

# GE + HSEMANE

## LUTHERAN CHURCH

News from 4040 N. 108<sup>th</sup> Street, Omaha, NE 68164

March, 2017



## Power of the Gospel

**I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes. Romans 1:16**

Crucifixion was a most shameful way to die. The condemned individual was stripped of both clothing and dignity, nailed to a wooden cross, and left there to die slowly over the course of hours or days. It was an execution reserved for only the very worst of criminals.

With all this in mind, you might expect the early Christians to have been ashamed or even embarrassed about what had happened to Jesus. Instead, from the very beginning, the message of Jesus' suffering and death on the cross has been at the heart and core of Christianity.

As he addresses a group of Christians in Rome, the apostle Paul even calls Jesus' suffering and death "the gospel," which means "good news!" He writes, "I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes."

How could Paul and other Christians be so positive about the shameful death of Jesus? The answer is that by Jesus' death, God was accomplishing something wonderful for all people.

The prophet Isaiah put it like this: "He was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed." The reason Jesus died that shameful death on the cross was to take away all our sins—our lust, pride, selfishness and greed...every cruel word we have said to hurt other people...every wicked action for which we are ashamed and wish we could take back. All these sins, for which we deserve to be punished, were placed on Jesus and he took the punishment in our place.

Jesus' suffering and death on the cross means that we are saved from God's punishment for our sins. It means that relying on Jesus as our Savior we can look forward to eternal life in heaven that our Savior has prepared for us.

Thank God for the message of the gospel, "the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes." Powerful enough to wash away our sins. Powerful enough to bring us home to heaven one day. Powerful enough, and important enough, for us to rely on Jesus alone for salvation.

## GALATIANS



### BIBLE STUDY

## SUPPORT OF THE BIG WIGS

Galatians 2:6-10

As for those who seemed to be important -- whatever they were makes no difference to me; God does not judge by external appearance -- those men added nothing to my message. On the contrary, they saw that I had been entrusted with the task of preaching the gospel to the Gentiles, just as Peter had been to the Jews. For God, who

was at work in the ministry of Peter as an apostle to the Jews, was also at work in my ministry as an apostle to the Gentiles. James, Peter, and John, those reputed to be pillars, gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship when they recognized the grace given to me. They agreed that we should go to the Gentiles, and they to the Jews. All they asked was that we should continue to remember the poor, the very thing I was eager to do.

While it was all well and good that the “Big Wigs” (the so-called “recognized” apostles) had accepted Paul as an equal co-worker in the public ministry of the Gospel and as an apostle directly called and sent out by Christ, Paul said that this approval was not what mattered to him. What mattered to him was that God approved of the message that he had been proclaiming.

Paul had his apostolic authority because God had called him to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles. He didn't have apostolic authority because of a handshake from someone in Jerusalem or because of some verbalized ministry plan. While Paul was grateful for the blessings of Christian fellowship and while Paul saw the value of defining specific areas of ministry (to the Jews and to the Gentiles), Paul is trying to get the point across that he would still be doing what he was doing (and have the authority to do that) even if people like Peter and John did not exist. His ministry did not depend on them. It depended on the Holy Spirit who would work through his message.

To the weak in Galatia who were beginning to be influenced by the false teachers who were attacking Paul, his apostleship, and his message, these verses would have reminded them how foolish they had been to ever doubt what they had been originally taught. As Paul goes on in this chapter, it will be important to keep in mind that he is not being arrogant or proud. The integrity of the Gospel was at stake. We can thank the Holy Spirit for inspiring Paul to speak so confidently. As we read these words and as we read the Gospel of Jesus, the Holy Spirit wipes away all doubt and assures us that we are saved purely by God's grace alone.

**PRAYER:** *I thank you, Lord Jesus Christ, for faithful pastors and teachers who clearly and confidently proclaim your Word of truth. Amen.*



Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The GLS school year reaches three-fourths of the way on March 16. It is amazing that we have come this far. Assumptive that Gethsemane has always run a school year on quarters (rather than just semesters or trimesters), that make 275 quarters of school in our school's history. It is amazing that we have come this far. Last week we had an alum come back for a brief visit. I was explaining to her what we had going on and what we had coming up. She was surprised to hear about all the changes in the few

short years since she attended GLS. It is amazing that we have come this far.

GLS is blessed with continued support from church and community to allow us to do what we do - Gospel ministry combined with elementary education. We thank you for all of your support. We ask for continued prayers as well as any time or talents that you can offer. Please let friends and neighbors know about us. Please share any pertinent information you see coming out of school and church regarding GLS. Join our Facebook page followers and share posts related to our school.

God is so good, and Jesus is the answer. We look forward to our final quarter and the preparations that are on-going for 2017-18 (GLS's 70<sup>TH</sup> year of operation).  
Praise be to God!

Mr. Pederson

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GLS has started our early registration process. Current families received an email on February 1 to "re-up" for next year. Existing families should be able to add new attendees easily to their existing accounts. We held our Kindergarten Round Up on February 16. Six families attended with two being from the community. We are thankful! Next year's calendar and tuition numbers have been set. Coming back from our Winter/Spring/Basketball Break (February 24-March 5), families will receive a good deal of information regarding next year.

Please contact Mr. Schmidt (or any School Board members) or Mr. Pederson with any questions.

# OWLS

(ORGANIZATION OF WELS LUTHERAN SENIORS)



The February meeting was held at Gethsemane. Speaker, Dr. Mark Christian, converted Christian, spoke to 90 attendees including members and visitors prior to the chapter meeting focusing on Islam and his now Christian faith. Dr. Christian answered questions regarding the Muslim religion and impact on our country and our community. Dr. Christian was in front of the crowd for nearly two hours, and nobody was bored! A free will donation of nearly \$400 was collected for Dr. Christian and support of the Global Faith Initiative that he has founded to educate America about the nature of Islam. OWLS members provided refreshments at the conclusion of the meeting. Dr. Christian remained for awhile and made himself available for individual discussions. Plans are to have a recording available on our YouTube channel for those interested but unable to attend. Also, for more information on Dr. Christian's efforts go to [www.globalfaith.org](http://www.globalfaith.org). Thanks to all those that took the time to attend this event on a beautiful afternoon in Omaha!

Dick V called the meeting to order with eighteen members present along with two visitors. We are pleased that Kathy P has rejoined the OWLS team.

#### Upcoming events discussed:

- Sandhill Cranes, Friday March 17 at 8:00 a.m. Meeting at Gethsemane. Contact the church office if you will be attending. A schedule for this event is posted on the OWLS' bulletin board out and reviewed. We have folks who have volunteered to drive.
- Pathfinders, March 25 at 2:00 p.m. lunch prior (location to be arranged). Tickets are \$13.
- Tentative plans are to have the April 9 meeting at Durham museum.
- Memorial Day at Omaha's Memorial Park, May 29 (Monday) around 11:00 a.m. Exact time will be determined. Meeting and lunch after is at Beacon Hills in Aksarben Village. Because of limited parking, it may be necessary congregate and share rides.

#### Visitors are welcome contact Dick or Sandy if you are interested in coming.

Dick will be attending the National OWLS board meeting on April 10<sup>th</sup> and will be taking member recommendations including input on the National OWLS Bylaws.

Richard V, President

# LWMS

(LUTHERAN WOMEN'S MISSIONARY SOCIETY)  
"Go to Dark Gethsemane"

Save the date! The Spring LWMS Rally will be held at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Omaha on Saturday, April 22<sup>nd</sup>. The rally will begin at 9:00 a.m. The speaker is yet to be determined, due to the speaker accepting a recent Call. So....stay tuned for details when they become available.

Unfortunately, I am still waiting for information regarding the new Befriend a Missionaries. I was hoping to have information to share with you by this time! Look for ways that we, as a congregation, can show our support to them with our offerings and gifts.

I contacted the CAMM (Central African Medical Mission) coordinator regarding the current needs in Africa. At this time, pill bottles are not needed! So, I will keep the pill bottles that have been donated until they are ready for more. ☺

Want to take a trip to Florida? This summer is your chance! The 54<sup>th</sup> Annual LWMS Convention will be held in Orlando, Florida, June 22<sup>nd</sup>-25<sup>th</sup>, 2017! Our NE-IA Circuit has a Send One Sister program, and will give money towards one lady in our circuit who would like to attend her first convention! If you are thinking about attending your first convention, let me know! I would love to connect you to the Send One Sister program!

### March Prayer Requests

- Our new Befriend a Missionaries
- The work being done in India
- The work being done on the Apache Reservation.

*Leslie B  
-Reporter*



# NELHS

(NEBRASKA EV. LUTHERAN HIGH SCHOOL)

- Extra-curricular update:
  - Boys' basketball: Varsity is 18-6 and continues to be ranked as the 10<sup>th</sup> best team in class D-1. The 2016-2017 team set the season record for wins in a season with their victory over Osceola in sub-district play.
  - Girls' basketball: Varsity finished their season at 9-12 with a loss to Fullerton in subdistricts.
  - The NELHS Quiz Bowl team traveled to Dorchester to participate in the Crossroads Conference Quiz Bowl Competition on February 15 and took home first place.
  - The NELHS speech team took home the Class D first place trophy at the Crete Speech Meet on February 4.
- Call News
  - Pastor Haakenson has returned the call to teach Spanish at Michigan Lutheran Seminary and will remain working with our families here at Nebraska Lutheran.
- Upcoming events:
  - **Knight Out:** Please join us for this night of fellowship and fundraising at the German American Society in Omaha on Saturday, March 11. Contact Twila Fickel

([tfickel@nelhs.org](mailto:tfickel@nelhs.org)) for more information about this night. We are also seeking businesses and individuals to sponsor this night.

- The bi-annual **association meeting** will be on Sunday, March 12, at 4 p.m. at NELHS.
  - The **All Sport Camp** for elementary students in grades 5-9 will run June 11-14. Contact Mark Otte at [lotte@nelhs.org](mailto:lotte@nelhs.org) if you would like registration information.
- **“This is Our School” Campaign**

Overview: NELHS continues to be blessed in many ways and is poised to significantly grow during the next several years. A final step to position NELHS for growth is to increase the regular support that NELHS receives from individuals to support its people and programs every year.

Goal: Have over 100 families and individuals to make Nebraska Lutheran “Their School” and sign up for monthly donations to support the operating budget.

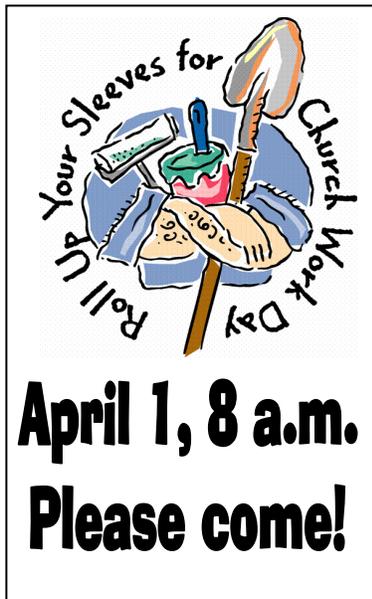
How: Go to the NELHS website ([www.nelhs.org](http://www.nelhs.org)), click on “Support NELHS” and follow the directions to have an amount (\$5, \$10, \$20, \$50, \$100,...) monthly withdrawn from your bank account or credit card.

By many of us making Nebraska Lutheran “Our School,” we can dramatically change the financial health of our school and enable it to continue to grow.

As of today, we have **14 donors** supporting our school monthly with **\$1,200** for a total of **\$14,400** a year. Please pray about this and consider making Nebraska Lutheran your school by supporting it with a monthly donation.
  - **Recruitment:** Our goal is 40 new students for next year. So far **20** have applied (18 freshmen, 1 sophomore, and 1 senior). If you know of a family whom we can contact to tell about our ministry, please let Administrator Mark Otte know at [lotte@nelhs.org](mailto:lotte@nelhs.org) or call 402-728-5236. Keep praying!

*Mark Otte, Administrator*

## DEACONS



A congregation-wide clean-up day will take place on Saturday, April 1. This is the day that we clean the cobwebs, give the windows a good washing, deep clean the restrooms and wash light fixtures and vents, amongst other things. Please plan to help out! Many hands make lighter work. We'll start at 8 a.m.

The latest challenge in upkeep has been the parking lot lighting. The east light has burned out. We are obtaining estimates for replacement and possibly the installation of LED lighting. Our hope is to have this fixed before Ash Wednesday services.

The new “short throw” projector has been installed in the fellowship hall as well as a new screen. The project will be completed when the electrician can come to finish. Our goal is to have this done during spring break so the work doesn't disrupt the classrooms during school.

We appreciate everyone's help in picking up trash, if you come across it. If you see something that needs to be repaired, please let the church office know. Thank you for helping us to keep the property in ship shape!

# DISCIPLESHIP



Sunday School starts each week at 9:15 a.m. Please help your child to be on time and attend as often as possible. We carefully prepare lessons each week and look forward to sharing God's word with as many students as possible.

We can sing more songs if we start on time. We like action songs so we can move around before going to our classrooms.

Preschool through 6<sup>th</sup> grade will meet in the sanctuary from 9:15 to 9:30 for the opening, offering, and songs and then will proceed with their teacher to their classrooms for their lessons. The 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade class starts right away; they meet in Mr. Zimmermann's room. High school students meet in the church basement.

March lessons for Preschool-6<sup>th</sup> Grade:

5 - The Unforgiving Servant

12 - The Ten Lepers

19 - Jesus Visits Mary and Martha

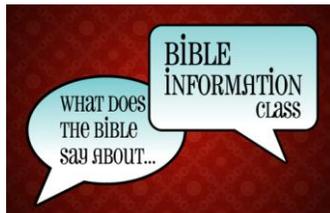
26 - The Parable of the Rich Man and Poor Lazarus

A big thank you to all our teachers, helpers and substitutes who put in time, talents, and resources to have lessons and activities planned for their classes.

*Nickie L  
Sunday School Coordinator*

## NEW BIBLE INFORMATION CLASS

Pastor Koester will be starting a new series of Bible Information Classes on Monday, February 27 at 7:00 p.m.



This is a great chance to review the basic teachings of the Bible and what we believe as confessional Lutherans.

Perhaps with the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation coming up in October, this would be a great way to celebrate that historic event and to thank God for restoring the right teachings of "Grace Alone, Faith Alone, Scripture Alone."

This is also a great opportunity to invite a friend or family member who has questions about God and his Word or who is looking for a church home to come and hear what God says about this and that. Consider whom you might invite, ask them to go, and then come with them!

## STEWARDSHIP

- The Stewardship Board wants to make all members who are Thrivent Policy holders aware that they are able to apply for a Thrivent Action Card. It is a \$250 debit card that can be used towards a charitable activity. These cards have already been used to provide the food for the Tuition Assistance Dinner that was held in February and would also work for other church activities. If you are a Thrivent member and would like more information or help getting the process started, please contact a member of the Stewardship board for assistance.
- There are no Lenten dinners planned for this year. The Stewardship Board would like to know what people's thoughts are and if this is something that should be brought back in the future.

- Dates for the annual 3-on-3 Basketball Tournament/Open Gym will be announced soon. Keep an eye out!



Book Club will be meeting on Tuesday, March 28<sup>th</sup> at 7 p.m. and will be hosted by Dawn B (please see our church directory for her address). We will be discussing **Comfort & Joy** by Kristin Hannah.

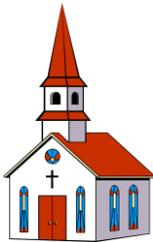
At the time of this printing, we have not yet met for our February (28<sup>th</sup>) discussion of **The Longest Ride** by Nicholas Sparks (hosted by Liz K). So if you are reading this prior to February 28<sup>th</sup>, please feel free to join us for this discussion as well!!!

Additionally - please note that our last meeting of our "book club year" will be April 25<sup>th</sup> (hosted by Sharon B) and we will be reading **The Magnolia Story** by Chip and Joanna Gaines rather than the book originally noted. So.....this is your heads up for planning purposes!!!

We look forward to having you join us for some great discussion as well as fellowship soon!!

We look forward to having you join us for some great

*Becky G*



## VACANCY CALL NEWS

The saints at Good Shepherd met on February 12<sup>th</sup> and chose to extend a Divine Call to Rev. Don Schultz of Lakeside Lutheran High School of Lake Mills, WI. Please keep Pastor Schultz and our brothers and sisters in Christ in your prayers. Pastor Helwig will continue to serve as the vacancy pastor for Good Shepherd until the Lord of the Church provides them with a new pastor. We pray that this will be soon.



Spring your clocks **ahead** one hour before you go to bed on Saturday, March 11<sup>th</sup>!