



ST JOHN AMELITH PARISH NEWS

March 2024

From The Pastor

“I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.” John 16:33

As March still keeps us in the season of Lent and with the last week of this month ending with Holy Week, suffering comes to mind. Jesus knew this reality throughout His ministry, but especially showed concern of what this meant for His disciples. On the night He was betrayed He gave the promise of peace that would be in Him, but the fact remained “you will have tribulation.” Tribulation is not necessarily searching for some sin against the Law, but simply the suffering of circumstances brought on by a sinful world AND our relationship to Christ. As the Lutheran Scholar Rev. Dr. Gregory Schulz comments on the crucified Christ, “The crucial nature of *suffering* – **which is not the same phenomenon as pain and is best thought of as *biblical lament*** – has been largely suppressed in modern churches, including our Lutheran churches. The suppression of the fellowship of His sufferings in modernity has undercut the Christian faith.”

Lament is more than shedding a tear or feeling bad about an outcome. It is grief or remorse over life. A few felt this before the cross of Christ rather than run away. However, lament is also all over the Bible. Most would go to the suffering and losses of Job. If we dive deeper, a whole book in the Bible is called, “Lamentations.” Jeremiah the prophet shares his lament over the defeat of Jerusalem and exile. There is even a category of lament in the Psalms that is the saints of old prayer book. Psalm 10 asks, “Why, O Lord, do you stand far away? Why do you hide yourself in times of trouble?” There is plenty of other places, but this aversion to lament by churches today is no good. The power of positive thinking or looking at that silver lining is not the same as what Christ told St. Paul. In his suffering our Lord promised, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness” (2 Corinthians 12:9).



We at St. John have the right to lament over hardships set before us. There is time and seasons for everything as the Wisdom of Solomon reminds us (Ecclesiastes 3). It means we can join David in the freedom to ask, “How long, O Lord? Will you forget me forever?” (Psalm 13) Lent as a season in the church year teaches lament. Such a longing over life in a broken and dreary world is to draw us to Christ crucified. Lament is not an end in itself like “getting off our chest” but to see that Jesus Christ knows our griefs and carried our sorrows. His promise is not that we can remove tribulations so easily, quickly or deny them. Instead, faith relies on what our Lord says, “I have overcome the world.” This overcoming by Jesus is in the perfect sense by what He lamented over on the cross before His Father.

The joy of Lent is that Easter turned lament into rejoicing in the Lord’s resurrection. It happened just as He said. A true deliverance of forgiveness has brought forth a new creation in Christ. This glory before the world hidden in His cross is to know the love of God. While the night is a sign to the end of a day, Jesus has made the eternal day in Him. The baptized holds this before our life, since Christ is faithful. Lament is to go through the suffering for a time, but God goes with us all the way. “Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need” (Hebrews 4:16). The last day of March will this year surprisingly be Easter! We might be surprised who joins us when lament before such a Lord is forgiveness, life, and salvation given for our lives.

The death and resurrection of Christ is for you,

Pastor



Saturday , March 30th

Easter Egg Hunt 10:00am

St. John Amelith Lutheran School
1664 Amelith Rd
Bay City, MI 48706 Please Join Us!
Ages : Toddler to 4th grade

Please bring a friend and your own basket or container to collect your eggs!

St. John Amelith

Presents...Our Pizza Fundraiser!



It's Pizza! Pizza! Time! Time for you, your friends, and your family to stock up with Little Caesars Pizza Kits! Have them on hand for quick dinners, parties or entertaining! They're fun to make and delicious to eat!

For every kit we sell, SJA will get \$6.00.

All proceeds will go to St. John Boosters, which assists in funding educational outings, activities throughout the year and staff appreciation as well as many other miscellaneous projects.

Please keep the following dates in mind:

Sale starts: Monday, March 4th

Sale ends: Friday March 22nd

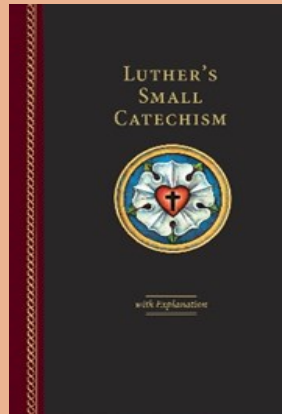
Pick up: Orders will be in the week of April 8th, but we do not have a scheduled day yet.

Please turn in all orders and money (cash or check) to the school office by Friday, March 22nd. Please have all checks made payable to "St. John Amelith".

If you have any questions please feel free to contact Jackie Town (989)274-0880.

**THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING
ST. JOHN BOOSTERS!!!**

Adult Instruction (Didache Class)



A new cycle of classes begins Wednesday, April 24th and will go for twelve weeks. We will meet at the school 5:30pm in the Luther Room. It is for those interested in becoming a member at St. John, but can also serve as a great opportunity for any current member to review the Small Catechism. Sign up by calling the church office or sending an email to pastor.

New members will receive all material for free, but we ask St. John members to give a donation to cover the course book (roughly \$15). All our welcome, learn together, and find refreshment from our Lord. Be rooted in the word and grow in our Lutheran identity that unashamedly confesses Christ!



Holy Week Schedule 2024

Palm Sunday/Confirmation Day--- Sunday, March 24th (9:30am)

Holy Week begins by the processing of palm branches and praising Jesus as king. Yet, “Hosannas” turn to the crucified king of glory. This double themed Sunday has joy mixed with humility of what comes in Passion Week. The rite of confirmation for youth falls on this Sunday at St. John, which ties back to the early church. The emphasis for it being on Palm Sunday is not about graduation, but how our life and confession of Christ is to go with Him who has given all for us by His Cross.

Maundy Thursday---Thursday, March 28th (6pm)

As our Lord came to the Passover feast, so on this night we gather to receive what He has given His church. Before His disciples and approaching death, a new commandment came from Jesus, “Love one as I have loved you.” Chief to Maundy Thursday is how Christ in love instituted the Lord’s Supper. More than celebrating an event, His will toward us is to give His true body and blood to eat and drink for the forgiveness of sins. Finally, this service concludes with the stripping of the altar showing the Lord’s humiliation in His crucifixion.

Good Friday---Friday, March 29th (7pm)

There are multiple kinds of service for this day, but St. John will be doing the Tenebrae Service or service of “darkness.” We gather in the light only to watch it gradually recess into the darkness. This service emphasizes how sin, death, and Satan would consume Christ as the sacrifice for a sinful world. The focus is on the primary reading of our Lord’s Passion and concludes with prayers. We end in darkness and silence as the Paschal light or Christ candle departs from the sanctuary having to wait until the Easter Vigil.

Easter Vigil • Saturday, March 30th (no service)

While St. John is not doing such a service, it is good to share the value of it. As Christmas Eve, so there was an Easter Eve in the ancient church. It turned toward the baptism of new catechumens and their reception of the Lord’s Supper. This service is a reverse of Good Friday celebrating the victory of Christ that has conquered the darkness. Primarily it belongs to the return of light with the paschal candle, focus on Old Testament readings over God’s deliverance of old, remembrance of Holy Baptism where Christ took us into His death and resurrection, and the first “Alleluias” celebrating the Lord’s Supper.

Easter Sunday • March 31st (6:30am & 9:30am)

Join us Easter Sunday to celebrate our Lord’s resurrection. The Divine Service now comes with celebrating the Easter acclamation, “Alleluia, Christ is risen!” It includes readings as usual from the Old Testament, Epistle, and Gospel fixed on the victory of Christ over the grave. Joyous hymns help us celebrate along with a Gospel procession that begins the service. The culmination of Easter is finally to receive the Lord’s Supper that is the victory feast of our God with forgiveness, life, and salvation of His body and blood.

VLHS *Ministry Update*



Valley Lutheran Music Department invites you to

THY WILL BE DONE

A LENTEN WORSHIP CONCERT
featuring the
SYMPHONIC BAND AND GOLDEN VOICE CHOIR

Home Concert

Saginaw, MI Sun., March 17
Immanuel, Frankentrost 3 p.m.



LUTHERANS FOR LIFE OF MICHIGAN PRESENTS

A LIFE SUMMIT

*Life Triumphant Hurlled
in Splendor Through Thy Broken World*

SUNDAY, APRIL 28th, FROM 2:00-5:00PM
ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH
329 N. SORRELL STREET, FOWLER, MICHIGAN 48835

PLEASE JOIN US for this event to hear and learn how we can be involved in continuing to share the message of the value of every human life. This is a great event for our congregational Life Teams, Life Advocates, pastors, lay leaders, as well as anyone who would like to become more prepared to share the **FOR LIFE** message!

SPEAKERS:

DR. RONI GRAD, KEYNOTE SPEAKER: “I was born in Detroit, MI, received my BA and MD at Boston University, practiced **pediatric pulmonology** mostly in academic settings and retired in 2016. I am a member of *Catalina Lutheran Church in Tucson*, where I wear many hats including Chair of our congregation’s *Life Team*. I serve as **Board member and secretary on the Lutherans For Life Board of Directors**, and as *Life Coordinator* for the English District, Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. I just completed the course of training in the Arizona South Circuit Lutheran Servanthood School.”

DR. GRAD will give TWO PRESENTATIONS during this Life Summit:

INTRICATELY WOVEN – We will review the human development in the womb, touch on a few things that can occasionally go wrong in this vale of tears, and consider some Scripture along the way.

ORGAN DONATION AND DETERMINATION OF DEATH – through the lens of Scripture, our Lutheran Confessions, liturgy and hymnody, we will examine the ethical issues surrounding common (and generally unquestioned) practices related to the donation of organs at the end of one’s earthly life. We will discuss the recent Lutherans For Life position statement, *Determination of Death (with Special Reference to Organ Donation)*, and the implications for end-of-life planning.

PASTOR PAUL CLARK is the *Lutherans For Life of Michigan Federation President*, and *Life Coordinator for the Michigan District*. He also serves on the *LFL National Board of Directors*. Pastor Clark will be the *M.C.* of our event, as well as giving an **opening presentation** on the theme **“THE SPLENDOR OF LIFE IN A BROKEN WORLD.”** Pastor Clark will also give an **update** on where things stand in our current state of affairs, especially here in **Michigan**.

This event is **free**. Light refreshments will be served. Please **RSVP** (if possible by April 14) to Pastor Paul Clark at revpmclark@gmail.com - or call or text to **517-420-4826**.
Those who have not registered are still welcome to attend.

Rooted in God’s Word, Growing in Christ’s Love, Branching Out to Serve, Bearing Fruits of Faith

Contact Us

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