



Peace Lutheran Church

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March, 2015

What Are You Taking Up For Lent?

March 2015

The season of Lent has a negative reputation in the minds of many people. Perhaps that's why Lent is not observed in any meaningful way by many Christians. People might think about Jesus dying on the cross to forgive our sins and give us eternal life at the end of Lent and think that's pretty good. It's just all the other stuff connected to Lent that seems so negative.

What stuff? Lent has traditionally been a time for Christians to fast, that is, to go without eating at specified times. This has been translated into "giving up something" for modern day Christians. Christians may give up chocolate, desserts, alcohol, or something else they really enjoy during the 40 days of Lent.

Is this a good or bad thing? First, we should say there is no direct command from God to fast or give up anything. (However, Jesus seems to assume that we will fast in Matthew 6:16-18 where He gives directions for how to fast properly.) Therefore, you are not pleasing God more by fasting or giving up something and you are not angering God if you choose not to do those things.

Secondly, fasting or giving up something near and dear to you *can* be a good thing to do when done with a God pleasing motivation. If your intent is to increase your meditation on the death of Jesus for your sins, fasting or giving up something can help. When you feel hunger pangs or the desire for that which you have given up, you can't help but think of the reason you are doing that. I know. I have done that.

But isn't there something "positive" that we can do to observe Lent? In light of what Jesus has done for us in suffering and dying on the cross, the Church has always had good and positive things for Christians to do in response during Lent. The Church has traditionally encouraged Christians to take up three things during Lent: special meditation on God's Word, more time in prayer, and almsgiving (giving money to those in need).

Fasting helped people who wanted to take up these things. The time that was normally spent eating could be used for meditation and prayer. The money that was normally spent on food could be given to the poor.

If you choose to not fast or "give up anything" for Lent, your church still helps you take up these things for Lent. We have Wednesday evening Lent services to give you time for special meditation on God's Word. We provide special Lenten devotional books free of charge at the back of the church to help you devote more time to prayer. Special Lenten offerings at church or special contributions to community needs help you with almsgiving.

Whether you choose to "give up" or "take up" something for Lent, never let your action be the center of attention. Lent is all about what God has done for us in sending Jesus and what Jesus has done for us in redeeming us from sin, death, and the power of the devil. See Lent, not as a dreary obligation, but as a wonderful opportunity to respond to Christ's work in faith and in love.

In Christ,

Pastor Steven R. Schlund

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All of the groups who sponsor the soup suppers each Wednesday during Lent.

Everyone who helps prepare, setup, and clean up after Sunday school and Bible study each Sunday.

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 and children's 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

- ♥ **Because there are many people gone during the month of March, we have changed our next meeting to be Tuesday, April 14 at 6:30 p.m. with a Bible study.** The Bible study will be handed out early so we can study it and come back and share our experiences! 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 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 Elsie Huss at the end of March.** This money goes to mission work both locally and afar. Thanks for your continued support.
- ♥ **The Montana District Convention for 2016 will be held here in Great Falls! Ladies from Peace are the host society!** If you would like to be involved in the planning process or in any way, please let Ruth Denning or Gloria Creek know. We are in the planning stages but there is much work to be done! Venues for the convention and the Saturday night banquet need to be selected, as well as entertainment for the Saturday night banquet. Meals need to be planned along with table favors and many other details. Please consider joining us for this exciting event and help us make it the best convention Montana has ever seen!!
- ♥ **The Lutheran World Relief Drive will be May 16, 2015.** More details will be available as the time gets closer.

Ladies Bible study schedule

FRIDAY LADIES BIBLE CLASS will begin a new study of I CORINTHIANS in late March, when the snowbirds return to Great Falls --! Come and join the group as they meet on Friday, March 27th from 1-3 p.m. at the home of Marge Johnsten, 3000 8th Ave. So. You will enjoy the fellowship that accompanies the Bible study.

Assisted Living Ministry is not dependent upon snowbirds, nor do they dismiss for summer, but remain constant in their visitation. You are always welcome to join the ladies and gentlemen who lead hymn singing and share a devotion at the following locations. Tuesday, March 10th at 11 a.m. they will meet at Bee Hive Home #1, 2816 15th Ave. So. The group will gather for a no host lunch on Friday, March 20th at 11:45 a.m. at the Bar S Supper Club, 5100 North Star Blvd. Afterward many will go to Highgate House, 3000 11th Ave. So. The Lord blesses the visits with these residents with much joy! Come and share the Lord's blessings and joy!



March Anniversaries

- Mar. 3 Hank and Kathy Politz
- 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
- 13 Richard Brandt
- 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 Lucile Back
- 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

June Foard, June Meier's daughter

Jane Hering

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

Ushers for March

- March 1 ----- Arnie Gidlow
- Bruce Clark
- March 8 ----- Mitch Martin
- Eric Fletcher
- March 15 ----- Pat Lewis
- Kevin Aguiar
- March 22 ----- Lee Henselin
- Darrell Greenwood
- March 29 ----- Matt Schlund
- Dan Grove

40 Days for Life in Great Falls

**Ash Wednesday, February 18
through Palm Sunday, March 29**
The Pro-Life community stands in front of Planned
Parenthood, 211 9th St. South
from 7 AM to 7 PM

to pray for an end to abortion, for people inside, those going in and those going by, for a change of heart.. Lutherans for Life organizes volunteers, many from our congregations. Other congregations also participate. Contact Barb Going at 727-4878 if you are interested in getting involved in any way. Hearts are being changed and lives are being saved. Can you spare an hour or two to pray for life? Check out this website www.40daysforlife.com for more information.

“Life Quotes” from Lutherans for Life

“As baptized persons, we are sons and daughters of God in Christ. That makes us holy. Holy means being set aside for noble purpose. We are not common, but uncommon. As such, we are usable not just by anyone but by God. What a difference it makes to see ourselves this way.” *Linda D. Bartlett, titus2-4life.org* – A “Life Quote” from *Lutherans For Life* • www.lutheransforlife.org – A “Life Quote” from *Lutherans For Life* • www.lutheransforlife.org

Youth event on March 8

The youth of Peace will be gathering at the home of Greg and Kaye Franczyk, 510 Kinglet Court, on Sunday, March 8 from 4 to 7 p.m. for a craft, movie and pizza night! If you have some plastic Easter eggs laying around that you don't want, please bring them to the church by March 8 so the youth can put them to good use on Easter morning! No need to go out and purchase any! Thank you!

Soup Supper still available

There is still one open soup supper on March 18. If you or a group would like to sponsor it, please sign up on the calendar in the library.

Finances

The following is a rundown of our giving for the year 2015 so far:

First Quarter (January – March)

January – Given: \$9,221.75

Expenses: \$13,381.28

Lenten schedule

Jesus spoke about the Kingdom of God through special stories called parables. Jesus brought the Kingdom of God to people by His work on the cross. The theme for our Lenten midweek services will be *Parables from the Cross*. Each week, we will connect the words spoken from the cross by our Savior and parables spoken earlier in His ministry. In the parables are hints of the last words and also elaborations and applications for the words from the Lord's own "story sermons." These services continue through March 25. Worship begins at 7:00 PM with a Soup Supper served before at 6:00 PM.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Word</u>	<u>Parable</u>
March 4	Today, you will be with me in Paradise	Workers in the Vineyard
March 11	Behold, your son; behold your mother	The Good Samaritan
March 18	I thirst	The Rich Man and Lazarus
March 25	Why have you forsaken me?	The Widow and the Judge
April 2 (Maundy Thursday)	It is finished	The Wedding Feast
April 3 (Good Friday)	Into Your hands, I commend my spirit	The Mustard Seed

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Applying Biblical Teachings

"Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms" (1 Peter 4:10).

Of Christian liberty, Martin Luther wrote, "A Christian is a free lord of all and subject to no one. A Christian is a ministering servant of all and subject to everyone." Through Jesus Christ's suffering and death, we have been set free from the Law. Yet, in this freedom, we are slaves. We have been liberated by the Gospel to give loving service to others. Through the work of the Holy Spirit, our hearts have been filled with Christ's love. In this love, we are slaves of Christ, "... faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms."

Christians have received gifts and abilities from God to be used in the service of others, especially their own congregations. Having received these blessings, we are responsible to God to use them for the good of others and for His glory.

One way we all serve the Lord is through our financial support of His work here at Peace Lutheran Church. As we go about our own business and work, using our God-given talents, the Lord prospers us as He sees fit. Having been prospered with what we need to carry out His work, we share these blessings with others, especially through our financial support of this ministry.

Being mindful of the state of our financial resources, we seek ways to make the best use of them. We follow Solomon's counsel as set forth in Proverbs 27:23-24 where he wrote, "Be sure you know the condition of your flocks, give careful attention to your herds; for riches do not endure forever, and a crown is not secure for all generations." We are diligent in looking after the resources which God has entrusted to us so that no opportunity is lost and everything is done properly. We pray for guidance to use wisely what is given and to avoid the temptations that accompany financial difficulties.

By the work of the Holy Spirit through the Word, we remain watchful and diligent in all things. We use all that God has given in the faithful administration of God's grace in its various forms to His glory!