

ST. JOHN LUTHERAN LCMS  
11400 WEST PANAMA ROAD, CRETE, NE 68333



Come to the cross and learn of God's great love for all His people. There is friendship, fellowship, and the gift of God's word of forgiveness.

# ST. JOHN LUTHERAN CHURCH NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 33 ISSUE 3 MARCH 2019

Dear Friends,

Giving something up for Lent? Or considering it? Some would call such giving something up as a type of fast. *FYI: you don't have to!!* But if you do fast – do it God's way.

What is fasting? Fasting is usually abstaining from food and drink for a set time period. If you are having blood work done, there is some fasting prescribed—and this is for a good reason. But giving something up for Lent?

A Bible word search shows that the word fasting does not appear in any of the Epistles. Paul never talks about it. God's Word does not prescribe it as something you have to do. When Jesus did talk about it, He indicated that it was something that should only be between you and God—if you do it.

Matthew 6:16–18 (ESV): <sup>16</sup>“And when you fast, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. <sup>17</sup>But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, <sup>18</sup>that your fasting may not be seen by others but by your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.”

Don't let any one else know that you are fasting. If you fast to make a show of it and bring attention or praise to yourself—that does NOT please God. A fast that brings attention to yourself for bragging purposes is wrong.

There is a better description for fasting and God's purposes found in Isaiah 58:6-7:

“Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the straps of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover him, and not to hide yourself from your own flesh?”

The “fasting” that God commends here is simply summarized as showing mercy and love to others. What are ways that you can point someone away from wickedness to righteousness? How can you show someone the love and forgiveness that comes from God? How can you help take care of those who need food and clothing and shelter? This is the kind of “fasting” God desires. And this way of love is how we should be ALL-THE-TIME.

So, don't worry about giving anything up for Lent. Take up something. Take up mercy and show it. Have mercy as Christ has been merciful to you. Mercy can also be call loving-kindness. Live a life of love and kindness as God has loved you and been kind to you. In Christ we have received forgiveness, compassion, kindness, mercy. Walk with Jesus in these and God is pleased.

In Christ,

Pastor Toensing



“Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke?”

Isaiah 58:6, NIV

**PLEASE HAVE ALL INFORMATION OR ARTICLES FOR THE NEWSLETTER TO CHRIS HOLLMAN BY 25TH, THANK YOU!**

Clothing for Orphan Grain Train:  
We can once again send used clothing to Orphan Grain Train. When leaving clothes in the drop box outside the church by the back door, please mark them for either OGT or PCM (People's City Mission).

## **ASH WEDNESDAY AND LENTEN DUTIES:**

### **Ash Wednesday, March 6 10:30 am & 7:30 pm**

Pianist (10:30 am & 7:30 pm): Ellen Miller  
Elder (7:30 pm): Todd Hoyer  
Greeters (7:30 pm): Mr & Mrs Wayne Eggert  
Acolytes (7:30 pm): Madison Hestermann & Katelyn Novak

### **March 13 10:30 am & 7:30 pm**

Pianist (10:30 am & 7:30 pm): Ellen Miller  
Elder (7:30 pm): Todd Hoyer  
Greeters (7:30 pm): Mr & Mrs Todd Hoyer  
Acolytes (7:30 pm): Mersadies Kvasnicka & Ted Muff

### **March 20 10:30 am & 7:30 pm**

Pianist (10:30 am & 7:30 pm): Ellen Miller  
Elder (7:30 pm): Terry Dittmer  
Greeters (7:30 pm): Mr & Mrs Gary Meinke  
Acolytes (7:30 pm): Skye Hoyer & Jacob Meinke

### **March 27 10:30 am & 7:30 pm**

Pianist (10:30 am & 7:30 pm): Ellen Miller  
Elder (7:30 pm): James Walker  
Greeters (7:30 pm): Mr & Mrs James Walker  
Acolytes:(7:30 pm): Colton Homolka & Calen Homolka



**MARCH**  
BIRTHDAYS

& *BAPTISMS*

### **BIRTHDAYS**

1 Deb Ourada  
6 Jacob Meinke, Conner Slama  
8 Deb Nyhoff, Deb Walker  
10 Eric Dewey, Addilyn Brethouwer  
11 Tessa Petereit, Ryan Strufing  
13 Braxton Hartman, Butch Mehl  
15 Taylor Reetz, Chris Williams  
17 Andrew Ellingson, Marlow Meinke, Lane Wendelin  
19 Larry Pomajzl, Jolene Reetz  
20 Bradley Pomajzl, Jr.  
21 Sandra Reiss, Steven Toensing  
23 Cindy Hoesche, Isaac Meinke, Maggie Wohl

25 Jerry Ferguson, Cathy Hollman  
27 Marla Musil, Alice Poole  
29 Dennis Kattau, Jaxon Trautman, Rylyn Trautman  
31 Cheryl Langfeldt, Kurt Reetz,

### **BAPTISMS**

2 Tory Dello  
5 Logan Adam  
6 Angie Louch  
8 Shelley Toensing  
9 Ryan Meinke  
11 Nick Hollman, Katelyn Novak  
12 Dave Eggert, Jerry Ferguson Jr., Dolyn Meinke, Allan Reetz  
13 Camryn Adam, Del Reiss

14 Steve Schultz  
15 Megan Korbel  
16 Jace Ourada  
17 Kade Nelson  
19 Deb Walker  
21 Peggy Bojanski  
24 Noreen Wild  
25 Glen Louch, Jacob Meinke, Blythe Dewey  
26 Deb Ourada  
29 Matt Ellingson, Ken Kahle  
30 Joe Ellingson, Dan Underwood

**OUR MISSION** Share the Joy of His News by growing inward through God's Word, Sacraments and fellowship and by growing outward through words, actions, and mission outreach.

### PREPARE FOR BLAST OFF!

VBS 2019 is scheduled for July 21-25 from 5:00—7:30pm. Registration for kids and volunteers to come soon...tell your friends! Any questions, contact Kaylie Brethouwer



### Men's Bible Study...Regrets, Reality, Restoration

The simple truth is life is full of **regrets**. Imprinted on our psyches, some resist all attempts at erasure. What do we do when the condemning memory of past offense(s) won't be silenced? Is there a way out beyond our backstory? *Regrets, Reality, Restoration* shows there is, by sharing the life stories of those who have found resolution and victory over the heartache of their pasts. You are invited to join the men of St. John on March 12 at 7:00 pm in the Church Fellowship Hall.

### Building Committee Update

The Building Committee is now in receipt of an alternative set of preliminary plans from the architects. The Building Committee is now reviewing this newest, preliminary option and will begin gathering in March for deeper discussion and review of both plans where additional alterations will likely follow. The committee's hope is to have these concepts refined and ready for membership feedback by our 2nd quarter Voters meeting. Keep an eye on the church website for updates and/or forthcoming meeting dates.

### Evangelism Committee Update

The Evangelism Committee will hold its next meeting on Tuesday, March 5, 2019 at 7:00 p.m. Members of St. John are encouraged and welcomed to attend. Following the committee's regular, open meeting will be a Bible Study taken from a Concordia Mission Society "Good News" periodical.

## LADIES AID MINUTES

St. John Ladies Aid met on February 27, 2019 with Diane Kahle as hostess. The meeting opened with prayer and singing, "We Praise You O God". Pastor Toensing led us in Bible Study.

Roll call was taken with seven members present. The minutes of the November meeting, which was our last regular meeting, were read and approved. The treasurer's report was given. Diane passed a hostess sign up sheet around and Janice handed out the annual treasurers' report.

**OLD BUSINESS:** Diane thanked everyone who helped at the funeral of Marilyn Nast.

**NEW BUSINESS:** It was decided to have another Ladies Night Out. Diane was going to have more information next meeting and we will discuss it more then. It was also decided to have a covered dish luncheon after the March 27 morning Lenten service. Anyone wishing to join us after the service for lunch is welcome.

A December birthday was celebrated by Deanna Eggert. January anniversaries were celebrated by Marvin and LaVonne Nitzel, Dave and Deanna Eggert and Larry and Linda Pomajzl. February birthdays were celebrated by Bonnie Bleich and Linda Eggert.

We closed with the Lord's Prayer and common table prayer. Shirley Reetz, secretary

### MAIN STREET LIVING

I have an address change for donations to Main Street Living. This is a television program that has been airing on **KLKN** on Sunday mornings at 10:30 a.m. The new address is: Main Street Living – Lincoln, 3825 Wildbriar Ln, Lincoln NE 68516.

**NOTE FROM PASTOR...**

There are circumstances in life that might land someone in the hospital. As your pastor, I consider it a high priority to visit when one of our members is in the hospital. But I might not always get the message. Sometimes people forget. Sometimes you might assume that someone else will let me know. If I should know that someone is in need of a pastoral visit in the hospital, please let me know. I would rather get five calls or messages letting me know than none. Thank you. Pastor

**CELEBRATION AT THE LIED...**

Come celebrate Concordia's 125th year anniversary at the Lied Center on March 23, 2019 at 7:00 pm as Concordia's Bands and Choirs perform a concert of sacred and secular music. Tickets available starting at \$15.00 at [www.cune.edu/125](http://www.cune.edu/125)

**LAMBS OF CHRIST PRESCHOOL**

March will be another busy month for us hopefully the weather will soon settle down. Starting on March 6th we will be holding an early 3's class. We will meet on Wednesdays from 12:15-3:15. If someone is interested please contact me at the school or 402-826-0611. We will be hosting Grandparents day on March 25th and 26th. We are looking forward to having the children share the Preschool with them. We will be explaining the meaning of Lent and preparing for the upcoming Easter season during March and April. We will have a few Birthdays to celebrate this month and hopefully soon can get outside and enjoy some warmer weather.

God's Blessings, Kathy Oelschlager

[lambsofchristcrete@gmail.com](mailto:lambsofchristcrete@gmail.com) 402/826-4375

**ST JOHN PRAYER CHAIN**

We are organizing a new church prayer chain. If you choose to participate, you have the option of receiving prayer requests via email or phone. Pastor will be setting up an email to be used specifically for prayer requests, and LWML will organize those who wish to receive phone calls. If you would like to be part of the prayer chain, please sign up on the sheet in the narthex. We hope to start the chain in April. If you have questions regarding the prayer chain, please see Pastor.

**SOUNDS OF THE PASSION**

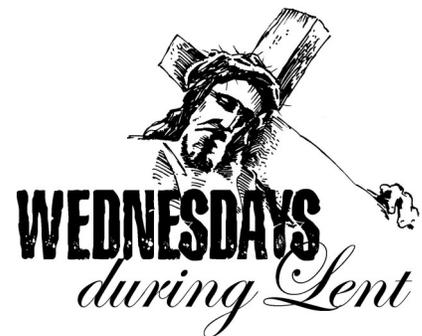
Ripping cloth. Clinking coins. Tramping feet. These are just a few of the sounds of the passion of our Lord Jesus Christ. For the midweek services of Lent—from Ash Wednesday through Good Friday—we will follow the passion our Lord through sounds and the stories they tell. Jesus goes to Jerusalem and to Calvary to give His life as a ransom for our sins. By His death we are saved. Join us for these services on Wednesdays at 10:30 a.m. or 7:30 p.m. May the Lord grant us to grow in faith and love in this journey with Jesus.

March 6 - Ash Wednesday: Joel 2:12-13 Ripping Cloth

March 13 - Matthew 26:14-16 Clinking Coins

March 20 - John 11:28-37 Crying Tears

March 27 - John 18:1-9 Tramping Feet

**LWML NEWS**

LWML is collecting items for hygiene kits for Orphan Grain Train. Items needed are bath towels, wash cloths, bath-size bars of soap, toothbrushes, and sturdy combs. Bath towels and washcloths should be in good condition and dark colors are recommended. All other items must be new. There is a collection container in the narthex at church. We will collect items during March and April. Thank you for helping to provide these basic needs to people in need.

National LWML has put forth a \$5 mite challenge to meet their goal. A gift of \$5 will help feed, clothe, and give spiritual support to those in need and hurting. If you would like to help LWML meet their mission support goal, please place your contribution in the Mite Box in the narthex by Sunday, March 17th. Thank you for your support!

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OPPORTUNITIES FOR FURTHER GROWTH

**Schedule at a Glance**

Worship Service (Sundays)	9:00 a.m.
Sunday School & LYF (Sundays)	10:30 a.m.
Bible Class (Sundays)	10:30 a.m.
Midweek Classes (Wednesdays)	6:30 p.m.
Elder’s Meeting (March 4, 2019)	6:30 p.m.
Evangelism Committee (March 5, 2019)	7:00 p.m.
Men’s Bible Study (March 12, 2019)	7:00 p.m.
Lutheran Women in Mission (March 19, 2019)	7:00 p.m.
Ladies Aid Meeting (March 27, 2019)	2:00 p.m.

**FROM THE ELDER’S**

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

The Lenten season is upon us. Lenten services will begin next week with Ash Wednesday. We will hold morning services at 10:30 each Wednesday this month, evening services will begin at 7:30. Please join in these special services as we focus on the upcoming suffering, death, and resurrection of our living Lord and Savior. Take a moment also to thank pastor, the Lenten season is definitely a season of extra work for him.

Please keep in mind there are always volunteers needed to provide Sunday after-service snacks in the basement. The sign up sheet hangs in the kitchen. To those who have brought in the past we extend thanks. The fellowship that is shared over coffee, juice, cookies, brownies, etc is always enjoyed.

Lastly, let us reflect upon ourselves during lent. Isaiah writes, "And now, go, write it before them on a tablet and inscribe it in a book, that it may be for the time to come as a witness forever. For they are a rebellious people, lying children, children unwilling to hear the instruction of the Lord ;"

Isaiah 30:8-9 ESV. It's easy to forget we are the children living in a time to come that he references. We are a lying, rebellious people who are in desperate need of a Savior. Thank the LORD that he himself provided that Savior for us.

In the name of the Christ, our savior, from the elders

**THOSE SERVING DURING THE MONTH OF MARCH**

DUTY	3/3/19	3/10/19	3/17/19	3/24/19	3/31/19
<b>Organist</b>	Jolene Reetz	Jolene Reetz	Jayne VanAsperen	Jayne VanAsperen	Jolene Reetz
<b>Elders</b>	James Walker	Mitch Homolka	Gary Meinke	Roger Koch	Todd Hoyer
<b>Greeters</b>	Mr & Mrs Art Brinkmeyer and Mr & Mrs Roger Brunelle	Mr & Mrs Terry Dittmer, Darleen Dittmer, Marilyn Nelson	Mr & Mrs Roger Koch and Mr & Mrs Glen Louch	Mr & Mrs Tim McDermott, Barb Meinke, Fran Sieck	Mr & Mrs Dave Musil and Mr & Mrs Marvin Nitzel
<b>Acolytes</b>	Kian Morris & Jacob Meinke	Calen Homolka & Colton Homolka	Nick Hollman & Hugo Pomajzl	Katelyn Novak & Kian Morris	Madison Hestermann & Ted Muff

## The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod; LCMS Stewardship Ministry; March 2019

Everything we have and everything we are is a gift of God's providential care. We understand that we're not islands unto ourselves. We could not exist without those who have gone before us and those who walk alongside us. God has given us forefathers in family, country, and faith. We are recipients of what God worked through them. We know God provides for our well-being through these means.

He gives us farmers and ranchers so we can eat. But more than that, God created and gave us all the things those farmers and ranchers cultivate. He gave us the corn, the beans, the wheat, the cows for milking, the steers for grilling. He gave each of those things for our nourishment and sustenance. Without God creating and instilling in those things their taste, their nutritional value, etc., we would not exist.

God gives us doctors, surgeons, nurses, and hospitals. He gives us medicine and medical instruments, and, of course, He gave us everything to make those medicines and medical instruments. He instilled in those things the properties to be utilized for those purposes. Without God creating and instilling healing properties into those things – and without God creating the ability within man to learn this and implement it to serve our medical needs – we would not enjoy the health we do now.

But there's more. He gives us gainful employment through our employers and provides for the necessities of life through the labor of our hands:

“Then Moses said to the people of Israel, ‘See, the Lord has called by name Bezalel the son of Uri, son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah; and he has filled him with the Spirit of God, with skill, with intelligence, with knowledge, and with all craftsmanship, to devise artistic designs, to work in gold and silver and bronze, in cutting stones for setting, and in carving wood, for work in every skilled craft. And he has inspired him to teach, both him and Oholiab the son of Ahisamach of the tribe of Dan.’ ” (Exodus 35:30–34)

And one step back from that, He has created and given us hands, and attached to hands are arms with strength. He created us with minds to make those arms and hands move and accomplish the work set before us. And with that mind, He has given us reason and senses.

That mind, because of the reason God has instilled in it, is able to work through difficult problems before we press those arms and hands into labor. It allows us to grapple with concepts and run through scenarios instead of having to experience every situation personally. It allows us to learn from the mistakes, as well as from the accomplishments, of ourselves and others. This can be done for our entire body, all our skills and talents, everything that makes us ... us.

So, everything we have and everything we are is a gift from Him. This is what we confess in the First Article of the Creed when we say that we “believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.”

But that is just the First Article of the Creed. We confess two more articles that deal with God's provision for our spiritual well-being. He sent his Son to die and be raised on the third day for our justification. He delivers that justification through the means of grace (baptism, preaching and the Word of God, and the Lord's Supper). And to give you those means of grace, He gives pastors and teachers, etc. Literally everything we have and everything we are in this life – and the next – is an inexpressible gift from God.

And it is for this, all of this, that we give thanks. **And that is what stewardship is all about — giving thanks for God's provision for us.** To give thanks is more than having an attitude of gratitude, more than just a feeling in our hearts.

It is an action. It begins in the heart, but it doesn't stay there. It works its way out through the mouth in praise for God's gifts and in love and charity through the hands to our neighbors in family, country, and church.

“For all this it is my duty to thank and praise, serve and obey him” (*The Small Catechism*, 16).

So give thanks to God for His inexpressible gifts — for everything we have and everything we are. Do this not only in word but also in deed.