

TAPIOLA APOSTOLIC LUTHERAN CHURCH

APRIL – 2026

SCHEDULE

Sunday Bible Study and
Sunday School: 9:45 a.m.
Sunday Service: 11: a.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7:00 p.m.

SPEAKERS

**April 3, 7:00 p.m. Good
Friday:** Ivan Niemela

April 5, Easter: Ivan
Niemela, *Holy Communion*

April 12: Mark Sunnarborg

April 19: Ivan Niemela

April 26: Ivan Niemela,
*Potluck meal following the
service*

CONTACTS

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The Suddenness of God's Long-Suffering

God has faithfully made His voice known to each generation; first through the prophets in the Old Testament and today through His Son. The message of salvation, revealed through signs and wonders, is clearly outlined in His Word—the Bible. In the New Testament, Jesus spoke to both His disciples and the Pharisees on two occasions regarding the signs of the end of the world. In one instance, He declared that the latter days would be like those in the times of Noah and Lot (Luke 17:26, 28). In both accounts, judgment did not come without ample warning; however, when it did come, it arrived suddenly, like a thief in the night, catching many unprepared. Today, we live in a world strikingly like those ancient times. We are surrounded by signs of the approaching Day of Judgment and have unprecedented access to the truth about salvation—yet few are truly moved by it. This spiritual indifference reflects what Scripture calls “*a falling away*,” a turning from truth that precedes the return of Christ (2 Thessalonians 2:3). The warnings are present, but the response is faint.

In Noah's time, “*God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually*” (Genesis 6:5). This deeply grieved Him, leading to His decision to destroy both man and beast. Yet, because of Noah's righteousness, God granted humanity 120 years of grace before the flood came. During this time, Noah patiently built the Ark. His life and obedience served as both an invitation to repentance and a warning of coming judgment. The ark itself stood as a visible sermon—a call from God that went unheeded. When the time came, only eight people entered the Ark, and “*the Lord shut him in*” (Genesis 7:16), sealing the door of grace with finality.

Similarly, in Lot's time, “*the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the Lord exceedingly*” (Genesis 13:13). Despite this, Lot chose to settle near Sodom during a dispute between his herdsmen and Abram's. Later, God revealed to Abraham His intention to destroy the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah due to their great sin. Abraham interceded, pleading for mercy if ten righteous men could be found. God agreed and sent two angels to Sodom, where Lot welcomed them into his home. That night, the men of the city—young and old alike, from every sector—surrounded Lot's house, demanding to defile the visitors. This confirmed the complete absence of righteousness in the cities. The angels urged Lot to flee with his family. His sons-in-law dismissed the warning, and only Lot, his wife, and two daughters escaped. Tragically, Lot's wife looked back and was turned into a pillar of salt. Her backward glance revealed a divided heart still tethered to what God was destroying.

This moment—when Lot's wife looked back and was turned into a pillar of salt—echoes the story of Orpah, who kissed Naomi as she returned to Moab instead of continuing to Judah (Ruth 1:14). Like Orpah, Lot's wife began the journey but could not let go of her past. Both stories reveal that salvation requires more than intent—it demands complete surrender. As Hebrews 12:1 exhorts, we must “*lay aside every*

weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us,” and run with endurance the race set before us. Looking back is not just nostalgia—it is resistance to God’s transformation.

The accounts of Noah and Lot are more than ancient records; they are prophetic mirrors reflecting our current generation. In both cases, God extended mercy before delivering judgment, providing time, warnings, and visible signs. Today, we observe a similar decline: truth is dismissed, righteousness is ridiculed, and spiritual conviction has been replaced by moral relativism (2 Timothy 4:3-4). This growing indifference is not random—it is foretold to evolve into a complete disregard for God, as it once did. We are very close to those days... if we are not already there.

We are not called to predict the exact hour of the end, but to be prepared to meet Jesus today. As Paul exhorts, *“now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed”* (Romans 13:11). Yet mercy has its limits, and grace has a door. The question is not whether we have heard the truth, but whether we will answer His call—by confessing the sins that trouble our conscience to fellow believers and praying for one another, that we may be healed (James 5:16). This invitation is open to all people—the time is now: to respond, to surrender, and to walk forward without looking back.

God’s Peace,
Charles Korhonen