



THE PITTSBURGH LUTHERAN

VOL 94, NO 2, March 2024

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PALM DEVOTION

by The Reverend Dr. Douglas H. Spittel, PALM President

“The Eyes of Faith Behold Life”

So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: “Death is swallowed up in victory.”

“O Death, where is your sting?

O Hades, where is your victory?”

The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.- 1 Corinthians 15:54-58

Our mortal eyes behold the ravages of sin daily in a world of wickedness and deceit. It is easy to imagine that the wicked prosper at the expense of the righteous. Even if one can dismiss the terrible changes and events that we see and hear of in the public media, death soon visits our homes and families, claiming our dearly loved ones and altering our lives yet again in ways with which we find difficult to cope.

This March, we again take the Lenten journey with Jesus to Calvary, and standing with His mother and the disciples, look in horror as our beloved Lord is nailed to the cross. If we come to this place in sincerity and truth, our horror is magnified by the fact that it is because of our wickedness and rebellion against God – because of our sin that Jesus dies on the gibbet of the cross. Hearing God’s Word, we can only be convinced that the “wicked” is not some “other,” it is we. All seems hopeless in this world. All appears to be lost.

But on the very last day of March this year, we again go to the tomb of Jesus to find that He is not there! We are not righteous, but He is! Our sin and death appeared to win, but it was a fleeting illusion that death could not maintain. “Death is swallowed up in victory.” Jesus died our death for us and rose from the dead for our justification. Jesus does what we cannot do. Jesus is risen from the dead and is alive! Jesus has won the victory and graciously gives it to us. Our labor is not in vain; it has great benefits for our neighbors. We can be steadfast and immovable as the eyes of faith now see the victory of life over death in Christ Jesus, our Lord and Savior.

This March, we are privileged to walk the journey of Lent together in our churches, following the path that blessed Martin Luther so eloquently recounts in his famous Easter hymn.

Christ Jesus, God’s own Son, came down,

His people to deliver;

Destroying sin, He took the crown

From death’s pale brow forever:

Stripped of pow’r, no more it reigns;

An empty form alone remains;

Its sting is lost forever.

Alleluia!

Lutheran Service Book, #458, stanza 3

*be steadfast,
immovable*

PALM NEWS

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

March

Good Samaritan Hospice (GSH), Concordia Lutheran Ministries, free Spousal Grief Support Group, Concordia of Cranberry, 10 Adams Ridge Blvd., Mars, each Tuesday, 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

April

6 to 28. Stations of the Resurrection presented by Pittsburgh Lutheran Choir. See flyer this issue for dates, times, and locations.

SCHEDULE OF WORSHIP AT BETHEL, GLENSHAW, AND ZION LAWRENCEVILLE

March

6. Ongoing devotion at Zion 6:30 p.m. followed by a light supper, 7:00 p.m.

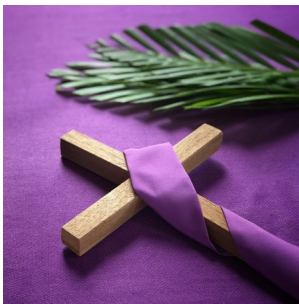
13 LENTEN WEDNESDAY Ongoing devotion at Bethel 6:30 p.m. followed by a light supper @ 7 :00p.m.

20. Ongoing devotion at Zion 6:30 p.m. followed by a light supper, 7:00 p.m.

24. PALM SUNDAY, Worship at Zion followed by a Light Brunch, 11:30 a.m.

28. HOLY THURSDAY, Joint Worship at Bethel with Holy Communion, 6:30 p.m.

29. GOOD FRIDAY, 3 p.m. Special Service at Zion, 3:00 p.m.; Bethel, 6:30 p.m.



The Pittsburgh Lutheran

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All Saints Campus Ministry

by Vicar Zachary Wessel

Studying the Scriptures with Students

Being a member in the LCMS means that we believe that the Lutheran Confessions in the Book of Concord are a true and pure exposition of the Word of God. While this might sound a little abstract at first, this has had a very tangible meaning for how we have engaged with students in Bible study. In years past, the campus ministry of All Saints has had an assortment of different Bible studies. But on campus and dealing with college students coming from many and varied backgrounds, the conversations would again and again end up going toward denominational differences. What is it that makes Lutherans different from other denominations? Why do other denominations believe some of the things they do? How can we be sure that Lutherans have the correct understanding of Scripture? These are the sorts of questions that students would wonder about.

Eventually, Pastor Deal decided to address these questions more head on. He decided to study the Augsburg Confession with our student group, the written confession that stands at the core of Lutheran identity. This might seem like an odd choice at first. After all, people coming to a “Bible study” aren’t going to expect going through a confessional document. But we rightly understand that these confessions are nothing more than a correct exposition and interpretation of Scripture. Although we are going through the Augsburg Confession, we are using it to study Scripture. That is the entire point of the Augsburg Confession, after all!

This has proved quite successful with the students. Although attendance at this student Bible study has gone up and down, as the demands of college life and assignments vary, the engagement and interest is always high. Having a systematic way to talk about what Christianity is, what it teaches, and what it means to be and live as a Christian is helpful beyond belief for these young Christians, who are trying to grow in their understanding of what they believe and have been taught. It gives them the opportunity to dig not into just one small portion of Scripture, but to see the big picture of what the Scriptures say as a whole, and to dig into all of the Scriptures more deeply and systematically. It also gives them the opportunity to ask and answer the questions that they are facing in their own life and that their friends and family from different backgrounds ask them. Even students who join us from non-Lutheran backgrounds, they appreciate the fact that we are willing to address the denominational differences head on and have real, serious conversations about what the Scriptures have to say about a given topic, that might not come up normally.

Even if it might seem odd at first to address these studies and questions about the Scriptures in this systematic, almost too head-on way, it really shouldn’t surprise us. The Word of God is consistent with itself in its totality; it is completely and entirely true, so it will stand up even under systematic scrutiny, as going through the topics addressed in the articles of the Augsburg Confession demands. In going through this, it therefore also enables these young students to have the ability to stand up under scrutiny and to understand what the Scriptures truly confess and what the faith is that is purely taught in the evangelical Lutheran Church.



A number of students from Grove City College have been coming to All Saints, and have also enjoyed our student Bible Study on campus

REDEEMER LUTHERAN SCHOOL

Oakmont / Penn Hills



Redeemer celebrated Lutheran Schools Week during the final days of January, with dress-up days, fun competitions, dance parties, service projects, and of course the Penny Wars! The week culminated with the Education Fair, as classes showcased a variety of countries for their families and friends. This year's Education Fair saw the return of the book fair as well, after a long hiatus!

The basketball season saw a host of high points, with both high school teams advancing to the playoffs and several students selected as league MVPs for the season. The high school boys lost in the quarter finals, while the girls team progressed to the finals for the second year in a row, earning second place after a hard-fought loss to Beaver County Christian. Emenet Richardson, Anika Vanwyk, and Jaden Craig were named league MVPs for the girls, with Jesse Vanwyk and Derrek Craig making the MVP list for the boys. Senior Jesse Vanwyk earned an additional honor as he hit the 1000 point mark in just 3 seasons of play! We are proud of our Ram teams representing Redeemer and Jesus Christ this season.

Senior Chloe Torres was recognized and rewarded for all of her hard work and academic excellence during her high school career at Redeemer Lutheran High School. Chloe received The Founders Scholarship from Geneva College. This prestigious award is given to students who have achieved outstanding academic excellence. The award will cover tuition for all 4 years of her undergraduate studies at Geneva. Chloe will be pursuing a degree in Early Childhood Education from Geneva beginning this fall. She is currently interning in the lower elementary grades at our Idaho Campus.

Redeemer Lutheran School is now enrolling for the 2024-2025 school year! For more information, please contact Alison Jackson at 412-793-5884 or admissions@redeemer-oakmont.org, or visit online at rlspittsburgh.org and complete an online inquiry.



SCHOOL NEWS

REDEEMER LUTHERAN SCHOOL

Oakmont / Penn Hills



Senior Jesse Vanwyk hits the 1000 point milestone

Middle & high school faculty go all out for Decades Day during Lutheran Schools Week



Lady Rams high school basketball takes 2nd place two years running

Chloe Torres Geneva College Scholarship



NEWS FROM AREA CONGREGATIONS

MT. CALVARY

West View, PA

Rather than reinventing the wheel, Mt. Calvary's Tom Hoover, head of the church's evangelism committee, purchased two permanent signs advertising Holy Week times and services. Tom each year used to personally create new signs, but this seems to be the more prudent way to go.

The two signs will be placed in front of the church at angles to be seen from all approaches.



Zion Lawrenceville and Bethel Glenshaw

HEARTS FOR JESUS

Zion sponsored mini fundraiser during Heart Month to honor our loved ones since 2009. Congregants remember family members and friends with a \$5 donation for a selected charity. The list is published in the weekly bulletin. This year gathered 35 hearts.

LWML SOUP-R BOWL

Wedding, Country Potato and Beef Vegetable soups were this year's menu for \$10 per quart. All proceeds will be donated to the LWML general mission fund which includes a medical mission in Venezuela, deaf mission in Columbia, Lutheran Church and School in Uganda and Operation Christmas Child. 48 quarts of soup were sold.

BETHEL WELCOMES NEW PART-TIME ORGANIST

Luke Swanson has been covering three Sundays with the resignations of Bethel's two part-time organists and deserves a thumbs up for a job well done - praising the Lord with such talent.

ZION LUTHERAN

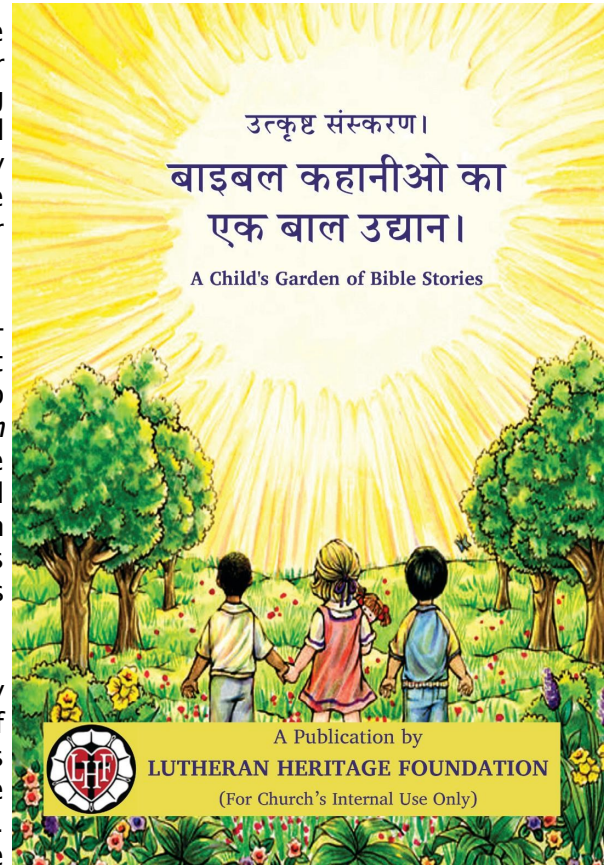
Bridgeville

Reaching the Children of India with the Gospel

'In America, Christian parents may take for granted the wide variety and accessibility of quality faith-based books for their children. Our Lutheran publisher, Concordia Publishing House, offers many old and new titles for sharing the Good News with young ones. Not so in other countries, especially those in which Christianity is a minority religion. In these countries, Christian parents may have very few resources for nurturing their children in the faith.

Several months ago, Zion Lutheran Church in Bridgeville donated a mission offering of \$9000 to a translation project conducted by the Lutheran Heritage Foundation (LHF) to help children in India. LHF translated the book, *A Child's Garden of Bible Stories*, into Hindi, the most widely spoken language in India. With the help of Zion's offering, the group printed 3,000 copies of the children's Bible book in February; then in March, the printers will finish the binding so that the books may be distributed to Hindi-speaking churches and families throughout India in April and May.

These books will be useful for outreach in India, a country dominated by deep poverty and false religions. Nearly 80% of the population are Hindu, who put their hope in many gods and the teachings of reincarnation. Islam and Sikhism are also present, while only 2.4 percent of Indians are Christian. Books that simply but faithfully show who Jesus Christ is are badly needed in languages the people can read and understand.



पुकारने लगा। यीशु ने पतरस का हाथ पकड़ा और कहा, "पतरस, क्या तू ने अचानक सोचा कि मैं तुझे डूबने दूँगा?" यीशु और पतरस नाव पर चढ़ गए। एक बार फिर हवा रुक गई। नाव में सभी चेलों ने यीशु से कहा, "निश्चय आप ही परमेश्वर के पुत्र हैं।"

1. यीशु को देख कर चेलों ने क्या सोच?
2. पतरस क्या करना चाहता था?
3. जब यीशु और पतरस नाव पर चढ़े तो चेलों ने क्या कहा?



LHF's executive director, Rev. Dr. Matthew Heise, recently commented on the organization's work in India. "More than one billion people – one-sixth of the world's population! – live in India, and over 30 percent are under the age of 14. These are the thousands of children who need to hear the Gospel of Jesus Christ and to receive His rich gifts of forgiveness, salvation and eternal life," according to Heise.

Heise went on to state, "The LCMS has its longest international mission history in India, where we opened our first "foreign" field in 1895. Sixty-four years later, the India Evangelical Lutheran Church (IELC) became a partner church with the LCMS and continues to be a strong church body reaching out to 65,000 communicant members, 114,600 baptized members and 80 schools. Yet the challenges remain. Our Lutheran church partners in India look forward to having this children's Bible book in the Hindi language, which will be given at no charge to the families who want and need them. This is going to be an important resource for the Holy Spirit to reach children with the love of Jesus Christ."

UPCOMING SPECIAL EVENTS

Upcoming Special Events

PITTSBURGH LUTHERAN CHORUS resumes weekly rehearsals at Zion, 237-37th St., Lawrenceville each Thursday at 6:30 p.m. in preparation for the Stations of the Resurrection presentation in April. All are welcome to join. Parking is available at the Lower Lot. All you need is a love of music. Perhaps your congregation is interested in hosting a concert. At this time, all Saturdays and Sundays in April are open. Please contact Shirley Freyer at 412/480-9933 or e-mail sfreyer@concordialm.org to reserve a date.



Good Samaritan Hospice Youth Bereavement Care, Free Event

MARCH 9, 2024 | 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Good Samaritan Hospice, a mission of Concordia, will host a free Youth Bereavement Care Event. Saturday, March 9, in the activity room of its Middlesex Twp office, 116 Browns Hill Road, Valencia, PA 16059.

The event is open to bereaved youth up to age 21, as well as their caregivers. All youth must be accompanied by a caregiver. Registration begins at 9:30 a.m.

The event, titled “March Memories,” will focus on creating personalized memory boxes. Attendees should bring items that remind them of the special person in their lives who died, which will be used to make a unique memory box.

Adults can relax and unwind, receive support from a bereavement coordinator or create their own memory box.

Lunch will be provided for all guests.

Registration is required by Monday, March 4.

For more information or to register by phone, call Brittany Foy at 1-800-720-2557, ext. 4428.



Good Samaritan Hospice Adult Support Group

MARCH 13, 2024 | 2:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Good Samaritan Hospice (GSH), a mission of Concordia Lutheran Ministries, will host a free grief support group for adults on Wednesdays from March 13 through May 1 at the Concordia at Cabot Haven II, 2nd floor classroom, Entrance 5, 148 Marwood Rd., Cabot, PA 16023.

This free grief support group will be led by GSH Bereavement Coordinator Marcia Jones-Washington and will provide an opportunity to share with others who have also experienced the death of someone close to them.

Many people find that learning more about grief, connecting with others and listening to other people’s stories helps them feel comforted on their grief journey.

Registration is required by Wednesday, March 6, for the support group.

For more information or to sign up, call Brittany Foy at 1-800-720-2557, ext. 4428.

Stations of the Resurrection

Most of us are familiar with the Stations of the Cross, the traditional Roman Catholic devotion that encourages meditation on the Passion of Christ. In that devotional, the fourteenth and final station is the burial of Jesus.

While this is certainly a fitting conclusion to the account of the Savior's suffering and death, it has been increasingly regarded as lacking as a conclusion of the entire Paschal Mystery, which, of course, is incomplete without the resurrection of Jesus (1 Corinthians 15:14; 17-19).

In the summer of 1988 Father Sabino Palumbieri, professor of anthropology at the Selesian University in Rome, proposed a new set of stations centered on the resurrection and the events following it. The first major celebration of this devotion was in 1990.

The Stations of the Resurrection focuses on the various appearances of Jesus during the forty-day period between His resurrection from the dead and His ascension into heaven. "He presented Himself alive to [His disciples] after His suffering by many proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God" (Acts 1:3 ESV). Unlike the Stations of the Cross, all the Stations of the Resurrection are based on Scripturally recorded incidents contained in the four Gospels and the book of Acts.

This service of praise and prayer is an adaptation of these stations and will be presented at various Concordia Lutheran Ministries communities during the month of April. All are invited to come and hear. The Pittsburgh Lutheran Chorus sing praises and listen to members of various our church congregations as well as some of our residents read scripture as it pertains to Jesus' last days here on earth.

Scripture readings include Matthew 28:1-10 (Jesus rises from the dead), John 20:11-18 (The Risen Lord appears to Mary Magdalene), Luke 24:13-35 (The Risen Lord appears on the road to Emmaus), Luke 24:36-43 (The Risen Lord appears to the disciples at Jerusalem), John 20:19-23 (The Lord establishes The Office of the Keys), John 20: 24-29 (The Risen Lord strengthens the faith of Thomas), John 21:1-19 (The Risen Lord restores Peter); Matthew 28:16-20 (The Lord gives The Great Commission) and Acts 1:3-11 (The Risen Lord ascends into heaven).



Stations of the Resurrection (continued)

The Pittsburgh Lutheran Chorus, directed by retired schoolteacher and church organist at Zion in Lawrenceville for nearly 50 years, Ruth Molkenthin Miller has directed the chorus since the 1990's.

Chorus members are Sopranos - Lisa Bruni, St. John's; Debbie Woolweber, Bethel/Zion Lawrenceville, June Wright, Peace; Altos - Linda Bright, Christ Forest Hills, Shirley Freyer, Zion Lawrenceville, Nancy Stanczak, St. John's, Carol Whiteside, Emmanuel, Etna; Tenors - Jonathan Bright, Christ Forest Hills; Donna Heintz, Bethel, Jack Jasneski, St. John's; Basses - Fred Heintz, Bethel, David McElroy, Mt. Calvary, Rev. Donn Woolweber, pastor, Bethel/Zion Lawrenceville.



Anthems include "Savior When In Dust to You," a favorite Lenten hymn written and composed in the early 1800s in Wales (#419 LSB).

"Christ Is Arisen," is a 12th century Easter hymn, perhaps the oldest German folk song in existence today. Goethe in his drama, "Faust" mentions it as a song that will never die, and Martin Luther refers to it as a hymn that must be sung from year to year. (#459 LSB)

"Have You Seen My Jesus," is a unique composition for an Easter vigil written to be sung a cappella. The listener is taken to the garden along with Mary in her search for Christ. His Resurrection will soon replace the sadness since Good Friday and yet this moment of reflection is an important prelude to the Alleluias of Easter from the scriptures in John 10:13 and March 12:10.

"Were You There," is a popular African American spiritual written in the 19th century, sung during Holy Week. (#456 LSB)

Written by Palestrina, considered the leading composer of late 16th century Europe, "The Strife Is O'er," is a favorite Easter hymn (#464 LSB)

"O Love, How Deep, How Broad, How High," written in Latin in the 15th century "Deo Gracias" was taken from Ephesians 3: 17-21 and arranged by Carl Schalk, noted Lutheran composer, author and lecturer who taught at Concordia University Chicago. (#544 LSB)

"O Sons and Daughters," was written in 1494 by Jean Tisserand, a Franciscan monk and set to a 15th century French melody. (#471 LSB)

"Brother James' Air," was composed by a Scottish hymn writer, minister and author, James Leith Macbeth Bain who became known to his peers as Brother James early 1900s. It is a moving melody based on the words of Psalm 23, thought to be the most beautiful of many that came to him spontaneously.

Beloved modern composer of hymns and choral music Natalie Sleeth wrote "Go Into to the World" based on the Great Commission in Matthew 28:19-20.

Stations of The Resurrection Schedule

FOCUS ON THE VARIOUS APPEARANCES OF JESUS DURING THE 40-DAY PERIOD BETWEEN HIS RESURRECTION AND HIS ASCENSION.

ALL THE STATIONS ARE BASED ON SCRIPTURALLY RECORDED INCIDENTS IN THE FOUR GOSPELS AND THE BOOK OF ACTS.

SATURDAY, APRIL 6

LUND CARE CENTER @ 2 P.M.

OERTEL CARE CENTER @ 3:30 P.M.

134 MARWOOD ROAD ~ CABOT 16023

SUNDAY, APRIL 7 – 2:30 P.M.

CONCORDIA OF THE SOUTH HILLS HARMONY ROOM

1300 BOWER HILL ROAD ~ MT. LEBANON 15243

SATURDAY, APRIL 20 – 2 P.M

CONCORDIA AT RIDGEWOOD PLACE

1460 RENTON ROAD ~ PLUM BORO 15239

SUNDAY, APRIL 21

CONCORDIA AT REBECCA RESIDENCE CHAPEL

3746 CEDAR RIDGE RD ~ALLISON PARK 15101 @ 2:30 P.M.

HIGHPOINTE AT REBECCA CHAPEL

1871 HIGHPOINTE LANE ~ ALLISON PARK 15101 @ 4 P.M.

SUNDAY, APRIL 28

CONCORDIA OF MONROEVILLE

4346 NORTHERN PIKE ~ MONROEVILLE 15146 @ 2:30 P.M.

Adult Grief Support Group

A Grief Support Group hosted by Good Samaritan Hospice

**Every Wednesday from
March 13 through May 1**

2 - 3:30 p.m.

Concordia at Cabot, Haven II Classroom

Entrance 5, 148 Marwood Road, Cabot, PA 18023

This free grief support group will be led by GSH Bereavement Coordinator Marcia Jones-Washington and will provide an opportunity to share with others who have also experienced the death of someone close to them. Many people find that learning more about grief, connecting with others and listening to other people's stories helps them feel comforted on their grief journey.

Registration is required by Wednesday, March 6, for the support group. For more information or to sign up, call Brittany Foy at 1-800-720-2557, ext. 4428.



**Good
Samaritan
Hospice**

A mission of Concordia Lutheran Ministries

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