

GIFT of GRACE

LUTHERAN CHURCH

GRACE NOTES

WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 5, 2020

A WORD FROM PT

The direction of the action matters!

You may be thinking, "What in the world is our Pastor talking about?" Well, I want to contrast two directions of action. This first is an action that starts from on high and moves downward. The second is an action that starts from below and moves upward.

James writes in the New Testament, "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change" (1:17). So what I am talking about by the direction of the action is whether it is God's action coming down from on high

or human action attempting to ascend upward.

I agree with the Luther and the Lutheran Confessions that Christianity is primary about God's action, a downward motion. Religion in general can often be all about human attempts to aspire to God, an upward motion. The quintessential act of God was that of the Son of God who "For us and for our salvation came down from heaven" (Nicene Creed). This descent involved the Divine One assuming our humanity (the Incarnation), then suffering and dying for our sins, rising from the dead, ascending to heaven with the promise to return for us at the end of the age.

The problem with our upward activity is that our lack of humility and trust in God and His Word is what got us to sink into the pit of sin and death in the first place. Our attempts to climb are futile. They result in falling deeper. But there is no futility or limitation in God's ability to come all the way down, and then to ascend again on high bearing in His ascending all who entrust themselves to His arms of mercy.

The downward action, can by grace, initiate a response in us where we can reach up to God in prayer, praise, and thanksgiving! But only by His initiative!

SINCE YOU ASKED...

What is the meaning of the Incarnation?

The word *incarnation* is taken from Latin term *incarnatio*. It literally means "taking flesh" and in the Christian Faith it refers to God becoming human. In John 1:14 we learn of God the Son becoming flesh with the

birth of Jesus of Nazareth. Indeed the child born to Mary was a man, but it is the insistence of the Christian Faith that Jesus was also fully God. He is sometimes called the *God-Man*. Without ceasing to be fully divine, inseparable and equal to God the Father and God the Holy Spirit; God the

Son also fully assumed our humanity in the womb of the Virgin Mary. In this way Jesus mediates God to man and then also represents man to God. The mystery of the Incarnation becomes a necessary means by which Jesus' death and resurrection accomplishes our salvation.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- Tuesday, 2/4**
1:00pm Prayer Gathering
- Wednesday, 2/5**
6:30pm Adult Ed/Confirmation
- Friday, 2/7**
6:30am Men's Breakfast at church
10:00am Service at Care Center
- Sunday, 2/9** 5th Sunday a Epiphany
8:00am Choir Practice
9:00am Divine Service
10:15am Annual Meeting
11:00am Potluck Brunch
- Tuesday, 2/11**
1:00pm Prayer Gathering
6:00pm Church Council Meeting

KEY ATTRIBUTES OF LCMC & NALC

- *Christ-Centered*
- *Mission-Driven*
- *Traditionally-Grounded*
- *Congregationally-Focused*

LCMC (Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ)

NALC (North American Lutheran Church) (www.thenalc.org)

THIS AND THAT...

As spelled out in our Constitution, the preferred date for the **Annual Meeting** is the second Sunday in February. In keeping with this, our Annual Meeting will fall on the heels of the Divine Service on Sunday, February 9. Business includes elections and the adoption of a Mission Spending Plan, otherwise known as a Budget.

The **Church Council** will meet on Tuesday the 11th at 6:00pm.

Upcoming Events in February include the **Church Council** on Tuesday the 11th; the **Mission District Council Meeting** on Saturday the 15th; and the **Ash Wednesday Service** on the 26th.

 Our **Designated Benevolence** for the month of February will be directed to the **North American Lutheran Church (NALC)**.

Don't forget to bring non-perishable food items for the **Holmen/Onalaska Food Pantry**.

 The Duesenbergs are signed up to clean the church the week of February 16. Cheryl Ruud and Hannah Scholze are listed for week of March 15.

 Attractive bookmarks are being designed and printed as an outreach tool for our congregation.! Also, direct people to our web site...

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LUTHERAN CHURCH

For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God. - Eph 2:8

HUMOR DEPARTMENT

Celebrations

Birthdays

Feb 2..... Kermit Gunderson
 Feb 24 Jed Roll

Anniversaries

Top 10 Conversations between Golfer and Caddy

- this week the final 5...

5 Golfer: "Please stop checking your watch all the time. It's too much of a distraction."
 Caddy: "It's not a watch - it's a compass."

#4 Golfer: "How do you like my game?"
 Caddy: "Very good sir, but personally, I prefer golf."

#3 Golfer: "Do you think it's a sin to play on Sunday?"
 Caddy: "The way you play, sir, it's a sin on any day."

#2 Golfer: "This is the worst course I've ever played on."
 Caddy: "This isn't the golf

course. We left that an hour ago."

AND the #1 best caddy comment:

#1 Golfer: "That can't be my ball, it's too old."
 Caddy: "It's been a long time since we teed off, sir."

WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

2/9 Fifth Sunday after Epiphany
Asst Minister: Leslie Duesenberg
Reader: Calvin Swaney
Crucifer: Elyse Schoonover
Acolyte: Sam Schoonover
Ushers: Wendell Halderson
Counters: David B/Jeremy S
Comm Asst: Connie Meunier
Accompanist: Tom Rislow
Fellowship: *Potluck after Annual Meeting*

2/16 Sixth Sunday after Epiphany
Asst Minister: Tom Rislow
Reader: Craig Bartos
Crucifer: Drew Staff

Acolyte: Dawson Staff
Ushers: Mary Bartos
Counters: Cheryl Ruud/Mary Bartos
Comm Asst: Heidi Traver
Accompanist: Leslie Duesenberg
Fellowship: Mary B/tba

2/23 Transfiguration of Our Lord
Asst Minister: Naomi Rislow
Reader: Brad Benrud
Crucifer: Calvin Swaney
Acolyte: Alex Uy
Ushers: Tom Kruse
Counters: Tom R/Hannah S
Comm Asst: Jeremy Schoonover

Accompanist: Tom Rislow
Fellowship: Dottie H/tba

3/1 First Sunday in Lent
Asst Minister: Mike Meunier
Reader: Naomi Rislow
Crucifer: Asher Roll
Acolyte: Jed Roll
Ushers: Cole Warner
Counters: Naomi R/Jane K
Comm Asst: Jarrod Roll
Accompanist: Tom Rislow
Fellowship: tba

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Services held at 9am at:
 642 Western Avenue
*A block north and then
 a block west of King Furniture*