

APRIL 2021

Shepherd's Voice



The monthly parish newsletter of
GOOD SHEPHERD CHURCH

WHAT WE BELIEVE...

We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, visible and invisible.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation he came down
from heaven,
was incarnate from the Holy Spirit and the
Virgin Mary,
and was made man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius
Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.

On the third day he rose again in accordance
with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory to judge the living
and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver
of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son
who with the Father and the Son is wor-
shiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic
Church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the for-
giveness of sins.

We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

FROM THE PASTOR'S STUDY

THE POWER OF RESURRECTION

As we enter into the Season of Easter, we leave behind the penitential season of Lent. I love the way the Church calendar works. For forty days, we traveled with Christ through the Lenten desert—fasting, praying, and offering works of mercy. And while forty days sounds like a long time, particularly if we have been fasting for any part of it or if we've given up something we love for Lent, take notice: the FEAST of Easter lasts 50 days! That's right, the Church in her wisdom has granted us 10 more days of feast than of fast!

But the true meaning of the Easter celebration is Christ's victory over the grave. Christ rose from the dead by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Here's one of the most powerful verses of Scripture in the entire Holy Bible: "If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you." Romans 8:11 literally tells us that if we have the Holy Spirit living in us—that same Spirit gives us and our mortal bodies the same power over death.

Does that mean we're going to live forever? YES! Actually, that's exactly what it means. Now, we may take our last earthly breath before Jesus returns, but the promise to those who place their faith in Christ Jesus is forgiveness of our sins and thus, a life forever in the very presence of God Almighty! So, even if we take our last earthly breath before He returns, His resurrection assures us that the power of the Holy Spirit will also resurrect us into a life of eternity in our glorified bodies.

Continued on page 2

But here's the deal... as good as that news is, it's easy for us to defer to it as a core belief of our faith but not really contemplate what it means for us day to day and in the moment. But think about this: AT THIS VERY MOMENT, dear Christian, you have same Holy Spirit indwelling you! You have access to the power of the same Holy Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead.

In the Old Testament, the Holy Spirit did not permanently indwell the people of God. It's one of the reasons we see King David pray these words in Psalm 51 "Do not cast me from your presence and do not take your Holy Spirit from me" (verse 11). The Good News of Easter is that we see the power of the Holy Spirit when Jesus is raised from the dead. Fifty days after we begin our Easter Feast, we'll enter the Feast of Pentecost when we see Jesus deliver the promise of the gift of the Holy Spirit to all who place their faith in him and are baptized into His body.

Do you realize that's us? We are THE Church of Jesus Christ by virtue of being baptized into His body.

Picture living waters flowing on earth—perhaps it's a mighty river with a powerful current. God brings His people to Him by the water of Baptism like a powerful body of water moves an item from one place to another. He sends His Holy Spirit into the life of that person in the Sacrament of Baptism. Even though an earthly priest pours the water and speaks the words "I baptize you in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit" it is the High Priest, Christ Himself that is baptizing or immersing the one being baptized into the His Body. If God has caused this to happen on an infant or young child, then later on, that individual will have the chance to reaffirm the vows of baptism through Confirmation and in that beautiful Christian Sacramental Rite, a bishop will lay hands upon the confirmand and ask God to intensify the gift of the Holy Spirit in the life of the one being confirmed.

The powerful story of the resurrection of Christ is the powerful promise it is leading to—the gift of the Holy Spirit. Take notice of something that will be different during the Easter season at church. During the 50 days of Easter, the first reading each Sunday will not be from the Old Testament, as it is the rest of the year. Instead, during Easter, the first reading will come to us from the Book of the Acts of the Apostles. It is in Acts that we are given a picture of the early Church, just after the resurrection of Christ. It is in Acts that we are told the story of the first Christian celebration of Pentecost—that day when the promise of Christ—that He would return to the Father so that the Father could send the gift of the Holy Spirit to the people of God—comes to full fruition.

I'll stop here so as not to get ahead of myself, for we've got the 50 days of Easter feasting to go through before we get to Pentecost, but know this: The power of the resurrection is yours because the same Holy Spirit that raised Christ from the grave now resides in you, dear Christian. That is indeed VERY GOOD NEWS!

Until next month, let your light shine!

Fr. Randall Graf+

SERVICES FOR APRIL 2021

Thursday, April 1 @ 6:35 PM—Maundy Thursday Service

Friday, April 2 @ 3:00 PM—Good Friday Service

Sunday, April 4 @ 8:30 AM & 10:00 AM—Easter Sunday Service

Tuesday, April 6 @ 12:15 PM—Midday Prayer (online only)

Wednesday, April 7 @ 12:15 PM—Midday Prayer (online only)

Friday, April 9 @ 9:00 PM—Office of Compline (online only)

Sunday, April 11 @ 8:30AM & 10:00 AM—Sunday morning Holy Eucharist (Easter 2)

Tuesday, April 13 @ 12:15 PM—Midday Prayer (online only)

Wednesday, April 14 @ 12:15 PM—Midday Prayer (online only)

Friday, April 16 @ 9:00 PM—Office of Compline (online only)

Sunday, April 18 @ 8:30 AM & 10:00 AM—Sunday morning Holy Eucharist (Easter 3)

Tuesday, April 20 @ 12:15 PM—Midday Prayer (online only)

Wednesday, April 21 @ 12:15 PM—Midday Prayer (online only)

Friday, April 23 @ 9:00 PM—Office of Compline (online only)

Sunday, April 25 @ 8:30 AM & 10:00 AM—Sunday morning Holy Eucharist (Easter 4)

PLEASE NOTE: As a reminder, all services are held in-person unless otherwise noted as “online only” and all in-person services require mask and appropriate social distancing. In addition to being offered in-person, our Sunday morning Holy Eucharist at 10:00 AM is also live-streamed. Our YouTube channel is located at www.YouTube.com/GoodShepherdMet.



EASTER CROSS

In keeping with our Easter morning tradition, the youth of the church will team with our Sunday School teachers and other adults to decorate the flower cross before the 10:00 AM Easter Sunday service on April 4.

If you can help, meet us in the conference room at 9:15 AM. Don't forget to bring some fresh flowers! Everyone is invited!

As a side note, some folks may not realize that the beautiful Easter Sunday flower cross is the same ugly cross that we placed nails into at our Good Friday service. As the nails represent our own sins for which Christ died for us on the Cross of Calvary, seeing the Cross “born again” on Easter Sunday morning with beautiful flowers can be a powerful and moving spiritual experience.

Thank you for your help.

Renee F. Graf

Christian Education Director

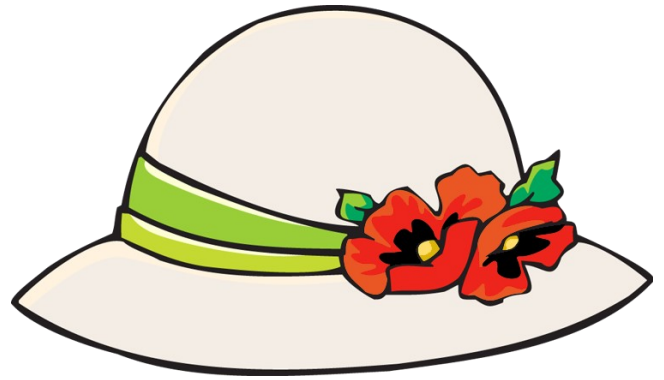
GSC WOMEN'S GUILD

The ladies of the Women's Guild will resume meeting on **Tuesday, April 13th.**

Please remember we will meet in the Sanctuary.

Barbara Mehrrens

GSC WG President



NOTES FROM RINDA

I had intended to write more about psalms this month, but we are in the process of moving and have no idea where my notes are! Most of us are glad to see the first full month of spring arrive.

We have been blessed to see the beautiful azaleas blooming in front of the church as well as the beautiful flowers in the Memory Garden. (My allergies have not been too pleased!)

The beauty of nature makes me think of a favorite hymn, "This Is My Father's World."

*This is my Father's world
And to my listening ear
All Nature sings and round me rings
The music of the spheres.
This is my Father's world
I rest me in the thought
Of rocks and trees, of skies and seas,
His hand the wonders wrought!*



Azaleas blooming in front of Good Shepherd Church.

In addition to the wonders of springtime, we celebrate the Resurrection of our Lord this weekend.

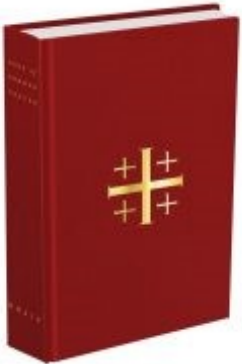
What a wonderful gift! Happy Resurrection!

Rinda Coleman

GSC Music Director

BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER

Good Shepherd Church will be placing another order for the Book of Common Prayer. If you would like to purchase a copy, please let Fr. Randall know. Each book will cost \$21 and you are welcomed to purchase as many as you would like.



Our Sunday liturgy, Midday Prayer, Compline--virtually every service we offer at Good Shepherd Church is included in the ACNA Book of Common Prayer (BCP). The BCP also includes a full psalter containing all 150 psalms, the three year Sunday lectionary, the daily lectionary, a calendar of holy days, and much more. To read several collects from the BCP, see article below.

Our last order was in the Fall and all books in that order sold immediately upon delivery. Now is your chance to get your own hard covered copy of this beautiful prayer book.

Order your copies today! When paying for your order, please make your check payable to



A FEW COLLECTS FROM THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER

FOR JOY IN GOD'S CREATION (Number 21, page 652)

O heavenly Father, you have filled the world with beauty: Open our eyes to behold your gracious hand in all your works; that, rejoicing in your whole creation, we may learn to serve you with gladness; for the sake of him through whom all things were made, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

FOR TRUSTFULNESS IN TIMES OF WORRY AND ANXIETY (Number 80, page 670)

Most loving Father, you will us to give thanks for all things, to dread nothing but the loss of you, and to cast all our care on the One who cares for us. Preserve us from faithless fears and worldly anxieties, and grant that no clouds of this mortal life may hide from us the light of that love which is immortal, and which you have manifested unto us in your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

FOR PREPARATION FOR PERSONAL PRAYER (Number 97, page 675)

Holy Spirit, breath of God and fire of love, I cannot pray without your aid: Kindle in me the fire of your love, and illumine me with your light; that with a steadfast will and holy thoughts I may approach the Father in spirit and in truth; through Jesus Christ my Lord, who reigns with you and the Father in eternal union. **Amen.**

GSC WORK DAY

A very BIG thank you to those parishioners who came out for our Spring work day at church on Saturday, March 20. So many projects were completed and areas improved. When you see one of those workers, make sure you give them a BIG GOOD SHEPHERD THANK YOU!

They include:

Margaret Aucoin

Mel Aucoin

Joe Deibel

Sheila Fussell

Irving Lacrouts

Suzi Lanier

Carla Scallan



FORGIVE

BY PATSY ENGLS

Good Shepherd Church member Patsy Engles is a published poet. Originally composed published in 1990 by Eagle Wings Ministries, Ms. Patsy offers her poem entitled "Forgive" for readers to use as a Christian meditation during this Season of Easter as we contemplate the reality of forgiveness by the Cross of Jesus.

The unkind word of yesterday

We must forgive and forget

Even tho' our hearts may bend

And burden with regret

We must forgive ourselves and others

And let our souls be free

To receive the power and blessings

Which are here for you and me

For deep within each of us

Is the ability to find

The way to overcome the fault

To accomplish peace of mind

Christ forgave upon the Cross

Those who caused Him pain

He set for us the example

That there is all to gain

If we but look beyond our grief

And victory acclaim

So when life seems all too heavy

As unkind thoughts obstruct our view

We must forge ourselves and others

And find our strength anew

And take each other by the hand

As we journey side by side

Forgiving one another

As we in His love abide

KEEP UP WITH GOOD SHEPHERD CHURCH ONLINE



www.FaceBook.com/GSCMet



www.YouTube.com/GoodShepherdMet



www.Twitter.com/GoodShepherdMet



www.GSCMet.com



*PLEASE got to our
website and
subscribe to our
e-newsletter!*



CELEBRATIONS, REMEMBRANCES, AND ETERNAL FLAME DEDICATIONS

Each Sunday is an opportunity to celebrate and remember in our church family. To celebrate a birthday, anniversary, graduation, or other joyful event or to remember a loved one who has returned home to the Lord, simply fill out a blue "Celebrations and Remembrance" form and submit it with a suggested \$10 honorarium. The name and event will be published in our Sunday bulletin.

If you would like to dedicate the weekly Eternal Flame Lamp in memory of a loved one who has returned home to the Lord, you may view the open dates in the red binder located in the narthex. The suggested minimum honorarium for the Eternal Flame dedication is only \$15.

PRAYING AN ACT OF SPIRITUAL COMMUNION

Since the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown began last year, Good Shepherd Church has been streaming our 10:00 AM Sunday morning Service of Holy Eucharist each week. During the distribution of Holy Communion, the lector reads a prayer entitled **An Act of Spiritual Communion** for those who are watching at home and are unable to partake in the reception of Holy Communion sacramentally. That beautiful prayer comes from the Book of Common Prayer (pg. 677, ACNA 2019) and can be prayed by a Christian any time they are longing for the grace of Holy Communion but are unable to receive the tangible elements of the sacrament. These are the words to that prayer:

***Dear Jesus, I believe that you
are truly present in the Holy Sacrament.
I love you above all things,
and I desire to possess you within my soul.
And since I cannot now receive you sacramentally,
I beseech you to come spiritually into my heart.
I unite myself to you, together with all your faithful people
gathered around every altar of your Church,
and I embrace you with all the affections of my soul.
Never permit me to be separated from you. Amen.***



GOOD SHEPHERD CHURCH

ANGLICAN CHURCH IN NORTH AMERICA

5122 West Esplanade Ave

Metairie, LA 70006

504.454.0764

www.GSCMet.com

Father Randall M. Graf, Priest & Rector

WORSHIP SERVICES

Holy Eucharist

8:30 AM & 10:00 AM every Sunday

Service of Midday Prayer

12:15 PM Tuesday & Wednesday (online only)

Service of Compline

9:00 PM Friday (online only)

