

Good News of Peace

March 2015 A.D.

A Caring Family ✦ Reaching Out ✦ Sharing Christ's Love ✦ Teaching God's Word!

From the Pastor's Desk

Dear Friends in Christ,

One final time I would like to use this space to review the last of the key points from the Vision Cast event in October for the benefit of the entire congregation. Held in conjunction with our Mission Festival Sunday, this event provided an opportunity for our members to be involved in our current strategic planning discussion by sharing a few ideas for ways in which we might better carry out our mission of caring, reaching, sharing, and teaching.

Prior to that discussion, it was my job to answer five questions in order to set the tone for the congregational discussion that followed. Those questions were "who are we?", "what is our address?", "what time is it?", "what is God calling us to do?", and "what is our strategy?" Over the past four months (November-February), I have reviewed how I attempted to answer the first four of those questions (previous months' newsletters remain available on our web site, if you would still like to read the four previous columns). This month I will conclude this series of columns with the fifth and final question, "what is our strategy?"

What is our strategy for figuring out how to continue to faithfully carry out what God is calling us to do as the unique congregation we are, in the particular community in which we are located, and at this particular time in our congregation's history?

We are already on the right track, I believe, and that should be encouraging. We have made a lot of

progress over the last roughly two years. We have adopted a revised mission statement and have been working hard to use it. I have been hearing more and more, throughout the congregation, about how this or that event or activity fits in with ... caring, reaching, sharing, or teaching. This is exciting to hear and to see!

We have a committed core of congregational leaders who has been hard at work on a strategic plan, especially over the last year. I thank and praise God for them, for their commitment of time and effort over these past months, and for their enthusiasm and excitement! Please keep them, and the entire planning process, in your personal prayers.

During the course of the planning process thus far, we have adopted the four areas mentioned above as our ministry "targets": caring, reaching, sharing, and teaching. And we have started to ask important questions within each of those areas and to identify what kind of congregation we want to be in the future and how we're going to get there.

At the Vision Cast event in October, the roughly 60 members in attendance had an important opportunity to contribute to the planning process by starting to help us answer those questions. As the planning process continues in the coming months, those valuable member responses will be helping us to expand the vision for our congregation's ministry, so that it isn't just my vision for Peace, or the vision of a few of our members, but our vision together. Most importantly, however, we want our vision to be informed by God's Word and guided by prayer, because ultimately we want it to be His

vision for our congregation's ministry.

What's next? At our monthly meetings this year, our Church Council will be setting aside time specifically to continue the planning process. Our next step is to sort through the member responses provided at the Vision Cast event. We will be doing so one category at a time – first caring, then reaching, then sharing, then teaching. In fact, we started this process already at our February meeting by discussing the caring category and had a very productive discussion.

Once we have worked our way through the four categories, we will be finalizing our strategic plan and then starting to establish priorities. We will be doing our best to report our progress to the congregation, and to invite additional congregational input where it may be beneficial, as we go. Again, please keep this process, and those involved, in your personal prayers.

In conclusion, I will say again that I continue to be excited about the work the Lord has before us in the months and years ahead. I pray that you are, too! And I invite you to continue to pray with me that the Lord will make His vision for our congregation's ministry our vision.

His richest blessings to each and every one of you in Christ, our Savior, especially as we journey together in the coming weeks through the Lenten season and to His cross!

In His Service,

Pastor Derek Riddle

The Season of Lent

As you know by now, the season of Lent is underway with Ash Wednesday, February 18. Below you will find the remaining schedule for this year's mid-week and special services. Please note the **time change** for our mid-week services this year.

2015 Lenten Schedule

Lenten Midweek #3-6 – March 4, 11, 18 & 25

5:30-6:15 p.m. Pre-Service Supper
(Fellowship Hall)

6:30 p.m. Mid-Week Service

Theme: Calling Us Home – based upon selected passages from 1 Peter

- March 4 – “Calling Us Home... Peculiar”
- March 11 – “Calling Us Home... Suffering”
- March 18 – “Calling Us Home... Blessed and Blessing”
- March 25 – “Calling Us Home... Grace toward Glory”

Palm Sunday – March 29 at 9:30 a.m.

- A Service of Scripture & Song

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

Good Friday Service – April 3 at 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.

2015 Lenten devotional booklets, from Lutheran Indian Ministries, were placed in your mailboxes in February. Extra copies, for visitors or for members to share with family, friends, or neighbors, are available both in the narthex and in the church office.

BOARD OF ELDERS

The Board of Elders work with Pastor in the spiritual growth and care of the members and the worship life of the congregation. We are here to serve you and give help in any way we can. Please don't hesitate to contact an Elder with your questions or concerns. The Elders are divided into five Elder teams. The teams with their members under their care are on the bulletin board by Pastor's office. If you would like a visit please call an Elder. The Elders

are looking for men of the congregation to prayerfully consider serving as an Elder of Peace Lutheran. Randy Martens will be moving from the area because of his job. The Elders will mentor you along the way and answer any questions. They have a role description for Elder and also a handbook on the Elders' duties and responsibilities for you to read and learn more what being an Elder is all about.

A reminder on our midweek church services and the new starting time of 6:30 pm church service with a soup service at 5:30 pm. Come hear God's Word right after soup and fellowship with our brothers and sisters in Christ.

BOARD OF STEWARDSHIP

The Board of Stewardship's responsibilities are to encourage the congregation to offer their time, talent and treasures according to their ability. The purpose of our existence here on earth is to do what Jesus showed us. He showed us His love and gave us JOY, PEACE, PATIENCE and whatever else we need to be disciples for Him. Jesus gave up everything for us and took upon Himself a crown of thorns and the cross to win us back to be His own. As we continue through the Lenten season, we learn and are reminded of everything that God has done for us through His Son Jesus. God does it all, but He uses us as instruments to show His love to others. Using some of the time God gives us in attending church, where we hear God's Word, and by attending Bible Study, we learn even more. This also strengthens our faith so that we will become more talented instruments for our Heavenly Father in sharing His love with others.

Let's go! Ring the bells, strum the guitars, beat the drums and make some noise by being the

instruments God wants us to be, using.....our time, talents and treasures wisely.

PALM SUNDAY

This Palm Sunday we would like to present 'the Passion of our Lord' through song and Scripture. The service will involve many members of the church with their many different gifts of music and the Scripture reading of the Passion Story. We hope you will join us for this special service.

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. 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/.

March 1

"The True Author of Your Life Story"
Lutheran Hour Speaker: Rev. Gregory Seltz
When Christ's story becomes yours by faith, life changes.
(2 Corinthians 7:10)

March 8

"Lifted Up"
Lutheran Hour Speaker: Rev. Gregory Seltz
When sinful pride lays us low, God's grace in Christ lifts us up again.
(Psalm 103:8-12)

March 15

"The Power of God's Enduring Forgiveness and Grace"
Lutheran Hour Speaker: Rev. Gregory Seltz
Jesus offers reconciliation and restoration to those overcome by trouble and regret.
(John 16:33)

March 22

"No Regrets? Follow Jesus!"
Lutheran Hour Speaker: Rev. Gregory Seltz
In the end, forgiven sinners will not regret having followed Jesus.
(Matthew 16:21-26)

March 29

"Show Me"

Speaker Emeritus of The Lutheran Hour:

Rev. Ken Klaus

Jesus really did die and three days later He really did conquer death through His resurrection.

(John 19:17-18)

Stewardship Corner

Why does giving seem so difficult? In reality, it isn't. But we make it difficult. We make it difficult because we're afraid. We're afraid that it isn't worth the investment. We're afraid that what we give to the church might be wasted, or that we could use it for something better, something more enjoyable, something more real, more tangible, more immediate, even more important, something more important than God and His gifts.

The point is this: We struggle with giving because we don't believe as we should. We should fear, love, and trust in God above all things. And so we fail to give because we don't love God with our whole heart, soul, and mind. We fail to give because we don't fear Him more than we fear other things. We fail to give because we don't trust Him more than we trust the things we can more immediately see, taste, and touch. We don't trust that He will give us everything (EVERYTHING!) we need to support this body and life. For if we did fear, love, and trust in God above all things, we would see and know that all the other things that vie for our time, our talents, and our treasures pale in comparison to the joy of the real, tangible, immediate love God has showered upon us in the proclamation of the forgiveness of sins on account of His Son's death, resurrection, and ascension.

The only proper response to this is repentance: to confess our sin, our stinginess, our lack of fear, love, and faith in God promises, and to trust in Him to help us bring our desire to do better to fruition. For God is not holding out on us. He never has. He never will. For if He has given you His only Son, how will He not also give you all things? He will. It is His promise. And these promises are sure and certain.

The reality is that God doesn't need our giving. He doesn't need our time, our talents, our treasures. He is God. We are not. He can do all things without our help. And even what we do give, even the good and righteous things we do accomplish, these are but filthy rags, as the prophet Isaiah tells us (Isaiah 64:6). Our gifts to God and to the Church are like a child's gift of dandelions to his mother. They are weeds, which most of us spend an entire summer trying to rid our yards of

them. And yet despite the fact that they are weeds, mothers always receive them with a smile and with joy. They will even put them in vases and display them on tables and countertops. They will recount to friends and other family members how their child gave them flowers, just to say I love you and I'm thankful for all you do.

Our Lord, too, receives with joy and a smile the gifts we give in thanksgiving and praise of what He has done. Even though these gifts are but weeds, filthy rags, and despite the fact that He doesn't need them to accomplish what He wills, He receives them and puts it to use for our and our neighbors good. That is the real joy of giving. He doesn't need us. Yet He makes use of us, He employs us in His service despite it. He makes all that we do—our giving, our work, our service to our family and friends and neighbors holy. And He blesses it for their and our good and to the glory of His name.

So is giving so hard? Nah, it's like giving dandelions to our mothers. And when dinner is ready, when the food is on the table, she'll gladly have a vase full of them right in the middle. The Lord has prepared a table for you. Dinner is ready. The table is set. His Body and Blood is given to strengthen and nourish you. And right there, where Christ is with us, are the dandelions we gave. He has put them to use for our good, for our forgiveness, for our life in Him.

Taken from www.lcms.org

March Anniversaries

	Date	Yrs
Terry & Norma Flewelling	3/6	44
Eric & JoAnne Muller	3/11	15
Chris & Denise Flewelling	3/17	3

March Birthdays

Mark Karsten	3/3
Stacie Papineau	3/4
Jennie Lewandowski	3/6
Debbie Rothe-Mayer	3/6
Jane LaLonde	3/7
Joshua Kandal	3/8
Kay Bruning	3/9
Bailey Srebnik	3/9
Hannah Schaedig	3/10
Cinda Grulke	3/11
Matthew Flanery	3/18
Tom Latz	3/19
Debra Russ	3/20
Matthew Russ	3/20
Patrick Altman	3/21
Mary Primak	3/21
Terry Scranton	3/21

Justina Brown	3/22
Althea Luebke	3/23
Bob Bingle	3/24
Kathy Wilson	3/26
Ruth Wright	3/26
Riley Felix	3/27
Jordon Flery	3/28
Elton Schalk	3/28
Jordan Zempel	3/28
Darin Ehrke	3/30
Chet Karsten	3/30

If you notice your name is missing from the birthday or anniversary sections, please let the church office know so we can update our records... and celebrate these milestones with you!!

Your Board's Name Here

As you may have noticed, most months' Good News of Peace includes the following regular features: "From the Pastor's Desk," updates from the Boards of Elders and Stewardship, a "Stewardship Corner," the Lutheran Hours schedule, and birthdays and anniversaries. Why are there not more features included?

First, a brief word about the difference between the "Board of Stewardship" section and the "Stewardship Corner," as some have asked about: why do we need both? The answer is that the Board of Stewardship paragraph is written each month by one of the members of our Board of Stewardship and is intended to focus upon what is going on here at Peace. The "Stewardship Corner" comes from the Synod and is intended to tie the subject of stewardship to where we are in either the Church Year or the calendar year. They serve different purposes.

As for the rest of the newsletter's contents, we would welcome any of our other Boards and Committees to submit either regular or periodic updates to be included. Board and Committee members, why not consider using GNOP to keep the congregation informed about what you are currently discussing and/or working on? See Pastor or Peggy anytime with questions.

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