

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH

Mission Statement:

First Hand

2023

Sharing God's grace through prayer, witness, and service.



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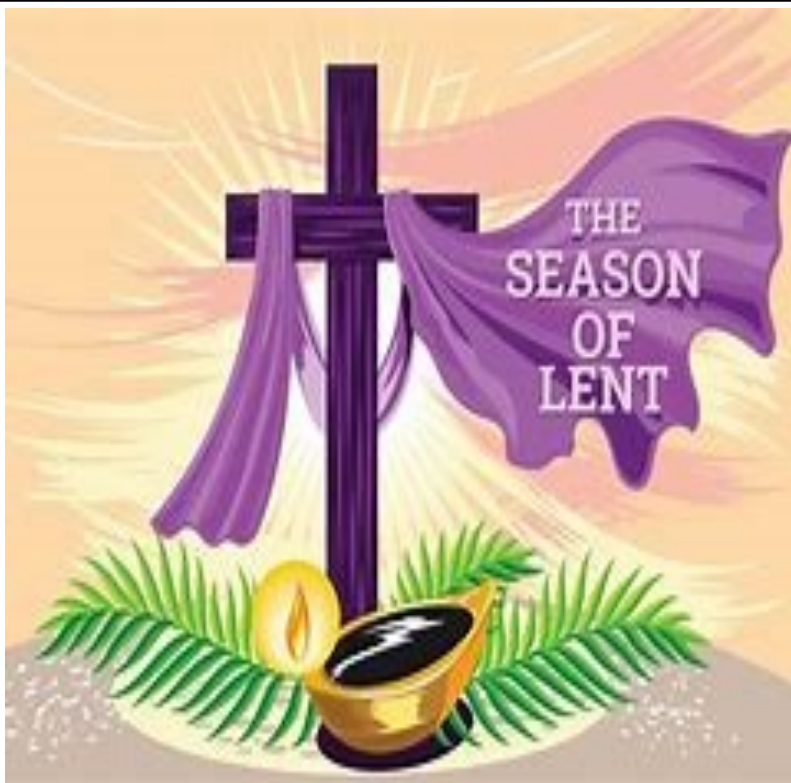
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The Lenten Services will begin on March 1 and continue each Wednesday @ 7:00 pm through March 29th.

The Lenten Dinners will also begin on March 1 at 6:00 pm and continue through March 29th.

(See list of main course for each dinner on page 5)

The deadline for newsletter articles for **April** is **March 21st**



FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

Forgive me if I have told this story before, but it is one of my favorites. One of my seminary professors relayed a story of a time when his children were little, and they were having a family meeting. He and his wife were explaining to their children what Lent was, and explaining that a traditional Lenten exercise was to give up something you enjoy for Lent. The older daughter said she would give up caffeinated drinks, like Coca-Cola and Pepsi. The other daughter said she would give up chocolate. The son, who was the youngest child, (at this time he was about 5 or 6 years old) said: "I will give up kicking people." The father explained: "No son, that's not what Lent is about. You need to give up something you like," The son, of course, replied: "But I LIKE kicking people!". Well...okay....watch out come Easter Sunday!

The Lenten tradition of giving up something for Lent is a good idea. I know many friends and family members who have given things up like smoking, fast food, Facebook, and other vices for Lent. The tradition comes from the knowledge that before Jesus began his ministry, he spent 40 days and 40 nights in the wilderness, fasting and praying; the end of which he was tempted by the devil.

Lately, it has become increasingly popular to put a bit of a twist on the idea of a Lenten discipline: instead of giving something up for Lent, begin a new spiritual practice. Examples could be setting time every day to read a Bible text, setting aside a certain time each day for prayer, or fasting once a week. For anyone wondering how fasting would work, they might try emulating how Muslims fast during the month of Ramadan. In the month of Ramadan, Muslims fast between sunup and sundown, so they are allowed to eat before the sun comes up in the morning, then again in the evening, with only water and vitamin supplements during the day.

During March, on the five Sundays in Lent (March 1, 8, 15, 22, and 29) we will be having a mid-week Lenten dinner at 6 p.m. followed by a worship service at 7PM. Four of the services will be the Holden Evening Prayer Service. The service on May 22 will be a contemporary worship service in Rice Hall. The theme of each service will be one of the five promises that we make at our baptism. Or, if we were baptized as infants, the five promises made on our behalf, which we affirm for ourselves when we are confirmed.

If we have fallen away from one or more of these promises, Lent is a perfect time to remind us to honor those promises again-repent of our inaction, and willfully choose to live into our baptismal promises. Of course, it is important to remember that the reason for engaging in these practices; the reason for living into our baptismal promises is *not* so that we can *be* saved; it is because we already *are* saved. Paul calls it dying to sin and rising to new life in Christ.

The Gospel acclamation we sing during the Lenten season perfectly sums up our Lenten discipline, returning to living out our baptismal promises. It comes from the prophet Joel; the 2nd chapter, 13th verse: Return to the Lord your God, for He is gracious and merciful; slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. In the abiding hope of the empty tomb,

Pastor Larry

The Season of Lent



The word “Lent” comes from the old English word *lencten*. This season begins with Ash Wednesday, and runs for 40 days, until Easter. The tradition of placing ashes on the forehead on Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of a season of solemnity and reflection on Christ’s suffering for our sins. Holy Week occurs the week prior to Easter, starting with Palm Sunday and ending with Good Friday.

Colors of Lent and Easter: The colors for Lent are purple, to remind us of our need for repentance. For Ash Wednesday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday, black is used to remind us of our sorrow at our Savior’s suffering. On Easter, the colors are white or gold, the color of purity, holiness, glory, and joy for our Savior’s resurrection and triumph on the cross.



HOLY WEEK

Holy Week recalls the events of the week that led up to the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Over the years, this week has been considered the most important and holy time in the life of the church—especially what is known as the “Triduum” – or Great Three Days – of Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter morning.



March 1st

6:00 pm Lenten Dinner Hosted by Outreach & Faith Formation Committee
(Baked Potato Bar and fruit Salad)

7:00 pm Lenten Worship Service

March 8th

6:00 pm Lenten Dinner Hosted by Worship Committee
(Baked spaghetti -meat & meatless sauce, Garlic Bread, Salad)

7:00 pm Lenten Worship Service

March 15th

6:00 pm Lenten Dinner Hosted by Property Committee
(Chef's Surprise, rolls)

7:00 pm Lenten Worship Service

March 22nd

6:00 pm Lenten Dinner Hosted by Fellowship & Christian Service & Mission
(Ham/turkey & cheese sliders)

7:00 pm Contemporary Lenten Worship Service

March 29th

6:00 pm Lenten Dinner Hosted by Council
(Meal TBD)

7:00 pm Lenten Worship Service

The committees will also provide beverages along with the main dish. Those attending can bring a side dish, such as a salad or dessert to share.

March 2023 Financial Report
Judy Vassar, Financial Secretary

¹⁰So he set out and went to Zarephath. When he came to the gate of the town, a widow was there gathering sticks; he called to her and said, 'Bring me a little water in a vessel, so that I may drink.' ¹¹As she was going to bring it, he called to her and said, 'Bring me a morsel of bread in your hand.' ¹²But she said, 'As the LORD your God lives, I have nothing baked, only a handful of meal in a jar, and a little oil in a jug; I am now gathering a couple of sticks, so that I may go home and prepare it for myself and my son, that we may eat it, and die.' ¹³Elijah said to her, 'Do not be afraid; go and do as you have said; but first make me a little cake of it and bring it to me, and afterwards make something for yourself and your son. ¹⁴For thus says the LORD the God of Israel: The jar of meal will not be emptied and the jug of oil will not fail until the day that the LORD sends rain on the earth.' ¹⁵She went and did as Elijah said, so that she as well as he and her household ate for many days. ¹⁶The jar of meal was not emptied, neither did the jug of oil fail, according to the word of the LORD that he spoke by Elijah. (1st Kings 17:10-16; NRSV)

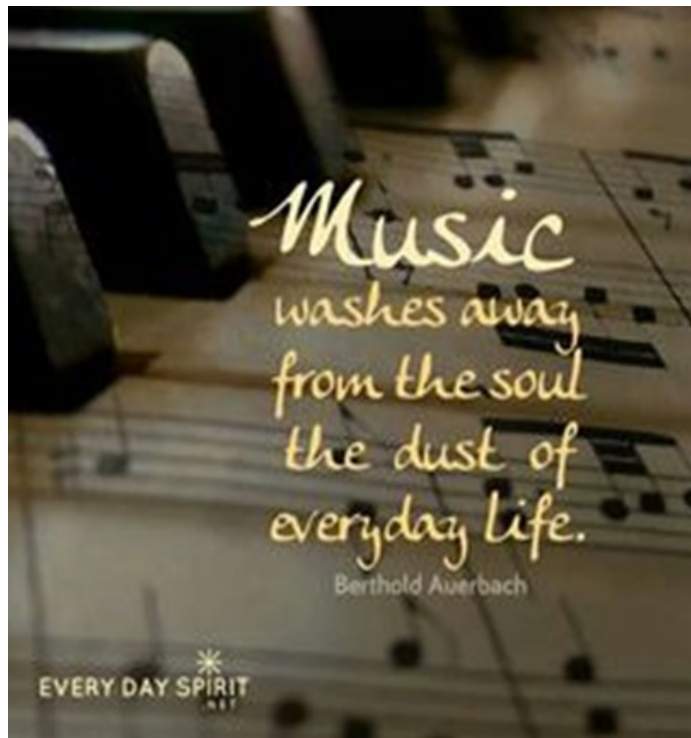
In this passage Elijah encounters a widow who is in the midst of a personal and a national economic crisis. However when she invests her resources, time and culinary talent in sustaining Elijah, God sustains her in return.

Let this scripture encourage us to keep our stewardship commitment of giving our resources and ourselves to Christ. For the same grace that sustained this widow is still available to sustain us as well.





Report of Director of Music
Judy Vassar



During this season of Lent it is good to focus on your inward self.
Take time to be refreshed.

Musically we hope to have a variety of songs that will enhance this spiritual
season.

Be sure to put on your calendar the Community Services on Maundy
Thursday and Good Friday.



“TUESDAY LUNCH” IN THE COURTYARD/LOUNGE WILL MEET AT NOON ON TUESDAY, MARCH 7TH AND 21ST. BRING YOUR LUNCH AND ENJOY THE FELLOWSHIP.



COMING UP IN APRIL

(PLEASE PUT THIS ON YOUR CALENDAR)

EASTER BREAKFAST ON April 9th at 9:00 am prior to the Communion Worship Service.

There will be sign up sheets posted in the near future in the lower narthex.

FAITH FORMATION MINISTRY TEAM IS LOOKING FOR NEW MEMBERS TO HELP WITH VBS AND IDEAS FOR ADULT BIBLE STUDY AND SUNDAY SCHOOL FOR KIDS.

Please contact Kris Shannon if you would be interested in becoming part of this team and contributing ideas to help get these programs up and running. *kshannon5kids@gmail.com 330-951-6563*

MAKE LENT COUNT

PRAY • ACT • GIVE

During the season of Lent, Faith Circle will be sponsoring a service project to benefit residents of Luther Community.

Items collected will be:

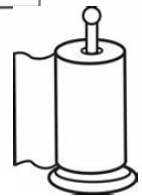
-liquid laundry detergent-
requesting smaller containers such as 37 oz to 55 or 65 oz as the larger ones are difficult for residents to manage and also this way more residents might benefit

-liquid dish detergent

-paper towels

-toilet paper (2 ply, but please not the thick luxury brand as it is hard on plumbing)

A bin in the lower narthex will be available to collect the items throughout the month of March.



Faith Circle will meet on March 21st in conjunction with the "Tuesday Lunch" at noon in the courtyard/lounge. Bring your lunch and enjoy fellowship. Offerings will be collected at the meeting to benefit our general fund, pennies for Habitat for Humanity and change for the Home of Peace Orphanage.



It will soon be time to order the beautiful sanctuary flowers for Easter Sunday. An assortment of lilies, daffodils, hyacinths, and tulips can be ordered. New Leaf florist will be providing the flowers; however they have not given us a price or an order deadline. Once we have that information there will be ordering envelopes in the bulletins with extra envelopes located in the upper narthex. Once available, please remember to fill out the information on the front of the envelope and include your payment.

Assistance needed: The funds that are used to supply food for funeral dinners are very low. These funds are used to purchase the main items used in a meal, such as ham, buns, potato casseroles, etc. There are donations of food such as vegetable trays, cheese trays and desserts which help to keep the cost down. If you would be interested in making a financial donation that can be given to FLC, note on the envelope for funeral dinners. If you would like to be added to the list to provide a donation of food you can contact Jean Wright @ 937-844-8428.



Thanks to all who help out at Our Daily Bread. We will be serving on March 20th at 4:15 pm and helpers are needed to serve the meals. Also needed are cookies, cupcakes or brownies. Please contact the church office if you plan to help.



**Daylight Saving Time begins on Sunday, March 12th.
Remember to move your clocks forward 1 hour.**



I just wanted to thank everyone for all the sympathy cards and personal well wishes upon the death of my father. I appreciate being part of a caring group of people.

Thank you, Carolyn Novak

Thank you from Lisa Nevers and Dr. Elizabeth Uhlman for the financial support given and the prayers for everyone still recovering in Florida.



(NOTE: There is still time to contribute to this cause or to the Lutheran Disaster Relief Fund for Turkey)



The Christian Higher Education Fund Ministry Team is responsible for providing grants to worthy applicants from First Lutheran Church to assist in continuing their education beyond high school. Sizes of the grants are determined by two factors: number of applicants and available funds. Financial contributions are always welcome and greatly assist in our endeavors.

This year's applications are available in the church office and should be completed and returned to the office by April 15th.

The Ministry Team then meets in late April or early May to review the applications and determine grants. Current members of the Ministry Team are Chris Tillman, Cheri Comstock, and Carl Gillespie.



Please consider donating one and/or two vases of altar flowers. We still have numerous openings for 2022. The need for March and April are as follows:

Mar 19 — 2 vases

Apr 9— 1 vase

Mar 27— 1 vase

Apr 23— 2 vases



**March Ministry Team Meeting
Date:**

- 3/6 7:00 pm Special Council
- 3/11 9:00 am Property
- 3/21 7:00pm FLIRT Meeting
- 3/27 7:00pm Worship Team

2023 Church Council

President- Chris Hildreth Blair

Vice-President- John Bodin

Secretary- Carolyn Novak

Treasurer – John Belser

Financial Secretary – Judy Vassar

Members- Ray Kramer, Judy Lunz, Brittany Porter, Liz Rose, Kris Shannon, Brenda Shively, Ray Swisher



Sunday Attendance for Jan

	<i>On site</i>	<i>Online</i>
Jan 1	49	72
Jan 8	65	46
Jan 15	64	37
Jan 22	48	57
Jan 29	70	57
<u>Average</u>	60	54



Ministry Team Highlights

Christian Service Ministry Team

- Upcoming Spring Events

Faith Formation Ministry Team

- Talking about VBS, Sunday school programs

Fellowship Ministry Team

- Mission Project

Finance Ministry Team

- Monitor church finances

FLIRT

- Continued training for emergency situations

Outreach Ministry Team

- Continue contacts for those unable to attend services

Property Ministry Team

- Building maintenance

Quilters

- 200 + quilts completed in 2022

Worship Ministry Team

- Holy Week Services

Copies of reports from the monthly meetings of each ministry team is available for you to view in the Partners In Ministry Book located in the lower narthex.

During the past month we have remembered many in prayer. We remember in prayer all who are in need of God's presence and care ... especially:



Health Issues

Sally Stephan

Roger Brown

Jordan Banks

Jeff Manahan

Carolyn Hoy

Pastor Kevin Greenwald

Surgery

Ernie Hoffman

Brenda Shively

Chris Gamble

Entered the Church

Triumphant

Amanda Markley

John Ortli

Eric McFarlin



- 03/09 Lois Heintz
- 03/13 Barb Triplett
- 03/13 Tom Rose
- 03/21 Carol Smola
- 03/24 Linda MacGillivray
- 03/26 Dennis Latimer
- 03/27 Ella Swisher
- 03/30 Rhonda Bingaman
- 03/31 Emma Swisher



- 03/23/2013 Cody & Dana Allen
- 03/13/1964 William & Lois Heintz
- 03/28/1981 Gary & Susie Shields



Worship Assistant

3/5 Kris Swisher
3/12 Dave Vassar
3/19 Cindy Weikart
3/26 Chris Hildreth Blair

Communion Assistant

3/5 Jean Wright
3/12 Ray Swisher
3/19 Colleen Bodin
3/26 Jinny Fergus

Reader

3/5 Jean Wright
3/12 Bodin
3/19 Marjorie Bixler
3/26 Dave Vassar

Altar Guild

Rachel & Carl Gillespie

Greeters

3/5 Misty Kipker
3/12 Carl & Rachel Gillespie
3/19 Stacie Jones
3/26 Susan Wyckoff

Acolyte

3/5 Declan Shannon
3/12 Winnie bodin
3/19
3/26 Lottie Bodin

Usher

Walt Stephan for month of March

Communion Bread

Confirmation Class

March 2023

Sunday		Monday		Tuesday		Wednesday		Thursday		Friday		Saturday	
26 9:00am Confirmation Class 9:00am Fellowship Time 10:00am Communion Worship Service 6:00pm Book Study	27 10:00am Staff Meeting 12:00pm AA (RH) 1:30pm Bible Study 7:00pm Worship Committee Meeting	28 9:00am Quilters 3:00pm Pastor's Meeting 6:00pm Contemporary Practice	1 9:00am Cluster Meeting @ St. Marks 12:00pm NA (RH) 6:00pm Lenten Dinner 7:00pm Lenten Service	2 12:00pm NA (RH)	3 Office Closed	4 Office Closed	5 9:00am Confirmation Class 9:00am Fellowship Time 10:00am Communion Worship Service 6:00pm Book Study	6 10:00am Staff Meeting 12:00pm AA (RH) 1:30pm Bible Study 7:00pm Council Meeting - Special 7:00pm Dulcimers	7 9:00am Quilters 12:00pm Lunch in the Courtyard or Lounge 3:00pm Pastor's Meeting 6:00pm Contemporary Practice	8 7:30am United Way Meeting 12:00pm NA (RH) 6:00pm Lenten Dinner 7:00pm Lenten Service	9 12:00pm NA 7:00pm Choir Practice	10 Office Closed	11 Office Closed 9:00am Property Meeting [Lounge]
12 9:00am Confirmation Class 9:00am Fellowship Time 10:00am Communion Worship Service 6:00pm Book Study	13 10:00am Staff Meeting 11:00am Chaplain (MRH) 12:00pm AA (RH) 1:30pm Bible Study	14 9:00am Quilters 11:00am Chaplain (MRH) 12:00pm Community Advisory Board 3:00pm Pastor's Meeting 6:00pm Contemporary Practice	15 8:00am Lo. Co. Pastor's Association Breakfast 11:00am Chaplain (MRH) 12:00pm NA (RH) 6:00pm Lenten Dinner 7:00pm Lenten Service	16 11:00am Chaplain (MRH) 12:00pm Homeless Shelter Board Meeting 12:00pm NA (RH) 7:00pm Choir Practice 8:00pm Bell Practice	17 Confirmation Retreat Office Closed	18 Confirmation Retreat Office Closed	19 9:00am Confirmation Class 9:00am Fellowship Time 10:00am Communion Worship Service 6:00pm Book Study	20 10:00am Staff Meeting 12:00pm AA (RH) 1:30pm Bible Study 4:15pm Daily Bread	21 9:00am Quilters 12:00pm Lunch in the Courtyard or Lounge 3:00pm Pastor's Meeting 6:00pm Contemporary Practice 7:00pm FLIRT Meeting [Lounge]	22 12:00pm NA (RH) 6:00pm Lenten Dinner 7:00pm Contemporary Lenten Service	23 12:00pm NA (RH) 7:00pm Choir Practice 8:00pm Bell Practice	24 Office Closed	25 Office Closed
26 9:00am Confirmation Class 9:00am Fellowship Time 10:00am Communion Worship Service	27 10:00am Staff Meeting 12:00pm AA (RH) 1:30pm Bible Study 7:00pm Worship Ministry Team Meeting	28 9:00am Quilters 3:00pm Pastor's Meeting	29 12:00pm NA (RH) 6:00pm Lenten Dinner 7:00pm Lenten Service	30 12:00pm NA (RH) 7:00pm Choir Practice 8:00pm Bell Practice	31 Office Closed	1 Office Closed							