The Lenten Journey

In the infant years of the church, there was a long period of preparation that led up to one’s baptism. It was a time observed through fasting, solitude, prayers and reflection. The one who was about to be baptized, then, was living between dying and birth, between an end to the old self and a rebirth to new life as a child of God.

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday. We will move through Lent being “Cross-examined,” arriving at Holy Week prepared for the Passion of our Lord.

In Lent, as each of us lives between the tension of dying and birth, we are led by Christ into new possibilities for ourselves, our families and our church. Indeed, it was Martin Luther who suggested that repentance was a continued crawling back to the font, the baptismal womb-of-our-faith. Our Lenten journey can be an occasion for renewal focused on our baptismal remembrance and centered upon Christ’s death and resurrection. It can be a time when our lives are changed and our Lord and His church are placed in proper relationship to one’s total life. [Charles R. Wertz, from Newsletter Feb., 1993]

Ash Wednesday Worship - Feb. 10

Ash Wednesday, observed this year on February 10, begins the Season of Lent, the 40 day period of spiritual preparation before the observance of Holy Week and the events of our Lord’s passion, and culminating in His triumphant resurrection. Our traditional Ash Wednesday service of Holy Communion at 7:30 PM will also provide an opportunity for the imposition of ashes for those who desire. An abbreviated Ash Wednesday service will be held at 12 Noon on Feb. 10. Pastor Paul Nordeen is our guest preacher at both services.
From the Interim Pastor
From Christmas/Epiphany to Lent, Reflection and Sharing

When you read this, the Christmas/Epiphany season will be fading and we will be approaching the solemn time of Lent. Lent calls us to repentance, directs us to look at our sins and meditate on the wonder that God would send his son to die that our sins would be forgiven. In the church year, we have moved from the “outward” reach of the Gospel to the “inward” reflection on ourselves and our need for forgiveness. But we do not completely lose the concern for reaching out to those who are not close to the faith, to the world that needs to hear the Gospel. We never lose that concern. At Christmas we sang “Go, Tell It On the Mountain,” and—though mountains are scarce in New Jersey—we are still called to Go and to Tell.

I’ll bet you told folks about the neat stuff you got for Christmas and the fun things you did. (You probably also told folks about the things that weren’t fun, but that’s another story.) We also need to tell about our faith and what it adds to our lives. Our hymns and prayers declare loudly that “Jesus is born!” that the Messiah has come. We need to find ways for those who do not yet hear our hymns and prayers to get that message.

Can we do that today? How should we do it today? How do we become the Bethlehem Star leading others to Christ? How does the light of Christ shine through us? Are we able to give the honor, respect and worship to Christ that the ancients gave to their kings? Can the incense of our prayers continually rise from earth to God? How does the Lord’s power to heal reach others in our ministries?

It is the mission of the Church to make the Christmas story more than a historical event. We are to let the surprise of who Jesus is come into today’s world every day, so that others—whether far from us in faith or distance or ethnicity—can have their own surprising epiphanies and meet Jesus.

Since the Bethlehem star has faded, it is important that our stars shine more brightly.

The meditative, penitential season of Lent brings the message of God’s grace and forgiveness direction into each of us personally. Then our understanding of God’s grace enables us, inspires us to share.

At the Church of the Savior, we are in an interim time, between pastors. That means more sharing of the work in this parish, more dedication to how this congregation lives and witnesses. As your interim pastor, I am here only half-time; and it is good to see how our congregational leaders step forward to get things done. Be sure to thank them and watch for opportunities to do more for our congregation, our New Jersey Synod and our Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. It is not only because I occasionally write for The Lutheran, that I encourage you to read the magazine of the ELCA and see the exciting things we do together.

Lent begins with Ash Wednesday on Feb. 10. I will be away on a long-planned winter vacation; but Pastor Paul Nordeen will take good care of you and the Ash Wednesday services.

I say it every year. Begin your Lent with ashes, continue with prayer and meditation on our need for forgiveness, walk the Way of the Cross during Holy Week, and I guarantee that your Easter Celebration will be more joyous than you can now imagine.

See you in church,
Pastor Austin

Our Evangelical Lutheran Church in America works in more than 80 countries around the world, through partnerships with local churches and through our membership in the Lutheran World Federation, based in Geneva, Switzerland. The LWF is a global communion of 143 member churches in all parts of the world. We help each other witness to Jesus Christ, train new Christian leaders, share theological insights, support local congregations and deliver the love of Jesus through service to those in need, refugees, and victims of oppression. As members of the ELCA and supporters of our local congregation, synod and the ELCA, each of us takes part in the global mission—the “Epiphany” mission—that tells others about the love of God.
As the nursery school students began to celebrate the Epiphany, one teacher enthusiastically held up a large star. “Boys and girls, what does this star remind you of?” asked the teacher. Expecting to hear “Jesus”, she tried to swallow her smile when one child yelled out, “MACY’S”! Laughter and fun. What a blessing. The Bible states that a merry heart is good medicine. May God continue to bless all of us with His joy and love throughout the Valentine season.

Nursery school children “visit” New York City!

Our Nursery School Children took a trip (in imagination) to New York City! “New York, New York – it’s a wonderful town!” We can’t exactly sing the words that Frank Sinatra used, so we made up our own. New York City is right across the Hudson River and during the week of January 25, the children were excited to take an imaginary trip through the Lincoln Tunnel to Grand Central Station, Little Italy, the Bronx Zoo and the Museum of Natural History. The “trip” included circling the Statue of Liberty in our imaginary boats, having our pictures taken next to a taxi, and visiting the Plaza Hotel. Our goal was to acquaint the children with New York City where many parents work and have families. Our theme week dinners in February, with child-friendly cuisine, continue the celebration of New York City.

Thanks – to the Congregation - from the Nursery School staff

The Nursery School staff would like to say “thank you very much” to the congregation for treating us to our delicious Christmas dinners at the Nursery School staff party once again this year. The dinner was delicious! Your thoughtfulness, kindness and generosity are all very much appreciated by us all. Thank you, also, for the personalized thank you notes, which were so very meaningful. We are grateful for your kind words and loving support. Thank you! God bless you! – The Nursery School staff
Our Evangelism Deacon, Bill Vollinger, has introduced a new feature that you will see from time to time in The Savior’s Call. We offer glimpses into the lives of some of our members and friends, with the aim of getting to know a little bit more about one another, and also, having opportunities to share our faith with one another. The story below was shared by David Johnsrud.

A Gift From God  by David Johnsrud

I have received a gift from God and I thank God by giving it back. I am talking about music.

The gift is not a great talent for music but rather it is a great love for music. And to give it back, I have started to sing and play for people. It started by joining the Christmas Caroling with Church of the Savior. Bill Vollinger asked me if I would like to sing in church one Sunday at communion. My response was an emphatic maybe. It took Bill a couple of months to finally convince me to do it.

Part of the reason is that my talent was not very apparent at a young age and so there has always been a little lack of confidence. My parents said they thought I would last about 8 weeks of piano lessons - I've been playing ever since! A boy in my church's children’s choir told me to just move my mouth but don't sing out loud. I couldn't carry a tune in a bucket as they say. But God's gift to me was the love of music that sustained years of practicing and gradually improving. In my heart it means more to me than just giving me the talent of a prodigy for it required lots of work and patience.

It is very much like the way I view my journey of faith through my life. There was some promise when I was young, but it was up to me put in the time to learn God's word and discover the evidence of his wonderful creation all around us. Once I sang in church I understood how it was a way of thanking God for the gift he had given me. At home I play and sing Christmas carols and songs every year from Halloween to New Year's. I started thinking about putting together a sing-a-long at a local assisted living home. I had joined with a friend and his world class pianist mother singing show tunes at the Actors’ Home and my sister's kids had performed at their local assisted living home for years. Betsy and Allie have come with me and we have always had a great time for the last three years. This year was so moving to me for one lady told me she didn't need the lyric sheet the way her eyes were. Then afterwards she came up and thanked me and told me how much she enjoyed it. She said she would have clapped but couldn't with her arthritis. It made it all so worthwhile that I was able to give just one person a little bit of enjoyment at the holidays. Last year I put together a Valentine's Day set of songs with Love in the title. This year I'm putting together a St. Patrick's Day set which has some overlap in church, “Be Thou My Vision” and “Morning Has Broken”. Sharing my music - and sharing my faith - these are very special ways that I am blessed to be able to take the gifts that God has given me - and share them with others.
A Message from the President about our Call Process by Laurie Feingold

Now that we’re headlong into the new year, Church of the Savior is moving forward with the activities for calling a new pastor. I’d like to let you know the progress we’ve made so far and what to expect going forward.

First, we formed the Call Committee, who is responsible for managing the call process. Our Call Committee consists of seven members who represent a cross-section of the congregation, considering age, gender, life stage and the like, as well as individuals who bring varied perspectives. The Call Committee is led by John Leara, who is on our council, and includes David Carlson, Vicky Durstewitz, Marge Duffy, Chandler Farro, Gretchen Morrow and John Paulus.

The Call Committee is currently preparing a Ministry Site Profile and congregational survey results, which outline the “personality” and needs of Church of the Savior. These documents will be sent to the Office of the Bishop this month and used as the guide for calling the pastor.

The Office of the Bishop will then put forth one candidate at a time, who will be interviewed by the Call Committee. They will then either recommend that the candidate move forward with a Council interview, or we begin again with a new candidate. Once a prospective pastor is approved by the Call Committee and Council, the candidate will be presented to the congregation for a “meet and greet” and to lead worship. After worship, the congregation votes to call the pastor.

Bring a can of food and a contribution - Souper Bowl of Caring, Sunday, Feb. 7

Prayer: “Lord, even as we enjoy the Super Bowl football game, help us to be mindful of those who are without a bowl of soup to eat.”

Church of the Savior participates in the annual Souper Bowl of Caring by joining congregations across America in taking up a special collection to help fight hunger. In 2014, over 7,000 churches participated, and over $8.4 million was collected! Food and money are directed to Center for Food Action to help feed the hungry in Bergen County and to Lutheran World Relief to help feed the hungry overseas. Every dollar helps share God’s love.

"A Place For Prayer - Daily Prayers For Lent" - New Devotional Booklet

The season of Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, February 10, and we are offering a new devotional booklet, “A Place For Prayer”. … “Daily Prayers for Lent.” Our Lord taught us to pray and, modeling what he taught, He Himself spent time in prayer to His Father. During the days of Lent, as we walk with our Lord to the cross, we follow His path of prayer. Copies of “A Place For Prayer” are available in church on the back ushers’ table.
Open Your Heart To God In Prayer

Pray for our members: Cody Bain, Arnold Berzins, Arline Carlson, David Carlson, Fred Conrad, Marge Duffy, Joan Duryea, Leah Feingold, Tom Gervat, Jack Grove, Rudy Heydt, Larry & Erna Hused, Marie Kashammer, Minda Larsen, Frank McElroy, Art Minck, Brenda & Ed Moderacki, Bob Natusch, Paul and Mary Nordeen, Marge Schaeffer, Audrey & Bud Schuermann, Roger Williams, Art Wilson, Bea Wing, Ed & Mary Wuensch.

Your prayers are requested by many of our members, for: Christian Unity, Baby Ava-Rose, Sofia Bodin, Michael Bull, Dina Burke, Gunther Fox, Tom Gervat, Pastor Kent Klophaus, Ted Lane, Heidi Lutjens, Bob Natusch, Pastor Roger Spencer, Katie Starenko.

Bill Cangialosi for Rose’s mother Rose Voorhees, friends Ellen Kummer, Noreen Laughlin, Jimmy Patterson, Lou Majors, and Chriss Osenbrock;
Laura and Norman Cardine for their daughter Laura and son-in-law Donn Sardella;
The Carlson family for Bruce and Lynn Carlson;
Conrad family for friends Rachel Johnson, Kevin Reynolds, Matthew Wierzibicki, Marcus Daniels, Walter Starke, Erin Kelly, Sheila Castroagudin, Heather & Pam;
Vicki Coyle for her friends Anne Krautheim and Nancy Kent;
Marge Duffy for her sister Mary and friend Alison Grohman;
Alma Durstewitz for her friend, Paul Clement
Joan Duryea for her friends Linda Brown and Frank Kulok;
Sabrina Edwards for her mother-in-law, Ruth Storer;
Leah Feingold for friend Emily Borstelman Sei;
Jay and Dorothy Ferreira for niece Jayda Falby and friend Victoria Sandberg;
Selwyn Fung for nephew Kevin Salazar and friend Linda Landi;
Silvia Hagmaier for daughter Candice, friends MaryEllen Stiehl, Sean Cox, Paul Gargiulo, Sean McCabe, Norm Stafford;
Rick & Maggie Henly for Maggie’s Aunt Jo Harrer, Rick’s brother-in-law Bob Clyde, their neighbor’s son, Gary Witte, and for friends Kathy Schneyer and Ben Ballam;
Brenda Heydt for her son Rudy, and for her brother Edward Koennemann;
Erna Hused for her husband Larry, her brother Willi Wild, and for her friends Brigitte Gerney, Therese and Diana;
Margie Jackson in the school office for sister Barbara Starrett, cousin Peggy Devenish, neighbor’s son, Tim McVeigh, friends Carl Bindel and Donna Boesch, and son Robert’s friend Tracey Taylor;
Marie Kashammer for son Robert, son-in-law Frank Sessa, brother Edward Lauer, friends Roy and Lavonne Klemm, and great-niece Ericka Spinner;
Sally & John Leara for neighbor Ken Mosier, cousin James O’Connor, sister Darlene and family, aunt Joy Lane, brother Anthony; and friends Jackie Santalla and Kyra Kearney;
Marie Millner in the school office for her nephew Teagan Baralo, his mom Ellen, and friend John Spellman
Art Minck for his niece, Jean;
Ed and Brenda Moderacki for Ed’s mother Helen;
the Nagles, for Pastor’s sister Jan; and friends Eva Hamden, Lydia Lehmbeck;
Bob Natusch for his friend Beatrice (Cherry) Mizerek;
Nursery School families request prayer for Joan Aiello and Robert Hershey;
Marilyn Picher for her daughter Sherry, and her friend Joyce Miller;
The Reese and Mason families for Ron and Barbara Radomski, Julia Madsen, Eileen Tamino and Erin Chack;
Stella Rosenzweig, nursery school teacher, for her son, Sean;
Marge Schaeffer for Linda Forster; Mike Tirpak; Ann Calanan Shawn McPartland; and niece Pat Schaeffer;
Pat Smith, for son Brian’s family, grandson Jason, Kerry Kolan and husband Matt, & friend Barbara Franke;
Fred Soka for dear family friend Julia Reynolds;
Dorothy Syme for her son David; and for her sister Evelyn Schramm;
TJ Taborelli for his wife, Michelle;
Chalagne Vollinger for daughter, Sara, step-brother Brian Bagnall; and friends Irene Genin, David King, Alma McDermott, Claire Willoughby, Maenelle Thompson, Barbara McKenna, and Shawn Franco;
Roger Williams for his nephew, George Williams;
Adelaide Woods for her mother Ann Lembo, and her niece Nicole Woods.
Calendar Page
Mission Focus Statement
Church of the Savior Lutheran is a caring community of God’s people,
Called in Jesus Christ, to live by the power of the Holy Spirit,
Thereby glorifying God the Father in our every day lives.