

Shepherd's Staff

April 2018

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.

Dead or Dormant

Now that the snow has left, at least for a little while, I am seeing the effects of a cold winter on the plants outside. The barren trees and brown grass can have a saddening effect on our spirit. Yet we have confidence that the Spring will bring the hope of new life that will cause the dormancy to fade and new life to burst out in living color. The transformation will be a welcome sight to both the spirit and the mind as we shake off the Winter blues. Yet what if the change does not come? What if, instead of dormant, the plants are dead? It is difficult to tell on some plants until we reach the fullness of Spring.

Driving around the area I have seen some interesting things. Some land owners have made the Spring renewal a little easier for the grasses and wild flowers by burning off the ditches and waterways so the dead is gone, purged by fire. From what was seen in the past, this proves to be very helpful as the dead stalks would block the sunlight on the new growth. The dead stalks also make for some unsightly views of the new, living plants as they try to push up into the sunlight. The purge brings out a lush and lovely green scene of life after the ashes. Preparing for the return of producing fruit in praise and honor of the Creator is always good work.

With the return of the Spring season, I am wondering if there may be a lesson in all this activity for us? Are we ready to clean out the old, dead, and decaying parts of ourselves so that we can bloom in the glorious Son-light of God's love? If we were to look in the mirror, will we see the dregs of the past tarnishing our ability to honor God with the vitality and beauty of the new life we have been given? While it is often difficult for us to lay aside our past, God has called each of us to be clothed with His glory so that we can be the light to the world around us. Burning off our own desires and demands may be just the deadly look that we must shake off. God provides a powerful cleansing agent for such a demanding task.

At Easter we celebrate the fact that God loves us so much that he sent Jesus, his only begotten Son to bring atonement for all who believe. To be cleansed in the precious blood of Christ, we must be willing to let the "dirt" fall away. It is only when we surrender completely to Christ that we will be ready to claim the new, even as the fields that are purged with fire to return to new life. Tried by fire is never pleasant but the impurities that are attached to us just as the dross in gold need a powerful action to remove what pollutes us at the deepest level. In Christ, we can celebrate that instead of burning our sins away we can simply give our past and its darkness to Jesus! There is no need to struggle through the debris so that we can grow in the Lord. All we are asked to do is to release it to Jesus!

What are you holding on to that could give rise to the question of is it dead or dormant? What are you willing to let go of so that God's glory may radiate in and through you for the world to see for God's glory? Give what is no longer useful so that God can use you to grow in the beauty of his love and life.

Pastor Rus

Easter Joy

Jesus came to earth,
To show us how to live,
How to put others first,
How to love and how to give.

Then He set about His work,
That God sent Him to do;
He took our punishment on Himself;
He made us clean and new.

He could have saved Himself,
Calling angels from above,
But He chose to pay our price for sin;
He paid it out of love.

Our Lord died on Good Friday,
But the cross did not destroy
His resurrection on Easter morn
That fills our hearts with joy.

Now we know our earthly death,
Like His, is just a rest.
We'll be forever with Him
In heaven, where life is best.

So we live our lives for Jesus,
Think of Him in all we do.
Thank you Savior; Thank you Lord.
Help us love like you!

By Joanna Fuchs



Jesus Loves Me; Easter Tells Me So

Jesus loves me, this I know;
The Easter story tells me so.
He died for me to bear my sin;
He opened heaven to let me in.

Yes, Jesus loves me;
Yes Jesus loves me;
Yes Jesus loves me;
Easter tells me so.

Jesus loved me when He died,
Loved me enough to be crucified.
But His death didn't last very long,
Because His power is so strong.

Yes, Jesus loves me;
Yes Jesus loves me;
Yes Jesus loves me;
Easter tells me so.

Jesus' came back from the dead
I know because the Bible said.
Jesus is my Lord and King;
Love and praise to Him I bring.

Yes, Jesus loves me;
Yes Jesus loves me;
Yes Jesus loves me;
Easter tells me so.

When I die, I'll rise up, too.
We'll all be in heaven, me and you.
We'll see Jesus face to face.
Up in heaven, that happy place.

Yes, Jesus loves me;
Yes Jesus loves me;
Yes Jesus loves me;
Easter tells me so.

The Easter story brings much joy
To us all, each girl and boy.
Jesus is my Savior now;
Heaven and earth to Him must bow.

Yes, Jesus loves me;
Yes Jesus loves me;
Yes Jesus loves me;
Easter tells me so.

By Joanna Fuchs



April Birthdays/Anniversaries



Happy Birthday

4/4	Kevin Meester
4/5	Shelly Meester
4/8	Marjorie Siebenga
4/8	Mary Johnson
4/10	Michael Allspach
4/22	Paul Bruns
4/22	Ida Folken
4/23	Betty Pott

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 Mulder by the 20th of the month. The goal is to have the newsletter in your mailboxes on the last Sunday of the month.

	<i>Greeters</i>	<i>Ushers</i>	<i>Sunday School Teachers[#]</i>	<i>Coffee*</i>
4/1	Joel Reints Family (N)	Gerald Haan	Easter	EASTER - Coffee served before church
	Marlyn & Marcia (S)	Andrew Haan		
4/8	Mike Stirling Family (N)	Mark Kramer	Ryan & Stacy	Gene & Janet
	Arnie & Kay (S)		Deb	
4/15	Paul & Ruth (N)	Joshua H.	Kayla & Shelly	Irv & Amy
	Melvin R. & Harold C.		Stacy	
4/22	Steve & Charlene (N)	Mike Stirling	Amy & Kay	Marlyn & Marcia
	Joy K. & Mary V. (S)		JoLynne	
4/29	Clarence & June (N)	Ken Meester	Kamie & Nancy	Dale & Angie
	Gene & Janet (S)		Brandy	

*If you are unable to serve coffee on your Sunday as listed, please find your replacement. Thank you.

#The teacher schedule and lessons will be in the bulletin. You can always check the website as well- the bulletin is always on there (even before Sunday!!) www.parkersburg-crc.org If you need to change a Sunday, please call one of the teachers.

Spring Flower Word Search

Can you find all the names of the Springtime flowers?

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

ANEMONE
BLOSSOMS
CALLALILY
CAMELLIA
CROCUS
DAFFODIL
DAHLIA
FORSYTHIA
HYACINTH
LILAC
LILY
MAGNOLIA
MAYFLOWER
NARCISSUS
PEONY
PHLOX
SCILLA
SNOWDROPS
TRILLIUM
TULIP
VIOLETS

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