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# Agapegram

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March 2019



ETERNAL SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH

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## Luther's Eye on Christ

*"He is like a tree planted beside streams of water, which yields its fruit in season, and its leaves do not wither..."* Psalm 1:3 EHV

**Unlike some Lutheran Pastors, I don't have vast swaths of Luther quotes memorized; and, while I do reference Luther and his teachings where appropriate, I'm not one to drop his name in every single sermon. So, to keep up with the reformer, I've picked up a daily devotional book from Concordia Publishing House called *Martin Luther: Psalm by Psalm*. Reading Luther's**

commentary on the Psalms is an interesting experience that contrasts with both his own very practical explanations in the Large Catechism of how to keep the commandments in daily life and also with the typical bible commentary available today. Most commentaries (including the introductory notes before each book in your typical study bible) give lots of historic and analytic details. Explanations on author, audience, literary style, date and purpose for writing, and key themes abound in such **modern study aids. Luther's approach is both jarringly different and wonderfully Christ-centered.**

**Dear Martin's commentary on the verse from Psalm 1 listed above starts out with the assertion, "Leaves are words." To which claim, my immediate thoughts were, "Really? Why does he think that?"** Is that what the Psalmist is really trying to communicate to us? It seems more likely that the unwithering leaves are just one descriptive image to paint the picture of a healthy, well-watered tree. Does the imagery of leaves as words show up elsewhere in Scripture that I'm forgetting about? **Why haven't I heard this before?" Sometimes Luther drives my analytical mind a bit crazy.**

**While I don't think Holy Scripture has a highly developed theology on leaves and I'm not even sure that's what the Psalmist intended us to conclude, Luther is doing something different here. It's not** precise biblical analysis, but rather like a sermon illustration intended to turn our focus to Christ. Because Luther rightly understands Psalm 1 to point us to Jesus, as the ultimate Blessed Man, he just carries the analogy forward. Just as a tree puts forth leaves, the Lord puts forth His words. He then connects this thought to several other biblical teachings about eternal life found in the Gospel words of Christ (Jn.6:63); about the enduring nature of His saving Word (Mt. 24:35); and, then leads to a personal application of our own words in James 3:2 where he writes:

*Perfect as the man is who makes no mistake in a single leaf [word], more perfect is certainly he whose leaves are blooming and plentiful, but most perfect is he whose leaf does not fall off, who is worthy to have his thoughts and sayings deserve eternal remembrance and authority.*

**Luther shows us salvation in Christ alone; encourages us with God's Word that will never pass away; teaches us that our words should be pure like our Savior's and that our gracious words should overflow; and then, brings us full circle to turn our eyes back to Jesus Christ who is "most perfect" and our eternal Lord.**

**Luther rarely misses a chance to turn our focus to Jesus Christ. That's an approach to bible study worth developing.**

*"Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself."* Luke 24:27 EHV

*Pastor David*

## Finance Board

At our Sunday Voter's Meeting a question was asked about the outstanding amount of our mortgage that matures April 3, 2025. As of February 1, 2019 the church owes \$199,479 and at the meeting we approved additional principal payments from excess cash of \$24,000 for 2019. This amount plus 11 months of additional payments of approximately \$36,300 will reduce the balance owed at December 31, 2019 to \$139,179. If we continue the same monthly mortgage payments of about \$3,300 we will pay the mortgage off in July of 2023 with no balloon payment due. Should we continue to have excess cash and allocate a portion of it to principal payments we will become mortgage free even sooner. By utilizing this payment strategy the church has saved thousands of dollars in interest paid.

Another topic I am asked about regularly is featured in an advertisement on the back page of February's "Lutheran Witness". The ad is for IRA Rollovers, if you are 70 ½ or older, to Concordia Seminary, but the reasons/advantages of doing it also apply to IRA Rollovers to Eternal Shepherd Church. They are: Avoid taxes on all direct transfers of \$100,000 or less, satisfy some or all of your required minimum distribution (RMD) for the year, reduce your taxable income, even if you do not itemize deductions, it is a gift that is not subject to the deduction limits on charitable gifts, and use the rollover to make payments on an existing pledge.

Finally, we need at least two tabulator teams (2 people each) to assist in counting and recording our Sunday receipts. It can be husband and wife, or just two friends with a desire to assist the church. If you can write checks to pay your monthly bills, balance your check book, and reconcile your bank account you have the necessary skills to be a Tabulator. If interested contact Grover Stewart, Financial Secretary at (704) 603-7092, or by email at [gstewartjr@reagan.com](mailto:gstewartjr@reagan.com).

*Bob Massa*  
*Finance Board Chair*



Please remember to set your clocks ahead one hour before going to bed on **Sat. March 9th** as we Spring Ahead into Daylight Savings Time



## *Deaconess Musings*

### Where Did the Alleluias Go?

*Alleluia cannot always  
Be our song while here below;  
Alleluia, our transgressions  
Make us for a while forgo;  
For the solemn time is coming  
When our tears for sin must flow.  
~ Alleluia, Song of Gladness, LSB 417 verse 3*

The Church now enters the season of Lent, turning solemn, repentant eyes towards our sin. We take time to stop, draw back, and recognize the part we, all humanity, played in condemning Christ to the cross. Christ Jesus, God-Incarnate, was born into this world for this very purpose: death. This tremendous act of redemption calls the redeemed to reflect. Pause. And express penitential thankfulness to our Lord God.

Our sanctuary also bears the change of season: deep violet colors, more somber and introspective hymnody, and a glaring omission of the Alleluias from the liturgy.

Why omit the Alleluias? It is, at its core, a word of praise spoken, chanted, and sung by the people of God in response to our Lord and Savior. However, as mentioned above, the introspective nature of Lent calls us to forgo the joys of the Alleluias for a time. We purposefully and consciously refrain. The Church now moves in contemplation of the gravity of Christ's suffering and death to atone for our, your, my very sin. To wholly remove that endless chasm that would separate us from the love of our Creator.



While somber and pensive, the season of Lent never loses sight of the hope that is found in Jesus Christ and His cross. In its own restrained manner, Lent prepares us not only for the events of Holy Week and our Lord's Passion, but for the immensely joyful morning of Eastertide, when the Alleluias return in grand victory and triumph. After forty days of not singing or speaking them, on Easter Morning those Alleluias sound all the sweeter. But for now, soon to begin this journey through the Lenten season, we intentionally reflect and refrain, turning our faces toward the grandest celebration of the Church: our Savior's glorious Resurrection.

Blessed Lent to All.  
*Deaconess Holly*

## FROM THE BOARD OF STEWARDSHIP

### HAVE YOU THANKED GOD FOR YOU RECENTLY?

Have you sat back and contemplated exactly who you are and the magnificent way that God made you. Not just your God-given talents (either known or not yet discovered), but the very essence of who you are. If someone asked you to describe yourself, what would you say? Would you focus on your good points and forget your negatives? Would you focus on the external rather than the internal? Would you repeat what others may say about you? **Describing yourself is not a trivial challenge.**

What mirror do you use to evaluate yourself? The Ten Commandments? Fruits of the Spirit (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control)? Love your neighbor as yourself? Do you use the Bible as a guide or do you use society and society guidelines as your evaluator or a combination of both?

Take time to thank God for making you exactly as you are, thank Him for placing you at this time and place, thank Him for loved ones, ... thank Him for everything!

*For you created my innermost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb, I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Psalm 139:13, 14*

*Sue Hauser, Stewardship Board*

### ESLC Youth Adopt-A-Mile Fundraiser

Help us fly to Minneapolis, Minnesota

for the 2019 LCMS Youth Gathering.

**\$1.00 = 1 Mile**

**July 11-15, 2019** over 20,000 Lutheran Teens and Adult Leaders will gather in Minneapolis, Minnesota for the **2019 LCMS Youth Gathering!**

For more information or to make a donation please see the display board in the narthex or talk with Deaconess Lustila.



# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

On February 10th Eternal Shepherd held their first Congregational Meeting of the 2019 calendar year. Attendees voted unanimously to accept the Council's recommendation on how to use 2018 excess contributions. Additional funds (\$7,700) were allocated to the Haiti Missions School and for finalizing funds (\$9,659) needed to erect an illuminated ESLC sign on Highway 123.

I'd like to clarify and expound on the other two items receiving funds: Capital/Asset Replacement and Additional Mortgage Paydown:

- Prior to receiving additional funds our C.A Replacement Funds balance was \$65,000. Adding the additional \$23,800 brings the new balance for this fund to total ~\$89,000. The Finance Committee's target for this fund is \$100,000. Over the next 10 years we'll need to repair/replace our aging roof (~\$50,000), air conditioning systems (~\$35,000-\$70,000) and parking lot (~\$80,000-\$100,000). Given these additional funds, we are well positioned to address our long-term infrastructure when needed!
- Paying down the mortgage principle with the additional \$24,000 and contributing more against the principle in future monthly payments, we'll be paying off our mortgage in 2023 (2 years early); we'll be on target to save \$25,000 in interest for this loan. Clearly a wise use of God's blessings to ESLC. For additional loan details see Bob Massa's March Agapegram article.

Discussing church finances may not be the most interesting topic for many members; however, knowing we are good stewards of God's gifts will allow us to continue to fund Eternal Shepherd's targeted ministries today and into the future.

Thank you for approving these funds at our last congregational meeting!

*In His service,  
John Cochell*



## Oconee

Join Oconee Winds for our Spring Performance on **Sunday, March 10th at 3:00pm at the Walhalla High School Auditorium**. Come hear some colorful and playful pieces, like "Light Calvary Overture," and get ready for Spring! ESLC members playing in this concert include: Jacob Zirbel, percussion; Shannon Cox, trombone; and Deaconess Holly Lustila, clarinet. Hope to see you there!

# *Upcoming Lenten Services*



## *Ash Wednesday Worship Service*

*March 6th - 7:00 pm w/Communion*

## *Wednesday Night Lenten Worship Services*

*March 13th - 7:00 pm*

*March 20th - 7:00 pm*

*March 27nd - 7:00 pm*

*April 3rd - 7:00 pm*

*April 10th - 7:00 pm*

## *Lenten Meals at 5:45 pm—6:45 pm*

*March 13th hosted by the Honduras Mission Team*

*March 20th hosted by "The Crossing" Youth*

*March 27th hosted by the Alaska Mission Team*

*April 3rd hosted by "the Altar Care Committee*

## **Little Lambs Preschool Spaghetti Supper & Silent Auction Fundraiser**

**Saturday, March 2nd**

**4:00 - 6:00 pm Dinner at 5pm**

at

**Eternal Shepherd Lutheran Church**

**220 Carson Road Seneca, SC 29678**

**in the main Fellowship Hall**

**For Tickets or information  
contact Roberta Port, Gina Cote or  
any preschool board member**



# Real Love in a World Gone Astray

by Kerry Blount

What do we mean when we say God is love? What do we mean when we say that because God is love, Christians—those who seek to follow His Son—should strive to act and speak in loving ways to everyone? While Immanuel lived among us, did He interact with anyone out of any motivation but love? If we answer no, how do we fit events like forcibly cleansing the temple or shaming an indignant crowd into our understanding of His loving spirit?

Jesus' cleansing of the temple made the people He confronted angry; indeed, it very likely made them feel downright unloved. (*Matthew 21:12-13*) How could He be so cruel, many would say today. Yet Jesus loved them enough to call them to repentance by His powerful contrast of their actions with God's intent. Defrauding others in the name of religion is never a loving thing, He cries, both then and now. Would it have been love for Jesus to say to the money changers and animal vendors, "I know this is your livelihood and how things have been done in our culture for hundreds of years; but can't you try to keep the cheating to a reasonable level?"

Jesus' dealings with the crowd who brought a woman caught in the act of adultery made the crowd feel ashamed and apparently caused them to recognize their own sins. (*John 8:1-11*) How rude and alienating, many would say today. Would we prefer that Jesus had said, "You are right to judge this woman, but only I have the right to condemn her. Somebody hand me a stone." Or perhaps, "I'm so glad your love for the purity of Israel has brought you here; can't we let her off the hook just this one time?" Similarly, Jesus' words to the accused woman, however tenderly we want to interpret them today, demand that she turn away from the lifestyle that brought her to His feet. Can we imagine Jesus saying, "I know you're just a victim here. Go home and keep a low profile; otherwise you might be brought before someone less forgiving?"

The only way to comprehend Jesus' supremely loving approach in these two examples (and many others as well) is to understand that God's love transcends ours. His love is always at the furthest reaches of "*agape*" love—the highest form of love, which always seeks the greatest good for the one receiving the act of love. It's the love that calls every person to walk in the light rather than to skulk in darkness. It's the love He asks each Christian to cultivate with the help of the Holy Spirit, and then to display in our relationships with everyone we encounter, including unscrupulous businessmen, self-righteous crowds, or individuals addicted to sin.

Today, many elements of American society tell Christians that to suggest anyone should conform their attitudes and behavior to the pattern of thought and living taught by Jesus and His apostles is judgmental and unloving. In the examples of Jesus' supposedly "unloving" behavior above, we have no direct evidence in Scripture that anyone He confronted changed their behavior or attitudes. But the opportunity to turn from darkness to light was lovingly offered to each listening heart. If we allow ourselves to listen to the world's lies, that opportunity may soon cease to be offered, drowned in accusations that to offer abundant life is an unloving act.

No Scriptural example, including the examples above, gives anyone—and especially any Christian—the "right" to act or speak unlovingly to another. But the examples of God's uncompromising love point to a way of loving people that is deeper and richer than ignoring or acquiescing to beliefs and behaviors that are clearly at odds with His loving Word. As our brother Paul reminds us, *real love* never condones or delights in evil, but *always rejoices with the truth*. It is, indeed, the most excellent way. (*I Corinthians 12:31-13:13*)

## Welcome to Our Newest Members

### Welcome Fred Massa

Coming to us after 37 years in CT, both Massas were born & raised in PA. Fred recently retired from wkg for the state of CT, and moved here several weeks later. They'd bought their house in Keowee Key a year before moving. Upon deciding on this area to live, Fred asked his CT Pastor if he knew anything about ES & he in turn e'd Pastor Hammer who sent info on the church & worship practice which solidified his decision to join. Fred enjoys outdoor activities such as hiking, canoeing & camping, and was active in the Boy Scouts. Two children & one grandchild (son in IA, daughter in MA) In his previous church Fred served as a SS teacher; when he left there he was an Elder and on Church Council.. You will most likely meet Fred at the early service for he is an "early bird" - his final statement to this interviewer was "Just happy to be here!" We are too (c:



### Meet Dan Franzen

After 45 years as a furniture refinisher in Los Angeles, this Navy Vietnam veteran moved to Pickens with his wife Bonnie, from Phelan CA. Together they claim two daughters, two sons & four grandchildren (Easley & CA). Dan was educated in Lutheran schools. He is currently recovering from both heart surgery and a kidney removal! Welcome to ES, Dan, you are the man!



### Welcome to the Tyner's

Knowing that they wanted to live near water, Susan & Jon decided to check out Lutheran Churches before looking at property. They visited ESLC, liked the service & congregation, so began the two year process of finding property & building. Their former locations were MI, NJ & OH - Jon has an engineering & business background, recently retired. Susan's was in political science; she taught briefly before becoming full-time homemaker & volunteer. Their son lives in the Atlanta area with his wife & newborn Luke. Looking forward to enjoying water activities and hiking, they recover by practicing hot yoga. This couple has been active in many areas of the church through the years such as youth ministry, education & music. Welcome, Tyners!



*"He will feed His flock like a shepherd; He will gather the lambs with His arm,  
And carry them in His bosom," Isaiah 40:11a*

## Eternal Shepherd Family Hike

*Who:* The Eternal Shepherd Family: all ages welcome!

*What:* A visit to Devils Fork State Park to view the Oconee Bells in bloom.

*Where:* Meet in the Fellowship Hall after late service for a “picnic” lunch (bring your own sack lunch), then carpool to Devils Fork State Park.

*When:* Sunday, March 17; rain date: Sunday, March 24

*Why:* The rare Oconee Bell blooms during late March in a unique area of the Upstate. We will have the opportunity to go together to view this lovely phenomenon and give thanks to the Creator for his wondrous works!

*Cost:* Entry to Devils Fork is \$5.00 per adult; \$3.25 per senior (age 65+); \$3.00 per student 6-15 yr; no charge for children under 6 yr. Annual parking passes are available at the park, if preferred.



*Info:* The hiking trail to the most picturesque blooming section is an easy quarter mile on a well-maintained trail. We will pause there to enjoy the floral display and offer our prayers of thanksgiving for God’s abundant grace. Those who prefer will return to the parking lot on the same entry path. Those who wish to go on will continue on the 1 mile loop to view other smaller colonies of Oconee Bells and other woodland landscapes.

Participants who prefer may meet us at the park in the main parking lot of the Visitor Center at approximately 2:45 pm.

### **MISSION QUILTERS ---Quilting Day March 16**

We have several national holidays during the year that are well known, but did you know there is a national QUILTING DAY? Really there is. I say this to bring attention to the work the Mission Quilters do every second Tuesday of each month for the less fortunate in this world. There is a display on the bulletin board in the Narthex which shows where these quilts are sent. We would love to have you join our group—we are small but productive. No quilting experience is needed; as we mostly cut, combine, and sew our quilts by machine. Please join us; we can always use more hands to help do God’s work. Contact Marlene Bell at 864-710-8947



## Read how Operation Christmas Child changed an entire family through the gift of a soccer ball. God only asks for our obedience. He will do the rest!



### Soccer Ball Boosts Evangelism

Throwing a punch in a schoolyard fight nearly caused Ernesto to be expelled from school. It wasn't the first time that the pre-teen had gotten into trouble at his school in Mazatlán, Mexico. If one of the boys at school taunted him by taking his backpack, kicking him, or calling him names, Ernesto would strike back. "I wasn't fighting just to attract attention or get respect, I got into fighting because I felt alone," Ernesto recalled. "I felt sad because I was ashamed of the fighting, but that only caused me to fight more to push the sadness away." Ernesto didn't see an end to his sadness until friends told him about the hope and love of Jesus. Now Ernesto tells others about the great joy of following Him.

Playing soccer with friends in his neighborhood helped distract Ernesto from the trouble he was experiencing at school. Still able to see how miserable he was feeling, Christians within the group began talking with him about God and invited him to church.

Wanting to experience the peace of the Lord that he had been hearing about, Ernesto asked Jesus to be his Savior two weeks after starting to attend church. Two weeks after that, the new Christian received an Operation Christmas Child shoebox gift at the church. The shoebox contained a variety of school supplies, hygiene items, and toys—including a soccer ball with pump. Ernesto was thrilled to have his own ball. He also appreciated the school supplies because for many families the items are expensive, he said. "I was excited when I saw the school supplies in the gift because most of mine were broken or used up," Ernesto said. "They helped me improve my grades." His teacher recognized him as a top student as his grades continued to improve.

Not only did his shoebox's school supplies help him with his homework, the soccer ball would play a key part in Ernesto's discipleship as a new believer in Jesus Christ.

"Before, I wanted to be like other kids, to join in what they were doing and imitating them," Ernesto said. "Now, I stand apart and ask them to join me and my friends talking about Jesus while playing soccer."

As Ernesto participated in our follow-up discipleship program for shoebox recipients, The Greatest Journey, he learned more about how to follow Jesus and tell his family and friends about Him. Now 12, he still uses the ball he received in his shoebox gift as an avenue to talk with his peers about Jesus in between games at their local field.

"After we play soccer, my friends and I invite other kids to church to hear more about Jesus," Ernesto said. "We teach them that He is the best gift that people can get." Ernesto said that lessons he learned in The Greatest Journey three years ago continue to help him to talk with his family and friends about Jesus. "The Greatest Journey had a huge impact in my life because it has amazing stories of Jesus," Ernesto said. "It is where I got excited to learn about Him. Lesson by lesson, I was learning more about Jesus, to know He is real in my life. It is the best gift. Now, as God is helping me to grow, I can help others to grow and know about Jesus, too."

Being discipled to disciple others has made a lasting impact in Ernesto's family. This past year, Ernesto's mother Mirlanda put her faith in Jesus after being invited to church by Ernesto and her mother Alisia.

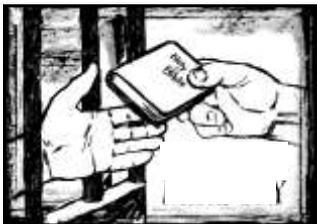
"I accepted Christ because of Ernesto's testimony," Mirlanda said. "I've heard and seen him pray with his grandmother. I went to church because of him. It has made a difference in my family and myself."

## Amid the turmoil in Haiti – the Gospel goes forth!



First – Pastor Walta and the entire staff of Pas Bonbon thank you, Eternal Shepherd, Seneca, for supporting the school's 2019-2020 budget. The school we started one year ago has 110 students today and registrations for 2019-2020 are going to be 300. We are building the funds to purchase Bibles and Luther's Small Catechism to cover the increase in students as well as their families. This also includes the new church, Rocky Road Lutheran. February has been very traumatic in Haiti, with riots, travel bans, lack of food, closed schools, and no jobs. Pastor Walta reported on February 17, 2019 "We are so blessed. All our employees in the school are members in our church, singing in our choir, and studying in our seminary". School is open, and the children have class and a meal each day. In addition, the Board of Evangelization of the Central Plateau continue to evangelize. The pictures above are in Maissade (nan Tidjo) which is a new preaching station 13 km from Pas Bonbon. Today, there are 6 churches and 4 preaching stations in the Central Plateau. All of this started by Pastor Walta after the earthquake of 2010. The three churches that we at Eternal Shepherd are involved in are Pas Bonbon- 190 members; Laotchikit – 507 members; Rocky Road – 143 members. All of these churches and schools are in fellowship with the LCMS. Today, there are approximately 1,000 Lutherans in the Central Plateau. We are praying to have at least 12 churches, 8 schools with 5,000 members before January 2023. Our investments in time and money so far have resulted in so much more than you can imagine. Want to learn more. Contact Lars Helland.

### DETENTION CENTER OUTREACH MINISTRY:



**Saturday, March 9th** ESLC is planning a visit to the Men's and the Women's sides of the Detention Center in Walhalla. **We will need cookies for this ministry** (30 baggies with regular cookies – 4 cookies to a bag). These cookies are a small way of sharing God's love and are much appreciated by those who receive the goodies. **We will meet at ESLC Sat., March 9th at 10:00 AM** for logistics & prayer and then on to the Center to make our 11:00 AM appointment. *Thank you for your support of this ministry.* Questions, contact Cecil Murray and **cookie angels please contact Elaine Grotheer. The sign up sheet is on the bulletin board.**



## MISSION NEWS

**Honduras Mission News:** As I write this we have just finished packing our trunks and are about the final preparations for our mission to Honduras. When you receive this we will be just beginning our week of serving the people of Honduras. As you worship this Sunday we will be at worship in one of the churches where we will hold our brigades this week. It will not be worship as we Lutherans are used to but we will have lots of singing (very loud) and lots of preaching (long sermons) and lots of praying (this is good). And that is worship Honduran style. There are warm welcomes when we arrive and when we leave and lots of interaction with the church community. We may not understand everything that is said but there is always the translation of the sermon so we get the idea. Even though we may not understand it all the presence of the Holy Spirit is felt in the love that is shared among everyone gathered there for worship. Thank you for everything that you have done to make this mission possible. We will have a report for everyone when we return.

*Que Dios te bendiga, (May God bless you), Your Honduras Mission Team*

## Update on our Mission support in Sierra Leone.

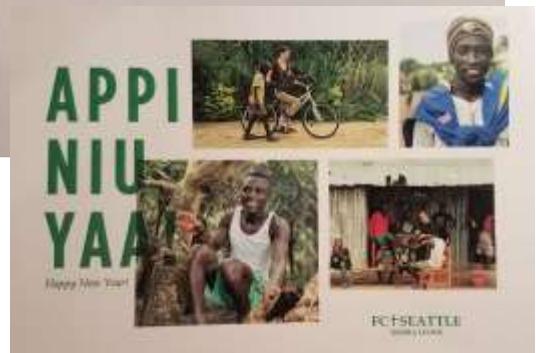
### **BOCU, BOCU TENKI!**

Thank you so much for your faithful support of the ongoing orphan care, soccer club and discipleship in Sierra Leone!

Your help this year has made an impact in many lives. It gave orphans a safe home and more rigorous school environment. The kids are blossoming and most are doing better in school with marked improvement in English. It also made it possible for our soccer and church-related activities to continue. 'We fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal' 2 Corinthians 4:18. Thank you for your commitment to press on toward eternity together.

*With love, Eric, Becky, Jen, Terri, Lisa  
and the whole FC Seattle SL Team*

**For more information  
contact Elisabeth Baker  
or Lars Helland.**



## *Comfort Dog News*

In case you haven't heard the news yet, our very own Comfort Dog will be arriving at Eternal Shepherd mid April! Handlers and caregivers will be attending training in Northbrook, IL on April 9-12 and will be bringing the dog back to Seneca at that time. And if all goes according to plan, the dog will be available to greet everyone on Palm Sunday! **On May 5th at the late service, there will be a "Passing of the Vest" ceremony where the dog, handlers and ministry partners will be commissioned to begin ministry in our church, community and wherever God calls us.**

This is an exciting time for Eternal Shepherd! Not only will we be adding a new member to our church family but ministry opportunities will be opening up for us in the community *to share the mercy, compassion, presence and proclamation of Jesus Christ to those suffering or in need.* (LCC Mission statement)

Amidst all the excitement, there is still a lot of work to be done. Eight handlers and two caregivers are already in place but we need Ministry Partners to complete the team. Therefore, on March 17 after late service in Room 300, there will be a Ministry Partner meeting. What is a Ministry Partner (MP) and what is their role? A MP accompanies a handler and the dog to events or visits. A MP may also have the opportunity to pray for someone in need. In addition, there are other areas of service a MP can help with such as publicity, fund raising, providing baked goods and handling correspondence. At this point and because we are so close to getting the dog, we are looking for a level of commitment for those interested in the MP role. Further, a MP will need to undergo a background check, have a team shirt ordered and decide which areas of interest they will serve in. If you are not sure yet, but think you might want to be a Ministry Partner, please attend this meeting to learn more about it and to discern God's will for you.

Lastly, many of you have asked me questions about the dog, and here are some of the most common questions...

*What is the dog's name and sex?* We don't know yet but this will be revealed when we go to Northbrook in April.

*What does the dog look like?* It is a golden retriever, but could have golden, white, or reddish coloring.

*Is this a therapy dog?* No, it is a vested working dog that knows ~35 commands and works with a trained handler.

*Is this the church's pet?* No, it is a dog trained to do ministry with people in need.

*Can we pet and love the dog?* Yes by all means! The dog's vest says, "Please Pet Me"

*Still have questions?* Just ask me anytime!

Thank you for your prayers, encouragement and financial support over the last couple of years. This has been a long road but one that God has led us every step of the way. Please pray for this ministry and those involved as we are all stepping out in faith into a completely new and exciting ministry. *Kyra Carbone, Top Dog, 864-932-8308 or topdogeslc@outlook.com*

## Welcome our new Comfort Dog With a Shower of Blessings!



**March 3rd—24th**

Take one of the dog bone gift suggestions at the “Comfort Dog Shower Table” in the Narthex, and shop for a doggie welcome gift.



*"Comfort, comfort my people, says your God"  
- Isaiah 40:1*

## Hospitality Happenings for March

**March late service schedule:**

**3/3 - Tracy Cochell**

**3/10 - Ann Cochell**

**3/17 - Jill Roeder**

**3/24 - Janet Moriarty & Betty Terry**

**3/31 - Sue Williams**



Thinking about joining the hospitality board? Please see myself or Marlene Bell with any questions. *In his service, Sue Williams*

**FOOD BANK NEWS:** Please help us in collecting preferred needed canned, or boxed grocery items each month. These items will help restock the Golden Corner Food Pantry's shelves. **March's** preferred product is "**Canned Tuna**". Please place items in one of the trash cans marked Food Bank down by the main Fellowship Hall. *~Thank you for your generosity and support.*



**THE FLOWER CHART** is hanging on the bulletin board in the Narthex. There is also an eye-catching, yellow information sheet above the calendar which will answer any questions you have about how it all works. Please check it out and feel free to sign up on any of the Sundays listed through the end of the year. *Thank you!*



**Greeting Cards**— Birthday! Get Well! Encouragement! Praying for You! Sympathy! Thinking of You! Cancer/Difficult Times! Anniversary! Baptism! Thanksgiving! Christmas! Please be sure to check out the cart in the Fellowship Hall. They are still \$.50 a card and \$5.00 for a whole box. *Thank you for your support.*

## **SCRIP CARDS**

Please remember that **Scrip cards make great gifts and earn money for Eternal Shepherd at the same time.** Please see your scrip ladies today or pick up an order form located by the Scrip box in the narthex. *~Thank you for your support.*



## SPECIAL GIFTS/MEMORIALS



### **In *January* the following gifts were given:**

In loving memory of *Shirley Eckersley*  
the Elders Fund received a gift of \$50.00

In loving memory of *Evelyn Fredrickson*  
the WES Fund received a gift of \$40.00

In loving memory of *Bill Richards*  
the Choir Fund received a gift of \$75.00

In loving memory of *June Schultz*  
the Choir Fund received gifts of \$100.00  
and the Food Bank Fund received gifts of \$50.00

### Other Gifts:

The Capital Campaign Building Fund received gifts of \$30.00

The Comfort Dog Ministry Fund received gifts of \$140.00

The Elders Fund received a gift of \$100.00

The Food Bank Fund received a gift of \$25.00

The General Fund received a gift of \$3,000.00 from a Schwab Charitable Fund

The Haiti Missions Fund received a gift of \$1,000.00

The Honduras Mission Fund received gifts of \$98.00  
and the Helping Hands for Honduras Fund received a gift of \$20.00

The Little Lambs Preschool Fund received a gift of \$1,000.00  
from a Schwab Charitable Fund

The Lutheran Witness Magazine Fund received gifts of \$305.00

The Mission Quilt Sewers Fund received a gift of \$25.00

The Toys for God's Kids Fund received a gift of \$200.00

The Youth Convention Adopt-A-Mile Fund received gifts of \$435.00

# Little Lambs Tales

*"See! The winter is past; the rains are over and gone. Flowers appear on the earth; the season of singing has come, the cooing of doves is heard in our land."*

*Song of Solomon 2:11-12*

As we finish out our cold winter season and enter into the season of Spring, we are renewed and refreshed; reveling in the warmer temperatures and the beginnings of Spring-time. It is a time of teaching God's awesome power and glory in all of His creation. We begin the month of March with our annual visit from Dr. John our dentist on March 1<sup>st</sup>. We all enjoy this special visit because not only do the children learn about dental hygiene but Dr. John is also a "magician" who loves performing all sorts of fun magic tricks to entertain while teaching our young children.

The following evening we will all gather as one community (church and school) for our annual Spaghetti Supper and Auction! We anticipate a wonderful community event where we have the opportunity to eat a delicious meal and bid on some great auction items! On March 8th we will be holding our Parent's Night Out. We give this free night of babysitting to our parents because we know how difficult it is to get away as a couple when raising young children. Our families will be dropping their children off in the big playroom at 5:00pm and picking them up at 7:00pm.

We will be discussing Fire Safety on March 13<sup>th</sup>. Our local firemen will come to the Preschool to teach the children about fire safety and what to do in times of emergency. Not only will they teach the children but they will arrive in their big red fire truck! The children will be able to have a close up tour of it and even have the opportunity to climb in it and explore!

A few days later we celebrate St. Patrick's Day. We will wear green and teach our children about this Christian holiday. The significance of the shamrock representing the Holy Trinity will also be discovered as they learn about this day. We may even have some fun as the Leprechauns come into the classroom to create a little mischief!

All of us at Little Lambs Preschool thank you for your continued support and prayers for this ministry of our church. We continue to thank God for giving us the opportunity to care and love these beautiful children and watch them grow in their relationship with the Lord.



*~Blessings to you and your families!  
Gina*



## **SERVICE TIMES**

8:30 a.m. Worship Service  
(Communion 2nd & 4th Sundays)

9:45 a.m. Sunday School  
& Adult Bible Study

11:00 a.m. Worship Service  
(Communion 1st & 3rd Sundays)



## **THOSE WHO SERVE**

Pastor: David Hammer  
Deaconess: Holly Lustila  
Secretary: Celeste Entrekin  
Preschool Director: Gina Cote  
Choir Director: Rick Schmidt  
Choir Accompanist: Michelle Rowland  
Organist: David Phillips

## **MISSIONARIES**

Joanna Johnson, Taiwan  
Nate Esala, Lutheran Bible Translators  
David & Dr. Arianna Shirk, Kenya  
S.E.D. Missionaries to Peru

Eternal Shepherd Lutheran Church  
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