



March 17th is St. Patrick's Day. Here in the United States, St Patrick's Day is a celebration of being Irish or a day to wear green or a day to eat corned beef and cabbage. All of that has very little to do with who Patrick was and why it matters to us in Christ's Church.

Patrick actually wasn't Irish. He was born to Christian parents in Britain around 389 A.D. He was kidnapped and taken to Ireland as a slave and forced to be a herdsman for about 6 years, and then he escaped and ended up at a monastery in France. Eventually, he became a priest and then a bishop, and he returned to Ireland sometime after 432. There, he spent his time organizing the Church, preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ, and teaching the biblical truth about the Triune God. At that time, there was division in the Church about the teaching of the Trinity, but Patrick taught clearly that there is one God in three Persons – the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. There are several legends that Patrick used the shamrock with its three leaf clover to teach about the Triune God, but it's probable that those are legends and not historical accounts. Patrick died around 466, and tradition says he died on March 17. That's why St Patrick's Day is celebrated on March 17 each year.

That all makes for a nice history lesson, but for us in the Church today, it's more than a history lesson. This year, there are two things about Patrick's service in the Church that are helpful for us to remember. First, the identity of the Church and our identity as Christians is tied to who God is. The truth of our Triune God is central to the Christian faith and to who we are as Christians. Confessing that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are the three Persons of the one God is vital to our faith, especially as it confesses that the Son – Jesus Christ – and the Holy Spirit are God. If there is a difference in how a Christian talks about the Trinity, there is also a difference in how that Christian talks about who Jesus is. A confusion about the Trinity leads to a confusion about if the Son is fully God. Any teaching that diminishes our Lord Jesus is a dangerous teaching indeed!

The other important lesson for us today about Patrick is the way that he courageously served God where he was called. After he was ordained as a bishop, he was sent to Ireland, the land where he had been a slave. Ireland was a land that was not overly Christian, but did have a strong influence from the Druids. Druidism is a sacrificial, nature-based religion, and shares some characteristics with other nature based-religions. Patrick confronted the Druids and their religious teachings that opposed the gospel of Jesus Christ. He served as both a missionary and a Church leader at the same time.

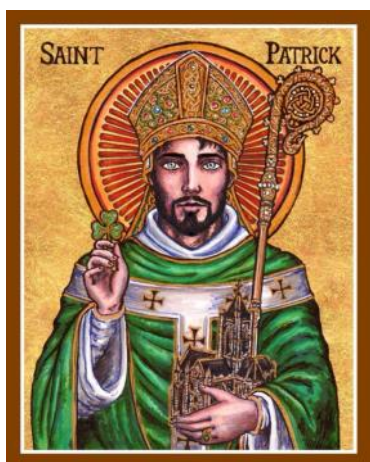
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*That you may believe that Jesus is the Christ,
the Son of God, and that by believing
you may have life in His name. —John 20:31*

Today, we live in a world where there are teachings that are opposed to the gospel of Jesus Christ. We speak the gospel to others to show them that the death and resurrection of Jesus is for them, and no other form of faith or belief will do them any good. This isn't an effort to bring "civilization" to the world, but to bring Jesus Christ to the world. He is, after all, God in the flesh who died and rose to redeem the world and to make it holy. He calls all who hear this gospel to faith in Him.

So this year, as you drink your shamrock shakes and eat corned beef and cabbage and wear green and think about being Irish for a day, pray that your Triune God gives you the faith and faithfulness that He gave to Patrick. Confess your faith in the Triune God, and courageously proclaim the Gospel of Jesus to those who need it!



HYMN VERSES FROM LSB 604:1-2

written by St. Patrick

I Bind unto Myself Today

**I bind unto myself today
The strong name of the Trinity
By invocation of the same,
The Three in One and One in Three.**

**I bind this day to me forever,
By pow'r of faith, Christ's incarnation,
His Baptism in the Jordan River,
His cross of death for my salvation,
His bursting from the spiced tomb,
His riding up the heav'nly way,
His coming at the day of doom,
I bind unto myself today.**

Bible Studies this Spring

Board of Education

Men's Breakfast Bible Study ~Join us for the **1st and 3rd Saturdays at 7am**, at **Sunny Street Café** in Keller.

JOY group ~Tuesday at **9:30am** in the Fellowship Hall.

Confirmation 1: **Sundays at 9:30am**, second floor MCLA.

Confirmation 2 ~Tuesday at **7pm** in the Fellowship Hall.

Pastor's Class ~ **Thursday at 6pm** in the Fellowship Hall. This course covers the basic teachings of Christianity from Luther's Small Catechism.



STEWARDS UNDER THE CROSS **March 2021**

"I am not commanding you, but I want to test the sincerity of your love by comparing it with the earnestness of others. For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich" (2 Corinthians 8:8-9).

Without commands or even arm-twisting, St. Paul encourages, even challenges, the Church in Corinth to demonstrate the sincerity of their faith by their generosity in giving. He does this because giving generously is a gift of the Spirit given to us through the Gospel.

St. Paul wrote: "But just as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in your love for us—see that you also excel in this grace of giving" (2 Corinthians 8:7). In other words, just as we grow in faith and speech and knowledge of eternal things by the Holy Spirit through the Word of God, so also do we grow in giving from the same Spirit through the same Word.

The problem is that the grace of generosity often grows cold in us. It's not so much that we stop giving, but we don't put it first. We treat it like all the other bills that must be paid. It becomes a chore, just one more thing to check off a list of things to do. That empties it of its spiritual power and robs us of the joy that Christ and the Scriptures assign to it. On top of that, since this generosity is linked to faith and knowledge of divine things, a lack of excelling in giving is sure sign that our faith and knowledge of God are under attack as well.

Thus St. Paul points to the foundation of generosity: the generosity of Christ Himself. Even though He was rich, He became poor so that we who are poor might become rich. Thus, the incarnation, suffering, and death of our Lord on the cross is the reason, source, and driving force for our generosity in giving to the church.

And since Christ who was rich became poor so that we might be rich in His grace—of which generous giving is part—so we also who are rich in His grace can excel in pressing His grace into service toward the gracious work of the church.

Pay attention to what you give to the church so that you may excel at it. And if you find that your heart has grown cold or indifferent toward it, immerse yourself in God's Word. Read it at home. Attend Bible Class. Hear and listen to it preached in the Divine Service. Be reminded of what Christ has done for you in His incarnation, suffering, and death. For this will strengthen your faith and knowledge. And where that excels, so will the grace of giving excel also.

Is it STILL Lent?

If you remember back to when the pandemic began, it was the middle of Lent 2020 when everything went on lockdown. With churches and schools closing or going virtual, everyone who was able to work from home, with great fear and uncertainty for the future, may have felt at the time that Lent never really ended. To be unable to join our voices in the sanctuary, tuning in virtually from our computer screens at home, really made the conclusion of Holy Week seem somewhat anticlimactic. And while the streaming service did contain the "Alleluia," we did not shake the walls with our joyful shouts together. Here we are again, in the season of Lent, a year later, and many of the same trials are yet before us. Times of separation from our community, loss of friends or family, and heightened vocational uncertainty have burdened our hearts and minds for so long that they have become "normal." And so, as the seasons return to the Lent it seems we never left a time where many traditionally take on a spiritual practice or abstain from a particular comfort to devote oneself to prayer, there is one thing I suggest we all give up for Lent this time around: *hope*.

I know that seems unnecessarily dreary and dismal. Things have gotten better, schools and churches are open, and there is light at the end of the tunnel which seems almost in reach. Why now? Do we not have many more reasons to be optimistic than we did seven months ago? Isn't it finally time for things to go back to the way they were before, you know, *normal*? *The life to which we were accustomed and in which we were more comfortable*?

The thing is, we were never meant to be comfortable. As we see in our journey through Lent how Jesus is making his way to the cross, we are reminded that we follow a Savior who embraced the path of suffering – *with joyfulness*. *As he drank the bitter cup, Christ himself relinquished all hope that there would be an easier way.*

Maybe the world will recover, or maybe what comes next will be worse. Tomorrow is promised to nobody. This world is cursed, and it is time for us to gaze deeply into this truth until we understand that we, too, had better just give up.

Because no matter what happens, our life is hidden with Christ on high, where the saints who have gone before us eternally rejoice on another shore and in a greater light. This is our true home, where our higher citizenship lies, the kingdom to which we are ultimately loyal.

No matter what happens here, for better or for worse, we can face it with the confidence that as surely as God in Christ has joined us miserable sinners in our suffering, he will also bring us into his kingdom where no trace of it may be found. Come, let us fix our eyes on Jesus, as we learn from him in the midst of trials and temptations to pray, bear the cross, and die. For though we, too, will most certainly endure these things, we joyfully follow in the footsteps of Him who went before us, because we know exactly where they lead.

May heaven be ever in your hearts as we respond to Christ's call to be ambassadors for the justice, peace, and joy of His kingdom, shining the redeeming light of true hope into the ruins of this hopeless world. Though weary from all the changes, we will yet celebrate the triumph of His unyielding life at the end of these 40 days with a new thankfulness in our hearts. He has brought us this far, and he will see us safely to the end. Take heart and lift up your eyes.



New Council Members: We welcome John Perkins as the new Vice-President and we welcome Eric Weber as the new Chairman of the Evangelism Committee.

Officer Member Orientation: The Council conducted officer and board member orientation and training on February 9th. Some tidbits from that training: from President Clay Brandt: “The council will work to streamline processes and simplify areas of ministry to work more efficiently and help each board to work within their respective lane of responsibility and authority.”

Note From the Secretary: “I will work to make our processes transparent, communicate regularly, and facilitate the participation of volunteers into regular participation in the work at Messiah. Call upon me to facilitate or coordinate in any way possible.

Church Annual Reports: Our near-term council schedule is to complete our first ever Messiah Lutheran Church Annual Report for publishing in early April and to complete the FY2022 budget in a timely fashion for presentation prior to the April Voter’s Assembly.



Next Meeting Dates:

- ~March 24th at 8:00 pm following the Lenten Service.
- ~April 21st at 7:00 pm.
- ~April Quarterly Voter’s Assembly— April 25th immediately following the late service.



Board of Stewardship: Are you thinking about retirement? Do you need to make a will? Have you considered what to do with the estate you’ll someday leave behind? These and many other related questions will be addressed in an upcoming **Estate and Retirement Planning Seminar** presented by the Board of Stewardship.

Where: Messiah (in the Fellowship Hall)

When: April 24th

Time: 9am-1pm.



A message from the Trustees: Starting at 8am-12:30pm, March 20th we are going to have our **Annual Spring Cleaning!** This year we are focused on cleaning out the MAC ANNEX Building. We are asking for volunteers to help with painting, landscaping and interior clean up.

We would also like to move the storage unit that is next to the Sport Court away for maintenance purposes. If you are available to serve, please contact Paul Lara at Trustees@Messiahkeller.org or 972-741-9003 (text messages preferred) Snacks and water will be provided.



***It is a wonderful gift to serve in the House of the Lord.
Where is our Lord calling you to serve?***

MLCA Students celebrating National Lutheran Schools !!



MLCA recently celebrated National Lutheran Schools Week. National Lutheran Schools Week is the opportunity to celebrate with nearly 2,000 schools nationwide and to give thanks for the gift of Lutheran schools for students, families and communities. During National Lutheran Schools Weeks, it's been a tradition at MLCA to celebrate by having a spirit week in which both students and staff love to dress up and participate! This year, we had a Crazy Sock day, Tacky Tourist Day, Sports Team Day, Career Dress Up Day and an MLCA Spirit Day!

The theme for this year was "Sent to Serve" and is inspired by Matthew 20:28, "Even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

MLCA Announcements~

Upcoming Events:

- ~ Spring Break: March 15-19
- ~ No School: April 2 (Good Friday)
- ~ No School: April 5 (Easter Monday)
- ~ Spring Program: April 29
- Last Day of School: May 27

SAVE THE DATE



Open enrollment for MLCA is here! We are now accepting reenrollment packets from our existing families as well as applications/enrollment from new families. Spread the word about our wonderful school! Please contact the school office at schooloffice@mlcatexas.org for more information.



Despite the incoming storm that shut down Texas, our Bake Sale was a success! Our youth gathered from 6pm-6am and baked: Apple Pies, Cowboy Cookies, Rosemary Bread, Rhoda Brewer's famous Matrimonial Bars, Chocolate Chip Cookies, and Scones. They arrived home safe Saturday exhausted.

We really appreciated all the orders that came in along with your generous donations to help fund this year's summer Higher Things trip to Austin.

The night consisted not only of baking, packaging, and cleaning, but an array of fun activities including a treasure hunt, Spike Ball, and making chocolate covered pretzels that were devoured by the youth! Stay tuned for our upcoming youth events:



Upcoming Events:

Camping Trip: TBD

Pool Party: TBD

Christ Academy: June 20-July 3rd

Higher Things Conference: FORGIVEN

When: July 27th-30th, 2021

Where: Concordia University Austin, TX info: erin.mccomack@hotmail.com



Christ Academy High School : July 20-July 3, 2021

by Pamela Buhler

Christ Academy High School consists of three important elements: confessional catechesis, liturgical worship and a fun life together. Christ Academy is comprised of two schools, Timothy School for men and Phoebe School for women.

During their stay, students will be taught by the faculty at Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne. Learning also takes place informally in the invaluable discussions over the dinner table and in dorm groups every day. Students also experience the joy of living a life of worship as we gather together around God's Word four times a day. All of our worship is drawn from the Lutheran Service Book and is focused on the person and work of Jesus Christ. Our students will have the opportunity to witness to their faith while serving the greater community. Finally, students have fun at Christ Academy. The academy is packed full of great activities and our students both enjoy themselves and build lasting friendships along the way.



Whether you are interested in a Career for Christ or are just interested in theology, Christ Academy is the event for you. Contact Deaconess Buhler at 972-342-7697 to register or for more information regarding tuition/travel. <https://www.ctsfw.edu/ctsfw-events/christ-academy/phoebe-school/>

Young Adults/College students from Messiah, Holy Shepherd, Faith Plano, Faith Wiley, St. Paul, Immanuel Fairview and Trinity, Norman OK (OU) attended the North Texas Free Conference hosted by Faith Plano on January 30. The speaker was Rev. Roy Askins, current editor of the Lutheran Witness.



UPCOMING EVENT!!!

When: March 6th

Where: Messiah Lutheran Church

Our plans for the event:

- 3:00 PM - Archery, outdoor games, camp fire (or indoor games)
- 5:30 PM - Food trucks in Bear Creek Park
- 7:00 PM - Evening Prayer Service (Pastors Chryst and Ottmers)
- 7:30 PM - Bible Study (Pastor Ottmers, Immanuel Fairview)

WE HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE!!

Messiah News & Updates

by Pamela Buhler



Thank you all for working with me and sending in all the necessary information to update our pictorial directory! It was a lot of work, but now we have a beautiful, accurate, updated directory. The beautiful thing about THIS directory, is that it is not a one-time hit wonder. As members join, we can add them to our database and hand them a current directory, just like the one you received, in as simple as a few minutes. We can continue to print accurate directories in real-time as long as you

all help us keep your information accurate. To **UPDATE** your directory information, follow the directions below:

- ~Go to www.messiahkeller.org
- ~Log in using your email listed in the directory (resetting your password if necessary)
- ~Click "Connect" and then click "Members"
- ~Update your household information/picture

If you need help with this process and/or did not receive a directory but desire a copy, please contact our church secretary, Jaana Phillips, at churchoffice@messiahkeller.org and she will print one for you.