

The New Humanity

a monthly newsletter from



St. Luke
Lutheran Church

April 2026

The New Humanity, affectionally referred to as the "NuHu," is inspired by Ephesians 2:15: *"that Christ might create in himself one new humanity in place of the two, thus making peace."*

This longer, monthly newsletter includes articles from staff and one committee in addition to the regular weekly announcements. May we be reminded of our New Humanity in Christ as we read and reflect together.

This month's contents:

- From the Pastor's Fireside
- Committee Spotlight
- From the Loft
- Announcements
- Pray together
- Calendar

From the
Pastor's
Fireside
Pastor Jason Churchill



Easter Letter

Dear Beloved Community,

Christ is risen. Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

As we enter Holy Week, I find myself drawn again to the holy mystery at the heart of our faith, not as something to be explained or mastered, but as a story we are invited to enter, together.

One of the deepest convictions that has emerged in my own work is this: *theology does not live only in texts or ideas. It comes alive in community—in the act of reading, listening, questioning, and dwelling in the story together.* Meaning is not handed down fully formed. It is encountered...slowly, honestly...among people willing to walk the path side by side.

Holy Week invites us into that kind of shared encounter.

We do not come to Easter by skipping ahead. We come by walking the path.

From the moment Jesus crosses the gate into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, everything begins to unfold. The crowd gathers. Voices rise. Hope and tension fill the air. It is a moment filled with expectation—and with risk.

That feels a lot like the world we are living in now.

There is much unfolding around us. War continues to shape the lives of countless people. Protests rise from deep cries for justice and dignity. The pace of change and the weight of uncertainty can leave us feeling unsettled, even overwhelmed. At times, it can feel as though a shadow is stretching across everything.

But this is precisely the kind of world into which the story of Holy Week speaks.

Jesus enters a world marked by empire, fear, and fragile hope. What is most striking is not only what happens to him, but how he moves through it.

He does not meet violence with violence.

He does not answer fear with fear.

He does not grasp for power in the ways the world expects.

Instead...

At the table, he offers love.

At the cross, he extends forgiveness.

In the face of death itself, he entrusts everything to God.

This is the mystery we are invited not just to observe, but to inhabit.

Because Easter is not simply the celebration of an empty tomb. It is the revelation of a way of being in the world—a way shaped by peace, grounded in love, and committed to justice that does not mirror the violence it resists.

And this is why being present for Holy Week matters.

On Good Friday, we enter the darkest part of our story. We stand at the cross. We let the weight of it settle. And just when it feels as though darkness has the upper hand... the service ends.

But listen closely to the final hymn of that night.

What sounds like an ending is not the end.

God does not abandon the story to the shadow.

The hymn foreshadows what is yet to come.

Resurrection will break in—not by erasing what has happened, but by declaring that it does not have the final word. Love endures. Life rises. Peace is not defeated.

This is the hope we carry.

And so I invite you to enter this story with us:

Maundy Thursday – April 2 – 7:00 PM

Good Friday – April 3 – 7:00 PM

The Great Vigil of Easter – April 4 – 7:00 PM

April 5 – Easter Breakfast – 8:30 AM

Followed by Festival Worship – 10:00 AM

Wherever you find yourself this season hopeful or weary, certain or searching, you are welcome. There is a place for you in this story, and a place for you in this community.

May this Holy Week draw you into the deep mystery of Christ's peace. And may Easter awaken in you a hope that is strong enough to face the world as it is—and still trust in the world as God is bringing it to be.

With love and resurrection hope,

Pr. Jason



From the Loft

Erik Kibelsbeck
Music Director

In this month's column, I thought I'd share about the music that is packed into the next four days. There is great richness here and you are invited into the full richness of it all. I am so grateful to our choir for making the time in their busy schedules to make it happen.

On Maundy Thursday, the choir will offer a setting by Edward Elgar of the "Ave Verum Corpus" text. For the conclusion of the service while the altar decorations are removed, the setting of Psalm 88 by Michael Clarkson will be used again; I find it very compelling. During individual absolution, something a little different: some piano music by Chopin.

Good Friday's core is the proclamation of the Passion Gospel. Starting during the pandemic we used Tomas Luis da Victoria's setting a few times, then did one by Erik Meyer. Last year we did the big Charles Wood setting which is so expansive that it comprised the bulk of that service. This year we'll do a shorter one again so that the liturgy will be more complete. Heinrich Schuetz composed the setting. As is typical, a narrator declaims the text, and other singers take the roles of Jesus, Pilate, and others. The choir sings the parts of the crowd, along with a concluding prayer.

The Easter Vigil as we do it here is mainly a congregational service musically, aside from the proclamation of the Exsultet by a cantor. Responses to the readings, the great "This is the Feast" in procession into the sanctuary decorated for Easter, and two great Easter hymns are included.

And then at the Sunday festival, brass and timpani will enhance the music as is traditional. The prelude (really before the service on this occasion, don't be late!) is a splendid crescendo from a whisper to full brass, organ and timpani. One of the many brass settings (I think St. Luke owns eight different ones!) of "Jesus Christ is Risen Today" opens the service; all the hymns will be in festive settings. The choir offers a late Renaissance setting of "This is the Day the Lord Has Made" as the anthem. The postlude might sound familiar, it is a version for brass and organ of the postlude from Transfiguration, returning to joyful postludes after Lent.

Committee Spotlight

The Congregational Life Committee

Congregational Life continues to provide coffee and refreshments for our after worship service fellowship. The Church Council graciously covers the 3rd Sunday of each month. If other committees would like to handle a week and set up a display for your work within and outside the church, let me know (ledewalt@gmail.com). Help is always welcome even if you are not a baker. There are opportunities to set-up, clean-up or even take home the table cloth for cleaning.

Easter breakfast is the next big event and we have many people signed up to help with set-up, clean-up, and bringing casseroles and baked goods. More help is always appreciated. The warm weather this week



reminds me that Summer is fast approaching, along with our service in the park and picnics.

Luke hard at work preparing for coffee hour after worship.

Announcements



CONNECT in COMMUNITY



Holy Week

St. Luke Lutheran Church | 109 Oak Ave in Collegetown

<i>Palm Sunday</i>	<i>Maundy Thursday</i>	<i>Good Friday</i>	<i>Easter Vigil</i>	EASTER
MAR 29	APR 2	APR 3	APR 4	APR 5
10:00 am	7:00 pm	7:00 pm	7:00 pm	10:00am

 **ALL ARE WELCOME WITHOUT EXCEPTION** 

Remember, God loves YOU!
stlukeithaca.org

Easter Sunday

8:30 am Breakfast

10:00 am Holy Communion

All are invited to the table without exception!



SERVE in COMMUNITY



Easter Breakfast

Thank you to everyone who has signed up to help, prepare, make food, serve, and clean up! We are looking for a couple more folks to help on Easter morning by brewing coffee and setting up at 8am, and a couple to help by serving food starting at 8:15am. We have a good number of folks bringing food, but if you had your heart set on making some to share please do! It's always better to have too much than too little when it comes to breakfast celebrations. You can use the link below to sign up online or send a quick email to [Luke](#).

Easter Breakfast Sign Up



LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF

Lutheran World Relief Personal Care Kits (LWR PCKs): Our goal is to assemble 50 PCKs for LWR. There are three ways you can help:

- 1) Donate needed items (see list below),
- 2) Make Monetary Donations and Social Ministry will buy items (mark checks/envelopes with "Personal Care Kits", place in the offertory plate or give online via Tithely and choose the fund [Personal Care Kit](#)),
- 3) Mail Order items and send them directly to St. Luke Lutheran Church at 109 Oak Ave., Ithaca, NY 14850 to the Attn. of Monica Vakiner. We also need help with shipping costs (\$4.00 per kit).

Items Needed:

- dark colored lightweight bath towels,
- bath-sized soap bars (need 8 to 9 ozs. per kit), and
- metal nail clippers.

Place items in the large box near the office in the narthex. Thank you so much for helping St. Luke to be a global neighbor.

Will be collecting until April 12, 2026.

Thanks for supporting St. Luke and Lutheran World Relief

[Donate to the Personal Care Kit fund here.](#)

Feeding the Hungry

Ithaca Kitchen Cupboard:

Personal Care Items are needed for the Red Wagon during the month of April, including bar soap, shampoo,

toothpaste, and diapers. Also, we need reusable grocery-sized bags for the clients using the IKC. Please place the bags near the Red Wagon. Thank you!



BLUE WAGON for the BLUE CABINET:

Spring is here and temperatures seem to be above freezing, so no more worries about cans exploding in our blue cabinet! Please consider donating canned soups, tuna, and plastic jars of pasta sauce, peanut butter and jam. Cereal, oatmeal, macaroni and cheese, pasta, protein bars and toilet paper are always welcome. Thank you for supporting this ministry!

Pastor Jason will be out of the office from Monday, April 6th until Sunday, April 12th, and will not be available via email or phone.

We pray together for and with...

... Austin and Kori Barnett, Jane. For our service members killed and injured. For places of war and strife.

Upcoming commemorations of saints, renewers of society, and other festivals can be [found here](#). Prayers are added weekly to our list and will remain for three weeks. If you wish to extend the name of the person for whom we are praying please inform the office. To add someone to the prayer list please [email the Communications Manager](#).

Calendar

Thursday, April 2

9:00 am Peace by Piece Quilters
1:00 pm CCC Events Committee
7:00 pm Maundy Thursday Service

Friday, April 3

7:00 pm. Good Friday Service

Saturday, April 4

7:00 pm. The Great Vigil of Easter

Sunday, April 5 EASTER

8:30 am Easter Breakfast
10:00 am Holy Communion

Tuesday, April 7

No Bible Study while Pastor Jason is away.

Wednesday, April 8

1:00 pm. Collegetown Community Collective

Thursday, April 9

1:00 pm. CCC Events Committee

*St. Luke Office is generally open: Mon. 1 pm-5 pm, Tues. 9:30 am-1 pm,
Wed. 8am-4pm, Thur. 9:30 am-5pm, Fri. 9:30 am-1pm*

***If you would like to be removed from this list, please reply or [send us an email](#) with UNSUBSCRIBE in the subject line. We will be sad to see you go, but...
Remember, God loves you!***

Download Our Church App!

Download our St. Luke Lutheran church app for free.

[Download now](#)



**Sunday 10:00 am
Service of Holy Communion**

St. Luke is a [Reconciling in Christ Congregation](#) of the [ELCA](#). As a Reconciling in Christ Congregation, the people of St. Luke Lutheran Church are called by God to be a community of Christians, a part of the body of Christ. Because we believe we are one in God's eyes, we welcome the mix of ages, races, gender identities, physical and mental capabilities, and sexual orientations with which God's children are blessed. Everyone is invited to share in God's grace. We rejoice in the knowledge that nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus--not our wealth, nor our poverty, nor our nationality, nor our political convictions, nor whom we love, nor anything else in all creation. We are called to follow God's mission of reconciliation and justice with all humanity, and we celebrate our journey of discipleship with a special appreciation for the privileged responsibility of our campus related ministry.

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Our mailing address is:
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