

Gethsemane Lutheran Church of Hackettstown, NJ

The Garden

Gethsemane's Bi-Monthly Newsletter



UPCOMING DATES OF IMPORTANCE

Mark Your Calendars!

Saturday, Feb.9, 10am, Prayerwalking

Wed. Feb. 13: Ash Wednesday Worship
Holy Communion, Imposition of Ashes

Wednesdays, Feb. 20,27, Mar.6, 13, & 20
Lenten Midweek Services, 7pm
Soup Suppers, 6pm

Sun. Mar.17: New Member Orientation
(9:15am)
New Member Rite of Reception (10:30am)

Sun. Mar.24 Palm/Passion Sunday
Beginning of Holy Week
See back of cover letter for schedule

Sat. April 13 VISIONING DAY at Gethsemane

SOUP SUPPERS IN LENT

Once again we look forward to soup suppers in Lent, beginning on Wed., Feb.20, 6pm, and before each of the Wednesday Lenten services. Please sign up on the hallway bulletin board to bring soup and/or bread. We usually need at least 4 servers per supper. See Jeff or Marilyn Meeks for details or to volunteer.

JUNIOR YOUTH GROUP BEING ORGANIZED

A "Junior" youth group for grades 4 through 6 is being organized by Danielle Siek, Lorraine Smith, and Jason Kiefer. They are planning on fellowship and servant activities, and welcome parental support.

ASH WEDNESDAY, THE BEGINNING OF LENT

The season of Lent dates back to the middle of the 4th century, when candidates for Holy Baptism fasted for 40 days and received catechetical instruction. After Christianity was legalized in 313AD, the period of preparation for baptism became a period of preparation by all Christians for Easter. Lent is from an Anglo-Saxon word meaning "springtime"; it is the "holy springtime of the soul", a time for spiritual preparation, planting and growth.

Ash Wednesday leads us into Lent. Originally it was a day when people who sinned and were asking forgiveness would be temporarily excommunicated from the church. These "penitents" would be brought in, admonished publicly, prayed over and then expelled from the church before the Lord's Supper. For 40 days, the penitents were under spiritual discipline before being welcomed back into the church, forgiven.

In the 11th century, the practice changed to include all Christians. Ashes are a sign of our repentance, mortality, and renewal. We recall that God spoke to Adam the words that you will hear when you are marked with ashes, "you are dust, and to dust you shall return." The reminder of renewal comes from the former use of ash mixed with soap as a cleansing agent. The marking of the ashes in the form of the cross reminds us also of our baptismal cleansing, when we were "sealed by the Holy Spirit and marked with the cross of Christ forever."

WHAT IS GOD'S PREFERRED FUTURE FOR GETHSEMANE?

SAVE THE SATURDAY MORNING of APRIL 13 (9-NOON), as we have set that date for our VISIONING DAY, a time we gather to begin to answer the above question. It's not the "Super Bowl", but it is a very important time for our setting direction for the future. Discerning God's will for our church family won't come easily without fervent prayer.

Our current Vision Task Force and leaders are now starting to plan by: *organizing the congregation for community surveys, *surveying community leaders, and *prayerwalking our neighborhoods (*our first prayerwalk is Sat.Feb.9, 10am. Meet at church*)

1) Servant volunteers are needed to meet with community leaders (like the Mayor, school principals, the police chief, hospital administrator) and to ask:

*what are the greatest strengths of our community? *our three greatest challenges? *the most pressing problems? *and how might we partner with you to improve our community?

2) We also need volunteers to help with at least one neighborhood community survey (on a Sat or Sun), going door-to-door, and taking one minute to ask 3 questions:

*what 3 words describe Gethsemane Lutheran Church?

*what needs are not being met in our community?

*if you were looking for a church home, what qualities would you look for?

3) We are inviting members to participate in at least one prayerwalk (again, on a Sat or Sun----our first one will be on Saturday, Feb.9, 10am....meet at church, and we'll prayerwalk the church's surrounding neighborhood); we go out in teams of 2, pray for the homes and people you see, and talk with anyone you meet and ask if you can pray for them or any need.

The information gathered from the surveys will be important for our Visioning Day on April 13, as we identify the top 5 issues of the vision for the next five years.

The final vision statement will be created by Pastor and a small group of leaders, worded so that it communicates what Christ's mission looks like at Gethsemane, and which creates a burden on the hearts of our of our members. You can participate RIGHT NOW by taking this to the Lord in prayer!

HOME LENTEN STUDY GROUPS on "Prayer" will begin after Ash Wednesday (Feb. 13th.) We are planning to offer at least five opportunities for this six-week study. Please check the hallway bulletin board to signup for one of the groups:

1) meets **Monday evenings** at home of Jan Long (124 Louis Lane), co-facilitated by Linda Lopresti

2) meets **Tuesday evening** at parsonage(801 East Baldwin, Hackettstown)

3) meets **Wednesday afternoons, 4:30pm, in Fellowship Hall**, facilitated by Jim Dobak

4) meets **Thursday evenings at home of Lorraine Smith** (36 Vienna Hills Dr., Hackettstown), facilitated by Jason Kiefer

5) meets **Friday evenings at home of Charlie Stackhouse** (7 Birch Ridge Drive, Hope, NJ) facilitated by Charlie.

We are trying to offer as convenient a schedule as possible. WHEN YOU SIGNUP, DON'T WORRY ABOUT HOW MANY HAVE SIGNED UP.....We will try for groups of 7-10, and if more than that sign up, we can have two groups on that evening. We'll find a home for you!

Here's a **description of the six sessions on prayer:**

1) Prayer With a Purpose (Prayer Blocks, Praying the Lord's Prayer/ A Letter to Dad)

2) Hallowed Be Your Name (The Potter and the Clay/A Look at the Psalms)

3) Daily Bread (A Daily Bread Prayer to God)

4) Your Kingdom Come (Back to the Potter/Prayerwalking/I Timothy 2:1-8)

5) Forgive Us Our Debts (Forgiveness of Sins/Private Time with God)

6) Deliver Us From Evil (A Letter to Wormwood/The Devil/Ephesians 6:10-18)

MUSIC NOTES

Thanks, again, to all of the musicians who made the Christmas season so inspirational. The choirs put in so much extra practice time during the busiest time of the year, and it is very much appreciated. We are blessed at Gethsemane with truly dedicated and talented chancel and chime choir members.

As we celebrate Epiphany and prepare for the holy days of Lent, we are so happy to officially welcome our newest choir member, Jonathan Klemm, who joined our tenor section last fall. Jonathan is very helpful with the new world of downloading music, and his technical savvy is a valuable addition to the choir! He's a great singer, too! We are also delighted to welcome back Kristin Labert this winter. She is a talented alto, as well as a fine violinist, who brings a wonderful voice and spirit to the group.

There's plenty of room in the choir for you, too! Consider joining us as we prepare a special Lenten cantata. We have just begun rehearsals for this beautiful piece of music, which includes many of the lilting tunes of Lent such as "Were You There" and "What Wondrous Love Is This?"

We've ordered several new pieces of music for the chime choir, too! In mid-February, the chimers will meet again to rehearse on Wednesday evenings before the mid-week services. We have a full three-octave set of chimes, and the more ringers that we have, the fuller the sound.

We are so proud of our Sunday School musicians, too! Now singing twice a month in the regular worship services, the children are learning new and traditional songs of praise and learning the importance of raising their voices to worship our King. Mark your calendars for the first and third Sundays of every month so that the kids can be well-rehearsed for their choir anthems. It has been fun to add chimes and rhythm instruments, too.

Music is a very important part of our Lutheran worship tradition. I'm so very grateful to be a part of this ministry, which I love. Please continue to offer your feedback and suggestions, and raise your voices in songful prayer! From my seat at the organ or piano, it is a joy to hear, and to our God, it is a blessing.

Laura Petrie

SENIORS' LUNCHEON

Our monthly seniors' luncheons continue in 2013. We very much enjoyed the Rev. Art Doring as our guest on Jan.30. We meet on 4th Wednesdays, 12:30pm; bring a bag lunch, with dessert and beverages provided. The next four scheduled luncheons are: Feb.27, Mar.27 (Holy Week--may change), April 24, and May 22. (June: to be decided by our group).

NEW MEMBER RITE OF RECEPTION

New members will be received on Sunday, March 17 (St.Patrick's Day) at Gethsemane. An Orientation will be held at 9:15am, with leaders of the congregation in attendance. And then a special Rite of Reception will be held for all joining. Later in April, a special New Members' Luncheon will be hosted by our Church Council.

If you are a Lutheran desiring to join Gethsemane, please contact Pastor Terry. Those with a non-Lutheran background are presently attending a Pastor's Class on Sunday mornings at 9:15am.

GETHSEMANE LUTHERAN PRESCHOOL

We are currently taking registrations for the upcoming school year. Two Open Houses were held at the end of January. We also noted Lutheran Schools Week

The children have enjoyed units on snow, mittens, Dr.King, polar bears and penguins. February will involve many activities on the post office, valentines, and nursery rhymes.

In March we will study Dr. Seuss, rabbits and eggs. Of course the Easter story will be the focus for many stories, songs, and crafts.

Sue Galloway, Director

YOUR LOCAL THRIVENT NEWS

If you are a Thrivent member with 2012 Thrivent Choice dollars to designate please remember to do that before March 31. Your 2012 Thrivent Choice dollars do not "roll over", they return to the control of the corporate office and you start accumulating for 2013. Please consider directing them to Gethsemane Lutheran Church or Gethsemane Lutheran Preschool. The church uses the Thrivent Choice dollars to recognize and honor volunteers in the congregation and to provide leadership training for congregational leaders. If you have questions or need assistance please contact Susie Herzberg, 908-979-0024.

NONAGENARIAN NEWS!

***Marie Zebrick** celebrates her 90th birthday on Saturday, February 2nd. A Coffee Hour with cake will be served in her honor after church on Feb.3.

***Marg Kent**, our most senior member, celebrates her 95th birthday on Feb.10th.!

***Evelyn Beegle**, our most senior charter member and one of our five nonagenarians at Gethsemane, has moved to the House of Good Shepherd after living 59 years at her home on East Baldwin. Her address is 798 Willow Grove Street, apt. 263, Hackettstown, NJ 07840. Phone number is 908-684-5993



HYMNS WE LOVE TO SING

*O Lord, throughout These Forty Days
LSB 418O Lord, throughout these forty days
You prayed and kept the fast;
Inspire repentance for our sin,
And free us from our past.*

This hymn is based on the hymn by Claudia Frances Hernaman - 1838 - 1898. Claudia was the daughter of W.H.Ibotson a Vicar of Edwinstowe, Notts. Claudia married the Rev. J.W.D. Hernaman in September 1858.

The text of the hymn, LSB 418, is a paraphrase by Gilbert E Doan of the original hymn by Claudia Frances Hernaman. It is based in part on Luke 4:1-4 *And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness for forty days, being tempted by the devil. And he ate nothing during those days. And when they were ended, he was hungry. The devil said to him, "If you are the Son of*

God, command this stone to become bread." And Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone.'" The text of the original hymn was written by Claudia F. Hernaman. It was first published in 1873 as part of the collection: *The Child's Book of Praise; A Manual of Devotion in Simple Verse*. Over her lifetime she composed over 150 hymns, most of them intended for children. It is set to the tune St. Flavian, an adaptation of the music from the first half of Psalm 132 in John Day's *English Psalter* of 1562. In the Liturgy of the Hours, "Lord Who Throughout These Forty Days" is used during Lent. Many churches use this hymn as an entrance hymn on Ash Wednesday.

*Lord, who throughout these forty days
For us didst fast and pray,
Teach us with Thee to mourn our sins
And close by Thee to stay.*

– Bob Bornemann