

St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church Newsletter

March 2010

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From Pastor Johnson
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Thirty-one of this year's forty days of Lent will fall within the month of March. During this season we undergo a "spiritual housecleaning" through increased attention to God's Word of Law and Gospel and through a more focused use of the traditional disciplines of fasting, prayer, and almsgiving. In a sense, fasting is the basis for the other two practices. The time normally spent in eating can be dedicated to additional prayers, while the money you save from decreased food purchases can be granted to those who stand in greater need. Fasting for the body may be useful to you, but fasting for the soul is never a good idea. Our souls become famished when they do not feed on God's Word. On the First Sunday in Lent we heard Jesus respond to the devil's temptation to turn stones into bread: "man does not live on bread alone, but on every Word that comes from the mouth of God."

So that we and our children might learn "every Word"—and waste nothing—our congregation endeavors to teach that Word in various settings and methods. Sunday morning is very prominent in this regard. The public reading of the Scripture is a wonderful opportunity to hear God's Word and be blessed by it, especially as we note connections between the Old Testament (and "the Gradual"), the Epistle (and "the Verse"), and the Gospel (and its acclamations before and after the reading). On the basis of these readings comes the exposition of what we hear in the sermon (the readings also serving as the basis for the prayers and the hymns). So the sermon is meant to be a "teaching moment" whereby God's Word is unpacked, applied, and proclaimed. You should be able to come away from a sermon knowing that the Law has accused you, trusting that the Gospel has pardoned you, and learning something you may not have known before about the texts read on that Sunday.

Bible classes are offered both on Sunday and throughout the week by your pastoral staff. The setting is different than our congregational gathering in the sanctuary—youth room, fellowship hall, and conference room are all utilized in this effort. The importance the congregation attaches to bible study can be seen in the money spent to upgrade the fellowship hall with "sound panels" and a soon-to-be-installed amplification system more friendly to that room. Also note that Pr. Briel's Sunday morning class is available online for your review.

Sunday School is a very important part of the mission of this congregation. We have been richly blessed by the superintendents and teachers who have "stepped out" and volunteered their time to teach our congregation's children God's Word. If you think you could never teach Sunday School, watch in the coming months for some "testimonials"

from teachers who once thought that too, but who now want to share with you how much Sunday School has blessed them AND the children they are teaching. Please also be aware that we continually think through the program to see what kind of improvements can be made; in fact, there are some great ideas that we hope to be implementing in the coming weeks and months to make Sunday School an important part of the time our families spend at church on a Sunday morning.

A vital part of our congregation's mission of instructing people in God's Word is found in our school. Our teachers have devotions with their students, teach religion, listen to memory work, and pray. On top of that, they model God's Word on a daily basis in a variety of situations, not all of them pleasant. Weekly chapel, daily staff devotions, and staff bible study are all instances in which we want the "Word of Christ to dwell in us richly."

So what do all of these opportunities to hear and grow in God's Word mean for us in Lententide 2010? I would like to show the connection between God's Word and prayer. Luther always maintained that prayer was not only a matter of praying to God, but also listening to Him. God's Word is primary, and then our petitions flow from that basis into prayer. Luther may have picked up his insight from the liturgical life he experienced from childhood. The Collects that we pray in church would have also been prayed by Luther in his day (and for one thousand years prior to that). These Collects exhibit a common form in which we first state something true of God (learned from His Word). Only after we have said something about who God is or what He has done do we petition God for something (related to the statement portion of the prayer). The prayer concludes with a Trinitarian ending that is important for our understanding of prayer, God's Word, and our own Christian life (the baptismal life).

A great example of this kind of prayer is actually found in a Lenten hymn, "O Lord Throughout These Forty Days (LSB #418)." Notice how in each of the first three verses we state something about Christ that we learn from the Scriptural account of His temptation in the wilderness (i.e. the Gospel reading assigned every year for the First Sunday in Lent). We then connect our petition to the reality of Christ, wording our petition on the basis of the statement that was made (sung) about Him. **The statement:** "O Lord throughout these forty days You prayed and kept the fast." **The petition:** "Inspire repentance for our sin and free us from our past." Think also of the Lord's Prayer, with its seven petitions. The petitions only follow on the opening statement about who God is, namely, "our Father." Then—and only then—can we be bold to pray such things to God. We know that God is our Father from Scripture and from our Baptism. The moral of the story is that our "prayer life" is directly related to our "Word life,"

as demonstrated in the form of the liturgical prayers we pray and the hymns we sing. During this Lententide 2010, with its focus on an increased use of the Christian discipline of prayer, you might find it beneficial to at the same time increase your exposure to the various ways in which God's Word is taught in our congregation, which Word itself serves as the basis for prayer.



From the Principal
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The short month of February had a flurry of activity. The two information and enrollment nights and the private school open house at the Maple Grove Community center brought us several families who enrolled their children for next year, but there is certainly room for us to serve many more.

This year's science fair was February 25th. The St. John's students conducted and displayed some excellent science projects that were very interesting and informative. Thank you students and parents for all your hard work and support. A big thank you to our Science Fair judges: Mr. Arthur Inselmann, a retired teacher, Dr. LeAnn Bakke a biology professor at the Concordia University, Mrs. LeAnn Cummins, a retired teacher, Mr. Roger Handberg, an aerospace engineer, Mr. Randy Beyreis, a medical engineer, and Mrs. Pat Ellinger, medical field. Thank you also to our set up helpers: Mrs. Sue Thurber, Mrs. Renee Day, Mrs. Patty Bohnsack, Mrs. Kris Eversman, Mrs. Laura Toelle, and Mrs. Rhoda Davis.

The basketball season has now concluded and all of our teams enjoyed the regular season competition and the tournaments they participated in. The trophies that they won are on display. This year our 7th & 8th grade girl's team participated in the Minnesota State Lutheran basketball tournament February 26th through February 28th at the Gangelhoff Center on the Campus of Concordia College in St. Paul.

March 7th through the 13th is National Lutheran Schools Week. This is a time when Lutheran Schools (Pre-Kindergarten through twelve, colleges, and seminaries) plan activities to promote and celebrate Christian education as provided through Lutheran Schools. In this newsletter and around the building you will see a special page with information about our activities for the week.

Everyone is encouraged to attend a special presentation on Creation versus Evolution hosted here at St. John's on March 9th at 7 PM. See the announcements for more information. Posters are also displayed around the building.

St. John's Lutheran School will once again host the area Schmidt Music Band Festival. This year's festival is on March 11th. Band students from several area schools and home school programs will join together for rehearsal and then give a concert in our gym at 7 PM. Once again everyone is welcome to attend!

Our 8th graders and many of their parents are going to Washington D.C. on March 15-19. Our group will be very busy all five days, not only seeing the many buildings, monuments, museums, and grounds, but also learning of the many Christian influences in forming this country.

A reminder that the congregational assembly meeting is Sunday, March 21st. I encourage all members of St. John's Lutheran Church to attend, to be informed, and to share in the decision-making.

We are now enrolling students for the coming year! Why St. John's Lutheran School? Lutheran Elementary and High Schools develop characteristics necessary for success as a citizen and most importantly as a Christian in adult life. Children are helped to develop values and to learn the basics for successive years of education and spiritual growth. Children at St. John's receive a quality education in all the academic areas. We give parents the opportunity to exercise their right to religious freedom—even in their choice of their children's schools. I encourage all members of St. John's to consider enrolling their children in our school and to invite your friends and neighbors as well to take part in the quality, Christ-centered education offered here! Call the office for information at 763-420-2426.

Walk-A-Thon – the major PTL fundraiser of the year and a family fun day is just around the corner toward the end of April. You will see much more detailed information coming from the PTL committee soon. Mark Saturday, April 24th on your calendar now and plan to participate! Last year about \$40,000 was raised for finishing all flooring in the new building and to help complete the furnishings. This year the main emphasis is technology to upgrade our computer lab, website, technology use in the classroom and more.

In His Service,
Gary L. Volberding †

Those Who Serve in March

Please remember....IF you are unable to serve on your scheduled day, it is up to YOU to find someone who will take over for you.

Acolyte Schedule

	<u>8 AM</u>	<u>10:30 AM</u>
3/3	7 PM Sarah Walters	
3/14	Sara Halfrich Jessie Fuhrman	Megan Bode Amanda Brackeen
3/17	7 PM Megan Bode	
3/21	Sara Halfrich Jennifer Meine	Christopher Dooley Sam Schutte
3/24	7 PM Christopher Dooley	
3/28	Colton Bursch Kyle Christopher	RaeAnn Retzlaff Shawn McDowell
3/31	7 PM Natalie Winsor	

Altar Guild

Leslie Jackson 763-420-3377
Carla Bredenberg 763-424-6902

Ushers

8 AM

Dennis Schwecke, Nathan Mazurowski, Myron Cooper,
Al Mazurowski

10:30 AM

Dan Holthus, Eric Sand, Ernest Underwood, Dan Picotte

Deacons for March

3/7	Dan Kolander	Dan Holthus
3/10	7 PM Ross Meyer	
3/14	Greg Christopher	John Radintz
3/17	7 PM Tom Eversman	
3/21	Peter Radintz	Ed Kemna
3/24	7 PM Erik Preus	
3/28	Joe Koehler	David Day
3/29	7 PM Jerry Rogge	
3/30	7 PM Mike McFerrin	
3/31	7 PM Dan Holthus	

Deacons for April

4/1	7 PM John Radintz	
4/2	noon - Ed Kemna	evening -Dan Holthus
4/3	Vigil - Ross Meyer	
4/4	Dan Kolander, 8 AM	Greg Christopher, 10:30 AM Marv Cummins
4/11	Kevin Pomeranke	Jack Wold
4/18	David Day	Todd Haag
4/25	Joe Koehler	Peter Radintz

Money Counters

4/7	Scott Kulberg, Cindy Kiekow, Mark Schutte
4/14	Mike McFerrin, Paul Radintz, Mike Rachow
4/21	Dave Giefer, Bob Radintz, Don Cross
4/28	Craig Schutte, Jack Wold, Bob Stashenko

Announcements

EASTER LILIES: The Altar Guild will be providing an opportunity for members of St. John's to purchase a beautiful Easter Lily. The lilies will be used to decorate the Church on Easter Sunday. The lilies may then be picked up after the last Easter Service and enjoyed by you in your home. If you wish to order a lily, please fill out the order form that was placed in your church mailbox. Extra forms are also available in the church office. Thank you for helping to beautify the church for the celebration of our risen Lord.

Missions Update: We are thankful for Pastor Briel's safe return from India. Members of St. John's have supported the Bible Faith Lutheran Church in India with our pastor. Now let's support them with our donations. The Bible Faith Lutheran Church is dedicated to educating God's people and pastors in a strong Lutheran confession of faith in Jesus Christ. They oversee many congregations, operate a Christian day school, provide refuge for destitute children, and train pastors in the Lutheran faith. The Bible Faith Lutheran Church depends entirely on donations from individuals and churches like ours. Any money you donate goes a long way in India. To donate to Bible Faith Lutheran Church in India check "Missions" on your offering envelope, and write "INDIA" on the line.

SOUP/SANDWICH: Delicious soups and sandwiches will be served each Wednesday in Lent. Serving time is from 5:15-6:45 PM. Chicken noodle, wild rice, and a soup of the week will be served each night. Take a break from cooking and come! This is a Washington, D.C. fundraiser.

ORGAN FUND: Many thanks to all of you who have contributed to the organ fund so far. The condition of the organ continues to deteriorate. For example: four pipes are pulled out so far (they sound on their own without being played from the keyboard), there are leaks in the wind chest, wire contacts in the pedals are corroding and making the pedals not play, and the swell shutters stick in a closed position sometimes. The organ committee is off and running to find the right instrument for our church. Help make this a reality and please continue contributing!

C.R.O.S.S. Please remember others by your donations of non perishable food. We appreciate all you give to remember the needs of others.

EDUCATING A NEW GENERATION OF LUTHERANS...Issues, Etc. is radio talk show hosted by LCMS Pastor Todd Wilken and produced by Lutheran Public Radio. Listen to what you want when you want at www.issuesetc.org.

LWML IS COLLECTING: used eyeglasses for MOST Ministries who has twelve eyeglass teams heading out into the mission field this year. These teams will take 36,000 pairs of eyeglasses that have been sorted, washed, read stickered, bagged and filed numerically in all prescription strengths. Please donate new or used eyeglasses. We can also use children's glasses and sunglasses. There will be a box for the glasses in the narthex. Thank you so very much!

LCMS EXTENDED GIVING: Frequently, needs come to our attention from outside the scope of our normal giving. Please prayerfully consider giving to these needs. If you have questions, contact Jerry Rogge at 763-428-4547.

THE KINDNESS FUND is for emergency assistance to members of our congregation according to Act 2:45b. Donations are always welcome for future use. For questions please contact Gretchen Kliche 763-477-6136 or Marv Cummins 763-420-2317.