

CLARION

MARCH 2023

FROM PASTOR'S DESK



WHERE ARE THE CHILDREN?

In the Psalms, King Solomon rejoices at the blessing of children:

“Behold, children are a heritage from the Lord, the fruit of the womb a reward. Like arrows in the hand of a warrior are the children of one’s youth. Blessed is the man who fills his quiver with them! He shall not be put to shame when he speaks with his enemies in the gate” (Psalm 127:3-5).

Of course, he’s basically just reflecting God’s encouragement for us to **“be fruitful and multiply”** (Genesis 1:28, Genesis 9:1).

As faithful, God-fearing parents, we are called to raise our children in the “fear and admonition of the Lord.” We have an obligation to teach them the faith and to help them see and understand the amazing grace of God in which we stand, forgiven and saved for the sake of Jesus Christ and His life, death, and resurrection.

God pulls no punches in this: **“Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise”** (Deuteronomy 6:4-7).

It's not just the Old Testament, either. One day, Jesus was hanging out and people were bringing their kids to Him so that He would give them a blessing; a hand on their head and a prayer of blessing spoken over them. His disciples thought this was a waste of His time, and tried turning folks away. Jesus was livid! **“Let the little children come to me and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven”** (Matthew 19:14).

We have an obligation, but we also have an invitation to raise our children in the faith, to bring them to Jesus, to demonstrate to them that they are a vital part of this community that the Holy Spirit has brought us into through baptism.

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So where are the children?

Why is our average attendance at Sunday School so low? Why aren't your kids coming to Sunday School or Youth Sunday Study or even joining us in our Adult Bible Study classes? Where are they?

To be really blunt with a word of Law, why aren't you bringing them to Jesus? Why aren't you teaching them diligently? Why aren't you passing along this amazing gift of faith to your kids?

I've heard it said, and it's mildly terrifying, that the Church is always just one or two generations away from extinction. If we don't pass the faith along to our kids when they are young, how can we possibly expect them to remain in the faith as they grow older? How can we expect them to pass along a faith that was never really given to them?

The fact is, this issue – disengagement with the Church and its various programs – is not new. I saw an article nearly ten years ago that suggested that the “fastest growing ‘religion’ in the United States” is *sports*. And it rang true. As a culture, we devote significant time and resources to our sports – we buy the jerseys, we learn the rules, we study the teams, we know the players, we gladly shell out big bucks to attend the ~~worship services~~ games. But we don't do the same for our faith, which has eternal implications. We don't study the Bible regularly, don't seek to continually learn about the one we claim to follow, we're lukewarm in attendance, and we're anemic in our giving.

And the thing is, your children are watching. They are drawing conclusions about how important faith really is by how we adults engage. If we are haphazard and apathetic in our engagement with the Church, how can we expect them to be anything more than that? Our actions speak far louder than our words.

It gives me no pleasure to point this stuff out, and perhaps the people who will read this aren't the ones who need to hear it, but as your pastor, I desperately want you to be here to receive all of the gifts that God has for you, whether that's in worship, at Bible Study, in Confirmation, at Youth Events, or in various Service Events. YOU should be actively involved in your church so that your children understand how important it is that THEY are actively involved in their church.

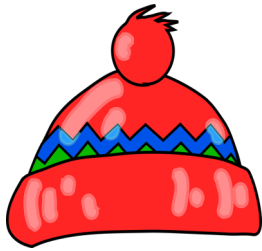
What is missing? What needs to be improved for you to have your children (and you!) more involved? If you have ideas, I want to help you bring them fruition. Let's work together to make sure that our kids have the benefit of a strong faith so that they can weather the storms of life and join us in Christ's presence for eternity.

In HIS service,

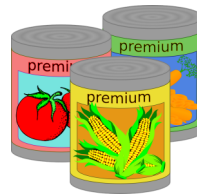


Pastor Eric Longman

From the office...



Once again we are collecting winter coats, jackets, hats, gloves, scarves, and blankets for those in need. As it gets colder we see a great need from those who come in for food and shelter at our pantry. If you have any gently used items of this sort, please consider donating them to the church office and we will see to it that they get into the hands of those in need. Thank y'all for your help and support!



FOOD PANTRY

Hours

**Tuesday-Friday
2 pm-4 pm**

PASTOR'S CARE FUND

Hours

**Thursday & Friday
2 pm-4 pm**

A Friendly Reminder

Any information you need put into our weekly **NEWS & NOTES** needs to be submitted to the office by **NOON** on **WEDNESDAY** of each week.

Any information you'd like put into the **CLARION** is due to the office by **NOON** on the **15th** of every month.

HOLY TRINITY NEWS

2023 EDITION



VOTERS' CALL MEETING

Members are HIGHLY encouraged to attend our **Sunday, March 5th** special Voters' Assembly to select the pastoral candidate to whom God is leading us to extend a Divine Call for Associate Pastor of Youth and Families. This meeting will be held in the Sanctuary at the beginning of the **9:30 am** education hour between services. Candidate information can be found in the Narthex.



CHURCH BUS

We offer rides to our Sunday services in the church van. The van does **NOT** have wheelchair access so riders will need to be able to get in and out with a hand from the driver. We are looking for drivers to help with this ministry as well. If you could help even one or two Sundays a year it would be greatly appreciated!

If you are interested call or text Ted Reinker at (409) 750-9633.



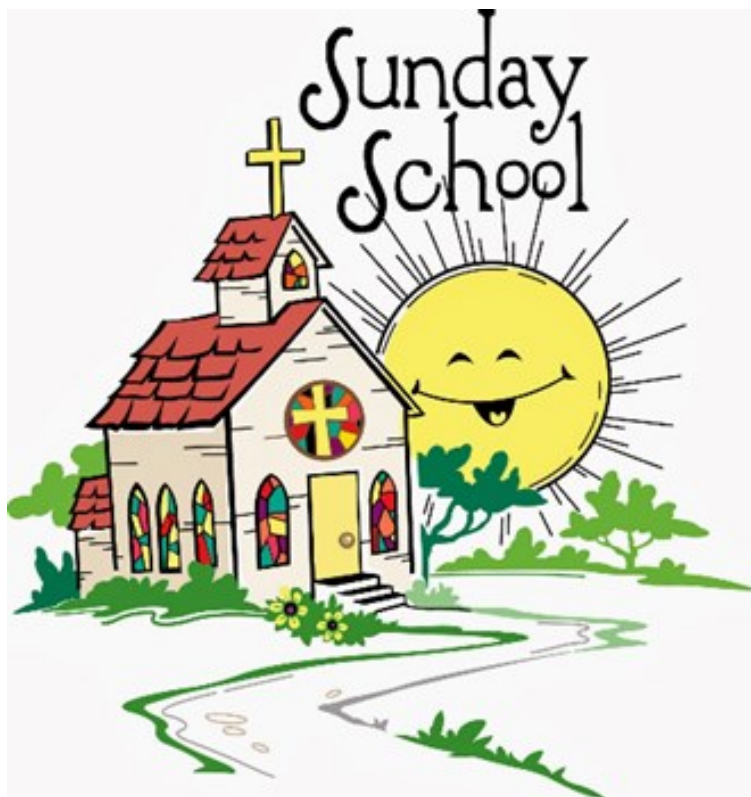
PINOCHLE

Friday, March 10th will be our next date for playing cards. Hopefully you have your calendar marked and will be ready to help set up at 6:00 pm and get cards in your hand for play at 6:30. Don't forget to bring a little something to share for a snack. Looking forward to seeing everyone and perhaps a few new faces!



CRAFTY CREW

Enjoy some relaxing fellowship time **the last Thursday** of each month from **4-8 pm**. We have people who scrapbook, crochet, embroider, make ornaments, and other various crafty goodness. Come check us out!



*"Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old,
he will not depart from it."*

Proverbs 22:6

Calling all children and teens! Sunday school begins at 9:30 with donuts and an opening message from one of our members. New this month, we will begin talking about tithes and take an offering during the opening section. We are excited to be working with our music ministry team to help get our children involved in the service.

Here is a list of our small groups and wonderful teachers!

Kindergarten to 4th: Leah O'Ryan & Karen Kvamso

5th to 8th: Amy Wright & Heather Stottlemeyer

9th to 12th: Dean Eisma & Casey Bolte

If you have a pre-k child they are welcome to join our elementary class! Parents can stay with the child to help them feel more comfortable if needed.

Thank you all!

Kati Evans

kati.evans46@gmail.com

479-685-6768



Camp Trinity on Petit Jean Mountain 2023

SUMMER CAMPS

Now is the time to register for Summer Camp 2023 at Camp Trinity. The schedule includes 9 sessions. Parents can learn more and register at the camp website. The camp is looking for senior staff, ages 18-25, to serve for the months of June and July. Also, high school students who want to serve as counselors-in-training for one or two weeks can request an application via email at director@lutherancamp.org

OUTDOOR CLASSROOM

The sixth semester of Camp Trinity's Outdoor Classroom for homeschooling families has a few openings for the Wednesday sessions, March 1-May 3. The Thursday sessions are full. Parents can learn more about the classes and speakers at the camp website.

RETREAT LODGE

The Retreat Lodge at Camp Trinity is now open and booking for family reunions, retreats, and other gatherings. Check out the Camp Trinity website to learn more!

www.lutherancamp.org

HOLY TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH



Parents' Day Out

We've been busy learning and playing in February! On days we couldn't go out and play we used ride-on toys generously donated by Helping Hands. In the classrooms we explored ice, colored salt and sand. We celebrated St. Valentine's Day exchanging cards to show our love for one another.

In March we'll look forward to Spring, looking for signs of new life in nature. We'll talk about Christ on the cross and relate the new life of Spring to His resurrection, which we'll celebrate in April.

Our rooms are filling up and we could use a volunteer for two to three hours during the day with rocking and feeding babies or reading stories to preschoolers! If interested, you can email me (Leah) pdo@holyltrin.org. Or if you prefer text my number is 774-276-1549.

Thank you all for your continued support! The teachers and I feel and appreciate it!





Giving Up Something for Lent?

What would be a fitting thing to give up, especially during the season of Lent?

Are you one of those who is giving something up for Lent? While this has not been popular among Protestants, some Lutherans and many Roman Catholics follow this tradition that has its origin in the ancient Church. Often after years of instruction in the faith, adult catechumens underwent rigorous tests during the 40 days of Lent. This was especially true when the Church was under persecution. Personal sacrifices during Lent were used to test the commitment of adult catechumens in preparation for their baptism on Easter Sunday. Back then, it was understood that the baptism of water might well be a prelude to martyrdom by a baptism of blood. Over time, personal sacrifice during Lent by the baptized was viewed as an expression of solidarity with these Christian wanna-bes and has been associated with Lent ever since. The later tradition of fasting as a salutary expression of that sacrifice connected with the forty days of Lent with the forty days in the wilderness when our Lord endured a fast after His baptism.

Also from the ancient world, when one was called upon to accept some grave sacrifice, perhaps even the offering up of one's life, the expression was to drink from a bitter cup. And, sometimes, literally. Think of Socrates who accepted his own death sentence by drinking a cup of hemlock.

In the same sense, our Lord struggled in the Garden of Gethsemane over the cup His Father was poised to have Him drink – to offer up His body and blood as the perfect sacrifice for the sins of the world (Luke 22:42). You may recall a similar cup that the Lord God instructed Abraham to deliver to his only son, Isaac (Genesis 22). How much would father Abraham be willing to sacrifice for the sake of His love of God? How about His only one? If we were to eavesdrop on our Lord in anguish in the Garden, we might well ask the same question: How much would God the Father be willing to sacrifice for the sake of His love of sinners such as each of us? How about His only begotten Son? With father Abraham and with God the Father, we see two cups – each filled with much passion. Two cups – but only one to drink.

We learn from Genesis 22 that the cup intended for Isaac was just a test for father Abraham. And, of course, Isaac is never told about the bitter cup ahead of time. He learns only when Abraham's knife is poised; and then also, they both learn it was just a test. Isaac is to be spared. However, with God's Son, our Lord Jesus, it was different. No test! He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all (Romans 8:32). Indeed, for us all. For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son (John 3:16).

Here again, played out on a hill in the mountains of Moriah not far from where Abraham first built his altar; 2000 years later, God would pass His bitter cup to His chosen son of Abraham – His own Incarnate Son. And also by contrast, as Jesus indicated to his disciples on three separate occasions; He saw it coming. Here in the garden, our Lord experienced incredible passion about The Passion. Luke reports that the intensity caused capillaries on Jesus' forehead to burst causing Him to sweat drops of blood (Luke 22:24). Knowing in advance, the Son accepts the will of the Father so that while we were enemies of God, Jesus will drink the cup and die for us.

It was always the plan. It was always the cup. Before the foundations of the world (Ephesians 1:4), the Father destined to send His son into the world to drink the cup of our salvation (Psalm 116:13). It is a cup that will cause His blood to be poured out so that we might also be partakers of this cup. Dying to sin, and being raised up unto newness of life, we partake of the cup of blessing that we bless for the forgiveness of all our sins. (1 Corinthians 10:16).

Let's return to the question: Are you giving something up for Lent? Let me encourage you to do so. But, what would be a fitting thing to give up, especially during the season of Lent? After passing the test, Abraham thought that sacrificing a nearby ram caught in a thicket would do just fine for the time being (Genesis 22:13). What do you think would be a fitting sacrifice to give to the Lord? It is a tough question for two reasons. First, we do not have anything that He needs. And secondly, whatever we have that is worth anything, He gave us. On a rather mundane level, it has been popular to think about giving up for Lent some food you really enjoy. How about your favorite meat? Or (Lord forbid!), perhaps chocolate?

Let's come at this a different way. I believe that there is one thing that our Lord wants all of us to give up all the time, but perhaps, especially during the penitential season of Lent. For Lent, He wants you to join Him in His passion as He walks to the cross. He is preparing to make the ultimate sacrifice for you and He wants you to sacrifice something to Him. What does He want? He wants you to sacrifice your sins. Give them up to Him with a broken and contrite heart because it is a sacrifice that He will not despise (Psalm 51:17).

This is not some clean-up-your-act program. Rather, He wants you to give Him the guilt of your sins to make sacrifice for it, and in return to give you His righteousness. He will drink the cup of salvation so that your cup might be overflowing with the living water of your baptismal grace and the cup of blessing in His blood for the forgiveness of your sins.

During this Lenten Season, your Lord is preparing to sacrifice His body and blood as the perfect sacrifice for your sin. This is what He is preparing to give up for Lent. This is the bitter cup from His Father that He prepares to drink. It is the cup of salvation.

So, for this Lenten Season and all seasons, make the one acceptable sacrifice unto the Lord as you prepare for His passion – the one thing He desires. Give Him your sins! Get passionate about His passion by giving up or giving over to Him your transgressions...that He may have them, that He may die for them, that He may drink this bitter cup on account of them. And then come to His table – to have His bread and the cup of blessing that we bless. Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow...well, tomorrow will be like today. Tomorrow w you live! Today, tomorrow, and forever.



About the Contributor | Steven A. Hein

Dr. Steven A. Hein serves as Director of the Concordia Institute for Christian Studies, and organization that offers auxiliary educational service to Christian gatherings across the country and the leadership of the Lutheran Churches in West Africa. Dr. Hein also serves as an affiliate professor of theology at Concordia University, Chicago and the Institute of Lutheran Theology. He is the author of, "Christian Life: Cross or Glory?" and "You Can Give an Answer: A Study in Christian Apologetics."

Heins, S. A. (2017, March 27). Giving Up Something for Lent. 1517. Retrieved February 7, 2023, from <https://www.1517.org/articles/giving-up-something-for-lent>

KIDS IN THE DIVINE SERVICE

Why do we celebrate Lent for 40 days?

Don't forget what Lent is all about! It is a time when we are reminded of what Jesus gave up for us, and a time when we look forward to and prepare for His death and resurrection!



We celebrate Lent for six weeks, or 40 days, as we remember Christ's temptation in the wilderness in the Gospel of Matthew. There **Jesus was without food** for 40 days.



We remember the temptation of **the Israelites in the desert** after the Lord had delivered them from Egypt. This lasted 40 years.



Finally, we can remember the story of **Noah and his family**. After 40 days and 40 nights of rain, the Lord delivered them as He promised.

During these 40 days of Lent, we remember God's faithfulness to His people and how His faithfulness is complete in Jesus, our Savior. Jesus remains faithful to us, always being where He promises to be: in His Word and Sacraments. Wow! What a Savior!



Parents: Continue to encourage your children in their Lenten preparation. During worship, point out the places where our Lord comes to us (i.e. God's Word, Holy Communion, Holy Baptism, Absolution). Remember, being their example and companion on this Lenten journey makes a difference!



KIDS IN THE DIVINE SERVICE



Hey! What happened to the "a" word?

There's one word we often use in the Church that isn't used during Lent. Usually we use it after responsories, antiphons and other parts of our worship. Have you guessed what the word is yet? If you guessed "alleluia," then you are right. We stop singing and saying "alleluia" during Lent and won't speak it again until Easter morning.

What does "alleluia" mean and why don't we say it during Lent?

"Alleluia" is a Hebrew word that means "Praise the Lord." Since we focus on the sufferings and death of Jesus during Lent, we stop using this joyful word until we celebrate Jesus' glorious resurrection. On Easter morning the first words you hear will be: "The Lord is risen. He is risen indeed! Alleluia!"



Parents:

During worship, help your children to look for places in the service where "alleluia" has been omitted. Notice the red writing in the hymnal. These words will help to point out when and where we might use or refrain from using the "a" word.





FEED MY SHEEP

January 2023

Food Pantry Statistics

Total Households = 41 (109 people total)

Adults (18-60) = 63

Children (0-17) = 25

Senior Citizens (61+) = 20

Other (*Unknown*) = 0



PASTOR'S CARE FUND

January 2023

These disbursements are from money designated for the Pastor's Care Fund. Your contributions bring a tremendous relief to your neighbors who are in difficult circumstances.



Total Households = 34 (92 people total)

Utility Help = 14

Rent/Mortgage = 1

Motel = 19

Transportation = 0



March

Birthdays

- | | | |
|----------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| 4 Sam Welborn | 17 Mike Platt | 26 Christian Dunlap |
| 6 Walt Parsons | 18 Billie Mattes | Mackie Gregory |
| Holly Rodgers | John Wildenborg | Ellie Griffin |
| 7 Nate Gutche | 20 Steve Moeller | Alecia Gutche |
| 9 Matt Yeager | Skip Shane | 27 David Ferguson |
| 10 Karen Kvamso | Christopher Wahl | 28 Kathy Dickerson |
| Aubrey Studyvin | 21 Cindy Clark | Karen Launderville |
| 11 Ainsley McClellan | Shelby King | Linda Parsons |
| Danielle Roll | Joe Raleigh | 30 Kovyn Haney |
| 12 Ray Eschenburg | Jerry (Gerald) Sinclair | Matthew Jones |
| 14 Cassidy Brewer | 22 Christopher Robeson | Paula Mattes |
| Jan Emmons | 23 Casey Bolte | 31 Stella Ned |
| 15 Cole Brockhoff | 24 Timothy Gibson | |
| 16 Nadir Franco | 25 Sabrina Isbell | |

Anniversaries

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| 11 David & Jennifer Black | 22 David & Brenda Smith |
| 16 Paul & Lisa Heilman | 23 Phil & Annette Garling |
| 19 Jody & Whitney McClellan | 27 Travis & Alisha Bracht |



SERVING IN MARCH 2023



**March 5
(LENT 2)**

**March 12
(LENT 3)**

**March 19
(LENT 4)**

**March 26
(LENT 5)**

READERS

8:00 AM

SABRINA ISBELL

JOHN AUGUSTINE

MARY FREVERT

LAURIE RAFFEL

10:45 AM

SKIP SHANE

KATHLEEN THOMPSON

LEE LANDAUER

REV. JOHN LINDNER

GREETERS

8:00 AM

DEAN & NANCY
EISMA

RAY ESCHENBURG &
KAREN LAUDERVILLE

VERN SCHMIEGELOW &
ELAINE LAUDERVILLE

BETH KIKOEN &
JUDY BANKHEAD

10:45 AM

MEDIA

8:00 AM

JOHN JENKINS

DONNA WINTERS

BETH KIKOEN

DAVID HEINTZ

10:45 AM

JEAN GREGESICH

ZACHARY GUST

LEVI WRIGHT

JEAN GREGESICH

STREAMING

OWEN WINTERS

MAC MACGOWAN

OWEN WINTERS

MAC MACGOWAN

LEAD COUNTERS

MAC MACGOWAN &
HT MEANS

MAC MACGOWAN &
HT MEANS

MAC MACGOWAN &
HT MEANS

MAC MACGOWAN &
HT MEANS

LAWN CARE

TEAM 1 (EDGING)

TEAM 2 (GAS)

TEAM 3

TEAM 4

**ALTAR GUILD
ELDERS**

PAT COLLINS AND TONI SHANE
8:00 AM – ALLEN WINTERS
10:45 AM – DUANE WRIGHT

USHERS

8:00 AM – TEAM E
(DAVE FREVERT, DEAN EISMA, KEN RADER, TOMMY BYRD, TODD KRUEMPEL)
10:45 AM – TEAM F
(DAVE LEHENBAUER, ROBERT CARTER, LEROY MEYER, BEN MILLER, JEAN GREGESICH)



MARCH 2023

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|--|--------------------------------------|--|---|---|---|-----------|
| | | | 1 10 AM WORSHIP 2-4 PM FOOD PANTRY 12 PM NEWS & NOTES DUE 5:30 PM CONFIRMATION 5:30 PM SOUP SUPPER 7 PM WORSHIP | 2 2-4 PM FOOD PANTRY | 3 2-4 PM FOOD PANTRY | 4 |
| 5 LENT 2 (FEED MY SHEEP) 8 AM COMMUNION 9:30 AM VOTERS ASSEMBLY 10:45 AM COMMUNION | 6 PASTOR'S DAY OFF | 7 2-4 PM FOOD PANTRY 6:30 PM ELDERS | 8 10 AM-WORSHIP 2-4 PM FOOD PANTRY 12 PM NEWS & NOTES DUE 5:30 PM CONFIRMATION 5:30 PM SOUP SUPPER 7 PM WORSHIP | 9 2-4 PM FOOD PANTRY | 10 2-4 PM FOOD PANTRY 6 PM CARDS | 11 |
| 12 LENT 3 8 AM WORSHIP 9:30 AM EDUCATION/BELLS 10:45 AM WORSHIP 12 PM CLARION DUE | 13 PASTOR'S DAY OFF | 14 2-4 PM FOOD PANTRY 6:30 PM COUNCIL | 15 10 AM WORSHIP 2-4 PM FOOD PANTRY 12 PM N&N/CLARION DUE 5:30 PM CONFIRMATION 5:30 PM SOUP SUPPER 7 PM WORSHIP | 16 2-4 PM FOOD PANTRY | 17 2-4 PM FOOD PANTRY | 18 |
| 19 LENT 4 8 AM COMMUNION 9:30 AM EDUCATION/BELLS 10:45 AM COMMUNION | 20 PASTOR'S DAY OFF | 21 2-4 PM FOOD PANTRY | 22 10 AM WORSHIP 2-4 PM FOOD PANTRY 12 PM NEWS & NOTES DUE 5:30 PM CONFIRMATION 5:30 PM SOUP SUPPER 7 PM WORSHIP | 23 2-4 PM FOOD PANTRY 4 PM CRAFTY CREW | 24 2-4 PM FOOD PANTRY | 25 |
| 26 LENT 5 8 AM WORSHIP 9:30 AM EDUCATION/BELLS 10:45 AM WORSHIP | 27 PASTOR'S DAY OFF | 28 2-4 PM FOOD PANTRY | 29 10 AM WORSHIP 2-4 PM FOOD PANTRY 12 PM NEWS & NOTES DUE 5:30 PM CONFIRMATION 5:30 PM SOUP SUPPER 7 PM WORSHIP | 30 | 31 | |