

FAITH NEWSLETTER

Feb. / Mar. 2018



Dear Friends in Christ,

Lent is just around the corner. It comes to us a bit early this year; its beginning on Ash Wednesday coinciding with Valentine's Day.

On Ash Wednesday, our first reading will be from the Old Testament prophet Joel. This is how it begins:

“Yet even now,” declares the Lord,
“return to me with all your heart,
with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning;
and rend your hearts and not your garments.”

The Lord calls you to “rend your hearts,” that is, tear them open. I'm reminded of the popular Valentine's Day symbol of a heart pierced by Cupid's arrow.

Love can be painful sometimes. It's painful if you love someone, and they don't return your love. It's painful when you love someone dearly, but they are separated from you by distance, or even death. It's painful when you watch someone you love make mistakes and go down the wrong path. Love can be like an arrow to the heart.

Love was painful for Jesus, too. Jesus loved you so much that He was willing to die for you. On the cross, Jesus' heart was pierced—not with Cupid's arrow, but with a Roman spear. His blood was shed out of love for you.

It's painful to think about what Jesus had to undergo. It's not pleasant to hear of His suffering and death. Sometimes we might want to just skip over Lent and Good Friday and go straight to Easter and the resurrection.

But it is in this Lenten journey to the cross where Jesus teaches us what true love is all about. He teaches us to be examine our lives and to see whether we have been loving towards all others, including our enemies.

When we examine ourselves we see our faults and our failures. It causes us to weep and mourn and tear open our hearts out of grief.

Yet Jesus does not leave our hearts torn open. On Ash Wednesday we will sing once again Psalm 51, “Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right Spirit within me.” Jesus takes your broken, empty heart, and gives you a new, pure, holy heart. He gives you a heart made whole by His love. If you are looking for a new heart, a new love, the kind that only Jesus can give, join us once more on this Lenten journey to the cross.

In Jesus' love,

Pastor Birkholz

In and Around Faith Church

Special Services:

Ash Wednesday: Feb 14, 7:00p

Lent begins with a time of reflection on our sinfulness as well the great mercy of God. We will celebrate the Lord's Supper, and ashes will be available for those who wish to receive them.

Lenten Midweek Services: Wednesdays at 7:00p, Feb 21-Mar 21

Join us for a time of prayer and reflection on God's Word. We will be focusing on the connections between the suffering of Joseph and the suffering of Jesus.

Palm Sunday: March 25, 9:00a

We join with the crowds in welcoming Jesus who comes as our humble king. We will also read together the passion account from St. Mark's Gospel.

Maundy Thursday: March 29, 7:00p

We give thanks for Jesus' gift of Himself in the Lord's Supper and the example He set as He washed His disciples' feet. The service concludes with the stripping of the altar as Psalm 22 is sung.

Good Friday: March 30, 3:00p and 7:00p

In the afternoon we have the chief service, including the reading of St. John's passion. The Tenebrae vespers in the evening is filled with psalms and prayers as the church is gradually darkened.

Easter Vigil: March 31, 7:00p

We reach the pinnacle of Holy Week as we hear once more the great stories of deliverance from the Old Testament and the proclamation of Jesus' resurrection.

Easter Sunday: April 1, 9:00a

Our celebration of the resurrection continues as we rejoice in Jesus' victory over death and the grave.

Ladies Aid

Our next meeting will be Feb. 1st at 6:30 PM. All ladies are welcome. We will be making plans for our Rummage Sale. The sale date is April 28th from 9:00 AM until 2:00 PM. Start cleaning out closets and cabinets to donate to the Rummage Sale.

February Mission of the Month: FHP Ministries

Faith, Hope, and Peace (FHP) Ministries is a volunteer organization working around the suburban area since 2009 to bring the Word of God to those living in area residential care facilities. Pastor Birkholz was one of the founding members. As we enter 2018, we now serve 17 facilities, whose residents receive the message of salvation each week with the help of more than 50 pastors, 47 helpers, and 20 musicians. Over 335 residents, family, and friends worshipped together to celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior the week of Christmas! If you could spare a few hours during the week to play a keyboard, help residents at the services, share your clerical skills, use your sewing talents, or just help with a task when needed, please contact Pastor Birkholz.

VBS: Save the Date!

Vacation Bible School for 2018 will be from June 11-15, 9:30a-12:00p each day. Watch for more information in the coming weeks on how you can help.

Organ Update

We are very close to finalizing plans for the installation of our new organ. It looks very likely that we will be able to have it here and ready to play by Easter! We are also planning a Hymn Sing to celebrate and dedicate the organ. The tentative plan is for this to take place in the afternoon of Sunday, May 6th.

Schedule of Feb. / Mar. 2018 Events

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Feb. Event</u>
3	9:00 AM	Food Pantry Distribution
4	9:00 AM	Worship / Communion
	10:15 AM	Sunday School / Bible Class
7	7:00 PM	Prayer Service
11	9:00 AM	Worship / Communion
	10:15 AM	Sunday School / Bible Class
14	7:00 PM	Ash Wednesday Worship / Communion
17	9:00 AM	Food Pantry Distribution
18	9:00 AM	Worship / Communion
	10:15 AM	Sunday School / Bible Class
21	7:00 PM	Lenten Worship
25	9:00 AM	Worship / Communion
	10:15 AM	Sunday School / Bible Class
28	9:00 AM	Lenten Worship

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Mar. Event</u>
3	9:00 AM	Food Pantry Distribution
4	9:00 AM	Worship / Communion
	10:15 AM	Sunday School / Bible Class
7	7:00 PM	Lenten Worship
11	9:00 AM	Worship / Communion
	10:15 AM	Sunday School / Bible Class
14	7:00 PM	Lenten Worship
17	9:00 AM	Food Pantry Distribution
18	9:00 AM	Worship / Communion
	10:15 AM	Sunday School / Bible Class
21	7:00 PM	Lenten Worship
25	9:00 AM	Worship / Communion
	10:15 AM	Sunday School / Bible Class
29	7:00 PM	Maundy Thursday Worship / Communion
30	3:00 PM	Good Friday Worship
	7:00 PM	Good Friday Worship

Weekly Meetings

Bible Study	Fri. - 10:00 AM
AA Groups	Mon. & Fri. - 6:00 PM Wed. & Thur. - 7:00 PM Sat. - 8:00 AM
Alanon	Tue. - 7:30 PM

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I have a home to live in, which I am very fortunate to have. As you all know, we have our expenses associated with our homes, and, to the best of our ability, we take care of them as they come due.

I also have a Second Home where I spend an hour, or sometimes more, each week. It is my Church Home. The Church is the people, but we still have buildings to maintain and costs associated with their operation. I am blessed to have my Second Home.

I know it is difficult at times to remember our Second Home and these expenses. But as members, we have a responsibility to help maintain our Church Home.

Please, I beg you, remember the blessings we have received for many years at our Church. Try to do the best you can to support our needs at Faith Lutheran. The Lord says to give Him our first fruits.

I humbly ask of you to give, if you can, so that we can continue to have our Second Home.

With the love of Jesus Christ,

Bob Green
Elder and Vice-President

Feb. / Mar. 2018 Elders, Ushers & Lay Readers

Feb. Worship 9:00 AM Sunday

Feb. 4	Alden Ketchum Ed Neaves Mary Slepski Ray Bennett
Feb. 11	Mike Kampenga Richard Clark Kenilynn Breitbarth Mark Trojanowski
Feb. 18	Alden Ketchum Gene Osmanski Marilyn Diehl Sheila Kush
Feb. 25	Mike Kampenga Ed Neaves Richard Clark Katie Kampenga

Lenten Services 7:00 PM

Feb. 14	Mike Kampenga Gene Osmanski Alden Ketchum Ed Neaves
Feb. 21	Ed Neaves Mike Kampenga
Feb. 28	Gene Osmanski Alden Ketchum
Mar. 7	Ed Neaves Mike Kampenga
Mar. 14	Richard Clark Gene Osmanski
Mar. 21	Alden Ketchum Ray Bennett
Mar. 29	Ed Neaves Gene Osmanski Richard Clark Mike Kampenga
Mar. 30 3:00 PM	Gene Osmanski Alden Ketchum
Mar. 30 7:00 PM	Ed Neaves Richard Clark

Mar. Worship 9:00 AM Sunday

Mar. 4	Gene Osmanski Richard Clark Cheyenne Breibarth Mark Trojanowskii
Mar. 11	Alden Ketchum Mike Kampenga Mary Slepski Ray Bennett
Mar. 18	Ed Neaves Richard Clark Sheila Kush Dora Haynes
Mar. 25	Alden Ketchum Gene Osmanski Marilyn Diehl Katie Kampenga

Lay Readers 9:00 AM Sunday

Feb. 4	Ray Benett
Feb. 11	Mike Kampenga
Feb. 18	Gene Osmanski
Feb. 25	Debbie Hochgesang
Mar. 4	Mark Trojanowski
Mar. 11	Ed Neaves
Mar. 18	Dora Haynes
Mar. 25	Kennilyn Breitbarth

Hymn of the Month for Lent:

“All Mankind Fell in Adam’s Fall” (# 562)

The great hymn of the Reformation was written by Lazarus Spengler in 1524. It was a favorite in the early days of the Lutheran church and is even mentioned in the Book of Concord. The hymn was not used much in the following centuries, until the late 1800s when German hymnals began to include it again. It was translated into English in 1880. The text of the hymn draws on Paul’s comparisons between Adam and Jesus. Adam brought sin and death to all humanity, but Jesus brings us all life and salvation.