



The Cross Word March 2023

From Pastor Lisa

You likely know that I returned with a group from a trip to the Holy Land (Israel and Jordan) a couple of weeks ago. There were many “aha” moments as we read scripture in various places and learned a bit of backstory that gave us entirely new insight into the biblical narrative. We came back changed (and I don’t just mean our lighter wallets from buying souvenirs). You can look forward in the spring - may it come someday soon! - to a presentation by the group, with pictures, items to show, stories and possibly even food. In the meantime, if you’d like to hear about it, ask one of our group members. The travelers from LCC were: Bob and Barb Wilson, Kerry Carpenter, Rod and Deb Sargent, Larry and Tracy Wolf, Ken and Karen Will, Mavis Pommerer, Mike and Tracy Geiermann, and Pastor Lisa.

Deacon Janie begins her new position as Executive Director at Camp of the Cross Ministries this week. Clearly, we all wish her and the camp well! We are proud and looking forward to both new things and beloved traditions at CCM.

Meanwhile, I know you’re wondering: What’s next for us?

Having heard positive feedback from having a deacon in the position, our church council is supporting moving into the call process for a new rostered minister (that could be a deacon or a pastor) to be our new director of discipleship. In order to do that, though, there are a couple of things that we would like to accomplish immediately.

The first is get input from all of you on your hopes, dreams, ideas and priorities for youth, family and education programming. Watch for a survey that will be distributed in all the ways we can think of, and get it back to us quickly. ALSO: we will put out newsprint sheets or posterboard and ask you all to write on it these things and any suggestions you have for events, studies, programs, etc. Remember, the Director of Discipleship will work with adult educational programming at church as well. Get us your thoughts and ideas in March – you can even just send an email to the office or to me with them, if that is easiest for you. Or call me for a conversation – just make sure I write your ideas down! We would like to hear from toddlers to elders – your views are important!

And secondly, we’ll fill out the ministry site profile, which details our congregation and the job description for the position, which we’ll adapt after hearing from you all. We hope to have all this done in six weeks, so that the position can be posted asap.

Blessings to you this March, as we journey toward the cross together.

Pastor Lisa

Lent Altar Focus – Sweet Deal for CAR

This project will technically continue until Easter – April 9th. 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 re- turn! 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. In 2021, it increased by 50% to \$1521.86! 2022 saw gifts of around \$1800! How much can we do this year? Thank you for your generosity! There are colorful pamphlets with some information about the CAR on the table in the narthex.

Angels Among Us

It is well known that food brings us together, and we can count on our angels this month to help make that happen! Janice and Keven Martin have been members here at LCC for some time – after they were invited (hint, hint) by friends and loved the friendliness, music and atmosphere here. Janice is the "Lady J" in Lady J's Catering, and Keven works closely with her. The delectable soups we enjoy on Wednesdays in Lent come from them, as well as other special meals. They have been a constant help in assisting us in sourcing food, paper and serving products, or giving us a great price, or providing items outright (such as juice for kids on Sundays, and frozen rolls to assist the youth in their caramel roll fundraisers). Janice currently serves on and as the Vice President of our church council. We are grateful for your smiles, your gracious presence and willingness to serve, your business acumen, and great food, Janice and Keven! Thank you!

Book Club

Meets the 2nd Wednesday at 1:30 in the Library.

March: Remarkable Bright Creatures by Shelby Van Pelt

April: Vanishing Half by Brit Bennet

May: Black Cake by Charmaine Wilkerson

June: We are the Light by Matthew Quick

July: So Long Chester Wheeler by Catherine Ryan Hyde



Your Ministry Endowment Fund and Legacy Planning



Your Ministry Endowment Fund currently stands at about \$118,000.00 with most of that invested through the ELCA Ministry Growth Fund, and although last year was not kind to investment portfolios, the fund closed 2022 with a fourth quarter of 6.23% growth.

Legacy giving is all about giving for the long-term. Gifts are pooled and invested to endow LCC with the resources to grow its mission and ministry beyond our lifetimes.

When we make a legacy gift, we are giving to something that will continue in perpetuity. Part of the sense of satisfaction that comes from making a planned gift lies in the knowledge that we can make a lasting impact; we can leave a legacy for generations yet to come. Legacy gifts can be as varied as the interests of the donor. They can include such items as stocks and bonds or other appreciated securities, insurance policies, retirement plans, art or antique collections, real estate or other assets. The gifts may be made through such vehicles as trusts, charitable gift annuities, a donor advised fund, or a bequest in a will. Often a donor will meet with their financial planner and a representative of the LCC Ministry Endowment Fund to decide how to fund the gift.

As the Apostle Paul said in 2 Corinthians 9:12: *“You will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.”* Please consider a legacy gift to your LCC Ministry Endowment Fund, and be sure to reach out to one of the Committee members with any questions.

May God continue to bless you and this congregation,

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Movie Night returns!

The Men's Bible Study group has decided to host a Movie Night on Friday, March 10 in the Multipurpose Room. Bring something to share (if you can, but come anyway if you can't!) for the potluck at 6 pm with movie to start about 30-40 minutes later. There will be popcorn!

Dan's Supermarket Receipts

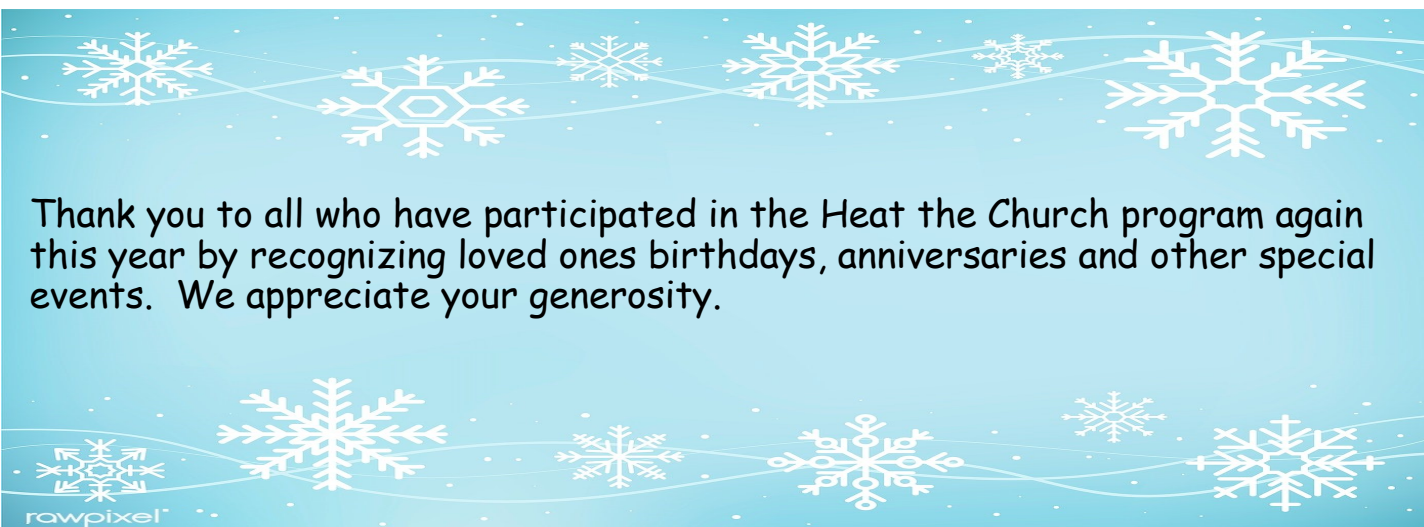
Thank you for all your generosity in collecting and sharing your Dan's Supermarket receipts over the last few years. For each \$150,000 in receipts, the church received \$1000 – a total of \$4000! It also took a lot of sorting and counting. We appreciate all of you for your efforts! Unfortunately, Dan's parent company has discontinued the program as of March 1st. Our last batch was sent in about a week ago, and we were able to still share many extras with other charities! Thanks again for bringing them so faithfully.

Join in the fun!

With Deacon Janie gone, Pastor Lisa is wondering if any of you (ideally a few people!) would like to do an occasional children's message? She will share with you the scriptures and themes of the week, should you choose to talk about them. Or, you can do something on a general theme of your choosing. Speak to Pr. Lisa if you are interested!

Easter brings Peep Dioramas!

Peeps – you know, those brightly colored marshmallow-like animals which appear in all the stores in spring – were used by our church school children to create dioramas (the peeps became characters, dressed up by the young artists). This year, the week of March 26th will bring more peep dioramas, as the church school kids get ready for Easter! Materials are provided. Don't miss it!



To Become Better Adults, Look to the Lessons We Teach Our Kids from the “Becoming Minimalist” blog by Joshua Becker

“Be who you needed when you were younger.” —Brad Montague

It’s easy to see the faults in others but difficult to see the places where we fall short in our own lives.

We are so sure that life would be better if *“he didn’t act like that,”* if *“she didn’t say those things,”* or if *“only my boss would start being more _____.”*

On a larger scale, we are quick to think society would be better if *those people* would be less selfish, less greedy, less argumentative, more thoughtful, or would just see things the way I see them.

Because it’s easy to see the faults in others but not ourselves, we are quick to point out the room for improvement in others, but slow to see the blind spots in our own lives.

The powerful old adage goes like this, *“Be the change you want to see in the world.”* This quote is often read to inspire positive change, as in *“Be the first to start doing the good you want others to do.”* And that’s true.

But the other side of the coin is equally important, *“If you want others to stop a negative, harmful behavior in their lives, begin by addressing it in your own life.”*

These aren’t words we usually like to hear. But they are important. Positive change only happens when we become intentional in trying to address it. Brad Montague is famous for once saying, *“Be who you needed when you were younger.”*

His statement of life mission is a powerful way to see the world that can change how we see ourselves.

And it can be helpful in discovering the blind spots in our lives.

We all want to model and pass on positive behaviors to our kids and others.

To do that, it can be helpful to study the lessons we want to teach our kids, and use them as a mirror into ourselves.

Here are a few powerful examples:

We encourage our kids to share.

But how readily do we share our money and possessions with others?

We encourage our kids to not be envious of others.

But how often are we jealous of the neighbor or co-worker with the bigger home, larger paycheck, newer car, or more luxurious vacation?

We encourage our kids to not talk bad about others.

But how often do we speak ill of others behind their back? Or equally damaging, spread gossip?

We tell our kids to clean their room.

But how frequently do we leave our rooms in the house cluttered and disheveled?

We counsel our kids to not waste money and save for something special.

But are we setting a good example as parents living within our means and not wasting money?

We teach our kids to “talk to the new kid at school.”
But do we walk over and introduce ourselves to the neighbor?
We tell our kids to play fewer video games.
But how many evenings do we spend watching television or scrolling social media?
We tell our kids to read.
But rarely pick up a book ourselves.
We hope our kids will take responsibility for their actions.
But then blame circumstances for our decisions.
We encourage our kids to be honest.
But change the truth at work and home to fit our needs.
We teach our kids about the importance of forgiveness.
But how many years have we held a grudge against that one family member?
We encourage our kids to not complain and be happy for what they have.
All while wishing the circumstances of our lives were somehow different.
I write these words as guilty as any. There are no perfect humans.
But I believe every single one of us wants to live our best life. And every single one of us wants to live in a society that is benefiting all.
And maybe the best way to do that, is to start looking closer at the lessons we want to see in our kids.

Lenten Soup Suppers and Worship on Wednesdays

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, a selection of breads, and desserts. 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 at the supper to defray expenses.

Our theme for Lenten Wednesdays this year is **Seeking**. This series is founded on questions. Some questions are hopeful and curious. Some feel like a charge or a challenge. Our questions won't necessarily lead to answers, but they can help us find clarity and a new perspective. We are seeking our own calling, the sacred, and how to live as a disciple. We pray approaching all these things will lead to new beginnings, restoration, a wider grace. Hope to see you on Wednesdays this March!

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
March 2023	Altar Focus: C.A.R.		1 5:15pm Soup Supper Worship Service 6:15pm Church School Confirmation 7pm Rabbi Noah 7pm	2 Rabbi Noah 9-11 1-3pm Quilting 1pm	3 Wired Word 1:30pm	4 Men's Bible Study 10am
5 9:15am Church School 10:00 River Worship 11:00 Coffee Hour/	6 Needlework Group 9:00am	7 Staff Meeting 10am	8 Book Club 1:30 5:15pm Soup Supper Worship Service 6:15pm Church School Confirmation 7pm	9 Quilting 1pm Church Council 6:30pm 7:30pm AA Mtg.	10 Wired Word 1:30pm	11 Men's Bible Study 10am
12 9:15 Church School 10:00 River Worship 11:00 Coffee Hour	13 Needlework Group 9:00am	14 Staff Meeting 10am	15 Soup Supper 5:15pm Worship Service 6:15pm Church School / Confirmation 7pm	16 Quilting 1pm 7:30pm AA Mtg.	17 Wired Word 1:30pm	18 Men's Bible Study 10am
19 9:15 Church School 10:00 River Worship 11:00 Coffee Hour	20 Needlework Group 9:00am	21 Staff Meeting 10am	22 Women's Book Study 9:00am Soup Supper 5:15pm Worship Service 6:15pm Church School / Confirmation 7pm	23 Gather Bible Study 10:30am Quilting 1pm 7:30pm AA Mtg.	24 Wired Word 1:30pm	25 Men's Bible Study 10am
26 9:15 Church School 10:00 Worship Service 11:00 Coffee Hour	27 Needlework Group 9:00am Knitting 4 Others 1 pm	28 Staff Meeting 10am	29	30	31	



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E-News

Worship Times:

Wednesday Worship
6:15pm (School year)

Sunday Worship
The River Service
10:00am

Lisa Ahlness, Pastor

Office Hours:

M -TH 8-4pm

Fri. 8-noon School Year

Summer Hours 8—noon

Mon.—Fri

Making Jesus Known by Sharing our Gifts