

CHIMNEY ROCK LUTHERAN CHURCH -- APRIL NEWS

Pastor David Sands Writes . . .

George Washington Carver was born a slave in the American south. But against all odds, he became a great botanist who literally rebuilt the southern agricultural economy after the Civil War. He developed hundreds of uses for peanuts, and dozens of products from sweet potatoes and soybeans. Much of his research was conducted in his laboratory, which he called "God's Little Workshop." But in spite of his great accomplishments, George Washington Carver remained a very humble man, who gave all of the credit and glory for his work to the Lord. Carver once explained his relationship with God by saying "There is literally nothing that I have ever wanted to do that I asked the blessed Creator to help me do, that I have not been able to accomplish. It's all very simple if one knows how to talk with the Creator." Indeed, Carver talked regularly with the Creator. He had a habit of rising at four o'clock every morning to walk in the woods, and talk to God. Carver confessed, "There He gives me my orders for the day. I gather specimens and listen to what God has to say to me." The Lord says, "Follow me," and the faithful obey.

We can't physically see heaven or hell. We have never talked to any of the spirit-led authors of Scripture. As believers, we are convinced by faith, of their truthfulness, and we live accordingly. We base our present lives and future destinies on invisible realities. It has always been that way for the true followers of God. The Apostle Paul said, "We walk by faith, not by sight" (2 Corinthians 5:7)

The men who were chosen by Jesus to be his disciples, were people just like you and me. They weren't distinguished for their natural talents, or intellectual power. They were prone to mistakes, wrong attitudes, lapses of faith, and bitter failures. They came from ordinary occupations that would never have suggested they were candidates for spiritual success. But they did the only thing that really mattered. When Christ called "Follow Me," they answered "Yes", and responded immediately. For those original disciples, "following Christ" was an everyday reality. And it should be for us too.

An old pastor once said, he could always tell when a Christian was growing, because a growing Christian would always talk more and more about Christ, and less about himself. When a Christian matures in his walk with the Lord, he sees himself getting smaller and smaller until, like the morning star, he or she, gives way to the rising Son.

Christ called to the original disciples with the summons, "Follow me" and they answered "Yes." They didn't ask, "What's in it for me?" They didn't wait to see if everyone else was going to follow along, before they would agree. They didn't make excuses that it wasn't a convenient time for them. They didn't suggest that perhaps they'd have more time when they retired, or after they'd gotten on top of their careers. For them, it wasn't a matter of popularity, or fame, or riches. They answered "yes" out of a desire to have a relationship with Jesus the Christ. And through their own ministries, each of the original disciples has echoed Christ's call, around the world and through the centuries - "Follow me." Through them Christ continues to invite each of us, to follow him.

Jesus himself stands at the crossroads of our destiny, and demands a deliberate choice of life or death, heaven or hell. The Lord requires that each person choose between following the world on the easy, well-traveled road, or following Him on the narrow, but sometimes difficult road. Christ showed us the way, and those who have gone before us in faith, have left behind footsteps for us all to follow. The question is: Will we?

Yours in Christ, *Pastor David Sands*

Cemetery News Shared

Please remove all winter wreaths and decorations from the cemetery by April 1st. Thank you for your cooperation.

Come to the Lorn & Royce Band Special Music Service on April 6

Please join us at Chimney Rock on Sunday, April 6, at 9:30am for a special music service led by bluegrass/gospel musicians, Lorn Schultz and Royce Sorensen, also known as the Lorn and Royce Band. They have come full circle after starting together in the '80s as founding members of *The King's Trio*. Lorn went on to form *The King's Countrymen*, which included bus tours to Nashville, Branson, plus numerous recordings over the band's 26-year run. Lorn and his wife Kristi hosted a very successful and dearly loved Bluegrass Gospel Festival every summer for 18 years on their Mondovi farm. In addition to

23 years with *The King's Trio*, Royce uses his multi-instrumentalist skills as a sideman in numerous Wisconsin bluegrass bands. He also has a recording business at his Eau Claire home studio. The two "old friends" continue to share their love of bluegrass/gospel music and giving testimony to the work of Christ in their lives. Coffee will be served after the service. Bring your friends and help spread the word!

Dairyland Conference Morning of Renewal Scheduled

The 2025 W/ELCA Morning of Renewal is scheduled for Wednesday, April 9, 2025, at Immanuel Lutheran Church in Strum. The day begins with registration and coffee from 8:30-9:30am, and the meeting begins at 9:30am. The guest speaker will be Paul Savides, volunteer organizer with JONAH (Joining Our Neighbors Advancing Hope). Mr. Savides is also co-chairman of the JONAH Affordable Housing Task Force. \$20 registration fee is due April 2. Lunch will be served at noon, and the event ends at 1pm.

Holy Week Worship Services Listed

Holy Week begins with Palm Sunday worship at 9:30am on April 13. The Sunday School kids will sing and serve lunch. Good Friday worship will be held at 6:30pm on April 18, and we'll celebrate our risen Lord on Easter Sunday, April 20. Hope you can join us for these important services in the church year.

Synod Assembly Planned for April 26

Rostered leaders, SAMs, congregational delegates and guests are invited to attend the annual synod assembly under the theme "Come and See!" This one-day event will bring us together for resolutions, partner ministry updates, connections, and worship. The event will be held on Saturday, April 26, from 8am to 5pm at Bethany Lutheran Church located at 35 W. Messenger Street in Rice Lake, Wisconsin. Chimney Rock can send two delegates—one male and one female. Register online at nswi.org.

Drive-Thru Chicken Dinner Scheduled for April 27

Contact People—Forrest Nutter (715.695.3487) Barb McGee (715.695.3448) Barb Sylla (715.985.3496)
Saturday, April 26, beginning at 9:30am—we'll package buns, bars, and beans for the Sunday meal. Please bring bars by 10am. We're asking for 9 x 13 pans of bars that can easily be packaged (no cakes or refrigerator desserts, please). Please don't cut your bars; we'll do that on Saturday so they're all the same size.

Sunday, April 27, at 9:30am—Worship Service.

Our Drive-Thru Chicken Dinner will be held from 10:30am till gone. The menu will include ¼ charcoaled chicken, bag of chips, beans, dinner roll, bar, and bottle of water at a cost of \$10 per meal.

Monetary donations would be appreciated to offset dinner expenses for food and supplies (chicken, charcoal, chips, buns, paper products, water, etc. need to be purchased). \$70 if you want to donate a case of chicken plus charcoal. Make checks payable to Chimney Rock Lutheran Church and place them in the offering plate on Sunday or submit to Dan Solfest. Please note on your check/envelope that your donations are for "chicken dinner expenses." Because of your generosity in 2024, we cleared \$3,691.08!

Workers Needed—We had wonderful cooperation at our dinners the last three years, with about 50 people helping in one capacity or another each year. Let's make sure that this year is a success, too! Please volunteer or say "yes" when asked to help. Thank you!

Parking—Because our dinner is a drive-thru, we can't park in the usual places on April 27. Please park north or south of the church or alongside the newest cemetery, leaving Church Road open for customers who will drive in the church driveway and go north past the hill cemetery and exit on Solfest Road.

Thank you in advance to everyone for your cooperation and continued support!

Luther Park Bible Camp Registration Open

Confirmation parents, registration is now open if your students are interested in attending Luther Park Bible Camp in Chetek this summer. We haven't received any printed materials, but you can go online (lutherpark.org) to get information and schedules, call 715-859-2215, or email the camp at info@lutherpark.org. Our church pays \$100 towards the registration fee.

Worship Assistants Needed

Please check the green sheet in the narthex and sign up to read, greet, or usher on open dates. We appreciate all of you who have volunteered—including our Confirmation and Sunday School students.

Join Us for Coffee

Thank you to those who have served coffee after worship on Sunday mornings. When you sign up in the narthex, be prepared to bring food for approximately 25 people. Beverages will be provided.

We Acknowledge the Following Memorials . . .

- ❖ Monty Loomis memorials to the General Fund given by family and friends
- ❖ Dale, Roxie, and Terry Erickson memorials to the Cemetery Fund given by Jerry Erickson.
- ❖ Oliver & Agnes Hawkenson memorial to the Cemetery Fund given by Dan & Beverly Brey family
- ❖ Beverly Brey memorials to the Cemetery Fund given by Brey family and friends, Bill and Mary Hermanson, Al and Shelly Barneson, Greg and Sandra Peterson, and Bev and Dick Paulsen
- ❖ Gordon and Mary Peterson and Arnold and Grace Barneson memorial to the Cemetery Fund given by Al and Shelly Barneson

Please Inform Pastors of Illness & Hospitalizations

If you hear that one of our members is hospitalized, please let Pastor Sands or Monica know. Because of HIPAA laws, hospitals no longer contact pastors when someone is admitted. Also, please contact them about illnesses—even when the member isn't hospitalized.

Membership

If anyone is interested in becoming a member, please talk to Pastor David Sands or Synodically Authorized Minister (SAM) Monica Dejno. Their contact information is located on the calendar page.

Church Offerings

Please remember that our church needs your continued financial support. Jason has put a "donate" button on our church website (www.chimneyrockchurch.org) for those who wish to contribute electronically. E-Pay information is also included in this issue. Of course, checks are the preferred method of donation and should be made payable to Chimney Rock Lutheran Church. If you don't attend Sunday worship, your offering can be sent to one of the addresses listed below.

Chimney Rock Lutheran Church
N43255 Church Rd.
Strum, WI 54770

Daniel Solfest
N43178 State Rd. 93
Strum, WI 54770

E-Pay Available at Chimney Rock

If anyone would like to send their contributions to the church electronically, please contact Treasurer Dan Solfest for the correct information. You will need the church's account name, account number, depository bank's name, and bank's Federal Reserve Bank routing number. You will also need to tell your bank the amount to send and frequency of remittance. Dan can be reached at 715.985.3242 or in church on Sundays. Thank you for your interest in supporting Chimney Rock Lutheran Church.

Newsletters

For those who can't access the monthly newsletters electronically via email, our church website, or Facebook, please pick up a printed copy the last Sunday of each month for the next month's calendar and news. Newsletters will be mailed to those who don't have electronic access or aren't in church to pick up a copy. Any questions, please contact Barb Sylla at 715.985.3496 or bbsylla8246@gmail.com. Information to be included in the newsletter should be submitted by the 20th of each month.

Our Vision Statement

Be alive and well in ten years with healthy evangelism and vital family fellowship.

Our Mission Statement

We, as a family of God, rooted in the strength and inspiration of God's Holy Spirit, are called forward facing challenges by the promises of God to reach out in love to our rural community, especially cherishing and welcoming children.

April Birthdays and Anniversaries

1st—Tony Rustad
2nd—Collin Koval
4th—Alexandria Loewenhagen
5th—Nathan Olson
6th—Barb Sylla, Virginia Howard
9th—Michele Barneson

11th—Kayden Kensmoe
13th—Chuck Girtman
14th—Mary Hermanson
15th—Diesel Berg, Jackson McGee
16th—Matt Olson
21st—Pam Flikkeshaug, Arne Olson

25th—Denise Loesel
26th—Bob Kolve
27th—Jenessa Perry
30th—Kris Flury

Chimney Rock Congregational Council Minutes – March 10, 2025

Call to Order—Trustee Don Solfest called the March 10, 2025, meeting to order at 6:30pm. All members were present: Monica Dejno, Jerry Erickson, Richard Gunderson, Barb McGee, Forrest Nutter, Mary Olson, Pastor David Sands, Dan Solfest, and Barb Sylla.

Devotions—Pastor Sands read Luke 13:31-35 and led in discussion and Monica led in prayer.

Secretary's Report was read by Barb. Mary and Forrest motioned to accept, and motion carried.

Treasurer's Report—Dan distributed the report ending February 28, 2025. Richard made a motion to accept, Barb McGee seconded, and motion carried.

Old Business:

- 1) No bid yet on repairing/painting small bell tower windows.
- 2) Community Resource lists—rather than list specific information from several departments, it was decided to list or place a link to co.trempealeau.wi.us on the church website and to also include that dialing 211 will connect with local services; that way, we won't need to update information if/when it changes at the county level.
- 3) Treasurer Dan Solfest reported that the Bertha Olson Kuehn CD held at First National Bank will renew in April. He has discussed the low interest rate with the bank and will possibly move the CD to gain a higher interest rate, with interest added to the General Fund.
- 4) The Special Music Sunday by the Lorn & Royce Band is April 6, 2025. Pastor Sands is working on a bulletin.
- 5) Bev Paulsen will be the delegate to annual meeting of the American Lutheran Home in Mondovi on May 27.
- 6) Forrest has ordered chicken directly from Pilgrim's, with 7 cases of mixed white and dark and 2 cases of dark meat only; he will also pick up charcoal; Monica will again supply butter for grilling as well as butter pats; Barb McGee and Barb Sylla will be ordering supplies, advertising, calling workers, setting up the assembly line in the basement, etc.
- 7) Ash Wednesday worship was cancelled due to the bad weather. Pastor Sands had imposition of ashes on Sunday, March 9.
- 8) 155th Anniversary—discussion tabled until after our chicken dinner.

New Business:

- 1) Monica reported that Eric Mueller and Molly Mish are potential members.
- 2) At the Annual Meeting, Brad Olson suggested having a Christmas Day service. Monica made a motion to this effect, seconded by Mary, that we schedule a Christmas Day service at 9:30am this year, as well as the usual 4pm Christmas Eve service.
- 3) Monica will be on vacation from March 27 through April 4.

The next council meeting is scheduled for Monday, April 14, at 6:30pm.

Adjournment—Richard and Jerry motioned to adjourn. The meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer at 7:16pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Barb Sylla, Council Secretary

2025 Council Members

Trustee	Richard Gunderson	715.797.3721
Trustee	Don Solfest	715.287.4562 715.797.3014
Trustee	Forrest Nutter	715.695.3487
Deacon	Barb McGee	715.695.3448
Deacon	Jerry Erickson	715.530.2079
Deacon	Mary Olson	715.694.2239 651.587.6126
Treasurer	Dan Solfest	715.985.3242
Secretary	Barb Sylla	715.985.3496 715.530.0338

EASTER MESSAGE FROM BISHOP MARTIN



I can still remember the pound of my heart to this day. It was Good Friday in the year 1995. I was working at Lutherdale Bible Camp as a year-round staff and my task that day was to dismantle the several hundred foot zipline. It was a warm spring day, but I still experienced the wind that caused the tree that I was attached to sway far more than I wanted it to. The tree itself was dying and thus it could no longer serve as the anchor of the zipline where the platform was. It was on that platform where youth and staff alike would find themselves transferring the rabbit ears attached to their harness to the zipline that would lead to the ensuing rush of emotions. As I stood on that platform, connected to a couple of tree staples with my own rabbit ears, I loosened the hardware that secured the zipline cable to the tree, bolt by bolt. It was quite a surreal experience.

As I loosened the final bolt, that cable released about a foot away from my face, causing my heart to beat in a way it has never beaten before or since. The sound haunted me for those few seconds as the cable fell to the ground about 40 feet below. Once I collected myself, all I could think about was how appropriate it was to watch the death of the zipline on Good Friday. That element was always the climax on the high ropes course. It was the final adventure for countless youth as they experienced the challenges of that course. Just step off the platform, trust, and fly!

I was saddened to see that zipline fall. But then I was overjoyed to see it rebuilt in a new and more secure location! It reminds me of that great Easter spiritual that states, "It's Friday, but Sunday's coming." It's the reminder that we call it Good Friday only because as Christian believers, we know that Easter is coming. Without Easter Sunday, Friday would have been even more devastating as it already was. Jesus' followers were lost, confused, and in deep sorrow. Those emotions resulted from the trauma that they were experiencing. But Easter reversed the pain of that trauma and turned it into a joyous chorus of "Alleluias" where we can now see God's almighty power being revealed! We can see how God has power over death itself and not just for Jesus. God's power to give life to all believers in all times and in all places through the death and resurrection of Jesus is what brings us joy, hope, comfort, and faith itself! God's power to renew our lives each and every day through the gift of forgiveness cannot be understated. God's desire to heal our broken relationship because of our sinfulness indicates the depth of that love, knowing that God so desperately desires to be with us forever.

That old zipline was a source of joy for so many people. But when contrasted with the joy we can experience daily, it simply pales in comparison. Friends, live into that joy of the resurrection. Remember the gift that Jesus embodies that is truly the greatest gift we've ever had - the gift of God's unconditional love. Despite the various losses that we grieve each year, some that appear to be quite unbearable at the time, remember the gift of Jesus. We are a resurrection church. We are a forgiven and forgiving people. And we bask in the glory of God's amazing grace.

Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

Bishop Martin