



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

Welcome to Messiah!

Weekly Sunday Services

8:30am Traditional Worship
9:45am Education Hour
11:00am Contemporary Worship

Wednesday Lenten Services

Ash Wednesday Feb. 17
5:15pm Soup Supper
6:30pm Lenten Service

Wednesdays beginning Feb. 24

5:15pm Soup Supper
6:30pm Prodigal God discussion in
Fellowship Hall

office@messiahfamily.com

Phone: 402-331-5510

www.messiahfamily.com



In This Issue

[Pastor Greg's Column](#)

[Stewardship](#)

[Lent 2010 Schedule](#)

[Faith Formation News](#)

[Pastoral Care News](#)

[Parish Nurse News](#)

[Angelfood Ministries](#)

[Women of the ELCA News](#)

[Serving from the Heart](#)

[Financial Updates](#)

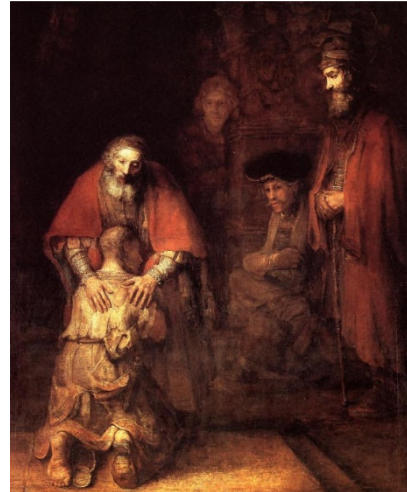
Messiah Messenger

February 2010

Pastor Greg's Column

"A Father's Love"

For 2010 Lent, this will be our theme for both Sunday worship and our Wednesday gatherings. I am especially excited about how I think God will be present in these disciplines. The power of the Gospel, the good news is in the Father's love. No matter how long we've been a Christian, no matter how mature we have grown in faith, it comes back to refreshing our heart, mind, soul and strength in His extraordinary love. One thing I ask of you: Prayerfully consider your commitment to this Lenten season. Traditionally it has been a time of renewed discipline and piety in order for



God to draw us closer and envelope us even more in His love. The sermons and Wednesday studies will be a progression, culminating in Holy Week, so it will be helpful for you to commit to being present each Sunday and Wednesday. Elsewhere in this newsletter you will find details about our Lenten gatherings - make it a priority to put them on your calendar. One thing will be different from the past, instead of "worship" on Wednesday evenings in the sanctuary, following our soup suppers we continue fellowship, study and discussion around the tables in the fellowship hall. It is our hope that this will encourage discussion and reflection that leads to life change!

Of course, before Lent begins, I ask for your prayers as I travel to Tanzania. I am so excited about this trip! From others who have gone and my own prayer-preparation, I know God will be blessing this time! A highlight will be when on Sunday, February 7th I will be worshiping and sharing God's Word with our brothers and sisters of the Nkuu Kati Parish. I will also be sharing your gifts and messages with them.

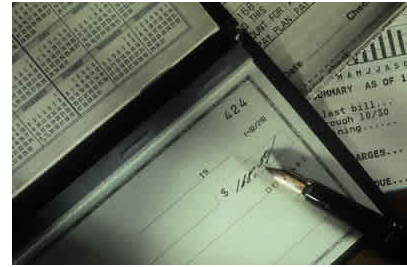
So that you may share in my travels, I have set up a blog that you can follow and offer comments. Just go to www.gregtherev.wordpress.com I'm not sure of the frequency of my blogs, but you can subscribe so anytime I enter a new blog you will receive it via email - isn't technology grand?!

Join us Sunday, January 31st to see the gifts I am taking on your behalf and be a part of the prayers of sending.

God's blessings, peace and joy be with you all!
Pastor Greg "GregtheRev"

Stewardship

✓ Checkbook Theology-how do you spend your money?



Do you ever think about how your checkbook reflects your beliefs? What would someone looking at our check registers and credit card receipts assume were our priorities? In the law of Moses, the people of Israel were taught to bring their first fruits to God as a temple sacrifice, and these first fruits were to be the best—a lamb without blemish, the purest grains, the most luscious fruit. God was to be given the first and the best. That was the nature of the tithe—a tenth portion given to the community in God's name—ten percent of gross income in today's language. It was a given.

Our checkbooks, net worth statements and estate plans reflect our theology. The custom of American culture is to take care of your own needs first as well as the needs of your family. Leaving something to the church or to other charitable causes in our estate plans seems to be a new thought. Recent estimates indicate that ten to thirty trillion dollars of wealth will be transferred from one generation to the next in the coming two decades. How much of that will go to support the institutions that have nourished us—our churches, schools and communities? How much will be left to strengthen our common life or to care for God's creation?

**How do we decide what to give?
Is it whatever is left over when we've satisfied
our own desires?
Isn't this just the opposite
of what our faith teaches us?**

Scripture teaches us that all we have is a gift from God and that we live by the grace of God. This perspective helps to keep us humble when we come to make decisions about how we will use the income and assets we control. A theology of stewardship must bear in mind that all of creation is under the reign of God. Caring for God's creation by using our treasure, our time and our talents for the good of the whole will move us closer to accountability. It will also draw us nearer to God and to all that God has created.

Excerpted from *Graceful Living: Your Faith, Values, and Money in Changing Times* by the Rev. Laura Dunham, Certified Financial Planner. Published by RCA Distribution, Inc., 2002. Order at 800-968-7221. More information at www.gracefulliving.com

Lent 2010 Schedule

On Sunday mornings Pastor Greg will lead us through an understanding of

and the uncovering of the Bible's DNA that will change how you read and apply the Bible:

- Sunday February 21 The Powerful Old Covenant - Humanity Gives God an Idea!
Sunday February 28 The Even Better New Covenant - New Clothes and a New Belt
Sunday March 7 The Even Better New Covenant - Beauty Marks and New Names
Sunday March 14 Living in the Authority of the Covenant - Luck and the Firetruck Syndrome
Sunday March 21` Ruling and reigning in the Covenant - Loosening and Binding Prayer

On Wednesday evenings, after soup and fellowship, we will engage the popular parable known as The Prodigal Son, renamed The Prodigal God, with the principles of Covenant and Kingdom. Pastor Timothy Keller, via a DVD study, will lead us in this exploration which promises to help each of us discover the amazing depths of God's extravagant love.

The book, "The Prodigal God" by Timothy Keller and a Discussion Guide will be available. Books are \$10.00 and Discussion Guides are \$5.00.

- | | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------|--|
| Ash Wednesday February 17 | The Parable | |
| Wednesday February 24 | The People Around Jesus | Why People Like Jesus But Not the Church |
| Wednesday March 3 | The Two Lost Sons | Redefining Sin |
| Wednesday March 10 | The Elder Brother | Redefining Lostness |
| Wednesday March 17 | The True Elder Brother | What and Who We Need |
| Wednesday March 24 and Salvation | The Feast of the Father | Redefining Hope |

Holy Week Schedule:

- | | | |
|----------------------------------|--|------------------------|
| Sunday of the Passion March 28th | Choir Cantata | The New Covenant |
| Maundy Thursday April 1st | Welcome to the Feast! Meal | The Covenant |
| Good Friday April 2nd | Stations of the Cross | The Covenant Sacrifice |
| Easter April 4th | Resurrection! 7:00, 8:30 and 11:00 am. | The Covenant Ratified! |

Faith Formation News

[Confirmation](#)

Wednesday night Confirmation classes will conclude on Wednesday, February 10.

Reminder: Ash Wednesday, the beginning of Lent is on Wednesday, February 17. Everyone is encouraged to start each Wednesday in Lent with a meal of soup and sandwiches in the fellowship hall beginning at 5:30 p.m followed by Lenten Services beginning at 6:30 p.m.

SUNDAY MORNING PROGRAMMING

B.L.A.S.T.

Sunday Feb. 7--Computer Room 5th/6th, Art Ark
3rd/4th, BibleMax Theater 1st/2nd

Sunday Feb. 14--Messiah Playhouse-All grades

Sunday Feb. 21--Messiah Playhouse 1st-3rd, Art Ark 4th-6th

Sunday Feb. 28--Messiah Playhouse 4th-6th, Art Ark 1st-3rd

Little Disciples

Sunday School for 3, 4 and 5 year olds continues each Sunday morning at 9:45 a.m. in the Little Disciples Room (Preschool Room)

Senior High Forums continue each Sunday morning in the Senior High Youth Room from 9:45-10:45 a.m.

The 7th & 8th grade Confirmation Students will travel to a local mortuary on Sunday, February 7 as part of their Death and Dying Series. This trip will conclude this 5 week session. Starting February 14, the Confirmation youth will return to meeting in the loft on Sunday mornings beginning at 9:45 a.m.

"Souper Bowl Sunday - February 7, 2009

Senior High Youth

On Sunday, February 7th, our High School Youth will provide some special information regarding Souper Bowl Sunday and then will be using soup pots at the church doors to collect money for "Souper" bowl Sunday. They will join young people in churches all across the country to collect money for those who are hungry and hurting. All of the money collected is donated to a charity selected by the participant. Our church will donate the Souper bowl collection to Project Hope Food Pantry. Please support the youth of our church in this effort to "love our neighbors" by dropping your dollar in the soup pot on "Souper" Bowl Sunday. Thank you!

Lenten Soup & Sandwich Suppers

Please join us from 5:30-6:15 p.m. on Wednesday evenings during Lent for the soup, sandwiches, and fellowship that proceeds each 6:30 p.m. Lenten Service.

The Senior Youth will be serving on Ash Wednesday, February 17th.

Upcoming/Congregational Fellowship Events

Annual Spaghetti Dinner & Silent Auction

" A Night at the Beach...Wash Away the Winter Blues"-

Sunday, February 21, 2010

5:00-7:00 p.m.

Cost: \$8.00 per person or \$25.00 per family

Cooked, Hosted & Served by the Youth of Messiah

The congregation is invited to the Annual Messiah Spaghetti Dinner on Sunday, February 21 from 5:00 - 7:00 p.m. This years' theme is "A Night at the Beach...Wash Away the Winter Blues." Tickets can be purchased between church services on Sunday, February 7, 14, and 21. You can also purchase them at the door on the day of the event. Mark your calendars and plan to attend. The food, service, fellowship and entertainment will be outstanding!! All proceeds will go toward the Senior High Youth Work Camp Trip to Racine, Wisconsin and other upcoming Senior High Events.

Attention: Senior High Youth - Set up/decorating for the Spaghetti Dinner event will take place on Saturday, February 20 at 10:00 a.m. Mark your calendars now!

Upcoming Fellowship Events for February

M.A.R.s group will meet at the church on Tuesday Feb. 2 at 11am for a luncheon.

Amazing Pizza Machine

5-8th Grades

Saturday, February 27, 2010

12:00-3:00 p.m.

Cost: \$\$15.00

Friends Welcome!

We'll meet at Messiah at 12:00 p.m. and then drive over to the Amazing Pizza Machine where you will eat a hearty lunch and then have 90 minutes of unlimited activities included the rides and activities and a play card for 60 points. We'll return to the church by 3:00 p.m. Permission forms and sign up sheets are located on the bulletin board outside the fellowship hall. Friends are always welcome!!!

Senior High Ski Trip

9-12 Grades

Friday, February 12-Monday, February 15, 2010

Winter Park, Colorado

Fifteen youth and adults will travel to Winter Park, Colorado for a long weekend of skiing, fellowship, fun, devotions and worship and of course beautiful scenery.

Junior High Winter Trip

6-7-8 Grades

Cost: \$200 (includes transportation, two nights lodging at Embassy suites, breakfasts, and ski equipment & lessons)

Afton Alps for Skiing

Mall of America for shopping

Minneapolis, Minnesota

March 5-7, 2010

Friends Welcome!

Space is still available for the Junior High Winter Trip. We'll leave after school on Friday, March 5 for a weekend of skiing at Afton Alps, shopping at the Mall of America, nightly devotions and worship on Sunday morning before we head back. Forms are located on the bulletin board outside the fellowship hall or see Rita for more information.

Senior High Work Camp

Racine, Wisconsin

9-12 Grades

Cost \$350.00

June 19-26, 2010

Space is still available for the Senior High Work Trip to Racine, Wisconsin. We'll leave early on Saturday, June 19 and travel to Wisconsin where we will spend the night and then on Sunday, June 20, check into camp for a week of work in the intercity of Racine. We'll return on Saturday, June 26. Permission forms are located on the bulletin board outside of the fellowship hall. Don't miss this chance to make a difference for others and for yourself. It will be a great week.

Pastoral Care News



Pause for Prayer

We have a Prayer Chapel at Messiah. The room previously known as the Oasis Room is now the Prayer Chapel. We set aside this room for individual (or group) prayer. We invite you to "drop in and pray awhile" anytime the church doors are open.

In our new prayer chapel, you'll find prayer request cards (both empty and filled out), a Bible and a hymnal for devotional use, and a guest book. We ask that you date and initial the guest book each time you visit the chapel. (We wish to

track the use of this room and also keep track that the prayer requests are being lifted up to our Lord.).

Online Prayer Requests

Many people make use of our Prayer Cards each Sunday morning to initiate prayer requests. Or call the office and initiate the requests that way. And that is wonderful! But did you know that prayer requests can also be submitted via our Messiah home page on the web? Find the right sidebar on our home page www.messiahfamily.com and click on Prayer Requests. Fill out the form, submit it, and we'll add that person to our prayers!

Care for the Caregiver

Our next meeting of our Pastoral Care team will be on Wednesday, February 17 at 1 p.m. in our Prayer Chapel. All members of the pastoral care team are requested to be there so we can take some time sharing and praying together and have our weekly refresher topic.

New members always welcomed! Give us a call in advance (331-5510) so we can gather information for becoming a member of the Pastoral Care Team at Messiah!

Sue Simmons - Pastoral Care

Parish Nurse News



February is National Heart Month. Heart Disease still remains a leading cause of death in both men and women. Stop by the Parish Nurse Table and learn more about Heart Disease and what you can do to help prevent it.

10 ways to love your Heart.

- Know your blood pressure and cholesterol numbers
- Get regular check ups
- Follow your Dr's advice for diet and exercise
- Take prescribed medications as directed
- If you smoke, QUIT now
- Get at least 30 minutes of moderate physical activity each day
- Eat a heart-healthy diet, including fruits and vegetables, whole-grain foods and

fish

- Limit foods high in saturated fats and cholesterol
- Limit your sodium intake to 2,300 mg daily
- If you drink alcohol, drink in moderation- an average of no more than 1 drink/day for non pregnant women

Low impact exercise class continues Mondays at 1:30 PM in the Little Disciples Room- feel free to join us!

Doni Schroeder R.N. Parish Nurse



Angelfood orders will be taken on Feb 7 and 14 and the cut off date for ordering is Tuesday Feb 16th at 5 pm.

Distribution date is Saturday Feb 27th from 9am to 11am at the Ralston Senior Center, 7300 Q St.

angelfoodministries.com

Messiah Women of the ELCA News

Upcoming events

- Metro East Spring Gathering - theme is "Share the Light of Christ: Live, Laugh and Love" April 17th at First Lutheran Church in Blair

- Messiah's WELCA Spring Gathering is April 18th - theme TBD

- Saved to Serve opportunity in Grand Island on May 21, 22, 23rd - They will be refurbishing a group home with paint, paper and love.

- Saved to Serve opportunity at Camp Carol Joy Holling on July 30, 31 and August 1st

- Metro East Autumn Renewal will be September 25th at Bethlehem Lutheran in Wahoo



Serving From the Heart

February is Heart Month and this is a great devotional from Rick Warren's daily online devotional on "Serving from the Heart" which posted on Dec. 31, 2009. If you are looking for insight on where you can serve the Kingdom of God from your heart, please contact Pastor Greg or Diane Blomberg (Apostolic Coordinator) to explore these opportunities.

From now on if you listen obediently to the commandments that I am commanding you today, love God, your God, and serve him with everything you have within you, he'll take charge of sending the rain at the right time Deuteronomy 11:13-14 (MSG)

Repeatedly, the Bible says to "serve the Lord with all your heart." God wants you to serve him passionately, not dutifully. People rarely excel at tasks they don't enjoy doing or feel passionate about. God wants you to use your natural interests to serve him and others.

How do you know when you're serving God from your heart?

The first telltale sign is enthusiasm. When you're doing what you love to do, no one has to motivate you, or challenge you, or check up on you. You do it for the sheer enjoyment. You don't need rewards, or applause, or to be paid, because you love serving in this way. The opposite is also true: When you don't have a heart for what you're doing, you're easily discouraged.

One characteristic of serving God from your heart is effectiveness: whenever you do what God wired you to love to do, you get good at it. Passion drives perfection. If you don't care about a task, it is unlikely that you'll excel at it. On the other hand, the highest achievers in any field are those who do it because of passion, not duty or profit. We've all heard people say, "I took a job I hate in order to make a lot of money, so someday I can quit and do what I love to do." That's a big mistake. Don't waste your life in a job that doesn't express your heart.

Remember, the greatest things in life are not things. Meaning is far more important than money. The richest man in the world once said, "A simple life in the fear-of-God is better than a rich life with a ton of headaches" (Proverbs 15:16, Msg).

Don't settle for achieving "the good life," because the good life is not good enough. Ultimately, it doesn't satisfy. You can have a lot to live on, and still have nothing to live for. Aim instead for "the better life" -- serving God in a way that expresses your heart.

Figure out what you love to do -- that which God gave you a heart for -- and then do it for his glory!

Financial Updates

	Month(Dec 2009):	Year to Date:
Mission Share to NE Synod:	\$ 3,569	\$ 35,470
General Fund:		
Receipts received	\$ 50,072	\$ 462,283
Expenses invested	\$ 47,613	\$ 449,562
Surplus/(Shortfall)	\$ 2,459	\$ 12,721
Fund Balance - General Fund	\$ (19,298)	
Special Ministries Funds:		
Receipts received	\$ 7,139	\$ 138,114
Expenses invested	\$ 3,375	\$ 83,824
Surplus/(Shortfall)	\$ 3,764	\$ 54,290
Fund Balance - all special funds	\$ 105,887	

Upcoming Events

The Men In Misson Group of Messiah will be serving at the Stephen Center on Friday February 5th at 5:30pm.

February 7 is Don & Millie's Restaurant (84th & Q) Sunday. Dine in or drive thru from 11am to 9pm and mention that you are from Messiah Lutheran Church and the church will receive 20% of that day's Messiah receipts. The money is used to bless the many ministries of Messiah. Tell your friends and neighbors.

Papillion Area Lions Club will hold their Spaghetti Dinner on Sunday Feb. 7 from 11am to 4pm in the Papillion-LaVista High School Cafeteria (North location). Cost is \$8 for adults and \$4 for children 6-12. Children 5 and under eat for free. Tickets are available at the door or call 339-8229. There will be entertainment and free health screenings.

Upcoming Lutheran Marriage Encounter Weekend Feb 12-14 in Lincoln, NE. If interested in attending, please contact Dayle & Terri Mautz 402-540-8508 or email them at dtmautz@yahoo.com

Project Hope Needs for February : Beans/Cookies

February 21 is Project Hope Sunday.

**Sunday February 21 from 5-7pm is the Annual Spaghetti Dinner.
Tickets go on sale Feb. 7th!**



Consider a Trip to Tanzania

You are invited to visit our companion synod in Tanzania! As we continue to deepen our relationship with the Northern Diocese of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania, two Nebraska Synod-sponsored trips to Tanzania are planned for 2011:

February 7-22, 2011

July 12-27, 2011

February 6-21, 2012

Estimated costs range from \$3700 (February Trip) to \$4500 (July Trip) which covers all airfare, transportation, meals, safari fees, and visas. The trip includes visits to ministry sites of the Northern Diocese as well as a safari to the Serengeti and Ngorongoro Crater.

These trips flow from the relationship we share with our companion synod in Tanzania. The companion synod program enables the Nebraska Synod to experience the gifts and witness of the Northern Diocese of the Evangelical Church in Tanzania.

Interested? Please contact Pr. Martin Russell or Stephanie Lusinski in the Nebraska Synod office (402-896-5311). Space is limited.
