

FLC & OS� Light

Newsletter of First Lutheran and Our Savior's Ministries

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It's All Adiaphora

Open our eyes, Lord, we want to see Jesus, to reach out and touch him, and say that we love him. Open our ears, Lord, and help us to listen. Open our eyes, Lord, we want to see Jesus.

Text: Robert Cull

In conversation with clergy and laity, many of them assume our two congregations are identical. They are often shocked to hear that there are two church councils, the communion bread is different, and the vision and mission statements are unique to each congregation.

When they want to know why you can be different yet alike, I simply say, it's all adiaphora. By that, I mean, the customs, rituals, etc. that are neither commanded nor forbidden in scripture. For instance, communion bread can be a wafer, a piece of sourdough, or another earthly element that is used in conjunction with God's Word. No one is more right than another and it may be just a matter of preferences.

People are curious about how churches work together and maintain their individual identity. First, what is common is that both churches are Lutheran, share the same pastor, have similar goals and have the same order of worship. But that is where the similarities end and adiaphora takes over.

This year adiaphora is being extended into the Lenten season. Since my arrival, I have described Lent as the 40 days (not including Sundays), which is a time of reflection and soul searching. It is a season of preparation for Easter since the earliest days of the church. Lent begins on Ash Wednesday and ends as we begin the Triduum of Holy Week.

Over the past three years, we have "packed away" the alleluias in a suitcase, in a pot of dirt, and in a locked treasure chest. This year, we will celebrate the Sundays of Lent as true mini-Easters. The Paschal candle will be lit; we will sing a few alleluias and celebrate the Lord's Day, knowing that he conquered death and the grave.

Remember that it is all adiaphora and is designed to help us open our eyes to the Lord. Midweek worship will still be held. Holy Week will be a mixture of old and new traditions from the processional on Palm Sunday to Maundy Thursday dinner church, and a solemn, contemplative Good Friday worship.

On Holy Saturday, the Easter Prayer Vigil will be from 7 am to 7 pm. During this time, we are asking people to pray, read scripture, and reflect on the true meaning of Easter. Signup will be coming in mid-March for the prayer vigil which can be done in your home or at the church for a half-hour to an hour.

As we enter into Lent, open your eyes, ears, and minds to Christ active in your lives. Let us begin to live into those new vision and mission statements and respond to the love of God in our lives.

In Christ,

Pastor Carol

We Have a Mission

Our Savior's Lutheran Church is a nurturing, accepting, and joyful faith community which invites all to grow in Christ.

Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen. 2 Peter 3:18

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LENTEN SERVICES

The season of Lent begins on February 26th with Ash Wednesday and ends on the Triduum of Holy Week.

Ash Wednesday is a traditional service with the imposition of ashes and Holy Communion at 5pm on February 26th.

This year's Sunday Lenten Series is "The Call to Serve." Worship is at 9 am with Holy Communion. We celebrate these Sundays as mini-Easters, since they are not counted in the 40 days of Lent.

On Thursdays, we gather for our soup and bread suppers at 6:15. (There is a signup sheet on the in the Narthex) Worship follows at 7 pm. The Midweek worship series "Open My Life Lord" with Holden Evening Prayer.

HOLY WEEK SERVICES

Palm Sunday (4/5) begins Holy Week, a week-long observance of our Lord's entry into Jerusalem. We begin outside the sanctuary and process into the church. Worship with Holy Communion is 9 am.

Maundy Thursday (4/9) begins the Triduum of Holy Week which includes our Lord's passion, death and resurrection. On this Thursday we share a simple meal as worship is intertwined with the dinner at 12 Noon. The service includes Holy Communion and stripping of the Altar.

Good Friday (4/10) is a day in which we remember Jesus' death by crucifixion. Good Friday is called 'good' not because Jesus died, but because of what we experience of grace, forgiveness, joy, peace and love, as a result of that death. This solemn service is at 5 pm.

Easter Prayer Vigil (4/11) from 7 am to 7 pm on Holy Saturday. During this time, you will be asked to pray, read scripture, and reflect on the true meaning of Easter. Details to follow soon.

Easter Sunday (4/12), at 9 am, we celebrate this day of days with Holy Communion and are filled with hope as we share the Good News that Christ is risen.

LENTEN DEVOTIONS

Throughout the 40 days of Lent (not including Sundays), as throughout our lives, it is Christ who works to fill the empty vessels of our hearts and we discover "...we have this treasure in clay jars, so that it may be made clear that this extraordinary power belongs to God and does not come from us" (2 Corinthians 4:7).

The devotional is a daily email that has a verse, an invitation to be still during a prayer and reflect on, what is Jesus saying to you today? How does your Star Word help to discern God's activity in the world for you?

For anyone who does not have a computer, the devotional will be available in a printed format on Sunday each week. If you would like to receive the devotion, please see the sign-up sheets.

Mission and Vision

We have a vision... We will listen to God's plan for us to flourish in faith, family, and community. *I delight to do your will, O my God; your law is within my heart.* ' Psalm 40:8

At the annual meeting, we adopted our new mission and vision statements to respond to God's call in our lives. As a reminder, the mission statement is the basic purpose, why a church exists. The vision statement is the approach used in putting the mission statement into action.

THIRSTY THEOLOGY

God invites us to "Come, all who are thirsty, come to the waters" (Is.55:1). It's a moving portrayal of how the Lord offers satisfying refreshment for our thirsty souls. We gather once a month for pizza and conversation. Thirsty Theology meets the first Monday of the month at 6 pm.

"Speaking of Faith" sessions are March 2nd and April 6th at First Lutheran in Plains.

Each person is responsible for paying their share of the meal and drinks. Carpooling is a great way of continuing the conversation.