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The Messenger

March 2020

Pastor
The Rev. Paul Herter

Youth/Family Life
Becky Martinal, D.C.E.

**Worship
Sundays**
8:30 (Classic Praise)
11:00 a.m. (New Song)

**Bible Study
Sundays**
10:00 a.m. (all ages)
Tuesdays
9:30 a.m. (adults)
Wednesdays
10:00 a.m. (ladies)
6:30 p.m. (adults)

Draw Closer to God during Lent

Dear Fellow Redeemed in Christ Jesus,

Beginning Wednesday, February 26 (Ash Wednesday in 2020), we have entered the Church Season of Lent. The Lenten season is not the longest season in the church year, but it is one of the most important seasons, if not the most important season. It is a time for spiritual preparation through repentance and growth in faith for Easter – the celebration of the Resurrection of our LORD. Lent is the time of the church year when the passion and death of our Savior comes into sharp focus. It begins with a special day of repentance, Ash Wednesday, and ends in the depth of Christ’s sorrow and sacrifice for our sins on Good Friday.

“Especially among Protestants today, people are not sympathetic with the mood or methods of Lenten observance. Each year there is a cry by someone for a shorter Lenten period, the dropping of fasting and the elimination of special Lenten services. Generally, Protestants ignore fasting as being superficial and meaningless. At Vatican II, Roman Catholics relaxed the rules for fasting: Meat may be eaten on Fridays and breakfast may be enjoyed before Holy Communion. People are too comfortable, lax and affluent to be bothered about self-denial. Because attendance is very poor, many churches no longer have mid-week Lenten services. (Many non-liturgical churches never had Lenten services.) Moreover, Lent as a time for special personal devotions is not observed by most Christians today even though denominations may produce special Lenten devotional booklets for this purpose. Lent can be the first fruitful season of the church year as the faithful strictly and sincerely observe the season. It can be a time of spiritual development and preparation for the resurrection.” (quote by John R. Brokhoff)

So, what are you going to give up for Lent? As I was thinking about this recently, I decided to give this suggestion as guidance for our consideration: Do you have an addiction? What habit or practice do you have that controls you or hinders your Christian walk? Opioid addiction has been in the news, for sure, and there are others – addiction to nicotine or porn; what about drinking or drugs; how about cell phone use or online gaming; and even food, i.e. unhealthy eating habits? (According to some researchers, in ten years 50% of adults in the U.S. will be obese – this condition now ranks second only to heart attacks as the cause of death in our Nation.) Lent can be a specific time when, with God’s help, we take back control of our lives from our addictions and unhealthy lifestyles.

Of course, Lent has a positive aspect as well. Not just what we might ‘give up’ for Lent, but also what will we ‘take up’ for Lent? Our Lord Jesus said that we, His disciples, His followers, must “Take up their cross daily” and follow Him. In many ways, this is the higher challenge for us during Lent and throughout our lives as Christians. To refocus and re-center our lives with daily devotions and Bible reading and prayer. As expressed in the words of the song:

“Day by day, Day by day,
Oh, Dear Lord, Three things I pray,
To see thee more clearly,
Love thee more dearly,
Follow thee more nearly,
Day by day”

(Robin Lamont, *Godspell*)

May our Lord bless us with a clear 2020 Vision of His Will and Work in our midst!

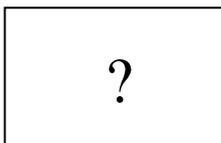
Pastor Paul

Stewardship Corner

Jesus is Most Important

In his book, *The Best Is Yet to Come*, John Kieschnick tells the story of Bob Buford. He writes, "Bob Buford owned a cable television company, and God richly blessed his business. Wealth and power, however, didn't fill the hole in Bob's life. He had a nagging sense of emptiness, so he went to a psychiatrist. Bob shared his dilemma, and the psychiatrist told him, 'Bob, I want you to go home and take out a piece of paper and a pen. Draw a box, and in that box write the words that describe the most important thing in your life.'

What do you suppose Bob wrote in His box? What would you write in your box? What is your highest priority in life?



Before we put our answers in the box, let's reflect on our thoughts in relation to Bob's emptiness. As Christians, we understand that wealth and power do not fill our emptiness nor give us the security and happiness that Bob was seeking. As our faith grows, we learn that true riches have nothing to do with money. We can have very little money and be very rich or be very wealthy and be impoverished. True riches have to do with a right relationship with Jesus Who, through His death and resurrection, brings us happiness, contentment, joy, love, peace, and life everlasting. Material possessions do not constitute real riches.

Material things are transitory. What we possess materially is subject to loss in a variety of ways. Our wealth can be lost in the stock market or through rust, obsolescence, and thievery. No matter how much money we may have, we have no way of guaranteeing that it can be kept safe and secure. Money can be lost, stolen, or its purchasing power lost through inflation. Investments can decline in value and businesses can fail. Our property can be burned or robbed. All material things can be gone quickly. Even if our material things stay with us, we will eventually leave them, because, at the end, we can take nothing with us.

God had blessed Bob materially, but he was still feeling empty with no purpose. Through faith, we understand that what we need most is a relationship with Jesus Who is the only Person Whose love and forgiveness can give us all that we need. So, in response to the psychiatrist's question as to what is the most important thing in our life, our answer in the box is "Jesus!"

Kids Against Hunger

St. John's Lutheran Church and Youth Group are hosting a Kids Against Hunger food-packing event at Michener Elementary School, 104 Dawes St., Adrian, on Saturday, March 14. Carefully measured and packed food stuffs will be put together in packages that will be distributed to those in need in the United States and around the world.

To find out how you can help, contact St. John's at 265-6998 or talk to Becky.

A "Hive" for Workers

God's house is abuzz with workers! One way to become a worker in God's house and to have a part in building His Church is investing in Church Extension Fund. Consider making an investment today. For more information, contact (Congregation Representative Name and telephone number) or call 800-242-3944. (This does not constitute an offer to sell or a request to buy. The offer is made solely by CEF's Offering Circular.)

January 2020 Stewardship Summary

Average Church Attendance: 81
Average Holy Communion Attendance: 34
Education Hour - Adults & Youth: 28.5;
Confirmation & Elementary: 6



Praise the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits - Who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases.

Psalms 103:2-3 (NIV)



Daylight Savings
Time begins the 2nd
Sunday in March –
March 8, 2020. What
does this mean?

**We need to turn
our clocks AHEAD**

one hour at 2:00 a.m. Sunday, March 8.

So.... change your clocks before going to sleep Saturday,
March 7!

Why Ashes on Ash Wednesday?

As you know, Jesus retreated into the wilderness and fasted for forty days to prepare for His ministry. It was for Him a time of contemplation, reflection, and preparation. By observing Lent, most Christians join Jesus on His retreat.

Lent consists of the forty days before Easter. In the western Church, we skip over the Sundays when we count the days of Lent, because Sunday is always the joyful celebration of the Resurrection. Therefore, the first day of Lent in the western Church is always a Wednesday.

Biblical societies relied very heavily on wood fires for heating and cooking, which meant that keeping ashes under control was a major housekeeping task. Then as now, if a person was preoccupied with something serious, they didn't always tend to the housekeeping – it's the least of their concerns. Imagine that there is a death in the family. A friend stopping by to pay their respects might gently say, 'Did you know you have ashes on your face?'

So ashes became a sign of remorse, repentance, and mourning. Today someone might wear a black armband to signify that they are in mourning; back then people put ashes on their foreheads.

You can find biblical examples of this in 2 Samuel 13:19, Esther 4:1-3, Job 42:6, and Jeremiah 6:26. During Lent, ancient Christians mourned their sins and repented of them, so it was appropriate for them to show their sincerity by having ashes on their foreheads. The custom has persisted in the church as secular society has changed around us. It is most appropriate on Ash Wednesday, when we begin a period of sober reflection, self-examination, and spiritual redirection.

Traditionally, the ashes for the Ash Wednesday service come from burning the palm fronds from the previous year's Palm Sunday celebration.

(continued next column)

Some people only celebrate the happy times in Jesus' life: Palm Sunday, Easter Sunday, and Christmas. But I think as true friends, we should also watch and pray with Him on Maundy Thursday, stand by Him at the cross on Good Friday, and retreat with Him into the wilderness during Lent.

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Lent began with Ash Wednesday, February 26, 2020. Our Lenten services continue *on Wednesday evenings, March 4 – April 1, at 6:30 p.m.* Our services will feature **CROSS EXAMINATIONS.**

How can the cross of Christ become more meaningful in my life? If you have ever asked yourself that question, you won't want to miss **CROSS EXAMINATIONS.**

Our services will be built around a "Readers' Theatre" as ancient and contemporary characters confront one another and seek to discover how their Christian faith impacts on the issues in their lives.

Our themes:

- March 4 – **"A Matter of Death and Life"** – includes an interview with Pontius Pilate concerning the justice – and the outcome – of Christ's crucifixion.
- March 11 – **"Is the Cross Necessary?"** – Annas and Caiaphas, Peter and Mark, Cyprian of Carthage, and a panel of modern experts deal with the problem of Christian suffering.
- March 18 – **"Enemies of the Cross"** appear not only at the foot of the cross then, but also in a restaurant and an office today, anxious to remove the Cross from view. (Communion will be celebrated at this service.)
- March 25 – **"What is Missing in Christ's Sufferings?"** – an extended interview with St. Paul concerning the meaning – and the results – of faithful cross bearing.
- April 1 – **"The Marks of Christ"** may still be evident in the lives of those who follow Him today.

Guests are always welcome at all our services.
Invite a friend or neighbor to meet Jesus.

Mighty Mites at Work

What a blessed privilege we have – to assist in mission work by saving our loose change (and currency) in our mite containers. This is one simple way to help spread God’s kingdom, something everyone can do!

The books for the 2018-2020 biennium of the LWML—Michigan District will close April 30. It is important that we get our “mites” to the District well before then so that our books can be balanced.

What are “mites”? Mites are our change – coins of all denominations and perhaps some folding money as well – from our shopping which we place in a special container to be dedicated to the Lord’s service through the Lutheran Women’s Missionary League (LWML). If you would like a container for your “mites”, talk to Sharron Sheridan or Mary Martinal.

This month as you put money into your mite container, say a prayer for the Lutheran Heritage Foundation and their effort to provide Lutheran Books for Missionaries around the World.

The Holy Spirit encourages us to reach out to all people with Christ’s saving Gospel in a language they can understand, as at Pentecost: “How is it that we hear, each of us in his own native language?” LCMS missionary to Papua, New Guinea, Rev. Larry Matro echoes, “Nothing can reach a person better than the Word of God in a language they can truly understand.”

LCMS missionaries and church partners around the world are facing a big hurdle in introducing new believers to Jesus because they lack good Lutheran books translated in the languages of the people they serve.

Since 1992, Lutheran Heritage Foundation has been translating Lutheran books, such as Luther’s *Small Catechism*, or *A Child’s Garden of Bible Stories*, into various languages and providing them to missionaries around the world. This grant – of \$15,000 – will fund over 3,000 books for missionaries and partner churches. What a privilege we have to help!

Prayer: Dear Lord, please bless the efforts of those supporting the Great Commission by serving as missionaries and translators, and bless our mite offerings that they may enable their work. In Jesus’ Name. Amen.

Secret Sisters

Are you remembering your Secret Sister? Pray for your Sister daily and remember her regularly with a note. This pleases our Lord and strengthens our relationship with Him and with our fellow believers.

Women of Hope!

We will meet Monday, March 9, at 1:00 pm for those who want to meet in the afternoon and at 7:00 pm for those who want to meet in the evening. We will enjoy a soup exchange. Bring a family-sized pot of your favorite soup. Enjoy tasting others’ soup. Take some home for later! It’s fun! (And we’ll learn more about our upcoming Mother/Daughter Brunch, too.)

Zone Board Meeting HERE

The Irish Hills Zone of the Lutheran Women’s Missionary League-Michigan District will meet at its Spring Board Meeting HERE AT HOPE, on Saturday, March 21.

There will be a “continental breakfast” during registration time (9:00 – 9:30 a.m.) and lunch (about Noon).

Guests are welcome at our meetings. Come and see how our Zone functions.

You are the Face of LWML!

Keep Saving and Sharing!

The quick checklist of things for everyone to be saving:

- 1) canned & boxed goods for community food pantries;
- 2) Boxtops for Education coupons on General Mills products;
- 3) Motel/hotel freebies (shampoo, wrapped soap, etc.)
- 4) Loose change (“mites”)

Any questions on any of these items (just what to save, where to put items, etc.), call the Church Office, 263-4317

Rummage Sale Coming in April!!

The annual Spring Rummage Sale conducted by Hope Women in Mission will be held Thursday, April 23, and Friday, April 24, 2020. We need lots of help to be ready. Begin thinking about what you can donate to the Sale. Watch and listen for announcements on when to sign up to help before, during, and after the Sale.

If you want to drop off your items now, please make sure they are in a sealed plastic container (so mice cannot make nests in, or a meal of, your donations) which is labeled “Rummage Sale.”

March Celebrations

Happy Birthday

Mikaela Starr	2
Jacob Brevoort	4
Sarah Holmes	4
Dick Kuntz	10
David Weisenfelder	12
Tyler Moyer	13
Zoe Krueger	18
Susan Muck	19
Mike Vergiels	21
Kelsey Krueger	25
Phyllis Johnson	29
William Kohn	29

Birthdays, cont.

Michael Fink	30
Judy Kuntz	31
Kayla Sweeney	31

Wedding Anniversaries

Rick & Michelle Wetzel	27
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Baptismal Anniversaries

Ken Sande	3
Liam Sande	3
Jacob Brevoort	4
Delight Sieler	21
Dick Kuntz	25
Dale Martinal	29
Myrna Sheldon	31

Happy March

We Pray This Month:

For the Nations of the world for peace, healing from their troubles, and spread of the Gospel
For Our Nation –

that God would guide and protect our local, state and national judges
that God would guide and protect our military wherever they are serving.

For His Church –

that God would strengthen and protect all His people who are experiencing trials, testings
and/or persecution and all who are serving His Church as missionaries, pastors, teachers

For Hope –

that God would bless our 2020 Administrative Board
that God would bless and grow our Sunday School, our congregation, Youth Ministry

For those who grieve: families of:

For those who struggle with illness or injuries –

Myrna Sheldon	DeLight Sieler	Ron & Dianne Gentz
Helen Bendes (arthritis)	Dave & Dee Weisenfelder	Margaret Parker
Tricia Moyer-Fowler	Luella Goetz	Maynard Howard
Dorothy Parker	Fred & Sandy Houck	Les & Sue Howard
Chuck & Ruth Lamley-Presley	Patti Vergiels	Sue Muck
George MacBlaine (surgery)	Jim & Diana Gulliksen	Jim Hill (Parkinson's)
Sue Johnson	Denver Brown (accident)	Verna Garsey
Kristie Smith (eye issues)	Del Nabb (fibrosis)	Jada Korsman
Marti Hudelston	John Parlier	Karl Kellk
Jon Willett (lung transplant)	Kimberley Balowski	Jamie Murphy (cirrhosis)
Micheal Thiel	Larry & Betty Bendes	Adam Bartek (dialysis)
Bill & Jeanie Landry	Alan Garrison	Shannon (cancer)
Jeremy Gerloff (cancer)	Mark Case (cancer)	Brenda Kafer (cancer)
L. J. Jones (cancer)	Dale Chase (cancer)	Andrew Frank (cancer)
Florence Hagerman (cancer)	David Baumgartner (cancer)	Steve McRobert (cancer)
Bob Gage (cancer)	Mark Garcia (cancer)	Doug Williams (cancer)
Joanne Sohl (cancer)	Jim Barancin (cancer)	Bob Stevenson (cancer)
Gregg Woods (cancer)	Jerry Strayer (cancer)	Tom Salbut (cancer)

We give thanks to God for our many blessings.

Contact the Church Office, 263-4317 or hopelcms@tc3net.com, with new requests and updates.

HOPE
PRAYS

March 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 1 st Sunday in Lent 8:30am Classic Praise [C] 10am Education Hour 11:00am New Song 12:30pm Young Adults	2	3	4 10am Ladies Study 6:30pm Lent II	5 9:30am Home School Group 7:15pm Choir	6	7
8 2 nd Sunday in Lent 2am DST Starts 8:30am Classic Praise 10:00am Education Hour 11:00am New Song [C]	9 1pm/7pm Hope Women 6:30pm Elders	10	11 10am Ladies Study 6:30pm Lent III	12 9:30am Home School Group 7:15pm Choir	13	14 Kids Against Hunger Packing Event
15 3 rd Sunday in Lent 8:30am Classic Praise [C] 10:00am Education Hour 11:00am New Song 12:30pm Jr. Youth 4:30pm Marriage Enrich.	16 6:30pm Admin Board	17 Newsletter Deadline	18 10am Ladies Study 5:30pm Young Adults @ ULC 6:30pm Lent IV [C]	19 9:30am Home School Group 7:15pm Choir	20	21 9am Zone Board Meeting here
22 4 th Sunday in Lent 8:30am Classic Praise 10:00am Education Hour 11:00am New Song [C] 4:00pm Prayer Time	23	24	25 10am Ladies Study 6:30pm Lent V	26 9:30am Home School Group 7:15pm Choir	27	28
29 5 th Sunday in Lent 8:45am Coffee & Donuts 9:00am Education Hour 10:00am Worship [C]	30	31			[C] = Communion	

March 2020 Servant Schedule

USHERS: 8:30 a.m. Mar.: John Butler, Jay Butler, Lowell Oberhaus, Jim Ritzert
11:00 a.m. Mar. 1 & 15: Rick Wetzel, Tom Sande, Jon Henzi
11:00 a.m. Mar. 8 & 22: Otto Bilkey, James P. Sheridan

Mar. 1 8:30 a.m. **ELDER:** Bill Kohn; **ELDER ASS'T:** Jerry Johnson; **LITURGY ASS'T:** Bill Kohn; **READER:** Sue Muck;
COMMUNION: Jerry & Phyllis Johnson
11:00 a.m. **READERS:** Youth

Mar. 4 6:30 p.m. **ELDER:** Rick Wetzel

Mar. 8 8:30 a.m. **ELDER:** John Butler; **LITURGY ASS'T:** John Butler; **READER:** Judy Parros
11:00 a.m. **ELDER:** Jim Logan; **ELDER ASS'T:** Otto Bilkey; **READERS:** Carol Herter; Dale Martinal; **COMMUNION:** the Sande Family

Mar. 11 6:30 p.m. **READER:** Bill Kohn

Mar. 15 8:30 a.m. **ELDER:** John Butler; **ELDER ASS'T:** Hans Jacobsson; **LITURGY ASS'T:** Jim Logan; **READER:** Dee Weisenfelder;
COMMUNION: Hans and Arlene Jacobsson
11:00 a.m. **READERS:** Helen Bendes, Rick Wetzel;

Mar. 18 6:30 p.m. **ELDER:** Jim Logan; **ELDER ASS'T:** Otto Bilkey; **READER:** Jim Logan; **COMMUNION:** the Martinals;

Mar. 22 8:30 a.m. **ELDER:** Ron Gentz; **LITURGY ASS'T:** Jerry Johnson; **READER:** Judy Theung
11:00 a.m. **ELDER:** Rick Wetzel; **ELDER ASS'T:** Dale Martinal; **READERS:** envoy; **COMMUNION:** Kathy Beekel, James P. Sheridan

Mar. 25 6:30 p.m. **READER:** Ron Gentz

Mar. 29 10:00 a.m. **ELDER:** Jim Logan; **ELDER ASS'T:** Paul Martinal; **LITURGY ASS'T:** Jim Logan; **READER:** Patti Vergiels;
COMMUNION: the Martinals