



Ascension Evangelical Lutheran Church

2820 12th Avenue South Moorhead, MN 56560

Church Phone: (218) 233-5346

www.ascensionmoorhead.org

www.wels.net

March 2018 Newsletter

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

Dear Members and Friends of Ascension,

Hopefully, this winter will soon be dying out and hopefully spring will come early. I know this is wishful thinking on my part as March always has reminded me that March is still a winter month. March is also often the season of Lent and of March Madness. This always creates a dilemma for me as basketball is my favorite sport and I would like to watch as much basketball as possible. But with two services a week and three on Holy Week, it is usually not possible to watch as much as I would like. I usually don't even have time to fill out my NCAA brackets.

We are currently in the season of Lent. Lent is the forty days leading to Easter. Lent begins with Ash Wednesday and forty days later we have Easter. Since the date of Easter changes from year to year, so does the date for Ash Wednesday. Since Easter is earlier than usual this year, so was Ash Wednesday. Since Easter falls on April 1st this year (some would say April fool's Day), Ash Wednesday was on February 14th (some would say on Valentine's Day).

Lent is sometimes one of the more misunderstood seasons of the church year. Why is Lent 40 days

long? Most say it is because Jesus was in the desert for 40 days when he was tempted by the devil. We usually hear the account of Jesus being tempted by the devil on the first Sunday in Lent. It reminds us of part of what Jesus endured for us on his way to the cross. As one person commented: "Although I was drawn to Christianity in search of joy; it's the Cross that keeps me coming back day after day, year after year. It is this time of year, known as Lent, that I am reminded of what Jesus did for me."

Why is the color purple associated with Lent? Usually, churches that celebrate Lent choose the deepest, darkest shade of purple for this special season. Purple is the color of repentance for sins and also symbolizes the state of our souls outside the light of Christ. Purple is also said to be the color of Christ's passion.

Lent is also a time for self-examination and repentance. Seeing our sin and seeing what Jesus had to endure in order to save us from our sin is what leads to this self-examination. Many churches will encourage, and some people actually will, give up something for Lent. Some people will give up a particular sin, weakness, habit, or vice. For some it might be giving up smoking, give up

chocolate, or giving up diet soda. While this practice can have personal benefits, I don't necessarily endorse it. I want Lent to be all about what Christ has done for me and not about what I'm giving up or doing for him, even if I may benefit.

For some people Lent seems to be a little bit of a drag. It is not like Advent (also a time for repentance) because during that time of the year we are excited about the days leading up to Christmas; you know – "the most wonderful time of the year." Some of the hymns during Lent strike a somber, sorrowful tone. It is not pretty or easy to hear what Jesus had to endure for us. Yet, at the same time Lent properly prepares us for Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter. Jesus won the victory! I know that my Redeemer lives! Because he lives we will also live with Jesus forever in heaven! Alleluia! Alleluia!

In Christ's service,
Pastor Lloyd Schlomer



www.facebook.com/AscensionMoorhead





OPEN FORUM

On **Sunday, March 11th**, we will have an open forum during the Bible study hour at 10:30. One of the items for discussion is our new Mission Statement.

Our proposed new Mission Statement reads:

The mission of Ascension is to enable our members to share the way to salvation as found in the inspired Word of God with our community through the efforts of each member, group and activity of our congregation.

There will be other topics as well and anything you might want to bring up.
We encourage everyone to attend.

JESUS CARES MINISTRIES
A MINISTRY OF THE LUTHERAN
HOME ASSOCIATION



We continue to meet once a month for our Jesus Cares Ministry. This ministry is for those with intellectual and development disabilities. This is an underserved group of people in our community.

We do devotion, a short Bible lesson, crafts, music and a snack. While the ministry is going well, we do not serve a lot of people and could serve more.

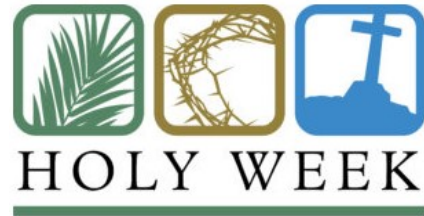
If you know of anyone who might benefit from this ministry, please refer them to our Jesus Cares team.

Any questions, talk to Darlene Schlomer.



GPLHS SPRING CONCERT

Great Plains Lutheran High School in Watertown, SD, will hold their Spring Concert at the GPLHS gymnasium on March 11th, 2018, at 3:30 in the afternoon. The concert is titled: "To You I make Music". The concert will include performances by the Band, the Freshman Choir, the Celebration Choir and the Honor Choir. If you cannot make it to Watertown for the concert, it will be live-streamed at www.GPLHS.org.



LENT AND HOLY WEEK

The Lent season continues with midweek Lent services on:
Wednesday evenings at 6:30 through Wednesday, March 21st.

Our theme this year is:
"Jesus Christ Is Our Great High Priest".

Holy Week begins with Palm Sunday, March 25th.

*The Maundy Thursday service with communion will be at Ascension this year on March 29th, at 6:30.

*The Good Friday service will be at Shepherd of the Valley in West Fargo on March 30th, at 6:30.

*Easter Sunday is on April 1st.

We will have our Easter, the "Resurrection of our Lord" service, at the regular time of 9:00 AM. We will also have an Easter breakfast before the Easter service beginning at 8:00 AM.

He is risen! He is risen indeed!

Lutheran Mobile Clinic (CAMM)

Lilongwe, Malawi

February 2018



"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." Jeremiah 29:11

Greetings from the warm heart of Africa,

Are you a planner? I am. At this time of year many people plan what they'd like to accomplish during the year and beyond. As I finish my term of service with Lutheran Mobile Clinic in Malawi, I am starting to plan for what comes next. Though planning of at least some degree is wise and sensible, what happens when plans are upset? Do you feel frustrated or angry, wondering where you went wrong?

The Israelites, to whom this promise in Jeremiah was first made, certainly wondered what went wrong. Being defeated and carried off into exile wasn't what they expected to happen. One day they were making plans and going about their lives and the next they were captives in a foreign land.

Some of the rural Malawians that the Lutheran Mobile Clinic serves are wrestling with very grim situations, just like many other people throughout the world. Grave illnesses, the death of the main breadwinner, flood and drought, the breakup of families and other consequences of living in a sinful world have snuffed out the survival plans of some of these people. In these circumstances it is easy to forget that God is watching and intervening for their good. Hope is fleeting and a prosperous future seems impossible. They may be tempted to think that God is guessing and hinting, rather than knowing and declaring His plans for their lives. They may wonder if God's promises apply to them.

How about you? Do you ever wonder if God's promises apply to you? Perhaps unexpected circumstances have led you to seek another job, though you loved the one you had. Has an illness or the death of a loved one taken the joy and contentment out of your daily life? Maybe most of your plans have evaporated along with your wealth and you are wondering what your future holds.

Be assured that God's promise in Jeremiah is to us, just as it was to the Israelites. But it is not just *to* us; it is also *about* us. Do you define prosperity by what you

have, or by what you share? What is "enough" and in what or whom do you hope? Are you prosperous because you have a certain net worth or because you have all you need? Is it "enough" to maintain the hope of eternity in heaven and live at peace with God through Jesus, or is your time and energy centered on how much you can acquire?

God is the source of every blessing and everything belongs to Him. But He places us and gives to each of us as He sees fit, expecting that we use His gifts to benefit others. No matter what your situation is, you can always do something for someone in need, whatever that need looks like. If you have time, offer it; develop your talents, and use them; if you have money, share it; if nothing else, be a prayer warrior.

As we make our plans, let's remember that God knows what we need for our lives and He promises to provide it as we are focusing on Him, His ways and His kingdom. Everything else is just details!

Your sister in Christ,

Amanda Artz, Clinic Administrator
Lutheran Mobile Clinic, Malawi

If there is information you would like included in the monthly newsletter, please either drop a note in Trisha Dominguez's mailbox or send an e-mail to: newsletter@ascensionmoorhead.org

All information for the April newsletter is due March 27th