> 12noon Praise Band 6:15pm Choir 7:00pm OA 7:30pm  — Michelle's vacation (19-30) —	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>22</b> Sunday School (+Adult Class) 9:30am <b>WORSHIP</b> 10:30am	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>  Folk Group 6:30pm Quilters 7:00pm	<b>25</b> AA 10:30am  Adult Class 7:00pm	<b>26</b>  Praise Band 6:15pm  OA 7:30pm	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>  <b>Spring                      Clean-up</b> 9am-12noon
Michelle Kemp's vacation (19-30)*						
<b>29</b> Sunday School (+Adult Class) 9:30am <b>WORSHIP</b> 10:30am	<b>30</b>					

\*In Michelle Kemp's absence from the church office, please contact Pastor Lynn or Brenda Carver for any needs you may have.

St. Matthew's United Church of Christ  
5289 McKinley Parkway  
Hamburg, NY 14075



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Email: [officestmattucc@verizon.net](mailto:officestmattucc@verizon.net)  
Website: [stmattsucc.org](http://stmattsucc.org)  
Our church building is fully accessible.

*No matter where you are in your life's journey, you are welcome here!*