



Bethany Lutheran Outlook
February 2018

Serving God, Community, and Individuals



IF YOU GAIN
the whole world
BUT LOSE YOUR
own soul?

MARK 8:36, NLT



PASTOR'S REFLECTIONS

This year, the date of Ash Wednesday is February 14th, Valentine's Day. While the two days have coincided before, my research tells me that the last time was 1957, 61 years ago; no wonder I don't remember it. Curiously, it happens again in 2024 and also in 2029 and then not again until sometime after the year 2100. I couldn't find a chart that went any further than that but I figure I'll be retired by then anyway!

With Ash Wednesday and Valentine's Day both being on February 14th it made me wonder if there was any way to connect the two. At first glance there doesn't appear to be much of a connection. It doesn't seem like a cross of ashes on one's forehead and the fasting of Lent has much in common with candy and feasting on Valentine's Day dinner, but let's think about it.

There's actually very little that is known about the St. Valentine of Valentine's Day other than the fact that there was such a person who lived in Rome back in the third century. There are legends about him, most having him imprisoned and finally martyred for proclaiming the Christian faith at a time when Christians were being persecuted. There are a couple of stories about him healing the daughter of his jailer of her blindness and then, on the day of his execution, sending her a note and signing it, "Your Valentine." There are also stories about him marrying Christian couples so that the husbands wouldn't have to go to war and this at a time when the empire was short of soldiers. That's probably where the idea of Valentine's Day as a day about romantic love comes from.

Ash Wednesday is not a day about romantic love. It's more about a broken relationship, that relationship being the one between God and humanity. On Ash Wednesday we are reminded of our failure to be who God would have us be, reminded of our need for repentance, our need to turn away from those things that cause our relationship with God to be broken.



Lent begins

I don't think it's a stretch to say that Ash Wednesday is about love though. It's not romantic love that can ebb and flow, but a deeper kind of divine love. The other side of repentance is forgiveness and forgiveness is about God's love that doesn't ebb and flow but is always there. A cross of ashes on one's forehead is a reminder of our sinfulness and our need for forgiveness, but by the grace and love of God that forgiveness is always available.

Ash Wednesday is an important day on the liturgical calendar, intended to begin a period of honest self-reflection, one that we repeat every year because we need to. Even though it's Valentine's Day, plan to be in church on Ash Wednesday and let the forty days of Lent be a time of reflection on your need for repentance, repentance that is a response to the love that God has for you not just on Valentine's Day, but every day.

Pastor Geier

"Ashes to Ashes"

Oh, divine Fire,
burst aflame in my life —
spontaneous combustion
to turn all that traps or crushes growth ...

laziness busy-ness self-preoccupation worries and
doubts indifference ...
to turn all that traps or crushes growth ...
into
ash.

Rendered to ashes by way of a Cross,
The world will know I've been graced by the Fire.

And finally, oh Fire divine,
I will come to know your light and warmth
in the sooty depths of my soul.

—Heidi Mann



DAILY LECTIONARY



The foundational premise of this set of daily readings is their relationship to the Sunday lectionary. The readings are chosen so that the days leading up to Sunday (Thursday through Saturday) prepare for the Sunday readings. The days flowing out from Sunday (Monday through Wednesday) reflect upon the Sunday readings.

“The Bible is the cradle wherein Christ is laid.”
—Martin Luther

February 2018

1 Psalm 147:1-11, 20c	Proverbs 12:10-21	Galatians 5:2-15
2 Psalm 147:1-11, 20c	Job 36:1-23	1 Cor. 9:1-16
3 Psalm 147:1-11, 20c	Isaiah 46:1-13	Matthew 12:9-14

4 Fifth Sunday of Epiphany

Isaiah 40:21-31 Psalm 147:1-11, 20c 1 Cor. 9:16-23 Mark 1:29-39

5 Psalm 102:12-28	2 Kings 4:8-17, 32-37	Acts 14:1-7
6 Psalm 102:12-28	2 Kings 8:1-6	Acts 15:36-41
7 Psalm 102:12-28	Job 6:1-13	Mark 3:7-12
8 Psalm 50:1-6	1 Kings 11:26-40	2 Cor. 2:12-17
9 Psalm 50:1-6	1 Kings 14:1-18	1 Timothy 1:12-20
10 Psalm 50:1-6	1 Kings 16:1-7	Luke 19:41-44

11 Transfiguration Sunday

2 Kings 2:1-12 Psalm 50:1-6 2 Cor. 4:3-6 Mark 9:2-9

12 Psalm 110:1-4	Exodus 19:7-25	Hebrews 2:1-4
13 Psalm 110:1-4	Job 19:23-27	1 Timothy 3:14-16

14 Ash Wednesday

Joel 2:1-2, 12-17 Psalm 51:1-17 2 Cor. 5:20b — 6:10
Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21



15 Psalm 25:1-10

Daniel 9:1-14

1 John 1:3-10

16 Psalm 25:1-10

Daniel 9:15-25a

2 Timothy 4:1-5

17 Psalm 25:1-10

Psalm 32

Matthew 9:2-13

18 First Sunday in Lent

Genesis 9:8-17 Psalm 25:1-10 1 Peter 3:18-22 Mark 1:9-15

19 Psalm 77

Job 4:1-21

Ephesians 2:1-10

20 Psalm 77

Job 5:8-27

1 Peter 3:8-18a

21 Psalm 77

Proverbs 30:1-9

Matthew 4:1-11

22 Psalm 22:23-31

Genesis 15:1-6, 12-18

Romans 3:21-31

23 Psalm 22:23-31

Genesis 16:1-6

Romans 4:1-12

24 Psalm 22:23-31

Genesis 16:7-15

Mark 8:27-30

25 Second Sunday in Lent

Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16 Psalm 22:23-31 Romans 4:13-25 Mark 8:31-38

26 Psalm 105:1-11, 37-45

Genesis 21:1-7

Hebrews 1:8-12

27 Psalm 105:1-11, 37-45

Genesis 22:1-19

Hebrews 11:1-3, 13-19

28 Psalm 105:1-11, 37-45

Jeremiah 30:12-22

Luke 12:36-43



Ash Wednesday Prayer

Merciful God, you called us forth from the dust of the earth; you claimed us for Christ in the waters of baptism. Look upon us as we enter these Forty Days bearing the mark of ashes, and bless our journey through the desert of Lent to the font of rebirth. May our fasting be hunger for justice; our alms, a making of peace; our prayer, the chant of humble and grateful hearts.

Enjoy the Poetry of Hymns

Face the Cross

You came into the world as a tiny Child,
Small and unassuming.
From Your first conscious thought, You knew Calvary
Was before you, looming.



You knew who You were, what You would do,
Why You had been sent to this place:
To face the cross, never turn away,
The salvation of the world hangs in the balance.
You must face the cross, follow and obey,
Knowing God will make a way
For You to face the cross.

Mary, on Golgotha's hill, mourning ev'ry wound,
broken-hearted, crying.
You can't believe your eyes, cannot bear to see your son and Savior dying.
You heard His first word, held Him in your arms;
Now you pray to heaven for grace to face the cross,
Never turn away, the salvation of the world hangs in the balance.
You must face the cross, follow and obey, knowing God will make a way
For You to face the cross.

How hard it is to look upon that dying form,
To resist the urge to run for cover from the storm.
But each of us is free to choose to turn away
Or to stay and embrace the cross;
Stand and face the cross.
The salvation of the world hangs in the balance.
Stand and face the cross, never turn away
Follow and obey,
Knowing God will make a way for you to face the cross.

By Ruth Elaine Schram and Scott Schram

Ruth Elaine Schram wrote her first song at the age of twelve, and her first octavo was published twenty years later, in 1988. In 1992, she became a full-time composer and arranger and now has over 2,000 published works. Over seventeen million copies of her songs have been purchased in their various venues, and she has been a recipient of the ASCAP Special Award each year since 1990. In addition to her choral music for church and school choirs, her songs appear on thirty albums (four of which have been Dove Award Finalists) and numerous children's videos, including sixteen songs on four gold videos, and four songs on one multi-platinum video.

Ruth began piano and theory lessons at the age of five. She studied music at Lancaster Bible College and Millersville State College and taught Elementary Music in Pennsylvania for several years.

On February 22, the Bethany Choir will sing Ruth and Scott Schram's anthem "Face the Cross." The text reminds us that as Jesus and Mary were forced to face the cross with all its suffering, we too, must face the cross to gain everlasting life. The haunting text images of Jesus and Mary at the cross challenge people to face the challenges of their faith and recommit themselves to Jesus, their Lord and Savior.

Lenten February

Actually, February is really the perfect month for Lent. In the midst of our sense of hopelessness and despair, Lent challenges us to take a break, to put things on hold for a moment, to step back and look at ourselves and the lives we are leading. The season challenges us to confront those things and situations that make us less than what we - and God - want us to be.

The weather notwithstanding, our Lenten February speaks to us of hope: that we can be reborn and re-created in the life and love of God as sure as spring and summer will dawn. Let us enter the "wilderness" this month with Christ that, in the quiet and peace of Lent, we may rediscover hope and purpose, and rekindle the light and warmth of God's love in our lives.



**Lenten Soup Suppers:
5:30 each Wednesday of Lent**

The Boards of Bethany will provide the soups each Wednesday of Lent.*

February 21 - Finance and Property
February 28 - Social Ministry
March 3 - Christian Ed
March 14 - Stewardship and Personnel
March 21 - Worship & Music

*No Soup Supper on Ash Wednesday

Ashes



On Ash Wednesday, as Lent begins, worshipers' foreheads are often marked with ashes in the sign of the cross. The ashes traditionally come from burning palm branches from the previous Palm Sunday. In Old Testament days, ashes were a sign of mourning and repentance. Today, some worshipers wipe off the ashes before leaving church, to symbolize being cleansed from sin by Jesus' death; others wear the ashes the rest of the day, carrying the cross of Christ into the world. The speaking of Genesis 3:19 often accompanies the placement of ashes:

“You are dust, and to dust you shall return.”



February 14

**12:15 pm Spoken Service
(Confession and
Imposition of Ashes)**

**6:30 pm
Traditional Service
(Confession,
Imposition of Ashes,
and
Holy Communion)**



Wednesday Lenten Services will Highlight the Drama Series Pushing Down Daisies

This series of plays considers the affect that the “shadow of death” can have over us as we journey through life. These funny and touching plays tell the story of John who is the caretaker of a cemetery. He lives there in his retirement aft working as a school teacher and before that as a pastor. John tells stories of thing he has witnessed here in the graveyard over the years to an engaging warm character.

Practice Makes Perfect

In this first play we learn from John about a strange couple who has come to the graveyard on repeated occasions and stands before different graves each time.

Deadly Passion (Is That Redundant?)

John witnesses two would-be “lovers” as they come to the cemetery to find privacy.

Robbing Death

John recalls two would-be grave robbers he interrupted one dark evening,.they have been told that someone was buried with his money. They have come to steal it.

Private Confessions

In this more serious play, a woman is at a tomb. Her minister arrives unexpectedly. She is there because there are things that she wishes she had told the deceased.

Perchance to Dream

Death has cast a shadow over all the plays, and in this last play we realize who the angel is and why she is there.

Could you make soup?

If you would be able to help the Boards of Bethany for the soup suppers by making a pot of soup, it would be greatly appreciated. Some boards members have responsibilities for several boards and others find it difficult to make the soup. If you could help, please contact one of the board chairpersons and volunteer. Thank you so much. A list of the board chairpersons is listed on the back cover of the Outlook.

Noisy Offering Supports **Welcome Home**
Lutheran Social Service

Welcome Home is a housing program for homeless people where clients are given help to live on their own. It is open to any client in Marquette or Alger County who is currently homeless, living in a shelter or somewhere not meant for habitation. Through Welcome Home temporary housing and support services help clients build skills to gain independence and permanent housing. Clients work with a case manager who provides:

- *employment counseling and support
- *transportation
- *educational support
- *life skills training, including budgeting
- *mental health services
- *housing placement
- *referrals to other community resources.

Being homeless can be a vicious cycle. Without stable living conditions, it can be difficult to find and keep a job. Welcome Home helps clients gain skills and confidence that lead to self-sufficiency. It's not a hand-out but a hand-up. It helps people get their lives back on track. For more than 15 years, the goal has been to help clients move into safe, secure housing and then equip them with the knowledge and skills they need to transition to independence and permanent housing.

The January and February Noisy Offering will support these vital services.



**The February Noisy
Offering will be given to Lutheran Social Services of
Upper Michigan - Welcome Home Program.
Thanks to everyone for your generosity!**

Blessing the Dust

For Ash Wednesday

All those days
you felt like dust,
like dirt,
as if all you had to do
was turn your face
toward the wind
and be scattered
to the four corners

or swept away
by the smallest breath
as insubstantial -

did you not know
what the Holy One
can do with dust?

This is the day
we freely say
we are scorched.

This is the hour
we are marked
by what has made it
through the burning.

This is the moment
we ask for the blessing
that lives within
the ancient ashes,
that makes its home
inside the soil of
this sacred earth.

So let us be marked
not for sorrow.
And let us be marked
not for shame.
Let us be marked
not for false humility
or for thinking
we are less
than we are

but for claiming
what God can do
within the dust,
within the dirt,
within the stuff
of which the world
is made
and the stars that blaze
in our bones
and the galaxies that spiral
inside the smudge
we bear.

—Jan Richardson
Circle of Grace



**2018 Funding Request for Bethany Building Project
Was Approved at January 28, 2018. Meeting**

The council requested and the congregation approved a special funding request to update and maintain our beautiful church. The list of projects consists of the following:

1. Education wing roof and fascia replacement
 - > Required maintenance and the fascia would be maintenance free
2. Upgrading the wooden exterior areas of the church with maintenance free materials
 - > Maintenance is required, curb appeal would be much improved
3. Upgrading the windows in the education wing and fellowship hall
 - > Energy efficiency improvement and they need maintenance
4. Replacing the two windows in the choir loft.
 - > Energy efficiency improvement and they need maintenance
5. Replacing the back entrance doors to the church
 - > Energy efficiency improvement and they need maintenance
6. Upgrading the two big windows on the west wall of the sanctuary
 - > Current windows are single pane plexiglass and are very energy inefficient.
7. Updating the ladies' and men's restrooms.
 - > to provide a welcoming presentation for our members and guests
8. Updating the heating system controls and insulating the ceiling in the education wing
 - > This would allow controlling the temperature more accurately and efficiently.
9. Replacing the carpet in the entrance and stair areas of the church
 - > Maintenance is required.

Total Cost of Projects - \$200,000

How would we pay for them? The church Council has authorized \$80,000 of current funds to be used for these projects. The balance of \$120,000 will be raised by a special appeal to the congregation and the remainder required will be borrowed.

If borrowing is required, the current rate available from the Mission Investment Fund would be 5.25%. A \$100,00 loan would result in a \$1,087.00 monthly payment for a 10 year period.

Why now? The maintenance is overdue, will improve energy efficiency and it is our time to take care of this beautiful building for the years to come.

Who would do the work? We would use local contractors based on the result of competitive bidding.



A letter will be sent to members of the congregation detailing the project and the special appeal to raise funds for the project.

Your support is gratefully appreciated.

Our Good God

For the love of God is broader
than the measure of man's mind;
and the heart of the Eternal
is most wonderfully kind.
If our love were but more faithful,
we should take him at his word;
and our life would be thanksgiving
for the goodness of the Lord.

—Frederick W. Faber





Library Notes for February 2018

By Keenan Tunnell

This year's calendar puts us in some strange places: We finish the Epiphany season on 11 February and observe both Ash Wednesday and St. Valentine's Day on the 14th so you might want to check out titles related to both. Give some thought for the REAL St. Valentine who espoused the cause of young love, holy marriage, and those being persecuted for their faith. Perhaps you will gain some idea of the strength and devotion of Valentine's faith to take you into the season of Lent, our annual journey to the Cross and Easter. Fasting has been a traditional part of that journey, and so I've chosen a number of books related to the place of food and fasting in our lives. There are others on the Library kiosk, but a few are briefly presented here. Perhaps you'd like to investigate fasting as part of your Lenten Journey.

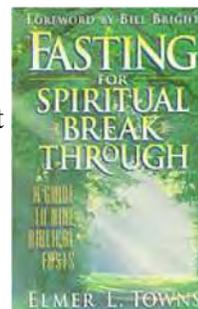
Tompert, Ann. **St. Valentine.** (JUV 270.1 TOM)



Every February 14 we exchange cards and flowers as expressions of love. Valentine's Day is among our most popular holidays. But what do the words "Be my valentine" mean? Who was Valentine?....Ann Tompert weaves together the most enduring stories of Valentine to create a tapestry of the saint's life...including stories of him performing secret weddings for soldiers who were forbidden by law to marry, and of Valentine giving comfort to persecuted Christians...glimpses of the man whose life remains essentially a mystery.

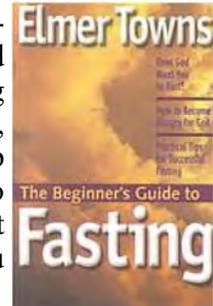
Towns, Elmer. **Fasting for Spiritual Breakthrough.** (248.4 TOW.1.)

This is a thought-provoking book on one of the least understood—but most powerful—disciplines of Christianity. Most believers know about fasting, but few of us really understand the wonderful benefits that come when we fast with purpose and direction. Written in Dr. Towns' dynamic, descriptive style, this book gives the "why" of fasting, rather than just the "how." He avoids a glut of techniques and schedules, and instead provides a probing look at Isaiah 58, often called the fasting passage. Learn how fasting can strengthen your faith and draw you closer to God.



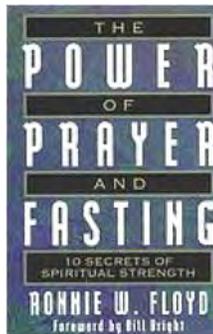
Towns, Elmer. **Beginner's Guide to Fasting.** (248.4 TOW.2.)

Since Old Testament times, God's people have engaged in the spiritual tradition of fasting: going without food for a predetermined length of time to accomplish an important purpose or goal. Fasting can be done for any number of reasons: to get to know God better, to wait on God for an answer to prayer, to listen to God, to worship Him. In these pages, you'll discover why you should fast, how to prepare for your first fast, what kind of fasts to follow, how to get started, and what to expect after you are finished. Learn how you can master this powerful spiritual discipline.



Floyd, Ronnie W. **The Power of Prayer and Fasting.** (248.4 FLO)

The hand-in-hand spiritual discipline of prayer and fasting is not a gimmick or a spiritual fad, although its neglect in recent decades makes it a rediscovery for many Christians. Instead, as Dr. Floyd points out, prayer and fasting is a Scripture-ordained act of obedience—a means of humbling ourselves before God, drawing closer to Him, and making room for Him to speak and act in our lives. The book offers firsthand stories, explanations of how fasting works in the life of a Christian, and practical, step-by-step guidance for those who may seek to observe a fast of varying lengths, from one to forty days.



Extravagant Love

The love St. Paul describes in 1 Corinthians 13 is “no mild, tepid thing,” writes Mark Buchanan in *Your Church Is Too Safe* (Zondervan). “It is no flight of fancy, no frisson of giddiness, no mere ruffle of sensation. This love is neither nice nor prissy nor fragile nor coy. This love is fierce and wild and dangerous and unbreakable. It is sublime and subversive. It is indefatigable and undefeatable. It is nothing less than the love God has for you, to bind you and to loose you, to take you captive and then set you free. This love is extravagant.”



FASTING AS A MEANS OF GRACE

by Jennifer Woodruff Tait,
managing editor of Christian History magazine.

"O LORD, which for our sake didst fast forty days and forty nights; Give us grace to use such abstinence, that, our flesh being subdued to the spirit, we may ever obey thy godly motions in righteousness, and true holiness, to thy honor and glory."—Collect (prayer) for the first Sunday in Lent by Thomas Cranmer for the 1549--Book of Common Prayer. Spelling modernized.

I've only fasted one time for longer than the occasional skipped meal, and that was during Holy Week 1995. I was in seminary then, where I had heard much about the virtue of fasting. As regular readers of *Christian History* know, I am a Wesleyan-Arminian and I grew up in the United Methodist Church and went to a Wesleyan-Arminian seminary. Fasting is on the list of John Wesley's means of grace (see below for a modernized list of what the means of grace are, if you're curious) and I tried to practice the others regularly, but found this one a more difficult hill to climb. I thought that Maundy Thursday and Good Friday would be a good time to attempt this spiritual practice. Prayer and fasting are spiritual disciplines.

As I recall now, I went about 60 hours, going from the morning of Maundy Thursday to a meal mid-day on Holy Saturday. One of my chief memories is of the Maundy Thursday chapel service at my school, where the choir performed sacred music related to the crucifixion. I realized that what I had heard was true: after the initial hunger pangs faded, the absence of food meant more attention to the presence of God in my life. When I had a small amount of fruit on Holy Saturday it was welcoming, but also somehow sad, as though that heightened awareness of God's Spirit would be in some way crowded out of my life as it assumed its more normal contours.

I can't imagine how Jesus must have felt when fasting for 40 days and 40 nights. Was he tempted to eat? Did he feel more free to pray? (Does being attentive to the movement of God's Spirit in your life feel different when you are ... you know ... actually God incarnate?) What we do know is that Scripture tells us he did so, and that when he faced down the devil in the desert it was out of the spiritual grounding of that 40-day fast.

It is that fasting that, through a long series of historical developments, led to our modern observances of Lent, and it is that fasting that's often recalled in our hymns and songs—and, in the Anglican tradition, in this prayer that Thomas Cranmer wrote for the first Sunday in Lent for the very first Book of Common Prayer in 1549. The reformers who created the BCP wanted to replace a prayer used in the medieval church which they felt placed too much emphasis on fasting as a good work:

O God, who purifies thy Church by the yearly observance of the Lenten fast: Grant unto thy household, that it may follow out in good works those holy inspirations which it endeavours to obtain from thee by abstinence.

Cranmer's version places the emphasis, not on how good fasting looks before God, but on the effect on us of doing it: learning to obey God and seek after holiness and righteousness. From my own experience, I would agree.

This Lent, whether or not you give something up or take something on, keep that in mind. The purpose of this season is not to feed our pride by what we give up, but to learn obedience to the One who saved us and who faced down death and the devil on our behalf.

The Wesleyan Means of Grace

Courageous and forward-leaning mission congregations practice spiritual disciplines. Our vital work is a spiritual adventure based in John Wesley's means of grace. John Wesley taught that God's grace is unearned and that we were not to be idle waiting to experience grace but we are to engage in the means of grace. The means of grace are ways God works invisibly in disciples, hastening, strengthening; and confirming faith so that God's grace pervades in and through disciples. As we look at the means of grace today, they can be divided into works of piety and the works of mercy.

Works of Piety

Individual Practices – reading, meditating and studying the scriptures, prayer, fasting, regularly attending worship, healthy living, and sharing our faith with others

Communal Practices – regularly share in the sacraments, Christian conferencing (accountability to one another), and Bible study

Works of Mercy

Individual Practices - doing good works, visiting the sick, visiting those in prison, feeding the hungry, and giving generously to the needs of others

Communal Practices – seeking justice, ending oppression and discrimination (for instance Wesley challenged Methodists to end slavery), and addressing the needs of the poor

Making disciples, growing vital congregations and transforming the world is part of a spiritual adventure that is empowered and guided by the Holy Spirit as churches engage in the means of grace. Spiritual goals are accomplished by connecting the means of grace with proven vital church practices such as planning, strategic direction, prioritization, clear focus and alignment.



Living Lutheran— January 2017 Form a Faithful Foundation

Cover Story:

- Form a faithful foundation; Holding one another to our baptismal promises (Meghan Johnston Aelabouni)

Features:

- Past experience not necessary; Congregations host job-training opportunities (Wendy Healy)
- The path to citizenship; ELCA congregations hold classes, provide support (Anne Basye)
- Building the church for tomorrow (Erin Strybis)
- “The Ethiopian Bonhoeffer”: The life, works and witness of Gudina Tumsa and Tsehay Tolessa (John Potter)
- A vital response to human trafficking; ELCA companions in Thailand offer new life for victims (Karris Golden)

Perspective:

- Confessing racism (Elizabeth Lowry)

Reflection:

- Shine on (Kimberly Knowle-Zeller)

My Faith Journey

- A second call (Steve Hilgeman)

Faith & Family:

- Jesus, light of the world (Scott Seeke)

Deeper Understandings:

- Themes in mark (Mark Allan Powell)

From Bishop Elizabeth A. Eaton

- Church speak



Fellowship Hall Floor original 1962 Will patch asbestos floor and put down carpet squares which are replaceable if ruined.

Sanctuary original 1970 Carpet

Church Pews and Choir Chairs 1970 reupholster both

LAY SCHOOL NEWS Winter/Spring 2018

The Winter Semester began on Tuesday, January 23rd and will continue until March 13th. All classes will be held at Messiah, Marquette. At present, just two classes will be offered this semester, both on Tuesdays.



New Testament Epistles January 23rd to March 13th (6-8:15) (8 sessions)

A review of the letters of the New Testament and the various ways in which they reflect the gospel message. Consideration will be given to the context of each letter and how it spoke—and speaks today. (Pastor Allan Johnson)

Reformation History January 23rd to February 27th (3:30-5:30) (6 sessions)

A study of the controversies leading to the Reformation including the role of Luther and other major reformers. Issues and controversies within the Reformed churches will also be discussed. (Pastor Doug Norquist)

The other two classes for this semester are ***Christian Theology I and Acts/Evangelism***. *With the current shortage of clergy in the area right now there are not instructors for these classes. If the situation changes, you will be informed. In the meantime we'll go with just two classes.*



Cradle Roll

Welcome, Lucy LaChapelle

Hillary and Andrew La Chapelle are proud parents of baby girl Lucy Williamina, born on January 11th. Grandparents are Jim and Holly Sodergren. Lucy weighed in at 7 pounds 13 ounces and was 20 1/4 inches long. Welcome Lucy!

“What Do I Have?”

What do I have, Lord, that you would need me as a servant?

Eyes, he said,
to see the beauty in all that I’ve made —
and my children as they travel life’s highway.

Hands, he said,
to reach out and touch hurting souls,
to give a hug or encouraging pat on the back.

Feet, he said,
to lead my children through this world of strife
and to help them run from sin and follow me.

Mouth, he said,
to lift up your voice and sing praises to me
so others may hear the joy in your heart.

Ears, he said,
to listen to my still, small voice of love
and to hear my children when they cry for help.

Heart, he said,
so you may know the full love of my Spirit
and love my children as I have loved you.

—Thomas Butler



A NEW COMMANDMENT

In John 13:34, Jesus offers important instructions for his followers.

Directions: Figure out the pattern in each vertical line of letters. Then add the next letter in the sequence to the blank underneath, completing John 13:14, NIV.

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZABCD...

F	L	S	Y	F	K	Y	X	E	I	Q	B	V	O	O	J	F
H	M	T	A	I	L	A	Y	H	K	R	D	Y	P	S	M	G
J	N	U	C	L	M	C	Z	K	M	S	F	B	Q	W	P	H

E	X	M	B	C	L	M	B	U	V	F	R	P	L	V	F	R
F	Y	P	C	F	M	P	C	X	W	I	S	Q	M	W	I	S
G	Z	S	D	I	N	S	D	A	X	L	T	R	N	X	L	T

A	R	J	Q	C	C	S	B	F	K	Y	X	H	L	Q	B	Y	I
E	S	M	R	F	G	T	C	I	L	A	Y	J	M	R	D	A	L
I	T	P	S	I	K	U	D	L	M	C	Z	L	N	S	F	C	O

JOHN 13:34, NIV

Christmas 2017



Lighting the Advent wreath



Hanging of the Greens



Checking out the stable during the children's sermon



Abbi Bruhnke singing
"Mary, Did You Know?"



Sunday School kids and the Bethany
Choir sang together for the Christmas
cantata.



Bishop Eaton's Christmas Message "Just This. Just Now"

I was driving to work one day thinking about my schedule – the meetings I needed to attend, reports I needed to finish, preparations for upcoming travel, email, phone calls, and making a grocery list in my head so that I could pick up what I needed for supper on the way home from work. All of a sudden, I found myself pulling into the parking garage at the Lutheran Center. I had driven the 9 miles to work and had no idea how I got there. I didn't remember the traffic lights, the turns, the scenery – nothing. I had been so absorbed in what was coming up that I was completely oblivious to the present.

I think this experience is not unique to me. We set part of our lives on autopilot and set the planning, list-making, what-if scheduling part on overdrive. Now, planning is a good and necessary thing. One ought to be aware of what is coming up and what needs to be done, but I found that I was so driven by the contingencies and possibilities that I was everywhere all of the time, and, therefore, not anywhere at all.

I asked my spiritual director about this, and she recommended that I meditate on these four words: "Just this. Just now." It's a simple discipline but not an easy one. It can alleviate all that anticipatory stress but only if we are willing to be still.

Here we are in Advent. This season doesn't exist in secular culture where everything is barreling toward Christmas. No time to wait, no time to notice, no time to be present. Not this. Not now. All of a sudden, we will find ourselves on the day after Christmas not knowing how we got there.

Advent is a holy season, a season that bids us to be present, to be still. So much is evoked in this season – hope, longing, and the bittersweet awareness that the world is beautiful and broken. Consider all of these things. Sit with them. Pray with them. Be aware of this time of great promise that comes, at least in the Northern Hemisphere, when night is longest. Come, Lord Jesus.

Wait for the Lord. Disengage the autopilot. Notice. Just this. Just now.
Blessed Advent and merry Christmas, dear church!

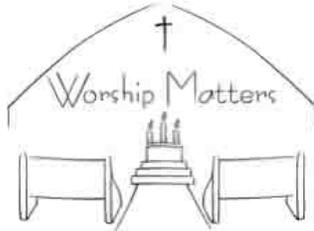
The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton
Presiding Bishop



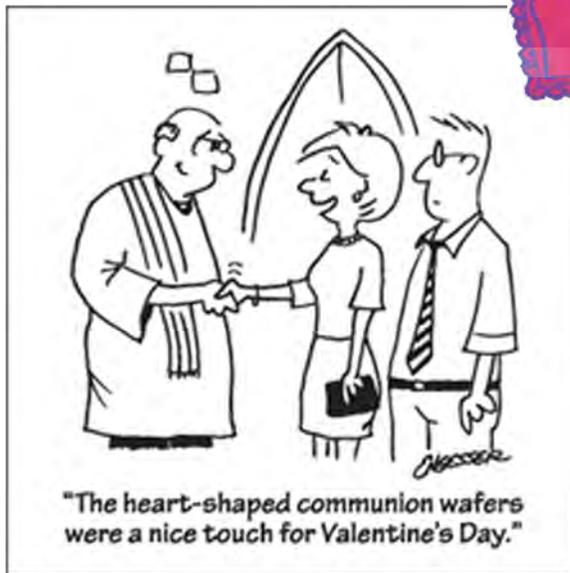
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America



Council Highlights— January 2018



- Received thanks from LSS, Samaritan's Purse, and Feeding America
- Fortune Lake Lutheran Camp's Director/Pastor Tracy Polzin will be leaving effective Feb. 3, 2018.
- Pastoral Acts: Funerals: Allan Maki (12/28/17), Bob Waters (1/3/18), Jean Sandstrom (1/20/18)
- David Leverton was appointed as chair of the Endowment Committee.
- Jim Kinnunen presented the final budget numbers for 2017.
- Reviewed the 2018 budget to be presented to the congregation at the annual meeting
- Two major items to be presented to the congregation at annual meeting will be the budget and approval to perform a number of operations and maintenance repair projects.
- Made list of Lenten Soup supper host schedule.



OUR CHURCH'S

FINANCES

YTD Income: \$211,941.74

YTD Expenses: \$204,509.31

Jan. - Dec. 2017



Christian Gift-Planning

Below is the fifth part of a twelve part series explaining how Christians can incorporate the Church in their estate planning.

ELCA Donor Advised Funds are a way in which a donor may retain practical control of how much, when, and to what ministry a gift to the ELCA is distributed. By giving, a person may contract with the ELCA not only to retain supervision of the use of the gift with ELCA ministries, but may also pass that supervision to family members to encourage their faith-based giving. By making the gift \$25,000 or more, the fund may become an endowment, meaning that principal is retained and only earnings are distributed annually. In effect, this creates a vehicle similar to the foundations utilized by the wealthy. Family members continue to make distribution decisions, and the philanthropy of the donor therefore continues long after their life. But most of all, the family has the satisfaction of making significant gifts each year to worthwhile ministries.

For more information: Contact Timothy Knutson, ELCA Foundation at (414) 477-9979 or timothy.knutson@elca.org, or Pastor Larry Westfield, ELCA Foundation at (262) 224-9574 or larry.westfield@elca.org, or Bishop Katherine Finegan at (906) 228-2300 or kfinegan@nglsynod.org

Alice Eman's Daughter to Receive Transplant

Gloria Eman Clickner, daughter of Alice Eman will be having a kidney transplant on February 14. Gloria, who lives in the Madison area, will receive a kidney from a live donor. What a glorious gift she will receive on Valentine's Day, a selfless gift from someone she doesn't even know! What a glorious gift to receive on Ash Wednesday, a day that begins the story of God giving his only Son that we might live! Keep Gloria in your prayers.

A Willing Sacrifice

Robert Coleman, in *Written in Blood* (Fleming H. Revell), tells of a boy whose sister needed a blood transfusion. The boy was the ideal donor because the two children had the same rare blood type. When the doctor asked, "Would you give your blood to your sister?" the boy hesitated.

Finally, with a trembling lip, he said, "Sure, I'd do it for her." Soon a nurse inserted a needle into the boy's arm. As he watched his blood flow out, his voice shook. He asked, "Doctor, when do I die?" The doctor then realized the gravity of the boy's decision. He'd thought giving his blood to his sister meant giving up his own life.

The boy's love for his sister mirrored Jesus' love for all. Fortunately for us, Jesus loved us so deeply that he was willing to die so we might live.

**All I Really Need to Know about Life,
I Learned from Noah's Ark**



1. Don't miss the boat.
2. Don't forget we're all in the same boat.
3. Plan ahead - it wasn't raining when Noah built the Ark.
4. Stay fit - when you're 600 years old someone might ask you to do something really big.
5. Don't listen to critics; just get on with what has to be done.
6. For safety's sake, travel in pairs.
7. Two heads are better than one.
8. Build your future on high ground.
9. Speed isn't always an advantage. After all, the snails were on the same ark with the cheetahs.
10. When you are stressed, float a while.
11. Remember the ark was built by amateurs; the Titanic was built by professionals.
12. Remember that the woodpeckers inside are a larger threat than the storm outside.



Answer to "A New Commandment" puzzle: "Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another." John 13:34, NIV

Bethany's Website

www.bethanyishpeming.org

To view the latest edition of the Outlook in color, please visit Bethany's website.



Keep In Your Prayers

Remember our home-bound and nursing home residents:

Valente: Doreen Brown

Jacobetti: Carol Waters

Teal Lake Senior Living Community: Betty Geier, Jean Johns

Mill Creek: John Pontti

- The family and friends of Allen Maki who mourn his loss
- The family and friends of Pastor Marcia Solberg who mourn her loss
- The family and friends of Pastor Bob Sutherland who mourn his loss
- The family and friends of Bob Waters who mourn his loss
- The family and friends of Jean Sandstrom who mourn her loss
- Glen and Hope St. Amour who mourn the death of Glen's mother, Dianne St. Amour
- Kay Chartre
- Gloria Clickner
- Vicki Baldini
- Kathy Geier
- Roland Kyburg
- Mark, Kathleen, and Karmen Slown
- Ruby Kaukola
- Sharon Argall
- Dan Argall
- Ray Chartre
- Roger & Ruth Solberg
- Carl & Doris Pellonpaa
- John and Marilyn Pontti
- Jim Sodergren, Jr.
- Cindy Warner
- Bob Kaukola
- Ted Swanson
- Loreth Johnson
- Judy Hogan
- Brown family
- Mark
- Lois Goethe
- Robert Maki
- Zander Atkins
- Jim Bjerne
- Angie Kempainen
- June Forsberg
- Those in the military that they may remain safe



Contact **Linda Dahl** by phone, e-mail, or by dropping a note in the newsletter mailbox at church.

485-1625
linkarzig@gmail.com



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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

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Rev. Warren Geier, Pastor
Home Phone: 485-4218
E-mail: pastor@bethanyishpeming.org

Parish Planning Council:
Exec. Director, Robert Nadeau
Asst. Exec. Director, Robert Clark
Christian Education, Tonya Perry
Finance, Jim Kinnunen
Personnel, Jim Bjorne
Property, Robert Bruhnke
Social Ministry, Marie Chilman
Stewardship, Tom Perry
Worship & Music, Keenan Tunnell



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
Northern Great Lakes Synod



February Worship Assistants

February 4

Assisting Minister - Terra Frustaglio
Acolytes - Abby Koski and Ian Bivins
Altar - Clara Carlson
Coffee Hosts - Barb Yunkari & friends
Flowers - In memory of Karl Dahl by
Linda Dahl
Nursery - Ben Bruhnke
Bread - Rae Elliot
Youth Ushers -

February 11

Assisting Minister - DJ Bivins
Acolytes - Luke Holmgren and Kyra
Holmgren
Altar - Marian Medlyn
Coffee Hosts - Social Ministry
Flowers - In memory of Inez Simons by
Colleen Sundblad
Nursery - Hope Kaukola
Bread - Linda Dahl
Youth Ushers -

February 18

Assisting Minister - Kay Ryan
Acolytes - Jarin Johnson and Ian Bivins
Altar - Sue Ryan
Coffee Hosts - Volunteers
Nursery - Kayla Koski
Bread - Terra Frustaglio
Youth Ushers -

February 25

Assisting Minister - Sally Grant
Acolytes - Faith Cain and Abbi
Bruhnke
Altar - Marian Medlyn
Coffee Hosts - Prayer Shawls
Nursery - Sabrina Holm-Brown
Bread - Tonya Perry
Youth Ushers -

February 14 - Ash Wednesday 6:30 pm

Assisting Minister - Brent Clark
Bread - Marian Medlyn

February Ushers:

Jaak Liivoja
Mike Richards
Tom Ryan
John Waters
Tim Grant
John Hansen

March Ushers:

John Beerling
Jerry Hager
Bill Heavyside
Don Meyer
Dan Sleeman
Bob Bruhnke
Rick Rhoades



Thank You!

Happy Birthday!

- 2 William Heavyside
- 2 Joshua Niemela
- 2 Aili Toivonen
- 3 Sharon Argall
- 3 Megan Barton
- 4 Eric Beinlich
- 4 Victoria Rankin
- 6 Zoe Argall
- 7 Rachel Argall
- 8 Kelly Anderson
- 8 Kayla Koski
- 9 Carrie Goldsworthy
- 9 Kenneth Carlson
- 11 Abigail Bruhnke
- 11 Renee Rankin
- 11 Diana Sandstrom
- 11 Roy Koski
- 13 Linda Bertucci
- 13 Harriet Maki
- 13 Debbie Snell
- 14 Thomas Varda
- 15 Rae Elliot
- 16 Kenneth Johnson
- 18 John Beerling
- 18 Michael Flynn
- 18 Lindsey Drebenstedt
- 19 Marvin Toivonen
- 20 Jacob Bivins
- 23 Seth Bjorne
- 23 Denise Kaukola
- 23 Victoria Mattson
- 24 Ethan Argall
- 25 Victoria Mattson
- 26 Linda Hurrell
- 26 Karen Kasper
- 27 John Carlson
- 27 Garret Frustaglio



Happy Anniversary!

Jerry & Roberta Luokkala
2/13/1971 46 years

James & Holly Bjorne
2/14/1981 36 years

