



In this Issue:

| | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Ministry and Funding Report | 3 |
| Outreach News | 4 |
| March Birthdays | 4 |
| Notes & News | 5 |
| Mid-Week Lent | 5 |
| Reporters & Meetings | 6 |
| Movie & Pizza | 6 |
| Easter Festival | 7 |
| Devotion | 8 |
| March Calendar | 9 |

The Reporter

March 2023

The Reporter

Volume 21, Issue 02

“Our Father”

by Pastor Proeber

We have all had earthly fathers. Some have been excellent examples of a Christian and loving father. Some have not. With the Lord's Prayer we have the privilege to address the Lord as “our Father.” This is the result of grace and the working of the Gospel and the Holy Spirit.

By nature we are not readily drawn to the Lord in prayer, nor do we want to think of him as our father. By nature we are sinful, and as a result, we are dead in our trespasses and sins. What compounds this situation is the fact we are hostile enemies of God. We want nothing to do with him, and we refuse to come to him in prayer. Certainly there may be some isolated incidents when in deep need or great distress, one might desperately plead for God to intervene. This is not prayer. Nor is it addressing God as our Father. The result is God does not receive or answer this prayer.

Because of what God has done for us in love, our situation and relationship with him has changed. Through the precious work of Jesus we have been reconciled to the Lord. We have also been given new life and new strength. We no longer question God's existence, his approachability, or even his willingness to answer our prayers for our good.

Jesus made it possible for us to come to the Almighty God and Lord of all creation without fear and trembling. Now, we don't have to come seeking to make a deal with God. Nor, do we come wondering if it will ever do any good. We can come as dear children come to their dear father. What makes this even more amazing is that we can approach a dear Father in heaven.

This is what Luther explained so well in the address of the Lord's Prayer —
With these words God tenderly invites us to believe he is our true Father and that we are his true children, so that we may pray to him as boldly and confidently as dear children ask their dear Father.

(Luther's Small Catechism)

There are several truths Luther wants the child of God to understand. The first is that we are coming to the Almighty God who dwells in heaven. This is not a figment of our imagination. Nor is it a placebo designed to make us believe things will be better. This is someone who can actually do something about our situation. It is this same, all-powerful God of heaven who says, “I will always act for your good.”

Continued on page 2

Our Father, from page 1

In a winsome way, Luther also explains how and why we can come. It is not like Dorothy and her entourage in the “Wizard of Oz.” They cowered in the presence of the great and mighty Oz, and were terrified by his fearsome presence. We come to a compassionate, merciful Father who tenderly invites us to pray. It is as if God comes to us and lifts us on his lap to comfort us, just as an earthly father takes his troubled child on his lap. He also lovingly says, “Tell me what is troubling you, my child.”

This is how we need to see the Lord our God. And we can see him this way because of Jesus. Through his precious work the anger of a hostile heart is quieted. The rebellion of disobedience is washed away. Anything which separates us from God is removed. What remains is the true child of God—redeemed, restored, and forgiven.

This changes the way we see the Lord, as well as the way we approach him. Luther used the words boldly and confidently. It is not as though we stand toe to toe with God and make demands feeling justified in telling God what to do. The Lord would never accept this kind of behavior. However, when fear is removed, when undeserved love is lavished, when a tender invitation is offered, how can we not come before the Lord with boldness and great confidence. He wants us to pray to him. He welcomes us when we come relying on his help. He assures us he will never let us be put to shame as we place our complete confidence in him.

This means everything to us as we pray to our God and Father. Just think about it. The Lord never turns us away when we approach him. Nor does he ever reject our prayers. This is why we can pray with boldness and confidence, and why we can pray without giving up.

Our Lord gives us the gift of prayer so we do come to him. Whatever troubles us, whatever distresses us, whatever burdens our hearts with guilt or shame, he says pray. Come to me! Come directly to me! Come without hesitation! Nowhere else do we receive this kind of an invitation. Even the best “customer service” department cannot compare or compete with what the Lord does for us. This is why we pray. It is also why we find great solace as we pray. We approach the Lord of heaven and earth knowing he wants us to come.

Prayer is the soul's sincere desire unuttered or expressed,
The motion of a hidden fire that trembles in the breast.

Prayer is the burden of a sigh, the falling of a tear,
The upward glancing of an eye, when none but God is near.


Prayer is the contrite sinner's voice returning from his ways,
While angels in their songs rejoice and cry, “Behold he prays!”

Prayer is the Christian's vital breath, the Christian's native air,
His watchword at the gates of death—he enters heaven with prayer.

Nor prayer is made by man alone—the Holy Spirit pleads,
And Jesus on the eternal throne for sinners intercedes.

O Thou by whom we come to God, the Life, the Truth, the Way,
The path of prayer Thyself hast trod—Lord, teach us how to pray.

I lie
down
& sleep;
I wake again, because
the Lord
sustains
me.
Psalm 3:5



“Ministry and Funding Report”

by Al Todd

The congregation's 2023 ministry and funding plan (budget) was approved at the January 2023 Congregational Meeting, and is broken out into nine (9) categories as shown below:

| | 2022 Actual | 2023 Budget | \$ Over/ Under Actual 2022 | % Inc / dec |
|----------------------------|----------------|----------------|-------------------------------------|----------------|
| General Fund Income | 133,403 | 139,139 | 5,256 | 4.3% |
| Total Advertising/Outreach | 1,944 | 4,614 | 2,670 | 137% |
| Total Church Operations | 15,167 | 15,884 | 717 | 5% |
| Total Church Utilities | 8,996 | 8,773 | -223 | -2% |
| Total Education Expenses | 912 | 939 | 27 | 3% |
| Total Fellowship | 607 | 759 | 152 | 25% |
| Total Pastor Expenses | 105,869 | 110,373 | 4,504 | 4% |
| Synod Missions | 13,341 | 13,914 | 573 | 4% |
| Total Worship Expenses | 321 | 360 | 39 | 12% |
| Total Expense | 147,157 | 155,616 | 8,459 | 5.7% |

In 2022 we saw a year over year decline in the General Fund of \$6,257. We ended 2022 with a balance of \$22,259 which is a 22% decline in the General Fund in the past year. Accordingly, we had to supplement our General Fund by transfers from the Endowment Fund in the 4th Quarter of \$7,500.

For the year 2023, we are asking congregation members, by God's grace, to increase their offerings by 4.3%. If that increase is forthcoming, we will only need \$16,476 from the Endowment Fund for the year to cover budgeted expenses. If congregation members decide to give even more than a 4.3% increase in offerings, then we will need an even smaller supplement from the Endowment Fund.

Please prayerfully consider the financial gifts God has entrusted to your stewardship so that we can fund the ministry plan we have adopted through which we can continue to proclaim the gospel to our community and, via our on-line capability, the world.

If you have any questions regarding the 2023 budget, please don't hesitate to contact me or any member of the congregation's church council.

To us are given gifts divine; all talents you have sent.
 Inspire us now to use them your kingdom to extend.
 We hold each gift a trust from you nor claim it was our own;
 We gratefully acknowledge, Lord, all things are yours alone.

Christian Worship 481 at. 2



Outreach Opportunities

The Outreach Committee continues to sponsor events to provide opportunities for members to invite friends and relatives to Our Redeemer. Some events are conducted outside the formal worship service. There are also special worship services with food and fellowship afterwards. We hope these events will encourage you to invite people you know to learn more about our church and to hear the message of Grace we proclaim. Please plan to participate, and to serve!

“**A**
farmer

Easter Festival and Egg Hunt, April 1st at 4:00 pm.

This year we are adding another event to reach out to people and families in our community. The Fall Festival was a big hit, and we want to build on what we previously did. There will be snacks, projects for the kids, rock and face painting. There will also be an egg hunt with a special lesson included.

Everyone is invited. Also, take the time to invite your friends and neighbors to attend. There are fliers in the back of the church, please pick several up, and share them. There is also a sheet with “donation requests.” Please take a look at it, and indicate where you can help. If you have any questions, please speak with Emily Schroeder.

Holy Week Celebration

One of the most special times of the year is the final steps of Jesus going to the cross. In each of these services we have the opportunity to see God the Father’s love in action. Share this good news with others!

| | |
|-----------|--|
| April 2nd | Palm Sunday Worship at 9:30 am |
| April 6th | Maundy Thursday Worship at 7:00 pm |
| April 7th | Good Friday Worship at 7:00 pm |
| April 9th | Easter Festival Worship at 9:30 am with a brunch following the service for friends and members. Sign up sheets will be placed on the table in the back of the church shortly for help with serving, and with the Easter Memory Garden. |



March Birthdays

We rejoice in the many blessings God has given the members of our family of faith. May the Lord continue to bless them richly.

- 5th - Logan Y.
- 9th - Frank F.
- 12th - Zachary W.
- 16th - Kallie H.
- 28th - Chris M.

Notes & News

Handbell Choir

Practices for the Spring—Holy Week, Easter, Trinity and Pentecost—will move to Thursday evenings at 7:00 pm. Please note the change!

We are thankful for those who generously give of their time and efforts to make practices and ring for our worship services.

There is also an invitation—if you are curious, or if you would like to try ringing—to speak with Debbie.

New ringers are always welcome, and can be worked into the future playing schedule.

Wednesday Evening Bible Class

For now, the mid-week Bible Study will be on hold through Lent. It will restart May 10th at 7:00 pm.

The class will begin a new topic for the Spring. Currently one is being considered. It is an outreach class: "One by One." It looks at the opportunities we have as individual Christians, and provides assistance to become more confident and comfortable in shar-

ing the good news of the Savior.

If there are other topics you would like to study, please speak with Pastor during the course of March.

Sunday Morning Bible Class

As always there is a regularly scheduled class after the worship service. It is "Digging Deeper." Each Sunday one of the appointed lessons for the day is studied, and offers the opportunity to review the lesson, and to consider "my view" -- a section on application for today.

Each lesson is a unit by itself, so if you cannot make Bible Class every Sunday, you can still drop in without missing any of the previous lessons.



Sunday School

We are still in need of teachers for the new quarter from now through the month of June. If you can help one Sunday or two Sundays a month, that would be great. If you would like to team teach with another teacher, that would also be a tremendous help. Please speak with Pastor Proeber as soon as possible. Training and weekly materials will be provided.

Mid-Week Lenten Worship

Each Wednesday evening, we will continue to follow our Savior as he leads us through his humiliation and passion. This year, we will consider the "Impassioned Prayers of the Passion." These are prayers offered by Jesus and others which called upon the Lord for help, for comfort, and for strength in the time of temptation. Each of these prayers can be regularly prayed by each of us. Come and learn about the gift we have through Jesus' suffering and death, as well as his invitation to pray.

Lent 3—March 8th
"Forgive Me, Lord!"

Lent 4—March 15th
"Father, Forgive Them!"

Lent 5—March 22nd
"Remember Me in Your Kingdom!"

Lent 6—March 29th
"My God, Why have You Forsaken Me!"

Maundy Thursday—April 6th
"Heavenly Father, I Pray for Them!"

Good Friday—April 7th
"Father, Into Your Hands I Commit My Spirit!"

Serve the Lord with Gladness

Reporters Wanted

Book review? Personal Story of Faith?
Event report? Potluck-gathering? Party? Field Trip?

Half-page to three pages
Reviewed for scriptural consistency
Due by 25th of month to appear in next issue

Hard-copy or email to Pastor Proeber—pastor.orlcsb@gmail.com

A simple and rewarding way to serve!

Thanks to Al Todd for his article on the ministry and funding plan, and Emily Schroeder for the Easter Festival flier. There is a standing invitation to provide material for the *Reporter*. Throughout the past volumes, articles authored by members have really made every issue more interesting. We pray that every member will provide an article for 2023. If you have an idea, and you are not sure whether to act on it, please don't hesitate to speak to Pastor Proeber. Thanks!

Meetings for March

| | |
|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Church Council | March 7th at 7:00 pm |
| Committees | March 7th at 8:00 pm |
| Outreach Committee | March 14th at 7:00 pm |
| Property Work Day | To be scheduled for March |

The Spring Congregational Meeting will be April 16th following the worship service. Plan to be a part of our congregation's ministry, and support it with your presence and your prayers.

Movie & Pizza

On Sunday, February 19th, twenty members and guests gathered for a evening of fellowship and food. At 5:30 pm there was pizza, salads, and soft drinks. More than enough for everyone to have extra helpings. After an hour of fellowship and eating, the group went to the sanctuary to watch the presentation, "A Pastor and Christian's Role in Civil Government." Although the film was first produced in the 1990's, it offered many practical insights, along with some interesting discussion. The evening continued back in the fellowship hall with desserts—again more than enough for everyone to have seconds. The hit of the evening was a chocolate mousse torte.

The next activity will be our Easter Festival on April 1st at 4:00 pm. In addition, we will have our regular Easter worship and brunch following the service on April 8th. Hope to see all of you at both events!



Join us for our first

EASTER FESTIVAL AND EGG HUNT

Join us for a bunny-approved afternoon
of fun and games and family!



April 1, 2023 | 4:00 - 6:00 pm
Our Redeemer Lutheran Church
770 Vala Drive | Santa Barbara

Questions? Email pastor.orldsb@gmail.com



Devotional Corner

The Right Perspective

Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days." The Jews replied, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple and you are going to raise it in three days?" But the temple he had spoken of was his body. After he was raised from the dead, his disciples recalled what he had said. Then they believed the Scripture and the words that Jesus had spoken.

John 2:19-22

John enjoyed visiting the Museum of Modern Art. He appreciated the different styles and mediums with which the artists expressed their visions. On one trip a new sculpture had been added. As he studied the new piece, he contemplated what the artist had envisioned. While he admired the artist's talent, he couldn't quite understand his concept.

On a subsequent trip with his wife, the two of them slowly walked around the sculpture. After changing positions several times, they finally recognized what the artist was portraying. Both John and his wife agreed, it took the right perspective to see things clearly.

The disciples were also in need of the right perspective. Jesus boldly proclaimed, "Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days." Like the Jews who had heard his words, they were confused. How could he do something as incredible as this? It wasn't until Jesus was raised from the dead that they understood and believed. It took the right perspective.

Like the disciples I need to view Jesus and his ministry from the right perspective. Without the help of the error-free and inspired testimony of the Scriptures, I would find it hard to believe anything about Jesus.

With the right perspective, I come to know Jesus as the Son of God and the Son of Man who was perfectly qualified to be my Savior. I also know he was perfectly obedient in life and in death to secure my rescue from sin, death and the power of the devil. All of this becomes even more clear when I view it from the perspective of Jesus' resurrection from the dead.

Because Jesus rose I know what God has declared is valid and certain. I can approach God the Father in boldness and confidence with my prayers. I can rejoice in his never-failing supply of forgiveness to release me from my sin. I can anticipate a joyful welcome into his eternal, heavenly kingdom.

Without Jesus' resurrection I would always be lost in doubt and confusion. Now, through Jesus' resurrection from the dead, I not only have the right perspective, I also know what Jesus did for me.

Prayer

O blessed Lord, I thank you for the precious gift of your holy Word. It is the truth from which I learn about my Savior. It also provides the perspective through which I see Jesus as that Savior.

March 2023

Church Office: 967-1128







Our Redeemer Lutheran Church

Parsonage Phone: 967-3570

Grow in Grace!

Encourage one another!

Proclaim what we have seen and heard!

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|---|---|--|--|---|--|--|
|  | | | 1 Midweek Lent 7:00 pm <i>"Your will be Done"</i> | 2  | 3 Office Hours 10:30—2:30 pm | 4 Clean Everson Lawn Beginning March 5th— C. Schueler |
| 5 Lord's Supper Worship & Live Stream 9:30 am Education 11:00 am | 6  | 7 Church Council 7:00 pm Committees 8:00 pm | 8 Midweek Lent 7:00 pm <i>"Forgive Me, Lord"</i> | 9 Handbells 7:00 pm | 10 Office Hours 10:30—2:30 pm | 11 Clean Favuzzi LWMS Spring Rally Las Vegas, NV |
| 12 Worship & Live Stream 9:30 am Education 11:00 am | 13  LET THE WORDS OF MY MOUTH —AND THE— MEDITATION OF MY HEART BE ACCEPTABLE TO YOU, O LORD, MY ROCK, —AND— MY REDEEMER. PSALM 19:14, NRSV | 14 Circuit Study Outreach / Fellow- ship Planning 7:00 pm | 15 Midweek Lent 7:00 pm <i>"Father, Forgive Them"</i> | 16 Handbells 7:00 pm | 17 Office Hours 10:30—2:30 pm | 18 Clean Florez Lawn Beginning March 19th— G. Grunewald |
| 19 Worship & Live Stream 9:30 am Education 11:00 am | 20  | 21 | 22 Midweek Lent 7:00 pm <i>"Remember Me in your Kingdom"</i> | 23 Handbells 7:00 pm | 24 Office Hours 10:30—2:30 pm | 25 Clean Grunewald |
| 26 Worship & Live Stream 9:30 am Education 11:00 am | 27  | 28 | 29 Midweek Lent 7:00 pm <i>"My God, why have You forsaken me?"</i> | 30 Handbells 7:00 pm | 31 Office Hours 10:30—2:30 pm | April 1st Spring Festival 4:00—6:00 pm |