

# Leadership

FROM THE



Happy Easter Everyone! Springtime has arrived and Christ has Risen! Alleluia!

What began on Ash Wednesday and the casting off of our mortal egos in the ashes has ended with the resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ from the ashes of our sin. Our long pilgrimage has concluded and we are living in the light once more. You have all been faithful and earnest travelers throughout the Lenten Season, participating in our congregational bible studies, reading and sharing the daily devotions, as well as attending the Sunday morning and Wednesday evening services. Through this shared effort, I believe that we have all come to grow in our personal faith and in our sense of community and the strength and support we can draw from being a part of this wonderful group.

The work of our faith has come to fruition! Easter Services were beautiful and bright with all of you there singing of the resurrection. Just as the seasons have turned yet again, this sacred day reminds us that we have reached a turning in our lives of faith as well. We are no longer bound to the consequences of sin and death, instead living forever hopeful for the promise of eternal life in and with our risen King. I am humbled at the faith that each of you have demonstrated and shared during our conversations, bible studies, and in how you love the people you meet. You are all great witnesses to the faith we share!

This is unfortunately the last full month that I will be with you all. I have had the joy of walking through two Lenten Seasons and celebrating two Easters with you. I have been involved with baptisms, I have sat with you, heard your wonderful stories, and cried alongside you. It has been and still is a moving experience being with you all, and I know that these last several weeks are going to go by much too quickly for my liking. But before I depart in May, I just wanted to say once again that each of you have been an incredible blessing to Alex and me, and I don't know what I would do without your having helped form me and grow in my faith and call to ministry. But this is not the time for goodbyes, we still have ministry to do and gospel to preach, so don't lose that pep and energy, we're going to need it!

## *Vicar Update*

I know many of you have been asking about my first call timeline and where I have been assigned. I am incredibly pleased to share with everyone that I have been assigned to Region 8 and the West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod of the ELCA. I have not learned which church or churches I may be interviewing with just yet, but I will be keeping you all updated as I learn more. I wouldn't have been able to make it this far or grown in my sense of call if it hadn't been for each of you supporting me and praying for me along the way. For that, I am forever grateful to this community and this congregation for inviting me in and letting me be a part of your faith journeys.

~ Vicar Michael

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## ***Faithful Conversations Update***

My intern project *Faithful Conversations* is going to be taking on a new look coming this Spring! My project team and I have discussed how to transition leadership and carry on the spirit of our conversations as I prepare for graduation. There has been a great amount of enthusiasm for these conversations, and people have shared that having an intentional place, where topics that are difficult to talk about can be talked about, has been valuable and I'm pleased that so many of you have been able to be a part of this powerful ministry.

Going forward, there will be a different format to the meetings. Where they previously were monthly gatherings at the Crippen Building on the CRC campus in Chelsea, we are going to be hosting them **during the middle hour at church on Sundays starting April 15th**. The reason for this is to make these discussions more accessible to as many people as possible so we can hear multiple perspectives and truly learn about and from one another. Instead of having one conversation a month, the goal is to host several talks over multiple consecutive Sundays, allowing for multiple topics or interests to surface and be addressed over a longer period of time. We hope that the enthusiasm for this project and ministry continues on into the future. With the new format we hope it creates a more contextualized series of discussions which I think will be a great opportunity to grow as a community and move forward in faithful participation of God's mission.

A big thanks to the project team, Beth Heuser, Andre Marcoux, Lori Marcoux, and Kathy Pantolin, for all of their amazing work and dedication to this project. Their insights and passion have been invaluable, as we have discerned what topics to address and how to make them most relevant to Zion. The next conversation will cover Criminal Justice and you can find hard copies of the Social Statement on the literature credenza by the church offices.

~ Vicar Michael