

Grace News

But they urged him strongly, “Stay with us . . .”

Luke 24:29

One of the many benefits of living in the Seattle and LA areas were some of the people that I got to meet. One of them was my cousin. Not for the first time, only for the first time in Seattle or LA. It is one of the benefits of having family involved in the NBA. As a family we traveled to Seattle under the guise of watching basketball, but most of the questions from the girls were centered around, which one is our cousin? How long has he done this? Does he play basketball? Does he know us?

After the game we were ushered behind the scenes where we got to see some of the players and talk for a few minutes. It was the first time some had met, but it was as if we had all known each other for years. Conversation was quick as family was talked about and distance and time we covered.

The trip home was occasionally peppered with what I remembered about growing up; is your cousin like his father? and other such queries. In between the questions I was lost in remembrance about my family – reliving some of the years and events – recreating those events as if they had happened yesterday – in fact, recreating family.

Two disciples on a similar journey of remembrance are joined by a third. As the day came to a close they invited the stranger to stay with them, to enjoy their hospitality for the evening before he continued his journey. As they sat to eat the stranger took the bread, blessed and broke it, and in these actions the stranger is revealed and community is again created.

In this season of Easter our readings take a very similar vein. It is a time to remember and re-member. We spend a lot of time with those first disciples remembering the life and ministry of Jesus, our hearts once again burning as we hear the story. In our remembering the story we are re-membered as community, for the promise of Jesus is known – he is present with us where we gather in his name.

This is the good news that we bring to a fragmented world. In Jesus we are remembered as members of one family. Together we share the same story. Together we share one meal and proclaim on faith as our hearts burn with the excitement of Jesus among us.

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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- for the promise of Jesus is known – he is present with us where we gather in his name
- no amount of good deeds or of bad will determine God's relationship with us, or our eternal future





LUTHERAN DISASTER RESPONSE

Lutheran Disaster Response brings God's hope, healing and renewal to people whose lives have been disrupted by disasters in the United States and around the world. When the dust settles and the headlines change, we stay to provide ongoing assistance to those in need.

Where Lutherans are responding:

South Sudan Relief

Hurricane Matthew

Louisiana Gulf Coast Flooding

Africa Drought

West Virginia Flooding

Nepal Earthquake

Middle East and Europe Refugee Crisis AMMPARO: Protecting Migrant Minors

Lutheran Disaster Response strives to help the church continue to be church in the midst of disaster — following Christ's call to bring hope and healing to our neighbor in need.

How We Work

We are a church that is a catalyst, convener and bridge builder. Lutheran Disaster Response collaborates with other disaster response organizations and religious entities in the United States and around the world. This enables the greatest stewardship of resources and maximum impact of response. We are a welcome partner because we respect the perspectives and strengths of others.

We recognize that every disaster is local. Because of this, we believe every response needs to be rooted in the community; we work to accompany that community from immediate relief through long-term recovery. In our international work we partner closely with companion churches and other Lutheran and ecumenical relief agencies to make sure local needs are being addressed and met. In the United States, we work through our extensive affiliate network and other partners to address these same concerns.

Lutheran Disaster Response strives to help the church continue to be church in the midst of disaster — following Christ's call to bring hope and healing to our neighbor in need. Some key areas of work include:

- Providing emotional and spiritual care for people who have been affected by a disaster and for leaders who respond to a disaster
- Coordinating volunteers through our local affiliates
- Assisting refugees in a holistic way by meeting the varied needs of the community
- Promoting disaster risk-reduction by helping communities build their assets thereby reducing the effects of likely disasters
- Providing long-term recovery efforts by addressing the unmet needs months or even years after a disaster strikes

FALLING AND NOT AFRAID

Our living and our dying are great mysteries.

Not long ago a young reporter contacted me wanting to talk about death. She had suddenly come to the realization that she would one day die. She wanted to know what happens to us when we die, was there life after death and what did Scripture say about heaven? These are meta-questions.

I know how I felt when I was 28. I didn't want to die. My whole life was ahead of me. I couldn't accept that there was a limit to my time on earth. And there was a bit of a fear factor. What would happen to me? What if there was not a resurrection? Would death be painful? Did my life have meaning? I felt a little guilty about these doubts and fears because I was already ordained—I should be steadfast in my faith and have no doubts about my ultimate future. But I did.

Here is what I learned from my experience at that time in my life: Life is precious and beautiful and, even in its painfulness, something to be fiercely protected. Also, doubt is not the opposite of faith but is part of faith. Doubt and questions can lead us to clearer understanding and deeper faith.

Based on our tradition's conviction that it is God's gracious will to be merciful, that God intends good for all people and all creation, that no amount of good deeds or of bad will determine God's relationship with us, or our eternal future—this is God's work, God's grace—I tried to answer the reporter's questions.

Lutheran Christians do believe in life after this earthly one. Paul wrote: "Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? Therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his (Romans 6:3-5).

There are many passages in Scripture that speak about heaven—beautiful descriptions of reconciled humanity singing praises to God, the end of mourning and crying and pain and death, and the beauty of the heavenly city. And we hear God's fulfilled promise: "See, I am making all things new" (Revelation 21:5).

Our living and our dying are great mysteries. The images of heaven we read in Scripture are the best and inspired efforts of the finite to describe the infinite. Human language and understanding are too small. But I am sure of this: God is love. God's love is infinite and complete. In

*(Continued on page 6)
Falling and Not Afraid*



Dwelling in the Word

Lent 4 - March 26, 2017

John 9:1-41

"Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?"

Blindness, prejudice, and theft are not experienced among us as divine punishment or signs of God's displeasure. Jesus, in John 9, does not try and answer the age old question of 'why bad things happen to good people', but he does point out that the love of God can shine through even the worst of our experiences. (Including the cross, we might remember in Lent.) Yet, what happens in this story?

What happens in this story is that when the love of God is made manifest all sort of deviant human behaviors, fears and sidestepping becomes evident. In this way we know Jesus as one who has come into the world for the work of judgement. It is not that Jesus judges us, but that our own actions are revealed and it is they - our own actions - that condemn us.

Preachers, this is the "Law" your 'Law and Gospel' should proclaim. Sunday, please fill in the blank here - that is, how will you preach this truth and the Gospel that accompanies it?

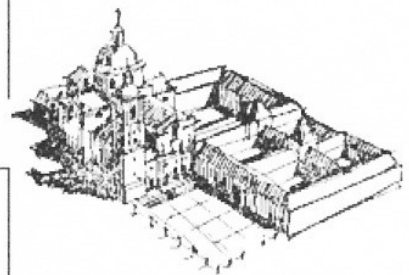
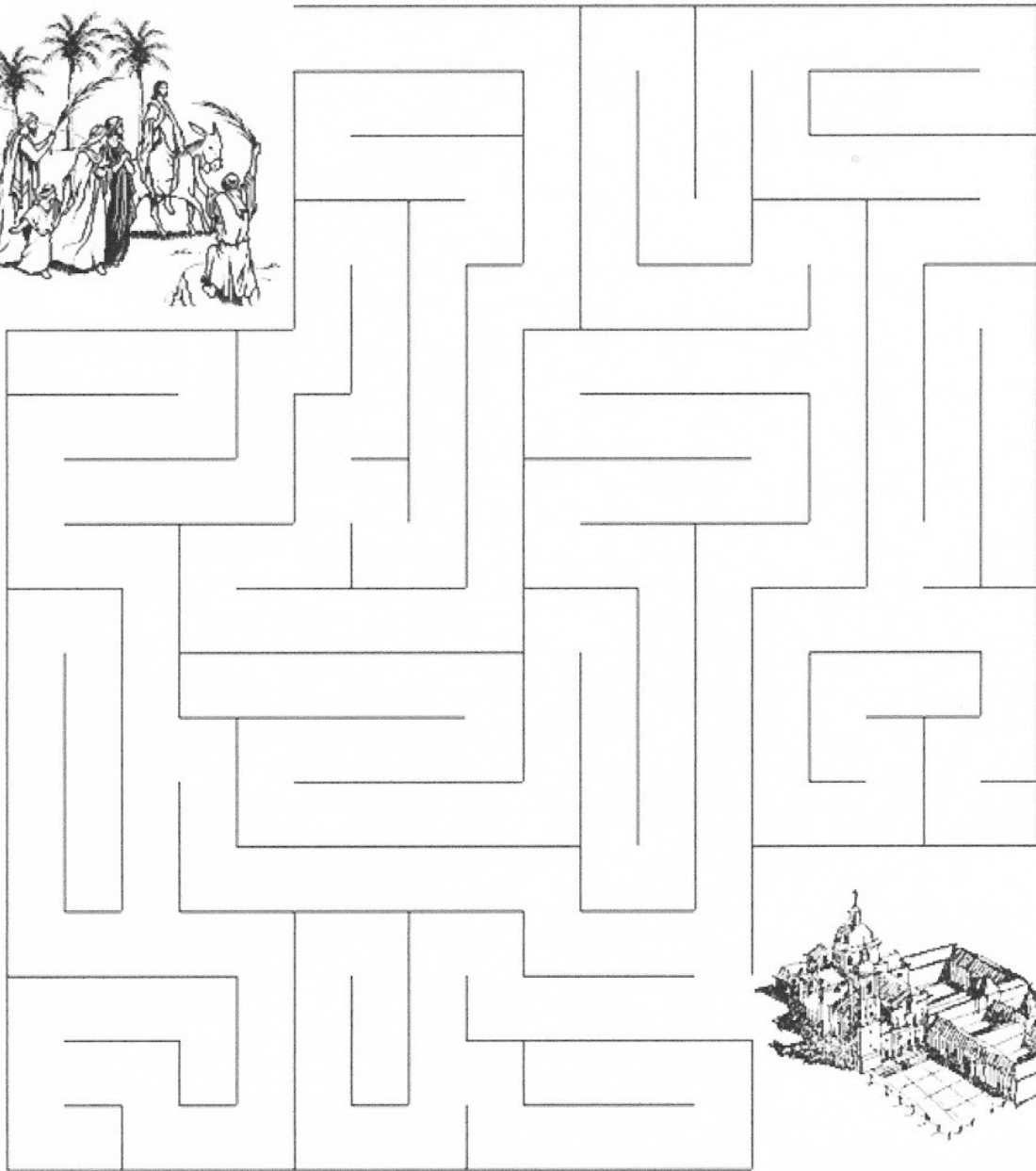
Preach with power!

Bp. Dave



The Triumphal Entry

Can you help Jesus find the way through the streets of Jerusalem?



Some of the people went ahead of him, and some followed. They all shouted,
"Hosanna to the Son of David!"
"Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!"
"Hosanna in the highest heaven!"

The Triumphal Entry

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"Hosanna to the Son of David!"

"Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!"

"Hosanna in the highest heaven!"

*Hosanna
in the
Highest!*



L W T F I F Z S B L E S S E D
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N C A E Y H D I S C I P L E S

SPREAD	VILLAGE	BLESSED	BRANCHES	HOSANNA
HIGHEST	SHOUTED	DISCIPLES	LORD	JESUS
HEAVEN	CLOAKS	NAME	ROAD	COLT

GRACE AND MERCY LUTHERAN CHURCH

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Worship: Sunday Morning @ 8:45 @
First United Methodist Church, 191
E. Gladys

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Falling and Not Afraid

this life we only get a foretaste of that. When our earthly life is done we will be enfolded in that love and loved completely by the one who knows us completely.

Paul put it this way: "For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known" (1 Corinthians 13:12).

My spiritual director told me this story. There was a woman who missed her footing in the dark and fell out of an open hotel room window. She clung desperately to the ledge all night, only to see at sunrise that she was 6 inches from the ground the whole time.

Our lives are like that—trying to hold on no matter what, not believing that God is there ready to receive us.

I thought about that for a while and only later came to realize that I am falling and not afraid. I don't know what will come next in this life. I can't definitively describe heaven. But I do know my life is in God's hands.

In peace,

The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton

Novel Ideas meets on the final Tuesday of the month (April 25th). Doors to Davis Hall open 5:30ish PM. Bring something to munch on and a desire for conversation. The book for April is *Big Lake* by Nick Russell a book "with a plot that has more twists and turns than an Arizona mountain road, a cast of characters you won't soon forget, and a shocking ending that shakes the town of Big Lake to its very foundation, this first book in the Big Lake series will keep you turning pages to the very end!" See you on the 25th.

For the really adventurous, the book for May is *Hidden Figures*, by Margot Lee Shetterly, "true story of the black female mathematicians at NASA whose calculations helped fuel some of America's greatest achievements in space."



What happened in the Reformation?

Martin Luther posted his "Ninety-Five Theses" in Wittenberg on Oct. 31, 1517, and the resulting debate about Christian teaching and practice led to changes that have shaped the course of Western Christianity for almost 500 years. At the heart of these wide-reaching changes was a deep conviction that God's mercy or grace in Jesus is given freely to all. When Luther and others learned to trust God's mercy with "a living, daring confidence," they discovered in that faith the freedom to give themselves generously, lovingly in all of life's undertakings with everyone they met.

The changes began with a critical look at confession and forgiveness, preaching and the sacraments — what Luther called the "means of grace."

The sale of indulgences, the practice of penance, the content of preaching, the administration of Baptism and the Lord's Supper — all the restrictions that impeded the message of God's mercy from being heard and received fully by



(Continued on page 7)
What Happened?

Serving God's People

<i>Date</i>	<i>Reader</i>	<i>Refreshments</i>	<i>Acolyte</i>
Apr 2	John Larson	Larsons	
Apr 9	Rochelle Meyers	Meyers	
Apr 16	Phil Schimdt	Jean & Cindy Ruhl	
Apr 23	Kathleen Madore	Madores	
Apr 30	Steve Anderson	Andersons	
May 7			

Celebrations

<i>Date</i>	<i>Celebration</i>	<i>Celebrant</i>
Apr 4	Birthday	Dan Madore
Apr 5	Birthday	Robert Cozad
Apr 9	Birthday	Emilee Meyers
Apr 9	Birthday	Rayden Nava
Apr 14	Birthday	Nikki Nava
Apr 29	Anniversary	Hunter Lindley

(Continued from page 6)
What happened?

all came under close scrutiny. Repeatedly, Luther made changes and took initiatives to give full and free expression to the gospel, the message of God's liberating mercy in Jesus Christ. He translated the Scriptures into German so that ordinary believers could hear the Word of God in their everyday language. He composed many hymns including "A Mighty Fortress" (based on Psalm 46) that put the Word of God to music, the language of the heart. He preached for the people in Wittenberg in simple, everyday terms, and he used those sermons as the basis for teaching resources that parents and local pastors could use — his Small and Large Catechisms.

Next month: Why the Reformation is still relevant

April 2017

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2. 5 Lent 8:45a Worship/Comm. 10a Fellowship 10:a Education Hour 3p JC Superstar	3 6:32a Next Text 9:30a Next Text 2.0	4 8a Coffee	5 6p Bread/Soup Supper 7p Worship	6 1p Quilting	7	8
Pastor Inch—Hermiston						
9 Palm/Passion 11a Joint Worship/ Comm.	10 6:32a Next Text 9:30a Next Text 2.0	11 8a Coffee 6:30p Leadership Mtg.	12 10a Gather Study	13 Maundy Thursday 1p Quilting 7p Worship	14 Good Friday 7p Tenebrae Service	15 Holy Saturday 8a Peter Rabbit Breakfast
Pastor Inch—Hermiston						
16 Easter 6:30a Worship @ Bluff 10:30a Worship/ Comm. 11:30a Breakfast 5:p Worship @ Prison	17 6:32a Next Text 9:30a Next Text 2.0	18 8a Coffee	19 9a Foot Clinic	20 1p Quilting	21	22
Pastor Inch—Hermiston						
23 2 Easter 8:45a Worship/Comm. 10a Fellowship 10:a Education Hour	24 6:32a Next Text 9:30a Next Text 2.0	25 8a Coffee 5:30p Novel Ideas "Big Lake"	26 10a Gather Study	27 1p Quilting	28 7p Tapping Into Faith	29
Pastor Inch—Hermiston						
30 3 Easter 8:45a Worship/Comm. 10a Fellowship 10:a Education Hour						
Pastor Inch						



Lenten Services

FUMC/G&M: 191 E. Gladys Avenue

St. John's Episcopal: 953 E. Gladys Avenue

Hermiston, OR

3/1 (Wed)	6pm Ash Wednesday service (FUMC hosts)
3/8 (Wed)	6pm soup/bread 7pm Lenten service (FUMC hosts)
3/15 (Wed)	6pm soup/bread 7pm Lenten service (G&M hosts)
3/22 (Wed)	6pm soup/bread 7pm Lenten service (St. John's hosts)
3/29 (Wed)	6pm soup/bread 7pm Lenten service (FUMC hosts)
4/5 (Wed)	6pm soup/bread 7pm Lenten service (G&M hosts)
4/9 (Sun)	11:00am Joint Palm Sunday Service (FUMC hosts)
4/13 (Thurs)	7:00pm Maundy Thursday service (G&M hosts)
4/14 (Fri)	7:00pm Good Friday service (G&M hosts)
4/15 (Sat)	7:30 – 10:30am Peter Rabbit Breakfast
4/16 (Sun)	6:30am Worship at the Butte (FUMC hosts)
	10:30am Joint Easter Service & Breakfast (G&M hosts)