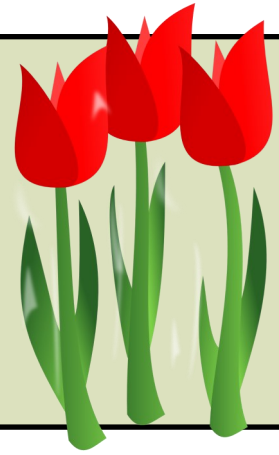


# The **SERVANT**

April 2024



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## Worship

Saturday, 5:00 p.m.  
Sunday, 8:30 a.m.  
Sunday, 10:45 a.m.  
Sunday School, 9:30 a.m.

### **Pastors**

**Lori L. Hope**  
**Sawyer Vanden Heuvel**



St Mark's Lutheran Church  
2001 S Elmwood Avenue  
Sioux Falls, SD 57105  
605-332-4092  
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## **Practicing Incarnation: Becoming God's Easter People**

*And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding,  
will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*

—Philippians 4:7

We are Easter people! Easter changes how we act in the world despite all the facts of sin, grief, death and loss. We trust that God enters into the pain and fear with a presence and peace that gives us strength and community that sustains. Barbara Brown Taylor calls this “practicing incarnation: becoming God’s Easter people.”



She writes, “Relatively late in life, I have decided that incarnation is less a doctrine than a practice, which Jesus did not come to do once and for all but to show any who were willing how God’s word might become flesh in their own lives, too.”

We are Easter people! We practice our faith as we care for our neighbor, grieve with those who mourn, feed the hungry, write letters to advocate for justice, celebrate the gift of community, work toward reconciliation, and encourage one another. We live as though we believe that God abides with us in life and in death. And we trust that *the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*

Happy Easter,

*Pastor Lori L. Hope*

# *“The Earth Is Full of Your Glory”*

**by Pastor Sawyer**

*“Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory.”*

—Isaiah 6:3

In our communion liturgy during the “Holy, Holy, Holy,” we always sing “heaven and earth are full of your glory.” This line in the liturgy comes from Isaiah 6:3. It reminds me of how every place we go in the world, whether it is down the street or across the ocean, we are interacting with God’s creation. Being in the presence of God’s creation stirs us to sing praises as we connect to God and to one another.

Have you ever thought about your connection to the earth? For me, I’ve always seemed to find myself connecting with God the most when I am out on a hike, a walk, or along the lakeside. Growing up in the rural parts of Iowa, most of my entertainment as a child happened in the wonder of being outside. As you go about your day, where do you find yourself in the presence of God?

This month, you will have the chance to think about your own story and your connection to the Earth. I am thrilled to be hosting a storytelling workshop, alongside Pastor Kyle Svernungsen at St. John American Lutheran, with Dr. Mary Hess of Luther Seminary. Dr. Mary will lead our workshop on digital storytelling, faith, and what it means to share stories of our care for creation. This project is a part of Dr. Mary’s sabbatical research that is based in studying faith communities and connecting us to the land we live on.

I hope you will join me on **Saturday, April 13**, from **9 AM to 3 PM** at St. John American Lutheran Church (1912 W 13th Street). There is no cost to attend this workshop and a lunch will be provided. Together, we will learn the art of listening to one another and recording our stories into a digital format. Even if you do not have any experience using digital technology, you are more than welcome to attend and be a participant. No previous experience is necessary. Through this interactive workshop, we will find ways to see God’s glory throughout all the earth and the heavens above us. More information about the workshop and how to register is included on page 5 of this month’s newsletter.

Please feel free to reach out with any questions or comments.

Yours in Christ,

*Pastor Sawyer*



# *“The Lotus Flower”*

**by Vicar Melinda**

*“God writes the Gospel not in the Bible alone,  
but on trees and flowers and clouds and stars.”*

—Martin Luther

Springtime brings so much life with it. Blooming flowers, flourishing vegetation, rain showers, and longer, sunny days. Birds return from their winter vacations, both snowbirds (people) and feathered, flying birds. Baby animals are welcomed into the world. Students prepare to graduate and explore the next step in their life's journey. It is a season of transformation, new life, and resurrection.

Easter is one of the most special celebrations of Spring for me. The process of navigating through Holy Week brings me joy, gives me hope, and reminds me of God's love for the creation. The seasons of Lent and Easter are filled with self-reflection, transformation, new life, and resurrection. Jesus' example of servant leadership in washing the feet and sharing a last meal with the disciples is a model of how we should live and share our lives with others. In a community, serving and caring for each other without exclusions (even Judas was cleaned and fed) brings a spirit of transformation and resurrection. The love displayed on the cross by Christ is an open invitation for all to receive the gift of new life through him.

When I think of transformation, new life, and resurrection, I am reminded of one of my favorite flowers, the Lotus. The Lotus flower is a beautiful flower that blooms out of murky and dark waters. Dr. Dheepa Sundaram, Assistant Professor of Religious Studies at the University of Denver, says “Lotuses only grow in really swampy areas, so that symbolizes this idea that out of ugliness and destruction and unrest, we can all come together in this perfect moment.”



The day Christ died, there was unrest in the city surrounded by ugliness and fear. The curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom on that holy day. Darkness and sadness covered the people and the land. It did not seem like joy could rise again. Then Sunday morning came and the perfect moment happened.

The Lotus flower is a representation that all of creation has beauty within it. Regardless of how its life begins or how dark and murky the waters are where it lives, it can rise and bloom. Saints, we are a representation of God's beautiful and beloved creation. May we always know how precious and loved we are and may we continue to rise and bloom.

Peace and Love,

*Vicar Melinda*

## April Bible Study: 1 John

Martin Luther, in his lectures on 1 John, said, "This is an outstanding epistle...so beautifully and gently does it picture Christ to us." (LW 30:219)

During the six Sundays after Easter, worship services will include readings from 1 John.

On the four Fridays in April, Bible Study participants will meet at 10:00 a.m. to study the whole book of 1 John (all five chapters!). Weekly themes for study and discussion are:



- Friday, April 5: Who Is Jesus - Really?
- Friday, April 12: Who Are We - Really?
- Friday, April 19: How Can We Love - Really?
- Friday, April 26: How Can We Live - Really?

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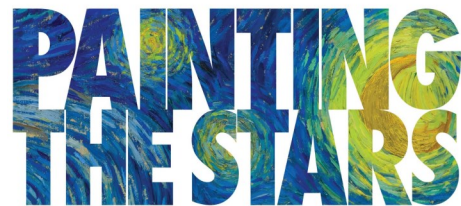
## Painting the Stars: Science, Religion and an Evolving Faith

Celebrating the communion of science and faith, *Painting the Stars* explores the promise of evolutionary Christian spirituality. When most people hear the word "evolution," they are thinking primarily about biological evolution. But in order to understand evolutionary spirituality or evolutionary Christianity, we need to appreciate that an evolutionary dynamic extends beyond the realm of the physical. What occurs at the biological level also takes place in the domains of consciousness (psyche and spirit), culture, worldviews, social and political ways of organizing our lives. Participants will watch a 20-minute video featuring thirteen theologians and leaders and then have 40 minutes for discussion and sharing.

Sunday, April 7, 9:30 a.m.: "Toward Healing the Rift"

Sunday, April 14, 9:30 a.m.: "Toward Healing the Rift"

Sunday, April 21, 9:30 a.m.: "A Renaissance of Wonder"



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## St. Mark's will host a Poetry Reading on Sunday, April 28



Adult Forum at 9:30 on Sunday, April 28, will be a poetry reading in recognition of National Poetry Month. Scheduled to read are Dana Yost, Mary Mortenson, Jana Keller, and Linda Hallstrom. Then the agenda shifts to "open mic" when those in attendance may read poems they have written or poems that they enjoy.

National Poetry Month was established in 1996 by the Academy of American Poets to celebrate the amazing wealth of emotion, humor and human experience found in poetry. Held every April, National Poetry Month is the largest literary celebration in the world.

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**"April is a reminder that life is a beautiful, ever-renewing cycle."**

— E.E. Cummings



# THE EARTH & YOUR STORY

A Digital Storytelling Workshop  
in collaboration with Luther Seminary

## What?

You are invited to attend a **free workshop** led by Dr. Mary Hess of Luther Seminary, on digital storytelling, faith, and what it might mean to share stories of care for Creation. We will listen carefully to one another, record short memories, and take those moments and put images and music together into a digital short story.

## Where?

St. John American Lutheran Church  
1912 West 13th Street  
Sioux Falls, South Dakota 57104  
Hosted by St. John and St. Mark's Lutheran Churches

## When?

Saturday, April 13  
**9 AM - 3 PM**  
Lunch Provided

## What to bring?

You only need to bring yourself and your device (a smartphone, tablet, or laptop). No previous experience with digital technologies is expected, but if you have some we welcome you to assist others in the workshop.

Please **RSVP in advance:**  
[tinyurl.com/yourearthstory](https://tinyurl.com/yourearthstory)



Learn more about this project at  
[earth.storyingfaith.org](https://earth.storyingfaith.org)

SCAN HERE

## St. Mark's Annual "Offering of Letters"

The Offering of Letters is one way that St. Mark's lives out a Christian calling to speak up for those who lack life's basics. Specific messages to Congress work toward reducing hunger and poverty. Policy changes can have a huge effect on whether people can put food on their tables. The Farm Bill is a strong example of such a policy.

Larry Peterson, a member of St. Mark's, reports that the greenhouse garden in Kyle, located on the Pine Ridge reservation, exemplifies the type of project that the Farm Bill can promote. The greenhouse garden is next to the youth center allowing students to be involved in helping to bring more nutritious food to the community. He adds that the funding for rural housing in the recent Farm Bill is also especially helpful on the reservation.

St. Mark's contacts to Congress on hunger and poverty are offerings, gifts of citizen influence, as surely as money in the offering plate. So, St. Mark's dedicates the letters in the same way that other offerings are dedicated.

With other churches and groups around the country writing on the same topic, and all asking God's blessing on these efforts, there is often remarkable success, even in a divided Congress. Bread for the World, a non-partisan Christian advocacy group working to end hunger in God's world, provides leadership for the Offering of Letters. The ELCA is a member of Bread for the World and is represented on the board.

The Offering of Letters is one way that St. Mark's "strives for justice and peace in all the world" (our confirmation promise) and helps others to have the abundant life Jesus said he came to give. (John 10:10) Thank you for your participation.

### How to participate:

- Write a letter or send an email. Letters and emails will be dedicated during prayers on Offering of Letters weekend, April 13 and 14. Letters can be written at home or at a table in the narthex. No stamp is needed; letters will be hand delivered to local congressional offices.
- Email Congress through their websites—or you can personalize the ready-to-email [online letter](#) by adjusting the wording and/or adding your motivation for writing.

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## Second Wind

We have heard most of the quotes about aging:

- "Old age is not for sissies." — Bette Davis
- "You know you're getting old when you stoop to tie your shoelaces and wonder what else you could do while you're down there." — George Burns
- "Age is an issue of mind over matter. If you don't mind, it doesn't matter." — Mark Twain

These expressions are maybe funny and even true, but aging is also frustrating and at times overwhelming. Sometimes it seems that our children and our doctors do not take our anger and our right for autonomy seriously.

St. Mark's would like to gather together people who are 65 years and over to talk honestly about the experiences, fears, hopes, and some strategies to live more authentically and proactively. The goal is to create pragmatic strategies and alternatives for meeting the "issues" of old age. The Second Wind group will meet for the first time on Thursday, April 4, at 3:00 p.m. in the education room.

**St. Mark's Mission Statement**  
to nurture faith and life for loving service in Christ's name.

## St. Mark's serves The Banquet on April 19

St. Mark's is scheduled to serve The Banquet (900 East 8th Street) on Friday, April 19. Volunteers are needed for the 2:00 p.m. shift that prepares the meal and the 5:15 p.m. shift that serves the meal. A sign up sheet will be available in the narthex.



## Mission Trip to Pine Ridge

St. Mark's is planning for a group from here to join with volunteers from Custer Lutheran Fellowship for a four-day working trip to Red Shirt Table. Volunteers will assist in the completion of the coffee shop for the Red Shirt community. Last year a group from St. Mark's helped to provide and install flooring and also worked on some outside projects. This year volunteers will finish connecting the water line to the coffee shop, complete indoor plumbing (sinks, toilets, etc.) and do a couple of minor electrical projects. Group members will also help with outside landscaping. The proposed schedule is:

- **Thursday, May 2:** Travel day. Outlaw Ranch is providing a place to stay for the weekend.
- **Friday and Saturday, May 3 and 4:** Work days at Red Shirt Table.
- **Sunday, May 5:** Worship service at Woyatan Lutheran Church in Rapid City. Return to Sioux Falls.

If you are interested or want to learn more, please talk to Pastor Lori, Doug Larson, or Larry Peterson.

## Sioux Falls schools Native American Honoring Ceremony

St. Mark's has been asked to provide 10-15 volunteers for the Sioux Falls School District's Native American Honoring Ceremony to be held on Monday, May 13, at the Washington Pavilion. St. Mark's will also provide funds for cupcakes for the event. \$250 was raised at the February 28 Lenten supper—with an additional \$200 needed.

St. Mark's has also agreed to donate at least 10 star quilts to be presented to high school seniors who are honored at the ceremony. Some of the families are not able to provide star quilts for their students; the cost of a quilt is approximately \$200.



### How you can help:

- Contact the church office, Pastor Lori, or Doug Larson if you are interested in participating in the May 13<sup>th</sup> ceremony.
- Donations toward star quilts are greatly appreciated!

## History Highlights

St. Mark's will observe its 70th anniversary in 2024. As we prepare for the anniversary, we are sharing some of the church's history highlights along with notes on what was happening nationally and around the world. **In 1986:**

- **St. Mark's served at The Banquet for the first time on April 14.**
- The space shuttle Challenger exploded 73 seconds after liftoff.
- The federal minimum wage was \$3.35.

## Crossroads Conference Spring Gathering

Women of the ELCA Crossroads Conference will meet on Saturday, April 20, from 8:30 to 2:30 at Spirit of Joy Lutheran Church.

Speakers include:

- Pastor Kari Webb, SD ELCA Synod Staff
- Pastor Chris Matson, COTS & Eat Well Mobile Market
- Pastor Sawyer Vanden Heuvel, Shepherd's Table
- Janet Kittams, Help Line Center
- Todd Smith, Charis Ministries

The conference is open to all. [Click here](#) for registration information.



### Endowment Fund Scholarships

St. Mark's Endowment Committee is accepting requests for educational grants available to St. Mark's students who plan to attend full-time at any post high-school institution. Forms are available on the table in the narthex or [online](#) and must be returned to the office by April 12.

### Change of date for Fill Your Cup

Fill Your Cup will meet on the third Wednesday of April rather than the second Wednesday. Dates and times for April are: Thursday, April 11, 7:00 p.m. and Wednesday, April 17, 9:00 a.m.

### Need Groceries? Got Gift Cards?

We can help you with both! If you shop at Hy Vee and/or Fareway, St. Mark's office has gift cards available—\$100, \$50, or \$25. When you use the gift cards, you are helping to support the youth programs at St Mark's! *Five percent* of all gift card purchases go to St. Mark's youth programs. Just stop by the office to buy cards.



### April Baptism Anniversaries

Judd Alberty  
Lauren Alberty  
Luanne Alberty  
Alysha Baus  
Carol Dorman  
Mary Gayer  
Bridger Hope  
Rhonda Kemmis  
Lorie Laurila  
Ruth Merrick



Donna Olson  
Kevin Olson  
Ashley Pete  
Kim Phillips  
Judie Roberts  
Andrew Schnabel  
Isaac Schweitzer  
Jamie Smith  
Karen Zingmark

### THANK YOU

to those who are sponsoring our missionary in Nicaragua and our Transportation Ministry during the month of April

**Transportation Ministry Sponsor**  
Marlon Mollet is the April sponsor.

#### Mission Ministry Sponsors

April 7: Marlon Mollet  
April 14: Dale and Dianne Schnabel  
In memory of Jerri Hansen  
April 21: Karen Zingmark  
April 28: Dar and Margaret Blume



# April 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	<b>1</b> Pastor Lori's Sabbath	<b>2</b> Quilters, 9:00 a.m. Office Staff, 9:30 a.m.	<b>3</b> Lectionary Discussion, 11:00 a.m. Watercolor, 1:00 p.m. Choir, 7:00 p.m.	<b>4</b> Book Study, 10:00 a.m. Second Wind, 3:00 p.m.	<b>5</b> Pastor Sawyer's Sabbath Bible Study, 10:00 a.m.	<b>6</b> Watercolor, 10:00 a.m. Worship, 5:00 p.m.
			Vicar Melinda Out of Office			
<b>7</b> Worship, 8:30 & 10:45 a.m. Sunday School, 9:30 a.m. Adult Forum, 9:30 a.m.	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b> Quilters, 9:00 a.m. Office Staff, 9:30 a.m. Polling Place — City-Wide Election	<b>10</b> Lectionary Discussion, 11:00 a.m. Watercolor, 1:00 p.m. Choir, 7:00 p.m.	<b>11</b> Book Study, 10:00 a.m. Ruth Circle, 1:00 p.m. Fill Your Cup, 7:00 p.m.	<b>12</b> Pastor Sawyer's Sabbath Bible Study, 10:00 a.m.	<b>13</b> Watercolor, 10:00 a.m. Worship, 5:00 p.m.
	Pastor Lori/Vicar Melinda Out of Office					
<b>14</b> Worship, 8:30 & 10:45 a.m. Sunday School, 9:30 a.m. Adult Forum, 9:30 a.m.	<b>15</b> Pastor Lori's Sabbath	<b>16</b> Quilters, 9:00 a.m. Office Staff, 9:30 a.m. Council, 7:00 p.m.	<b>17</b> Fill Your Cup, 9:00 a.m. Lectionary Discussion, 11:00 a.m. Watercolor, 1:00 p.m. Choir, 7:00 p.m.	<b>18</b> Vicar's Sabbath Book Study, 10:00 a.m.	<b>19</b> Pastor Sawyer's Sabbath Bible Study, 10:00 a.m. St. Mark's serves The Banquet	<b>20</b> Watercolor, 10:00 a.m. Worship, 5:00 p.m.
				Vicar Out of Office		
<b>21</b> Worship, 8:30 & 10:45 a.m. Sunday School, 9:30 a.m. Adult Forum, 9:30 a.m.	<b>22</b> Pastor Lori's Sabbath	<b>23</b> Quilters, 9:00 a.m. Office Staff, 9:30 a.m. Internship Committee, 6:00 p.m.	<b>24</b> Lectionary Discussion, 11:00 a.m. Watercolor, 1:00 p.m. Choir, 7:00 p.m.	<b>25</b> Book Study, 10:00 a.m.	<b>26</b> Bible Study, 10:00 a.m.	<b>27</b> Watercolor, 10:00 a.m. Worship, 5:00 p.m.
Vicar Out of Office			Pastor Sawyer Out of Office			
<b>28</b> Worship, 8:30 & 10:45 a.m. Sunday School, 9:30 a.m. Poetry Reading, 9:30 a.m.	<b>29</b> Pastor Lori/Vicar Melinda's Sabbath	<b>30</b> Quilters, 9:00 a.m. Office Staff, 9:30 a.m.				



Our Lord has written the promise of resurrection,  
not in books alone, but in every leaf in springtime.

—Martin Luther

St. Mark's Lutheran Church  
2001 S. Elmwood Avenue  
Sioux Falls, SD 57105

**The Servant** April 2024

## Office Hours & Contact Information:

- Lori Hope, Pastor  
Tuesday-Friday  
[pastor@smluth.org](mailto:pastor@smluth.org)
- Sawyer Vanden Heuvel, Pastor  
Monday-Thursday  
[sawyer@smluth.org](mailto:sawyer@smluth.org)
- Melinda Garza Moran, Vicar  
Tuesday- Friday  
[intern@smluth.org](mailto:intern@smluth.org)
- Linda Hallstrom, Office Manager  
Monday - Wednesday 8:30 a.m.- 2:30 p.m.  
Thursday 8:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.  
[stmarks@smluth.org](mailto:stmarks@smluth.org)
- Karin Lindell, Ministry Coordinator  
Tuesday 9:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.  
Wednesday 1:00 p.m.- 4:00 p.m.  
Thursday 9:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.  
[karin@smluth.org](mailto:karin@smluth.org)
- Deb Carrier, Finance Manager  
Wednesday  
[deb@smluth.org](mailto:deb@smluth.org)  
*If you need anything related to finance,  
please email Deb anytime.*

To reach a member  
of the pastoral team  
during non-office hours  
605-215-2925

St Mark's Lutheran Church  
2001 S Elmwood Avenue  
Sioux Falls, SD 57105  
605-332-4092  
<https://www.smluth.org>



St. Mark's office is also open on Fridays  
from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.