

# *A Message From Our Pastor*

## *The Three Days*

We are coming soon to the center of our church calendar, the heart of our life of faith, the celebration of our Lord's Passover from death to life. It is sometimes called in Latin, "Triduum," which means "three days." The Three Days begins at sundown on Maundy Thursday, April 9, and concludes on the evening of Easter, the festival of our Lord's resurrection, April 12.

I strongly encourage you to worship at St. Martin's during the Three Days, as we move from the last meal to betrayal to the foot of the cross to the empty tomb. Our life and faith center on what God has done in Jesus, the crucified and risen Lord of creation.

The times of our worship services are listed elsewhere in this newsletter. Here I will briefly describe the actions and meaning of worship during the Three Days, as we are led from death into the new life and light of resurrection.

### **Maundy Thursday**

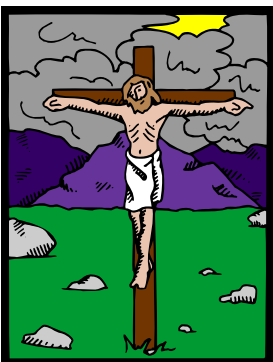
The word "Maundy" comes from the Latin, "mandatum," which means "commandment." Jesus tells his disciples on the eve of his betrayal, "I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another." (John 13:34) Jesus himself embodies this commandment by washing his friends' feet, which in New Testament times was the work of servants. On this night, we wash each other's feet to symbolize the serving love of Christ.



This serving love becomes real for us in the meal Jesus shares with his disciples, even as he is about to be betrayed. As he celebrates the Passover meal, Jesus takes bread and a cup of wine and says, "This is my body and blood, given for you." We eat and drink trusting in Jesus' offer of himself for a broken humanity and a suffering world.

The service ends with the stripping of the altar, symbolizing Jesus' suffering and death. We hear the moving words, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Psalm 22:1) We leave in silence, with no benediction, suggesting that our worship continues as we contemplate Jesus' death.

### **Good Friday**



We gather in silence around the cross of our salvation. The gospel reading on this day is the Passion according to John, in which Jesus' last words are not "Why have you forsaken me?" but "It is finished." (John 19:30) For John, Jesus triumphs in the cross, his love defeating all the forces of hate and evil. We share in Christ's death, and therefore his victory over death, and that is why we call this Friday "good."

The cross anchors us as we pray in words and in silence, for the whole world, for all those in need. We close with ancient words praising the One who by his death has brought forth life: "We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you. By your holy cross you have redeemed the world." Again, we end in silence, waiting for the surprise of the empty tomb.

## Easter Vigil

This worship service would take place on the Saturday evening before Easter Day. To my knowledge, St. Martin's has not offered an Easter Vigil before, and we will not have one this year. But you may want to consider it in future years; a growing number of Lutheran churches are holding Easter Vigils. It is definitely one of my favorite services of the year!



The Easter Vigil begins in the dark, with a candlelight procession, as we wait and watch for the first light of resurrection. First, we hear the great stories of salvation from the Old Testament: creation, the flood, the deliverance out of Egypt, and others. Then, as the lights are suddenly turned on, we sing "Alleluia" and hear the story of God raising Jesus from the dead. The worship concludes with the first baptisms of the Easter season, and the feast of God's risen presence in bread and wine.

If you are interested in having an Easter Vigil, a good way to begin is to attend one at another church to experience it first-hand. This would be something for our worship and praise team to prayerfully consider and investigate.

## Easter Day

The Three Days concludes with the joyful refrain: "Alleluia! Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia!" With Mary Magdalene, Peter and disciples of every time and place, we discover that our Lord is not dead, but alive, filled with God's strong, endless love. We have become witnesses of his resurrection. This is the day to rejoice, to pull out all the musical instruments, to sing with full-hearted joy: "Jesus Christ is risen today!" Because he lives, death has lost its sting. We too can live in a new, grace-filled way.

The Three Days give us an opportunity to experience once again God's saving death and the new life of resurrection. The words of this hymn come to mind:



"Three holy days enfold us now  
In washing feet and breaking bread,  
In cross and font and life renewed:  
In Christ, God's firstborn from the dead."  
(written by Delores Dufner)

May we be renewed, re-energized by the Spirit, as we celebrate these Three Days at St. Martin's!

*Pastor Tim*

### **New Member Class Begins April 19**

St. Martin's Lutheran Church welcomes all to become members of our congregation! We will be having a new member class, led by Pastor Tim, on two Sundays, April 19 and April 26, at 9:15 a.m. in the library.

New members will be received into membership by affirmation of baptism on Sunday, April 26, at the 10:30 a.m. worship service.

Please RSVP by contacting the church office (798-2777) or by speaking with Pastor Tim.

We give thanks to the Holy Spirit who continues to draw new people into our faith community!

# Our Journey to Easter

## Wednesday, April 1

6:00- 7:00 p.m. Soup Supper in Fellowship Hall. Free-will offerings accepted; members are encouraged to sign up to donate soup or bread.



7:00 – 7:45 p.m. Mid-week Lenten Services – This service gives us time to pause in our busyness to focus on God's redeeming grace. This is a time for introspection, self-examination, and repentance - in preparation to celebrate Easter. The service includes the Holden Evening Prayer.

## Palm Sunday, April 5

8:00 & 10:30 a.m. All worshippers will be invited to enter the service in a procession with palms. Weather permitting, we will start by the funeral home. We will celebrate Jesus triumphant entry into Jerusalem and then read the Passion account.

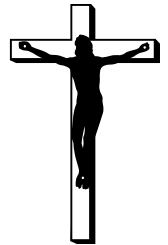
## Maundy Thursday, April 9

7:00 p.m. We will commemorate Jesus' last supper with his disciples with the celebration of Holy Communion, and have the opportunity (optionally) to wash the feet of a brother or sister. Young people who have prepared for Communion will be invited to receive Communion for their first time.

## Good Friday, April 10

1:00 p.m. Traditional Good Friday Worship

7:00 p.m. Prayer Around the Cross – a contemplative service of quiet music, reflection, and prayer. Worshippers will be invited to light individual candles to represent their prayers.



## Easter Sunday, April 12



8:00 a.m. Traditional Easter Worship and Celebration  
10:30 a.m. Contemporary Easter Worship and Celebration  
8:30–10:15 Easter Breakfast served by the Youth in Fellowship Hall



## *Bishop's Easter Message*

When Mary Magdalene, Mary and Salome came to the tomb, their hopes and fears intersected. They wondered aloud about the impossibly large and heavy stone that presented an obstacle to their immediate plans. Worse, what they thought lay behind the stone was unspeakably devastating. Jesus, who embodied the hope of God's promise in a fully human life, was not simply dead, but crucified -- executed in the most extreme humiliation, a savage mockery of the hope that had lived with him.

But the stone was gone, the grave empty. Where they had expected to hear the silence of death's mockery, they were met by an astonishing message that the crucified one was raised from the dead, that their hope was victorious over humiliation, and that Jesus lives and is leading the way into an unexpected, surprising future with God.

Jesus lives and resurrection hope beckons. Jesus' resurrection on the third day signals that God is not finished until the life of Jesus renews the whole creation. Sinners once haunted by the threats of judgment will live forgiven, restored, renewed and freed. All lives broken by sin's injustices and haunted by death's terrors will be transformed by joy and transfigured into the new creation in Christ.

You and I are witnesses of this new creation. You have been baptized into Jesus' death and resurrection and have heard his promise. Your lives are hidden in his and he feeds you with a foretaste of the eternal feast of joy. He will meet you in your hope. He claims your daily work and makes it into a holy calling. He lives in you and sends you into the world as an ambassador of reconciliation, a testimony of God's incomparable love. Jesus lives! Your life in him is resurrection witness.

The Rev. Mark S. Hanson  
Presiding Bishop - ELCA

## From Our President

If you have not heard the good news, we accepted an offer for the parsonage and the closing is March 30<sup>th</sup>. I know that most of you wanted to see the parsonage sold before we called our new pastor and fortunately it appears to have worked out. Some of you that have children in school may recognize the Turley name. Jeff and Marn Turley have three children in the Middleton Cross Plains schools. I believe their oldest son is at Glacier Creek Middle School. Hopefully the pastor that accepts a call likes the idea of not having to move into a parsonage.

Christy Yrios-Howell, Ann Houck and I went to the LEAD workshop that was sponsored by our synod. All of us went to different workshops and we all felt it was a valuable experience. We brought back some good ideas related to Sunday school and the new ELCA Sunday School curriculum, great website information, and a new initiative of the ELCA which focuses on the Bible.

The featured speaker talked about the decline in church numbers in all major denominations. He went on to say that in today's growing churches there is a paradigm shift from:

- a maintenance congregation to a congregation that emphasizes mission
- a membership congregation to a congregation that emphasizes discipleship
- a chaplaincy congregation to a congregation of hospitality (makes everyone feel welcome)
- a pastor-centered congregation to a congregation that empowers the lay people
- a congregation that focuses within (us) to a congregation that focuses on outreach (community)
- a settled congregation to a congregation that is sent (leaves the comfort zone of the church to go out into the community and beyond)

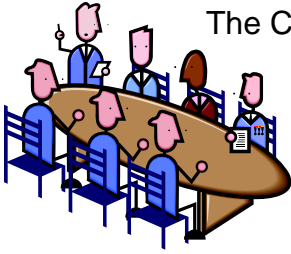
How do you think we are doing? I know we have plenty of room for improvement, but I personally feel we have taken big strides in this paradigm shift at St. Martin's. There is not one statement listed above that our church council does not agree with as the direction for the future.

Are you someone that believes that most of us at St. Martin's should spend more time learning how the Word of God speaks to us in our daily lives? It was surprising to me to hear how many pastors in our synod feel that most of our members do not know the basic stories from the bible. Our mission statement has bible reading as a focus of the 6 marks of discipleship. So let's do something to make that focus a reality. The timing is perfect because the ELCA and our synod have introduced a new Book of Faith initiative to make us all more fluent in the language of Scripture. The purpose is to show us how we can become renewed, enlivened and empowered by the Word. The synod would like to have about 15 congregations that would commit to creating a Book of Faith leadership team at their church. Our team would seek ways to engage the Bible across the full range of congregational life. We would be making a one year commitment to this initiative with our synod and it could be a life changing experience for you and members of our church. No experience necessary!! Just a will to make bible reading and discussion a part of your life and a center piece of discipleship at St. Martins. If you are interested please talk to me at church or give me a call at 798-2752.

Here is something that would fit right in with the Book of Faith initiative. I am really excited about a new Lutheran Study Bible published by Augsburg Fortress, the publishing company of the ELCA. I am going to order 10 of these Bibles so that we can get the hardcover edition for \$24.50 each plus tax. I will charge you \$25 per bible. What a deal! There will be a sign-up in the narthex if you are interested in purchasing one of these NRSV translation Bibles that offers solid background on history including how the Bible came into being, unique Lutheran insights throughout, with notes on all the passages written by over sixty Lutheran pastors and teaching theologians. This is a very rich resource for anyone serious about reading the Bible for an in depth understanding of scripture. One copy is for me and I will sell the other 9 copies to the first 9 people that sign up. To learn more about this Bible go to: <http://www.augsburgfortress.org/> and click on Lutheran Study Bible.

*Van Valaskey*

# Call Team Update



The Call Team has been very active lately. We have completed the Congregational Mission Profile and will soon be working with the Synod to receive a list of pastoral candidates to interview. We met with Bishop Bruce Burnside on March 12, 2009 and had a great discussion about our Profile and the next steps in the process. We will hold a mock interview on March 24 to prepare for the real thing – interviewing candidates for our Pastor position.

As part of the Call process members of our congregation are welcome to bring forth names of candidates to be considered for the Pastor position. **If a member of St. Martin's wants to suggest a candidate, we will pass the name on to the Synod and the Synod Mobility Team will determine if the suggested candidate can be considered.** Please be aware that suggesting a candidate does not guarantee that the person will qualify for an interview. If you would like to suggest a candidate, please contact Jeff Postle (798-1620) or any other member of the Call Team by April 8, 2009 so we can keep the process moving. Thank you.

The members of the Call Team are Kris Rhude, Ann Boehnen, Elaine Smiley, Lee Swanson, Jeannie Hering-Schuman, Ann Houck and Jeff Postle. Feel free to contact any of these members if you have comments or suggestion about finding a new Pastor.

Jeff Postle  
Call Team Leader



## JAM Needs Your Garage Sale Treasures

As garage sale season opens, please keep JAM in mind. We are always in need of jump ropes, basketballs, baseballs and bats and other used sports equipment that is still in good shape and needs a new life. Used computers (not old ones, 2005 or better) that still work, have no viruses, and are good for playing games on are also welcome. Please call JAM if you have a computer we can have. Please don't donate a computer that doesn't work, JAM doesn't have the money for disposal of the unit.



## JAM is taking applications for next school year 2009-2010

JAM has openings for children ages 5-11 (grades K-5) for next school year. Registration is \$30.00 per semester, and \$12.00 per day. JAM follows the Middleton-Cross Plains school calendar and is operational from 3-6 PM daily and 1-6PM on Early Release days. JAM is a state licensed day care facility which offers quality childcare along with homework help, daily snacks, and themed weeks. We have a large teacher to child ratio in staff, and the staff genuinely cares about each child. Please call the JAM phone line at 798-5085 for information or stop by the church office for a registration packet.



## SHARE NEWSLETTERS FOR APRIL ARE HERE

ORDER BY APRIL 7 DELIVERY APRIL 25  
BREAKFAST SANDWICH SPECIAL FOR \$13.00  
IMPORTED DANISH PORK SPARE RIBS 10LBS FOR \$20  
OSCAR MAYER CHEDDAR STYLE SAUSAGE LINKS FOR \$8





## Youth

2 Corinthians 5:17

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ; the old has gone,  
the new has come"

### **Spring is fast approaching and I feel a sense of new beginnings.**

Before we look ahead let's look at last couple of months. Lead by Julia Weaver, the Senior High youth group went to Sugar Creek Bible Camp where they spent the weekend hiking, playing group games, building campfires and making new friends. The theme for the weekend was Advent. During their time together they had bible studies and did a prayer circle. It was a great time having fun and learning more of Christ's love for us all.

The mission trip to Crownpoint, New Mexico is in full swing. We have 19 youth and four adults committed to going. We have been doing many fundraising event and are working hard towards our goal of raising \$14,000 for the trip. To date over \$5,000 has been raised with the pancake supper; bake sales and generous donations from our church family. We have a long way to go, but we have more fun-fundraisers like the Royal Flush, Easter breakfast, (which will be matched by Thrivent Financial), Trout Day Garage Sale, a car wash at the old fire station on May 17<sup>th</sup>, and a brat sale at the True Value in town. Culver's is donating 15% of sales on March 24<sup>th</sup> to our Senior Youth. It's a lot of work but as you can see, our youth and the many parents that plan these events are committed to helping the needs of the Navajo nation in Crownpoint, New Mexico. I'm so proud of them.

Confirmation is nearing the end. We had a great time at the Kalahari celebrating the year. The kids have been wonderful. Teaching Confirmation has been one of the most rewarding and spiritual times of my life. I truly believe our confirmation class has a closer understanding of their walk with God. Confirmation day is May 3<sup>rd</sup>. We have 19 kids being confirmed. It is their decision to confirm their Baptismal vows and become full members of our church. Their faith in God was evident during the personal interviews that Pastor Tim and I had with each of them. They are ready!

Looking ahead, the 30 Hour Famine is April 25 – 26. All youth from 8<sup>th</sup> grade to 12<sup>th</sup> grade are welcome to attend. Over 20 kids are signed up and there is still room for you. Sign up on the youth bulletin board in the narthex. Senior High Youth Group meets every Thursday at 7 p.m. Come join us. You are wanted and welcomed to be a part of St. Martins Youth Group.

Always in God Grace,  
Tim Knipfer- Youth Ministry Director

The following 5<sup>th</sup> graders have received instruction and will begin receiving Holy Communion on Maundy Thursday April 9: Jared Barman, Taylor Bonk, Sarah Faber, Savanna Jackson, Alex Niebuhr, Samantha Roll, Daniel Johnson-Schunk, Hanne Anderson-Smith.

We welcome their presence with us as we eat and drink at the Lord's Table. May we all continue to be nourished and strengthened through this Meal of Grace!



# Missions

*“They will know we are Christians by our love”*

## **Concert for Africa Saturday, April 25<sup>th</sup> 7:00 p.m.**



The 7<sup>th</sup> annual “Concert for Africa” is happening! We simply changed the date from February to April so the weather was no longer an issue! Join us as the “Madison Community Gospel Choir”, “Soul Purpose” and “Revelation” raise their voices and fill the evening with awesome talent and uplifting music! This annual concert is held to raise awareness and financial support for “McKallie’s Home of Future and Hope”, a children’s village being built in Malawi, Africa. Unlike orphanages, this children’s village is built on the concept of family. Every child that lives at the village will be part of their house family, managed by one mother.

The concert doesn’t have a ticket cost. Free will donations are accepted and greatly appreciated! As always, 100% of the proceeds from the concert will go to the children’s village. Last year we raised over \$4,000.00! So come, enjoy with others, this annual event. You’ll have a great time and will leave knowing that you’ve made a difference in the life of a child.



## **Lutheran Social Services Storage Space Needed**



LSS of Wisconsin will begin to resettle refugees in the Madison area through a satellite office, and are in need of storage space to store items donated for refugees. Ideally, the storage would be:

- 1) Free, a donation to the ministry of LSS and refugee resettlement.
- 2) Relatively accessible from the Beltline or the Interstate
- 3) Moderately temperature controlled with a clean floor and free of critters
- 4) Large enough to store furniture donations (2000 to 3000 square feet would be ideal)
- 5) Regularly accessible.

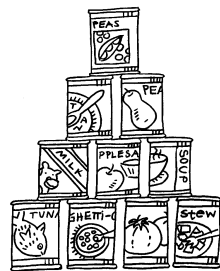
If you own this kind of space, or know someone who rents space like this that we could use, please contact Reverend Clint Schnekloth, 608-423-3017, [pastor@bminet.com](mailto:pastor@bminet.com)



## **MOM’s 9000 Challenge**

As part of the Annual Feinstein Challenge, MOM is inviting ALL Member Churches to work TOGETHER to raise **9000 lbs of Donated Food and Personal Hygiene products AND \$9000 in Financial Donations.**

For the 12<sup>th</sup> straight year, the Feinstein Foundation will divide up **\$1 million** among hunger-fighting agencies nationwide in order to promote giving to organizations like MOM who have a food pantry serving the most needy in our community.



### **FOOD DRIVE**

The Challenge runs for two months – March and April. At the end of April, MOM reports its total donations and subsequently, receives a portion of the \$1 million. **The more donations MOM receives in March and April, the more Feinstein money we will receive in May!** Anything you can give will help MOM receive a larger portion of that \$1 million.

The Challenge is on! It’s our hope that we will exceed that goal and truly make a difference for those in need right here! *Many thanks to each of you for all you do for MOM and the clients served.*



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**“He has  
been.  
raised;  
he is not here.”**