



The Shepherd

March 2024 newsletter

*Shepherd of the Springs
Lutheran Church, Missouri Synod,*

Colorado Springs, CO

This issue of The Shepherd focuses on Lent and on March 15, a special edition of The Shepherd will be sent out with a focus on Holy Week.

*The
Season
of
Lent*



GIVING SOMETHING UP FOR LENT?

Are you one of those who is giving something up for Lent? While this has not been popular among Protestants, some Lutherans and many Roman Catholics follow this tradition that has its origin in the ancient Church. Often after years of instruction in the faith, adult catechumens underwent rigorous tests during the 40 days of Lent. This was especially true when the Church was under persecution. Personal sacrifices during Lent were used to test the commitment of adult catechumens in preparation for their baptism on Easter Sunday. Back then, it was understood that the baptism of water might well be a prelude to martyrdom by a *baptism of blood*. Over time, personal sacrifice during Lent by the baptized was viewed as an expression of solidarity with these Christian wanna-bes and has been associated with Lent ever since. The later tradition of fasting as a salutary expression of that sacrifice connected the forty days of Lent with the forty days in the wilderness when our Lord endured a fast after His baptism.

Also from the ancient world, when one was called upon to accept some grave sacrifice, perhaps even the offering up of one's life, the expression was to drink from a bitter *cup*. And, sometimes, literally. Think of Socrates who accepted his own death sentence by drinking a cup of hemlock. In the same sense, our Lord struggled in the Garden of Gethsemane over *the cup* His Father was poised to have Him drink – to offer up His body and blood as the perfect sacrifice for the sins of the world (Lk. 22.42). You may recall a similar cup that the Lord God instructed Abraham to deliver to his only son, Isaac (Gn. 22). How much would father Abraham be willing to sacrifice for the sake of His love of God? How about his only son? If we were to eavesdrop on our Lord in anguish in the Garden, we might well ask the same question: How much would God the Father be willing to sacrifice for the sake of his love of sinners such as each of us? How about His only begotten Son? With father Abraham and with God the Father, we see two cups – each filled with much passion. Two cups – but only one to drink.

We learn from Genesis 22 that the cup intended for Isaac was just a test for father Abraham. And, of course, Isaac is never told about the bitter cup ahead of time. He learns only when Abraham's knife is poised; and then also, they both learn it was just a test. Isaac is to be spared. However, with God's Son, our Lord Jesus, it was different. No test! *He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all* (Rom. 8:32) Indeed, *for us all. For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son* (John 3:16). Here again, played out on a hill in the mountains of Moriah not far from where Abraham first built his altar; 2000 years later, God would pass his bitter cup to His chosen son of Abraham – His own Incarnate Son. And also by contrast, as Jesus indicated to his disciples on three separate occasions; He saw it coming. Here in the garden, our Lord experienced incredible passion about *The Passion*. Luke reports that the intensity caused capillaries on Jesus' forehead to burst causing Him to sweat drops of blood (Luke 22.24). Knowing in advance, the Son accepts the will of the Father so that while we were enemies of God, Jesus will drink the cup and die for us. It was always the plan. It was always *the cup. Before the foundations of the world* (Eph. 1.4), the Father destined to send His son into the world to drink *the cup of our salvation* (Ps. 116.113). It is a cup that will cause His blood to be poured out so that we might also be partakers of this cup. Dying to sin, and being raised up unto newness of life, we partake of *the cup of blessing that we bless* for the forgiveness of all our sins (I Cor. 10.16).

Let's return to the question: *Are you giving something up for Lent?* Let me encourage you to do so. But, what would be a fitting thing to give up, especially during the season of Lent? After passing the test, Abraham thought that sacrificing a nearby ram caught in a thicket would do just fine for the time being (Gen. 22.13). What do you think would be a fitting sacrifice to give to the Lord? It is a tough question for two reasons. First, we do not have anything that He needs. And secondly, whatever we have that is worth anything, He gave us. On a rather mundane level, it has been popular to think about giving up for Lent some food you really enjoy. How about your favorite meat? Or (Lord forbid!), perhaps chocolate?

Let's come at this a different way. I believe that there is one thing that our Lord wants all of us to give up all the time, but perhaps, especially during the penitential season of Lent. For Lent, He wants you to join him in His passion as He walks to the cross. He is preparing to make the ultimate sacrifice for you and He wants you to sacrifice something to Him. What does He want? He wants you to sacrifice your sins. Give them up to Him with *a broken and contrite heart* because it is a sacrifice that *He will not despise* (Ps. 51.17) This is not some clean-up-your-act program. Rather, He wants you to give Him the *guilt* of your sins to make sacrifice for it, and in return to give you His righteousness. He will drink the cup of salvation so that your cup might be overflowing with the living water of your baptismal grace and the cup of blessing in His blood for the forgiveness of your sins.

During this Lenten Season, your Lord is preparing to sacrifice his body and blood as the perfect sacrifice for your sin. This is what He is preparing to give up for Lent. This is the bitter cup from His Father that He prepares to drink. It is the cup of salvation. So, for this Lenten Season and all seasons, make the one acceptable sacrifice unto to Lord as you prepare for His passion - the one thing He desires. Give Him your sins! Get passionate about His passion by giving up and giving over to Him your transgressions. . . that He may have them, that He may die for them, that he may drink this bitter cup on account of them. And then come to His table – to have His bread and *the cup of blessing that we bless*. Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow . . . well, tomorrow will be like today. Tomorrow you live! Today, tomorrow, and forever.

Steven A. Hein
Second Week in Lent

The Annunciation of Our Lord *March 25*

The Lectionary: Isaiah 7:10-15 / Hebrews 10:4-10 / St. Luke 1:26-38a

“And having come in, the angel said to her, ‘Rejoice, highly favored one, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women!’ But when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and considered what manner of greeting this was” (St. Luke 1:28-29; NKJV).

Two angels visited young women. One was evil. The other good! Both made promises of greatness. One promised a life of freedom, hidden knowledge, and independence. The other promised a cross! One pointed to something that would be so easy to take. The other spoke of something all but impossible. One offered options. The other never gave the young woman a choice!



If you were to ask the world which was good and which was evil, the answer would be near unanimous; yet, it was the evil angel, Satan, who spoke lies to Eve promising independence from God, knowledge of good and evil, and whispered of “free will” right within her grasp. However, Gabriel told the truth!

You shall conceive and bear a son, and you shall call His name Jesus – He shall save His people from their sins. As crazy as it sounds, nothing will be impossible with God. There is no choice. No free will. This is your blessing. The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore the child to be born will be called holy. The Son of God!

The Annunciation marks just one pregnancy until Christmas, almost always in the middle of Lent, though, this year on Holy Monday! They’re as joined together in the grand narrative as the two angels. The tree of the garden revealed sin. It was always meant to be answered by the tree of the cross that reveals salvation. The cross lets us call evil, evil; and good, good. It lets us acknowledge our sins, and in repentance, be not afraid!

Nothing is impossible with God! That’s not for you to do. It’s for Christ to do...for you; even the part where we acknowledge our sin, and in repentance, are not afraid.

He will descend from heaven to become incarnate, born of a Virgin, and walk the road to the cross...to undo death itself and then rise on the Third Day, just as He promised, just to save you! This isn't just an arbitrary connection. It's the presence of hope among so much that seems strange, terrifying, and upside down.

Let us pray: *O Lord, as we have known the incarnation of Your Son, Jesus Christ, by the message of the angel Gabriel to the virgin Mary, so by the message of His cross and passion bring us to the glory of His Resurrection; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, One God, now and forever. Amen!*



Members

Jill Damec

Darrell Root

Marlene Schmidt

Cheri Penwell

Military

Captain Rob Landers (USAF) (Barry's Son-in-Law)

Captain Abel Wilson (USAF) (Friend of SSLC)

2LT Frederick Heidt (USAF) (Friend of SSLC)

Master Sergeant (USMC) Kyle Chase (Dale & Kari's Nephew)

First Sergeant (USA) Benjamin Kueter (SSLC member),

Sergeant First Class (USA) Jordan Etchells (Dale & Kari's Son)

A1C Trevor Smith (USAF) (SSLC member)

Family Members

Patty Krueger (Barry's widow)

Kathi Chase (Kari's Sister)

Jacob Damec (Jeff and Jill's Son)

Rainer Dieterle (Conny's Father)

Tyson (Tiffany's Uncle)

Eli (Shannon and Ben's nephew)

Janice Patterson (Pastor's Mother)

Lutheran World Relief Mission Quilts **From Nina Kuberski**

I was looking for a new project for my time and talents when I saw an article in the newspaper explaining how you might reuse sheets/pillowcases/mattress pads/tablecloths that you no longer wanted. The article pointed to Lutheran World Relief Mission Quilts! So I started investigating. These quilts can be used as warm bedding, simple tents or floor coverings. There are guidelines for size, what can and cannot be used [no fleece] and where to send the completed quilts. If you're curious and want to know more, here's the site: <https://lwr.org/blog/2024/understanding-new-quilt-kit-ministry-guide>.

I'm looking for donations of old sheets etc [listed above] and fabric you no longer have use for. Please bring them to me at Church. From the website you can also donate money to help pay for shipping to various places. Thank you.



Birthdays

3/07 Jean Pena

3/25 Sam Penwell



This Calendar includes the entire month of March.

On March 15, a more expanded calendar for Holy Week will be published.

February

Sun, Feb 25: *Reminiscere*

Wed, Feb 28: Mid-Week Vespers a. *Reminiscere* (7 p.m.) (Dr. Hein)

March

Sun, Mar 3: *Oculi*

Wed, Mar 6: Mid-Week Vespers a. *Oculi* (7 p.m.) (Dr. Hein)

Sun, Mar 10: *Laetare* (Presentation of the Creed)
Reception of new member

Tue, Mar 12: Circuit Meeting at SSLC

9:30AM. Divine Service SSLC members are welcome to join with pastors from our district. Light breakfast to follow.

Wed, Mar 13: Vespers a. *Laetare* (7 p.m.) (Pastor)

Sat, Mar 16: Men of the Shepherd (9 a.m.) (LC – The Prayer)

Sun, Mar 17: *Judica* (Presentation of the Our Father)

Wed, Mar 20: Vespers a. *Judica* (7 p.m.) (Pastor)

Sun, Mar 24: *Palmarum*

Tues, Mar 26: *Mystagogy* (Study of the Sacraments/Questioning)

Thur, Mar 28: 7:00PM Holy Thursday

Fri, Mar 29: 7:00PM Good Friday

Sat, Mar 30: 7:00PM Holy Saturday

Vigil of the Resurrection of Our Lord
Confirmation of Arryana Kay Kueter

Sun, Mar 31: 8:00 AM Easter Breakfast

9:00AM *The Feast of the Resurrection*



Pontius Pilate

Submitted by Gary Law

As the Roman Prefect over Judaea (Judea), Pontius Pilate had the power of life and death. His approval was required to sanction an execution. As such, he had a critical role in the fulfillment of our Lord's completed mission.

Pontius Pilatus (Pilate) was appointed 5th prefect of Judea Province in AD 26 while Tiberius was emperor. Pilate governed the province for over 10 years. Prior to this, Sejanus, commander of the Praetorian Guard, had accumulated so much power and influence that he effectively ruled the Empire. Because he rose to power just before Pilate was sent to Judea, Pilate may have been appointed by Sejanus rather than Tiberius.

During the 10 years (26-36 AD), Pilate had at least six significant conflicts with the local population, one of these being the trial of Jesus in 33 AD. Matters were made more complicated when Sejanus was accused of a plot in AD 31 and was executed without trial. The arrest and execution of many of his associates followed. As a likely Sejanus associate, Pilate was in a delicate position that required him to stay in favor with the emperor. When the Jewish religious leaders (the Sanhedrin) told Pilate that if he released Jesus he would be no "friend of Caesar", he would have clearly seen this as a threat to destroy his favor with Tiberius and endanger not only his career, but his life. As a result, despite obviously believing Jesus to be innocent, he eventually acted in his immediate best interest and submitted to the pressure of the Sanhedrin.

Two artifacts are known that directly connect Pontius Pilate as prefect of Judea. One is "The Pilot Stone" discovered in Caesarea, Israel. It is a monument stone

with a dedicatory Latin inscription that reads: “Tiberius, Pontius Pilatus, Prefect of Judea... dedicated”. More recently a copper-alloy signate ring was analyzed bearing the name “Pilato” (Pilates). The ring was discovered in a 1st century archaeological layer from 71 AD or earlier. Since the name “Pilatus is of Italian origin and is unknown from any other person in ancient Judea, the ring almost certainly refers to Pontius Pilate. It may have been used by Pilate or (more likely) a lower ranking official acting on his behalf.

Prior to the discovery of the ring and the stone inscription, Pilate was known only from manuscripts of Josephus, Philo, Tacitus, the Gospels, Acts, and 1 Timothy.



*Shepherd of the Springs Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod
A Confessional, Evangelical, Sacramental, and Liturgical
Congregation of the Lutheran Confessions*

Where the Lutheran Reformation Lives!

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