



Shepherd of Peace Lutheran Church

THE SHEPHERD'S VOICE

Gregg Braden

11. February 2013 ·

A member of the church, who previously had been attending services regularly, stopped going. After a few weeks, the pastor decided to visit him. It was a chilly evening. The pastor found the man at home alone, sitting before a blazing fire. Guessing the reason for his pastor's visit, the man welcomed him, led him to a comfortable chair near the fireplace and waited.

The pastor made himself at home but said nothing. In the grave silence, he contemplated the dance of the flames around the burning logs. After some minutes, the pastor took the fire tongs, carefully picked up a brightly burning ember and placed it to one side of the hearth all alone then he sat back in his chair, still silent.

The host watched all this in quiet contemplation. As the one lone ember's flame flickered and diminished, there was a momentary glow and then its fire was no more. Soon it was cold and dead.

Not a word had been spoken since the initial greeting. The pastor glanced at his watch and realized it was time to leave. He slowly stood up, picked up the cold, dead ember and placed it back in the middle of the fire. Immediately it began to glow, once more with the light and warmth of the burning coals around it.

As the pastor reached the door to leave, his host said with a tear running down his cheek, 'Thank you so much for your visit and especially for the fiery sermon. I will be back in church next Sunday.'



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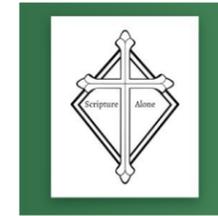
Shepherd of Peace Lutheran Church

There's a Place for You at SOP!

449 Millwood Circle
Maumelle, Arkansas 72113

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What's a Gesima?

When you prepare to go on a journey, there are always preparations to be made. There are bags to be packed. You want to make sure that your car is in good enough condition to make the trip. You may have to arrange for someone to come by and feed the cat. There are all kinds of considerations to take into account when you get ready to go on a journey. The three Sundays that precede Lent are referred to as "Pre-Lent" or "Gesimatide." These Sundays are not part of Lent, but they prepare us for Lent. They prepare us for our journey as we walk with Jesus through his suffering, death, and, on Easter Sunday, his resurrection.

Septuagesima is the first Sunday in Gesimatide. It comes from the Latin word for 70 and it means that there are 70 (or so) days until Easter. The readings for Septuagesima remind us that Lent is coming and that we need to start thinking about how we will observe Lent. Lent, by the way, comes from the German word for fast. The practices of fasting, prayer, and almsgiving are the historic marks of the season of Lent. The readings for this day also remind us that we are saved by grace alone.

Sexagesima is the second Sunday of the Pre-Lent season. It comes from the Latin word for 60, indicating that we are about 60 days away from Easter. The reading for Sexagesima suggest to us that as we fast during Lent, we are blessed with more ample time to be about the hearing of God's Word. We are called to hear and learn God's Word that it may take root in us and save us. The Word of God alone is what brings us the truth of God's salvation.

Quinquagesima, the last Sunday of Gesimatide falls just three days before Ash Wednesday. As you might have guessed, the name for this Sunday indicates that we are about 50 days from Easter. This Sunday we pray along with the blind man that our eyes may be opened to and we will follow Jesus to Jerusalem that we might finally understand what God is doing in the suffering and death of Jesus. We are reminded on this day that faith alone saves us.

Additionally, you'll notice a difference in the worship service during Gesimatide. In Luke's account of the Transfiguration, you'll read that after Jesus revealed his glory to Peter, James, and John, he set his face toward Jerusalem. He started his journey to the cross. To reflect that, we will sing "Alleluia, Song of Gladness" as our closing hymn on Transfiguration Sunday (February 5 this year) and we will refrain from using Alleluias after Transfiguration, saving this joyous word of praise for Easter. Here are the last two verses of that hymn:

Alleluia cannot always
Be our song while here below;
Alleluia, our transgressions
Make us for a while forgo;
For the solemn time is coming
When our tears for sin must flow.

Therefore in our hymns we pray Thee,
Grant us, blessed Trinity,
At the last to keep Thine Easter
With Thy faithful saints on high;
There to Thee forever singing
Alleluia joyfully

So as we prepare to join Jesus on the road to Jerusalem, let us make the proper preparations for the journey!




Valentine's


Parent's Night Out

Friday, Feb. 10 & Saturday, Feb. 11

WHO: Kids 2-10 years old

WHERE: Shepherd of Peace Lutheran Church (449 Millwood Circle, Maumelle)

WHEN: 5pm-10pm (each night)

COST: \$5 per hour/per child (Dinner is included)

RSVP: RSVP by Thursday, February 9th to 501-851-4546 or shepeace@sbcglobal.net

Enjoy Valentine's Day with your love and trust
your kids with us!



All proceeds go to the SOP Youth Fund.



Beginning the first of February and running through the entire month, the senior youth will once again place envelopes in the Narthex with varying amounts listed from \$1-\$100. The money raised will help support their trip this summer with Pastor to the Higher Things Conference in North Carolina. They thank you for your support.

In 2016 the REACH committee was involved in many activities that either 'reached' into the community (Relay for Life, Bash on the Blvd) or 'reached' out to invite them in, like VBS. We also spear headed collecting from the community for Back to School uniforms & supplies.

We've finished the holidays so it's time to discuss 2017 'REACH'. What worked, what could be done better, new things to add, etc. It's our 500th year celebration. Is anything being planned? Let's get together to talk, think and plan.

Please plan to attend a REACH meeting in the Fellowship Hall, following church (approx. 10:15a) on Feb 12. REACH is an open group that's common goal is to get beyond the 4 walls of SOP, let the community know us, as well as to show, tell and serve our God. ALL are welcome to join. In HIS Service, Laura Quimby



The Incredible Scandal of God's Perfect Love

by [Jennifer Rothschild](#)

The Story of Hosea Told by a Master Storyteller

I first heard of [Hosea](#) from my dad who was a master storyteller. Growing up, I loved listening to his stories. His specialty was weaving together tales that blended a lot of God's truth, a bit of application and a Southern drawl. In fact, sometimes I couldn't quite make out the characters' names because they were lost in Dad's sweet, slow Southern twang. When he told me the Bible story I'm about to tell you, a love story about an unlikely couple, I honestly thought the characters were named Hosear and Goma! As far as I was concerned, those were their real names until I realized, years later, that not everyone shared our brogue.

Hosea and Gomer: An Unlikely Love Story

Hosea (not Hosear!) was a preacher—a prophet, really—who lived at a time when religious folks didn't want to hear his message. The Israelites were more interested in worshipping idols than worshipping Jehovah. They were, as the hymn writer put it, "Prone to wander ... prone to leave the God I love."

One day, God told Hosea his bachelor days were up. The problem with the wedding announcement was it came with a dreadful prophecy.

His wife would break his heart. Aware of Gomer's promiscuous reputation, Hosea humbled himself in obedience to the Lord.

As a godly man, he surely had different hopes for marriage—those of pursuing a lover who would share not only his heart but also his faith and convictions.

Hosea Hears Rumors

How many times had he dreamed of late night talks, stolen kisses in the courtyard and holding hands as he drifted off to sleep beside the one with whom he longed to build his future? Instead, he awakened from his marriage vows to emptiness and abandonment. The Bible doesn't say when or how; all we know is that it did happen.

But Hosea began to hear rumors. And his heart began to break.

His beloved was going off with other men. He couldn't even be sure the children she bore were his. Hosea—a broken-hearted father, a betrayed husband and a bewildered preacher—felt like his fragile heart would never recover. And, then, the final blow ... Gomer's wanderings had drawn her into the wrong company.

Hosea Does the Unthinkable

God told Hosea to do the unthinkable—to go redeem his wife. Gomer was being sold as a slave. Hosea must have cried out to God, "She's thrown my love away. Why should I have to buy back what is already mine?"

Hosea was a faithful husband; Gomer was an unfaithful wife. God is the faithful lover of our souls. We are often faithless, prone to wander.

Hosea and Gomer's story is the story of God and Israel. It is also our story. When we, like Gomer, were enslaved, God bought us back. When we found ourselves stuck in chains we never intended—chains of insecurity, discontentment or fear—God freed us.

When we, by our very nature, threw God's love away, He redeemed us.

God's Unconditional Love and Act of Redemption

When Hosea bought Gomer back, when he redeemed her, he did so with 15 shekels of silver and 5 bushels of barley (Hos. 3:2). When God redeemed us, He paid the ultimate price with the blood of His Son (I Pet. 1:18, 19).

Gomer did not deserve to be redeemed. Her behavior did not merit such mercy. Israel did not deserve God's faithful betrothal. Their unfaithfulness did not merit such mercy. You and I do not deserve salvation. Our sin does not merit such mercy.

Why did God redeem you?

Why did Jesus pay the ultimate price for your redemption?

Why does God continue to give His unconditional love to a people who continually throw it away?

It's not because we deserve it; it's because His mercy demands it. Aren't you glad God does not treat us as our sin deserves? (Ps. 103:10) God chose you and loves you. This love story is your story. Even if you are faithless, He will remain faithful.

If you are enslaved, God will buy you back.

If you are lost, God will find you.

If you are ashamed, God will cover you.

If you wander off, God will bring you home.

If you give up on Him, God will not give up on you.

No matter where you are, God sees who you are, and He loves you.

Through the story of Hosea, God tenderly touches your arm and whispers, "Come home. My love sets you free.

When you get tired of striving and wandering, I'll be there to draw you to Myself again and remind you who you are in Christ."

How Your Story Connects with Hosea's

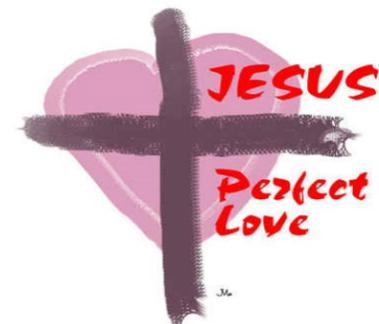
That's the message of the whole Bible, isn't it? At a manger in Bethlehem, God entered the slave market where all of us were putting ourselves up for auction, prostituting ourselves and our humanity to a lesser life. But on the cross, Jesus paid the full price for our freedom.

He bought us back.

This is the scandal of God's love—His loving desire to make us His people and the full persons He intended us to be.

God's response to you is the same as it was to Israel. **He will heal your faithlessness. He will love you freely.** God has written on your very life the words *I love you*. He values you so much that He enters into covenant with you, redeems you and remains faithful to you.

May we never carelessly throw away what cost God so much. Oh, what love!





SPECIAL DAYS IN FEBRUARY

- 2/2 Dani Ausburn (b)
- 2/2 Lisa Nazzaro (b)
- 2/3 Sarah Wray (b)
- 2/3 Bob & Mary Kling (w,65)
- 2/4 Melissa Bishop (b)
- 2/5 Ken Quimby (b)
- 2/7 Jennifer Zanca (b)
- 2/8 Steve Haas (b)
- 2/8 Carolyn Leisman (b)
- 2/10 Gene & Veronica Shepherd (w)
- 2/11 Phyllis Christiansen (b)
- 2/16 Kelly McDonald (b)
- 2/22 Trina Bowen (b)

February 2017

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 <i>Kitchen Klub, 6:30pm Choir, 7pm</i>	2 <i>Bible Study, 10:30a Mid-week teens, 6:30pm</i>	3	4
5 <i>Bible hour, 8am Worship, 9am</i>	6 <i>Quilters, 10am</i>	7 <i>Bible Study, 6:15p</i>	8	9 <i>Bible Study, 10:30a Mid-week teens, 6:30pm</i>	10 <i>Parents Night Out SOP Youth 5-10 pm</i>	11 <i>Parents Night Out SOP Youth 5-10 pm</i>
12 <i>Bible hour, 8am Worship, 9am Reach, 10:15</i>	13 <i>Quilters, 10am BoD, 6:00pm</i>	14 <i>Bible Study, 6:15p</i>	15 <i>Choir, 7pm</i>	16 <i>Bible Study, 10:30a Mid-week teens, 6:30pm</i>	17	18
19 <i>Bible hour, 8am Worship, 9am</i>	20 <i>Quilters, 10am LM, 7pm</i>	21 <i>Bible Study, 6:15p</i>	22	23 <i>Bible Study, 10:30a Mid-week teens, 6:30pm</i>	24	25
26 <i>Bible hour, 8am Worship, 9am</i>	27 <i>Quilters, 10am</i>	28 <i>Bible Study, 6:15p</i>				

FEBRUARY EVENTS

- February 1st – Kitchen Klub, 6:30pm
- February 10th/11th -Parents Night Out/SOP youth, 5-10pm
- February 12th - Reach meeting, 10:15am
- February 13th -Monthly BoD Meeting, 6:30pm
- February 20th -Monthly Lay Minister Meeting, 7pm



Mark Your Calendar

03/01	Ash Wednesday	Service @ 7:00pm
03/08	Lent #1	Service @ 7:00pm/Meal @ 5:45-6:40pm
03/15	Lent #2	Service @ 7:00pm/Meal @ 5:45-6:40pm
03/22	Lent #3	Service @ 7:00pm/Meal @ 5:45-6:40pm
03/29	Lent #4	Service @ 7:00pm/Meal @ 5:45-6:40pm
04/05	Lent #5	Service @ 7:00pm/Meal @ 5:45-6:40pm
04/13	Maundy Thursday	Service @ 7:00pm
04/14	Good Friday	Service @ 7:00pm
04/15	Easter Vigil	Service @ 7:30pm
04/16	Easter	Service @ 9:00am/Meal @ 10:15am/Easter egg hunt

*The
Season
of
Lent*



Unlike Advent, services will be held at both churches for Ash Wednesday through Easter. As noted above, SOP times remain unchanged. Lenten meals will be hosted by the BoD, Lay Ministers, and the Kitchen Klub and to that end each group is asking for volunteers to assist with some of the cooking, as well as helping to clean up after. A sign up sheet is on the bulletin board listing the dates and the team leaders. If you have any questions reach out to the team covering the date you want to help. Be certain to sign up early....you know the slots will fill up fast! ;)

Easter morning will begin with service at 9am. We will follow that with a potluck meal consisting of breakfast casseroles, pastries and fruits. Then, as always, our Easter egg hunt! Look for the sign up sheet in early April.



Love. Grow. Serve.

The Lutheran Camp on Petit Jean is looking for an experienced school cafeteria cook to run the kitchen during summer camp. This is for the months of June and July. It works best if the cook stays on site, but we would consider someone who commutes. The camp can provide housing apart from the youth cabins. Most sessions run from Sunday afternoon through Friday afternoon, or from Sunday supper through Friday lunch. The cook will have two college-age assistants. This is a good opportunity for someone who is not working in the summer and looking for a way to serve God by serving His children.

David Cox, Lutheran Camp