

From Our Pastor



Dear Friends,

Grace to you from God our Father and from our Lord Jesus Christ.

Easter comes a bit late this year. As you receive this newsletter, we should still be in lent but quickly moving toward Palm Sunday and then, the most important days of the Christian year, the great Triduum or Three Days; Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter. Taken together, these services are the climax of the year. To celebrate Easter without the other two services deprives a person of the opportunity to join with the church in immersing themselves in the death and resurrection of Jesus. There are many reasons why people cannot do all three services and not to attend them is certainly no sin, but it is a loss for both the community who will gather and those who do not. Please note the times of the services elsewhere in this newsletter.

On a different note, The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, including our own synod, is facing a severe shortage of pastors. We are used to hearing about the priest shortage from our Roman Catholic friends. Now it is our turn. A dramatic decrease in the number of those entering seminary and a sudden rush of retirements means that there are not nearly enough pastors to go around. There are less than half the number of graduating seminarians to fill just the openings for first call pastors this spring. At best, unless a parish is "perfect" it will take much longer to find a pastor. In the worst case, many small and/or poorer congregations will go without. It isn't that pastors are greedy, it's that most relatively new pastors are so much in debt that their compensation has to be as high as possible so that they can just stay afloat.

To paraphrase a song, Jesus told us there would be days like this. The harvest is plenty, the laborers are few. And he told us what we should do. Beg the master of the harvest to send laborers into the field. We are to pray. Our presiding bishop, Elizabeth Eaton, has asked every congregation



Pastor Austin is celebrating 30 years in the ministry - so like good Lutherans we are - there will be a potluck luncheon in hono of Pastor Austin on April 30 immediately after the service. Pastor Heather April will preach that day to give Pastor Austin a break.

Join us as we honor Pastor with this great celebration!



Dare to Care Food Pantry

Our Dare to Care Food Pantry continues to provide our neighbors with much needed nutritional food on a regular basis. In just the first two months of this year we served 691 families. The food we give out is high quality, and emphasizes healthy choices. As examples, much of the pasta we distribute is whole wheat, and, while we do give out some soft drinks, we limit them to just a few per family. So far this year, we have given out over 50,000 pounds of food.

One third of our volunteers are from First Lutheran. They do a variety of jobs, such as preparing food packages for our clients, registering each client in our computer system, picking up the food from the Kroger barrel assigned to us, and transporting sometimes large amounts of food from the Dare to Care warehouse to our pantry.

Some things which are not normally supplied by Dare to Care are toilet tissue, bath soap, and diapers. We are always happy to get donations of those items.

We continue to have need for used plastic grocery bags. Our volunteers pre-bag the types of food in small bags, then when a client comes for their monthly allotment their cart or basket can be filled quickly. We do use new bags for things like fresh produce, but the used bags are great for canned and boxed goods. When we run out of used bags, we have to use new bags. The new bags are available at a reasonable price from Gordon Foods, but we need a continuous supply of the used bags to keep our cost down.

Jim Lillie, First Lutheran Dare to Care Food Pantry



APRIL 2017

- 8 John Gephart**
- 11 Sharon Lillie**
- 14 Ted Rosky & Wanda Schaffrick**
- 16 Janet Gill**
- 19 Blair Cecil**
- 24 Allison Wastschlager**



Please join us for services during Holy Week. We will have services for Maundy Thursday and Good Friday at 7:00 pm



Please plan to join us on Easter Sunday. We will have Breakfast at 9:00 am and then have an Easter Egg Hunt for the kids! Bring all children - kids, grandkids, nieces, nephews, and friends. It's so much fun to watch the little ones hunt for eggs!



9 Adrian & Michele France
19 Ted & Jackie Rosky



Lunch with Luther

April 2, 2017

Luther's Early Years

While we eat lunch on Sunday, April 2, right after worship, we'll see, on the big screen, photos of places where Luther lived, studied and worshipped during his pre-Reformation years. We will try to give you a picture of life in the late medieval period, as well as a peek into the spiritual mindset of the great reformer, Martin Luther.

The following questions will be addressed, plus much more:

- Who were his parents and what did they look like?
- Where and when was he born?
- Where did he go to school?
- What about his rash promise to Saint Anne to become a monk?
- What was it like to live in a monastery?
- What on earth is the *Anfechtung* that Luther experienced?

Jim and Nola Lillie will lead the session, but you are all invited to jump right in with your questions and your thoughts.



Council News

God Bless Us Everyone! Ron and Lori have been in Hawaii enjoying their 50th Wedding Anniversary, so Caroll, the Secretary will give you a rundown of what's happening with the Council. The Council met on March 19. Still need to get some kinks out of Shepherd's Staff, but we're getting closer! Paul Nellis has agreed to attend the Ind/Ky Synod Convention, but we still need a female representative. We have a new copier and it's working pretty good. Caroll and the copier have come to an understanding - she won't destroy it and the copier will make decent copies! We finally got new carpet laid down in Luther Hall. Looks great. Ron got an estimate on replacing the facets upstairs, replacing some of the toilets and repairing the water cooler next to DTC. Brightside Clean up is April 30. Will get a sign- up sheet started soon. We've been having trouble with the alarm. People are coming in and trying to disarm system and sometimes the alarm was not set! This causes the alarm to go off and the police to come. Signs have been put up by each alarm informing people to look first and see if alarm is set and reminding the people who use our building, that if it is their fault the Police come again - they pay the fine! First will have breakfast and an Easter Egg Hunt on Easter and Sunday (Apr 2) is the deadline for turning in forms for Easter Lilies.

That's all for now.!

Caroll for Ron



Did you notice the new carpet in Luther Hall? It's pretty and cushy!!



A Note from David

April holds the days of Holy Week, and the celebration of the resurrection at Easter. Maundy Thursday brings the remembrance of the Last Supper of the Lord and of our forgiveness. Good Friday brings the story of the suffering and crucifixion of Jesus. On Easter Sunday we sing "Alleluia" and rejoice in Christ's resurrection. After the more somber reflective music we have heard during Lent we now sing "Alleluia" and proclaim that *Jesus Christ Is Risen Today*. This hymn, no. 365 in *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*, is a corporate hymn of praise and alleluias for our redemption and eternal life through Christ's victory over death and the grave. This festival hymn opens the Easter Sunday procession and ushers us into the joyous season of Easter.

David



April

- 8** ***Make Palm Crosses***
10:00 am
- 9** ***Pot Luck Breakfast - Bring a dish to share***
9:00 am
- 13** ***Maundy Thursday Service***
7:00 pm
- 14** ***Good Friday Service***
7:00 pm
- 16** ***EasterEgg Hunt for the Children***
9:30 am
- 15** ***Brightside Cleanup***
Time to be announced
- 30** ***Potluck to celebrate Pastor Austin's***
30th Anniversary - Bring a dish to share
After Church

to pray that God will raise up spirit filled leaders for the church. We at First will be doing this regularly in our worship. You are invited to do this on your own, even daily if you can. A suggested prayer is offered here.

Christ Jesus, head of the church, raise up from among the baptized pastors to preach your word and administer your sacraments; deacons to serve all people and bear your gospel to the world; and congregational leaders to bring vision and vitality to your people. Grant us the grace to identify those in our midst you are calling, courage to name their gifts, and opportunities to gently nurture and support their discernment. God of mercy. Receive our prayer.

May God bring us all alike to the glory of an eternal Easter.

P. Austin



We will be making Palm crosses for Palm Sunday and invite everyone to join us on Saturday, March 18, at 11:00 am in Luther Hall. It's great fun and fellowship. Every year we have to remind ourselves how we made them before!