

Life Together

February 2010

Olsburg-Walsburg Lutheran Parish

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From the Desk of Your Pastoral Leaders...

Is Lent in trouble?

Most of us have a favorite holiday season. For some it's Christmas with all the family get-togethers and presents and cultural foods. For others it might be the fourth of July and summer, filled by a sense of national pride, vacations and outside adventures. AND, each year at right around this time of year, comes a season that very few of us would pick – a season that seems to most of us as grim as the weather that usually comes right along-side it. This season is Lent!

When was the last time you heard someone counting off the days till Ash Wednesday arrived. Have you ever heard a young child ask "how many sleeps till the day of Ashes is here?" Or people leaving work a little early so they could get their Lenten shopping done. It simply doesn't happen.

So, what's the problem? Plainly put – we need to go no further than one of the primary readings for Ash Wednesday in Matthew 6: "And when you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces so as to show others that they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that your fasting may not be seen by others but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you."

You didn't even need to read the entire verse most likely to be struck with Lent's problem – "And when you fast..."

Other than the occasional crash diet, who fasts anymore? And, there you have it! The problem with Lent is that it feels like this strange space of time which comes each year, that celebrates things we don't value and encourages attitudes we don't share. It is becoming seen as old-fashioned, even medieval in its focus.

So, should we face the fact that Lent is in trouble. Even among our Lutheran tradition which has a rich and long history of Lenten focus, there is not the same kind of enthusiasm or expectancy which greets Advent.

BUT, you know what? Each year, a little voice keeps whispering – I need Lent... I need a time to focus, to get my mind off of career, social life, the next project – the hundred other things which I think might give me meaning and – center in Meaning itself.

Maybe I need this forty days to focus and re-orient myself toward the Maker of all that was given for my pleasure and which I have let become merely distracting. Maybe I need the opportunity once again, to fix my eyes on the revelation of the God who loves God's children enough to take the form of a man hanging on a tree.

And just maybe, Lent really isn't mine to do with whatever I please... Maybe Lent isn't any of ours – to scoff at or observe... Maybe Lent is God's! God's gift to a people starved for meaning, for courage, for comfort, for life...

I need Lent. I need an absence of gifts so I might acknowledge the Gift. I need time to be quiet and still, a time to hear again what was promised me at Baptism: "You are mine! I am with you!"

I need Lent to remind me of who I am – God's heir and Christ's co-heir – so that, come Easter, I can rejoice and celebrate with joy all the anticipation of a true heir to the throne.

And so, we have Lent, a gift to the church. A time to find God's peace and hope and freedom that we so often lack.

Blessings and Hope in your Lenten journey
Gordy

The Olsburg Council met on November 16, 2009. The meeting was called to order by the vice chair, Jim Nelson, and we opened with prayer led by Pastor Gordy.

Members present: Kirby Burklund, Joyce Cantrell, Laura Clifton, Jan Cooper, Shari Holt, and Woody Kasselmann.

Purpose of the meeting was to prepare the 2010 Budget for Olsburg Lutheran Church. Treasurer, Laura Clifton, reviewed the proposed 2010 budget for Olsburg Lutheran Church and answered questions regarding budget adjustments from the 2009 actual expenses.

The Finance Committee reviewed the meeting with Walsburg to discuss the proposed 2010 Joint Parish Budget. Joyce Cantrell moved and Woody Kasselmann seconded that we accept the 2010 Joint Parish Budget as presented.

Jan Cooper moved that we accept the proposed 2010 Olsburg Lutheran Church Budget. Jim Nelson seconded. The motion carried.

Jan Cooper moved that we present the budget to the congregation at the annual meeting. Kirby seconded. The motion carried.

The ramifications of the Walsburg vote to affirm and renew their affiliation with the ELCA and the Central States Synod was discussed. Thirty-two votes were cast to affirm and renew, and 55 no votes were cast. The motion to affirm and renew did not pass by the required two-thirds majority. Our council will continue to hold our partner church in prayer as they face challenges to carrying out their mission and ministry as a church.

Meeting adjourned with the Lord's Prayer.

Walsburg Church Congregational Meeting December 6, 2009

Walsburg Lutheran Church held a special congregational meeting on Sunday December 6th, 2009 at Walsburg Church. The purpose of the meeting was to vote on a resolution to affirm its relationship with the ELCA.

"It is brought to the congregation from the church council and will provide information that will help the council move forward with clarity and mission."

The resolution failed by a vote of 58 No – 32 Yes.

Dear Friends,

On behalf of the Olsburg Lutheran Church we send you greetings, and we would like to ask for your help. We are in the process of stabilizing headstones and graves that have eroded over time in the Olsburg Cemetery. The costs involved in this type of work as well as regular cemetery mowing expenses have increased through the years, even though the cost of securing a plot in the cemetery has not. If you would like to help us with the expenses involved in the cemetery preservation and upkeep, we would appreciate any contribution you can make as we strive to develop a perpetual fund to support the Olsburg Cemetery in the future.

In addition, if you could provide us with the names and addresses of family members who have loved ones buried in the Olsburg Cemetery but have moved out of the community, we would greatly appreciate that information.

Contributions or contact information can be sent to:

*Jim Nelson, Chair, Olsburg
Cemetery Committee
Olsburg Lutheran Church
P. O. Box 128
Olsburg, KS 66520*

Thank you for your interest and your assistance.

Sincerely,

Olsburg Lutheran Church Council

February birthdays and anniversaries

If you know of a member whose birthday is not listed, please contact the church office.

Birthdays

- 1 Helen Wieters (W)
- 2 Julie Higgins (O)
- 4 Dick Flohr (W)
Nicholas Allen (W)
Lynn Webster (O)
- 5 Dale Larson (W)
Daniel Higgins (O)
- 6 Lynne Berry (W)
- 7 Roseanne Johnson (W)
- 9 Becky Holt (O)
- 10 Phillip Monser (O)
- 12 Shane Adams (O)
- 13 Alicia Scofield (W)

- 14 Vincent Smith (O)
- 15 Wes Esping (O)
- 16 Jessie Sundgren (W)
- 17 R.J. Bokelman (O)
- 23 Loretta Hoerman (W)
Lukas Kulp (W)
- 24 Brad Haller (W)
- 28 Ebba Nelson (O)
Makayla Vargo (O)
Madison Vargo (O)

Anniversaries

- 14 Dean and Donna Nelson (W)
- 15 Robert and Cindy Kulp (W)

March 1-8

- 1 Katie Burklund (O)
Raymond Nelson (W)
Jared Henry (W)
- 2 Donna Nelson (W)
Brianna Olson (W)
- 4 Marian Smith (O)
Jeanette Pultz (W)
Jennifer Kulp (W)
- 6 Garrett Nelson (O)

Members in service this month

Thank you to these members for their service to the parish during February.

Walsburg

Ushers: Rob Kulp, Roger Sundgren, Don Nelson, Jordan Hagenmaier

Greeters: Rob and Cindy Kulp, Roger and Kathy Sundgren, Don and Rita Nelson

Communion Ushers: Cindy Kulp, Carl Larson, Don Nelson, Debbie Hagenmaier, Roger Sundgren

***Acolytes:** No List received in office

***Lay Assistants:** 2/7 Jay Peterson; 2/14 Jerry Bohnenblust ; 2/17 (Ash Wednesday) Rita Nelson; 2/21 Rob or Cindy Kulp; 2/28 Carla hageman

Flowers for Church: Volunteers (Please contact the Altar Committee) (No flowers during Lent)

Altar Committee: Melissa Deetjen, Janet Neilson

Olsburg

Ushers: Marvin Johnson, Nick Cooper, Kevin Burklund

Communion Assistants: 2/7 Laura Clifton; 2/17 Jan Cooper (Ash Wednesday); 2/21 Coleen Esping

***Acolytes:** 2/7 Jonathan Nelson; 2/14 Kyle Clifton; 2/17 Madison Vargo (Ash Wednesday) 2/21 Makayla Vargo; 2/28 Monique Sandquist

***Lay Assistants:** 2/7 Bill Monser; 2/14 Brian Clifton; 2/17 Bryon Nelson (Ash Wednesday); 2/21 Codie Webster; 2/28 Coleen Esping

Altar Committee: Kristi Fronce, Kathy Monser

Kitchen Committee: January and February—Mary Rosell

***If you are unable to be present for your assignment, please find a replacement and contact the church office so the correct name will appear in the bulletin.**

Thank you

Thank you—thank you one and all who've helped us through our difficult times... for prayers and flowers, for food and phone calls of concern, and many, many cards. Remembering with grateful hearts ~~Raymond and Maxine Anderson

Walsburg Annual Congregational Meeting

Walsburg Lutheran Church will hold its annual Congregational meeting February 14th. Hope to see you there!

HEALTH KITS FOR HAITI via Lutheran World Relief A "WOW" (Walsburg – Olsburg – Waterville)

Confirmation Service Project

Contacts: Confirmation Students who are supported by Sonja Sandquist, Gordy Sandquist or Jeremie Vore

People who must flee their homes quickly often do not have time to pack essential items. Health kits can help refugees maintain personal hygiene while living in exile. Items may also contribute to a new start for those who can return home.

Each Kit contains the following items. Feel free to donate one or all items. Items will be collected through Valentine's Day at Walsburg, Olsburg and St. Marks Lutheran Churches. Kits will be assembled by our Confirmation Youth:

- One hand towel, dark color recommended
- One washcloth, dark color recommended
- One bath-size bar (4 to 5 oz.) of soap, any brand, in its original wrapping
- One adult-size toothbrush in its original packaging
- One sturdy comb, remove packaging
- One metal nail file or nail clippers with file attached, remove packaging (do not substitute cardboard emery boards for the file)
- Six Band-Aids® (or similar brand), preferably 1/2" to 3/4"; secure together with a rubber band

IMPORTANT NOTICE:

Please do not include toothpaste in the health kits. Toothpaste will be added at the warehouse prior to overseas shipment.

Sending top quality items makes a caring statement to the recipient about the giver.

Please give new items only, except where noted otherwise.

Please do not donate items with any religious symbols, messages or with your congregation's name. LWR provides material resources based on need, regardless of religious creed. Religious references could be misinterpreted by the governments of the receiving countries, jeopardizing the delivery to the people who need the items most.

Please do not donate any items decorated with a U.S. flag, patriotic or military

symbols, or references to the armed forces, including camouflage. LWR and our overseas partners have access to areas of the world others do not because we are impartial humanitarian organizations. If our intentions are misinterpreted as being politically motivated, our work, our partners and the people we assist could be endangered.

Project Comfort Fund Note: LWR's approximate cost to handle and ship one LWR health kit overseas is \$2.65 (includes the cost of toothpaste to go with the health kit)

If you would like to make a monetary donation to cover the shipping of the kits to the distribution site, please contact one of the pastors.

Confirmation Schedule

Lent is always a crazy time for Confirmation. We will still meet on Wednesdays for a meal, abbreviated class and worship. Our location will follow the Lenten worship schedule, moving back and forth between the two churches, every other week. Please attend the supper and worship with your parents. Your folks can hang out in the fellowship hall and help clean up while we have class. Everyone can go home after worship. There will not be any supper or class on Ash Wednesday, February 17th.

6:00 PM Soup Supper
6:25 PM Class in the Sanctuary
6:55 PM Worship leadership (Confirmation Youth will serve as ushers, acolytes and lay readers throughout the Lenten Season)
7:45 PM Go home!

Location:

Walsburg: February 24, March 10 and March 24
Olsburg: March 3 and March 17

Confirmation Camp Tomah Shinga Week June 27-July 2

The Walsburg – Olsburg Confirmation Camp has been pushed back a week (if referring to the original schedule). We will go to a camp on the following dates:

June 27 – July 2

The full registration form is included in this newsletter or you can register online at www.tomahshinga.com. Make sure you notify your church body to see if there is any scholarship or grant money available to you.

Adult Education

SALT (Stewards Attending Life Together)

Bible Study

1st and 3rd Mondays in Memorial Hall at Walsburg
7:00 – 8:30 PM

The group continues exploring Genesis through the “Book of Faith” curriculum. Upcoming foci include; “The Future: Yours, Mine or Ours?”

A look at the story of Joseph in Genesis 23-41
“Are We Promise Bearers?”

The rest of the Joseph story in Genesis 42-50

Sunday Morning Brew and Bible Study

Sunday Mornings in the sanctuary at Olsburg.

10:00 AM - 11:00 AM

Bring your Lutheran Study Bible or buy one at church (some are available for use)

Gather together for good coffee, good friends and Good News using the curriculum from the Book of Faith initiative of the ELCA. We are checking out the stories in Genesis through four different lenses: the historical, the literal, the theological and the devotional. This is very similar to the process that most pastors use as they prepare to preach on a text. In the spirit of Martin Luther, all people are ministers and so they must be prepared in the same way! And remember, the coffee is always great!

Beth Moore Bible Study

Mondays,

4:30 – 6:00 PM

Pastor’s Study at Olsburg

The ladies welcome anyone who would like to share thoughts from their day and the grapple with the Word as it is brought to us via video from Beth Moore. The group is also looking at texts from the Old Testament.

Lenten Devotional Available Beginning Ash Wednesday

From Fear to Love By, Henri J.M. Nouwen

Henri Nouwen was one of the most innovative and influential spiritual writers of the past century. At a time when he was most seeking God’s radical love and forgiveness, he encountered Rembrandt’s famous painting and recognized its power to communicate our need to love and be loved.

Journey through Lent with short excerpts from his books, “Home Tonight” and “The Return of the Prodigal Son.”

Communion Preparation / Education

All youth who are in 5th Grade and older are invited to participate in a class to help them understand and fully appreciate the sacrament of communion that we share as a community. Because schedules are so crazy and full participation is desired, we will gather names of all participants and design a schedule based on availability of group members. We will need about four hours together. Contact Pastor Sonja by March 15.

Celebration of Communion

All participants in communion class will come forward during Maundy Thursday services, April 1 to celebrate the ways that they will gather with the community for the Eucharist. Some will be taking communion for the first time. Others will be affirming their participation in the meal.

Parents as Teachers will be meeting at Olsburg Lutheran Church beginning February 10.

The Olsburg church council voted to allow Parents as Teachers to use the church basement on Wednesday mornings from 9:30 to 11:00 am for a Parents as Teachers preschool play group. Susan Hazelbaker is the Parent Educator who will be leading the play group. The group will begin meeting on Feb. 10 and will meet each Wednesday morning until June. If the church basement needs to be used for a funeral or some other event on a Wednesday morning, the play group will cancel their meeting. This is a great opportunity for our church to provide community outreach to families with young children!

Announcing Synod-wide Sabbath

February 21-27, 2010 -- Join the Bishop's staff and Central States Synod Congregations in Sabbath as we begin the 2010 Lenten season.

What is it?

In an effort to ignite spiritual renewal in our congregations and synod, this is an intentional week designed to “shut-down” and “re-focus” our lives of faith. This is a time for our congregations to rest and abide in relationship with God as individuals and as a community of faith. This is not just about cancelling meetings. This is about re-examining our individual and corporate relationship with God.

Why should I / we do this?

We are called to not only know about God, but to know God. When we mature in this relationship we learn that it has two parts. We are nourished and sent. This relationship with God is not only to be consumed, it is to be shared. The proclamation of Good News is for the world. When we dwell in relationship with God we begin to discern the particular way that God shapes us for God's work in the church, the community and the world. All prayer is realized finally in the fruit it bears. Our ministry work becomes a prayer, made concrete, in the world. Gratitude is a trusted sign that God is working.

The need for spirituality - A Story:

There is a story of a man who came to a hermit for spiritual direction. His life was full of stress and turmoil, and he claimed that he could no longer find God. The hermit took him down to the river where he silently dipped a bowl into the river, filled with water, and quietly led him back to his hut. They sat for a very long time until the sand, silt, and mud had gone from the churned up and cloudy to clear. The point was made. We, like the man in the story, need to learn how to sit patiently and wait quietly for our bodies and minds to settle so we can be present to God. (Spirit Windows, p.13)

Suggestions and Resources for your Corporate and Individual Sabbath Week

<http://www.css-elca.org/sabbath00.html>

Final thoughts for Your Journey

- ✚ Consider a daily rhythm of prayer after the Sabbath Week is over
- ✚ Connect with others about their God experience
- ✚ Notice how the prayer changes throughout the day
- ✚ Consider you own sense of being with each consecutive day
- ✚ Be gentle with yourself if you are unable to pray
- ✚ Be creative in how you tend your relationship with God and other people
- ✚ Consider meeting with a group of spiritual friends or a spiritual director if you feel called to do so

Igniting Spiritual Renewal Congregational Sabbath Resources

Common Language:

Christian Spirituality: Dwelling in relationship with God and the promise of Christ.

Sabbath: Resting in God while God is working and nourishing us

Prayer: Words and silence with holy power

Silence and solitude: A time and place to pay attention (listen) to the presence of God

Common Questions:

What can I do in silence to be present to God?

- ✚ Prepare your body to be able to listen by getting into a comfortable but alert prayer posture (sitting straight but relaxed with your feet flat on the floor and hands open in any way that is comfortable).
- ✚ Suspend judgment by allowing thoughts to gently fall away or setting them aside for later.
- ✚ Breathe deeply. Inhale, making space and exhale anxiety.
- ✚ Dwell on your focal point: silence or a word or a Scripture.
- ✚ Be with God.

What if I can't get quiet – my thoughts won't settle down?

- ✚ Be gentle with yourself.
- ✚ Consider sifting through your thoughts by journaling responses to two questions:
 - What of this day / season / situation is life giving?
 - What of this day / season / situation is not life giving?
- ✚ Engage in a more active form of devotion that still allows silence for listening to the stirring of the Spirit (music, art, walking, knitting, running, playing, nurturing family, time with friends, woodworking, cooking).

As I listen in my time of prayer, what am I listening for?

All people experience God differently. Sometimes this relationship is experienced as a sense of peace, a sense of love, a sense of joy, a sense of movement, a sense of struggle. The feel of your body will give you clues along the way. A question one might ask in reflecting on the prayer experience is this: Is it consistent with the life of Jesus and all that I know to be true about God and faith? Remember that this is an art, not a law.

Life *together*

Olsburg-Walsburg Lutheran Parish
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Leonardville, KS 66449-9617

Address Service Requested

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U.S. Postage
PAID
Olsburg, KS 66520
Permit No. 2

Lent Worship Schedule

Holden Evening Prayer With Luther

All are welcome to explore Martin Luther's approach to praying the Small Catechism, called the "Garland Prayer." Many have studied the Small Catechism in Middle School. Many can still recite portions of the creeds, prayers and commandments to this day. Young and old will come together around this classic text and ask, "What does this mean?" Better yet, we will follow in the footprints of Luther during our 40 day journey in Lent and take it into prayer.

Our evening will begin with a community soup supper provided by the people of the hosting church (after Ash Wednesday) Free will donations will be collected at the meal and a special offering will be collected during worship.

Ash Wednesday – Confession

February 17 (No soup supper)

7:00 PM – Olsburg
8:15 PM – Walsburg

Please gather together for the imposition of ashes and communion as we explore Luther's explanation and benefits of confession in two parts: our sinfulness and God's mercy.

February 24 – The Ten Commandments

Walsburg Lutheran Church
6:00 PM Soup Supper
7:00 PM Worship

March 3 – The Apostle's Creed

Olsburg Lutheran
6:00 PM Soup Supper
7:00 PM Worship

March 10 – The Lord's Prayer

Walsburg Lutheran
6:00 PM Soup Supper
7:00 PM Worship

March 17 – Holy Baptism

Olsburg Lutheran
6:00 PM Soup Supper
7:00 PM Worship

March 24 – Sacrament of the Altar

Walsburg Lutheran
6:00 PM Soup Supper
7:00 PM Worship

Holy Week

Palm Sunday – March 28

During worship we will process with Psalms, remembering Jesus' entry into Jerusalem.

Maundy Thursday – April 1

7:00 PM - Olsburg
8:15 PM - Walsburg

On this night, Jesus gives the commandment to love one another. We will celebrate those who are taking communion, and we will engage all of our senses in the story through song, drama, communion and a foot washing. Stay tuned for details. We will need adults and youth for dramatic portions.

Good Friday Service of Light and Darkness – April 2

7:00 PM – Olsburg
8:15 PM – Walsburg

Come and hear the passion of Christ through the traditional words and a more contemporary presentation through story and song and drama, featuring Walt Wangerine's "The Ragman." Adults and youth needed for drama.

Easter Worship Services – April 4

Sunrise – Walsburg
9:00 AM – Olsburg
11:00 AM – Walsburg