

Bethesda on the Bay Lutheran Church

Second Sunday of Easter

Also
Holy Humor Sunday
Hymnal Supplement, Now the Feast and Celebration

April 27, 2024
10:00AM

**Please stand as you are willing and able.
ELW refers to the red hymnal, Evangelical Lutheran Worship.*

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

The assembly gathers in quiet for prayer and meditation.

PRELUDE

Hornpipe

Noel Rawsthorne

*CONFESSION AND LITANY

Rev. Robert M. Thompson composed the following "Confession and Creed for Bright Sunday" to begin the worship:

Pastor: We believe in God, who made us in His image.

People: We live, we love, we laugh, because we are like Him.

Pastor: We believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, our Lord and Savior.

People: Jesus had the last laugh on the evil one when Jesus rose from the dead.

Pastor: We believe in the Holy Spirit, coequal and coeternal with the Father and the Son.

People: Our counselor, our guide, our motivator - Jesus is our joy!

Pastor: Forgive us, Lord, when we take ourselves too seriously, when we don't claim the happiness that is rightfully ours as your children, when we forget that you will have the last laugh in this world.

People: Restore to us the joy of our salvation, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*GATHERING SONG ~ Joy to the World, the Lord's Alive

From, The Joyful Noiseletter, April 2005

I. Joy to the World, the Lord's alive,

*Awake, rejoice and sing!
It's just as He had said,
He's risen from the dead.
Salvation now He brings,
Salvation now He brings,
Salvation, salvation now He brings.*

*2. Joy to the World, the empty tomb,
Proclaims a victory.
Of light compelling,
A great dispelling*

*Of darkness in the world,
Of darkness in the world,
Of darkness, of darkness in the world.*

*3. Joy to the World, Our Savior reigns,
Let Heaven and earth proclaim
The glories of His righteousness,
And wonders of His love,
And wonders of His love,
And wonders, wonders of His love.*

***PROCLAMATION & GREETING**

Alleluia! Christ is risen.
Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
And also with you.

***PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Let us pray.

O Great Laughing God, we come into your presence with joy and longing to be surprised. You know better than we do, Joyful God, what important people we believe ourselves to be. So often we think we have to be serious all the time and therefore we miss out on the joy and delight of your creation. Fill us with Easter's joy! Fill us with the love poured into us through Jesus Christ, our risen Lord and Savior. May we find that in giving up to laughter, there is healing and hope and abundance and blessing. Tickle our souls with the brush of your Spirit to renew our worship and our living. In Jesus name, **Amen.**

***NOW THE FEAST AND CELEBRATION**

Refrain

Now the feast and cel - e - bra - tion, all of cre - a - tion
sings for joy to the God of life and love and free - dom;
praise and glo - ry for - ev - er - more!



SPECIAL MUSIC

Send Us Thine Asteroid, O Lord Traditional
Sung by Emerson Emser

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

FIRST READING

Acts 5:27-32

²⁷ When they had brought [the apostles,] they had them stand before the council. The high priest questioned them, ²⁸ saying, “We gave you strict orders not to teach in this name, yet here you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and you are determined to bring this man’s blood on us.” ²⁹ But Peter and the apostles answered, “We must obey God rather than any human authority. ³⁰ The God of our ancestors raised up Jesus, whom you had killed by hanging him on a tree. ³¹ God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior that he might give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. ³² And we are witnesses to these things, and so is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey him.”

The reading may be concluded: Word of God, Word of Life.

The assembly responds: **Thanks be to God.**

SECOND READING

Revelation 1:4-8

⁴ John to the seven churches that are in Asia:

Grace to you and peace from him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven spirits who are before his throne, ⁵ and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth.

To him who loves us and freed us from our sins by his blood, ⁶ and made us to be a

kingdom, priests serving his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

⁷ Look! He is coming with the clouds;
every eye will see him,
even those who pierced him;
and on his account all the tribes of the earth will wail.

So it is to be. Amen.

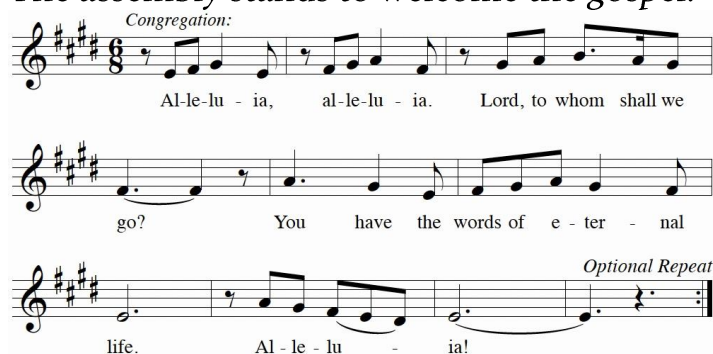
⁸ “I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.

The reading may be concluded: Word of God, Word of Life.

The assembly responds: Thanks be to God.

*GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

The assembly stands to welcome the gospel.



*GOSPEL

John 20:19-31

The gospel is announced. The holy gospel according to St. Luke.

Glory to you, O Lord.

¹⁹ When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you.” ²⁰ After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. ²¹ Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.” ²² When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³ If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.”

²⁴ But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. ²⁵ So the other disciples told him, “We have seen the Lord.” But he said to them, “Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe.”

²⁶ A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you.” ²⁷ Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe.” ²⁸ Thomas answered him, “My Lord and my God!” ²⁹ Jesus said to him, “Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not

seen and yet have come to believe.”

³⁰ Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. ³¹ But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

The gospel concludes: The gospel of the Lord.

The assembly responds: **Praise to you, O Christ.**

***REFLECTION**

The Rev. Angela Freeman

Silence for reflection follows the sermon.

The assembly stands to proclaim the word of God in song.

***HYMN OF THE DAY** We Know That Christ Is Raised ELW 449

***PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

P: God of resurrection and new life, we come before you in prayer for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

A brief silence.

A: Inspire the church with the breath of your Holy Spirit, that we sing the good news of the resurrection. Inspire deacons and pastors, lay leaders and bishops to boldly proclaim your love for all people. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

A: Preserve the earth as a safe home for all creatures. Restore habitats contaminated by pollution or overuse, strengthen efforts to shape more sustainable communities, and make us mindful of the impacts of our daily lives on the well-being of creation. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

A: Kindle in the nations a spirit of cooperation and mutual care. Raise up creative and courageous leaders committed to shaping just solutions to complex challenges in our local and global communities (*current issues of concern may be named*). Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

A: Embrace all who carry wounds, that they might know your compassion. Draw near to those with chronic pain or anxiety, and all for whom death is near. Comfort individuals and communities suffering in any way (*especially*). Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

A: Transform our fear into curiosity and love, especially across differences in race, religion, sexuality, gender identity, and economic situation. Unravel stereotypes that lead to discrimination, and destroy oppressive systems that marginalize vulnerable communities. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

A: We remember the faithful departed from all times and places. Confident that you are the Alpha and Omega, we pray for your wisdom and guidance until our earthly pilgrimage is complete. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

P: We commend these and all our prayers to you, O God, trusting that you are always with us; in the name of Jesus Christ, our risen Savior.

Amen.

***PEACE**

The presiding minister and the assembly greet each other in the peace of the risen Christ.

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

OFFERING MUSIC

An offering is gathered for the mission of the church, including the care of those in need.

OFFERING SONG

As the offering is brought forward to the altar, the congregation sings.

Refrain *Congregation:*



As the grains of wheat once scat-tered on the hill were
gath-ered in - to one to be - come our bread;
so may all your peo-ple from all the ends of earth be
gath-ered in - to one in you.

Verses



1. As this cup of bless-ing is shared with-in our midst
2. Let this be a fore-taste of all that is to come when
to Refrain
may we share the pres - ence of your love.
all cre - a - tion shares this feast with you.

OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray: Generous God,
you've filled our lives with laughter,
our hearts with hope,
and our pockets with more than enough loose change and holy possibility.
We bring these gifts not out of guilt,
but out of gratitude—
because you keep surprising us with love,
grace, and the kind of joy that makes us snort when we laugh.
Use what we offer—
our coins and our kindness,
our time and our talents,
our dollars and our dancing—
to tickle the world with resurrection joy
and to spread your love
like laughter in a quiet room.
In Jesus' name,
Amen.

*GREAT THANKSGIVING

The presiding minister greets the assembly and invites all present to give thanks.

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.
We lift them to the God of joy!

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

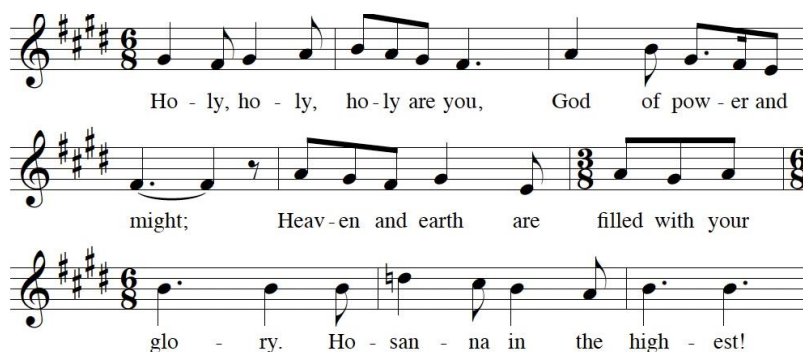
*PREFACE

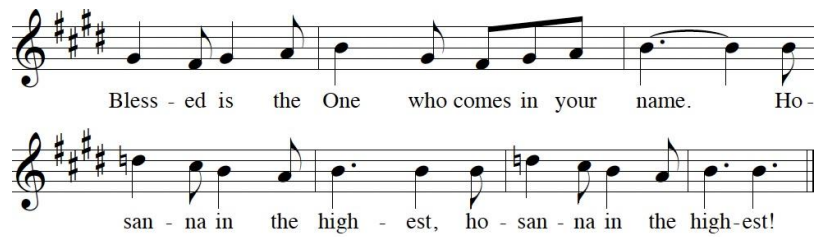
The presiding minister continues.

Holy and hilarious God,
how could we keep from laughing?
You flung stars into the sky like confetti,
tickled the bellies of whales,
and taught ostriches to run like they stole something.
You formed us in your image—
not with straight lines and stiff backs,
but with dancing knees and twinkling eyes.
Even when we turned from you,
you came after us—not with wagging fingers,
but with wide arms, ready to welcome us home.
Prophets told your jokes before they made sense—
valleys of dry bones rattling to their feet,
lions turned into sleepy kittens,
and a highway through the sea.

And so, with all who giggle in glory,
and all who still belly-laugh here on earth,
we sing your praise:

*HOLY





*THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

The presider continues with the eucharistic prayer.

Holy is your Son, Jesus Christ—
resurrected prankster of paradise,
who turned water into wine
and death into life,
who slipped out of the tomb
before the stone even hit the ground.
He walked through locked doors,
broke bread with the bewildered,
and whispered peace into every frightened heart.

On the night before the punchline,
Jesus took bread,
gave thanks, broke it, and said:
"Take, eat—this is my body, broken for you."

Then he lifted the cup,
grinning through the shadows, and said:
"Drink from this, all of you. This is the cup of the new covenant,
poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins."
"Do this in remembrance of me."

And so, we remember the story that still stuns us:

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again—

probably when we least expect it.

Pour out your Spirit, O God,
on us gathered here and on these gifts—
not just so we may remember,
but so we might be re-membered:
reassembled, re-animated, and re-sparked
as the body of Christ in the world.
Make us gigglers of grace,
whisperers of peace,

and holy fools for the sake of your kingdom.
All glory and laughter be yours,
God of holy joy,
now and forever.
Amen.

***LORD'S PRAYER**

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.
Our Father in heaven,
 hallowed be your name,
 your kingdom come,
 your will be done,
 on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
 as we forgive those
 who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
 and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
 and the glory are yours,
 now and forever.
Amen.

***INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

The risen Christ is made known to us
in the breaking of the bread.
Come and eat at God's table.

We will either come to the altar or remain in our seats today to receive communion. You can decide your own comfort level. Pre-filled elements available at the ushers stand when you came in. The Pastor can also come to you in your pew. If that is desired, please indicate to the Usher when they come by.

Holy Communion will be served in a continuous fashion at the altar. If you come forward, you are invited to receive bread from the presider in the center aisle. Let Pastor know if you need gluten free bread. The worship assistant will have a tray with small cups of wine. Light colored wine in the center of the trays is nonalcoholic. Place empty cups into the tray with the acolyte before returning to your seat.

LAMB OF GOD

Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the
 you break the chains of ha - tred and
 you are the way of jus - tice and
 you are the way of mer - cy and

world: have mer - cy on us, mer - cy on us,
 fear:
 peace:
 love.

Final Stanza
Congregation or Assistant:
 mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you

Congregation:
 take a - way the sins of the world: grant us peace,
 grant us peace, grant us peace.

COMMUNION MUSIC O Living Bread From Heaven ELW 542 This is Christ's Body ACS 967

This is Christ's bod - y, bro - ken and blest. Feed us with
 mer-cy and love. We are Christ's bod - y,
 bro-ken and blest. Heal us and make us one.

*PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray. Shepherding God,
 you have prepared a table before us
 and nourished us with your love.
 Send us forth from this banquet
 to proclaim your goodness
 and share the abundant mercy of Jesus,
 our redeemer and friend.
 Amen.

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

*BLESSING

The presiding minister proclaims God's blessing.

The God of resurrection power,
the Christ of unending joy,
and the Spirit of Easter hope
✠ bless you now and always.
Amen.

*SENDING HYMN Come, Let Us Laugh

Words: Jo Cassaday-Maloney

Tune: Come, Thou Almighty King (ELW 408)

1 Come let us laugh, pray, and sing! We have been given everything.
This is our chance – we can let it all hang out,
Never more have a doubt, giggle and snort and shout
It's time to dance!

2 Jesus is raised from the dead, this is word we just have to spread!
Now is the time – let it in waves just roll,
Try not to take control, don't sound too meek or droll
Like bells we'll chime!

3 Life has been turned around, death conquered, grace abounds
Our God is great! We have been freed from fear,
Grinning from ear to ear, wiping away each tear
Weeping can wait!

4 This is the day to rejoice! Give every child of God a voice.
Everyone hear! We've been redeemed and blessed
To care about the rest. Joy is our lasting guest
Year after year.

***SENDING**

Go now—

we will go with hearts full of laughter,
with eyes squinting from the brightness of grace,
with hearts wide open to holy surprises.

Be bold in your joy.

Be generous with your giggles.

**We will tell the good news with a grin,
and live like resurrection is the punchline
that changes everything.**

May your steps be light,
your burdens be lifted,
and your spirit be as free
as a kid on a swing in the sunshine.

The world needs the joy of Christ!

Let us go to share it.

***DISMISSAL**

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

He is risen indeed! Thanks be to God. Alleluia!

POSTLUDE

String Quartet in E-flat major, “The Joke”

Haydn

Leading Worship Today

The Rev. Angela Freeman

Eric Richardson

Dr. Matt Chiu

Chris Kiel

Mark Richardson

Rocco Giammarco

Norm Resko, Mark Richardson

Deb Weiland

Bill & Lynne Zeidler

Emerson Emser

Senior Pastor

Minister of Music

Organist

Assisting Minister

Lector

Acolytes

Ushers

Altar Guild

Tech Team

Sound

NRSV Scripture, Psalm, Liturgical Music and Hymns from Sundays and Seasons.com.
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"Come, Let Us Laugh.." Words: *Jo Cassaday-Maloney Tune: Come, Thou Almighty King (ELW*
408).

Next week's scripture: First Reading: Acts 9:1-6 [7-20]; Psalm: Psalm 30; Second Reading:
Revelation 5:11-14; Gospel: John 21:1-19.



BETHESDA ON THE BAY LUTHERAN
CHURCH & CHILDCARE CENTER

bethesdaonthebay.org

(440) 871-2276

info@bethesdaonthebay.org



ANNOUNCEMENTS

TODAY'S ALTAR FLOWERS ARE DEDICATED to the Glory of God by Sunny Baddour in memory of her brother Gibbs.

LARGE PRINT BULLETINS ARE AVAILABLE FOR THOSE WHO NEED THEM. SPEAK WITH AN USHER OR PASTOR FOR ASSISTANCE.

SCRIPTURE BASED COLORING SHEETS

Coloring sheets, based on the Sunday scripture, are available each week by the usher's stand. You are welcome to pick one up for use during worship or take it home with you for colorful prayer and meditation during the week.

EASTER FELLOWSHIP HELPERS

Thank you to the following who helped provide a wonderful time of fellowship on Easter: Laura English, Marianne Schmidt, Lisa Hanson, Dave Lembke, Lynne Zeidler, Nancy Fetterman, Barb Woodburn, Diana Wolfe, Holly Risch, Rachel Musser, Deb Coleman, Sandy Sittler, Melanie Long, Jane Lennon, David Johnson, Dave Lembke, Amy Hisey, Lisa Hisey, Krystina Schmidt, Marion Zelinski, Diane Poretsky, Joan Appleby, Mary Beth & Mark Larsen.

SUNDAY MORNING ADULT FORMATION

PRAYER BOOK OF THE BIBLE Beginning April 27

Sunday Adult classes will be on break for Holy Week and the first week of Easter, gathering again on Sunday, April 27 at 9:00 in the lounge. Beginning a series on the Psalms. The group will discuss Psalms, The Prayer Book of the Bible by Dietrich Bonhoeffer and read corresponding psalms. The small book is provided for you. Come together for a meaningful and prayerful time during the holy season of Easter.

2025 BETHESDA GRADUATES

It's the time of year to celebrate our graduates! If there is a high school or college graduate in your family this year, please email the following information to info@bethesdaonthebay.org:

- Name
- Where graduating from
- Degree, if applicable
- Future plans
- Any special honors they would like highlighted
- A current photo. (5x7 is preferred but we will use whatever you provide. The photo does not have to be professional, and it can be mailed, dropped at church, or emailed. Please note emailed photos will be printed from church copy machine so will not be photo grade.)

BLESSING BAGS

Collection through May 11, Assembly after worship May 18

Many Blessing Bags were assembled during God's Work Our Hands Sunday last year. All of them have been distributed. This is a simple but meaningful way to offer a tangible gift to someone who is in need. We are going to make another batch of Blessing Bags! Your generosity last fall left us with some extra supplies. Listed below are the supplies and quantities we need now to make 50 more bags. Please remember that we can only use small, travel-size toiletries. This list will be updated weekly. Thank you for your help!

50 Pairs of Tube socks

41 Shampoo

50 Conditioner

40 Soap

44 Deodorant

34 Razors

44 Shaving Cream

50 Snacks (e.g., granola bars; something small that won't melt in a hot car)

24 Hand Sanitizer

35 Kleenex packs

50 Small 8oz. Water Bottles

2025 SYNOD ASSEMBLY

Watch Party at Bethesda - May 17 9:00 am - noon

Bethesda is a member congregation of the Northeastern Ohio Synod, one of 65 synods of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Annually, the Bishop and Synod Council gathers the congregations and Rostered Ministers together to conduct business and direct the next year of collective ministry.

This year's Assembly will be a virtual assembly with Watch Parties available around the synod for voting members to gather in fellowship. Bethesda is one of the hosts for a watch party. Help is needed to host with refreshments and hospitality that morning, and anyone is welcome to attend as a guest of the assembly. If you are available to help or would like to be a guest, please reach out to Pastor Angela.

CONFIRMATION

Today – Bowling Party to celebrate the end of the year! 2:00 – 4:00 pm at Nautical Lanes in Avon Lake. The next Confirmation class is Thursday, May 1st 6:00 – 8:00 pm. Keep them in your prayers as they grow in their faith and as people in the weeks ahead. For more information, contact Pastor Angela.

CHURCH OFFICE COMMUNICATION

Main Office and Chrissy: info@bethesdaonthebay.org

Pastor Angela: pastor.angela@bethesdaonthebay.org

Church Office hours Monday – Thursday 9:00am – 2:00pm

WEEKLY BIBLE STUDY

Gather weekly on Wednesday at 10:00am for Bible study and discussion about the assigned scripture we hear on the approaching Sunday morning. Bible Study not meeting April 16 or 23. No expertise needed. Share together in open conversation, prayer and fellowship.

PEACEMAKERS QUILTERS

The Peacemakers is an outside group that meets at Bethesda Thursdays at 9:00 am, now through May 2025. They quilt and donate their quilts to charitable groups that need them, with the support of Thrivent Financial. New quilters and sewers are welcome anytime. The sewing technique is straight-seam. They also have projects you can do at home! If you are interested in learning more or joining the group, contact the office or show up on Thursday!

LUTHERAN WIND ENSEMBLE

Saturday, May 10th at 2 pm, Americana – a concert featuring marches and show tunes – will be presented at the Jochum Center at Lutheran West (3850 Linden Rd., Rocky River, OH 44116). Tickets are \$10. For more information, email Lutheranwinds@gmail.com.

CHURCH COUNCIL MARCH MEETING SUMMARY

- Council elected new officers for the upcoming term: Diana Wolfe (President), David Webner (Vice President), Malena Hansen (Secretary), and Bill Zeidler (Treasurer). All nominees were unanimously approved.
- Bethesda Child Care Center (BCCC) is thriving and fully registered for fall. Due to high demand, someone even camped overnight to secure a spot. Council will explore clearer guidelines for prioritizing church members and staff during registration.
- Chrissy Morscher has been successfully enrolled in ELCA Portico benefits, including healthcare, as previously approved. No financial impact to Bethesda.
- A new insurance policy through Lightwell Insurance Advisors/Brotherhood Mutual was unanimously approved. The total annual premium is \$13,337, with a small retroactive adjustment.
- Building updates included the need to repair western stained-glass windows (\$19k quote received), explore HVAC servicing (not addressed in over 4 years), and continue work on outdoor shade solutions.
- The church remains ahead of budget, though some maintenance and insurance expenses were higher than anticipated. BCCC finances remain strong, with increased revenue and a profit reported for January and February.
- Council discussed long-term building improvements, including adding a second ramp for better accessibility. A future capital campaign may be considered.
- The NEOSynod Assembly will be held virtually on May 17. Bethesda will host an in-person watch party for delegates with worship to follow.
- Next meeting is focused on teams, scheduled for April 30.

