

The Promise

People of God

Seeking, Seeding, Serving & Spreading God's Love



The Monthly Newsletter of Covenant Lutheran Church—ELCA

REFLECTIONS FROM PASTOR MARK

February 2012

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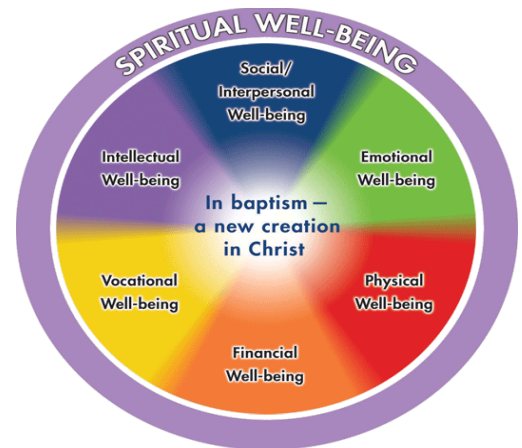
2012 Lenten Journey is "A Walk to Emmaus!"

Discipleship is a journey of discovery. While pondering our next trip to the Boundary Waters I came across a story about a former British army captain Ed Stafford who completed a perilous 4,200-mile walk across the length of the Amazon River. It took him two years, and, en route, he managed to avoid deadly snakes, hostile villagers and nasty crocs.* It was a long walk.

We are going to walk to Emmaus for our long walk of Lent this year. Emmaus is seven miles Northwest of Jerusalem. Together marking our miles with pedometers and keeping track of our exercise (1 mile=10 minutes of exercise) we are going to track our journey of 6,213 miles from Stoughton. For those of you who do not have a pedometer we are securing 150 at the cost of \$5 a piece for the journey. We figure it is around 154 miles a day for 40 days and we should arrive with Jesus in Emmaus. Some are thinking we may even have enough miles to return home before Easter evening.

The Road to Emmaus tells the story of two disciples who, unknowingly share their journey with Christ, and

experience all dimensions of well-being. They walked together accompanied by Christ (physical well being). They talked, listened and told the story (emotional well being). Christ interpreted scripture and taught them (intellectual well being). Christ broke bread with them and their eyes were opened (spiritual well being). Christ charged them to be witnesses (vocational well being). Alongside our Parish Nurse Sue Richards who will be one of our guides we are going to look at these five healthy themes all designed to integrate faith and health.



If there's anything the Emmaus Road story teaches us, it's that the

disciples of Jesus are at their best when they keep walking with him. Discipleship is never a drive-by or fly-by process, in which we can look for instant results and ignore the people and places we whiz by every day. Disciples of Jesus recognize that their lives are a journey of following Jesus and learning from him but also looking *for* him in the faces of strangers who join them on the way. Disciples are willing to follow Jesus despite the dangers and potential pitfalls, and they offer hospitality to others who may not yet recognize him. Disciples also know that *they can't walk the journey alone*. Intrepid explorer Ed Stafford needed others to help him walk the Amazon and finish. Discipleship is a long walk and we need each other along the way. Stafford *finished* his long walk with a dip in the water. We *begin* our journey with Jesus when we're dipped in the waters of baptism. We also need nourishment along the way, which the breaking of bread in the Eucharist offers us all through Christ's gracious sacrifice. No matter where we live and move in the world, we are reminded that it's Jesus who leads us, provides for us and walks beside us. Every step of Lent will remind us of those promises.

Do you remember the film *Forrest Gump*:

Forrest Gump: Those must be comfortable shoes. I bet you could walk all day in shoes like those and not feel a thing.

Nurse at park bench: My feet hurt.

Forrest Gump: My momma always said you can tell a lot about a person by their shoes, where they go, where they've been. I've worn lots of shoes. I bet if I think about it real hard, I can remember my first pair of shoes.

Well, by the end of the 40 days of Lent we can all look at our shoes and say these are the shoes that took our congregation all the way to Emmaus this year! Put your walking shoes on and come on Wednesday/Saturday evenings and Sunday mornings to walk with us – it will help us be a vigorous congregation. Let's get moving,
Pastor Mark

*"British man walks entire Amazon River in two years." *USA Today Web site*, August 9, 2010. usatoday.com/news/world/2010-08-09-Amazon-walker_N.htm. Viewed November 26, 2010.



God's Work. Our Hands.

At this time of year we are reviewing, celebrating and thanking God for the past year and looking forward to a new year together. We wish to thank you for your contributions to Covenant Lutheran Church during 2011. On account of your generosity and gifts, it was an exceptional year of *Faith in Action*:

- **We have added a new Parish Nurse, Sue Richards, to our staff.**
- **We have contributed over 9% of our gifts beyond our walls to the local and global communities.**
- **We have assisted families in Stoughton through START as well as refugee families settling in Dane County.**
- **We have provided Health and Midwife Kits for people around the world.**
- **People from our congregation have traveled on mission trips to bring God's love to others.**
- **We will add new technology with a projection ministry to enhance our worship.**

These are wonderful indicators of financial health at Covenant. Frederick Buechner once said: "Your call to ministry is where your deepest gladness meets the world's greatest needs." Covenant is meeting those needs because of your faithful response to Christ's invitation and the result is joy! Each of you are a treasure to our church and appreciated for your regular attendance at worship, your financial contributions, and service.

God's blessings,
Faith in Action/Stewardship Teams

INSTALLATION OF 2012 COUNCIL

The following members were installed as 2012 Council members on Sunday, January 15:

Greg Clark, Dan Christensen, Bill Eversoll, AnnMarie Oakland, Larry E. Olson, Richard Shilts, Christy Unzicker, Marijo Vols, Heidi Weber & Scott Wendt

MESSAGE FROM PASTOR GEORGE

just visiting with pastor george...Important "F" Words

At our January 17 Congregation Council meeting, when asked to share my pastor's report, I concluded by pointing to the last paragraph in my written report by commenting, "We really need to remember some "F" words." That raised some eyebrows and chuckles before I could even continue! Perhaps I used a poor choice of words as I introduced the paragraph, but I did get everyone's attention! Let me share the paragraph with the "F" words emphasized:

*We of Covenant listened intentionally for God's leading in 2011. The Spirit spoke through a variety of people. We shared our opinions, questions and concerns. I sense a deepened commitment to mission. New ministries took shape. I pray that God will keep us **focused, faithful and fearless** in **following** Jesus in bringing God's Light and Life to others.*

We live bombarded lives...bombarded with words and images from the internet (websites, Facebook, Twitter, emails...), television, newspapers (for those of us who still subscribe), magazines, advertisements...bombarded with expectations at home and work and school. We can have difficulty focusing.

We have made promises...promises to our employer or employees...promises to our friends... promises to our spouse...promises to service clubs or organizations...promises to God. Tensions arise when the promises pull us in differing directions, put pressure on us as each requires attention. We can struggle with remaining faithful.

We see situations that we know do not measure up to God's will for people, for the planet, for life together in community, for caring for our neighbor (near or far) as ourselves. We often hesitate or find excuses to remain silent or turn away or stay at a distance because we fear the response or reaction of others.

I experience all of these things. I need Jesus these Epiphany days as he encounters people in their needs and brokenness and longing. I need Jesus to bring God's Light and Life to me. When I see and hear him, when I witness

his focus on God's will, his faithfulness in caring for others and his fearlessness in standing with the oppressed and outcast, then his Spirit works in me to sharpen my focus, to strengthen my faithfulness and to drive out fear.

As a community of believers, we have these same struggles as we do individually. But God does not abandon us in our dilemmas. I rejoice that God sends Jesus to us, that Jesus dwells with us always, that God's Spirit speaks to us through one another to lead us more deeply into God's willing-to-die-for-us love and amazing grace. I have confidence that God will work in and through Covenant in 2012 so this congregation and each of us will shine with Christ's light. I wonder where Jesus will lead us, will lead you, will lead me in 2012?

*I pray that God will keep us **focused, faithful and fearless** in **following** Jesus in bringing God's Light and Life to others.*

COVENANT CARE TEAM



Its winter!

Snow and **Cold** and **Ice** keep some elders inside and away from their usual activities and social contacts.

Do you know someone living alone who might...

- Enjoy someone stopping by for a visit
- Enjoy company for a BYO lunch
- Like someone to run errands or grocery shop for them
- Like help organizing their papers for tax time

These are some types of service and support the Covenant Care Team members are happy to provide. If you know someone who might benefit from similar help and support, please contact the church office with the following information:

- **Your name and phone number**
- **Name of individual, their address and their phone number**

One of the team leaders will phone you for additional information.

MESSAGE FROM MARK DOLL,
MINISTER OF FAITH DEVELOPMENT

Coincidence. It always intrigues me.

This past week, Pastor Mark and Pastor George attended a synod sponsored event that was all about boundaries and making sure you are attentive to them. Boundaries for clergy are a critical issue, both for the pastors themselves, but also for their parishioners. Without delving into that particular issue, I wanted to note that Pastor Mark mentioned that one of the topics discussed was the perceived power that clergy have, in many areas. Obviously, people bring their "secrets" to pastors, knowing that they can trust the pastor's confidentiality. There is surely also the realization that for spiritual guidance, for prayers, for counseling, pastors have skills that others may not. With that confidentiality and skills comes power.

A little of that trickles down to the Minister of Faith Development position as well, although my skills are not that of an ordained minister, and I don't pretend otherwise. But, with few exceptions, I am treated with respect, respect that I may or may not have earned.

Anyway, the coincidence is that the next evening, during Peer Ministry, we were discussing dealing with authority figures, particularly in difficult situations, where we might have an issue that we need to bring before an authority figure, even an issue with *that* authority figure. And being an authority figure means having power. It also means expecting respect – that is, an authority figures expects those who come before him/her to come with respect.

Well, for teenagers, most of their authority figures are older than they, so there is also the natural tendency to use the phrase "respect your elders." And I think it's appropriate, in the sense that as we age, we obviously gain experience, and hopefully gain wisdom and intelligence. But I had to pause, or perhaps more accurately, interrupt, and mention that I don't think age has much to do with whether we treat another person with respect. Specifically, I try to treat the youth of our congregation (well, all youth, but I know more in our congregation than outside of it) with a great deal of respect; I don't require them to get older to get it nor do I expect them to

earn that respect. Just as with *trust*, they have my *respect* until they lose it. And if I don't treat them with respect, will they respect me, merely because I'm (a bit) older? Listening to our Peer Ministers, the answer is *perhaps* – *perhaps I'll treat you with respect, as you are (a bit) older, but you don't necessarily have my respect.*

Point being ... relationships are everything. Someone once said to a group I was part of (I know who said it, but I don't know if it was his thought or someone else's, and I can't accurately quote it anyway) "what is truly valuable in your life that isn't tied to a relationship?" Very likely, the answer is "nothing."

The same day that Pastor Mark and Pastor George attended the event on boundaries, they also attended an event on Social Media, and how it is affecting churches. Specifically, mentioned were things like Facebook, Twitter, Linked-In, and more, with the point being that these are really the avenues for reaching congregations, and the most effective way to communicate, and to build and maintain relationships.

My initial thought is: I'm terrified. I don't spend much time on Facebook anymore; I appreciate the good about it, but nearly every time I get on the site, I witness someone treating another human being without respect. It's seldom by name, more by a description of actions, but it's ugly, and it's not how we are commanded by Jesus to handle our differences. And because there are no repercussions, (other than perhaps some hurt feelings and damaged relationships), *it's so easy to do*. And then, others pile on, because no one's really getting hurt, and we all have our problems with someone who would do *that* (whatever that might be).

When did we get away from talking to one another, resolving our differences with respect, or at the very least, not taking our problems to the whole world, at the expense of another?

Even in a world with so much hurt, with so many messes to be cleaned up, with so much anxiety ... it's still all about relationships. Always will be. And it all starts with respect.

NOTES FROM YOUR PARISH NURSE
Caring for You...Walking in Faith

*He has told you, O mortal, what is good;
and what does the Lord ask of you
but to do justice, and to love kindness,
and to walk humbly with your God? ~Micah 6:8*

Walking is a part of our everyday life. Walking was one of those very first accomplishments in our lives that was met with excitement, wonder and praise. How often have you approached a parent of a toddler and asked, "is she walking yet?" Those first steps are very wobbly at best. But when that youngster gets moving there is no going back...! In Micah 6:8, among other things, the Lord is asking us to walk *humbly* with our God. I think that this is a poignant request as we enter the Lenten season. Walking with God means (in Hebrew) 'to allow yourself to be advised by God'. How cool is that! In order to do this, you have to have your spiritual ears listening and tuned into what God is saying or directing you toward. Walking can be a great way to get ourselves focused and in tune with God to receive His advise! This Lenten season we are going to add a physical and wellness focus, "Walking to Emmaus", to our traditional reflection and meditations. With walking as the most basic form of transportation and simplest exercise, it seems only natural to consider a daily Lenten walk with God. We will not only feel better but will deliberately create a time in our day to pay particular attention to what God is saying and doing in our lives. Our "walk" can take the form of any exercise, as we will be discussing at our Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday services.

In the medical front, walking has been found not only to make you feel better now, it will maintain your independence and ability to do daily tasks as you age. Research has shown that walking regularly can help protect the aging brain against memory loss and dementia, help cut the risk of heart disease and reduce the chance of developing type 2 diabetes in high risk adults by 60 percent!

Here are a few simple tips to get you moving...

1. **Start with short distances or time periods**...5-10 minutes at a time. Slowly increase your time by a couple of minutes every two weeks.
2. **Have a walking buddy.** Having a partner motivates and makes you accountable to each other.

3. **Break it up.** If your goal is 30 minutes, try walking 15 minutes twice a day. Or break it up into 10 minute walks.
4. **Wear a pedometer.** Taking 5,000 steps or fewer daily is considered sedentary. Work you way up to 10,000 steps, which is considered active.
5. **Keep a record.** Keeping a daily log of your time and distance lets you see your progress and keeps you motivated.



Please join us in our "Walk to Emmaus" program. This can be the year that we take the words '*walk humbly with our God*' seriously. Allow your heart and mind to open up and to seek out that direction that you are being lead. My hope is that this year's Lenten journey to Emmaus and wellness discussions will spill over and motivate our daily routines. As you look forward and when that Easter morning arrives, you will be greeted with that same excitement, wonder and praise that you had when you took those very first steps... and there will be no going back!!!

In His Grace,
~Sue Richards, RN
Your Parish Nurse

THANK YOU

Thank you to Marijo Vols, Grace Gullickson and Jeff and Kris Peterson for delivering Poinsettia

NORSE AFTERNOON OF FUN

The Stoughton Norwegian Dancers invite you to attend Norse Afternoon of Fun! Shake off the cabin fever at 1:30 pm on Sunday, February 12th at Stoughton High School. The combination of colorful Norwegian costumes, rousing music and lively ethnic folk dancing produces the necessary elements to relieve the "winter blues". Audience members are encouraged to wear their national costumes. **Come and see six of our own Covenant Stoughton Norwegian Dancers!**

SOCIAL JUSTICE NEWS

LENTEN FAITH IN ACTION: OFFERING FOOD TO THE HUNGRY

God gave the prophet Isaiah ears to hear God and boldness to speak God's word. Isaiah declared God's word that encourages us to care for the hungry and afflicted; we read in Isaiah 58:10, "...if you offer your food to the hungry and satisfy the needs of the afflicted, then your light shall rise in the darkness and your gloom be like the noonday." Not only do we help meet the needs of others but our own spirits soar as we care for others as God cares for us!

Offer your food to the hungry...We of Covenant offer food to the hungry in several ways. We provide meals to members in a short-term need, support Stoughton Food Pantry, serve Our Daily Bread (a monthly community meal in Stoughton hosted on a rotating basis by several congregations), serve at The River Food Pantry (a Friday community meal in Madison for people, most of whom are low income or homeless), and contribute to ELCA World Hunger Appeal.

During Lent 2012, Covenant encourages all to **offer food to the hungry**. This **FAITH IN ACTION** emphasis gives us opportunities to express our trust in the God who meets our needs. You are invited **offer food to the hungry** in one or more of the following ways:

Congregation: Food for Friends pray for fellow members daily

Sign-up to be on the **Food for Friends** team to provide a meal(s) to a person or family following death of a family member, after a hospitalization, during an illness, etc. You will be contacted when a meal is needed.

Local Community: Stoughton Food Pantry pray for the hungry daily

Donate items on Food Pantry needs list, **especially cereal, Helper dinners and pasta, VOLUNTEER** to assist in distributing items to those who come

Broader Community: The River Food Pantry at 2201 Darwin Road, Madison

(contact Don Warren at 873-6569 for info.)
Friday evenings..... **VOLUNTEER** to assist in serving meals to the homeless
Last Friday monthly...**PARTICIPATE** with the Covenant Team in prepping and serving the meal

Globally: Combat Hunger pray for the hungry and for an end to poverty in the world

Every day.....**Add money to your Hunger Piggy Bank**

Overnight famine..... **World Vision's 30 HOUR FAMINE**

- **Participate** in **Covenant's 30 Hour Famine** on February 24-25 **by donating** your time, food and financial support.
- **Participate by fasting for 30 hours** (12:30 pm on February 23 to 6:30 pm on February 25) to experience what nearly one billion people in the world know every night—going to bed hungry.

Sustaining gifts..... **Consider a gift that could be life-changing with ELCA Good Gifts**

LITTLE CHICKS! Within a few months of birth, hens begin to lay eggs (nutritious meals for growing kids); the extra eggs can be sold to grow a small business. **A Buck (\$1.00) a Chick or \$10.00 for 10 chicks**



A **PIG** in a pen is like money in the bank! Within months, piglets grow to weigh a couple hundred pounds, bringing a big payoff at the market. Families can use and sell a pig's manure to help grow crops. **\$30.00 for one pig**



A **COW** provides it all! Its milk, fertilizer, calves and meat can quickly strengthen a family's financial stability and may help them escape hunger for good. **\$500.00 for one cow**



Last year several people tended our garden. If 3-5 individuals are interested again this year, the garden area will still be available. The garden size will remain the same. Proceeds will be shared with the Stoughton Food Pantry, Covenant church members and garden workers. If you are interested in helping with the planning, planting, watering, weeding or harvesting, please contact the church office (873-7494) or Susie Swenson (873-5635).

Ministry of the Month

Social Justice Ministry Team

The **Social Justice Ministry Team** meets the first Tuesday of each month at 6:30 pm.

"The LORD has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?" (Micah 6:8)

Opportunities for participation include:

- **Adopt-a-Highway:** Members of the congregation clean a local roadside of debris each spring and fall.
- **ELCA Malaria Campaign:** Covenant links with other ELCA congregations to work with church bodies in Africa and become part of the global movement committed to prevent, treat and eliminate deaths from malaria and educate communities in Africa about this disease.
- **ELCA World Hunger:** Individuals/families collect their spare change throughout the year into a "piggy bank". This money is then collected in May and submitted to the ELCA to fight world hunger. Some members chose to give special gifts through ELCA GOOD GIFTS to purchase animals for families to have sustainable income.
- **Fair Trade Coffee & Chocolate:** Fair trade coffee and chocolate are available to the congregation for purchase at all times.
- **Habitat for Humanity:** Covenant coordinates with Habitat for Humanity of Dane County several times a year to participate in building a home in Stoughton or the Madison area.
- **Host-a-Family:** Christmas gifts are provided for individuals and/or families in need within the community.
- **LUAD (Lutherans United Assisting after Disasters):** Covenant participates with other Lutheran churches in the area to plan and coordinate our response to disasters in the local region.
- **Mission Trips:** Covenant is involved in mission trips of various types, including international trips and those within the US and regionally.
- **Mitten Tree:** Covenant collects mittens, scarves, and hats at Christmas to be distributed to those in need.
- **Newborn & Hospice Kits:** Kits are assembled and then taken to the Synod assembly in the spring.
- **Our Daily Bread:** Covenant participates with other local churches in providing a free meal to the community on the fourth Sunday of the month. We serve one or two times a year. Besides preparing and serving the food, we also provide rides as needed for anyone within the Stoughton school district.
- **Refugee Resettlement:** Members form a welcoming committee to help furnish an apartment for a refugee family, and/or welcome the family upon arrival, and/or mentor them as they transition to their new home.
- **River Food Pantry:** Members of the congregation assist with meals and free clothing distribution at the River Food Pantry on the north side of Madison on Friday evenings. Members often carpool to Madison for this service opportunity.

Stoughton Food Pantry: Members of the congregation bring items and place them in the shopping cart in the narthex. These are then taken periodically to the Stoughton Food Pantry.

SOCIAL JUSTICE MINISTRIES

INSTRUCTIONS: Check the ministry or ministries for which you offer your time and/or skill and/or energy. **Print your name** in the space provided. **Place your completed sheet in the offering plate or turn in to church office. Thank you!**

I, _____ (name), offer my time and/or skill and/or energy to serve others as checked (X) below.

DISASTER RESPONSE

- Serve as trained LUAD (Lutherans United Against Disaster) volunteer in our synod (south-central WI)
 Promote/Educate on Lutheran Disaster Response (LDR)

ENVIRONMENT

- Adopt-A-Highway (roadside clean-up spring and fall)
 Promote/Educate on environmental Issues

HEALTH ISSUES

- Support newborn and hospice kits project
 help purchase *help assemble* *help pack*
 Support ELCA Malaria Campaign, including mosquito nets
 Promote/Educate on global health issues



HUNGER

- Stoughton Food Pantry
 Promote needs to congregation
 Transport donated items to pantry
 Volunteer at pantry
 Our Daily Bread (Sun eve community meal 1 or 2 times/year)
 Donate food
 Help prepare and serve meal
 Provide rides
 River Food Pantry (north Madison)
 Assist with meals (Tues noon, Fri evening)
 Organize, display clothing donations
 ELCA World Hunger
 Distribute/Collect Piggy Banks
 Promote/Educate on hunger issues

POVERTY

- Promote Fair Trade coffee and chocolate
 Assist with Mitten Tree program in Nov/Dec
 Assist with Host-A-Family program in Nov/Dec

REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT

- Serve on welcoming task group
 Gather needed items to furnish apartment
 Provide storage space for items to furnish apartment
 Be a friend/mentor to refugee family (training provided)
 Be an English as a Second Language tutor (training provided)

SERVICE/MISSION MINISTRY

- Habitat for Humanity
 Help build a house (no experience necessary)
 Provide meals for workers
 Service/Mission Trips
 Participate: locally/regionally in U.S.A. internationally
 Assist in planning Provide transportation
 Adult companion with youth trip

SOCIAL JUSTICE MINISTRY TEAM

- Serve on the team (meets the first Tues evening monthly)

OUR NEIGHBOR'S FAITH: Islam series continues

More than 30 persons have participated in the week-day series focusing on "Islam." The focus for the last three sessions on Feb. 1, 8, 15 has been determined with input from those participating in the first sessions. Titles from the series of GREAT COURSE lectures on DVD by renowned scholar of Islamic studies, John L. Esposito are:

Session 4: The Contemporary Resurgence of Islam
Session 5: Women and Change in Islam
Session 6: The Future of Islam

All Wednesday sessions are being held in the Fellowship Hall, 9:30-11 am. Anyone is welcome to attend even if you have been unable to attend any of the previous sessions. WELCOME!

Topics for other possible enrichment seminars are being discussed. There is a strong interest in a series on JUDAISM. If you have an interest in this topic or any other, please share your comments/interest with Pastor George.

FREE ESTATE PLANNING SEMINARS

Estate Planning Attorney and Covenant Member, Eric Christoffersen is offering a series of free estate planning seminars at Covenant in the month of February. Each week, Eric will highlight an estate planning topic of interest in a brief, easy to understand session. Sessions will last approximately 45 minutes and light refreshments will be served. You are welcome to attend any or all of the seminars in the series. Seminars are for adults of any age, and guests are also welcome. All classes will be in the Adult Education room off of Fellowship Hall.

Dates & Times:

Wed. Feb 8, 15, 22, 29 – 6:00 pm

Sun. Feb. 12, 19, 26, March 4 – 3:00 pm

Session 1 - Overview of Estate Planning from a Christian Perspective

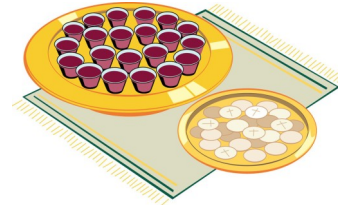
Session 2 - Basic Wills and the Probate Process

Session 3 - Efficient Estate Administration with Revocable Trusts

Session 4 - Planning for Incapacity with Financial and Healthcare Powers of Attorney

COMMUNION INSTRUCTION

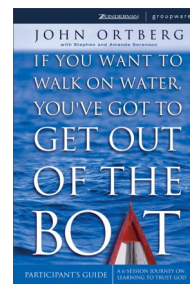
Communion Instruction for all 5th graders plus their parents, as well as for any who are interested in learning more about communion and what it means to be Lutherans, begins on Sunday, March 4^h during the education hour. We will meet March 4, 11 and 25.

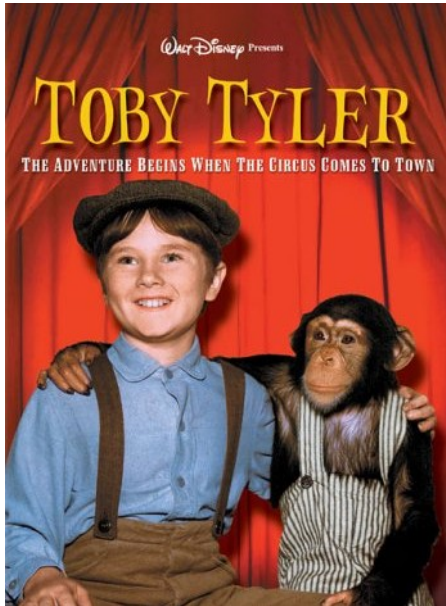


MEN'S BREAKFAST

The next Men's Breakfast will be on Saturday, February 11 at 7:30 am. Our study is the book *If You Want to Walk on Water You've Got to Get Out of the Boat!*, by John Ortberg. We meet on the **2nd Saturday of each month from 7:30-9:00 am**. Bring your appetite and willingness to support one another. This is open to all men of the congregation (post confirmation).

You won't want to miss Don Warren's famous **Buckwheat Pancakes** (as well as cornmeal)!!!





FAMILY MOVIE NIGHT FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 4

Toby Tyler

Please join us in the Covenant Cinema on Friday, February 4. The warm-up begins at 6:30, the movie starts promptly at 7:00, and the evening wraps up by 9:00. Popcorn and lemonade are provided, and it's all FREE!

Straight from the vault of Disney's bygone classics comes this 1960 family film about a boy who joins the circus, based on the book of the same name by James Otis Kaler. Kevin Corcoran (Old Yeller, Swiss Family Robinson) is unsurpassed as the earnest and endearing Toby Tyler, an orphan who lives with his poverty-stricken aunt and uncle until the day he is told he's a "millstone around their necks." When the circus comes to town, Toby runs away to join the vagabond life of the big top. Although his concessionaire boss is a con man, Toby makes fast friends with Ben Cotter (Henry Calvin) and Sam Treat (Gene Sheldon) who protect him and, in the end, receive much more from Toby than they give. The movie's best moments center on Toby's camaraderie with a mischievous chimp he names Mr. Stubbs. The final circus scenes of Toby's equine acrobatics with the pretty Mademoiselle Jeanette (Barbara Beard), and comedic stunts with Mr. Stubbs are well worth the price of admission. The three-ring comedy is sweet and simple, sprinkled with a few wholesome life lessons. Marvelously directed in Disney's vintage style by Charles Barton (The Shaggy Dog), the overall effect will tug on a family's heartstrings and funny bone.

FAMILY MOVIE NIGHT MOVIE LIBRARY

Do you ever wonder how we get the movies we have for movie night? Well, there have been many sources: the library, Red Box, Net Flix, and the Movie Gallery while it was open. Another very common source has been Amazon.com. And thus, what started out as a movie or two has become a large collection of movies. Why do you care? Perhaps you don't! But if you do, these movies are now available for you to borrow – at no charge! Here's what you need to know:



Contact Mark for a list of movies. Pick out one that you and your family would like to see. E-mail Mark at markdoll@chorus.net. I (that would be Mark) will e-mail you and let you know if it is available. If it is, I'll hold it for you until you can pick it up. When you're done watching it, bring it back, and feel free to select another. Kind of like NetFlix, with out the "net" part. Oh yeah, and without the money part.

If you need more information about any of the movies, feel free to e-mail me and I'll provide you the details I have. The only restriction is that there is only one movie allowed out to a family at a time.

30 HOUR FAMINE

February 24-25

What is a 30 Hour Famine you ask? Great question! Here's a little bit of the answer:

- ◆ It's a lock-in
- ◆ It's a learning experience
- ◆ It's a fund-raiser to fight world hunger
- ◆ It's a chance to experience something you've probably never tried before
- ◆ It's a night of games, movies, conversations and more
- ◆ It's a night without food (yes, really)
- ◆ It ends with a celebration meal!



The 30 Hour Famine is an overnight event for 7th-12th grade youth, and you do not need to be a member of Covenant. We are also very much in need of adults to participate in this event – if you are interested in being part of this tremendous experience, please contact Lynn Poirier at 873-3204 or Mark Doll at 873-7494. Registration forms are available in the church office.

2012 YOUTH AND ADULT WILDERNESS EXPERIENCE



We are offering a youth event for 8th grade through High School

ages, as well as adults, in the Boundary Wilderness Canoe Area for one week. We are limited to a total of 18 – 24 people (male and female). This trip leaves on a Wednesday, last week in July or first week in August (very early); with a nights stay at our outfitter before entering the BWCA on Thursday - Tuesday. We will return the following Wednesday, early in the evening. This wilderness experience includes two days of travel and six days (five nights) canoeing, portaging and backpacking. Cost is around \$375.00 per person and includes transportation, permits, canoe and equipment rental and food. We will spend winter and spring preparing in small groups. All meetings will be in the Cinema Room, unless otherwise specified. The preparation highlights include:

Future Date: Recruiting Adult Leaders and Youth participants. We will discuss entry points and personal gear requirements. Pictures of past experiences shown. A non-refundable \$150.00 payment is due.

Future Date: What to expect in the BWCA

Future Date: Turn in Permission Slips and registration. Second \$150.00 payment due. Select small groups and leaders according to ability to carry canoes, portage and keep them balanced with youth and adults. Maximum of eight people per group, but six is ideal.

Future Date: Cooking & Food Planning

Future Date: Safety & Medic Day: Preparing first aid kits, handling saw and axe in the wilderness. What happens in case of an emergency?

Future Date: Packing Day: Pack your duffel bag for the week. Equipment instruction.

Future Date: Canoe training day – how to paddle the canoe, portage a canoe and provide helpful suggestions on spending a week in the wilderness. (Final Payment is due.)

If you are interested, please contact one of the following people, or call the church office and let Chris Doll know. We have to know a count ASAP, as we have missed the initial deadline for permit applications, and need to get an approximate count for entry permits.

Are you interested? Contact people are:

Pastor Mark 873-7494
Dennis Hilgendorf 279-1655
Greg Pigarelli 873-0296

ADULT & SENIOR NEWS



Covenant Senior Ministry Luncheon

Tuesday, February 7, 2012

11:30 a.m.

Fellowship Hall

Program: "Hobby Show and Tell"



Mark your calendar for our next luncheon—**Tuesday, February 7, 2012, at 11:30 a.m. in Fellowship Hall**. Come, see and learn about the special interests, talents, hobbies that some of our senior members will be sharing and have on display—a "Hobby Show and Tell" program!! If you, too, would like to share your special interest, talent, or hobby, please contact Wilma Baumbach (873-6235), Carolyn Carroll (873-6992), or Verjean Sime (873-3505).

Hot dishes, rolls and coffee will be provided. If you are able to bring a dish to share at the luncheon, it would be greatly appreciated. If you are in need of a ride, please contact the church office (873-7494). We hope you can join us for the February luncheon—the October and December luncheons were a great success!!

2012 ADULT SERVICE/ MISSION TRIP

In November six members of Covenant joined Pastor George for a service/mission trip to Nashville. Those who served on Covenant's LDR Team in 2011 (Pastor George, Linda Muller, David Nelson, Dan Oakland, Richard Shilts, Greg Vodak and Penny Vodak) will happily share their perspectives. Some of them and others have expressed interest in another service/mission trip in 2012.

Lutheran Disaster Response in North Dakota has issued a call for help to rebuild homes in Minot or nearby communities that were devastated by floods last summer. A meeting will happen at 6:30 pm, Tuesday, February 7, to share information and begin planning for a trip for any interested adults to serve in ND late this spring or early summer. Costs will include gas money, meals en route and \$20 per person per night for lodging and meals while in ND.

If you have any interest or want to learn more but can't make the meeting on February 7, please contact Pastor George at 576-4916 or pastorgeorge@chorus.net.

HOLDEN VILLAGE OPPORTUNITY

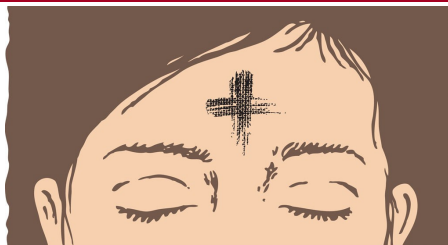
Some members of Covenant have expressed interest in journeying to Holden Village for a week of renewal, refreshment, and relaxation. Here is part of Holden's own description from their website, www.holdenvillage.org; you can learn more by visiting that website.

Holden Village is a center for renewal in the Cascade Mountains in Washington state, a Lutheran ministry welcoming all people into the wilderness to be called, equipped and sent by God. The center of our lives is the Good News of Jesus Christ, which opens us to ourselves, each other and all the issues facing humankind. At Holden, we live in a real flesh and blood community of forgiven sinners. In work, play and conversation – in disagreement and agreement – we offer ourselves to each other in mutual forgiveness and respect. While Holden is open year round, in the "high" season from May to October, our learning program is much more expansive and varied geared for all ages.

Holden welcomes all of God's children, regardless of denomination, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age or political opinion. Guests arrive and depart daily. Greetings and farewells happen daily. At Holden, communication with the outside world is limited. We have no phones or television, no cell phone reception, and limited radio. There are no roads connecting to Holden.

The week of **August 12-18 (Sunday through Saturday)** appears to be the best option. **Cost is \$360 per adult** (children are less with a maximum of \$1,230 for a family), which include lodging, meals and program. **Transportation** to and from Holden is **additional**. Pastor George will meet with anyone seeking more information following all worship services, Saturday, February 11, and Sunday, February 12. You may contact him anytime at 608-576-4916 or pastorgeorge@chorus.net.

LENT



Ash Wednesday

February 22, 2012

Worship at 11:00 am and 7:00 pm

**Wednesday Lenten services - 11:00 am and 7:00 pm
through March 28th**

LENTEN SUPPERS AND LUNCHESES!

We will again serve Lenten suppers and lunches this year! Each Wednesday in Lent, beginning with Ash Wednesday (February 22), lunch will be served following the 11:00 am worship and supper will be served at 5:30 pm. Please consider hosting/organizing one of the meals and sign up on the sheet located on the Narthex bulletin board. First come, first served for dates!

Many Covenant members look forward to these lunches/suppers as special times of fellowship and gathering to enjoy a meal with family, and we'd like to continue this meal tradition that Covenant does so well. If you would like more information about planning for a meal, please contact Denise Pigarelli (873-0296, evenings, or dlwpigarelli@pharmacy.wisc.edu).



With wellness in mind, please consider healthy choices when preparing our Lenten meals. A great website is www.everydayhealth.com. It is chocked full of great recipes as well as tips to convert your "tried and true" casserole dishes and family favorites into healthier meals. A couple of examples:

- ◆ try replacing oil in cake recipes with applesauce (1:1 proportion)...the result is a an amazingly moist treat!
- ◆ try making a veggie lasagna for a change of pace
- ◆ try ground turkey/chicken in place of ground beef in your next hot dish or taco recipe.

These are simple ways to make healthy alternatives while satisfying your appetite!



SEDER MEAL PLANNING MEETING

It's been three years since Covenant's last Seder meal, and we're starting to plan for this year's event! If you are interested in helping with the 2012 Seder meal (scheduled for Wednesday, April 4, 2012), please plan to attend an organizational meeting at 6:30 pm on Tuesday, February 28, 2012 in the Covenant narthex/gathering area. If you would like to help but are not able to attend the meeting, please contact Denise Pigarelli at 873-0296 to let her know of your interest. Many hands make light work—hope to see you there!

MARTIN LUTHER CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

Martin Luther Christian School and Child Development Center

"Soaring in Faith and Excellence"



REGISTRATION

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It's registration time! Martin Luther Christian School will be holding its 2012-2013 registration for new and returning students from **February 6th- 23rd**. New families wishing to enroll in one of our many programs may contact the MLCS office to receive tuition and enrollment information and to set up a tour.

The **MLCS Elementary School offers Kindergarten through 5th grade classes**. Students participate in Spanish, Music, Art, Technology, Physical Education, Religious instruction and weekly Chapel services. Our goal is to foster academic excellence, Christian values, character and leadership skills. Our MLCS team of parents, teachers, and staff work to prepare and support our students in their educational success.

MLCS FOUR YEAR-OLD KINDERGARTEN (4K)

Is your child turning 4 years old? Do you have questions about the 4K Program?

MLCS 4K – Four Year-Old Kindergarten Program: MLCS is pleased to be entering its 5th year as a host for the Stoughton Area School District's 4K Program. We continue to offer three am classes and two pm classes taught by our team of experienced teachers.

Students learn, play and socialize in the classroom, during PE class and on our large playground. The classrooms participate in special Friday sing-a-longs, art projects and a story time with the Stoughton Public Library's Librarian.

MLCS offers a 10-minute period of religious instruction after each class period where students will hear God's Word, listen to Bible stories, sing and pray together. This program is designed for those families who desire a Christian focus for their child/children and written permission to participate is required.

Children must be 4 years of age on or before September 1, 2012 for entry. Student 4K registration is Monday, February 6 from 9:00 am – 7:30 pm, at Sandhill Elementary School.

Our **Junior Kindergarten (JK) Program** is open to children who are 4 or 5 years old on or before September 1, 2012. This is an ideal choice for parents who are looking for an all-day educational program for their four or five year old child who is not entering kindergarten. The Junior Kindergarten (JK) is held from 11:00 am – 3:00 pm each day and is in session from 8:00 am – 3:00 pm on the days the 4K is not in session. Students enrolled in the Junior Kindergarten (JK) program remain in the same room throughout the day enjoying three hours of 4K in the am and then seamlessly transitioning to the JK, in the afternoon, making this a full day of enrichment. JK is a part of the MLCS Christian Elementary School and, so students will enjoy classes in art, music, Spanish, physical education, computers, religion, and chapel each week.

The **MLCS 3 Year-Old Preschool Program** is open to children turning 3 years old on or before September 1, 2012. This class is taught by a DPI certified teacher and is offered three mornings a week. A two day class may be offered, if the three day class is filled.

The **MLCS Child Development Center** offers quality childcare for children 6 weeks to 12 years of age. Wrap around care is offered to students in all of our programs including 4K. Your child will enjoy the seamless transition between his/her classroom to the Child Development Center located within the same building. MLCS bussing is offered to before and after school students going to and from the public schools only.

At MLCS, your child will grow academically, socially and spiritually in a safe and nurturing environment. For 2012-2013 tuition rates and scholarship information, please call our Elementary School Office at 873-8073 or our Childcare Office at 873-7884. Visit us at: **mlcschool.org**

"CELEBRATING OVER 30 YEARS OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION"

FEBRUARY WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

Acolyte Schedule—February 2012

| | |
|--|--|
| <u>Sunday, Feb. 5</u> | 8:00 am Lexie Knudtson & Claire Schmaling 10:30 am Erik Hansen & Alex Morris |
| <u>Sunday, Feb. 12</u> | 8:00 am Fred Richards & Matthew Curry 10:30 am Nicole Hansen & Meredith Melland |
| <u>Sunday, Feb. 19</u> | 8:00 am Kailyn Prein & Andrew Forrer 10:30 am Genevieve Stout & Amanda Rusch |
| <u>Wednesday, Feb. 22—Ash Wednesday</u> | |
| | 7:00 pm Noah Doll & Tyler Glick |
| <u>Sunday, Feb. 26</u> | 8:00 am Reghan Anderson & Sam Anderson 10:30 am Joe Nelson & Isaac Eugster |

***If you are unable to fill your scheduled time, please switch with a friend.
Please call the church office (873-7494) so names can be changed in the bulletin. Thank you!***

February Altar Guild: Christy Unzicker

February Communion Committee: Joe & Marylis Hansen

Saturday Schedule—February 2012

| | | <u>Ushers/Communion Assistants</u> | <u>Lector</u> |
|---------------|------|---|----------------------|
| Feb. 4, 2012 | 5:30 | Daren Gunderson & Kelly Schieldt | Tom Nelson |
| Feb. 11, 2012 | 5:30 | Dennis & Sandy Markuson | Sandy Markuson |
| Feb. 18, 2012 | 5:30 | Karen Boehme & Raven Poirier | Karen Boehme |
| Feb. 25, 2012 | 5:30 | Peggy Petersen & Tim Osterhaus | Peggy Petersen |

Sunday Schedule—February 2012

| | | <u>Communion Assistants</u> | <u>Lector</u> | <u>Greeters</u> | <u>Ushers</u> |
|---|-------|------------------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|----------------------|
| Feb. 5, 2012 | 8:00 | Bill Eversoll & Alecia Chicker | Bill Eversoll | Mark & Diane Hartel | Olson |
| | 10:30 | Andy Toso & Kelsey Toso | Andy Toso | Andy Toso | Herbst |
| Feb. 12, 2012 | 8:00 | Mike Soehner & Richard Shilts | Steve Peterson | Mike & Mary Soehner | Nissler |
| | 10:30 | Greg Vodak & Max McHone | Greg Vodak | Marcia Trentz | Fossen |
| Feb. 19, 2012 | 8:00 | Phyllis Hein & Kendra Halverson | Phyllis Hein | Phyllis Hein | Soehner |
| | 10:30 | Norm & Verjean Sime | Verjean Sime | Norm & Verjean Sime | Kahl |
| <u>Feb. 22, 2012—Ash Wednesday</u> | | | | | |
| | 7:00 | Rocky & Kathy Olson | Marijo Vols | Rocky & Kathy Olson | Heil |
| Feb. 26, 2012 | 8:00 | Karl Nissler & Julie Rice | Wayne Duddleston | Patty Woodstock | Olson |
| | 10:30 | Philayne Chose & Ann Winecke | Philayne Chose | Ann Winecke | Heil |