

FIRST Impressions

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A Publication of First Lutheran Church • Birmingham, AL

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First Lutheran Church

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[View our Church Calendar](#)



Pastor's Pen This is Living

Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and whoever lives and believes in me shall never die." - John 11:25-26

We get confused about the word life. "That's life" often means, "Too bad, that's the way it is." Or we might say, "What a life" meaning, "This is wonderful." We all value life. We hold onto it as long as we can, and we mourn its loss. Sometimes we are under the mistaken idea that life consists of who we are, what we have, what we do, and whom we know. If those are our thoughts, then these words of Jesus make no sense.

Continued on page 2

Local Events

Saturdays: Pepper Place Market; www.pepperplacemarket.com

Through 6/25: Light Play, Birmingham Museum of Art;
www.artsbma.org

3/31 - 4/16: *Bright Star*, Red Mountain Theatre;
www.redmountaintheatre.org

4/2: Three on a String in concert, Lyric Theatre; www.lyricbham.com

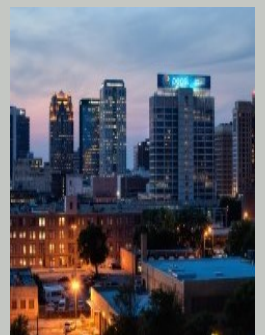
4/15: Spring Cahabaque, Cahaba Brewing Company; www.cahababrewing.com

4/15: REO Speedwagon in concert, Lyric Theatre; www.lyricbham.com

4/21: Smokey Robinson in concert, Alys Stephens Center; www.alysstephens.org

4/21 & 4/23: Opera Birmingham presents *Hansel & Gretel*, Dorothy Jemison Day Theater;
www.operabirmingham.org

4/30: Jewish Food & Culture Fest, Levite Jewish Community Center; www.bhamjcc.org



(cont'd from p. 1)

Earlier in this Gospel he told his disciples, “I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly” (John 10:10). He was speaking to people who were full of physical life. So obviously he meant something else when he used the word.

Jesus, in claiming to be the source of life, is talking about another kind of life. It is not limited to tangible or physical things, but rather to those defined by the spirit. There is an eternal or spiritual life that we can live while we are continuing to live in this present world. That kind of life comes from a close relationship with the source of life - Jesus. It can be described by its qualities - inner peace, honesty, hope and expectancy, a sense of the constant presence of God, direction and purpose, fulfillment, contentment, joy.

While telling Mary and Martha that their brother would physically rise from the dead, even more important, he was offering spiritual life to them.

Lent is a time for Christians to see how sin has made our earthly life empty and shallow. Holy Week reveals the depth of God’s love as he ransoms us from our lives to give us his life. Easter is our celebration of God’s gift of new life.

This month as we continue Lent may it lead us through the awe of Holy Week to the shout of Easter “THIS IS LIVING!”

Prayer: Lord Jesus, I receive your offer of life. Fill me with your life today. Amen.

In His Peace,
Pastor Schultz



**Join us for breakfast on
Easter Sunday at 8:30 a.m.
in the Fellowship Hall**

From the President Faith and Deeds

Recently I was asked to define what needs the church has physically and to develop a list of projects that members of the church could complete. The request came from someone that I respect greatly and who is very involved. They were seeking information so that they could assist with a church priority. The first things that came to mind were all oriented about the upkeep of a seventy year old building – things that we all can see. These included removing flaking paint and painting walls, cleaning overlooked areas, replacing missing floor tiles, cleaning out flower beds, blowing leaves from the parking lot, cutting weeds on the hillside, etc. Then I thought of things that are not related to the physical upkeep of the church but relate to the administration of the church and doing things “in good order.” These included producing bulletins for the worship service, keeping up church records, preparing the sanctuary for weekly worship, communication to our members and the community (live stream, bulletin boards, newsletter, signage, etc.) just to mention a few things.

As I thought about all the opportunities that we have to serve our God, I realized that our congregation is very involved. It has been my experience that Lutherans are very humble people. We are taught that our faith is demonstrated through our deeds and that one should be discrete in what we do in the service to God (the left hand not knowing what the right hand is doing). I have witnessed this in our church on an almost-daily basis. As president of the congregation, I would like to publicly recognize people for the things that they do, but I know that if I did they would not be pleased. The people are doing these deeds to show their love of the Lord and that they want our Father to see their deeds in secret so that He will reward them in heaven. I also recognize that I do not know everything that people do and I do not want to recognize the ones that I see or know of and not recognize those who are working humbly in an unseen way.

We are blessed by God to be in this place and worshiping through our deeds and actions. I will post a list of “things” that need to be accomplished around the church but will also post a list of “opportunities” to serve in the church.

Thank you for your service to the Lord. Thank you for affirming my faith. I continue to look forward to seeing where God is taking us.

In His humble service,

Glen Thompson
Congregational President

Worship Ministry

God's Love for the World

“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in shall not perish but have eternal life.” - John 3:16 (NIV)

As Christians prepare to celebrate Easter, many things in the life of our Lord Jesus Christ are recalled. We are witnesses to God's love for humankind through His only Son Jesus Christ and the promises He made to the world. The apostle John says, “This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.” He gives his one and only Son to the world because he loved the world he created, even though we as the crown of his creation had gone bad and ruined it all. He sends his one and only Son into the world because of his love and his plan for our salvation. God loved the world and excluded no one.

God loves us in such a way that it is not easily understood. Many Christians refer to God's love by its Greek name, agape. This kind of love is more than a feeling; it's a resolve, it is steadfast. It doesn't base its action on how likeable or worthy the subject is; it acts in the interest of its subject. God's love brought results. He gave his one and only Son for the cross and the world's salvation. In fact, Jesus repeated what God's gift meant, “Whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.” Faith saves, but not just any faith – but faith in the Son of God. Those that believe in Him “shall not perish.”

Although we enjoy life with Jesus now, we will know life in full glory after death as believer.

Jesus came to fulfill the Father's will and secure eternal life for all people. He brings about a new birth. Believe and live. Jesus' resurrection is proof that in him and what he did, God accomplished for us what we could never hope to do on our own – overcome sin and death and make us fit for heaven in his present.

In His Peace,
Charles Craig
Worship Ministry Chair

Called to Serve and Celebrate Ministry Easter Joy

Easter Joy

*Jesus came to earth,
To show us how to live,
How to put others first,
How to love and how to give.*

*Then He set about His work,
That God sent Him to do;
He took our punishment on Himself;
He made us clean and new.*

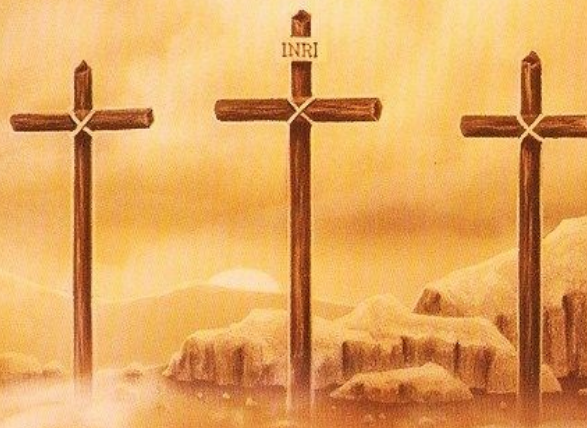
*He could have saved Himself,
Calling angels from above,
But He chose to pay our price for sin;
He paid it out of love.*

*Our Lord died on Good Friday,
But the cross did not destroy
His resurrection on Easter morn
That fills our hearts with joy.*

*Now we know our earthly death,
Like His, is just a rest.
We'll be forever with Him
In heaven, where life is best.*

*So we live our lives for Jesus,
Think of Him in all we do.
Thank you Savior; Thank you Lord.
Help us love like you!*

By Joanna Fuchs



Lorenza Robinson

Called to Serve & Celebrate Ministry

Christ Care Ministry A Holy Responsibility

“Beloved, whatever Is true, wherever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think on these things.”

- Philippians 4:8

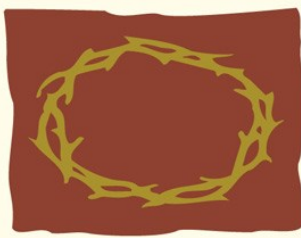
The well-being of our mind is our responsibility. At present that’s a colossal task given how far afield of Eden we have come. The news on television 24/7 is filled with chaos and violence — the exact opposite of what Scripture tells us to focus on. Let’s not forget: We were created to walk with God in the beauty and peace of the Garden of Eden — our true home and natural habitat. Look where we are today: Life lived chaotically in the traffic of multi-tasking, sleep deprivation, sustained stress, fraught relationships, too many expectations to handle deftly, too many financial demands to allow peace of spirit, too much chaos in the world, too many wars, too much suffering, “too many of this, too much of that.” Our mind suffers. We become anxious and fractious.

Tranquility eludes us. Because God loves each one of us more than we can grasp, He commands us to take care of our minds, to think on what is honorable, just, pure, lovely, gracious, excellent, and worthy of praise. We’re instructed to fix our thoughts on these things, not on the turbulence of a warring world, though of course we are to do our part in restoring peace. But in the midst of chaos let the mind find rest and pleasure in remembering what’s beautiful and wholesome and life-enhancing, for the sake not only of our mind, but for the well-being of our body and soul. We know that whatever affects our mind affects our body and soul. All three realities are inseparable: ***mind, body, soul, the trinity of our being***. God charges us to care for each with wisdom, respect, and reverence. We are the work of His hands, but the care of “this work” is our sacred responsibility. Ours. Not His. Ours. It’s sacred work, a holy responsibility - and ours to fulfill.

Be at peace beloved, for God is with us all today,

Pastor Tom (ptl)

*** Used by his permission from the Daily Commentaries of my friend and brother in Christ, Rev. Dr. Norman Henry McCrummen, III



Holy Week Calendar

4/6 - Maundy Thursday Worship 6:00 p.m.

4/7 - Good Friday Tenebrae Worship 6:00 p.m.

4/9 - Easter Breakfast 8:30 a.m.

4/9 - Easter Egg Hunt 9:00 a.m.

4/9 - Easter Worship 10:15 am.

Selma Tornado Response

The Southern District LCMS has established a disaster response center at Trinity Lutheran Church in Selma AL. Two response ministries will be working to serve those affected by the recent tornadoes in that area.

If you wish to volunteer, you may do so by contacting Shepherds Heart Disaster Response Ministry (www.facebook.com/ShepherdsHeartMinistry) or Forged by Fire Services (www.facebook.com/ForgedByFireServices).

If you'd like to directly support them with donations, you can send a designated gift to them through First Lutheran Church (www.firstlutheranbham.org).

“

Be thankful
for yesterday.

Be grateful
for today.

Be hopeful for
TOMORROW.

Roger Lee

Joy of the Lord

**Join us on the Second Sunday
of the month at 5:00PM for**

Evening Prayer

✠ ENTER IN SILENCE ✠

✠ WORSHIP PRAYERFULLY ✠

✠ DEPART IN PEACE ✠

LWML News

Painting the Planet Purple with Servanthood

1942-2022 -- 80 YEARS of GOD'S GRACE



2023 Convention

Celebrate the Lord of the Nations (Psalm 33:12-13)

Date: June 22 - 25, 2023

Location: Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Theme: Celebrate the Lord of Nations

Scripture Verse: Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord, the people whom He has chosen as His heritage! The Lord looks down from heaven; He sees the children of man. (Psalm 33: 12-13)

For registration and additional information, go to the LWML website (www.lwml.org).

The Hope of Spring

God, thank You for Spring and the hope of warmer, longer, brighter days.

Thank You for the coming of growth and life and birth.

Thank You that things are coming awake in the world.

This is what our calendar says, and we do see some signs that it is real.

But we also struggle with the residual layover of Winter.

Now we ask that You bring into reality all that belongs in this season. Your word says that we will have provision, and hope, and joy, and health, and loving relationships here and now in this life.

We ask that what belongs in this season would become actual in our practical lives.

We hope in You and in Your promises. We hope in Your gift of Spring.

— Author Unknown

Today and always we are surrounded by HIS grace and mercy.

Serve the LORD with gladness.

Sheree McGraw, President
First Lutheran Church LWML

Neighborhood Yard Sale April 29

One Man's Trash is Another Man's Treasure!

First Lutheran will host a neighborhood yard sale on April 29 from 9:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. Anyone interested in participating may reserve a table for a \$25 donation made payable to First Lutheran. If you'd like to volunteer to help or if you have items to sell and need more information on reserving a table, please contact Wendy Harris at 205-706-9229.



Sunday Morning Adult Bible Study: Genesis

9:00 a.m.

First Lutheran Fellowship Hall

(Coffee abounds!)



Worship with us Sundays at
10:15 a.m. in person or online via
Facebook or YouTube.



Easter Egg Hunt

First Lutheran will host a children's Easter egg hunt at 9:00 a.m.
Easter Sunday, April 9. Candy donations are welcome and may
be given to Wendy Harris by April 2.