

GIFT of GRACE

LUTHERAN CHURCH

GRACE NOTES

WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 26, 2020

A WORD FROM PT

The Season of Lent is upon us. And I invite you to take advantage of practices that can be more distinctive to the Season.

Note that you are invited, not commanded, to take part! Indeed that Old Testament Community of Faith was commanded to observe seasons and practices, but those dictates have not been carried over to the New Testament. Such matters are now a matter of freedom. And without being legalistic about it, the Church has in fact wisely developed patterns for our shared lives with the Old Testament as the source of inspiration.

Take for example, fasting. Fasting is not commanded

in the New Testament for Christians. But it is clearly a practice anticipated and carried on by Christians. In His Sermon on the Mount, Jesus said, "And when you fast" (Mat. 6:16f.)... So you might think of fasting as a "gift" rather than a "command"! It is something we may freely choose to do with accompanying benefits.

The tradition of observing a 40 day Season of Lent has developed as a time for spiritual renewal. In the wisdom of the Church's tradition, such renewal and spiritual formation is aided by discipline. Accordingly, the Lenten disciplines are generally regarded to involve fasting, study, prayer, charity, and repentance.

Lent first began as a time of preparation for Baptism. In time it also became a time to be renewed in those initial preparations. The Baptismal journey is one of ongoing daily repentance, which is dying to sin and rising in faith to newness of life. Dying to sin is not an easy or pleasant thing! In fact, apart from the grace of God it is impossible for us. But there is no forgiveness, cleansing, and new life without the dying.

By freely placing ourselves under a discipline or observance, our lives are ordered and therefore humbled. This is a chastening and a mortifying of our sinful nature. It can sharpen our attention on what matters most!

SINCE YOU ASKED...

What is the meaning of "Lent"? The English word "Lent" means "springtime". Lent is the six-week period of spiritual discipline before Easter (40 days not counting Sundays). At an early period in the Church's history baptisms might only be celebrated once a year at the Easter Vigil Service. Accordingly there was a period prior to this of intro-

ducing and training candidates for baptism. In time the training for baptismal candidates grew to a six week period, and this training involved fasting. The 40 days was, no doubt, modeled on the 40 days of our Lord Jesus' fasting in the wilderness before his temptations by the devil. As the years passed the Lenten fast began to be applied, not only to the

baptismal candidates, but to the church as a whole. Church members were encouraged to approach Easter in the same manner in which they had solemnly prepared for their baptisms. That is why the Season of Lent has finally developed as a time for fasting, study, prayer, acts of love, and humility. (with help from *The Westminster Dictionary of Worship*, edited by J.G. Davies, The Westminster Press.)

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Tuesday, 2/25

4:00pm No Prayer Gathering

Wednesday, 2/26

7:00pm Ash Wednesday Service

Friday, 2/28

6:30am Men's Breakfast at church

Sunday, 3/1 1st Sunday In Lent

8:00am Choir Practice

9:00am Divine Service

10:45am Adult Class

1:15pm Worship at Bethany St. Jo

Tuesday, 3/3

4:00pm No Prayer Gathering

Wednesday, 3/4

6:30pm Lenten Midweek Service

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...

Lent is around the corner and it begins with the **Ash Wednesday Service** on the 26th at 7pm. The Divine Service with Holy Communion will also include the Impositions of Ashes

For our Lenten **Midweek Services**, starting March 4, we will gather for soup at 6:30pm and then at 7 we will utilize the Holden Evening Prayer Service. The theme for the meditations will be our Baptismal Journey. We will consider a number of Biblical

narratives involving water and sea to learn about Baptism.

The **Church Council** next meets on Tuesday, March 10, at 6pm.

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 March 15. Heidi Traver is listed for week of April 19.

Have you every considered forwarding Grace Notes to one of your email contacts? You might sense that a Pastoral Address or teaching segment in one of the issues would be especially apropos for one of your contacts...

GIFT of GRACE

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 24 Jed Roll
Mar 16 Jon Uy
Mar 17 Mike Meunier
Mar 18 Nikki Hanson
Mar 18 Aimee Stutzman

Anniversaries

May 3 J & J Schoonover
May 6 T & L Duesenberg
May 7 T & N Rislow

Eternal Truths

- If you are too open-minded, your brains will fall out.

- Age is a high price to pay for maturity.

- Artificial intelligence is no match for natural stupidity.

- If you must choose between

two evils, pick the one you've never tried before.

- My idea of housework is to sweep the room with a glance.

- Not one shred of evidence supports the notion that life is serious.

- It is easier to get forgiveness

than permission.

- If you look like your passport picture, you probably need the trip.

- Bills travel through the mail at twice the speed of checks.

- A conscience is what hurts when all your other parts feel so good.

WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

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: Cheryl R/tba

Acolyte: Calvin Swaney

Ushers: Jeremy Schoonover

Counters: Jarrod R/Nikki H

Comm Asst: Karri Bjornstad

Accompanist: Leslie Duesenberg

Fellowship: tba

3/15 Third Sunday in Lent

Asst Minister: Jeremy Schoonover

Reader: Jessica Schoonover

Crucifer: Sam Schoonover

Acolyte: Elyse Schoonover

Ushers: Merlin Wangen

Counters: Dave Bjornstad/Jeremy Scho

Comm Asst: Jessica Schoonover

Accompanist: Tom Rislow

Fellowship: tba

3/22 Fourth Sunday in Lent

Asst Minister: Cole Warner

Reader: Heather Roll

Crucifer: Benjamin Roll

Acolyte: Stella Roll

Ushers: David Bjornstad

Counters: Heather R/Connie M

Comm Asst: Heather Roll

Accompanist: Leslie Duesenberg

Fellowship: tba

Gift of Grace Lutheran Church
Pastor Timothy A. Duesenberg, STS
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(608) 797-7837

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

3/8 Second Sunday in Lent

Asst Minister: Karri Bjornstad

Reader: Jon Uy

Crucifer: Kylee Kernan