



Good News From Good Shepherd

"I am the Good Shepherd. The Good Shepherd gives His life for the sheep."
John 10:11

March, 2023

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church
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Walking with the Lord

Thoughts that cross my mind as I walk with God through the Sunday morning Divine Service.
(Based on the Common Service—Divine Service setting 3—LSB 184)

Entering the Sanctuary

As I enter the sanctuary I am worn down by life. Worn down by what I have seen and heard from the world, the devil, and my flesh. (old Adam) These have tried to convince me that God is not for me or this world, instead God is against us all. I see war, pestilence, famine, calamity, tragedy, disease, and death that all seems to confirm that God is angry with us. I see shades of these things in my own life as well and I wonder, "is God angry with me as well?" Then there is my sin, which I know does not please God. This past week, I have seen the sin in my life, in my thoughts, my words, and my deeds. Oh the war that is waged within me against God and against man...how wretched I truly am. I too begin to question, and for good reason, why would God be in favor of an evil person such as me? Yet, God has promised that, "In the day of my trouble I call upon you, for you answer me." (Psalm 86:7)

The Invocation

I sit in my seat among my fellow believers as we wait for the coming of our Lord. The pastor faces the altar and solemnly calls upon God, "for through [Christ] we both have access in one Spirit to the Father (Eph. 2:18)." I hear the words ring out, "In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Suddenly the Divine Service begins!

The Lord has just entered the Sanctuary into our very presence, just as He promised in Matthew 18:20 saying, "Where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them." Christ is here in this room for me, for all of us. I do not see Him with my eyes as did the disciple in the Bible, but He is as much here now as He was then. Immanuel, God who became flesh, dwells with us on earth once again.

I certainly don't feel worthy to stand in the presence of my God, but these same words remind me that I am Baptized into Christ. Some time ago, God came into my life and placed His holy name upon me through water. In Baptism, God said to me, "Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine." (Isaiah 43:1) Indeed, He has redeemed me in the person and work of His Son. Here in His Baptism He has called me, not only by my given name, but by His holy name. (Matt 28:19) He has baptized me into the very life (the person and work) of Jesus Christ (Romans 6) and claimed me as His own child. (1 John 3:1)

To this we all say, "Amen." These Words of God are firm, steadfast, and trustworthy. God is in my very presence, He is here for me, and I stand before Him as His son.

The Exhortation

Nevertheless, the old self has gotten the upper hand in my life. I have sinned against God and against my neighbor. I truly am not worthy to be called God's son. (Adaptation of Luke 15) I have gone astray. I am deeply troubled by my sin.

Pastor, who is called by God as His representative, turns to us. He know that together with him we are poor, miserable sinners in need of God's forgiveness and he exhort us with the words similar to Hebrew 10, "Brothers *and sisters*, since we

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have confidence to enter this holy place by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, and since we have a great High Priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled (baptized) clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. (Baptism)”

The Versicle

We are then strengthened with the words and promises of Scripture. Pastor speaks the concluding words of Psalm 124, the Psalm that Israel sang about God being on their side, “Our help is in the name of the Lord” to which we respond, “Who made heaven and earth.” This is most certainly true, by His Word alone the Lord created heaven and earth and by God’s holy name in baptism He has recreated us in the image of His Son. Only by God’s Word can we be made new.

We know that if we say “we have no sin,” we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we do not acknowledge our sins and keep silent, our bones become brittle from our groaning all day long. Day and night the Lord’s hand will be heavy on us (confronted by His law); our strength will be drained as in the summer heat. However, when we acknowledge our sin to God and we do not conceal our iniquity, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (Adaptation of Ps 32) Pastor and congregation together turn to the Lord and respond to His promise of grace in Psalm 32 saying, “I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord, and You (Lord) forgave the iniquity (guilt) of my sins.”

The Confession of Sins

In the General Confession of Sins I, with my congregation, confess that I am by nature sinful and unclean (Original Sin inherited from Adam) and that I have sinned against God and man in my thoughts, words, and deeds (Actual Sin; Eph 2:1-4) I am indeed a poor, bankrupt, miserable sinner who is truly dead in my trespasses and sins. There is nothing in or about me that can redeem me before God. I truly deserve nothing but God’s wrath and anger, now and for all eternity. Yet I am heartily sorry that I am so deeply sinful and have committed such grievous sins against my creator and my neighbor. With hatred towards my sins, I turn away from them (repent) and ask God to have mercy on me for Jesus sake.

...and Absolution

Where there is confession, there is always an “and.” In the Lutheran Church, Confession is always followed by Absolution. “If we confess our sins, [God] is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” (1 John 1:9) This is a promise that God fulfills through His Church, specifically through the Pastor whom He Calls through a local congregation.

Jesus promised that He would give the Keys to the Kingdom of Heaven (the ability to forgive or retain sins) to His Church (Matt 16:19) and on the evening of His resurrection Christ fulfilled His promise saying to His Church,

“Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you.” And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you withhold forgiveness from any, it is withheld.

God always Calls men into the Office of the Holy Ministry (Priest, Prophet, Apostles, Pastors) to publicly stand in His stead and by His authority and command to announce to those who repent that their sins are truly forgiven. God wants His voice to be heard among His people, as He said to His Called servants in Luke 10, “Whosoever hears you hears Me, and the one who rejects you rejects Me.”

Because of God’s design and His promises, I have confidence that it is not the voice of the Pastor that I hear in the Absolution, it is indeed the voice of God. It is Christ himself standing in our presence speaking to those who repent of their sins. It is Christ Himself saying to me after my confession, “I forgive you all your sins.” And so they are, for I have heard it from the very lips of God.

Pastor Michael Poynter



A Message from Your President

Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given All the signs around for Friday fish fries and the notion of fasting (from meat, chocolate, etc.) in this season stimulated the curiosity of the history behind it. The following are excerpts from Christianity.com’s history of Lent. (See the full web address below*)

Christians honor the 40 days and nights following Christ’s baptism when He went into the wilderness without water and food and was tempted by Satan. During that time, Christ did what we do today when we fast: wrestle with temptation. This was not the first fast; biblical figures often fasted when petitioning God for something important. “So, we fasted and implored our God [...], and he listened to our entreaty” (Ezra 8:23 NIV). The Israelites “mourned and wept and fasted till evening for Saul and his son Jonathan, and for the army of the LORD and for the nation of Israel, because they had fallen by the sword” (2 Samuel 1:12 NIV).*

“Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the straps of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover him, and not to hide yourself from your own flesh? Isaiah 58:6-7 (NIV)

Ft. Geoff Harvey describes the development of the 40-day fast in the early centuries of the Christian church, saying:

There is no evidence of a forty-day fast in the pre-Nicene period. The first explicit reference to such a fast is in Canon 5 of the Council of Nicaea (325), where it is treated as something familiar and established, not as an innovation on the part of the Council. By the end of the fourth century the observance of a forty-day fast seems to have been the standard practice in most parts of Christendom, but in some places – possibly including Rome – a shorter fast may have been kept.*



“And when you fast, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, that your fasting may not be seen by others but by your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you. Matthew 6:16-18 (NIV)

There’s much more to be read on the subject to inform one’s personal decisions on whether or from what to fast. My choice these days is less about food and more about fear.

Then He said to *them* all, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it. Luke 9:23-24 (NKJV)

What I will endeavor to give up for Lent and always is Fear. Fear that prevents from doing what Isaiah records, fear that skews thinking as Matthew records, and fear of taking up my personal cross as Luke records.

Council Actions: The leadership team met on February 13 and came to consensus on a number of items including:

Content for the voter meeting; modifications in Financial reporting with gratitude to David Smith and Guddy Gawura for the account restructuring that makes it possible; exploring higher interest savings opportunities for our Reserve Fund.

Voter Actions: At the February 19 meeting, voters approved prioritizing the replacement of AC units over other projects and selected Phillip Brann as our Lay Voter for the LCMS Synod President election. **Marlis Norton**

Sanctity of Life VBS



Vacation Bible School will be here before we know it! Our theme this year is Zoomerang Sanctity of Life. We are currently looking for adult and youth volunteers to help make the week a success. VBS will be held June 12-16 from 9-12pm. See the table setup in the Family Life Center for more information. You may also register as a volunteer or register children ages 4 - entering 5th grade for VBS using the following link <https://gslcky.myanswers.com/zoomerang/> Jessica Brann

Christian Education

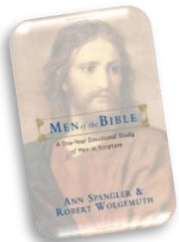


Women's Bible Breakfast • Will resume in April

We will meet at 9 a.m. Bring a dish to share or your own personal favorite if you prefer. God always provides just what we need. The study begins at 9:30 a.m. We will begin a new series to be determined.

Women's Sunday Bible Study • *Job* • 8:45 a.m.

For Job there will be no book. We will supplement the study with a guide developed by Dr. Reed Lessing.



Women's Tuesday Bible Study • *Men of the Bible* • 9:30 am

We study one person at a time, often in multiple sessions, no book required, so join in any time. We have just begun looking at Jeremiah - the lengthiest book in the Bible.



Church Prayer Time
3rd Wednesday
6pm-7pm

Men's Bible Study	Mondays 10 am
Pastor's Bible Study	
Sunday Mornings 8:45	
Tuesdays 7 pm	

Bible Study at Legacy Living
3rd Wednesday of the Month



March

Phillip Brann	March 4
Susan Schneider	March 8
Linda Kuhn	March 9
Jeanne Brooks	March 15
Lenton Woolley	March 15
Michael Siren	March 20
Matthew Densel	March 29

April

Karyl Juergens, Karyl	April 2
Fred Langsdale, Fred	April 2
Liam W Ostermeier	April 4
Meekah Siren	April 12
Bryan Yri	April 13
Dalton Aragon	April 22
Mark Aragon	April 25
Taylor Woolley	April 27



Women's Auxiliary Committee • Blanket Brigade

We expect to receive the materials for about three dozen receiving blankets. They will be distributed soon with a requested completion date of **April 1**. The task consists of some cutting, pressing a narrow hem and sewing the hem. Once that is complete, Women's Auxiliary labels are pressed on.

Our three dozen blankets will be a portion of the 200+ we expect to complete through our sister churches of the Federation. These are part of the larger ongoing mission of supplying UCMC new mother's with a gift of encouragement to take home.



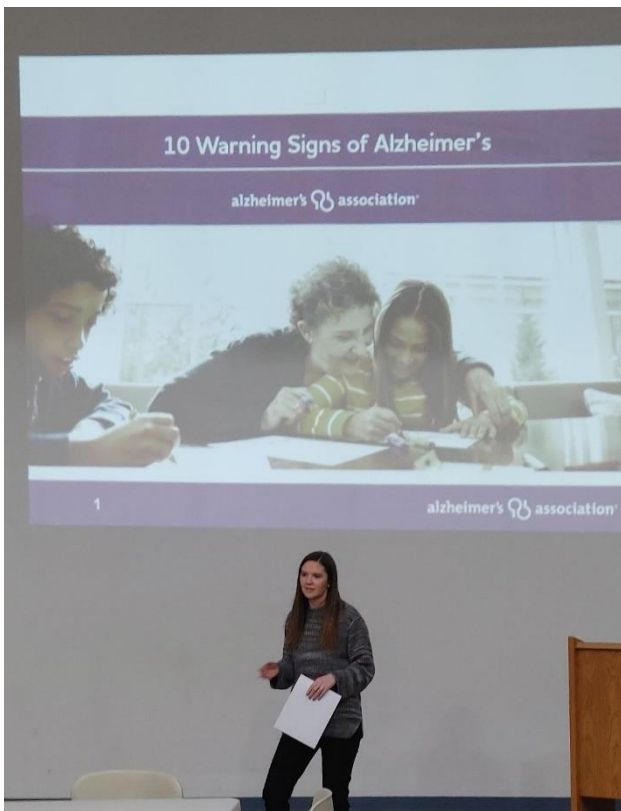
LWML -Lutheran Women's Missionary League, Cincinnati Zone • March 11

Good Shepherd Ladies: Please join All the women in LCMS Lutheran churches in Cincinnati in this effort of the LWML. Bring donations of socks, undies, and T-shirts for adults and children. All donations will be gathered and sorted on **Saturday March 11 beginning at 9:30 a.m.** for distribution to Immanuel Lutheran's Kids Church and to Prince of Peace Lutheran homeless. **St. Mark's Lutheran (Milford)** will host this event titled "Ohio District- We Serve You with Gladness" from 9:30 am until 2:00 pm. This event will be divided into three parts: Ohio District Presentation by Co-Chairmen Liz Underwood and Nicole Dowdell (highlighting how they serve the zones), the servant event (sorting what is collected for distribution), light lunch, and our zone meeting (where details of the upcoming Missions In Motion will be provided, the nominating committee will be reporting candidates for President and Secretary, and a bylaws committee will be reporting on their progress in updating the bylaws to align with the updates of the Ohio District Bylaws at the last district convention). It is important that all our women participate in these decisions. All women are encouraged to attend all portions, or whatever fits into their schedule. (Snow date on Saturday March 25.)



February Events

O.W.L.S Information Session

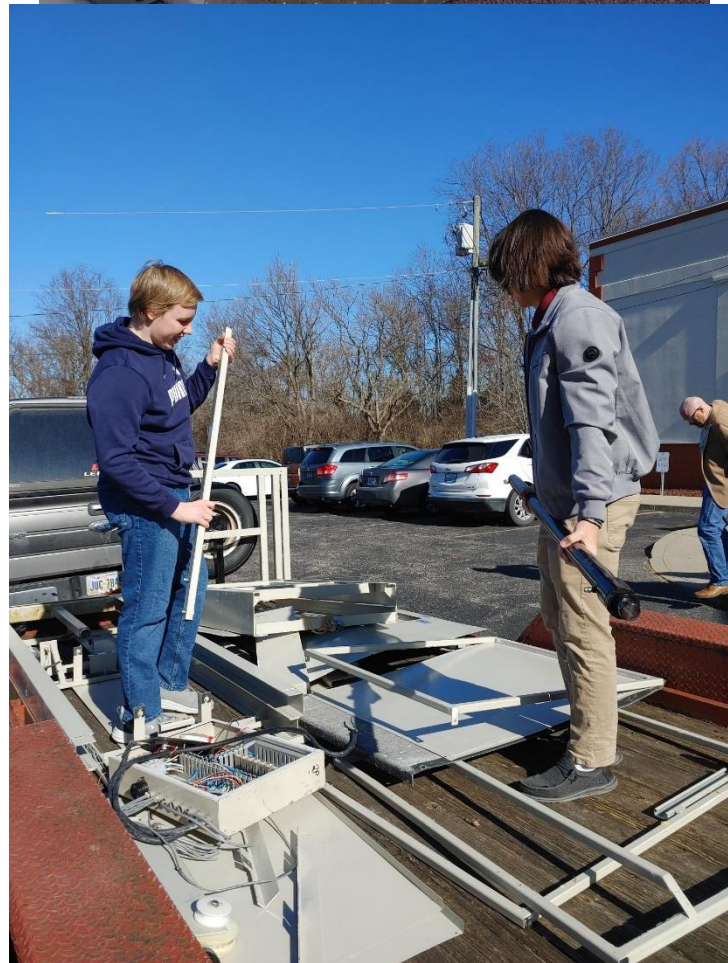
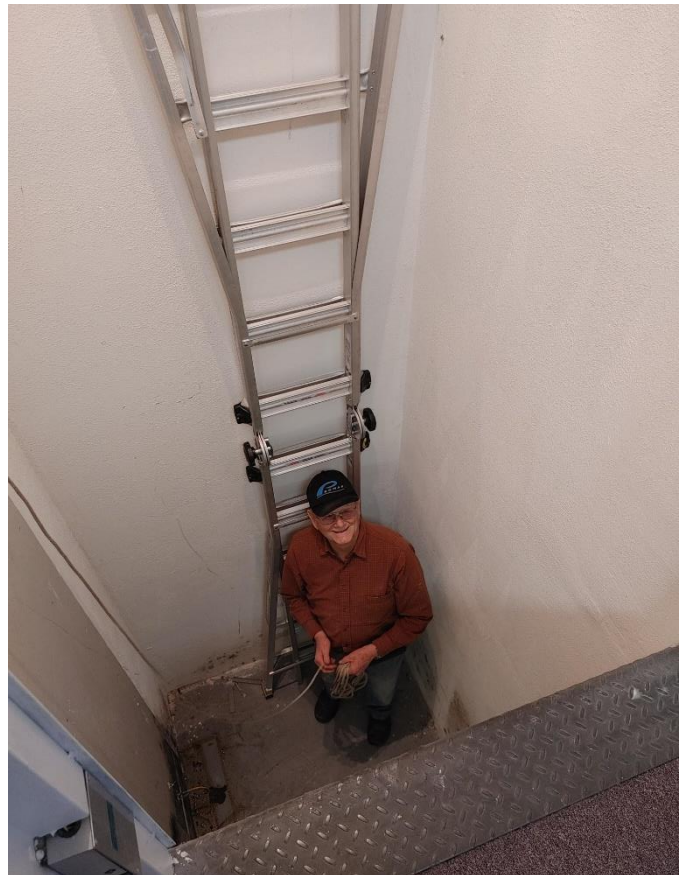


American Heritage Girls High Tea



Removing the Elevator

(Most probably didn't know we had one)

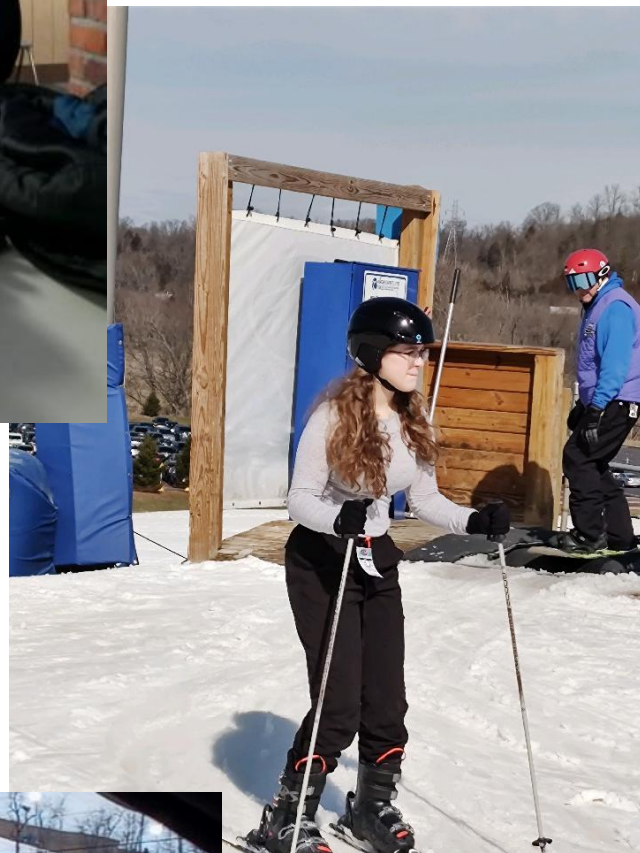


Youth Activities

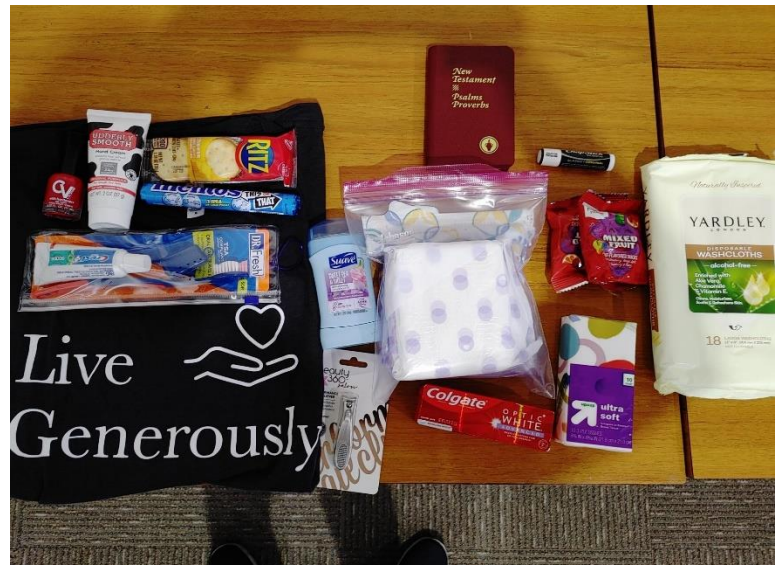
Potato Bar Fund Raisher



Perfect North Skiing



Purses with a Purpose



25 purses were filled with essential items. They will be given to women experiencing homelessness.

Whiz Kids Dinner



Flood Bucket Assembly
150 buckets were assembled and sent to East
Palestine
Thanks to all who contributed





Martha/Mary Day
Saturday, March 25
9:00 – 2:00

Easter Fellowship,
April 9, 2023
instead of on the first Sunday
fellowship.

Ladies High Tea,
Saturday, May 6, 2023
2:00 - 4:00 pm.

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