



FISHHOOK

March 2024



March 2024 will mark the end of Lent, and on the final day of this month we'll celebrate Easter. This, in my mind, is almost as fitting as having Easter land on April 1, the start of a new month (and yes, April Fools' Day). There is something poetic about starting such a joyous celebration on the final day of a month that is dominated by the more somber time of Lent.

Every Christian family and congregation has their own Easter traditions. Perhaps you have some special dinner planned for Sunday evening; I know I do! St. Andrews always has the sunrise service (together with two other services later in the morning). There is something special about proclaiming God's glory in the risen Jesus with the first signs of light in the brisk, cold air of our courtyard.

Other congregations have different customs and practices, one of these being the Saturday Easter Vigil which is celebrated much like we do our

final Christmas Eve service. God's people gather around 11pm and welcome Easter morning the very minute the clock strikes 12. And just like at an early morning Easter sunrise service, there is an eagerness and anticipation to shout glory to God for our risen Lord and Savior.

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Take heart and look forward to the promise we have in Jesus.

(continued from first page) 1 Corinthians 15:20 says, **“But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep, for as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive.”** St. Paul then puts an exclamation point on Christ’s power made perfect in the resurrection with this blessed statement: **“The last enemy to be destroyed is death.”**

This is what we celebrate both on Easter and even on Holy Saturday, the day between Good Friday and Easter Sunday. A day when, as 1 Peter 3:19 says, that Jesus proclaimed His victory over sin, death, and the devil to those in hell. This action by our Lord has always been understood as the first Gospel proclamation of the risen Jesus to the universe: That even though He died, death could not hold Him. Even though the devil thought he had Jesus beat, nothing could be further from the truth. For by dying, Jesus conquered death for all people.

With each day this month, we step closer and closer to the proclamation of Easter—that Jesus is risen from the dead, for you. For by His death and resurrection, our sins are washed away. The old has passed away, and in Christ, the new has come.

Yet now, some 30 days away, we still find ourselves in Lent, pausing to meditate on Jesus’ Word and works throughout His ministry on earth. Pausing to hear His “I am” statements. And drawing closer to His final few words on the cross.

Beloved Christian, know that just as we wait for Easter on March 31, 2024, we are still waiting for the more perfect Easter. For as God’s Word promises, Christ is coming soon: “Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed—in an instant, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.” On that day, the alleluias will be loud and long, even as they are silent in our services now during Lent. In the meantime, take heart and look forward to the promise we have in Jesus: eternal life with Him.

In Christ,

Pastor Brian

Kids of St. Andrews

Kids’ Church



March Kids' Church Schedule

♥ Music, Crafts, Bible Stories



♥ Classes 3-yrs thru 5th Grade



♥ March 3, 10, 17, 24



Sign-in @ 10:35am. Kids join families in church for prayer & communion after class.



St. Andrews Easter Egg Hunt

Sunday, March 17, noon



St. Andrews Easter Egg Hunt

Newday Preschool



March is here and we are getting ready to learn about the death and resurrection of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ—how He died for our sins and rose from the grave three days later.

The children are looking forward to working on their Easter projects to decorate their classrooms; and of course, having tons of fun at their Easter parties.

Newday Preschool will be closed March 25-April 1 for spring break.

Newday Preschool will have a summer program that will run from June 3-July 25. Summer is lots of fun here at Newday with different themes, snacks, and projects. Be on the lookout for the registration form, or feel free to give us a call!

If you are looking for a school that helps children grow spiritually, socially, emotionally, academically, and physically, call our preschool director Marla Rivas at (209) 957-4089 or email newday@stalc.org.

First Communion

First Communion class (for 5th graders and older) will be held in the fellowship hall at **5:30pm on Wednesdays, March 13, March 20, and March 27**. These classes will prepare our first communicants to receive Jesus' body and blood for the forgiveness of their sins on Maundy Thursday (March 28 at 7pm). It is a joy to see those who are young rejoice in the Lord!

2024 Confirmands

Students who are being confirmed this year have class on **Wednesday, March 6 at 5:30** in the preschool room to continue preparing their faith statements for presentation during worship.

Middle School

**FRIDAY
FUN
MIDDLE SCHOOL** *Game Night*

**6TH-8TH GRADES
MARCH 15, 5:30-7PM**

*Free dinner will be served!
(Parents, drop off and pick up kids
in the fellowship hall.)*

Serving Stockton and Beyond

Rahab Comfort Dog

Rahab Comfort Dog team is looking forward to Easter and Jesus' resurrection! *We love because He first loved us. 1 John 4:19*

Rahab Comfort Dog Handler Cathy Pauley and Ministry Partner Boni Hamilton visited Marshall Elementary School and spent time in the school's calming center. Rahab's friend, Tara, was a counselor at Madison and is now a counselor at Marshall. She helped bring the calming center to the school. The students all love Rahab and look forward to her monthly visits. *Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. Philippians 4:6*



Caregivers and Handlers Mike and Ann Marie Rehbein continue to visit Novellus Assisted Living, and Rahab's friend is there to greet them every month in the lobby. Handler Laura Moore and Ministry Partner Sue Gruber also visited Oakmont of Lodi Assisted Living and Rahab made some new friends. They look forward to the team visiting them again in a few weeks. *"...even to your old age I am he, and to gray hairs I will carry you. I have made, and I will bear; I will carry and will save." Isaiah 46:4*

Rahab Comfort Dog Handlers Laura Moore and Cathy Pauley visited Shepherd's Gate in Brentwood. Rahab got to visit the children who live at Shepherd's Gate because there was no school that day, and then they hung out with the moms and provided comfort and support for each of them. *The Lord is near to the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit. Psalm 34:18*

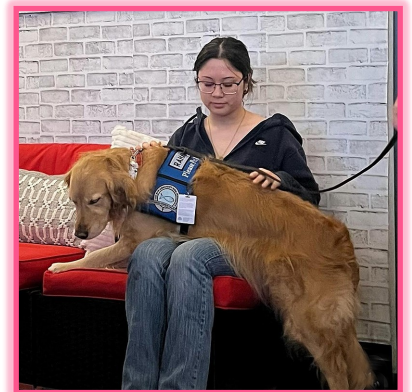
Rahab Comfort Dog was invited to Lincoln High School by Chloe Marlow to do a presentation for the Peer Mediation Class. Top Dog Bobby Moore and Rahab attended as part of the emotional support animals presentation. Bobby talked about the LCC Comfort Dog program and Rahab got to meet all the high school students in attendance. *For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus. 1 Timothy 2:5*

Top Dog Bobby Moore and Rahab returned to Monterey Park on the anniversary of the tragic mass shooting for the vigil. The community came together and shared their stories and remembered those who lost their lives. Rahab and Rueben Comfort Dogs were there to give comfort and show the love of Jesus...to let His light shine above everything. *For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. 2 Corinthians 4:6*



Rahab drove all the way to Phoenix with Handlers/Caregivers Mike and Ann Marie, Top Dog Bobby, and Handler Laura to serve at the LCMS church worker conference. She worked hard bringing joy and comfort to people in ministry, along with Comfort Dogs Micah, Salome, Isaac, and Lois. A bonus was getting to spend time with Comfort Dog Isaac's handler, Miriam Deuel! *So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith. Galatians 6:10*

Rahab enjoyed the honor of being a golden on "National Golden Retriever Day." Rahab loves the doggies that are just like her—especially her close friends Micah, Aaron, Genesis, and Rueben! *When the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and honored the word of the Lord; and all who were appointed for eternal life believed. Acts 13:48*



If you would like to purchase a Rahab Stuffedie (stuffed animal with Rahab bandana) to add to an Easter basket, please email Top Dog Bobby Moore (not church staff) at comfortcarek9@stal.org. Cost is \$20 each and for every stuffedie purchased, the team can buy another stuffedie to give out at ministry events.

Team to Thailand

The Thailand team with Cathy Pauley, Jamie Eisenbeisz, Tatum Deuel, and Monte Posey spent 11 days in northern Thailand sharing God's love and His Word with many Hill-tribe people. The Hill-tribe we shared with are mainly Karen and Hmong, who fled from Burma in the late 1960s because of the threat of persecution. A lot of the older people are first-generation Thailand refugees, but the majority of those we visited were born in Thailand.

When these Hill-tribe people fled to Thailand, they built houses that are very hidden from all roads. At night, you cannot see the homes from the road in most cases. Most of the villages in the area we stayed have Christian families and in some cases a Christian church, but the majority of the villagers are either Buddhist or ancestor worshippers.



Our team had the privilege of sharing about God, His creation, and His love to hundreds of students. Every school or village we visited included side visits to villagers in need of prayers. Our hosts, Siami (Americanized name) and Sawahtree (Christian shepherd to many of the villages) know these families and their needs so we knew how to pray for each of them.

The Christian churches are Baptist, so baptism is usually performed at age of consent. We met a mom and her son in his 20s who was badly injured before "age of consent" and is still totally bedridden. His mom allowed Monte to baptize him, because she understood the importance of baptism that he normally would have had as a teen.

We traveled to 12 villages, taught in five schools, and visited five churches. One of the churches we visited was rebuilt by Christian soldiers and police after some angry Buddhist men burned down the original church (and yes they were tried, convicted, and served five years in jail). We attended and spoke at three church services and led evening devotions on eight nights with the students who lived at Musekee, where we also stayed.

Thank you again from the entire team for your willingness to "send" us, and for all of your prayers!

Be sure to attend worship on March 10 to hear more from the team!

Hosting Un-housed Families


We'd love your help with this month's Family Promise rotation! Cook a dinner, play a game with kids, wash dishes, or help with homework. Families will be here **March 3-9**. Please contact Pam in the office to learn more! (209) 957-8750



Save These Dates

Don't miss the marvelous Good Shepherd Talent Show on **April 6!** Come to St. Andrews at noon for singing, jokes, and dancing by our very own Good Shepherd "kids."

Cookies and coffee will be served afterward!



VBS
JUNE 24-28, 5:30-
8:10PM (DINNER INCLUDED)

SAVE-THE-DATES:
Prep Day: May 18, 9am
Volunteer Meeting: June 23, 9:30am

Senior Pastor Call Process

Updates from Pastor Ron Youngdale

"Tell me what's more important than being present for children and listening to them. I'll wait" (Maxime Lagacé, a professional hockey player). In my last (and first) Fishhook article I quoted an old adage: "Children should be seen and not heard!" That inspired me to find the above quote regarding children. I think it's interesting that this month's quote kind of contradicts last month's quote. So once again I can say, "Yikes!"

Having been asked to be a consultant for you in preparation for calling a senior pastor, I think my job is as much—or more—about listening as it is talking. I want to hear what the congregation, church leaders, and staff have to say about the needs and wants of St. Andrews Lutheran Church. Please do not hesitate to contact me by email or phone (both are listed below). My ultimate goal is to assist you in becoming better at what you do, sharing the love of Jesus with one another and the community.

We have completed the first step in the journey to calling a senior pastor by studying and discussing "Know Your Community," a report about who the 364,102 people are in our neighborhood and what they prefer (beliefs, lifestyles, even pets). We appreciated your observations and questions and will have more time to discuss that on March 10 (more info below).

The second main resource, "Know Your Church," will provide an opportunity for every person in our congregation to give their anonymous perceptions of the ministries at St. Andrews. The survey will be available online or on paper.

On **March 10 from 9:45-10:30am** we will have an "open house" to do several things: (1) provide a handout summary of comments and observations made during the "Know Your Community" presentations; (2) discuss the comments people made at those two presentations; (3) add your input about information garnered from the report; (4) get information about the "Know Your Church" survey and share instructions on how to take it. That survey will be available to take until April 10, and we'll present on those results on April 28.

TENTATIVELY, we are hoping to have an all-congregation potluck and brainstorming meeting about the implications of the above two reports on May 19. That will prepare everyone for the "Pastor Search Survey." Specific details will be given later.

It is a pleasure to serve the Lord with you. If you have any questions or comments, please contact me at pastorron@stalc.org or (209) 404-4817. To God be the glory!

The graphic features a light green background with a white border. On the left, the words "QUESTION" and "& ANSWER" are written in a stylized, outlined font, with "QUESTION" in yellow and "& ANSWER" in blue. To the right, "Open House" is written in a large, elegant, black cursive font, with "with Pastor Ron" in a smaller, blue cursive font below it. At the bottom, the event details are listed in a bold, black, sans-serif font.

**QUESTION
& ANSWER**

Open House
with Pastor Ron

March 10, 9:45-10:30am
Bring thoughts or questions
and learn about our upcoming
"Know Your Church" survey!
In the fellowship hall.

Women in Mission



Crafting and Walking

God has gifted each one of us with skills and passions to use for His glory, and some of our ladies are sharing their gifts to equip others with more tools for living generous and creative lives. If you would like to join in or learn more, please contact these folks!

Card Making — **March 13 and 27 at 1:30pm** in the fellowship hall. Karen Kleinert: (209) 406-9708; hkleinert05@comcast.net

Beading — **March 19 from 1:30-4:30pm** in the library. We're making crystal crosses as we celebrate our one-year anniversary! For more info, Debbie Wilson: (209) 298-8451; skydebbill@yahoo.com

Walking — **March 23 at Knights Ferry**. This walk includes a barbecue! For meetup location and start time, contact Joan Sykes: (209) 931-0577; jumblefromjoan@inreach.com. Also, stay tuned for information about a prayer walk during April's CNH LWML convention. Let's keep those tootsies moving!

Bible Study



Ladies, join us on Mondays at 9am in the fellowship hall as we study the incredible story of Easter. Contact Jamie Eisenbeisz for more information: (916) 230-4280; jmeisz@hotmail.com

Lutheran Women's Missionary League



We are excited to have Rahab Comfort Dog and some of her team at our **March 12** LWML meeting.

Be thinking of creative ideas for painting river rocks. At our planning meeting last summer, we decided to paint rocks and place them in parks and along pathways in our community with an uplifting, good-news message. We will have the paints and 2"-3" rocks for you to paint (or bring your own rocks). This will be a fun project!

Worship

Journeying Through Lent

DAILY DEVOTIONS BY EMAIL THIS LENT

BEGIN WITH GOD'S WORD
READ A DEVOTION
PONDER A QUESTION

starts on
Ash Wednesday
Feb 14, 2024



www.SparkHelpsChurches.com

family midweek lent services

*interaction with the true story
of forgiveness for all ages*

Wednesdays, 7-8pm
February 21 thru March 20



Holy Week & Easter

*Palm
Sunday*
March 24



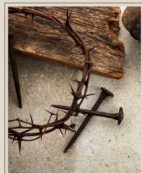
8:30am,
10:45am

*Maundy
Thursday*
March 28



Noon,
7:00pm

*Good
Friday*
March 29

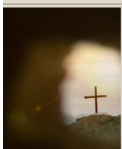


Noon,
7:00pm

*Easter
Sunday*
March 31



6:30am,
8:30am,
10:45am



Holy Week 2024

ST. ANDREWS LUTHERAN CHURCH, STOCKTON



Easter

*Bring flowers from your garden
on Easter to fill an empty cross.*