

April Letter from the Pastor

My Dear Brothers and Sisters,

It is the month of April – of Easter and the empty tomb. The departure of coldest weather and the arrival of warmer temps and more sunshine. The opening of trout season; cold river waters filled with life. The beginning of field work on farms; things are greening up. Lots of little lambs are running around with more to come.

April is a month of newness, a welcome transition from March's cold and sometimes wet days and weeks. The month begins on Maundy Thursday, the evening of the Last Supper and the final events in Jesus' life that led to death. Good Friday, a somber day of remembered suffering and horror, when our precious Savior was crucified on our behalf. Saturday, a day when the disciples no doubt felt great sadness, and even greater regret. And Sunday, the day the stone was rolled away and our Risen Lord walked out of that tomb! We have life because He is Life, may His name be forever praised.

April is a month of renewal. The warmer temperatures and longer days mean trees will be budding out soon. Flowers will be popping up on the south side of buildings and hills. The trilliums will be decorating the woods. Those trout fisherman will be matching hatches and swatting at black flies as the chilly waters flow past their waders. The farmers will be waiting for the ground to dry up, making sure all the equipment is ready to go. And those lambs – just too cute. Denny Grabill has a nice flock out on the south side of town; they run back and forth, little skeins of wool with legs and bleeters.

April is a good month – enjoy it. Don't keep looking ahead with the expectation that May or June or July will be Your Month, that time of the year when things will be great again. Enjoy April...in April. Each day, whether rainy or sunny, is a blessing from God. If we have shelter, if we have adequate food and clothing, and our relationship with Jesus is progressing, then life is good. Celebrate that! If you need to get closer to Jesus, pray for that! If you want to somehow love others more in His name, pray for that! If you want to experience more joy in your life with Christ, pray for that! Perhaps rather than the Lord giving you more joy, He will simply help you to "see" the joys that are already flowing around you and then He will lead you to share that joy with others.

And if for some reason you are not feeling particularly optimistic about April and life in general, remember a couple of things – first, you are eternally special to God and *he loves you with a perfect love*. Second, you are eternally important to Polly and me, and we love you with a wonderful albeit imperfect love. Because of you, our lives are made brighter, warmer, and are filled with goodness and grace – all gifts from God, through you.

We give thanks, for April, and for you.

In Christ and Christ alone,

Pastor Mik