

FAMILY NEWS

Gloria Dei Lutheran Church and Academy | Davie, Florida

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WHAT IS LENT?



Lent is a season of preparation leading up to Easter. It is the forty days plus the six Sundays before Easter. For centuries, it has been observed as a special time of self examination and penitence. Lent is a time for concentration on fundamental values and priorities, and is not a time for self punishment. Throughout Lent, the worship services of the church take on a simpler tone, appropriate to this

season. Banners are removed from the church. Crosses showing the risen Christ are veiled. The word "Alleluia" is not used in the words of the liturgy or hymns. These practices help the worshiping community to mark this season of renewal as a special time in the church year. Lent is a time to draw closer to the Triune God and see it is He who gives the most.

OBSERVING LENT

The custom is to mark the season of Lent by giving up some things and taking on others. Both can serve to mark the season as a holy time of preparation. Some examples of things people give up for Lent include sweets, meat for all or some meals, and alcohol. In most cases, giving up something for Lent can be made more meaningful by using the money or time for another purpose. For example, meal times on fast days could be spent in prayer. Another example is that if you give up meat during Lent, the extra money that would go to LC-MS Lutheran World Relief or your local food pantry. Some things added during Lent are daily Bible reading, fasting on Fridays, times of prayer, increasing our financial offerings, attending extra worship services, taking a Bible course of study related in some way to spirituality. Note that the season of Lent is forty days plus the six Sundays.

Continued on next page

This is because Sundays are celebrations of Jesus' resurrection and are always an appropriate day to reduce the restrictions of Lent. So that if you have, for example, given up chocolate for Lent, you could indulge in a weekly candy bar on Sunday. Lent is also an especially appropriate time for confession. While confession to a pastor is not required to receive God's forgiveness, it can be a meaningful rite of reconciliation to God.

PALM SUNDAY

This Sunday before Easter is the last Sunday in Lent. The day commemorates Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem with a blessing of palms and a procession in which the whole congregation carries palms. The day is also marked by reading the story of Jesus' passion (the word used to describe Jesus' death comes from "suffering," which is one old meaning of passion). Some of the Palm Sunday palms are kept and used to make the Ash Wednesday ashes for the next year.

WHY DO I BELIEVE IN JESUS?

By Matthew C. Harrison



Jesus grabbed me by the neck in 1962 at a font in little old Bethel Lutheran Church in the Iowa farming town of Lawton. I have no recollection of a time when I did not know that Jesus was my Savior. I often think that I grew up at the "end of sanity." There wasn't much crime to speak of. No drugs really. I walked to and from school from kindergarten on with no worries of abduction or sexual predators. Culture and church, Boy Scouts, school — all for the most part supported a similar morality and a favorable view of Christianity. But things change.

Today's world is a post-modern cultural collage. And that's not all bad, mind you! Prior to the fall of the Berlin Wall, teetering modernism was in its last gasp, asserting that this or that philosophical or political theory could encompass all truth. Would science unlock the mysteries of life and the universe? People believed the answer was, "Yes!" The modernists discounted the spiritual realm, opting for this or that psychological theory to explain the human experience. They all grasped for truth and found parts of it, but the complexities of the human individual, the collective community, simply evaded encapsulation. And every new discovery, whether at the atomic level or about the universe, has unfolded complexity upon complexity. The most shocking thing is the repeated discovery of order — ordered genetic information in biology and complex order in the universe. It was famously asserted that the probability of life coming about randomly would be about the same odds as a tornado sweeping through a junkyard and assembling a 747, fully fueled and ready for takeoff. Atheism requires too much faith for me.

The question I had to grapple with — the question everyone has to deal with — is, “What do you make of Jesus?” Most people will respond with morality. Jesus was a great man who left the world great ethics, like “Love your neighbor as yourself.” But Jesus’ ethics can all be found in various other religions. What makes Jesus unique is His claim to be the divine Son of God who came to give His life as a ransom (Mark 10:45).

And did He or did He not rise from the dead? The resurrection accounts of the Bible have all the sober signs of reality, including the complexity of details told from different viewpoints, which are not easily harmonized. I also find it compelling that there are no records of squabbles between Jesus’ living followers over what actually took place. Others discounted or contested the facts, but they were either contemporary opponents of Jesus or came much later after Jesus’ immediate followers were all dead. And finally, Jesus’ apostles preached the death and resurrection of Jesus and suffered all, even death, to do so. They believed it happened.

I believe it too, because “Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God” (Rom. 10:17). Jesus has grabbed my black heart with forgiveness. My reason follows after, in the wake of faith, and convinces me that the universe is simply too ordered and too complex to exist by chance. And the only way that the life of Jesus makes any sense is if what the Bible says about Him actually happened.

The Rev. Dr. Matthew C. Harrison is president of The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod.

Holy Week ~ 7:00 p.m.

Thursday ~ April 13 Maundy Thursday

Friday ~ April 14 Good Friday

Saturday ~ April 15 Easter Vigil

Sunday ~ April 16 Easter Sunday

8:00 a.m. and 10:45 am

Easter Egg Hunt ~ 9:30 a.m.

Easter Breakfast ~ 9-11 a.m.





Soup Suppers

Each Wednesday beginning March 1st a variety of soups and desserts will be offered for your enjoyment beginning at 6 PM in the Fellowship Hall. This is special time of sharing and fellowship. A free will offering will be taken. All are welcome!

SEMINARIAN SPOTLIGHT: THE MURPHY FAMILY

Dear Gloria Dei,

Greetings from sunny Jacksonville Beach! We have been so blessed to spend our vicarage at a church that shares so much of your heart. We have been cared for so well and loved by the people at Bethlehem just as you have cared for us throughout this entire seminary process.

We are so excited to let you know, if you haven't heard already, we are having another baby. More than that, we just found out we are having another baby boy! We are still in the process of determining a name, but we are thrilled to be welcoming this new child into our lives. Devin Jr. and Penny are doing well. Penny has a full head of crazy hair these days and is sassy and chatty, and Devin Jr. has started picking up more words.



Right now, we have begun the season of Lent, and with it begins the second busy season of my vicarage. Please pray for me and us as a family so that we can continue to grow together and serve our vicarage congregation. God has taught me so much as a vicar, and I have really enjoyed being able to do hands on ministry in Jacksonville Beach. It is truly a privilege to serve in the church of our Lord.

May God bless you all in your continuing ministry in South Florida. I am certain that you will keep raising up men for ministry and spreading the Word of our Lord throughout your community. We thank you all for your continued prayers and financial support. It has meant so much to us. We think of you often.

Sincerely,

The Murphys

SEMINARIAN SPOTLIGHT:

THE SESSA FAMILY

To our dearest Gloria Dei family,

Greetings brothers and sisters in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

There are so many things and events that are happening in our life. We have both good and bad news. Would you like to hear the good news or the bad new first? I'll start with the good.

Leah has started a business with our sister-in-law, Deja Sessa. They design custom art pieces. She is incredibly talented. I encourage you to follow her on Instagram @LetteredByLeah. They're pieces are designed around hand lettered quotes and Bible verses. They customize the pieces by adding illustration, using watercolor and other physical mediums, as well as graphic, and even chalk board design.

As we come up on the 500th anniversary of the Reformation I am reminded of how the gospel was communicated through art and woodcuts. Leah has begun to create beautiful illustrations in her Bible as a form of illuminated manuscripts. It is a very devotional experience for her and I get to feast on her finished products.

That was good, but now I begin to deliver the bad. My supervisor, Rev. Dan Weber, has accepted a call to serve St. Luke's in Federal Way, WA. I am filled with both joy and sadness. I am glad that the people of Washington will hear the gospel through his ministry, but losing a friend and a great supervisor saddens me. Please keep Rev. Dan, Charlotte (his wife) and his children in your prayers as they relocate their family across the country.

Like many of you, our lives are a mixture of joy and sadness, happiness and sorrow. We long for this summer when we plan to be in south Florida for a few weeks. We are so grateful for your friendship, generosity, and love that you have lavished on us throughout this process.

Your son in Christ,

Sam Sessa



SHARED TALENTS

Once again, Gloria Dei is blessed by the ministry of woodworking by Pat and Gary Von Alven. Sprucing up the "plain looking railing" at the choir loft, Pat shared her "gift with the saw" to add decorative molding to an otherwise "boring" protection rail. Pastor Poulos commented that "members like Pat & Gary sharing their gifts and talents with the Gloria Dei family continues a long tradition of the giving of vocational gifts with the church family." Thanks, Pat & Gary, for your "labor of love and service."



SEMINARIAN SPOTLIGHT:

THE BLANKEN FAMILY

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Grace, mercy, and peace to you from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!

The last few times that you had heard from us, Annie had been writing to you because I had been busy with schoolwork. This last quarter was by far the hardest schooling experience I have ever had in my life. I'm glad to say that it is over. The last week of the quarter was very stressful, and I wound up getting sick because of it. However, I'm glad to say that the sickness is wearing off and I'm finally starting to feel like myself again.

Right now, my time is focused around prepping for my very first sermon. I will be preaching on Luke 18:31-34 on March 15th (a Lenten midweek service). I'm looking forward to preaching, both with anxiety and humility that God has blessed me with this honor and opportunity. Every pastor understands that the office itself is undeserved. There is nothing that we have ever done to 'deserve' the office or earn God's favor. God uses us as his instruments for the sake of His Church because of what Jesus has done for us. With this in mind, I say that I am truly honored to bear the privilege to preach and be considered for the ministry.

You may like to know what I am going to be studying this upcoming Spring Quarter. My classes are as follows below:

- Pastoral Counseling
- Pastoral Theology I
- Lutheran Confessions II
- Field Education I
- Liturgics II
- Church History II
- New Testament Greek Readings

In addition to the classes above, I also plan to attend two modules (weekend seminars). They are as follows:

- Lay Leadership Development
- Pastoral Care in the Valley of Death

I expect both modules to be highly educational and extremely practical. I look forward to gaining some practical application from the seminar that I will be able to use on vicarage and at my first call someday.

Annie is still busy teaching, but this break has been nice to get some quality time with her and baby Evelyn. At first being sick, it was not so enjoyable. But now, it finally feels like a break. I'm able to take the time on break to watch Evelyn and get some much-needed quality time with her. During this last quarter, I often felt distant from the two of them due to the load of schoolwork. But now, I'm happy to be able to rest, relax and spend time with my family.

Also, my parents are here visiting as I am writing this letter to you. They tell me how often they receive encouragement from you as well as the constant prayers you are offering for us. We thank you very much for all the support you have provided for us: financially, in your cards and letters, and in your prayers. We miss you very much and hope to see you soon after this upcoming Spring Quarter (sometime in June). We look forward to being able to share the Sacrament of the Altar with you in person once again.

In the love of Christ,

Alex, Annie, and Evelyn

alexander.blanken@ctsfw.edu



Please keep our seminarian families in your prayers:

Sam, Leah, Ben and Charlotte Sessa, 10970 Roxbury Plaza, Apt 322, Omaha, NE 68137
Devin, Melissa, Penny and Devin, Jr. Murphy 909 13th St. N, Jacksonville Beach, FL 32250
Alex and Annie Blanken, 5609 Old Dover Blvd., Apt 6, Ft Wayne, IN 46835

Your

American Heritage Girls Troop 1483

Gloria Dei Lutheran Church

February was very special for our Troop. We had virtually everyone at our first “Daddy-Daughter Dance,” an event we will almost certainly hold every year. The theme was “Valentine’s Day” and the moms did a wonderful job decorating, arranging the covered dishes, and establishing the mood for dancing with some great music. Dads, or special guests, and daughters ate supper together and line danced, slow danced ... even did the “Chicken Dance!” Remember the “Macarena?” Several times, we caught moms peeking through the kitchen doors having a good laugh themselves.



Some of our Explorers and Tenderhearts met at the Broward County Humane Society for a class about the mission of the Society and what they routinely do. After the class, the girls had a tour of the complex, where they saw lots and lots of dogs, cats, and even a few rabbits and guinea pigs. To thank the Society for the event, the girls donated much needed supplies like paper towels, dog biscuits, and cat treats.

Our next big event is a camping trip on March 10th-12th at C.B. Smith Park in Pembroke Pines. We are very excited about staying out two nights and expect most of the Troop to be there the entire weekend. In addition to cooking, we’ll be working on the fire starting, fishing, and camping badges.

Take a look at our bulletin board in the hallway just before you reach the women’s bathroom. You will find information about American Heritage Girls as well as information specific to our Troop. You are invited to take the bookmarks and information slips to share with families who have daughters you think might be interested in the program.

Please spread the word about your troop. If anyone is interested in more information, they can contact Jim or Debbie MacGregor at 785-207-3796 or send an email to ahg.fl1483@gmail.com or email Darla Schulte at darla_schulte@bellsouth.net.



GLORIA DEI

LUTHERAN CHURCH & ACADEMY

March 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 Ash Wednesday 9:30am-Joyful Hearts— Women's Bible Study 10:30am-4pm Thrift Shop Open 7pm Divine Service	2 5pm-American Heritage Girls	3	4 8am-Men's Breakfast & Bible Study 9am LWML Breakfast & Bible Study 9:30am-1:30pm Thrift Shop Open 1pm-GriefShare
5 8am-Divine Service 9:30am-Sunday School 10:45am-Divine Service	6 9:30am-1:30pm Thrift Shop Open 7pm-"A Longer Look at the Lessons" Bible Study	7	8 9:30am-Joyful Hearts— Women's Bible Study 10:30am-4pm Thrift Shop Open 6pm-Lenten Soup Supper 7pm Divine Service 8pm-Christianity 102	9	10	11 8am-Men's Breakfast & Bible Study 9:30am-1:30pm Thrift Shop Open 1pm-GriefShare
12 8am-Divine Service 9:30am-Sunday School 10:45am-Divine Service	13 9:30am-1:30pm Thrift Shop Open 7pm-"A Longer Look at the Lessons" Bible Study	14 10:30am-Prayer Shawl	15 9:30am-Joyful Hearts— Women's Bible Study 10:30am-4pm Thrift Shop Open 6pm-Lenten Soup Supper 7pm Divine Service 8pm-Christianity 102	16 5pm-American Heritage Girls	17	18 8am-Men's Breakfast & Bible Study 9am LWML Breakfast & Bible Study 9:30am-1:30pm Thrift Shop Open 1pm-GriefShare
19 8am-Divine Service 9:30am-Sunday School 10:45am-Divine Service	20 9:30am-1:30pm Thrift Shop Open 6:30pm-School Board Meeting 7pm-"A Longer Look at the Lessons" Bible Study	21 6:30pm-Church Council	22 9:30am-Joyful Hearts— Women's Bible Study 10:30am-4pm Thrift Shop Open 6pm-Lenten Soup Supper 7pm Divine Service 8pm-Christianity 102	23	24	25 8am-Men's Breakfast & Bible Study 9:30am-1:30pm Thrift Shop Open 1pm-GriefShare
26 8am-Divine Service 9:30am-Sunday School 10:45am-Divine Service	27 9:30am-1:30pm Thrift Shop Open 7pm-"A Longer Look at the Lessons" Bible Study	28	29 9:30am-Joyful Hearts— Women's Bible Study 10:30am-4pm Thrift Shop Open 6pm-Lenten Soup Supper 7pm Divine Service 8pm-Christianity 102	30	31	

BIRTHDAYS

March / April 2017

Judy Herman	3/2	Tami Maisa	3/21	Nina Poulos	4/5
Sal Gianseracusa	3/3	Victoria Schweiger	3/22	Sean Hoyt	4/6
Chris Saitta	3/4	Melina Guerrero	3/23	Susan Grimmett	4/8
Bryan Macha	3/7	Jonathan Vonada	3/23	Kathy Marriott	4/10
*Leif Preus	3/7	Idoris Blanken	3/24	Bruce Caruso	4/11
Nancy Hughes	3/8	Ina Henry	3/25	Linda Malone	4/11
Barbara Kronk	3/8	Sharon Flynn	3/27	Dale Devier	4/13
Ginger Poulos	3/10	Nicholas Grillo	3/27	Anthony Gallardo	4/14
Wilhelmina Heller	3/12	Joan Lee	3/27	Donald Coxe, Jr.	4/15
Donna Croup	3/13	Andrew Livengood	3/27	Debra Larsen	4/15
George Mueller	3/13	Zella Serian	3/27	George E. Poulos, Jr.	4/17
Michel Conner	3/15	Richard Francis	3/28	Rebecca Jones	4/18
*Rev. Adam Lehman	3/16	Ava Grillo	3/28	Helen Hadden	4/19
Osvaldo Estrada	3/16	Gayle Caruso	3/29	Ken Zugar	4/19
Walter Bork	3/17	Sadie Kern	3/29	Barry Vonada	4/26
Jennifer Cusumano	3/17	Jim MacGregor	3/29	Edgar Carstens	4/29
Coco Zheng	3/19	Vincent Wilson	3/29		
Lucille Muklewicz	3/20	Skyler Kern	4/1		
Shelby Dammann	3/21	Lourdes Bray	4/5	*Missionary Family	
Marie Harbar	3/21	Jamie Coxe	4/5		

ANNIVERSARIES

March / April 2017

David Inman & Colleen Gilchrist	3/1	Jeri and Marisella James	4/11
Greg and Toni Grillo	3/1	Ron and Barbara Reitsma	4/12
Sal and Michelle Giansiracusa	3/17	Russell and Lourdes Bray	4/15
Bill and Carol Jones	3/26	Alex and Marie Harbar	4/17
James and Kelly Watkins	3/27	Sean and Lea Hoyt	4/24
James and Doris Gilchrist	3/29	Joe and Deborah Meighen	4/25
Doug and Doris Roberts	4/1		
Jose and Lori Urtecho	4/2	*Missionary Family	



Pray For Us Calendar

These prayer requests were submitted by coworkers in the Lord's mission.

Congregations and individuals are invited to copy these pages for newsletters or other distribution. Download at lcms.org/prayforus or call 888-843-5267 to request a copy.

THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION IN ASIA — MARCH 1-15 The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) has been working in Asia since sending its first missionary to India in 1895. Today, the Asia region is home to both well-established Lutheran churches and fledgling Lutheran groups — all of which are hungry for solid, distinctively Lutheran instruction. At their request, the LCMS continues to assist them in various ways with theological education.

Remember God's work through theological education in Asia as you pray:

- 1.** for Christ's work throughout the world, that the Gospel might be proclaimed to all people and the forgiveness of sins be delivered through the Means of Grace.
- 2.** for LCMS partner churches throughout Asia, that God would guard them from the assaults of Satan that would lead them into despair or grievous sin and uphold them by His Word and gifts.
- 3.** for the LCMS and her work throughout the world, that Jesus Christ would shine the light of His Gospel through the work of her missionaries, both foreign and domestic, and preserve her from false teachings and despair.
- 4.** for Concordia Theological Seminary, Hong Kong, that it would be a place where pastors are trained to proclaim the Gospel to a world in need of forgiveness.
- 5.** for Martin Luther Seminary in Lae, Papua New Guinea, that God would strengthen and preserve the seminary to prepare the pastors of the Gutnius Lutheran Church to convict people with God's law and then heal them with the word of Absolution.
- 6.** for Japan Lutheran Seminary in Tokyo, Japan, that our Lord, Jesus Christ, would make the seminary a place where the Word of God is taught in its truth and purity.
- 7.** for Concordia Theological Seminary in Nagercoil, India, that the Lord would preserve the seminary from all evil and lead it to become a bastion of the Gospel against the attacks of the wicked foe.
- 8.** for Timothy Lutheran Seminary in Birip, Papua New Guinea, that the Lord would use the instructors to shine His Word upon the path of students preparing to serve His Church.
- 9.** for students and professors of Lutheran Theological Seminary in Baguio City, Philippines, that they might serve the Lutheran Church in the Philippines faithfully.
- 10.** for the Rev. Dr. Daniel Jastram, LCMS theological education facilitator for Asia and instructor at Japan Lutheran Seminary, that the Lord would use him to encourage and build up seminaries throughout the Asia region.
- 11.** for the Rev. Dr. Stephen Oliver, LCMS theological educator at China Lutheran Seminary, Taiwan, that he would continue to point his students to Christ and Him crucified for the sins of the world.
- 12.** for the Rev. Dr. Michael Paul, LCMS theological educator at China Lutheran Seminary and church planter, that the Lord would bless his labors as he assists in planting a new church in Taiwan.
- 13.** for the Rev. Dr. Edward Naumann, LCMS theological educator to South Asia, that the Lord would grant him courage to teach the students of the Lanka Lutheran Church and the India Evangelical Lutheran Church.
- 14.** for the Rev. Dr. Hans Trinklein, LCMS theological educator in Seoul, South Korea, that, as he learns the language and culture of the country, the Lord would equip him to faithfully teach and preach the Word of God.
- 15.** for Luther Seminary in Seoul, South Korea, that the Lord would preserve those who teach and those who learn to hold fast to His Word in all circumstances.



Vicar A. Francis Silva studies under the Rev. Roger James, LCMS missionary and South Asia area director, during a class at Lanka Lutheran Church in Sri Lanka.

INVOLVEMENT IDEAS

- Want to know more about the location of the Synod's missionaries and partner churches? Visit lcms.org/asia to download a free map of the Synod's work in the world.
- Learn more about the history of the Synod's work in Japan at lcms.org/japan.
- Did you know there are Lutherans in Bangladesh? Read about two grants the LCMS recently gave to assist these believers at blogs.lcms.org/2016/lcms-provides-life-giving-water-bangladesh.

JAPAN — MARCH 16–31 The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) began work in Japan in 1948. In 1976, the Japan Lutheran Church (JLC), or Nihon Ruteru Kyodan, became a partner church of the LCMS. To this day, LCMS missionaries continue to support the work of the JLC in the areas of Lutheran school education and theological education at the seminary.

Remember God's work in Japan as you pray:

16. for the Japan Lutheran Church (JLC). Pray that the Lord would preserve the Means of Grace in the JLC so that they would be edified to bring those gifts to those who do not yet belong to God's kingdom.

17. for those still suffering from the 2011 Tōhoku earthquake in northeast Japan, that the Lord would use the JLC to show mercy to those in need.

18. for Urawa Lutheran School (ULS) in Saitama, Japan, that the Lord would guide teachers as they provide both mental and spiritual food for the children in their care.

19. for Tom and Debi Going, LCMS educators in Japan who teach at ULS, that the Lord would use them to share the light of the Gospel with the students of ULS.

20. for Hiromasa Fukushima, principal of ULS, that he would guide and direct the school for the education of students and the glory of God.

21. for the Rev. Shin Shimizu, president of the JLC, and the rest of the JLC's leadership, that the Lord would equip them with wisdom and insight to deal with the struggles and trials of church administration.

22. for the pastors of the JLC as they proclaim the Gospel, that the Lord would grant them fidelity to the Word of God and a bold confession of the Christian faith.

23. for the members of the JLC, that God would use them to serve their neighbor and to share the message of the forgiveness and love Christ bestowed on them.

24. for the teachers and educators of the JLC, that God would enable them to rightly apply Law and Gospel to equip students both to share the good news of salvation and to serve their neighbors.

25. for the JLC's Sunday schools, that God would use those opportunities to nurture His little lambs and prepare them to grow into full maturity in the faith.

26. for the congregations of the JLC, that our Lord would keep and preserve them through His Word and Sacraments, so that all who receive them would be strengthened unto eternal life.

27. for the husbands and wives in the JLC, that God would use their sacrificial love for each other to demonstrate His love for sinners everywhere.

Japanese students gather in the home of Tom and Debi Going, LCMS missionaries to Japan, to bake Christmas cookies and hear the Christmas story.



28. for the young people of the JLC, that God would use their youthful zeal to spread the message of Christ's love to all those in Japan.

29. for all those who bear the name of Christ in Japan, that God would grant them a holy desire to share the love of Christ with those who do not yet belong to the kingdom.

30. for the Word of God in Japan, that it might have free course and be preached for the joy and edification of Christ's holy people.

31. for the leaders of Japan, that God would use them to keep and preserve peace and harmony, both domestically and abroad, so that the Gospel might be shared and God's people preserved from all persecution and harm.

MISSIONARY & PERSONNEL BIRTHDAYS

Download the prayer cards of missionaries and other personnel from lcms.org/prayercards.

March 2 Ryan McDermott, Ghana

March 4 Joan Jastram, Japan

March 5 Joel Klammer, Asia

March 13 David Warner, Spain;
Georgia Witt, Kenya

March 15 Molly Christensen, French-speaking Africa

March 16 Adam Lehman, Spain

March 19 Jonathan Naumann, Dominican Republic

March 20 Clinton Hoff, Czech Republic;
Antonio Lopez, Brownsville, Texas

March 21 Yanela McMiller, Dominican Republic

March 23 Linda Braun, Germany

March 24 Lalita Hoff, Czech Republic

March 31 Amanda Groshek, Taiwan;
Anton Lutz, Papua New Guinea;
Richard Sovitzky, Eurasia

MILITARY CHAPLAINS WITH BIRTHDAYS IN MARCH:

Chaplain David Wollenburg, MAF Committee member; Chaplain Jonathan Lorenz, Fort Bliss, Texas; Chaplain Pon Chanthaphon, Mayport, Fla.; Chaplain Tristen Engle, PAX River, Md.; Chaplain Mark Steiner, Washington, D.C.; Chaplain Michael Sneath, Quantico, Va.

WORD ON STEWARDSHIP

Lent is a season of repentant joy. There is joy in repentance because in repentance, God, through His Word, turns us away from our sins — our failures of thought, word, and deed — to believe in the forgiveness and new life He has accomplished for us in the death and resurrection of His Son. For our God is our Father, and fathers discipline their children. He loves us enough to point out when and where we have erred, so that we are not weighed down by false belief, despair, and other great shame or vice.

Thus we do well to listen to God's Word, His own teaching, about giving. St. Paul exhorts: "Anyone who receives instruction in the word must share all good things with his instructor" (Gal 6:6). This means that the local congregation is primary. In other words, everything else that we might give to during the year — laudable and worthy charities — are to be on top of what we give to our local congregation. For the local congregation is the place that serves us with the gifts of Christ's death and resurrection. The local congregation is where our spiritual needs are met when Christ's atonement is preached, when the forgiveness of sins is proclaimed, when we were baptized into the name of the Triune God, and when we partake of the body and blood of the risen and living Lamb of God.

But how much are we to give to this local congregation? His instructions are these: to give regularly (1 Cor 6:1–2), proportionally (1 Cor 16:1–2; 2 Cor 8:12), and generously (2 Cor 8:20) of our first fruits (Gen 4:4; Prov 3:9; Lev 27:30) with a spirit of eagerness (2 Cor 9:2), earnestness (2 Cor 8:7), cheerfulness (2 Cor 9:7), and love (2 Cor 8:23).

Thus, giving to the church is not to be an afterthought, given after everything else is spent. In this way, it is deliberate. We give it regularly, whenever we have income. We set it aside beforehand, before anything else is spent. From those first fruits, we set aside a proportionate and generous amount. Ten percent was the standard for the Israelites. Tithing was a command for them. St. Paul never mentions a tithe. Since a tithe was the bare minimum for the people of Israel in the Old Testament, perhaps St. Paul had more in mind. That aside, however, ten percent is an easy way to figure out an amount. You simply move your weekly, bi-weekly, bi-monthly, monthly, or yearly income one decimal point to the left. And that's it. That's what you put in the offering plate to support your local congregation so that you may continue to be a hearer of God's word by sharing all good things with those who teach it to you.

And how are we to give it? We give it with eagerness and earnestness. We give it cheerfully and with love, not out of compulsion. For through the preaching of the gospel and the administration of the sacraments, God has made us His children, forgiven us all our sins, given us grace upon grace, promised us life everlasting with Him in His kingdom, and filled us with His own Spirit, the Holy Spirit. This makes giving a joy. For it is more blessed to give than to receive (Acts 20:35).

In repentant joy, then, do we hear God's Word on giving, and we let that Word dwell in us richly. We let that word wash over our ears and seep into our hearts, to turn us away from our own selfish desires and turned toward Him in faith and love. We love the Lord and His Word. And we desire to do it. And when we have failed, that Word reproves and corrects, forgives and consoles. It calls us back to Him who is our God, our Savior, our Father.

LCMS Stewardship Ministry
<http://www.lcms.org/stewardship-ministry>

The 27th series of GriefShare, a grief recovery support group, began on Saturday, February 11 however you, a friend, co-worker, etc. can still join us...just come in to the Chapel at 12:30 pm on any Saturday for welcome time and registration.

GriefShare is a Scripture based, Christ-centered ministry which focuses on grief topics associated with the death of a loved one. The DVD seminar features nationally respected grief experts and real-life stories of people, followed by a small group discussion about what was viewed. The third segment of GriefShare involves your personal workbook which permits you to jot down notes from the DVD, learn what Scripture says about grief, and includes a weekly progress chart.

Many grieving people find they are only beginning the work of healing when family and friends have returned to their daily life routines. Too often people, including Christians, tend to stuff their grief instead of allowing it to do the God-given work for which it is intended. Don't allow fear of what others may think to keep you from what could help you. **Confidentially is very much a part of this program.**

Your bereavement experience may be recent or not so recent. You will find encouragement, comfort and help in grieving the death of a loved one. You will learn how to recognize the symptoms of being stuck in grief, that you do not need to live in bondage of certain emotions as well as valuable information about facing your **"new normal"** life. Grief-related books/materials are available for participants to borrow from our Lending Library.

There is a \$25.00 registration fee which covers the cost of the accompanying workbook, Resource Manual and Tool Box for this peer led ministry.

Questions? You can call the church office or any of the GriefShare Facilitator Team (Linda Malone, Judy Herman, Millicent Patterson or Marian Fowler) or go to www.griefshare.org for more information as well as information on other churches who sponsor GriefShare world wide.

.As many of you know, the majority of our participants are NOT members of Gloria Dei. Some have come to us through past participants who recommend and share how GriefShare has helped them to better understand the grief journey; others have come because of our members sharing the availability of GriefShare in our community. Still others have joined our groups due to our publicity through the media, funeral homes, and other groups.

Do you know of someone who could benefit from GriefShare? Take a GriefShare brochure or calling card (available in the foyer or Fellowship Hallway)....share it with that person.

In His Service and yours,

The GriefShare Team (Judy, Millicent, Linda, and Marian)

What fun we had at our Valentines' Family Game Night! Food, fun and games what more could you ask for?! We thank Ginger Poulos for leading the games!



Keep collecting those mites!
If you need a mite box please
pick one up at the purple table!



Please join us on the 1st and 3rd Saturday
of each month at 9:00 a.m. for
Breakfast/Bible Study
All women of Gloria Dei are invited to share in
fellowship, food and studying God's word.

BIBLE STUDIES

Fatherhood *with Joel Biermann*

Fatherhood is more than providing half the genetic material at conception; it's being there for the long haul. In *Fatherhood with Joel Biermann* the Concordia Seminary professor and dad relates how being a father is a demanding pursuit with a heavenly goal—raising kids who know Jesus as their Lord and Savior.



Men's Breakfast and Bible Study
Every Saturday 8 a.m.
in the Fellowship Hall,
Followed by Bible Study In Room 32
Hot Breakfast \$4.00
For more info contact Bruce Caruso
at 954-962-4186



Monday Night Bible Study
meets each Monday in the
chapel at 7 p.m.

They are studying "A Longer
Look at the Lessons"

Delve deeper into each
week's three Scripture
readings with "A Longer Look
at the Lessons." This Bible
study is based on the
lectionary in the Lutheran
Service Book, and provides
information about the
readings and their contexts.

For more information please
contact Elaine Carstens 954-
587-8394

Joyful Hearts
Women's Bible Study
Meets on Wednesday
9:30 a.m.
in the chapel.

All women are welcome!



Please join the women of the
Lutheran Women's Missionary
League

1st and 3rd Saturdays
at 9 a.m.—11 a.m
for Breakfast/Bible study
We will meet in the chapel.
All women are invited!

PASTOR POULOS LEADS THE FOLLOWING BIBLE STUDIES

Sunday mornings, 9:30 a.m. "Bible Foundations!"
Why we believe what we believe!

Wednesday Nights, 8:00 p.m. - 8:45 p.m. "Christianity 102:"
The Lutheran Difference



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The owners of these businesses and professional services provide this monthly newsletter at no cost to Gloria Dei families.

Please contact them and make use of their services or products.

 
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