

Trinity Tribune

Trinity Lutheran Church ✠ Paola, Kansas

 **APRIL**
2022

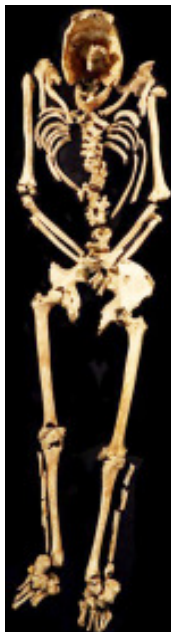
From the Pastor

*On a hill far away
Stood an old rugged cross,
The emblem of suffering and shame;
And I love that old cross
Where the dearest and best
For a world of lost sinners was slain.*

In 1792, the French physician Dr. Joseph Guillotine performed what he considered to be a humanitarian gesture: he invented a new instrument of execution, which bears his name. The guillotine, electric chair, and gas chamber were all touted in their day as being less painful and traumatic — a more “humane” way to die! The most recent development along these lines is death by lethal injection. The idea has been to make executions less cruel.

But they had a different attitude in ancient times. Crucifixion was invented for the very purpose of being painful, traumatic, an *inhumane* way to die, a cruel form of death. In order to serve as an example and a deterrent, death by crucifixion was deliberately designed to be slow, brutal, and public. The Roman poet Cicero called crucifixion “*the cruelest and most hideous punishment possible.*” The Jewish historian Josephus said that crucifixion was “*the most wretched of deaths.*”

In our nation today it is a major news story when the government carries out an execution. But in the Roman Empire of 33 A.D. executions were common, and the most common form of execution was crucifixion. Jesus was one of many tens of thousands who were put to death by crucifixion. Jesus Himself was crucified along with two criminals. For a Roman soldier, crucifixion detail was just an ordinary part of his regular duties.



Pictured above is a heel bone of a crucifixion victim, discovered in 1968 at Jerusalem and still containing the iron spike driven through it to affix him to the cross. It dates from the exact same time as Christ, and the inscription on the box holding the bones reveals it was another Jewish young man, named Jehohanan of Hagkol, who like Jesus of Nazareth was crucified by the Romans. Amazingly, because of the vast scope of the Roman Empire, last year an entire skeleton from the same time period, pictured at left, of yet another of their countless crucifixion victims, with a nearly identical heel bone still containing an iron nail, was discovered near Cambridge, England!



The Romans had a step-by-step crucifixion routine. The crucifixion detail usually consisted of four soldiers for each victim. Once they learned there would be crucifixions that day, the soldiers who were on crucifixion detail would gather the necessary items: whip, hammer, iron nails, and rations for them to stay at the cross until the victim had died.

The crucifixion routine began with the victim being stripped and whipped almost to the point of death. This torture was intended to weaken the victim and shorten his time on the cross, as was thus considered a humanitarian gesture! Matthew 27:26 says, “[*Pilate*] had Jesus flogged, and handed him over to be crucified.”

The victim would then be forced to carry his own cross out to the place of execution. John 19:17 reports, “*Carrying His own cross, He went out to the place of the Skull (which in Aramaic is called Golgotha).*” But it seems Jesus was so weakened by the torture He had endured that He could not bear His cross the entire distance, and so Matthew, Mark and Luke tell us that the soldiers picked a man from the crowd named Simon of Cyrene and forced him to carry the cross.

Out at the place of crucifixion the soldiers gave the victim wine mixed with myrrh, a mild narcotic. Mark 15:23 tells us: “*They offered Him wine mixed with myrrh, but He did not take it.*” Perhaps Jesus did not take it because for our sake He had to suffer the full, undiluted agony of the cross.

As a bonus for being on crucifixion detail, the soldiers were permitted to divide among themselves the victim’s clothes. Luke 23:34 says, “*They divided up His clothes by casting lots.*”

The cross would be laid out on the ground and the victim nailed to it. Peter says in Acts 2:23, “*They put Him to*

death by nailing Him to the cross." For many years critics said that the New Testament must be in error, that the Romans couldn't have nailed people to crosses, because it would be impossible for someone to be held onto a cross with nails, since the nails would pull through the flesh.

Then in 1968 the first skeleton of an actual crucifixion victim was discovered in a tomb near Jerusalem, the remains of a man in his mid-twenties who was crucified about the same time as Jesus. A seven inch iron spike was still lodged in his leg bone, very much like a railroad spike except tapered to a fine point.

Because iron was valuable, these spikes were normally extracted by the soldiers and used over and over again. But this particular spike had hit a knot in the cross and bent like a fishhook so that it could not be pulled from the body. Splinters of olive wood from the cross were still stuck to the end of the spike.

But the most interesting thing was at the other end of the spike, between the head of the spike and the bone: a square piece of acacia wood which functioned as a washer. That is how the Romans held a victim onto a cross with nails; they were better engineers than we are, and they knew how to use a washer to distribute the load!

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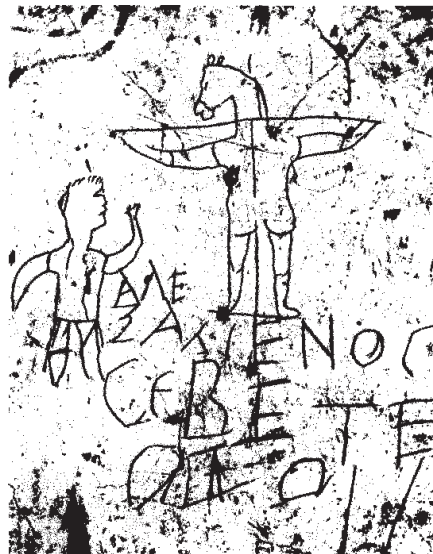
Published Monthly by

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April, 2022*



The earliest known depiction of Christ upon the cross is not a work of Christian art, glorifying Christ, but rather this mocking piece of graffiti. Dating from 150 A.D., it was discovered in 1857 carved into the floor of an ancient army barracks near the emperor's palace at Rome. It seems one of the soldiers there, named Alexamenos, was a Christian. The graffiti shows this faithful soldier kneeling before a cross. On the cross hangs a naked man — but with a donkey's head. The sarcastic inscription says, "Alexamenos worships his God." Though intended as an insult, this bit of graffiti is actually a beautiful witness across the centuries to the faith of this ancient Roman soldier.

After the victim was nailed to the cross the soldiers would raise it up and post a wooden plaque above the victim specifying his name and the crime for which he was being crucified. John says 19:19, "Pilate had a notice prepared and fastened to the cross. It read: JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS." Even though Pilate found Jesus innocent of treason, that was nevertheless the official reason he was crucified, supposedly claiming to be "The King of the Jews" in competition with Caesar. There was a specific Roman law, Lex Julia Majestatis, enacted by Augustus in 8 B.C., which made it an offense punishable by death for anyone to proclaim himself a king without prior permission of the Roman emperor.

The notice posted on the cross was an important part of the deterrent effect of crucifixion, a warning to everyone else not to commit the same crime. That is also why something so ghastly as crucifixions were carried out in a prominent, public place, as John 19:20 adds, "Many of the Jews read this sign, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city, and the sign was written in Aramaic, Latin and Greek."

In order to utterly humiliate the crucifixion victim he was usually completely naked as he hung on the cross. The soldiers and the crowd would insult and taunt him. As Mark 15:29 reports, "Those who passed by hurled insults at Him," and as Luke 23:36 says, "The soldiers also came up and mocked Him."

There was very little crucifixion victims could do to fight back or retaliate. They would usually curse the soldiers or spit in their faces. If you were a soldier on crucifixion detail, you had to watch out that the victim did not make one last defiant gesture by relieving himself in your face. Contrast that with the attitude of Jesus. First Peter 2:23 says, "When they hurled their insults at Him, He did not retaliate." Jesus preached, "Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you" (Luke 6:27-28). And on the cross He practiced what He preached: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34).

Crucifixion would cause dehydration and intense thirst. And so John 19:28 reports that Jesus said from the cross, "I thirst." The soldiers soaked a sponge in wine vinegar, which is what they themselves received for their daily ration, put the sponge on a stick and lifted it to Jesus' lips.

Victims of crucifixion often lasted three or four days on the cross. That is why Pontius Pilate was surprised to learn of Jesus' death. In order to hasten death it was customary to break the victim's legs so that he would slump down and be unable to breathe. As John 19:31-32 says, "Because the Jews did not want the bodies left on the crosses

during the Sabbath, they asked Pilate to have the legs broken and the bodies taken down. The soldiers therefore came and broke the legs of the first man who had been crucified with Jesus, and then those of the other." Once again archaeology confirms the New Testament: when those skeletons of crucifixion victims were discovered, their legs had been broken.

Jesus was so weakened by the all the torture He endured before His crucifixion that He died after three hours on the cross. John 19:33-34 continues, "But when they came to Jesus and found that He was already dead, they did not break His legs. Instead, one of the soldiers pierced Jesus' side with a spear, bringing a sudden flow of blood and water." Modern medical doctors interpret this to mean that Jesus probably died as a result of congestive heart failure, a buildup of fluids around the heart.

Everything the Bible reports about Jesus' crucifixion agrees perfectly with the historical and archaeological evidence. But one thing history and archaeology can't tell us is the meaning for you personally of Jesus' death on the cross. Paul says in Colossians 1:19-20, "God was pleased to have all His fullness dwell in Him, and through Him to reconcile to Himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through His blood, shed on the cross." Because Jesus died on the cross you are reconciled with God, you are forgiven all your sins, you are at peace with God through his blood, shed on the cross.

*In that old rugged cross,
Stained with blood so divine,
A wondrous beauty I see;
For 'twas on that old cross
Jesus suffered and died,
To pardon and sanctify me.
So I'll cherish the old rugged cross,
Till my trophies at last I lay down,
I will cling to the old rugged cross,
And exchange it some day
for a crown!*

Pastor Kevin Vogts



We have again arranged for Easter Lilies to be ordered through the Church Office from Price Chopper, for \$9 each. Sign up on the counter in the church office indicating that you wish to have these plants purchased for you, and put your payment in the offering plate marked "Easter Lilies."

The deadline to sign up for ordering through the Church Office is Palm Sunday, April 10. You are also welcome to bring your own plants, if you wish to purchase them elsewhere or receive them as gifts. Please still sign up on the list indicating that you will provide your own plants and drop them by the church the week before Easter Sunday. You are also welcome to take your plants home any time after Easter Sunday.

When you sign up, please indicate whom your plants are in memory or honor of, the way you want it printed in the newsletter.



Drive-In Easter Sunrise Service April 17

Because it all went so beautifully last year, there have been many requests to have a "Drive-In Sunrise Service" again this year, which we hold in our parking lot at 7:00am on Easter Sunday, April 17.

Our local area broadcast system allows those in attendance to listen to the service on their car radios, and it will also be broadcast over our outdoor sound system. Like last year, the drive-in service will include Holy Communion, with communicants coming from their cars to receive it in a continuous manner.

A second Easter service also with Holy Communion will be held inside the Sanctuary at the regular time of 10:00am. Both services will feature the same order of worship and message, "Easter: Good News for You!" based on Luke 24:1-12.



Holy Week begins on Palm Sunday, April 10. A special service of Holy Communion commemorating the Last Supper will be held on Maundy Thursday, April 14, at 7:00pm. Pastor Vogts' message will be "This Is the Feast of Victory" based on Exodus 12:1-14.



On Good Friday, April 15, at 7:00pm we will have a traditional Tenebrae Service. "Tenebrae" (TEN-uh-bray) is the Latin word for "darkness" or "shadows."

The Tenebrae Service is marked by a gradual extinguishing of candles and other lights, symbolizing the death of our Lord, interspersed with readings, prayers, hymns, and other musical selections related to His Passion. Our Tenebrae Service will feature seven candles, gradually extinguished as we read Christ's seven last words from the cross.

Pastor Vogts' message will be "His Pain—Our Gain" based on Isaiah 53:4. Bring your family to meditate upon our Savior's sacrifice for your salvation!

Missionaries of the Month



Each month we remember in prayer in our worship services—and you are encouraged to remember in your personal prayers—specific missionaries around the world who are supported by our congregation through our mission offerings to our Synod.

April 3

Rev. Andrew & Kelsey Schlund
Mexico

April 10

Rev. Eric & Johanna Stinnett
Ethiopia
(See Article Page 5)

April 17

Rev. Paul & Genevieve Nelson
Indonesia

April 24

Justin & Jordan Logston
Belize



A new member recently commented how much they appreciated the informal visiting at Coffee Hour following our worship services, and that was one thing that attracted them to join our congregation. The signup sheet to host Coffee Hour is on the counter in the Gathering Room. Consider signing up to honor birthdays, wedding anniversaries, etc. — most of 2022 is open!

April 3

Jan Minden

April 10

Michelle Haley
Emma's Birthday

April 17

Easter Breakfast

April 24
Karen Brack
Malcom's 1st Birthday



April BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

Our records of birthdays and anniversaries may not complete. If your information is missing or inaccurate, please accept our apologies and notify the Church Office at 913-849-3344 or email Church Secretary Stacey Elkinton at trinitylutheranblock@gmail.com.

April 1 Lori Schlegel
April 1 Elaine Stewart
April 3 Brigitte Rodewald
April 4 Joy Hinds
April 4 Kristina Elts
April 5 Shamron Ferrell
April 5 Tyler Hieber
April 5 Wesley Medlen
April 5 Joe Mueller
April 6 Kelsey Debrick
April 6 Dennis Johns
April 6 Bill Koelsch
April 8 Leslie Prothe
April 8 Ella Durham
April 8 Dawson Garrison
April 9 Emma Haley
April 10 Karlie McMullin
April 11 James Fanning
April 13 Suzanne Peckman
April 14 Matt Oberheide
April 14 Venita Prothe
April 14 Layla Schlegel
April 14 Dana Simonson
April 15 Lois Holtz
April 16 Erika Hall
April 17 Rev. Kevin Vogts
April 18 Melissa Richardson
April 19 Katie Taylor
April 20 Loren Herrs
April 21 Ashley Debrick
April 22 Chloe Maisch
April 22 Lori Richardson
April 22 Nicholas Minden
April 22 Malcolm Brack
April 23 Eric Ritch
April 24 Bridget Medlin
April 26 John Gerken

April 26 Austin Reyelts
April 26 Tyler Reyelts
April 29 Krista Munzer
April 29 Abigail Koelsch
April 29 Erin Meyer
April 30 Ellen Pinneo
April 5 George & Pam Holtz (32)
April 5 ... Burl & Shermene Peckman (36)
April 11 Mark & Jan Minden (7)
April 13 ... Alan & Jeanne Hutchison (31)
April 20 .. Max & Jennifer Boydston (37)
April 26 Dan & Cathy Hieber (35)
April 26 Keith & Laura Prothe (42)
April 27 Kevin & Marla Prothe (31)
April 28 Chris & Denna Jones (21)



Sermons for April

Complete videos of all our services, as well as audio and printed text of the sermon only, are available on our church website at www.trinitylcms.org/sermons. Printed copies of that day's sermon and several of the most recent sermons are also available in the Gathering Room.

April 3

"Jesus, Model of Acceptance"
John 12:20-33

April 6 (Lent Service VI)

*"Our Lenten Journey:
The Garden Tomb"*
John 19:38-42

April 10 (Palm Sunday)

"Court TV—Channel 33 A.D."
Luke 23:1-49

April 14 (Maundy Thursday)

"This Is the Feast of Victory"
Exodus 12:1-14

April 15 (Good Friday)

"His Pain—Our Gain"
Isaiah 53:4

April 17 (Easter Sunday)

"Easter: Good News for You!"
Luke 24:1-12

April 24

"The Promise of Easter"
1 Corinthians 15:17-20



Communion Change Beginning with Maundy Thursday

The Elders have determined that because of a change in conditions, beginning with our celebrations of Holy Communion on Maundy Thursday, April 14 and Easter Sunday, April 17 the Pastor and Elders will discontinue the use of masks, gloves, and tongs when distributing the elements, and return to our pre-COVID distribution practices. We will still bring the Sacrament to anyone desiring to receive it in the pews.



In Christian Sympathy

John David Trickett

Born March 1, 1948
Entered Eternal Rest
March 19, 2022

*"Come unto Me, all you who
are weary and heavy laden,
and I will give you rest. . . you
will find rest for your souls."
Matthew 11:28-29*



Bible Class on the Church Year

Have you ever wondered about the origin, meaning and significance of the "Church Year"? In *The Year of the Lord's Favor* we are exploring such questions as how this system of celebrations and readings was established, what the annual cycle of these seasons means, why certain colors and symbols are used for the seasons and what they signify.

This class will help you to better understand and appreciate our worship, and its thematic organization around the Church Year. Join in Sundays at 9:00am in the Heritage Room as we explore *The Year of the Lord's Favor*.



After suspension due to Covid, the nursing homes in Paola are generally allowing visitors from area churches to lead worship services. Our first service will be on Palm Sunday, April 10 at Medical Lodge at 2:00pm. (North Point is not currently allowing services but this may change by that date.)

Members are welcome and needed to help with these simple services of approximately 20 minutes in length, by passing out songbooks, helping lead singing, and especially warmly greeting the residents. At this time all those participating are required to wear masks.

Other scheduled dates for 2022 are:

May 8
Country Club Estates & Vintage Park

June 5
Medical Lodge (& North Point)
June 26
Country Club Estates & Vintage Park
July 25
Medical Lodge (& North Point)
August 14
Country Club Estates & Vintage Park
September 11
Medical Lodge (& North Point)
October 2
Country Club Estates & Vintage Park
October 30
Medical Lodge (& North Point)
November 20
Country Club Estates & Vintage Park
December 18
Medical Lodge (& North Point)



In 2015, Rev. Eric and Johanna Stinnett received a surprise call from LCMS Missionary Recruitment asking if they'd be interested in serving as missionaries in Ethiopia. At first, Johanna says, they were "floored." But after much prayer, the family of six packed up and moved from small-town Montana to big-city Addis Ababa, where Eric teaches at Mekane Yesus Seminary. In this interview, Johanna talks about Ethiopia and what it has been like to live in another country during the COVID-19 pandemic. Johanna recently answered questions about their life and work in Ethiopia.

What's your favorite thing about serving in Ethiopia?

One of the things I love about Ethiopia is that everyone is religious in some way. Raising our kids here has the benefit that no one mocks them for their faith. The everyday greeting always ends with "thanks be to God."

How has the pandemic impacted your life and work?

A typical schedule used to be Eric leaving for classes up the hill from where we live on the seminary campus and us homeschooling. When the coronavirus arrived, the seminary students were told that they were going home for two weeks, and all schools were shut down by the government. That time turned into six months. We also had to cancel our summer plans to see family and reconnect with our mission supporters. The separation from family has been hard.

What has it been like to live in another country during this time?

Living in Ethiopia during COVID did give rise to some fears and anxiety — not all of it on our part. When the rest of the world was exploding with cases, there were hardly any in most of Africa. When it did come, the first case was identified in a foreigner. A few more cases were confirmed in foreigners, and so an anti-foreigner sentiment developed for a while. ... We were able to have house church with the other LCMS missionary family, the Rabes, who are here with us. We were so thankful to continue to hear God's Word in person and to have another Lutheran family here with us in mission.

During this challenging year, what has helped you through?

We are thankful to God for the intentional reaching out to us by the nationals of the church here and those we call our friends. They have regularly texted and inquired after us and about all of you in the United States. News of the U.S. coronavirus numbers came, and many people here were praying for all of you.

How have you continued to share the Gospel?

Staying through the pandemic strengthened our relationships with the church here. It also gave the opportunity to continue to share the Gospel and learn new ways of teaching. While classes were out, Eric was asked to do a TV series emphasizing Lutheran identity and talking about Scripture alone, grace alone and faith alone. The audience that Mekane Yesus TV reaches is estimated to be 30 million people. So, where one

Holy Week & Easter Schedule

Maundy Thursday Service

with Holy Communion
Thursday, April 14, 7:00pm



Good Friday Tenebrae Service

Friday, April 15, 7:00pm

Drive-In Sunrise Service

Easter Sunday, April 17, 7:00am
Second Easter Service at 10:00am
Both Services Include Holy Communion
and Same Easter Message



Easter Breakfast

Easter Sunday, April 17
8:00am

Sponsored by Generations

All Invited — Everyone Welcome!

door was shut, another was opened, and the Gospel was proclaimed.

What would you say to another family considering missionary service?

If the Lord could use us, ordinary people from Canada and Montana, who knows what He may have in store for you? It has been difficult for us at times, but the Lord has also granted us many blessings and a good, albeit unusual, life here — did I mention there are jackals, monkeys and hyenas on our compound? Life is full of good things and tough things on the mission field, but Christ holds us secure in His everlasting and redemptive love.

PORTALS of PRAYER

The new quarterly issue of the devotional booklet *Portals of Prayer* for April thru June is available at the church, in regular size, large print, and a new "digest" size (same size as Reader's Digest). A great way to keep close to the Lord!