

# ST. PETER COMMUNICATOR

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February 2024

## From the desk of Pastor Peterson

Dear brothers and sister in Christ, we are now entering the Season of Lent. To help us on our Lenten Journey, let's review the meaning of Lent and what it means to us. Lent is a Christian season of spiritual preparation that lasts for 40 days before Easter Sunday. It begins on Ash Wednesday and ends on Holy Saturday. The word "Lent" comes from the Old English word "lencten," which means "spring season" During Lent, Christians engage in practices such as fasting, prayer, and almsgiving as a way to deepen their connection with God and to reflect on the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross. Fasting during Lent typically involves abstaining from certain foods or luxuries as a form of self-discipline and solidarity with the sufferings of Christ. The Lenten season serves as a period of spiritual purification, allowing believers to renew their faith and draw closer to the core tenets of Christianity. Thus the 40 days in Lent.

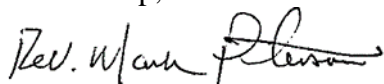
We, as Christians, journey with our Lord throughout His time in the wilderness where Jesus was tempted in every way. Jesus though did what Israel refused to do, and that was stand on God's Word. He defeated Satan and would eventually totally defeat him at the cross. What is interesting is that Lent lasts for 40 days, and Jesus was in the wilderness for 40 days, and Israel was to journey through the wilderness for 40 days after they had sinned against God. The number 40 comes into play here and as we like to ask in the Lutheran Church, what does the number 40 mean? 40 represents a time of testing, of purification.

So, how do we treat the season of Lent? First off, we must remember that Jesus did not need to be purified or even tested because He is the Son of God, and He is true God. Jesus resisted the devil for us. Secondly, because Jesus is Israel reduced to one (Jesus did what Israel could not do which is fulfilling the Law) and while Israel sinned against God, Jesus did not. This is important because Jesus gives us this victory at the cross. What Jesus did in the wilderness is given to us!!! Jesus' victory is now our victory. Jesus did the work, and we get the gifts of His work.

In our Lutheran tradition, Lent is not something that we are forced to give up due to edicts from higher ecclesiastical authorities, to show repentance and sorrow for our sins. We do that every day of the year. Instead, Lent is an opportunity for all of us to reflect deeply on our own sins and unworthiness before God. In that light if you choose to give up something for Lent, that is your choice and between you and God. Actions such as fasting and giving up things we like for Lent is an excellent reminder of what Jesus did for us through the proclamation of the Law (which shows us our sins), and most importantly, what Jesus did for us in going to the cross.

Our Midweek Lenten Services will focus on Psalm 41, where we will rejoice at what God has done for us in Christ. What an opportunity to invite people to church. Giving them an opportunity to hear God's Word, to know that God loves them, and to give them hope for a wonderful future in the new heavens and earth that is to come. Then invite them to our Holy Thursday/Maundy Thursday services and Good Friday services as well. Then to top it off, invite them to celebrate the victory that Jesus gives to us through His suffering, death, and resurrection to eternal life. Happy Lenten and Easter Season to each and every one of you from our risen, victorious, and ascended Lord Jesus Christ, Amen. And remember God, really, really, really does love you. Amen.

In His Grip,



Pastor Peterson



## Mission Matters

### Lutheran World Relief

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It's been a while since we have written about Lutheran World Relief (LWR). It's also been a while since we have packaged some of the various kits used by LWR in the many needy areas of the world. In addition to quilts, many school kits, personal care kits, baby care kits and fabric kits are collected and distributed to those most in need.

“Founded in 1945 by Lutherans in the U.S., Lutheran World Relief is an international aid and development organization that partners with communities to help them develop productive and stable economies, improve resilience in the face of a changing climate, and respond to natural disasters and humanitarian crises. In 2019, Lutheran World Relief joined the Corus International family, an ensemble of global leaders united in a commitment to ending poverty, suffering and injustice once and for all.” *lwr.org*

We recently received a summary of distributions made by LWR during their fiscal year ending in September of 2023. On our behalf, 551,700 quilts and kits were distributed in 14 countries. Quilts (194,983) and school kits (190,043) top the list of items provided. Personal care kits (123,920) and baby care kits (35,490) were also distributed as well as 7,264 fabric kits. Most of the quilt kits went to Angola, Georgia, Mali, Tanzania, and Ukraine while Guatemala and Liberia received the most school kits.

More information is available at [lwr.org](https://lwr.org)

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**LUTHERAN  
WORLD RELIEF**

Lutherans like you are a force for sweeping positive change around the world

For three generations — more than 75 years — compassionate and generous people like you have shared your God-given spirit of love and leadership, putting Lutherans at the forefront of global service.

You have walked alongside neighbors in need, helping them endure hardships, providing refuge and developing lifesaving solutions. Time and again, you have shown that caring for others is an expression of who you are as a person and as a Lutheran.

And you did it again last year. Your love and generosity shine Christ's light into the lives of God's children in need.

In times of crisis, your love is there.

### In Türkiye...



You touched the hearts and lives of families like the Aaıkgözes, who lost everything to deadly earthquakes. You gave them renewed hope.

In the immediate aftermath, you delivered tents, tarps, winter clothing, emergency food and water, and more to children, women and men affected by the quakes — including Syrian refugees living in Türkiye. And even though the news crews are long gone...

Your love and support are still there, helping families rebuild their lives. You're giving them container homes, where they have a roof overhead, a kitchen, a bathroom — and a safe place where real healing can begin in their hearts.

### In Ukraine...



Your love quickly reached families fleeing violence, in Ukraine and those living as refugees in Poland. You delivered emergency food and water, shelter ... and warm quilts, like the one now

cherished by Tetiana and her 2-year-old daughter, Masha.

#### YOUR LOVE PROVIDED:

  
**MORE THAN  
58,200  
NIGHTS OF  
SAFE SHELTER**

  
**OVER  
17,590  
QUILTS TO  
COMFORT  
CHILDREN**

  
**MORE THAN  
27,860  
CARE KITS  
FOR FLEEING  
FAMILIES**

Today, your love is still reaching far into battle-torn Ukraine. You continue to provide food, water, shelter and urgently needed health care through mobile medical clinics.

Since September 2022, more than 5,000 people in 26 cities have received vital medical care. Thank you.

### In Honduras...



More than 1,100 young adults in Honduras will have new employment opportunities, thanks to the technology and skills training you're helping to provide.

You're giving them a chance to build a life in their homeland and earn reliable income. You are setting the stage for their futures — filled with hope and endless possibilities.



### In South Sudan...



Your generosity provided a speed boat for transportation to clinics in a country where

flooding has made accessing health care impossible.

Thanks to you, suffering children, expecting mothers and entire families receive the essential care they desperately need. And in the months and years ahead, your act of kindness will continue to save lives.

Your love reaches around the world

Your incredible generosity is always noticed and appreciated. In fact, it's felt by children, women, men and seniors around the world right now.

Thank you for ensuring that the Lutheran Church is fully engaged in ending poverty, injustice and human suffering. Thank you for believing this is a mission worth achieving.

Faithful Lutherans like you are the foundation for everything we do.

*From the Lutheran World Relief blog*



#### February

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Natalie Sowinski
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LUTHERAN WOMEN IN MISSION

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS**

**Winter Getaway:** February 2-3, Marriott, Waukesha

**LWML Prayer Service:** February 7, 1:00, Zion,  
New Holstein

**Monthly Fellowship:** February 11, 9:30,  
Fellowship Hall

**Ash Wednesday Luncheon:** February 14, ~11:30,  
Fellowship Hall

\*Decorative wooden crosses made and  
donated by Ken Plate will be available

**Easter Lilies and other flowers:** order now until  
Ash Wednesday

**Zion, NH, Women's Day:** April 6, speaker  
Roberta Hilgendorf on Alaska mission life

**LWML-SWD Convention:** June 14-15

**Bible Study and Planning Meeting:** Every second  
Tuesday at 1:00

**LWML-SWD Mites:** 22-24 LWML-SWD  
\$205,000; (\$153,750 to LWML-SWD grants and  
\$51,250 to LWML grants) See our annual report  
for mites submitted by St. Peter WIM

**HAPPY ANNIVERSARY**

February 14<sup>th</sup>

Ken & Sue Plate



February 14<sup>th</sup> Ash Wednesday  
Divine Service with Holy Communion

10:30 a.m. @ St. Peter

*Luncheon to follow*

7:00 p.m. @ St. Luke

**Midweek Lenten Services**

**Ash Wednesday - March 20<sup>th</sup>**

Wednesdays at 10:30 a.m. @ St. Peter

Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m. @ St. Luke

**Palm Sunday**

**Divine Service (NC)**

March 24<sup>th</sup> 8:30 a.m. @ St. Peter

10:30 a.m. @ St. Luke

**Maundy Thursday**

**Divine Service with Holy Communion**

March 28<sup>th</sup> 1:00 p.m. @ St. Peter

7:00 p.m. @ St. Luke

**Good Friday**

**Divine Service with Holy Communion**

March 29<sup>th</sup> 1:00 p.m. @ St. Peter

7:00 p.m. @ St. Luke

**Easter Sunday**

**Divine Service with Holy Communion**

March 31<sup>st</sup> 8:30 a.m. @ St. Peter

10:30 a.m. @ St. Luke





## The Divine Service: A Guide

By Roy S. Askins

At the heart of Lutheran worship sits God’s action, His giving to us. Worship does not revolve around our work, but His. We do not, therefore, focus on “having to go to church” as a task to check off a divine to-do list to make God happy. Rather, God commands us to gather, and we receive from God what we need most: eternal healing and restoration. Our “duty” is to rest and receive from Him.

First-time visitors may find our services a bit awkward or uncomfortable. This is to be expected. First, keep working on it; push through it until you become a bit more comfortable.

The discomfort also stems from a theological reality: The Divine Service brings sinners into the presence of the holy God. Apart from His grace and mercy — which He delivers in this very service — we would be eternally lost.

In this issue of *The Lutheran Witness*, we will help you understand and receive the eternal treasures of the Divine Service.

Please note a couple of things. First, not every congregation practices the service in exactly the same way as every other. While we continue to use together “ceremonies and other practices that are profitable for tranquility and good order in the Church” (AC XV 1), this does not mean every tradition in every congregation is exactly the same. That’s OK.

Second, for this issue, we’re following Divine Service Setting 3 from *Lutheran Service*

*Book (LSB)*. What we say about this service will in large part also apply to the other four settings in the hymnal. Familiarity with one will result in familiarity with the rest.

Finally, we suggest reading this issue with your Bible and *LSB* next to you. The two go hand-in-hand. The service is the Word of God, even if the text is arranged differently or uniquely set to music. *LSB* hints at this with Bible references in the margin.

This issue was written with a first-time church attendee in mind. But that does not mean you should just hand this magazine to the visitor when he walks in and call it good. Rather, consider his visit an opportunity to practice hospitality. Sit with your visitor in the pew and lead him through the service. Afterward, you can hand him a copy of this issue of *The Lutheran Witness*.

Even if you are a lifelong Lutheran, we are convinced that you will still learn from this issue. A huge “thank you” goes to Director of LCMS Worship Rev. Sean Daenzer for his assistance in making this issue a reality.

In Christ,  
Roy S. Askins  
Managing Editor, *The Lutheran Witness*

### Print Feature



## What Is Worship?

By LW Contributor

### *Gathered around the Word*

Welcome to worship, where things look and sound different from much of what you experience in your everyday life. You will use some difficult-to-pronounce words, and parts of the service will have

unique names. Sometimes you'll need the hymnal; sometimes you'll need the bulletin.

First, don't worry. You're new to this, and it's going to take some time to get used to it. Some of the people you're sitting (or standing) next to have done this for 80 or more years. Others had to learn the service just like you. Be patient. Come back next Sunday. You won't figure it all out the first time.

Second, ask questions. This issue of *The Lutheran Witness* is all about hospitality, all about welcoming you into the life of the church's worship, where you receive from God's hand. The people of the congregation will help you learn, and the pastor will delight to take you through the congregation's service and open for you the treasures Christ gives in the Divine Service.

Before we dig into the details, let's start with the big picture: Why?

**The primary movement of worship is from God to us.** We do not gather to do something for God. We don't worship to stroke God's ego or as slaves obligated to show up for an oppressive overlord.

It's quite the opposite. Our God knows the depth of our sin, the deadening reality of our transgressions. He endured this sin on the cross. When we gather in worship around His Word, He serves us with His forgiveness. Worship is the place heaven touches earth and God delivers to us forgiveness that renews and strengthens our faith.

**In the Divine Service, God serves us by speaking to us His Word.** Wherever Christians gather, God's Word is at the center and gathering point. By that Word, God speaks to us; in the service, He enfleshes His Word in His own body and blood. The heart of the Divine Service is the Word of God.

To reflect this, the service is split in two parts (along with a short preparation). The first part is the Service of the Word; the second is the Service of the Sacrament. Both services grow out of God's speaking to us. In the first, God speaks to us from the Bible. In the second, God puts His Word into

physical elements (bread and wine) and places that Word into the mouths of His people.

In the **Confession and Absolution**, we confess our unworthiness to stand in God's presence. He forgives our sins and welcomes us into His presence.

In the **Service of the Word**, we first hear from the prophets who foretold of Christ's coming, looking for the fulfillment of God's promise to save the world (Gen. 3:15). Then we tune our ears to the apostles and their epistles (letters) teaching the Gospel to the Early Church. Finally, we see the full picture of God's work in the world through the Gospel reading: the teachings and life of Jesus.

After the readings, we speak together with all Christians the words of the Nicene Creed. Then the pastor preaches on the texts, applying them to this particular congregation. He proclaims to God's people that, though they are sinful, God has made them His own in the blood of Christ.

After we respond in thanksgiving (offering) and prayer, we turn to receive God's Word in the **Service of the Sacrament**. In the Lord's Supper, God comes to us in a way He is not present anywhere else. Heaven touches earth in this gift. Jesus — true God and true man — gives His body for us to eat and His blood for us to drink. What a profound mystery.

We testify to this in song and acclamation, fixing our attention on His gifts (Prefaces), joining in eternity's song (Sanctus) and proclaiming His sacrificial death (Agnus Dei) until He comes. The Lord's Supper is the most intimate expression of Christian unity, one in which only those who have been instructed, examined and absolved in a shared confession participate. In time, we pray you also will join us in this faith at His altar.

The service ends in the way it began: in His name, which sends us out in love for our neighbor. The entire service revolves around God giving to us His Word. This Word builds, strengthens and renews faith. Having received it, we go forth with it into the world, living and serving with sacrificial love.

### *Caring for My Neighbor*

If any of the Ten Commandments might tempt us to think that keeping the Law is easy, it would be the Fifth Commandment. After all, how hard is it to get through life without murdering somebody? The vast majority of people can handle that!

But Jesus famously blows up this notion by pointing out that the command, “you shall not murder,” goes much deeper — down to the heart.

You have heard that it was said to those of old, “You shall not murder; and whoever murders will be liable to judgment.” But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, “You fool!” will be liable to the hell of fire. (Matt. 5:21–22)

Hatred and disdain come from the same sort of crookedness of heart as murder. With both murder

and hatred, you look down on another person and think them of little worth.

In the Small Catechism, Luther also points out that every “do not” in the commandments also includes a “do this:” “We should fear and love God so that we do not hurt or harm our neighbor in his body but *help and support him in every physical need*” (SC, Fifth Commandment, emphasis added).

We are not called merely to avoid evil; we must also do positive good.

So when Jesus drew near to us and became our neighbor by taking up our humanity, He came not only to avoid harming us, but He came to positively help us, bless us and serve us.

We are now called to show the love to our neighbors that Christ showed to us. Your neighbor is yet another gift that God has given you that requires your stewardship. We are called to show mercy, to be kind, to love and serve our neighbor. One aspect of this stewardship is financial: our neighbors need us to support the church’s work so that they can hear the Gospel and come to faith. Our neighbors need the church’s alms and mercy work. Our neighbors need our faithful service in all we do in the name of Christ.

## **Trinity Lutheran Rantoul - Early Childhood Round Up Night!**

Parents of 3K, 4K, and Kindergarten students,  
please join us to learn more about our program!

**Meet the teachers, ask questions,  
and register your little ones!**

 **Tuesday, February 20, 2024  
at 6:00 pm**

 **N6081 West River Rd.  
Hilbert, WI 54129**



# February 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>Altar Guild:</b>  Cheri Koffarnus Bonnie Ott Bonnie Teinert				1	2  <i>10:00 Bible Study @ Terra Verde, Chilton</i>	3
<b>4 Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany</b> <i>Green</i>  8:30 Divine Service 9:30 Sunday School	5	6   7:00p Bible Study	7	8	9  <i>10:00 Bible Study @ Terra Verde, Chilton</i>	10
<b>11 The Transfiguration of Our Lord</b> <i>White</i>  8:30 Divine Service (NC) 9:30 Sunday School / Fellowship	12	13  1:00p W.I.M. Meeting & Bible Study  7:00p Bible Study	<b>14 Ash Wednesday</b> <i>Black or Violet</i>  10:30 Divine Service Luncheon  <i>7:00p Service @ St. Luke</i>  <b>Valentine's Day</b>	15   6:00p Elders Meeting 6:30p Council Meeting	16  <i>10:00 Bible Study @ Terra Verde, Chilton</i>	17
<b>18 First Sunday in Lent</b> <i>Violet</i>  8:30 Divine Service 9:30 Sunday School	19   Newsletter Articles Due  <b>Presidents' Day</b>	20   7:00p Bible Study	21  10:30 Midweek Lenten Service  <i>7:00p Service @ St. Luke</i>	22	23  <i>10:00 Bible Study @ Terra Verde, Chilton</i>	24
<b>25 Second Sunday in Lent</b> <i>Violet</i>  8:30 Divine Service (NC) 9:30 Sunday School	26	27   7:00p Bible Study	28  10:30 Midweek Lenten Service  <i>7:00p Service @ St. Luke</i>	29		

Divine Services marked (NC) will not have Holy Communion