



Peace Lutheran Church

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The Effect of One Man's Death

A very famous basketball player recently died. Kobe Bryant of the Los Angeles Lakers perished when the helicopter he was riding in crashed north of Los Angeles. Also dying were eight other people, including Kobe's daughter.

The reaction to his death has been most interesting. It reveals much about how our society views death and deals with it. People are grief stricken and numb with sadness and shock. Much of this has to do with the fact that a celebrity is involved. Had this been nine ordinary people dying in a helicopter crash, it might have been reported in the news and quickly forgotten. However, since it is a famous athlete, there is more attention and more grief.

People call this death "senseless" and struggle to understand why this happened. Death is bad in general and especially bad in the situation. Many say that death has taken these people much too soon, especially the three teenaged girls who were in that helicopter. Glowing tributes have been pouring in from other basketball stars, stars in other sports, and people in general. Some of the tributes express mild complaints that this is so unfair. It's just not right that someone should die who was such a good person – a superstar in the NBA, an ambassador for basketball all over the world, a writer of children's books and a producer of an Oscar-winning film. People just can't understand death and its cause, its victims, and its end.

The Word of God and Jesus' mission to the world has much to say about this subject. First of all, there is no unfairness in death, regardless of the age or social standing of those who experience it. Death is neither harsh torture imposed by a cruel God, nor a horrible punishment for very bad people. Humanity, as a whole, is responsible for death because of our rebellion against God and has been earned by every one of us because of our sin. The Bible says, "Sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sin." (Romans 5:13)

In other words, sin came to this world because of Adam. Death came into the world because of sin. All have sinned which means all will die. This means that death will eventually and inevitably come calling for each of us. It does not matter whether it comes when we are old or when we are young. We shall die. It is not unfair nor untimely when someone dies. That person is simply getting what they have earned. As the Bible puts it, "For the wages of sin is death." (Romans 3:22-23) I'm not saying Kobe Bryant and the others in that helicopter deserve to die there and at that time. Kobe Bryant and the others (including us) died because they were sinners.

There has been only one death that could be considered to be "unfair." It is the death of someone far more famous than Kobe Bryant. It is the death of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Jesus came into this world to undo what humanity had done. Jesus came to obey the Law of God which we did not and could not do. Jesus came to bear the sin of the world from us and to Himself. Jesus died the death we deserved on the cross for our sin even though he had no sin of His own.

While we may view the death of a superstar as being "meaningless," the death of Jesus Christ was quite meaningful. As the sin of Adam brought death, the perfect life of Jesus brought righteousness. As death brought eternal death and hell for Adam and his descendants, the death of Jesus Christ, followed by His resurrection, has brought eternal life for all who are connected to Christ. As the Scriptures put it, "Therefore, as one trespass led to the condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men." (Romans 5:18)

As Christians, we do not celebrate death, but we know how to handle death. We know that it is a punishment for our sin and the sin of all who have lived, famous or not famous.. We know that Jesus took our sin and the sin of the world upon Himself and endured death for us. We know that, being connected to Christ by faith, means that death is not the end. Death has become the gate to everlasting life which those who are in Christ shall enter and live forever.

Epiphany is the season of "revelation." God reveals his Son and our Savior to the nations in order that we might have comfort and hope. When a tragedy occurs or the death of a celebrity takes place, may God use us to reveal the hope and the comfort that we have through Jesus Christ so that others may experience that comfort and that hope, too.

In Christ, our Lord,
Pastor Steven R. Schlund

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Everyone who donated baby items for the layettes that are taken to the hospital by Denice Combs.
Everyone who made fleece blankets for Denice Combs' layettes.
Val Martin and Gloria Creek for playing the organ during our worship services.
Pat Lewis for filling in while Pastor Schlund was in Fort Wayne.
All those who volunteer to teach Sunday school, Bible class, and midweek classes on Sundays and Wednesdays.
Matt Schlund for changing the banners and paraments.
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.
All of the ladies and gentlemen who provide devotions and hymn singing for the people at Park Place, Benefis Extended Care, Highgate House and Bee Hive Homes.
All of the quilters for the beautiful quilts you make all year.

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.

Ladies Bible study schedule

With February upon us, we start counting the weeks until the first signs of spring. Some wait for plants, others look for birds to migrate. It's only six weeks until we see the bluebirds are in the mountains and the robins return to Great Falls. As for the plants, usually in seven weeks the first crocuses are blooming on the south side of a home when they are planted next to a nice warm basement.

Counting the weeks until signs of spring, the FRIDAY LADIES BIBLE CLASS continues to grow in God's Word as they study the book of EPHESIANS. Know that you are always welcome to join them for an afternoon sipping a hot cup of coffee or tea, with study and fellowship that will warm your heart. They meet from 1-3pm on February 7th, 14th, and 21st at the home of Ann Nimmick, 2327 15th Ave So.

Assisted Living Ministry with a devotion and hymn singing will meet at the following locations. On Tuesday, February 11th ladies and gentlemen will gather at 11:00 a.m. at Bee Hive Home #2, 2816 15th Ave So. The monthly no host lunch will be held at 11:45 a.m. on Friday, February 28th at Panda Express, 1021 57th St So. After lunch many will go to Highgate House, 3000 11th Ave So, where residents are especially eager to see Christian friends who come to share God's Word in familiar hymns. Come and join the group as they reach out to the Great Falls community!

LWML

- ♥ **Thank you to everyone who donated items for the Baby Shower** for Denice Combs who gives baby layettes to the mothers at Benefis who have babies but have no clothes in which to take them home. She is very thankful for our help and continued support of her endeavor.
- ♥ **Our next regularly scheduled meeting will be Saturday, March 14 at 10:00 a.m. with a Bible study.** All ladies of Peace are invited and encouraged to come and join us! We will establish a nominating committee for the elections in May. Remember your Mite Boxes!
- ♥ **2020 LWML Montana District Convention** will be held at Trinity Lutheran Church and School in Billings on April 24 – 26, 2020. The theme is "Victory through Christ" and based on 1 Corinthians 15:57 which says, "But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." All ladies are invited and encouraged to go and share in this fellowship with other ladies from across the state. Registration forms are in the church office or in the latest Montana Missive.
- ♥ **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 our missionaries Rev. Andrew Schlund in Mexico City and Rev. Eric Stinnett in Ethiopia. Thanks for your continued support.



Baptismal Anniversaries

February	4	Rebecca Gerard
	8	Jamie Franczyk
	9	Connie Juden
	29	Kim Bibler



February Anniversaries

Feb. 4 Bernie and Phyllis Schaaf



INCLUDE THESE PEOPLE IN YOUR PRAYERS:

The following people are experiencing health problems:

- Michael Drummond** – Lupus
- Rev. Mark Grunst** of Billings who has Lewy Body disease
- Connie Juden**
- Rev. Erich Kaelberer** – ALS
- Gary Lindstrand**
- Wallace Martin**, Mitch's brother under Hospice Care
- Jane Nicolaus**, cancer
- Ed and Sarah Ostlund**, in assisted living in Billings
- Becky Schlund**, MS
- Steven Schlund**, Parkinsons
- Christine Wallace**, former LWML Montana District president, final stages of cancer

One member who is away serving in the military is **Michael Lewis**.



IT'S LEAP YEAR!

Deacon for February is

Kevin Aguiar

Ushers for February

2	Dennis Nivens Tyler Denning
9	Pat Lewis Greg Franczyk
16	Matt Schlund Arnie Gidlow
23	Mitch Martin Eric Fletcher

Lent Begins in February

Lent will begin with Ash Wednesday soup supper sponsored by LWML on **February 26** at 6:00 PM. There will also be an Ash Wednesday Worship Service that evening at 7:00 PM. Lent lasts about 6 weeks. If your group would like to sponsor one of the soup suppers, please sign up on the calendar in the Fellowship Hall. Be watching for devotion booklets that can be used to help us prepare ourselves for the suffering, death and resurrection of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. You won't want to miss it!

Wee Disciples Fund Raiser

Every third Tuesday of the month, you can help raise funds for Wee Disciples by eating at Fuddruckers! Present the coupon, which can be found on the table in the hallway, between **5 and 9 PM on February 18**, and Fuddruckers will give 20% of your total ticket to Wee Disciples!

Research Committee

The members of the Board of Directors are forming a Research Committee to help us prepare for the vacancy when Pastor Schlund leaves at the end of April. This committee will research where our next pastor and his family will live. Should we rent? Should we buy? Should we build? If you are interested in being a part of this committee, please contact Vice-Chairman Greg Franczyk at 406-671-2297.