

Crossings

"Making known
God's deeds
among us."
Isaiah 12:4

Volume 13 Issue 2

February 2018

Pastor's Epistle

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

As Lent approaches, I ponder the mysteries of Baptism and repentance. In Luther's Small Catechism, one of the questions in his explanation of Baptism is, "What does Baptism mean for daily life?" His answer to this question is as follows:

It means that our sinful self, with all its evil deeds and desires, should be drowned through daily repentance; and that day after day a new self should arise to live with God in righteousness and purity forever. St. Paul writes in Romans 6: We were buried therefore with him by Baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life."

First, what exactly is "our sinful self"? "Our sinful self" is an admission that our very nature is fundamentally and mortally sick because sin has corrupted our will in such a way that we, by nature, desire what *we* want, instead of what *God* wants. This corrupted will of ours turns us away from God and emphasizes everything that might be self-centering, self-fulfilling, self-promoting. Because humans are born this way, we do not have the capability to *right* ourselves. God's holiness demands right living, which is impossible for us to do. So we are condemned to death – eternal separation from God.

Pretend you are an old 1967 Buick that always has something wrong with it. Your owner t gets one thing fixed and another part fails and you still won't run right. After trying many times to get the various parts fixed, unsuccessfully, your owner decides to junk the car - you. You find yourself in a junkyard waiting in line to be crushed before being shipped off to the fires to be melted down and made into something else.

God could have decided to junk God's broken creation – melt it down into something else. But He didn't. God "turned" from his wrath and turned to love. God's love trumped God's wrath – and God came to us in Jesus Christ. To become human, to be one of us, and to not only carry our sins, but take their power of death into himself for us, so that those who believe in him might have new life in him.

Through Baptism we receive the gifts of new and eternal life and forgiveness, and we are made *right* before God, by the action of the Holy Spirit, on account of Christ's work through the cross. That means that God no longer counts our fundamental nature against us; so even though we still sin against God and others, our nature that drives us to sin will no longer count against us when we stand before God. Instead, Jesus stands before God in our stead.

I bring this up because during Lent we emphasize repentance, which is a turning towards God. As Christians we are called to be obedient to God's will, not our own. But because of our nature "in the flesh", we often do our own will instead of God's. As Lutherans, we believe that baptism frees us from our sinful selves to live for others. But to do that, we need to live a repentant life; a life that daily turns towards God. As a Christian who was brought up in the church, I sometimes have a difficult time really understanding this gift of love we receive through the cross of Christ. Since I sometimes have difficulty grasping the depth of God's grace because I can't always grasp the depth of my brokenness, I thought maybe many of you might have similar experiences.

So I invite all of you, as part of your Lenten reflection, to join me to think deeply about what you believe regarding sin, your sin, and the person and work of Jesus Christ. Do you embrace him as your Savior? Do you believe you fall short of the glory of God (Rom 3.26)? What does it mean to accept your natural brokenness? What does it mean for you to receive grace freely given to you by Jesus Christ? What might it look and feel like to rise each morning and, before anything else, repent of your own will and, turn towards God, asking God's blessing and direction for the day? Let's do this together and serve God in all humility and gratitude.

Walking with you this Lenten Season – Pr. Nancy

Our Mission Statement

*Called by Christ to love
God & neighbor
through deepening prayer,
broadening fellowship,
and expanding worship.*

"In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Beloved, since God loves us so much, we also ought to love one another."

1 John 4:10-11

Lenten meditation:

The less obvious and sometimes more costly forms of self-denial

Self-denial is a slippery discipline, especially at Lent, when Christians traditionally give up something they like to eat. Ages ago when believers gave up meat, eggs, and milk, they were suffering genuine hardship because they didn't have many other options in their diet.

Today, giving up a certain food is easy—there is always lots more to replace it. No meat, no problem. We've got fish and soy products, blender drinks and protein bars. In addition, there is always the thought lurking in the back of my mind that if I cut back on food a bit I might lose a few pounds.

There are other options for self-denial as we commemorate our Lord's 40 days in the desert as He began His earthly ministry. To add to your commemoration of Lent, or to begin now or anytime, consider these disciplines, that may not be as obvious as food, but can be quite difficult:

We can give up our time. We can give up our free time and spend more time with Jesus, in His word, or serving others. This can be a genuine sacrifice, because for those who work in ministry, there is little free time.

We can give up control of our words. This is hard for me. I love to give my opinion. For Lent I can give up my words so I can listen carefully.

We can give up feelings of resentment. Yes, the work we do is hard and few appreciate it, but no matter how difficult our day, our burdens are nothing compared to what Jesus bore for us.

Spend time alone with Jesus, as He did with His Father in the desert. Ask Him what He wants you to give up. Obey Him faithfully, in secret, and your Easter reward won't only be a few lost pounds, but a closer walk with your Savior.



"I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me."



The Water and the Witness

Our Lenten Focus

Each year as Lent comes around the foreheads of believers are left both fresh and raw in the dust of ash. Those ashes superimposed over the mark with which they are sealed in the covenant of baptism serve as reminder that in baptism life can only come from death, and that baptism is a daily death and resurrection. Baptism does not stand alone in the life of a Christian. At best, with the water also comes the witness, the sharing through of God's transforming love through word and deed.

We will be journey through Lent with the Water & Witness theme. As we navigate through Scripture, Christian traditions, and life experience as communities and people that encounter the waters of baptism as both raging and peaceful. Still, seeking to be about more than water, we hope to draw you into a deeper encounter with the One who both calls and stirs these waters, the One who draws all creation into his own life, death, and resurrection. Bound together in baptism these promise-filled waters carry the faithful people forth to become the creation God intends, to proclaim God's transformative powers, to live a reconciled life.

Lent



RECENT PRAYERS

Susan Anderson
Nate Baggett
Linda & Jim Bills
Jerry Carr
John Champe
Linda Christensen
Trish Clouse
Robin Coughenour
Tony Daggett
Mary Datschefski
Betty Foster
Ryver Lane
Behruz Charibov's Parents
and family
Elizabeth Moore
Jaxson Osmundson
John Pasuit
Mike Randall
Ashley Reeves
Rick
Ty Rogerson
Suzanne Roberts
Connie Rue
Sharon Scot
Misty Smith
Susie Smith
Mitch Sullivan
Ron Swanson
Rachel Thiede
Vanessa
Heidi Williams

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St. Paul's Shut-ins:

Ruth Johnson

Continuing Prayers
(2016)

Anthony Allen
Pat & Gerry Anderson
Gene Dobson
Gerry Gillette
Maya Griebel
Wendy Henexson
Richard McDonough-
Cathy Tietje
Osmundson
Leo Oye
Dr. Marridee Randall
Leeta Sanger
Scott Sanger
Lyle Spieler
Greg Tilton
Fred Witte

(2015)

Linda Ulrich Johnson
Ella Teno

(2014)

Sharon Glenn
Nick Griffin
Pat Mason

Continuing Prayers

Brantley Hemann
Laura Moore
Trisha Raven

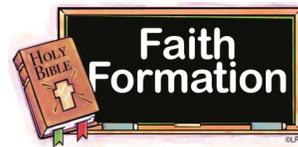
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**Education/
Prayer Team**



February 14
@ 11 am

Session one
Washing hands with distant hearts
(Mark 7:1-12)



Faith Formation Gathering: February 21.
We will be at Monroe Care from 4—5 pm. We will be bringing them hearts and playing games with the residents. Afterwards we will come back to the church for a meal and fellowship.



Please help us decorate the hearts that are in the fellowship hall; as there are about 60 residents and we would like to give each one a heart.

Roman Catholic – Lutheran Dialogue

"Declaration On the Way; Church, Ministry and Eucharist"

Final Sessions on Agreements on Ordained Ministry

Thursdays @ 6:30 pm

We will be using the same book as the other sessions. This session stands on its own; so you can join us even if you were not able to attend previous sessions. If you need a book, let Pastor Nancy or Gloria know. Each church will host the refreshments when we meet at their church.

Feb. 1 @ St. Paul's Articles 21-23 (pg 13/pg 47– mid section 49)—Fr. Mike

Feb. 8 @ St. Paul's Articles 24-26 (pg 13-14/pg 49– 54)—Pr. Nancy

Everyone who participated in any of the 17 sessions is encouraged to join us on Feb. 8 for our final session. We would like to take a group photo and we will have an end of sessions party.

Fellowship Team Ministries



BRUNCH
February 18

Senior Fellowship

Pot-luck Luncheon: February 7 at 11:00 am.
Get your thinking caps ready

WOMEN of the ELCA (WELCA)

Our **February meeting** will be on Thursday, the 22 after Lenten Worship about 7:15 pm
Come to worship and join us for food, fellowship and quick meeting after wards.

We have a monthly **Bible Study** on Weds., February 14 at 11 am. See more details on page 3.



Birthdays & Anniversaries

Birthday's

2. Carson Stocker
2. Kay Spieler
5. Greg Dorpinghaus
7. Bristol Lynn Dowdy
11. Rhonda Mason
11. Sophie Hemann
12. Joyce Tangie
13. Dan Stocker
16. Jay Heaton
17. Karter Spieler
22. Judy Van Polen
23. Richard James
24. Logan Dorpinghaus
28. Amanda Thomas

Baptismal Birthday's

2. Veronica Fuhs
3. Becca Mason
7. Alex Mason
11. Mitchel Sparks
16. Sharon Wilkin



Holy Baptism

On February 4 we welcome into the family of God, Talia Elizabeth Lee Sherman, daughter of Craig & Amberlyn Sherman. Her grandparents are Phillip & Laura Clouse and Great-Grandma Gail Clouse. Phil & Laura will help guide Talia in her faith journey as her sponsors.

Shrove Tuesday



Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper: Feb. 13 from 5-7 pm. We will be serving all you can eat pancakes with sausage & bacon. We still have spots open where you can help with the afternoon pre-cooking of bacon and sausage; as well as cooking pancakes and serving during the meal and clean up.

Items still needed frozen sweetened strawberries and bacon. Sheet to sign-up is in the fellowship hall on table by usher stand



Council



Next Council Meeting will be March 11 after worship.



Over the past year we have had a lot of travel to be with our family. As a result of the traveling; Gloria has been away from the office. We really appreciate the understanding and support from the congregation and council.
Gloria & Charlie Smallwood

St. Paul's Lutheran Church

Council Meeting Minutes

January 28th, 2018

Members Present: Gail Clouse, Richard James, Ruth James, Stephanie Kelley, Pastor Nancy Reed, Kay Spieler, Amanda Thomas, Marilyn Woods

Additional guests: Gloria Smallwood

Gloria requested approval of transfer of funds totaling \$4000 from the Anderson Fund (which provides for the continued education of St. Paul's youth) to St. Paul's Christian Ed/Faith Formation Fund. Five children were able to attend Riverside Bible Camp this past year using the funds. The current balance is \$340.52. Gail motions to approve the transfer of funds. Kay seconds; motion carries.

Gloria also reported that there are repairs that need to happen at the church including kitchen door repair and fluorescent light replacement in the sanctuary. It was questioned whether these lights could/should be changed out to LEDs? Also wondered if there were any energy efficiency grants that St. Paul's might apply for to help fund the replacement? Chariton Valley Electric may be able to provide some ideas about grant availability.

Also, the furnace filters need to be replaced at least every three months. More need to be purchased so they are available when needed.

New Officers

Richard motions that Ruth James become President; Kay seconds; motion carries.

Gail Clouse will continue as Vice President.

Amanda Thomas will carry on as Secretary.

Anita Simmons will continue to serve as Treasurer.

Kay Spieler will serve as a council member.

Pastor Nancy asked to put her salary income as housing allowance for 2018. Marilyn motions to approve; Ruth seconds; motion carries.

Next meeting on Sunday, March 11th, after worship.

Pastor motions the meeting adjourn.

Gail seconds; meeting adjourned.

Minutes submitted by Amanda Thomas, Secretary

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St. Paul's Phone Directory is available on fellowship hall table. (Directory is Blue this year)

2018 Annual Report: Let Gloria know if you want a hard copy of the report and she will print one for you.

Office Note: Gloria will be out of the office from 2/1-2/6. She will also be out Feb. 20-26.

Usher & Lector rotation is on the bulletin board above bulletin/usher stand.

Usher duty check list is on bulletin stand by gray book.

Mission Task Force



Boxes of Hope Continuing Mission: for the Emergency Assistance Office.

Items that are in the greatest demand are:



© Can Stock Photo

All-purpose cleaning products & Bathroom cleaners

Dish soap

Laundry Detergent

Toilet paper

Toothpaste

Shampoo

Men & Women Deodorant

Body wash (not bar soap)



These items can not be purchased with the SNAP card (food stamps)

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Mission Project for Lent

The WATER & The WITNESS

The Water and The Witness calls us to make the connection between the waters of our baptismal witness and the world's water-related need.

We take for granted that we can quench our thirst at any water tap anytime without worrying about illness. Water is essential. And the waters of baptism are a reminder of what this project is all about.

Why Water?

The global water crisis doesn't always make headlines. But the truth is that it claims more lives each year than war.

Globally, 1.8 billion people – that's about **one out of every four people** – drink from contaminated water sources. Unsafe water leads to illnesses that claim the lives of 840,000 people each year, almost half of whom are children under the age of five.

What's more, women and children spend hours each day collecting water. This keeps them from school, work, and time with family. This keeps families and communities from learning, earning an income, and contributing to the local economy.

Water facts

- Research in eastern Uganda found that a family spends an average of **660 hours** a year collecting water. This represents two full months of labor.
- Water-related illnesses result in the loss of **443 million school days** each year.
- Close to **half of all people** in developing countries are suffering at any given time from a health problem caused by contaminated water or unsanitary conditions.
- **2.5 billion people** live without basic sanitation.
- More people have access to a mobile phone than a toilet.
- On average, women in Sub-Saharan Africa walk more than **three miles** each day to fetch water for their families. A traditional five-gallon jug, usually used for this purpose, weighs **40 pounds** when full!

Sometimes, it feels like how can our small church help with the global water crisis; we are just a drop in the bucket. Our shared donations with the other churches in the SEIA Synod can lead to a global change and another way for us to witness to the world by helping those in need.

We encourage everyone to make donations in our water bucket.

With your help, hope we can match or exceed our donations of last year; when purchased 45 pigs.

(\$1350.00). (This mission project will start on Ash Weds., Feb. 14)



Worship Servers

Altar Guild: Hayley Dobson & Anita Simmons

<u>Feb. 4</u>	Worship Assistant:	Gail Clouse
	Ushers/Greeters:	Stocker Family
	Lector:	Gail Clouse
<u>Feb. 11</u>	Worship Assistant:	Marilyn Woods
Transfiguration	Ushers/Greeters:	Hemann Family
	Lector:	Marilyn Woods
<u>Feb. 14</u>	Worship Assistant;	Marilyn Woods
Ash Weds.	Ushers/Greeters:	Smallwood's
	Lector:	Gloria Smallwood
<u>Feb. 18</u>	Worship Assistant:	Marilyn Woods
	Ushers/Greeters:	Tom & Linda Preston
	Lector:	Florence Heacock
<u>Feb. 25</u>	Worship Assistant:	Anita Simmons
	Ushers/Greeters:	Richard & Ruth James
	Lector:	Anita Simmons



Schedule for February

Feb. 4	Morgan light & put out the candles Morgan collect communion cups
Feb. 11	Parker light & put out the candles Sophie collect communion cups
Feb. 18	Grayson light & put out the candles Eli collect communion cups
Feb. 25	Nikko light & put out the candles Lydia collect communion cups



Ash Wednesday Worship with Holy Communion and Imposition of Ashes:

Join us on **Feb. 14 at 6:30 pm** as we start our Lenten journey. The sign of ashes suggests our human mortality and frailty. What seems like an ending is really an invitation to make each day a new beginning, in which we are washed in God's mercy and forgiveness. With the cross on our brow, we long for the spiritual renewal that flows from the spring-time Easter feast to come.

Worship Team Ministries



Feb. 4	Practice
Feb. 11	Practice & Performance
Feb. 18	TBA
Feb. 25	Practice



Mid-Week Lenten Worship

Every **Thursday in Lent** we will have a Contemplative Lenten Service of Renewal.

Worship will be @ 6:30 pm
 Feb. 22
 March 1
 March 8
 March 15
 March 22

St. Paul's Lutheran Church
335 North Eighth Street
Albia, IA 52531

Phone: 641-932-7270
Email: splalbia@iowatelecom.net
Web Site—<http://www.splalbia.org>
Office Hours: Tues.-Weds.-Thurs.
9 am-2 pm

Place Mailing Label Here

Get your newsletter by e-mail and in color. Send your e-mail address to the church office.

Links:

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
The Southeast Iowa Synod of the ELCA

www.elca.org
www.seiasynod.org

EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE OFFICE HOURS: Monday 9:30 –11:30 am & 1-3 pm
Wednesday 10 am—Noon & 1—3 pm Friday 9 am—Noon



WEB SITE: Check out St. Paul's Web site at <http://www.splalbia.org>.
You will find our newsletters, calendar and recipe. Please send the office anything you would like to share on our web site.



Radio Broadcast St. Paul's worship service is broadcast each Sunday on
KIIC (96.7 FM) during their Sunday Son—Up programs starting at 8:00 am.

SOUP LUNCHEON: First Christian Church on Thursday, Feb. 1 from 11 am—1:30 pm.
Free Will Offering. They will have: chili, vegetable or bean soup rolls/ cornbread & desserts.

Lenten Soup Lunch: St. Mary's starting Feb. 20 from 11 am—12: 30 pm.



St. Paul's Lutheran Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper

On February 13 from 5-7 p.m. **All You Can Eat Pancake Supper.** Celebrating Fat Tuesday as we prepare for Lent, come and join us as the men of St. Paul's make regular pancakes and blueberry pancakes at this annual men's ministry. Be sure to enjoy the other items on the menu: sausage patties, bacon & fruit cocktail. We will have special fruit toppings of strawberries & blueberries with whip cream for your pancakes as well. Your donations help with maintenance and church projects during the year.

