

THE  
VOICE  
OF

***ST. PETER'S***

FEBRUARY 2018

**From the Pastor:**

On February 14<sup>th</sup> we will observe Ash Wednesday at St. Peter's, and so we will once again begin the penitential season of Lent, which points us toward the suffering and death of Jesus upon the cross. By stretching out his hands for us upon the cross, Jesus took from us the heavy burden of all our sin upon his sinless body. By pouring out his precious life-blood for us upon the cross, Jesus saves us, in the words of Martin Luther, "from sin, death, and the power of the devil." The cross of Jesus shows us the great extreme to which God was willing to go in order to reclaim us as God's own precious children.

Lent should be a time of repentance, renewal, and spiritual discipline for us, but in this season, we must always remember that the deepest meaning of Lent is not for us to do something to make amends to God, but for us to grow in our appreciation of what God has done for us. Lent reminds us that although we can do nothing to remove the heavy burden of sin from ourselves, we can turn it over to Jesus, our Savior, who has taken it from us and who has overcome it through his sacrificial death upon the cross.

Lent was always special for Martin Luther because he placed such a major emphasis on the cross of Jesus. During this Lenten season, our Wednesday evening services will be "Standing at the Cross," which will focus on portions of sermons that Luther actually preached during Lent. As we stand with Luther at the foot of the cross each week, we contemplate the ways in which we stand firm in the faith as followers of Christ during this holy season. This Lent, then, let us make every effort to attend these services, and let us also make room in our hearts for the love and forgiveness which God has given us through Jesus, and let us believe more fully the good news that God truly grants, in the words of Luther, "forgiveness, life, and salvation" through the death and resurrection of Jesus, our Lord and Savior!

**Yours in Christ, Pastor Richard**

## **Highlights from the January 4<sup>th</sup> Council Meeting**

Due to very cold weather, the January Council meeting was canceled. The Council will meet on February 1<sup>st</sup> for its annual re-organizational meeting, and it will take up the business that could not be done in January.

### **WEDNESDAY NIGHT LIVE**

In January, we continued our study of the Reformation period, with attention to the non-Lutheran Reformers and their contributions to Church History.

The sessions, which run from 7:00 PM to 8:00 PM, are held on Wednesday evenings until the beginning of Lent, when the sessions will be held on Tuesday evenings.

The schedule for the February 2018 is: Wednesday, Feb. 7<sup>th</sup>, Tuesday, Feb. 13<sup>th</sup>, Tuesday, Feb. 20<sup>th</sup>, and Tuesday, Feb. 27<sup>th</sup>

### **CONFIRMATION CLASS NEWS**

Our combined Middler (Eighth Graders) and Senior (Ninth Graders) class is continuing its study of the history of the Christian Church with sessions on the Medieval period, with a focus on the Papacy and the Crusades.

The Middler-Senior Class will meet at 9:00 AM on February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup>, and 24<sup>th</sup>.

The Junior Class (Seventh Grade) met on December 27<sup>th</sup> for a session on the Moravian Church and for making Moravian stars under the leadership of Andrea Knoll. It will meet on February 3<sup>rd</sup> at 9:00 AM in the Youth Room for a lesson on the Parable of the Prodigal Son.

### **LENTEN SERVICES**

The Season of Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, which falls on February 14<sup>th</sup>, and we will have Ash Wednesday services with Holy Communion and the imposition of ashes at 11:00 AM and 7:30 PM. Our mid-week Lenten Services will be held at 7:30 PM on February 21<sup>st</sup>, and 28<sup>th</sup>, and March 7<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, and 21<sup>st</sup>.

## **ASK THE PASTOR**

This is a new column in our monthly Newsletter, in which Pastor Richard will try to answer questions of general interest to the Congregation.

**QUESTION: “IN HEAVEN, WILL WE BE IN SPIRIT OR BODY FORM?”**

**QUESTION: “IN HEAVEN, WILL WE SEE ALL OUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS, THAT HAVE PASSED AWAY BEFORE US”**

**QUESTION: “IS CREMATION ALRIGHT FOR CHRISTIANS?”**

Our questions this month all deal with heaven. The first raises the question of bodily resurrection. In the Gospel of Luke, when the risen Jesus appears to his disciples on the first Easter Sunday, he demonstrates to them that he is not just a spirit, but that he has returned in bodily form. In First Corinthians, St. Paul insists that Jesus experienced a bodily resurrection on Easter Sunday and, likewise, Christians will also experience a bodily resurrection. Thus the Church confesses in the Third Article of the Apostles’ Creed, “I believe in the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting.” So the Christian tradition believes in a bodily resurrection in heaven, patterned after the glorified body of the risen Lord.

The second question asks whether we will see and know our loved ones in heaven. At the Last Supper on Holy Thursday, Jesus promised his disciples that he would share bread and wine with them in the Kingdom of Heaven. In the Book of Revelation, there is a vision of the saints gathered around the throne of God and singing their praises. These passages imply that we will see and know others in heaven. One of the prayers in our Lutheran funeral service reassures the bereaved with the promise of “joyful expectation of eternal life with those they love.” So the Christian tradition believes that we will see and know our loved ones in heaven.

The third question involves the practice of cremation, which has become popular in the United States. Cremation was common in the Roman Empire, but the early Christians rejected it as a heathen practice, and that attitude persisted well into the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. The ELCA website offers the following statement: “Lutheran theology and tradition do not favor any particular form of burial. God’s ability to give resurrected bodies to those who bear the name of Christ cannot be stymied by any human action, including organ donation or cremation.” So cremation is alright.

## **Youth Ministry News**

On December 24<sup>th</sup> the Youth Ministry & Christian Education held a first annual Happy Birthday Jesus Party. There were 38 children and 3 babies that attended to help celebrate baby Jesus Birthday. All the children received gift bags. The celebration included a prayer, singing, games, crafts, pinata's, snacks, cake and beverages. Everyone had a blast including the adults! We would like to thank everyone who attended and helped to celebrate a special Birthday Party for Jesus. Total breakdown of expenses were: \$250 Thrivent Grant and \$19 from the Youth Ministry Fund.

We also received over 30 cans of soup that will be donated as part of our Souper Bowl of Caring.

The next YMC meeting will be on February 11<sup>th</sup>. The YMC will meet every 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of each Month at 11:30am.

The next Jubilee class for children ages 2-5 years old will be on Feb the 18<sup>th</sup> at Noon. The program will run every 3<sup>rd</sup> Sat of each month.

The Program will be an hour long of learning stories about Jesus, Singing, Dancing, Games and Crafts.

The next Spark group event will be on February 18<sup>th</sup> at Noon. It will be the "The Annual Indoor Snow Ball Battle." This is a combination of a snow ball battle and game of capture the flag! We invite everyone to come and bring a friend. Plan for a High Energy Fun Day! Youth Ministry Committee will be providing a light lunch and drinks. Please sign up either on Facebook or our website at [stpeterslutheranpinegrove.org](http://stpeterslutheranpinegrove.org) under events.

Summer camping registration for 2018 is open. Any children who would like to attend Camp Kirchenwald or Bear Creek Summer Camp please follow us on our website at [stpeterslutheranpinegrove.org](http://stpeterslutheranpinegrove.org) for more information under Ministries. (Click on Youth Ministry Summer Camp).

If any children wish to attend Bear Creek Camp, please contact Justine Tice for more information.

Youth Ministry Fund Balance as of 1-14-18 is \$3,804.04.

\*\*\* COMING SOON Youth Ministry Event in May to Lake Tobias\*\*\* Stay tuned for more information in March Newsletter.

Sincerely,

Ben Moyer,

Youth Ministry Committee

**REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS:**

✝ Those who were hospitalized, recuperating, ill, or in any need in the months of January & February: Chase Morgan, Shirley Zimmerman, Dorothy Dower, Kevin Schneck, and Debra Keefer.

✝ Isabelle Ruth Stormont, the daughter of Ian and Emily (Stolarick) Stormont, born on December 5<sup>th</sup>.

✝ Adelynn Mae Thomas, the daughter of Cody Thomas and Tessa Heim, born on January 3<sup>rd</sup>.

✝ Logan Andrew Lengel, the son of Bradley and Jaimie (Harnish) Lengel, who was baptized on January 21<sup>st</sup>.

✝ The Family of Pat Brand, who passed away on January 17<sup>th</sup>.

✝ Barrett Neil Bressler, the son of Neil and Amber Jo (Heberling) Bressler, who was baptized on January 28<sup>th</sup>.

\*The Prayer Circle will meet on Wednesday, February 7th @ 9:00AM.

## **Memorial Gifts... To the Glory of God**

### ***(Memorial Fund)***

\$60 in honor of Loved Ones by Howard C. Lengel & Shirley Lengel.

### ***(Capital Improvement Fund)***

\$20 in memory of Pastor Hoenich's Mother by Virginia Schwartz.

\$200 in memory of Loved Ones by Virginia Schwartz.

\$100 in memory of Loved Ones by Kenneth and Betty Bressler.

### ***(Stew Zerbe Memorial)***

\$50 in memory of William Harris by George and Kathy Sorokach.

\$20 in memory of Mrs. Hoenich by George and Kathy Sorokach.

### ***(Youth Ministry Fund)***

\$500 in honor of the People of St. Peter's wishing everyone a Blessed New Year by Financial Secretary, Ben Moyer.

## **Bible Journaling**

Our new Bible Journaling Group, led by Nancy Reichelt, will meet on Tuesday, February 6th at 6:30 PM. Everyone is welcome!