



# The Country Courier

News from The Sower's Chapel

April 2025

## FROM OUR REGIONAL PASTOR

Let me begin by wishing you a very happy and productive weekend during the Rev. Olaf Hauptmann's visit over the Palm Sunday weekend!

Speaking of Palm Sunday, as you all know, this is the beginning of what many Christians call Holy Week, which includes the many deeply significant events of the Lord's last week of life in His earthly body. Many Christians also commemorate a 40-day period called Lent, which is a tradition that begins with Ash Wednesday (March 5<sup>th</sup> this year) and ends on Palm Sunday, including fasting, prayer and self-sacrifice to represent the Lord's own period of fasting during His temptations in the wilderness (in *Matthew 4*) before He began his public ministry.

Notable among the events of Holy Week, in addition to what we call His Triumphant Entry into Jerusalem, were three major confrontations with the Scribes and Pharisees, His prediction of the end of the age, and several important parables about heaven. It was also during this time that he was anointed with costly oil (in preparation for his burial), that He held His Last Supper with the disciples, culminating in the betrayal by Judas, and of course, the whole story of His brutal crucifixion, burial and resurrection. In three of the four Gospels, this one week accounts for at least 25% of the whole story.

These facts, not to mention the tremendous spiritual significance of the Lord's death and resurrection, have often made me wonder why we put so much emphasis on Christmas compared to Easter. In preparation for Christmas we get gifts for all our friends and family, we have parties, dinners, parades, Christmas trees and all sort of colorful lights and decorations, not to mention our annual tableaux service. In contrast, Easter week is much more subdued, *but in fact, it is much more important!* It is the culmination of the Lord's whole reason for coming into this world, and it is, or should be, a celebration of His full glorification, our "ticket" to salvation! What could be more important than that?!

Yes, of course, the events of the week include sadness, misunderstanding, temptation and grief in the process. But what a fabulous outcome! What an amazing, inspirational story!

Think about it! Maybe this year you would like to inaugurate some new traditions at the church or at home to celebrate this life-on-earth-saving series of events. A celebration of the Passover or of the Lord's resurrection appearances at home with your families, perhaps? A new focus on gift giving? By the way, I don't mean to spoil the fun, but can we just ditch the Easter Bunny and focus on the Lord?

Whatever you do, have a wonderful, thoughtful and joyous Easter season!

—Mike Gladish ([mgladish@gmail.com](mailto:mgladish@gmail.com))

## WELCOME OLAF HAUPTMANN!

**Rev. Olaf Hauptmann will be visiting our congregation to lead our worship service on Sunday, April 6 and meet with our Interview Committee on Saturday morning, April 5, at 10:00 AM at the church.**

Olaf, now living in Denmark, is looking forward to returning to the priesthood after an absence of 12 years. He is visiting New Church congregations in need of a resident pastor, with the possibility of serving that use for a congregation that would welcome his services.

The Board called for an Interview Committee to meet and plan how to get to know Olaf and for him to get to know us as a possible fit for his return to the ministry. The Committee met and decided to invite Olaf to meet with our committee on Saturday morning. **The Interview Committee is meeting again on Monday, March 31 at 7 PM.**

If you would like to **join the Interview Committee**, please come to this meeting on Monday to plan how to present questions to and from Olaf at our meeting on Saturday morning. We will also discuss how to evaluate our findings to present to the Bishop in determining if Olaf would be a good fit for our congregation and if our church would be a good choice for Olaf to serve as resident pastor.

To hear Olaf preach and welcome him and his fiancé, Anina King, please **come to church on Sunday, April 6 at 10:00 AM!**

*Interview Committee  
Al Lindsay, Trish Lindsay, Ian Heliman, Mike Brown*

## EASTER SERVICES

### **Maundy Thursday Holy Supper - April 17th at 7 pm**

Please join us for this annual celebration of the Lord's Last Supper with His disciples, and His establishment of the Holy Supper. ALL are welcome.

### **Easter Sunday Worship, March 31st**

**6:30 am:** Sunrise Service at Alfred & Marlene Brown's followed by a light breakfast.

**11 am:** As per our tradition, Easter Sunday will be a family-service with a single talk suitable for all ages. Please consider bringing a non-perishable food item that will be distributed to our local food bank. There will be a processional to bring food offerings forward at the beginning of the service.



## **Society Annual Meeting Saturday, April 26, 2024 @ 10 AM**

The Annual Meeting of Members of the Freeport Society of the General Church is scheduled for Saturday, April 26 at 10 a.m. at the church.

This is an essential annual gathering in which we elect members of the Board, review our budget, and think about the state of the congregation and what we might focus on moving forward.

A report of the Nominating committee will be sent prior to the annual meeting.

## TUESDAY BIBLE STUDY

At the moment the Bible Study group is meeting Tuesdays at 1 pm at Ken and Zarah Blair's home at Concordia Haven 1 in Cabot. Currently, the focus of study is the Gospel of Mark. Contact Chris Bown with any questions (412-352-6332).

## "THE WONDERS OF HEAVEN"

This study and discussion group will continue meeting at church through the month of April on Wednesdays from 7-8 pm. Contact Chris Bown with any questions (412-352-6332).

## FROM THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Following are some highlights from the Board Meeting that occurred on March 11, 2025.

- The board is in the process of repairing the manse and greatly improving the driveway. This is a significant investment, but the board feels it is necessary prior to renting the downstairs unit.
- Sally has located a new piano for the church. It is a beautiful Baldwin from Slippery Rock University. It will be moved into the sanctuary soon. Congratulations us!
- We are in the final stages of accepting a land donation from Court Lee.

— Ian Heilman, Secretary



## APRIL 2025 CALENDAR EVENTS

- Tue, Apr 1:** 1 pm - Bible Study @ Blair's
- Wed, Apr 2:** 7 pm - The Wonders of Heaven Study Group
- Sat, Apr 5:** 10 am - Meet w/Rev. Olaf Hauptmann
- Sun, Apr 6:** Rev. Olaf Hauptmann
- Tue, Apr 8:** 1 pm - Bible Study @ Blair's  
7 pm - Board of Trustees
- Wed, Apr 9:** 7 pm - The Wonders of Heaven Study Group
- Sun, Apr 13:** Rev. Nathan Cole (*Palm Sunday*)
- Tue, Apr 15:** 1 pm - Bible Study @ Blair's
- Wed, Apr 16:** 7 pm - The Wonders of Heaven Study Group
- Thur, Apr 17:** 7 pm - Maundy Thursday Service
- Sun, Apr 20:** Rev. Lou Synnestvedt (*Easter*)  
6:30 am - Sunrise Service  
11 am - Easter Festival Service
- Wed, Apr 23:** 7 pm - The Wonders of Heaven Study Group
- Sat, Apr 26:** 10 am - Society Annual Meeting
- Sun, Apr 27:** Rev. Nathan Cole
- Wed, Apr 30:** 7 pm - The Wonders of Heaven Study Group



## VISITING MINISTER SCHEDULE

April 6 - Rev. Olaf Hauptmann

April 13 - Rev. Nathan Cole  
(*Palm Sunday*)

April 20 - Rev. Lou Synnestvedt  
(*Easter Sunday*)

April 27 - Rev. Nathan Cole