

A NOTE FROM THE PASTOR

Ash Wednesday is a day or two away, and with it comes the Church season of Lent. For many people, Lent was a time to give up something. You might decide to give up eating chocolate bars, or stop drinking pop or coffee for the 40ish days of Lent. This was supposed to show your commitment to God, or how good of a Christian you were. Yet, Lent does not have the same meaning as it once did. I don't believe many people choose to give up anything for Lent these days, and I tend to agree with that. Instead of giving up things for Lent, I'd like to propose another way to look at the season of Lent.

During Lent this year, I'd like to invite everyone to add a spiritual discipline to their lives. Instead of taking something away from your life, like coffee or chocolate, I invite you to consider adding a time for prayer in the morning? Or, perhaps you could volunteer at a local charity? I believe that God's hope for all of us is a better realization of God's presence in our lives, and the peace that comes from that presence. God isn't as concerned with suffer-

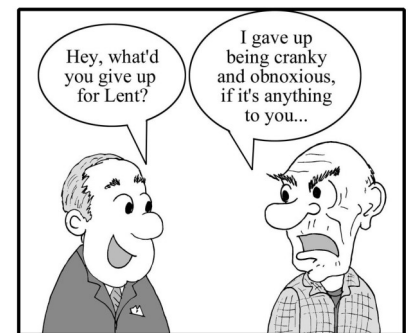
ing for his sake, like denying yourself coffee, as he is concerned for everyone's happiness. For me, our God is a loving God, who desires that we love one another and ourselves. One of the best ways to understanding God's love for us and for others is to see that love in operation. And, perhaps the easiest way to do that is to open yourself up for what God has in store for you.

So, I encourage you to responsibly enjoy your Fat Tuesday. But, when you wake up on Wednesday, I hope you would consider how you might add some time for God in your life. It can as easy as a morning prayer where you acknowledge that you are a child of God, whose sins are forgiven and who is called to be good news for the world. Or, you could sign up to help serve Lenten meals or help the less fortunate in some way. Whatever form it takes, I know that you'll be richer for it. Take a risk, and do something different for Lent. The results might surprise you!

Peace,
Pastor Erick

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Adult Ed Upcoming Schedule

Sunday mornings at 10:00 am in the Kairos Room (Pastor led)

March 5—Hinduism	April 2—Islam	May 7—Presbyterian/Reformed Traditions
March 12—Buddhism	April 9—Atheism/Agnosticism	May 14—Baptist/ Other Anabaptist Traditions
March 19—Judaism	April 16—No Adult Ed	May 21—Other World Religions
March 26—Islam	April 23—Other Lutheran Denominations	
	April 30—Catholicism	

MARCH MESSENGER

TASTE OF SPRING - ANNUAL SALAD LUNCHEON & BAKE SALE

Thursday, April 27th 11:00—1:00 p.m.

Start checking out your favorite salad and bar recipes that you plan to donate for the Luncheon and/or bake goods sale. Sign-up sheets for salad, bars and volunteers to help that day will be available in the

Narthex on April 9th, 16th, and 23rd. Please sign up early! Plan to attend and taste all of these wonderful salads and bars and pick up your homemade bakery items. Thank you.

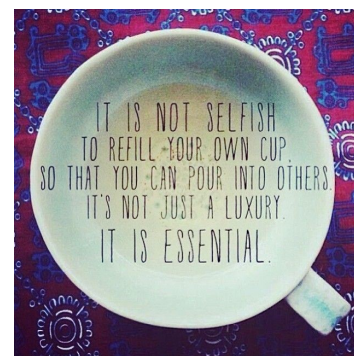


*"It is not selfish to
refill your own cup
so that you can
pour into others.
It's not just a
luxury. It is
essential. "
-unknown*

LOOKING FOR A FUN WAY TO HELP OUT? WE HAVE A PLACE FOR YOU!

The Fellowship Committee is looking for a few good people. We plan the Lenten & Advent lunches, Annual Meeting potluck and the Pebble Lake pot-luck.

What can be better than working with great people and FOOD?! Call Terry Gervais at 952-250-0432, you will be glad that you did!



SAVE THE DATE - "HAITI DAYS"

Join us in the Quilting Room on the last 2 Fridays of March (March 24 & 31) to sew shorts for boys and food bags for adults. This will be a very fun time of friendship and fellowship for all that love to sew! If you don't sew, there is tying and other things to help with as well. For years we have been sending over

boxes of dresses for the little girls in Haiti, and boxes of washcloths and bars of soap. This year will be different because we will be making shorts for the boys and food bags too. If you have any questions about this project or are interested in getting involved, call Jane Willett at 218-736-2048.

DOING GOD'S WORK
with our hands



LENTEN COIN FOLDERS are available for you to pick up at the back of the sanctuary, on the info counter, in the church office or we can send you one if you call the church office. The folders are a wonderful way to give back during the Lenten Season.



WELCA

Women of the ELCA

"Love Days" Quilters

Meets every Monday
9:00 am– 3:00 pm
Hope you'll join us!

WELCA Board Meeting

No meeting in March

Circles

Sarah: Wed., March 29th
9:30 am at Pioneer Pointe

Hannah: Wed., March 29th
1:00 pm at First Lutheran
Church

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THE 2017 MEALS BY WHEELS SCHEDULE:

March 6-March 10

May 29-June 2

June 5-June 9

If you are interested in driving for Meals by Wheels, contact the church office at 218-739-3348. We drive 5 routes each day, so we appreciate all the help we can get - even if it is only one day!



BENEVOLENCE UPDATE

The Salvation Army is one of our local benevolences that focuses their mission on serving those in need. Without any outside assistance, the Salvation Army helped over 27,000 people in Otter Tail County. As well as helping those individuals with food, clothing, shelter and utilities, they were able to change the lives of 27 children who live in poverty. We continue to support the Salvation Army and the many wonderful things they are doing in our communities.



UPCOMING EVENTS:

Senior Fly Schedule:

**March 1 (After
Ash Wed. Wor-
ship) 7:45-8:30**

**March 8 (After
Vespers, 7:45-
8:30)**

**March 15
(After Vespers,
7:45-8:30)**

**March 22
(After Vespers,
7:45-8:30)**

**March 29
(After Vespers,
7:45-8:30)**

Fly K4 and Fly 57 Schedule (4:30-5:15)

March 1 Fly 57

March 8 Fly K4

March 15 Fly 57

March 22 Fly K4

**March 29 NO FLY
(5th Wednesday)**

FLY News

FIRST LUTHERAN YOUTH

MARCH 2017

Why Ash Wednesday?

Do you ever wonder why we put ashes on our foreheads on Ash Wednesday?

The ashes represent our mortality and are an outward sign of our sinfulness. When we go to church on Ash Wednesday and go to the front of the sanctuary to receive ashes, the pastor says the words: "You are dust, and to dust you shall return" (Genesis 3:19).

These ashes are a sign of repentance, our whole bodies saying, "Yes

God, we are sinful people." It is good to be reminded of this, especially as we enter the season of Lent, the most somber time of the church year.

Sometimes we go through life feeling indestructible. It's good to be reminded of the truth—that God is God and that we are not. Sometimes we become curved in on ourselves and put ourselves in front of everyone else (including God.)

When we look in the

mirror on Ash Wednesday and see that black smudge on our foreheads, we should be reminded that, no matter what, we need God's love and forgiveness each and every day. And, the shape of those ashes – the shape of the cross – reminds us of the gift of baptism and the love that God has for each one of us.

In Christ,

Palm Sunday Breakfast Coming Up!

Palm Sunday, April 9th, will be our first fundraiser for our summer Mystery Mission trip. We will be serving pancakes and fruit in the fellow-

ship hall at church. Come and enjoy a delicious meal while supporting our church youth! We will serve from 9:30-11 AM that

day. Also, mark your calendars for an Easter Egg Hunt, between services on Easter Sunday. Watch the messenger for more details!

**FIRST
LUTHERAN
CHURCH**



**March
Happenings:**

Sunday school	5
"Butterflies" 0-4 yr. Olds and parents in Fellow- ship Hall	12
4th Grade Milestone Class with parents	12
4th Grade Milestone Blessing in worship	19
5th grade First Communion Class with parents- Pottery-making!	26

Sunday School News

March 2017

First Communion Classes: Faith Milestone for 5th graders

A unique faith experience begins for 5th graders and their parents on March 26 during Sunday School. This class with the students, the parents, and Pastors provides an opportunity to prepare for the Sacrament of Holy Communion. The classes begin with a pottery making day as they mold a chalice for their First Communion. It continues with a bread making day and instruction. These tactile lessons are meant to help kids reflect on the things they've felt and learned about communion. The families go home with a hand made pottery chalice which will be used to receive First Communion. After the instruction, students will experience their First Communion at the worship service on Maundy Thurs-

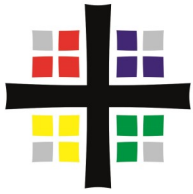
day, April 12 at 7:00 p.m. Grandparents and God-parents are encouraged to attend the service as a wonderful family celebration. Following the occasion, have these special adults share what the sacrament means to them. When we find an opportunity, take the time to discuss and affirm each of the gifts given in Holy Communion; Being together with Jesus, receiving forgiveness, celebrating, giving thanks, receiving strength to serve, receiving Jesus, and growing in faith.



Jesus Is My Superhero!

You are invited! "Butterflies" VBS is for young families to celebrate Jesus! It's a time and place to have fun with other young families! Children and an accompanying adult are invited to participate in Vacation Bible School this summer for a short playful experience. Many treasured friendships have sprung from this popular, active family event. Details will follow in months to come.

Cindy Larson, Sunday School Superintendent



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*Mark
Your
Calendar*

- ⇒ WELCA Salad Luncheon - Thursday, Apr. 27th, 11 - 1 pm
- ⇒ Confirmation Brunch & Rehearsal - Saturday, May 20 at 10:00 am
- ⇒ Rite of Confirmation - Sunday, May 21st at the 11:00 am service
- ⇒ Senior Recognition Sunday - May 28th, 9:30 am (One Service schedule begins)
- ⇒ Senior Recognition Brunch - May 28th, 10:30 am

Lenten Suppers

Come join us during Lent for supper at 5:15 – 6:45 pm starting March 8th. We will have a simple meal down in the fellowship hall, watch for a menu in the Sunday bulletins.

DEADLINE TO SUBMIT ARTICLES
FOR THE APRIL MESSENGER
IS MARCH 21ST



Spring forward!
Turn your clock AHEAD
one hour before bed
on Saturday evening,
March 11th.

TRANSITION TEAM UPDATE - LISTENING POSTS

The Transition team met for the first time last week and is excited to get started. In order to do that, we have set up the following dates as Listening Posts for the congregation. These will be meetings where the Transition Team will be asking questions to understand better where we are as a congregation. The Transition Team is there to listen to you and your responses and there will be plenty of time for questions and reflection from people who attend. If these dates do not work, feel free to individually approach one of the Transition Team members to share your reflections. Currently, the members of the Transition Team are: Pastor Erick Thompson, Chad Felstul, Dan Kwapinski, Jennifer Smestad, Ron Spangler Sr., Jan Wendel, and Rick West.

Wednesday, March 8th, 6-7pm – Kairos Room
Sunday, March 12th, noon-1pm – Kairos Room
Wednesday, March 15th, 6-7pm – Kairos Room
Sunday, March 19th, 9:45am -10:45am – Narthex
Tuesday, March 21st, 6-7pm – Kairos Room

