

The Pastor's Page

March 2019

"The Cross Calls You Back"



Grace and peace to you!

Lent is happening later this year than it has in any year of recent memory. I, for one, have welcomed that. I wasn't ready for Christmas when it came, so it's been nice operating in "business as usual" mode (aside from this winter's snow and ice). But now, Lent is just around the corner. Like most things in life, it comes whether you are ready or not.

All of this reminds me of how easy it is to get caught up in my own affairs—the tasks *I want* to accomplish at work and at home; the books *I want* to read; the friends and loved ones *I want* to visit; the places *I want* to go. God's priorities for my life inevitably fall on the back burner—or off the stovetop altogether. The Christian life feels like a constant tug-of-war: God's priorities, my priorities, and other people's priorities for me, pulling me in every direction—leaving me anxious, exhausted, and empty.

This is why Lent matters—for the re-centering of our lives upon the One who gives life: the crucified and risen Jesus. Above all the clamoring and noise of daily life, the cross calls you back—so that all the selfish desires and crippling fears may be crucified with Christ. The cross calls you back—to be reborn in peace, hope, and love. The cross calls you back—so that every fiber of your being can be filled with the all-surpassing love of Jesus Christ *for you*.

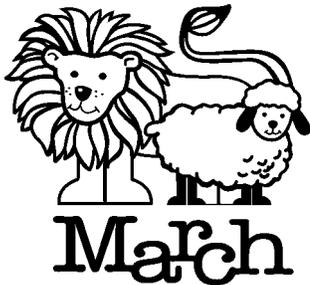
The Lenten journey begins with Ash Wednesday on March 6, with Word and Sacrament and the imposition of ashes at 7:30 p.m. Every Wednesday, we will gather at 6 p.m. for a soup supper, followed by evening prayer at 7 p.m. This year's theme is *What Wondrous Love: Holy Week in Word and Art*, featuring the works of artist John August Swanson (the same artist we've been studying in Bible Study). The Leechburg Ministerial will be hosting Lenten lunches on Fridays, beginning at 11:45. And we will have a variety of free devotional booklets available for your prayer and meditations.

The season of rest, repentance, and renewal we all need is about to begin. Cling to the cross Jesus carried for you—and live in the love the creator of the universe has for you. Cling to the cross, and Christ's saving power will work in you to bless those who are hurting. Cling to the cross and be born anew through the living and abiding Word of God.

See you on Sunday,

+ Pastor Jim

WE WISH HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO:



- 1 – Andrew Muth
- 2- Robert Carter
- 7 – Russell Baker
- 10-David Kramer
- 14 – Rick Sinka
- 19-Karen Kalmar
- 22-Janis Hill
- 25- Kayla Prosser
- 26-David Moran
- 26-Rodney McKelvey, JR
- 27- Tom Smythe
- 29-Amy Dunmire
- 29-Lois Fulton
- 30-Jacki Radaker
- 30-Madison Shanta

Celebrating An Anniversary This Month

23-Jack & Tracy Zimmerman

Baptismal Anniversaries

- 2 – Rachel McKelvey
- 5 – Chris Fuller
- 6 – Ronda Blystone
- 16 – Michael Zimmerman
- 19 – Sarah Shaner
- 27 – Paul King

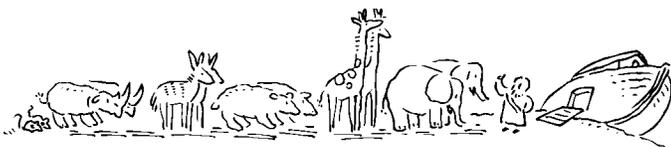


Electronic Giving



First Lutheran Church is now accepting online giving. Go to our website, servinggodgracefully.net then click on **give on line** Follow the directions.

Check out Pastor Jim's **BLOG** page, <http://jamesarter3.blogspot.com> where you can read his sermons and Bible studies!



Office Angels

Thank you to all who come in to assemble the newsletter. More volunteers are welcome!

Worship Assistants

Acolytes

- 3/3 Elsa Zalenski
- 3/6 Ash Wednesday **Volunteer needed**
- 3/10 Tabytha Hogan
- 3/17 Olivia Smythe
- 3/24 Spencer Libengood
- 3/31 Katie Muth

Assisting Ministers

- 3/ 3 John Smail
- 3/ 6 Margaret McKallip (Ash Wednesday)
- 3/10 Victoria Hogan
- 3/17 Jason Delp
- 3/ 24 Andi McCool
- 3/ 31 Kenny Muth

Altar Guild

- 3/3 Debbie Smail & Michelle Baldesberger
- 3/10 Janis Hill & Diane Kuhn
- 3/17 Cheryl Nelson & Carolyn Shaffer
- 3/24 Terra Kardos & Sandy Smythe
- 3/31 Kathy Munko & Lois Bowser

Head Usher

John Smail

Oil

Given in memory of Alice Jane Williamson by Pete Williamson

Newsletter Deadline March 24



Blood Pressure check

The **third Sunday** of every month, we will be checking Blood Pressure in the **Nursery**. If you are interested in a monthly record of your blood pressure, please join us immediately after church service. Those taking B/Ps are Sandy Smythe, Andrea McCool, and Amada Graham.



Clothing Closet

We will be open **every month** on the third Saturday. The next sale date is **March 16**. If you would like to volunteer on one of the sale dates, please contact Janice King. Sorting on Wednesdays 9 AM - Noon

Prayer Ministry

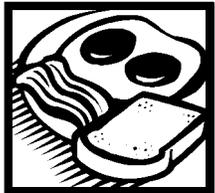
We have a special place set up in the area behind the organ console. The 3 windows are set up for different prayer needs. There is a place for **public prayers** (situations and people that anyone can know about and pray for), there is a box for more **private prayers** and another box for prayers that **just Pastor Jim** would see and pray for. If anyone would like to be personally prayed with; we will be available on Sunday mornings.

Bible Study

The Bible studies meet the second and fourth Wednesdays **March 13 & 27** from 9AM – 10 AM. During Lent, only the morning Bible study, the 6:00 Bible study will be part of the Lenten mid-week devotions



BREAKFAST



FELLOWSHIP

Come join us for Breakfast at King's Family Restaurant in Leechburg on **March 9!** We will meet at 9 AM on the **second Saturday of every month.** This is a time for fellowship, a short devotion and prayer. Everyone is invited to attend!



Office Hours

The secretary is in the office on Tuesday and Thursday mornings from 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM
724-845-7518

Pastor James Arter

Tuesday – 9:00 AM – 10:00 AM
Wednesday and Thursday – 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM
Or by appointment

Contact Information

Pastor James Arter, 930 Wildlife Lodge Road,
Apt. 302, Lower Burrell, PA 15068
Phone 724-212-7240
pr.jim@comcast.net

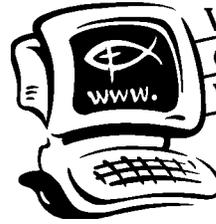
Ink Cartridges

Thank you to all who have brought in ink cartridges. Please continue to bring them in. This helps save considerably on our office supplies!



Like us on **Facebook** and stay connected with all that's happening in our church!

www.facebook.com/servinggodgracefully



**VISIT
OUR
WEB
SITE**

Wanted - E-mail addresses

Do you have an e-mail address you would like to share with the office? This would be used to send reminders and possibly items mailed by first class mail. You can send it to felc@windstream.net

Thank You!

To my friends at First Lutheran, Your thoughtfulness is heartwarming.

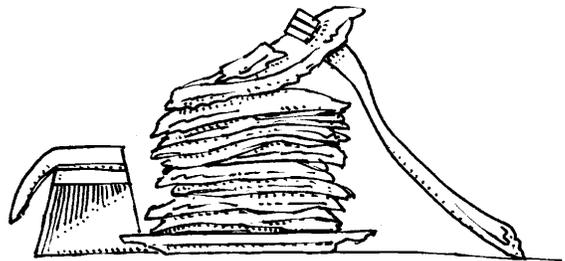
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To my dear friends at First Lutheran, Thank you so much for all the delicious and delightful gifts. It means so much to share God's love with you at Christmastime and all year long.

A Blessed Year to all

Sincerely,

Albert Carter



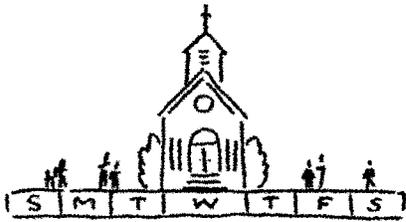
Pancake Breakfast

March 3

Our annual pancake and sausage brunch is on Sunday, March 3rd after worship. Plan on staying for some good food and fellowship!

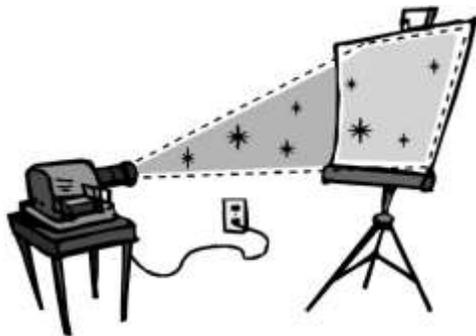


Ash Wednesday Service – 7:30 PM



Mid-Week Worship

Mid-week services during Lent will begin with a light supper at 6:00 PM followed by a brief service at 7:00 PM. We will be reflecting on the art work of John August Swanson, a continuation of our ongoing Bible Studies.



March 1st, Movie Night
Children of all ages, and they are encouraged to bring their friends!



Youth Fest - April 26-28

What is Youth Fest? Youth Fest is the SWPA & NWPA Synods' Junior and Senior High Youth Retreat! It is a great weekend away at Lutherlyn to play, worship, learn, grow, and "get away from it all" with other youth and adult leaders.

For more information, see the flier in the rotunda or on line at www.lutherlyn.com or www.swpasynod.org



Spring Craft/Vendor Show

Saturday, March 9 – 10 AM – 2 PM

Come out and support our Relay for Life Team and **local** vendors and crafters. Looking for gifts, try one of our vendors! The kitchen will be open so **stop in for lunch!**

Tambellini Gourmet Foods

Leechburg Lutherans relay for life team will be selling Tambellini's frozen food, beginning March 17th. This will be pasta and soup. Watch for details.

God has help

A Sunday school teacher was teaching her class of children a lesson on creation. "Now, children," she said, "who can tell me who makes the flower grow from the seed?"
"God does," one boy said.
"But fertilizer helps."

Community Lenten Lunches



Cross Roads Presbyterian Fridays during Lent (March 8 through April 12) meal at 11:45 brief devotion follows at 12:10



GriefShare

There will be a Loss of Spouse session of GriefShare on Sunday, March 10 from 2 PM – 4 PM. The 13-week spring session of GriefShare will begin on Monday, March 18th at 6:00 PM and continue through June 10th.



**Daylight Savings
Time begins on
March 10th!** Turn
your clocks **ahead** one
hour before you go to
bed on
Saturday, March 9th.



WELCA

Women of the ELCA

ALL women are invited

first Tuesday of each month at 1:00 pm

Locations alternating monthly between
Forks Church and Hebron

**The next meeting will be Tues, March 5,
1 pm at Forks**



A prayer for Lent

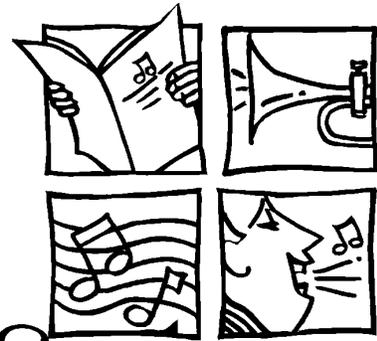
O Lord, open my eyes that I may see more
clearly the condition of my soul. If there is
darkness, mean-spiritedness, egotistic pride ...
or worse within, cleanse me from all
unrighteousness. Renew a right spirit within me
and make me truly Christ-like in all my
thoughts and actions. And when I begin to
edge away from your will, please stir up my
conscience until I am in harmony with you
again. In Christ's name.

Clothing Closet Meeting

Those who have helped with the clothing closet
ministry over the past 12 months will meet after
worship on Sunday, March 31 to decide on our
calendar of causes for the next year. Bring
ideas!

God has a work to do with us
that will not be done without us.
-St. Augustine

Mark your calendar for April!



*Special
Music*

**Spring into Life Music
Festival**

Sunday, April 28, 3:00 PM at First Lutheran
Church



**GOOD
FRIDAY**

Community Service
April 19, 2:30 PM
Cross Walk through town