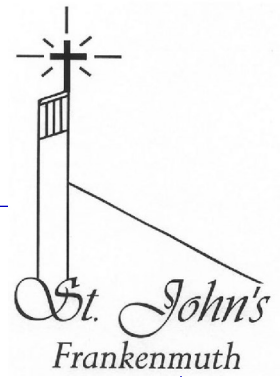


THE VICTORY



St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church Newsletter

February 2022

RENT ON ASH WEDNESDAY

What was more present in your mind as the beginning of March came up? Rent to be paid (or mortgage), or turning your life around? Another high heat bill, or the guilt you've let pile up like dirty clothes you just keep wearing over and over?

There are so many pressing, day-to-day issues that consume our attention, important issues, but too often, spiritual priorities get the squeeze. Ash Wednesday, March 2 this year, calls us to return to the center of things, to turn from what's merely urgent to what's perpetually important. Traditionally on Ash Wednesday, we hear these words: "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." Return to the Lord your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love; and he relents over disaster" (Joel 2:12, 13).



Rending your garments (tearing your clothes) was a biblical expression of anxiety and distress. Like punching a wall or screaming into a pillow, having rent (past tense of "rend") garments was a display of anger and disgust—in this case, anger and disgust over what you've done. But tearing your clothes, just like saying you're a "Christian" or even a "sinner," can be surface level, to keep up appearances. "Rend your hearts," God says.

We're constantly tempted to believe that if we pay the rent, cover the heating bill, do that renovation, get the promotion, go on the vacation, life will be good. But as Jesus tells us, "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you" (Matthew 6:33). Bring your jumbled up priority list to Jesus, rip it to shreds and throw it on him.

He always lived with God first in mind, and on the cross he was punished for your wandering, fretting mind. When Jesus died, Mark tells us "the veil of the temple was rent in two from the top to the bottom" (Mark 15:38, KJV21). That veil in the Jewish temple represented separation between God's holiness and human sin.

Worship Service

Sunday at 10 a.m.

Bible Classes

Sunday 9 a.m.

Wednesday 6:30 p.m.

Youth Sunday School

Sunday 9 a.m.

Service Broadcast

- ♦ Sunday 8 a.m.
Radio WKCQ 98.1 FM
- ♦ Monday 7 p.m.
Charter Cable TV
channel 191

Church Office Hours

Monday—Friday
10 a.m.—4:30p.m.

Office Phone:

(989) 652-6201

Pastor Patrick Ernst

(612) 845-9152

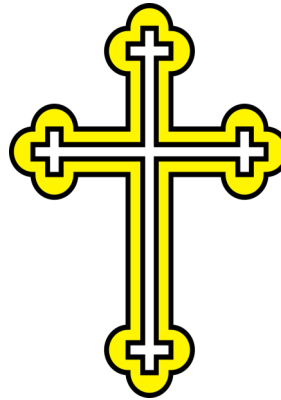
Crossing that veil could only be done under the strictest circumstances and only once an animal had been sacrificed for the sins of the person going through. Jesus is our sacrifice, the “Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world” (John 1:29), so the separation between God and sinners is gone. God calls us to return with rent hearts and be made whole through Jesus. Ash Wednesday is about undeserved forgiveness, freedom from disordered habits to chart a new course in Jesus’ image.

~Pastor Patrick Ernst



Thanks to Jean and Jeff Warnemuende on your travels to Mankato, MN to Bethany Lutheran College bookstore to pick up our 500 new hymnals. Your travels are greatly appreciated by all of us who will hold these in our hands during the upcoming months.

I urge that requests, prayers, intercession, and thanksgiving be made for everyone~ for kings and all those in authority.



The following memorials were given in their honor:

General Fund: \$885



Confessions Corner

Introduction to the Apostles' Creed

Thus far we have heard the first part of Christian teaching, and in it we have seen all that God wishes us to do and not to do. The creed properly follows, which sets forth all that we must expect and receive from God; in short, it teaches us to know him perfectly. It is given in order to help us do what the Ten Commandments require of us. For they are set so high that all human ability is far too puny and weak to keep them. Therefore it is just as necessary to learn this part as it is the other so that we may know where and how to obtain the power to do this.

First Article of the Apostles' Creed

Small Catechism

What does God say about these commandments?

I believe in God the Father Almighty,
Maker of heaven and earth.

What does this mean?

I believe that God has made me and all creatures; that He has given me my body and soul, eyes, ears and all my members, my reason and all my senses, and still preserves them; that He richly and daily provides me with food and clothing, home and family, property and goods, and all that I need to support this body and life; that He protects me from all danger, guards and keeps me from all evil; and all this purely out of fatherly, divine goodness and mercy, without any merit or worthiness in me; for all which I am in duty bound to thank and praise, to serve and obey Him. This is most certainly true.

Large Catechism

I hold and believe that I am God's creature. Besides, he makes all creation help provide the benefits and necessities of life. Moreover, he gives all physical and temporal blessings—good government, peace, security.

Here much could be said if we were to describe how few people believe this article. For if we believed it with our whole heart, we would also act accordingly, and not swagger about and boast and brag as if we had life, riches, power, honor, and such things of ourselves, as if we ourselves were to be feared and served. This is the way the wretched, perverse world acts, drowned in its blindness, misusing all the blessings and gifts of God solely for its own pride, greed, pleasure, and enjoyment, and never once turning to God to thank him or acknowledge him as Lord or Creator.

For this reason we ought daily to practice this article, impress it upon our minds, and remember it in everything we see and in every blessing that comes our way. Whenever we escape distress or danger, we should recognize how God gives and does all of this so that we may sense and see in them his fatherly heart and his boundless love toward us. In this way our hearts will be warmed and kindled with gratitude to God and a desire to use all these blessings to his glory and praise.

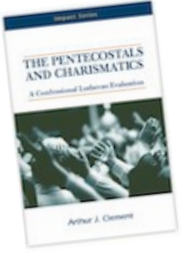


THE CREATION
(GENESIS 1)

Here we see how the Father has given to us himself with all creation and has abundantly provided for us in this life, apart from the fact that he has also showered us with inexpressible eternal blessings through his Son and the Holy Spirit, as we shall hear.

**March's book recommendation by Jeremy Aiello:
The Impact Series:
From Northwestern Publishing House
The Pentecostals and Charismatics: A Confession-
al Lutheran Evaluation By Arthur J. Clement**

Written by expert pastors and theologians, this series provides a greater understanding of our present-day church and faith. Addressing a wide variety of important doctrinal and cultural questions, this series offers both clarity on difficult issues and practical applications for your spiritual life.



You may have heard of people speaking in tongues, claiming to heal the sick, or being able to see the future. These are all aspects of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movement. In this book, the history, teachings, practices, strengths, and weaknesses of this popular phenomenon are evaluated in the light of God's Word.

The Pentecostals And Charismatics: A Confessional Lutheran Evaluation will help you gain a better understanding of the history of these groups and the traits that distinguish them from other Christians. The author also paints a clear image of the ways the tongues movement has departed from Scripture and outlines the proper teachings about the Holy Spirit. Through reading this book, you'll have a better understanding of the Pentecostals and Charismatics and how to share your faith with them.

The Impact Series features crucial titles on a variety of topics, including denominations, doctrine, and cultural issues. With practical applications for Lutherans and other Christians, these books provide a greater understanding of our present-day church and faith, all while pointing to the gospel.

These books can be ordered at online.nph.net or you can see Jeremy Aiello for purchasing a copy.

As we begin our lent, aka "passion season" reflect on one of Martin Luther's sermons on suffering and the cross. LW 51:207; WA 32:37f.

The Necessity of Suffering

It is highly necessary that we should suffer, not only that God may thereby prove his honor, might and strength against the devil, but also because the great and precious treasure that we have, if it were given to us without suffering and affliction, would make us snore in our abuse of security. And we can see unfortunately it is a general thing that many abuse the holy gospel and that there is nothing more they need to do or give or suffer. This is a sin and a shame.

The only way our God can check such evil is through the cross. God must so discipline us that our faith increases and grows stronger, and we thus draw the Savior all the deeper in into our soul. For we can no more grow strong without suffering and temptation than we can without eating and drinking.

Therefore, since it is better that we should be given a cross than that we should be spared a cross, no one must falter and take fright at it. Have you not a good, strong promise in which you can take comfort? Nor can the gospel advance except through us as we suffer willingly and bear our cross.

*On this Ash Wednesday,
Lord God, I reflect on my
life during the past year
and on my relationship
with others and with you,
Keep me steadfast on your
path. Amen.*



Lenten Schedule

© LPI

Join us for all of our special Lenten Services in March, as we view our Savior's suffering and death in payment for our sins, and his glorious resurrection sealing our salvation, and giving us heaven!

March Lenten Services: 2, 9, 16, 23 and 30.

Wednesday Evening @ 6:30 p.m.



TITHE YOUR TAX REFUND

This year, if you receive a tax refund and don't need it to cover your living expenses, consider spending 90% of it on whatever you'd like, and tithing, or giving 10%, to our St. John's Foundation. A contribution to our "Endowment Fund" or "Church Scholarship Fund" would help our church reach more people with the gospel and support Christian education for years to come, long after the rest of your refund has been spent and enjoyed.

The St. John's Foundation plays a unique role in our congregation by investing donated money and using the income on those investments to increase the impact of your donation. **To give to the Foundation, simply write a check to St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church Foundation and designate in the memo line or on your offering envelope "Endowment Fund" or "Church Scholarship".**

In the Old Testament, God commanded his people to tithe their income, usually in the form of their crops and livestock, to support the work of the church (Leviticus 27:30, 32; Numbers 18:21). We are free from those ceremonial laws of the Old Testament. Jesus kept them for us, paying his due to the temple so we can be forgiven of our stinginess and set free to give out of love, not compulsion. We aren't obligated to give 10% of our income to the church or other charities, but Jesus and the apostles present giving as a natural part of the Christian life (Mark 12:41-44; 1 Timothy 5:17, 18). On average, Christians give 2.5% of their income to the work of the church. For comparison, during the Great Depression that average was 3.3%! Tithe your tax refund, as "A gift that will keep on giving, so that 'future generations will be told about the Lord' Psalm 22:30" (St. John's Foundation Brochure).

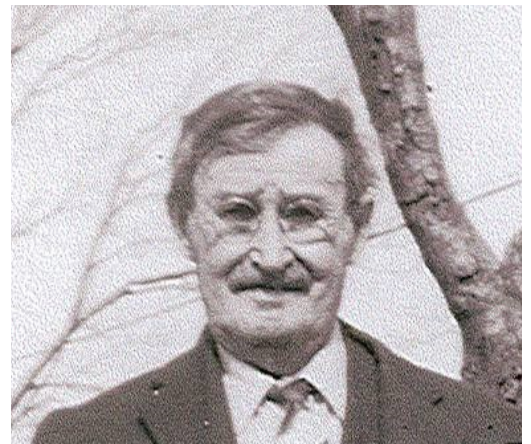
If you have any questions or would like to donate non-cash gifts to the foundation (stocks, bonds, real estate, life insurance, etc.), contact the church office at 989-652-6201.



OLD NEWS

This cross was used in St. John's Lutheran Church, 205 West Tuscola Street in the early 1900's. The cross is original, painted gold and white but the base is not the original. The cross was donated to the Archives by former member Debbie Baker. This cross originally came from Clara Schmidt (Debbie Baker's grandmother)

who received it from her father John Stellwag Debbie Baker's great-grandfather who was church custodian from 1928 - 1946.



LENT AND EASTER WORD SEARCH



ABSTINENCE
ADORATION
ALMSGIVING
ASH WEDNESDAY
ATONEMENT
CELEBRATION
COMMUNION
CONFESSION
EASTER TRIDUUM
EQUINOX
FASTING
FORGIVENESS
FORTY DAYS
GOLD
GOOD FRIDAY
HOLY SATURDAY
HOLY THURSDAY

HOLY WEEK
INDULGENCE
LAST SUPPER
LENT
LITURGY
MORTALITY
PALM SUNDAY
PASSION
PILLARS
PRAYER
PREPARATION
PROMISE
PURPLE
RESURRECTION
SPRINGTIME
VOLUNTEER
WHITE



LENT

NAMES FOR JESUS

Start at the letter listed at the beginning of each line. Then move in the direction shown by each arrow to end up at the correct letter. Write that letter in the

For example, F → → ↓ = Q

Puzzle #1

1. S ← ← ↑ = ____
2. G ↓ ↓ ← = ____
3. L → ↑ ↑ ↑ = ____
4. O ↑ ↑ → = ____
5. F → → ↑ = ____
6. J → → → = ____
7. V ↓ ↓ ← = ____
8. Z ↑ → ↑ → = ____
9. P ← ← ↑ = ____
10. Q ↓ ← ← = ____
11. M ↓ ↓ → = ____

I	G	E	C	X	D
K	H	P	W	V	Y
H	X	R	Y	M	T
F	L	Z	E	K	C
D	T	Q	H	O	E
N	J	W	S	U	B

Jesus said, "I am ____

Do you know where this verse is located?

