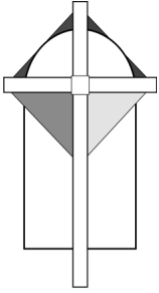


Happy St. Patrick's Day



IRISH BLESSING

May the road rise to meet you,
may the wind be ever at your back.
May the sun shine warm upon your face,
and the rains fall soft upon your fields.
And until we meet again,
may God hold you in the palm of his hand.



ST MARK'S
LUTHERAN CHURCH



ST. MARK'S MESSENGER

March 2023
Valley, Nebraska
www.StMarksValleyNE.com
402.359.2315

from the Pastor...

Below is a picture that I took of the area of the Judean Wilderness near where the Dead Sea scrolls were found. I include it because it is a rather profound wilderness. I doubt very much that it has changed since the time of Jesus, and even long before that. Our trip to the Holy Land was a deep blessing for Bob and me. The richness of being on location in the Holy Land was so moving, spiritually. To see the Sea of Galilee seemed important—for we know that Sea itself has not changed—so, it was somewhat breathtaking to imagine Jesus walking on the water there, or to imagine the disciples in a boat in a storm, or even simply fishing.

But the Wilderness too, was also stark and powerfully spiritual location. It too stands unchanged by thousands of years of Christian devotion and pilgrimage. Standing in the desert, with the warm breeze blowing and no other sound, one can hear what Jesus heard, and saw and then one can imagine the



difficulty of those 40 days he spent in the wilderness, being tempted. The views, the loneliness and isolation are stark and pure. As we enter our 40 day period of Lent, we hearken back to these 40 days that Jesus spent in the wilderness. His journey in the wilderness can really also be seen as our own story. No, we aren't in the Judean wilderness, and we might not actually hear the devil's voice in our ear. But in a true sense, it IS our story. Every day. The human story. Every day we are blasted by temptations and choices that those temptations bring.

Will I pass along that bit of gossip about someone? It's so juicy, it is hard to pass up. Will I treat my co-workers or family fairly? Will I speak the truth unkindly, or will I speak the truth gently in love? Will my stress and anxiety be expressed by anger and frustration to those I care for?

Jesus left the desert after having been tempted and making all of the right choices. We often make the wrong choices—at least I know that I do. At each wrong choice, we turn away from God and the love and thriving God wants for all of us. It is at this point that we must realize that we are all a project that is 'under construction' and Lent is the season where we repent, which really means to turn around, to 'return' to God and God's will for us. We ask for and receive forgiveness—like water in the desert, which our Lord longs to supply to us.

As the son in the parable of the Prodigal Son returns to his father for forgiveness and another chance—so does our Lord long for us to return and receive his mercy and love. He waits for us, not to judge us, but to embrace us and welcome us home. May you remember this as you go out into the wilderness of the world each day and may you remember who awaits you to embrace you and forgive you. Return to him and be reminded of whose you are. Receive that water of forgiveness in the wilderness.

May God bless our Lenten journey,
Pastor Barbara

Have mercy on my, O God, according to your loving-kindness (hesed!); blot out my offenses. Wash me through and through from my unlove and my wickedness, and cleanse me from my sin. For I know my transgressions only too well, and my sin is ever before me. Holy God, Holy and Mighty, Holy Immortal One, have mercy on us. Amen.



DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME

**Remember to spring forward on
March 12th!**

from the PMA...

Feast and Fast

During the season of Lent, we hear about the discipline of fasting. We may be inclined to 'give up' or fast from something as an expression of a sacrifice. Food items are common targets, as are bad habits. We tend to 'give up' something we should not be engaging in in the first place. Perhaps we think that because it is a religious discipline, God will help give us the will power that we lack on our own. Whatever the motivation, when we fast from something there is always a response of feasting. When we give up cookies for example, chips often take their place. The feasting response is often as harmful to us as what we are fasting from. An alternative to feasting on similar targets is to feast on something that honors God and the sacrifices that Jesus has made for us. Feast on reading the Word. Feast on prayer in new times, ways and locations. Feast on midweek worship and meals. You just may establish a new positive habit at the end of the Lenten season.

Karen

OFFERING COUNTERS & USHERS

During Lent, if you are scheduled to count offering, help with sign in, or usher on Sunday morning, we ask that you also perform the task at the following Wednesday evening Lenten service.

Thank you!

A PRAYER FOR ST MARK'S COUNCIL

Loving Lord, give courage to our council to believe that you have an important mission for our congregation at this time. Help us look beyond our own walls and reach out to others. Amen.

PRAYER GARDEN BRICKS

**New bricks will be installed in the
Prayer Garden in April.**

Deadline to order a brick is March 31.
Order forms are available at the front desk.
Please turn order form(s) in to Jan.







We are considering ordering another batch of St. Mark's T shirts. To be able to place an order, we need a minimum of 25 shirts. If you are interested in ordering, please put your name on the list on the Welcome Desk with the number of shirts you want by April 1. Cost: \$13.99 for sizes S-XL, an additional \$3 for size 2XL, and an additional \$5 for sizes 3XL and 4XL.

LENTEN WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Day/Date	Time	Theme
Wednesday March 1	7:00 p.m.	Wednesday Lenten Service
Sunday March 5	9:30 a.m.	Second Sunday in Lent
Wednesday March 8	7:00 p.m.	Wednesday Lenten Service
Sunday March 12	9:30 a.m.	Third Sunday in Lent
Wednesday March 15	7:00 p.m.	Wednesday Lenten Service
Sunday March 19	9:30 a.m.	Fourth Sunday in Lent
Wednesday March 22	7:00 p.m.	Wednesday Lenten Service
Sunday March 26	9:30 a.m.	Fifth Sunday in Lent
Wednesday March 29	7:00 p.m.	Wednesday Lenten Service

HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE

Day/Date	Time	Theme
 Palm Sunday April 2	9:30 a.m.	Palm Sunday Worship/ Communion*
 Maundy Thursday April 6	7:00 p.m.	Maundy Thursday Worship/Communion
 Good Friday April 7	7:00 p.m.	Good Friday Worship
 Easter Sunday April 9	9:30 a.m.	Easter Sunday Worship/ Communion*

ALL SERVICES ARE IN PERSON AND ALSO LIVE STREAMED.



COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

**This is a synopsis of the Council meeting
held on February 1st, 2022**

- An announcement will be in the newsletter regarding purchasing more St. Mark's T-shirts. We will need at least 25 orders. Please see your March newsletter.
- Mission Share to the Synod will be 8 % of regular giving.
- Sign up for pictorial directory pictures is underway.
- Family Game Night will be held on Saturday, April 1 beginning at 5:30 with a meal and game playing beginning at 6:30.
- Council will provide meal on March 1 – Fried Chicken, Cole Slaw, Potato Salad, Baked Beans, Rolls and Desserts.
- The following groups/people will be asked to provide a quarterly and yearly report for the congregation. (Bullet points). WELCA, Karen King, Bob Jepsen, Men In Mission, COPE.

MARCH NEWS FOR WOMEN OF ST. MARK'S

FAITH CIRCLE NEWS

FRIENDSHIP CIRCLE NEWS

JOY/PEACE CIRCLE NEWS

Birthdays in March



It has been requested to have personal birthdates put in the newsletter. If we are going to do this we need you to be sure that we have your birth date.

Please let the church office know your date if you have not already done so.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO THE FOLLOWING"

- | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 – Rachel MacDonald | 16 – Carson Stanzel |
| 2 – Jaeda Bakken | 17 – Travis Glidden |
| 2 – JoAnn Hardman | 18 – Raven Leal |
| 3 – Chad Camenzind | 18 – Jessica Petersen |
| 4 – Darlene Brummels | 19 – Forrest Goff |
| 5 – Sharon Elske | 22 – Barb Smith |
| 5 – Brian Petersen | 22 – Caleb Trost |
| 5 – Lauren Ueckert | 25 – Mallory McGaughey |
| 6 – Annie Hurt | 27 – Addison McKamy |
| 6 – Frank Kirchmann | 28 - Connor Hamsa |
| 7 – Kyle Johnson | 28 - Barb Munson |
| 7 – Ethan Karloff | 29 – Karen Flynn |
| 7 – Marilyn Ramsey | 29 – Sam Lathrop |
| 9 – Chet Ryan | 29 – Paige Winkler |
| 10 – Jennifer Kreager | 31 – Jeffrey Flynn, Jr. |
| 13 – Kari McGaughey | 31 – Natalia Menard |
| 14 – Ann Crabtree | |

SCRIPTURES FOR SUNDAYS IN MARCH 2023

March 5

Second Sunday in Lent

First Reading	Genesis 12:1-4a
Responsive Reading	Psalms 121
Second Reading	Romans 4:1-5, 13-17
Gospel Reading	John 3:1-17

March 12

Third Sunday in Lent

First Reading	Exodus 17:1-7
Responsive Reading	Psalms 95
Second Reading	Romans 5:1-11
Gospel Reading	John 4:5-42

March 19

Fourth Sunday in Lent

First Reading	1 Samuel 16:1-13
Responsive Reading	Psalms 23
Second Reading	Ephesians 5:8-14
Gospel Reading	John 9:1-41

March 26

Fifth Sunday in Lent

First Reading	Ezekiel 37:1-14
Responsive Reading	Psalms 130
Second Reading	Romans 8:6-11
Gospel Reading	John 11:1-45

DECEMBER MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORT

December Budget = \$22,406

December Expenses = \$19,714

December Giving = \$33,350

END OF YEAR FINANCIAL REPORT

January - December Budget = \$268,877

January - December Expenses = \$262,674

January - December Giving = \$398,827

End of year 2021 Balance in Savings = \$64,289

End of December 2022 Balance in Savings = \$64,404

End of December 2022 Balance in Checking = \$22,252

End of December 2022 Worship Enhancement Total = \$6,616



CREATED BY VECTOXPORTRAL.COM

From Laughing with Lutherans

"The church secretary just left for a job less stressful. She joined the Marines."

"Tom B. will address Lenten fasts and the practical points of fasting and Linda S. will bring the doughnuts."

PRAYER CONCERNS

Lisa Olson	John & Lorrie Denker	Bev Griffin
Gwen Rittgarn	Mary Lou Finn	Rick & Janae
Larry Laughlin	Dan & Sharon Josoff	Gregg
Dallas Musgrave	Ruth	Lori Dyas
Marla Peterson	Karen Frost	Gary
Carolyn Chaffin	Sandy Critel	Maxine Nash
Lawrence Bonacci	Fred Fogle	Sadie
Howard Renshaw	Ann Crabtree	Mike Stutzman
Bob Mumm	Rod Marshall	Covid Patients
Caregivers Among Us	All Those Grieving	Care Center Residents
Care Center Staff		

ALL OUR HOMEBOUND MEMBERS

Chet Ryan	Donna Fintel
Joan Kahlandt	Carl Seieroe
Dee Christiansen	Annie Hurt
Millie Richards	Donna Hovendick
Jean Krahrmer	

For all military serving at home and around the world. We include prayers for their families as they hold things together in their absence.