

He shall have dominion also from sea to sea,
 And from the River to the ends of the earth.
 Those who dwell in the wilderness will bow before Him,
 And His enemies will lick the dust
 The kings of Tarshish and of the isles
 Will bring presents;
 The kings of Sheba and Seba
 Will offer gifts.
 Yes, all the kings shall fall down before Him;
 All nations shall serve Him. (Psalm 72:8-11)

We would expect the Psalms following Psalm 72 to be ones of praise and delight in the fulfilled Abrahamic and Davidic promises.

Instead of bringing blessings to the people, Solomon's reign initiated the decline into materialism and idolatry that eventually led to exile. Rather the Psalter reflects the tragic history of Israel. Psalm 73 and 74 are Laments: *When I thought how to understand this, It was too painful for me* (73:16); *O God why have You cast us off forever?* (74:1). Book 3 contains the darkest Psalm (88) and ends with Psalm 89 asking: *Lord, where are Your former loving kindnesses, which You swore to David in Your truth?* (89:49).

Jesus came to fulfill all the promises of Psalm 72 and tell the people that God had not forgotten His promises. In Luke, Zechariah spoke prophetically: *He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the LORD God will give Him the throne of His father David.* Simeon recognized the King who would bless all the nations: *a light to bring revelation to the Gentiles And the glory of Your people Israel* (Luke 2:32). The magi saw His Star and came to worship Him with valuable gifts. The people expected the Messiah to establish His righteous rule in Israel and defeat the Roman Empire. But Jesus entered the desert to be tempted by Satan.

In much the same way we leave the Season of Epiphany for Ash Wednesday, Lent, Maundy Thursday and Good Friday. We know that Jesus has defeated the enemy and yet we are confused and often in despair: Why do we suffer? Why is there still oppression? Where is Your righteous rule? Our waiting is different from the faithful people of the past, because we see Jesus but we don't see His righteous rule and so we pray: Thy Kingdom Come Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Events Coming Up

"Better Knots" Marriage Enrichment

Please join us on Sunday, February 10th, from 2:00 - 4:30 p.m. for a time of marriage enrichment. Couples from all stages of marriage... months to many years... are encouraged to join us for this special event.

Super Bowl Party

Everyone is invited to join us for a Super Bowl Party on Sunday, February 3rd, beginning at 4:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Our youth are sponsoring this event and will provide snacks. A free-will offering will be collected to support their trip to the National Youth Gathering in Minneapolis this summer.

Installation of Pastor Fitch

Messiah in Missoula and Trinity in Superior invite us to join them for the installation of Rev. Russell Fitch who will be their new pastor. The service will begin at 5:30 p.m. at Messiah here in Missoula on Sunday, February 10th. They also invite us to hors d'oeuvres starting at 4:30 p.m. and coffee and dessert following the service.

Boards & Parish Planning Meetings

Just a reminder that our Boards and Parish Planning Committee will meet on Tuesday, February 19th. The Board meetings begin at 6:00 p.m., and the Parish Planning Meeting begins at 7:30 p.m. Hope to see all of our board and PPC members then!

Ambassadors for Reconciliation

The Ambassadors for Reconciliation will give a presentation on Sunday, February 17th, during the Bible Class Hour. They have a new opportunity to bring a healing message to church leaders in Rwanda along with the Office of International Missions of our Synod. Please come hear about this mission opportunity!

LifeLight Bible Study to Begin

The Tuesday morning LifeLight study will begin on Tuesday, February 12th, at 9:30 a.m. in the Library. To prepare for Lent and Easter they will be studying the second part of the Gospel of Luke. Everyone is welcome to join them!

School News

You may not know it, but Mrs. Candi Shaw was gracious enough to come out of retirement to fill our classroom teaching needs over the last three months. Candi has been such a blessing as a volunteer in our school for several years, but this time she really went above and beyond! She will not be able to work with us full time any longer as it is time to get back to retirement (Roger has plans!), but we have been blessed with a wonderful replacement. Mrs. Leah Klemp will be working as an aide in the classroom for the remainder of the school year even as she continues to teach the two-day preschool class. Thanks to both of these lovely ladies for their willingness to serve.

National Lutheran Schools Week began January 27th and continues through the first weekend in February. The students will be singing a hymn at both services on February 3rd to celebrate with the congregation. We enjoyed a week of special devotions and activities centered around this year's theme Real. Present. God.

Your classical school students, board, and staff want to be sure the entire congregation knows how much we appreciate all that you do for us! Not only does the congregation of First Lutheran provide the facilities that we need (and that is a very big deal!), but we are so blessed with volunteers both in the classroom and behind the scenes. This school truly is your mission to the community!

Preschool News

Preschool is currently registering children for the 2019-2020 preschool program. We offer a 2-day class for 3 and 4 year olds on Tuesday and Thursday mornings and a Pre-K class on Monday, Wednesday & Friday mornings. If you are interested in registering your child or have any questions, please call Linnea Stiff at home 251-5536 or church 549-3311 Ex. 6.

Birthday Bags

It's that time of year again when the LWML ladies are assembling birthday bags ... they hope to do over 100 bags this year! They are looking for donations of party supplies such as cake mixes, frosting, birthday candles, hats, paper plates, napkins, balloons, party favors, small toys or stuffed animals, and birthday bags. They will assemble Birthday Bags to be given to Missoula Food Bank clients when a child has a birthday. Please bring some of these items to the church by March 1st. If you would rather give a cash donations and let the ladies shop for you, please contact Jetta Moon or Linnea Stiff. All donations will be greatly appreciated. Thank you!

First University

We are beginning a new program called First University, as our congregation is filled with individuals who have extraordinary skills and knowledge. First University is a program designed to encourage sharing those God-given gifts with others who share the same interest.

We are looking for individuals who would be willing to share their talents and abilities with others ... whatever these may be!! We know we have talents in various crafts such as cake decorating, flower arranging, pottery, wood-working, etc. Or if you have knowledge of various topics such as financial planning or healthcare. We are open to various ideas!

If you have an idea you would like to share or know someone else with talents, please contact the church office for more details. Our e-mail is flcmissoula@aol.com or you can call us at 549-3311 Monday - Friday between 9:00 a.m. & 1:00 p.m.