



NORTHDALE NEWS

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Dear friends in our Savior,

The days are lengthening. Spring is coming. The temperatures are getting steadily warmer. That must mean Lent is here! Beginning with Ash Wednesday, March 1, we enter into the solemn journey of Lent where we being our preparations for the celebration of our Savior’s resurrection at Easter. Before we celebrate the joy of Easter, we must first go through the darkness of Lent. Lent is a time of somber reflection. It is the time when we focus our attention on the sufferings and death that our Savior went through which made his resurrection so glorious. We spend some time in our Wednesday services reading through the Passion (or Suffering) history of Jesus last 24 hours on this earth.

What makes this time for us so somber is not just realizing that Jesus endured this type of treatment, but understanding why he need to do so. He certainly did nothing to warrant being treated in such a way. Perhaps Isaiah said it best when he wrote, *“Surely he took up our pain and bore our suffering, yet we considered him punished by God, stricken by him, and afflicted. ⁵But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed. ⁶We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.”* (Isaiah 53:4-6) Jesus endured the suffering he endured in our place. He suffered the pain and suffering that we deserved for our sin. His love for us even led him to go as far as suffering the pain of hell itself in your place and mine. All of this we reflect on during the season of Lent.

It is for this reason that Lent is a time of repentance. Repentance is a three step process for God’s people. It includes recognizing our sin and feeling sorrow over that sin. It continues by laying that sin at the foot of our Savior Jesus and trusting in the forgiveness he won on Calvary’s cross. It concludes by turning from that sin to live a life that is pleasing to God in heaven. The theme that we will follow throughout this Lenten Season helps us to do this very thing. Our theme this year is “Repent: Turn to Jesus!”

All of this fits well with the ***Building our Faith - Family - Future*** emphasis that we have been focusing on throughout the month of February and will bring to a culmination in March. We have been focusing on the grace God has shown to us in Jesus. We see that grace in all of its glory in Jesus’ willingness to go to Calvary’s cross and suffer and die for our sins. This grace is what gives and strengthens our faith, it is what brings us together in God’s family, and it is what makes our future secure as we look to the eternal life that is ours in Jesus.

Take advantage of the opportunities you have throughout this season of Lent to ponder God’s grace in sending Jesus to be your Savior. Be humbled by his love as you reflect on your sins which made His suffering and death necessary and lay those sins at his feet to know the full forgiveness he offers. Then be refreshed through his Gospel message to celebrate at worship and in your lives the victory that is yours in Jesus your Savior.

Lenten blessings to all of you.

Pastor Charlie Vannieuwenhoven

STEWARDSHIP CORNER

Beginning Again

Sometimes it's good to get back to the basics. When the whirlwind of holiday events and celebrations is over, it's a good time to take stock of the past year and prepare for the coming year. For some this means remembering its blessings; for others, sorrowing over its setbacks.

Whether rejoicing or sorrowing, however, God is there with us. He was here "in the beginning." He created it all. When "the earth was formless and empty, [and] darkness was over the surface of the deep, the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters. And God said, 'Let there be' . . . And there was . . ." (Genesis 1:2,3).

All it takes is a word from God's mouth and there it is. He created it, owns it, and loans it to us for our use. In addition, all the time, he is there with us; never will he leave us (Hebrews 13:5). God has forgiven our past sins, and there is no cause for worry over what the New Year will bring, for God has already been there.

Each of us can make a new beginning; in fact, each day, each moment, can be a new beginning. God promises to provide for all our needs. Paul wrote, "And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:19). Believing this promise, we do not need to fear for our futures, financial or otherwise. We can afford to be generous givers because we are covered by God's promise to care for us.

By God's grace, let us make that new beginning. May we live according to God's plan for us and manage the vast resources he has loaned to us to the best of our abilities. May we honor him in all we say, in the way we live, and through our generous offerings as we work to make his name known.



MISSIONS HIGHLIGHT—

Each month, we designate and send a portion of our offerings to WELS as our congregational mission offerings. These offerings help to support missions and ministry that is taking place in our country and around the world. Here are few areas where your mission dollars are hard at work supporting workers who are proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus in your name:

Meet Missionary William Dunn:

It has now been just over six months since receiving my assignment to the bilingual Spanish mission congregation, La Iglesia Luterana San Pedro in Milwaukee, and yet it feels like yesterday. I remember hearing the assignment "San Pedro Lutheran Church," and thinking "Spanish ministry, oh boy, in the past four years I've only had one semester of Spanish at the seminary and two weeks of work in Mexico...how is this going to work out?" But as it turned out, the mission at San Pedro was a bilingual Spanish mission with a bilingual worship service. Then I learned that St. Peter was not only bilingual, but actually trilingual, with services in Spanish, English, and Karen. Several times a year we even have a service that incorporates all three, such as our Trilingual Thanksgiving service! The longer I have been at St. Peter getting to know the congregation, the more I am excited to be here and to serve here. Learning about all of the different cultures and backgrounds has been both humbling and energizing. We are multicultural and intercultural. We have so many outreach opportunities in our immediate community as well as through our elementary school, Christ-St. Peter. And as it turns out, all the Spanish classes at MLC come back quickly (though there is still work to be done).

It has now been just over six months since graduation and assignment day and yet it also feels like the distant past. There have been so many changes. We moved from Grafton to Milwaukee. Baby number three was added in October. The ministry at San Pedro is continually growing and full of potential. I have been overwhelmed by the loving reception I have received as I continue to visit our families in order to get to know them better and begin developing a vision for the future. God has truly blessed this church and we are blessed to be a part of it!

Building Our Faith - Family - Future

This month, our ***Building Our Faith - Family - Future*** stewardship appeal will culminate on March 5 with our Celebration Sunday service on Sunday, March 5. There will be many special things happening that day. We will hold only one worship service that day at 10:30 a.m. We will worship in the larger gymnasium at Northdale Community Park which is a half block south of our church location. Our service will be one of fellowship and unity as we praise God for the partnership that we enjoy together through the grace of Jesus our Savior. There will also be a catered dinner after the worship service so that we can all get to know one another better as fellow believers of God and fellow members of Northdale Lutheran.

What makes this Sunday the culmination of our appeal is that we are asking everyone to bring forward their Promise Cards stating their commitment to our appeal over the next three years. We've now spent a month listening to God speak to us in his Word. We have hopefully been all able to spend some time in prayer asking God to guide and direct our generous response to his grace. Now is the time to put that commitment to paper and pen and pledge our support to further expand our school ministry through this program. If you haven't done so yet, please take time in the week leading up to March 5 to prayerfully consider how you might respond in support of this effort with your gifts. If you aren't able to financially support this project right now because of your situation, please remember to keep this effort in your prayers. You can fill that out on the Promise Card and turn that in as well.

We are looking for Promise Cards from every one of our members. We will be following up on those who have not filled out a Promise Card just to encourage your participation. Thanks in advance for your participation with this.

After we have gathered our Promise Cards and made our commitment, we will be expanding our efforts to include our school families in this appeal and give them a chance to participate in this project. We will also be reaching out to the members of the Carrollwood Area Business Association of which we are members to give them an opportunity to participate as well.

It's time that we take a moment to thank some of the many people who have helped with our efforts so far. We thank our Lead Team with this appeal: Jeff Berg, Jessica Kingsborough, Kati Hatfield, Tom Faucette, David Mosakowski, Wanda Schofer, Mike Laurin, Melissa Busch, Mateo Gaviria, Chris Teeples and Dave Hartwig for their work. We thank our presenters who share the information with the congregation during our presentations: Steve Nuss, Steve Ward, Todd Loescher, Keith Moore and Kati Hatfield. We thank our Commitment Team for delivering packets to people who couldn't be at the presentations: Mike Laurin, Mateo Gaviria, Chris Teeples and Bill Montgomery. It has been so great to see so many people involved with this project. Thank you all for your efforts. We pray that God will bless your faithful work among us.



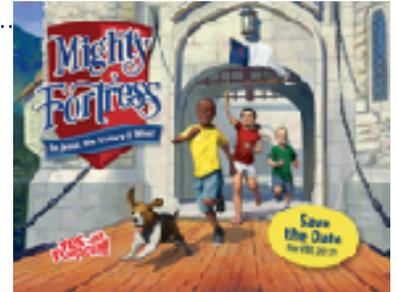


SENIOR WINNERS

Senior Winners will meet on Wednesday, March 15th @ 12pm in the Fellowship Hall. We will meet before worship that day. Any questions speak to John Kim, Sr. We'd love to have you join us. Be sure to sign up on the small group sign up forms if you are planning to come.

VBS 2017!!

It's time again to start planning for our 2017 Vacation Bible School. Our VBS is planned for July 17-21. Registration is already accepting VBS campers at www.northdalelutheran.org. We will be looking for many volunteers to help us with this. A meeting will be held on Monday, March 6 at 6:30 p.m. to begin making plans. If you are interested in helping, you can talk with Kristin Phillips or Pastor Vann and they will get you more information. We are excited to serve the many young campers who come to our VBS with the wonderful grace of our God!



Mid-Week Lent Worship



We begin the solemn journey of Lent on Ash Wednesday, March 1, as we travel toward Calvary's cross and the empty tomb of Easter Sunday. We offer Wednesday Worship opportunities beginning on Ash Wednesday and continuing for the next 5 weeks. We will worship at 2:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. This year, we are following a series entitled, "Repent: Turn to Jesus". We will not be participating in a Lent Preaching Rotation this year. After Ash Wednesday, our services will be a bit shorter than normal and will be more devotional type services. Please set aside time during your busy weeks, to gather for this hour of worship and meditation.

South Atlantic District Summer Youth Camps

The South Atlantic District's summer youth camps are now accepting registrations! We are excited to host TWO summer camps in 2017. With the Lord's blessing and your recruitment/encouragement within your ministries, we have set a goal of 750 participants between both camps. How incredible to even consider such a large number of hearts to be touched by God's grace! That will only happen with your focused effort and support. Here are the dates of the upcoming summer camps:

The Amazing Race Teen Challenge

Orlando, FL

June 27-30, 2017

\$355 per participant (Students completing 8th grade thru completing 12th grade)

Visiting Disney's EPCOT Theme Park

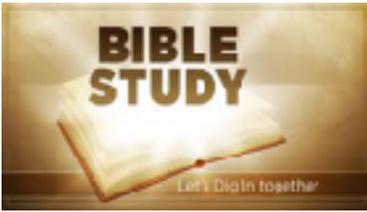
Camp South-Soul Survivor

Covington, GA

July 24-28, 2017

\$285 per participant (Students completing 3rd grade thru completing 8th grade)

You can find more information about each event as well as registration forms at www.hopelutheranwpb.com and click on the "Events" tab. Included in those files are: advertising flyer, schedule of the camp and links to the online registration. The deadline for registration is April 30th. Please send one check per congregation to the address provide in the attachment.



THURSDAY BIBLE STUDY

We continue our study of Exodus for our Thursday Bible Study. We meet every Thursday evening at 6:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. We'd love to have you join us for this.

Taste of Carrollwood

This year, we will once again be participating in the Carrollwood Area Business Association event entitled, "Taste of Carrollwood" on Sunday, April 2. This event will allow us reach almost 3,000 people with information about our church and school. Our school students will also be singing for 20-25 as a part of this. What a great way for us to reach out into our community so that we can make contact with more people and share with them God's love in Jesus. The exciting thing about this year's event is that it will be held at the newly renovated Tampa Yankees Stadium. There will be many family friendly activities to participate in.



George M. Steinhilber, Field With the Tampa Yankees

Pastor Vann to Home Missions



Pastor Vann will be traveling to Milwaukee to attend the Spring meeting of the WELS Board for Home Missions March 30-31. Pastor serves as the Chairman of the WELS Campus Ministry Committee and also as the Recording Secretary for the Board for Home Missions. He thanks the congregation for their willingness to allow him to serve our church at large in this way.

Tampa Circuit LWMS Spring Rally

The spring rally of the LWMS Tampa Bay Circuit will be held at Living Savior Lutheran Church in Valrico on Saturday, April 1 starting at 10:00 a.m.



Church/School Finances



Total income, fiscal year to date: \$303,383. Total expense, year to date: \$335,426. Which leaves a deficit of \$32,042 for the current fiscal year.

The General Operating Fund began the fiscal year at (\$2,763). The current Operating Fund Balance at January 31, 2017 is now (\$34,805).

We are able to pay our bills and payroll, due to borrowings from our internal dedicated accounts, the bulk of which comes from the Emergency Use account and the School Endowment account.

The Capital Improvement Account has its own bank account which is set aside to only pay bills related to it. That balance stands at \$30,156.

MINISTRY LEADERSHIP TEAM

The following are highlights from the Ministry Leadership Team meeting on February 20, 2017:

- The following membership actions were reported or approved:

Transfer In –David Schofer from Living Savior Lutheran Church, Valrico, FL

Transfer Out – Michael Tortorice to Christ the Lord Lutheran Church, Clearwater, FL

Release –Elizabeth Eckert, by her request (moved to Georgia)

Floyd Yancey, whereabouts unknown

Michael Dyer, whereabouts unknown

This leaves our Total Membership at 210 with Communicant membership at 150.

- Pastor Vann reported that he will be presenting about Campus Ministry at an LWMS rally in Ocala, FL on March 11th.
- Mark provided the School Ministry Board report. We met on Feb 8th and since then have approved applications for 2 new students who will be joining us on 2/21 (1st grader and 6th grader). This puts our total enrollment at 57 currently and if all of the current prospects attend, we can be looking at 91-92 students for next year. We are working on getting some promotional materials ready for our preschool recruitment days with Children's Nest on March 6th. Mark was able to go to a parent meeting at Messiah Preschool and talked with 7-8 families about what NLCS is all about. Mark commented that this is an effective means of going out to where the families are.
- Steve Ward reported for Evangelism. The Northdale FunFest is April 1st at the Northdale Community Park and the Taste of Carrollwood is April 2nd at Tampa Yankee Stadium. They've asked our kids to sing again (Mark wanted to be the 1st performance around 1pm). VBS registration is ready to go online and we already have a few people signed up. The dates for VBS are July 17th-21st and we've increased the price from \$25 to \$30. Moms & Tots enrollment is split into two sessions (10-15 in first session and second session is 15-20).
- Chris Teeples reported that the video did not work for yesterday's service but the glitch was corrected at the end of the service. Celebration Sunday (March 5th) is normally a communion Sunday but we will not be offering communion at this special service. Ash Wednesday is next Wednesday and Pastor will not be rotating this year. In the future, pastor would like to make Wednesday evenings a "Youth Night" with a shorter service (approx. 30 minutes) to cover all activities in about 90 minutes. This year will be an opportunity to see how that would work.
- Chris was wondering if we would have any interest in hosting the upcoming Lutheran film "A Return to Grace – Luther's Life and Legacy" at one of the local theaters this year. There is a website that you can go to and sign up to host one of these showings. Chris will research the event opportunity further and report back to the MLT.
- Mike Laurin reported that the squirrels will be captured by our traps in the attic (was decided on by the school board). Mike wanted to thank Brian for installing a lock on the door between the mailboxes and fellowship hall. Brian is also going to install some new faucets in the bathroom. The Seniors asked if we can install a memorial plaque in the mailbox area. Mike said we're waiting on landscaping where the old tree was located until after our plans for the remodel are completed. Chris asked to look into the soap dispenser in the men's restroom in the church foyer.
- Jeff Davis sent an email to Jeff Berg, Pastor Vann & Mark Thiesfeldt about some additional expenses and a possible trip by Jeff Davis back to Tampa to go on non-member household visits with Mark. MLT felt that the anticipated expense of \$1,000 would more than be offset by additional contributions to our appeal. Motion made by Mike Laurin seconded by Steve Ward to approve additional expenses (anticipated to be approx. \$1,000) for Jeff Davis to prepare the brochure for CABA members and non-member families and to cover an additional trip to Tampa by Jeff to accompany Mark on family visits for non-member households from the school - motion carried.
- Pastor asked for any comments to what he has put together so far for Ministry Team job descriptions and any thoughts on how to proceed with altering term limits for MLT members. Mike commented that we could form a 'Care Committee for Called Workers'. Pastor commented that if we are good with the teams, then we need to discuss term limits as this would require adjustments to the by-laws. Currently the Chairman, School Board Elder & Church Ministry Elder have term limits. We proposed having 2-year terms that are renewable up to 3 times (total of 6 years). Pastor will draft up some language for the MLT to review at future meetings.
- Jeff provided a handout to the MLT with further details on PushPay or Mogiv as to make a decision about which way to move forward. After interviewing 6 online giving companies, Jeff reported to the MLT that both PushPay and Mogiv are good options, but felt that PushPay offered some advantages in terms of software and giving tracking over Mogiv that for our needs, PushPay would be a better choice. Motion made by Steve Ward seconded by Mike Laurin to approve Jeff proceeding with starting the process of setting up PushPay for our e-giving program at NLCS, motion carried.



STAY CONNECTED...

**to your school.
to your teachers.
to your youth.**

Hurricane Sports Update

The month of March brings both our soccer and our track and field seasons to a close. For soccer we have been once again participating in a Clearwater league called PALS. The team has had games on Tuesdays and Thursdays for several weeks. In track and field our season builds up to the SALSA meet in Bradenton on Saturday, March 4th where we compete together with over 200 other students from our fellow Lutheran schools across Florida.

2017-18 Enrollment Steps

Our enrollment for the current school year now stands at 57 students. We were thankful to welcome two new students in mid-February. Preparations have begun for the 17-18 school year. Step number one for current school families is to return the enrollment commitment form which was distributed in mid-February. Step number two is to complete the TADS enrollment process in which we update contact information and complete various permission and release agreements. We try to do as much of this work in the spring as possible so that it doesn't have to interrupt your summer vacation. Registration fee payments (except for McKay or Step Up students) must be made by June 1st to guarantee your child's placement at NLS. Please talk to a staff member with any questions.

Ministerial Education Presentations

This month we will welcome presenters from Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary (WLS) and Michigan Lutheran Seminary (MLS). WLS is our church body's pastor-training school. Traditionally, when men who are interested in becoming a pastor in one of our churches they will first attend four years at Martin Luther College (MLC) in New Ulm, MN. After graduation from MLC these men attend WLS in Mequon, WI for another four years, one of which is spent as a vicar (pastor-in-training) in an actual congregation. MLS is one of our church body's two ministerial education preparatory schools. It is a similar model to Luther Preparatory School in Watertown, WI. It provides special training for 9th-12th grade students to continue on to Martin Luther College to become a pastor, teacher, or staff minister. MLS graduates are also well-prepared to go on to other careers outside of the public ministry. We invite everyone to these two presentations: Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary on Wednesday, March 8 at 8am (grades K-8 will attend) and Michigan Lutheran Seminary on Tuesday, March 21 at 1pm (grades 3-8 will attend).

Spring Break, End of 3rd Quarter, & Parent-Teacher Consultations

This year's spring break is scheduled for March 13-17. Enjoy the week off from school! The third quarter of our school year finishes just before spring break on March 10. Report Cards will be sent home on Monday, March 20 after spring break, and optional parent-teacher consultations will be offered during the week of March 20-24.

Other Activities

March is a busy month! Other activities in March include a field trip to NLS by Children's Nest Preschool on Monday, March 6, **Donuts for Dads** on Wednesday, March 8 from 7-8am, **School Ministry Board meeting** also on Wednesday, March 8, **NLS Spirit Day at EVOS Restaurant** also on Wednesday, March 8, **Arbor Day Clean-Up and Kona Ice Truck** on Friday, March 24, **Students sing** for worship on Sunday, March 26, and the return of the **All Children's Hospital Walk-a-thon** on Friday, March 31.

**Northdale Lutheran Church and School
(WELS)
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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

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Teachers: Chris Haring: 517-202-7283
Aimee Hardman: 813-464-5113
Lynn Marggraf: 262-613-3020
Amy Vannieuwenhoven 813-850-7520**

**Sunday Worship: 8:00 & 10:30 a.m.
Communion Services: First and Third Sundays of the month
Sunday School & Teen Bible Class: 9:15 - 10:15 a.m. (September through May)
Sunday Bible Class: 9:25-10:15 a.m.
Fellowship: 11:30 p.m.
School hours: 8:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. M-F**