

The Royal Messenger

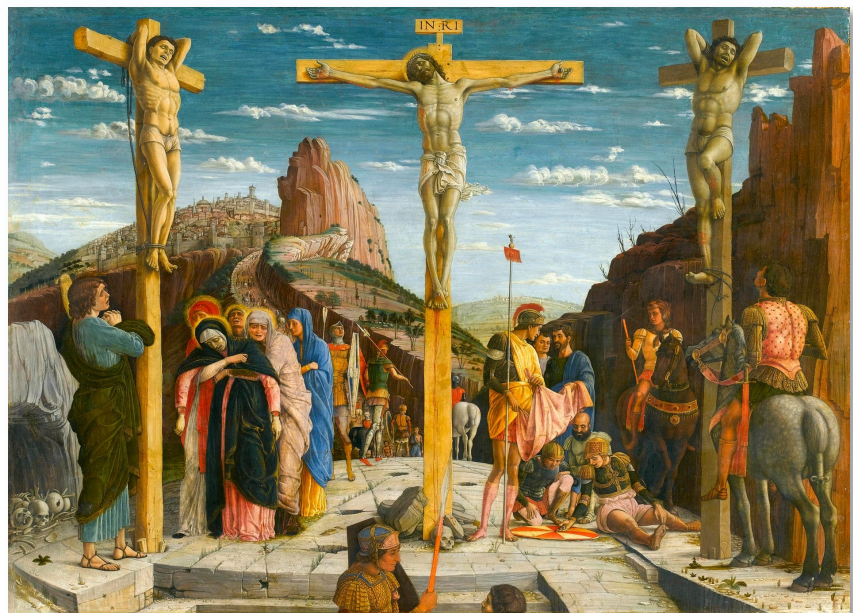
From the desk of Pastor Olsen:

Changing the Ending

Did you ever want to stop the movie you are watching before it gets to an end because you just know how this is going, and it is not going to be good? Have you watched a show for some time, either binge watch or worse yet, have watched for years and you don't want to watch the final episode because you just know it is not going to end well for your favorite characters? Or the boy won't get the girl. Or the bad guy is going to get away and the cowboy with the white hat won't get to ride off into the sunset?

If you could just stop the movie. If you could just not watch the final episode, then maybe, *just maybe* in your mind, that bad ending never happened. If you stop reading in time, maybe Romeo and Juliet will get to be together, alive that is. Or maybe if you just stopped watching, Han Solo is still alive, and he wasn't murdered by his own son. (Star Wars spoiler alert.) If somehow our imagination was more powerful than the reality, we could turn back the clock, make time stop, or change the ending. *If only . . .*

Try as I might, there is no way that I can possibly picture in my head how it must have been for those disciples and followers of Jesus on that Good Friday. John stands, the only disciple there, at the foot of the cross throughout the entire event, even unto Jesus' death, "So the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first, and of the other who had been crucified with him. But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. But one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once there came out blood and water. He who saw it has borne witness--his testimony is true, and he knows that he is telling the truth--that you also may believe." (Joh 19:32-35 ESV) **Surely John would have turned the clock back, even 24 hours if he could.**



Crucifixion by Andrea Mantegna, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons

Jesus' mother witnesses all of it. It has been said that no parent should have to see the death of their child, and yet could there be a more horrific death of your child than what Mary had to behold? Indeed, a sword would pierce her soul as was predicted when Jesus was just a tiny baby. The utter horror Mary had to behold and yet she stayed. She did not leave her son. Certainly, we do not pray to Mary but might we for a moment recognize the strength of this mother to stay

with her child. If anyone would have wanted to stop time, to turn it back or have a different ending it certainly would have been this mother, the very mother of the Son of God!

And what about those who ran away? What about Peter who denied Jesus and wept bitterly? What about those other disciples, apart from Judas of course, who were afraid for their own lives? If they could have turned back the clock or have stopped the "movie" or rewritten the ending, they probably would have done so. Fearful that they would be next, one can only imagine not just fear, but pain, loneliness, maybe even the guilt of not being there or doing anything to stop this. What agony they also must have felt in such a moment.

What about some of those other men, men who took part in Jesus' burial, men often forgotten about, but willingly dealt with Jesus lifeless body? *"After these things Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus, and Pilate gave him permission. So he came and took away his body. Nicodemus also, who earlier had come to Jesus by night, came bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about seventy-five pounds in weight."* (Joh 19:38-39 ESV)

The burial was necessary. What a horrible and terrible circumstance we would be in if the clock was turned back. **How terrifying it would be if this event on Calvary did not take place.** How utterly frightening it would be were the Son of God not to hang on that cross and make full payment, the perfect atoning sacrifice made once and for all time. If they had stopped "the movie," changed the script, or not let it play out as it needed to play out, we would be lost forever in our sin. We would face the eternal torment of Hell where the fire is never quenched, the devil would go on unchecked, and death would go undefeated bringing more destruction than it already had since the fall into sin.

It had to happen, and it had to happen this way. It was completely necessary that the Scriptures should be fulfilled. Two men were walking along the road to a certain town about seven miles away when a stranger appeared to them along the way. He inquired of what happened and their response tells all, *"But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel."* (Luk 24:21 ESV) They had hoped, but their hope was gone. They thought Jesus would redeem Israel, to restore, to free Israel once and for all. But you see this Jesus is dead. This is where they were on that first Easter morning. The pain and hopelessness were still there.

This word "redeem" is used only in two other places in the New Testament. One of those speaks volumes to what had to happen and why the payment price was high, so high that it cost the life of the very Son of God Himself. St. Peter records in his first letter, *"you were ransomed (redeemed/bought back) from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot."* (1Pe 1:18-19 ESV) His blood had

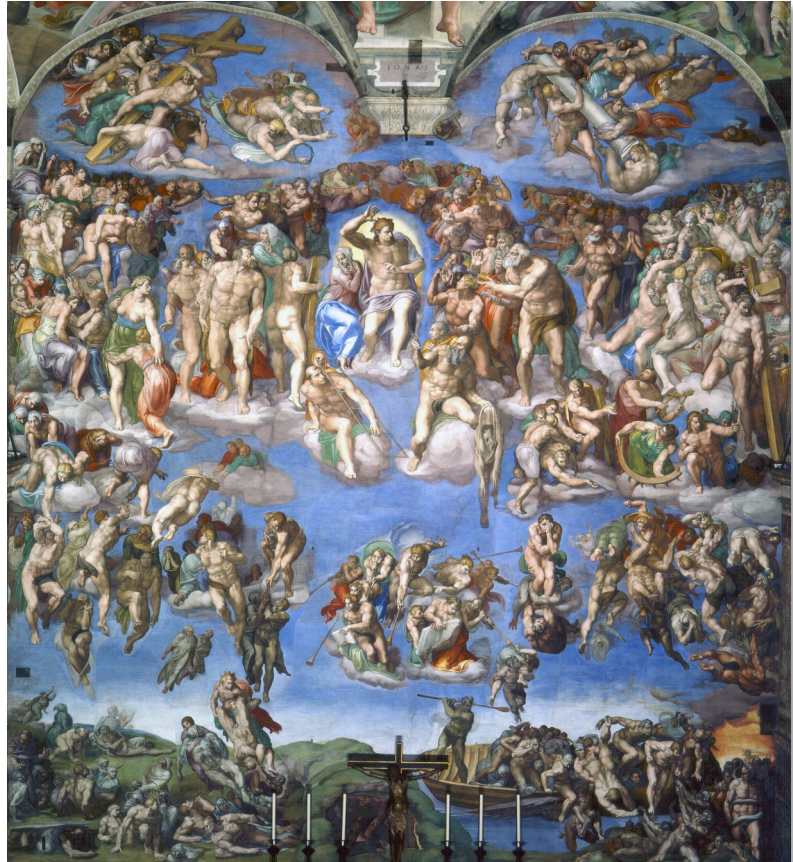


Road to Emmaus by Robert Zünd, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons

to be spilled. His death had to happen. **His complete atoning work was necessary.** By the blood of this very lamb, a lamb without blemish or spot, the perfect Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, you have your pardon and peace.

Those men along that road to Emmaus thought the hope died with Jesus, but they were wrong! Praise be to God that it did happen. Praise be to God that the clock wasn't turned back. Praise be to God that "we kept watching," because it was absolutely necessary that it all take place as it did so that full payment would be made for your sin!

As we approach Good Friday, a blessed and most holy day, we cannot get anywhere near to what these family members, disciples and followers of Jesus felt. There are no number of movies or series that is going to be able to recreate what happened on that necessary day. We would not have understood what was going on nor the need for it to happen more than they did. **But what we do know is that sacrifice, that blood was poured out and freely shed for you.** The one that stayed, the one that watched His Savior and your Savior, die gave us these words by way of the Holy Spirit for our peace, our comfort and our confidence, *"if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world."* (1Jo 2:1-2 ESV)



Last Judgement by Michelangelo, Sistine Chapel, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons

The story did not end that day when He died. The story did not

even end three days later. The story did not end when He ascended, or on Pentecost. As a matter of fact, the story, His story, continues until He returns on that last day when we, with those who have come before us, shall rise again and live forever bodily in the presence of God almighty. For those who are in Christ, there truly will be a "happy" ending the likes of which we have never seen, nor can we imagine. Until then, live safe and secure in the knowledge that you have died with Him, and you have risen with Him in the blessed waters of Baptism. Praise be to God that He did not change "the ending." AMEN.

Blessings in Christ,

Pastor P. C. O. [Signature]

— Holy Week Schedule —



PALM
SUNDAY
9 AM



MAUNDY
THURSDAY
7 PM



GOOD
FRIDAY
7 PM



EASTER
Easter Vigil 6:30 AM
Breakfast 7:45 AM
Divine Service 9:30 AM

A colorful illustration featuring a smiling sun with rays, a stack of pancakes with a fried egg on top, and a steaming mug of coffee. A brown banner across the bottom of the illustration reads "EASTER BREAKFAST please join us!".

April 20, 2025

★ MEMBERS, FRIENDS AND FAMILY ARE ALL INVITED TO SHARE BREAKFAST BETWEEN SERVICES ON EASTER MORNING. ★

A freewill offering will be taken to support the programs of the 125th Anniversary Celebration of Emmaus Lutheran Church.

Easter Vigil 6:30 am | Breakfast 7:45 - 9:00 am | Easter Festival 9:30 am

Bible Classes

Sundays Join us after church, around 10:20am, as we continue to delve into a variety of topics. Currently, we are learning more about the Book of Concord and the Lutheran Confessions.

Wednesdays During Lent, we have Bible Class from 6-6:45pm in the Library. Vespers follow at 7pm.

Thursdays Our Thirsty Thursday class will continue meeting at 10:45am Thursday morning in the Library until the end of May. Please note due to Maundy Thursday, there will be no class on April 17. And, on May 15, we go to Zion and join their Confessions class.



Serve, Clean Up & Have Fun

All are invited to volunteer with the Great American Cleanup, the nation's largest community improvement program. It is a time when we can show our community pride by lending a hand to clean up littered roadsides, parks, trails and river ways.



GREAT AMERICAN
CLEANUP

KEEP AMERICA BEAUTIFUL®

Last year, we made a great impact and had a lot of fun while cleaning up from the church property down to Scott Road. Join us this year, on **May 3 from 9—11:30 am**, to spruce up our neighborhood.

Please be sure to **sign up by Wednesday, April 9** at the table in the front hall, or call the church office. We must pre-register in order to receive sufficient supplies and T-Shirts for everyone.

Board of Finance Update

In the Feb/March Newsletter we reported that, as of mid-year, our budget was on track. In this edition we want to share another positive financial marker. Last year, while waiting on the second voucher installment, we maxed out our Line of Credit and used "Bridge the Gap" funds to meet operating expenses. **This year, the second Voucher installment arrived without our having to use any Line of Credit funds!** Not only did this decrease our interest expense, it also allowed some of us to sleep a little better. As always, we greatly need your continued faithful support and prayers to carry out God's work here at Emmaus Lutheran Church, School and Pre-school.



Thank you!

Gregg Kiess, Treasurer

P.S. The next **Finance Town Hall** will be held on **Tuesday, April 22** at 6:30 pm.

Women's Guild Update

We are happy to share a few updates and events with everyone.

LWML Mites Month Now is the time to collect those mites! March was Mites Month but we will not send them in until mid-to-late April. If you would like a Mitex box, please contact Lisa Kanning and she will send you one.

Easter Breakfast Join us on April 20 from 7:45—9am for food and fellowship between services. The Colbert Family, once again, is generously heading it up with our Guild. Please watch for sign-up sheets on April 6 and 13. This is a great opportunity to bring your friends and family to church! Please provide an estimated headcount so we can plan the food accordingly. Also, all monetary donations will go to our 125th Anniversary celebrations throughout the year.

Pizza Hut Discount Cards They're back by popular demand! Each \$10 card has six offers and each offer can be used up to four times — so you can use the card 24 times! They're accepted at Pizza Huts in 27 different towns. See one of the ladies to buy one, or a few, cards today.

Thank you!

Barb Kanning, Secretary

P.S. We will not meet in April. The **next meeting** will be **Wednesday, May 14** at 9am.

Letter from the Principal

Emmaus has been busy with learning and excitement! The halls are always alive with the sounds of students and teachers. Besides the regular curriculum here at Emmaus, we have had several exciting events take place.

- ⇒ Junior Achievement BizTown for 5th-8th Grade
- ⇒ Learn Not to Burn for Preschool-4th Grade, led by local firefighters
- ⇒ The NED Show (**N**ever give up, **E**ncourage others, **D**o your best) for K-8
- ⇒ Kindergarten Signing Day
- ⇒ StarBase for 5th Grade

The **School Auction** was a great success; not only financially but also the fun and fellowship that was shared, as we celebrate the students of Emmaus. Proceed dollars, still to be determined, will go to increase security and purchase risers for drama and musical performances. In addition, we raised a substantial amount of money for the Emmaus Endowment Fund.

The 6th-8th Grade **Wax Museum** is April 25, from 6-8pm while K-2 will host a **Spring Musical** on May 7 at 6:30pm.

PTL is hosting a **Carnival** coming on Friday, May 2 from 6-8pm. Please attend or share with those who may be interested.

The school year is starting to draw to a close and we thank God for the ministry opportunity that we have had. **Confirmation** will be Sunday, May 4th and we will be graduating the 8th Grade students this year on Wednesday, May 28, at 7pm; please join us in celebrating their education.

Enrollment is open for the 2025-2026 school year. If you know of anyone who is looking for a school home, please encourage them to consider Emmaus. We are excited to share God's love; schedule a tour and learn more about us.

Thank you for all you do to support the ministry of Emmaus Lutheran School, the students, families and staff. You are a blessing.

Growing up into Christ.

Blessings,
Esther Spanos, Principal



News from Preschool

Preschool will be busy the next couple of months. On Monday, April 28 we will be having **Grandparent's Day**! Every year we have a couple of children who do not have grandparents in the area and need an "adopted" grandparent for the morning. If you would be interested in doing that please see me and I will match you up with a child. The time commitment that day would be from 8:30-11:00 a.m.

On Monday, May 12 we will celebrate our **Mom's with Muffins** with Mom!

May 27 at 6:30 p.m. will be our Preschool Closing program with **PreK graduation**! We wear caps and gowns and it's the cutest thing ever and the congregation is welcome to come enjoy the graduation!

Thursday, May 29 is our traditional end of the year trip to the Ft. Wayne Children's Zoo. We spend the morning with our friends at the zoo! It's always a fun way to end the school year!

Our new climber for the **Preschool playground** should be shipped shortly. It's costing us a little more for the take out of the old climber than we initially anticipated so to offset that we are having another Andy's Knock-Out Chicken dinner on Friday, April 25! Look for more information soon!

Our **2025-2026** Preschool class is full with a waiting list and we have 8 openings left in our PreK program for next year! If you know somebody looking for a Christ-centered PreK program please send them our way!

Thank you for always supporting the Preschool with your prayers, paper towel rolls and other craft items!

In Christ,
Joann Olsen, Preschool Director





Andy's KO **FUND** *Chicken* **RAISER**

Proceeds will go toward
completing the new Preschool
playground equipment.

*Friday,
April 25*

*Only from
2-6 pm*



8626 Covington Rd, Fort Wayne

PREORDERS APPRECIATED

459.7722 for more details

Sunday, April 27 10:30am-12:30pm

DELICIOUS

CARRY-OUT

Spaghetti Lunch

Supported by the Board of Christian Education.
Proceeds go towards registration and travel costs of the
Higher Things Summer Conference at Calvin University

Lunch includes a generous helping of
spaghetti, garlic bread, salad and a dessert

Pay in Advance: \$8.00 per meal

Pay at the Door: \$8.50 per meal

Pre-purchased meals are appreciated to ensure proper planning.
Cash or check made out to Emmaus Lutheran Church.

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| Name: | |
| Phone Number: | |
| How many meals: | |
| Total Paid: | |

2025

PARKING LOT SALE



Saturday

MAY 17

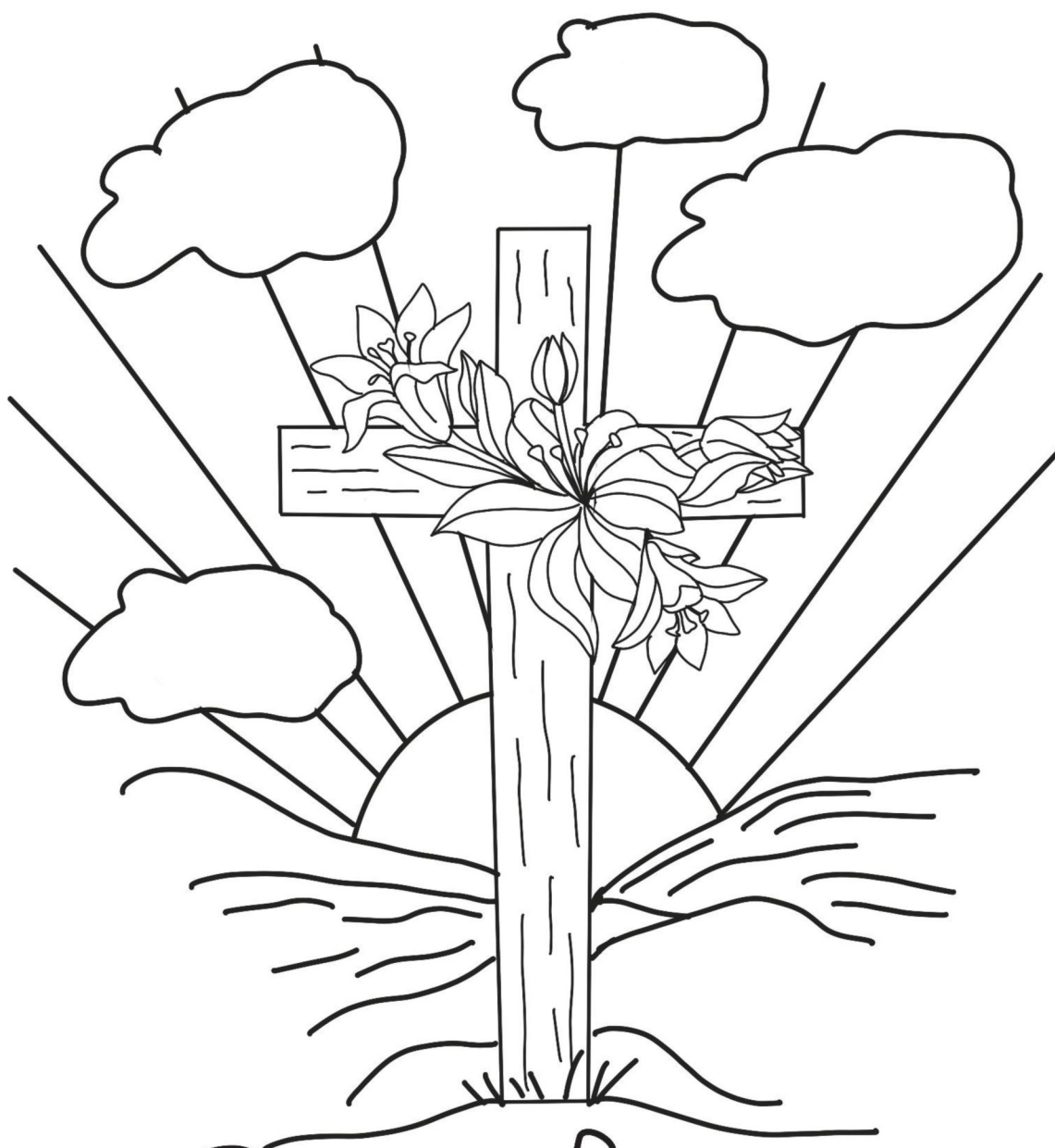
8:00am - 2:00pm

**Emmaus Lutheran Church
8626 Covington Rd., Fort Wayne**

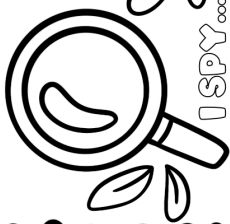
**You don't want to miss this
shopping extravaganza!**

**Follow our event on Facebook
for sneak peeks and more!**





He is Risen



FILL IN THE SCRIPTURE:

FOR GOD SO _____ THE _____, THAT HE
 GAVE HIS ONLY BEGOTTEN _____. THAT
 WHOSOEVER BELIEVETH IN HIM SHOULD NOT
 _____, BUT HAVE _____.

I SPY
 HOW MANY
 EASTER EGGS
 CAN YOU
 FIND?

JOHN 3:16, KJV
I LOVE EASTER SUNDAY BECAUSE...

UNSCRAMBLE THE WORDS:

BOTM
SOC SR
USEJS
ENSOT
ESIRN

HE IS RISEN!

**HELP THE DISCIPLES
 FIND THE RISEN
 MESSIAH!**



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Vice President:

Vacant

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Dr. David Reichwage

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Gregg Kiess

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www.emmausfortwayne.org

PLEASE
PLACE
STAMP
HERE

