

Announcements

◆ A warm welcome to all our visitors and guests, friends both old and new. We pray that God has blessed your time among us with His Word and Holy Spirit. We ask that you please sign the guest book at the back of the church, and we pray that our Lord would guard and keep you in His grace, mercy, and peace throughout the Days of Christmas and the New Year of Our Lord.

◆ The new Emmaus picture directories are available downstairs in the church hall. There should be a copy for each household. Pick yours up today.

◆ Following coffee & refreshments, our Family Bible Class continues a study of Genesis, making special use of Dr. Luther's commentary on that book.

Catechesis class for younger and beginning catechumens meets at the same time. Older children, especially between the ages of eight and twelve, will meet with Mike Jindra and Ian Walsh. And Dave Smith is teaching a catechesis class for teenagers and others who are interested.

◆ The Sacred Season of Lent begins this week on Ash Wednesday (1 March). There will be opportunities for the imposition of ashes on that day, either in the morning (9:00 a.m.) or shortly before the Divine Service that evening (6:30 p.m.). As in past years, there will be opportunities throughout Lent for the Word of God and prayer, and for the celebration of the Sacrament.

◆ On Thursday and Friday of this week, Pr. Stuckwisch will be attending a meeting in Fort Wayne with the other Vice Presidents of our District. For that reason, we will not be gathering for the brief spoken Divine Service that we would normally be having this Friday (as throughout the rest of Lent).

◆ Dcs. Rhein will be leaving this Friday for a couple weeks in Ethiopia, for her continued work on the hymnal project there. Please remember her in your prayers and intercessions as she travels and as she serves the church.

◆ **COLLECTIONS FOR 19 FEBRUARY 2017: \$ 1,387.00**

In order to meet our financial obligations and commitments, an average of \$2360 is needed each week.

◆ **We are in need of additional greeters to welcome members and guests to the Lord's House on the Lord's Day. Please consider volunteering to serve and assist in this way approximately one Sunday each month.**

◆ IN THE LORD'S SERVICE THIS LORD'S DAY: (ELDER) Robert Rhein; (USHERS) Aaron Seyboldt & Egon Tribble; (ACOLYTE) Frederick Stuckwisch; (ORGANIST) Dcs. Sandra Rhein; (GREETER) Pat Nering.

◆ Rev. D. Richard Stuckwisch, Pastor Home Phone: (574) 233 – 0574

On the Church Year

“Lenten fasting has often served a useful and Christian purpose. Fasts were common in Biblical times. In the New Testament period the church encouraged the faithful to fast on those days when Christ died (Fridays) and when Judas agreed to betray him (Wednesdays). The food which would normally have been eaten during a fast was given to the poor.

“Today fasting has almost disappeared as the requirements have lessened even within the Roman Catholic Church, especially since Vatican II [in the mid-1960's]. Luther and other reformers were certainly not opposed to fasting as such, provided it was a preparation of repentance for the proper reception of the Holy Communion. As the Scriptural reading for Ash Wednesday makes quite clear, however, outward preparations are far less essential than inward ones.

“Foods such as pretzels and hot cross buns stem directly from Lent. At the time when the fast was far stricter than it is now, including a ban on dairy products as well as meat, as it still does in Eastern Orthodoxy, people subsisted largely on breads and pastries, eked out with soups and vegetables.

*“Pretzels are one of these Lenten foods. Bakers in Germany decided to turn out something that even looked religious. The crossed arms of the pretzel were intended to represent a Christian at prayer, with his palms on opposite shoulders making a crisscross of his forearms. In Latin the shoulder was known as the *bracella*, and through the German this eventually gave us the word ‘pretzel.’*

“Hot cross buns as we know them today probably are too rich in shortening to have passed muster in the fasting laws of the Middle Ages. What we have now may have developed from small loaves of bread, marked atop the crust with the sign of the cross. A similar kind of bread, sweetened a bit with shortening and sugar, is still common in Spain and Portugal as a special treat on any kind of religious occasion — Christmas, Easter, a christening, a wedding.

“In Germany, despite the great tradition that made sacred music a central part of public worship, all singing was dropped during Lent. When Johann Sebastian Bach was at Leipzig, for example, the organ and the choirs were silent during these weeks, with music coming back into its own for Palm Sunday and Easter.

“Occasionally, however, in accord with the general mood of sobriety, a violinist or soloist did perform during Lent, usually in a minor key. Maundy Thursday and Good Friday often featured great choral presentations of the Passion, such as the St. Matthew Passion.

“Like Easter, the English word ‘Lent’ got its name from the folklore of the Germanic tribes. ‘Lencten’ is the same root as ‘lengthen,’ and stands for that time of the spring when the daylight does in fact lengthen.

“Even within the season of Lent there are distinct moods and accents. Laetare, the Fourth Sunday in Lent, breaks into the general mood of self-denial in the same way that Gaudete, the Third Sunday in Advent, breaks into the season of Advent. On this Sunday the Roman church permits rose as a liturgical color.

“The historic Epistle for the day speaks of Jerusalem as ‘the mother of us all,’ and from this reading the Sunday was often known as Mothering Sunday. Originally this was a day when children returned to their home churches and to their families.

“On this day the pope often gave special recognition to those who had upheld the faith in a significant way. When he awarded the Golden Rose—a filigree rose of worked gold—to King Henry VIII of England, he also granted the king the title Defender of the faith, largely for his writings against Luther.

“Historically, the Fifth Sunday in Lent, also known as Judica, was ‘Passion Sunday—marking the beginning of Passiontide. This season is older than Lent and focuses on the Passion. The chants for these days contain many ancient hymns that describe Christ’s suffering, such as Vexilla regis, Pange lingua, and O Sacred Head, Now Wounded (of Reformation origin).

“The Scripture readings also began to take up the theme of the crucifixion. Traditionally this was also the day when the cross disappeared beneath a veil, together with all statues and pictures, not to reappear until Easter.

“The feeling of awe that surrounds Lent influenced even church architecture. Massive rood screens of stone and wood began to hide the mystery of Christ’s sacrifice from the eyes of the faithful. In the East the screen became a solid wall, and the priest was as effectively sealed off as if he had been officiating within the holy of holies.

“Holy Week largely reflects what the church at Jerusalem once did. In the first two or three centuries Jerusalem was the most ancient and most influential of the ancient bishoprics, and citing the example of the place where Christ suffered and died was the strongest argument one could raise for imitating it.”

(From THE YEAR OF THE LORD, by Theodore J. Kleinhaus, CPH 1967)

Walking with Our Savior this Week

TODAY THE TRANSFIGURATION OF OUR LORD
Divine Service of Communion 9:00 a.m.
Coffee & Refreshments Downstairs 10:30 a.m.
Catechesis / Family Bible Class 10:45 a.m.

MONDAY *Vespers* 6:00 p.m.

TUESDAY *Pastor's Writing Day (but do call in cases of emergency)*

ASH WEDNESDAY Corporate Confession / Ashes 9:00 a.m.
Imposition of Ashes 6:30 p.m.
Divine Service of Communion 7:00 p.m.

THURSDAY—FRIDAY *Pr. Stuckwisch at a meeting in Fort Wayne*

Dcs. Rhein leaving for Ethiopia until March 20th

NEXT SUNDAY **Divine Service of Communion** 9:00 a.m.
Coffee & Refreshments 10:30 a.m.
Catechesis / Bible Class 10:45 a.m.

You may also want to keep in mind, in your observance of daily prayer at home:

*The Appointed Readings for Ash Wednesday (10 February):
Joel 2:12–19; 2 Cor. 5:20—6:10; and St. Matt. 6:1–6, 16–21*

*The Appointed Readings for next Sunday, the First Sunday in Lent:
Genesis 3:1–21; Romans 5:12–19; and Saint Matthew 4:1–11*