



The Grapevine



God's Purpose at ASLC is to welcome and accept everyone, improving their lives by embodying Christ's love.

Volume 21, Issue 2

Mission: To be a family of faith, empowered by God, to proclaim Jesus Christ.

February 2018



Pr. Joshua W. Gyson

and the Prez says . . .

By: Paul Oldenburg

If Ash Wednesday (the beginning of Lent) and Valentine's Day fall on the same date this year (and they do), does that mean that you can't eat the Valentine's chocolates that your sweetheart gets you? Well...maybe. But that's only if you give up chocolate for the 40 days of Lent. I'm guessin' that you're thinking you'll find something else to give up this year. I know that I am!

Historically, the Church has practiced "giving something up" during the season of Lent. This is a practice that helps us to keep our idols in check and to make sure that our real source of comfort and consolation rests in God alone. In recent years there has been a new Lenten Practice developing; instead of giving something up, you "take something up," like praying more, attending worship more faithfully, tithing better, etc.

Either way, I hope that this year you will practice this ancient tradition of taking up and Lenten Practice. And I would suggest that since you don't want to have to cheat on the first day, you don't pick chocolate this year. Instead, maybe you might pick something that is a little more meaningful, something that allows you to both give something up and take something up. And to help you with this, I offer you the idea of taking up a practice that I started a few years ago, a practice that has changed my life, that has changed who I am and how I see the world.

So here it is (take it or leave it): **Give up cursing.** (No I don't mean it that way! Well...maybe) I mean that anytime you feel the need to yell at somebody, anytime somebody cuts you off on the road, anytime you feel a burning hatred in your heart for somebody, instead of yelling a curse at them (which they often don't even hear anyways), instead offer a blessing. **Take up blessing.** A simple "God bless you" will do, but make it your own.

Now you might think that this is going to be the easiest thing ever, but I promise you that it won't. We are programmed to curse; we look at it as justice, only forgiving the other after we get our curse in first. Well, this practice changes that...it changes everything. First, if you are a sinner (anything like me) this practice is going to make you aware of how you unconsciously treat others, and in turn change you for the better. Second, I truly believe that this practice will make you and the world a better place, a way of living that is in tune with the Kingdom of God. Could you imagine what this world would be like, if we all went around blessing everybody that we meet!?

I pray that no matter what, you find a Lenten Practice that means something important to you, and that you receive as many blessings as you share.

Blessings,

Pr. Josh

Our Lenten journey is coming soon! The season of Lent lasts for 40 days, excluding Sundays, and represents the time Jesus spent in the wilderness facing temptation.

Lent, which begins this year on Valentine's Day, February 14th, is a time for self-examination and reflection as a way of deepening our relationship with God through Jesus Christ.

Because I was taught that Lent is a time for self-reflection, I use this time to look back at what I've done and haven't done.

Through prayer, I ask for guidance to help me be a better person and to look for opportunities to help my sisters and brothers. This Lenten discipline is a way that I have found helps me to reconnect and grow in my faith. Why not join me?

One way to help you with your self-reflection is by attending the Mid-week Lenten Services as we participate in the ELCA Lenten Study: The Faces of Christ.

This Lenten Journey is a long walk, but Jesus took a longer walk for us. A little more time spent on him is a small price to pay for all he did for us!

God Bless,

Paul

Procrastinating On The Path

Procrastination is one of the easiest things to do. Particularly this time of year, when holiday travels and celebrations have worn us out, when wintry weather finds us hibernating under blankets. But God’s work calls us out of our procrastination. The need for food, clothing and toiletries is constant. The opportunities to worship, learn about and praise God continue on with Sunday services, Faith Formation classes and Wednesday night supper and study. Warmer weather is on it’s way. Come out of hibernation. Discover the gifts that God has given you. Discover how to use those gifts. Discover how it feels to live out the promise that God will always be there to help you use your gifts. Discover that God’s grace and love are constant, even in procrastination.

YES! of America

Make plans to come to the Grand Opening of our new location on Friday, February 16th from 1 to 5 pm! It will be an afternoon of treats, music, and networking with YES! Board Members and Partners. The address is 10210 Westgate Drive, in Tampa in the old Timberlane Recreation Center. Please email Laura Sticklin (drslegs@gmail.com) to RSVP by February 9th.

Also, one of the newest ventures of YES! is to provide 100 pounds of bird seed a month to Baldomero Lopez Veteran’s Home. Their outdoor bird feeders make for great bird watching for the residents, many of whom have limited mobility or memory difficulties. Donations can be placed in the YES! bin.

“Soup”er Bowl of Caring

Help to fight hunger and poverty in our community through the “Soup”er Bowl of Caring on Sunday, February 4th. Bring with you to worship, non-perishable food items for the food pantry at Christian Social Services. Then, use them to vote for the team you think will win. Let’s see if All Saints can pick the winner!

Then, join us at 6:30 pm in Malivuk Hall for the Chili Cook-Off (bring recipes) and to watch the big game (and the commercials!). If you are not making chili, please bring a football food to share. Also, bring your favorite beverages and some comfortable chairs!

**Shrove Tuesday Pancake Dinner
February 13th from 6:30 to 7:30 pm**

Shrove Tuesday traditionally marks a time of confession and absolution as Christians enter a season of penance. It was a day for using up rich foods often given up for Lent, which is where the pancake tradition came from. In modern times, it has taken on a festive nature and is celebrated as Mardi Gras (Fat Tuesday). We honor both traditions with Bella’s Delicious Pancakes, along with a festive atmosphere. A freewill offering will be taken and donated to a scholarship fund for behavioral therapy.

Brown Bags

It cost about \$100 per week to pack 60 meal bags for the kids at A Brighter Community. The children in this preschool are living below the poverty level even though their parents are either working or going to school and these meals help the family immensely.

“These are all of our children. We will all profit or pay for whatever they become.” - James Baldwin

Christian Social Services

This is a tough time of year for the C.S.S. food pantry. During the holidays, many people give generously. Once the holidays are over, the donations decrease but the need is still there. And, the Postal Carrier Food Drive is not until May! You can assist those in need of a helping hand by bringing non-perishable food items and placing them in the bin in Malivuk Hall.

“I tell you the truth, whatever you did for the least of these, you did it for Me” (Matt. 25:40)

Deacon Continuing Education

On Monday, February 19th at 6:30 pm, we will be taking a look at the ELCA Social Statement “Caring for Creation”. This class is open to anyone interested in exploring this topic, but please call the office to find out about the required and optional reading.

Free Little Pantry

The free little pantry provides an option outside of traditional pantries which run on limited hours and provide only food. Along with non-perishable food, this pantry also contains personal hygiene products and baby supplies such as diapers and wipes. What a great addition this is to all the wonderful things C.S.S. is already doing in our community.

Mission Team Meeting

Because of Ash Wednesday, our next meeting will be on Wednesday, February 7th at 7 pm.

Newsletter Deadline

The deadline for the March Grapevine is Monday, February 19th.

Faith Formation

Infant to Age 5—Nursery

A short Sunday school lesson, art project and play time!

Kindergarten to Grade 5—Classroom 1

Spark Sunday School Curriculum

Students will hear a kid-friendly version of the same readings we learn about in worship.

Grades 6 to 8 Confirmation—Upstairs Youth Room

Faith Inkubators—Come explore the Old Testament with Anthony & Lindsay Williams

Adults—Malivuk Hall

The class will explore ELCA Social Statements, which are documents that assist us in thinking about and discussing social issues in the context of faith and life.

These educational opportunities are open to all and our hope is through Christian education you will have a closer relationship with God and a greater understanding of your faith.

Teaching Seder

A Seder tells the story of God’s grace in history and calls the participant to experience and share in the story.



Our Teaching Seder is on Wednesday, March 28th at 6:30 pm and in the Jewish tradition, it is customary to invite guests to share the meal with you. Please bring a “kosher” style food item to share.



Ash Wednesday

February 14th

A spoken service will be held at noon and a full service at 7:30 pm. Communion will be served at both services.

Because it is Valentine’s Day, we are not having our normal Wednesday evening potluck meal. Instead at 6:30 pm, we will provide hors d’oeuvres and ask that you bring your favorite beverage for a beverage sampling. Please sign up in the narthex for the appetizers so we know how much food to prepare.



Join us on Wednesdays, starting February 21st for a potluck meal at 6:30 pm and Lenten Worship at 7:30 pm.

Worship will be based on the ELCA Lenten Study: The Faces of Christ. Join us as we seek who Jesus Christ is, what it means to be Christ for others, and to see Christ in others. Worship includes an interactive sermon, as well as a service project to benefit the Free Little Pantry.

Also, a weekly Lenten devotional video will be posted to our Facebook page on Wednesday. So like our page, then watch and comment on the videos as part of your Lenten discipline.

Worship Time is 9:47 am

Acolyte: 2/4: Jackson Kamp. 2/11: Aaliyah Caynor. 2/18: Mackenzie Gyson. 2/25: Keller Gyson.

Altar Guild: **Set-up:** Ben and Kaye High. **Clean-Up:** February 4 & 11: Donna Bryant and Vi Ficarrota. February 18 & 25: Judy Callan and Michelle Danielson.

Assisting Minister: February 4: Mackenzie Gyson. February 11, 18 and 25: Cindy Kamp.

Lectors: 2/4: Suzy Tkacik. 2/11: Anna Breede. 2/18: Andy Malivuk. 2/25: Volunteer Needed.

Crucifer: February 4 & 11: Dave Sanders. February 18 & 25: Volunteer Needed.

Ushers: Pete Lacko, Paul Lunseth, James Shewbarran and John Stewart.

Tellers: Ilse Corydon and Liza Stewart

Greeters: February 4 & 11: David Sticklin. February 18 & 25: Paul Lunseth.

Breadbaker: Julie Noya.

~ ~ ENABLERS ~ ~

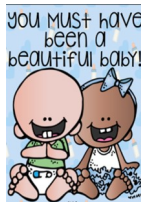
ELCA Youth Gathering Fundraisers

Anna Breede, Emma Brown and Sophie Thomas, along with Marcia Greensfelder and Anne Sylvester, will be attending the ELCA Youth Gathering in Houston this summer. For information on their fundraising efforts, please see the information below.



Youth Gathering participants and their families will host the **Second Sunday Meal** on February 11th after worship. And, what could be better than some Texan cuisine of BBQ sandwiches with all the fixins! Donations can be made through the free-will offering.

There is still time to submit your photo to Marcia or Cindy for the **Baby Photo Contest!** There is a \$5 entry fee. The original photo will be returned to you after being copied. The photos will be displayed in two categories: Adult (18 and up) and youth (birth to age 17). People will then have the opportunity to vote with their dollars by category for the cutest baby. There will be a prize for the winner of the cutest baby vote in each age grouping. Pictures will be displayed soon, so be sure to get yours turned in before voting begins! People are encouraged to vote early and often!



The **Flamingo Surprise** fundraiser is ongoing with flamingos landing on lawns throughout the area! Costs is \$5 to purchase Flamingo Prevention Insurance so they won't roost on your lawn, or \$10 to have flamingos roost on someone else's yard. If you have flamingos fly in, cost is \$15 to have them removed, or \$10 to have them shooed to another location, and \$5 to insure that they will not fly back to you!

Rent-A-Teen Youth are also available to assist with those chores you need done around your house. Please contact Marcia to schedule.

What creative ways to help our youth raise funds!

Music Practice

The Adult Music Group generally practices every week on Thursdays at 7 pm in the sanctuary. However there are some upcoming changes to the practice schedule because of the Lenten season.

Practice will be held on February 13th around 7 pm, after we have had our fill of delicious Shrove Tuesday Pancakes! The following week starting on February 21st through March 28th, we will move practice to Wednesdays immediately following the Lenten Worship Services which start at 7:30 pm. Our regular schedule returns in April.

The youth will practice on February 4th after Sunday School with pizza and will sing during worship on February 11th. The remainder of their schedule is below:

- March 25th (Palm Sunday)
After Sunday School with pizza
- April 1st (Easter)
Youth will sing for second service worship as a choral introit
- April 15th and May 6th
After Sunday School with pizza
- May 13th
Kids will sing in Church
(last music event for youth until the fall)



Holy Week Dates

- March 28th at 6:30 pm**
Teaching Seder
- March 29th at Noon and 7:30 pm**
Triduum 1—Maundy Thursday
- March 30th at Noon and 7:30 pm**
Triduum 2—Good Friday
- March 31st at 7:30 pm**
Triduum 3—Easter Vigil at Sunset
- April 1st—Easter Sunday**
Worship at 7 and 10 am
Easter Breakfast at 8 am
Easter Egg Hunt at 9 am

We welcome all who are seeking God's love and grace.

We welcome all because God welcomes all, regardless of race or culture, sexual orientation, gender identity, or relationship status. We welcome all without regard to addictions, physical or mental health, imprisonment, socio-economic circumstances, differently-abled or anything that too often divides us.

Our unity is in Christ.



Green Team—A Strawberry Solution!



By: Donna Bryant

According to EcoWatch, “Approximately 500 billion plastic bags are used worldwide annually. More than one million bags are used every minute. 46 percent of plastics float (EPA 2006) and it can drift for years before eventually concentrating in the ocean gyres. It takes 500 to 1,000 years for plastic to degrade.” April 7, 2014

Gyres are ring-like systems of ocean currents that result in trash accumulating in garbage patches in the ocean. Plastics are one of the major contributors to these garbage patches. In a previous article, I challenged you me to save every plastic bag you received in a month to get a feel for this problem. After trying this myself, I think a week is sufficient. It is estimated the average American family takes home 1500 plastic bags a year.

Using the premise that if you are not part of the solution then you are part of the problem, the church has purchased reusable nylon bags that fold into themselves and look like strawberries. The bags will be for sale for \$3 each or two for \$5. They are compact, lightweight, and easily hook onto your keys, purse or belt which makes them convenient to use when you are out running errands. Reusable bags also last a long time. In the meantime until you purchase your bag, you are encouraged to skip the bag for that one or two items if you are able.

And what about all those bags you already have now? Marianne Baab is collecting clean, dry bags which are turned into plastic yarn (plarn) to make sleeping mats for the homeless. It takes about 700 plastic bags to make enough plarn for one mat. During a recent worship service, our youth helped to bless one of her completed mats, along with some yarn blankets she also made. Bags can be placed on the soda machine in Malivuk Hall.



5315 Van Dyke Rd
Lutz, FL 33558

Office: (813) 963-0969

www.allsaintstampa.org

PastorJosh@allsaintstampa.org

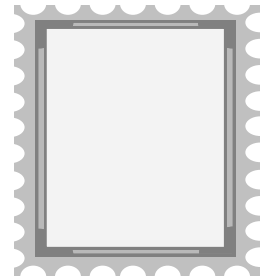
office@allsaintstampa.org

Mission Team

Pastor:	Joshua Gyson
President:	Paul Oldenburg
V President:	Cindy Kamp
Secretary:	Nicole Aiello
Treasurer:	Anne Sylvester
Larry Bryant	Larry Hickman
Rob Sabatini	Anthony Williams

Donation Options

- ♥ Sunday Offering Plate
- ♥ On-Line Banking
- ♥ Use the “Give” option on our website



Meets 1st Wednesday of the month!