



Grace Note

Messiah Lutheran Church

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In the past few years our congregation has joined with countless others in the ancient practice of the imposition of ashes on Ash Wednesday. I know this still seems a bit strange to some people. Those words: "remember that you are dust and to dust you shall return" seem like a real downer to a lot of people. So why do we do all this?

Ash Wednesday began somewhere around the 4th century and has been an important part of the Lenten journey ever since. This day begins the Lenten season of 40 days leading us to the empty tomb of Easter.

The name, Ash Wednesday, comes from the ancient practice of placing ashes on worshippers' heads or foreheads as a sign of humility before God, a symbol of mourning and sorrow at the death that sin brings into the world. It places us in a position to realize the consequences of sin. Ash Wednesday is a somber day of reflection on what needs to change in our lives if we are to be fully Christian.

So why do we need to do that? Quite simply, it is because we are human. We need to be reminded of what is important. We need to look at our lives and ask ourselves if we are on the right path. Ash Wednesday and the season of Lent give us the opportunity to do that very thing.

It's important to note that the ashes are imposed in the shape of the cross. The ashes are meant to remind us that we are sinners in need of grace. The cross reminds us that Christ died so that we may be free of the sin that binds us. Ash Wednesday is a remarkable moment when we realize how much we truly need the grace of God, and how blessed we are to have received it.

One of my favorite things to do is prepare the ashes for this day. If you look in my office you will see a bunch of palms left over from last Palm Sunday. The ashes for this Ash Wednesday are made from these palms. I have always loved the continuity this represents for us in the church.

This Ash Wednesday you will be invited to come forward to receive the ashes on your forehead. Take this opportunity to look at your life realistically and to turn back to God. Let it also remind you of the tremendous love that God has for you. Even in the midst of our sin, Christ has redeemed us and washes us clean every day.

In Christ's Name,

Pastor Fox

Our Mission Prayer: *Gracious God, through belief in Christ's teachings and through the presence of the Holy Spirit within us, empower us to share the word; care and support each other and God's community; worship as a family in Christ; and be Christ-like examples to those whose lives we touch. Amen*



OUR SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES WILL BE BAKING LENTEN PRETZELS

throughout the Lenten season. Each Sunday a different

children's class will participate in making pretzels that will be available to the congregation before the 11 a.m. service. Pretzels may be purchased for a donation.

The money collected will be used to buy chickens! The "Chicks" will be given through the Heifer International Organization.



(Since 1944, it has worked to bring help, healing, and hope to millions of impoverished families worldwide. This organization works exclusively in areas of livestock and agriculture to develop programs to alleviate hunger and poverty.) A starter flock of chicks can bring up to 200 eggs per year per hen. These chicks require little space and thrive on readily available food scraps; therefore, families can make money from the birds at very little cost to raising them. The nourishing eggs help give nutritious protein to malnourished diets. An added bonus to the chicks is that they help control pesky insects and fertilize gardens!

To quote Walter Cronkite, an avid supporter of the Heifer organization, "If there is one thing I could give the struggling people of the world, it would be self-reliance. Everyone deserves the dignity of providing for themselves and for their families."

May the children of Messiah be the little "Chickadees" who provide this hope, this spring! May they learn to understand that it is better to give than to receive, especially when helping God's impoverished children around the world. This program will help our

children experience teamwork, goal setting, money management, geography, empathy and gratitude, and social ministry. The more pretzels they make and sell, the more they will earn to support children in other parts of the world who are less fortunate.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS! The *Children's Easter Program* will be held on **Sunday, April 8th**. Practice for the program is planned for Saturday, April 7. See *Diana Fox* with questions.

A COLLECTION FOR TWO MEMBERS OF MESSIAH CURRENTLY SERVING IN IRAQ, *Sal Perez and Kyle Roth*, will be taken by the Christian Education and Social Ministry committees. Stay tuned for more information about collection items and details as we work together to support these outstanding young men on duty!

SECRET VALENTINES!

Don't forget to bring your Secret Valentine a small treat or note each Sunday in February. This is a great way to encourage Sunday School attendance and participate in a fun activity for all age levels.



WEDNESDAY EVENING BIBLE STUDY will resume with a new study after Easter. Watch the bulletin for details.

MUSICIANS ARE NEEDED FOR LENTEN VESPERS. Volunteers are asked to contribute special music for the Wednesday night services in Lent. If you would like to share your talents, watch for a sign to be posted on the bulletin board in the reception area. Call *Esther Hodgkinson* (440 729-9550.)



FAITH CIRCLE will meet on *Thursday, February 15 at Noon.*

Bring a sack lunch.

Dessert will be provided by *Marlene Evans. Pastor Fox* will continue his Bible study on "Women of the New Testament."



CAN YOU HELP WITH LENTEN

SUPPERS? We will continue our tradition of coming together in the fellowship hall at 6:00 p.m. for supper each Wednesday in Lent before we come together in the Sanctuary at 7:00 p.m. for worship. Members are asked to volunteer to bring an item and help in the kitchen for one of the weeks. Sign-up sheets will be posted in the reception area. Please indicate that you are assisting at least two weeks prior to the date. You will be contacted about what to bring.

MESSIAH'S THURSDAY EVENING WOMEN'S GROUP HAS BECOME MESSIAH SISTERS OF THE VINE - a reference to



Messiah Sisters
of the Vine

John 15:5, "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in

him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing." We invite you to join us in the church library on **Thursday, February 1 at 7:00 p.m.!** We are discussing *Secrets of the Vine for Women* by Darlene Wilkinson. On February 1st we'll talk about the second and third chapters. But our discussion is a basic one about our lives as Sisters of the Vine and you do not have to read the book to be able to fully participate! Child care is available but only if arranged in advance! The cost for the evening is \$7.50 and you must call **Diana Fox**, 216 291-5186, by January 29th to make those arrangements. Please join us as we come together to grow in faith and fellowship! It's good to have sisters!!

LENT BEGINS ON ASH WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 21ST

We will come together that night at 7:00 for worship that will include Holy Communion and the voluntary Imposition of Ashes.



Ash Wednesday

Remember to keep the Wednesdays in Lent open. We will continue our tradition of coming together at 6:00 to share supper in the fellowship hall before we come together in the Sanctuary for worship at 7:00 p.m.

Easter is April 8th



**Remember
in
Prayer**

PLEASE KEEP IN YOUR PRAYERS: *Lawson and Phyllis Anderson, Ken Wilt, Barbara Budzinski, Adam, Alma Fanto, Avis*

Slaven, David Phoenix, Theresa Hanson, Emily Petrillo, Jim Spring, Dorothy Hielld, Greg Shepka, Baby Aiden, Margaret Coville, Olson Kelly, Annette DiRosa, Delores Hilliard, and Charlie Stoughton.



SOUPER BOWL SUNDAY IS FEBRUARY 4TH. Once again, we are collecting soup for the New Covenant Hunger Center until **February 4th**. Any and all kinds of soup would be appreciated - canned or boxed - ready to serve or condensed - single serving or family size - any flavor or brand. Last year we collected 356 items of soup. Let's try to surpass that number! The soup will be delivered Monday, February 5th, and **volunteers are needed to help with the delivery**. Please call **Lorie Marsalis** at 440-442-5931 if you are able to help.

OUR ANNUAL LENTEN FOOD DRIVE for New Covenant Hunger Center takes place **February 21 through April 1**. Donations of non-perishable foods, paper products and cleaning supplies would be greatly appreciated. Please think of those in need while doing your grocery shopping during Lent. **NO GLASS CONTAINERS PLEASE.** **Volunteers are needed** on April 2nd to deliver the food to New Covenant.

PLEASE BRING IN COUPONS FOR NEW COVENANT HUNGER



CENTER. Coupons for food items, paper products and cleaning supplies are needed. They do not want coupons for pet foods or restaurants.

If at all possible, please cut the coupons out before bringing them to church - great project for kids. Because some coupons expire rather quickly, please bring them in a timely manner.

ANGEL FOOD MINISTRIES: In order to better serve the needs of our church and community, Messiah is joining Angel Food Ministries -- a nonprofit, nondenominational, Christian organization dedicated to providing low cost food to communities across the country.

The program is simple: orders are placed for food, and the food is picked up at the church at a later time. Food is provided in "units". Each "unit" costs \$25 and contains both fresh and frozen food with an average retail value of over \$50. The food is not seconds or outdated. Each unit of food will help to feed a family of four for about one week or a single senior for almost a month!

Order forms will be printed in our church bulletin for two weeks prior to the deadline. When you fill out a form, you can give it to **Lisa Perry, Lorie Marsalis**, or drop it off at the church office. Payment must be included with the order. On delivery day, you simply come to church and pick up your order. Anyone can order this food. There are no income guidelines or application fees.

As we work to get the program up and running smoothly, initial distributions will be focused on Messiah members. Once we are confident in the process, we will stretch out into the community to reach those around us who are in need. By joining this ministry, Messiah will open its doors to our neighbors and minister to both their physical and spiritual needs.

The deadline for our first distribution will be **February 10th**. **All orders, with payment, must be received by this date.** The menu for February's unit and specials will be printed in Sunday bulletins along with an order form. Our first distribution will be **February 24th from 11 a.m. until 1 p.m.** at Messiah. For more information contact **Lisa Perry** at 440-442-5705. Please also visit <http://www.angelfoodministries.com/>

IT'S MORE THAN SOUP . . . Faith Circle collects Campbell soup labels which we clip and send to Navajo Evangelical Lutheran Mission in Rock Paint, Arizona. We just mailed 850 labels. Three million labels were recently redeemed to buy a new van for the mission. In addition to Campbells, Franco American, Pepperidge Farm, Swanson, Prego, and V8 can be used. Please continue to save the labels and place them in the soup can container in the hallway near the back door.
Phyllis Short (216 291-0769)

THE BOOK GROUP'S February selection is *The Innocent Man*, a current *New York Times* best seller by John Grisham. Grisham vividly recounts the true story of two men accused of a crime they did not commit. Pick up this page-turner and join us for what is sure to be a lively and thought provoking discussion. The group will meet **Tuesday, February 13, at 7:00** in the church library.

PRAYER AT MESSIAH - At Messiah, we are committed to lifting up those in need in our prayers. If you have a prayer concern to bring to the congregation please keep the following things in mind:

1. You can call the office with your prayer concern. Let us know how you would like this person prayed for (see below).
2. You can fill out a prayer card in worship. The prayer cards are collected by ushers during the hymn of the day (the hymn that follows the sermon).

On the cards you have three choices, please be sure to check one:

- a. Add to today's prayers only - Our worship assistant will pray for your concern that Sunday only. Please be sure to write legibly and help with any difficult pronunciations. Write the information as you would like to have it prayed out loud.
- b. Add to continuous prayer list in weekly bulletin/Grace note list - Your concern will

be prayed for on the Sunday that you fill out the card. The name will then be added to the prayer list that is in the bulletin and the Grace Note. Names stay on the list for one month. They can be renewed each month, but you must notify the office or indicate on a prayer card if you would like it renewed. If there is no renewal, the name will be taken off the prayer list.

- c. Add to Prayer Partner phone list - If you check this, the name will be prayed for that day, added to the prayer list, and put on the list to go to our prayer partners. Each Tuesday Pastor Fox sends out a phone tree (automatic phone message delivery service) to our prayer volunteers. This is a group of people who have agreed to pray for the needs of our congregation. Your concern will be brought to them for prayer throughout the week. If you would like to volunteer to join the prayer partners, please call *Carol Pearson* (440-449-3161) to be added to the list.

Please remember to always sign your prayer card. We need to know who to speak with in reference to your concern.

We want to pray for those in need. Please do not hesitate to make prayer requests.

Remember, however, not everyone who has prayer needs wants them publicly known. If you request prayers for someone, please be sure to ask them if this is okay first. Also, don't assume that needs will automatically be placed on the list. In most cases only a name will appear on the list unless specifically requested. This is to protect confidentiality.

Our hope is that Messiah will be a community grounded in prayer. Thanks for your help in this important ministry.



**REQUESTS
— FOR —
PRAYER**

MESSIAH'S WEBSITE KEEPS GETTING BETTER! If you haven't already visited it - please check it out! Lots of information about Messiah can be found there along with the current and past issues of *Grace Note!* In fact you can usually access the current edition long before it arrives in your mailbox! *Messiah's calendar* is also available there and may include activities that were scheduled after that month's *Grace Note* had already been published - so it is your best source of what is happening and when!

www.messiahlyndhurst.org

WOULD YOU LIKE TO RECEIVE A COPY OF THE GRACE NOTE BY EMAIL EACH MONTH? To be put on the distribution list, email tonilaurenson@adelphia.net. You will still get a hard copy in the mail but you'll have other information in a more timely way!

FROM THE LIBRARY . . . You may recall that *Messiah* is a member of the National Church Library Association. We received their winter publication recently which contained some interesting book reviews. The following was listed under Biblical Studies: Richard A. Burrridge - *FOUR GOSPELS/ONE JESUS?* A Symbolic Reading, Second Edition, 216p. Paper, Eerdmans, 2005, 0-8028-2989-5

The four Gospels posed a problem for the early church. The problem was that at many points they didn't agree with one another as they told the story of Jesus. Sometimes they flat out contradicted each other. So the question became, "Do we meet one Jesus in the Gospels, or four?"

Richard A. Burrridge, dean of King's College, London, first addressed this problem in 1994 and has now given us a new edition that reflects the advances in recent Jesus scholarship. Burrridge is a very good writer.

His sentences are clear and well crafted, and his illustrations, excellent. For example, he compares the four pictures of Jesus in the Gospels to four museum pictures of Winston Churchill - a dignified statesman; a family man at holiday tea; in uniform with the soldiers in the trenches, at rest with his paints along the shore - the same person in all four; but the circumstances are very different. That's the way it is with the Gospels.

Burrridge further brings out the uniqueness of each Gospel by what he calls "A Symbolic Reading" using the ancient well known symbols associated with each gospel: Matthew has a human face, Mark a roaring lion (here Burrridge uses Aslan from *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* by C. S. Lewis to great effect), Luke a patient ox, and John a soaring eagle.

The reviewer, Rod Olson from Westwood Lutheran Church, St. Louis Park, MN, highly recommended it for our library.

WELLNESS NOTE

KNOW YOUR KNEES

Lately, your knees have been getting your attention through pain or noises. What do they want? That depends on how seriously they are troubling you. Have your knees checked by a doctor if:

- They are hot or swollen
- They lock up or give way
- Your pain is severe or interferes with walking or sleeping.

If your knee pain isn't that bad, but you do not want it to get worse, what kind of self-care steps can you take?

- Exercise. You need strong, limber muscles to protect your knees.
- Warm up for five minutes before exercising and then stretch.
- Minimize high-impact activities that cause your knees to twist. Those include running, racket sports, softball and basketball.

- Choose low-impact activities such as walking, swimming, water aerobics and cycling.
- Maintain a healthy weight to avoid putting excess stress on your knees.
- Take a break if you have a flare-up and rest until it subsides. Ice and elevate the knee.
- Wear sports shoes in good condition with good shock absorption. If you have high arches or flat feet, consider shoe inserts.
- Get up to stretch your legs during the day if you do a lot of sitting.

Want More Information? Visit:

www.elcaforwellness.org (For more on knee problems, search on knee pain.)

Source: Mayo Clinic Health Quest, Aug. 2006

Submitted by **Peg Wilt and Kathy Strom**,
Wellness Co-chairpersons,
Nancy Coleman, Secretary



CHURCH COUNCIL

January 16, 2007

Pastor's Report: Pastor attended the Synod

Assembly to elect the new bishop with **Jen Butler** and **Mike Lester**; made 11 home visits; had four office visits at Messiah; conducted three funerals: **Nancy Paradise**, **Ruth Pittard**, and **Russell Elton** (non member); entertained nine members of the LYO at this home in December; and was on vacation the week after Christmas. **Rev. Gary Sandburg** of Trinity Lutheran Seminary will preach at both services on February 11th.

Treasurer's Report: **Chris** reported we ended the year with a zero balance. The courtyard account has a \$500 deficit. This is probably due to some funds being credited to the Operating Fund because it was not noted on the check or was missed by the counters. All persons have satisfied their obligation to the Courtyard Fund.

Property Committee: **Chris Kovach** reported that the Property Committee has prepared a Repair Request form to be filled out when items around the church need repair or attention. **Marty Hassink** met with a man from G.E.

regarding the lighting of the windows and improvement of sanctuary lighting. An electrician is needed to check the timer on the parking lot lights.

Christian Education: The Sunday School will bake pretzels during Lent. Donations from the sale of the pretzels will be used to buy chickens through a world hunger relief organization for families in Africa. The Christian Ed and Social Ministry Committees will work together to take a collection for **Sal Perez and Kyle Roth**, members of Messiah serving in Iraq.

Youth: Two of our youth went to the Winter Gathering in Independence and had a great time. The first LYO meeting was held at Pastor Fox's home the first week of December and nine youth attended. The group will meet every other month. **Fred Moser** is planning to take a group to a Cav's game.

Worship: LBW Setting 1 will be used during Lent. The purple paraments cannot be located and need to be replaced. This would be a very good memorial gift. **Nancy Durst** will investigate the cost of replacement. The choir cantata will be on Palm Sunday. The carillon dedication will be on February 11th. Nursery care is needed. Worship Committee will discuss a solution.

Evangelism: Twenty brochures have been printed at a cost of \$.75 each.

Social Ministry: **Lorie Marsalis** is the new committee chairman. A new ministry called Angel Food Ministries is a non profit group which buys groceries in huge bulk and ships to churches, who in turn sell it to anyone who wishes to buy at a reduced cost. We will try it in February.

Courtyard: Plaques still need to be ordered for certain courtyard donations and some plants need to be replaced. The dedication of the Courtyard will probably be in the Spring.

Responsibility for Lenten Dinners: The Fellowship Committee has agreed to take charge of this project.

