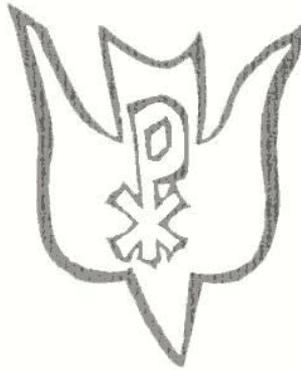


Focus

on Spirit of Christ



Newsletter of

Spirit of Christ Lutheran Church

2749 Bunker Lake Blvd NE

Ham Lake, MN 55304

March 2016

A Member of

The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod

(763) 755-7234

secretary@soclc.org

www.soclc.org

**Our Mission is to live in love for God and one another,
reaching out to all people proclaiming and sharing the
Good News of Jesus Christ.**

We worship our Lord every Sunday at 9:00 a.m.

Pastor Rev. Jason Neel	612-581-8786	soclpastor@gmail.com saradoog@comcast.net
Minister of Music John Peterson	612-327-4892	carsinger@aol.com
President Wes Johnson	612-860-5221	wes.johnson54@yahoo.com
Vice President Sue Anderson	763-561-3840	rocketsredglare@juno.com
Secretary Lynne Yarbrough	763-434-7012	lynnejy@centurylink.net
Treasurer Lois Spadgenske	763-757-5377	Secondtim1.5@gmail.com
Head Elder Dan Mathiason	612-245-5764	dan.mathiason@comcast.net
Elders Gerry Anderson Ralph Fuerst Chris Schoenbauer Wes Spadgenske Tom Yarbrough	763-755-1078 763-571-4997 763-572-3847 763-757-5377 763-434-7012	gerryand@comcast.net rafuerst@hotmail.com chris.schoenbauer@ thomsonreuters.com otherwes@gmail.com tomyarbrough@centurylink.com
Board of Youth Shari Pack	651-784-3383	packfamily1@comcast.net
Board of Education Judy Sillman	763-792-9883	judysillman@aol.com
Board of Stewardship Carole Kampf	612-805-6842	Carole.kampf@gmail.com
Board of Trustees Rick Welle	763-767-1392	rjowelle@comcast.net
Board of Finance Kati Schoenbauer	763-572-3847	Kati_johnson@yahoo.com
Evangelism Jennifer Williams	763-755-3353	Jw898@msn.com

From Our Pastor

Saints,

What is the cross of Jesus about? What does it do? What happens for us through it? Why did it have to happen? I've been re-reading a book entitled *Making Sense of the Cross* by David Lose, which addresses this topic. I'm going to borrow heavily from it as I share some of the ideas below.

Throughout the centuries there have been a number of ways that Christian thinkers have addressed the question of Jesus' work on the cross. Usually, these ideas (called "atonement theories") draw images from Scripture to try to answer these questions in ways that people can make sense of. Here are three important ones:

1. **The Cross as Ransom and Victory.** This theory sets up a great contest between God and the devil, in which all human beings have been claimed as the devil's prisoners because of our sin. Jesus, then, actually becomes God's way of tricking the devil. On the cross, God offers Jesus as a ransom payment to the devil for the rest of humanity. Because Jesus is a human being, Satan imagines that he will be able to have a hold on Jesus as well, and win a mighty victory over God. But it turns out that because Jesus *is* God, the devil does *not* in fact have the right to him, and so in the resurrection the devil has lost his hold both on all humanity and on Christ himself. If you read C.S. Lewis' *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*, this is essentially the explanation given for how Aslan redeems Edmund.
2. **The Cross as Paying the Debt.** In the previous theory, it was the devil who needed to be paid. In this one, it's God who needs a price paid. Because God is a God of justice, our sin causes us to owe him an eternal debt – and the only way this debt can be paid is through the punishment and death of humanity. Because Jesus is God's Son and perfectly obedient (even sinless!), he is worthy to pay the debt and fulfill justice. And because Jesus is human, he is able to stand in our place as one of us to take that punishment.
3. **The Cross as an Example of Self-Sacrificial Love.** In this theory, the life and teaching and ministry of Jesus show us God's love and God's

(Continued on next page)

commandment that we ought to love one another. The cross becomes the ultimate expression of this love, because there is no love greater than someone laying down their life. This expression of love would then inspire us to lay down our lives, loving others as God has loved us. In other words, it is less that the cross *accomplishes* forgiveness, but that it is the ultimate *demonstration* of God's mercy.

My guess is that at least one of these theories - and maybe all three - sound right to you. After all, there is scriptural evidence for all three. Mark 10:45 tells us that "The Son of Man came...to give his life as a ransom for many." Romans 3:25 tells us that God put forth Jesus "as a sacrifice for atonement." And Romans 5:8 tells us that "God demonstrates his love for us in this: While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

And yet...none of these theories tells the whole story. The work of the cross is too enormous and mysterious and complex to be reduced to a simple theory. The power of the cross is much more than theory - it is an actual event that occurred 2000 years ago, and it is a spiritual event that occurs again and again in our lives. It's not only the awful and offensive message that when Jesus came to be God with us we killed him. It's also the awful and offensive message that we, too, needed to die, and that the cross is the means by which we die, mystically connected to Jesus' death in the waters of Baptism. It is God's demonstration that sin does not win, followed by his demonstration in the resurrection that death does not win. It is the victory of mercy and the fulfillment of justice and the mystery that mercy has trumped justice. It's a demonstration of how God will reign in human hearts even when we would reject his reign. It's the foolishness of God and the power of God for salvation.

And in the end, we might be wise to follow Paul's lead when he says "I have decided to know nothing among you except for Jesus Christ and him crucified." After all, the cross and the empty tomb are, in all their mystery, how we know God. Blessings on your celebration of this truth this coming Good Friday and Easter.

Pastor Jason Neel



Building Improvement Fund

As we entered 2016 the Trustees established a Building Improvement Fund with a goal of raising \$10,000. Your donations totaled \$5,840 for a total of \$10,840 after \$5,000 in matching gifts!

The Trustees have identified the following repair needs:

1. Jacking and leveling the sidewalk at the front entrance.
2. Addressing the infrastructure of the brick wall leading up to the front entrance.
3. Narthex flooring, as well as carpeting in the rest of the building, and improvements to lighting and storage.

If you have questions or suggestions, please contact a member of the Board of Trustees.

Trustee Chairman Rick Welle (612-518-2616).



Two Reasons

Excerpt from Jonathan Boehne

It is often helpful to know *why* we do things. Otherwise, we may not do them. Why do we drink water if soda tastes better? Oh, right. Our bodies need water. Why do we exercise when watching TV is so much easier? Oh, right. We need healthy hearts.

When it comes to prayer, many of us do not pray as we should because we forget the *why* of prayer. There are two reasons. First, God tells us to. Second, He promises to listen. We shouldn't be surprised if we don't *feel* like praying. We don't feel like doing many of the things that are good for us. When God tells us to do something, we know that it is for our good.

Jesus prayed often. He lives to intercede for us right now. He has promised to listen and to answer; "Ask and it will be given to you." You are invited to send your prayer requests- petitions, and praise and thanksgiving, to the Spirit of Christ email prayer chain at pegpete4@msn.com. This is a wonderful opportunity to bring glory to God, and minister to others through prayer.

Ladies Monday Bible Study Fellowship

Attention Ladies- Our 1st. and 3rd. Monday Bible Study Fellowship will continue to meet through March and April at 7:00 p.m. During this time, we will be reading and discussing Paul's letter to Titus. The Apostle Paul calls Titus a beloved disciple and fellow worker in the Gospel. Paul left Titus in charge of a new congregation on the island of Crete. The counsel and encouragement that Paul gave to this young pastor is timeless, and beneficial to each of us. Please join us as we fellowship, pray, and live in love for God and one another.

Patrick of Ireland

St. Patrick's Day on March 17 is celebrated with frivolity, wearing of the green and all too often drunken overindulgence. Was there a St. Patrick and is he the one who set the example? Is all this merry-making what he was all about?

Patrick, born in 372 AD, was the son of an official of the Roman Empire. At the age of 15 years he was kidnapped from his family home in Wales by Irish raiders, taken to Ireland and sold into slavery. His duty was to care for the animals of an Irish landowner, living outdoors with them year round under very harsh conditions.

He constantly dreamed of home; freedom and returning home was the subject his many prayers, sometimes as many as 100 per day. He was a Christian. After 5 years an angel came to him in a dream and told him of a ship ready to set sail for Wales. He escaped to the ship and stole home to Wales.

His devotion to his faith led him to pursue an education as a priest, eventually becoming a bishop. Following the years of his captivity he dreamed of Ireland often and in his dreams heard the voices of the Irish people calling for his return to their land. He fulfilled this calling and returned with the goal of bringing the love, peace and forgiveness of Christ to the pagan people of Ireland.

Patrick was deeply spiritual; he was also a leader and a man of action. He overcame many obstacles to obtain his goal of Christianizing Ireland. His renovation was not through revolution but through careful respect to old institutions and beliefs with loving kindness for all. He used the shamrock, three leaves on one plant to explain the trinity. He used the Celtic cross to show that Christ was the son/sun of God.

There are myths and legends galore about Patrick. The Irish do tell fine stories. Patrick speaks to me from his breastplate. Below is a portion of that prayer:

Christ with me, Christ before me, Christ behind me, Christ in me,
Christ beneath me, Christ above me, Christ on my right, Christ on my left,
Christ in breadth, Christ in length, Christ in height,
Christ in the heart of every man who thinks of me,
Christ in the mouth of every man who speaks of me,
Christ in every eye that sees me, Christ in every ear that hears me.

I arise today through a mighty strength, the invocation of the Trinity, through belief in the Threeness, through confession of the Oneness of the Creator of creation. Salvation is of the Lord. Salvation is of the Lord. Salvation is of Christ. May Thy Salvation, O Lord, be ever with us.

March
Birthdays &
Anniversaries

March Birthdays

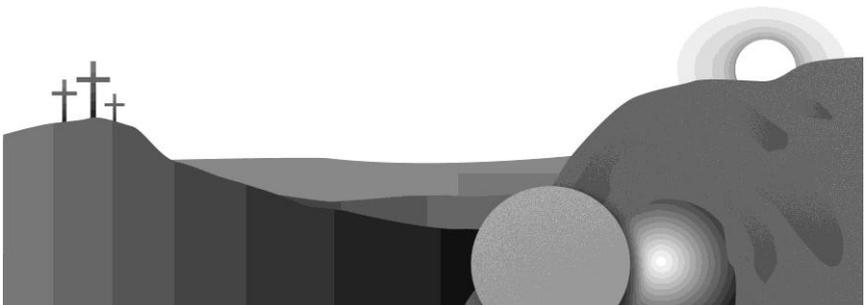
- 1 Autumn Degler
- 3 Libby Schoenbauer
- 4 Ryan O'Keeffe
- 6 Annavive Gagne
- 8 Dan O'Keeffe
- 9 Charles Birkholz
- 11 Elaine Hayden
- 12 Breanna Freundschuh
- 12 Brent Freundschuh
- 12 Wes Johnson
- 14 John Peterson
- 17 Sierra Carlson
- 17 Brock Walker
- 22 Evalie Kasella
- 23 Tina Miller
- 24 Alex Hansen
- 24 Ashley Hansen
- 24 Zane Jorgens
- 25 Bob Bartholdi
- 26 Corky Hull
- 26 Jan Berg
- 28 Kati Schoenbauer
- 31 Cara Hoppenrath

March Anniversaries

- 9 Don & Rita Matheson
- 10 Dave & Becky Hansen
- 26 Alvin & Susan James



Birthday Blessings



Serving the Lord in March

Elder

6 Chris Schoenbauer
9 Wes Spadgenske
13 Dan Mathiason
16 Ralph Fuerst
20 Gerry Anderson
24 Chris Schoenbauer
25 Wes Spadgenske
26 Dan Mathiason
27 Ralph Fuerst (7:00am)
Gerry Anderson (10:00am)

Reader

6 Sandy Elhardt
9 Rita Matheson
13 Larry Waterman
16 Peggy Peterson
20 Terry Elhardt
24 Heather Kurvers
25 Amy Fuhry
26 Heather Kurvers
27 Peggy Peterson (7:00am)
Rita Matheson (10:00am)

Nursery

6 Sara Neel
13 Sue Anderson
20 Louella Garland
27 Amy Fuhry

Acolyte

2 McKenzie Williams
6 Anna Brynteson
9 Carter Lease
13 Richard Pawlik
16 Kenneth Schieffer
20 Mandy Sillman
24 Savannah Hofman
25 Gabriel Jauch
26 McKenzie Williams
27 Anna Brynteson (7:00am)
Carter Lease (10:00am)

Greeters

6 Elaine Hayden & Pam Birkholz
13 Cindy Johnson & Judy Waterman
20 Johnson Family
27 Fuhry Family

Trustee

3/2-3/8 Doug Degler
3/9-3/15 Mike Hammerstrom
3/16-3/22 Justin Zimmerman
3/23-3/29 Adam Garland
3/30-4/5 Doug Hofman

PICKLES BRIAN CRANE





For God
so loved
the world

that he gave
his only Son.

John 3:16



LENTEN CALENDAR

Wednesdays March 9th & 16th

Lenten Midweek Worship

6:45pm

Soup Supper for all at 6:00pm

Thursday, March 24th

Maundy Thursday Worship

6:45pm

Friday, March 25th

Good Friday Worship

6:45pm

Saturday, March 26th

Easter Vigil

6:45pm

Sunday, March 27th

Easter Morning

7:00am & 10:00am

