

Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, and he said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem.

John 24:45-47

The season of Easter is upon us! While our broader society usually speaks of Easter as a specific Sunday on which the church celebrates the resurrection of Christ, it is actually an entire season. Unlike Lent or Advent however, it is not one of preparation, but celebration. We actively observe and rejoice in how our new lives in Christ are unfolding.

The gospels are clear that Christ walked among his disciples after his resurrection. Those encounters had a profound effect on the individuals he interacted with. In the locked room, on the road to Emmaus, on the seashore, or travelling to Damascus, believers (and soon to be believers) encountered the risen Lord. And they understood, in ways they never did before, the profound change that had taken place in the world. Disciples became apostles.

While our encounters might not seem so dramatic as those of Thomas, Saul, or even Paul, Christ's resurrection still echoes in our own experiences. For just as the disciples did not gain full understanding of Christ upon first meeting Jesus, our lives as Christians are not formed in an instant. Instead, as the rituals of baptism, first communion, and confirmation attest, our lives in Christ are constantly ones of becoming. I believe this is true for all the folks at Kirkland Crossings. Although, as I have heard many times, God has been walking with residents and staff for many years, there is always more to learn, more to discover, and more to experience.

The past 12 months have certainly been a time of testing and discovery for many Christians, including residents, their families, and the staff. Together, we have devised new ways to connect to one another and worship God. Both as individuals and a community, we have lamented the loss of familiar rhythms and a crushing sense of isolation and loneliness. We have loved our neighbors by wearing masks and staying six feet apart. And when the vaccine was finally available, we gave thanks and lined up to get our shots.

As more and more individuals and groups in the area and nationwide are vaccinated against the coronavirus, we are beginning to look to the time when we can once again gather for worship, fellowship, and study as we used to. Yet, maybe we shouldn't just go back to "business as usual," but actively seek to understand how we have been renewed through our experience. Will we be able to appreciate our togetherness more? Will we engage in worship in a more active way? Will we sing out even more lustily as we can finally join in singing hymns? Only time will tell. If nothing else, maybe we will remember that through the pandemic, the church did not close. Nor did our worship stop. We just moved it out of the sanctuary for a while. May we will return to remembering God's faithfulness and a new understanding of what it means to "be the church."

This year, Easter brings a new meaning to resurrection and renewal. As we remember what and who we have lost, let us look with joy to the new life to which God is leading us now.

Pastor Katie

KIRKLAND CROSSINGS NEWS

Special Worship Services

- **Maundy Thursday: Thursday, April 1 at 2:15 p.m.**

Maundy Thursday is the Thursday before Easter, believed to be the day when Jesus celebrated his final Passover with His disciples. Most notably, that Passover meal was when Jesus washed the feet of His disciples in an extraordinary display of humility.

- **Easter Sunday: Sunday, April 4**
10:00 a.m. (Catholic Mass)
1:30 p.m. (Ecumenical Worship)

The significance of Easter Sunday is Jesus Christ's triumph over death. His resurrection means the eternal life that is granted to all who believe in Him.



Exercise for a Healthy Heart

As we all know, having a healthy heart is extremely important. Without one, we may not be able to do things we normally enjoy doing. Did you know, exercise is one of the best things you can do to maintain a healthy heart? Here are some ways exercise is beneficial for the heart:

- Exercise helps lower blood pressure
- Exercise is pivotal in weight control - diet alone won't get you there
- Exercise helps strengthen muscles and enhances muscle ability to take oxygen from the blood
- Exercise has been found to help people quit smoking
- Exercise can manage diabetes
- Exercise can lower stress
- Exercise reduces inflammation, helping to avoid heart disease

As you can see, there are several ways regular exercise can help keep your heart healthy. As we get older, it becomes all the more important. If we want to be able to continue doing things we enjoy, and be more independent, we need a healthy heart to help us out. If you need help getting started on an exercise program that is appropriate for you and will keep your heart running well, talk to your site's fitness instructor!

<https://www.ahajournals.org/doi/full/10.1161/01.CIR.0000048890.59383.8D>

KIRKLAND CROSSINGS NEWS

Vaccination Heroes



Did you Know?

Easter Eggs

Easter is a religious holiday, but some of its customs, such as Easter eggs, are likely linked to pagan traditions. The egg, an ancient symbol of new life, has been associated with pagan festivals celebrating spring. From a Christian perspective, Easter eggs are said to represent Jesus' emergence from the tomb and resurrection. Decorating eggs for Easter is a tradition that dates back to at least the 13th century, according to some sources. One explanation for this custom is that eggs were formerly a forbidden food during the Lenten season, so people would paint and decorate them to mark the end of the period of penance and fasting, then eat them on Easter as a celebration.

Easter Bunny

The Bible makes no mention of a long-eared, short-tailed creature who delivers decorated eggs to well behaved children on Easter Sunday; nevertheless, the Easter bunny has become a prominent symbol of Christianity's most important holiday. The exact origins of this mythical mammal are unclear, but rabbits, known to be prolific procreators, are an ancient symbol of fertility and new life. According to some sources, the Easter bunny first arrived in America in the 1700s with German immigrants who settled in Pennsylvania and transported their tradition of an egg-laying hare called "Osterhase" or "Oschter Haws." Their children made nests in which this creature could lay its colored eggs. The fabled rabbit's Easter morning deliveries expanded to include chocolate and other types candy and gifts.

Source: *HISTORY.COM*

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Presbyterian Homes & Services is a nonprofit organization and an equal opportunity employer serving older adults through community services, housing, and health care.

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Volunteers offer God's grace in various forms

Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms. ~ 1 Peter 4:10

Happy National Volunteer Month! While we may not see large celebrations until later this fall; we can't let this moment pass without sharing our gratitude. Thank you to all our volunteers for your steadfast dedication to our ministry and the people it has touched over the past year.

We have all had to reimagine our lives, what we can give of ourselves and how we can continue to share our gifts with others. Some of you began visiting via phone with other residents, volunteers, or college students. Many of you sent cards or wrote letters; sewed masks and gowns or knitted prayer squares. Some helped with clerical opportunities so that staff could focus on offering more activities for small groups or one on one and ensuring that residents could continue to connect with their family members. No matter how you spent the last 12 months, if it included volunteering, we appreciate you.

As we begin to reintroduce volunteer roles into our PHS communities, we urge you to speak to the Volunteer Director at your PHS community about ways to share your time and talents. Please keep in mind that volunteering will indeed look different as we move forward. We thank you for your grace as we continue to learn how to navigate this new reality.

One thing is true and unchanging; volunteers make the world a brighter place. And the past year has been a testament to this truth, our communities are brighter with volunteers in them.

Thank you,

*Samantha Sleeman,
PHS Volunteer Services Director*

*Jess Drecktrah
Vice President, Life Enrichment*