

St. John's Lutheran Church
NEWSLETTER

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SECRETS

I used to like watching reruns of the game show from the 1950s-60s called "I've got a Secret." Perhaps you remember this entertaining show in which the celebrity panelists would ask questions to ordinary appearing people in order to figure out what unique or unusual skill or attribute the person had. It is often fun to keep secrets, particularly ones that delight other people when they are finally revealed. As Christmas presents are being made or purchased there is joy in kidding family members, "I know something that I won't tell."

There is a darker side to keeping some secrets. There is a saying in the addiction recovery field, "You're only as sick as your secrets." We do not want our misdeeds to come to light. We are ashamed of ourselves, and don't want to admit that shame to others. And yet, we have a tendency to ruminate on our secret sins to the point that they destroy our relationships with each other and with God.

Fortunately, there is a solution: confession and absolution. In confession, one lays one's sins at the foot of Jesus' cross. While the general confession in church is proper and efficacious, there is something much more freeing in confessing to another human being. Some people

have turned their psychological counselor or the bartender into their confessor, but with them there is no word of Absolution, of God's forgiveness. Psychologists describe the feeling of revealing emotional distress as catharsis, which means cleansing, but true cleansing comes on account of Christ's forgiveness.

Martin Luther wrote about private confession and absolution in the Small Catechism: "*What sins should we confess?* Before God we should plead guilty of all sins, even of those which we do not know, as we do in the Lord's Prayer. But before the confessor we should confess those sins alone which we know and feel in our hearts."

I am available for private confession and absolution every Sunday between 8:00 am—8:45 am, and at other times by appointment. Anything that you tell me in the context of confession will remain completely confidential, including any illegal activity. I hope that you take advantage of hearing God's word of forgiveness applied directly to your individual sin. It can be a very freeing experience!

Pastor Chris



PALM SUNDAY

On Palm Sunday, March 28, we will celebrate the confirmation of three young people: Scott Godaire,, Mackenzie MacLeod, and Julia Miller, and celebrate Holy Communion along with blessing and distributing Palms.

Mid-Week Lenten Worship:

Midweek Lenten Worship services are held on Wednesdays at 11:00 a.m. followed by a luncheon or 7:00 p.m. The following sermon topics are:

March 3: "This Is It???"

Jesus said, "Today you will be with Me in paradise." Huh? Life is short; get the most out of it here-and-now!

March 10: "How Do You Know Who I Am?"

Jesus said to Mary, "Woman, here is your son," and to John, "Here is your mother." Do you bristle when people make claims on your life?

March 17: "How Can I Believe in a God Who Would..."

Jesus cried, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" Is there vindication for believing in God?

March 24: "I Need This...and This...and This..."

Jesus said, "I thirst." What do you need? Why do you need it?

Loving Relationships Team

Based on the survey results reported last month, we have formed a task force to work on fostering our loving relationships. We are working on identifying ways we show our brothers and sisters Christian love and seeing ways where we can grow and improve. These can be things like inviting someone out for a coffee, or including them in a family birthday party, or being willing to share a personal concern. As Christians, we should and do pray for one another but we need to get out of our comfort zone.

We need to follow Jesus' command as he says in John 13:34-35 "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

TEAM MEMBERS:

Pastor Hazzard, Doris Love, Lori Miller, Renee Rix, Chris Tharion, Bill Schneeloch

The Book Discussion Club

will meet in the lounge for a pot luck supper on Monday, March 1st at 5:30 in the church lounge. We will be discussing Karen Kingsbury's book, *On Every Side* which is a fiction based novel based on the true story of a lawsuit having a statue of Jesus in a public park. Next month's book, *Until We Reach Home* by Lynn Austin is about three Swedish sisters emigrating to the USA in the late 1800's.



With a goal towards broadcasting God's Word in the best possible way, we are experimenting with new microphones in the choir loft so we can more clearly pick up the voices of our blessed choir. This is an ongoing process, so the posted MP3 may sound different from week to week. Please help in the continuing outreach mission project of our Radio Broadcast of Sunday morning Worship. Broadcasts can be heard each Sunday at 7:30 AM on WHYN (560 AM). The cost for the program is \$75 per week.

If you are interested in sponsoring a broadcast (or a part of a broadcast) in memory of or in honor of anyone please call the church or sign up on the sheet outside the office door. Donations of any amount are welcome. Also, we have CD's of previous weeks' broadcasts as well as our Christmas Eve and Christmas Day Worship services.

Additionally, we have posted previous weeks' broadcasts on our website. Just log onto <http://stjohnswestfield.com>; links to the broadcasts and the weekly bulletin are the main page.

Please see/call Bill Schneeloch (568-4906) or e-mail at radio@stjohnswestfield.com with any questions.

RED CROSS SPAGHETTI SUPPER FUNDRAISER will be held at St. John's on Thursday, March 4 from 3:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

The following have signed up for flowers for the months of March and April:



March 7 - Muserait (1) & Towle (1)
 March 14 - Sienkiewicz (1)
 March 21 - Ferst (1) & Caba (1)
 March 28 - Fisher (2) & Lacey (1)
 April 4 - Towle (1) & Domaingue (1)
 April 11 - Sienkiewicz (1)
 April 18 - Sofinowski (1)
 April 25 - Sienkiewicz (1)

If you would like to sign up for flowers, the 2010 FLOWER BOOK located on the round table.

We can do up to three bouquets per Sunday. The cost per bouquet is \$21.00.



EASTER FLOWERS:

If you would like to order flowers that will adorn the altar on Easter, in honor or in loving memory of a loved one, please fill out a flower form located on the round table in the church foyer. The flowers may be taken home after the Easter worship service.

The choice of flowers for this year are daffodils, hyacinths, tulips, or lilies. The price per six inch pot plant is \$7.50. There is also a combination ten inch pot for \$16.00. These plants are from Rudy Muserait's greenhouse. Ordering forms are available on the round table at the church and are due by March 21st. Checks may be made to the St. John's Altar Guild. If you have any questions, contact Debbie LaBombard at 532-0506.

EASTER CANDY will be sold by the Youth Group as a fundraiser for their trip to the National Youth Gathering in New Orleans.



VOLUNTEERS!

Your help is needed during the 2010 year to help usher. Anyone willing to help during the worship services can sign up on the sheet located outside of the church office or contact Bob Slozak. Teens, men and women are welcome.

Volunteers are needed to care for the altar during the upcoming months in 2010. If you cannot do a full month, two weeks will be fine. This activity doesn't take a lot of time and is very easy to do. Men, women, and teens are welcome. Training will be provided for those who are interested.



Thank you to everyone who supported our Super Bowl Grinder Sale and Annual Valentine's Day Brunch and Flower and Candy Sale. The youth worked so hard preparing the food for the brunch and the Congregational Meeting, cleaning the altar, as well as pick up after the meal.



We have raised approximately \$6000 towards our \$15000 goal. We will continue to sell Golden Nozzle Car Wash Tickets and collect cans/bottles for redemption. Also beginning in the month of March, the youth will be selling STOCK for their trip to New Orleans to attend the National Youth Gathering. Please support our efforts in trying to raise money to attend the National Youth Gathering this summer. Thank you for your prayers and support.

Thrivent Builds Habitat for Humanity –

Our 2010 build is a new home at Gunn Square in Springfield near Springfield College. We have scheduled the wall raising for April 24 at 8:30 a.m..

Going forward, we have St John's workdays scheduled for May 1 and May 22 and will schedule future Saturdays as the project moves along. If you're interested, you do not have to wait for a "St John's" day, we will have work days every Saturday until complete. If you have any questions, please contact either James Love – J.L.Love@comcast.net or Bill Schneeloch – schneebill@aol.com



GERMAN SUPPER

MARK YOUR CALENDARS for our Annual German Supper on Thursday, April 15 with settings at 5:30 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. The delicious menu includes roast pork, hot dogs, sauerkraut, mashed potatoes and gravy, green beans, bread and rolls, applesauce and dessert.

Tickets are available after worship services or by calling the church office (568-1417) or Jane McClure (562-0492). The cost is \$10.00 for an adult, \$5.00 for children (5-12 years), and children under five are free. Invite all of your family and friends to enjoy this wonderful supper.

REMINDER: Someone may call you for a donation of cakes to be served at our German Supper as desserts. If anyone can help with the preparation, setting up, waitressing, and clean up. please call Sally (562-3186) as soon as you can.

LWML MITE BOX UPDATE



Nine projects have been paid. Currently Project 10: Children's Fund for First Lutheran School has \$1875 towards the \$3000. The LWML-New England District has until March 30 to complete it's Mission Goal for the 2008-2010 Biennium. To meet this goal and fulfill the remaining mission projects, another \$6,873.78 is needed. So please continue to help by placing your donations in the jar on Sunday mornings or grab your own MITE BOX on the round table in the church.

MARCH BIBLE READING SCHEDULE:

March 1 - 1 Sm 16:1-23
 March 2 - 1 Sm 17:1-58
 March 3 - 1 Sm 18:1-19:24
 March 4 - 1 Sm 20:1-21:15
 March 5 - 1 Sm 22:1-23
 March 6 - 1 Sm 23:1-29
 March 8 - 1 Sm 24:1-22
 March 9 - 1 Sm 25:1-44
 March 10 - 1 Sm 26:1-25
 March 11 - 1 Sm 27:1-29:11
 March 12 - 1 Sm 30:1-31
 March 13 - 1 Sm 31:1-13
 March 15 - 2 Sm 1:1-2:32
 March 16 - 2 Sm 3:1-4:12
 March 17 - 2 Sm 5:1-25
 March 18 - 2 Sm 6:1-23:12
 March 19 - 2 Sm 7:1-29
 March 20 - 2 Sm 8:1-10:19
 March 22 - 2 Sm 11:1-12:31
 March 23 - 2 Sm 13:1-14:24
 March 24 - 2 Sm 14:25-16:23
 March 25 - 2 Sm 17:1-18:33
 March 26 - 2 Sm 19:1-20:26
 March 27 - 2 Sm 21:1-22:23
 March 29 - 2 Sm 23:1-39
 March 30 - 2 Sm 24:1-25
 March 31 - 1 Ki 1:1- 2:46

What Have I Done for Him?

Lent is a season in the church year during which we particularly focus on the sacrifice Jesus made for us to pay the debt we owed for our sin. We know there is no way we can pay the debt ourselves. Only the sinless Son of God could do that. We have access to heaven only by grace through faith in Christ Jesus.

While we cannot repay Jesus for what He has done for us, His love does require a response. Paul, speaking of our ministry of reconciliation, wrote, "*For Christ's love compels us . . .*" (2 Corinthians 5:14). We remain on earth to carry out the tasks which Christ left for us to do: to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, care for the sick, and visit the

prisoner, (Matthew 25:31-46). James admonished us that "*. . . faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead*" (James 2:17).

We provide the funds that support our pastors, teachers, and missionaries. Again, we can quote Paul writing in 1 Corinthians 9:11-12. "*If we have sown spiritual seed among you, is it too much if we reap a material harvest from you? If others have this right of support from you, shouldn't we have it all the more?*" Certainly each of us is addressed by the Great Commission: "*Go and make disciples of all nations . . .*" (Matthew 28:19).

The following words from Frances Ridley Havergal are a poignant reminder that Christ's love and sacrifice for us require a response:

Thy life was given for me, Thy Blood, O Lord, was shed

That I might ransomed be, and quickened from the dead.

Thy life was given for me, What have I given for Thee?

And Thou hast brought to me Down from Thy home above

Salvation full and free, Thy pardon and Thy love.

Great gifts Thou broughtest me, What have I brought to Thee?

We are saved by grace through faith for works. Let us pray for the desire to be good stewards of the gifts of salvation, health and wealth, and time and opportunity which God has given us that we might have a part in the furthering of God's kingdom.