

Lent 2019

The next season of the Church year greets us as the month of March begins. For Lutherans, it is a season that we are only beginning to appreciate. Growing up as a member of the Augustana Synod (a small Swedish part of the Lutheran Church), Lent was rarely mentioned. For us, Lent was a time that our Roman Catholic sisters and brothers practiced as a part of their mysterious traditions. Indeed, we only knew it was Lent when our friends talked about what they had “given up” for 40 days before Easter or when a black smudge appeared on their foreheads on Ash Wednesday.

Thankfully, we as ELCA Lutherans have come a long way. Today, in the ELCA, and here at Our Savior’s, Lent is a powerful part of our spiritual formation. For us it begins a season of reflection, of discernment, and of taking steps to be closer to God. Lent is a season where we focus not on “what we give up” (although some habits might be healthy to give up), but instead, on what new habits and practices we can “take on”.

I invite you to join with me on Ash Wednesday, March 6th at either the 10:00 a.m. or the 6:30 p.m. worship service. We will explore the concept of moving closer to God, commune together, and mark our foreheads with ashes to remind ourselves that we are children of God. Taking on something new would be a great way to begin Lent. Come and see how Lent can be a spiritual tool for you!

As a church we will also be taking on something new! On Ash Wednesday from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., “Drive-Up Ashes” will be offered to our community. Your church staff and members of the Worship and Music Team will offer ashes, a brochure inviting those who stop an opportunity to worship with us, and a hot cross bun, which has always been a symbol of Lent. What a great way to reach out to those in our community who, for whatever reason, have not participated in the life of any church.

This year, our weekly Wednesday Lenten Services will take place at 6:30 p.m. only. (No morning services). Here is an idea for you to take on something new. Invite a church member who may not drive at night, and offer to drive them to the Lenten soup suppers which begin at 5:30 p.m., and then worship with them at 6:30 p.m. What a wonderful opportunity for fellowship and a new Lenten practice!

Together we will all take on something new! Thanks be to God!

God’s Peace to you and your loved ones,

Interim Pastor Dennis E. Ellisen

Confirmation News

There will be **No Confirmation Class** during Lent. Students are expected to attend Lenten worship services. There will be no March classes. We will reconvene for the rescheduled Unity Service on **Wednesday, April 24th**.

Saturday, March 9th is our annual **Spring Lock-In/Adventure Night!** Join us for an evening of late-night fun and adventures. We will meet at Church for the 5:00 service to kick off the evening.

Sunday School News

Our Savior's Sunday school hour continues to be at 9:15 a.m. We have been missing quite a few students since the Christmas program. I am really sorry the flu and cold season is upon us. I hope everyone gets healthy, stays healthy, and in bad weather stays safe. Know that the children are definitely missed each week in Sunday school. Please join us here for the months of March, April, and May.

God's Peace,
Ruthie Melzer

Giving the Gift of Warmth

This past December, we donated several lap blankets to the Veteran's Home in King, Wisconsin for our vets to stay cozy and warm. We give some of our yarn to Phyllis Matcza, who generously crochets the blankets. We are grateful for people donating yarn to our Mission so we can keep tying our quilts and crocheting the lap blankets for the Vets. We received a very nice thank you letter from the Veteran's Home for the lap blankets and filed it in our records.

Reminders: If you have fabrics suitable for quilts, or yarn you don't need, these items are greatly appreciated by us and are put to good use. Mission Quilters meets on the first Thursday, March 7 (1–4pm) and the third Thursday, March 21 (9am–12 noon). Anyone who has the desire to spread the warmth is welcome!

Nancy Freier, President
OSLC Mission Quilters

Mobile App Update

The Our Savior's mobile app is in the design process and will be available to download very soon. Once it's ready, the T.E.C. team will help our members with downloading and using this great tool. You'll be able to stay connected with just a touch of a button – how cool is that?!

Digital Sign Update

Our new electronic messaging console (digital) sign will be installed as soon as the weather permits. The double-sided sign will be located on Commercial Street to have the most traffic visibility. We'll be able to share info about our church, upcoming events and the Good News of Jesus Christ. Memorial funds were used to cover the cost.

Updating Member Information

As we move toward using more technology to keep members informed and connected, it is extremely important for us to have current member information on file. During the month of March, we'll have several opportunities before/after services for you to review and/or update your personal information (names, address, phone #s, email, etc.) for the church office. *A 'test email' will also be sent out the last week in March to email addresses that we have on file – please watch for that and reply as instructed.* Thanks in advance for your help in getting this done.

“God’s Work. Our Hands” - Yes, YOU can make a difference! Here are some opportunities to share God’s love in our community.

Supporting Our Missions

Guatemala Mission Trip—On March 23 to 31, thirteen faithful OSLC members will be travelling to Antigua, Guatemala for an International Mission Trip building two homes for deserving families with the *From Houses to Homes* non-profit. You have a chance to “travel with us” by donating items for us to distribute. The following are suggested items:

- Crayons/markers, coloring books
- Kids, women’s or men’s new or used shoes (smaller sizes)
- Spanish/English primary books
- Toothpaste/brushes
- Sports items, tennis balls, soccer balls w/ pump
- Little girls’/womens’ new underwear

There is a collection box in the Gathering Area. We hope to fill two extra suitcases! Please keep us in your prayers as we get ready and while we’re away. Muchas Gracias!

Summer Mission Trip – We’re heading back to Texas to lead a week of Camp Noah in June (either June 16-22 or June 23-29). *This will be our third time partnering with Camp Noah.* The camp helps families/children who have been affected by natural disasters. We’ll lead a fun-filled day camp (Monday-Friday) for up to 50 children (ages 4-12).

Our goal is to have 20-25 people, ages 13 and up, from Our Savior’s. If you enjoy working with children, loved going to camp as a child and like to meet new people, then we need YOU! It’s sure to be an amazing experience that will not only change *their* lives, but *yours as well*. This is a great family opportunity for teens to grandparents! Contact Marcie Kimmes at mkimmes@our-saviors.org or 725-3956. To learn more about Camp Noah, visit their website www.lssmn.org/camp_noah/

FVLH HAS \$50,000 Matching Grant

Fox Valley Lutheran Homes has been amazingly gifted by Mary Beth Nienhaus, well-known Appleton philanthropist, a gift of a \$50,000 matching grant. For every dollar that is given to FVLH in March, April and May of 2019 for their elevator campaign, Mary Beth Nienhaus will match it 1:1, up to \$50,000. Our central elevator in the apartment building is wearing out, Like the building itself, it is reaching its 50th birthday and has outlived the general life expectancy of most of its parts.

There are two fundraising events planned during this time. They are a dinner and Family Feud event at the Grand Meridian in Appleton on March 9, and also a concert featuring Eric Diamond, a Neil Diamond Tribute Artist, at the Outer Edge Stage in Appleton on May 3. You can purchase tickets for these events on our website www.fvlhomes.org or by calling our office at 734-7225. There is also a link to make donations on our website. Thank you in advance for your contributions!
-Becky Luett, Executive Director

THINK SPRING! Living Color Flower Sale

Our Summer Mission Group is selling landscape flats, hanging baskets, color bowls, wave petunias, and vegetable and herb plants. Order envelopes are in the gathering area and must be turned in by March 24. Plants are delivered around Mother’s Day. All proceeds will be used for the Texas mission trip in June.

Thank you for supporting OSLC Missions!

Men's Breakfasts

The men's Bible study meets on the second and fourth Saturday of every month. We meet at 8:00 a.m. in the meeting room of Perkins Restaurant across from Wal-Mart. This month we meet on March 9 and 16. Come and join us. All men welcome.

Women's Book Club

The book club at OSLC welcomes you to join our friendly group of 10 to 12 women. We generally meet at 6:30 p.m. on the fourth Tuesday of each month in the church library. This month we meet on March 26. Come join us!

Prayer Shawl Ministry

We meet on the first Tuesday of each month at 9:30 am. Prayer shawls are shared for many reasons – weddings, baptisms and hospitalizations, to name a few. We need you so we can continue to spread the love of God and the strength of prayer through this ministry.

Esther Circle

The Esther Circle meets the second Tuesday of every month at 9:30 a.m. at Church. This month our meeting will be on March 12. See you there!

Ash Wednesday Services

Please join us for Ash Wednesday Worship Services on March 6 at 10:00 a.m. and 6:30 p.m.

Lent Soup Supper and Worship

We encourage you to join us on Wednesdays, starting March 13 through April 10, for Soup Suppers at 5:30p.m., followed by worship at 6:30 p.m. A free-will donation at the soup supper will go towards the summer mission to Texas.

Easter Flower Sale

Help fill the church with beautiful blooms! Lilies, tulips, daffodils, and hyacinths are on sale. Order (with payment) by April 14. Envelopes with order forms will be available starting March 30 in the Gathering area with a drop box. Please fill out the order form completely. Flowers may be purchased "in honor of" or "in memory of" family members and friends.

Pick up flowers after the final Worship Service on Easter Sunday, April 21, or during church office hours, Tuesday, April 23. Flowers remaining at church after April 23 will be donated to a local care facility. The flower sale is sponsored by the Joyous Ringers handbell choir. Funds will go toward their Music Program. Thank you for your support!

Chancel Choir Members Needed

Well it is that time of year when some of the Chancel Choir members go off to warmer places and our choir shrinks! Please consider joining us for the Lenten, Palm Sunday, and Easter season. We have begun rehearsing for them already and really need you! We meet every Wednesday night from 7:00-8:00 p.m. in the music room. Bring a friend. Many voices make a balanced choir and you just have to be able to carry a tune!! Contact Ardy Kreuter, Director, with questions.

Attention all Retirees and Friends

If you're not working, wouldn't mind taking a day off, are retired and have some free time, please join us for a brainstorming session. On Sunday, March 10, following the 10:30 worship service, we will start planning our next adventures. The meeting will start at 11:45 a.m. and a free lunch is included. I hope to see you on the 10th.

-Ruthie Melzer

News From the 2019 Annual Meeting

We had great attendance at the 2019 Annual Meeting on February 10. Thank you to all of you who attended. The following is a summary of important information presented at the meeting.

Karl Wunderlich, our building fund treasurer, gave us an update on the building fund. He reported that our loan balance at the beginning of 2018 was \$491,582. During the year we took in contributions totaling \$235,831. We ended the year with the loan balance at \$352,761 and a cash on hand balance of \$113,417. The cash balance will be reduced by applying a large payment to the mortgage. We will also be holding more in cash to pay for the anticipated replacement of the gymnasium roof. That additional expenditure was part of the fourth capital campaign which we kicked off in May 2018 and will run through April 2021. It is our goal to have the mortgage retired at the end of the campaign.

Tim Moe, our Finance/Stewardship Team chairperson, presented the proposed 2019 budget. The proposed budget is \$439,997 and calls for income to increase over actual giving in 2018 by \$18,202 (a 4.5% increase). Proposed spending is \$439,997 which is an increase over 2018 by \$6,917 (a 1.6% increase). The spending forecast was allocated to different categories: salaries increased by \$26,458, benevolence increased by \$4,113, worship increased by \$1,129, evangelism decreased by \$8,001, confirmation decreased by \$2,964 and buildings and grounds decreased by \$13,941. Consequently, with this budget, we will end 2019 with a projected loss of \$17,697. This is not acceptable and a Finance/Stewardship Team has been formed to implement programs to erase the deficit. The proposed budget was approved by the congregation.

Marcie Kimmes, Ministry Associate, shared information about our new Ministry Teams. Most committees from years past are non-existent and we are re-thinking the way we do ministry. Our goal is to have teams of 5 to 7 people who are passionate about specific areas. Each team will determine the needs of the ministry and how often to come together – whether in person or via email, text, online. We want people to join together to make our ministries vibrant, relevant and impactful. In closing, Marcie asked the meeting attendees, *“What inspires you or gives you a sense of purpose? ... What can you offer to your church family?”* All members are encouraged to spend some time in prayer then talk with any of the people already committed to moving our ministries forward. See pages 17-18 in the annual report for the Ministry Teams.

Ken Schmidt spoke on behalf of the Call Committee in Rick Carlson’s absence. The Call Committee first met with Pastor Amy Engebose of the Synod office on October 10, 2018, to begin the call process. A 14-step process for the Committee to follow was provided by Pastor Amy, and the Committee has found itself at Step 7 for approximately three months. Step 7 is “the Bishop’s Office then begins a search process for appropriate names for the Call Committee to interview”. The Bishop’s Office first provided names at the end of January. The Call Committee will perform telephone first interviews of the candidates the week of February 11. Updates to the congregation from the Call Committee will come when there is news to share.

Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.'
~ John 4:16

Generous People...

Attention Youth and Families

Thank You!

With your help and generosity, we were able to donate over \$700 and over 130 food items to Father Carr's Place 2B. Thank you for helping to make this year's Souper Bowl of Caring a huge success!

Generous Congregation...

Unified Budget YTD Through January

	<i>Budgeted</i>	<i>Actual</i>
Income	\$ 30,681.30	\$ 30,876.70
Expenses	<u>\$ 36,416.42</u>	<u>\$ 36,853.28</u>
	(\$ 5,735.12)	(\$ 5,976.58)

Memorials Received...

A special thank you to those who remembered

*Marcia Anderson's Mother
Richard McCrory*

February Pastoral Acts...

Baptisms –
Emajean Aurora King on
February 10

Weddings -- none

Funerals – none

New Members— none

Building Fund...

Through January

Remaining on Loan	\$347,235.26
Principal Paid on Loan	\$ 6,688.00
Total Contributions	\$ 8,152.17
Billed on Loan	\$ 3,218.98
Paid on Loan Over Billed Amount	\$ 3,469.02