



Business Meeting

Samuels.

The Joint Council meets on February 3rd at 7pm at



Your Pastor's Ponderings

“The United States is the most religious nation in the developed world, if religiosity is measured by belief in all things supernatural -- from God and the Virgin Birth to the humbler workings of angels and demons. Americans are also the most religiously illiterate people in the Western world. Fewer than half of us can identify Genesis as the first book of the Bible, and only one third know that Jesus delivered the Sermon on the Mount.” -- from March 4th 2007, edition of the Washington Post.

So let's begin at the beginning. Let's begin with the first couple (no, not the new President and his wife) but with the very first couple, Adam and Eve. One of the reasons that Adam and Eve are important is because from the very beginning, they reflect the relational nature of God. God did not create the earth on some whim or because God was bored. I believe that God created (the earth and everything in it) because God was lonely. God wanted to be in relationship with someone similar to God, someone like God – Adam and Eve, those created in God's image.

Adam and Eve are introduced in the second chapter of Genesis, in the second creation story (Yes, there are two creation stories – check out Genesis 1 and Genesis 2 to see the difference.) They are introduced here but they are not named until later. In chapter two, they are simply called “the man” and “the woman”.

The Hebrew word for “man” is “Aa-dam”. And it is from this Hebrew word that we get the first man's name: Adam. The first man is not born but created -- “made from the dust of the ground” (Genesis 2:7). In addition to creation in this verse, there's a Hebrew pun going on here –

The word for ground or earth is adamah. The word for man is adam. Therefore, from the adamah God makes adam OR from the earth God makes earth creatures.

Shortly thereafter, God completes the creation of the garden but soon Adam grows lonely. God acknowledges the human need for relationships (“It is not good that the man should be alone.” – Genesis 2:18) So God decides to create a companion according to the human's need. How does God do this?

Well, the creator, the molder and planner becomes the experimenter. All sorts of animals and birds are made and brought to the human to be named, to see if they are suitable according to the human. The human names them but is unable to find a suitable companion.

Eventually, God figures out the human (Adam's) need. Out of man God molds a woman. It's another Hebrew pun about names here but I like Bill Cosby's explanation best as to where “woman” comes from. When the man saw the beautiful thing that God had made out of his own flesh, he whistled – Wo! Man!

With Eve's creation, the human has been differentiated into male and female. God now acts as matchmaker, bringing the two together. The deeply relational creation is complete. All are related. All are tied to each other and tied to the land, to the garden in which they were placed.

The point is this: Like a potter using clay of the earth, God molds the creature (the human) from the ground. Then breathes life into it – with the breath of life, God breathes Spirit into humanity. And God makes them for relationship – relationship with him and relationship with each other. Note that in this creation account, humanity is made first and then the rest of creation. This story gives humanity special place, first priority in God's creation. All this happened because God wants to have special relationship with all of us, not just Adam and Eve. But Adam and Eve are important because it all started with them.

Of course, that's what I think.

Pastor Will



Sweetheart Ham Dinner

The New Centerville Fire Department will be hosting a Ham Dinner on February 14, 2009. **Benefits the Building fund.**

Time: 6pm

Price: \$9.00 Adults

12 and under \$4.00

Tickets are available at the door or in advance by calling **Rich Clay @ 926-4398**. Take out orders are available.



LENT: Ashes to Ashes—Let Us Return to the Lord

Now is the acceptable time to return to the Lord. During Lent the people of God are called to reflect on the meaning of their baptism into Christ's death and resurrection. Wednesday, **February 25th is Ash Wednesday**, the first day of Lent. On that day, there will be a worship service with Imposition of Ashes and Holy Communion at 7pm @Messiah. The sign of ashes calls us to remember our mortality and frailty. The sign of the cross reminds of the hope of new life in the resurrected Christ.

In addition to this special service, we will continue our Lenten practice of mid-week Lenten soup suppers and worship services held in cooperation with the Laurel Mountain Lutheran Cluster (including the New Centerville Parish, the Lavansville-Bakersville Parish and St. Luke's in Rockwood).



Our Mid-week Lenten schedule is as follows:

February 24th – Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper, 5pm – 7pm @M

February 25th – Ash Wednesday: 7:30pm @Messiah

March 4th – Mid-week: 6pm – Soup; 7pm –Worship @Mt. Calvary, Lavansville

March 11th – Mid-week: 6pm-Soup; 7pm – Worship @St. Luke's, Rockwood

March 18th – Mid-week: 6pm-Soup; 7pm – Worship @Messiah

March 25th – Mid-week: 6pm-Soup; 7pm – Worship @Mt. Zion, Bakersville

April 1st – Mid-week: 6pm-Soup; 7pm – Worship @ St. Paul's



SNOW CAMP is Coming!

Attention Snow Campers – We will depart from the parking lot of Messiah on Friday, February 6th at 6:30pm. (Please try to arrive by about 6:15pm or so.) Also, please eat supper at home before you come. Snacks will be provided later in the evening but not right when we get there. We will return on Sunday, February 8th around 1pm.

!!ALSO – Pastor Will is still looking for Male Chaperones to help stay in the boys cabins over the weekend. Even if you can only stay for one night that would be helpful.



Confirmation

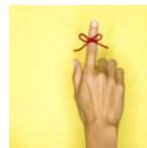
Confirmation Calendar – Monthly Preview

Jan. 31 (**Sat.**) – 6pm: Movie Night @MC

February 6-8 – SNOW CAMP

Feb. 15 (**Sun**) – 5pm: Class @MC

Feb. 24 (**Tues**)– 4pm: (or when you get there) Servant Event
-- Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper @M



Jesus, Justice, and Journey – Sr. High Event

Registrations are in. The Sr. High Event will be held on the weekend of February 27, 28 and March 1. We will depart from the parking lot of Messiah at 4:30pm on Friday, February 27th. We will stop for dinner somewhere along the way. Youth will return on Sunday, March 1st around 1-1:30pm.



A Treat for Your Sweet – A Sweetheart Dinner

On **Sunday, February 15th**, the Sr. High Youth going to New Orleans will host a Sweetheart Dinner immediately following late worship. Come share a special meal with your loved ones and help our youth be fed in New Orleans.

FYI – Thanks to your generosity and their hard work, we have raised enough money to provide airfare, registration and lodging to get to New Orleans but we still need a little extra in order to provide them with meals while they are there.

There will be a free will offering taken during the meal to help do this. Even if your budget is little tight, you are still invited to come and eat with our youth and offer them your prayers as they look forward to this exciting journey of faith.

Our menu will include: Roast Beef, Potatoes, Green Beans, Cole Slaw, Home-made Rolls, Dessert and Beverages.

In addition to the dinner, we will also be having a small silent auction featuring some baskets filled with goodies, a knotted quilt, and a hand-embroidered quilt (quilted by our church ladies with embroidered material donated by the Livengood family).



A Souper Thank You

The Laurel Mountain Mission Team would like to thank everyone who purchased a quart of soup to support our ministry to the



Gulf Coast and to Habitat for Humanity. We made and sold over 200 quarts of Beef Vegetable and Ham N Bean.

Also, we would like to thank everyone who helped make that possible – to our chefs, our cooks, our choppers, our stirrers, our lifters, our ladlers, and our deliverers. Thanks for a job well done and a delicious bowl of soup.



On the Horizon: Worship Happenings in February

February 1st – Joint Parish Worship @MC

Today, we will be having a Joint Parish Worship Service at Mt. Calvary at 10am. A fellowship luncheon will follow. We will also be having a guest preacher.

Our pastor friend from Houston, Chris Lake, who was to baptize Lydia but couldn't because of Hurricane Ike, will be present to share with us stories about the Hurricane's aftermath, how it affected his congregation, and the ministry opportunities that arose because of it.

February 8th – Sunday of the Wounded Healer

Today, we remember that it is God who strengthens the powerless. In the healing work of Jesus, we see the hand of the creator God, lifting up the sick woman to health and service. Also, today during worship we will celebrate a **Rite of Anointing and Healing** for those who need a sign that God strengthens and renews us all.

February 15th – Tell the Good News Sunday

Today, we hear how Jesus crosses the boundaries of fear of contagion to touch and heal a man suffering from a skin disease. Although the man is instructed to tell no one, he cannot keep from living the good news. Now cleansed, the man tells the story freely. We are called to tell the story in our lives as well.

February 22nd – The Transfiguration of our Lord

The three disciples' vision of Jesus' transfiguration brings to an end the season after the Epiphany. Following this vision, Jesus comes down from the mountain strengthened to begin his journey to

Jerusalem and Mt. Calvary. We are given this last vision of the light of God's glory to sustain us in our Lenten journey to the cross as well.



There's Wisdom in the Word – Parish Bible Study

All are invited to come, pray, and study scripture as we continue to explore the Book of Faith. Our topic will be The Many Meanings of the Bible. Our session will include a video presentation by Dr. Mark Allan Powell.

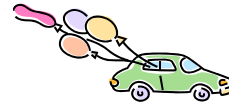
Bible study meets on Tuesday, February 24th at 7pm (following our pancake supper) or Wednesday, February 25th at 10:30am in the lounge at Messiah.



Coming In March – CTIM: Congregation Together in Ministry

Topic: Open the Word -- Open the Book of Faith

On Saturday, March 28th, the Allegheny Synod is hosting a CTIM event at Mt. Calvary Lutheran in Johnstown. The event will feature a guest speaker – Brooks Schamm, Associate Professor of Biblical Studies at Gettysburg Seminary and there will also be various workshops on different aspects of the Book of Faith. Please watch for additional information.



Dear Friends of Meals On Wheels Somerset County,

The Meals on Wheels program is in desperate need of substitute volunteers to help pack the meals and also drivers or carriers to deliver the meals.

This service is greatly appreciated by the clients we serve. Those dedicated volunteers who help, have testified that they thoroughly enjoy their jobs and that it is very fulfilling knowing that they are helping others in such a valued way. We could not possibly provide this service to our community without their assistance.

For more information, please feel free to call us at 443-2787. Your attention to this matter is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely, Marge Coddington



A Feast before our Lenten Fast: Pancakes and Sausage

Before we enter the time of Lenten restraint, everyone is invited to come fill up on pancakes, sausage, and fried potatoes on Shrove Tuesday. Our Parish Pancake Supper will be held **at Messiah on Shrove Tuesday, February 24th between the hours of 5pm and 7pm**. Stop by any time during those hours as your schedule allows and join us for an evening of delicious food and good fellowship.

The supper is free to all who come but if you'd like to leave a free will offering you may. This year's offering will go towards the Rockwood Ministerium's Rental and Fuel Assistance Fund.



Confirmation Servant Event – Flipping Pancakes and Frying Sausage

As our service project for February, confirmation youth are asked to come help set up, prepare, cook, serve, or clean up after for our Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper at Messiah. According to your schedule, please show up between 4pm and 6pm on February 24th to help out.



SPECIAL MUSIC OPPORTUNITY – Geneva Choir

Concert @MC

On **Friday, March 6**, the Lavansville-Bakersville Lutheran Parish will be hosting the Geneva College Choir, who will be performing a concert at 7:00 pm. The concert will take place at Mt. Calvary in Lavansville, and it is the first stop on Geneva's spring-break choir tour. A wide variety of music will be performed, so bring your friends! Concert is free, but we will be receiving a free-will offering for help in gas expenses, etc.



Housing Needed for Choir Students

Students from the Geneva College Choir will be looking for home-stays, so if you are willing to have a pair of students stay with you overnight and serve them breakfast before leaving Saturday morning, please call the L/B Church office at 443-3965 so that we can begin a list. If you have a preference for hosting boys or girls, please indicate that as well. We will be receiving a list from the college the beginning of February. We hope that you will share this musical opportunity with us!



A New Nursery and Kiddie Sunday School

Lately, we have been hearing the wonderful sounds of more babies and kiddies in the sanctuary at Messiah. It is wonderful practice for them to learn how to worship and to occasionally sit still with their families. They are always welcome in our worship and in



our church family. But we also understand that young children can make it challenging for parents to worship for themselves.

Therefore, beginning February 8th, Messiah is starting a new nursery for babies and young children during the worship hour. Babies may be dropped off at the nursery before worship. Young children are encouraged to sit with their family for the beginning of worship and then before the lessons, they will be invited to go out for a lesson with our nursery teachers. Parents may accompany them if they are a little shy. Pastor Will is hoping to begin a weekly brief message with the children prior to the lessons and their dismissal.

The nursery will be staffed by two adult attendants at all times. Any adults who would like to assist in staffing the nursery, please call Pastor Will or Patty Gross.