



The Churchman

Sts. Peter and Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church

250 Woodside Road, Riverside, Illinois 60546 * (708) 442-5250

“Faith Active in Love”

www.stspeterandpaulriverside.org

Volume 43

February 2021

Issue 2

We are called together by the Holy Spirit around Word and sacraments to glorify God the Father, creator of all things, through our Lord Jesus Christ. We trust God to nurture lives of faith and hope, as we serve and give witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ for the salvation of the world.

The Practices of Lent

Ash Wednesday Liturgy of Holy Communion
and Imposition of Ashes at 7:15 p.m.

In-Person and Live-Stream Worship Options Available

Almsgiving: Giving alms, Jesus teaches, means making the hardships and needs of others our own—the young and the old, the sick and the suffering, next door neighbors and people in distant lands—people it would be easy to forget. Rather than simply looking out for ourselves, Jesus urges us to see those in need. What shall we give? Some time, some of our talent, maybe material resources. Whatever we give should be something that costs us, given in a spirit of gratitude to God for the life that fills us each day. What shall we give (up) in Lent? Maybe a telephone visit with someone who cannot leave home or is hospitalized; maybe some time helping a child with homework; maybe a donation to a shelter for homeless men or women; maybe a gift to Lutheran World Relief; maybe a new niche for ministry in the congregation. After all, before us are the great alms that Jesus gave: “He loved us, and gave himself up for us.”

Prayer: The Lenten season calls us to pray, but prayer, Jesus teaches, is much more than saying words. “Go into your room, and close the door, and pray to your Father in secret.” Before we pray, we need to shut the door to the noise, the trivialities, the distractions, the countless cares grabbing for our attention. In the quiet place of our hearts, we speak and listen to God. We trust that God helps us pray in this season. For those who have stopped praying or pray with little fervor, God gives graces for praying again. Usually the graces come as we turn to prayers and practices already there: reflective reading of the Bible and devotional materials, the liturgies of the Lord’s Supper and other opportunities for worship, simple grace-filled prayers like the Lord’s Prayer or the psalms. “What a Christian should be doing at all times should be done now with greater care and devotion,” Pope Leo told Christians of the 6th century who were beginning their Lenten observance.

Fasting: This discipline is likely the greatest challenge. Our society looks on fasting itself as peculiar, perhaps even abysmal. Urging everyone to eat, drink, and buy more and more, our world today has made fasting unfashionable and perhaps even un-American. Yet the gospel message warns us that more and more can ruin creation. An acquisitive spirit is a selfish spirit. The taste for too much can destroy. The good things of life can turn into our captors. In our society, fasting could be viewed as a gift to free us from those things to which we have attached our lives. This Lent, recognizing the hold some

things have on us, we can try with God’s help to keep them in their right place. For many good reasons, not all of us are physically able to fast due to health problems, work situations, family responsibilities, etc. But some reasonable abstaining from something which obstructs our relationship to God can be a liberating experience. Some may find that they are able to do without food during a day of the week, perhaps Friday in remembrance of our Lord’s suffering, or Saturday evening before Communion on the Lord’s Day. Others may find it helpful to set aside certain ways of spending time or money, addictive behaviors or manners of treating others. We need to develop a leaner, less wasteful way of life for the sake of all creation. Can the discipline of fasting lead us to a gentler style of living in communion with the earth and one another?

However you decide to practice the disciplines of Lent, let them be offered freely and generously, not unwillingly and begrudgingly, and in love for our Lord and in gratitude for the gift of life and redemption.—*djl*



*For waters break forth in the wilderness,
and streams in the desert;
the burning sand shall become a pool,
and the thirsty ground springs of water...
(Isaiah 35:6b-7a).*

**In addition to the in-person worship option,
join us every Sunday at 10:15 a.m.
for live-streaming of the liturgy
accessed through the website at
www.stspeterandpaulriverside.org .**

**Recordings of the services are uploaded to the same
site for viewing at a later time.**

**E-worship folders are also available
at the website.**

Ash Wednesday and the Forty Days of Lent

The holy season of Lent begins Ash Wednesday, February 17th. Christians gather on this holy day to mark the beginning of the baptismal preparation for Easter. On this day, we receive an ashen cross on the forehead—a gesture rooted in baptism—make extended confession, hear the solemn proclamation to keep a fast in preparation for the Easter feast, and contemplate anew the ongoing meaning of our baptism into the Lord's death and resurrection. While marked with the ashes of human mortality, the church hears God's promise of forgiveness and tastes God's mercy in the bread of life and the cup of salvation.

Ash Wednesday, February 17th

Liturgy of Holy Communion
with Imposition of Ashes

at 7:15 p.m.

(In-person and live-stream options
available with service recorded.)

Midweek Evening Prayer in Lent

Electronic format via email and website
for home use with recordings of

Holden Vespers and meditations for the season.

February

February 4: Isabelle Boike Lois Mika	February 18: William Londak
February 6: John Borysek	February 19: Gretchen Kostelny
February 7: David Richards Ann Vana	February 21: Peter Drahos Adriana Kubova Sarah Michaels
February 9: Robert Skudrna	February 22: Robert Kany
February 11: Donovan Byrne Christopher Greer	February 23: John Kostelancik
February 12: Jack Bute Susan Hassel	February 25: Gary Drahos James Triska
February 13: Valerie Smith	February 29: Marie Kamp

Birthdays and Anniversaries

February 5, 1972: Gary and Jocelyn Drahos
February 14, 2008: Vincent and Valerie Smith
February 27, 1965: George and Joyce Hodul

Happenings

**Ash Wednesday Liturgy of Holy Communion
with Imposition of Ashes**
February 17th, 7:15 p.m.

Congregation Council Meeting
Thursday, February 18th, 7:30 p.m.

Baptism of Luka Jan Kubo-Hartsfield New Year's Eve, 2020



Luka Jan, son of Bernard Hartsfield and Karin Kubova, and grandson of Branislav Kubo and Adriana Kubova, was baptized at Sts. Peter and Paul on Thursday, December 31st, 2020. Shown here (from left to right) are Pastor Dennis, Bernard Hartsfield, Karin Kubova, Adriana Kubova, Luka Jan, Kristian Kubo and Branislav Kubo.



Memorials and Honorariums

❖ For the Church ❖

In loving memory of beloved mother, grandmother, sister and aunt +LaVerne Hanzel+ on the anniversary of her death by remembering children Karen Cox, Kevin and David Hanzel, and their families; sister Audrey Bucz and her family, and niece Adrienne Gana.

The Kubo Family, in celebration of the baptism of Luka Jan Kubo-Hartsfield on December 31st.

Vojtech and Maria Chladek, in honor of Darina Durkovic and Milosava Blahut.

Jim and Nancy Baty, in memory of father +Steve Michael+ on the 100th anniversary of his birth on January 1st, 2021.

John and Kristine Racek (*Special Appeal Fund*).

John and Nancy Phelan and Family, in memory of mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother +Mildred Melka+.



[God] is always shielding us like a wick because the fire he is trying to start with us is a fire that the whole world will warm its hands at. It is a fire in the dark that will light the whole world home (from *The Son of Laughter* by Frederick Buechner).

FEBRUARY WORSHIP SERVERS

February 7th:

Greeters: Paul and Carrie Watkiss
Assisting Minister: Charles Matthies
Lector: John Broussard
Usher: Janet Broussard

February 14th:

Greeter: Ann Kmet
Assisting Minister: Vicki Michaels
Lector: Fred Kuzel
Usher: Fred Kuzel

Ash Wednesday:

Greeters: John and Shirley Kostelny
Assisting Minister: Brandon Michaels
Lector: Tom Michaels
Usher: John Kostelny

February 21st:

Greeters: Larry Crachy and Karen Kubik
Assisting Minister: John Broussard
Lector: Charles Matthies
Usher: Janet Broussard

February 28th:

Greeters: Philip and Linda Painter
Assisting Minister: Carrie Watkiss
Lector: Jane Lauritsen
Usher: Walter Cudecki

Sacristan and Altar Care:

Janice Hapgood

MARCH WORSHIP SERVERS

March 7th:

Greeter: Fred Kuzel
Assisting Minister: Charles Matthies
Lector: Brandon Michaels
Usher: Fred Kuzel

March 14th:

Greeters: John and Shirley Kostelny
Assisting Minister: Vicki Michaels
Lector: Carrie Watkiss
Usher: John Kostelny

March 21st:

Greeter: Carole Pollitz
Assisting Minister: Brandon Michaels
Lector: George Valek
Usher: Walter Cudecki

March 28th:

Greeters: Edward and Joanne Sefara
Assisting Minister: John Broussard
Lector: Joanne Sefara
Usher: Janet Broussard

Sacristan and Altar Care:

Ruth Bakalich

Worship and Music Committee Report to the Congregation

The Sts. Peter and Paul Worship and Music Committee held a pair of meetings during the 1st quarter of 2020 to discuss and plan for the seasons of Lent and Easter. But, as with almost everything else, those plans were cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Consultations between Pastor Dennis Lauritsen and Council leadership led to the difficult decision to suspend all church activities (including in-person worship services) on March 18th. Subsequently, through a series of e-mails entitled "Bread for the Journey," Pastor Dennis provided worship materials and links to pre-recorded sermons and music to allow the congregation to worship in their own homes.

As the restrictions against public gatherings were eased during the summer, a working group consisting of Pastor Dennis, Parish Musician David Richards, and members from Council leadership, worship planning, and the health care profession was formed. This group met several times to develop procedures to be used during worship services that would reduce virus transmission and optimize the safety of those in attendance. These procedures were reviewed and approved by the Church Council and were incorporated into the "Returning to Public Worship in the Sanctuary" document which was distributed to the congregation.

In-person worship services in the sanctuary resumed on July 19th. As part of the restart, the services were also live-streamed via the internet for those members unable to (or uncomfortable with) attending. We are grateful for those who are attending and participating in our services. To those who are not attending, please be aware that you are still considered part of our church family and remain in our prayers.

A special thank-you goes out Paul Watkiss, Tom Myers, and John Kostelny, who have been instrumental in setting up and providing the live-stream of our services.

During December, two recorded concerts were made available: the choir *Lux Cantorum Chicago* released "Christmas Ornaments" and David Richards offered up "A Joyful Christmas." We trust that both concerts enhanced the Christmas celebrations of our members.

We continue to monitor the status of the COVID-19 virus and make adjustments to our services as directed by public health and government agencies. We trust God's guidance as we navigate through this pandemic.

As always, and especially in this challenging year, our special thanks and wishes for God's continued blessings to Pastor Dennis Lauritsen and Parish Musician David Richards for their work in leading our services.

—Charles Matthies,
Worship and Music Committee Chairperson

From the Parish Register

Baptism:

Luka Jan, son of Bernard Hartsfield and Karin Kubova, and grandson of Branislav Kubo and Adriana Kubova, was baptized on December 31st, 2020. Luka's sponsors are Kristian Kubo, Alexia Campbell, and Caroline Belenske.



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DATED MATERIAL

Thank you!

Thank you to the following individuals and families who purchased poinsettias to decorate the chancel of the sanctuary for our Christmas season services:

Ruth Bakalich, John and Shirley Kostelny, Ladies Altar Guild, The Lauritsen Family, BettyAnn Mocek and Family, Tina Rothstein and Family, The Slahor and Babyar Families, and The Watkiss Family.

Memorial Flowers

Dec. 27th: In memory of mother and grandmother +Betty Zittman+ on the anniversary of her birth on December 28th by remembering children and grandchildren.

Jan. 3rd: In memory of +Katherine Predny+ on the anniversary of her birth.

In memory of +Mildred Predny Kessler+ on the anniversary of her death.

Jan 17th: In celebration of the 20th Anniversary of the Installation of Pastor Dennis at Sts. Peter and Paul on January 28th, 2001.

In memory of +Paul Predny+ on the anniversary of his birth.

News from Riverside Preschool at Sts. Peter and Paul

February is going to be a "sweet" month. We will be busy making crafts, celebrating Valentine's Day, and talking about Presidents' Day.

On our annual pajama day we will be watching a movie and eating some popcorn.

—Lisa Manganiello, Preschool Director

Thanks from the Parsonage

Thank you all for again remembering our family at Christmastime with your many cards and gifts. You are always so kind and thoughtful to think of us in this way at this time of year and it makes for a brighter, warmer Christmas in our home. As always, we cherish your love, support and encouragement throughout our years with you. We pray that the light of Jesus' presence will shine in your lives and guide your steps throughout the coming year.

—Pastor Dennis and Jane



A History of Saint Valentine's Day

Valentine's Day started in the time of the Roman Empire. In ancient Rome, February 14th was a holiday to honor Juno who was the Queen of the Roman gods and goddesses. The Romans also knew her as the goddess of women and marriage. The following day, February 15th, began the Feast of Lupercalia.

The lives of young boys and girls were strictly separate, however, one of the customs of the young people was name drawing. On the eve of the festival of Lupercalia the names of Roman girls were written on slips of paper and placed into jars. Each young man would draw a girl's name from the jar and would then be partners for the duration of the festival with the girl whom he chose. Sometimes the pairing of the children lasted an entire year, and often they would fall in love and would later marry.

Under the rule of Emperor Claudius II, Rome was involved in many bloody and unpopular campaigns. Claudius the Cruel was having a difficult time getting soldiers to join his military leagues. He believed that the reason was that Roman men did not want to leave their loves or families. As a result, Claudius canceled all marriages and engagements in Rome. The good Saint Valentine was a priest at Rome in the days of Claudius II. He and Saint Marius aided the Christian martyrs and secretly married couples, and for this kind deed Saint Valentine was apprehended and dragged before the Prefect of Rome who condemned him to death. He suffered martyrdom on the 14th day of February, about the year A.D. 270.

At that time it was the custom in Rome, a very ancient custom indeed, to celebrate in the month of February the Lupercalia, feasts in honor of a heathen god. On these occasions, as noted above, amidst a variety of pagan ceremonies, the names of young women were placed in a box, from which they were drawn by the men as chance directed.

The pastors of the early Christian Church in Rome endeavored to do away with the pagan element in these feasts by substituting the names of saints for those of maidens. And as the Lupercalia began about the middle of February, the pastors appear to have chosen Saint Valentine's Day for the celebration of this new feast. So it seems that the custom of young men choosing maidens for valentines, or saints as patrons for the coming year, arose in this way.