

March  
2021



## Cancel Easter?

Elder Charles Moore



## Important Dates

Good Friday  
Service 7pm

Youth Camp  
July 18-23

Can Easter be canceled? This is not the first year that some have not celebrated the resurrection. On the very first Easter, the Jewish power players anxiously conspired to make sure any plans for Easter would be canceled.

**Read Matthew 27: 62** Now on the next day, the day after the preparation, the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered together with Pilate, 63 and said, "Sir, we remember that when He was still alive that deceiver said, 'After three days I am to rise again.' 64 "Therefore, give orders for the grave to be made secure until the third day, otherwise His disciples may come and steal Him away and say to the people, 'He has risen from the dead,' and the last deception will be worse than the first." 65 Pilate said to them, "You have a guard; go, make it as secure as you know how." 66 And they went and made the grave secure, and along with the guard they set a seal on the stone.

It is surprising that the Jewish leaders remembered what Jesus had said about rising from the dead. The Jewish leaders understood what he meant, but of

course, they didn't believe it. The Jewish leaders wanted to make sure the disciples would not try to perpetuate a hoax, by stealing the body of Jesus, and then claiming he had risen from the dead. Pilate agreed to help them "cancel Easter," by posting guards. Yet he said something strange: **Matthew 27:65 Pilate said to them, "You have a guard; go, make it as secure as you know how."** Understand—the disciples had only one sword among them, the one Peter had in the Garden of Gethsemane. The disciples had all fled when Jesus was crucified, except for the women, and Joseph and Nicodemus, who had buried Jesus. Who did they think was going to overcome the armed guards? And why would the disciples try to steal the body? In fact, there was no plot to steal Jesus' body. After lying low on the Sabbath, the men were hiding out somewhere. Only some women ventured out at dawn on Sunday—hardly a threat to the armed guard at the tomb.

Yet Pilate's words became a prophecy: "Make the tomb as secure

as you know how." How secure was that? **Matthew 28: 1 Now after the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to look at the grave. 2 And behold, a severe earthquake had occurred, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled away the stone and sat upon it. 3 And his appearance was like lightning, and his clothing as white as snow. 4 The guards shook for fear of him and became like dead men. 5 The angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid; for I know that you are looking for Jesus who has been crucified. 6 "He is not here, for He has risen, just as He said. Come, see the place where He was lying. 7 "Go quickly and tell His disciples that He has risen from the dead; and behold, He is going ahead of you into Galilee, there you will see Him; behold, I have told you." 8 And they left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy and ran to report it to His disciples. 9 And behold, Jesus met them and greeted them. And they came up and took hold of His feet and worshiped Him. 10 Then**

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**Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid; go and take word to My brethren to leave for Galilee, and there they will see Me."**

The resurrection of Jesus went on as planned! The guards felt an earthquake, and they saw an angel, bright like lightning in the dawn of the day. They were so afraid that they shook. The women heard the angel say, "Do not be afraid." Do not be afraid? Of course, they were afraid! Yet the angel challenged their fear, with news they could hardly imagine: "He is not here; he is risen!"

As the women hurried away, afraid yet filled with joy, Jesus met them. He too said to them, "Do not be afraid." Do you catch a theme here? "Do not be afraid."

Many are saying that these days, because of the pandemic and the uncertainty and fear it causes. Why should we not be afraid? Not because we don't see the danger; we do. Not because we have everything under control; we don't. We should not be afraid because Jesus is alive.

The Jewish power players were afraid—afraid that if people feared God more than them, they would lose out. They were still trying to cancel Easter.

Cancel Easter? Not if you believe that Jesus rose from the dead. Of course, some say we can't know whether Jesus actually rose to life. It was a long time ago—almost too long for us to imagine the truth of it. Yet the story has not changed; if it was true then, it is true now.

Even if the story is true, some try to avoid a decision on the truth of the resurrection, because it threatens their way of life. It threatens their hopes and dreams for worldly success, their prejudices and privileges, or the freedom they crave. They are not seeking to discover the truth, but to manage the truth to fit the life they choose.

Others believe that Jesus rose on the third day, incredible as that seems, and their lives reflect the life he gives to those who believe. Can Easter be canceled? Church services can be canceled. Public celebrations can be canceled. But the truth of the resurrection, that Jesus rose from the dead, cannot never ever be canceled. Amen!

## Michigan Report Tim Begeman



As the pandemic saunters on, I try to look on the bright side. For example, now that we have to wear masks in public all the time, it comes in handy when breaking out in cold sores. You can now have an enormous hideous blister on or around your mouth, as sometimes I do, and no one is the wiser. You no longer have to field demoralizing questions like: were you in a fist fight with your wife and lost? Or, did you try to eat a live hand grenade and it went off? Or, did you fall out of your car while speeding down the highway and hit the guardrail with your lip? So, wearing a mask all the time isn't all that bad.

Unfortunately, December started out with Cheryl Lymond's husband, Butch passing away after contracting Covid. He is extremely missed by Cheryl, his whole family, and friends.

On December 10th we had our annual bell ringing for the Salvation Army. We signed up for blocks of time to vigorously ring a tiny bell the whole evening to subtly remind shopping pedestrians that there are people in need this time of year. Thank goodness that Melinda Begeman had carpal tunnel surgery earlier in November so she was well equipped to fling her wrist and ring the bell with careless abandon.

December we had our yearly Christmas Eve service. We started it with Emily Schott skillfully and appealingly playing Christmas based songs on the piano to set the mood. Dave Fedor was the officiator for the evening. To kick off the service Noah Schott played "God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen" on the violin, Sue Schott presented a stimulating pertinent reading, Aurine Moore, Jeff Begeman and Jonathon Schott sang Christmas associating solos. To finish the service Elder Charlie Moore summed it up with a short talk.

At the beginning of the year we continued our weekly bible studies with the book of Genesis. We all enjoy getting together via zoom to discuss the many theological topics, the creation of the world, the early history of humanity, Israel's ancestors, and the origins of the Jewish people all covered in that enlightening book of the Bible.

In January, Sue and John Schott's son, Jonathan moved to Missouri to get a fresh start and open up employment opportunities. He has currently found an apartment, employment and settling in comfortably. Our hopes and prayers are with you, Jonathan.

Katie Begeman's boyfriend started a job at Dunkin Donuts in January. The whole family has to adjust

trying to consume left over donuts brought home at the end of his shift and to the new schedule between watching, feeding and playing with their son, Grayson.

Chelsea Begeman and Brian McCarthy got married in a beatific, intimate and socially distant ceremony on January 23rd. Congratulations Chelsea and Brian! We all pray they have an enduring and euphoric marriage. Speaking of Chelsea, we found out later that she is now in a family way. As a matter of fact Chelsea and Brian are expecting a baby boy. Our prayers are with them in this fortuitous start to their little family.

During our bible study in February we had all received an extraordinary announcement. Unbeknownst to us, apparently Dave Steinbrook had asked Kay Nevil her hand in holy matrimony. She ostensibly acquiesced. I just hope that Dave did the proper thing and asked her father's permission first.

I'm sad to announce that Mary Begeman unexpectedly passed away on the 5th of February. She was my beloved cousin, who in my youth learning to drive, oftentimes would let me drive her large expensive car without batting an eye. Mary missed very few if any sporting events that her cherished nieces or nephews were featured in. She was a mainstay to our Color Camp for as long as I can remember. Her mother was head cook for many years and Mary joined in to help during that time and beyond. She did all the grocery shopping during camp week for anything and everything that was needed by any of the staff. She also was the affable, welcoming and familiar face that all the campers saw when they first entered the food line or wanted to buy candy every day. Through the years she also recruited many children to attend camp. We could never have Color camp without the kids. She is and will be sorely missed.

Late in February we got news that Lisa (Layton) Bishop was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. She is currently seeing a specialist to get treatment options and selections. Please pray that she would make a complete and unmitigated recovery. Keep Lisa and her family in your continued prayers.

### SAVING GRACE

Lord, you are so wonderful  
And deserve our love and praise  
I cannot express just how I feel  
When I think of your saving grace

To think of what you went through  
That day upon the cross  
And in the moments leading up to it  
When soldiers spat and scoffed

And beat you with no mercy,  
Making sport and having fun  
You said not a word in your defense  
Even though you were God's son

You bore it all out of your love  
For the lost and dying souls,  
To give us a hope we can hold on to  
For a future yet to unfold

It's such a beautiful description, Lord,  
Of what your grace can do,  
For no one's exempt from your saving grace,  
But it's a gift freely given from you

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**CHURCH OF THE  
LORD OUR  
RIGHTEOUSNESS**

**1922 LaSalle Road  
Monroe, MI 48162  
Church 734-242-9511  
Elder Moore  
734.242.7674**

**Publisher - Jeff Begeman  
734-586-8619  
jbegeman@centurytel.net**

**website  
colornet.org**

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A boy asks his father, "Dad, are bugs good to eat?" "That's disgusting. Don't talk about things like that over dinner," the dad replies. After dinner the father asks, "Now, son, what did you want to ask me?" "Oh, nothing," the boy says. "There was a bug in your soup, but now it's gone."

Q: Did you hear about the kidnapping at school?

A: It's okay. He woke up.

Q: Can February march?

A: No, but April may.

Did you hear about the guy whose whole left side was cut off? He's all right now.

Q: What is the tallest building in the entire world?

A: The library, because it has so many stories.