



SHEPHERD OF PEACE LUTHERAN CHURCH  
There's a Place for You at SOP!



## THE SHEPHERD'S VOICE

### How to Pray the Ten Commandments

by Matthew Harrison

*Here's a little piece I wrote as a preface to a collection of biblical texts. It teaches Luther's method of prayer, which interestingly encompasses both rote and free prayer! — Pastor Harrison*

Martin Luther wrote a little book on prayer for his barber, Peter. In it, he lays out his simple method of praying texts. It's brilliant. I call it "I.T.C.P":

Instruction

Thanksgiving

Confession

Prayer

The method anchors prayer in the texts of Scripture or the catechism but allows the Holy Spirit to prompt thoughts via the Word, which may be chased more freely by the mind at prayer. . .

Luther explains his method, using the Ten Commandments:

I think of each commandment as, first, instruction, which is really what it is intended to be, and consider what the Lord God demands of me so earnestly. Second, I turn it into a thanksgiving; third, a confession; and fourth, a prayer. I do so in thoughts or words such as these: "I am the Lord your God, etc. You shall have no other gods before me," etc. Here I earnestly consider that God expects and teaches me to trust him sincerely in all things and that it is his most earnest purpose to be my God. . . .

Second, I give thanks for his infinite compassion by which he has come to me in such a fatherly way and, unasked, unbidden, and unmerited, has offered to be my God, to care for me, and to be my comfort, guardian, help, and strength in every time of need. We poor mortals have sought so many gods and would have to seek them still if he did not enable us to hear him openly tell us in our own language that he intends to be our God. How could we ever—in all eternity—thank him enough!

Third, I confess and acknowledge my great sin and ingratitude for having so shamefully despised such sublime teachings and such a precious gift throughout my whole life, and for having fearfully provoked his wrath by countless acts of idolatry. I repent of these and ask for his grace.

Fourth, I pray and say: "O my God and Lord, help me by thy grace to learn and understand thy commandments more fully every day and to live by them in sincere confidence. Preserve my heart so that I shall never again become forgetful and ungrateful, that I may never seek after other gods or other consolation on earth or in any creature, but cling truly and solely to thee, my only God. Amen, dear Lord God and Father. Amen" (Luther's Works 43:200).

Luther's advice to his barber, Peter, is brilliant. You can pray texts of the Bible, hymns, creed, catechism, etc. Start with the Ten Commandments!

(reprinted from the February, 2017 *Lutheran Witness*)

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### Christian Sympathy

We extend our Christian sympathy to the family of Gregory Scott Robertson who was called to his eternal rest on February 24, 2017. A memorial service will be held here at SOP on April 1, 2017 at 10:00am with a visitation with family to follow at fellowship hall.

SHEPHERD OF PEACE  
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### **Theological Jargon: Justification**

*Over the next several months I plan to write articles for the newsletter covering some of the words that we use when we talk about our faith.*

Justification is a legal term that refers to be declared “not guilty.” When we use it theologically, we are talking about being declared not guilty before God. When we examine our lives in light of the Ten Commandments, we reach a very different verdict. We can’t possibly be honest with ourselves if we think that we have kept God’s Law. We all have sinned and fall short of his glory. We deserve nothing but everlasting punishment in the fires of hell. So how is it that we are justified, that is, declared “not guilty,” before God? This is only because of Christ and his death on the cross. There Jesus took the place of every sinner and suffered the punishment that was due each and every one of us. Because Jesus, the one who is really not guilty, suffered for us, now there is no punishment for us. Jesus became guilty for us so that we could be declared “not guilty” before our God in heaven.

This justification acquired by Christ at the cross is often referred to as objective justification. What this means is that *all sins* were forgiven at the cross in the death of Jesus. By “all sins” we mean all sins committed by everyone in the history of the world and all sins that will ever be committed until Christ comes again. This includes the sins of unbelievers. So the question then follows, why are not all saved?

For this, let’s look at the Parable of the Wedding Feast in Matthew 22:

And again Jesus spoke to them in parables, saying, 2 “The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding feast for his son, 3 and sent his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding feast, but they would not come. 4 Again he sent other servants, saying, ‘Tell those who are invited, “See, I have prepared my dinner, my oxen and my fat calves have been slaughtered, and everything is ready. Come to the wedding feast.”’ 5 But they paid no attention and went off, one to his farm, another to his business, 6 while the rest seized his servants, treated them shamefully, and killed them. 7 The king was angry, and he sent his troops and destroyed those murderers and burned their city. 8 Then he said to his servants, ‘The wedding feast is ready, but those invited were not worthy. 9 Go therefore to the main roads and invite to the wedding feast as many as you find.’ 10 And those servants went out into the roads and gathered all whom they found, both bad and good. So the wedding hall was filled with guests.

11 “But when the king came in to look at the guests, he saw there a man who had no wedding garment. 12 And he said to him, ‘Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding garment?’ And he was speechless.

13 Then the king said to the attendants, ‘Bind him hand and foot and cast him into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’ 14 For many are called, but few are chosen.”

The reason the guest was thrown out was that he had rejected the means by which one is to enter the wedding feast. The man who was thrown out had a valid invitation, but he tried to make it in on his own terms rather than on God’s.

This is why not all are saved. Like the guest who was thrown out, sometimes people try to make it to heaven on their own terms. They reject the ways in which God gives them justification.

We have two different terms that help us understand the two types of justification: objective and subjective justification. . All people are objectively justified, that is Christ died for the sins of the whole world. The gift of justification is then received by faith through the means of grace; this is subjective justification. We are subjectively justified when we are baptized. We are subjectively justified when we hear the Word of God preached to us. We are subjectively justified when our pastor absolves us of our sins and feeds us Christ’s body and blood in the Lord’s Supper. Subjective justification is that justification which is FOR YOU, specifically *you*.

Rejoice that you have been justified by grace through faith in Jesus Christ and that you have received this gift through Word and Sacrament!

In Christ,  
Pastor Vandercook

# March 2017

Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

			<b>1</b> <i>Ash Wed. Ser. 7p</i>	<b>2</b> <i>Study, 10:30a</i>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>5</b> <i>Bible Hour, 8a Worship, 9a</i>	<b>6</b> <i>Quilters, 10a</i>	<b>7</b> <i>Study, 6:15p</i>	<b>8</b> <i>Sup, 5:45p Lent Wor., 7p Choir, 8p</i>	<b>9</b> <i>Study, 10:30a Concert/ Trinity 7pm</i>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>12</b> <i>Bible Hour, 8a Worship, 9a</i>	<b>13</b> <i>Quilters, 10a BoD, 6:30p</i>	<b>14</b> <i>Study, 6:15p</i>	<b>15</b> <i>Sup, 5:45p Lent Wor., 7p</i>	<b>16</b> <i>Study, 10:30a</i>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>19</b> <i>Bible Hour, 8a Worship, 9a</i>	<b>20</b> <i>Quilters, 10a LM, 7:30p</i>	<b>21</b> <i>Study, 6:15p</i>	<b>22</b> <i>Sup, 5:45p Lent Wor., 7p Choir, 8p</i>	<b>23</b> <i>Study, 10:30a</i>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>26</b> <i>Bible Hour, 8a Worship, 9a</i>	<b>27</b> <i>Quilters, 10a</i>	<b>28</b> <i>Study, 6:15p</i>	<b>29</b> <i>Sup, 5:45p Lent Wor., 7p</i>	<b>30</b> <i>Study, 10:30a</i>	<b>31</b>	



MARCH 1ST



- 3-3 Fred Bishop (B)
- 3-4 Savannah Wray (B)
- 3-7 Daniel Moreth (B)
- 3-10 Jimmy & Mary Womack (A,10)
- 3-12 Jerry Geddes (B)
- 3-13 Jeanette Hurley (B)
- 3-14 Sarah Shepherd (B)
- 3-15 Savannah Tyndall (B)
- 3-18 Beth Helmstetter (B)
- 3-19 Jerry & Linda Geddes (A, 35)  
Dana Zimmerman (B)  
David Vandercook, Jr. (B,8)
- 3-20 Teresa Creasman (B)
- 3-21 Carol Smith (B)
- 3-23 Mark Bird (B)

MARCH 12th



# prayer & fasting

## **Giving Up Something for Lent?**

by Rev. Michael Keith

I love food. A lot. I love trying different kinds of food. I like trying foods that I have never had before. I love going back and eating the old tried and true favorites. Food is a big part of my life. In fact, the grade eight kids that I teach a class in Christian Studies to each morning at our school have said that I talk about food a lot in class. Apparently many of my illustrations end up talking about food. I wasn't aware that I do that, but they have noticed a pattern. I guess it is subconscious! I like food.

There are traditionally three customs that are associated with Christians observing the penitential season of Lent:  
Increased time for God's Word and prayer  
Almsgiving  
Fasting

It is quite common for Lutheran congregations to have mid-week Lenten Services to provide the opportunity to God's people for increased time in God's Word and prayer. It is also common for the offerings at those Services to be directed outside of the parish's needs to support some charity, mission, or other cause. But what about the third? What about fasting? Did I mention I like food? I don't know if I like the sound of that one!

Why would a Christian "fast" during the Season of Lent? Well, let's clear away some of the junk before we go there. No, it's not to punish yourself for your sins. No, it's not some way to show God how sorry you are. No, it's not some way to show God (or any other people who happen to notice) how sincere you are. No, it's not a way to impress God or earn anything from Him. And no, it's not to lose weight!

Why then? We Christians might fast during Lent to learn to discipline the desires that so often rule over us. It is not unlike going to the gym and lifting weights--the more you exercise the muscle the stronger it gets. The flip side of this is when you go and do something that you don't normally do and use muscles that you don't normally use you often find it very difficult and that the next day you are really sore! When you exercise your will over your desires you learn to exercise self-discipline. So, fasting during Lent is one way to exercise the "discipline muscle" over your desires.

What does fasting look like? How do you fast? There are different ways this is done among Christians and there is no "right" way. Some people will talk about "giving something up for Lent." This is one form of fasting. You are "fasting" from that "thing you gave up." It takes willpower to deny yourself whatever you have "given up for Lent." Some common examples of this is a certain food or drink that you like or watching TV. Recently it has become common for people to fast from social media during Lent.

Another form of fasting is the reduction of food at meals. Fasting is not starving, nor should it be as that is unhealthy! However, one form of fasting is to consciously eat less. One tradition is to eat only one full meal a day with two considerably smaller meals. The idea behind this is that not only is it an exercise in self-discipline but it is also an opportunity to turn our hunger and desire from the physical to the spiritual. We fast to turn away from self and toward God. As the hunger created by the fast is directed towards God in prayer, we grow in understanding what Jesus said: "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst" (John 6:35).

Cont.



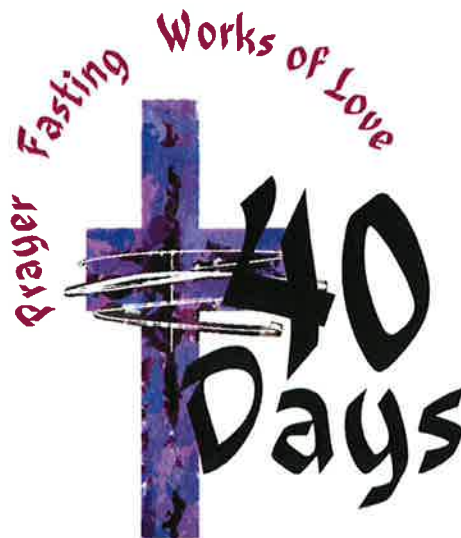
So, does it matter if you fast? Nope. Not at all. You are free in Christ to eat all you want during Lent. Your relationship to God does not depend upon your fasting. Your salvation has nothing to do with fasting. Your salvation was secured for you by Jesus and His perfect life, His death on the cross, and His resurrection. It was given to you as the waters of Holy Baptism were poured over you. Your sins are forgiven as the words of the Holy Absolution are spoken into your ears. Forgiveness, life, and salvation are yours in Christ as it is placed in your mouth in the Holy Supper. Fasting has nothing to do with your salvation. Period. However, some Christians through the centuries have found it helpful in their life of faith. It has been a common practice among Christians since the earliest times. It sets apart the Season of Lent from the rest of the seasons. It also has the effect of connecting our spiritual life to our everyday physical life. It is a practice that has largely been lost among us North American Lutherans. Perhaps this Lenten Season would be a good time to rediscover this practice?

One last piece of trivia for you concerning the Season of Lent: The Sundays are not a part of Lent. All the Sundays are Sundays "in Lent" but not of Lent. Why? Because Sundays are always a feast day! Sundays are always a day when Christians gather around our resurrected and ascended Lord. Sundays are always days when we gather to rejoice and receive the gifts Christ comes to give. It is true that the Sundays in Lent will often reflect the penitential themes of the Season, but make no mistake about it: Sundays are always Feast days! So this means that during the Season of Lent--if you choose--Sundays are days during which your fast does not apply!

A blessed Lenten Season to you--however you choose to observe it--as we contemplate the wondrous love shown to us by our Savior, Jesus.

*Rev. Michael Keith serves as pastor at St. Matthew Lutheran Church and SML Christian Academy in Stony Plain, Alberta, Canada. He can be reached at [keith@st-matthew.com](mailto:keith@st-matthew.com)*

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# CHURCH NEWS

## KITCHEN KLUB

Right now our Klub members consist of:

Mari Flemmons	Duanne Markman
Jerri Shertzer	Karen Johnston
Laura Vandercook	Dana Zimmerman
Mary Womack	Georgie Reprogle

There is plenty of room for more. Please join us! On the 28th of February we served lunch to a Pastor's meeting here at SOP. We are covering 3 of the Lenten meals and could certainly use any volunteers that would like to help out. A sign up sheet is on the board.

We also plan the potlucks and help to feed our members in need due to surgeries, illnesses, etc. All wonderful outreach projects to be involved in.



The shopping cart in the Narthex has been coming in useful for local children in need of food. We thank you for those donations and ask that you continue to give as you can!



## MARCH SERVICE VOLUNTEERS

Lay Minister	Pete Christiansen
Acolyte	McKayla Tyndall
Ushers	F'lar Ausburn & Paul Reprogle
Communion Prep	Jerri Shertzer & Karen Johnston
Communion Assistant	Tom Wray

We are getting ready to celebrate our most important season and would love to have those who wish to sing come join us! We don't make you work too hard or too long. Rehearsals are every other Wed. (mostly) and during Lent we will use time after the service to prepare our Palm Sunday, Easter Vigil Service, and of course Easter celebration. It's a grand time for singing with a group such as ours!

The time for signing up for the Easter Lilies is almost upon us! Watch for the sign up sheet on the board and a bulletin notice!



#### CHOIR CONCERT AT TRINITY

On Thursday, March 9th at 7pm the choir from the Lutheran High North in Houston, TX will be giving a concert at Trinity in North Little Rock. Please plan on attending!

#### Lutheran High North Concert Choir—Concert at Trinity in NLR on March 9 at 7pm

The Concert Choir of Lutheran High North is made up of students ranging in all musical abilities. Several of the students will go on to pursue a career in music. The choir meets five days a week and sings at several events throughout the year and competes in both solo and small ensemble and in large ensemble TAPPS (Texas Association of Private and Parochial Schools) competition each year. The choir is often sought after and invited to sing at community events and at our area Lutheran churches.

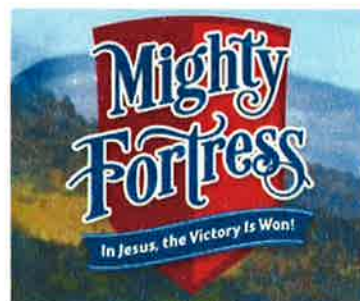
The Concert choir learns and prepares a variety of styles of music combining the various musical periods. The musical repertoire ranges from chants and canticles sung in traditional Latin to contemporary, Gospel and Spiritual pieces. Each piece brings a new element of the wonderful gift that God has given us in music.

The Concert choir has toured many parts of the country including New York and California. We are excited to share the Gospel through music with you our brothers and sisters in the Midwest. We pray the music and time shared together will be a blessing to you and to us.

Soli Deo Gloria.

On April 8th, the Men's Bible Breakfast will be returning at Shepherd of Peace! Come join us for breakfast and a time of Bible Study with Pastor. Additionally, we will be doing some service work both at SOP and also for our community. Be looking for more details in the bulletin in the weeks to come!

A big **thank you** to the many people who have volunteered to house, feed, and chauffer all of the members of the Lutheran High North Concert Choir! It is such a blessing to be among such warm and generous people!



VBS will be June 8th, 9th, and 10th this year. We will have a meeting later this month to start organizing.

# dates to Remember

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

## FAMILY SUNDAYS AT DICKEY-STEPHENS PARK

Take your church bulletin on the following dates and your family (2 adults and up to 4 kids 14 & under) will be admitted for \$10! Other special events are planned. Check the board in the hall.

April 9th @ 2:10pm  
 April 23rd @ 2:10pm  
 May 14th @ 2:10pm  
 May 28th @ 2:10pm  
 June 28th @ 2:10pm  
 July 2nd @ 2:10pm  
 July 23rd @ 6:10pm  
 August 6th @ 6:10pm  
 August 13th @ 6:10pm  
 September 3rd @ 2:10pm



March 1—Ash Wednesday  
 March 8—Lent #1  
 March 9—Choir Concert at Trinity  
 March 13-Monthly BoD meeting  
 March 15-Lent #2  
 March 20-Monthly LM meeting  
 March 22-Lent #3  
 March 29-Lent #4

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.

