



# Acts of Faith

Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church  
The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod  
Kewanee, Illinois

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## ***“Do Not Weep For Me—Weep For Yourselves”***

Luke’s Gospel records that as the beaten and bleeding Jesus staggered under the weight of the cross through Jerusalem’s narrow streets, the pitiful sight became too much for some women who were following. They broke into tears and beat their breasts in lamentation.

Surely Jesus would be honored and pleased by this tearful adoration. Yet, there’s no indication that he was. He turned and said to them, *“Daughters of Jerusalem, stop weeping for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children.”* He told them that days of destruction were coming, when the barren would be considered blessed (a prophesy of the destruction of Jerusalem which happened some 40 years later, in 70 A.D.).

What a remarkable incident, especially since these are the only words we know of that Jesus spoke on the way to his crucifixion. But these are important words, especially for Lent. That’s because Lent is a season of the church year when citizens of the world “line the streets of Jerusalem” to behold the suffering Savior walking by. Lent is that season when the multitude follows him to Calvary to see the horror of his pain and death.

But, the question is, “How would Jesus have us respond to his suffering?” There are many daughters and sons of Jerusalem among us today. For them, weeping for Jesus is still the response of choice. The emphasis is all on what they feel for him. To all such, the poignant words of Christ ring out, *“Stop weeping for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children.”*

*“Stop weeping for me!”* Jesus doesn’t want our pity during Lent. He doesn’t expect us to “feel his pain” or simply to feel depressed that something so bad happened to one so good. That’s not where our focus should be. *“Weep for yourselves.”* The weeping that Jesus looks for is the weeping of repentance—repentance that renounces sin and then firmly believes that the suffering of Jesus atones for

it all.

Our sin mocked him, scourged him, beat him, and drove the nails through his holy hands and feet. As the Scripture says, *“He was delivered up because of our transgressions”* (Rom. 4:25). All of this should move us to tears: Tears of repentance. Tears of sorrow that our sin has hurt God, our neighbors, and ourselves. Tears of mourning over the fate we deserve—eternal destruction in hell.

The Jerusalem women could see Jesus’ imminent destruction. They knew he would soon die a horrible death. That made them weep and wail. But they couldn’t see their own imminent destruction. They saw that Jesus was under a death sentence (unjustly), but they didn’t know that they were under the same sentence, as we all are. *“For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God”* (Romans 3:23) and *“the wages of sin is death”* (Romans 6:23). The daughters of Jerusalem didn’t understand that the awfulness of Christ’s suffering should have led them to see the awfulness of *their* sin.

As we meditate on our dear Savior’s suffering this Lenten season, may it lead us to *“weep for ourselves”* tears of repentance. Both parts of repentance: (1) confessing and turning away from all our sin; (2) and then firmly believing that through the suffering and death of Jesus, every sin and failure is completely forgiven and forgotten.

Blessings,  
Pastor Fischer

### *March's Calendar*

- March 1 Evangelism Meeting, 6:30 PM  
**March 4 2nd Sunday in Lent**  
March 7 Confirmation Class, 5:30 PM  
Lenten Service, 7:00 PM  
March 8 Building Comm. Mtg., 7:00 PM  
**March 11 3rd Sunday in Lent**  
March 12 Circuit Pastors' Meeting, 9:00 AM  
March 14 Confirmation Class, 5:30 PM  
Lenten Service, 7:00 PM  
March 15 Church Council, 7:00 PM  
**March 18 4th Sunday in Lent**  
Courtyard Estates Service, 3 PM  
March 20 Women of Faith, 10:30 AM  
March 21 Confirmation Class, 5:30 PM  
Lenten Service, 7:00 PM  
March 22 Building Comm. Mtg., 7:00 PM  
**March 25 5th Sunday in Lent**  
Nursing Home Worship Services,  
2 & 3 PM  
Youth Group, 6:00 PM  
March 26 Henry County Right-to-Life, 7 PM  
March 28 Confirmation Class, 5:30 PM  
Lenten Service, 7:00 PM

No, it's not true. A rumor is that the new U.S. one-dollar coin has omitted the words, "*In God We Trust.*" Yes, the words are there, but they're on the *edge* of the coin rather than on one of the *sides* of the coin! (How prominent is your Lord and God in your *life*?)

### *Easter Lilies*

Lois Novotny will be taking names of those wishing to make donations for Easter Lilies. There will be a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board in the church. Also, she has a flower calendar to schedule flower arrangements for the altar on Sundays.

### *Mid-Week Lenten Worship Schedule*

During this year's Lenten season, Faith is offering a special series of mid-week worship services titled *Coming Home from Exile: The Exoduses of the Scriptures*. These services continue on Wednesdays at 7:00 PM. The theme for each service is described in the schedule below. Please plan to attend, and also invite your relatives and friends.

**March 7th:** *Jacob the Heel Comes Home*  
(Genesis 28:10-17).

**March 14th:** "*Out of Egypt I Have Called My Son*" (Exodus 14)

**March 21st:** *Exile and Return from Babylon*  
(Ezra 1:1-4)

**March 28th:** *The Promises of a Cosmopolitan Exodus* (Isaiah 11:11-16)

**Holy Week** will be coming quickly in April with Palm Sunday (and Confirmation) on April 1st; Maundy Thursday, April 5th; Good Friday, April 6th; and Easter, April 8th.

*Stricken, smitten, and afflicted, See Him dying on the tree!  
'Tis the Christ by man rejected; Yes, my soul,  
'tis He, 'tis He!*

*'Tis the long expected prophet, David's Son, yet  
David's Lord; Proofs I see sufficient of it: 'Tis a true  
and faithful Word.*

### *Women of Faith Meeting*

Women of Faith will meet on Tuesday, March 20th, 10:30 AM. The meeting will be held at Vary Fischer's home if the church kitchen isn't ready yet. Watch the Sunday bulletin for details. Marilyn Sturtevant will lead the Bible Study, and there will be a "Hobo Soup" lunch. (Each woman brings a can of soup to add to the pot!)

**Mary Had a Little Lamb**  
(The extended version)

Mary had a little Lamb,  
His fleece was white as snow.  
And everywhere that Mary went,  
The Lamb was sure to go.

He followed her to school each day,  
T'wasn't even in the rule.  
It made the children laugh and play,  
To have the Lamb at school.

And then the rules all changed one day,  
Illegal it became;  
To bring the Lamb of God to school,  
Or even speak His Name!

Every day got worse and worse,  
And days turned into years.  
Instead of hearing children laugh,  
We heard gun shots and tears.

What must we do to stop the crime  
That's in our schools today?  
Let's let the Lamb come back to school,  
And teach our kids to pray!

**No Moneybags!**

A rumor has been going around that several million dollars has been donated to the church, and that we don't need any more money for the building program. Not true! We're very grateful for all the contributions and pledges we've received, large and small, but we're still a long way from paying for the church. We have a substantial monthly mortgage payment, in addition to our utility bills and other expenses. So, please keep this in mind in your giving plans. Contact Otto Schwefel, Wayne Becker, or Mary Duncan for details regarding our budget and needs (as well as to clear-up any rumors).

**LWML Mite Collection**

The LWML Mite collection will be March 11<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>. The Central Illinois District LWML set a Mite goal of \$78,000 for 2006-2007. Of this, \$19,500 was to be for the national goal, and \$58,500 for the District goal. The District goals include eight grants. The first five grants have been paid. These include: student aid for church workers, a grant of \$20,000 is paid; the Outreach Center for the Blind, Jacksonville, a grant of \$5,000 is paid; the Latvian Soup Kitchen, a grant of \$15,000 is paid; the Alaska Mission for Christ, a grant of \$8,000 is paid; and CPH Materials for St. Peter Lutheran School, a grant of \$1,100 is paid. The remaining unpaid grants include the Lutheran Schools in Haiti for \$5,000, the Spanish Radio Ministry for \$1,300, and From the Servant's Heart for \$3,100. The Spanish Radio Ministry is one of Pastor Dominguez's ministries in the Quad Cities. He has a Saturday morning broadcast that reaches the Spanish families in the area. We've gathered \$49,100, but we still need \$9,400 to reach our goal. Please find some more change and fill those Mite boxes. With the Lord's blessing, we WILL reach our goal.

**Hymnal Bookplates**

If you ordered a hymnal recently and haven't found the one with your bookplate in it yet, that's because the latest shipment of hymnals won't arrive until mid-April. Due to the popularity of the *Lutheran Service Book*, shipment of hymnals is delayed until production can catch up with demand. Additional orders may still be placed though.

## *How's the Family?*

In a casual, sidewalk encounter we sometimes ask a friend, "How's the family?" We simply want to catch up on what's happening with loved ones. The answer may surprise us. "Family" often means different things to people. In fact, the Rev. Roger Sonnenberg has observed that "few questions are being asked more than this one, 'What is a family?' Even dictionary definitions have changed over the last few years." But, Sonnenberg has done more than ask the question again. As senior pastor of Our Savior Lutheran Church in Arcadia, CA he composed "Defining Family," the third chapter of Family Ministry Basics, published by Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, MO in 2006. (For additional information visit [www.cph.org](http://www.cph.org) or telephone 1-800-325-3040.)

The Holy Scriptures speak clearly about family, Sonnenberg reminds us. Already in Genesis, the first book, God provides us with His design. Adam and Eve, the first husband and wife, have children. They make up the first family. Many years later, into what framework was Jesus born? He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary into the household of Joseph, Mary's husband. In terms of their enduring impact on human life they are the "First Family." In that home environment, where Mary treasured up in her heart all the miracles associated with Jesus birth and childhood, the Savior "increased in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man" (Luke 2:52).

Pastor Sonnenberg correctly asserts that "from the very beginning, God gave the highest priority to the husband-wife relationship." Genesis 2:24 rejects any current definition of family which includes same-sex marriage. We read, "Therefore, a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife and they shall become one flesh." When Jesus in his public ministry quoted from Genesis he added, "What therefore God has joined together let not man separate" (Matt. 19:6). So, when a man and woman live together with marital privileges but without pledging themselves in life-long faithfulness to God and to each other they live outside of God's plan for a "one flesh" relationship. Sonnenberg also recalls how studies show that unmarried couples who "try out" living together without first making a life-long commitment, even if they marry later, have a 53 per cent higher rate of divorce than those who have not cohabitated.

Some contemporary trends in family life, such as having children outside of wedlock, which often compels mothers to raise children alone, violate God's family system, Sonnenberg believes. He also discourages the adoption of children by same-sex couples. "Children need and yearn for both male and female role models," he advises.

However, it's obvious that God carries out his gracious purposes even in human structures which are frail and broken. Scripture clearly demonstrates such in Ruth's relationship with her mother-in-law, Naomi (Book of Ruth), and in the single widow's situation with her children (2 Kings 4:1-7) God did His work, Sonnenberg counsels. "The important thing to remember is that Christianity is about relationships," Sonnenberg writes. "Healthy relationships are possible because of the vertical relationship between us and God. Because of our relationship with God through faith in Jesus Christ, those relationships known as horizontal relationships [with other human beings, especially] are possible," he adds. When our relationship with God is ailing and confused then we will taint and tangle up our relationship with others. Only in the mercy of Christ's forgiveness are we connected with God and others for robust Christian living.

Because God loves all people through his Son, Jesus, he numbers in his own family, the whole Christian Church, human families of many descriptions. Sonnenberg affirms that God calls to himself stepfamilies, single-parent families, grandparent-headed families, the widowed, the never-married, as well as the man/woman who struggles with his/her sexuality. We know from our earliest memories that Jesus said, "God so loved the world that He gave His only Son that *whoever* believes in him should not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16). In Jesus, human beings are united together as divine family now and in eternity. CPH

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Charles Heinrich 3/01  
Katherine Cook 3/02  
Bonnie Nuding 3/08  
Erica Grabbe 3/09  
Elizabeth Godke 3/11  
Deborah Woods 3/13  
Jaxson Hicks 3/14  
Eric Cervantez 3/16  
Steven Becker 3/19

Carol Schwefel 3/20  
Muriel Dilts 3/26  
Andrew Becker 3/27  
Cindy Ganschow 3/27  
Helen Kuster 3/28  
Trenton Terry 3/31  
Mae Watson 3/31

## Anniversaries

Julie & Roy Carpenter 3/04  
Cindy & Rick Ganschow 3/10  
Sandra & Raymond Heinrich 3/15  
Mary Kay & Marvin Newman 3/18  
Vary & Rev. Robert Fischer 3/23

### WORSHIP SCHEDULE

9:00 AM-Sundays  
Adult Bible Class &  
Sunday School, 10:15 A.M.

7:00 PM Wednesdays

Rev. Robert Fischer-Pastor

Church Phone: 309-852-2787

Cell Phone: 309-714-1181

Home Phone: 309-853-5394

E-mail: [pastor@faithkewanee.org](mailto:pastor@faithkewanee.org)



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Address Correction Requested

*Stricken, smitten, and  
afflicted—for us.*

## ***We're In!***

On February 11th, we were very pleased to have our first Sunday worship service in our new building. Since the sanctuary is still being finished, services are being held in the lower-level Fellowship Hall. 101 persons were in attendance at this first service.

In addition to having our first worship service, we also had the dedication and first usage here of the new LCMS hymnal, *Lutheran Service Book*. Several favorite hymns were sung which weren't available in our previous hymnal: "Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee," "Great is Thy Faithfulness," and "Go, My Children, with My Blessing." We look forward to more variety of hymns, as well as to having our familiar hymns.

Work which remains in the upper level includes carpeting, hardwood flooring in the chancel, installation of interior windows and doors, installation of pews, installation of the organ and sound system, and installation of cabinets and a sink in the sacristy, and the "coffee area" cabinets and sink.

Outside work, such as landscaping and parking lot improvements, need to wait for warmer weather.

It's not known yet when a Communion rail will be installed. One item which was purchased from another congregation is a Communion rail which was hand-carved in 1894. The Communion rail is very beautiful, but is too short for our chancel. We're looking for a carpenter (craftsman) who will be able to carve extensions for this rail. The carpenter we've currently found won't be able to start the project for a couple of months, then it will take some time for him to complete it.