

The Messenger

March 2016



**The Newsletter of Christ Lutheran Church
Woodcliff Lake, New Jersey**

The Church: Proudly Proclaiming Christ since A.D. 33

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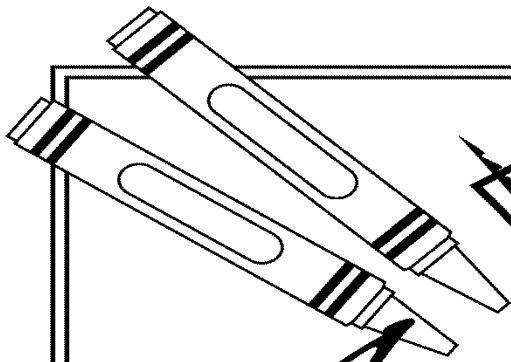
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Pastor: The Rev. Marc Stutzel
Director of Music: Argine Safari
Director of Youth Choirs: David Scance
Musician: Fred Messner
Administrative Assistant: Doris Crouse



PUZZLE

A new creation

Just as spring brings beauty and renewal,
in Christ we, too, are made new.



Directions: Follow each flying butterfly to its correct number. Then write that word on the line with the corresponding number to read 2 Corinthians 5:17.

10					11
8					6
12					9
5					7
13					16
3					17
2					14
15					4

"Therefore, _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5 _____ 6 _____ , _____ 7 _____

_____ 8 _____ 9 _____ 10 _____ 11 _____ : _____ 12 _____ 13 _____

_____ 14 _____ 15 _____ , _____ 16 _____ 17 _____ is here!"

2 CORINTHIANS 5:17, NIV

Answer: Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! 2 Corinthians 5:17, NIV



Spring Forward

I'm never ready for a time change. The one in the fall is easier to live with—an extra hour of sleep or an opportunity to re-live an hour (if we're night owls) so we can get that one moment right. Falling back is awesome. But in early March, the opposite happens. We actually lose time. In fact, I lose more than just an hour. I spend the entire Saturday before the time change lamenting my upcoming loss of sleep. And then I spend all night worried that my alarm clock will not go off and I'll wake up after church has already started. When I spring forward in March, I don't spring forward joyfully. I feel more like I'm being launched, unwillingly, into a future I'm not exactly ready for.

Being launched into a future we're not ready for is a good foundation for Lent. Lent is a time for prayer, reflection, fasting and repenting. But why? I think one answer is because we don't know exactly what tomorrow will bring. We don't know what adventure we'll be called to embrace. We don't know if some crisis will arise that changes who we are and what we know. We don't know if tomorrow will be different or if tomorrow will feel just like today. And even though we might feel confident today, there's no way we are ever truly prepared for all the possibilities of what tomorrow can bring.

But Lent is an opportunity to more fully experience one part of who we are. We are God's. We are Christ's. We don't know what we'll be asked to spring forward into but we do know that, no matter what, Jesus is there with us. Lent is usually called as a time to repent. But repenting is more than just feeling sorry for doing something wrong. Repent is really about turning back towards God. When we repent, we turn away from where we think we should go and, instead, turn back towards the promises of God that are ours to begin with. When we turn back, we look forward into God's future which has a place for all of us. Spring forward by springing back into God and live into that love that God gives us every day.

Pastor Marc



ELCA World Hunger's 40 Days of Giving

Walter Brueggemann wrote in his poem titled, "We will not keep silent:"

We are people who must sing you, for the sake of our very lives. You are a God who must be sung by us, for the sake of your majesty and honor. And so, we thank you, for the lyrics that push past our reasons, for the melodies that break open our givens, for cadences that locate us home, beyond all our safe places, for tones and tunes that open our lives beyond control and our futures beyond despair. We thank you for the long parade of mothers and fathers who have sung you deep and true; we thank you, we thank you for the good company of artists, poets, musicians, cantors and instruments that sing for us and with us, toward you. We are witnesses to your mercy and splendor; we will not keep silent . . . ever again. Amen.

We have a song of thankfulness that God intends for us to sing: singing this song with the melodies of our lives, the harmonies of our neighborly service to the stranger, and the imperfect beats that mold so tenderly together, allowing us to never keep our thanks silent, but to live out daily. Providing voice to the needs of our neighbors who are hungry is what ELCA World Hunger's 40 days of giving is all about. This is a call to action to create a world in which all are fed and none go hungry. These are songs that need to be sung, never to be held silent. How are you singing a song of thankfulness in your life?

The Rev. Kevin L. Strickland, assistant to the Presiding Bishop of the ELCA

Care Committee sponsors our Lenten Hunger Appeal

The Hunger Appeal began February 10, continuing through the 40 days of Lent! We are partnering with congregations all over the U.S. to raise 2 million dollars to support this amazing ministry. From the plains of Ethiopia, the mountains of Nepal, to the shores of the Gulf Coast after Hurricane Katrina and the streets of Passaic NJ, ELCA World Hunger is there. In the U.S., over 48 million people don't know where their next meal is coming from. We pray and work to change this reality.

Care Committee is hosting coffee and bake sales after worship during Lent (February and March) to support ELCA World Hunger. We invite you to stick around after worship, enjoy a delicious bite to eat, get to know someone new and help end hunger around the world. Financial donations will also be accepted—checks to "ELCA World Hunger", ("Lenten Hunger Appeal" on memo line) and place into the offering plate!

FAITH OUT LOUD: READING THE BIBLE IN 2016

MARCH SCHEDULE

BIBLE STUDIES:

WEDNESDAYS AT 11:30 AM &

THURSDAYS AT 7:00 PM

March 1: Deuteronomy 7-8

Mar 2: Deut 9-10

Mar 3: Deut 11-13

Mar 4: Deut 14-16

Mar 5: Deut 17-20

Mar 6: Deut 21-23

Mar 7: Deut 24-27

Mar 8: Deut 28-29

Mar 9: Deut 30-31

Mar 10: Deut 32-34

Mar 11: Joshua 1-4

Mar 12: Josh 5-8

Mar 13: Josh 9-11

Mar 14: Josh 12-15

Mar 15: Josh 16-18

Mar 16: Josh 19-21

Mar 17: Josh 22-24

Mar 18: Judges 1-2

Mar 19: Jud 3-5

Mar 20: Jud 6-7

Mar 21: Jud 8-9

Mar 22: Jud 10-12

Mar 23: Jud 13-15

Mar 24: Jud 16-18

Mar 25: Jud 19-21

Mar 26: Ruth

Mar 27: 1 Samuel 1-3

Mar 28: 1 Sam 4-8

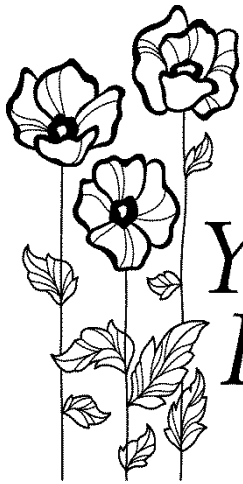
Mar 29: 1 Sam 9-12

Mar 30: 1 Sam 13-14

Mar 31: 1 Sam 15-17

CHECK THE WEBSITE WWW.CLC4U.COM TO VIEW COMPLETE
SCHEDULE (WILL MEET MOST WEEKS)

As I sit here writing, we are still in the midst of some volatile February temperatures—frigid, rainy, warm, you name it. We're hoping for a warm spring! I would like to thank you to some of our members . . .



*You're a
Blessing!*

First, a big thank you to Alice Namendorf, and Carol Kress for all their time and efforts on behalf of the Care and Worship Committees for the past few years. They helped provide ideas and compassionate comments as we discussed your church business. Thanks to Judy Husarek for stepping up to be our Secretary this year when no one else did. She provided a valuable service to all of us! We enjoyed having you all on Council.

Next, thank you to Linda Osolin for agreeing to continue on Council for three more years! While we are lucky to have her on Evangelism, she reminds us how they need more people to help spread the message. Please see her or Coryn Thalmann to help in any way.

Welcome to Lynn Lesko, Coleen Daub and Colin Post! They will be serving as Secretary, Worship and Youth representatives. They were elected at the Annual Meeting on Sunday, February 7th. We look forward to their contributions and fresh perspective as we work together.

Thank you to everyone who attended our Annual Meeting on February 7th. We had over 65 people even though it was Super Bowl Sunday. The meeting was only 90 minutes, and we got so much accomplished. If you missed it, we reviewed the highlights of each committee, approved our 2016 Budget and voted on many things: Council members, Nominating Committee, Special Gifts Committee members, Special Gifts applications (all approved) and our Koinonia reps.

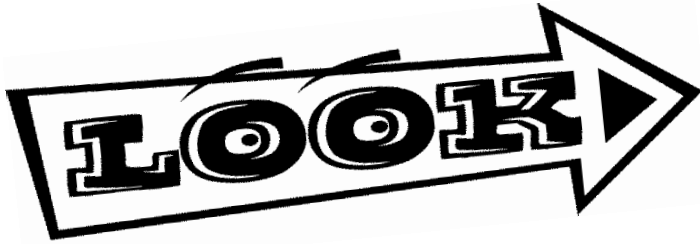
We hope you enjoyed having the bagels and coffee. Please let me know if you have any other suggestions for making the meeting more enjoyable or valuable.

As I said at our meeting, I am optimistic for the future of our church and for the wonderful things we will do and see in the coming year!

Yours in Christ, Carla Hoenigmann
carlah716@cs.com
201-391-7843



Christ Lutheran Church Women News



***Start saving now for Annual Trash,
Treasure and Clothing Sale
Saturday, April 30th***

Just a reminder to start setting aside your treasures and cleaning out your closets in anticipation of the clothing collection which begins Monday, April 4th in Mitchell Commons and treasure collection (anything not in the clothing category) which begins April 17th. More details will follow in future Messenger articles and Sunday bulletins.

If you are interested in helping, please call Ann Christensen at 666-5078. New helpers (of any age) are always welcome . . . no experience necessary . . . it's a lot of fun and a chance to make new friends. (We are especially looking for a person(s) to take over as the clothing coordinator. Crystal Ramhorst will be here to help train someone this year, so if you are interested please let us know.) We'll feed you well, and you'll feel better knowing that you've helped our church raise funds for improvements here and for many deserving charities.

We are also looking for an organization where we can donate any leftover books after the sale. If you know of anyone looking for book donations, please contact Ann Christensen.

Christine Badame





“Come and worship Christ our Lord”

Palm/Passion Sunday – March 20th

Worship with Holy Communion, 9:00 and 10:30 am

Maundy Thursday, March 24th, 7:30 pm

Worship with Holy Communion and Stripping of Altar

Good Friday

Worship – March 25th, 7:30 pm

The Resurrection of Our Lord

Easter Day

April 8—8:15, 9:15, and 10:30 am

Holy Communion, Choirs and Special Music



Join us for Easter Sunday brunch—pancakes, sausage, egg casserole, muffins, juice and coffee without having to cook it yourself! Sound good? Join us between 8:00 and 10:00 AM in the Opsal Wing. If you plan on attending the 9 am service, we've changed the time to make it easier to enjoy breakfast before church, and anyone is welcome up until 10:00 am. No charge--a free will offering basket will be available. Come and help us celebrate the day of Jesus' resurrection.

Sing and ring with us—Chancel Choir would love more people to sing for Easter Sunday—basses, tenors, altos, sopranos. Rehearsals are each Wednesday evening at 8:00 pm in the choir room. Handchime Choir rehearsals begin Sunday, March 6 following the 10:30 am worship. Let Argine Safari or Doris Crouse know if you are available to ring again this Easter (March 27) – new ringers welcome.

Decorate the church altar on Easter Sunday by purchasing flowers beginning Sunday, March 6. Pick up an envelope from the Narthex table, complete (with your choice of tulips, daffodils, lilies) and return to the church office.



Children are cheerful givers



I recently read an article on the website Focus on the Family entitled, “Teaching Servanthood”, by Carolyn MacInnes. It was a wonderful account of how Ms. MacInnes was given a glimpse of what God looks like as she watched her grandparents live their lives. This is a beautiful line from the article which I hope will encourage you to read its entirety: “George and Ruth haven't ended world hunger. They haven't cured AIDS. They just see needs and quietly, tenderly meet them. My grandparents put flesh and bone to God's great love. Those hands not only changed who I was – they changed who I want to be.”

In the article, the author asks the question: “Have your kids seen God's hands? It's great to talk about Jesus washing feet and feeding crowds, but those accounts are just bedtime stories to children who don't witness servant behavior in their world.” She goes on to examine her own definition of “servanthood” and the consideration of being a cheerful giver vs. just trying to fill a quota to impress someone. She says she has a “hunch that Jesus wouldn't have used day-planners or lists, as he seemed to keep his schedule open for ‘divine appointments’. He never avoided a task that was ‘beneath’ Him or considered any person unworthy of His time. Sure, He got frustrated: He wept for our lack of understanding, but He never gave up on His mission. Whether He was performing a marvelous miracle or holding a child, He did everything with great compassion. He asked us to do likewise. Take time. Be humble. Keep on. Love. Simple commands . . . but hard commands.”

Ms. MacInnes believes that “Like God himself, our kids aren't tracking the number of our activities or judging how “good” those works may seem. They're watching to see if our hands are working in tandem with our hearts.” She then elaborates on how to teach “servanthood”. “It's never too early to begin cultivating servant-like traits. If we start by teaching and modeling basic kindness, we lay a foundation for communicating the value of work and charity.”

This article ties in perfectly with Sunday School lessons as we travel through the Lent. Servanthood helps explain why Jesus would give up his perfect life so that we could be saved from sin. He gave his life for us because Jesus was the greatest servant who ever lived, and nothing compares with his ultimate sacrifice on the cross. As you and your family journey through Lent, you may want to read about other servants in the Bible too. It is helpful to talk about what attributes made them faithful servants. During Sunday School time, we will also help children learn that they too are servants and that every time we serve Christ, we must also serve others. Children love to serve which is one of the best ways to show others that we are Christians.

As we have opportunities to serve through various projects at Christ Lutheran Church, let's invite our children to work alongside us. There they will continue to see God's hands at work, and they will certainly help us to be cheerful givers! During the month of March, children/youth are invited by JoAnn Sallo to help assemble Health Kits for those in need. Stay tuned for details.

The complete article referenced above may be found at www.focusonthefamily.com. If you do not have internet access and would like a copy of the article, please contact me at 201-251-9531.

Janet Post for Christian Education



Church library news

As we head toward Easter, have you ever taken the time to read one of the historic and/or fictional books about Jesus' last days? These are on display in the library in addition to the ongoing Bibles for our year-long Bible study.

Sometimes, God is a travel agent

I was in Newark Airport, sitting at the gate before my flight to Texas would depart. I was anxious and lonely, and feeling a bit sorry for myself. I wasn't anxious about flying. I love to fly. It was the Texas part that had my stomach in a knot. For reasons I can't go into right now because I wanted to keep this shorter than "War and Peace", it's never pleasant for me in Texas. In fact, I would prefer to go to the dentist, emergency room, or undergo surgery. I can usually talk my brother, Glenn, into accompanying me and commiserate with each other on the flight back and forth, but this time I was almost literally flying solo. And so, while sitting at the gate I was trying to imagine who I might get to sit next to on the plane. Admittedly, my imagination went a little wild. Wouldn't it be cool, I thought, if I got to sit next to say..... Ravi Zacharias? Ravi Zacharias is a world renowned Christian apologist, philosopher, and an amazing, engaging speaker. And in my mind at least, Ravi and I are tight friends, (although in real life he wouldn't know me from a can of paint.) Maybe the reason HE popped into my mind instead of say, Brad Pitt, is because just 3 days earlier, in a small remote town in the Adirondacks at a little known Christian camp called Camp of the Woods, my brother Glenn, my husband John and I had the opportunity to listen to Ravi speak. And it was awesome. In fact, when Ravi mentioned that he would be speaking at the camp all week with his friend and colleague (who I had never heard of before), Nabeel Qureshi, I entertained the notion of driving the hour back and forth from our summer home each day so I could be there to hear it. But as my crazy busy life would have it, that never happened. So there I was at the gate. Wouldn't it be cool if Ravi sat next to me on the plane? But nah. Ravi would still be up at Camp of the Woods. Reality popped my bubble. I would probably be sitting next to some stodgy old businessman. And then I was reminded of something Glenn told me: "Never talk to the person next to you on the plane. They want to read, or sleep or listen to music, not you!" So I mentally prepared myself for a long lonely flight. I texted my brother, Glenn. "I miss my travel partner." He texted me back. "I know. I just said a prayer for u." I took out my Bible and my commentary on Isaiah and I started to read. I guess Isaiah was going to be my travel companion that flight. A little while later I boarded the plane. I found my seat, and had just stowed my carry on safely in the overhead bin and was about to buckle my seat belt when the twenty something young lady next to me said, "Are you a Christian?" It was an unusual ice breaker, and I was caught a little off guard but I answered openly, "Well, yes, I am." And she shot back quite enthusiastically, "So am I!" And then she went on to explain that she was reading this amazing book, and she showed me the cover. It was

“Seeking Allah, Finding Jesus”, by Nabeel Qureshi. I looked at the cover and was overwhelmed by the coincidence, and said out loud, but more to myself than to her because I knew she wouldn’t have a clue what I was talking about, “Nabeel Qureshi!? He’s Ravi’s colleague, and I wanted to hear him speak at Camp of the Woods!” And she goes, “Camp of the Woods?! My sister went to Camp of the Woods!” I said, “No way!” She said, “Way!” My seat belt wasn’t even on yet, and we had bonded. My new friend Abigail and I were quiet just long enough for the flight attendant to explain where the emergency exits were, and that in the unlikely event of our plane making an emergency water landing our seat cushions could be used as floatation devices. But when the spiel was over our conversation picked right back up again. We talked about the Bible, Jesus and Isaiah 53. I was witnessing to her and she was witnessing to me, and I’m pretty sure we were both unintentionally witnessing to the people in front of us because we were excited, so we were LOUD, and we did not... shut... up. And she kept coming back to the book she was reading, and how she just knew I would love it. Finally I said to her, “I think I should let you get back to reading your book, and maybe I should get back to reading Isaiah”. And much to the delight to the people in front of us, that’s exactly what we did. And in 10 minutes I was asleep. When I woke up I glanced over at her. I could see she had been crying. It was obvious the book had moved her. She finished it as we were landing, and then she gave it to me. I was getting ready to politely refuse, but I had the feeling God had gone to some trouble to organize all this, and I so I accepted it graciously. In the airport in Dallas, I texted Glenn: “Ur never going to believe who God arranged for me to sit next to on the plane.” He texted back: “Ravi?” I quickly texted back: “Don’t be ridiculous.” (I chuckled to myself as if I hadn’t been thinking the exact same thing hours earlier). I continued, “No. Someone even better.” That night in Texas I thanked God for seating me next to Abigail. Then I started “Seeking Allah, Finding Jesus”. And like Abigail, I couldn’t put it down. When I finished it, I told anyone who was willing to listen, about how good it was and how I felt God put it in my hands. This book is meant to be shared and talked about. At the very least it enlightens Christians on Islam, and might take away the mystery and in turn some animosity. It did for me. But it also taught me a lot about my own faith, at first through the eyes of a devout Muslim, and then through the eyes of a devout believer in Christ. Starting the first week in May, I will be leading a 6 week book study on “Seeking Allah, Finding Jesus.” I hope you join me. I know you will love it. And when you do, I will email Abigail and let her know the impact of the ripple she started.

~Linda Osolin