

Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd

March 2022 Newsletter

From Pastor Nancy Hong

Lent: A Time to Take Away, or A Time to Add?

As of Ash Wednesday, March 2, Christians around the world will be in the season of Lent. Lent has traditionally been a solemn time, even a penitential time, to fast, to pray and to give alms, along with personal practices of self-denial.

We've probably seen friends on Facebook sharing how they'll be giving up coffee, or wine, or even Facebook, for Lent. The idea behind this self-denial is to identify with Jesus and how in the wilderness, he fasted for 40 days* giving up food, companionship, and home.

On the other hand, the word *Lent* is a shortened form of the Old English word *lencten*, meaning "spring," "Spring season," or simply "growth." This ancient definition invites us to grow in our relationship with Jesus. Rather than self-denial, one adds a practice to their lives to experience their Christian faith in an expansive way. Prayer, meditation, study, service, confession and celebration are number of ways to grow our faith, but certainly not the only ones.

Forty days of self-denial. Forty days of growth. Which will help you grow in your faith, and grow closer to Jesus? Both are options!

May God bless us as we move into this sacred time.

Pastor Nancy

*Luke 4:1-13 Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness, ²where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing at all during those days, and when they were over, he was famished. ³The devil said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become a loaf of bread." ⁴Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'One does not live by bread alone.'" ⁵Then the devil led him up and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. ⁶And the devil said to him, "To you I will give their glory and all this authority; for it has been given over to me, and I give it to anyone I please. ⁷If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours." ⁸Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'Worship the Lord your

God, and serve only him.'" ⁹Then the devil took him to Jerusalem, and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, saying to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, ¹⁰for it is written, 'He will command his angels concerning you, to protect you,' ¹¹and 'On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.'" ¹²Jesus answered him, "It is said, 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'" ¹³When the devil had finished every test, he departed from him until an opportune time.

LUTHERAN DISASTER RESPONSE EASTERN EUROPE CRISIS RESPONSE On Feb. 24, Russian forces invaded Ukraine, launching land, sea and air attacks. Hundreds of thousands of people are seeking refuge in neighboring countries. There are major humanitarian concerns for both internally displaced people and refugees. Many of these Ukrainians fleeing their homes need shelter, basic necessities and pastoral care. Lutheran Disaster Response is accompanying our companions in Ukraine, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia, as well as such ecumenical partners as Lutheran World Federation and Church World Service, in their humanitarian responses to the crisis. These partners provide refugees with immediate support and supplies such as food, blankets, water and hygiene kits. Your gifts designated for "Eastern Europe Crisis Response" will be used entirely (100%) to provide support for people impacted by conflict in the region.

Write a check to LCGS and we can send it or give digitally go to www.elca.org/disaster and go to Eastern Europe Crisis

Lent Worship Services 2022 - Wednesday Evenings at 6:15 pm

We are *back* to Holden Evening Prayer and Confirmation students leading worship each week. Confirmation Small Groups will take turns ushering, serving Communion, reading, praying, and sharing. These Holden Evening Prayer Services are intentionally shortened this year so that you have time to join a Small Group before or after worship, if you are interested/available. Although we will not be gathering for Soup Suppers this Lent, we hope these Small Groups will help you connect in new ways. Join us for worship, small groups, or both! We'd love to see you - and the Confirmation students would love to have your support as most of them will be leading Lent worship for the very first time this year.

The choir will begin rehearsing again on Wednesdays in March. We would love to have any and all interested people, young and not so young. We welcome you, even if you can't make all the rehearsals or times to sing. Here is our upcoming schedule. We will be downstairs in the choir rehearsal room off of the Fellowship Hall directly after the Holden Evening Prayer worship. Any questions, please contact Debbie Sanders 218-216-5366 or email at debra.k.sanders@icloud.com

Rehearse Wed. March 9 - after worship - shortly before 7pm

Wed. March 16 - shortly before 7pm

Wed. March 23 - shortly before 7pm

Wed. March 30 - shortly before 7pm

Wed. April 6 - shortly before 7pm

Sing on Sunday - March 27

Sing Palm Sunday - April 10

Sing Maundy Thursday - April 14

Sing Easter Sunday 9:30am service - April 17

Thank you for Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd's recent donations of \$210.00 for the general fund, \$1,000.00 for the food shelf, and \$475.12 for after school programming at the Steve O'Neil Apartments. Your gifts will allow us to continue to provide food, shelter, advocacy, and a caring community for some of Duluth's most vulnerable residents. We are grateful for the support of friends like you who make it possible to fulfill the promise of CHUM's mission to create a future where every person has food, shelter, dignity, and hope.

CHUM is proud to be a diverse community that celebrates together, welcomes all comers, stands in solidarity with our neighbors, demonstrates generosity, practices fellowship, and spreads love in the world. Thank you for being part of that community.

Sincerely, Gracia Swensen, Development Director

Bell Ringing Christmas is the time when The Salvation Army has the greatest opportunity to do the most good. The Red Kettle campaign is their largest fund raising event. THANK YOU everyone who helped with bell ringing this holiday season - Pat & Bruce Johnson, Linda Susens, Tom & Julie Seidelmann, Marge Kangas, Roger & Helen Munson, John & Nancy Carlson, Laurie Seidelmann & her housemates, Laurel Pagel, Tom & Pat O'Brien, the Kemp family, the Jeff Kreager family, Wayne & Karen Kragseth, Brenna Jordan & Lois Foltz, Lois Opseth, Pat & Susan Sage, Amy Loken, Marcia Semerau, and Mary Semerau.. We covered 20 hours at Cub Foods on two Saturdays in December. People were richly blessed as a result of your generous contribution of time and for your giving spirit during this very busy time of year. *Thank you! Marcia Semerau, Reaching Out Leadership Team*

Dear Friends, I would like to thank you from the bottom of my heart on behalf of The Salvation Army and the people we serve for the giving of your time and Christmas cheer at our Red Kettles in 2021. Funds raised at our kettles not only helped us provide 2,136 people with Christmas dinner and 1,316 children with gifts but will help us throughout the year to provide nutritious meals, housing, utility assistance, and other emergency assistance to those in need.

Here are some highlights: **You raised \$1,212.06**

Red Kettle Campaign Goal for 2021: \$220,000.00

Total amount collected at the kettles: \$217,873.99 (\$255,373.99 with Miner's Match)

Total hours staffed by volunteers: 3,066 of 5,994 total hours available

We genuinely thank you once more for volunteering with us and to see you again next Christmas Season.

Sincerely, June Stanley, Administrative Assistant/Volunteer Coordinator

Lenten Almsgiving and Prayer

“Yet even now, says the Lord, return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; rend your hearts and not your clothing. Return to the Lord, your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and relents from punishing.” Joel 2:12-13



As a child, I felt I was unfairly dealt a “double whammy” in life. My dad was a dentist, and my mother was a dietitian so there was rarely any soda, candy, or many sweets in our house. If a bag of cookies was unloaded from a grocery run, it was usually quickly discovered and devoured by a few of my many siblings. This scarcity of sugary treats, however, made “giving up sweets” for Lent *effortless!* As it turns out our household food practices were a healthful way to live and I’m grateful for their limits now as an adult. I have been also grateful over the last several decades to dig much deeper into what Lenten practices should be for adult Christians.

Two very traditional practices are “almsgiving” and prayer. An ELCA Lenten Stewardship Devotional I recently reviewed describes alms as “our compassionate, heartfelt response to the people Jesus mentions in Matthew 25: those “least” of our sisters and brothers who are “less” than we in circumstance only and always our equal in their humanity. Your outreach makes God’s love for them feel very real and very immediate; your kindness reveals Christ’s presence within them as well. “

The need for generosity to those facing food insecurity or job or housing loss during this pandemic is growing. Consider *layering* your giving, if you are able: “first fruits” commitment to your congregation as a foundation, then some added compassionate giving during the special seasons of the year such as Lent and finally some targeted giving to the needs in your community or globally. As a nutrition professional, I’m drawn to charities that feed people so will likely do Lenten gifts CHUM Food Shelf and Lutheran World Relief.

Lenten generosity is an outcome of “repentance” or returning to the Lord and requires a deeper commitment to Scripture study and prayer. Consider a 40-day Lenten short daily devotional for this time. I plan to download and use the [free Lenten devotional prepared each year by Luther Seminary](#). This year the devotion is based on the ELW hymn 343 “My Song Is Love Unknown.” The devotion describes this hymn as telling two stories. The story of Jesus’ ministry and passion intermingles with our story as humans. The hymn lifts up the mystery of God’s deep unknowable love that Jesus reveals. The hymn also shares the puzzling response of humans to the Good News of Jesus. How could Jesus love us so deeply and persistently when we are so messed up? What a wonderful question to ponder this Lent!

Please consider joining us Mondays from 9-1PM in the lower level Fellowship Hall to work on sewing ministries. No experience required as we will find something for you to do. We have machines and supplies for projects.

If you have any questions, please call Sue Boutin 218.349.5991.



JUST SHOW UP!

Women of LCGS if you would like to be a part of our “Women’s Ministry” please come join us. All you need to do is Show Up!

Ruth Circle will meet on Tuesday, March 8th at 6:30 at Rachel Mosely's. 202 North Hawthorne Road. All women are welcome.

Questions, please call Lois Opseth 218-340-3605.



TOGETHER, WE CAN FEED OUR NORTHLAND NEIGHBORS!

During the season of Lent, Good Shepherd's Hunger Team will be asking for everyone's help in supporting Second Harvest Northern Lakes Food Bank. Second Harvest is our area's largest distributor of food to families needing food assistance in Northeastern MN and Northwestern WI. Second Harvest distributed over 2 million pounds of food last year, or 5.6 million meals which fed approximately 44,000 of our Northland neighbors. This distribution occurs through a network of regional agency partners, such as local food shelves/soup kitchens/shelters, and through their own direct service programs: a food shelf, a mobile food pantry, a nutrition assistance program for seniors (NAPS) and a backpack program (children can take a backpack of food home on the weekends.)



Begun in 1984, it was seen as a stop-gap ministry for miners on the Iron Range who lost their jobs due to the recession. Unfortunately, food insecurity and hunger in our area continues to persist. Three of the largest contributing factors to food insecurity are:

- Housing costs: housing often requires more than 1/3 of a northland family's income
- Cold weather: heat is necessary to survive our winters, and utility costs continue to rise
- Livable-wage jobs: there are many working poor in the Northland and families need food assistance to help stretch their budgets to cover all their monthly and weekly expenses

How does having enough to eat promote not only health but hope for those in temporary crisis? Knowing there will be food on their tables, helps stabilize many individuals and families in these trying times. Nutritious food allows children to concentrate and learn in school. It helps adults focus on employment and education and food assistance can provide for a healthier quality of life for our senior neighbors living on fixed incomes.

Please support Second Harvest Northern Lakes Food Bank throughout Lent. There will be opportunities for financial contributions at Good Shepherd every Sunday as we gather for Lenten services. We also encourage you to think about volunteering at the food bank, many of our members already do! The food bank is located at 4503 Airpark Blvd. in Duluth. If you are interested in more information, ask one of our hunger team members or go online to: northernlakesfoodbank.org

At the end of Christmas break, LCGS hosted a COVID testing site so students and staff and their families could safely return to the classrooms. "The Duluth School Board, during its January 2022 meeting, recognized LCGS for service to students and families during the extended winter break and throughout the school year."

We received a **Certificate of Recognition** for support and service to Duluth Schools during the Covid-19 pandemic!

Thank you to everyone who made this possible!!

What's Your Favorite Bible Verse/Passage?

This month we hear from our Office Manager Christine Whitcomb

Jeremiah 29:11

"For I know the plans of I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. -Jeremiah 29:11 (NIV)

This verse that has gotten me through the deaths of my parents, and other loved ones. It has seen me through some of my darkest days when tears are pouring out in sorrow and despair and I am asking the question, "why me?" I am also reminded of the happy moments of my life in which I have rejoiced and prospered. Jeremiah 29:11 is a verse that has provided me guidance and reminds me that I am living my life on God's time not my time. He has a perfect plan for me. Every trial and triumph I have endured has led my life to where I am today and where I will be tomorrow. Those moments have impacted who I am as a person and who I strive to be. I live my life with hope and trust in God. Knowing that God will always guide my life each and every day. Jeremiah 29:11 has become my favorite verse because it has gotten me through adversity and given me strength to continue to hope for a better tomorrow.

LCGS IS NURTURING FAITH



Save the Date! Camp Good Shepherd 2022
Day Camp is *back* June 20-23
with Staff from Camp Onomia
(Volunteer Training, Dinner and Campfire Worship on Sunday, June 19)



Sunday, March 6 Prayer Milestone Worship

You may have noticed, we are expanding our Milestones Ministry this year to include all Sunday School grades, and even Adults! The next big milestone is coming up: the Prayer Pillow Milestone. We will have special prayer books for all Kindergarteners, 2nd Graders, and even adults! Kindergarteners and 2nd Graders can also take home a special, hand-made pillow that has a secret pocket to hold their prayer books just perfectly. A little pillow and a little book can make a big difference as we strive to fulfill those baptismal promises: to nurture all children in faith and prayer. But it's not just about kids this year! We also have a book describing a new (ok, actually ancient) way to pray for adults, too! Whether you think of yourself as a dedicated prayer warrior already, or if you've always struggled with the idea of prayer - this book could be a great resource for you. We'll have copies for everyone (and we can always order more!) Please join us in worship on Sunday, March 6 for our Prayer (Pillow) Milestone (for all ages!)

Peer Ministry starts Wednesday, March 2 Open to all 10th Graders

In the past, Peer Ministers have met in the fall and winter to plan the January Retreat for Confirmation Students. We knew the timing of that wasn't quite right with Covid this year. But, we are feeling hopeful now! Peer Ministers will meet throughout the month of March, planning something special for the Confirmation students before the end of the Confirmation Year. If you have any questions, please contact Katie. Our first meeting will be March 2nd, starting right after the Ash Wednesday worship. Thanks!

Sunday School Save the Date: We'll be making our favorite Easter Gardens on Sunday, April 3 this year. Dirt, Rocks, Crosses, and Grass Seed create the most beautiful Easter Centerpieces that also tell the Bible Story. It's one of our favorite traditions! You are welcome to join us at 9:00 am that Sunday morning.



Register for Camp Today!! Invite a friend! www.vlmcamps.org Summer Camp Registration is open! Join us this summer at Camp Vermilion and Camp Hiawatha Spend time at Camp Hiawatha or Camp Vermilion this summer and you will experience a week of a lifetime! It's a chance to try some new things, meet new friends, explore your creative side, learn team work, be silly, sing, laugh, and learn what it means to live as God's people in the world!

We have programs for all ages - a one day experience for those new to camp, a two night program for those not quite ready for a full week, and week-long programs for elementary, junior high, and senior high campers.

**We're looking for awesome summer staff too!!
It will be the best summer ever!!**



VLM is excited to announce that we will be offering a **Young Adult Ministry pilot program**, beginning in March of 2022! The VLM Young Adult Ministry (YAM) will be based out of the main VLM office in Duluth, MN and will offer opportunities for young adults ages ~18-35 to nourish mind, body and spirit. This pilot program will provide outdoor adventures such as hiking, canoeing, and snowshoeing, as well as community-building experiences such as service-learning and intentional conversations about life and faith over a good beer or cup of coffee.

Katie Anderson - Young Adult Ministry Coordinator, vlmcamps.org/yam

Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd (ELCA)

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2022

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Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd

M-Th 9:00-4:00 Fri 9:00-12:00

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Website: www.lcgsduluth.org

MEET THE STAFF

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