

# RESURRECTION NEWS



L E N T

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**MARCH 2015**



## Pastor's Letter

March, 2015

### *"Individual Confession and Absolution"*

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

*"Individual Confession and Absolution."* I know. It sounds too "Catholic" to be "Lutheran," right? Wrong! "Individual Confession and Absolution" belongs to the whole Church as a precious gift for all Christians.

#### So, what's it all about?

First of all, the practice of confession and absolution is central to the teachings of the Scriptures, and is something that we do together every Sunday at the very beginning of the Divine Service. We confess, **"I, a poor miserable sinner, confess unto You all my sins and iniquities with which I have ever offended You..."** And then we receive the absolution. "Upon this your confession, I as a called and ordained servant of the Word, announce the grace of God to all of you, and in the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ, I forgive you all of your sins, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."

Sound familiar? In CORPORATE Confession and Absolution, no specific, personal sins are mentioned. It's all very general and deals with who we are 'by nature' before God – 'sinful and unclean,' 'imploing His mercy.'

INDIVIDUAL Confession and Absolution is the same Confession and Absolution except that it gives the penitent the opportunity to bring out a particular sin he/she has been carrying and hand it over to Jesus Who has already atoned for it by His blood. In return, the Absolution is just as personal. "I forgive you (name), in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."

The Confession is the acknowledgement of the sin, vocally, and in the presence of another person, usually the pastor. There's no opportunity for explanation or excuse or rationalization. Likewise, there's no scolding or preaching from the pastor. Neither is there any judgment about whether or not the penitent is 'truly contrite' or whether the confession is 'sincere.' Confession is just that – out loud confession. And the goal of Confession is out loud absolution.

The Absolution is nothing other than the Gospel being applied directly to you. It's not 'advice' or 'counseling.' It's God's act of forgiving you here and now. Absolution does not simply promise forgiveness, nor does it give assurance or reassurance of God's forgiveness. It actually grants and bestows forgiveness, here and now, TO YOU for THIS SIN!

It is God Himself who forgives sins. But He carries out this power through the Gospel spoken, proclaimed. And when His Word is proclaimed, He Himself is present in that proclamation. It is His voice. The Augsburg Confession puts it like this, "It (*absolution*) is not the voice or word of the man who speaks it, but it is the Word of God, who forgives sins, for it is spoken in God's stead and by God's command." (AC XXXV:3) It should also be said that everything that is said in Confession falls under the strict seal of confidentiality.

The benefits of Confession and Absolution for the penitent are too numerous to list here, but it most certainly includes the assurance of God's love and forgiveness, consolation, relief from anxiety and/or guilt, peace for a troubled heart.

We will have more to say on this. But I invite you to take advantage of this precious gift that God has given to His Christians. Luther once wrote, "Therefore, when I urge you to go to confession, I am simply urging you to be a Christian." (*Large Catechism*) You will notice that a new statement will regularly appear in the worship bulletin – "Individual Confession and Absolution is available by appointment with pastor Nielsen."

Yours in Christ,

*Pastor Nielsen*

# *Seeking to Serve...notes from a Deaconess student*

Dear Brothers and Sisters of LCR,

My two weeks at the Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne participating in two intensive classes were indeed intense. As I related briefly Sunday morning right after my return, and again to the church council, my time there was busy from before sunrise (which is a bit later there than here) until nearly midnight most days. My morning course, studying the Pauline Epistles, met at 7:30am. We took a break for the 10am chapel service, but met for one additional hour before our lunch hour at noon.

The afternoon course in Theological Ethics ran from 1pm to 4:10pm. We had readings, research, writing assignments and a few additional required meetings some evenings as well. Please feel free to corner me to find out more about my time and what I have been learning. The opportunity to worship almost daily together was certainly a blessing, as was the fellowship with deaconess students from around the country.

One of my assignments for the Theological Ethics class was to write an article which might be included in a church newsletter addressing some issue of our society, and with a Lutheran perspective brought to its consideration. I decided to write a bit about marriage and sexuality.

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Valentine's Day is upon us again—the day for romantic dinners, exchanges of cards and chocolates, and pledges of true love. This day of focus on romantic attraction and attachments also brings into sharp contrast the lives of those who wish for a person who will be their perfect match, understanding and respecting their physical, emotional and sexual needs. We also recognize increasing disorder in the relations of men and women around us: sexting, regular “hooking up” for one-night stands on college campuses, the legalization of homosexual marriage, the release of the film “Fifty Shades of Gray” based on a novel series featuring an extra-marital sexual relationship largely consisting of what has historically been considered a sexual perversion (sado-masochism), the cultural acceptance or even expectation that couples will live together before marriage.

In most cases, romance has a role in marriage, or precedes marriage. As Christians, we believe that God created women and men for each other, and as John Chrysostom noted in his “Homily on Marriage” centuries ago, “this love (eros) is deeply planted within our inmost being...it attracts the bodies of men and women to each other, because in the beginning woman came forth from man, and from man and woman other men and women proceed.” God intended for men and women to complement and complete each other and so “the two shall become one flesh”. Not only are they physically different and complementary, they communicate, function and relate in different ways and so are called to different vocations and responsibilities. Marriage is also a reflection or physical earthly image of the mysterious reality of Jesus Christ's relationship to the Church. Thus, as many have noted, the Bible begins with a wedding in the garden of Eden (before the fall into sin) and ends with a wedding in the new creation, the grand story of God's love for us.

Sadly, our inheritance of original sin from Adam and Eve's disobedience has marred our natures, and so we turn inward (Martin Luther called it “curvedness”). We see this in the quest to satisfy our desires outside of God's plans for us. People want to be liberated from restraints of morals or responsibilities for others, “If it feels good, it is good”. At the same time they demand that they should be protected, enabled and affirmed to choose their own perceived “good”. Woe to those who limit their choice for how they wish to pursue happiness. This is where the law comes in to help control those “natural” (actually sinful) desires. Both God's law, the Ten Commandments, for example, and human laws are intended to protect and keep healthy the community of persons and suppress the selfish desires of specific individuals whose actions may hurt others. In our society and culture, many recently enacted laws do not promote the health of the greater community.

In Christ's work for us and in us, through our baptism into his death and new life, we have been given the ability to choose the good that God intends for us in our relationships. We may struggle since we are still in

this sinful flesh, but we are no longer bound to the original sin. Also, we have received, and continue to receive forgiveness for not always choosing the good. Gilbert Meilander, in a collection of sermons entitled Love Taking Shape, addressed positive reasons for keeping God's law with respect to the use of our sexuality, which we are capable of doing in Christ. He noted "When we give ourselves sexually, we give *ourselves*...And therefore, sexual commitment is not to be separated from a sharing of the whole of life—not if we want the great good of faithfulness to come to its fruition in our lives. We cannot give ourselves fully if we withhold the future; for then our commitment is not as full and complete as Christ's commitment to his church." (pp.34-35). Yet still in mercy we need to remind each other of the forgiveness offered by Christ for sexual sins and all sins. As Jesus forgave the sinful woman who anointed his feet with ointment in Luke 7, as he offered living water to the Samaritan woman of John 4 who had lived with five different men, as he told the woman caught in adultery of John 8 "Neither do I condemn you; go, and from now on sin no more" (v.11), we need to return to him for that word of absolution and that meal for forgiveness and renewal of strength which we receive during our family's gathering in the church.

Under his mercy,  
*Sharon M. Conover*

### **Mid-Week Lenten Services: "BLESSED" - THE BEATITUDES**

**All mid-week Lent services at both Noon and 7:00pm.**



3/4 - Wednesday - "Blessed are the those who hunger and thirst for righteousness..."

3/11 - Wednesday - "Blessed are the merciful..."

3/18 - *No services*

3/25 - Wednesday - "Blessed are the pure in heart..."

4/2 - Thursday - "Blessed are the peacemakers..."

4/3 - Friday - "Blessed are the persecuted..."

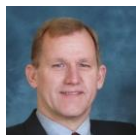
### **DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME BEGINS – March 8<sup>th</sup>.**

Be sure to remember to turn your clocks ahead an hour before retiring on Saturday night.

### **HIGHER THINGS YOUTH – FELLOWSHIP FUNDRAISER - Sunday, March 8<sup>th</sup>.**

Please plan to join us in the Fellowship Hall after worship for a special Fellowship Meal prepared by the Sr. Youth. Free will donations will go towards their trip to the Higher Things Conference this summer in Michigan.

### **"MISSION SUNDAY" - Sunday, March 22<sup>nd</sup>.**



The Board for Missions has arranged for Rev. Jeff Ehlers, executive director of the Garuna Foundation, Phoenix, Arizona, to be our special guest for MISSION SUNDAY. The Garuna Foundation has been one of the mission organizations that we have been actively supporting. Rev. Ehlers will speak at Adult Bible Study about the amazing work of the organization in Cambodia and Thailand with special attention to the "Garuna Kids" project. Please plan to join us.

### **BOARD FOR MISSIONS – Report on the "Men's Clothing Drive."**



An amazing amount of men's clothing was collected for the Mid-Maine Homeless Shelter. The goal was to sort it all by type and size, box, label and deliver 100 boxes to the Shelter. 30 people came to help on Saturday, February 14 at 9:00am. In an amazing show of teamwork and fun, the entire job was completed in an hour and a half! Amazing! And the goal was super-exceeded – 135 boxes were delivered. Thank you to everyone who brought clothes and helped in making this a great mission activity.

## BOARD FOR MISSIONS MEETING MINUTES - 2/4/15

### Mid-Maine Homeless Shelter:

The visit by Betty Palmer, director of the MMHS did not work out for February 22<sup>nd</sup> and will be rescheduled for the Spring.

Discussion of an essay that pastor Nielsen distributed to board members titled, "Luther's Christological Giving and the Welfare State." It addresses the failure of the current 'welfare system' and offers a better solution based on several key ideas taken from Luther, summarized as follows:

1<sup>st</sup> - Give to those who are local neighbors first and foremost, establishing relationships with those who receive the gifts of God.

2<sup>nd</sup> - A personal encounter between 'giver' and 'recipient' would result in a changed attitude towards welfare on the part of both. For the 'recipient,' instead of an attitude of entitlement and dependence, an attitude of gratitude. For the 'giver,' an attitude of grace towards those struggling in poverty and a desire to work for a better system.

3<sup>rd</sup> - In addition to physical support, the gift also serves as a form of evangelism and stewardship to those who are outside the Church.

Further discussion will follow at future meetings.

The March meeting of the Board is scheduled for Sunday, March 8<sup>th</sup> after worship.

All members of the congregation who may be interesting in serving on this Board are invited to attend.

### Herb Schartner funeral service

Our beloved brother and a long time member of the congregation, Herb Schartner died on February 7<sup>th</sup> while at his winter home in Florida. The funeral service will be conducted by pastor Nielsen at Trinity Lutheran Church, Clinton, Mass., where Herb was baptized and confirmed. The service begins at 1:00pm.

### From Rev. Matthew Harrison – President, LC-MS.

Dear brothers and sisters,

Tomorrow is Ash Wednesday, when the Church begins her slow and measured journey to the cross, where we see Jesus: the Savior who hangs — bloodied and scourged — for us. It is a time of reflection and repentance for me and also for you, for all of us as the LCMS, and for the Church throughout the world. And yet in the midst of our dusty Lenten ashes, we also look forward to Easter, when our Lord is raised from the dead, triumphing over sin and Satan, all for us. Yes, even during our Lenten fast, joy abounds!

**That's why I want to share two important things with you**, so that you may see and know that our Lord is at work in and among each one of us, and is using us collectively as the LCMS to bear witness to Him. First, our Synod treasurer, Jerry Wulf, shared at our Board of Directors meeting last weekend that **together as the Synod we have reduced internal borrowing of restricted funds to cash flow operations from some \$16 million four years ago to zero**. You read that correctly. Zero! And we're not stopping there. To get our financial house in order, we have also achieved a three-month cash reserve for operations, which is the minimum for a responsible non-profit.

Second, I'm delighted to announce that **we are closing in on doubling the number of career missionaries internationally, which is a goal set by the Synod in convention in 2013**. We are working to find a measured pace that will ensure that a sound system of missionary care remains in place but, by God's grace, will also enable us to continue to add men and women, lay and clergy, to our worldwide mission team. The international moment unfolding worldwide before us as the LCMS is truly astounding!

So, thank you. Thank you for taking part in getting our finances in order so that we may be hearty stewards of all our Lord has to give. And thank you for being a part of our church's mission work, that our fellow members may go to the ends of the earth to bear witness to Christ to those who have not yet heard that they are loved and whole on account of His death and resurrection. Thank you. Thank you for your faithfulness to God's Word and to the Lutheran Confessions. Lay people, thank you for loving your pastors. Pastors, thank you for loving your people. Thank you for living boldly as the baptized children, loved by God, that you are. And thank you for the privilege of serving you. I covet your prayers and promise you mine, this Lenten season and always.



## JUST FOR FUN!

### Ramblings of a Retired Mind

(not mine)

#### Disbursements of 2014 Craft Fair Money

LCMS World Relief	\$200
Bethesda Lutheran Communities	100
Maine's Children's Cancer Program	100
Lutheran Hour Ministries	100
Boy's and Girl's Club (for kitchen)	100
Maine Children's Home for Little Wanderers	100
Lutheran World Relief (purchase of goat)	100
LWML-NED, (10% of craft fair proceeds)	150
Trinity First Lutheran School	100
The Garunda Foundation (sponsor a child for a school year)	360
DDS 4 Kids (dental assistance for Vietnamese children)	100
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1500</b>

**(We are waiting to see if we get any matching Funds from Thrivent)**

**In Christ's Love,  
Anna Bisson (Pres.)**

>I was thinking how a status symbol of today is those cell phones everyone has clipped on. I can't afford one. So, I'm wearing my garage door opener.

>Employment application blanks always ask, 'who is to be notified in case of an emergency'. I think you should write, "A Good Doctor".

>You know, I spent a fortune on deodorant before I realized that people didn't like me anyway.

>I was thinking that women should put pictures of missing husbands on beer cans.

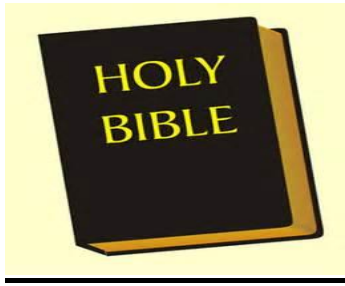
>I was thinking about old age and decided that it is 'when you still have something on the ball, but you are just too tired to bounce it'.

>I have gotten that dreaded furniture disease. That's when your chest is falling into your drawers.

>I know when people see a cat's litter box, they always say, "Oh, have you got a cat?" Just once I want to say, "No, it's for company."

>Why do they put pictures of criminals up in the Post Office? What are we supposed to do – write to these men? Why don't they just put their pictures on the postage stamps so the mailmen could look for them when they deliver the mail?

>I was thinking about how people seem to read the Bible a whole lot when they get older. Then, it dawned on me they were cramming for their finals. As for me, I'm hoping God grades on the curve.



## Monthly Worship

### March 1, 2015

#### Second Sunday in Lent

**Psalm:** 22:23-31

**First Reading:** Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16

**Epistle:** Romans 5:1-11

**Holy Gospel:** Mark 8:27-38

### March 8, 2015

#### Third Sunday in Lent

**Psalm:** 19

**First Reading:** Exodus 20:1-17

**Epistle:** 1 Corinthians 1:18-31

**Holy Gospel:** John 2:13-22 (23-25)

### March 15, 2015

#### Fourth Sunday in Lent

**Psalm:** 107:1-9

**First Reading:** Numbers 21: 4-9

**Epistle:** Ephesians 2:1-10

**Holy Gospel:** John 3:14-21

### March 22, 2015

#### Fifth Sunday in Lent

**Psalm:** 119:9-16

**First Reading:** Jeremiah 31:31-34

**Epistle:** Hebrews 5:1-10

**Holy Gospel:** Mark 10(32-34) 35-45

### March 29, 2015

#### Palm Sunday

**Psalm:** 118:19-29 or 31:9-16

**First Reading:** Zechariah 9:9-12

**Epistle:** Philippians 2:5-11

**Holy Gospel:** Mark 14:1—15:47 or  
Mark 15:1-47 or John 12:20-43

## BIBLE QUIZ

1. What was Abraham's original name?

A) Abraham B) Abram C) Abe D) Abramson

2. According to the law, which of the following would be considered clean?

A) ants and locusts B) spiders and locusts C) worms and locusts D) grasshoppers and locusts

3. Why did Jesus speak in parables so often?

A) He was gifted in telling short stories B) to hide God's wisdom from those who chose to disbelieve C) it was a pleasant alternative to John the Baptist's harsh teachings D) the crowd kept asking for yet on more parable

4. In the parable of the four soils, which soil represented faith that has no substance?

A) hard soil B) weedy/thorny soil C) stony soil D) good soil

5. Where did the antagonists accuse Jesus of getting His power to exorcise from?

A) Baal, god of the Canaanites B) Beelzebub, the prince of devils C) Zeus, top god of the Greeks D) top god of the Romans

6. Who said this: "This do in remembrance of me"?

A) Joshua B) Jesus C) David D) Peter

Answers on "Birthday" page



- 3/4 Esther Gould
- 3/5 Evan Farr
- 3/17 Daniel Morren
- 3/18 Arthur Conover
- 3/21 Glenn Carlson
- 3/25 Kari Farr
- Michael Hein
- 3/28 Twila Kaska



## CONFIRMATION ANNIVERSARIES

- 3/16 Becky Cote
- 3/17 Gail Carrano
- 3/27 Mark Larsen
- 3/29 Twila Kaska

## Paraprosdokians

(are figures of speech in which the latter part of a sentence phrase is surprising or unexpected; frequently humorous.)

----Money can't buy happiness, but it sure helps misery easier to live with.

----There's a fine line between cuddling and holding someone down so they can't get away.

----I used to be indecisive. Now I'm not so sure.

----You're never too old to learn something stupid.

----To be sure you hit the target, shoot first and call whatever you hit the target.

----Nostalgia isn't what it used to be.

----Change is inevitable, except from a vending machine.

----Going to church doesn't make you a Christian any more than standing in a garage makes you a car.

----I'm supposed to respect my elders, but it's getting harder and harder for me to find one now.



- 3/10 Evelyn Gaug
- 3/13 Fernando Gouvea
- 3/19 Fred Ouellette, Sr.
- Fred Ouellette, Jr.

## Bible Quiz Answers:

1. B Genesis 17:5
2. D Leviticus 11:20-23
3. B Matthew 13:10-15
4. C Matthew 13:20-21
5. B Luke 11:14-15
6. B 1 Corinthians 11:23-25



# The Lutheran Church of the Resurrection

## Calendar of Events

### March, 2015

#### **Week of March 1st**

Sunday - 3/1

8:45am. - Sunday School / Adult Bible Study  
10:00am. - Worship

Monday - 3/2

6:00pm. - Board of Elders

Wednesday - 3/4

Noon and 7:00pm. Mid-Week Lent Services

Thursday - 3/5

6:00pm. - Inquirers Class

#### **Week of March 8<sup>th</sup>**

Sunday - 3/8

DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME  
8:45am. - Sunday School / Adult Bible Study  
10:00am. - Worship  
11:30am. - Higher Things Youth Fellowship  
Noon - Board for Missions Meeting

Wednesday - 3/11

Noon and 7:00pm. Mid-Week Lent Services

Thursday - 3/12

6:00pm. - Inquirers Class

Friday - 3/13-20

Pastor Nielsen away on vacation.

#### **Week of March 15<sup>th</sup>**

Sunday - 3/16

8:45am. - Sunday School / Adult Bible Study  
10:00am. - Worship

Saturday - 3/21

6:00pm. - Board for Missions Dinner

#### **Week of March 22<sup>nd</sup>**

Sunday - 3/22

**MISSIONS SUNDAY**  
8:45am. - Sunday School / Adult Bible Study  
10:00am. - Worship

Wednesday - 3/25

Noon and 7:00pm. - Mid-Week Lenten Worship

#### **Week of March 29<sup>th</sup>**

Sunday - 3/29

8:45am. - Sunday School / Adult Bible Study  
10:00am. - Worship

Thursday - 4/2

Noon and 7:00pm. - Maundy Thursday Services

Friday - 4/3

Noon and 7:00pm. - Good Friday Services

## March 2015 - Stewardship

	<u>March 1</u>	<u>March 8</u>	<u>March 15</u>	<u>March 22</u>	<u>March 29</u>
Acolyte	Caden Fitzpatrick	Sarah Kohl	Allison Farr	Emily Larsen	Jacob Huesers
Comm. Assistant	Glenn Carlson	Mike Hein	No Communion	Brian Watson	Brad Grierson
Ushers	Brad Grierson & Moe Cote	Glenn Carlson, Jr. & John Gould.	Mark Larsen & Brad Fitzpatrick	Chris Batson & Steve Love	Bill Jahnke & Jon Morren
Greeters	Peter & Evelyn Gaug	Moe & Becky Cote	David Leigh & Dorothy McAllister	Tom & Katie Heusers	Dan & Sharon Callahan
Altar Care	Esther Gould	Lee Anne Larsen	Katie Huesers	Avis Grant	Deb Nielsen
Fellowship	Sasha Fitzpatrick	Amy Ouellette	Kitty Carlson	Mission Board	Sharon Klipp

*Lutheran Church of the Resurrection  
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