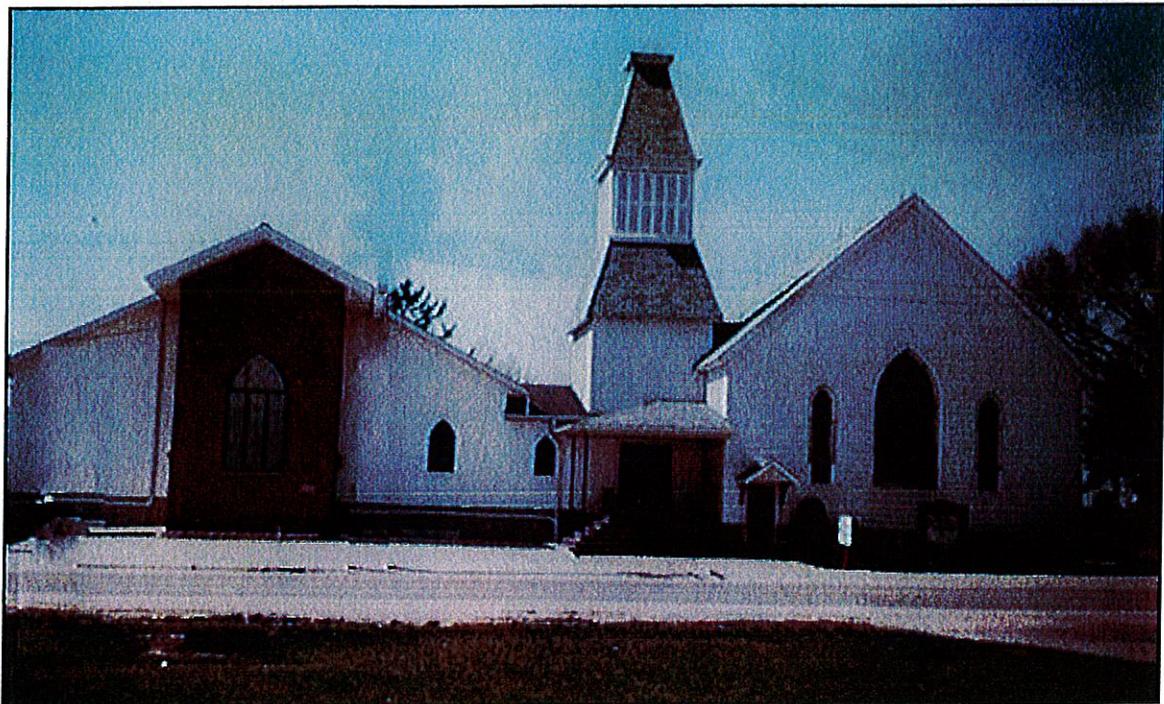


Seward Congregational Church
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*The
Chimes*

April 2025 Church News



Easter: Why Is this Important?

Have you ever heard that Christians celebrate Easter to substitute for a pagan holiday named after a goddess named *Eostre*, the Anglo-Saxon goddess of fertility? Everything that I have read recently report that there never has been any record of people serving this goddess of which rabbits and eggs were symbols.

Have you ever been passed over for a promotion at work? How about always being the last person picked for a ball game? How did that make you feel? Not great, I suppose.

This season is more connected to the Passover celebrated by the Jewish people throughout the centuries. The first Passover meal was eaten on the night of the exodus from Egypt that was led by none other than Moses. That was the night that the angel of death passed over the homes of the Jewish people when they had put blood on the doorposts of their homes, per the instructions of God to Moses, handed down to the people. Their lives, and those of their first-born sons were spared because of their obedience. Thus, the Passover has been celebrated since that first night.

The Passover meal, or *Pascha*, was the meal that our Lord was having that night during Holy Week in the upper room with His disciples—to remember the exodus from Egypt into the Promised Land (eventually).

Just as the Israelites were offered redemption by the Lord from their oppression and had overcome the conditions of slavery, led by Moses, a type of savior, after their Passover meal; so have we been offered redemption by the death and resurrection of the Holy God. This is why Easter is important.

Over the years, we have lost sight of the real reason for this season of Lent leading up to the most holy of days, Easter. The commercialism of this Holy Day has blotted out, for many, the real reason that we have Easter: the resurrection of Jesus. We, as a nation, have substituted bunnies and colored eggs because of the fallacy of the rumors about Easter being a substitute for *Eostre*, the goddess of fertility.

Instead, I believe that a better way of looking at the Easter eggs is the symbolism of the cracked egg which points to Jesus exiting the tomb, bringing new life to His people and the hope of living with Him eternally. Is it wrong to have Easter egg hunts or to do all the fun things we have associated with Easter for so long? I think not, so long as we teach our children the real reason we celebrate Easter—The Risen Savior!!

When we have communion, we are actually celebrating the Passover and the redemption and salvation that we enjoy because HE IS RISEN!!

--From the desk of Pastor Joel

Board of Trustees Meeting
January 15, 2025
Seward Congregational Church

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm.

Present were Peggy Whitney, Effie Hoppe, Brenda Van Hauen, Nancy Kirby, Char Remer, Matt Cowman, and Pastor Joel Hicke.

Opening prayer was offered by Pastor Joel.

The minutes from the December meeting were read by Pastor Joel. Matt made a motion to accept the minutes; Brenda seconded; the motion passed.

Finance reports were given by Effie and Brenda. Char made a motion to accept the reports; Matt seconded; the motion passed.

The pastor's report was given concerning the number of hours worked each week and the number of visits.

Old Business

The Investment Manager Job Description will be presented at the Annual Meeting on January 26th and then will be presented at each Annual Meeting.

The letter that was to be sent to Sharon Cowman concerning the swimming pool and other recreational equipment was tabled until the February meeting.

One of the large burners on the stove at the parsonage is not working. Pastor Joel contacted Ted's Appliance and they will be here on Tuesday, January 21st.

Spinello's called about the lock on the kitchen door, said that there had been a lubricant applied to the lock to make it work better. They gave the name of a lubricant that we can purchase to use on that lock. It's okay for Theresa to order this.

New Business

The final draft of the budget for 2025 was made to present at the Annual Meeting.

There will be a short meeting after the Annual Meeting on January 26th to choose the next Head Trustee.

Matt made a motion to adjourn; Brenda seconded; the motion was approved. The meeting adjourned at 9:06 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Pastor Joel Hicke

Diaconate Meeting minutes for March 5, 2025

Chairman Teresa Gobeli called meeting to order at 11:27am. Present were Teresa, Julie Gasior, Karleen Merchant, Delores Poppen, Bev Weerda, Bev Hilton and Pastor Joel Hicke, who opened with prayer.

The minutes of the Feb. 5th meeting were read by Karleen. Correction made to put Pastor before Joel's name. Bev W. made motion to approve minutes with correction, 2nd by Julie. Motion passed.

Bev W gave Treasurer report. \$836.53 is amount in Diaconate account. Karleen made motion to approve, 2nd by Bev H. Motion carried.

Pastor Joel gave report on his visits and the upcoming Lenten services.

Old Business discussion included tonight's Ash Wednesday service at First Presbyterian in Winnebago, March 12th Lenten Service in Seward and March 30th Singspiration in Seward at 6:00pm. The March 12th offering will go to Carpenters Place. We will also take a freewill offering at the Singspiration, which will go in the Diaconate Fund. There were positive comments regarding the Chimes. We would like to get updates on those in college and military to share in the Chimes. No new information on Spring Tea on April 26th.

Under New business we set the time for Maundy Thursday service on April 17th to be at 6:30 pm. There will be communion served. After the service we will set up the Easter lilies. Easter Breakfast will again be potluck style, beginning at 8:00, followed by 9:00am worship. Julie will put a signup sheet out for breakfast items. Karleen will be in charge of getting Easter lilies and Bev H. will get palms for Palm Sunday. We decided on a gift for Mother's Day, which Karleen will order. A motion was made by Julie, to get flowers for Effie Hoppe. Seconded by Bev H. Motion carried.

A letter was shared that our church sent to the Pecatonica and Winnebago sports teams who are now competing in basketball sectionals and state. In other business, Bev H. has ideas for three new banners. It was decided that the Women's Fellowship will vote at their March meeting to pay for materials. Pastor Joel said he will be out of town on June 8th. Karleen will check into pulpit fill, with a previous speaker. Our next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, April 2nd at 11:30am.

With no further business, Bev W. made motion to adjourn, seconded by Delores. Meeting adjourned at 12:22pm

Respectfully submitted,
Karleen Merchant

Seward Congregational Church Chimes April Announcements

BIBLE STUDY: Will meet on April 23 & 30 at 6:30 p.m.

DIACONATE: The Diaconate will meet on April 2, 2025 at 11:30 a.m.

TRUSTEE'S: The trustee's will meet on April 16, at 6:30 p.m.

CHOIR: Will meet on April 10, 24.

LENTEN SERVICES: On April 2 Services will be at Seward Congregational Church with a soup supper at 5:30, and Gary Brown leading the Service at 6:30 p.m. April 9 will be at Prairie View Assisted living, with soup supper at 5:30 p.m. and service at 6:30 p.m.

MAUNDY THURSDAY: We will have a Maundy Thursday service at 6:30 with communion at Seward Congregational Church

WOMENS FELLOWSHIP: Will meet on April 15 at 9 .m.

EASTER LILIES: Easter lilies in memory or honor of will be \$10.00. Forms are on the table in the narthex. Forms are due in Theresa's office by April 16.

EASTER SUNDAY: We will have breakfast at 8 a.m. followed by the worship service at 9 a.m. The Sunday School Singers will be performing on Easter Sunday You won't want to miss it!

REMINDER: All contributions for the CHIMES newsletter are due to the Office by the 3rd Friday of every month.

MONTHLY SUMMARY

February

General Fund	Income	\$4,104.59
	Expense	\$8,066.31

Monthly Budget \$7,338.59

January-February

		\$9,382.59
		\$18,531.67

APRIL BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

April 4- Richard Remer
 Laura West (Remer)
12-Julie Fry
14-Keith Long
19-Colton Asche

April 8 Richard & Tari Woods
20-Mark & Barb Klinger

April 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2 Diaconate 11:30 a.m. Lenten Service At Seward with Gary Brown. Soup supper 5:30 worship 6:30	3 Choir 6:30 p.m.	4	5
6 Sunday School 9:15 a.m. Worship Service 10:30 a.m. Fellowship following the service	7	8	9 Lenten Service At Prairie View Soup supper 5:30 worship 6:30	10 Choir 6:30 p.m	11	12
13 Sunday School 9:15 a.m. Worship Service 10:30 a.m. Fellowship following the service	14	15 Women's Fellowship 9 a.m.	16 Trustees 6:20 p.m.	17 Maundy Thursday 6:30 p.m.	18	19
20 Easter Breakfast 8 a.m. Worship 9 a.m.	21	22	23 Bible Study 6:30 p.m.	24 Choir 6:30 p.m	25	26 Grounded in Grace tea 11 a.m.
27 Sunday School 9:15 a.m. Worship Service 10:30 a.m. Fellowship following the service	28	29	30 Bible Study 6:30 p.m.			

GROUNDED



IN GRACE



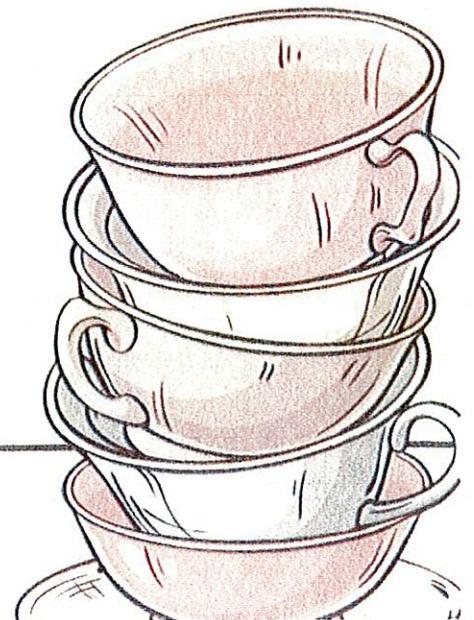
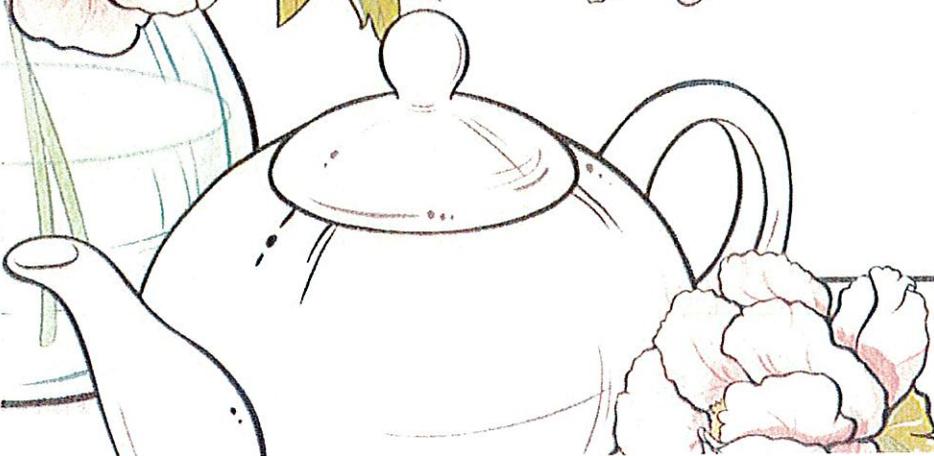
Saturday, April 26th

11:00 am

Seward Congregational Church

29 S. Pecatonica RD, Seward, IL

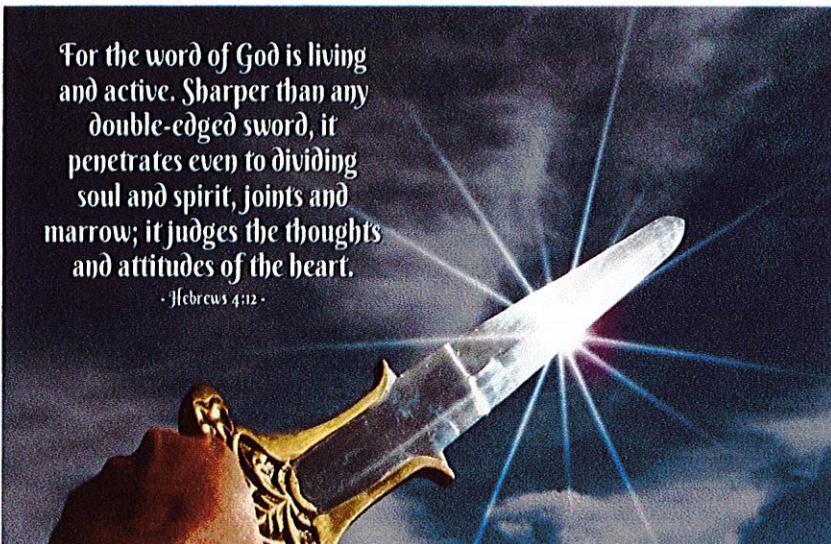
RSVP: 815.988.6111
815.222-3037



April 2025—Pastor Joel's Messages for Sundays of Lent and Maudy Thursday

- 6th Via Dolorosa: The Way of Suffering Matthew 27:22-31
- 13th Golgotha and the Tomb—Seven Last Words of Jesus, part 1
Luke 23:33-34; 39-43; John 19:25-27
- 17th Maudy Thursday—Seven Last Words of Jesus, part 2
Matthew 27:45-46; John 19:28-30; Luke 23:44-46
- 20th Easter: He Is Risen!
- 27th The Road to Emmaus Luke 24:13-35

ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS



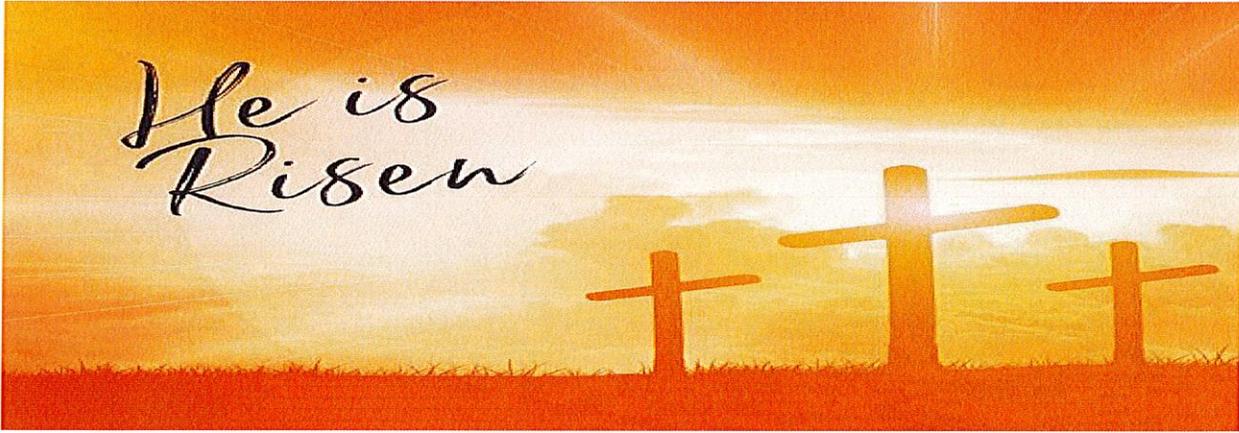
Hebrews 4:12 says that The Word of God is alive. The Adult Sunday School Class endeavors to go deeper into the Word of God to find out what it means and how it affects us in our everyday lives.

In the month of April, we will be working on the following scriptures: Exodus chapters 3, 12 and 33. When looking at the passage of Exodus 12 we will be tying it to Easter in the New Testament. Come join us and find out the messages that the Word of God has for you.

NOTE—Lessons usually take two to three weeks.

By Catherine Hicke

Seward Congregational Youth Grow in Faith



The Sunday School kids will be making a tissue paper stained glass Easter project to be completed by Easter.

The Sunday School Singers will be performing on Easter Sunday at 9 a.m. You won't want to miss it!

This Month in Sunday School, we will be learning about . . .

April 6th

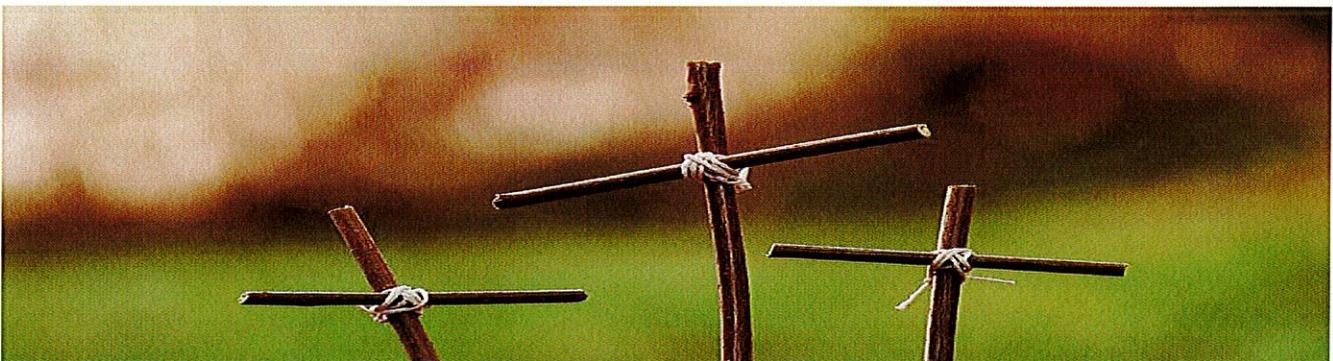
Jesus is Tried and Crucified (Luke 19:28-40 and Luke 23:1-49)

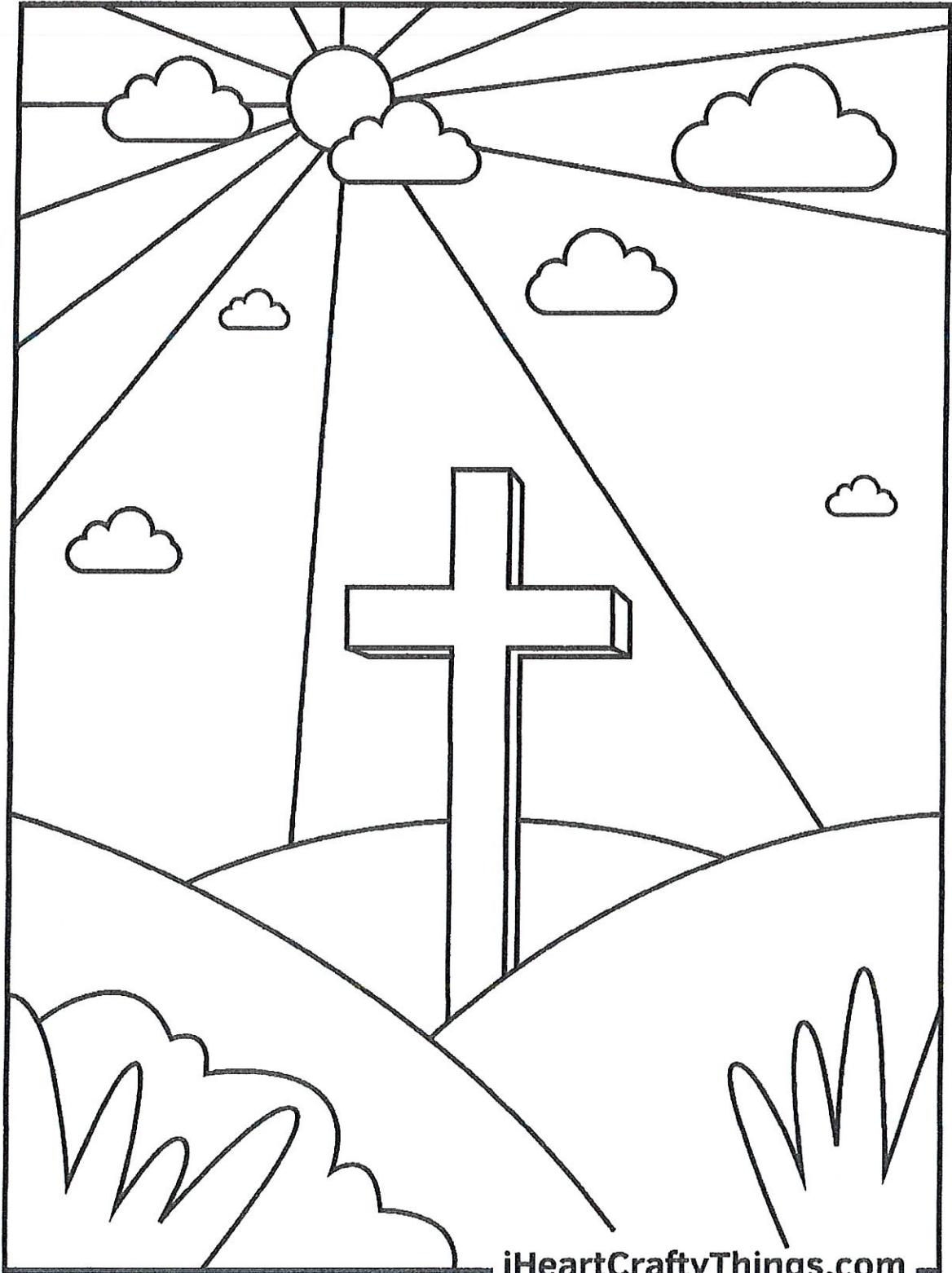
April 13th

Jesus Appears to Mary (John 20:1-18)

April 20th Easter Sunday For He Has Risen NO Sunday School this day

April 27th Apostles Defend Their Faith (Acts 5:12-42)







Easter Crossword Puzzle

Read the clues and fill in the corresponding squares on the puzzle.

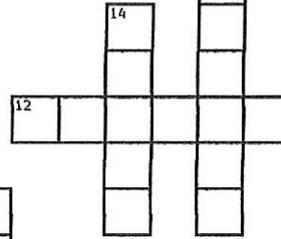
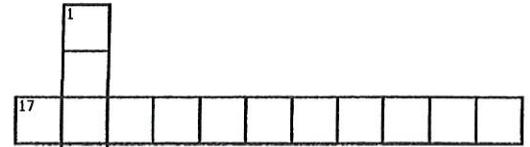
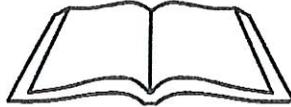


DOWN

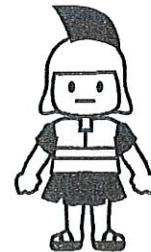
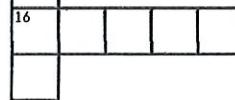
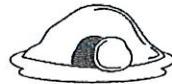
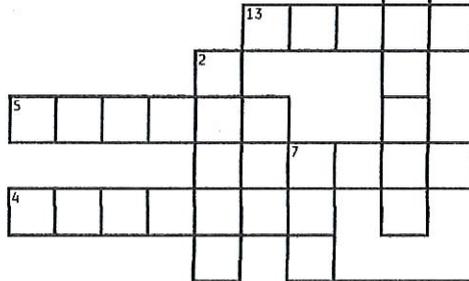
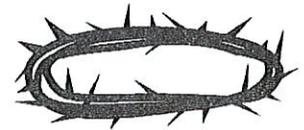
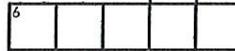
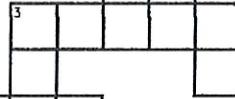
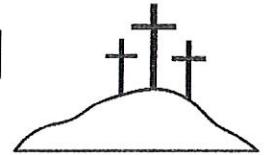
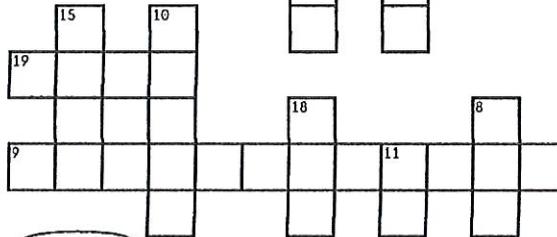
1. Reparation for a wrong or injury
2. An act of compassion or forgiveness
3. Eats nectar from flowers
7. Harmony between people or groups
8. A long-eared mammal used as a beast of burden
10. The one who died for the sins of humanity
11. A large stone structure, often used to store the remains of a deceased person
14. Final stage of life
15. A strong feeling of deep attachment
18. Not existing before

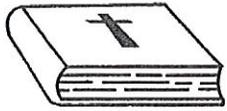
ACROSS

3. Text containing the history of the early Christian church
4. An event that defies the laws of nature
5. A plant that grows in a garden or field
6. Belief in the truth of something unseen
7. A type of tree with a single trunk and feathery leaves
9. Rebirth of something that had died
12. A solemn request for help or expression of thanks to a higher power
13. Heavenly being with wings and a halo
16. A structure made of two pieces of wood or metal placed at right angles
17. The act of pardoning someone for a mistake
19. A desire for something to be true



He is **Risen**



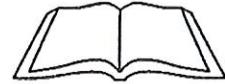
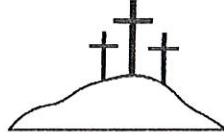


Easter Word Hunt



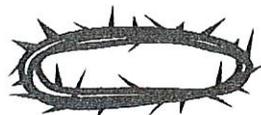
Find the hidden words in the grid

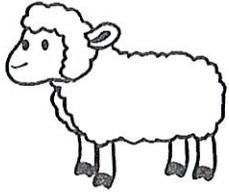
He is **Risen**



- Tomb
- Forgiveness
- Crucifixion
- Cross
- Resurrection
- Mercy
- Lamb
- Palm
- Sunday
- Christ

H P L I W A K W U G B E Y H F W A M Y
 S Q N P A L M J H J X N T I O F P L W
 U G Y Q P Y C R U C I F I X I O N B Z
 N E N M V F O R G I V E N E S S P C P
 D W M S O O J R Z K N R M E O W C O Z
 A Q A S H T C E V A L A X B U L B C E
 Y W B F X E C S T V C H Z I S V T F O
 O O L S G A H U O S L N B L H N I O X
 X L J A L I R R M Y N Y C G X T Z A O
 A Z J X A L I R B P C H Z V T V F S I
 K K F V M P S E C R C R O S S K Y G Q
 W F W W B E T C R I J X M E R C Y L N
 U U M H B G U T L W A Y X G G L E D Q
 Z Y X N Z L A I Q Y B P Z I A L O C B
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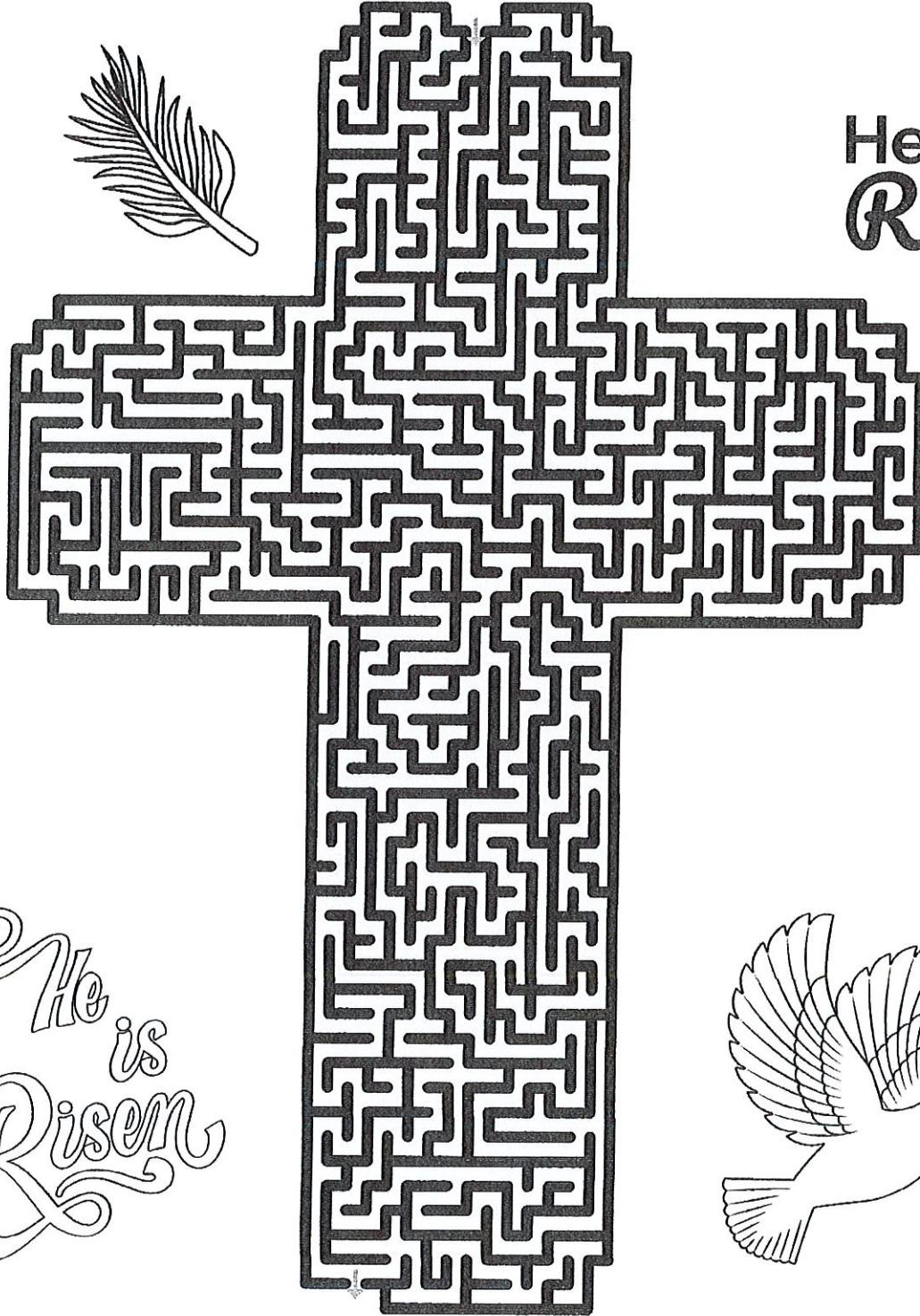




Cross Maze



Draw the way through the maze



He is **Risen**

He is Risen

