



# The CrossWord

March 2022

**From Pastor Lisa**

*"Come to me, all who are weary and carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest."  
Matthew 11:28*

Have you ever not wanted to go to Bible Study?

Possibly you just had so much going on, and one more thing would just topple you. Maybe you felt like you hadn't prepared, and therefore you would feel embarrassed or stupid or out of place, or (God forbid) someone would notice. Perhaps your head was spinning with so many thoughts in so many directions you just wouldn't be able to concentrate.

Have you ever not wanted to go to Bible Study? (It's also fair to substitute something else that you feel you "should" do.) Have I? Well... yes, actually – even though you may think it shocking for a pastor to admit!

The thing is, I love Bible study: When I can quiet my mind and just listen. The insights I glean from others when we study together that I would never have come up with on my own. And maybe most precious of all, the growth of relationships as we share our stories and recognize the intersections of our lives with the biblical stories.

Wednesday is the beginning of the forty day season of Lent. It has always been a time for study and reflection; often a time to "give up" something in order to dedicate oneself more deeply to God.

The thing is, I don't want to burden you with one more thing you "should" do. This Lent, I invite you to *let go and let God*. Find a way to just *be* in the divine presence. That might be a walk in the fresh air to just breathe. It might be Bible study (we have several options at LCC) – which I love and know you do, too. It might be popping in to Wednesday worship at 6:15 pm as we hear how "God is still with us." (Side benefit: a lovely, not prepared-by-you, soup supper with friends all around, starting about 5 pm!) It might be being there for someone at a low point in their faith journey – or letting someone be there for you.

Most of all, this Lent, I hope you can bask in God's grace. God loves you and nothing can ever take you out of God's hand that cradles you so tenderly.

Peace be yours this Lent.

Pastor Lisa

## **NEW! Stewardship of Life Series – Leaving a Legacy**

It's been a while since we've had an adult forum series on Sundays – this one was planned to happen in 2020 and, well, you know. It will stretch out over three months, so as to not interfere with coffee hour each week – we know how important fellowship time is to everyone! But we hope these topics will intrigue you. Feel free to invite family and friends. Each session will start at 11:15 a.m. – so you have a little time to visit – in the multipurpose room. Bring your coffee along.

### **Sunday, March 6: Changing Your Focus**

We will use a short article with this title by Sonia Solomonson in the latest Gather magazine as a springboard. (Copies available on the table next to the Dan's Supermarket receipt box.) The session will be both about how do I want to live in this season of my life, and also consider "paring down" – when you're done with the big house and all the stuff, how do you move forward into smaller spaces, and what are the practices and rituals that help you do this. Have you been through this? Bring your expertise and share it! Group conversation.

### **Sunday, March 20: Health Care Directives: Talking About a Tough Topic**

Do you have a health care directive? Are you even clear in your mind about what you might want in case of a health care emergency? Whom do you trust to make decisions on your behalf if you cannot? How do you even go about it?

Come hear and talk with Pastor Christina Martin, chaplain at Sanford Health and their expert on exactly these matters. There will be time for questions and conversation.

### **Upcoming topics in April and May:**

Writing A Will – And Yes, You Need One!

Writing Your Own Obituary

Funeral Pre-Planning: The Nitty-gritty (And Helpful!) Details

Financial Aspects in Leaving a Legacy: How Will Your Values Live On

### **Holy Week Schedule**

Sunday, April 10, Palm Sunday

Wednesday, April 13: NO Wednesday worship

Thursday, April 14, 7 pm: Maundy Thursday Service with Holy Communion

Friday, April 15, 7 pm: Good Friday Tenebrae Service of Shadows

Saturday, April 16, 7 pm: Easter Vigil Service

Sunday, April 17, Easter Sunday, 8 am and 10 am Celebration Worship

## **Angels Among Us**

Our angel this month is Murray Sagsveen – although you will have to go to Arizona to clap him on the back just now! Murray is a man of many high-powered accomplishments, although you would never know that from his humble demeanor. Murray, who is an attorney, has been a tremendous help to our church leadership over the years, most recently in updating our congregation's constitution and bylaws, and those pertaining to LCC's endowment and its guiding committee. He is a regular Scripture reader for Sunday worship. He has represented us at Synod Assembly and at Camp of the Cross meetings. Murray also acts as the Western North Dakota Synod Attorney, and advises congregations and camps all across the synod with various legal matters. He has endless stories; ask him about the intricacies of church cemetery associations sometime!

Murray has a sly sense of humor and is a loyal friend. He and his wife Kristi have been LCC members since the late 1970s. You will often find them with 3 generations of their family in the "Sagsveen-Staloch corner," in the far back left (as you look forward to the altar). (Yes, pastors notice where you sit. The back rows are highly to be desired! This must be excellent training for the youngest generation.) We appreciate the whole talented bunch, but this month – hats off to Murray, and thanks for all you do.

## **Fair Trade Items Available in Narthex**

Some of you are already long time fans of our fair trade items, available on the table in the narthex next to the water fountains. If you haven't yet, take a look at what is there: chocolate bars, teas, hot cocoas (three types!), baking cocoa, and both whole bean and ground coffees. They are all top quality products that support small farmers, and a small amount of the cost supports our youth group. You can pay in the office.

## **March Altar Focus – Sweet Deal for CAR**

This project will technically continue until Easter – April 17. Once again, we will be collecting donations for our sister church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the Central African Republic (CAR). You can pick up a tube of mini M & M's at the back of the church throughout Lent (although they are quite expensive and can't be sourced locally, so please guide your younger family members in not grabbing multiple tubes). The M & M's are, of course, delicious, and the tube makes a perfect little "bank" – it will hold \$14 in quarters, or rolled up bills or checks, or other change as well. Once you've enjoyed your treat of M & M's, please fill up the tube with your offering of choice for CAR, and drop it in the offering plate. It's so exciting to watch the tubes return!

Your gifts help fund roofs for schools and salaries for teachers, a women's center, motorbikes to help pastors and evangelists travel around the rough territory, and a clinic. All of these are immensely helpful in a country torn by war. In 2020, we as a congregation were able to send \$1000 to help CAR. Last year, it increased by 50% to \$1521.86! How much can we do this year? Watch for more information about CAR during Lent, and thank you for your generosity!

## **Book Selections for the Book Club at 1:30pm**

“The Flatshare” by Beth O’Leary.


March 9

“The Midnight Library” by Matt Haig.

April 16

## **Lenten Soup Suppers**

Remember that preceding each Lenten Wednesday worship, we have supper together in the fellowship hall starting around 5 pm, with delicious soups prepared by Lady J’s. Worship follows at 6:15 pm. We hope you can join us for food and fellowship each week! A free will offering will be taken to defray expenses.



**Thank you to all who have participated  
in the Heat the Church  
program again this year.**

## **Wednesday Worship Lenten Series “God is still with us”**

As we journey through this season of Lent together, you are invited to remember that from the foundations of the world, the Holy Spirit hovered over creation. The Spirit hovers, even now. When God’s people seemed abandoned in Egypt, God guided them into the Promised Land. God guides us, even now in the midst of a pandemic when we have felt abandoned, God is still with us.

This Lent, we will explore Gospel passages that remind us that God is still with us. The good news of the gospel is that Jesus experienced the fullness of humanity—comfort and pain, celebration and heartache, and joy and suffering. And when he had the choice to escape ridicule or rejection, Jesus stuck with the outsiders, the oppressed, and the hurting. The life of Jesus demonstrates that God knows what it is to be human and to be with us in all our experiences, especially in our suffering.—  
Adapted from: An Illustrated Lent for Families: God is Still With Us — Illustrated Ministry

Join us on March 9th, March 16th, March 23rd, March 30th, and April 6th at 6:15pm as we walk this journey together being reminded that God is still with us.

# A Message from the office of the Bishop

## March 2022

This Month's Writer: Deacon Beth Anderson, Associate for Leadership & Formation



Luke 13:6-9 (NRSV) Then he told this parable: “A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came looking for fruit on it and found none. 7So he said to the gardener, ‘See here! For three years I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree, and still I find none. Cut it down! Why should it be wasting the soil?’ 8He replied, ‘Sir, let it alone for one more year, until I dig around it and put manure on it. 9If it bears fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down.’”

This month we begin the season of Lent. Lent is often thought of as the 40-day journey to the cross. We embark on this journey with an eye toward the future, to the resolution of Christ's victory over death and the promise of resurrection for us all.

As Christians and as humans, we spend much of our time either looking backwards at the past or looking forward toward the future. Consider our most holy days for instance. We look back at the manger with nostalgia, often romanticizing the beauty and majesty of Jesus' birth and we look forward to the cross & resurrection with trepidation and anticipatory hope. But in so emphasizing the bookends of Jesus' life on earth, we may forget that Jesus's ministry was not defined by these two moments alone. God's love for humanity was revealed not only in manger and tomb, but also in the millions of seconds in between. In his daily interactions, Jesus paused, took time to notice and responded to what he saw - by healing a stranger, by listening to one whom society disregarded, by calling someone to service, or by teaching a way of life that defied tradition but honored the dignity of all God's children. Through these daily interactions, Jesus' attentiveness and response reveals God's love in truly life-altering ways.

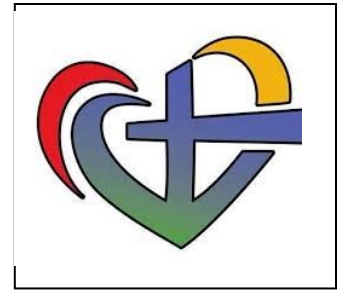
The parable at the start of this newsletter comes from our gospel reading for the 3rd week in Lent this year. I like it because it causes me to pause and wonder, “What did the gardener see in fig tree that the owner did not?” Looking to the past, the owner saw no fruit. Looking to the future, he saw only a waste of good soil. But the gardener noticed something else present. What evidence was emerging that caused him to intervene?

This Lenten season, I invite you to take the posture of the gardener. How might you give attention to what Jesus is up to in your life and in your congregation right now along your journey? What signs of growth may be emerging that if examined more carefully could lead to more abundant life? What if for this season, you focused less intently on what was or what could be, and instead paused to look more closely at what God is doing right now in this in between time. What might you discover?

In the coming months, our synod is hosting several opportunities for congregations to pause and give attention to what God may be up to in our midst. We invite you to join in any of the opportunities below as you ponder: How is God inviting us to witness to Christ's love in our community right here, right now?

# Children Youth & Family Ministry

March 2022



## Confirmation Schedule

<b>March</b>	<b>2</b>	ASH WEDNESDAY – CHURCH ATTENDANCE REQUIRED
	<b>9</b>	No Confirmation
	<b>16</b>	Large Group Night Theme: Jesus Calls First Disciples/Parents' Night <i>Please read: Mark 1:14-20; Luke 5:1-11</i>
	<b>23</b>	Large Group Night Theme: Feeding of 5000 <i>Please read: Luke 9:10-17, Matthew 14:13-21, Mark 6:30-44, John 6:1-14</i>
	<b>30</b>	Small Group night
<b>April</b>	<b>6</b>	Large Group Night Theme: Good Samaritan <i>Please read: Luke 10:25-37</i>

## Church School Schedule

<b>Sunday</b>		<b>Wednesday</b>	
		<b>March 2</b>	No Church School – Ash Wednesday
<b>March 6</b>	The Good Samaritan	<b>March 9</b>	No Church School
<b>March 13</b>	No Church School	<b>March 16</b>	The Prodigal Son – Whole Family
<b>March 20</b>	The Prodigal Son – Whole Family	<b>March 23</b>	Memory Work – Memorize Bible Verses
<b>March 27</b>	No Church School	<b>March 30</b>	Jesus the Good Shepherd
<b>April 3</b>	Memory Work: memorize bible verses	<b>April 6</b>	The Greatest Commandment

## Youth Group/Family Fun Activities

- March 5th:** Family fun day at Huff Hills from 10am to 4pm for a day of fun on the slopes. Each person is responsible for purchasing their own lift tickets and rentals if needed. Please let Janie know by March 4th if you plan on attending.
- March 13:** Family fun day at sky zone from 2-4pm. Come to jump into your faith. Cost is \$30
- March 19th:** Day of service. Join Deacon Janie in a day of service in our community. There will be a sign up sheet in the Narthex to sign up if interested. Watch the bulletin for more details.

## Youth Group Series “Who are we now? - Making sense of change”

The last two years have brought about a lot of loss and change with the pandemic that has impacted everyone. How do we make meaning of our experience and find a way to move forward? This series is designed to process the changes the pandemic has brought to us, and give us tools to find hope and move forward.

Lesson 1: I am: Who am I now? Who are we now? March 16th 8-9 pm OR Sunday March 20th from 4-5pm

Lesson 2: Loss and Grief: What have we lost and gained from this experience? March 23rd 8-pm OR Sunday March 27th 4-5 pm

Lesson 3: Equipped to be Resilient: How do we stay deeply rooted and move forward through change? March 30th 8-9pm OR April 3rd 4-5pm

Lesson 4: Renewed in Hope Each Day: Where is God calling us? Offered April 6th 8-9pm OR April 10th 4-5pm

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>March 2022</b>		<b>1</b> Staff Meeting 10am	<b>2</b> ASH Wednesday Lenten Supper 5:15pm Worship 6:15pm <b>NO</b> Church School/ <u>or</u> Confirmation 7pm	<b>3</b> Quilting 1pm 7:30pm AA Mtg.	<b>4</b> Wired Word 1:30pm	<b>5</b> Council <b>Mini Retreat</b> <b>Family Fun</b> <b>Day Huff Hills</b> <b>10 -4</b>
<b>6</b> 9:00 Church School 10:00 Worship Service 11:00 Coffee 5pm Wed music practice	<b>7</b> Needlework Group 9:30am	<b>8</b> Staff Meeting 10am Gather Bible Study 1:15pm <b>Church Council</b> <b>6:30pm</b>	<b>9</b> <b>Book Club 1:30</b> Lenten Supper 5:15pm Church 6:15pm <b>NO</b> Church School/ <u>or</u> Confirmation 7pm	<b>10</b> Quilting 1pm 7:30pm AA Mtg.	<b>11</b> Wired Word 1:30pm	<b>12</b>
<b>13</b> 9:00 <b>NO</b> Church School 10:00 Worship Service 11:00 Coffee Family Fun Day Sky Zone 2-4 5pm Wed music practice	<b>14</b> Needlework Group 9:30am	<b>15</b> Staff Meeting 10am	<b>16</b> Lenten Supper 5:15pm Church 6:15pm School/ Confirmation 7pm Youth Group Series 8- 9pm Lesson 1	<b>17</b> Quilting 1pm 7:30pm AA Mtg.	<b>18</b> Wired Word 1:30pm	<b>19</b> Day of Service
<b>20</b> 9:00 Church School 10:00 Worship Service 11:00 Coffee 5pm Wed music practice Youth Group Series 4-5pm Lesson	<b>21</b> Needlework Group 9:30am	<b>22</b> Staff Meeting 10am	<b>23</b> Women' Bible Study 9am Lenten Supper 5:15pm Church 6:15 School/ Confirmation 7pm Youth Grp Series Lesson 2 8-9pm	<b>24</b> Quilting 1pm 7:30pm AA Mtg.	<b>25</b> Wired Word 1:30pm	<b>26</b>
<b>27</b> 9:00 <b>NO</b> Church School 10:00 Worship Service 11:00 Coffee Youth Grp Series Lesson 2 4-5pm	<b>28</b> Needlework Group 9:30am Knitting 1pm					



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## E-News

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### Worship Times:

Wednesday Worship  
6:15pm (School year)  
Church School 7pm  
Confirmation 7pm

Sunday Worship  
The River Service  
10:00am  
Church School 9:00 am

Lisa Ahlness, Pastor  
Janie Hague, Deacon

Office Hours:  
M -TH 8-4pm  
Fri. 8-noon School Year  
Summer Hours 8 to noon  
Mon.—Fri

### Lutheran Church of the Cross

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The Church Council meets once a month; the second Thursday at 6:30pm. The Council meetings are open to the congregation and all are encouraged to attend a meeting or to visit with a Council member if you have questions or concerns regarding the church.

**“Making Jesus Known by  
Sharing our Gifts”**