



Peace Lutheran Church

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March, 2016

How's Your Journey So Far?

March 2016

A man got into his car and headed east out of Great Falls on a trip to Billings. When he got to Eddies Corner, he pulled off the road into the parking lot, turned off the engine, and remarked to himself, "Well, that was a long trip." While he may have been tired from his trip so far and thought he had gone a long way, he was obviously mistaken. First of all, his trip was not all that long – maybe one and a half hours. Secondly, despite the ground he had covered, he hadn't arrived at his destination. In fact, he wasn't all that close.

We are all on a journey of sorts – a journey that leads to everlasting life in heaven. Sometimes we arrive at mistaken conclusions like this man driving to Billings. We think we've gone a long way when we haven't gone very far. And we think we've arrived when we still have a way to go.

We are in the middle of Lent. We observe Lent with special services and special devotions. Some people give up something they really enjoy for Lent (desserts, alcohol, Facebook, etc.) to give them more time for Lenten devotion and to direct their attention to Christ's suffering when they feel the loss of what they have given up.

At the end of Lent, those who have followed some of the Lenten traditions may breathe a sigh of relief and say, "Well, I made it through that," as if they've gone a long way in their journey. Now, I'm not being critical of Lenten traditions or the people that observe them. I observe them myself. While such actions may be helpful in our life of discipleship, we should not think they've caused us to travel very far in our journey. Even when we occasionally suffer greater things for the faith rather than for self-imposed discomforts such as criticism, rejection, and persecution, let us not think we have done something so extraordinary that we feel somehow that we have arrived.

Self-denial and suffering for the sake of Jesus Christ is not something that can be assigned to a 40-day period every spring or something that can be expected to occur only occasionally. Jesus said, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross *daily* and follow me." (Luke 9:23) We are not to live seasons of self-denial but lives of self-denial. We are not to expect to endure our crosses only on some extraordinary days but every day.

We have a long journey before us and we have a long way to go. How is your journey so far? The journey is difficult for all because it involves self-denial to continue in the journey. For some, it is more difficult because of the number and intensity of the crosses laid on them. For others, it is less difficult because of fewer and less intense crosses laid on them.

The good news is that we don't travel this journey alone. Jesus leads us through on the trail He blazed. He took up His cross, endured death for our sins, passed through the grave and rose from the dead to gain for us everlasting life. Jesus is with us as we travel, encouraging us with His Word and feeding and strengthening us with His Holy Supper. He will bring us through the journey until we finally arrive at our final destination in heaven. As the Word of God promises, "And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ." (Philippians 1:6)

Happy traveling! See you when we get there!

In Christ,

Pastor Steven R. Schlund

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Everyone who helps prepare, setup, and clean up after Sunday school and Bible study each Sunday.
Everyone who helps prepare, setup, and clean up after soup suppers each Wednesday.
All of the ladies who came and made pillowcase dresses for Africa.
Everyone who housed ladies for the LWML District Board meeting.
Elsie Huss for preparing all of the meals for the LWML District Board meeting.
All of the ladies who go to Park Place, Benefis Skilled Nursing Center and Highgate House to sing hymns and read devotions and minister to the shut-ins.
Val Martin and Gloria Creek for playing the organ and piano during our worship services.
The adult choir for enhancing our worship services.
Val Martin for directing the choir.
Elizabeth Allen for accompanying the choir.
All those who volunteer to teach Sunday school, Bible class, and midweek classes on Sundays and Wednesdays.
Idell Croskrey for changing the banners and paraments.
Angelika Fischer for cleaning the church.
Everyone on the Prayer Chain for their time and prayers.
Everyone who has donated treats for our fellowship time.
All of the men who volunteer to usher.
Cheri Magnuson for cleaning the Communion linens.

This list is not inclusive. Please accept our apologies if we have missed giving you credit for serving the Lord in any fashion. We know that the Lord knows your service to Him.

LWML

- ♥ **Our next meeting will be Tuesday, March 8 at 7:00 p.m. with a Bible study.** All ladies of Peace are invited and encouraged to come and join us! We will form a Nominations Committee for the elections that will be held at the May meeting. Remember your Mite Boxes!
- ♥ **Remember that Purple Pockets are due to Linda Aguiar at the end of March.** This money goes to mission work both locally and afar. Thanks for your continued support.
- ♥ **The society at Peace Lutheran Church is the host for the LWML District Convention here in Great Falls from April 29 – May 1, 2016.** The Friday evening Worship Service will be here at Peace as well as the closing Service on Sunday morning. On Saturday, we will be at the Hampton for our meetings and there will be displays along with the CPH store and LWML store. Peace is allowed 2 delegates. If there is anyone interested in going along as a delegate, please see Laura Brandt and come to the meeting where we will discuss who is going to go. It will be awesome to have everyone travel to Great Falls! We look forward to a great time of fellowship and Bible study with our sisters in Christ and encourage all who can to attend!
- ♥ **The Lutheran World Relief Drive will be May 14, 2016.** More details will be available as the time gets closer.

Ladies Bible study schedule

Our Lenten Walk continues. Attending these worship services and with Pastor's series of sermons on an in depth topic, the experience of Holy Week and Easter are greatly enriched! Our thanks to our pastor for all his time, study and effort, as he prepares us for the celebration of our Savior's resurrection on Easter!

In March the FRIDAY LADIES BIBLE CLASS will study II CORINTHIANS. They will meet March 4th and 11th from 1-3 pm at the home of Ann Nimmick, 2327 15th Ave So. If you can work this Bible study into your busy schedule, the group has a study booklet waiting for you!

Assisted Living Ministry will have hymn singing and a devotion at the following locations. Tuesday, March 8th at 11 a.m. ladies and gentlemen will meet at Bee Hive Home #2, 2816 15th Ave So. On Friday, March 18th at 11:45 a.m. the group will meet for a no host lunch at Five Loaves Coffee House Bakery, 4117 2nd Ave No. Afterward many will go to Highgate House, 3000 11th Ave So. How these residents love to sing "The Old Rugged Cross" during Lent! Give them the gift of your time to join them to assure them Jesus loves them, and God's people care about them.



March Anniversaries

Mar. 6 Gary and Tami Creek
 Mar. 24 Charlie and Cheri Hirst

Baptismal Anniversaries

March 2 Charlie Fisher
 3 Stephanie Blomgren
 5 Mitch Grove
 10 Arnie Wirth
 17 Kevin Aguiar
 20 Michael Drummond
 20 Leah (Huttinger) Taylor
 20 Cheri Magnuson
 23 Hailey McPartlin
 23 Kandace Faller
 23 Natalie Gerard
 25 Aedan Lewis
 25 Judy VanVleet
 25 Carol Kangas
 26 Tyler Denning
 27 Janet Rubino
 28 Spencer Smelser



INCLUDE THESE PEOPLE IN YOUR PRAYERS:

The following people are experiencing health problems:

John Birkholz
Tami Birkholz, John's sister-in-law who is battling a rare skin tissue disorder
Jane Hering
Connie Juden
Bill and Dorothy Neuman

Our members who are away serving in the military are **Kurt Mueller and Michael Lewis**.

Ushers for March

March 6----- Mitch Martin
 -----Eric Fletcher
 March 13 ----- Kevin Aguiar
 ----- Jeff Blomgren
 March 20 ----- Matt Schlund
 ----- Lyle Onstad
 March 27 ----- Arnie Gidlow
 ----- Lee Henselin

Finances

JANUARY 1 - JANUARY 31, 2016

CHURCH	YTD	YTD
INCOME	ACTUAL	BUDGET
Regular Offerings	\$ 13,551.00	\$ 11,693.33
Other Income	\$ 195.00	\$ 15.00
Total Income	\$ 13,746.00	\$ 11,708.33
Church Expenses		
Personnel/Benefits	\$ 6,595.29	\$ 6,894.57
Administrative	\$ 749.85	\$ 697.50
Buildings & Grounds	\$ 4,632.27	\$ 2,066.68
Missions	\$ 850.00	\$ 958.33
Christian Education	\$ 699.31	\$ 416.67
Total Expenses	\$ 13,526.72	\$ 11,033.75
Net Church Income	\$ 219.28	\$ 674.58

Attention Youth

Youth Ski and Swim Retreat

Who?

Youth 7-12 graders
 (and younger if accompanied by a parent)

When?

March 11-13, 2016

What?

Friday night: Check in 6:00-8:00p.m. Dinner, Devotions, Fellowship and Games

Saturday: Breakfast, skiing at Showdown Ski swimming at White Sulphur Springs, Pizza

Sunday Morning: Breakfast, worship & Sunday School

Where?

Peace Lutheran Church, 3340 11th Avenue South, Great Falls, MT.

Why?

Because winter in Montana is an awesome time to experience some of God's amazing handiwork outdoors and share it with fellow Christians!

Cost?

\$60 per youth, includes all meals, transportation, equipment, lift tickets and swimming

What do I need?

Bring your Bible, your sleeping bag and air mattress, your toothbrush, and a friend! You will want appropriate winter clothing for skiing, long underwear, hats, gloves etc., as well as a swimming suit and towel.

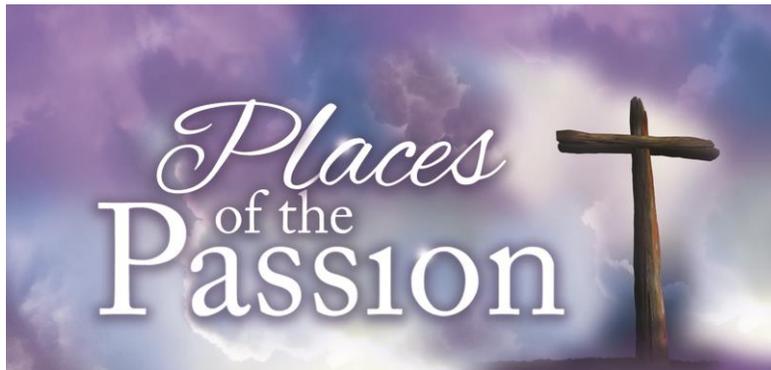
We will require final registration numbers by March 7, 2016. For more information contact Lyle Onstad (lyleomd@gmail.com).

Great Falls Workshop- “Mission From the Cross”

On April 16th, 2016 Trinity Lutheran Church in Great Falls, MT will be hosting a workshop from the book “Mission From the Cross”. The workshop will commence at 9 AM at Trinity with the Rev. Gerald Paul and Rev. Steven Schlund as the hosts. There is no cost to participants and a lunch will be served at noon.

The content of the workshop will consist of, using the copy from the website the following subject matter. *Mission From the Cross* is a valuable resource as it helps you understand how God blesses His children through your service in His kingdom. This resource explains the Lutheran theology of mission through a contemporary lens and focuses on how to accomplish this through God’s grace. Mission also dives into crucial topics such as culture, common styles of communication and strategy. This book offers a great understanding of your involvement in the mission field. We are called to go and make disciples of all nations (Matthew 28:19) and not to be ashamed of the Gospel (Romans 1:16), so how do we live that out?”

To adequately prepare for the lunch and materials we request that you register by phone at Trinity Lutheran church office (406-452-2121 M-F from 8:00AM-3:30 PM) or via e-mail at trinity@trinity-mt.org. To purchase items for lunch we ask that you register by April 6th. Thrivent Action funds have purchased 25 copies of the book and will be distributed to the first 25 registrants. No one that is not registered will be denied attending. Get informed and inspired connections to the life changing opportunity of proclaiming the Good News!



Lenten schedule

Places of the Passion The scenes of Lent are familiar: the upper room, the garden of Gethsemane, the halls of Pontius Pilate, and the hills of Golgotha. These are the places we remember when we meditate on our Lord’s Passion. When Jesus enters these Places of the Passion, He never leaves them as He found them. He transforms each into a place of hope, wonder, and salvation. *Places of the Passion* is the theme for our special Wednesday Lenten worship services and Holy Week services in 2016 this year. There will be a soup supper every Wednesday at 6:00 PM. Worship begins at 7:00 PM.

Date	Theme	Text
March 2	“The Betrayal: A Place of Eternal Love”	Luke 22:46-53
March 9	“The Courtyard: A Place of Renewal”	Luke 22:54-62
March 16	“The Trial: A Place of God’s Will”	Luke 22:63-23:25

Holy Week Jesus enters Jerusalem as He nears the end of His journey to the cross and tomb. Continue the journey with Him as we visit the *Places of the Passion* during Holy Week. There are no soup suppers during Holy Week. Midweek services begin at 7:00 PM.

March 20 (Palm Sunday)	“The Parade: A Place of Coronation”	Luke 19:36-38
March 24 (Maundy Thursday)	“The Last Supper: A Place of Forgiveness”	Luke 22:14-23
March 25 (Good Friday)	“Golgotha: A Place of Simple Love”	Luke 23:33-39
March 27 (Easter Sunday)	“The Tomb: A Place of Victory”	Luke 24:1-12

Applying Biblical Teachings

“And now, brothers, we want you to know about the grace that God has given the Macedonian churches. Out of the most severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own, they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the saints. And they did not do as we expected, but they gave themselves first to the Lord and then to us in keeping with God’s will” (2 Cor. 8:1-5).

If you look at the conditions in which the Macedonian Christians lived, you probably would wonder why they had not requested to be remembered with monetary gifts (as had the poor in Jerusalem) by their fellow brothers and sisters in Christ. If any group of people were in need, the Macedonian Christians were. Yet, they literally begged to give and then exceeded every expectation as to their ability to give. In proportion, their giving exceeded many who were blessed and had larger sums of money to give. This giving was truly God’s rich grace in action working through His faithful servants who had given themselves without reservation in His service.

What a powerful example the church in Macedonia set for the church of all ages, an example that every Christian should take to heart. Too often today, we see our churches as beggars, constantly having to admonish, plead, urge, coax and prod their members to give just to pay the bills, let alone the sending of monetary gifts to help needy brothers and sisters in Christ. These actions concerning giving are totally foreign to what took place in Macedonia by the power of the Gospel. The love of Christ, the risen Lord and Savior, filled their hearts without restriction, and in Christ’s love, they begged to give, even as they gave evidence concerning the power of the Gospel.

All too often the Law is used to motivate, and the full message of the power of the Gospel becomes distant. That which many of us learned in our youth must never be forgotten. By the power of the Water and the Word, a great change takes place, a change that Martin Luther dramatically captured in his small catechism. By the power of the Gospel, we are moved from restraint into action, from “Thou shalt have no other gods before Me,” to “We love God above all things when with our whole heart we cling to Him as to our God and gladly devote our lives to His service.”

By the power of the Gospel, we are moved from restraint into action, from “Thou shalt not kill,” to “We should help and befriend our neighbor in every bodily need,” and “We should be merciful, kind, and forgiving towards our neighbor.” By the power of the Gospel, we are moved from restraint into action, from “Thou shalt not steal,” to “We should help our neighbor to improve and protect his property and business,” and “We should rejoice when we see him prosper.”

By the power of the Gospel, the Macedonian Christians were moved from restraint into action. Their lives were devoted to the service of God as they cared for their needy brothers and sisters in Christ and begged to help and befriend them. Though others had prospered more than they had, they still rejoiced in their giving as they demonstrated the power of the Gospel.

May God grant each of us a special measure of His grace so that like the Macedonian believers, each day we may serve Him more and more, exceeding all expectations in all that we do, including that of our giving.