

March 30, 2025

Fourth Sunday In Lent





St. Stephen's Episcopal Church

St. Stephen's is a reconciling, affirming, and inclusive Christian community striving through worship, love and service to welcome all people just as God created you. No matter where you are on your journey of faith, and whether you are single, married, divorced, separated, or partnered, our welcome knows no boundaries of age, race, ethnicity, culture, political affiliation, gender, sexual orientation, economic condition, physical or mental ability. **We believe that God delights in the diversity of creation and so do we!**

We as people of faith who are called to care for this creation want to **respectfully acknowledge the Cowlitz and Chinook People**, who have stewarded this land throughout the generations. We begin this effort to acknowledge what has been buried by honoring the truth. We are standing on the ancestral lands of the Cowlitz and Chinook People. We pay respects to their elders past and present. Please take a moment to consider the many legacies of violence, displacement, migration, and settlement that bring us together here today. And please join us in uncovering such truths. An invitation to a Holy Lent:

This Lent we invite you to engage in the work and worship of St. Stephen's. It starts on Sundays when we engage in worship that is focused on our penitence as we seek absolution and forgiveness, the promise that God has made us and fulfilled through Christ's death and resurrection. From the Great Litany where we lay bare our souls before God, to the special service orders in An Exhortation and A Penitential Order, we begin our services in Lent with a focus on coming before God, asking for forgiveness, and being given that forgiveness. Flowing out from this worship experience you are invited to partake in our formation opportunities, our fellowship gatherings, and by participating in our outreach ministries. We hope that you will experience a Holy Lent this year.

Worship Team

Presider Fr. Nic Mather Musician Riki Davis Acolyte Juice Quiroz Altar Guild Becky Edmiston Coffee Hour Dee Taylor, Mary Lyons Reader Mary Hoover, Josh Carter Greeter Mary Lyons Chalice John Edmiston Usher Greg Lapic Verger John Edmiston Vestry Presence Mary Lyons, Mike Claxton

Connect with Fr. Nic:

Please leave your name and email/phone number and Fr. Nic will connect with you this week with an invitation to enjoy a cup of coffee on him!

Name: _____

Coming Together for Wine and for Bread Verses 1-3 0 1. Com - ing Wine and geth - er for for Bread, to -2. Who will be hun - gry if, hear - ing the call, 3. Here at this ta - ble, we're wel-comed by name; 0. Tast - ing it the and hear - ing read, sto - ry all? We of - fer seats ban - quet at our to All in - vit - ed, each is the same. are seat 0. d' shar - ing Know-ing our hun - ger and the meal got - ten? Whom Who for is will we ig nore? Serv - ing, re ceiv - ing, and eat - ing the feast 1., 2. 6 O - pens our eyes to see Je - sus real. is Who is the out-cast that knocks at our door? Hum-bles the haugh-ty and hon-ors the least. Verse 4 3. 4. Bless-ing this ta - ble the Spir - it here is 0. Grant - ing sud - den - ly clear: us vi - sion, SO 0. Shar-ing and serv - ing, the bod - y is fed, 0 Nour-ished by Je - sus, Wine and the the Bread, Nour-ished by Je-sus, the Wine and the Bread. Text: Adam M. L. Tice, b.1979, © 2009, GIA Publications, Inc. Tune: BLACKHAWK LANE, 10 10 10 10; David Haas, b.1957, © 2010, GIA Publications, Inc.

A Penitential Order

Bless the Lord who forgives all our sins. His mercy endures for ever.

The Decalogue

Hear the commandments of God to his people: I am the Lord your God who brought you out of bondage. You shall have no other gods but me. Lord have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law.

You shall not make for yourself any idol. Lord have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law.

You shall not invoke with malice the Name of the Lord your God. Lord have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law.

Remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy.

Lord have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law.

Honor your father and your mother.

Lord have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law.

You shall not commit murder.

Lord have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law.

You shall not commit adultery.

Lord have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law.

You shall not steal.

4

Lord have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law.

You shall not be a false witness.

Lord have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law.

You shall not covet anything that belongs to your neighbor.

Lord have mercy upon us, and write all your laws in our hearts.

"Seeing that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." *Hebrews 4:14,16*

Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

Silence

Almighty and most merciful father,

we have erred and strayed from your ways like lost sheep,
we have followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts,
we have offended against your holy laws,
we have left undone those things which we ought to have done,
and we have done those things which we ought not to have done.
But you, O Lord, have mercy upon us,
spare you those who confess their faults,
restore you those who are penitent,
according to your promises declared unto all creation in Christ Jesus our Lord;
and grant, O most merciful Father, for his sake,
that we may bereafter live a godly, righteour, and scher life

that we may hereafter live a godly, righteous, and sober life, to the glory of your holy Name. Amen.

The Almighty and merciful Lord grant you absolution and remission of all your sins, true repentance, amendment of life, and the grace and consolation of his Holy Spirit. **Amen**.

Kyrie

Ann Marie Long



Children are invited to follow the procession of the cross from the Church to the Parish Hall for Sunday School. While the program is geared for children 10 & under, ALL children are welcome to attend. Parents are also welcome to attend. Children will return to the church in time for Eucharist (typically returning after the passing of the peace).

The Lord be with you. **And with your spirit.** Let us pray.

Gracious Father, whose blessed Son Jesus Christ came down from heaven to be the true bread which gives life to the world: Evermore give us this bread, that he may live in us, and we in him; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen**.

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

A reading from Joshua 5:9-12

The Lord said to Joshua, "Today I have rolled away from you the disgrace of Egypt." And so that place is called Gilgal to this day.

While the Israelites were camped in Gilgal they kept the passover in the evening on the fourteenth day of the month in the plains of Jericho. On the day after the passover, on that very day, they ate the produce of the land, unleavened cakes and parched grain. The manna ceased on the day they ate the produce of the land, and the Israelites no longer had manna; they ate the crops of the land of Canaan that year.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people. Thanks be to God.

Psalm 32

- 1 Happy are they whose transgressions are forgiven, * and whose sin is put away!
- 2 Happy are they to whom the Lord imputes no guilt, * and in whose spirit there is no guile!
- 3 While I held my tongue, my bones withered away, * because of my groaning all day long.
- 4 For your hand was heavy upon me day and night; * my moisture was dried up as in the heat of summer.
- 5 Then I acknowledged my sin to you, * and did not conceal my guilt.
- 6 I said," I will confess my transgressions to the Lord." * Then you forgave me the guilt of my sin.

- 7 Therefore all the faithful will make their prayers to you in time of trouble; *
 when the great waters overflow, they shall not reach them.
- 8 You are my hiding-place; you preserve me from trouble; * you surround me with shouts of deliverance.
- 9 "I will instruct you and teach you in the way that you should go; * I will guide you with my eye.
- 10 Do not be like horse or mule, which have no understanding; * who must be fitted with bit and bridle, or else they will not stay near you."
- 11 Great are the tribulations of the wicked; * but mercy embraces those who trust in the Lord.
- 12. Be glad, you righteous, and rejoice in the Lord; * shout for joy, all who are true of heart.

A reading from 2 Corinthians 5:16-21

From now on, we regard no one from a human point of view; even though we once knew Christ from a human point of view, we know him no longer in that way. If anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us. So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's People. Thanks be to God.

Gospel Procession (before reading, please stand as able)

Gather Hymnal #474

From ashes to the living font Your Church must journey, Lord. Baptized in grace in grace renewed by your most holy Word.

The Holy Gospel of Our Savior Jesus Christ according to Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32 **Praise to you, O Christ.**

All the tax collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to Jesus. And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, "This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them."

So Jesus told them this parable:

"There was a man who had two sons. The younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of the property that will belong to me.' So he divided his property between them. A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and traveled to a distant country, and there he squandered his property in dissolute living. When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that country, and he began to be in need. So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs. He would gladly have filled himself with the pods that the pigs were eating; and no one gave him anything. But when he came to himself he said, 'How many of my father's hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger! I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands." So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. Then the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' But the father said to his slaves, 'Quickly, bring out a robe--the best one--and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!' And they began to celebrate.

"Now his elder son was in the field; and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. He called one of the slaves and asked what was going on. He replied, 'Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has got him back safe and sound.' Then he became angry and refused to go in. His father came out and began to plead with him. But he answered his father, 'Listen! For all these years I have been working like a slave for you, and I have never disobeyed your command; yet you have never given me even a young goat so that I might celebrate with my friends. But when this son of yours came back, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fatted calf for him!' Then the father said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found.'"

The Gospel of our Savior. Glory to you, O Christ.

Gospel Recession (after reading)

When we repent, you run to us, Forgiving arms spread wide; You celebrate when we return, And come home to your side.

Homily-The Rev. Nic Mather

THE NICENE CREED

(Please stand as able)

We believe in one God. the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth. of all that is, seen and unseen. We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became truly human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end. We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father, who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Celebrant: Forgiving Father, you watch for us with a loving heart, welcoming us home to you. Give us grace to see our path clearly and correct our course when we are led astray. Hear and answer our prayers to you as we say, Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Leader: Send your message of love to the world through us, that we might be examples of your good news to those who know us. Use our hearts and hands to your purpose. Open our mouths to advocate for the poor. Give us ears that hear the cries of the lonely, the forgotten, the imprisoned, and the poor. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Turn our foolish hearts from hate and division and unite us in a bond of love that will not tolerate persecution, violence, or waste. Give our leaders the desire for true service to your people and a passion for bringing peace to all nations. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer**.

Give strength to those who are afraid, to those who are facing diagnoses, disaster or loss. Comfort them with your spirit of hope and restore those things which have been lost. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Turn us away from bitterness and hopelessness. Give healing to those who are ill, peace to those of anxious heart or defeated spirit, that they might find wholeness of body, mind, and soul. We pray especially for David Hughey, Ron & Harriet Byrnes, Larry Riles, Tammy Robinson, Jo Pellows, Sharlene Snaza, Lisa Sudar, and those you now name either silently or aloud. *Pause*. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer**.

Give comfort to those who grieve and care to those who have died, and grant that we might all know resurrected life in your new age. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE: TRANS DAY OF VISIBILITY MARCH 31

Holy Creating One,

You are the God who calls us by new names.

You are the One who sends dreams of unimagined futures.

You are the Word that became flesh and lived among us, beside us, and for us. We give you thanks for your diverse creation that is constantly giving us glimpses of who you are.

We give you thanks for all that we learn about you through your beloved ones who are

transgender and gender-nonconforming,

those who dance with your Spirit beyond the binary of gender.

Thank you for those who have claimed new names,

those who have dreamed new futures,

those for whom word and flesh have taken on new life,

among us, beside us,

and for a truer picture of all that you have called us to be as your people.

May we seek out such stories of faith,

hear their words of challenge,

echo these lives of transformation,

and love as you love,

both our neighbors and ourselves,

as you call us

and dream for us

and make your Word alive in us.

Amen.

Prayer written by Alissa Bender (Canada), 2022.

Celebrant: Father, you rejoice when what is lost becomes found in you; search our hearts and keep them ever focused on the abundant life we find in you, your Son and in the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

THE PEACE & OFFERTORY

(Please stand as able)

The Peace of our Savior Jesus Christ be always with you. **And with your Spirit.**

Ascribe to the Lord the honor due his name, bring offerings and come into his courts.

Offertory Hymn

Coming Home William J Kirkpatrick Arr. Bailey & Mayo Choir

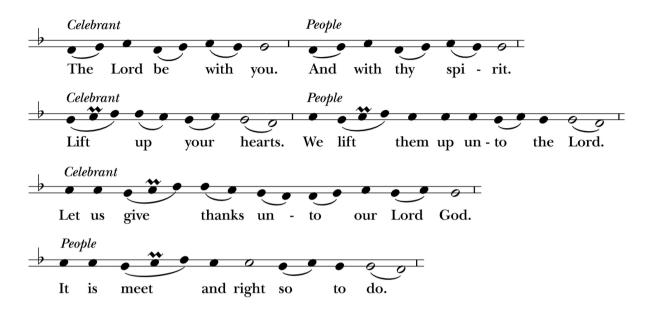


A mosaic reminder of Matthew 23:37-39: "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often have I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing! See, your house is left to you, desolate. For I tell you, you will not see me again until you say, 'Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.'"

Dominus Flevit ("The Lord Wept") Church, Mount of Olives, Jerusalem

THE HOLY EUCHARIST

(Please stand as able)

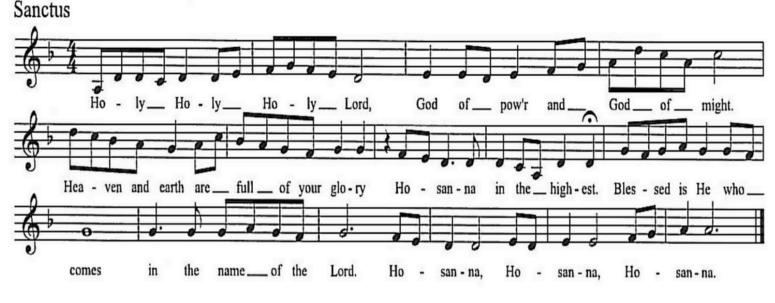


Setting: Copyright © Church Publishing Inc.

It is very meet, right, and our bounden duty, that we should at all times, and in all places, give thanks unto you, O Lord, holy Father, almighty, everlasting God.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord; who was in every way tempted as we are, yet did not sin; by whose grace we are able to triumph over every evil, and to live no longer unto ourselves, but unto him who died for us and rose again.

Therefore with Angels and Archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify your glorious Name; evermore praising you, and saying,



(You may choose to stand or kneel as able)

All glory be to you, Almighty God, our heavenly Father, for that you, of your tender mercy, did give your only Son Jesus Christ to suffer death upon the cross for our redemption; who made there, by his one oblation of himself once offered, a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction, for the sins of the whole world; and did institute, and in his holy Gospel command us to continue, a perpetual memory of that his precious death and sacrifice, until his coming again.

For in the night in which he was betrayed, he took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take, eat, this is my Body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Likewise, after supper, he took the cup; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, "Drink you all of this; for this is my Blood of the New Testament, which is shed for you, and for many, for the remission of sins. Do this, as often as you shall drink it, in remembrance of me."

Wherefore, O Lord and heavenly Father, according to the institution of your dearly beloved Son our Savior Jesus Christ, we, your humble servants, do celebrate and make here before your divine Majesty, with these your holy gifts, which we now offer unto you, the memorial your Son has commanded us to make; having in remembrance his blessed passion and precious death, his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension; rendering unto you most hearty thanks for the innumerable benefits procured unto us by the same. And we most humbly beseech you, O merciful Father, to hear us; and, of your almighty goodness, vouchsafe to bless and sanctify, with your Word and Holy Spirit, these your gifts and creatures of bread and wine; that we, receiving them according to your Son our Savior Jesus Christ's holy institution, in remembrance of his death and passion, may be partakers of his most blessed Body and Blood.

And we earnestly desire your fatherly goodness mercifully to accept this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving; most humbly beseeching you to grant that, by the merits and death of your Son Jesus Christ, and through faith in his blood, we, and all your whole Church, may obtain remission of our sins, and all other benefits of his passion.

And here we offer and present unto you, O Lord, our selves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and living sacrifice unto you; humbly beseeching you that we, and all others who shall be partakers of this Holy Communion, may worthily receive the most precious Body and Blood of your Son Jesus Christ, be filled with your grace and heavenly benediction, and made one body with him, that he may dwell in us, and we in him.

And although we are unworthy, through our manifold sins, to offer unto you any sacrifice, yet we beseech you to accept this our bounden duty and service, not weighing our merits, but pardoning our offenses, through Jesus Christ our Lord;

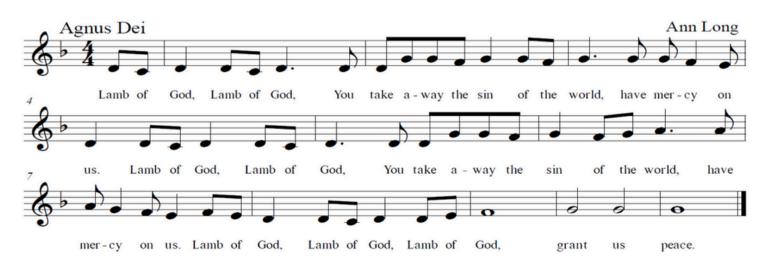
By whom, and with whom, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all honor and glory be unto you, O Father Almighty, world without end. **AMEN**. And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your Name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and for ever. Amen.

The Breaking of the Bread

The Celebrant breaks the consecrated Bread. A period of silence is kept.

Agnus Dei



The Gifts of God for the People of God. Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed on him in your hearts by faith, with thanksgiving.

You are invited to come forward and receive Eucharist at this time. We will be sharing wine from a common chalice, so if you would prefer intinction please let the priest know so that they may intinct in a separate chalice reserved for this practice. Gluten free communion is available and a non-alcoholic option in place of the wine is also available upon request.

Prayer for Eucharistic Visitor

We offer a prayer from our community to those who are unable to join us as we send the sacrament to them carried by a minister of the church

As you go to the sick and homebound, take with you not only the sacrament that we have celebrated, but also the Word of God which we have heard, as well as the affection of this parish community. Ask for the prayers of those whom you visit in return. Go, now, with God's peace and blessing. **AMEN**.



Text: Kevin Nichols, 1929–2006, © 1980, ICEL Tune: PASSION CHORALE, 7 6 7 6 D; Hans Leo Hassler, 1564–1612; harm. by J. S. Bach, 1685–1750

Postcommunion Prayer (Please kneel as able)

Let us pray.

Almighty and everliving God, we most heartily thank you that you feed us in these holy mysteries, with the spiritual food of the most precious Body and Blood of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ; and do assure us thereby of your favor and goodness towards us; and that we are very members incorporate in the mystical body of your Son, the blessed company of all faithful people; and are also heirs, through hope, of your everlasting kingdom. And we humbly beseech you, O heavenly Father, so to assist us with your grace, that we may continue in that holy fellowship, and do all such good works as you have prepared for us to walk in; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom with you and the Holy Spirit, be all honor and glory, world without end. Amen.

The peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you, and remain with you always. **Amen**.

(Please stand as able)

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord. Thanks be to God.

Closing Hymn

Following the closing hymn you are invited to join us in the Parish Hall for Coffee Hour! If you are new today, please take a welcome packet (found in the pew or at the front door) and if you feel comfortable, introduce yourself to Fr. Nic!

Now let us all with one accord

The Hymnal 1982, #147



Words: Att. Gregory the Great (540-604); tr. *Praise the Lord*, 1972, alt. James Quinn, SJ. Printed by permission of Geoffrey Chapman, a division of Cassell Ltd. Music: *Bourbon*, melody att. Freeman Lewis (1780-1859); harm. Thomas Foster (b. 1938).



Easter Memorials

The floral adornment of the church is make possible through donations from individuals. If you would like to make a donation, please use an envelope from the pew or contact the office with your memorial information before April 15th.

Street Outreach bag filling today! March 30 during coffee hour!

Seafarer Easter Project, April 6 Signing of Easter Cards during coffee hour

Save the Date: Spring Cleaning Party Saturday April 12, 9am-1pm (Coffee & Donuts, Pizza!)

Save the Date: Palm Cross Making Party, Saturday April 12 at 10am in Parish Hall

Holy Week: Palm Sunday April 13 @ 10:30am

Holy Week: Tuesday in Holy Week April 15 @ 7pm Holy Eucharist with Renewal of Ordination Vows for Clergy, Bishop Phil Labelle, Celebrant & Preacher

Holy Week: Maundy Thursday April 17 @ 6pm *No dinner will be served, please join us in the main church*

Holy Week: Garden Vigil, April 17-18, 8pm-12pm Sit in vigil with Christ in All Saints Chapel throughout the night

Holy Week: Good Friday April 18 @ Noon

Holy Week: The Great Vigil of Easter, Saturday April 19 @ 6pm

Holy Week: Easter Sunday April 20 @ 10:30am

Save the Date: Easter Brunch Coffee Hour Potluck Join us as we continue our Easter celebrations with our annual Easter Brunch Coffee Hour Potluck. Please, if able, bring a brunch dish to share! All are welcome and invited! Easter activities and egg hunt!