

# First Lutheran

## MARCH MESSENGER

### A NOTE FROM PASTOR JENNIFER

Issue 3, March 2015

402 South Court Street  
Fergus Falls, MN 56537  
218-739-3348  
firstlc@live.com  
Firstlcffmn.com

Dear Friends,

Are you Irish? I am one-quarter Irish. My maiden name was McAllister. My dad's dad, William "Bill" McAllister, was 100% Irish, and was so proud of his heritage. I always think of him and remember him in the month of March. Growing up, I thought I never understood what St. Patrick's day was all about. As I grew up and learned more about my heritage, I found it fascinating. So today in memory of my Grandpa, I'd like to share with you a little bit about St. Patrick.

St. Patrick (who was originally from England) found great strength for his missionary work in Ireland through remembering his baptism. He wrote a song that appears in our hymnal (ELW 450) and is known as "St. Patrick's Breastplate" (i.e. St. Patrick's protection). It goes like this:

*I bind unto myself today the strong name of the Trinity  
By invocation of the same, the Three in One and One in Three.  
I bind this day to me forever, by pow'r of faith, Christ's incarnation,  
His baptism in the Jordan River, his cross of death for my salvation,  
His bursting from the spiced tomb, his riding up the heav'nly way,  
His coming at the day of doom, I bind unto myself today.  
Christ be with me, Christ within me, Christ behind me, Christ before me,  
Christ beside me, Christ to win me, Christ to comfort and restore me.  
I bind unto myself the name, the strong name of the Trinity  
By invocation of the same, the Three in One and One in Three,  
Of whom all nature has creation, eternal Father, Spirit, Word.  
Praise to the Lord of my salvation; salvation is of Christ the Lord!*

It is said that St. Patrick used the shamrock as a way of teaching the concept of the Trinity – one God in three Persons. It would be great if every time we saw a shamrock this month, we could think about the great security we have in our relationship with God through our baptism. That, after all, is what the season of Lent is about – a time to reflect on what it means to be baptized children of God.

DIA DUIT! (God bless you!)



Pastor Jennifer



# MARCH WORSHIP THEMES

## March 1 "Starry-eyed Optimists"

**Text:** Genesis 15:1-6, 17:1-2, 17-19

Every time childless Abraham looked up at the heavens, he remembered God's promise, given so long ago, that his offspring would become as numerous as the stars in the sky. As we journey in the wilderness, may those same stars remind us of God's never-failing promises to us!

## March 8 "Strength When We Stumble"

**Text:** 1 Corinthians 1:18-25

It sometimes is hard to be a Christian. It is easy to be discouraged and wonder how we can continue to proclaim God's message of love and forgiveness when the world seems to proclaim otherwise. Are we foolish? Perhaps we are stronger than we think.

## March 29 "Earthly vs. Divine Wonders"

**Text:** Mark 15:1-39

It's easy to be distracted by the earthly wonders we encounter on our wilderness journey. Jesus was greeted with shouts of Hosanna and palm branches waved in his honor. But he never wavered in his mission – he knew there was a cross waiting for him. The Holy Spirit can help us stay focused and move forward as followers of Jesus.

## March 15 "The Wonder of the Cross"

**Text:** John 3:14-21

The poisonous serpent was a symbol of death, but God transformed it into a symbol of healing. The cross was a symbol of failure and shameful death. But Christ transformed it into a symbol of healing and victory.

## March 22 "The Wonder of the Seed"

**Text:** John 12:20-33

We want to avoid pain and suffering at all costs. We want to avoid the wilderness. But Jesus says of himself: *"unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain."* Without Good Friday – No Easter Sunday. Without death – no resurrection.



### WEDNESDAY LENTEN WORSHIP SERVICES

12:10 PM Worship  
(lunch follows in Narthex)

7 pm Lenten Vespers Services

### Lenten Coin Folders

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. The money collected from the coin folders is given to Luther Crest Bible Camp.

### Winter Weather Information

If the Fergus Falls Schools close due to bad weather, the activities at the church that day will be cancelled and the church office will also be closed.



## March Service Units

The following are the people in this Unit  
Please say "YES" when you are called to help!



Matt & Danielle Freitag	Gordy & Marie Fuchs	Kristie Eckley
Bill & Helen Watkins	Larry & Jeanette Dorn	George Fick
Jay & Dolly Dunbar	Gerald & Sheila Elliott	Jennifer Frank
Phyllis Anderson	Matt & Leslie Flugstad	Patty Haldorson
Brett & Wendy Duenow	Larry Goos	Chuck & Dawn Henkes
Myron & Lori Brusven	David & Vicki Hanneman	LeAnne Jaenisch
Tim & Bernice Overland	Jan Kjellerup	Wade & Elesha Jyrkas
Debbie Opatz	Barrett & Harriet Wicklund	Kurt & Carla Koski
Allan & Pam Schroden	Matt & Rachel Duenow	Rosie Mertz
Gordy & Sandy Kvern	Heather Rule	Dave & Becky Kantrud
	Don & Teresa Ashworth	

**DEADLINE  
TO SUBMIT  
ARTICLES  
FOR THE  
APRIL  
MESSENGER  
IS MARCH 18th**

## **2015 First Lutheran Church Council Members**

Lisa Wolfe, President  
 Elizabeth Abrahams, Vice President  
 Wendy Duenow, Secretary  
 Greg Wagner, Treasurer  
 Brian Becker, Youth  
 John Demuth, Stewardship  
 Kevyn Heck, Finance  
 Greg Peterson, Worship  
 Rick West, Outreach  
 Kelsey Felstul, Education  
 Steve Emerson, Personnel  
 Andrea Loomer, Membership  
 Duane Gran, Property  
 Mary Lou Olson, Fellowship

### **2015 Nominating Committee**

Missy Mattson, Kari Vaughn, Susan Hermes,  
 Jay Dunbar, Greg Kollman, Ashley Shuck



**Attention Seniors:**  
 Scholarship Application  
 forms have been mailed out to all  
 Seniors

Applications must be  
 completed by  
 deadline on application form



### WELCA Board Meeting

Tues., March 10th at 10:00am  
 Kairos Room

### Quilters' LOVE DAYS

Every Monday 9am-3pm

### Circles

**Sarah:** Wed. March 25th at 9:30am  
 Pioneer Pointe

**Hannah:** Wed. March 25th  
 at 1:00pm  
 First Lutheran Church

*In the next several issues, we will print testimony from our 2014 Tanzania Mission Team which they shared at the outdoor worship service on August 17. Enjoy!*



Imagine living in a place where less than 10% of the girl's even get the chance to attend a secondary school. Sadly, that's one of the statistics I found out about Tanzania. But I also learned that in their culture, a secondary education nearly triples a women's income, and she will reinvest about 90% of that income into her family. On our trip we were lucky enough to get the chance to visit a school that believes that if the women are educated, they will educate the whole village.

### **"Now I've learned the true meaning of the three small words on the backs of our shirts, 'One In Christ.'"**

We arrived at the MaaSae Girl's Lutheran Secondary School, or MGLSS, just in time to attend evening chapel. We tried to sneak in and sit in the back, but of course a group of 10 white people sticks out a little bit. But as soon as we sat down, we were instantly making friends. Some of the older girls came and sat by us, and I don't mean just sat near the group. I mean they would come and squeeze their way in between us. Then chapel started; first it was the drumming, and then everyone stood up and started clapping different rhythms, dancing, and singing at the top of their lungs. It was one of the most remarkable things I've ever experienced. I enjoyed watching some of our team trying to participate in the singing and dancing, even though no one had any idea what they were doing. I think the girl's got a kick out of it too. And when it became time to pray, tons of girls were raising their hands because they all wanted to do the prayer! It was so impressive to see that.

The next day the girls had a "surprise" for us, so they took our hands and up the hill we walked. We were going to sort raw coffee beans from the coffee plantation near the school. Then the girls showed us their chickens and cows. Wendy started talking to the cows, and the cows seemed to respond. The girls thought that was hilarious. Next the girls showed us their dorms. Dani and I went into a room where a lot of the girls were hanging out together. They had so many questions for us, we shared some of our pictures with them, and they even found a song on my iPod that they knew, and they all started singing along to it!

That evening was our culture sharing night. We sang some songs, and did some dances, but the girls from the school definitely out-did us with their performances!

### **"It was one of the most remarkable things I've ever experienced."**

Our last day at MGLSS began with a long walk uphill to church with our hosts. Wendy referred to this as "climbing Mount Kilimanjaro". Later that day we walked to the market with our hosts, and ended the night sharing our last meal with our new friends. Since we would be leaving at 5am the next morning, this was also our chance to say goodbye to all the wonderful people who had been so welcoming and friendly to us. It was a tearful goodbye with lots of hugs, which kind of surprised me because before the trip, I had no idea how close we would grow with these people from across the world. Now I've learned the true meaning of the three small words on the backs of our shirts, "One In Christ."

Emma Clark

My name is Ken Stensvaag and I was one of the adult leaders on the trip. When we were at the girl's school on that Saturday we played some games with them. We played some silly relay games. It got very competitive, but in a fun way. In the first relay, you have a balloon and you blow it up then you try to pop the balloon by sitting on it pretty hard. As we started that relay, a lot of the girls started to join the line, until almost the whole school joined in the fun. We had to give all our balloons to them. On my team the last girl who was up was quite small. She blew the balloon up and she tried to sit on it with all her weight but couldn't pop it because she'd let go and the air would escape and it sounded like she was passing gas. Everybody was laughing. The last relay we played is where you take a spoon and you run to a bowl of skittles and scoop some up with the spoon. Then you have to run or walk back with the skittles in the spoon and try to pour all your skittles into a water bottle without using your other hand. Let me tell you there was one particular chaperone, I won't say who, but she cheated and used her hand to put all her skittles into the water bottle!! It was a great afternoon with lots of laughs.

### **"We discovered that we have a lot of wonderful sisters-in-Christ at the Girls' School."**

And I think after that day, we all realized that, even though our language and culture is so different, we're all alike in many ways.

Ken Stensvaag

## COMMUNION HELP NEEDED

The Altar Guild has responsibility for providing communion to the congregation. We need more church members who would be willing to help set up, serve, & clean up after communion.

The actual serving of communion is usually done by two Pastors, two Communion Assistants, and two Acolytes. However, Altar Guild needs to provide at least two additional people to set up before communion, to help replace empty trays, and to clean up after communion. Males or females can be helpers. Some couples like to work together on this (just as some Communion Assistants are couples).

Set up is often done a day or two days before communion. It involves filling the plastic cups with wine and putting them in the brass wine trays. Prior to the worship service, certain items are put on the altar. There are detailed, typed instructions for doing this (as well as drawings to show placements on the altar) which you may

receive and review at home in advance. There are also directions taped to the side of the refrigerator.

Serving involves two people (one on each side of the altar area — one near the pulpit and one near the lectern) who each hold a filled wine tray to replace the wine trays that are emptied and filled with empty cups. They take the emptied cup trays to the Sacristy Room, & take the filled trays from the altar. The Pastors and Communion Assistants do the actual serving of wine and bread. The Acolytes collect the empty cup trays, which they pass back to the Altar Guild people, who pass the next filled wine trays to the Communion Assistants.

Clean up is usually done after each communion service. The Altar Guild helpers keep a written record of the number of people who take communion by counting the empty wine and juice cups as they are thrown away. They also have responsibility of putting away the brass wine trays and the other

items on the altar.

Judy Mouritsen, Cathy Neuman, and Sandy Pearson are currently the Altar Guild Members who are in charge of lining up people to help set up, serve, and clean up for communion. Please call one of them or call Ashley in the Church Office (218-739-3348) if you would be willing to be a special communion helper. You can determine how frequently you want to help (e.g. twice a year, once a month, on certain holidays, whenever needed) and when you want to help (e.g. 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> services, only summers, only in the fall, not during the winter months, etc.).



## THE MURIEL L. NELSON SCHOLARSHIP

**The Muriel L. Nelson Scholarship**, awarded through the First Lutheran Foundation, is now available. Muriel L. Nelson gifted an endowment to the Foundation to provide scholarships and assistance to persons pursuing a Christian education. This year, two, \$700 scholarships will be awarded to persons pursuing a Christian education at a church related post secondary school and who are members of First Lutheran Church or have families who are members of First Lutheran Church. The application is available by contacting the church office. Questions may be directed to Missy Mattson, Foundation Board Member at [missymattson@yahoo.com](mailto:missymattson@yahoo.com) or 736-6281. The application deadline is **April 15, 2015**.

The First Lutheran Foundation's mission is to use funds entrusted to it to further the mission of Christ's church so that the blessing of the gospel may be shared with all people. If you would like to learn more about giving to the Foundation, please contact any of the Foundation members: Orrie Leabo, Leonard Hatzenbuhler, Vicki Hanneman, Chad Felstul, Linda Mellon, or Missy Mattson.

# OUTREACH

## March is Food Shelf Month!

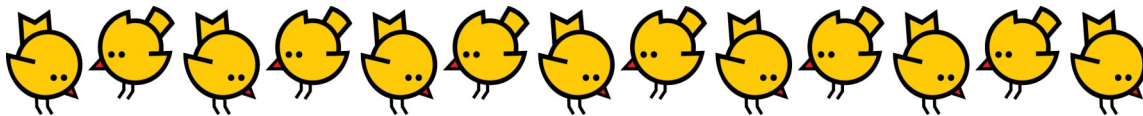
This month, First Lutheran is focusing our outreach efforts to help meet the needs of the people in our community through the Food Shelf. The Food Shelf is one of our local benevolences that helps so many people right in Fergus Falls.

FYI: The Food Shelf is open M-W-F and people are limited to visiting the Food Shelf one time per month; the Food Shelf is 100% volunteer based (including some of our members!); the Salvation Army takes all their left over fresh produce that cannot be held over until the next time they are open.

Let's come together and meet our goal of paying \$1,000 to the Food Shelf in March. If you would like to give to the Food Shelf, simply write "Food Shelf" on your offering check on the memo line.



### Buck-a-Chick



*This Lenten season, our congregation will again be participating in the "Buck a Chick" program through ELCA World Hunger Relief. A \$1 donation buys a chick for a family living in poverty. Once the chick begins producing eggs, the eggs provide nutrition to the family and/or can be sold at marketplace for income.*

*Our goal this year is 200 chicks. Do you know what 200 can do? On average, they could lay 1,050 eggs per week, 6,000 eggs during lent, and 54,750 eggs per year! Please consider donating to the "Buck-a-Chick" program through ELCA World Hunger. The sale will run March 9-April 20. You can purchase the chicks in the narthex at the "Buck-a-Chick" table, writing "Buck-a-chick on a check and placing in the offering., or stopping at the church office. Who knows, maybe we can get Pastor Saul to dress up like a chicken again!*

### Picture Directory-

Many of you have signed up for the new church pictorial directory and we thank you! Church representatives will be calling all families who did not sign up for a photography appointment. Those who participate will receive the new directory and a complimentary 8 x 10 portrait. We appreciate your willingness to make this a complete picture directory for our Church family.

#### Pictures will be taken:

March 10-14th

March 24-28th

June 10-13th

Hours are 2-9 pm





## UPCOMING EVENTS:

### Senior Fly Schedule:

(After Vespers)

March 4

March 11

March 18

March 25

### Fly K4 and Fly 57 Schedule:

March 4 Fly 57

March 11 Fly K4

March 18 Fly 57

March 25 Fly K4

# FLY News

FIRST LUTHERAN YOUTH

MARCH 2015

## Luck O' The Irish?

Do you have a lucky penny, lucky stuffed animal, or pair of shoes that always guarantees you a good day? Or do you feel like eating Lucky Charms for breakfast is your recipe for success?

Sometimes I wonder, when I have a bad day, if I looked at a broken mirror, saw a black cat crossing my path, or if I got in trouble for not forwarding one of those annoying emails that said I'd have 8 years of bad luck for not sending it on. Do you believe in luck?

As we approach St. Patrick's day, it's something I'm wondering about. I'm not so sure that I believe in luck. Don't get me wrong, sometimes it seems like I've had a terrible day and all I can think of is how bad my luck seems to be. But, at those times, it's so good to remember that

our God who is wonderful and powerful is stronger and bigger than anything we can call "luck." So should you own a lucky charm or



wear the same socks to every baseball game? If that helps you, I don't think it's necessarily a bad thing. These can be used to calm nerves or help us mentally prepare for an event. But we should all recognize that nothing is truly random, and God cannot be manipulated by four-leafed clovers or dirty socks. Time would be better spent by following

God, preparing for that game, and not risking anything too expensive in poker.

So, today, in the spirit of St. Patty's Day, Receive this Irish Blessing:

Wherever you go and whatever you do, May the luck of the Irish be there with you. Count your blessings instead of your crosses; Count your gains instead of your losses. Count your joys instead of your woes; Count your friends instead of your foes. Count your smiles instead of your tears; Count your courage instead of your fears. Count your full years instead of your lean; Count your kind deeds instead of your mean. Count your health instead of your wealth; Love your neighbor as much as yourself.

*Pastor Grief*

## Luther Crest Bible Camp

It's not too early to start thinking about going to camp this summer! If you have never been to Luther Crest, you are missing out. There are so many experiences to choose from, whether you want to go to X-Treme camp or want to be a night owl. If you register before March

17th, the price is lower!

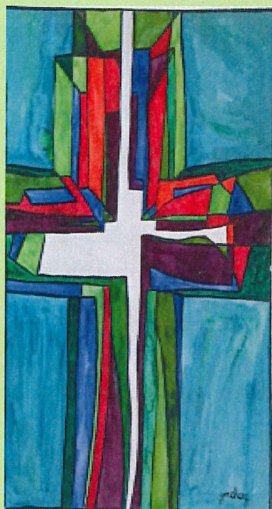
Camp is such a wonderful experience and I want each and every one of you to have the opportunity to go to camp this summer. It is an opportunity to make memories with your friends that you will never forget!

I plan to come out to Luther Crest and see as many of you as I can during your week at camp this summer. I am looking forward to it! Please see me for a brochure for more information about camp!





## FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH



### March Happenings:

Milestone blessing in worship- 1st Grade	1
"Butterflies" 0-3 yr. olds	8
4th Grade Milestone Class with parents	8
5th Grade Milestone Class with parents-Pottery	15
"Dragonflies" PS2-Kdgn. with Parents	15
4th Grade Milestone Blessing in worship	15
5th Grade Milestone Class with parents-	22

# Sunday School News

402 South Court Street

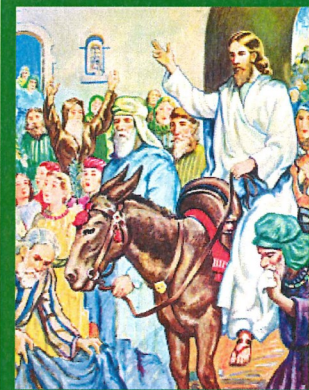
March 2015

### Building Faith with the Congregation

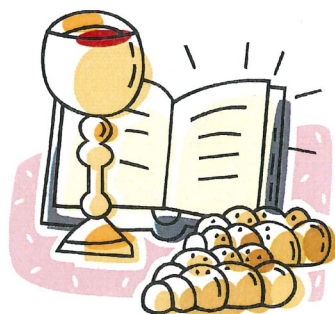
The Sunday School students will be coordinating activities with the Lenten Committee to create meaningful art and tokens. These handmade items will enhance the Lenten journey of faith for all of the Congregation. Like little elves in a workshop, the students will be

making stars and crosses to be given out during worship. Look for these handmade crafts as reminders for the Lenten journey and thank the children for their participation!

Palm Sunday is  
March 29  
Children sing in  
worship!



### First Communion Classes: Faith Milestone for 5th graders



A special faith learning experience begins on March 15 during Sunday School. The parents will begin their classes along with their children. They'll learn about the Sacrament of Holy

Communion. After their instruction over the next few weeks, students will experience their First Communion at the worship service on Maundy Thursday.



## FACING THE WILDERNESS... FINDING THE WONDERS

Our Lent/Easter Planning Task Force has once again come up with a wonderful theme for our Lenten Journey: *Together: Facing the Wilderness... Finding the Wonders*

You should all have received a brochure detailing the theme and the worship service opportunities during this season, but I would like to highlight here just the worship service on Easter Saturday, April 4 at 9pm, since I know that many of you have perhaps never attended an **Easter Vigil**. Let me answer some questions you may have about this service.

### **Q: Where did this service come from? Is it something new?**

**A:** The Vigil of Easter is the oldest celebration in the church year, and was the original way the early Christians celebrated the Resurrection in an annual observance. In its present structure the Vigil dates to the early second century. The last 50 years has seen a rapid and vigorous recovery of this ancient celebration, and now many Lutheran churches observe it.

### **Q: Why does the service begin at 9 pm on "Easter Saturday"?**

**A:** In Jewish worship tradition, the day begins at sundown. The 9 pm hour is a compromise between practical concerns and theological ones. (Daylight Savings Time adds another factor!) The actual resurrection took place sometime during the night between Saturday and Sunday, so this is a way to keep a vigil, and celebrate the miracle of Christ's resurrection.

### **Q: What are the four parts of the liturgy?**

**A:** The Vigil consists of Light, Readings, Baptism, and Eucharist (Holy Communion).

### **Q: Describe what happens.**

**A: Light** - We begin outside, gathered around a fire, where the large Paschal candle (representing Christ) is lit. We process with the candle into the dark sanctuary.

**Readings** - We listen to some of the great stories from the Bible, stories that remind us of God's powerful acts of salvation throughout history. We respond to the readings with beautiful hymns and canticles of praise.

**Baptism** - In the ancient church, the Vigil was the primary time to celebrate Baptism, since Baptism is the sacrament of being joined to Christ's death and Resurrection. Baptism is the Christians' passage from darkness to light, from guilt to grace, from burial with Christ to new life in his Resurrection. If there are no baptisms, we celebrate a renewal in our baptismal covenant.

**Eucharist** - Here is where we let out all the stops! The trumpets sound, the veil is removed from the cross, the lights come up bright, and dancers express for us the joy of the resurrection. Easter day begins! The risen Christ is present in the bread and the wine. We celebrate our salvation and union with Christ and one another as we receive the sacrament of Holy Communion.

### **Q: This sounds like an awful lot of church!**

**A:** Although the Vigil service will take around 90 minutes, it is well worth it. I guarantee it will be one of the most meaningful worship experiences of your life. And the movement and variety involved make it a favorite with children, too. (You can always head to Perkins afterwards for some Easter dessert.)

### **Q: Is this just a passing fad?**

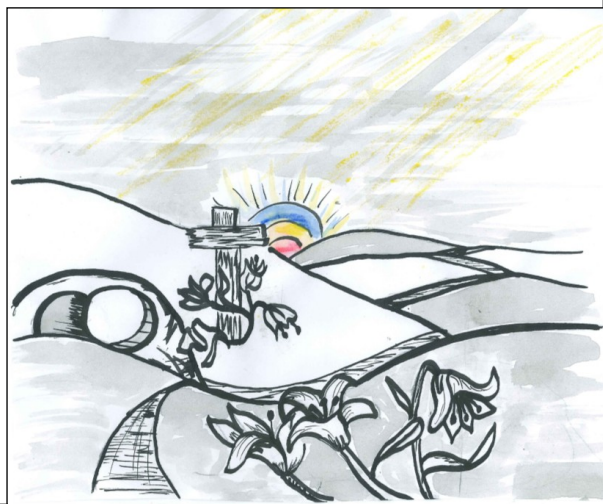
**A:** Every Lutheran church I know that has begun to hold Vigil services continues to do so. I'm pretty certain that in 50 years, it will be hard to find an ELCA congregation that doesn't celebrate Easter Vigil.

Please invite your friends, bring the whole family, and celebrate with me on this most Holy night, Saturday, April 4, at 9 pm.

In Christ,

*Pastor Saul*

Pastor Saul Stensvaag



The ELCA Congregations of Fergus Falls are holding a joint evening worship service for the community at **PioneerCare**, located at 1131 S. Mabelle Ave. on

**March 25 at 7:00 p.m.**

Chaplain Harry Olson will preach that evening and hospital Chaplain Brad Skogen will be the Cantor.



*Mark  
Your  
Calendar*

- Joint Lenten Worship at PioneerCare – March 25th, 7 p.m.
- New Member Classes – Apr. 12, 19, & 26, 4-6 pm
- WELCA Salad Luncheon – Thurs., Apr. 30th, 11 – 1 pm
- Confirmation Dessert & Rehearsal – May 10, 7 pm
- Reception of New Members & Rite of Confirmation -May 17th
- Senior Recognition Dessert – May 17, 7 pm



Remember to turn your clocks ahead on Saturday, March 7th !!

**Lent/Easter Brochures** went out in the mail two weeks ago, if you didn't receive yours you can pick one up at the info counter, church office or give the church office a call and we can send you one.

**THANK  
YOU**

**A Big Thank You**

To the Lenten Task Force in spending all the time planning and decorating for our Lent Season.  
What a great team!



**Spring Flowering plants** are needed to decorate the church on Easter. If you would like to furnish a plant, please send a check for \$15 to the church office (or put in a pew envelope marked "Easter Plant" and place in the offering plate). Those purchasing a plant may take it home following the 11 o'clock service on Easter Sunday.

