

Our Redeemer's Voice

February 2024



ST. VALENTINE'S DAY & THE FORTY DAYS OF LENT

We get to celebrate a neat, perhaps odd, confluence of dates this year. Ash Wednesday and St. Valentine's Day are the same day this year. It has happened before and will happen again. And it happens with some other dates. Easter and Tax Day, Easter and April Fool's. Easter and the opening day of baseball season. Good Friday and the Annunciation of our Lord. That last one may be a little more obscure, which is okay. You can ask me about it sometime.

It is thought that St. Valentine was put to death on Feb. 14th. And it is the custom that the commemoration of a saint occurs on their 'heavenly birthday', dying around the year 270 AD. St. Valentine was a Christian priest and a medical doctor. He was accustomed to caring for body and soul. But he lived and worked during a time of persecution by the Roman empire. It is thought that on the day of his execution, having heard that the daughter of his jailer was grieving the thought of his death because she had come to love and appreciate Valentine, Valentine wrote her words of encouragement from Scripture. And the note was supposedly written on a torn piece of paper in the form of a heart. (And from this custom eventually Joyce C. Hall would create a greeting card empire in his adopted hometown of Kansas City MO.)



LOVE & SACRIFICE!

On the day of hearts and love and candy and so many other things, some of us spend Tuesday getting the grease out of our house (Mardi Gras = Greasy Tuesday), contemplating what sacrifices we'll make these next forty days, preparing to make a penitential journey, and preparing to look both inward and outward while receiving the incomparable mercy of God the Lord.

Lent is a holy time. (Again, if you call me Pastor Obvious I won't disagree.) Lent is a time set apart. It has some similarities to Advent, which is also a time to get ready. Advent and Lent help us prepare for joyous festivals- Christmas and Easter. We prepare by spending time focusing on the necessity of things. We needed a Savior, and that is precisely who was in the manger. And the time for salvation arrives, as Jesus Christ is crucified for our forgiveness and is raised for our justification.

Lent may be a time for self-denial. We recall all the things that were taken away from Jesus, namely dignity and respect, and perhaps we learn to live with a little more simplicity and discipline.

Lent can also be a time for *caritas*. Perhaps you see in that Latin word our word 'charity'. Charity is love. Christians live as mirrors, reflecting the love we receive from the Lord, shining it out to the people around us. Lent is a time for

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Reverend Jeremy Loesch

(From page 1) increased charity, for alms-giving. Alms? These are the physical and monetary gifts that are given to those in need. How do we do this? A simple explanation is that at lunchtime, you deny yourself the combo meal and opt for a sandwich and a drink. You keep track of the money you save and when Lent is completed you give that money to a charitable organization, a service agency, food bank, social service organization, or a person in need. That's an act of love, a way to put your self-denial to use for someone else.

We'll have extra time for worship, prayer, and meditation. Ash Wednesday begins with worship at 7pm, with the Imposition of Ashes and the celebration of the Lord's Supper. Each following Wednesday's service will also begin at 7pm. Stay tuned for the theme of those Wednesday services as that is still being worked on.

Worship will look a little different than it does in Epiphany or Easter. Penitential purple will be seen. We will put away the Church's Alleluia for a time. The hymn of praise will be silent. We won't like it. But we'll also know that this is just for a time, and that times don't always last. It is not always Lent. But for a while it will be. And we'll welcome it for the opportunities we are given. And we'll mark the time until the great Day of Resurrection!

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Blessings—Pastor

LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE — VOLUNTEER!



AN INVITATION TO YOU AND YOUR FAMILY

- * Please open your heart to receive the joy of God's love as a Team Member of the Altar Guild.
- * Participation can be either as couples, families, or individuals. Everyone can become a servant in this privileged service of the Holy Communion.
- * The work of the Altar Guild is a spiritual service. At the Altar, our Lord Jesus delivers His true body and blood into our mouths. His body and blood forgives our sins, strengthens our faith, binds us to the Lord, and unities us with each other.
- * Service in the Altar Guild is a wonderful opportunity for service. It is a demonstration of the beauty and majesty of God.
- * A desire to beautify the house of God is a desire of God and for God. He is present in our church. Through His Word and Sacraments, Christ comes to us as we are gathered together in His name. He speaks to us, we speak to Him. He gives to us, we give to Him. God is present.
- * The Altar Guild handles holy vessels, items that are called 'externals'. The externals are not essential, because not every church uses the same elements but the externals are important. They express themselves in outward acts.
- * Through His Word and the Sacraments, Christ comes to us as we are gathered together in His name.
- * Please consider this service for our church and serving our Lord. A sign-up sheet is posted on the bulletin board in the Narthex for team participation.
- * Sunday Communion is held the first and third Sundays of the month. Special Communion Services may also apply.
- * You may contact me with my phone or email found in church directory.

—God's blessings, Lina

WHAT IS GOD ASKING OF US?



This Daily Devotion was written by Dr. Kari Vo.

Corinthians 7:29-31, 35 - This is what I mean, brothers: the appointed time has grown very short. From now on, let those who have wives live as though they had none, and those who mourn as though they were not mourning, and those who rejoice as though they were not rejoicing, and those who buy as though they had no goods, and those who deal with the world as though they had no dealings with it. For the present form of this world is passing away. I want you to be free from anxieties. The unmarried man is anxious about the things of the Lord, how to please the Lord. But the married man is anxious about worldly things, how to please his wife, and his interests are divided. And the unmarried or betrothed woman is anxious about the things of the Lord, how to be holy in body and spirit. But the married woman is anxious about worldly things, how to please her husband. I say this for your own benefit, not to lay any restraint upon you, but to promote good order and to secure your undivided devotion to the Lord.

Have you ever played that game where you imagine what three things you would grab if your house was on fire? It forces you to focus on what's really important. No time to deal with the dirty dishes—I need to grab the baby pictures. We can replace the plates, but I want Grandma's casserole dish. And for goodness' sake, take the dog!

It's harder to play that game on a daily basis—to sort through your mountain of errands, concerns, and busywork to figure out what truly matters, what is the one thing God wants me to be doing today. And yet, that's part of our mandate as Christians, isn't it? Figuring out what Jesus wants us of us, so our one precious life here on earth gets used for His glory as effectively as possible.

I think Jesus must have done much the same thing, given the fact that He would only be with us on earth for thirty-some years. That's a really short time to do all He wanted to do—to teach, to preach, to heal, to convert, and best of all, to save us from the power of evil through His own death and resurrection. Such an urgent mission didn't leave Him time for a lot of extras; obviously He never married or had children, and He arranged His life so that He could be as free as possible to do what God wanted from Him.

What, then, is God asking from us? That's going to be between each of us and the Holy Spirit to figure out. In my case, it involves being married, raising a son, and caring for a refugee church, as well as writing. In your case, what? Whatever it is, God will guide you to it. And you can do it with gladness, knowing that it helps more and more people to hear about Jesus—because He is the One who matters most of all.

WE PRAY: Dear Savior, set my heart and my eyes on You, so that I do the really important things—the ones that make a difference for You and Your people. Amen.

Reflection Questions:

1. How do you prioritize things in your life?
2. Paul highlights the differences between those who are married and those who are single. Why do you think he points to that distinction?
3. Do you try to begin each day with a gameplan, so to speak, in respect to your Christian life and how you will spend your time?

OUR REDEEMER NEWS & NOTES



“SOUPER” BOWLS FOR LUTHERAN COMMUNITY SERVICES – Beginning Sunday we will collect cans of soup for Lutheran Community Services. Any soup, chili, or soup like meal will fill the bill. Place it on the table in the overflow room. You can place donation on the Kansas City Chiefs side or the San Francisco 49ers side. Which team will get the most cans of soup before Super Bowl? Join us in fun as we help others in need!

BREAK OUT YOUR RAKES & POLISH— Save the dates! March 16 & 23. Easter is early this year, so is the church yard clean up. Bring your rakes on the 16th at 10 a.m. If it's still a bit chilly, we promise to break out the coffee and cocoa. If it is raining, or snowing, we will work inside on windows and pews. If we do work outside on the 16th, we will work inside on the 23rd. Please contact Bob to let him know you will be there. “Many hands make light work!” Remember, both days are work dates. Mark your calendar.



MONTHLY FELLOWSHIP/SOCIAL HOUR—Social & fellowship hour is held on the 3rd Sunday each month. We ask that 2 to 3 people bring items such as simple snacks, desserts, finger foods, etc. Next fellowship is February 18.—*Lina*

BIBLE STUDY—Every Sunday at 8:45 a.m. You can also participate online as we explore the book of Isaiah.

DEADLINE—For information to be included in Sunday's bulletin is Tue. morning each week; newsletter deadline is 20th of each month.

OFFICE CLOSED—February 19th for Federal Holiday.

BUILD A BAG SEEKS SUPPLIES —We are in short supply for razors, hats, gloves, toothpaste, ChapStick, socks, small hand towels and cotton crochet thread. There is a basket in the overflow room to place these items. Join us on Tuesdays at 10 a.m. All are welcome to help make sleeping bags for the homeless. No sewing experience required. Thank You – Marybeth, Lina, and Ruth

LUTHERAN WOMAN IN MISSION— Spring Rally Saturday April 20, 2024 at Our Redeemer Lutheran Church 9 a.m.—2 p.m. See Page 5.

AIR CONDITIONING/HEATING PROTOCOLS—Please shut all doors to rooms not being used to help with cooling efficiency during the summer and winter months.—*Bob*

COUNCIL MEETING— February 20 via Zoom.

LENT, HOLY WEEK & EASTER SERVICES *DIVINE SERVICE 3 BEGINS*



ASH WEDNESDAY SOUP AND SANDWICH SUPPER (6:15PM)— On Feb. 14, Our Redeemer Lutheran Church will host a soup supper to be held before the service. Service begins at 7 p.m. Everyone is invited to attend for worship and fellowship. If you wish to participate a signup sheet will be available in the Narthex for food items. You may also contact me by phone or e-mail. This information is found in the church directory.

WEDNESDAY MIDWEEK LENTEN SERVICES—Services begin at 7 p.m. followed by fellowship. We hope everyone will be able to attend and hear the blessings of God's word. God's blessings to all. Congregational Life-*Lina*

THE THEME FOR LENT IS "BE GRACIOUS TO ME"

ASH WEDNESDAY— (2/14) Service at 7 p.m. Join us for light fare and fellowship prior to service at 6:15 p.m.

FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT— (2/18) Communion 10 a.m. Join in fellowship following service.

LENT WEDNESDAY— (2/21) Service at 7 p.m. Join us fellowship following the service..

SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT— (2/25) Worship

LENT WEDNESDAY— 2/28) Service at 7 p.m. Join us fellowship following the service.

THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT—(3/3) Communion

LENT WEDNESDAY— (3/6) Service at 7 p.m. Join us fellowship following the service.

FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT— (3/10) Worship

LENT WEDNESDAY— (3/13) Service at 7 p.m. Join us fellowship following the service..

FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT—(3/17) Communion 10 a.m. Join in fellowship following service.

LENT WEDNESDAY— (3/20) Join us fellowship following the service.

PALM SUNDAY— (3/24)

MAUNDY THURSDAY— (3/28) Service at 7 p.m. Join us fellowship following the service..

GOOD FRIDAY— (3/29) Service at 7 p.m. Join us fellowship following the service..

EASTER SUNDAY— (3/31) Communion 10 a.m.



What An Opportunity! "Serve the LORD with gladness!" (Psalm 100:2a)

Have you had a unique opportunity in your life? Perhaps you have been blessed to attend college, to advance in your job, to travel to a special part of the world on a mission trip, or to use your skills and passion to help people in your community. Opportunity is defined as "a favorable juncture of circumstances," "an occasion or situation which makes it possible to do something, or the possibility of doing something" (Cambridge English Dictionary and Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary 2018).

Whatever opportunities you have enjoyed, today there is an opportunity for each of us. That opportunity or "possibility of doing something" is Lent! Lent is an opportunity. Lent is a favorable juncture of time where we are given the gift of 40 days to prepare for Easter. This opportunity begins on Ash Wednesday. For 40 weekdays, we pause, remember, and contemplate what God has done and continues to do for us. So, what might be your "opportunity" this Lenten season?

Lent may mean attending Lenten services where we focus on repentance. When we fully repent, God graciously forgives our sins and releases us from the guilt and sorrow our sins cause us. Knowing God forgives our sins for Jesus' sake, we are filled with joy and thanksgiving that leads us to abundant praise and worship for our great God.

Lent may also mean giving up something. Fasting is one such way to do this. In Matthew 6:16-18, Jesus talks about the proper way to fast. For some, giving up a type of food or other item for the Lenten season is a daily and constant reminder for them of Jesus' total sacrifice for us when He gave up His life on the cross to rescue us from sin and eternal death.

But instead of giving up something for Lent, this season can also be an opportunity for each of us to also consider what we can add to our lives that is good. A good addition might be to write notes (40 of them for each day in the Lenten season) to thank people in your life or tell them you are thinking of them and praying for them that day. Another good addition might mean reading a different psalm each day of Lent as your daily prayer. The Lenten season can be an opportunity to rise and shine 15 minutes early and spend the time in God's presence or even give up a 30-minute television show to add more time in His Word. Or motivated by Christ's own acts of kindness and love, you might wish to do an act of kindness for another person.

Another something we can add during Lent might be to find items in your home, maybe even 40 of them, to give to a service organization in your community that can give them to help those in need. Or perhaps you could encourage members of your family to share some "out of the normal" nice things with one another. For example, instead of just saying "Thank you" or "Good job," take the opportunity to tell your spouse, "I love how you help with the kids." Or tell your kids, "I love how you work hard on your homework," or "I love how you make others feel they are special."

The Lenten season can be a new opportunity for you, "an occasion to do something" memorable and meaningful. Whether you choose to give up something or choose to add something good, spend time in prayer and thanksgiving as the joyous celebration of Jesus' resurrection approaches. Ask the Holy Spirit to use your Lenten "opportunity" to prepare your heart for Easter in a way that is meaningful and that deepens your relationship with God. Enjoy your opportunity this Lenten season!

Prayer: Dear God, may we always, and in every opportunity, be Your willing servants. In Jesus' name. Amen.

What An Opportunity! Written by Past LWML President Linda Reiser, Grand Island, Nebraska Published by Lutheran Women's Missionary League, 2019

WHAT IS YOUR LENT OPPORTUNITY?

SAVE THE DATE



Bloom where you are planted.

Lutheran Women in Mission
Spring Rally

Saturday, April 20, 2024

Our Redeemer Lutheran Church
10 Johnson Road, Newark, DE

9am-2pm

More info to come!



LUTHERANS AROUND US



Warm Greetings from LCM at UD! Spring-term classes have resumed, and the students are back at Lutheran Campus Ministry. It's a joy to reconvene after UD's long winter break and to hear stories of family times, trips, and even international travel. This year one member was blessed to spend his winter session studying in Munich, Germany.

We're excited for 2024! Our spring plans include weekly Tuesday dinners and worship gatherings, as well as coffee and conversation outings, Bible study on the Gospel of Luke, monthly volunteering with FISH (*Fellowship in Serving the Hungry*), ice skating, a special Easter dinner, hiking, and an overnight spring retreat. If you'd like to visit us on a Tuesday evening at our lovely chapel at 247 Haines Street, please do. We love to talk with members of local congregations and with other LCM supporters. If you're interested in teaming up with friends to bring a home-cooked meal for students, please call our office or refer to our website: <https://lcmde.org/bring-a-tuesday-dinner>. Our students are very grateful for the dinners!



Please come join us for a Tuesday dinner this semester!

We especially invite your prayers for our four active seniors, Elizabeth, Gabby, Julie, and Lucca, as they finish their undergraduate studies at UD this spring, await word from graduate schools, and seek God's guidance for life and work beyond college. Please pray for the peace of Christ to sustain them, as well as for Jesus' accompaniment at each step of the journey.

Thank you for your support and for your prayers! ♥

In Chris Mindy Holland, Chaplain and Minister of Word and Service chaplain@lcmde.org †

CREATE SOME RIPPLES: INVITE SOMEONE

INVITE
someone!

When was the last time you brought someone to church? According to Google, 70 to 85 percent of people interviewed said that they started coming to church because of a friend or a relative asked them. Take a moment to think... who do you know that isn't going to church at the present time? It could be a friend, a family member, or even a neighbor. Let them know what time you will pick them up. Studies show that picking someone up will give

extra encouragement for someone who has not quite made up their mind. You can invite someone, you don't even know... like the lady standing behind you in line at the grocery store.

Certainly, Jesus did not know his disciples before asking them to "follow me." According to the Church Trainer Group, John the Baptist brought disciples John and Andrew, introducing them to the "Lamb of God". Andrew brought Peter; Jesus invited Phillip; Phillip invited Nathanael; John invited his brother James. (John 1:35-51) These historical invites have spread the Word of Jesus globally. That Word continues to resonate today.

This early networking demonstrates how one invite can create ripples that continue touch lives, bringing others to Jesus' side. An invite to church does not cost a cent. It just might make a world of difference to someone looking for their way back to Jesus' side or finding him for the first time.

CHURCH STATS (2023)





Last year seven different pastors graced Our Redeemer with their leadership: Rev. Ray Rogers, Rev. Doug Meilander, Rev. Peter Mueller, Rev. Michael Thress, Rev. Steve Bocklage, Rev. Steve Funck, and Rev. Elliott Robertson guided in us worship, bringing communion to remind us that the grace of Christ is always waiting. We are thankful.

In 2023 there were 63 services; 29 communion; member attendance totaled 1,156; visitor attendance 163. Members participated in communion 688 times; visitors 66. A total of 1,484 individuals streamed services from home. One member Arlen did not miss a service.



FEBRUARY 2023



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>SERVING — Pastor Jeremy Loesch ORGANIST— J. Hockersmith USHERS Arlen Besel Dennis Boon Jim Rose</p>	<p>STREAMING 2/4 2/11 2/18 2/25</p>	<p>LECTORS 2/4 2/11 2/18 2/25</p>		1	2	3
<p>4 Bible Study 8:45 a.m.  Communion DS2 10 a.m. Sunday School</p>	5	6 Announcement Deadline Build A Bag 10 a.m.	7	8	9	10
<p>11 Bible Study 8:45 a.m. Worship DS2 10 a.m. Sunday School</p>	12	13 Announcement Deadline Build A Bag 10 a.m.	14 Ash Wednesday 7 pm  Divine Service 3 Communion Fellowship & Food 6:15	15	16	17
<p>18  Bible Study 8:45 a.m. Communion DS3 10 a.m. Sunday School Fellowship after service Guest Organist Rob Furr</p>	19 Office Closed Federal Holiday	20 Announcement Deadline. Build A Bag 10 a.m. Newsletter Deadline Council Meeting	21 Lenten Service 7 pm Divine Service 3	22	23	24
<p>25 Bible Study 8:45 a.m. Worship DS3 10 a.m. Sunday School</p>	26	27 Announcement Deadline Build A Bag 10 a.m.	28 Lenten Service 7 pm Divine Service 3	29 		

FEBRUARY BIBLE READINGS

- 1 Luke 2:29-32
Exodus 1-3
- 2 Psalm 59
Exodus 4-6
- 3 Psalm 60
Exodus 7-9
- 4 Psalm 61
Exodus 10-12
- 5 Psalm 62
Exodus 13-15
- 6 Psalm 63
Exodus 16-18
- 7 Psalm 64
Exodus 19-21
- 8 Psalm 65
Exodus 22-24
- 9 Psalm 66
Exodus 25-27
- 10 Psalm 67
Exodus 28-30
- 11 Psalm 68
Exodus 31-33
- 12 Psalm 69
Exodus 34-36
- 13 Psalm 70
Exodus 37-38
- 14 Psalm 71
Exodus 39-40
- 15 Psalm 72
Leviticus 1-3
- 16 Psalm 73
Leviticus 4-6



***Read a little
each day and
you will get
through the
entire Bible in
one year***

- 17 Psalm 74
Leviticus 7-9
- 18 Psalm 75
Leviticus 10-12
- 19 Psalm 76
Leviticus 13-15
- 20 Psalm 77
Leviticus 16-18
- 21 Psalm 78
Leviticus 19-21
- 22 Psalm 79
Leviticus 22-24
- 23 Psalm 80
Leviticus 25-27
- 24 Psalm 81
Numbers 1-3
- 25 Psalm 82
Numbers 4-6
- 26 Psalm 83
Numbers 7-9
- 27 Psalm 84
Numbers 10-12
- 28 Luke 2:29-32
Numbers 13-15
- 29 Read a favorite
Psalm
Read a favorite
Story

