

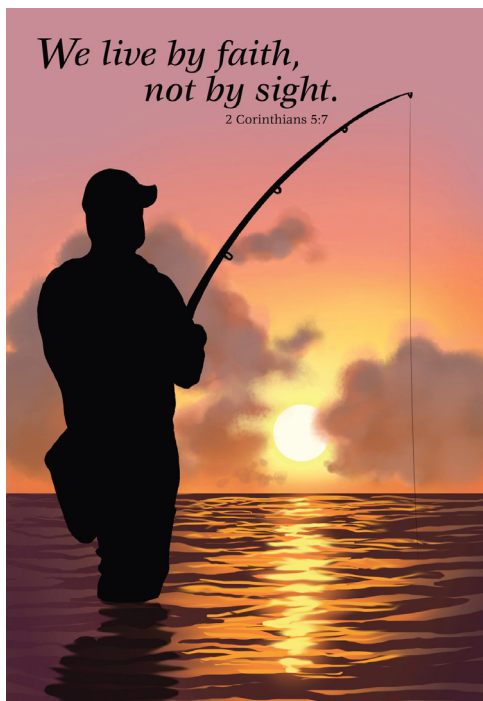
Believing is Seeing

by Pastor Mark Kom

We like to see things before we believe them. You know the saying, "Seeing is believing". We want to see things, touch things, verify things, and figure things out before we believe them.

When it comes to buying something it's good to subscribe to "Seeing is believing". Who wants to own a car that's stuck on the side of the road? Unfortunately "seeing is believing" has a way of impacting our spiritual life. In John 20 we find that it to be extremely dangerous, even fatal. Jesus teaches us another motto: **Believing is seeing**. Why is this important? It's important because trust and faith are central to our spiritual life. The well-known story of "doubting Thomas" has a lot to teach us.

The Bible doesn't tell us why Thomas wasn't there when Jesus appeared to the rest of the disciples on Easter evening. John tells us that the disciples filled Thomas in when they saw him later. Literally John says that the disciples kept telling him, "We have seen the Lord!" What was Thomas' reaction? Did he



jump for joy? Did he cry because he was so happy? No. He didn't believe them! In fact, Thomas did even more than that. Perhaps without meaning it he pointed out to the disciples how impossible it was that Jesus had really risen from the dead. Listen to what Thomas said: *Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe it.* In graphic language Thomas reminded them of how dead Jesus was, how horribly His enemies had treated him. He said he wanted to put his finger where the nails were. Perhaps Thomas thought that his whole finger would fit in the horrible nail wound. Thomas wanted to put his hand into Jesus' side! The soldiers had thrust a spear into Jesus' side. That wound itself would have killed a person. Perhaps without meaning it Thomas was saying, "How can

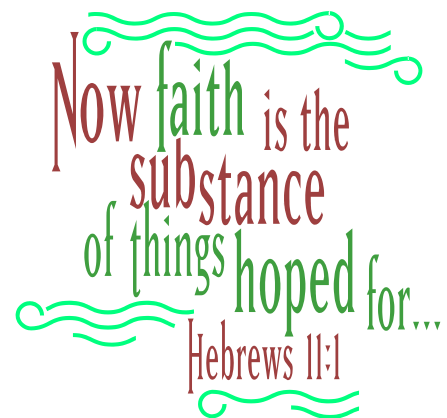
someone who has finger sized nail wounds and a hole in his side large enough to fit my hand possibly be alive? Wake up! Jesus is dead."

Thomas' attitude was potentially poisonous to the disciples. When is the last time we have been infected with that sinful attitude? When is the last time we have believed the things we can see and experience rather than on the unseen truth of the Bible? Perhaps it happened when something bad happened and we got wrapped up in that instead of in God's promises. Perhaps it happened when we failed to trust a congregational leader, instead thinking that the person had a sinful agenda. Perhaps it happens in a more subtle way. The devil wants to separate the Bible and spiritual truths from our everyday life. He wants us to go to work Monday trusting in our abilities and talents to get us through the day. He tempts us to focus our attention only on what we can see with our eyes, touch with our hands and figure out with our minds. That was Thomas' mistake, his sin. It's our sin as well.

Jesus could have said, "Fine, Thomas. If you doubt my resurrection then I'm finished with you." Instead this is what happened. *A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe."* Jesus appeared to the disciples and wasted no time in singling Thomas out. Listen to Jesus' exact words. *Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe.* These were the same words Thomas had used the week before! Thomas must have realized that Jesus knew what he had said a week before! The Bible doesn't tell us if Jesus made Thomas actually put his finger in the nail marks or his hand into the wound in His side. The Bible does tell us what Thomas said: *My Lord and my God.* What a powerful confession of faith. These were not words lightly spoken by a Jewish person. Thomas confessed that Jesus was God, his God.

You might be thinking, "I wish Jesus would appear to me! That would make things a lot easier!" Jesus addressed that topic in the very next verse: *Then Jesus told him, "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."* Jesus calls us blessed. We haven't physically seen Jesus yet we believe that He is the Son of God our Savior who has risen from the dead. We believe even though we haven't seen. That's the theme of John's gospel. In the Bible we see that God wants us to trust Him, to believe without seeing. That was the reason God had John write this book of the Bible. John puts it this way: *Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.*

That's true of the whole Bible. God tells us to trust His Word instead of our sight, our senses, our understanding and our intellect. Our heart tells us that we are sinful and deserve to be punished. The Bible tells us that Jesus died on the cross for us and in that way took all of our sins away. We can't see that; God wants us to believe it. Our sight tells us that the world is out of control and filled with danger. The Bible tells us that God is in control and even that He uses evil things for our good. Our experience teaches us that death is the end – period. The Bible tells us that death is just a doorway, that we have true life right now, life with God as our loving Father. Our mind tells us that a 2,000 year old book has little or nothing to do with life in 2011. The Bible tells us that its contents tower over 2011 and makes the so called important matters of the day seem trivial compared to the eternal truth of the Bible. Our culture tells us that on Monday morning we need to depend on ourselves and no one else; the Bible tells us to depend on God whether we are in church, at work, at home, or anywhere else. This is a critically important truth, so important that the Bible talks about it over and over again. St. Paul put it this way: *We live by faith, not by sight.* Peter puts it this way: *Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy.* The book of Hebrews puts it this way: *Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.*



Now faith is the

substance

of things hoped for...

Hebrews 11:1

One last point. John wrote: *But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.* We want to believe what God has told us in His Word; it's our very life! If John were here today he would add: so read the Word of God often! It's our prayer that we do just that so we can remember that "believing is seeing"!

April 2011

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1 8:30 a.m. Matins Grades 3 & 7 to Good Samaritan Wedding Rehearsal <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">NO BUS/HOT LUNCH</div>	2 Kaniess Wedding
3 8:00 a.m. Worship (C) 9:15 a.m. New Member Reception / Sunday School 10:30 a.m. Worship (C) Volleyball Pioneer Orientation	4 6:30 p.m. Worship (C) 7:00 p.m. Mary/Martha	5 7:00 p.m. Evangelism	6 4:00 p.m. Lenten Worship 5:00 p.m. Light Supper 6:30 p.m. Lenten Worship 7:30 p.m. Senior Choir 8:30 p.m. Praise Band	7 2:30 p.m. Southview Service	8 8:00 a.m. Matins & Muffins 9:00 - 11:30 a.m. Lyceum – Sea Life Minnesota Aquarium	9
10 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:00 a.m. Volunteer Fair 9:15 a.m. Bible Class/ Sunday School 10:30 a.m. Worship Volleyball	11 6:30 p.m. Worship 7:00 p.m. Fellowship	12 6:30 p.m. Education 6:30 p.m. Properties 6:45 p.m. Stewardship	13 4:00 p.m. Lenten Worship 5:00 p.m. Light Supper 6:30 p.m. Lenten Worship 7:30 p.m. Senior Choir	14 2:30 p.m. Southview Service 6:30 p.m. Pioneers 7:00 p.m. Elders	15 8:30 a.m. Matins	16
17 8:00 a.m. Worship (C) 9:15 a.m. Bible Class/ Sunday School 10:30 a.m. Worship (C) Sunday School & Choristers Sing Both Services 	18 6:30 p.m. Worship (C)	19 7:00 p.m. Council	20	21 1:00 p.m. Circle C 2:30 p.m. Southview Service 6:30 p.m. Maundy Thursday Service (C) 	22 12:00 p.m. Good Friday Service 6:30 p.m. Good Friday Service <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">NO SCHOOL</div> 	23 9:00 a.m. Easter Egg Hunt Pioneer Easter Breakfast Setup
24 6:00 a.m. Sunrise Worship 7:00 a.m. Easter Breakfast 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:15 a.m. Bible Class/ Sunday School 10:30 a.m. Worship 	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">NO SCHOOL</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">NO WORSHIP</div>	26 Spring Sports Pictures	27 8:00 p.m. Praise Band	28 2:30 p.m. Southview Service 6:30 p.m. Pioneers	29 8:30 a.m. Matins	30

7 Things About 7th Graders

The 7th Graders have been very busy lately. Here are just 7 of the things we've been doing:

1. In January, we got to learn about cultural diversity displayed in artworks as part of Art Adventure.
2. We just finished participating in the musical play "Go West" in which we were allowed to display the Lord's gifts of music and dance.
3. Earlier in the month of February we learned more about our physical abilities by tackling a trip to Welch Village for skiing lessons and a day of skiing.
4. We just finished basketball season.
5. We took part in the spelling bee.
6. Throughout the year we have been busy learning about who we are.
7. Finally, and most importantly, we're discovering how the Lord wants us to use our knowledge about who we are to bring his message of salvation to others.





DO NOT BE AFRAID!

"A young man dressed in a white robe...said, 'You are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who was crucified. He as risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid him. But go, tell his disciples and Peter...'" (Mark 16:5-7).

"Trembling and bewildered, the women went out and fled from the tomb. They said nothing to anyone, because they were afraid" (Mark 16:8).

Who wouldn't tremble and be afraid! You go to anoint a body to prepare it for a proper burial, but the body is missing. Then some ethereal creature tells you the body isn't there because it is no longer dead but alive. Who could take it in? "Don't be alarmed" the man in white said. Yeah, right!

Yet, looking back, perhaps the women remembered the thousands he had fed with only two fish and five loaves of bread. Maybe they thought again about the raising of Lazarus from dead. After all, he was the one who had stilled the raging storm on the Sea of Galilee.

Somewhere, sometime, that trembling and bewilderment turned to joy and faith, for they did go tell his disciples and Peter. And Jesus met them and greeted them, and they worshipped him. "Then Jesus said to them, 'Do not be afraid. Go and tell my brothers...'" (Matthew 28:9,10).

Jesus' last command is the same as this one: Don't be afraid. Go and tell. We can understand the fear of the women at the empty tomb. What are we afraid of? Trouble? Or hardship? Persecution? Or famine? Nakedness? Or danger? Or sword? There is no fear in these things! "No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us" (Romans 8:3-5, 37). We have the benefit of history. The women at the tomb couldn't fathom the outcome, but we have God's Word that assures us of our victory in Christ. We have his promise, "And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age" (Matthew 28:20). So don't be afraid! Go and tell!

CHRIST IS RISEN!
HE IS RISEN INDEED!
ALLELUIA!

Stroke Screening Coming to COL

Crown of Life will be hosting a preventive health screening event on **Tuesday, April 26, 2011**. The event is sponsored by Fairview. Life Line Screening will perform screenings for:

- 1) Carotid artery blockage (stroke)
- 2) Atrial fibrillation
- 3) Abdominal aortic aneurysm
- 4) Peripheral arterial disease
- 5) Osteoporosis (bone loss)

These screenings are recommended for anyone 50 and older, or 40 and over with cardiovascular risk factors. They are non-invasive, painless, and take 60-90 minutes to complete. The results, which are mailed directly to you, will help you and your doctor protect your health. The Stroke, Vascular and Heart Rhythm Screening Package is offered for \$139. The Osteoporosis Screening is available for an additional \$10.

Pre-registration is required. Call **1-800-324-1851** or visit www.lifelinescreening.com/community-partners to schedule your appointment. You may also pick up a registration form from the kiosk and give it to Gwen in the office.

4 facts YOU need to know about **stroke prevention**

- 80% of stroke victims had no apparent warning signs.
- Ultrasound screenings can help you avoid a stroke.
- Stroke is a leading cause of death and permanent disability.
- Screenings are fast, painless, affordable and convenient.



Holy Week Worship Schedule

Sunday, April 17 – Palm Sunday
Services at 8:00 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.

Sunday School Children and Choristers Sing

Monday, April 18
Service at 6:30 p.m.

Repeat of Sunday Service

Thursday, April 21 – Maundy Thursday
Service at 6:30 p.m.

With Communion and Stripping of the Altar

Friday, April 22 – Good Friday
Services at 12:00 p.m. and 6:30 p.m.

Tenebrae Service with Nail Placing

The church will be open from 3:30 – 6:30 p.m. for personal prayer and meditation. There will be a small booklet available to guide you in your prayers.

Sunday, April 24 – Easter Sunday
Sunrise Service at 6:00 a.m.

Easter breakfast served beginning at 7:00 a.m.

Song Services at 8:00 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.

Brass Choir Plays and Senior Choir Sings

Choir sings Bach's Cantata #4 based on Martin Luther's Hymn
Christ Jesus Lay in Death's Strong Bands

No Easter Monday Services



APRIL BIRTHDAYS

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 Aurelia Gustafson
Alexander Tillman
Mark Tourville | 14 Sandra Enger
Paige Seidl |
| 2 Debbie Chernohorsky
Laura Gibson
Megan Kom
Eric Rahn Lemmer
Wayne Lorenz
Cassandra Panek | 15 Colleen Solomon
17 Evelyn Geisinger
Michelle Kom
Edward Weber |
| 3 Barbara Berthiaume
Jordan Carlson
Delores Frisch
Christopher Hinz
Gina Myrlie | 18 Scott Classert
19 Linda Haberkorn
Beverly Knippenberg
Shane M. Myrlie |
| 4 David Monjeau | 20 Sophia Nichols |
| 5 CJ (Carlton John) Fischer | 21 Rodney Herbison
Chase Klocow |
| 6 Alexis Castro
Nancy Steber
Darlene Tollefson | 22 Doris Jensen
Daniel Pederson |
| 7 Caroline Wales | 23 Dale Krueger
Eric Montgomery
Shirley Walters |
| 8 Betty Jane Becker
Linda Bethke
Nicole Kruckow
Lauren Wolfrath | 24 Ellie-Rose Cenicerros
Donna Herbison
Lauren Myrlie
Steve Petermann |
| 9 Rachel Boehm
Anthyan Lopez
James Pederson
Daniel Redner | 25 Kari Marzinske
27 Margaret-Anne Cadwallader
Brent D. Hoeft |
| 10 Betty Borotz
Jeanne Steffen | 28 Michael Dohrn
Donald McLean |
| 12 Kim Ahlman
Joseph Jensen
Judith Myrlie | 29 Orlin D. Myrlie
Frederick Portz
Heather L. Schindeldecker |
| 13 Scott Hunter
Noah Kurth
Karla Quinnell | 30 Nathan Biggar
Neil Olson
Megan Rupprecht |

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE



Deaths

Florence Pietsch – March 12, 2011

Funeral March 15, 2011 at Crown of Life with Pastor Kom

STEWARDSHIP THOUGHT

Easter is right around the corner, but, without Good Friday, there would be no Easter. Look, then, on the Suffering Servant. Hear again the story of His Passion. Think anew of the ridicule and physical torment He endured even before His walk to Golgotha. Ponder His last words from the cross on which He hung in agony: *"It is finished." With that, He bowed His head and gave up His spirit*" (John 19:30). Focusing on this event in history reminds us again of the great cost Jesus paid for our salvation and leads us to worship and praise Him with all we are and have.

Source: *12 Months of Congregational Stewardship (vol. 1)* by Ronald J. Chewning, Stewardship Advisors



Bits & Pieces

New Member Welcome Reception

The stewardship committee invites you to come and welcome our new members!



Sunday, April 3
9:15 a.m.
Fellowship Hall

There will be no Bible study that day, so after our new members are introduced, you will have an opportunity to enjoy some cake and coffee while visiting with the new members. Please join us and help make this event an enjoyable time.

Lenten/Easter Concert

Everyone is invited to attend St. Croix Lutheran High School's Lenten/Easter concert **Sunday, April 10**. The concert will be presented twice – first at 3:00 p.m. and then again at 7:00 p.m. – in the St. Croix Chapel. A spaghetti supper will be served between performances from 4:30 – 6:00 p.m.

Volunteer Fair

The 5th Annual Volunteer Fair will be held between services on **Sunday, April 10**. Tables will be set up in the fellowship hall with information about the various roles and activities that are needed to carry out Crown of Life's ministries. People will also be available at the tables to answer your questions. Please plan to come and be a part of this event.

Volunteer Recognition Sunday

At the end of each service on **Sunday, April 10**, we will be recognizing everyone who helps with church activities by giving them a flower. Watch for the insert in the bulletin and be sure to be there on April 10!



Adult Information Class

The next class is scheduled to begin May 11. Class will be held on Wednesdays from 6:30 – 8:30 p.m. and will continue for 10 weeks. This class is designed primarily for non-members and unchurched individuals interested in learning what our church teaches. Members may also take this class as a refresher. Child care is available upon request. You may bring friends with you – all materials are provided. If you would like to attend or you know of someone we should contact, please call the church office at 651-451-3832.

Honoring Our Graduates

We would like to honor our 2011 graduates with a special picture board. Parents of 2011 graduates, please give the office a picture of your graduate along with their name, school and future plans.

Easter Egg Hunt

All children in Pre-K through Fifth Grade are invited to participate in an Easter Egg Hunt **Saturday, April 23**, at 9:30 a.m. Watch for more details.



Flowers

All members are encouraged to share the special events in their lives by donating flowers for the altar. Choose your special date on the flower chart posted in the glass enclosed bulletin board. You may bring flowers, or we can contact Glassings for you. More information and pricing from Glassings is available by the flower chart.



CARE Committee UPDATE

In February the CARE Committee provided one meal for a family who had lost a loved one. Please keep this family and all other families in our congregation with needs in your prayers. If you know of anyone in need of a meal please contact Liz Oldfield at 651-455-4483.

CROWN OF LIFE

Bits & PIECES

LUTHERAN
CHURCH & SCHOOL

115 Crusader Avenue
West St. Paul, MN 55118
651-451-3832

Mark C. Kom
Senior Pastor651-552-7014

Richard Schwerin
Associate Pastor651-578-9661

Daniel L. Plath
Principal651-451-3832

WORSHIP SERVICES

Sunday 8:00 a.m. & 10:30 a.m.
Monday 6:30 p.m.

Praise Service is held the second Sunday and Monday of each month.

SUNDAY SCHOOL & BIBLE STUDY

Sunday9:15 a.m.

VISION STATEMENT

We seek to be a vibrant community of faithful Christians who worship together, enthusiastically witness to God's Word, provide lifelong Christian education, compassionately minister to our members' and families' needs, and wisely use the gifts God has given us.

Please direct any questions, comments or ideas about this issue or any future issues to the church office at 651-451-3832 or Pastor Kom at PastorCOL@gmail.com.

Quotefalls

Place the letters in each column into the boxes below them to form a Bible passage. The letters are not necessarily in order. You determine which letter goes into which box below it. Each letter is used only once. Gray squares are used as word spacers.

C	T	E	B	R	U	H	I	S	O	M	U	S	T	M	S	A
A	H		A	P	S	U	H	H	A	W	O	H	I	P	E	A
N	E		B	R	S	H	I	S	H	L	E	S	I	D	T	A
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ANSWER TO THE MARCH QUOTEFALL:

If any man will come after me let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.