



Peace Lutheran Church

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Giving Up For Lent

As we begin the season of Lent, people will talk about what they are “giving up for Lent.” It may be giving up food on a certain day (fasting). It may be giving up chocolate or alcohol or sweets or any number of things. Is giving up something for Lent a good thing or a bad thing?

Giving up something or even fasting is not commanded by the Word of God. Therefore, we cannot say it is either right or wrong. Going without something can be *done* in a wrong way though. If it is done to somehow earn favor with God or to show yourself to be more pious or spiritually minded than a fellow Christian, then that use of this practice is definitely wrong and sinful.

However, such practices can be used in a very helpful way. This is done when such practices draw our attention away from ourselves and to Jesus Christ. The purpose of self-denial and fasting during Lent is to help us remember the suffering and death of Jesus. Normally, we might think about that only during Wednesday evening Lenten services. To give up food or something you strongly desire will get your attention quickly and more often. Every single time hunger or desire for that luxury hits and you deny yourself, you will immediately be reminded of why you are doing this: the suffering and death of Jesus Christ.

But being reminded of this is not simply to recall a historical event but to remember the reason for the event: our sin and rebellion against God. The Old Testament lesson for Ash Wednesday tells us that. The prophet Joel said, ““Even now,” declares the LORD, “return to me with all your heart, with fasting and weeping and mourning.” Rend your heart and not your garments. Return to the LORD your God, for he is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love, and he relents from sending calamity. (Joel 2:12-13)

As we consider our sinfulness before the Lord, he encourages outward actions here (fasting, weeping, and mourning). However, the main thing is not any outward action, but an inward event: rending the heart and not the garments. In other words, fasting or giving up something should remind us of our sin (not our hunger) and lead us to repentance which is the most important thing. In turning away from sin and turning to God by faith, we experience God's grace and compassion by which He forgives sins and relents from sending calamity.

How can a perfectly fair and just God do that without sacrificing the integrity of His holiness? He sent His Son, Jesus, into this world. Lent is not about what WE give up, but what Jesus gave up. Jesus “gave up” – that is, set aside – His divine power so that He might suffer and die in our place. Jesus “gave up” his life on the cross so that we might have forgiveness for all our sin. Jesus “gave up” His position next to the Father and suffered hell itself when He cried out, “My God, My God, why have you forsaken me” so that we might have life in heaven forever. And then Jesus “gave up” suffering, isolation, and death when He rose from the grave to life, thus proving all of this to be true.

If what you “give up” for Lent directs you to faith in what Jesus “gave up”, then it is a good and helpful thing. “Giving up” something might be something you want to try.

In Christ,

Pastor Steven R. Schlund

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TO**

Everyone who helped with the soup suppers during Lent.
Everyone who attended and helped at the Fat Tuesday party.
Everyone who attends and helps prepare, cook, eat and clean up during our Family Night.
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, Gloria Creek and Karen Schaefer for playing the organ during our worship services.
The adult choir for enhancing our worship services.
All those who volunteer to teach Sunday school, Bible class, and midweek classes on Sundays and Wednesdays.
Idell and Tommy 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.
Cindy Greenwood for decorating the bulletin boards.
 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.

Finances

We began the new year of 2012 with a deficit in the checking account of \$6,467.35. Our giving in January, 2012 is \$11,106.00 and our expenses for January were \$11,722.92. The amount NOT in our checking account at the end of January is \$7,084.27. The **Lutheran Church Extension Fund** loan balance as of January 31, 2012 is **\$78,966.67**.

LWML

- ♥ **Our next meeting will be Tuesday, March 13 at 6:30 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. Don't forget your Mite boxes!
- ♥ **Remember to bring your new soap for Soap Sunday on the second Sunday of each month.** Soap collected will go to Lutheran World Relief. Thanks for your continued support.
- ♥ **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 Montana District Convention will be at Trinity Lutheran Church in Kalispell from April 27 through 29, 2012.** The registration fee will be \$65 per person. The speakers will be many and very interesting, including Gary Thies, from Mission Central; Director of Christian Education Jason Schleicher, from Manitoba VBS; and, as always, a humorous interrupter. Registration forms will be in the next *Montana Missive!* Plan now to attend!
- ♥ **The Lutheran World Relief Drive will be May 19, 2012.** More details will be available as the time gets closer.

Ladies Bible study schedule

March is a great month for the LADIES FRIDAY BIBLE CLASS, as it has five Fridays! Join them as they continue their study of the BOOKS of JEREMIAH and LAMENTATIONS. Bible study will be at the home of Ann Nimmick, 2327 15th Ave So from 1:15 - 3:15 pm on March 2nd, 9th, 16th, and 23rd.

Assisted Living Ministry with hymn singing and a devotion will be at these locations. Tuesday, March 13th at 11 am ladies will be at Bee Hive Home #1 2824 15th Ave So. On Friday, March 30th at 11:45 am they will meet at 4B's Restaurant, 4610 10th Ave So for a no host lunch. Afterward they will go to Highgate House, 3000 11th Ave So. As part of your Lenten Walk, come and share God's love with these assisted living residents!



March Anniversaries

- Mar. 2 Rick and Lori Symonsbergen
- Mar. 3 Hank and Kathy Politz
- Mar. 6 Gary and Tami Creek
- Mar. 23 Brant and Donna Hasbrouck
- Mar. 24 Charlie and Cheri Hirst
- Mar. 29 Bruce and Janet Kempf

Baptismal Anniversaries

- March 2 Charlie Fisher
- 3 Stacey Jensen
- 3 Stephanie Blomgren
- 4 Elizabeth Becker
- 4 Elizabeth Paul
- 4 Amber Schoenthal
- 5 Mitch Grove
- 6 Derek Wayman
- 13 Val Kraenzel
- 13 Richard Brandt
- 17 Kevin Aguiar
- 20 Michael Drummond
- 20 Leah (Huttinger) Taylor
- 20 Cheri Magnuson
- 21 Joshua Schule
- 22 Clarissa Shaffer
- 23 Cheri Bricks
- 23 Kandace Faller
- 23 Natalie Gerard
- 25 Aedan Lewis
- 25 Lucile Back
- 25 Judy VanVleet
- 26 Tyler Denning
- 27 Janet Rubino
- 28 Margie Gettel



INCLUDE THESE PEOPLE IN YOUR PRAYERS:

The following people are experiencing health problems:

- John Birkholz**
- Margie Gettel**
- Esther Largent**
- Patsy Zvara**

We pray for comfort for the family of **Dick Berg** who died February 5.

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

Free scrapbook day & potluck at Peace

Free scrapbook day & potluck at Peace on Saturday, March 31 starting at 11 a.m. Please come and join us and spend the day or just part of the day with us making new friends, enjoying each other's company, working on projects that you've been wanting to finish, whether it be a scrapbook, making a card for someone, or some other craft project. Please bring your favorite dish to share and I will provide coffee, tea, lemonade or juice. Let's have some fun, see you there! Please RSVP to Angelika Fisher at 231-1115. Thank you and God bless.

Thrivent Financial for Lutherans announces some changes in their Thrivent Choice Dollars

There will be some changes on the Thrivent website as to how you direct your Thrivent Choice Dollars in the year 2013. Throughout this year, you will be able to continue to direct Choice Dollars to any Lutheran entity and use the "recurring" button. In the year 2013 they will eliminate the "recurring" button so that you will have to go online or call Thrivent and direct your dollars more often during the year. Thrivent will also be increasing the amount of money that can be designated during the year of 2012.

Choice Dollars for 2011 must be designated before March 31, 2012. If you are a Thrivent member and have questions or need help with designating your money, please contact one of our Congregational Advocates: Ruth Denning, 899-3147; Amy Dorr, 899-4050; or Diann Stevens, 453-1011. We are happy to help you with any questions or problems you may be experiencing.

Foothills Community Christian Open House

Please join us! Foothills Community Christians School is hosting an Open House on Tuesday, March 13 from 7 to 8:30 p.m. for any students and parents interested in learning more about the school, curriculum and the mission. The school is located at 2210 5th Avenue North. For more information, call 452-5276, view their website at www.foothillschristian.org or Facebook.

Lent: A Time For Renewal

Lent is a time for renewal, or it serves no purpose at all. Lent is not a time for breast-beating, nor simply for reciting once again the history of the Passion. If that were all that Lent accomplished, it would be better to cancel Lenten services this year.

Lent has to do with repentance and renewal. It is a time when God's Spirit forces us to face who we are and what we have done, when God's Word breaks into our hearts with the message that we aren't meant to live as slaves of evil. Further, the message of repentance includes the cleansing power of the cross, which turns us around to face who we are in Jesus Christ and to see who and what we can become by his grace, power, and indwelling.

Join us on Wednesday evenings during Lent at 7:00 PM for worship services under the theme: *Lent: A Time For Renewal*. Soup Suppers will be served at 6:00 PM.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Theme</u>
March 7 th	<i>A Time For Renewal of Witness</i>
March 14 th	<i>A Time For Renewal of True Religion</i>
March 21 st	<i>A Time For Renewal of Priorities</i>
March 28 th	<i>A Time For Renewal of Godly Fear</i>

One soup supper left!

Wednesday, March 28 has not been claimed by a group to sponsor the soup supper. If your group would like to sponsor the soup supper on that evening, sign up on the calendar in the fellowship hall.

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40 Days for Life

What is it?

A prayer vigil in front of Planned Parenthood, 211 9th St. S. for 40 consecutive days. For the third year pro-life Lutherans have committed to standing in prayer for two days.

Our prayers desire a change of heart regarding "the sanctity of life" for:

The staff of Planned Parenthood.
Those passing in cars, bikes or on foot.
The pregnant girls contemplating abortion.
The extended families wounded by abortion.
The medical profession providing abortions.
and humility for our work for God's kingdom.

Our next day is:

Wednesday, March 28th
from **7 AM to 7 PM**

Can you join us for an hour or two? Signs stating our purpose will be provided. Sign the time sheet on the bulletin board or contact the Jim and Barb Going at 727-4878.

We covet your prayers for the issue and for those who choose to stand.