

March 2016

The Staff

The Newsletter of Shepherd of the Glen Lutheran Church

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Sunday Worship & School 9:30 AM

As I write this, the weather outside could only be described as bleak. It's rainy, foggy, gray—from the bare trees to the soot-covered remnants of snow, the world looks dismal and colorless. But—that's about to change—today, next to a dirty snow pile, I saw the first shoots of crocuses coming up! A sight for sore eyes!

Ok, true confessions here—if you haven't figured it out already, I'm a winter Grinch. I don't like the cold. I don't like the snow. I don't like the ice. I don't like the dark. If I could, I'd curl up in bed the day after Christmas and not get out until Spring.

But, as much as I'm a real Grinch when it comes to winter, I know that the period of time when everything looks so lifeless is really part of the necessary cycle. Under the frozen mud, seeds and bulbs are biding their time, waiting for the right moment to grow. I don't know much about botany, but I suspect that the time of laying fallow is needed somehow for the burst of energy and growth come longer days and warmer weather.

That's why I love the passage from John that I read last Monday at the graveside of our dear brother Herb,

Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.

How often do we get to look at things from the point of view of a seed? A seed is small, hard and self-contained. A seed is very stable—seeds can exist for years in a sort of state of suspended animation. A seed stays constant, and there's something very safe and comforting about that—but there's a potential for life that can only be unlocked if the seed is willing to undergo a transformation, to *not* be a seed anymore.

The entire church is at that point I believe--all churches, but our church in particular in this time of interim ministry when we're doing the hard and unsettling work of looking at where we've been and where we're going.

During the "Acts 29" visioning Bible studies, we've been looking at our identity and purpose. We are a small church with a young history starting just 40 years ago as a mission church, which continues to define us as a place where there are people who have a sense of ownership, who "roll up their sleeves" and get the work done. The congregation is aging as fewer millennials and gen x-ers come to church, which is a trend that most churches are seeing. Busy lifestyles and demographics play a part in that trend, but we know that there is still spiritual hunger that we can satisfy.

While there are certain functions that we can't do because of limitations of people power and resources, there are things that we can offer that a larger church can't. We have taken a hard look at what has created conflict and considered how we grew from there, and considered as well those times when we have experienced and continue to experience the sense of joy that comes from doing what God has created us to do.

We will continue to explore our corporate sense of call and the niche that Shepherd of the Glen has in the Kingdom of God through March 13 at the Bible study right after worship. Please stay for this and give your input on the future of this church. Every voice at this church is important and needs to be heard.

The process of taking a hard look at what we can and cannot do is a tough job. The prospect of becoming something different is a scary one. Church has often been the constant in people's lives, safe and comforting, but Jesus calls us to be willing to let go of what is comfortable and become something new.

When the seed falls to the ground, there's no knowing what will sprout--something we planned for or something unexpected, something we can see or something that works beneath the soil to surface only in ways we can't perceive—all we know is that the seed is not going to be the same if it is to fulfill the potential inside. But we can count on God bringing forth life one way or another; we can count on that as surely as we can count on winter gently yielding to Spring.

We are, after all, a people whose faith is based on the discovery that the unexpected happened—just when the disciples were resigned to go back to their fishing boats and the women were set to do the grim and off-repeated task of cleaning up a body for burial, they discovered that in God's will, life always wins out over death. The seed planted never stays a seed—it transforms into something that bears fruit because that's what God always does.

Blessings of this transformative season,

Pastor Susan

Church Council Meeting held on February 9, 2016

The meeting was called together with prayer and a reading from *Accidental Saints*. Minutes from the January 12, 2016 meeting were read and approved with two corrections.

Reports:

The **Financial Secretary's report** was distributed.

For the week ending January 31, 2016:

Pledged Envelope Offerings:	\$5,972.31
Actual Envelope Offerings:	\$4,998.00 (83.7%)
Loose Offerings	\$130.00 (year to date)
Building Fund	\$50.00(year to date)
Gifts and Memorials	none
Miscellaneous Donation	\$1.134.54 (Boy Scouts)

The **Treasurer's report** was distributed.

January Envelope income:	\$4,998.00
Year to date total income:	\$6,464.54
Year to date expenses:	\$4,899.57

Financial reports were accepted as given.

Additional information (Linda Krause):

Linda K. is in the process of putting together a Resource Book of all of our contacts and contracts/service agreements with vendors.

The red Registry Book—Linda would like to update this "history of the church" registry. When she finds an item that needs updating she will bring the proposed updates to the Council for approval.

The Synod report has been compiled and sent to the Synod.

Upcoming Church Events:

Flea Market—June 4

Media Sale—September 14-17; set up day September 11

Bazaar—November 19

Tom will put these dates on the Church website. Linda K. will put them on the calendar in the office.

Board of Christian Education:

A Coffee Fellowship was held on January 31 in conjunction with the Annual Meeting. A Pancake Breakfast was held on February 7.

A Coffee Fellowship will be held on February 21 in conjunction with Gavin Hein's First Communion.

Board of Trustees Report:

We continue to receive a bill from Verizon. Tim K. will contact them and have the bill removed.

Board of Deacons Report:

There will be two services on Ash Wednesday—noon and 7 pm plus the drive by ashes from 4-5:30 pm.

The Setting for Lent will be Setting 4.

Communion will be given on the first and third Sunday of the month.

Hymn Selection—Alice C. has compiled a list of Congregational favorite hymns. Hymn selection will be from this list with only one unfamiliar hymn sung during any service. Hymns are selected approximately 1-2 months in advance in order to give the organist time to prepare the hymn. There will also be a sheet in the Narthex on which the Congregation can rate the hymns sung on any given day.

We discussed the Bulletin and the time required to produce the whole Bulletin including announcements and the Order for Worship from Seasons and Sundays.

We discussed the possibility of hiring an administrative assistant.

A motion was presented and passed to authorize the Deacons to explore what would be required to hire an administrative assistant.

Pastors Report:

Pastor Susan began the Bible Study/Visioning Acts 29 on February 7.

Pastor Susan continues to meet with members and make Pastoral Care visits. Please let her know of anyone who might need pastoral care.

Pastor Susan met with the rector of St. Andrews Episcopal Church to discuss possible collaborative ministry.

Pastor Susan attended the Baltimore West Conference meeting on January 20.

The Synod Assembly will take place on June 2-4, once again in Ocean City. We can send two delegates to the Synod Assembly. Please let Pastor Susan know if you are interested in being one of our delegates.

ANNOUNCEMENTS



Herbert Carl Becker
November 30, 1931 – February 18, 2016
We will miss you.



Congratulations to GAVIN HEIN on his First Communion!

Lenten Dinner Discussions continue Wednesdays (March 2, 9 and 16), 6-7:30 at Smokin'Hot Grill. Bring your Bible and enjoy a good meal, beverage and conversation about how the ancient scriptures are still very pertinent to life in the 21st century. We will be focusing on the lectionary readings that we often overlook—true gems! See you there!

Holy Week Services:

March 20 Palm Sunday worship at 9:30. We will hear the story of how Jesus entered Jerusalem to shouts of "Hosanna!" as the same crowd shouted "Crucify him!"

March 24 Maundy Thursday at 7:30. The word "Maundy" comes from the latin "Mandatum," where we get the word "mandate." Jesus gave us a mandate! Come hear about that mandate and how he invites us to live it out.

March 25 Good Friday Tenebrae Service at 7:30. This is the most solemn day of the year for Christians, but we call it "Good." The good news of Easter would be meaningless without the "rest of the story:" the deep sorrow of the crucifixion. Come worship and get the "whole story."

Easter March 27 Celebrate the most important event in the history of creation at 9:30 worship

Christian Ed/Fellowship meeting 10:00 on March 3. We're cooking up some new projects, like a prayer shawl ministry. Join us on the 3rd as we continue to plan new ministries.

Remember that wonderful extra hour of sleep we gained last fall? We lose it March 13! Don't forget to Spring ahead one hour so you're on time for church.

We have a very long prayer list so we have a lot of dear folks who are in our hearts. If any of them would like to have a visit from me for pastoral care or to receive communion, please let me know 410 707 4640 or susan.marie.beck@gmail.com

Easter Lilies: Please order your Easter Lilies by March 6. Price: \$12.50 a pot. Make check out to Shepherd of the Glen. (Ordering envelopes are in a basket in the narthex).