



Lutheran Church Of The Way

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

March 2025 Newsletter

FROM PASTOR

Each year, Lent rolls in like a thunderstorm bearing down on Tornado Alley. Things get dark, and the anticipation of the ugliness that's to come is as palpable as the static in the air. It always begins gently before rapidly escalating to a blinding torrent, only broken by the occasional explosion of lightning followed by a deafening crack of thunder. The sheer power driving the storm is both impressive and intimidating. Yet, when the darkness has unsuccessfully done its best to have its way with you, the clouds break with clear skies, and the storm rolls away as quickly as it arrived.

Our Lenten walk to the cross begins in the Garden of Eden by echoing God's judgment upon a rebellious Adam through the words "[Ashes to Ashes, Dust to Dust] from dust you were taken; dust you are, and to dust you shall return." (Genesis 3:19) The implication of these words for Adam was devastating. They never had to worry about death before the Fall; everything that they needed for their lives was readily provided for them by God. Now, death is an imminent and unavoidable reality. We mark the advent of this death by wearing an ashen cross upon our foreheads on the first of forty days preceding Easter Sunday. The tone around us shifts and becomes somber as the darkness moves in.

On three distinct occasions during the disciples' three years with Jesus, He foretells his death and resurrection to them. He prepares them for the onslaught of this storm that is coming. "I will die - THEN rise again three days later." One of the troubling aspects of a storm, though, is not knowing how long it will last and what the devastation will be in its wake. However, unlike Noah, we know that it won't last forever. (Technically, Noah did too, but only because God told him it would rain for 40 days and nights). Our hope in Christ remains steadfast as we endure the tumultuous and uncomfortable darkness of Lenten storms. "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it." (John 1:5)

*"Abide with me; fast falls the eventide;
The darkness deepens; Lord with me abide.
When other helpers fail and comforts flee,
Help of the helpless, O abide with me."
("Abide With Me", vs 1)*

LCW OFFICE SECRETARY

I want to introduce myself formally as our new church secretary. I am excited to work with Pastor, our president, boards, committees, and members to further the Lord's plan for our church. If anyone has any questions or concerns, please feel free to send me an email at office@familiesinchrist.org.

In Christ,

Kate-Lynne Laroche

ECHOES

The Roman way of executing criminals starts with public humiliation. With Jesus, this was enhanced. The mocking, taunting and flogging unmercifully, using nails rather than rope enhanced the agony. The soldiers also gambled for His robe at the foot of His cross.

We cannot imagine the pain and agony our Savior endured on our behalf. Because of Him we don't have to bear the same, He is no longer on that cross, He was triumphant over the devil. He is no longer on that cross, the tomb will soon be empty and He lives eternally with His Father.

When we gaze upon the cross, we remember His sacrifice and this humbles us. We do not deserve this gift but we have been justified by faith. We must believe in our hearts and proclaim with our lips the huge gift to all through Jesus Christ our Lord.

As we begin this Lenten Season, may we all humble ourselves as we look forward to Christ's Resurrection.

"He died not for men, but for each man If each man had been the only man made, He would have done no less"----- C.S. Lewis

Friendship in Christ,

Wini Pickett

MARCH BIRTHDAYS

March 1st - Melanie Rubenacker's
Phyllis Mueller

March 2nd – Charlene Mastrostefano

March 11th – Sandy Boehmler

March 16th – James Laroche

March 17th – Noelle Vincze

March 18th – Rhys Connors

March 20th – Nicky Dickerhoff

CHURCH POSITIONS AVAILABLE

LCW is looking for our next church president and an assistant to the president. Please prayerfully consider taking on this position!

Contact an elder for a job description. (Paul Bain, Dan Heather, or Fred Mueller).

BOARD OF ELDERS

Reflections on Eldership: A Journey of Humility

As LCW continues to change and grow, I feel compelled to share some personal reflections. While I deeply value the service of our Elders and the vital role they play in our community, I must acknowledge my own shortcomings in fulfilling this important role.

The Bible outlines specific qualifications for Elders, emphasizing qualities such as spiritual maturity, sound judgment, and a blameless life (1 Timothy 3, Titus 1). While I strive to grow in these areas, I recognize that I still fall short.

- **Spiritual Maturity:** I am constantly learning and growing in my faith, but I acknowledge that I still have areas of spiritual immaturity that I am working to overcome.
- **Sound Judgment:** While I strive to make wise decisions, I know that I am not always infallible. I am prone to biases and can sometimes lack the wisdom and experience necessary to guide others effectively.
- **Blameless Life:** I strive to live a life that honors God, but I am aware of my own imperfections and the ways in which I fall short of the standard set before us.

These reflections are not meant to discourage others from considering me for service, but rather to emphasize the importance of humility and a recognition of our own limitations. The role of Elder is a serious one, and it requires individuals who are truly dedicated to serving Christ and His church.

I believe that true leadership comes from a place of humility and a willingness to learn and grow. I am committed to continuing my spiritual growth and serving our church in whatever capacity I am able. The only qualification that I can claim to be truly mine is that I am **willing to serve** to the best of my ability.

Are you willing to help LCW change and grow? If you feel a calling— even if just a whisper — please step up and join the active church in any way that you can.

“Here I am Lord, Send me...”

Dan Heather, Elder

BOARD OF STEWARDSHIP

Steward Journey – Through Confidence

We pass through various stages of life, each with its challenges and fears. As children we fear the dark, thunder and lightning, bullies at school, etc. Comforted by our parents, we overcome these fears. In teenage years we deal with fears relating to physical development, socializing and acceptance, difficulty in learning and planning our future. As we mature, we wrestle with what profession to pursue and will I be able to do the job, do I want to get married and will I ever find a spouse, and where will we live. Then come the concerns of supporting a family, potential job loss, relocations and health problems. Eventual retirement does not necessarily bring rest - will we have sufficient funds to live on, our health and abilities deteriorate, and will there be family to help take care of us. I have only enumerated a few fears and you undoubtedly deal with a great many more.

Although all stages of life are full of fears, we take comfort in God's promises: "So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand" [Isaiah 41: 10]. "Indeed, the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows" [Luke 12:7]. Fear is good in making us cautious with foolish risks, but excessive, irrational fear can immobilize us completely. "Blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord, whose confidence is in Him [Jeremiah 17:7]. My former bible mentor put it this way when we trust in God faithfully: "**we are no longer afraid – only concerned** when things seem out of control." Even when you might feel useless, remember: "Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up [Galatians 6:9].

In life there is a flow of self-confidence as we go through the various stages of aging. Both body and mental alacrity decline and sometimes things really get out of control. Now we may become fearful, uncertain and have low self-confidence and act as we can't do anything. Yet, then we remember that all we have done was from the Lord and we belong to Him. In **Hymn 566 v5** Christian Scheidt directs us:

By grace to timid hearts that tremble
In tribulation's furnace tried,
By grace, in spite of fear and trouble,
The Father's heart is open wide,
Where could I help and strength secure
If grace were not my anchor sure?

Have faith and trust in the Lord.

Hartmut Schroeder, Head of Stewardship

CHURCH DIRECTORY PHOTOS

In an effort to update our photo directory, please forward family or individual photos to office@familiesinchrist.org.

Why Lutheran?

By George and Sharon Mather

...sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence; (1 Peter 3:15)

Defense of the Gospel?

What Is Apologetics? It is not apologizing, it's not saying, "I'm sorry." Rather, it's giving a defense! The study of Apologetics is *the study of the defenses of the Christian faith*. It is interesting to note that Jesus and his Apostles, over and over again warn Christ's Church to beware of false teachers and prophets. We are warned to be on guard for false teaching. An apologetic is just a fancy way to say "a defense." Many Christians are not aware that apologetics and doctrine go hand in hand. Similar to the old time musical, *Annie Get your Gun*, when it comes to love and marriage, "you can't have one without the other." Thus, the church is to be concerned about false teaching and the danger it puts forward, along with a reason or defense for our faith. Doctrine and apologetics go hand to hand. Remember, doctrine describes WHAT we believe, while apologetics confirms WHY we believe.

Carefully note the following from God's Word;

...that we should no longer be children, tossed here and there by waves , and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness deceitful scheming. (Eph. 4:14 NAS)

The church has always been under attack by her enemies, the world, the flesh and the devil. Martin Luther taught:

The enemies of the soul are. **The world**, which is an outside source of temptation that comes to us to opposes God's plan(s), **the flesh**, an inward source of temptation, referring to our sinful nature drawn to self and sin, and lastly, **the devil** or Satan, a fallen angel who is a source of temptation, and who spreads his lies about God.

In addition, Luther taught that God is all sovereign over the wills of men, and that Christians can resist temptation through faith, prayer, Holy Communion, baptism, and the communion of the saints. All become a source of forgiveness.

Apologetics is the defense against this triad, “the world, the flesh, and the devil.” Sadly, these three enemies of our faith often come disguised as “truth.” And, sometimes they come to us as a teaching of Christianity. We need to remember to, *test all things; hold fast what is good (1 Thess. 5:21)*. Be a Berean: *Now the Berean Jews were of more noble character than those in Thessalonica, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scripture every day to see if what Paul said was true (Acts 17:11)*. All truth is God’s truth, and such truth claims should be scrutinized through the filter of God’s Word. *Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves. Matt. 7:15*). Note, not everything wearing wool is a sheep. There is a reason why this occurs.

The purpose of these attacks is to destroy the Gospel’s message by making the Christian ineffective, I remember hearing on more than one occasions, *All I want is deeper life, not doctrine*, and, *Give us deeds, not creeds*. The truth is, without Christian doctrine, there is no deeper life, or Gospel message. The solution to the problem of false teaching that is all around us, is to arm oneself with God’s means of grace, His Word and Sacrament. The Sacraments provide inner strength and forgiveness, while learning God’s Word is essential for Biblical knowledge and “faith.” As St. Paul’s letter to the Romans so wonderfully notes: *So then, faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God. Rom. 10:17*. By learning God’s Word we grow into mature Christians, *“Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman who needs not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. (2 Tim. 2:15 ASV)*

Finally, God invites all of us to grow in our faith and be productive as we help grow His church. This is accomplished by producing the fruits of the spirit which are: *love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control Galatians 5:22-23*. Of course, we should always remember Matthew 28:19, *Go, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, Amen.*

WORSHIP EVENTS

ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE MARCH 5TH 6:45PM – Ash Wednesday Soup dinner 6:00PM

LENTEN SERVICES MARCH 12TH, 19TH, 26TH, and April 2nd, at 7:00pm

WOMEN OF THE WAY

Thank you to all who bought soup despite the crazy winter weather which made the soup sale last longer than anticipated. We made \$300 thanks to the generosity of all. This will be donated to the youth attending the National Youth Convention in New Orleans this summer.

Coming up this March is the Soup & Salad Supper on Ash Wednesday, March 5, at 5:30 pm. There are a few slots left to sign up for various foods needed for the supper - the sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board or you can call Pat at 781-690-4150.

We will **not** be holding any further Soup & Salad Suppers during Lent.

WOW is also planning on serving a breakfast on Easter Sunday, April 20 during the time between services. More information on this will follow.

Ladies, the LWML Eastern Zone (that's us) Spring Rally will be held on Saturday, April 26, from 12:00 noon - 3:00 pm at Our Redeemer Lutheran Church in Smithfield, RI. Please plan on attending - there is always great fellowship with our local Lutheran ladies.

We will soon be planning the groups for Breadbreakers, so if you have not already signed up please do so on the bulletin board. This is a great way to get to know your fellow churchgoers better. Call Pat for more information or to sign up.

Pat Heather

BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

During the month of January the Board of Christian Ed has cleaned out the nursery and updated toys and baby supplies. There are now faith-based age appropriate toys and a comfortable new glider with a couple of blankets for calming our babies. We are enforcing a policy that any toy donations for the nursery must first be approved by the Board of Christian Ed.

Some important things to keep in mind while visiting the nursery: **Children must be accompanied by a caregiver. Food should be kept in the fellowship hall. After enjoying your time in the nursery, please put away any used items.**

Any questions or concerns regarding the nursery please contact Charlene Mastrostefano at 401-323-7776 or cmastrostefano@gmail.com.