

A Mighty Fortress Lutheran Church

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Pastor's Article

A Little About Lent

Welcome to Lent! Lent is the forty-day season (excluding Sundays) of repentance and preparation for Holy Week and Easter. As we begin our Lenten journey, take some time to learn a little about Lent. How many of these did you already know?



- The term “Lent” originally comes from the Anglo-Saxon word “lencten” which means “spring.” This is the time, in the Northern Hemisphere, when the days are lengthening.
- The current practice of forty days of Lent recall Jesus’ forty-day temptation in the wilderness after his Baptism (Matthew 4:2, Luke 4:1-2) as well as Moses’ forty-day fast on Mount Sinai (Exodus 34:28).
- The appointed liturgical color for Lent is purple because purple has long been associated with royalty. In this case, Christ reigns from a cross.
- We refrain from using the word “alleluia” during this season. Based on the Hebrew word, *hallelu yah*, meaning “Praise the Lord,” alleluia has been a word of great praise to God in the life of the church and was prominent in early Christian liturgies. Because of the repentant themes during the season of Lent, singing or saying the word “alleluia” has historically been suspended during Lent's forty days. The joyful nature of alleluia is then welcomed all the more for joyous Easter celebrations!
- Lent originally began as a period of fasting leading up to Easter. Those preparing for baptism at Easter would fast and spend days in intense preparation. For those that were already baptized, Lent was a period to be renewed in their faith by studying the Bible, the Creed, and the Lord’s Prayer.

This year the gospel texts for Lent all come from the Gospel according to John. Rich stories about the living waters of baptism show up in many forms in the Lenten readings. The central baptism theme of rebirth is illustrated in the story of Nicodemus (March 5) and again in the stories of Lazarus and Ezekiel and the dry bones (March 26). The cleansing and healing elements of water were explored in Psalm 51 (Ash Wednesday) and again in the story of the

man born blind who washes in the pool (March 19). Thirst is quenched by water in a dry place with Moses striking the rock in the desert and the woman who meets Jesus at the well (March 12).

We'll end each Lenten service with a benediction from Psalm 51. May these words guide your Lenten journey as we refocus our attention on God's presence among us. Welcome, again, to Lent!

“Create in me a clean heart O God, and put a new and right spirit within me. Do not cast me away from your presence and do not take your holy spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and sustain in me a willing spirit.”

God's Peace,

Pastor Molly

Also, don't forget! Pastor Molly will be hosting a Bible Study on Wednesdays during Lent. You're invited to join either at 10:00am in the Fellowship Hall OR 7:00pm through Zoom. The Zoom links will be sent out each Wednesday morning. For this study, we'll be continuing with the Animate:Faith series. We'll watch a short video, and then use it to spark discussion and conversation. There is no pre-class material needed, just come as you are - all are invited!

Need a ride to the 10:00am session? Let Pastor Molly know. We have people ready and available to help get you to Bible Study.

Easter Flowers

The deadline for ordering Easter plants is March 26th. Order forms will be available starting Sunday, March 5th in the narthex.
This year Easter lilies are \$15 & Begonias are \$16.50.



Holy Week & Easter Worship Schedule

Palm Sunday – April 2nd at 10:00am

Join us as we wave palms and hear of Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem. We'll have a dramatic reading with instruments to tell the story of Holy Week.

Maundy Thursday – April 6th at 7:00pm (Soup Supper before starting at 5:00pm)

Join us as we hear of Christ's last meal with his disciples. As Jesus washed his disciples' feet, we'll participate in a hand washing ritual during the service, symbolizing the call to give and receive love in humble service to one another.

Good Friday – April 7th at 7:00pm

Join us as we hear the story of Jesus on trial before being sentenced to death. We'll extinguish candles as we read the solemn story, knowing the promise that the tree around which we assemble is indeed a tree of life.



Easter Sunday – April 9th at 10:00am (Easter breakfast before starting at 7:30am)

This is the day the Lord has made! Christ is risen, and through him all creation is made new! Come hear the story of Jesus' resurrection and help place flowers on the Easter cross!

Holy Week and Easter is a special time of the year and we want everyone to be able to come to worship. If you need a ride, please reach out to Pastor Molly. We have people available who want to help get folks to and from worship!

All our services will be livestreamed to our YouTube channel - *A Mighty Fortress Charlotte, NC.*



Lent Children's Message Series
The Pilgrimage of Lent -
A 40 Day Journey to Good Friday:
Team Meetings on Sunday Morning
Discussion of what we need for the journey
Passport to track journey

2nd Sunday of Lent
3rd Sunday of Lent
4th Sunday of Lent
5th Sunday of Lent

Mar 5 - Boots - How God walks with us and sometimes carries us
Mar 12 - Backpack - Supplies God gives us for our Pilgrimage
Mar 19 - Hiking Sticks - How God keeps us from falling/steadies us
Mar 26 - Map - How to read the guide to stay on the right path

**The Youth Group is meeting on March 5th after worship.
Join us fun and fellowship!**



**Outreach Ministry Project
During Lent**

During Lent the Outreach Team will be collecting items used to fill the ZOOM Bags for the homeless. As you shop and are able, we could use any of the following items:

- Small bags of chips, cookies, nuts
- Packs of crackers
- Fruit cups, apple sauce or boxes of raisins
- Protein or granola bars
- Small cans of Vienna sausages
- Small bottles of water

All items donated can be placed in the container by the cart in hallway.

Sundays in Lent include: **2/26, 3/5, 3/12, 3/19, 3/26, and 4/2.**

Thanks for your support.

Working hard to keep our Zoom bag stock filled! Please feel free to grab a few next time you're at the church. What an easy way to share God's love with our neighbors experiencing homelessness!

A Mighty Fortress Lutheran Church & the Outreach Thrivent Action Team



**ZOOM
BAGS
Help for
the
Homeless**



**Maundy Thursday
April 6th
5:00 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.
Join us for a light soup supper
before our Maundy Thursday worship
service at 7:00 p.m.**

Join a Lenten Bible Study with Bishop Tim Smith!

Bishop Tim Smith will offer an online Bible study on the book of Galatians during Lent—specifically, the five **Thursdays in March**—from 7 to 8 p.m. via Zoom. Don't miss this opportunity to study Galatians with other Lutherans across the synod! If you do not receive synod-wide emails and need help registering, let Pastor Molly know and she can sign you up.

Community Youth Project Fundraiser

LMM will be installing a commercial grade basketball goal for the youth in our community. This will also include a sign dedication and upkeep of this area for recreational use.

Goal: \$5,000

Currently Raised: \$1,400 as of 2/11/23

If you would like to support this great cause, please give money to Dwayne Graham, Chris Dukes, or Terry Saunders. Make checks payable to A Mighty Fortress Lutheran Church and earmark it for "LMM Youth Project"

NCLMM 100th Annual Gathering

Who: All men are invited. Bring a friend.

Where: Grace Lutheran Church located at 3020 Grace Church Rd , Salisbury , N.C. , 28147

When: March 11th. Registration is between 9am - 10am, Starts at 10am.

Pooch Party / Charlotte Checkers Game

Who: All are invited. Kids 16 and under get in free.

Where: Bojangles Coliseum

When: March 26th @ 1pm

Cost: \$22

RSVP by contacting Dwayne Graham @ 704-726-8215



Hearts to Hands CLT Mission on Saturday, April 15th

If you would like to help serve those in need for a few hours, please reserve April 15th for the "Packs & Panchos" mission.

It starts at 10:45 AM at First Ward Park and ends by about 1:15 PM. For more details, please visit their website: **HeartstoHandsCLT.org**.

There is a Volunteer button on their webpage, which is how you register to volunteer for this mission.

The next H2H mission after April 15th will be on June 10th.



Thank you to everyone who volunteered at the most recent Hearts to Hands LOVE (Pancakes from the Heart) mission! A record 61 volunteers came out to show those that we served love in the form of food, hygiene supplies, warm winter, clothing, and prayer. What a way to share God's love!



All smiles for our Tutoring Program! We always have an excellent time on Tuesday evenings hosting these awesome kids and their wonderful tutors. There is always lots of learning and laughter, food and friendships! Shoutout to all the tutors who make this program happen - we appreciate you!



The word is getting out that we have a tutoring program at AMF. Last month, a mom came to AMF and asked if she could enroll her 4 year old in our tutoring program. She speaks Spanish and her child in at Paw Creek pre-K program but she wants to do everything she can to help her child be successful.

So, we need someone who can teach the colors, count to 10, and read stories to a 4-year-old. Does that sound like something God is calling you to do on Tuesday evenings from 5:45-7:00? Think about it, pray about it. Let Libby Holman or Pastor Molly know if you are interested or have questions. Can start immediately.



Thanks to Dwayne Graham for organizing such a fun Sweetheart Dinner - the food was delicious and the fellowship was wonderful!

March Birthdays



March 2nd – Karl Kuekes

March 4th – Elaine Beal

March 10th – Janet Drake

March 17th – Mary Merlin

March 21st – Mia Strong

March 28th – Jennie Pitoniak

March 30th – Emily and Madison Jessee



March Anniversaries

March 1st – Penny & Greg Damron

March 7th – Diana & William Graham

March 24th – Mary & Danny Merlin

March

2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>1</p> <p>Worship 10:00 a.m.</p>			<p>1</p> <p>Pastor's Bible Study 10:00am & 7:00pm</p>	<p>2</p> <p>Read Across America Day at Paw Creek</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>4</p>
<p>5</p> <p>Worship 10:00 a.m. Youth Group after Worship</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>7</p> <p>Tutoring 5:45 p.m.</p>	<p>8</p> <p>Pastor's Bible Study 10:00 a.m. & 7:00 p.m.</p>	<p>9</p>	<p>10</p>	<p>11</p> <p>NCLMM Gathering</p>
<p>12</p> <p>Worship 10:00 a.m.</p>	<p>13</p> <p>Family Life 7:00 p.m.</p>	<p>14</p> <p>Tutoring 5:45 p.m.</p>	<p>15</p> <p>Pastor's Bible Study 10:00 a.m. & 7:00 p.m.</p>	<p>16</p>	<p>17</p>	<p>18</p>
<p>19</p> <p>Worship 10:00 a.m. Council Meeting after Worship</p>	<p>20</p> <p>Outreach 4:00 p.m.</p>	<p>21</p> <p>Tutoring 5:45 p.m.</p>	<p>22</p> <p>Pastor's Bible Study 10:00 a.m. & 7:00 p.m.</p>	<p>23</p>	<p>24</p>	<p>25</p>
<p>26</p> <p>Worship 10:00 a.m. Pooch Party 1:00 p.m.</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28</p> <p>Tutoring 5:45 p.m.</p>	<p>29</p> <p>Pastor's Bible Study 10:00 a.m. & 7:00 p.m.</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>31</p>	