



+Christian Symbol+

PALM BRANCH

When Jesus entered Jerusalem days before his death, crowds welcomed him by waving palm branches, common symbols of victory and rejoicing. Churches still use them to remember that occasion, knowing that Jesus' crucifixion was the ultimate triumph over sin and death. As early as Leviticus 23:40, God commanded Israel to use palms in a festival of rejoicing. In Revelation 7:9-10, Christian martyrs carry palm branches as they praise the Lamb before God's throne.

CHAPEL NEWS

Return Service Requested

CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH
337 Farview Avenue
Paramus, New Jersey 07652

CHAPEL NEWS

CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

**THERE ARE
ALWAYS
FLOWERS
FOR THOSE
WHO WANT TO
SEE THEM.**

— HENRY MATISSE

SOUP & PRAYERS

Soup & Prayers is one of those unique experiences that combines fellowship, Lenten reflection, and super duper soups and fresh bread!

Lent — the season of waiting, a season of self reflection, a season of learning, a season where perhaps “less” extravagant food is really “more”. Our Soup & Prayers program wraps all these things up in a nice, neat little package. If you’ve not joined us before, then this is the year you should, and if you have come before, come back again!

Join us on the following Tuesdays in the Church Family Room from 6:30 pm – 8:00 pm:

April 1 • April 8

Come and prepare your heart and soul for Easter.



Rev. Stover Crouthamel and Dolly Crouthamel Vander Plaat Memorial Scholarship

If you are an active member of Christ Lutheran Church and are planning to attend college or an advanced training program this fall, you may be eligible to apply for the Rev. Stover Crouthamel and Dolly Crouthamel Vander Plaat Memorial Scholarship. Please contact the Church Office at 201-262-0138 for the application (due by May 12, 2025). Applicants will be considered based on church activity, community activity, and academic achievement.



CHRIST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

337 Farview Avenue Paramus, New Jersey 07652
201-262-0138 • christinparamus@hotmail.com • christparamus.org

SERMON NOTES FROM PASTOR JONATHAN

Matthew 23:37b - Jesus Says: "How often have I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing!"

Throughout scripture we have many images for God including this image of God as parent, as mother, as a mother hen. You will notice this image in many hymns. "Thy Holy Wings" has a few lines that relate to this image of God as a mother hen: "Thy holy wings, O savior, spread gently over me, and let me rest securely through good and ill in thee." & "Oh, let me nestle near thee, within thy downy breast where I will find sweet comfort and peace within thy nest. Oh, close thy wings around me and keep me safely there, for I am but a newborn and need thy tender care." Another hymn in our hymnal speaks of this image of God as a mother hen too: "Mothering God, you gave me birth."; It reads "Mothering Christ you took my form, offering me your food of light, grain of life, and grape of love." & "Mothering Spirit, nurturing one, in arms of patience hold me close." And the last hymn I thought of is one that we don't know well because it's in our new hymnal supplement has the lyrics: "As a mother comforts her child, so God will comfort you. As a hen gathers her brood, so Christ will gather you. As a wise one counsels her friend, so the Spirit will counsel you. The Trinity of love will be with you."

It's a prominent thought among those that study theology that many people's ideas and images of God are found more in the hymns and music that we know than directly from scripture. The words we say and sing are important, give us images and ideas about God, and I'm grateful that many of the hymns we sing are soundly based in scripture. It's a reason we have hymnals with hymns selected by musicians, teachers, and scholars – and a reason we continue to have new hymnals that continue to provide expansive, faithful, and biblical images of God.

This image of God we have today as a mother hen, as a mother is present in our hymns and in our Gospel reading today, but versions of this same image can be found throughout the bible: in Isaiah as God's children are gathered beneath God's unwavering love; in Deuteronomy as God is compared to an eagle that stirs up her nest; in Ruth and the Psalms where Israel finds shelter under God's wings; in Paul's writing where signs of God's Kingdom are compared to birth-pangs of a new creation (those are some mighty kicks); and even Genesis as the Spirit of God brooded over the waters

and hovered over the face of the deep at the dawn of creation. This image of Jesus, of God as a mother hen, a mothering bird over her nest, a mother is deeply biblical and tied to our faith. However, it may not be the first image of God we think of. Yes, of course, we know God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – but God is so much more than that. The diversity of ways we can imagine and how God is shown to us is important – and so is this image that Jesus uses for himself as a mother, and specifically a mother hen. Our God comes to us as a mother hen. What does that look like? How does that feel? What does that mean for us as God's people?

Well, I'll turn you back to our hymns for a moment, because I think the hymn writers had some interesting ideas. In thinking about God as a mother hen, they were brought to an understanding that God provides us secure rest, sweet comfort, peace, safety, tender care. They were reminded that God gave us birth; created us all; offers us food in the forms of light, grain, grape, and more; and surrounds us with nurturing care and patience. This just expands our understanding of God even further. This lets us imagine God's love in different ways, furthering God's love for us. Because yes, many people quickly think of God as father, speaking to Jesus from above with a deep voice – this is my child, my beloved. As we read the prayers, the creed, and more, we may be reminded that God loves us as father. But that doesn't provide the whole picture for the expansive, abundant love of God. God loves us as mother as well. God loves us in more ways than we can possibly imagine. And each time we find a different way to think about God, to imagine God, we can deepen our understanding and relationship with God just a little bit more, we can experience the love God has for us even more.

And so, we think of our God as a chicken tending her chicks, as a mother, nurturing her children. I wonder how this image of God helps us to imagine God's love for us, and for all people – how it is uniquely like a mother's love. I wonder how that opens new ways for you to understand and relate to God. I wonder how that allows you to deepen your relationship with God. Our mothering God hold us, nurtures us, comforts us, and so much more. I wonder how remembering this faithful, biblical image of God opens new opportunities to share God's nurturing, motherly love with those we encounter in our walks of life, as God hold's us tightly and warmly in those expansive, motherly wings.

THE WESTERLUND SHOWER

Thank you to all who helped to make the Family Room a woodland wonderland and a joyous occasion! Thank you to Gina for the fun games. Thank you also to those who generously gave toward not only one, but four group gifts for the mom-and-dad-to-be. We wish Courtney and Pastor Jonathan the absolute best on their new adventure!



Patrick, Noyes "Bart"
Bartholomew, Dolores
Brickman, Charlie Brown, Tony
Calise, Karin Carlough, Mike
Chapman, John Claehsen, John
Cutler, Carol Daley, Carol
Doyle, Krista Fuchs, Mary
Carolyn Harrison, Dorothy
Hendricks, Fred Hesse, Pat
Kelly, Dennis & Jennifer Kruk,
Walter Kruk, Kaitlyn Kruk, Hugh
Lally, Dolores & Jack Lowack,
Marie Lupinski, Linda McFate,
Doris Robinson, Danny Rojas,
Cathy & Roger Schramm,
Michelle Seals, Tina Smith &
Family, Dave Splieth, Marge
Tomaselli, Lenny van Dam, the
Vega Family, Janice & Dave
Wedderman and Peter Zingaro

Those serving in the military...

Bryant Rodriguez Cyriax, Devin
Vega and Rachel Zarnke

Those who can't be with us...

Carol DeMott, Al & Barbara
Frielink and Irma Weishaupt

CORINNE'S CUPBOARD

This year during Lent we are again collecting food items for the Snack Pack Program started by Corinne Sakala years ago.

Many Bergen County school children who receive free or reduced priced school meals are left without adequate nutrition on the weekends and during holiday breaks. The program helps to fill this void by providing healthy, kid-friendly foods to these children. The snack packs are discreetly given to these kids by the classroom teacher on Friday afternoons or before school breaks.

We will collect the following food items for the Snack Packs:

Nutri-Grain Snack Bars – 1.3 oz. (no chocolate or nuts)



2% Milk Boxes – 8 oz., non-flavored, shelf stable



Chef Boyardee Microwavable Bowls – 7.5 oz.



100% Juice Boxes – 6.75 oz.



Cold Cereal Boxes – 1 oz. individual serving size



Macaroni & Cheese – 7.25 oz. boxes

At the end of Lent, we will assemble the items in bags and deliver them to the Center For Food Action who will then deliver them to the Bergen County schools in the program. Last year we assembled 250 bags!

If you'd like to help with this effort but would rather make a monetary donation, that's great also. We will use these funds to buy items to complete the packs. If you have any questions, please see Jan Behnke or Rosemary Chandra. Thanks for your help!

BIBLE QUIZ

From the cross, Jesus prayed words from the book of Psalms. What were they?

- "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"
- "I thirst!"
- "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do."
- "It is finished!"



Answer: A (See Matthew 27:46; Mark 15:34; and Psalm 22:1.)

APRIL

Lay Assistant | Usher
Altar Guild | Counter
Schedule

APRIL 6 10:00am
Lay Assistant Bob Denicola
Usher Lori Mercer
Altar Guild Lore Braun

APRIL 13 10:00am
Lay Assistant Chris Nilsen
Usher Terry Calise
Altar Guild

APRIL 17 8:00pm
Lay Assistant Carrie Ralston
Usher Linda Comery
Altar Guild All help

APRIL 18 8:00pm
Lay Assistant Pam Sakala
Usher Margarete Denicola
Altar Guild

APRIL 20 10:00am
Lay Assistant Pat Berinato
Usher Linda Polise
Altar Guild All help

APRIL 27 10:00am
Lay Assistant Bob Denicola
Usher Lori Mercer
Altar Guild Lore Braun

Counter Jan Behnke

BIRTHDAYS

Corinne Sakala 4/3
Matthew Savage 4/15
Sam Ralston 4/18
Margarete Stefanick 4/19
Linda Polise 4/24

Holy Week



Palm Sunday Triumphant Entry

- Reading: Matthew 21:1-11
- Activity: Make palm crosses or a palm-themed craft.



Monday Cleansing the Temple

- Reading: Mark 11:15-18
- Activity: Take a reflective walk, silently praying about what you wish to eliminate from your life or discussing obstacles that hinder your time with God.



Tuesday Speaking in Parables

- Reading: Matthew 22:1-14
- Activity: Choose a Gospel and count how many parables Jesus uses. For a challenge, identify which parables are in each Gospel book.

Wednesday Silent Wednesday

- Reading: Psalm 46
- Activity: Engage in a quiet challenge, focusing on prayer, Scripture or silent activities with minimal speaking.



Thursday The Last Supper

- Reading: John 13:1-20
- Activity: Re-create a foot washing ceremony by washing each other's feet.



Good Friday The Crucifixion

- Reading: Isaiah 53
- Activity: Draw, paint or write about the theme of sacrifice or caring.



Holy Saturday Day of Preparation

- Reading: Luke 23:50-56
- Activity: Prepare for Easter by decorating or cooking traditional foods like bread.



Easter Sunday Jesus Is Risen!

- Reading: John 20:1-18
- Activity: Celebrate the Resurrection with joy and fellowship by singing worship songs or sharing a meal.



APRIL 2025

Church (CH)
Fellowship Hall (FH)
Family Room (FR)
Office Building (OB)

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1 Soup & Prayers (FR) 6:30pm	2	3	4	5 Crafty Ladies (OB) 10:00am
6 Worship Service (CH) 10:00am Endowment Meeting (OB) 11:15am	7	8 Soup & Prayers (FR) 6:30pm	9	10	11	12
13 Palm Sunday Worship Service (CH) 10:00am	14 Holy Week	15 Holy Week	16 Holy Week	17 Holy Week Maundy Thursday Worship Service (CH) 8:00pm	18 Holy Week Good Friday Worship Service (CH) 8:00pm	19 Crafty Ladies (OB) 10:00am
20 Easter Worship Service (CH) 10:00am	21 Church Office Closed	22	23	24	25	26
27 Worship Service (CH) 10:00am	28	29	30			

CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH STAFF AND COUNCIL

Pastor
Office Administrator
Sexton
Director of Music Ministries
President
Vice President
Council Secretary
Treasurer
Recording Financial Secretary
Financial Secretary

Rev. Jonathan Westerlund
Debbie Geerlof
Bob Sakala
Michael Wittenburg
Chris Nilsen
Bill Jaichner
Pam Sakala
Chuck Young
Pat Berinato
Marge Tomaselli

Inward Ministry Team

Christian Education Pam Sakala
Shepherd
Worship Marge Tomaselli

Administrative Team

Financial Chuck Young
Property Bill Jaichner
Chris Nilsen

Outward Ministry Team

Servant Jan Behnke
Rosemary Chandra