

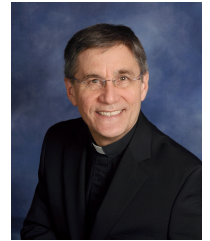


St. Luke Lutheran Church
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 Editor: Jo Klein

St. Luke Lutheran Church

Open doors, open hearts, open minds.

Parish Times March 2016



But Peter got up and ran to the tomb; stooping and looking in, he saw the linen cloths by themselves; then he went home, amazed at what had happened. Luke 24:12

Would you be willing to die for a lie? There are many people who have given their lives to protect the truth, but I don't know anyone who would give their life for a lie. I would not die for a lie. I am always amazed at how drastically the disciples changed after the resurrection. When Jesus was arrested, all of the disciples ran for their lives to protect their own necks. They were terrified. They did not want to die. They hid trembling in a room with doors and windows locked. As Peter ran away from the empty tomb in fear and wonder, little did he know that everything had changed...everything. There was no doubt in Peter's mind that Jesus had died on that cross, yet now he was alive. Jesus, the way, truth and life, was alive! It changed everything... *everything*. The greatest of all evil, the crucifixion of the Son of God, was changed into salvation, the greatest of all good. Death was changed to life. Despair was changed to hope. Fear was changed to love overflowing in abundant life. That is worth living and dying for, especially when you know death has been defeated. This was the gift of life and salvation given to the disciples. It is the gift for you and me. Come celebrate Easter. Come celebrate the love of God which has changed everything!

Pr. Dave



Our heartfelt thanks to our Bun Run volunteers for February: Mike Hegdahl, Joan Wilson, Ken McGrew, Doug and Jo Klein.



March Acolytes:
6: Victor Landenberger
20: Zach Moore
27, 9:30am: Ava Herrmann

January 2016 Finance Report

Receipts \$15,927.00
 Expenses \$11,136.93

Copies of the Treasurer's Report are available in the office, or see Ruth Carlson.



Ladies Night Out – Ladies Night Out in March will take place on Tuesday, March 15th at O'Gara's – 164 N. Snelling Ave. at 5:30 p.m. Please notify Joyce Bluel (651-690-4614) if you are planning on attending by Sunday, March 6th so we have an idea of how many for the reservation.



97 Very hungry people satisfied their hunger at the Loaves and Fishes Program at St. Matthew's Catholic Church on Jan. 25. Workers from St. Luke were Pastor Dave, Joyce Bluel, Larry Litzkow, Amy Drier, Matthew Brummund, Zach Moore, Roger and Dianne Diestler.



Usher Notes

Many thanks to our ushers for February: Gwen, Steve, Samantha and Matthew Brummund, Mike and Nancy Hegdahl, Linda Funkhouser, Michael Hoffman. Our ushers for March will be: Eva Mac Niven, Jim Kroschel, Doug Nelson, Wanda Mathison, Larry and Carol Vigdal, Pam Ballis, Katy Eggert.

Volunteer Drivers are Key Give A Lift!



St. Luke is in need of more drivers to transport parishioners to and from church for Sunday service. The majority of them live in the St. Luke neighborhood. If you can help, please sign up on the kiosk in the Social Hall asap. Your help is greatly needed and will be truly appreciated. Thank you.

Attention, Current and Past Council Members: We need volunteers to help count the offering. If you are interested, please email the church office at secretary@saintlukechurch.org. Please respond asap. Your help is greatly needed and will be greatly appreciated.



March is Minnesota FoodShare Month!



Each March, Minnesota FoodShare directs the March Campaign, the largest food drive in the state, and restocks 300 food shelves across Minnesota. It recruits thousands of congregations, companies, schools and civic groups to run local food and fund drives to aid in the effort.

Minnesota FoodShare actively promotes statewide food shelf donations, provides resources for food drive organizers, distributes funds to participating Minnesota food shelves, lobbies lawmakers on the behalf of those who are hungry, and educates the public about hunger in Minnesota.

So, during the month of March, we will be collecting donations of food and money for those in need. The food gathered will be donated to St. Francis Basket, which is our neighborhood's local food shelf. Checks can be made out to St. Luke with a notation of "food drive" in the memo line. Thanks for all of your help!



March Birthdays

- 3 Abigail Winecke
- 4 Carl Elliott
- 6 Connel McGough
Mark Stadem
- 7 Judy Salaba
- 10 Joe Luty
Amelia Mathis
Lois Porter
- 12 Betty Hoard
- 13 David Verschoyle
- 15 Donald Annala
- 16 Susan Lorenz
- 18 Jacob Arndt
Larry Eckstrom
Lisa Vandrovec
- 22 Alex Klein
- 24 Michael Fabie
- 26 Sheridan Moore
- 31 Julie Gaarder
Robyn Rongstad
Ralph Skoe



March Anniversaries

- 12 Mike Amundson & Kimberly Tyl: 2004
- 19 Sue & Dan Grzywinski: 1977

Confirmation

We will have class on March 1 and 15. On March 8 we will help make food packets at Feed My Starving Children. March 22 and 29 there will be no class.

We need lilies and/or flowering plants for our annual Easter garden display. Can you help? Every bloom counts. Let's make this our most glorious display ever! Please bring your floral offerings to church on 11:00 on Saturday, March 26. Please feel free to stay and help with arranging the flowers to decorate the Easter cross. You may take your flowers home to enjoy after the 9:30 Easter Sunday Service.





Election Judges Needed Our church will again be a polling place this year on August 9th and November 8th. Hundreds of our neighbors will be coming here to vote. You can help them have a good day by working as an election judge. Call the Ramsey County Elections Office at 651-266-2214 for more information.

**MARCH
WORSHIP
ASSISTANTS**

Readers:

Sunday, 3/6, 9AM

Sue McNeill

Sunday, 3/13, 9AM

Randi Friedl

Sunday, 3/20, 9AM

Wendy Bjorklund

Good Friday, 3/25, 7PM

Joyce Bluel

Jill Burchill

Roger Diestler

Barb Jensen

Christine Olson

Beth Peterson

Easter Sunday, 3/27, 7AM

Beth Peterson

Easter Sunday, 3/27 9:30AM

Wendy Bjorklund

Communion:

Sunday, 3/6, 9AM

Katy Eggert

Sunday, 3/20, 9AM

Wendy Bjorklund

Easter Sunday, 3/27, 7AM

Roger Diestler

Easter Sunday, 3/27, 9:30AM

Jeff Kingsley



2016 Fall Bazaar

It's never too early to start planning for the St. Luke Church Fall Bazaar! As you have read in a previous article, this event raises quite a bit of money that can be used for things that we do not have in our regular budget. I would like to encourage all members to get involved, it is a great way to get to know your church family better and the money raised has been used for some very worthwhile projects.

The date for this year's Fall Bazaar is Saturday, October 8th. Listed below are the committee chairs, who have graciously volunteered again this year. If you are interested in working in these areas, please contact the chair(s) to volunteer your time and talent.

--Co-Chairs Joyce Bluel and Judy Salaba

Jo Klein: Rummage Sale

Beth Peterson: Kitchen

Bev Eckstrom: Bingo and Kiddie activities

Joan Wilson & Deb Voldal: Bake Sale

Pam Ballis: Publicity & General Store

Volunteers Needed for Chair(s): Raffle

Judy Salaba and Joyce Bluel: Crafts

EASTER BREAKFAST This year, our annual Easter Breakfast fundraiser (March 27) will be raising money to be used by the Czech family as they cope with Adam's cancer treatments. We will be serving egg bake, cheesy potatoes and fresh fruit. We will need several volunteers who can help shop, set up and prepare food the Saturday before Easter, and serve and clean up on Sunday. No one person has to "do it all." If you are interested in helping with this important event, please sign up on the kiosk ASAP.



Results of the 2015 Fall Bazaar

The Bazaar committee met on February 7th after worship to discuss the results of the 2015 Fall Bazaar. The net proceeds for 2015 were \$4,104.68.

The committee voted to send \$100 to the Airport ministry \$675 to Camp Onomia, \$75 to Highland Leisure Age, \$500 to Family Retreat Fund, along with previous years proceeds this leaves a balance of \$11,148.82. The committee is also recommending using some of these funds to replace the flooring in the social hall. This will have to be approved by the church council.

Lenten and Easter Worship Services

Come worship with us on Wednesday, March 2, 9, 16 from 6:40-7:15 as we explore our baptism and the new life received in and through baptism. We will worship at 7:00 p.m. on Maundy Thursday (March 24). "Maundy" means "command." We remember Jesus' command to love one another and to be servants for one another, demonstrated by the washing of feet. We will gather around a table to remember the night in which Jesus was betrayed and first gave his disciples bread and wine as his body and blood. We will next worship on Good Friday (March 25) at 7:00p.m. We remember that day when Jesus, the Son of God who came to love us, was crucified. On Sunday, March 27 we celebrate the resurrection and new life found in Jesus at our 7:00 a.m. and 9:30 a.m. worship services. From 8-9 a.m. we will celebrate with our Easter Breakfast. Come, worship!

Pr. Dave

Please join us for Holy Week Worship

Maundy Thursday Worship, March 24, 7PM

Good Friday Worship, March 25, 7PM

Easter Sunday Worship, March 27, 7AM & 9:30 AM

Also on Easter: Pancake Fundraiser Breakfast at 8AM and Egg Hunt at 9AM...join us!



Feed My Starving Children

Please join us on Tuesday, March 8 from 6:00-7:30 at the Eagan FMSC location to help make meals for hungry children. If you have never done this before, it is very enjoyable as well as effective. Not only will you have some fun, you will help save lives in the process! Please sign up on the kiosk and join us in this beautiful work.



Commentaries for the March Gospel Readings

In preparation for worship, please read the Bible text for the day as well as the commentary found below. Prepare your heart and mind for worship and you will find yourself enriched. Sources for these studies include Working Preacher, Preaching Luke's Gospel by Rev. Richard Jensen, Luke by Dr. David Tiede, and my own notes.

March 6, Fourth Sunday in Lent: Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32

This is what is most often called the story of the prodigal son. Sometimes it is referred to as the story of the lost son, but perhaps it is best to recognize that both sons are "lost." Although the majority of the story involves the younger son, the loving, grace-filled father is the central figure in the story. Both of his sons reject him in quite different ways, but his love for them never wavers. Most people see the father as representing God. This is the third of three stories Jesus tells grumbling Pharisees in chapter 15, that deal with something lost (sheep, a coin, sons), someone who searches for the lost (shepherd, woman, father), finding that which is lost and repentance. One may ask how a sheep or coin repents. What is Jesus saying about repentance through these stories? Rev. Richard Jensen writes, "Who repented? The sheep? The only possible action in this story which could constitute repentance is the *finding of the lost*. Repentance, therefore, may be defined as our acceptance of being found. Jesus' second story underscores the same reality. The lost coin is found. Jesus says, "Just so, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents." Again, there is only one action here that can be construed as repentance. The lost is found! This theme of repentance carries over into the story of the Prodigal Son." How do you see that theme of repentance playing out in the Prodigal Son? Let's take a brief look at this story. When the younger son asks for his inheritance, something he wouldn't normally receive until his father has died, it is like telling his father to "drop dead." Money, which he had done absolutely nothing to earn, was more important to him than his father. Normally a father would have been angered by such a request, but the father gives the inheritance to his son. The son goes off and squanders the money. He loses it all and a famine hits. He is starving. He is so desperate he hires himself out to feed pigs. Hebrews would never eat pork, and according to Leviticus 11:7-8, pigs weren't even to be touched. The son had sunk so low that he was hungering for the husks used as pig feed. It then says that the son, "came to himself." This was the moment he changed and decided to head home. When I read this I am reminded of a quote from Simon Tugwell's book on the Beatitudes. Tugwell writes, "It is the desire for God which is the most fundamental appetite of all, and it is an appetite we can never eliminate. We may seek to disown it, but it will not go away. If we deny that it is there, we shall in fact only divert it to some other object or range of objects. And that will mean that we invest some creature or creatures with the full burden of our need for God, a burden which no creature can carry. No color television, no human love, no religious life, no activity, can finally assuage our hunger for God. If, like the prodigal son, we 'return to ourselves', like him we shall recognize that we have been trying to fill our bellies with husks, and we shall turn our minds towards home, towards our Father's love." The son practices his speech and stumbles home. But before he can make it there, his father, who has been waiting and watching for him, sees him and runs to him. Elders of that time NEVER ran. It was not becoming of an elder. But the father didn't care about appearances. He ran to his son, embraced him and kissed him. The son began his rehearsed speech, but the father would hear none of it. He called for a robe, a ring, and sandals, all signs that this one who returned was indeed fully and completely his son, speech or no speech. A party was called to celebrate and that is when the older son returned. When he heard the reason for the party he was angry. It wasn't fair. And indeed, for some people, grace isn't fair, especially when it is for someone else! The elder son rejected his father's invitation to join in the party. Like the younger son did previously, he spurned his father and yet the father did not reject his son. The invitation stood. The story ends there. We are left to wonder if the elder son would ever be able to get over his self-righteous indignation, receive the open invitation and so receive grace and join in the celebration. Or would he continue to mope about in his self-righteous indignation and miss the joyous feast? Are we sometimes like the elder brother, "too good" for grace?

March 13, Fifth Sunday in Lent: John 12:1-8

Six days before the Passover, Jesus came to the town of Bethany. Remember, during the Passover that year, just six days away, Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper, washed his disciples' feet, was betrayed and crucified. Just six days before all of that he returned to the house of Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead (John 11:38-44). They (Lazarus, Mary and Martha – siblings – John 11:1-2) gave a dinner for Jesus. I imagine they were very thankful to him for raising their brother from the dead. Martha, who always seemed to be working (Luke 10:38-42), served. Enter Mary with a pound of costly perfume made of pure nard worth about 300 denarii, which was the amount a laborer earned in a year of work. It was very expensive perfume! Mary poured this perfume on Jesus' feet, which wasn't normal practice. Even today, I don't think anyone puts perfume on feet, do they?! Could Mary be demonstrating her true discipleship which Jesus was about to teach the disciples by washing their feet? Mary anoints Jesus' feet and then wipes his feet with her hair. She gives Jesus her all. And certainly the fragrance of that perfume must have filled the room, the very opposite of the stench of death involving the raising of Lazarus (11:39). Life and death are on full display in the same room here. This is when Judas complains about the wastefulness of this act. All of that money could have been used for the poor! His complaint is revealed as hypocritical by the comment that he was a thief who used to steal money from the common purse! Although hypocritical, Judas' comment has some practical merit to it. And yet, Mary's act is a mirror of God's extravagant grace which the Lord showers upon us in

overflowing abundance, sending his beloved Son to die for us, as just one example. Aren't we called to reply with similar extravagant love? Is Mary a beautiful example of our calling? This is when Jesus steps in and defends Mary's actions. Unbeknownst to her, she has prepared Jesus for his burial. People in the room must have been taken aback by that comment, but they would soon see the truth in it. Jesus also makes a comment about the poor always being with us. As one commentator said, "Possibly he alludes to Deuteronomy 15:11, which *commands* generosity toward the poor precisely "since there will never cease to be some in need on the earth."

March 20, Palm Sunday: Luke 19:28-40

This is the processional gospel reading for Palm Sunday. The Passion gospel reading is too long for comments. I suggest you take time to slowly read it while meditating on what is written. In Luke 19:28-40 we see Jesus' triumphant entrance into Jerusalem. Remember that Jesus began his journey to Jerusalem and the cross way back in Luke 9:51. The journey is now complete. Now begins his intentional and obedient mission in Jerusalem - the cross. We see the words of Zechariah 9:9 (written about 500 years before Jesus' birth) taking on flesh here through the actions of Jesus. Right after this section of Luke, the cleansing of the Temple reminds one of what was written in Zechariah 14. God's plan is coming to fruition. Jesus commands his disciples to go ahead, find a colt which hasn't been ridden, untie it and bring it to him. If anyone objects they are to say that the Lord needs it. All of this happens just as Jesus says. He is in total command of this situation. The disciples spread their garments on the colt and then on the road in front of Jesus. They are rolling out a carpet for the king, reminiscent of 1 Kings 1:33-35 in which David's son Solomon rides a mule in royal procession to be anointed king over Israel and Judah. In 2 Kings 9:13 we also see that when Jehu was anointed king, people spread their garments over the bare steps, blew trumpets and declared, "Jehu is king." In other words, for those watching and knew their Scripture/history, there was no doubt of the symbolism of a royal procession; the coming of the king! Then as if to cast aside any doubt of what was happening, the whole multitude of disciples (remember there were more than just twelve) broke out shouting, "Blessed is the king, who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven, and glory in the highest heaven." This brings us back to the praises the angels sang when Jesus was first born. The praises of the angels in heaven now echo in the praise of people on earth. All this is too much for some Pharisees who are watching. We don't know if they were followers of Jesus or not, but they caution Jesus. Indeed, there is some need for caution. If the Romans heard all of this praise of a new king, it could be the end of Jesus. There can only be one "king," and that is the emperor. All others will be silenced and killed. But Jesus has little concern for their cautions. Jesus' answer to them is a sharp prophetic word. As Dr. David Tiede says, the best way to translate this is, "If these be silent, then the stones *will* cry out." Tiede writes, "This is not merely a pathetic fallacy to the effect that the rocks will praise God if no one else does. This is a word of warning as the words about the "stones" in 19:41-44; 20:6; and 21:6 will soon show. If and when the acclamation of Jesus as king falls silent, Jerusalem will be doomed. Indeed, not too long after Jesus was crucified, the temple and Jerusalem were completely destroyed in 70 A.D.

March 27, Easter: Luke 24:1-12

Jesus was crucified on Friday. The Jewish Sabbath begins on Friday evening and runs through Saturday. During that time, the disciples rested according to the law. Early on Sunday morning, the first day of the week, the women went to the tomb with spices to anoint the body, since they had been unable to do that right after Jesus was killed. This was to complete the burial process as prescribed by the law. They found the stone rolled away from the entrance to the tomb. They went into the tomb and found no body. As they wondered about this, suddenly two men in dazzling clothes appeared next to them. The dazzling clothes reminds one of the transfiguration on the mountain when Jesus' clothes became dazzling white (9:29-30). This is heavenly glory! These two men will later be identified as angels (23). This also reminds one of Moses and Elijah appearing with Jesus on the mountain. The women were terrified and bowed their faces to the ground. This is something people of that culture (also in other Eastern cultures) do when in the presence of someone of great stature. The men ask, "Why do you look for the living among the dead?" In other words, although the women were doing what is proper according to the law, it was totally unnecessary. There is no dead body here. They should have known better! Don't they remember what Jesus told them over and over again? In fact the men say, "*Remember* how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, that the Son of Man must be handed over to sinners, and be crucified, and on the third day rise again?" This was all part of God's plan. Luke emphasizes that throughout his Gospel (2:49; 4:43; 9:22; 9:51; 12:23; 17:25; 22:37). The women then remembered Jesus words and returned to tell the others. In this seeing and remembering of the women, we see the glimmer of faith springing to life even in the midst of death! But the others thought this was just an idle tale...female hysteria...and they didn't believe them. In fact, in those days women weren't trusted as witnesses. But isn't it interesting that Luke begins with Zechariah (Luke 1:8-23), the priest who was silenced by the angel Gabriel because he was slow to believe (an unreliable witness?), and it was Mary who believed and found favor! Then at the end of the Gospel, it was the women who were the first witnesses and once again the men didn't believe. It was one of many total reversals found throughout the Gospel of Luke. The words of Mary's magnificat (Luke 1:46-55) ring out as true throughout Luke. In a variety of ways, the powerful have been brought down and the lowly lifted up. But Peter heard this report from the women, ran to the tomb, found it empty and went home amazed. He didn't fully realize it, but everything had changed... everything... and they were just beginning to experience just how complete that change was.

The Lord bless thee, and keep thee. -Numbers 6:24