



# News from the Pews

VOLUME 3 ISSUE 1

February 2024



## Pastor's Press

Ash Wednesday is fast arriving (Feb 14<sup>th</sup>) and for our Lenten pilgrimage this year the theme of “You” is the highlight. This theme will loop in the classic Lenten contemplations around – fasting, alms, and prayer and will include with it the contemplation of the “You” in those spaces. What does it mean to be “you” – both in the simple everyday sense and in the deeper sense of the more vulnerable “you” – the one who connects with the Divine You. How do “you” live out Jesus’ commandment to love God and your neighbor? What could God be calling “you” into or toward in this new sacred space we are calling Transformation Discernment? What are “you” needing to acknowledge as grief or loss, to then let go of and move forward into? What could be “your” ministry calling both inside and outside of our faith community? These are all perfect Lenten ponderings and could fill many cycles of 6-week prayer services on Wednesdays. I would be a remiss Lutheran pastor if I didn’t also offer up some words from Martin Luther himself around this theme of “you”. Good old Marty said, “Everyone [you] should “put on” his neighbor and so conduct himself towards him as if he were in the other’s place. From Christ the good things have flowed and are flowing to us.”

As part of our Wednesday Prayer Services, we will be practicing some contemplative spiritual being-ness interspersed with scripture, song and prayer. These themes of fasting, alms and prayer will go something like this.

- Let us fast from easy answers, mindless distractions, preconceived notions and a desire to control.
- Almsgiving is a practice of attending to the needs of others. Let us look inward and bring loving attention to our whole selves so that we can bring loving attention to others.
- Extra time of prayer and devotion are hallmarks of Lent, let us honestly talk to God about our world, and desire to understand, feel and extend God’s loving care to all.

Please join me in our 2024 Lenten pilgrimage both on Sunday’s and Wednesday’s as we weave our sacred community together through sacred encounters and Spirit filled sacred space.

*Blessings, Pastor Sena.*

## Lent Worship Scripture and Themes

Lent 1 – Mark 1:9 – 15 “You are my beloved”

- How do we accept God’s claim and love self and others?

Lent 2 – Mark 8:31 – 38 “You are setting you mind not on divine things.....”

- How do we focus in this complex and fast paced modern world?

Lent 3 – John 2:13 – 22 “You stop making my Father’s house into a marketplace”

- How do we create God-focused money habits? What does it look like to engage church not as a commodity?

Lent 4 – John 3:14 – 21 “(You/Those) who do good are not afraid of Truth.”

- Are we seeking the glory of God in word and deeds?

Lent 5 – John 12:20 – 23 “This voice has come for your sake, not for mine.”

- What signs and symbols are we given to understand God’s work?

Palm Sunday – Mark 11:1 – 11 “What are you doing”

- What have you untied the colt, loved a neighbor, walked with someone through death?

## In Honor of Black History Month

Did you know...? Michael King Jr. was born on January 15, 1929. In 1934, his father, a Baptist Minister, attended a conference in Berlin and while visiting several sites in Germany became aware of the life and work of the Reformer leader, Martin Luther. When he returned to the US in August of 1934, he changed his name and his sons to Martin Luther King. His son's name (Martin Luther King Jr) will forever live on in history as the leader of the American Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s.

## Altar Guild Work Party

We have two coming up Altar Guild work parties you are invited to join. We will be sprucing up our worship space, cleaning supplies will be provided but feel free to bring what you are familiar with. Many hands make light work, we hope to see you there.

- Holy Cross - Saturday, February 10th from 10-12pm
- Christ the Good Shepherd - Saturday, March 9th from 10-12pm

## *Transformation Update*

The CORE Team has added some new members in our season of expansion. Kelsey Hallin, Erick Nyquest and Suzanne Stephen have all joined Wendy Smith, Margo Jensen and Pastor Sena to round out the CORE Team. Subcommittee interest forms are being filled out and the first two committees (finances and facilities) should be meeting this month to start us off on our Season of Research, Resources and Revelation. Our next All Congregation Conversation will take place after worship on Sunday, Feb 25<sup>th</sup>.

The leaders of the Exec Councils of both churches met with representatives from St Mark to discuss perspectives around our shared worship experiences. This group also agreed to meet quarterly together to continue our relationship of being “Better Together” and there are plans in the pipeline to have an All-Lutheran Family Reunion Picnic Day in July at Willamette Lutheran Retirement Community. Stay tuned for more information.

Pastor Sena has also reached out to some Synod suggested resource pastors/consultants to engage their expertise, mentorship and guidance and she meets monthly with Pr. Melissa Reed.

As we move into the next phases/seasons of our discernment covenant please keep each other, leadership and pastor in the forefront of your prayers. Amen!

## Salem for Refugees

CGS and HC are collectively gathering supplies for those in need through Salem for Refugees. Feel free to bring any number of items or a full kit to either Church location. We will be collecting supplies until March, thank you.



### Welcome Kit

- Electric tea kettle and black tea
- Monthly calendar
- Map of Salem area
- Scented jar candle with lighter
- Blanket
- "Welcome" doormat
- Notebook and pens/pencils
- Umbrella
- Scissors
- Small sewing kit
- Flashlight and batteries
- Wall clock with numbers(with batteries)
- Alarm clock
- Light bulbs (4, CFL or LED)



### Cleaning Kit

- Mop and bucket
- Broom and dustpan
- Sponges
- Cleaner spray bottles (1 bathroom, 1 kitchen, 1 all purpose)
- Toilet brush & holder
- Dish soap
- Laundry detergent
- Paper towels (2 rolls)
- Tissues (2 boxes)
- Small waste basket



### Bathroom Kit

- Bath towels and hand towels (4 of each)
- Washcloths (6-8)
- Shower curtain with rings
- Hand soap
- Rolls of toilet paper
- Small waste basket
- Floor bathmat
- Toilet Plunger

## Simple Soup Supper

Prior to Wednesday Lenten Services we will be joining together for Simple Soup Supper (SSS) starting at **5:45pm** and Lenten service will begin at **6:30pm**.

Please bring your own bowl, mug and utensils!



## Family Promise Volunteer Training

Learn best practices with a Family Promise refresher on Saturday, February 10<sup>th</sup> from 10am – 12pm at St. Timothy's Episcopal Church

Address: 3295 Ladd Ave NE, Salem OR 97301

For any questions, please contact Doug Odell 503- 856-5151



## February Birthdays

<b>Birthdays</b>	
Chuck Palmquist	February 6
Matthew Biggs	February 7
Eleanore Norman	February 11
Lorraine Bock	February 13
Ruth Aas	February 16
Mary Michener	February 17
Paul Briskey	February 21
Mike Kohn	February 21
Gwen Carr	February 29

## Upcoming Events

- **2/11** – Transfiguration of Our Lord Sunday Service @ CGS, 10am
- **2/8** – The Laughing Lutheran Ladies @ CGS Gathering Space, 1:30pm
- **2/10** – Altar Guild Work Party @ Holy Cross, 10am – 12pm
- **2/10** – Family Promise Volunteer Training @ St. Timothy's Episcopal Church, 10am – 12pm
- **2/14** – Ash Wednesday @ St. Mark Lutheran Church, 7pm  
Address: 790 Marion St NE, Salem, OR 97301
- **2/18** – First Sunday of Lent Service @ HC, 10am
- **2/25** – Second Sunday of Lent Service @ CGS, 10

## Wednesday Lenten Prayer Service

- **2/21** - @ Holy Cross; Pr. Sena Norton
- **2/28** - @ CGS; Pr. Heidi Bolt
- **3/6** - @ St. Mark; Pr. Sena Norton
- **3/13** - @ Holy Cross; Pr. Heidi Bolt
- **3/20** - @ CGS; Pr. Sena Norton

Starting at 6:30pm, services will be presided by Pr. Heidi Bolt and Pr. Sena Norton. Join us for SSS before Service begins at 5:45pm!

## Synod News

### **CGS CONTACT INFORMATION**

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Sunday Worship: 10:00-11:30; view YouTube sermons live or past sermons