



## Bethlehem News

# MARCH



Dear Friends in Christ,

As we enter into the Lenten season let's take a look at where we are going. After all, you would not set out on a trip without knowing where you are going, and why. Just why? What purpose is there for Lent?

Early in the Church's history, the major events in Christ's life were observed with special observances, such as His birth, baptism, death, resurrection, and ascension.

As these traditions developed, a period of time was set aside prior to the major observances of Jesus' birth and resurrection as a time of preparation.

During Lent, the Church's worship assumes a more penitential character. The color for the season is purple, a color often associated with penitence. The "Hymn of Praise" is omitted from the liturgy. The word "Alleluia" is usually omitted as well.

By not using the alleluia — a joyful expression meaning "Praise the Lord" — until Easter, the Lenten season is clearly set apart as a distinct time from the rest of the year.

Additionally, it forms a powerful contrast with the festive celebration of Jesus' resurrection when our alleluias ring loud and clear.

Finally, the penitential character of Lent is not its sole purpose. In the ancient Church, the weeks leading up to Easter were a time of intensive preparation of the candidates who were to be baptized at the Easter vigil on Holy Saturday. This time in the Church's calendar was seen as an especially appropriate time for Baptism because of the relationship between Christ's death and resurrection and our own in Holy Baptism (see Rom. 6:1-11).

This focus would suggest that the season of Lent serves not only as a time to meditate on the suffering that Christ endured on our behalf but also as an opportunity to reflect upon our own Baptism and what it means to live as a child of God.

On Ash Wednesday, we begin the season of Lent. During that service we receive ashes on the forehead. The question we should ask is for what purpose? There are many passages within the Bible that make reference to sackcloth and ashes as an act of mourning or showing sadness.

The use of ashes on Ash Wednesday is a more recent custom among most LCMS congregations, although some have done it for decades. The ashes are usually derived from the burned palms from the previous Palm Sunday. Experience will show, however, that in obtaining ashes this way, one palm leaf will produce enough ashes for several years. Like sin, they are very dirty and go a long way.

Ashes are dusty and dirty, and remind us of the need for cleansing, scrubbing, and purifying. In this way, we are reminded of our sin. We are reminded of God's words in Genesis 3:19 after Adam and Eve fell into sin: "By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food, until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; **for dust you are, and to dust you will return.**" Using ashes, the pastor makes the sign of the cross on each worshiper, and he speaks God's words as we kneel in submission and humility before God. The sign of the cross reminds us that "...the blood of Jesus his Son **cleanses us from all sin**" (1 John 1:7).

Blessings to you this Lenten season

Pastor Karl



## News and Updates



Our youth members continue to learn about Jesus and the disciples

as well as the stories of the Old Testament through their attendance at Sunday Service, Sunday School and Confirmation class. We also provide a Youth Group on the last Friday night of each month where we encourage the young members to come and bring their friends as well to learn, create and join in games. All members of the congregation are welcome. If anyone has any books or puzzles, they would like to donate, we would appreciate your help. The funds that we raise from the sales of the books and puzzles is used for our Youth. Thank you to all who take the time to be involved with the kids. Remember that we also have Sunday Bible Study after the service and Bible Study on Wednesday morning at 10:30. Join us in getting closer to Jesus.

Mickie Naumann



Here are the numbers of boxes for 2024 that were submitted by:

Southwest Fl Area Team: 21,040

Florida Puerto Rico Region: 723,972

United States: 10,574,805

Worldwide: 11,927,439

God did immeasurably more!

2024 was our best year all around.

Betty Willis



**Lutheran Women  
in Mission**

February was LWM month and we were very busy. We baked and sold muffins and Betty made several different fruit breads. There were 2 afghans that we sold raffle tickets for. We will be drawing the winners on March 3rd at the LWM meeting. All ladies are invited to join our group. We had a "noisy" offering the last Sunday of February. We appreciate all the support we received from all in the congregation. I will give you all the results in next month's news letter. Thank you to all the ladies who ushered and read this past month. The LWM spring Rally will be March 15th at Peace Lutheran in Naples. It begins with a luncheon at 12:00 noon. Please let us know if you would like to attend. *Sandy*

## **Elders' Monthly Devotion From Jerusalem**

### **GRACIOUS**

Gracious words from the most gracious place of completeness and wholeness "Jerusalem" because it is the dwelling place of the Lord

*Whoever gives heed to instruction prospers, and blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord.*

*The wise in heart are called discerning, and the gracious words promote instruction. Gracious words are a honeycomb, and sweet to the soul and healing to the bones.*

*Proverbs 16:20-21,24 NIV*

The Lord God,

He Himself attests:

"Thus says the Lord: I have returned to Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem; and Jerusalem shall be called the City of Truth; and the Holy Mountain"

Zechariah 8:3

Lord, would you bless and keep us,  
Lord, please make your face  
shine upon us.  
Amen

Klaus Naumann



## MARCH 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2 10:30 Worship 11:30 Bible Study; Sunday School & Confirmation	3 <b>LWM 1 PM</b>	4	5 <b>Ash Wednesday Worship 7PM</b>	6	7	8
9 10:30 Worship 11:30 Bible Study; Sunday School & Confirmation	10	11	12 10:30 Bible Study	13 Church Dinner 4-7 PM	14	15
16 10:30 Worship 11:30 Bible Study; Sunday School & Confirmation	17 	18	19 10:30 Bible Study	20	21	22
23 10:30 Worship 11:30 Bible Study; Sunday School & Confirmation	24	25	26 10:30 Bible Study	27	28	29
30 10:30 Worship 11:30 Bible Study; Sunday School & Confirmation	31					

MARCH ANNIVERSARIES	
11	Barbara Bulmahn & Vern Stork
15	Terri & Richard Gerlach
21	Audrey & Al Vine
30	Pam & Paul Rugenstein

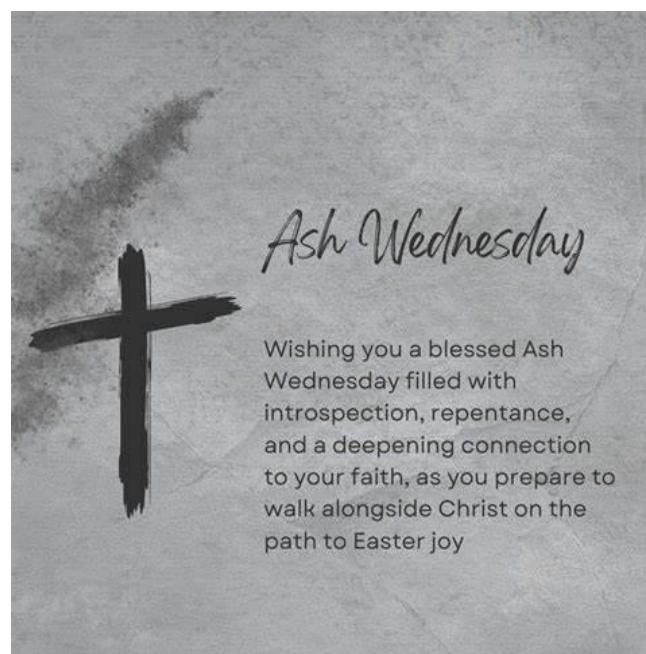
May God Bless Each One of You As  
We Celebrate Your Special Day!

**Daylight Savings begins Sunday March 9**  
Remember to turn your clocks ahead Saturday  
night so you're not late for church Sunday.

MARCH BIRTHDAYS	
9	Pam Barkhaus
10	Mary Tobeck
11	Ben Smith, Christine Lemhouse
13	Ruthann Thornton
15	Lillian Taylor
16	Patricia Kulbacki
17	Jennifer Morosey; Rudy Rugenstein
23	Kay Remmers
25	Sue Hartman
26	Robert Hedrick
28	Sharon Schafer, Judy Lawrence



Mickie & Klaus Naumann in Isreal at Mt. Tabor  
which is thought to be the site of the *Transfiguration* of Jesus.





## Bethlehem Lutheran Church

Phone: 239-694-3878

Website: [www.bethlehemlutheranfortmyers.org](http://www.bethlehemlutheranfortmyers.org)

Email: bethlehemlc@gmail.com

### Prayer Chain Needs

Do you know that Bethlehem has a prayer chain that prays for the sick, dying and hurting needs of our church family?

Call or email Linda at (239) 693-5026 or [jlkirsch3@comcast.net](mailto:jlkirsch3@comcast.net)

Your needs will be taken to the Lord!

### Sunday Worship

10:30 AM Worship Service

**Rev. Karl Glander**

[pastorkarlglander@gmail.com](mailto:pastorkarlglander@gmail.com)

239-293-1489

Organist: **Holly Bell**

Church Secretary: **Linda Kirsch**



LWM's "noisy offering" on Feb. 24rd raised \$467 for their missions



Some of the 20+ people who participated in February's game night featuring Valentines bingo games.

