

# DISCOVER FIRST



We dedicate ourselves to share the Gospel  
of Jesus Christ, to prepare for outreach and  
service, and to respond to human needs.



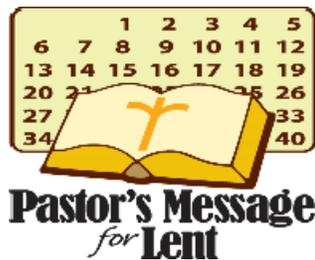
## MARCH 2020

First Evangelical Lutheran Church  
287 West Main Street, Xenia, OH 45385  
372-7421

Pastor William O> Schwochow  
E-Mail Address: [firstluthxenia@sbcglobal.net](mailto:firstluthxenia@sbcglobal.net)  
Web Site: <http://www.firstlutheranxenia.org>

Worship with us on Sunday morning at 9:30am  
Sunday School for children during Sunday morning worship  
Adult Sunday School at 11:00am

Church Office Hours: Tuesday-Friday, 9:00am-2:00pm



Sisters and brothers in Christ,

After a brightening Time after Epiphany, we enter Lent. It has been a while since I can remember that all of the Sundays in Lent, *as we title them*, fit into one month, as it does this year.

Last month, I suggested being “belightful;” this month I would suggest we “lengthen.”

The word “Lent,” (i.e., the fast between Ash Wednesday and Easter) comes from the Old English form in the early twelfth (12<sup>th</sup>) century and Old High German languages. For the English, it means “springtime” or “spring;” whereas for the Germans, it means “lengthening [of days].”

For me, during spring people, places, and things lengthen. The daylight lengthens. Our daily activities lengthen because of the daylight. The bulbs in the ground lengthen to spring forth from the earth. We lengthen the time we prepare for our taxes. We grow by lengthening the amount of time we assess our humanity.

For the church, during the springtime we lengthen the time we spend focusing on the faith of Christ within our baptism. We dig deep and allow the shoots of faith to lengthen within us. We worship longer, study Scripture longer, we lengthen our reach out to the poor and those in need of healing. We lengthen our focus on the Cross of Christ Crucified and Raised.

This year we dig deeper into our understanding of the faith in Luther’s Small Catechism on Sundays. See, elsewhere in this newsletter: Presiding Bishop Eaton’s recent article from *Living Lutheran*, titled “We Are Broken.”

On Wednesday evenings, we will ponder making changes. We will ponder on the change Jesus makes for us, the change he accomplishes for us, the change he has won for us, our community, and all humanity.

We will beg Jesus to remember us “Jesus, Remember Me” (ELW 616), to think longer on us longer “Lord Jesus, Think on Me” (ELW 599), to keep us near the Cross: “Jesus, Keep Me Near the Cross” (ELW 335).

This spring, will you change and lengthen your pondering on Jesus?

Lengthening with you the faith of Christ,  
PBS | The Rev. William O. Schwochow, *pastor*

Jesus, I Will Ponder Now (ELW 345)

Jesus, I will ponder now  
on your holy passion;  
let your Spirit now endow  
me for meditation.  
Grant that I in love and faith  
may the image cherish  
of your suffering, pain, and death,  
that I may not perish.

Make me see your great distress,  
anguish, and affliction,  
bonds and blows and wretchedness  
and your crucifixion;  
make me see how scourge and rod,  
spear and nails, did wound you,  
how you died for those, O God,  
who with thorns had crowned you.

Yet, O Lord, not thus alone  
make me see your passion,  
but its cause to me make known  
and its termination.  
For I also and my sin  
wrought your deep affliction;  
this the shameful cause has been  
of your crucifixion.

Let me view your pain and loss  
with repentant grieving,  
nor prepare again your cross  
by unholy living.  
May I give you love for love!  
Hear me, O my Savior,  
that I may in heav'n above  
sing your praise forever.

Text: Sigismund von Birken, 1626-1681; tr. August Crull, 1846-1923, alt.



The nation will be switching to Daylight Saving Time Sunday, March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2:00am.  
Be sure to set your clocks "AHEAD" one hour before retiring for the night on Saturday, March 7<sup>th</sup>.  
We don't want you to miss worshipping with us on Sunday morning.



*Began on Ash Wednesday,  
And concludes on Palm Sunday*



**Vespers Worship at 6:00pm** Choir Practice follows worship  
**Midweek Lenten Series: Making Change**

Change is a constant in our lives. Some changes mark gradual transitions, as when daytime shifts toward twilight or winter turns to spring. Others happen in the blink of an eye, separating time into “before” and “after”. We choose to undergo some changes after carefully considering our options, while others are forced upon us.

In the weeks, days, and hours before Jesus’ crucifixion, the disciples also experienced change: a change of venue as the gates of Jerusalem approached; a change of plans as their long-awaited Messiah was arrested and tried; a change of circumstance as the crowds shouted “Crucify!”

Change is hard. We long for the expected and familiar, but all too often find ourselves in the midst of uncertainty and the unknown. We cannot predict how things will turn out.

We are experiencing much change in these days. A transition in leadership opens wide the door of our expectations, anxieties, and fears. How can we experience God’s preferred and promised future for us? Come join us walking the journey.

## **2020 Year A Lent / Holy Week / Easter**

**During the Season of Lent we will be reviewing portions of “Luther’s Small Catechism” on Sundays; on Wednesdays, a Midweek Series titled: “Making Change.”**

**THE BEGINNING OF LENT**  
**Wednesday, February 26<sup>th</sup>**

**6:00 p.m. ASH WEDNESDAY**  
**Imposition of Ashes, Confession & Forgiveness,  
Holy Communion**

## FIRST WEEK OF LENT

Sunday, March 1<sup>st</sup> 9:30 a.m. THE TEN COMMANDMENTS  
Wednesday, March 4<sup>th</sup> 6:00 p.m. Change of Season

## SECOND WEEK OF LENT

Sunday, March 8<sup>th</sup> 9:30 a.m. THE CREED  
Wednesday, March 11<sup>th</sup> 6:00 p.m. Change of Habit

## THIRD WEEK OF LENT

Sunday, March 15<sup>th</sup> 9:30 a.m. THE LORD'S PRAYER  
Wednesday, March 18<sup>th</sup> 6:00 p.m. Change of Circumstances

## FOURTH WEEK OF LENT

Sunday, March 22<sup>nd</sup> 9:30 a.m. HOLY BAPTISM  
Wednesday, March 25<sup>th</sup> 6:00 p.m. Change of Heart

## FIFTH WEEK OF LENT

Sunday, March 29<sup>th</sup> 9:30 a.m. HOLY COMMUNION  
Wednesday, April 1<sup>st</sup> 6:00 p.m. Change of Plans

## HOLY WEEK

Sunday, April 5<sup>th</sup> 9:30 a.m. PASSION / PALM SUNDAY  
*Procession with Palms, Reading of the Passion Narrative,  
And Holy Communion*

Thursday, April 9<sup>th</sup> 7:00 p.m. MAUNDY THURSDAY  
*Office of the Keys: Forgiveness*

Friday, April 10<sup>th</sup>  
12:00 p.m. GOOD FRIDAY  
THE WAY OF THE CROSS  
7:00 p.m. TENEBRAE (Service of Shadows)  
*Absolution, Holy Communion, Stripping of the Altar*

Saturday, April 11<sup>th</sup> VIGIL OF EASTER

## RESURRECTION OF OUR LORD / EASTER DAY

Sunday, April 12<sup>th</sup> 9:30 a.m. Festival Eucharist

## LENT

Lent is a forty-day journey to Easter. Christians keep company with Noah and his family, who were in the ark for forty days; with the Hebrews, who journeyed through the desert for forty years; and with Moses, Elijah, and Jesus, who fasted for forty days before they embarked on the tasks God had prepared for them.

During Lent Christians journey with those who are making final preparations for baptism at Easter. Together, Christians struggle with the meaning of their baptismal promises: Do you reject evil? Do you believe in the church, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the dead? Do you believe in God the Father, the Son, and the Holy

The disciples of the Lord Jesus are called to contend against everything that leads them away from love of God and neighbor. Fasting, prayer, and works of love—the disciplines of Lent—help the household rejoice in the gifts of baptism of God's forgiveness and mercy.

Table Prayer  
for the Season of Lent

Blessed are you, O God, giver of all.  
You adorn our tables with food  
and give companionship for our journeys.  
Be present with us as we are fed in body and spirit  
that our sharing of this meal may be a sign of your life  
broken and shared for the world.  
In Jesus' name we pray.  
Amen.

Source: BREAD FOR THE DAY 2020: Daily Bible Readings and Prayers.

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**FISH SUNDAY, MARCH 1<sup>ST</sup>**

Since 1994 the first Sunday of each month has been designated as FISH Sunday here at First Lutheran. Please bring an item or two to church on Sunday, March 1<sup>st</sup> Monetary donations are also accepted you can use one of the pew envelopes and mark "For Food Pantry." *Thank you!*

In addition to our first Sunday of the month food donation we are collecting food for the Xenia Hunger Backpack Cuisine Program. This group is attempting to provide food to Xenia children who receive discounted and free lunch during the week but have little or nothing to eat on the weekend. For March we've been asked to bring in cereal or granola bars single servings box of 8-10. This is an ongoing addition to our FISH Sunday requests for food for the Food Pantry. Please place your donations into the box in the narthex marked for the Backpack Cuisine Program



**MARCH SPICE OF LIFE**

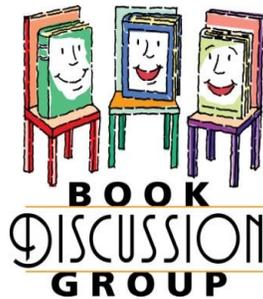
Mark your calendar for Noon, Tuesday, March 24<sup>th</sup>. All seniors in the congregation, 55 and older, are invited to attend these gatherings for friendship, fellowship and food. . This month the Sewing Circle is in charge. On the menu: fried chicken, scalloped potatoes, green beans, cole slaw & rolls. YOU are asked to bring a salad or dessert to share.



## BROWN BAG LUNCH

Thursday's from noon to 1:00 pm

Bring a brown bag lunch and join facilitator Adele Lerch for an informal Bible study based on the Upper Room devotional booklet. Copies will be provided for all participants. No special Bible knowledge needed. This study is about what scripture means to YOU. Questions? Contact the church office at 372-7421.



FIRST AND FRIENDS BOOK CLUB will be gathering on Tuesday, March 26<sup>th</sup>, 6:00pm-7:30pm

The selection for March is "Send Down the Rain" written by Charles Martin. Questions? Concerns? Talk with Adele Lerch. Don't forget to bring a friend! We do want the name of our book club to really represent who we are – First Lutheran along with our friends! Be ready for a fun and lively discussion! YOU are welcome to join us!

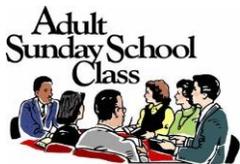
### News in the Parish.

✠✠ Please continue to remember these congregation members in your prayers: Clancy Cross, Jean Cross, Cindy Curtis, John Freeman, Suzy McGatha, Betty Peppo, Tony Reno, Brad Warnock

✠✠ Please continue to remember our homebound members in your prayers: Jean Akers, Russ Kiser, John Paul Saraga, Barb Taylor, Kathy Teague and Harold Warren



Children's Class meets at 9:25am with "The One Room Sunday School" Series



Meets at 11:00am, following worship featuring the "Wired Word," a series of discussions engaging various contemporary issues and how we might reflect upon them from a biblical perspective. The sessions are moderated by Dr. James Will. Come join the conversation. Everyone is welcome to participate.

## Outreach Opportunities through the Congregation...



Volunteer to help on Thursday evenings at The Caring Place. Talk with Barb Swinehart Deb Baldwin about ways in which YOU can help serve others.



We continue to collect items for the FVPC here in Xenia. The following items are needed and appreciated: soap, shampoo, conditioner, toothbrushes, toothpaste, mouthwash, deodorant, lotion, combs & brushes, razors (like Bic), envelopes, lined writing tablets, pens & pencils, paperback books, coloring books & children's books. A donation basket is in the narthex. First Lutheran Church is showing the Xenia Community how, with God's help, our ministry programs benefit others.



Continue collecting Campbell Product UPCs for Oesterlen Home in Springfield. (Please be sure and save only the square UPC symbol on the label.)



The past several years following Easter Sunday worship, we've enjoyed a time of fellowship. Plans are being made to continue the tradition again this year. A signup sheet will be on the kiosk soon to let us know if you would like to bring items such as fruit, donuts, muffins or other pastries to share.



Following worship on Easter Sunday the children of the congregation will be participating in an Easter sponsored by our Education Committee. We have plenty of eggs, but if you would like to donate small wrapped candies to fill the eggs or money to purchase the candy or small toys it would be appreciated. Please talk with Jane Cross or Jenny Napier. Parents...be sure and bring your child's Easter Basket on Easter Sunday.



Will be available to add to the Easter beauty of our sanctuary during the celebration of Easter. The lilies come in foil wrapped pots. The price this year is \$10.00 per plant. You can get an order blank at church or call the church office, 372-7421, to place an order. All orders need to be turned in by Wednesday, April 3rd<sup>h</sup>



## Scripture Readings for Sundays in March

### March 1<sup>st</sup> (First Sunday in Lent)

Each year on the first Sunday in Lent we hear about Jesus' temptation in the wilderness, and we pray that we may be able to resist the temptations that come to us here and now. Come to worship, to receive the Spirit's strength to live in light of your baptism.

#### Readings and Psalm

Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7\_ Eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil  
Psalm 32 Mercy embraces those who trust in the LORD. (Ps. 32:10)  
Romans 5:12-19 Death came through one; life comes through one  
Matthew 4:1-11 The temptation of Jesus in the wilderness for forty days

### March 8<sup>th</sup> (Second Sunday in Lent)

This coming Sunday, we set off along with Abraham, as he journeyed to the Promised Land, and with Nicodemus, when he visited Jesus in the night, for we are heading through Lent to arrive at Easter. Come: join the people of God in prayer and praise, word and meal.

#### Readings and Psalm

Genesis 12:1-4a The blessing of God upon Abram  
Psalm 121 I lift up my eyes to the hills; my help comes from the  
Lord. (Ps. 121:1, 2)  
Romans 4:1-5, 13-17 The promise to those who share Abraham's faith  
John 3:1-17 The mission of Christ: to save the world

### March 15<sup>th</sup> (Third Sunday in Lent)

During Lent we accompany Jesus to his cross and resurrection, and this coming Sunday we stop at a well to receive a drink of water. The water turns out to be Christ himself. Come to worship, and join all of us thirsty people, made alive in Christ.

#### Readings and Psalm

Exodus 17:1-7 Water from the rock in the wilderness  
Psalm 95 Let us shout for joy to the rock of our salvation. (Ps. 95:1)

Romans 5:1-11

Reconciled to God by Christ's death

John 4:5-42

Baptismal image: the woman at the well

### March 22<sup>nd</sup> (Fourth Sunday in Lent)

Last week the salvation that Christ offers the world was likened to water, and this coming week God's mercy is likened to light. What is the "darkness" in your life? Come to worship to celebrate the light that is Christ in you.

#### Readings and Psalm

1 Samuel 16:1-13 David is chosen and anointed

Psalm 23 You anoint my head with oil. (Ps. 23:5)

Ephesians 5:8-14 Awake from sleep, live as children of light

John 9:1-41 Baptismal image: the man born blind

### March 29<sup>th</sup> (Fifth Sunday in Lent)

#### Readings and Psalm

The Bible readings this coming Sunday are for everyone who feels half dead, for everyone who sees death everywhere, as well as for everyone who is afraid to even think about death. Come to worship, to receive the breath of the Spirit, to hear the voice of Christ, to be fed at the table, and to celebrate the life God gives.

Ezekiel 37:1-14 The dry bones of Israel brought to life

Psalm 130 I wait for you, O Lord; in your word is my hope. (Ps. 130:5)

Romans 8:6-11 Life in the Spirit

John 11:1-45 Baptismal image: the raising of Lazarus