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GETHSEMANE LUTHERAN CHURCH

FEBRUARY 2017

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FROM THE PASTOR

Martin Luther was a direct man. He believed, and taught, that there were important matters of Christian worship and discipleship. He also believed there were many things that were perceived to be important, but really weren't.

Scripture and preaching and prayer and baptism and communion---these matter. Whether communion assistants wore robes, or if you folded your hands or lifted them up when you prayed, or if the children's message comes after the psalm or the second reading, or if there should be cut flowers on the altar...these are the kinds of things that can get people awfully worked up, but really aren't that important for our Christian lives.

Luther called those things 'adiaphora'---something that is debatable, but spiritually neutral. I am still learning the ways, expectations, and traditions of Gethsemane, and have treasured the care and respect you have shown me as we find our way through liturgies and festivals and study. I have trusted in our shared Lutheran grounding, including the difference between what matters and adiaphora, in making suggestions and decisions about the ways we do things together. There have been times when someone has come to me and asked about this or that---sometimes it has seemed like a trivial thing to the one asking, and he or she may be quite astonished when I take it very seriously indeed and respond with slightly more vigor than expected.

And the opposite has happened as well...someone will come to me with a very serious matter, and I break down in giggles. I hope you don't take offense---but now you know why! Some things matter, and some are adiaphora!

With joy, and a prayer for understanding and patience, Pastor Suellen

Have you noticed? In the Great Thanksgiving, the pastor invites you to "thank the Lord our God"...and somewhere along the way, the response "It is right to give God thanks and praise" was adapted to "It is right to give our thanks and praise." These two phrases have very different theological meanings. At Gethsemane, we have returned to using "It is right to give God thanks and praise."

Do you know why pastors (and assistants) wear white robes? Pastors used to wear black robes because they were the educated ones, the academics/teachers in the community, and they wore the black robes of learning. As more and more people had access to education, pastors' robes changed from black to white, to remember their baptism, its promises and call to mission: "Let your light so shine before others that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven."

BELLS ARE RINGING!

The ELCA has Guidelines for Ringing Church Bells, with this introduction: "Church bells are used primarily to call people to worship and to announce the beginning of service. The bells also ring out to express joy, to announce death, to remind people of the obligation to pray, and to encourage the absent to join in the prayers of the Church." As our single bell is an inside bell, the Worship and Music committee has streamlined the Sunday morning guidelines to the following: One quarter-hour before worship the bell will be rung seven times to call the faithful to worship, and at the hour of each service, three times to announce the immediate beginning of worship. The numbers 7 and 3 have significance...they reflect the seven days in a week, and the Holy Trinity...both of which reflect the joining of many to make a perfect whole...just as the gathering up and joining of all our people together as a worshipping congregation form a perfect whole.

NOTES

- ♥ **Remember the Joys of VBS?** Bible learning, plus snacks and games and crafts? Why should kids have all the fun?! Come to Grown-Up Vacation Bible School! We begin **Saturday, February 18 from 1-5 p.m.** This year we mark the 500th anniversary of the Reformation. To celebrate, our series of **Grown-UP VBS sessions will focus on Martin Luther's Small Catechism.** Our first topic: **Prayer.** We'll explore Luther's morning and evening prayers, and then examine the Biblical, historical, and catechismal foundations of the Lord's Prayer. PLUS, snacks, games (with prizes!) and a craft! "To be a Christian without prayer is no more possible than to be alive without breathing." Martin Luther
- ♥ **Change for Good:** Our Change for Good jar had a wonderful beginning in our Advent season! The jar held \$130, and the Christmas Day congregation voted to use those monies to buy two goats and one pig through the ELCA Good Gifts catalogue.
- ♥ **Like Us on FACEBOOK.**
- ♥ **The Cooking Club at FirRidge** (on 112 and Market, part of David Douglas Schools) is the most requested club. They are looking for someone with a love of cooking who wants to share their passion with eager high school students. The club would meet once a week from 3 to 4:15 p.m. and the instructor would lead students through the prep, cooking, and eating of a healthy meal. Ingredients and supplies would be provided. Please call Elan Eichler at 503.593.5171 or elane@mfs.email if you're interested.
- ♥ **Many Thanks from Doug Glenn** for the many prayers, cards, and visits. He greatly appreciates everyone's thoughts and good wishes for his recovery.
- ♥ **An Altar Guild Meeting** will take place Sunday, February 12, at 9:30 a.m. between services. We hope you're able to attend if you are part of the Altar Guild or if you're interested in joining. We can always use new talent!
- ♥ **PLEASE PICK UP YOUR YEAR-END STATEMENTS!** They are in your mail file folders now.
- ♥ **Worship Assistants-Past, Present and Future:** We are in the process of updating our Substitute Lists for readers, ushers, greeters and communion assistants. Please stop by the table in the narthex between services this Sunday and next to make sure you are signed up for all positions in which you would be willing to serve and update your contact information. Then initial by your name. If you have been thinking of serving in a new position, now is the time to sign up. A member of the Worship Committee will be at the table to answer any questions you might have.

Gethsemane Lutheran Church — Income and Expense Budget Reort — through December 2016

| | | | | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------|
| Budgeted Expenses | Actual Income | Actual Expenses | Actual Difference | Attendance '15: 120 | 2016: 115 |
| \$367,912 | \$324,987 | \$323,533 | \$1,403 | Cathy Myers, Financial Manager | |

PRESCHOOL NEWS

This January our theme was "It's a Small World". We talked about the arctic and tropical areas of the world, did experiments with ice, and played with sand. We learned that people live in all different places and that many love Jesus.

Pastor Suellen and I met in December and it has been decided that the 2017-2018 will be the last school year for Gethsemane Lutheran Preschool. Please know this is not a rash or easy decision. Getting students each year has become harder and harder. We have been struggling for several years with enrollment. The preschool board and council have been in conversation for years trying to keep the program alive and solvent and beneficial to our community. We've adapted our structure and staffing to adjust to smaller enrollment. At this point, there is no more adjusting to be done and the outlook for attracting students to our program is bleak. Please continue to hold this ministry in your prayers as we grow towards the next phase. Children's ministry at Gethsemane isn't over, but is changing. We'll have one more year of "business as usual" bringing Christian education to any students who enroll.

It's time for our annual **Spaghetti Fundraiser** to benefit the preschool, which will be **Sunday, February 19, at noon, in our Parish Hall**. We will continue to have a raffle of gift cards so *gift cards are always a welcome donation*. There will of course be a spaghetti dinner served by our Fellowship Opportunities Committee, with donations requested for the meal and for our preschool.

In addition to baskets we would like to auction off skills and talents.

- If you are a sewer and could offer alterations or lessons as a service, please add this to the auction.
- If you are a handyman or love yard work and could offer a few hours of your time to be used in this way, please add this to the auction.
- Maybe you could teach someone to knit, or quilt, or cook.
- Maybe you would like to host a party and people could pay a set amount to be on the guest list.
- Perhaps you love wrapping gifts, or organizing spaces, or decorating spaces.
- Maybe you love to bake and could make fresh baked goods for someone.

All these gifts have value and could be auctioned off. The skills and talents at Gethsemane are many. Please try to think of something you could place a value on for us to auction off. If you would prefer to put together a basket, please do. Also, remember if you have a time share or vacation home please consider donating time as an auction item.

If you would like to donate a talent, skill, vacation home, or basket for this event, please let Katie Strobel know. We are asking for donations to be turned in by Sunday, February 12. Having them the week before will give me time to get them ready for the auction.

Registration for the 2017-2018 school year will begin for current and alumni preschool families on Wednesday, February 1. Registration for families new to our preschool will be accepted starting Monday, February 27. Our preschool will operate on the same schedule as the current school year. Registration is \$50 until June 1 and \$60 after June 1.

RICK STEVES' 'LUTHER AND THE REFORMATION'

Rick Steves' "Luther and the Reformation" is available for you to stream and share. This one-hour video is a wonderful resource to better understand our Lutheran roots and help us in our continued journey of understanding the gospel. Many thanks to Steves, who has generously given all members of the ELCA access to this video. DVD copies have been distributed to each congregation. Planning a viewing party? Find promotional photos, discussion questions and sample fliers at ELCA.org/RickSteves.

CHILDREN, YOUTH FAMILIES

Sharing God's Love Party happens Sunday, February 12, from 9:30 to 10:15 in the Sunday School room. Our Happy Birthday Jesus Party was cancelled due to inclement weather, so we are instead having a Valentine-type party where our focus will be Sharing God's Love with Everyone! There will be a short lesson, a craft, a game, and a special treat. If you still have baby items for Snow Cap, we will be happy to accept them.

Our Shrove Tuesday Pancake Feed will be Tuesday, February 28, from 6 to 8 p.m. in the Community Hall. You are all invited to join us for the Annual Shrove Tuesday Pancake Feed! There will be food, fellowship and activities for kids and adults alike. All ages are welcome! We will be learning about the origins and meaning of the word "Hallelujah". The kids will then decorate and hide the Hallelujah banner toward the end of the evening.

Traditionally, Shrove Tuesday, the day preceding Ash Wednesday (the first day of Lent), is celebrated by consuming pancakes before the fasting period of Lent begins. The expression "Shrove Tuesday" comes from the word shrive, meaning "absolve," and is observed by many Christians who make a special point of self-examination and repentance. The French term for Shrove Tuesday is Mardi Gras.

IT'S A SMALL WORLD AFTER ALL - A Real-Life Story by Lyle Johnson

Sometimes I am so amazed about how God brings people into our lives. For example: In 1977 when I was in the Air Force in Biloxi, Mississippi, I was sitting in church one Sunday, and as we shared the peace, I found out that the woman sitting next to me used to date my oldest brother. Small world...

This past June, my two brothers and I and our wives traveled through Europe together. We did a river cruise from Vienna to Amsterdam, and then flew to Norway for a week, followed by Iceland for four days prior to our return home. We had spent a few days in Oslo and we boarded a train bound for Bergen.

On the train, I sat in a seat by the window so I could take pictures. At the first stop a woman came into our train car and told me that I was in her seat. I apologized and started to move when she told me she was happy to sit in my (assigned) seat since she had been on this train numerous times before. We chatted a bit, then she asked me where I was from. I told her "Portland, Oregon". She then told me she had just returned from Portland after playing piano on Portland's "All Classic Radio". I asked her if she was a concert pianist and she said that she was. She said she had done some recording at a piano store in Portland, which turned out to be the one where I was working at the time! Again, small world...

Her name is Christina Kobb. She is a pianist, composer, and music historian specializing in nineteenth-century piano techniques. She was funny and fun and the next day she joined us as a tour guide around the city of Bergen, where she once lived. Later that day, we found a piano store where she gave us a brief but amazing concert. Unbelievable.

Christina told us of her dream of playing a piano concert at Carnegie Hall. She had recently begun a "Kickstarter" campaign to cover the rental cost of the recital hall, but the campaign was almost over and not quite halfway funded. We (the three Johnson brothers and our wives) decided to contribute to her campaign and also to let our friends know about Christina and her dream. Within two days, all of the funding was received, and we all agreed we would attend her concert this month (February 24, 2017) at Carnegie Hall!

Christina has become a part of the Johnson family, and we invited her to come out to the west coast and visit us. We were thrilled when she accepted and she will fly out in early March after her Carnegie hall debut. I have also asked Christina if she would consider putting on a concert at Gethsemane during her visit, which she also accepted!

On March 8, at 7:30 p.m. (following our 6:30 Lenten soup and bread), Christina Kobb will offer an evening of meticulously selected romantic piano pieces in a concert she calls "Keys to Romance". Admission will be free, however a freewill offering will be taken to offset some of her expenses and as a way of thanking her for this gift. I sincerely hope that you can join us for this amazing evening.

For more information about Christina, visit her website at this address: <http://www.fortepiano.no/en/welcome/>

May God's grace abound! Lyle Johnson

February Birthdays

- 2 Christine Wong
- 3 Priscilla Nelson
- 7 Lyle Johnson
Hailey Long
- 11 Mary Starmont
- 12 Diane Kovach
- 16 Lois Boro
- 19 Eric Letmate
- 20 Kim Stoffregen
- 23 Bill Bahleda
Dru Natasia
- 26 Denise Johnson

February Anniversaries

- 4 Roger/Roberta Vidlund
(50th)
- 7 Kelly/Mrs.Garrett (30th)
- 11 Jack/Nancy Lumber (17th)
- 14 Carolyn/Mr.Graf (38th)
- 15 Jack/Randi Bateman
(42nd)
- 21 Amy/RandySchotthoefer
(2nd)
- 24 Brian/Paulette Kelley
(38th)

*Unless otherwise requested, people named in the prayers will stay on the Urgent list for 30 days. **Prayer Concerns—Ongoing:** Those who are ill, homebound, or in need of other prayers: Roseann Libonati’s relative, Dawn; Darlene Kuehmichel; Virginia McCormick’s relative Ivan; Ida Olson; Dorothy Shouse and her daughter Robin; Ginny Barton’s friend Golda; Marian Aleckson; Dwain Estes; Linda Babcock’s grandson Josiah; Aiden Lindstrom; Galven Irby; Roseann Foster-Mikhail’s mother Rose; Jennifer Peck; Lucille Langseth; Sharon Lee’s relative Terri and friend Sandy; JoAnn Larson’s mother Mel; Virginia Haacke; Kay Qualheim’s niece Sherry; Wynn Stafford; Diane Bemrose; Kim Butenschoen; Don and Shar Giard’s friends Heather and Betty.*

***Urgent:** Those who are ill or in need of other prayers: Rachel Coughlin’s friends Carrie, Cathy, Edith, Angela, and Dawn; Kay Qualheim’s niece Sue and her husband John; Doug Glenn; Linda Babcock; Nettie Ubrick’s brother Buster; Jo Nelson’s niece Nancy; Shirla Rapp’s cousin Julie; Colleen Barnett’s relatives Linda and Ken; Gary Bowne, Barbara Keyes; Clara Shortt; Cathey Myers’ friend Brenda.*

Those who are grieving: The family and friends of Ida H. Olson.

Homebound Brothers and Sisters: Lucille Langseth, Marian Aleckson, Dorothy Shouse, Wynn Stafford, and Ida Olson.
(Refer to your directory or call the church for contact info.)

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Save a tree! Save a stamp!
Please send us your email if
we don't already have it.

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FEBRUARY 2017 — GETHSEMANE LUTHERAN CHURCH

See the website (glcportland.org) for updates on the calendar.

| SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
|--|--|--|--|---|--|--|
| | | | 1 5:30p- Clutterers 6p-Work@ SnowCap | 2 9:30a-Quilting 12:30p- Orchestra 1:30p-Chrysalis 6p-Bells 7p-Choir | 3 <i>Office Closed</i> | 4 |
| 5 8&10:30a- Worship 9:30a-Ed.Hr. | 6 7p-Band | 7 10a-BibleStudy 7p-SwingBand 6:30p-CYFMtg. | 8 5:30p- Clutterers | 9 9a-MutualMin. 9:30a-Quilting 12:30p- Orchestra 1:30p-Chrysalis 6p-Bells 7p-Choir | 10 <i>Office Closed</i> | 11 Service for Ida Olson |
| 12 8&10:30a- Worship 9:30a-Ed.Hr. 9:30a-Altar Guild Mtg. | 13 7p-Band | 14 10a-Preschool Board 10a-BibleStudy 7p-SwingBand Valentine's Day | 15 5:30p- Clutterers | 16 10a-Women's BibleStudy 12:30p- Orchestra 1:30p-Chrysalis 6p-Bells 7p-Choir | 17 <i>Office Closed</i> | 18 1-5p- GrownUpVBS |
| 19 8&10:30a- Worship 9:30a-Ed.Hr. Noon-Spaghetti DinnerPreschool Fundraiser | 20 Presidents'Day <i>Office Closed</i> 7p-Band | 21 10a-BibleStudy 7p-SwingBand 7p-CHURCH COUNCIL | 22 5:30p- Clutterers | 23 9:30a-Quilting 12:30p- Orchestra 1:30p-Chrysalis 6p-Bells 7p-Choir | 24 <i>Office Closed</i> Self-Defense, Chrysalis?? | 25 |
| 26 8&10:30a- Worship <i>Healing Services</i> 9:30a-Ed.Hr. | 27 7p-Band 6:30p-Mill Park Neighborhood Assoc. | 28 10a-BibleStudy 7p-SwingBand SHROVE TUESDAY Pancake Supper, 6-8p | March 1 ASH WEDNESDAY Services @ Noon & 7:15p | | | |