

## From the Pastor's Desk

Dear Friends in Christ,

A couple of weeks ago, as the season of Lent was at roughly the half-way point, the Lord blessed us with a couple of beautiful late winter/early spring days. On one of them, the temperatures reached into the 50s, and Julie and I made a point of taking a walk to the lake, our first one in probably several months. It didn't take me long to discover how truly ready for spring I was.

Unfortunately, in the two weeks since, the weather has shown that, while it may now be spring on the calendar, spring temperatures are not exactly here to stay. Instead we have seen more cold, more snow, and even a little bit of ice. I had to pull my heavy winter coat out over the weekend in order to be able to walk the dog. And today when I left the house, after getting a welcome break for at least a few days, I did so once again in my winter boots. We are close, I suppose. But we aren't quite there.

As this newsletter goes to print, we are close to the end of the Lenten season. Our last Wednesday Lenten service is behind us. And by the time many of you are reading this, Palm Sunday will be, as well. The end of our Lenten journey is close. Easter Sunday is just a week and a half away as I am writing this, and we may be ready to put Lent behind us. But we aren't quite there.

The season of Lent is an important one, giving us both additional opportunities to meditate upon our Lord's Passion and additional opportunities to hear the Word of God. During our midweek series this year, we delved into the epistle of First Peter and took a closer look at six different passages in which the Apostle Peter describes us as Christians on our journey through this life to our heavenly home:

- 1:8-12 – As Christians we yearn for our true home in heaven.
- 1:17-19 – God is calling us home holy, as He is holy.
- 2:9-10 – God is calling us home as His peculiar people.
- 2:24-25 – God is calling us home suffering, as Jesus suffered for us.
- 3:8-17 – God is calling us home blessing others and being blessed in return.
- 5:6-11 – God is calling us home, and His grace sustains us towards the glory of heaven.

As we leave our Wednesday services behind, which help us to mark the weeks of the Lenten season and to prepare for a truly joyful celebration of Easter, the final part of our Lenten journey includes Holy Week. Together with Easter Sunday, the days of Holy Week, especially Holy (or Maundy)

Thursday and Good Friday, form the heart of the entire church year. Our faith as Christians revolves around the events of those three days: the institution and celebration of the Lord's Supper; our Savior's betrayal, arrest, trial, suffering, crucifixion and death; and, of course, His victorious resurrection from the dead on Easter morning.

For this reason, while we may wish we could just bypass the rest of our late winter/early spring weather for better temperatures (as I am typing this, it is being reported that a tornado has just destroyed a mobile home park in Oklahoma, so maybe the March weather in northern Michigan isn't so bad, after all), there is no reason for us to dread the latter part of the Lenten season. Nor is there a reason for us to attempt either to hurry through it or to bypass it altogether. It is instead a tremendous privilege, and at the same time incredibly faith-building, to have the opportunity to ponder again the history-changing events of the final days of our Lord's life. After all, everything He did, He did with us in mind and because He loves each of us immensely.

As those sacred days on the Church Year calendar approach, it is also true that only when we have knelt humbly at our Lord's Table and received His holy body and blood into our hands and mouths, and only when we have watched and prayed with Him in the Garden of Gethsemane, and only when we have stood at the foot of His cross, can we truly fathom the depth of joy and hope the news of His empty tomb brings on Easter morning.

We will be there soon enough, and it will be rewarding to get there. Until then, I plan to do my best to appreciate what is left of this year's Lenten journey; these are the days on which we remember especially how our salvation was won. I invite you to join me. If you can't quite bring yourself to appreciate our lingering winter weather, however, I'll understand.

In the Service of our Crucified and Risen Savior,

Pastor Derek Riddle

## Holy Week Schedule

**Palm Sunday – March 29** 9:30 a.m.

• Scripture & Song Festival

**Maundy Thursday Service (with Holy Communion) – April 2** 6:30 p.m.

**Good Friday Service – April 3** 1:00 p.m.

**Easter Sunrise – April 5** at 7:00 a.m. (followed by an Easter Breakfast in the Fellowship Hall)

**Easter Sunday (with Holy Communion) – April 5** at 9:30 a.m.

*Please mark your calendars and plan to attend these special services.*

## BOARD OF ELDERS

Time! It doesn't stand still for anyone. This year's Lenten Season will soon come to a close, and time will take us into Holy Week with Maundy Thursday (service at 6:30 pm) and Good Friday (service at 1 pm) and again time will take us to Easter Sunday (services at 7 am and 9:30 am), the day Christ has risen! He has risen indeed!

We give thanks to God for all the blessings that He gives us, especially during this Lenten season where we had the opportunity to meditate on God's Word with the mid-week church service. We thank God for all the LOVE He showed us and continues to show us by sending His Son to suffer and die for us. During Lent we heard what Jesus did for us through the Word that we listened to during the church service and through the Word that we read in our Lenten devotions. We can give thanks to God for the love He shows us by showing that love to others by being a caring family (to all) reaching out (to all) and sharing Christ's love (with all) and by teaching God's Word (to all).

Time! Take time to give thanks to God for His Son who suffered and died for us and then rose on Easter Sunday so that we may live forever - with Him in Heaven. Christ is risen! He has risen indeed!

The Elders are here to serve all members of our congregation. Talk to an Elder if you have any questions or concerns.

We are looking for more men to serve as Elders of Peace Lutheran. We will mentor you along the way to becoming an Elder.

## The Lutheran Hour

The Lutheran Hour can be heard locally on Sunday mornings at 7:00 a.m. on 92.5 FM and at 11:00 a.m. on 1450 AM. You can also listen on-line or via podcast at [www.lutheranhour.org](http://www.lutheranhour.org). Now you can also download the new Lutheran Hour Mobile App to your mobile device. Instructions for doing so can be found at [www.lhm.org/apps/](http://www.lhm.org/apps/).

### April 5

"One Step Ahead"

Lutheran Hour Speaker: Rev. Gregory Seltz

Your future is not a mystery. Our risen Savior is one step ahead and He leads you to eternal life.

(Mark 16:1-8)

### April 12

"God Always Shows Up"

Lutheran Hour Speaker: Rev. Gregory Seltz

Jesus shows up in your life today with His gifts of forgiveness and new life.

(John 20:19-38)

### April 19

"It's Not Over 'til Jesus Says It's Over"

Lutheran Hour Speaker: Rev. Gregory Seltz

Our risen Savior enables us to hold on when troubled times tempt us to bail out.

(Luke 24:36-49)

### April 26

"Open-Minded and Accepting"

Lutheran Hour Speaker: Rev. Gregory Seltz

Tolerance and open-mindedness are values much touted, but truth is even better.

(Acts 4:12)

## Stewardship Corner

"And on receiving if they grumbled at the master of the house, saying, 'These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.' But he replied to one of them, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong. Did you not agree with me for a denarius? . . . I choose to give to this last worker as I give to you? Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or do you begrudge my generosity?'" (Matthew 20:11-15).

Entry into the Kingdom of heaven is by grace not by works. And this is the point of the parable. Those hired first received the same wage as those hired last. Those hired first, even though they bore the heat of the day, received the same wage as those hired last. Entry into the kingdom comes by grace, by the gracious call and invitation of the owner of the vineyard.

And we chafe against this. We, like those hired first, object to the master's decision. We begrudge him because of his generosity. We think that those who labored longer should receive a greater wage. And we protest that it's not fair. But that is precisely the point. It's not fair. It's by grace. It's given from God's undeserved love and kindness, not by merit. So we should rejoice. For to ask for fairness, to ask to be treated by what deserve and have earned, is simply to ask for hell.

For God owes us nothing. For by grace you are saved, by his undeserved love and mercy. And even though it was undeserved, that doesn't mean it was cheap. It wasn't cheap, but costly. It cost God the Father His own Son. It cost the Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, His very life. God's grace is costly grace. It costs us nothing but the cost for God was great. For it was achieved by the shedding of the holy and precious blood and the innocent suffering and death of Jesus. And it is by that shed blood that God by grace calls us to be His own. It is by that death that God by grace gives us entrance into His kingdom.

He doesn't owe us. We're not entitled to anything from God. He is not indebted to us. We are indebted to Him. For we have not lived as He mattered most. We have not loved Him with our whole heart, body, mind, and soul, with all that we are and all that we have. We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We justly deserve his temporal and eternal punishments. But unlike us, He doesn't hold this debt over our heads. He has instead place our debt upon the head of His Son, and His Son has taken it willingly so that we would be forgiven and free.

For reasons all His own God has determined to love us. He has taken the punishment we deserve upon himself. He has given gifts to those whom He knows would take it for granted. This is grace. He is kind, forgiven, steadfast. He is slow to anger and abounding in love. For the kingdom of heaven is entered by grace, by His giving not our earning.

He is allowed to do what He chooses with what belongs to Him. But it doesn't work the same way with us. For what belongs to us? Nothing. We belong to Him, by water and His Name. He purchased and won us from sin, death, and the devil by His holy, precious blood and His innocent suffering and death, so that we would be His own special possession. Thus, we have nothing of our own, it all belongs to Him. We are stewards of what He has given to us. And so we give of

ourselves, all that we are and all that we have, to those whom God has placed us to care for in our vocations of members of a family, society, and the church.

And if He has done all this for us, how can we not do with everything that He gave us likewise?

Taken from [www.lcms.org](http://www.lcms.org)

## April Anniversaries

	<u>Date</u>	<u>Yrs</u>
David & Kelly Crull	4/5	12
Chet & Brenda Karsten	4/11	51
Alvis & Norma Wirgau	4/14	59
Ed & Ruth Rothe	4/15	48
John & Janice Brown	4/24	33

## April Birthdays

Marie McDonald	4/1
Izabelle Loughran	4/2
Julie Schwiesow	4/3
Linda Summers	4/5
Laurie Rex	4/6
Keri Coolman	4/7
Cloe Ehrke	4/7
Marsha Grulke	4/8
Ava Fenstermaker	4/9
Darlene Nowicki	4/9
Glen Roeske	4/9
Deanna Dimick	4/11
Matthew Russ	4/11
Drew Flewelling	4/12
Kathy Zimmerman	4/14
Lee Bingle	4/17
Ivan Buck	4/17
Leeny Ries	4/17
Jacob Brown	4/18
Larry Rhode	4/18
Henry Srebnik	4/18
Demi-Jo Flewelling	4/19
Shelby Schleben	4/19
Shawn Grulke	4/21
Irene Radtke	4/21
Carol Mosher	4/22
Art Relitz	4/22
Terry Flewelling	4/23
Tom Selke	4/23
Wayne Augsburger	4/24
Dwayne Olden	4/24
Halee Witkowski	4/25
Julie Riddle	4/26
Doris Dowdell	4/29
Ramona Suszek	4/29
Kim Yarch	4/29
Connie Dembny	4/30
Ginny Rothe	4/30



## “Glorified Coffee Hour”

to benefit Lee Bingle’s mission trip to Kenya  
May 19-June 4

### Sunday, April 12, 2015

The mission is Kenya REAL  
(visit on facebook)

R - reaching out  
E - empowering  
A - acting in  
L - love

to help the people in the slums of Kenya.

### While there, we will be:

- helping at a free medical clinic
- building playground equipment and chicken coops
- working with the children in the school
- working at the feeding program (Children are fed twice a day)
- helping women make jewelry which provides some income
- washing the women’s feet (following Jesus’ example) to show our love
- doing whatever needs to be done to enable the people

Lee asks for your prayers during this time. If you are unable to attend the fundraiser but would still like to help, there are envelopes available on the narthex table for donations. (The majority of funds donated will directly benefit the Kenyan people being served.) Please make checks payable to Thrivent; put “Lee” in the memo area.

**Many, many thanks to everyone for helping make this mission trip possible.**