

The Friendly Visitor

First Lutheran Church
Louisville, KY

February 2024



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Message from the Pastor

I was trained in Asset Based Community Development. If you have never heard of it, you're not alone. Most of us are trained to look at people's deficiencies. Non-profits, like congregations, often focus on the deliverables they are able to bring to people who are poor. ABCD, as it is commonly referred to, focuses on people's assets, the things they already possess. Those who work on ABCD help to network people's assets together so that everyone has what they need. It is a focus on abundance rather than scarcity.

There are three basic questions people are asked. What is one thing you can teach others to do? What is one thing you would like to learn how to do? And who, besides God, is on this journey with you? That last question seems to be appropriate for Lent.

This month we begin the 40-day journey towards the cross and the resurrection on Easter. Lent has traditionally been a time of preparation. Some people give up something for Lent such as abstaining from certain food or behaviors, or they might fast. In more recent years, people have been encouraged to add something new to their lives like prayer time, meditation time, etc. I think it's okay to just let the season be however it is for you, to observe how the rhythms of worship and life influence and guide your journey over the next 40 days.

I invite you to consider the question: who is on this journey with you? How might you use this season of Lent to be more intentional in your journey with them? Perhaps you can find time to meet weekly and share a meal. Perhaps you can decide to call each other once a week as a check in. Perhaps you might consider being intentional about praying for one another or doing a book study together. Perhaps you might find other ways to express your appreciation for the relationship.

Let us find time this Lent to give thanks, not just to God, but also to the people in our lives who support us, encourage us, love us and are there for us no matter what. Thanks be to God for the blessing that they are.

If you are having a hard time thinking of someone, perhaps this is a good time to identify one person you would like to get to know better. You might invite them out or over for a meal. Learn to be more curious about their life and what they are interested in. Find ways to develop your friendship.

Whatever you decide to do for Lent, I pray that it is a time of blessings as you grow closer to God and with one another.

Blessings!

John

From the Music Minister

This year Sunday, February 11 is the last Sunday in the season after Epiphany. On this Sunday we celebrate the Transfiguration of Our Lord, and we sing the Alleluia for the last time before the beginning of Lent. Transfiguration Sunday is the feast day that celebrates one of the miracles of Jesus. Jesus is praying on a mountain with his disciples and begins to shine with bright rays of light. This miracle is unique in that it happens to Jesus himself, not to other people or things. The season of Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, the day we will receive the sign of ashes, which is a sign of our human frailty. The word "Lent" comes from an Old English word for spring, and the purpose of repentance is the renewal of our lives just as spring renews the Earth. Our liturgy during Lent becomes simpler as we set aside our alleluias and embrace a simpler, more contemplative tone in our gatherings. The liturgy setting changes to a chant-like setting, in a free and flowing style. You will notice that the color of the paraments changes from green to purple, the color for Lent, and the chancel and altar will look different. We can also take this opportunity to change the trappings of our lives and meditate on what can make us look different as individuals. Take the opportunity to worship in a more contemplative and introspective way as the music helps you move beyond your outer self and look inward.

David McNease



The Lenten season marks our walk from winter into spring and from barrenness into growth. As we come to God in all our rawness, the altar adornments reflect this - the rough, dusty ashen color of raw burlap, the dry tree branches, thorny stalks, and dry grasses. Stones represent stumbling blocks along our path through the wilderness. You are encouraged to visit the baptismal font often during this season. Here you'll find sand, dry tree branches and stones surrounding a bowl full of water, a sign of God's baptismal promise that never fades. Our journey along the Lenten path leads through the wilderness and toward the cross, toward the font, and finally toward the light of Easter.

Larry Askins

Chair, Altar Guild

On Sunday, January 28, Cassi Smith from First and Em Joy from Louisville Youth Group shared with the congregation what it means to support LGBT+ people in the church and the community.





More Church News...

First Lutheran was represented at the Sweet Adelines' Fund-Raising Trivia Night by Cassi and Matt Smith, Sharon and Jay Lillie, Vicky Frank and Stephanie McCoy. We didn't make the top five but were solidly in the middle. We had a great time. Nancy Brian was also there. She's been a member of the Sweet Adelines for many years and was volunteering at the food table.

Everyone who volunteers with the Food Pantry is invited to the Dare to Care Volunteer Breakfast on March 15 from 9:00-10:30 a.m. at the Waterfront Botanical Gardens. If you're interested, please call Elaine, a Dare to Care coordinator, at 502-736-9963, or email her at elaine@daretocare.org. If you'd like to carpool from the church, please call the church office.

On January 22, Jim Lillie, Nancy Brian, Larry Askins, Melody Sterling, Pastor John Bell, and Vicky Frank drove to have lunch with Bill and Wanda Schaffrick.



Thank You...

In the Food Pantry section of the Annual Report, we regret that Stephanie McCoy's name was left out. Stephanie helps out every Wednesday and her work is really appreciated. She also takes time to water our plants. Without her, they surely would die. Thank you, Stephanie, for all you do.

A special thank you to those who volunteered their talents as readers in the Christmas Eve Service of Lessons and Carols. Thanks to Larry Askins, Pastor John Bell, Nancy Brian, Jeff Dwellen, Alivia Frank, Jim Lillie, Nola Lillie, Stephanie McCoy, and Chase Wartschlager.

A big thank you also to those who helped decorate the Sanctuary for the Christmas season. Drew Wartschlager set up the tree and, while enjoying cookies shared in the cookie exchange, others hung the ornaments. Special thanks to Larry Askins, Pastor John Bell, Nancy Brian, Vicky Frank, Jay Lillie, Stephanie McCoy, David McNease, and Kristy Peavey, for helping to beautify the worship space. We also thank our custodian David Patton for his behind-the-scenes help.

We also extend a very special thank you to Bill and Wanda Schaffrick for their donation of a generous number of poinsettias which greatly added to the beauty of the sanctuary.

Bill Schaffrick was presented with a quilt created by the organization Quilts of Valor due to his being a WWII veteran. We all thank you for your service!



Finally...

Either the Property Committee is working hard to fix our basement leak, or the beavers have been hard at work!



THE FRIENDLY PUZZLER

Find the underlined words amongst the letter grid at the bottom.

The remaining letters will reveal a hidden message.

Matthew 6:1-8

"**Beware** of practicing your righteousness before others in order to be seen by them, for then you have no reward from your Father in heaven.

"So whenever you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be praised by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your alms may be done in secret, and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

"And whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, so that they may be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret, and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

"When you are praying, do not heap up empty phrases as the gentiles do, for they think that they will be heard because of their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him."

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N E E D E S E U G O G A N Y S R Y D

February 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
28 10:30am Worship Service - Reconciling in Christ service 12:00pm Luncheon	29 Food Pantry closed 5:30pm NA - Why Are We Here 7:30pm LYG	30 10:00am Food Pantry	31 10:00am Food Pantry 6:00pm NA - Escape from Denial 7:00pm Chancel Choir rehearsal	1 4:00pm Food Pantry	2 Food Pantry closed 6:00pm LYG	3 12:30pm NA - Lose the Desire
4 10:30am Worship Service 11:30am Annual Congregational Meeting 12:30pm Potluck luncheon	5 Food Pantry closed 5:30pm NA - Why Are We Here 7:30pm LYG	6 10:00am Food Pantry 7:30pm NA	7 10:00am Food Pantry 4:30pm LYG Staff Meeting 6:00pm NA - Escape from Denial 7:00pm Chancel Choir rehearsal	8 4:00pm Food Pantry 7:00pm Worship and Music Committee Meeting	9 Food Pantry closed 6:00pm LYG	10 9:45am NAMI meeting 12:30pm NA - Lose the Desire
11 9:30am Breakfast 10:30am Worship Service	12 Food Pantry closed 5:30pm NA - Why Are We Here 7:30pm LYG	13 Food Pantry closed	14 10:00am Food Pantry 6:00pm NA - Escape from Denial 6:30pm LYG 7:00pm Ash Wednesday Worship 7:00pm Chancel Choir rehearsal	15 4:00pm Food Pantry	16 Food Pantry closed 6:00pm LYG	17 12:30pm NA - Lose the Desire
18 10:30am Worship Service 1:00pm Council Meeting	19 Food Pantry closed 5:30pm NA - Why Are We Here 7:30pm LYG	20 NEWSLETTER DEADLINE 10:00am Food Pantry 7:30pm NA	21 10:00am Food Pantry 12:30pm Craft Day 4:30pm LYG 6:00pm NA - Escape from Denial 7:00pm Chancel Choir rehearsal	22 4:00pm Food Pantry	23 Food Pantry closed 6:00pm LYG	24 12:30pm NA - Lose the Desire
25 10:30am Worship Service	26 Food Pantry closed 5:30pm NA - Why Are We Here 7:30pm LYG	27 10:00am Food Pantry	28 10:00am Food Pantry 6:00pm NA - Escape from Denial 6:30pm LYG 7:00pm Chancel Choir rehearsal	29 4:00pm Food Pantry	1 Food Pantry closed 6:00pm LYG	2 12:30pm NA - Lose the Desire