

GOOD SHEPHERD NEWS

March 2011

The Season of Lent

What spiritual insight do you expect from this Lenten season? Lent is the 40-day period of repentance and renewal preceding Easter. It begins on Ash Wednesday (March 9th this year), and ends with Easter (April 24). Lent is a special time for meditation and prayer to increase our understanding of Christ's sacrifice on Calvary's cross and His glorious resurrection. The Lenten period allows us time to focus on the work of Jesus Christ for our salvation. The Lenten season is marked by penitential practices such as fasting and self-denial, repentance, and special services (including Holy Week services).

We invite you to join us this Lenten Season for our special Wednesday evening services. They begin at 7 pm, and are preceded at 6 pm by Lenten suppers.

Our Lenten evening theme this year will be *The Miracles of Lent*. *Miracles of Lent* looks at the important and significant miracles and events that God the Father performed to set apart His Son's death from all others. The miracles performed, and which we will examine each week, were: the three hours of darkness, the torn temple curtain, the earthquake, splitting of rocks, the Real Presence in the Lord's Supper, the death of God's Son, the opening of graves with many of God's people being raised to life and appearing to many in Jerusalem after Christ's resurrection, as well as the unbelievable faith of the Roman soldiers.

Join us for this special time of repentance and reflection.

Blessings,

Pastor Dan



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Cool Commemorations

February was a great month (I know my lovely bride will concur, as it also contains her birthday!) And while the weather might be cold and dreary, we've had some great festivals and commemorations this month that might have slipped below your radar. Festivals (or feast days) and commemorations are placed into the Christian calendar to help us remember some of the great people and events of Christian history, who God worked through to bring His saving Word to a lost and dying world. Since our times are no less dark and dreary than those of other ages, I thought it might be fun to remember a few of these great commemorations from the wonderful month of February—with three larger than life saints.

February 23rd: St. Polycarp. While his name might sound in our ears better placed in a pond or aquarium, this is one of the really great saints of the very early Church. St. Polycarp was a bishop in a place called Smyrna, somewhere around 70-150 AD. He was a student of St. John (yeah, THAT St. John!) and lived together with the people he served through great persecution. In spite of all that persecution, he lived to be fairly old, before the Roman authorities finally caught up with him. They tried to scare him with all kinds of nasty deaths (torture, eaten alive by animals, you name it) before they finally settled on burning him alive at the stake. When told that all he had to do was burn a little incense for the emperor to avoid this terrible fate, St. Polycarp responded that Jesus had cared for him all his long years of life, and he sure wasn't about to deny Him now. He died bearing witness to Christ in a theatre full of thousands, a faithful shepherd to the end.

February 16th and 18th, Philip Melanchthon and Martin Luther. While you probably know at least one of these characters already, the relationship between the two is something you might not have come across. These two were best buddies, and between them, they penned the majority of documents now collected into the Lutheran Book of Concord. While Luther was a priest, an Augustinian monk, and a Doctor of Scripture at the university in Wittenberg, Melanchthon was a gentle academic of ancient languages and ancient literature. While Luther was the fiery preacher, Melanchthon was the reflective writer. Luther met the rage of his times head on, beating back the nastiness and false witness of indulgence traffickers and corrupt churchmen. Melanchthon dug into the rich history of the church Fathers and the Holy Scriptures, and countered the false writings of bad theologians and half-baked ideas. Together, these mighty instruments of God were used to bring forth the Reformation, and untold millions have rallied behind their great works, such as the Small and Large Catechisms, and The Smalkald Articles (by Luther,) The Augsburg Confession, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, and the Power and Primacy of the Pope (by Melanchthon.)

Let us give thanks to God for the witness of His great saints in our history, who He kept strong in the faith, even under tremendous pressure and persecution. And let us also give thanks, that He gives to us this same Spirit, that we may stand steadfast in Christ, even under the pressures and persecutions of our own day. Amen.

Pastor Brad

Men's Breakfast / Bible Study March 19th

Join us **Saturday, March 19th** at **7 am** for a delicious breakfast, wonderful fellowship, and in-depth Bible Study. We are going through the series "Stuff They Didn't Teach Me in Sunday School." This month's lesson is "Noah's Vineyard." Join us. *Pastor Dan*

President's Corner

Endless possibilities. Besides normal business one of the tasks placed upon the council is to set and share goals for the current year. I want to say that I'm very excited and proud that the goals shared this year were a significant improvement over the previous year.

Not because last year's goals were bad, or that council and board members were focused in the wrong direction. That is not the case at all. But the goals were more concise, defined, and more importantly, more heartfelt. I'm not sure you understand the significance of that, so please hang with me while I try to explain how important I feel it is.

I believe God has designed each one of us for a purpose, something that we are built to be able to do. Which also means, we have or develop a passion for

that something (unless we selfishly go to great lengths to deny it). I also believe that, one of the methods by which God communicates to us, while be it more of a nudge of guidance, is through our non-selfishly motivated desires in life.

As we proceed through life we get taught what we need to know and prepared for what is to come. If you don't fight it, God will lead you to where your passion meets your faith in Him. For lack of any proper way to explain that, I can say it is a pretty neat deal when that happens.

That is what I caught a glimpse of during the past council meeting.

Julian Doyle

SEMINAR BY DR. PAUL MAIER: THE "LOST BOOKS" OF THE BIBLE

Saturday, May 15th -- 9:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.



Today, loud voices are claiming that some important writings that should have been part of the Bible were excluded, and that it's time to restore them. Is this true?

1. WRITINGS NEVER INCLUDED

The documents that never made it include apocryphal gospels, epistles, acts, apocalypses, and other writings that are interesting, but report useless miracles, contradict historical fact, and are novelistic additions to the biblical accounts.

2. COMPARING TRUE AND FALSE GOSPELS

With only two true Gospels covering the Nativity, the false gospels add many more curious details about Jesus' early years and his adult ministry as well. All of them reflect a later, derivative version of what really happened.

3. THE "GNOSTIC GOSPELS"

The discovery in 1947 of a manuscript horde at Nag Hamadi in Egypt provided a new collection of apocryphal documents that reveal an even more bizarre portrait of Christ. Yet, these are highly touted today by sensationalist authors and theologians who ought to know better.

4. RESPONDING TO ALL SUCH "LOST BOOKS"

The authors of these strange writings, however, did the church a favor in causing early Christianity to develop its rules for the canon and guard against heresy.



Dr. Paul L. Maier,
Professor of Ancient
History, Western
Michigan University
and widely-read
author.

Cost : Pre-register: **\$15 per person** (includes lunch)
At the Door: **\$20 per person** (includes lunch)

Reserve your ticket soon! Sign up in the narthex
or contact the church office (253-473-4848).

It's Music in God's Ears

This month we enter Lent. After the profound symbolism of Ash Wednesday, we begin a 40-day journey of preparation for the solemnity of Holy Week and the joyous eruption of celebration that will come with Easter. Many of us are familiar with this profound season. Perhaps we even follow the practice of "giving something up" for Lent as a discipline. I would encourage you also to think about how this season is reflected in the Liturgy we practice.

It helps to remember that the Liturgy that has come down to us as *Divine Service* (and as represented in the *Lutheran Service Book*) is founded in millennia of tradition and scripture. Almost all of the words in our Services are taken from Scripture, both Old and New Testament. What better way to worship our LORD than through the words that he has given us?

During most of the year, we start every service by singing with the faithful of history "*Lord, Have mercy Upon Us,*" thus joining them in the anticipation and hopeful promise of God's redemption.

That anticipation is fulfilled when, in the words of the Angel announcing the birth of Christ to the Shepherd's outside of Bethlehem, we sing:

*Glory to God in the Highest!
And Peace to His people on earth!*

In that moment, we join with generations of believers as our desperation is replaced by the fulfillment of hope as we hear the good news of our salvation.

During most of the year, we sing *Alleluias* throughout our worship in celebration of the fulfillment of that promise. *Alleluia* comes from the Hebrew words *Hallel Jaweh* (*Praise the LORD*) from Psalms 115-118, known in Jewish practice as the *Hallel*. Every time we sing it, we join ourselves in singing the very words that the disciples (and *Jesus Himself!*) sang on the night Christ instituted Holy Communion (*Matthew 26:30*). What a profound gift to realize that the same words that we sing in our worship were once uttered by our LORD and Savior!

During the seasons of Advent and Lent, we take a step back:

We recall a time when the promise was not yet fulfilled. We recall a time when the world waited in hopeful anticipation of our salvation. We take 40 days to ponder what our fate would be were it not for the indescribable gift of Faith by Grace through the blood of Christ shed for us.

Many of us will feel as if there is a "hole" in our worship for the next six weeks: we miss the *Glory to God* and long to once again sing *Alleluia!* This is a time for us to truly contemplate the profound lack in our outlook, were it not for the astounding gift of love Christ gave to us in His death for us.

Then, may we truly relish joy of singing again on Easter:

*Glory to God in the Highest!
And Peace to His people on earth!*

Then, in joy, we will loudly sing:

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

Then, may we truly be thankful for the profound gift of God's love for us!

Your Servant,

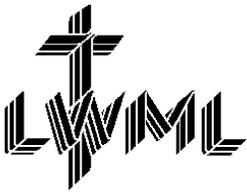
DVP (Denes Van Parys)

CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY WIND ENSEMBLE COMING MARCH 24th

Be sure to save **Thursday, March 24th at 7 pm** for a concert here at Good Shepherd featuring the **Concordia University Wind Ensemble** of Portland, OR

The group is the primary instrumental ensemble of the university. Repertoire is chosen from varied time periods, styles, and genres. Members serve as student ambassadors and representatives of Concordia University through their concerts and other performances. This 27-member group is under the directorship of Dr. William Kuhn. The concert is open to all, so be sure to invite your friends.

We will be feeding the group that evening as well as hosting them in homes for the night. A sign up sheet is posted on the bulletin board in the narthex.



Women in Mission

Please join us for the following events:

Weekly Bible Study on Tuesdays at 9:15 am. We are currently studying Luther's Small Catechism.

Weekly Quilting on Tuesdays at 10 am.

A monthly Bible Study on the second Saturday at 9:30 am.

Washington / Alaska District Retreat September 30 – October 2nd in Post Falls, Idaho

BEING WITH JESUS, LIVING ON THE EDGE

(Acts 4:13b, 20)

LWML Convention June 23-26 in Peoria, Illinois

Worship Proclaimer: Dr Ken Klaus

Inspirational Speaker: Katie Stam,

Miss America 2009

Singing, Praying, Sharing, Mites in Action

Want more information? Contact me:

Jane Oberg

475-2832

Women's Brunch & Bible Study / Pink Shoe

Our monthly Bible Study will meet again on the second Saturday of the month from 9:30-11:45 am in the fellowship hall. Please join us **March 12th** for a shared brunch and

fellowship followed by our Bible Study. **The Pink Shoe Club** is for girls from kindergarten – 6th grade. We all come together for brunch and then Miss Sue (Sue Tofflemire)

takes the girls for an activity while the adults study God's Word. All are welcome! Please join us! Babysitting is provided with advance notice at 473-4848.



Preschool News

www.littlelambstacoma.com

Sunday, March 6th at 4 pm in the fellowship hall the preschool will be hosting a "Tea and Talk" social. The

members of our congregation and our preschool families are invited to attend this one hour social event. We will have tea, punch, or water to drink and will also offer a few varieties of scones!

Everyone is then invited to the Annex Chapel for our 5 pm Chapel Worship! Please join us!

In house registration for the 2011-2012 school year begins this month for current students and families of Good Shepherd. Open enrollment begins in April.

Registration materials are on the tables in the narthex, can be downloaded from your computer via the website, or in the church or preschool offices. If you have any further questions you may contact Bonnie Jean Huset at 253-473-4848.

Bonnie Jean Huset
Preschool Director / Teacher

Lunch Bunch News

Each month we meet on the first Tuesday at 11:30 am. Pastor Dan always has an appropriate devotion for us and at noon we have lunch together with everyone bringing a dish to share. The program that follows varies.

Some months we play bingo or various games. Some months we watch a video. For two years we have had various hobbies / collections shared by individuals. For outings we have toured the Tacoma water front, visited Concordia Lutheran School, and for two years had a picnic out in Graham.

We are planning to tour the Wilcox Egg Farm in McKenna in the summer. If you have any ideas beyond what we have done, we would welcome your suggestion. Please come and join us each month on the first Tuesday. We don't discriminate against sex or age and we welcome retirees and anyone who has nothing else to do on that Tuesday!

In March we plan to view a video. Popcorn will be free but bring your own favorite beverage. Right now we do not have a set program beyond March, but one idea is to visit the Wilcox egg plant in McKenna and we are open to any other suggestions. For good fellowship and fun, come and join us on the first Tuesday of each month.

Pastor Ken Boetcher
253-847-5925

TEA AND TALK

FAMILY AFTERNOON TEA WITH SCONES

Sunday, March 6

4:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall



You and your family are cordially invited to join the preschool staff for tea and scones. Water and punch will also be available for those who do not wish to drink tea.

Following our time together with "tea and talk" everyone is invited to attend our casual chapel beginning at 5:00 pm in the annex building.