



THE LAMPLIGHTER

Christ Lutheran Church Newsletter

Volume 70 No. 03

March/April 2024



John 3: 16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

Happy Birthday

- 03/03 Catherine Newhard
- 03/03 Geri Costello
- 03/05 Sharon Kruger
- 03/10 David Kruger
- 03/20 William Shrive
- 03/25 Jerry Rigby
- 04/06 Julie Malady
- 04/09 Yvonne DePugh
- 04/10 F. Dean Hottenroth
- 04/14 John Kroner
- 04/21 Heidi Shute

Happy Anniversary

- 03/03 David & Marianne Besel
- 03/20 John & Anita Kroner
- 04/09 Dana & Karen Bolvin
- 04/23 Rev. Jess & Cindy Abbott

Checkout our CLC website at www.christstpete.org

It's awesome!

Daily Lenten devotions from the NALC at the Home tab.

LENTEN LUNCH & LEARN

EACH WEDNESDAY 12:00—1:30 PM

FEB 21—MAR 27

"The God We Can Know"

By Rob Fuquay

The God We Can Know is our 6-week Lenten Bible Study based on the "I am" sayings of Jesus found in the Gospel of John. This series will help you find and form an answer to the most essential question in the Christian faith, "Who do you say I am?"

*One by one, Jesus's statements grab our imagination, reveal more about his identity and purpose, and connect us to the God of Moses, who spoke the first "I am." These significant, yet ordinary images (bread, light, shepherd, vine, and more) give us insightful ways to experience Jesus and point us to a God who wants to be known. A video introduction to each session, filmed on location in the Holy Land, allows you to travel with Rev. Fuquay and actually see the places where Jesus stood while disclosing his true identity, and in what context he spoke each "I Am." The paperback book, *The God We Can Know*, is available for everyone (\$8.00 donation requested)*

Weekly themes are:

- Feb 21 *I am the Bread of Life – Knowing God's Satisfaction*
- Feb 28 *I am the Light of the World – Knowing God's Guidance*
- Mar 6 *I am the Good Shepherd – Knowing God's Care*
- Mar 13 *I am the True Vine – Knowing God's Power*
- Mar 20 *I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life – Knowing God's Way*
- Mar 27 *I am the Resurrection and the Life – Knowing God's Possibilities*

Come join us for lunch (delicious homemade soup and bread) each Wednesday and learn about the God we can know.

An Easter Message from Pastor John

When I finally reached the point where I was actually ready to give seminary a try, I made a visit to Chicago for a two-day recruitment affair hosted by the school. A goodly number of prospective students would be there and so they, along with me, would be treated to a taste of seminary life.

Most of my fellow inquirers were assigned to student housing, so I was a bit disappointed when I was yoked with a really, really old professor. As events of the first day wore down, the Rev. Dr. Joseph Sittler prepared to drive me to his, and his wife, Jeannie's apartment. The hour was late as Dr. Sittler and I headed out into the snow and cold of the February Chicago night.

I was nervous as I got into his car not just because I was going to be staying at a professor's house and he, essentially, a relative stranger to me. But I was also nervous because the aged Dr. Sittler had already retired from the University of Chicago before crossing the street to teach at the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, and because the dominant feature of his aged appearance was the eyeglasses upon his face. The lenses on the glasses he wore were the thickest I had ever seen! I don't think I exaggerate any when I say that the fictional Mr. Magoo has nothing on old Dr. Sittler. (and, as an aside, by the beginning of my second year of seminary, Professor Sittler required a reader because he could no longer see print at all).

Somehow, (thank you, Jesus!) we arrived safely at the Sittler apartment. Joe & Jeannie, as I was encouraged to address them, were simply wonderful and delightful hosts. And, oh my goodness! The abundant works of art (Jeannie's profession) and the shelves upon shelves upon shelves of books that walled their home was another sight I had never seen before and something truly remarkable to behold.

Well, as I learned from other people the following day, Dr. Sittler was a name that was world famous! I had no idea! I thought he was a "mere" Lutheran seminary professor. But, on that day, I discovered that I had been hosted by a man who had set the theological world a-buzz when he presented a paper for the World Council of Churches as they met in New Delhi, India. (I suspect you can google this on the net if you want to pursue it further.)

In the four-volume set of For All the Saints which serves as my main devotional study/reading, there is a piece that Professor Sittler authored entitled, "Aging: A Summing Up and a Letting Go." As the Easter season will arrive at the end of the month, which makes what Joe this great man penned, very pertinent to the time – I'd like to share with you what Joe once wrote.

"If I were a young preacher again, I would preach the Christian gospel of eternal life in God, but I would preach it sooner in my ministry, preach it throughout, and I would preach it more realistically. The Bible really has nothing to say about eternal life. That sounds like a shocking statement, but it's literally true. There is not a single clear and concrete word in the Bible about life after death. It affirms that life with God is life with that which does not die. But any speculation about life after death is steadily avoided by the biblical writers.

"Paul made an effort to address the question, but it's a bum effort. 'What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. And what you sow is not the body, which is to be, by a bare kernel, perhaps of wheat or some other grain. But God gives it a body as he has chosen, and to each kind of seed its own body. For not all flesh is alike, but here is one kind for man, another for animals, another for birds. And another for fish! (1 Corinthians 15:36-39) He tries by natural analogy to say something. Interestingly, he never tried it again.

"In Romans, the most mature of Paul's epistles, he says, 'If we live, we live, to the Lord, and, if we die, we die to the Lord, so then whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's.' (Romans 14:8P) Period!

"That is the fundamental and absolute work of scripture. But that word is immensely satisfying to old people. I never try to give any blueprints of eternity or heaven or eternal life, since by definition it is utterly impossible. I think instead of trying to answer all the questions about death, we ought to follow the example of Paul and the New Testament and say, 'Eye has not seen nor ear heard', 'By faith we are saved,' (For All The Saints, Vol 1, pp.1059-1060)

"Whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's." Period!

Christ is Risen! He is Risen, indeed! Alleluia!!!

Pastor John Thompson

Palm Sunday Mar 24 10:00 AM

Maundy Thursday Mar 28 6:00 PM

Good Friday Mar 29 6:00 PM Tenebrae Service

Easter Sunday Mar 31 10:00 AM



THE EASTER LILY

Christianity's most important holiday is rich in symbols, some secular, some religious, from the Easter bunny who brings treats and toys to children, to the Easter lily, a tall, stalky plant topped by graceful, trumpet-shaped blooms. But while the fragrant flower that fills churches and homes come Easter might seem simply a beautiful decoration welcoming springtime, over the course of its fascinating history it has come to feature a far deeper connotation. Today's Easter lily meaning is most commonly tied to the Bible and even Jesus Christ himself.

Long ago, pagans connected the plant with motherhood and fertility—there's a reason we give them as gifts to our moms as thanks for all that they do. There is even an ancient Greek myth which tells the tale of lilies blossoming from the milk of Hera, wife of Zeus. In Roman mythology, Venus, the goddess of love, was so envious of the lily's beauty and purity that she caused a giant pistil to sprout from its center. Cultures across the world still see lilies as symbols of virtue, hope, grace, and innocence.

While commercial bulb production of Easter lilies only began in the 19th century, lilies make many appearances in both the Old and New Testaments, emphasizing the flower's importance to Christianity. King Solomon spoke of them, and Christ referenced them, too. Mention of lilies in the Bible include:

"I will be like the dew to Israel; he will blossom like a lily. Like a cedar of Lebanon he will send down his roots" (Hosea 14:5).

"Consider how the lilies grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you, not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these" (Luke 12:27).

Referred to as "white-robed apostles of hope," lilies are believed to have sprouted from the ground where Christ's blood and tears fell during crucifixion, as well as in the Garden of Gethsemane after his betrayal. It's also said they grew in the Garden of Eden from Eve's anguished tears. Because they represent purity, lilies are identified with the Virgin Mary, and in artworks depicting the Annunciation to the Virgin they are often found in the angel Gabriel's hand. The flower is also associated with the saints Anthony of Padua and Catherine of Siena.

It's thought that Easter lilies came to symbolize Christ not only because they embody purity—the trumpet-shaped blooms recall the horns that heralded the resurrection of Christ. And the life cycle of Easter lilies, which grow from a bulb for several years beneath the earth before blossoming into magnificent flowers, recalls Jesus' death and resurrection. What other springtime flower could possibly represent Easter and Christ better?

Christ Lutheran “New Paint” Project

... progress as of March 1, 2024

Rebuilt Front Arches

Have you noticed !? Our ‘decayed’ front wood arches are now rebuilt with 8 foot tall block piers. Rebar and heavy steel angles are inside. Higher up, the curved arches are now clad with stucco. All amazing work by fantastic contractors. The block mason ‘gifted’ all costs. Blessed are we ! The stucco work for the piers and arches cost \$ 1,850.00. Beautiful, difficult work.

Painting

Erik and Dave painted the block piers to match the Sanctuary. This brought to light the Council goal of many years to repaint the Sanctuary and Luther Hall exteriors for two main reasons. 1) Building protection. 2) Aesthetics.

But, this never happened and is long past due. So, we contacted Jorge of Tasco Services, LLC and were quoted a super good price of \$ 9,170.00.

We signed the contract not only for the great price but Jorge’s past good paint work for us.

Color & Scope

How we wound up years ago with one color for the Sanctuary, and another for Luther Hall is unclear. Suffice to say they will now be the same color, as will be the back shed and front ‘sign’. Rest assured there were ‘lively’ discussions as to what the new color should be ! In the end, ‘**Pale Oak**’ for all walls (near same as Luther Hall now). And ‘**Bronzitone**’ for all trim, doors, and front arches (a dark color for sure).

The Luther Hall covered walkways overheads and steel supports will NOT be painted, so poor is their condition. A repair project for another day.

Funding

At this time, we are drawing funds from our ‘Property & Maintenance’ budget since members have done most all maintenance and repair work themselves – including recent extensive paint prep-work. Nevertheless, we do plan a fund-raising effort to replenish ‘much as we can’ to permit other upgrades such as new LH gutters. So, stay tuned !

Submitted by Bob Newhard

Thank you, Pastor John Thompson

There simply are not enough words to express our gratitude for Pastor John who has served as our supply and interim pastor at Christ Lutheran Church for the past 3 years. We have been incredibly blessed to hear the Word of God preached passionately and faithfully every Sunday; to celebrate and receive the sacrament of Holy Communion; to have his ministry to the sick and dying; to learn from him in Lent and Advent activities; and to witness the baptisms children and adults into the faith as children of God. Perhaps most importantly Pastor John has lifted up in prayer this congregation and its people each and every day.

Prior to coming to serve CLC, Pastor John had “retired twice”. He answered the call of the Holy Spirit to serve once again as a parish pastor and he has done so with no complaint or reservation. We must accept his decision that the time has come for him to “step away” from his pastoral duties and obligations. Just as the Holy Spirit led Pastor John to CLC, the Spirit will continue to be at work in our midst to lead and sustain our congregation and her ministry.

Pastor John was certainly a “3 Ps” Pastor--He preached, he prayed, and he praised (singing)—all with great eagerness and devotion. He was never hesitant or shy about sharing his love and zeal for his Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. We will miss all of that and more!

Pastor John will conclude his pastoral services to CLC on March 31, 2024. How fitting that he chose that date—Easter Sunday, this year. Easter Sunday celebration is the culmination of our faith and the climax of our worship calendar, and Pastor John will once again lead us in prayer, praise and thanksgiving through the Word and Sacrament.

There will be a luncheon in Pastor’s honor following the Palm Sunday (March 24) worship service. Please join us to express our gratitude and love for Pastor John Thompson.

May the Lord bless you and keep you, Pastor John



APRIL FOOLS' PUNISHMENT

- How do pirates celebrate April Fools' Day? *They walk the prank.*
- What did one spring flower say to the other? *"Girl, you really got me growing."*
- What do you call a group of bunnies hopping away from you? *A receding hareline.*
- Why shouldn't you tell ducks jokes on April Fools' Day? *They'll quack up.*
- Humpty Dumpty had a great fall.
Spring apparently wasn't bad either.
- What did the mama cow say to her baby after he stayed up too late on April Fools' Day? *"It's pasture bedtime."*
- Why don't eggs play April Fools' pranks? *They might crack each other up.*
- What kind of shoes do frogs wear when spring comes? *Open-toad.*
- Why don't chickens play pranks on April Fools' Day? *They don't engage in fowl play.*
- How do you plant a kiss in April?
You use two lips.

MARCH & APRIL DATES TO REMEMBER

BIBLE STUDY; Every Tuesday at 10:30

WOMEN OF SPIRIT BIBLE STUDY: Monday Mar 4th and Monday April 1st at 5:00 PM in Luther Hall

WEDNESDAY LENTEN LUNCH & LEARN: "The God we Can Know" Every Wednesday Feb 21—Mar 27
12-1:30 PM Soup and bread lunch provided

PALM SUNDAY WORSHIP: Mar 24th 10:00 AM

PALM SUNDAY LUNCHEON HONORING PASTOR JOHN: Following the worship service

HOLY WEEK SERVICES: Maundy Thursday Mar 28th 6 PM and Good Friday Tenebrae Mar 29th 6 PM

EASTER SUNDAY WORSHIP: Mar 31st 10 AM—The Resurrection of our Lord

COME ONE, COME ALL AND JOIN IN THE FELLOWSHIP OF JESUS CHRIST

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