

Shepherd's Staff

April 2021

We gather to worship, we go to serve our Lord.

"You will be my witnesses...to the ends of the earth!"

Parkersburg Christian Reformed Church

Sunday Worship 9:30 a.m., 6:00 p.m. ~ Church School 10:45 a.m. ~ Life Plus Wed., 6:30 p.m.

No Mask Required

One of the things about living through a pandemic that I am growing tired of is that of the required use of masks. I think there are many in the same line of thought. For those of us that wear glasses it is trying when the mask makes us choose between seeing clearly or having fogged up lenses that makes seeing almost impossible. One of the side effects that wearing a mask produces is the inability to readily be able to identify the people we have known for years. Between the mask and a hat the recognizable face of friends and neighbors becomes quite the task. What is the most frustrating is when we run into a person who will say hi to us by name and we cannot tell who they are. Of course we must return the greeting but the awkward moment lingers with us for a while as we rack our brain trying to figure out who that person was.

I am encouraged by the work that is being done to help us leave the masks behind. The vaccines that are being offered will someday make the masks a thing of the past. I know that many are showing their rejection of masks by the number of masks that end up in parking lots and along the sides of streets. This may help us in the short term to consider that the end of the mask wearing is near but we just need to find a replacement in the meantime.

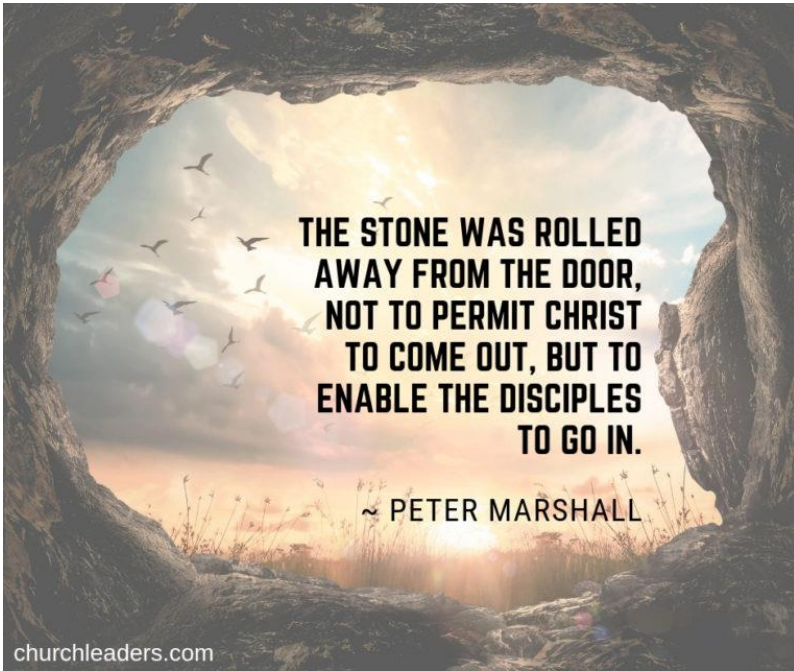
One thing that can be a silver lining through these moments is that we can be assured that God always knows our name. No mask will ever hide our true identity from God. While this is a comfort it can also be a concern because we cannot hide from God either. Just as the night does not hide us from God we can be assured that whatever we use on our face does not make us invisible to God. We can also be sure that God does not wear a mask that makes our recognizing his hand in our lives difficult to see either.

One of the ways that the Bible tells us that God can tell who we are is by our actions or our works. This can be a little scary if we have a problem with doing the things we know God is calling us to do. If we are to be known by our works, we must have some works to be known by. One thing that occurs to me is that as Christians we never retire. We don't get to a certain age then are allowed to hang up our responsibility to be Christians. While it is true that our work may change we are not to give up on working for the God we love.

So if we are called to continue to work for God, what does that work look like? We are still called to bring the Good News of Jesus to a world that is still dying. Without the love of God the world is getting more violent every day it seems. If the light of the world is not shining brightly through each one of us we are not helping the cause of bringing Jesus to the world. If we fail to be the love of God to the frustrated, to the broken in this cold world we are not part of the solution but become a part of the problem. If we are known by our works we cannot hide behind a mask or be afraid of letting others know that we are upholding them in prayer. We can still send cards to the lonely. We can call the shut-ins to let them know that we are thinking of them. These are things that we can do with "no mask required."

No mask can stop us from being Christ in the world if we truly set our minds to being who we are. We may not be readily recognizable to the people around us but God still sees us clearly. Being known by our actions will not gain us the free gift of salvation but it will identify us as belonging to Christ. Are your actions showing this truth?

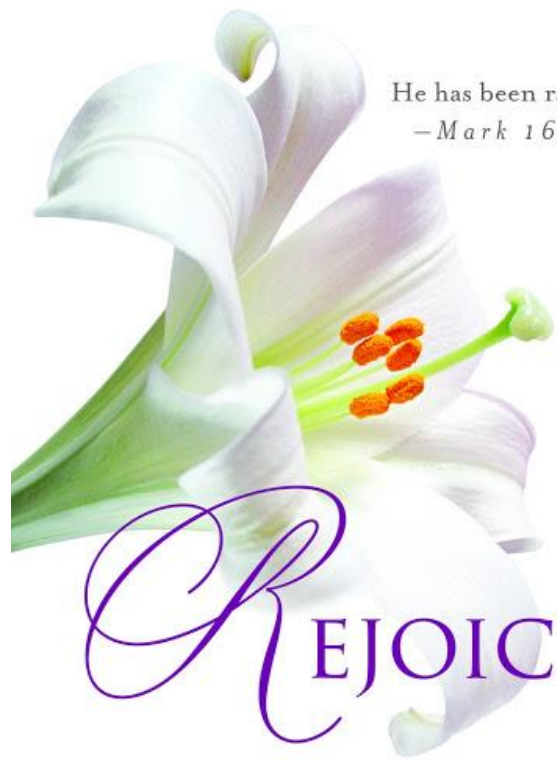
Pastor Rus



**THE STONE WAS ROLLED
AWAY FROM THE DOOR,
NOT TO PERMIT CHRIST
TO COME OUT, BUT TO
ENABLE THE DISCIPLES
TO GO IN.**

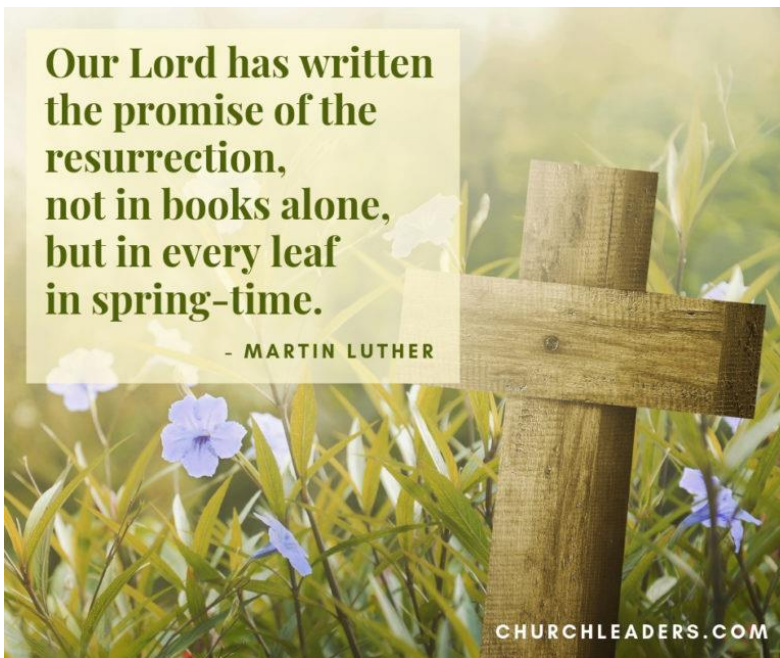
~ PETER MARSHALL

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He has been raised.
— Mark 16:6

REJOICE!



**Our Lord has written
the promise of the
resurrection,
not in books alone,
but in every leaf
in spring-time.**

- MARTIN LUTHER

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April Birthdays/Anniversaries



Happy Birthday

4/4 Kevin Meester
4/5 Shelly Meester
4/8 Mary Johnson
4/10 Michael Allspach
4/22 Paul Bruns

Happy Anniversary

4/8 Arnie & Kay Swanson
4/30 Rollyn & Kathy DeGroot



Reminder: If you have anything you'd like included in the Shepherd's Staff, please try to have it to Wendy Armstrong by the 20th of the month. The goal is to have the newsletter in your mailboxes on the last Sunday of the month.



Christ has not only spoken to us by his life, but has also spoken for us by his death.
~ **Soren Kierkegaard**

"I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?"
~ **Jesus Christ – John 11:25, 26**

Easter Word Search

G S N O I T P M E D E R Y Y M
J J U Y K I R Y T T F X E O L
R L K F W E E C I O J E R C K
X Y N G Q C U W V U P C M C K
R C R O S S H R E D P H M N E
I F V A I B Q U I R G P Q R N
S A Q Z M T M I R A C L E T S
E I A O I R C H R C O Y I U E
N T T P R C G E Y O H S S R L
I H H S O O C A R K I E P V K
N W O R C S D U B R J V R G T
O H T N G N T E S F U L A M I
D P V O U Q F L D K A S Y S H
Z M E S B Z Z W E M L Y E D F
E T G L M E G K B S L T R R U

APOSTLES
CROWN
LAMB
PRAYER
RESURRECTION
SON

CHURCH
FAITH
MARY
REDEMPTION
RISEN
SUNDAY

CROSS
JESUS
MIRACLE
REJOICE
SAVIOR
TOMB

