



BE A BARNABAS TO YOUR PASTOR

In a former issue of Focus on the Family magazine there was an insightful article encouraging Christian laypeople to a Barnabas to your pastor. Why this title? Because in the book of Acts, Paul's faithful companion, Joseph of Cyprus was nicknamed Barnabas which means "Son of Encouragement." Some ask, "Who is the pastor's pastor?" to which I would like to turn it around and ask, "Who encourages your pastor?" The answer is you.

Christian pollster George Barna has discovered that "pastors are the single most occupationally frustrated professionals in America." So in light of Scripture which makes it clear that we are to give special affirmation to our spiritual leaders (1 Timothy 5:17), I share these simple reflections for ways in which you can encourage your future pastor all year long.

Attend Church In another Barna survey, only 40% of the American public claims to attend church every Sunday. Only 60 % of Christians are part of those weekly congregations. "The empty pew has an eloquent tongue" is quoted from one author in Gospel Banner. "To the preacher, it says 'Your sermon is not worthwhile.' The empty pew is a weight, the occupied pew is a wing.

Pray Many pastors pray regularly for members of their congregation. But who prays for the pastor? Terry Teykl reflects in his book, 'Your Pastor: Preyed on or Prayed For?', "Only through their spiritual support has my ministry been able to endure its darkest days. When a layperson told me that he or she was praying for me, I felt sustained."

Volunteer Only about one-third of all Americans donate their time and talents to their church home. In a Gallop poll, pastors cite this apparent lack of commitment as one of their biggest frustrations with the ministry.

Share You Spiritual Growth Perhaps a particular sermon convicted you in a way you didn't expect. Or your pastor pointed out Scriptures that became your lifeline during a time of crisis. Tell your pastor how his ministry has affected your walk with God. Better yet, write it in a letter so he can reread it.

Invite a Friend to Church Most people are intimidated if a clergy invites them to worship. Surveys have noted that less than 4% of people come to church if asked by a pastor, but 70% plus come if invited by a friend. A pastor is buoyed up when he sees his congregation reaching out.

Criticize Privately Don't spout your criticisms to others in the church, and this is especially important for lay leaders to understand. Take your concerns to the pastor directly, we're sinners too. If your pastor is doing something or said something that bothers you, come and see him. He needs to hear it from you, not someone else. In the Spirit of Christ, he should appreciate your honesty and the opportunity to share perspectives.

Befriend His Family According to a Fuller Institute, 80% of all pastors feel their jobs have a negative effect on their families. Pastors' wives and children often feel isolated and pressured by high expectations. Pastors and their families are people - and people need friends.

Remember Him on Special Days Pastors celebrate birthdays, wedding anniversaries, Christmas and Easter. These are wonderful opportunities to acknowledge your spiritual leader with a card or a note. Consider expressing your gratitude in a special event during October, Clergy Appreciation Month.

Be an Advocate "One of the saddest times in my career was when a beloved parishioner turned his back on me," says one pastor of 30 years. "Yet, I can remember the affirmation from one member who stood by me when others sought my demise." You needn't agree with your pastor on everything, but as your spiritual leader, he deserves your steadfast encouragement, especially during difficult times. (1 Thessalonians 5:12-13)

Say Thank You A pastor is not just a preacher. He is an administrator, teacher, counselor arbitrator, leader and visionary. He works in a high-expectation environment in which he is constantly scrutinized and rarely applauded. It costs nothing to say, "Thank you for everything you are doing. I can see the Lord working through you." These words will be priceless to your pastor.

NIGHT TO SHINE



Night to Shine is back in person, February 10, 2023. We are hosting it with St. Michael's Lutheran Church in Bloomington. Night to Shine is a complimentary, exclusive invitation-only event for people with special needs. Night to Shine's mission is to bring faith, hope and love to those needing a brighter day in their darkest hour of need. We need many volunteers to make this magical night happen. If you are unable to attend the event, we also need people to help us pick up items for the event, and donations are always appreciated! Please visit www.nighttoshinemn.org or contact Shari at mnnighttoshine18@gmail.com for more information!

LWML NATIONAL CONVENTION



"Celebrate the Lord of the Nations" is the theme for the 40th Biennial LWML Convention, to be held **June 22-25, 2023** at the Wisconsin Center in Milwaukee.

Registration Costs:
 January 9 - March 14: \$160
 March 15 - May 10: \$180
 May 11 - June 10: \$205

Information is available at lwml.org/2023-convention

ESSAY CONTEST

Lutheran's For Life essay contest. Here's an opportunity for students in grades 6-12 to write a life-affirming essay based on the theme **Just As...I Am**. Ephesians 2:10, "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them"

is the theme verse, and is required in the formation of the essay. **Deadline for submission is April 1st.** For more information visit www.bit.ly/LFLessay.

Just As ... I Am

← →
**FOR WE ARE GOD'S
 workmanship,
 CREATED IN CHRIST JESUS
 to do good works,
 WHICH GOD PREPARED IN
 advance for us to do**
 ← →

Eph 2:10

COFFEE TIME



New Year, new signup!! Thank you to those who have faithfully served coffee and treats. But... we need more volunteers. It's not hard or scary!! Never made coffee? There

is always someone that can help with that. Prefer to have a partner? Ask another person/couple to work with you. We ALL enjoy the refreshments, please consider being a part of this hospitality opportunity.

FOOD DRIVE

The BASIC Youth Group is collecting non-perishable food for the CAP agency food shelf through February. There will be a table in the back.



OFFERING ENVELOPES



The new offering envelopes for 2023 appear to be missing!

Delivered last spring, the case of envelopes evidently got lost somewhere during the construction/reorganization of the church offices and storage spaces. Until the replacement order arrives, please place your offerings in a plain envelope marked with any designations beyond general fund giving (Missions, Building Fund, Special Offerings), or use a 2022 envelope you haven't used yet.

If you use a plain envelope, please include on the envelope your name and offering envelope number if you know it, especially if you are giving cash, for recording purposes. If you need an envelope, there will be envelopes available on the work counter opposite the kitchen marked for the next few Sundays. Once the replacement envelopes for 2023 arrive, you can pick them up on the counter as well.

The 2022 giving statements will be emailed out in January. If you prefer a printed statement, please contact the financial secretary, **Sheri Brunner** at 952-807-6473 or sheri.brunner@gmail.com.

ADULT BIBLE STUDY

Join us for Bible Study in the back of the sanctuary after worship. Feel free to get a cup of coffee first and snack before we start at 10:15 am.



TIME OF GRACE



Straight talk about God's Word and real hope for this life. A strong gospel message delivered in an informal Bible study style.

Subscribe to **Time of Grace** (www.timeofgrace.org) resources to be delivered to your email inbox daily. You will receive daily devotion emails with "Grace Moments" written devotions and "Grace Talks" video devotions.

Pastor Mike Novotny

The Core, Appleton, WI
KARE (NBC 11) 10:30 am

MAIN STREET LIVING NORTH



Main Street Living is an hour-long Lutheran television program that airs new episodes each Sunday morning. The Twin Cities program is broadcast at 9 am Central time on WFTC channel 29/9-2. Each Sunday, viewers enjoy a 30 minute remastered episode of "This is the Life," a popular Lutheran Hour Ministries series from the 70s and 80s. The episode is followed by a modified Lutheran worship service—led by a different local pastor each week. Main Street Living (Twin Cities) is endorsed by the Minnesota South District of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod; however, the program receives no funding from the District. It is totally funded by viewers and congregations of the WFTC viewing area.

www.mainstreetliving.com/twincities

FAST FACTS ABOUT LENT

Lent is a 40 day Christian season beginning Ash Wednesday and concluding on Easter (Sundays are not counted)

The word "Lent" comes from the old Anglo-Saxon word *lengten*, which means "springtime," named so for the time of the year in which it occurs. As someone has said: *"Lent is the Church's springtime. Out of the darkness of sin's winter emerges a people the Church--reborn through baptism into their Lord's death and resurrection from the grave."*



What we now call Lent was originally a period of fasting and study for catechumens who were to be baptized on the Saturday before Easter. The 40 day fast was said by Athanasius in 339 AD to be celebrated the world over. The 40 day fast of Jesus in the wilderness was responsible for the number 40 being chosen. The purpose of this extended fast was to practice self-denial and humility. This was to prepare oneself for receiving God's grace and forgiveness in baptism, given on Easter Saturday.

Lent prepares us for the observance of Jesus Christ's suffering, death, and resurrection for us. It is a season of repentance and sorrow for sin so the liturgical color for Lent is purple, the color of repentance and sorrow for sin. Lent is a time of self-examination in light of the Ten Commandments; it is a time of giving up of sinful behavior, a time of personal housecleaning. It is a time of commitment to the new life of Christ begun in baptism. It is a time of disciplined study of Scripture and a time of growing in faith. In recent years Lent has become a time to remember our baptisms. It is a time to reflect on the impact of baptism on our lives, and to ask ourselves how we are doing. Most of all, it is a time of renewal and new beginnings, as we through faith apply the complete forgiveness won by Christ's death to our lives. Lent heightens our awareness that we desperately need Jesus Christ.

Lent is an opportunity not an obligation. It is not commanded by our Lord, nor is it even mentioned in the Bible. Those Christians who observe it do so

because they find it a helpful opportunity for repentance and renewal, for the strengthening of their faith. Christians are free to observe or not observe Lent.

The beginning of what we call "Ash Wednesday," is difficult to date with certainty, though it probably began around

600 A.D. Ashes are applied to the forehead of Christians in the sign of the cross (throughout the Middle Ages ashes were sprinkled on the head) as a symbol of humility and repentance. The ashes are a reminder that we are "*dust and to dust you shall return*" (Genesis 3:19). Thus, they are a reminder of our mortality cursed as it is by sin. Moreover, the ashes remind us of our limits, of what we are, and how greatly we need God's mercy in Christ.

Let it be new, in that instead of "giving up" something, we should do something positive and practical and helpful for someone else. One Church suggests that during the first week parishioners express love for someone; in the second week, to write a letter of appreciation; in the third, to make a special phone call. In the fourth they are asked to send flowers, a book, or baked goods to someone new; in the fifth, pray for someone by name; and in the final week attend worship with someone outside their usual range of friendships.

Let's try it! We might enjoy it! Doing these things for other people is an expression of practical Christianity. Don't worry about being called a "*do-gooder*". The alternatives of being a "*do-badder*", or "*doing nothing*", are worse. We still remember the deep spiritual disciplines of discipleship, always aware of the self-denial and suffering of our blessed Lord Jesus. We shall be serious, but not sad; reverent, but not ultra-pious; solemn, but not depressed.

THE LUTHERAN HOUR



The Lutheran Hour can be heard each Sunday on WCCO (830 AM) at 6:05 am. And it can be streamed online too, www.lhm.org. Check-out LHM's daily devotions too.

February 5

"Your Time to Shine"

Guest Speaker: Rev. Dr. John Nunes

Light is necessary for life; God's light, even more so. (Matthew 5:14-16)

February 12

"Shine Like Stars"

Lutheran Hour Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler

A social media star with a million followers can't possibly know all one million of them. However, there is one really famous Person with billions of followers Who knows--and loves--each one. (1 Corinthians 3:6-7)

February 19

"Table Manners"

Lutheran Hour Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler

(Exodus 24:11)

February 26

"It Begins with Who I Am"

Guest Speaker: Rev. Dr. Dean Nadasdy

Our identity defines us. Every decision we make, every action we take, and every temptation we face begins with who we are. In Christ we receive an identity uncompromised and secure. (Matthew 4:1-11)



Cheryl Drangstveit	February 1
Lynda Sumpter	February 3
Chris Petrie	February 7
Ann Poe	February 10
Bella Peterman	February 12
Doug Brunner	February 13
Dylan Vannett	February 13
Pam Hunter	February 16
Tate Kruse	February 17
Ralph Wagner	February 22
Rev. Robert Nowak	February 27
Judy Weimer	February 27

LENTEN SUPPERS



LENTEN SUPPERS We will gather as a church family for meals during the Lenten season. Our first supper will be **Ash Wednesday, February 22nd at 6:00 pm**. Supper will be served each Wednesday through March 29th. The Lenten church service will follow at 7:00 pm. You can help by providing soup, other main meal items or dessert. A simple setup is at approximately 5:30-ish! Signup sheets are posted in the Commons. Questions? Contact Pam Hunter. FYI, Easter is April 9th.

LWML SPRING RALLY

April 1, 2023, at Mt Hope Lutheran Church

Bloomington, MN

Speaker: Pastor Mark Moss with Lutheran Heritage Fund

2 MINUTE MULTIPLIER



A weekday 2-minute devotion that helps you see Jesus at work in your world.

Memories

Socks and I have a love/hate relationship. I appreciate how certain settings require you to wear them. Tuxedo events. Weddings. Formals. Perhaps some socks feel too restrictive. Minimalist socks - if any - are more my style.

A friend of mine has a love/hate relationship with socks for an entirely different reason. His puppy just swallowed one. If the sock doesn't reappear on its own, surgery is on the docket. To the tune of \$5,000+. One could buy a lot of socks for that much money. One might be tempted to buy another puppy with it. The love-line falls somewhere under \$5,000. The heart/treasure combo quits before hitting that number.

Some of us consider \$5,000 but a drop in the bucket for a puppy we love. Consider the above-mentioned pet owner heartless. Someone whose treasure is grossly misplaced. Everyone's treasures differ slightly. Some gravitate to cars. Some, to trips. Others, to homes. Clothing. 65" TVs with speakers able to span from the highest highs to the lowest lows. Some lists includes puppies. Most include people.

Your treasure might differ from your spouse's treasure. From your neighbor's treasure. But every heart has a treasure to which it trends. A treasure that attracts and grips and won't let go. Of your heart.

Jesus' treasure? You. Your spouse. Kids. Colleagues. Neighbors. Even your enemies.

Treasure with a capital T includes you and me. He was willing to sell it all for you. Even and especially His own life. An eternal trade in. Worth infinitely more than \$5,000.

I'm not saying my friend should cough up the \$5k (excuse the pun). Not saying he shouldn't. Just saying that when you consider where your treasure is that attracts your heart, remember Jesus' heart will never leave you. Which is a great reason for you to do the same with Him. He's the treasure your heart longs for.

Rev. Bill Woolsey
President and Founder
FiveTwo Network

Sign up to receive the 2 Minute Multiplier emailed to you! www.fivetwo.com/2mm

988 SUICIDE & CRISIS LIFELINE

If you or someone you know is in a crisis or emotional distress, call 988 to reach the Suicide & Crisis Lifeline! This free and confidential lifeline is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, across the United States. It is comprised of a national network of more than 200 local crisis centers, combining custom local care and resources with national standards and best practices.



Men's Bible Study



Stories for Witness every Tuesday from 8:00-9:00 am join us for Men's Bible Study. Discover the witness value of stories. We will review the great sacred story arcing over every disciple's life and find themselves in the stories Jesus tells in the gospels. We will also consider their own stories for witness. The point of witness is just where the Christ story, the story of another, and my own story intersect. To emphasize the visual nature of Jesus' stories, art will be used extensively.



FEBRUARY

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

FEBRUARY 5**5th Sunday of Epiphany**

"Nothing but Jesus Christ & Him Crucified"

Matt. 5:13-20

FEBRUARY 12**6th Sunday of Epiphany**

"Your True Love"

Matt. 5:21-37

FEBRUARY 19**Transfiguration**

"On The Mountain of Transfiguration"

Matt. 17:1-9

FEBRUARY 22**Ash Wednesday**

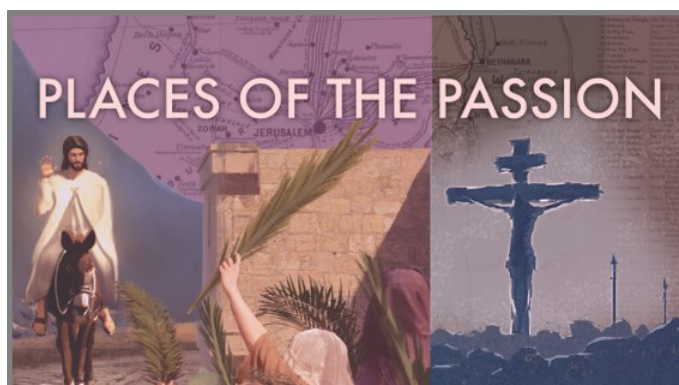
"Places of the Passion – City of Jerusalem"

Matt. 26:1-5

FEBRUARY 26**1st Sunday of Lent**

"True Good vs False Good"

Matt. 4:1-11



This Lenten season we follow in the footsteps of Jesus, contemplating what happened at each place our Savior stood along the path of his Passion for our sake. Written by theology professor Reed Lessing, each service explores the meaning, history and spiritual inspiration associated with the location highlighted. Parishioners will learn things they may not have known before as they grow to understand more deeply the hard road our Lord took that the way to heaven might be open to us.

Feb 22	Ash Wednesday	City of Jerusalem
Mar 1	Midweek 2	Bethany
Mar 8	Midweek 3	The Mount of Olives
Mar 15	Midweek 4	Gethsemane
Mar 22	Midweek 5	The Courtyard
Mar 29	Midweek 6	Pilate's Judgment Hall
Apr 2	Palm Sunday	Bethphage
Apr 6	Maundy Thursday	Upper Room
Apr 7	Good Friday	Golgotha
Apr 9	Resurrection of our Lord	The Empty Tomb



"I don't know how he does it. He preaches entire sermons without using the words 'cool', 'like' or 'awesome'."

CAMP OMEGA



Get ready for the best summer ever! Summer camp registration at Camp Omega is now open! There are camps available for a wide range of ages. Check it out! Save \$20 by registering by March 1. Register now www.bit.ly/campomega.

LCMS STEWARDSHIP MINISTRY – NEWSLETTER ARTICLE, FEBRUARY 2023

Don't Replace "And" with "Or"

We've all heard that stewardship means giving to the church of our time, talents and treasure. This alliterative trinity helps us see that giving is not just about money, but about our whole lives. As we confess in the Small Catechism's explanation of the First Article of the Apostle's Creed, God gives us everything we have and enjoy. First we confess that God gives us "our body and soul, our eyes, ears, and all our members, our reason and all our senses" (SC II). Then we confess that He gives us material things. The time, talents, and treasure trinity places before our eyes the fact that we are to give something of all three of these things toward the mission of the church in thanksgiving for what God has provided. For everything we have, and indeed, everything we are, comes from God's fatherly, divine goodness and mercy.

The problem with this alliterative trinity comes when we replace one little word with another little word — when we replace the word *and* with the word *or*. It is always written with the *and*, but when we read it, we read it with the *or*. Thus this quite helpful trinity, which extolls that everything that we have and are is a gift from God, to be given back in service of His church, turns into a trinity that we can pick and choose from when we serve God. The giving of our time, talents *and* treasure turns into the giving of our time, talents *or* treasure.

Then the question arises: Can we give of our time and talents instead of our treasure? Or perhaps it is the other way round: Can we give of our treasure and not of our time and talents? But these are the wrong questions. The right question is, can we give of our time and talents in addition to our treasure? Yes, indeed, we

are called to give of all three. The things that God gives us are not to be pitted against one another. Rather, they are given to us, and we are to press them all into God's service for benefit of His church and our neighbors in need.

Thus, we give all three. We give our treasure in the form of a generous, first-fruits proportion of our income. We give of our time in generosity for the benefit of Christ's holy church. We give of our talents in the same manner. Since God gave us all these things, we are called to give generously of all these things in faith toward Him and in fervent love to our neighbors.

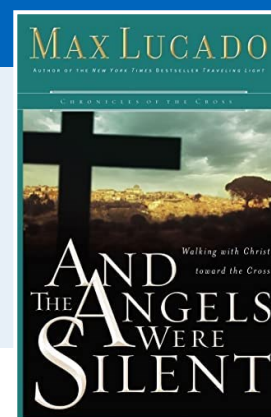
For God has provided all these things for us. Out of His fatherly, divine goodness and mercy, He gives us each time, talents *AND* treasure as a means to bless those around us. We serve our neighbors with these things, blessing them with the blessings with which God has blessed us. We give of our time, talents and treasure to our families, our society, our church and our local congregations. And we do this because we know that we are not our own. Rather, we belong to God. We have been bought with a price: the holy, precious blood and innocent suffering and death of our Lord Jesus Christ. He gave everything — His time, His talents and His treasure — to have us as His own and to live under Him in His kingdom and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence and blessedness. We have these things as gifts and blessings from God.

Let us then press them all into service for the sake of His love — time, talents and treasure together.

– LCMS Stewardship Ministry: lcms.org/stewardship

BOOKS FOR THE LENTEN SEASON

We have pulled some books from our church library that are a good read as we enter into the Lenten season. Two written by Max Lucado are *And the Angels Were Silent* and *Six Hours One Friday*. Another book is *The Day Christ was Born/The Day Christ Died* by Jim Bishop. We also have *Stories Behind the Traditions and Songs of Easter* by Ace Collins. All are displayed in the commons - take a look! They are available to check out. If you have other books to recommend, let us know and we'll share that information.



February 2023



SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1 12:00 pm Happenings Articles Due	2 7:00 pm Choir Practice	3	4
5 5th Sunday in Epiphany 9:00 am Worship/Communion 10:15 am Bible Study 10:15 am Sunday School	6	7 8:00 am Men's Bible Study 4:00 pm Confirmation Class 7:00 pm Elder's Meeting	8 12:00 pm Happenings Articles Due	9 7:00 pm Choir Practice	10 6:00 pm Night to Shine	11
12 6th Sunday in Epiphany 9:00 am Worship/Communion 10:15 am Bible Study 10:15 am Sunday School	13 7:00 pm Church Council Meeting	14 Valentine's Day 8:00 am Men's Bible Study 4:00 pm Confirmation Class	15 12:00 pm Happenings Articles Due 12:00 pm Newsletter Articles Due	16 7:00 pm Choir Practice	17	18
19 Transfiguration of Our Lord 9:00 am Worship/Communion 10:15 am Bible Study 10:15 am Sunday School	20	21 8:00 am Men's Bible Study 4:00 pm Confirmation Class	22 Ash Wednesday 12:00 pm Happenings Articles Due 6:00 pm Lenten Supper 7:00 pm Worship Service	23 7:00 pm Choir Practice	24	25
26 1st Sunday in Lent 9:00 am Worship/Communion 10:15 am Bible Study 10:15 am Sunday School	27	28 8:00 am Men's Bible Study 4:00 pm Confirmation Class				