



Friends in Christ Lutheran Church

March 2015 Newsletter

THE WAY OF THE CROSS

In the middle of Lent and in the middle of the Gospels we hear Jesus say "Take up your cross and follow Me." What does this mean?

First: Around the world we hear reports of Christians enduring difficulties for the sake of the name of Jesus. This is a part of the way of the cross. They are reminding us that this world is not our home; and that those who know these things will never completely fit into a pattern of life that knows about nothing else than the physical bodily life. In fact we will be resented, maybe even hated.

This is because of our hope. Our life, beliefs, and prayers show how amazing the promises of God are. And then they show how poor and empty the hope for "this life only" can be. Think of Carl Sagan intoning "Billions and billions of years", and of those who come after him sharing the hope of believing that they are made of the stuff of the stars, evolved and sharing their existence with the animals and that when they die they will help to nourish the plants and the animals that eat them. How amazing, they say, to be a part of that! Actually, no!

How amazing it is to be made in the image of God and to walk with God and share in the things of God and the life of God! But if we are to walk with God we can not fit in to the "only this life" hopes and plans of most of the world. So we can't help in some way being strangers here.

Do remember to pray for your brothers and sisters who are enduring

persecution in our days. Pray that they may be strong in their confession hold the hope of Jesus up in front of the world. Pray that our walk as Christians may be inspired and enlightened by their example. Pray that we may know what is truly important and treasured in our lives, in our souls. And pray that we may know how to give these treasures of the soul to our children in a way that they may also hold to Jesus as their Christ.

Second: The Way of the Cross means that we follow a pattern of repentance. We turn away from ourselves and to Jesus who calls us. It makes sense to love and show charity. It makes sense to forgive and set aside the hurts that come from others. It makes sense to begin the day with prayer. It makes sense to start a Sunday worship time by saying to God that we are sinners. It makes sense because we know the forgiveness in Jesus Christ. It makes sense because we know how often we need a new start ("it signifies that the old Adam in us should by daily contrition and repentance be drowned and die . . . and again, a new man come forth and arise . . ."). It makes sense to come to God and admit that even our religion, and our love, and our prayers, and our love all fall short; and we come close and trust only in the grace of God in Jesus Christ. So I share with you the words of a Lenten Hymn I just learned about this week. There is only one religion I know that is able to lead us to this pattern of devotional thought.

1. Not for our sins alone Thy mercy, Lord, we sue; Let fall Thy pitying glance On our devotions, too, What we have done for Thee, And what we think to do.
2. The holiest hours we spend In prayer upon our knees, The times when most we deem The songs of praise will please, Thou Searcher of all hearts, Forgiveness pour on these.
3. And all the gifts we bring, And all the vows we make, And all the acts of love We plan for Thy dear sake, Into Thy pardoning thought, O God of mercy, take.
4. And most, when we, Thy flock, Before Thine altar bend, And strange, bewildering thoughts With those sweet moments blend, By Him Whose death we plead, Good Lord, Thy help extend.
5. Bow down Thine ear and hear! Open Thine eyes and see! Our very love is shame, And we must come to Thee To make it of Thy grace What Thou wouldst have it be. (by Henry Twells)

Third, and most important: The Way of the Cross reminds us that we do not do or invent the way of the cross. It is the walk of Jesus "Who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, scorning its shame and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God." (Hebrews 12:2) Through Jesus' walk in the Way of the Cross He has earned and given us eternal life and the promise of sharing in His glory. Everything we have: the gifts of God; the walk of faith, and; faith itself growing within the soul comes from His walk. It is a gift and a treasure from beginning to end.

Pastor Mark Willig

Lent 2015 Continues

February 18 - April 3

OBJECTS OF THE PASSION

PROMISES FULFILLED

We are building a cross display. Every week there will be an object distributed, so you can build your display at home. Each object in our series has an Old Testament prophecy attached to it; and a New Testament fulfillment that transform the meaning of the object

OUR LENTEN SERIES CONTINUES

On Wednesdays through March At 7:00 p.m.

Lent 2: March 4 - The Live Coal

Lent 3: March 11 - The Crown

Lent 4: March 18 - The Written Word

Lent 5: March 25 - The Spear

Simple Suppers every Wednesday at 6:00 p.m.

(March 11 & 25 sponsored by the Youth Group)

Services Through Holy Week Are:

Maundy Thursday: April 2 at 7:00 p.m. - Hyssop

Good Friday: April 3 at 7:00 p.m. - The Cross

Easter: April 5 at 6:30 & 8:15 - The Shroud

Important Dates

Youth Group

The youth group held their first meeting of 2015 on Sunday, February 22. The 2016 National Youth Gathering to be held in New Orleans was discussed. For each person attending, the youth will need raise approximately \$1000. For this reason, lots of fundraising ideas were discussed. The hope is to get the entire congregation involved. More details to come as plans are finalized.

The Youth Group kids and their parents will be providing and serving two Lenten suppers on March 11th and March 25th. Youth will be receiving more information soon.



We will be holding a youth outing on Sunday, March 8, at 1:00 PM at Echo Lanes. The cost is \$1.75 per game and \$2.50 for shoe rental. We will meet at the bowling alley. You are welcome to bring a friend!

Lutheran Women's Missionary League



Do you remember attending women's circle? We are starting one of our own. The Lutheran Women's Missionary League will meet on March 4th at 10 am at the church. We will have a study about the Widow's Mite, enjoy refreshments and have a short formative meeting. Please plan to attend.

Notes from the Trustees Meeting

The Trustees met on February 26.

Among the things included in the Pastor's Report were:

Dates for Nursing Home services:

- February 27 for Park Pointe Assisted Living; Park Pointe; and Regency Care (Walnut Grove).
- March 26 at 10:00 a.m. for our members at Regency Care, and
- March 30 at 10:00 a.m. for our members at Park Pointe.

Work is continuing in several rooms in our new building including the Youth Room, the Middle Grades Sunday School Room and the Meeting Room. If you are interested in helping talk to Pastor or Dennie.

Our Youth Liaisons (Cathy Thompson and Kim Breyman) reported on Youth activities:

Plans for the National Youth Gathering July, 2016 in New Orleans; There are a number of fund-raising ideas to help with the cost; Among those ideas, the Youth Group will be doing the Lenten Suppers before two of our Wednesday Services (March 11 and March 25) at 6:00 p.m. Free will donations are welcome to help begin to save for the cost of the National Youth Gathering. And the first of our Youth Activities will be Sunday, March 8. We will go bowling at 1:00.

Of interest also is the report from Information Technology that on Sunday, February 8, when we were in the middle of the very large snow storm, we had our 8:15 service "live-streamed" over the internet. 40 people connected with the live stream and watched the service. Others found the service still on line later that day.

Watch for more things happening as Friends in Christ continues to move forward and grow.

Pastor Mark

BIRTHDAYS FOR MARCH

1st	Laurie Applebee	15th	Susan Seidler
	Greg Carlson		Paula Willig
4th	Bonnie Rydell Nelson	16th	Aaron Applebee
5th	Alora Runchey	19th	Richard Enervold
	Keith Larson	20th	Mary Alice Peterson
7th	Deb Carter	23rd	Austin Applebee
8th	Bob Wills		Georgette Walker
9th	Pat Schultz	30th	Scott Halkyard
11th	Greg Johnson		Amanda Krugler

ANNIVERSARIES FOR MARCH

2nd	Gary and Terri Gillette	9 years
4th	Bob and Alice Hunt	55 years