

# Covenant News



**March 2022**

*Pastor's Spin*

Siblings in Christ of Covenant,

Greetings! Amidst our Lenten pilgrimage during this month of March, a certain day will come up on the church calendar: the Annunciation of Our Lord (March 25, hence, nine months before Christmas), when we recognize the moment when Mary's life (and, actually, the whole world) was changed, drastically changed, at that. As the story so goes:



<sup>26</sup>In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, <sup>27</sup>to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. <sup>28</sup>And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." <sup>29</sup>But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. <sup>30</sup>The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. <sup>31</sup>And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. <sup>32</sup>He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. <sup>33</sup>He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." <sup>34</sup>Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" <sup>35</sup>The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. <sup>36</sup>And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. <sup>37</sup>For nothing will be impossible with God." <sup>38</sup>Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her (Luke 1:26-38 NRSV).

Why bring this up during Lent (didn't we cover this a couple months ago during Advent anyway)? Well, there's that one verse that sticks out to me during this season that's meant to focus on confession, repentance, renewal, not to mention the cross: "For nothing will be impossible with God." Granted, that verse can be taken to the extreme (as we human beings like to do with a variety of things) to rival the logic presented in the temptation story that we will hear on the First Sunday in Lent: turning a stone into a loaf of bread and surviving a fall from a tall building (Luke 4:1-13). I don't think that's what the angel Gabriel had in mind, including us winning lottery tickets or obtaining our dream car or the like.

But there is something to be said about applying "nothing will be impossible with God" during this season that may come off a tad bit somber in comparison to the rest. Yes, we fall short of the glory of God in a variety of ways. We have our fair share of falterings as we follow our Lord who was willing to take a cross up a hill out of death-defying love. And yet, "nothing will be impossible with God" in terms of forgiveness and mercy. And yet, it doesn't even stop there. Yes, God will not only forgive, but God will empower us to go into action with the new life and hope and grace we mind-bogglingly received. "Nothing will be impossible with God" in just how much God is willing to take on all our shortcomings and falterings and "it's complicated" histories. And "nothing will be impossible with God" in believing that we still have something to offer for the benefit of those who struggle with believing that verse, wondering if they truly can be loved, too.

The Annunciation story also provides an opening that we cannot take for granted. Mary has the guts to ask, "How can this be?" It serves as another reminder for the church and children of God everywhere: you're allowed to ask questions. You're allowed to have your doubts. You're allowed to struggle with "nothing will be impossible with God," and whatever else. The angel Gabriel does not rebuke Mary for having the most basic human curiosity. God does not either with us. It's all part of the journey, and regardless of how many curves and wandering off's we take, there will still be Emmanuel (God with us) as much now in Lent as in Advent and throughout our life. Thanks be to God, indeed!

In Christ,  
Pastor Brad





3/2 Alexandra King

3/2 Claudia Senderak

3/2 Marie Prendergast

3/4 Scott Spychola

3/5 Maren Dickey

3/11 Harry Werner

3/16 Deena Gaglione-Hernandez

3/19 Christopher Gaglione

3/24 Avery Lockmiller

3/24 Daralynn Constant

3/30 Toni Ridgell

3/31 Vanessa Petrakos(Besednjak)



We are proud to join our siblings in Christ of the Lutheran Church of the Master for the first time in-person since the pandemic ensued, as we gather for Ash Wednesday and for worships during Holy Week (there will not be midweek Lenten meals and Holden Evening Prayer this year). All worships will take place here at Covenant. We pray God's blessings of hope and renewal for you during these forty days and beyond!

### **Ash Wednesday**

March 2, 7:00 pm

### **Maundy Thursday**

April 14, 7:00 pm

### **Good Friday**

April 15<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 pm

### **Easter**

April 17

Easter Vigil: 6:30 am

Festival Eucharist: 9:00 am

FREE  
community  
MEAL

Our next FREE community meal will be Thursday, March 24 (4:30-6). Again, we continue this ministry in a drive-thru format from the back of the church. So, if you need a night off from cooking dinner or you know of someone else who needs it, help us spread the word. It is FREE for anyone and everyone!

## *Lenten Midweek Study and Worship on Zoom*

Beginning on March 9<sup>th</sup> and continuing through the Wednesdays in Lent (March 16, 23, 30, and April 6), you are invited to gather through Zoom either with your computer or by phone.

From 7pm-8pm, Vicar Marla will be leading a Bible Study using the Old Testament readings for the upcoming Sunday as a springboard for learning about the story of God's unfolding relationship with the people of Israel and what that has to do with us today. If you are new to Zoom, the beginning to the hour will include instructions and tips to help new Zoomers feel more comfortable.

At 8pm, we will be praying the Night Prayer, traditionally called Compline, that is found in the front of the ELW hymnal. It will only take around 15 minutes and will not include a homily. Just a chance to gather our thoughts, joys, and worries from the day and entrust our lives into the love and care of the God known in Christ through the Holy Spirit.

If you would like to attend just the Bible Study or just the Night Prayer just log in either at 7pm or 8pm at the following link:

<https://wartburgseminary.zoom.us/j/81603302574?pwd=NDMzWHNOQ2EvNEF4NmZ4RGxBbjNTUT09>

The password is COTM2022. You can also call in via phone as well by calling 301-715-8592 and entering this number at the prompt: 81603302574#. If you would like to be added to an email list with a weekly invitation to the Zoom link as well as a reminder, please email Vicar Marla at [mkay@wartburgseminary.edu](mailto:mkay@wartburgseminary.edu). Please feel free to invite all who might be interested in joining in.

The Bible study texts for each week are as follows: March 9 is Genesis 15:1-12; Mar. 16 is Isaiah 55:1-9; Mar. 23 is Joshua 5:9-12; Mar. 30 is Isaiah 43:16-21; and April 6 is Isaiah 50:4-9. The Prayer texts for each week are as follows: Mar. 9 is Matt. 11:29-30; Mar. 16 is Romans 8:38-39; Mar. 23 is 2 Corinthians 4:6-7; Mar. 30 is 1 Peter 5:6-9; April 6 is John 14: 27. A printed bulletin is available to all who are not able to participate in Zoom by emailing Linda at [bedfordlutheranchurch@gmail.com](mailto:bedfordlutheranchurch@gmail.com). For those Zooming in, Powerpoint slides will be shared on the screen for participants to participate in the prayer service.

Please email Vicar Marla with any questions at [mkay@wartburgseminary.edu](mailto:mkay@wartburgseminary.edu).



Arlene Lasher is still planning to have our annual plant sale during the spring. More info and forms to follow soon.

## **An Interfaith Call to Peace for Ukraine** (February 24, 2022)

Though we have been anxious about the recent growing tensions between Ukraine and Russia and between Russia and the NATO countries in recent weeks, we remain deeply concerned, as we have been since 2014, for the impact of this ongoing conflict on innocent civilians throughout Ukraine. All parties to the conflict must take every measure possible to protect civilians. All parties and the international community must renew efforts to de-escalate this threat to international peace and security.

All our religious traditions call us to pray and work for peace. We join our voices and hands together. We must open our eyes to those who are suffering, and we cannot remain indifferent to the injustice this conflict has brought on the people of Ukraine and may bring on people of neighboring countries.

We call on all those involved—whether governments, movements or individuals—to repent of aggression and violence, and turn instead to the way of peace through dialogue. We also call upon the faithful people of our congregations and communities to pray for wisdom, peace and justice to prevail in Ukraine.

Join us as we pray:

Oh Divine, most mighty, most merciful, our sacred stories tell us that you help and save your people. You are the fortress: may there be no more war. You are the harvest: may there be no more hunger. You are the light: may no one die alone or in despair. Oh Divine, most majestic, most motherly, grant us your life. Amen.

The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton (Presiding Bishop, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America)

Rev. Eddy Alemán (General Secretary, Reformed Church in America)

The Most Rev. Michael B. Curry (Presiding Bishop and Primate, The Episcopal Church)

Rev. Dr. John C. Dorhauer (General Minister and President, United Church of Christ, National Ministries)

Bishop Sally Dyck (Ecumenical Officer, The United Methodist Church)

Rev. Teresa Hord Owens (General Minister and President, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the US and Canada)

Bishop Teresa Jefferson-Snorton (Chair, National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA)

Rev. Dr. Betsy Miller (President, Provincial Elders' Conference, Moravian Church Northern Province)

Rev. Dr. J. Herbert Nelson, II (Stated Clerk of the General Assembly, Presbyterian Church (USA))

Mr. Basharat Saleem (Executive Director, Islamic Society of North America)

Dr. Tarunjit Singh Butalia (Executive Director, Religions for Peace USA)

Rev. Chris Thore (President, Provincial Elders' Conference, Moravian Church Southern Province)

# The Lutheran Church of the Covenant

## March 2022

Sunday Servers	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
AG: Claudia Senderak, Jean Rusher, Gwen Susanek	6 9:00 am First Sunday in Lent	7 6:30-8:00 pm Girl Scout meeting in Nursery	8 7:00 Council Meeting in Parlor 6:30 pm Women's AA meeting in Hall	9 No Mid week service	10	11 6:30-8:30 pm GOD AA meeting in Parish Hall	12 3:00 pm Women's AA meeting in Hall Saturday Service
AG: Sheila Werner, Annie Copeland, Paula Hohenstein	13 9:00 am Second Sunday in Lent Daylight Savings Time	14	15 6:30 pm Women's AA meeting in Hall	16 No Mid week service	17	18 6:30-8:30 pm GOD AA meeting in Parish Hall	19 3:00 pm Women's AA meeting in Hall Saturday Service
AG: Joan Garvin, Marie Zahn, Jen Garberich	20 9:00 am Third Sunday in Lent	21 6:30-8:00 pm Girl Scout meeting in Nursery	22 6:30 pm Women's AA meeting in Hall	23 No Mid week service	24 Community Meal Pick-Up 4:30-6:00 pm	25 6:30-8:30 pm GOD AA meeting in Parish Hall	26 3:00 pm Women's AA meeting in Hall
AG: Joan Garvin, Marie Zahn, Jen Garberich	27 9:00am Fourth Sunday in Lent	28	29 6:30 pm Women's AA meeting in Hall	30 No Mid week service	31	April 1 6:30-8:30 pm GOD AA meeting in Parish Hall	April 2 3:00 pm Women's AA meeting in Hall Saturday Service

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The Lutheran Church of the Covenant  
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