



Lutheran Church Of Peace

To Know Christ and Make Christ Known

The Tower Newsletter – March 2023

Issue Highlights

- Lent Schedule
- Soup Supper
- Youth Mission Mtg.
- Sunday Breakfast
- Remembrance Crosses



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LCOP Website:
www.lutheranchurchofpeace.org



www.facebook.com/Lutheranchurchofpeaceplatteville



Worship Services

Saturday 6:00 p.m.
Sunday 9:00 a.m.

Office Staff

Pastor Jasmine Tesdahl
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Hannah-Administrative Assistant
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Quote of the Month

Be a gardener. Dig a ditch, toil and sweat, and turn the earth upside down and seek the deepness. Water the plants in time...take this food and drink and carry it to God as your true worship.

--Julian of Norwich (c. 1342-1416)
English anchorite, mystic, writer

Pray together

For those with Health Concerns: Mark Kabele (Anna Mae's son) Jim & Arlene Crawford, Bob Weier, Jane Schwark, Julie Parrilli (Karen Niehaus' Daughter), Eric Kuhls, Corey Cullen, Andrea Ragsdale, Dave Niehaus, Dawn Jenny and Joan Sheldon

For those serving in the Armed Forces: Ryan Sheldon, Dylan Goke, Ryan Goke and Maxine Austin

BIBLE STUDIES & CLASSES

Adult Classes

- Bible Class-Sundays 10:35 a.m. worship service in the Fellowship Hall
- Women's Circle-First Wednesday of the month 1 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall
- Women's Group-Second Thursday of the month 6 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall

Youth Classes

- Sunday School (All school age children) 10:15 a.m. In the Sunday School

2023 Lenten Schedule

- **Wednesday, Mar 1-Lenten Worship at 6 p.m. -Soup Supper at 6:30 p.m.**
- **Wednesday, Mar 8-Lenten Worship at 6 p.m. -Soup Supper at 6:30 p.m.**
- **Wednesday, Mar 15-Lenten Worship at 6 p.m. -Soup Supper at 6:30 p.m.**
- **Wednesday, Mar 22-Lenten Worship at 6 p.m. -Soup Supper at 6:30 p.m.**
- **Wednesday, Mar 29-Lenten Worship at 6 p.m. -Soup Supper at 6:30 p.m.**
- **Thursday, Apr 6- Maundy Thursday Worship at 6 p.m.**
- **Friday, Apr 7-Good Friday Worship at 6 p.m.**
- **Sunday, Apr 9-Easter Celebration Worship at 9 a.m.**
- **Easter Breakfast 7:30 a.m.-8:45 a.m.**

*No Saturday night service on April 8

*No Sunday school Easter morning

Scan with a smartphone to give online to LCOP



Just a few notes

Deborah Circle: We will meet this Wednesday, March 1st, at 1 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. We'll work on Easter cards for shut-ins and our 90+ members. All are welcome to join us.

Soup Suppers: LCOP will begin soup suppers on March 1st, following the Wednesday Lenten services. If you are able to donate some needed food items for the meals, please check the sign up sheets located in the Narthex. Please plan on joining us!

Sunday Breakfast: The next LCOP Sunday breakfast will be March 5th after the 9 a.m. worship service. There is a freewill offering that will go to the LCOP youth, Lutheran World Relief, and Child Voice. All are welcome!

Youth Mission Trip Meeting: We will be having a youth mission trip meeting March 5th after the worship service.

Women's Group: The Feed My Soul women's group will meet on Thursday, March 9th, at 6 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. We'll cover chapters 17-19 in The Friendship Initiative. See Geri Zauche if you need a book. This is a great opportunity for building friendships and connections with other women of LCOP.

Women's Quilting Group: The Tuesday morning quilters meet in the Fellowship Hall on the first and third Tuesday of the month. All women are welcome!

Altar Flowers: Ordering altar flowers has become a lot easier! Just sign up on the Connection Board and pay the church. We will order them and have them delivered.

Worship Bible Reading: We are still looking for volunteers to do one or two Bible readings during worship services. The readings will be available the week before the service. A sign-up sheet is on the Connection Board in the Narthex.

Sunday Hospitality: Do you like coffee and cookies after worship? We're looking for some more coffee brewers and snack providers to host fellowship after worship on Sundays. It's super easy! All instructions provided. Bake bars or buy Oreos, there are no rules! Please sign up in the Narthex.

Thrivent Choice Dollars: Eligible Thrivent Financial members who have available Choice Dollars® have until **March 31, 2023**, to direct last year's, 2022, Thrivent Choice dollars. Don't miss this opportunity to recommend that Thrivent Financial provide outreach funding to Lutheran Church of Peace. Go to Thrivent.com/generosity to learn more. Or call 800-847-4836 and say "Thrivent Choice" after the prompt. For any other questions give Tim Zauche a call at 608-340-3040.

A Little Something From Pastor Jasmine

Grace + Peace to you, Dear People!

It is Lent, and it's almost time to start thinking about our garden. That made me think of Church as a Garden, which leads me to share with you some things that have been on my mind for the last couple of years, and I'm sure that you have thought about them too.

I've been doing a lot of personal research into the topic of why church participation is on the decline, and why people of my age/demographic and younger (Generation X, Xennials, and Millennials, Generation Z/Zoomers, etc.) don't always find church and church participation to be relevant to their lives. This always brings me to the age-old question that seems to be on everybody's hearts: What are we doing about it, Church??

I read an article recently by Adam Gabbatt of *The Guardian* that made some interesting observations about the current state of affairs. The article shares that research by the Survey Center on American Life and the University of Chicago show that in spring 2022, 67% of Americans reported attending church at least once a year, compared to 75% before the pandemic. But the pandemic isn't the only challenge the church faces. The article goes on to say:

But while Covid-19 may have accelerated the decline, there is a broader, long-running trend of people moving away from religion. In 2017 Lifeway [Research, an evangelical research firm measuring needs in life and culture] surveyed young adults aged between 18 and 22 who had attended church regularly, for at least a year during high school. The firm found that seven out of ten (70%) had stopped attending church regularly.

Some of the reasons were "logistical", [Scott] McConnell [executive director at Lifeway] said, as people moved away for college or started jobs which made it difficult to attend church. "But some of the other answers are not so much logistics. **One of the top answers was church members seem to be judgmental or hypocritical... And so the younger generation just doesn't feel like they're being accepted in a church environment or some of their choices aren't being accepted by those at church.**" About a quarter of the young adults who dropped out of church said they disagreed with their church's stance on political and social issues.

Outside of this article, other research that I've been paying attention to points to the cultural shift since the 1990s that makes parenting a full-time, contact sport. Today's parents feel a real cultural pressure, that earlier generations never faced, to help their children *find their purpose in life*. There is an overwhelming need and desire to make sure that children are fully equipped for success, and parents feel judged on the success of their children. This plays out by making sure that children are involved in plenty of sports and extracurricular activities so that they might find out where their interests and skills lie. All these extracurricular activities result in parents and families living by schedules that rule their family life, and having to make hard decisions about where they will spend their time. If church already feels like a judgmental or hypocritical place, families are simply not going to choose to spend their precious free time at church. They might make it an obligation for their children's sakes (like making sure that children are confirmed), and when the obligations are completed, they will stop coming.

When families don't come regularly, they don't build connections and community, and church stops feeling like a life-giving place. They stop coming. The result for the congregation is that participation numbers drop, and everyone starts complaining about sports, when the real problems might just lie within the congregation itself. But perhaps the congregation itself is incredibly welcoming? Another issue that the Church universal unfortunately runs into is that, generally, messages that un-churched or under-churched folks hear from the media are that Christians are judgmental, Christians are trying to take away the rights of others, Christians are trying to tell people that they are broken or sinful or going to hell for the way that God made them. While we at Lutheran Church of Peace know that these things aren't true, what are we doing to counter that narrative?

And, to top it all off, there are more younger folks in 2023 America that have never had a relationship with Church than were "raised in the church." So they're not going to wake up one morning and think, "I need to get back to church," because they've never been to one in the first place.

The Church's challenge (which is, by default, Lutheran Church of Peace's challenge) is multifaceted. And so, it is going to take creative, multifaceted problem-solving to address. Gone are the days when we can keep doing *what we've always done and pray* for new results. I don't have any answers or solutions, but after a lot of thought and even more prayer, I have some suggestions on what we need to do as a congregation:

We need to look at all the things that we do as church together as a gardener examines their garden, and ask ourselves some important questions:

- ♦ What is flourishing?
- ♦ What is overgrown and needs to be pruned? Perhaps there is some life left in it, but we can't tell for all the dead branches.
- ♦ What has died, and needs to be cleared away?
- ♦ What should we plant in its place?
- ♦ How do we continue to tend this garden that God gave us?

- **We need to make sure that everyone who comes into the doors of Lutheran Church of Peace feels welcomed and included in the life of the congregation.**
- **We need to make sure that everyone who doesn't come into the doors of Lutheran Church of Peace at least knows where we are and what we're about.**
- **We need to stay mission-minded: *To Know Christ and Make Christ Known.***
- **We need to accept that people's levels of participation have changed from 20-30 years ago, and we need to adjust our expectations accordingly (so that everyone still feels welcomed and included in the life of the congregation.)**
- **We need to remember especially during this time of Lent that:**

- ♦ We are a Resurrection People.
- ♦ Our journey towards the cross of death leads to NEW LIFE and to HOPE.

I hope that you get as excited about these challenges as I do, Dear People. One of the reasons that I came here to be your pastor is because I got a strong sense of your desire to tend this garden, to try some new things, and to live into this resurrection promise that God has given us.

I am already seeing some signs of pruning and new life, and I hope you do too.

In Christ,
Pastor Jasmine

Highlights from the February Council Meeting

1. Officer Elections
 - A. President Melby
 - B. Vice President Schmieder
 - C. Treasurer Kroll
 - D. Secretary Zauche
2. New Business
 - A. Benevolence timing
 - i. Ask Finance Team to look at this closer so that we are not doing all the benevolence at the end of the year, but rather throughout the year.
 - B. How do we share with the congregation better the missions that we support?
 - i. Do we need to form a Missions Committee?
 - C. Ecumenical support: We should be sharing other church fundraisers in town.

2023 Council Members

President- Peter Melby

Treasurer- Caroline Kroll

Vice President- James Schmieder

Secretary- Tim Zauche

Linda Fansler

Paul Fields

Liana Helbing

Joel Klinge

Alaina Reeves

Josephine Kischer

Remembrance Crosses

Everyone is invited to order wooden crosses to celebrate and remember the lives of fellow saints who have gone before us to be with the Lord. The crosses will be placed in the front lawn of the church during Holy Week and Easter. To reserve one or more, please fill out the form below or one in the in the Narthex, by the Connection Board. Forms and payment can be put in the box in the Narthex or dropped off in the church office by: Sunday, March 26th.

Name(s) of the deceased: (please print)

(If the person was a veteran, please indicate service area, rank, unit, and war(s) if applicable and known.)

Name of donor(s): **phone #:**

Number of **new** crosses ordered _____ x \$20.00 = \$_____

Number of **reused** ordered crosses _____ x \$15.00 = \$_____

Number of **military remembrances** _____ x \$3.00 = \$_____

Total amount enclosed: \$_____