

SAINT PAUL'S Epistle

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March 2006

Volume 64, Number 3

LENT: A TIME OF CHOOSING

On March 1st, we observe Ash Wednesday, and thus begin the season of Lent. Lent, as many are aware, is the period of the church year that rests between Epiphany (with its emphasis on light and illumination) and Easter (where we celebrate Jesus' resurrection).

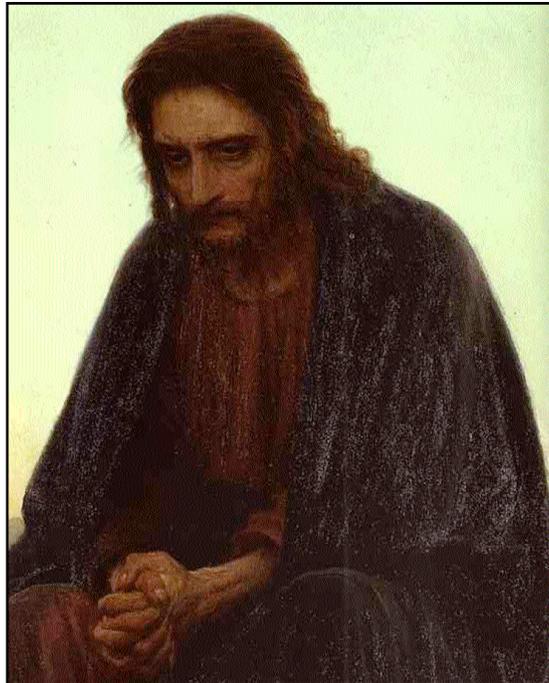
Lent is a season of intentional preparation. We begin our 40 day journey (we don't count the Sundays in Lent) in order to better prepare ourselves for a more full-hearted celebration of our Lord's resurrection. We are called to an honesty that seeks the truth, no matter what. It is, to use the language of 12-steps, a time to make "a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves." It is a journey inward, guided only by faith. And to get the most out of this period of preparation, it takes discipline.

But a question is begging to be asked. Why would any of us want to look *that* deeply within our souls? In a world where deviancy and decadence have been domesticated, where our culture's attitude towards most things abhorrent is, "What ever," why would we want to embark on a journey as challenging as this? One word: Life. Simply put, the disciplines of Lent promise literally to change our lives. They are a means to nurturing a closer relationship with the Source of life (God) and thus to *give* us life—one founded upon the two indispensable footings of freedom and responsibility.

The journey of Lent is not one we do on our own. We couldn't take this road alone, for it would overwhelm us. We take our first step down this 40 day

long road knowing that our Lord goes with us, and that he has intimate knowledge of our journey because of his own.

When Jesus began his ministry, immediately following his baptism by John, he did so by removing himself to the desert for 40 days of fasting, prayer, and temptation. It was there that he found the vision and resources necessary for his eventual journey—one that would take him to the executioner's cross. It was because of his journey, that we are able to take that first step on ours.



Christ in the Desert
Ivan Nikolayevich Kramskoy, 1872

In the painting, *Christ in the Desert*, by Ivan Kramskoy, we encounter a very human Jesus who appears weighed down by the heaviness of the decisions he must make. Proclaimed "The best Christ I ever saw," by the famous Russian novelist Leo Tolstoy, we can see in Jesus' face signs of the tension and stress that his choice brings. Here we find a Jesus in whom we will see fulfilled those haunting words of

Isaiah, "He was wounded for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the punishment that made us whole, and by his bruises we are healed." (Isaiah 53:5)

Jesus calls us each to choose. Make a choice this Lent to come to him through the discipline of worship, prayer, and study. Come to him and find life, as you have never found it before.

This season we will offer several opportunities to assist you on your journey. The offering is given. The choice is yours. The promise is eternal.

Pastor Hugh Haffenreffer

LENTEN NOTEBOOK

The Lutheran Course will be taught by Pr. Haffenreffer on Sundays during Lent, as well as Wednesday mornings.

What exactly *is* the Lutheran Course? Based on *The Lutheran Handbook*, The Lutheran Course expands the *Handbook* into an adult curriculum, perfect for new members looking for an introduction and current members hoping for a refresher course. Using the same winning combination of sound theology and offbeat humor as *The Lutheran Handbook*, the Lutheran Course will have you boldly and joyfully proclaiming your faith!

Each week the Course will include a DVD introduction to one of the fundamentals of Lutheranism by top-notch Lutheran theologians followed by group discussion and sharing. The sessions will include:

- How to tell the difference between the Law and the Gospel
- Five things you should know about the Lutheran Reformation
- The anatomy of a baptism
- How to receive Communion
- The three most rebellious things Jesus did, and
- How to read the Bible.

Those wishing to participate, and who have not as yet signed up, are urged to attend.

The times will be Wednesday mornings, March 1 through April 5, from 10:30 to noon; and Sunday afternoons, March 5 through April 9, from 4:30 to 6:00PM.

A \$15 donation will be welcomed to cover the cost of each copy of *The Lutheran Handbook* and *The Lutheran Course Workbook*.

For more information, please contact Pastor Hugh Haffenreffer at 860-529-5397.

Come find out what Martin is winking about!

Wednesday Evening Prayer will be celebrated each Wednesday night in Lent, beginning on March 8 and running through April 12.

Each service will include a skit by our youth. The 5 Wednesdays in Lent, as well as Maundy Thursday, will explore the deeper meanings of Baptism and Communion. The intent is to continue on Wednesdays, what we are exploring together in the Lutheran Course.

The services will begin promptly at 7:00PM.

Lenten Soup and Salad Nights! Back by popular demand, Lenten Soup & Salad will be offered prior to our Wednesday Evening Lenten Services. These meals will

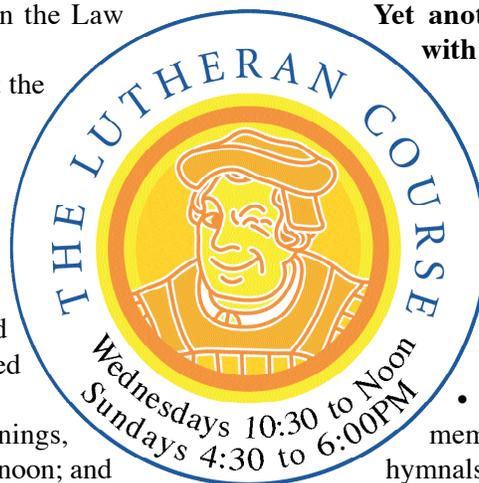
begin at 5:30 PM and end by 6:45 PM.

Jim Newmark has agreed to coordinate these meals. He would, however, like some help to make this all possible. Here's how you can help:

- Bring something for food that can be shared (please don't spend too much time preparing something!) If we could find a few people each evening to help provide the food, that would be appreciated.
- Sign-up on the soon-to-be-unveiled sign-up board in the Fellowship Hall.
- If you can't bring some food/dessert, a free-will offering will be taken to cover the costs.
- A little help cleaning up following the meal will be appreciated, too.

Please contact Jim Newmark with any questions at (860) 432-2060. We are all looking forward to as many as possible participating and hope you will join us!

Yet another great opportunity to fellowship with your family and friends at St. Paul's!



EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN WORSHIP

Your Worship and Music Team is busy planning ways to introduce the new Evangelical Lutheran Worship hymnal that will be published in October.

Here are a few dates to be aware of:

- In April, we will make available to our members more detailed information about the hymnals;
- In May and June, we will be taking orders for hymnals to be dedicated in honor or memory of loved ones;
- In September, we give an update on our progress (we want to be able to purchase 210 hymnals!) and, if needed, take more orders.
- In October, if all goes well, the final order will be given to Augsburg Fortress Press, and the Hymnals will be shipped.
- November will be the month in which we type up all the dedication book plates.
- And on Sunday, December 3, the first Sunday in Advent, we will dedicate and use our new hymnals. Stay tuned for much more!

Your Worship and Music Team

WEB SITE NEWS

Have you checked out St. Paul's Website lately? It is up to date and growing! We are hoping it will be a source of news and information, even *inspiration*, too. The address is stpaulswethersfield.org.

We welcome your comments, suggestions and offers of help! Talk with Pastor if you have any of these.

STEWARDSHIP

As mentioned at St. Paul's Annual Meeting, and in a number of communications last year, Stewardship will be receiving a lot of focus as we move from "Membership" to Discipleship! As an introduction to Stewardship, I would like to share a Stewardship Mission Statement and a brief story about the spirit and meaning of Stewardship.

Our Mission Statement reads.....

"... to help our members and friends recognize God's ownership of all that we have and, consequently, our responsibility to be good stewards (managers) of what He has entrusted to us.

"To this end, we will develop and implement programs to: (1), encourage each and every member of St. Paul's to offer Time, Talent and Treasure in thanksgiving and to the glory of God; and (2), increase each members understanding and support of the service and financial obligations of St. Paul's.

"While one aspect of stewardship is related to financial contributions, the ministry will focus on education and creating opportunities for members to contribute."

A story that reveals the meaning of Stewardship as follows:

The offering is a highlight of the church service for our young children who delight in placing the little offering envelope into the collection plate. We have made it a practice to tithe each Sunday morning and give a small offering during the evening service, so that our two children each get to put something into the collection plate.

One Sunday evening, as it came time for the offering, I looked to my husband, who always seems to have change in his pocket and found he had none. There was our young son, hand outstretched, waiting for those familiar coins to put into the envelope. I desperately searched my purse, but it, too, was empty.

We had to tell our boy that we just didn't have anything to give. Our son looked brokenhearted. Suddenly there was a smile on his face, and we watched as he blew a kiss into the offering envelope, proudly sealed it, and placed it into the collection plate just as it passed by.

That's what God really wants, isn't it? Each of us to offer Him the best we have.

*Reva J. Reed
from Daily Guideposts 1981*

If you are interested in participating in our Stewardship Ministry, the next meeting will be held on March 29 from 7:00-9:00PM in St. Paul's Fellowship Hall. If you have any questions, call Mark Bierbaum at 860-432-3111.

EASTER MEMORIAL FLOWERS

Memorial gifts will be used to purchase Easter lilies for the church chancel on Easter Sunday. Enclosed with this newsletter is the special flower envelope for your donations. There are extras in Fellowship Hall.

Make sure your name and the names of those you wish to be remembered are listed clearly on the envelope and also please indicate on the envelope whether or not you wish to have your donated plant following the services. All available plants are delivered to our shut-ins.

Once again we will order the plants from Patrissi's Nursery and we expect the cost of one plant to be \$10.00. Please get your flower envelope into the church office by Palm Sunday, April 9th.

ON THE ROAD TO DISCIPLESHIP

Our Lenten rotation extends from Feb. 26 – Mar. 12 and the Easter rotation will be

Mar. 19 – April 9. Our next Celebration Day will be Palm Sunday. There are no SCS Classes on Easter Sunday (April 16).

Our final rotation "Dig into the Bible" begins April 23 and ends May 21.

Hopefully, more volunteers will come forward to take over the planning of the upcoming stations of units. Christian Education at St. Paul's is not up to eight people but is a ministry for everyone!!

Thank you to everyone who made Celebration Sunday on Feb. 19th such a wonderful event.

Alice Ruppap

Last day of Sunday School is May 21.



WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

March 3 1PM

First Church of Christ
250 Main Street, Wethersfield, CT
2006 Theme "Signs of the Times"
Christian women from South Africa



YOUTH NOTES....

Easter Breakfast April 16

(look for info and sign-up sheet
in Fellowship Hall soon!!)

- March 5 Stock sales
- March 12..... Youth Mtg. after 10:30AM service
- March 19 Bake Sale after both services

**THANKS FROM
THE CORRELL FAMILY**

Dear Friends,

Our family wishes to express our sincere thanks and gratitude to the members of St. Paul's. Your continued prayers and support for Doris and our family during the past year are deeply appreciated and will always be remembered. And special thanks to all who helped to make the funeral and reception a very memorable day.

The Correll Family

OUTREACH CRAFT-A-THON

Sat. March 11 10-2PM

Come and join us at Betty Lamo's home: 45 Greenfield Street, Weth.

Bring your projects and/or ideas. Don't have a project?? We'll find you one!! We have lots of yarn and other supplies for various type projects.

Check out the sign-up sheet in Fellowship Hall (and sign up!)

Or call: Ann Baledes 529-2362; Carol Farley 828-5306; Betty Lamo 529-8469

You can also join us any Thursday, 10-2PM in Fellowship Hall.

BAKE SALE
Sunday, March 19
after both services

Help support the Youth San Antonio trip
Please bake or buy!!

Thank you for supporting our Youth.

THANK YOU

Thank you for continuing to donate soaps, lotions and other personal items for the Women's Shelter. There will be a basket near the coat rack.

MARCH BIRTHDAYS

- | | |
|------------------|-------------------|
| 3 Don Krug | 17 Marion Amanek |
| 5 Jackie Fischer | 18 Jennie Dotts |
| 7 Carol Bruce | 21 Millie Howe |
| Karen Harz | Thomas Grottke |
| 14 Mary Procyk | 29 Joseph Ciarcia |

PASTORAL ACTS

Doris Correll
Funeral Feb. 15
St. Paul's Lutheran Church

**ST. PAUL'S MEMBERS
IN SERVICE FOR MARCH 2006**

ACOLYTES:

Linda Anderson, Coordinator, 659-4094
Wed Mar 1 – Kyla Anderson
5 – Katie Grottke
12 – Gretchen Schultz
19 – Jamie Piscitello
26 – Amanda Piscitello
Apr 2 – Jay Viola

ALTAR GUILD:

Linda Anderson, Coordinator, 659-4094
Wed Mar 1 – Linda Anderson
5 – Debbie Howe, Judy Drouin
12 – Patty Bengtson, Bernice Noeker
19 – Helen Peterson, Mary Susla
26 – Judy Lundin, Mary Procyk
Apr 2 – Carol Farley, Harriett Fritsch

ASSISTING MINISTERS:

Kathy Coyle, Coordinator, 529-5983
Wed Mar 1 – Kathy Coyle
5 – Art Bruce 8AM,
– Jerry Vaillancourt 10:30AM
12 – Mike Coyle 8AM
– Mary Procyk 10:30AM
19 – Kathie Daly 8AM
– Sallyann Wolf 10:30AM
26 – Mark Bierbaum 8AM
– Steve Harz 10:30AM
Apr 2 – Emily Lourigan 8AM
– Patty Bengtson 10:30AM

COMMUNION ASSISTANTS:

Sue Agne, Coordinator, 563-0776
Mar 1 – Sue Agne
5 – Lillian Doerschler
12 – Judy Gerken
19 – Joan Kratzer
26 – Carole Hughes
Apr 2 – Patty Bengtson

EUCCHARISTIC MINISTERS:

Kathy Coyle, Coordinator, 529-5983
Month of March:
Joan Kratzer, Barbara Bonds

FELLOWSHIP HOUR HOSTS:

Helen Peterson, Coordinator, 666-4340
Mar 5 – Margaret DeBlois, Carol Farley
12 – Christine and Rick Intravia
19 – Sandra and Kenneth Slowik
26 – Joanna and Allen Piscitello
Apr 2 – Carolyn Champagne and Michelle

FINANCE:

Mary Procyk, Coordinator, 257-4793
Mar 5 – Penrose Wolf
12 – Bob Bowman
19 – Russ Correll
26 – George Howe
Apr 2 – Art Bruce

LECTORS:

Lillian Doerschler, Coordinator, 529-1939
Mar 1 – Kathy Coyle
5 – Jim Newmark
12 – Patty Bengtson
19 – Josh Viola
26 – Sue Agne
Apr 2 – Gloria Brocker

NURSERY:

Ann French, Coordinator, 529-3245
Mar 5 – Margaret DeBlois and girls
12 – AnnMarie and Katie Grottke
19 – Crystal Brozynski
and Roxie DeBlois
26 – Stephanie Lohmann
and Kimberlee Ruppap
Apr 2 – Margaret DeBlois and girls

TAPING OF SUNDAY SERVICE:

Crystal Brozynski, Coord., 828-5306
Month of March: Grace and Robert Durkin

USHERS:

Penrose Wolf, Coordinator,
8:00AM (529-9537)
Louise Lostocco, Coordinator,
10:30AM (529-3079)
Month of March
McDonald family, 8:00AM
Tom Grottke, Katie and Colin 10:30AM

March 2006

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<u>Sundays-4:30PM</u> <i>Lutheran Course</i>	<u>Wednesdays-5:30PM</u> <i>Lenten Suppers</i> March 8, 15, 22, 29 and April 5 before service at 7PM		1 Ash Wednesday Bible Study, 10:30AM Pot-luck/Conf. class, 5:30 PM Holy Comm. 7PM Choir, 8PM AA, 7PM	2 Thurs Grp, 10-2PM	3 AA, 10AM World Day of Prayer, 1PM-Trust Church of Christ, Weib.	4 Youth serve at Special Olympics Pot-Luck & Brown Bag Auction, 5:30PM
5 Holy Comm., 8 & 10:30AM SCSS9AM, Adh. Disc., 9:15AM Choir, 9:45AM Healing Service -12 Noon Youth Stock Sale	6	7 Outreach, 7PM OA, 7:30PM Scouts, 7:9PM PE-upstairs	8 Bible Study, 10:30AM Conf. class, 6PM Evening Prayer., 7PM Choir, 8PM AA, 7PM	9 Thurs Grp, 10-2PM	10 AA, 10AM	11
12 Holy Comm., 8 & 10:30AM* *Baptism, Zachary Myers SCSS9am, Adh. Disc., 9:15AM Choir, 9:45AM San Antonio Youth Mtg. aft. 10:30 AM service	13 Scouts, 7-9PM PE-downstairs	14 OA, 7:30PM	15 Bible Study, 10:30AM Conf. class, 6PM Evening Prayer., 7PM Choir, 8PM AA, 7PM Epistle deadline	16 Men's Breakfast @ Denny's, 7:30AM Thurs Grp, 10-2PM	17 AA, 10AM	18 Wedding - 2PM Corneliusson/ Lehoux
19 Holy Comm., 8 & 10:30AM SCSS9am, Adh. Disc., 9:15AM Choir, 9:45AM Bake Sale aft. both serv.	20	21 OA, 7:30PM	22 Bible Study, 10:30AM Conf. class, 6PM Evening Prayer, 7PM Choir, 8PM AA, 7PM	23 Thurs Grp, 10-2PM	24 AA, 10AM	25
26 Holy Comm., 8 & 10:30AM SCSS9am, Adh. Disc., 9:15AM Choir, 9:45AM	27	28 Pot. Adhbn, 6:30PM Ch. Council, 7:30PM OA, 7:30PM	29 Bible Study, 10:30AM Conf. class, 6PM Evening Prayer, 7PM Choir, 8PM AA, 7PM	30 Thurs Grp, 10-2PM	31 AA, 10AM	

SAINT PAUL'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

CHURCH SCHEDULE

- Worship: 8:00 & 10:30 a.m.
- Sunday Church School: 9:00 a.m.
- Adult Study Class: 9:00 a.m.

OFFICERS AND STAFF

Rev. Hugh R. B. Haffenreffer, PastorOffice: (860) 529-5397
Emergency: (860) 966-7360
Council PresidentBrian Beckwith
Treasurer.....Russell Correll
Financial Sect'y.....Mary Procyk
Minister of MusicMelissa Cheyney
Superintendent of Sunday Church School.....Alice Rupp
Office SecretaryMarianne Doolittle

MINISTERSALL THE PEOPLE OF SAINT PAUL'S!

Saint Paul's Epistle

SAINT PAUL'S EV. LUTHERAN CHURCH
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REMINDERS:

- Ash Wednesday: March 1 at 7:00PM
- The Lutheran Course: Sundays from 4:30 to 6PM
- Wednesday Evening Prayer: 7:00PM
- Soup and Salad Fellowship Meals: Wednesdays at 5:30PM

MARCH 2006