

RAQUETTE LAKE CHAPEL



2Q2022 PASTORAL LETTER

RAQUETTE LAKE, NEW YORK

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THE CHURCH SEASONS: APRIL, MAY, AND JUNE 2022

Many churches observe these holidays during the church year. In the next three months of 2022 we can reflect on these upcoming important seasons and days:

April 3: Last Sunday in Lent

April 10: Palm Sunday

April 15: Good Friday

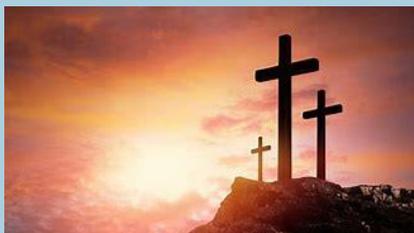
April 17: Easter Day

May 26: Ascension Day

June 5: Day of Pentecost

June 12: Trinity Sunday

As you can see most of these special days relate to the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, His ascension into heaven, and the coming of the Holy Spirit. We are invited to walk in this season with Jesus!



IS APRIL “THE CRUELEST MONTH”?

*April is the cruelest month, breeding
Lilacs out of the dead land, mixing
Memory and desire, stirring
Dull roots with spring rain*

-T.S. Eliot, “The Wasteland”

Maggie and I have not lived in the Adirondacks for a long time (only eight years, still “newcomers”), but, based on my experience, I claim we have two seasons: “winter” and “not winter”! This year as we entered the 2nd quarter of 2022 in the ADKs, we have experienced unusually warm weather and about two feet of snow melt in the last week or so. Entering April, I have to ask, “Are we now in spring?” and if so, *this is not an especially pretty part of the year*: Frozen ground turning to mud; melted snow and snowbanks revealing debris that has fallen and accumulated for the last five-six months; the deciduous trees still barren. Yes, April can seem a cruel month.

To understand why April the “cruellest month” for T.S. Eliot, we need to realize he is not making an argument about what it means to be April or to be spring. Eliot wrote his famous poem in the aftermath of the last global pandemic to shut down the world. He and his wife caught the Spanish Flu in December of 1918, and he wrote much of the poem during his recovery. This April we are just starting to understand the profound effect that the COVID-19 pandemic.

Perhaps we do well to remember: Pandemics end. Rain falls again. God-given seasons renew the earth every year. We do well to remember this, even as we gear up for uncertainty in our times:

Our soul waits for the Lord; he is our help and our shield. For our heart is glad in him, because we trust in his holy name. Let your steadfast love, O Lord, be upon us, even as we hope in you.

Psalm 33:20-22

Have a blessed spring! - Vance

JESUS' JOURNEY: WILDERNESS TO RESURRECTION



Through the end of April as we continue in the season of Lent, our Sunday Blasts turn away from the topic of Wisdom Literature and focus on Jesus' journey from the wilderness to the Resurrection, using key passages from the [Gospel of Luke](#) as a road map. Below are the points in the journey where we will stop, along with the associated scripture.

(Picture: cut canvas art by Don Trousdell. <https://www.dontrousdell.com>)

STOPPING POINTS ON OUR JOURNEY IN LUKE

We will not delve into all of these deeply, but they provide a significant path for us to follow. As we begin, we should note that Luke places the story of Jesus reading in the synagogue of Nazareth very early in the Gospel. This calls special attention to the beginning of Jesus' ministry!

- Jesus Tempted in the Wilderness: Luke 4:1-13
- Jesus at the Synagogue in Nazareth: Luke 4:14-30
- Eating and Healing on the Sabbath: Luke 6:1-11
- Palm Sunday – Jesus Rides into Jerusalem: Luke 19:28-44
- Jesus' Crucifixion, Death, and Burial: Luke 23:1-56
- Jesus Has Risen-Easter: Luke 24:1-11
- Jesus on the Road to Emmaus: Luke 24:13-34
- Jesus Appears to the Disciples: Luke 24:33-53
- The Ascension of Jesus: Luke 24:50-53

In the scripture reading of Jesus at Nazareth's synagogue, we learn clearing Jesus' mission. In a unique way, Luke's Gospel following Chapter 4 "shows" how Jesus is carrying out that mission.

JESUS AT NAZARETH'S SYNAGOGUE: LUKE 4:14-30

Jesus did nothing less than announce the beginning of the Kingdom of God on Earth. The Kingdom will (1) bring liberation to captives and the oppressed; (2) restore sight, both physical, but especially spiritual; and (3) bring about a "year of the Lord's favor." Given this agenda, what will the Kingdom of God require of us? Repentance, un-hardening of our hearts, and people must reassess their view about possessions, material things.



Why do we feel sad in the Spring? (Seasonal Affective Disorder?)

We usually think about seasonal affective disorder in the winter, as the cold, short days make it easier to avoid the rush and activity of the world beyond our doors. When it's miserable outside, we may spend our days under blankets, watching TV, and indulging in comfort food, lacking energy and feeling depressed.

But there is plenty of evidence to show that warmer, longer days also have a depressing effect on people too. In fact, for some people, the changeover from winter to spring is a more drastic change than moving from summer or fall into winter.

This is hard to pin down. Certainly, there are physical aspects of warmer weather that affect us: pollen, allergens, daylight savings time, and altered sleep patterns among them. To top it off, our bodies have to adjust to the drastic temperature change (and we know this all too well in the ADKs!). All these things affect not only our bodies, but also our spirits.

What can we do then to help our spirits? Remember that life is cyclical and there are good weeks and bad weeks. If being outside is not a regular part of our days, we need to get outside more. If we have avoided being with people, a slow increase in social activities can help us reconnect with old friends, our faith communities, and life in general.