

The *intercom* In Church and Community



From the Senior Pastor Celebrating New Possibilities



Dear OSL family and friends,

Easter is a celebration of God creating a brand-new possibility—life out of death. Though we are bound by the brokenness of sin, God, in a miracle of biblical proportions and out of deep love for all of creation, provides the freedom of forgiveness through the death and resurrection

of Jesus. The Church throughout the world joins hearts and voices in praising God with their Alleluias. Praise God for the gift of new life!

Holy Week

Come and experience the story of God's love for all creation as we gather for worship during Holy Week.

Maundy Thursday, April 14 – Noon and 6:30 P.M., The Gathering Place/Sanctuary: Interactive worship at tables, including a light meal and Holy Communion, Passing the Peace, and the Noisy Offering; worship concludes in the Sanctuary with the Stripping of the Altar.

Good Friday, April 15 – 6:30 p.m., Sanctuary: A dramatic immersion into the Passion of Our Lord as we encounter

it in John's Gospel. Televised on KTTW at 10:00 P.M. or watch online on OSL's Facebook page, at 6:30.

Stations of the Cross, all week, various locations: Take your time reflecting on the places and people along the way to Jesus' death and burial—an interactive devotional experience.

Easter Sunday, April 17, 7:00 A.M., Sunrise Worship, Sanctuary; 8:45 and 11:00 A.M. Celebrate Worship, Celebrate Center and Festive Worship, Sanctuary

In Other News

Youth Director John Schomberg is entering candidacy for ordained ministry in the United Methodist Church and will be leaving Our Savior's to begin his theological education. He will be placed at Beresford Zion United Methodist Church and serve the folks there as he is completing his academic requirements. A reception in his honor with a card shower will be held on Sunday, May 22, between worship services, in The Gathering Place. We hope you will join us in celebrating John's faithful ministry at Our Savior's and wishing him well as he begins this new chapter in his life.

On March 31, the Governing Board voted to reactivate the Call Committee that will oversee the process of calling our next Pastor of Youth and Family. They will begin meeting as soon as possible to continue the work they started nearly a

year ago, which was suspended while the board discerned our financial capacity to support a fourth pastor. Once a pastor is called, they will provide leadership and direction in the areas of confirmation and high school youth ministry as well as the decision to hire a youth director.

Finally, be watching your mailboxes for information related to this year's stewardship appeal, *Let Go! Trust God! Rise Up!* Please prayerfully consider, when that information arrives,

Ministry Spotlight Collaborative Garden Project

Churches hate wasted space.

It doesn't matter if that space looks like a row of empty pews, or a cavernous unused fellowship hall, or a broad expanse of parking lot. Churches want to use what they have, to see it filled up with people and bustling activity.

To me, this is a sign of God's Spirit in our midst. When scarcity rules our hearts, we try to keep what belongs to us, and we worry we will not have enough to share. But God pushes us to use everything we have to serve our neighbors. So when a church feels dissatisfied about its unused resources, I think this is a prod from the Holy Spirit—as though God asks us, "What else can you do with my gifts? Who else can you serve?"

Since I've been at OSL, the congregation has sensed this prodding when we look at the seemingly wasted space in our south parking lot.

We used to have a garden there to serve our neighbors from our Spanish-speaking partner congregation Pueblo de Dios. But this garden never achieved sustainability; because many

how you will invest in the mission and ministry of this sacred place called Our Savior's.

Easter blessings,

Randy

Pr. Randy Gehring

of the congregants in this congregation already work more than one job, gardening is simply not possible.

We toyed with the idea of using the property for Hezekiah House, our affordable housing partnership with The Community Outreach. But that program took a different direction when our organizations agreed to use the houses we owned instead.

Without any satisfying answers, the south lot remained a



tiny thorn in our side: irritating, pinching, and basically impossible to dislodge.

Then God started to use that dissatisfaction.

Two years ago, when we were heavily engaged in our conversations around racial justice here at OSL, I talked with my friend Pr. Michelle Lewis, who had begun the Peace Garden Project, a community garden that uses garden-

ing as a way to bridge the members of her racially diverse community. I mentioned that we had this massive south lot where we used to have a garden. I asked her what she would do with the asphalt that covered a portion of it.

“I wouldn’t do anything. I’d just plant raised beds.”

Around the same time, members from our church attended the World Hunger Leadership Gathering, the



same think-tank that led to the formation of our Campus Cupboard. We heard about community gardens other churches had started—including at one church that used a huge section of their huge parking lot for garden space.

Then, while those ideas germinated, out of the blue a neighborhood resident approached me with an idea. Could we use some part of our property—say, that south lot—in partnership with the garden at Augustana University? Could we partner to fight hunger?

Some initial meetings with the leadership at the Augie garden, community members, synod staff members, and OSL teammates led to the seed for an intriguing

partnership with big goals:

- ♦ To partner with area churches (including OSL) to plant gardens.
- ♦ To use the produce from these gardens to support local women- and minority-owned restaurateurs—especially new businesses struggling to achieve lift-off.
- ♦ To invite these restaurateurs to cater “diversity dinners” at our churches where they could tell the stories of their culture, their personal histories, and their food.

- ♦ To use whatever produce was left to fight hunger insecurity in our own churches.

We tested some of this last year when the Augustana garden brought fall harvest produce to OSL. We cooked with it in our kitchen to support our Kids Eat Free program here at OSL, where every child 18 and under can eat one of our fresh meals without cost. And we gave away hundreds of pounds of produce.

This year, as food costs soar, the garden collaborative has gained momentum. Augustana has recruited students to help share the vision and recruit churches to use their gardens for these purposes. We haven’t yet built our raised beds at OSL, but we hope to do this for the next growing season. Between now and then we will host the first Diversity Dinner, and we will continue to cook with and serve fresh veggies from our collaborative gardens.

You can help, too. If you have a garden, contact the Church Office (605-336-2942) for a list of vegetables you can grow. We will connect you to the Augustana Garden Collaborative, and they will help distribute your produce to one of our partners.

As this vision has grown, the south lot at OSL remains vacant.

But now we have a vision for its future.

—Pr. Justin Kosec

Photos: Crated vegetables, Zoe Schaeffer; tomatoes, Lewis Wilson; raised garden bed, Jonathan Hanna, all via Unsplash.com.



909 West 33rd St.,
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OUR SAVIOR'S
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Worship Services

Saturday Evening – 5:00 P.M., Sanctuary

Sunday Morning

Celebrate Worship – 8:45 and 11:00 A.M., Celebrate Center

Festive Worship – 8:45 and 11:00 A.M., Sanctuary

Television and Internet

Celebrate: 9:00 A.M., KTTW (cable channel 9; channel 7.1)

Festive: 1:00 P.M., KSCB (cable channel 30; channel 53),

Facebook Live: 8:45 and 10:15 A.M.

Website: oslchurch.com

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