



THE MESSENGER

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH OF WEST SEATTLE

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February 2023

OUR LENTEN JOURNEY

Our Lenten journey begins this year on Ash Wednesday, February 22. The Merriam Webster Collegiate Dictionary, 11th edition, tells us that “lent” is a word of Middle English origin meaning springtime. In the Christian church, the origins of Lent date to the early fourth century, developing by the sixth century to a penitential season of 40 days, preceding Easter. Since all Sundays are celebrations of the resurrection, the Western church excludes Sundays from the 40 days of Lent, numbering the Sundays as days “in Lent.” The 40 day period recalls the 40 days Moses spent on Mount Sinai to receive the law, the 40 years the Israelites wandered in the wilderness, and the 40 days Jesus spent in the wilderness in preparation for his public ministry, during which he was tempted by Satan.

We gather on Ash Wednesday to begin the season Lent using an ancient liturgy of confession and the imposition of ashes on our foreheads with the words “Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return,” taken from Genesis 3:19, where they are spoken by God to fallen Adam. The words and action combine as a potent reminder of our sinfulness and mortality. Yet the history of Lent is also one focused on regeneration, reminiscent of the origins of the name of the season. It has long been a time of preparation for baptism at Easter, and according to the *Manual on the Liturgy* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House 1979, pp. 306-307), Lent “is to be understood as the holy springtime of the soul, a time for preparation, planting, and growth...(Ash Wednesday’s) goal is participation in the Lenten discipline, which, by its focus on the mystery of redemption, should strengthen us by bringing us anew to the gift of our Baptism.”

As we approach this Lenten season, ponder the words of Isaac Watts (LBW 482), long considered the greatest hymn in the English language:

When I survey the wondrous cross on which the prince of glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss and pour contempt on all my pride.

Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast save in the death of Christ, my God;
All the vain things that charm me most, I sacrifice them to his blood.

See, from his head, his hands, his feet, sorrow and love flow mingled down.
Did e’er such love and sorrow meet, or thorns compose so rich a crown?

Were the whole realm of nature mine, that were a tribute far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine, demands my soul, my life, my all!

Join us on Ash Wednesday, February 22, at 7:00 pm, as we begin our Lenten journey this year.

Andrew J. King, Cantor

PRESIDENT'S REPORT...by Janine Douglass

*Statement of Mission First Lutheran Church of West Seattle
(Part V of V)*

“In conclusion we:

Affirm that through Holy Baptism and spiritual regeneration we bear one another’s burdens, so that we can provide help in times of trouble, advance maturity in Christ, and promote independence among us.”

This is the concluding sentence in the Statement of Mission for First Lutheran Church of West Seattle. It summarizes our mission statement, emphasizing the importance of Baptism and spiritual regeneration so that we can ease someone else’s burdens. We don’t perform good works for our personal gain, but in thanksgiving for the grace bestowed upon us through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus.

The Annual Meeting was held in person in the Parish Hall on Sunday, January 29th. If you missed the meeting and would like a copy of the Annual Report, please contact the church office. Extra copies will be available on the ledge outside of the office while supplies last.

The Call Committee met on January 9th, 2023 and again on January 23, 2023 to discuss the results of the references for our second candidate. After much deliberation, a motion was made to release the candidate from consideration and the motion passed with 1 opposed. Our next meeting will occur once we have received additional candidate names from the synod and/or we request approval from the synod to contact additional names as provided to us by the congregation.

Pulpit Supply for January was offered by Pr. Horacio Castillo. We were pleased to have him return to assist with worship and to preach during the first four Sundays of Epiphany. As Pr. Horacio has limited availability for pulpit supply, we were provided with names of pastors who are known to be aligned with confessional Lutheran teachings. Their biographies are available in this newsletter, and we look forward to hearing from them in the weeks to come.

Ash Wednesday is the beginning of the season of Lent, and will be on February 22nd this year. Our Psalm reading for that day, from the Lutheran Book of Worship, is Psalm 51:1-13. Verses 10-12 read: Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me.



STEWARDSHIP

The Good Fight of Faith

By Dana Kahn, Church Council

So then if we have food and clothes, that should be enough for us. But those who want to get rich fall into temptation and are caught in the trap of many foolish and harmful desires, which pull them down to ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a source of all kinds of evil. Some have been so eager to have it that they have wandered away from the faith and have broken their hearts with many sorrows.

1 Timothy 6:8-10

Giving can be relatively easy, but it is much harder to reflect on the difficult question which asks if we are giving what we ought to. This takes a bit of soul searching, prayer, and active self-reflection to truly see how money can plague us in both obvious and less obvious ways. Taking action to give more, when we identify that we should, can also be difficult, but trust in God and He will help you.

So, fight the good fight of faith by acknowledging wants and desires, and taking actions that promote stewardship as God's people. Some of these actions are:

Pray to God to help you give and to keep you from trusting in money.

Give regularly and keep your pledge.

Find ways to go beyond your pledge intermittently throughout the year through sacrificing other unnecessary purchases.

Do not give blindly; understand the good that is done through giving.

Return your pledge card each year and increase your pledge each year.

Call Committee

By Matthew Kahn, Chair

Grace and peace to the members of First Lutheran Church of West Seattle. We always knew the call process was going to be a long and difficult journey. We are blessed to have capable and thoughtful members on the committee who have spent many hours over this past year working diligently trying to find a new pastor for our parish.

As of last Monday, we released from consideration the last candidate that was submitted in the initial block of names from the synod office. The assistant to the bishop is continuing to search for possible candidates and we, as a congregation, have generated more names that we are exploring.

Do not give up hope. Have faith and pray that we will find a good pastor that will help lead the congregation for years to come.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

FOOD BANK COLLECTION suggested donation for February is canned goods, but any non-perishable foods or grocery store gift cards are acceptable. These much needed donated items of food are delivered weekly to the West Seattle Food Bank.

2023 FLOWER CHART is up and available for your sign up, on the board in the Parish House hallway. If you have favorite dates that you like to remember by giving Altar Flowers, now's the time to sign up.

DONATED FLOWERS are available after the service. If you are going to make a visitation, check with Maxine Foss about taking them with you.

HOLY EUCHARIST – Communion: Those who are baptized in the name of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit and believe are welcome to receive the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. If you are not able to walk up to communion but would like to receive, talk to one of the ushers **before** the liturgy.

PULPIT SUPPLY

During the month of February, we will be served by two supply pastors who are new to our congregation. Be sure to welcome both of them:

The Reverend Philip "Phil" Lee was born in North Dakota, grew up in Iowa, NYC, and Tacoma, and graduated from Seattle Pacific University in 1977, when he and Carolyn were married. They have three sons, two daughters-in-law, and two grandchildren. Phil graduated from Wartburg Seminary in 1981 and served churches in northern California and the Seattle area. Phil is on the NALC Clergy Roster (retired), and continues to serve as a therapist (LMFT) and Counseling Care Director with Shepherd's Canyon Retreat in Arizona, a ministry focused on helping struggling professional church workers - lay and ordained - recover hope. Landscape photography and fly fishing remain keen interests! *Pulpit Supply dates: Feb. 5th, Feb. 26th & March 5th*

The Reverend Richard "Barry" Fritts is a third generation Washingtonian who has his undergraduate degree in Business Administration and worked for the Boeing Company for 13 years in Supply Chain Management and Procurement. He has also served in the Washington Army National Guard and drove long haul for Gordon Trucking. Barry received his Master of Divinity from Luther Seminary in St Paul, Minnesota and has served congregations in Pennsylvania, Montana, Nebraska and Washington. Originally ordained within the ELCA, he is currently dual rostered in LCMC and the NALC. He is also endorsed by the Augusta District of LCMC which focuses on theology, church and mission. Barry and his wife Marney have two children and live in Maple Valley, WA. *Pulpit Supply dates: Feb. 12th, Feb. 19th, & March 12th*

 PARISH PRAYERS 

Remember in prayer before God those whom He has made your brothers and sisters through baptism.

Nancy Lawson, Mariann Petersen, Janice Lundbeck, Robert Schorn, Kim Lim, Melanie Johnson, Holly Petersen, Leah and Melissa Baker, Felicia Wells, Eileen & Dave Nestoss, Kyra Stromberg, Peter Morrison, Paula and The Rev. Douglas Lindsay, The Rev. Howard Fossier, The Rev. Kari Reiten, Yuriko Nishimura, Karen Granger, Nick Karlson, Angel Lynne, the extended Ceaicovschi family in Moldova, Richard Patishnock, Paul Sponheim, Nicole Coile, J.J. Chang, Kathy Krebs, Karen Granger, Caroline Ritter, Martin Nygaard and the family of Pam Allen.

Pray for the shut-ins that the light of Christ may give them joy: C.J. Christian, Joan Olson, Bob & Mona Ayer, Gregg & Jeannine Lingle, Robert Schorn, Nora Vanhala, Lou Landino.

Pray for our bishops Elizabeth Eaton & Shelley Bryan Wee, our presiding ministers, Philip Lee and Barry Fritts, our choirmaster Dean Hard and our cantor Andrew King, that they may be strengthened in faith, love and the holy office to which they have been called. Pray for our church council and our call committee, that God will Guide and strengthen them in these days.

Pray that God would give us hearts which find joy in service and in celebration of stewardship. Pray that God would work within you to become a good steward of your time, your talents and finances. Pray to strengthen the stewardship of our congregation in these same ways.

Pray for the hungry, ignored, abused, and homeless. Pray for the mercy of God for these people, and for all in Christ's church to see and help those who are in distress.

Pray for our country, for unbelievers, the addicted, the sexually abused and harassed, the homeless, the hungry and the unemployed.

Pray that God will bless you through the lives of the saints: St. Matthias, Apostle.

A Treasury of Prayers

O God...open our eyes that we may see what thou wouldst have us see in all the world about us, and our ears that we may hear what word thou wouldst speak in him who is that Word, even Jesus Christ, thy Son, our Lord. Amen



The Presentation of Our Lord

On Thursday, February 2nd we celebrate *The Presentation of our Lord* . This feast day revolves around a prophecy in Luke 2:34-35 that relates a stirring story about Christ's ministry. It says he will be spoken against, and that he will cause the rise and fall of many. Honor God this day for the wisdom of this prophecy.



The Transfiguration of Our Lord

The Last Sunday in Epiphany, February 19th, is the Transfiguration of Our Lord. On this day we behold the splendor of Christ surrounded by the glory of God. Study Matthew 17:1-9 to learn more about the time when Moses and Elijah appeared to Jesus, and the mysterious cloud from which God's voice tells us, "This is my Son, the beloved with whom I am well pleased; listen to him!"

