

Ambassadors of Christ



Beyond candy hearts and roses

The first half of February seems dominated by pink and red, cards and candy. But people not in a loving romantic relationship can sometimes feel left out of the festivities. Of course, all people need love — and certainly love is not limited to the romantic kind. Author Leo Buscaglia, who became known as “Dr. Love” for writing about the topic, said,

“Too often we underestimate the power of a touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest compliment or the smallest act of caring, all of which have the potential to turn a life around.”

Jesus taught that loving one another is second only in importance to loving God (Matthew 22:37-40), and that when we love one another, God lives in us (1 John 4:12). There are so many ways to do that — beyond candy hearts and roses! But Valentine’s Day is as good a reminder as any.

Lenten Living

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, February 22 this year. Christians have observed this season of the church year since the fourth century. It’s traditionally a time of reflection, penitence and spiritual renewal before Easter.

During Lent, some Christians give up something that hinders their relationship with God. Others do something extra for their spiritual growth or make a special sacrifice. The key is to make Lent a memorable season of sincere spiritual growth — a time that can set the tone for the rest of the year.

Pastor Scott Kiehn

Church Council

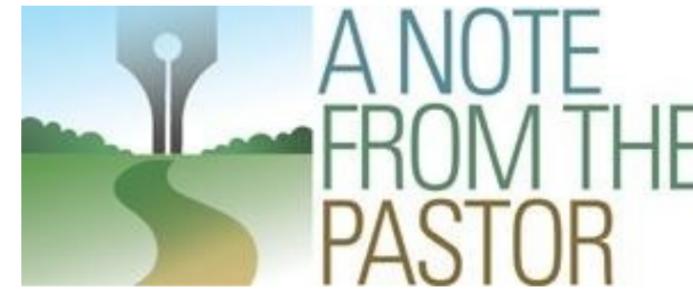
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As the days start to get longer and we start to experience more sunlight each day I am reminded we are in the season of Epiphany the season of light. Epiphany is a time where we focus on the revealing of Christ to the world the revealing of the light of Christ to the world. We are reminded also during this season that it is Christ’s light that we shine, it is Christ’s light that we reflect to the world. As God’s claimed and called children through baptism we are commissioned to be “the light of the world”. On February 5th we will hear the words of Jesus from the Sermon on the Mount, “Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.” I hope that these words sound familiar to you, they are very similar to

“...we are sent out to share the light of Christ...”

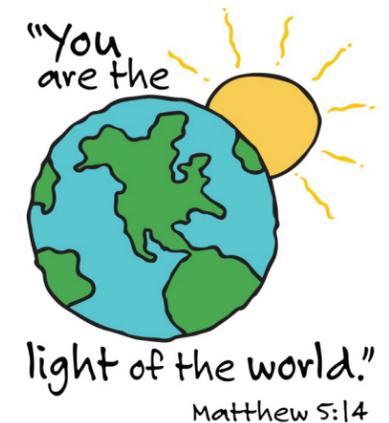
*It's still winter ... but
spring is near. It's
Lent ... but we're
pointed toward Easter.
Keep us hopeful, Lord.*



what we hear in our baptism service. When the baptismal candle is lit and given to the person being baptized (or parents or sponsors) A representative of the congregation reads the following words, “Let your light so shine before others that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven”. Notice that this commission is after the actual baptism after God claims the person as God’s own. As children of God, we are sent out to share the light of Christ with the world.

As Epiphany comes to a close on February 12th we continue with The Transfiguration of Our Lord and then we begin the season of Lent on Ash Wednesday, February 22nd. Look for more information in the newsletter on our Lenten series “Cross Examinations”. Blessings to you as you let Christ’s light shine through you and then begin our Lenten journey to the cross.

In Christ,
Pastor Scott



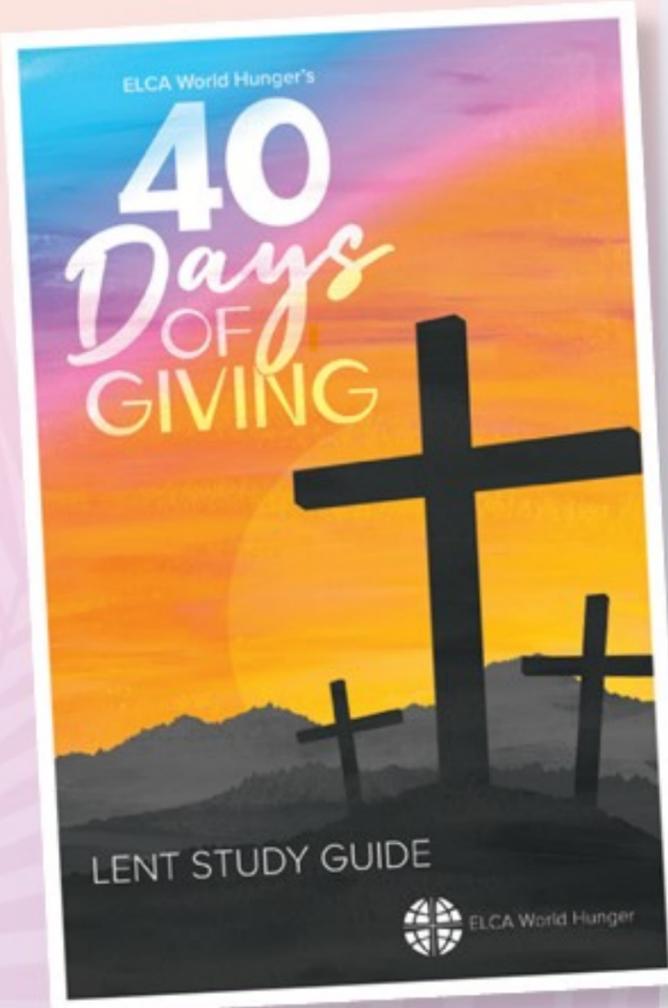
LOVE BITES!

Retailers eager to capture some of the \$20 billion that Americans spend every year for Valentine’s Day gifts are moving beyond candy and flowers. For an outside-the-box edible present for that special someone, now you can purchase a bouquet of bacon roses, pickles or even Olive Garden breadsticks. If money is tight, you can visit Waffle House on February 14, the one night it takes reservations.

Last year, a most unusual Valentine’s Day promotion had no takers. A reptile park in Mosca, Colorado, offered a two-for-one deal on gator-wrestling classes, but no one “snapped” up the opportunity. Maybe another heart-shaped box of chocolates isn’t such a bad idea after all!

Prayer’s certain payoff

Prayers prayed in the Spirit never die until they accomplish God’s intended purpose. His answer may not be what we expected, or when we expected it, but God often provides much more abundantly than we could think or ask. He interprets our intent and either answers or stores up our prayers. Sincere prayers are never lost [and] will never be wasted or go unrewarded.



“Justice, Peace and Wondrous Things: A Journey Through the Psalms With ELCA World Hunger”

In the Psalms we will find the pleas of a people — our spiritual ancestors — for renewal and transformation, for justice and peace, and for hope and comfort.

We will read the psalmist’s lament for the old Kingdom of David, which was reduced to rubble. We will read the yearning for safety and rest after the Israelites’ experience of war and exile. We will read earnest prayers for a world where peace and justice reign and all are satisfied. And we will read outbursts of thankful praise for God, who restores the people, feeds all who hunger and “keeps faith forever” (Psalm 146:6).

ELCA World Hunger’s 40 Days of Giving
We invite you to study, pray, be challenged and give with us throughout Lent during ELCA World Hunger’s 40 Days of Giving — toward a just world for our families, our neighbors and communities around the world. 40 Days of Giving begins on Ash Wednesday, Feb. 22, 2023. (This Lenten study guide is free of charge.)

This year, Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent, falls on February 22. During worship services that day, pastors in many Christian churches dip a finger in ashes (often made by burning branches from the previous Palm Sunday) and make a cross on parishioners’ foreheads.

Why ashes? Traditionally, they’re a sign of mourning, humiliation and penitence. Ashes also represent the frailty and temporary nature of human life (“You are dust, and to dust you shall return,” Genesis 3:19). Christians are pained because our sins led to Jesus’ death. With repentant hearts, we begin the season of Lent, knowing that it leads to

Jesus’ resurrection on Easter Sunday.

For Ash Wednesday — and throughout the 40 days of Lent — ponder this prayer from an Italian sacramentary, or liturgical book: “O God, you know how fragile is our human nature, wounded as it is by sin. Help your people to enter upon the Lenten journey strengthened by the power of your word, so that we may be victorious over the seduction of the Evil One and reach the paschal feast in the joy of the Holy Spirit.”



Notices

- Service/Event Team** is Donna Lee & Beth Knodel followed by Jenn Fewer & Danette Borgen. Feb. call group is **Bergtoll to Eliason**.
- Coffee Leader** for Jan. is Jennifer Fewer.
- Bring treats to share and join for coffee after church (except 2nd Sunday Brunch).
- Bring in Pop Tabs, Old Glasses & Used Print Cartridges to be recycled.
- Divine Drama Bible Study. Awesome. Neat. 2 sessions on Tues: 9 am & 6 pm.



Login or register on Reynold’s website. Then go to rewards and my rewards. Click on the Friends of Reynolds button and add the charity (#1006) you would like to support. You can only support one charity at a time.

Lutefisk Dinner Coming Soon
Keep an eye open for sometime end of February or beginning of March. Contact Jenn Fewer, Jon Mattfeldt or Debby Cornwell if you can help or have questions

Food Bank	
Feb 5	Toilet Paper
Feb 12	Hygiene Products
Feb 19	Toothpaste
Feb 26	Kleenex

LENT

Join us for **WORSHIP** and a **MEAL** during the season of Lent
Worship at 5:30 p.m.
Soup Supper to follow.

“Cross Examinations” Worship series will reflect on the cross of Christ; as an instrument of death on which the Lord Jesus was crucified...how it functions as a powerful symbol of faith.

Whether it is our body or our spirits; whether it’s our minds or our future; there will be an honest reality of the cross; pain, hurt and suffering. But there is also a word of hope and assurance that in Christ there is a bigger, far deeper reality at work for you.

Cross Examinations – Thursdays at 5:30 p.m.

Throughout the Lenten Season we are taking a deeper look at the meaning of the cross. The cross has become the most common symbol of our Christian faith.

Our Thursday Lenten Worship services will be built around a “Readers’ Theatre” as ancient and contemporary characters confront one another and seek to discover how their Christian faith impacts on the issues in their lives.

CROSS EXAMINATIONS	
February 22	Ash Wednesday “The Grace of God Revealed”
March 2	“A Matter of Death and Life”
March 9	“Is the Cross Necessary?”
March 16	“Enemies of the Cross”
March 23	“What Is Missing in Christ’s Sufferings?”
March 30	“The Marks of Christ”



Presidential Trivia — What type of Religious Affiliation

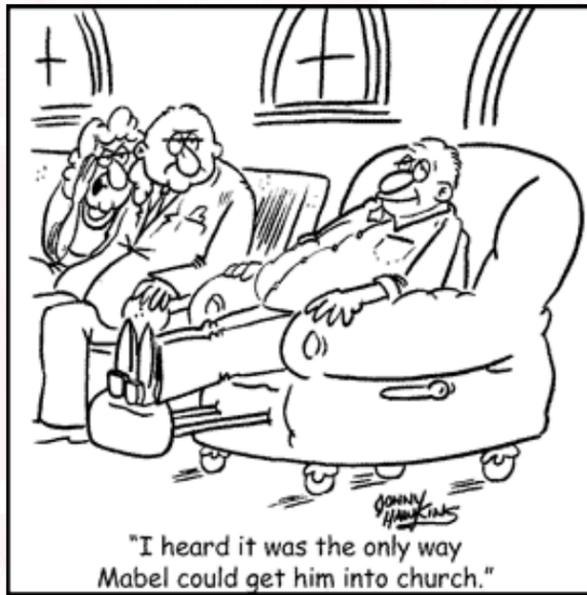
Forty-five people have served as President of the United States. Most have had some formal religious affiliation. *Some belonged to more than one denomination or changed membership.* Here is a list of denominations and the number of presidents associated with each.

Episcopalian - 16	Disciples of Christ - 2
Presbyterian -11	Dutch Reformed - 2
Baptist -5	Quaker - 2
Methodist -7	Catholic - 2
Unitarian -5	Congregationalist/United Church of Christ - 4
No specific denomination - 4	Jehovah’s Witness - 1

FLC Council Highlights December 19, 2022

(Complete printed or electronic copies of the minutes are available from the church office.)

- **CSI Christmas Dinner** went well, serving about 70 dinners.
- **Radio Broadcast** issues work is being done.
- **Architects** final major bill of \$2000 for the Lift/Window/Bathroom Update Project was paid.
- **Employee Handbook** revisions were approved.
- **The Annual Meeting** date was set for after church service on January 29, 2023.
- **Council Officers for 2023:** President-Shelly George, Vice President-Donna Lee, Secretary-Bev Johnson. Installation of council members will be January 8, 2023.
- **Staff Bonuses** will be given at the end of 2022.
- **Surplus Church Property** will be offered to congregation members first, then remaining items will be advertised and donated.



What did God do to cure Moses' headache?

Answer: He gave him 2 Tablets

- **Brunch on January 8** by the Discipleship Team.
- **5th Sunday Noisy Offering** on January 29 with money going to Energy Share of Montana.
- **Back Stairs Carpeting** has been replaced and some carpeting below the organ was repaired.
- **Poinsettias** were ordered for Christmas services.
- **December Finances:** Income \$16,806.28, Expenses \$18,548.36.

Puzzle!

Love is a fruit of the Spirit listed in Galatians 5:22-23. Identify another fruit that can make Valentine's Day — and every day — special. First, write a word that fits each clue below. Then unscramble the letters from the bold, vertical column to find another fruit of the Spirit. Write it on the blanks below.

LEAVE	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
CHAPEAU	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
TRANQUILITY	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
BECOME MATURE	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
RESPOND	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
SPHERE	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
OLD TESTAMENT QUEEN	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
DISCOVER	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
CONFIDENCE	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
ALWAYS	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□

Answer: depart, hat, peace, grow, answer, ball, Esther, find, trust, ever, gentleness

First Lutheran Church

Marked with the cross of Christ forever, we are claimed, gathered and sent for the sake of God's world as Ambassadors of Christ.



From death to new life

After the inventor of the Frisbee died in 2002, family members honored his final wish: to have some of his ashes molded into a flying disk! The point, according to toy legend "Steady Ed" Headrick, was for his loved ones to have fun playing with him even after he had passed. "He lived for Frisbee," said his widow, and now he lives on in one.



Thankfully, the ashes used on Ash Wednesday aren't cremains. But they do have special significance. They're often made by burning branches from the previous year's Palm Sunday celebration. By tying together seasons, the practice of receiving ashes reminds us of cycles: sin, repentance and forgiveness, plus life, death and resurrection — Jesus' as well as our own.



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