GOOD NEWS

FROM CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH

FEBRUARY 2024

FROM THE PASTOR

2/14/24 **Why do you** Practice Righteousness?
Matthew 6:1
2/21/24 **Why do you** Follow Jesus?
Matthew 4:19
2/28/24 **Why do you** know Jesus?
Matthew 16:16-17
3/6/24 **Why do you** rebuke Jesus?
Matthew 6:22
3/13/24 **Why do you** defend Jesus?
John 18:10
3/20/24 **Why do you** deny Jesus?
John 18:27

For Lent this year we are using the theme, "Why do you….?". We start on Ash Wednesday with the assigned text that has Jesus warning about being careful about why and how we do things. From there we take a look into Peter's life and a number of things he did and ask the question, why he did those things.

Peter is held up, rightfully so, as one of the greats in the Christian faith. Yet, there are things he does right and things he does wrong. As we work our way through his life as a disciple of Jesus we will look at some of those times and ask why, both good and bad. As we look at Peter we will also look at ourselves. You may not want to compare yourself with Peter, but you too are one of the greats of the Christian faith. Like Peter, you too do somethings right and somethings wrong. We will want to ask ourselves, Why do I?.

As we look and as we compare, we will notice that at no point does Jesus abandon Peter or you. There may be times when we suffer the earthly consequences of our actions, but still Jesus does not abandon us.

With the Ash Wednesday text, we see that the why and how of an action can have huge impact on whether that action is right or wrong. If we are able to see that through Peter's life, then, maybe we can see it more clearly in ours. Then, when similar situations come up in our lives, we might be able to evaluate the why and how before the action takes place.

I would encourage you to look up the texts, prior to the night of the service so you have more time to evaluate what Peter does. Then better be able to apply it to your life.

In Christ,
Pastor Nix

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FLOWER CHART

The 2024 Flower Chart is pinned to the bulletin board in the Narthex for those who would like to provide altar flowers for a particular Sunday.

If you have any questions about providing flowers, please contact Cheri Zehendner.

BIRTHDAYS

February

02 Benjamin Fick
04 Philip Fick
05 Monica Andreasen
06 Luna Nix
07 Eloise Fick

Lutheran Doctrine: Christ-Centered, Cross-Focused

Issues, Etc.

Talk Radio for the Thinking Christian

www.issuesetc.org

Sacred Music

lutheranpublicradio.org

LIFE THOUGHTS IN THE CHURCH YEAR FROM LUTHERANS FOR LIFE

February 4, Sexagesima - "Please rejoice in knowing prayer works and keep praying for the states who still haven't banned abortions and for those states trying to ward off those who want to bring it back. We are not done praying and never will be. God is on our side, and He has a plan. We need to stand firm and with faith never give up praying. God controls the power of prayer, and He is amazing." *Virginia Flo, Lutherans For Life – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • lutheransforlife.org*

February 11, Quinquagesima - "We live dripping with the promise of Baptism. We live fueled by the fire of God's Word. We live created on the sixth day and recreated by God's grace to be followers of Jesus seven days of the week until that great eighth day, called eternity, when we will sing praise in His presence forever. We live and we love and we are loved in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, sin forgiven, shame erased, status: all very good." *Rev. Dr. John Nunes, guest speaker on "The Lutheran Hour" – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • lutheransforlife.org*

February 18, First Sunday in Lent - "The state can punish offenders, but it can't give birth to law-abiding citizens. The state cannot love or nurture a child. It takes a family. A radical thought, that, but off limits in our public conversations swept clean of moral discourse. Pray that this will change." *James M. Kushiner, The Fellowship of St. James – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • lutheransforlife.org*

February 25, Second Sunday in Lent - "Our Heavenly Father remains active and almighty, especially in the difficult circumstances that life issues involve. In joining Himself to us with His incarnation, wisdom, power, atonement, and resurrection, Jesus makes every human life blessed—and a blessing! He lovingly and ably handles decisions about welfare and affliction, life and death, so that we don't have to do it on our own." *Pastor Michael Salemink – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • lutheransforlife.org*



Adult Church Choir

We are starting up the Vocal Adult Choir. Our first practice will be on Wednesday, January 31st at 7pm. We are looking for singers. Please talk to Lynette or Cynthia if you have any questions



Bell Choir

We are moving practice on Wednesday, January 31st to 6:15pm. New members are always welcome. Please join us if you are interested. If you have any questions please talk to Lynette .

CARING FOR MY NEIGHBOR

If any of the Ten Commandments might tempt us to think that keeping the Law is easy, it would be the Fifth Commandment. After all, how hard is it to get through life without murdering somebody? The vast majority of people can handle that!

But Jesus famously blows up this notion by pointing out that the command, "you shall not murder," goes much deeper — down to the heart.

> You have heard that it was said to those of old, "You shall not murder; and whoever murders will be liable to judgment." But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, "You fool!" will be liable to the hell of fire. (Matt. 5:21–22)

Hatred and disdain come from the same sort of crookedness of heart as murder. With both murder and hatred, you look down on another person and think them of little worth.

In the Small Catechism, Luther also points out that every "do not" in the commandments also includes a "do this:" "We should fear and love God so that we do not hurt or harm our neighbor in his body but *help and support him in every physical need*" (SC, Fifth Commandment, emphasis added).

We are not called merely to avoid evil; we must also do positive good.

So when Jesus drew near to us and became our neighbor by taking up our humanity, He came not only to avoid harming us, but He came to positively help us, bless us and serve us.

We are now called to show the love to our neighbors that Christ showed to us. Your neighbor is yet another gift that God has given you that requires your stewardship. We are called to show mercy, to be kind, to love and serve our neighbor. One aspect of this stewardship is financial: our neighbors need us to support the church's work so that they can hear the Gospel and come to faith. Our neighbors need the church's alms and mercy work. Our neighbors need our faithful service in all we do in the name of Christ.

2024 CHURCH OFFICERS

President: Michael Grooms

Elders: Jay Holtz
Les Britson
Dan Monson

Secretary: Luther Brack

Financial Secretary: Rev Phillip Andreasen

Asst. to the Financial Secretary: Dustin Preheim
Luther Brack

Treasurer: Marty Johnson

Trustees: Jonathan Fick
Andrew Brack
Dustin Preheim

INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS

We will install our Church Officers on Sunday, January 28th during the church service.

WOMEN OF CHRIST BIBLE STUDY

Will meet Saturday, February 10th, at 10 am in the Fellowship Hall. We are studying the great women of the Bible. This month's study will focus on Jochebed and Miriam. All the women of the congregation are welcome to attend. A copy of the Bible study is in the Narthex, on the credenza, if you would like to work on it before we meet. If you have any questions, please contact Lisa Johnson.



LENTEN SERVICES

Will begin on Wednesday, February 14th with Ash Wednesday, at 7pm. Imposition of Ash will be offered before the church service begins. The theme for this year's Lenten series is "Why Do You?" Lenten Suppers will begin on Wednesday, February 21st at 5:30 pm. Please watch the credenza in the Narthex for a sign up sheet for the meals.

CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH
TREASURER'S REPORT
January 24, 2024

	11/2023	12/2023	01/2024
Deposits:	$ 21,094.48	$ 58,340.53	$ 5,481.31
Disbursements:	$ 42,420.60	$ 24,792.50	$ 15,289.05
Deposit Breakdown:			
General Fund:	$ 21,082.48	$ 51,232.53	$ 5,399.31
Designated Funds:	$ 12.00	$ 7,108.00	$ 82.00
Monthly Budget Requirement:	$ 15,929.72	$ 19,912.15	$ 15,929.72
Mortgage Balance as of 1/24			$72,988.43



IN OUR PRAYERS

Duane Tieszen (son of Ray), Cancer treatment
Mildred Corey, at home
Lisa Johnson, health issues/wellness
Susan Powell, at home
Elva Clauson at home

Sermon Text and Titles for February

February 4 ***"What Does This Mean?"*** St. Luke 8:9
Isaiah 55:10-13
Psalm 85
Hebrews 4:9-13
St. Luke 8:4-15

February 11 ***"But Jesus Knew!!!"*** St. Luke 18:34
1 Samuel 16:1-13
Psalm 146
1 Corinthians 13: 1-13
St. Luke 18:31-43

February 14 ***"Why Do You Practice Righteousness?"*** St. Matthew 6:1
Joel 2:12-19
Psalm 51:1-19
2 Peter 1:2-11
St. Matthew 6:1-6

February 18 ***"How Do You Show the Devil Who You Are?"*** St. Matthew 4:3
Genesis 3:1-21
Psalm 32
Hebrews 4:14-16
St. Matthew 4:1-11

February 25 ***"How Do You Show Jesus Who You Are?"*** St. Matthew 15:27
Genesis 32:22-32
Psalm 121
1 Thessalonians 4:1-7
St. Matthew 15:21-28

Praise the One Who Breaks the Darkness LSB 849

Appointed for Quinquagesima (ONE-YEAR), | study by Paul Robert Sauer

Introduction

How would you describe yourself to a stranger? What would be the most important things to highlight? How do you boil down all of your interests and passions into just a few short descriptive words?

Who is Jesus? It is a question that Jesus Himself asks the disciples (Luke 9:18–20), and after some stumbling about Peter answers, "The Christ of God" (v. 20).

Today's hymn seeks out other biblical descriptions of who Jesus is, in an attempt to fill in the picture of "Jesus, the divine Messiah" with "Jesus, the man who walked on this earth and did great things," so that a complete picture of Jesus, who is both truly human and truly divine, can emerge.

- What images come to mind when you think about Jesus? Are they mostly divine? Mostly human? A mixture?
- Who do "others" today say Jesus is? In the face of confusing and conflicting images of Jesus, where do we go for answers?

Exploring the Scriptures

In today's Epistle, 1 Cor. 13:1–13, St. Paul speaks about how "faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love" (v. 13).

- Why might love be considered the greatest of these three?
- Is love simply an emotion? In what way does Jesus' incarnation reinforce the greatness of God's love?

Incarnation is at the heart of this hymn. Read John 1:1–14.

- How is Jesus' incarnation described by St. John? What image is used?
- What does this incarnation give birth to (vv. 12–13)?

In today's Gospel, Luke 18:31–43, Jesus breaks the darkness of a blind beggar by giving him sight.

- To what does Jesus attribute the man's restoration of sight (v. 42)? What does the beggar do with sight restored?

In our churches there is rightfully a strong emphasis on the forgiveness of sins offered through Jesus Christ. Read Luke 4:16–21.

- How does Jesus describe His mission (by quoting from Isaiah)?
- Is the Christian life simply about forgiveness of sin? What else is included in the Gospel (Good News) that Jesus brings?

Exploring the Hymn

Background

In 1986, Lutheran pastor Rusty Edwards (b. 1955) opened his Bible with the intention of creating a Bible study on the actual life and unique ministry of Jesus:

> What on earth did Jesus really do? As I prayed, studied, and thanked God for the life of Jesus, I began to write down some of his works. The list grew longer. Suddenly, I gazed down at the list and the list looked almost like a hymn. (Rusty Edwards, "Praise the One Who Breaks the Darkness," CrossAccent 15, no. 2 [2007]: 39)

Edwards then set aside the Bible study and composed "Praise the One Who Breaks the Darkness," a celebration of the marvelous works of the incarnate Son of God.

- If you were to describe Jesus to a friend, would you focus more on His theological importance or on His historical life?
- What do the historical life and works of Jesus contribute to our understanding of His theological importance?

Edwards titled his hymn after his favorite image of Jesus — the one who breaks the darkness in the world.

- What is your favorite image of Jesus? Why?
- Did Edwards leave out images of Jesus that you would include if you were writing the hymn? Which ones?

Text

This hymn is deeply descriptive of the life and works of Jesus. It is filled with biblical imagery. Yet Jesus is not explicitly mentioned by name until the third stanza.

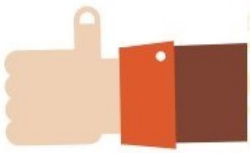
- If stanza 3 were removed from this hymn, would it be as powerful? Would you still know who the hymn was about? How?

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KIDS IN THE DIVINE SERVICE

What does the word "Amen" mean?

The word "amen" (pronounced AH-men) is Hebrew for **"certainly"** or **"truly."** Martin Luther said that it really means: **"Yes, yes, it shall be so."** You probably recognize this word from hearing it or seeing it used in prayer. Maybe you use it in your prayers every morning when you wake up and every night when you go to sleep.





Why do we use it?

God commands for us to pray. When we use the word "amen" at the end of our prayers, we are letting God know that **we truly believe that He will hear and answer all of our prayers** just as He has promised! What a great way to end a prayer!



Parents: Point out that Jesus used the word "amen" a lot in Scripture when He said things like: "Truly, truly I say to you." Encourage your children to listen for and say "amen" at appropriate points in the service. In what places besides prayer do we hear it amen?

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If you are in need of a ride to and from the church building, please contact Pr. Nix or one of the elders: Jay Holtz, Les Britson, and Dan Monson

GOOD NEWS!

God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

(Romans 5:8 NKJV)

UPCOMING EVENTS

2024

- Feb 14 Ash Wednesday Divine Service, 7pm
- Feb 21, 28, Mar 01, 08, 15, 22, 29 Midweek Lenten service, 7pm (Dinner prior)
- Mar 10 Daylight Savings Time Begins, 2am
- Mar 10 Voters Meeting
- Mar 28 Maundy Thursday Divine Service, 7pm
- Mar 29 Good Friday Tenebrae Service, 7pm
- Mar 31 Easter Sunrise Matins Service, 7am
- Mar 31 Easter Breakfast, 8am
- Mar 31 Easter Festival Divine Service, 9:30am
- May 09 Ascension Day Divine Service 7pm
- May 12 Mothers' Day Breakfast
- June 09 Voters Meeting
- July 21-25 VBS
- Sept 08 Voters Meeting
- Nov 03 Daylight Saving Time Ends, 2am
- Nov 28 Thanksgiving Day Divine Service, 9:30 am
- Dec 1 Advent Service, 7pm
- Dec 08, 15, 22 Advent Services, 7pm
- Dec 08: Voters Meeting, after Divine Service
- Dec TBA Children's Christmas Service
- December 24 Christmas Eve service, 5pm
- December 25 Christmas Day Service 9:30 am
- No New Year's Eve/Day Service



The hymn begins by celebrating the freedom that is brought by the "light" (John 1:4–9) who breaks the darkness. Out of that light comes freedom and all its benefits (described in st. 1). Read John 8:34–36.

- What is the slavery that John speaks of? Is it physical? Does it manifest itself in physical ways?
- How is creation itself affected by the freedom brought by the liberating light (st. 1)?
- Stanza 1 concludes with a reference to "the very Bread of peace." What is this a reference to?

In the second stanza humanity (the children), the spiritual realm (demons), and the whole of creation (burning sand) are made whole by the one who is "living water." Read John 4:7–15.

- Where do we go to get the living water?
- Is a celebration of Baptism present in this stanza? Why or why not?

The hymn concludes with the explicit identification of "the One" as the incarnate Word. We have been moved from table (Communion) to font (Baptism), and now the hymn concludes with a focus on the grace that table and font bring. Edwards saves the best for last. Read John 3:16–17.

- Why did God send Jesus? What is the greatest of the works done by the incarnate Son of God?
- Where is our unity found (Eph. 4:4–6)?

Making the Connection

This hymn calls to our attention the many works of the incarnate Son of God.

- What difference does it make to you to have a God who became one of us?
- How do we encounter the incarnate Word today?
- In what ways can we bring the incarnate Word to others (1 Cor. 12:27)?

In Closing

The incarnation of the Son of God has changed everything. God is not content to allow His people to live apart from Him and His presence. God continues to come to His people through His Word, through the bread of life (Communion), and through water (Baptism). Ultimately the incarnate Word draws us back to God through His role as Redeemer, "the One who makes us one" (st. 3) both with God and with each other as fellow members of the Body of Christ.

- Sing or read aloud together LSB 849, "Praise the One Who Breaks the Darkness."

Prayer

O Lord, mercifully hear our prayers and having set us free from the bonds of our sins deliver us from every evil; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen (Collect for Quinquagesima).

The following is a "draft" letter from the district about the future of the district's blanket subscription of the Lutheran Witness magazine.

Quick Reference:

Questions and Answers about The Lutheran Witness

1-18-2024

BACKGROUND: Our District President, Rev. Dr. Scott Sailer, at the direction of the District's Board of Directors, took the unusual action of calling for a congregational vote on whether to rescind a District Convention resolution from 1976 that required South Dakota District congregations to pay for subscriptions to The Lutheran Witness for their members. He took this action because the cost of the Witness had nearly doubled from 2022 to 2024, going from $11.25 per subscription in 2022 to a projected $20 per subscription this year, a 78% increase, thereby creating unexpected, higher expenses for the congregations and the District.

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When the voting ended on December 31, 2023, the Secretary of the District, Rev. Dr. Thomas Brown, reported that 75 of 106 congregations (70.75%) had cast official ballots, well beyond the 25% required to participate in the vote. Fifty-four (54) congregations voted "yes," that is, they voted to rescind the resolution and thereby end the requirement of congregations providing subscriptions. Twenty-one (21) congregations voted "no." The resolution passed by a 72% majority.

When will the current method of subscribing end, namely, congregations providing subscriptions for their members? Answer: The March 2024 issue of The Lutheran Witness will be the last issue under the current plan.

Who will pay for the three months of the Witness in 2024 (January, February, March) our members will receive? Answer: Congregations will be billed by the District Office for the three months.

Must the current subscriptions be cancelled? Answer: Yes.

Who contacts Concordia Publishing House (CPH), the publisher of The Lutheran Witness, to cancel the current subscriptions for each congregation? Answer: No current subscriber or congregation will have to contact CPH to cancel. It has already been arranged for the publishing house to cancel all current subscriptions, after the March issue.

How may we continue to receive The Lutheran Witness, after March 2024? Answer: More information will be coming shortly on how individuals may subscribe on their own or by way of their congregations, or how a congregation may receive bulk copies for distribution at the church.

When the official letter comes we will share that with all of you. This is just to let you know early, so you will not be surprised. If you have any questions or suggestions please feel free to share them.

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