

MESSENGER



FROM PASTOR GARY'S DESK

As I prepare for this upcoming day-long Communion retreat, I've been thinking a lot about Communion and what it really means. Obviously, we celebrate Communion as a means of grace. We receive forgiveness through the Body and Blood of Christ given in, with, and under the bread and wine of the meal. We celebrate Communion because it brings us together and makes us the Body of Christ to do God's will in the world, to proclaim the Gospel and care for the needs of others, especially the less fortunate. We celebrate Communion because it unites us with Christians who share in this meal from all times and places, building a worldwide union that joins us back with those loved ones we have lost and the ancestors that came before them, but is there more? Are there lessons we can learn from Communion that we can take with us into daily life?

As the weather gets nicer, with longer, warmer days, we like to spend more time outside. At least, I do. And while we should certainly all still gather for church regularly, we should also think about what it means to carry church with us outside, into the world beyond, into all the places God is calling us to bring Christ.

In Communion, everyone gets an equal place at the table and while excommunication is possible, that only happens due to persistent, unrepentant moral failings. No one is turned away because their clothes are too tattered and torn. No one is turned away because they can't afford to bring something to the church pot luck. No one is turned away because of race or gender or because they're "not from around here." Communion is a table that you don't have to pay for. You don't have to leave a tip.

On the other side of this, Communion is not a meal in which you can show off your status or wealth. No one is paying for all the meals at the table to demonstrate how much expendable income they have. No one is getting the fancier table at the restaurant in the quiet back room. You can't use this meal to show how good, how powerful, how wealthy, how influential, how well-connected you are. The meal belongs completely to every member of the community, and yet none of us really own it because it is a gift from God.

And this goes for me and other pastors like me too. We may know more about the history of the meal. We may have thought theologically and Biblically about what Communion means longer than you have. We may be able to more clearly articulate the importance of Communion than the average Christian, and yet, it isn't our meal. We aren't the host. We aren't the first guest.

We are simply the one entrusted to make sure the meal is shared properly. All the fancy clothes I wear while presiding on Sunday mornings are not to signify my own importance, they are to remind you of God's renewing and life giving love and our shared mission together.

Can we bring that away from here? Can we share that mentality with the rest of the world? When we feed the hungry, are we feeling superior to them? Are we doing it to make ourselves feel good, or are we sharing a meal in which we are also participating, in which we are also fed? When we eat with friends, do we use it as an opportunity to show how rich, socially skilled, or clever we are? Or do we purely enjoy the company of friends and the food we share as equals? Would we turn away the hungry that we don't feel are worthy? Would we turn away the hungry who are also drug addicts, ex-convicts, people who suffer from mental health challenges? Would we turn away people we dislike or disagree with, or is food a gift from God for all of us?

Peter Kropotkin was a Russian anarchist who believed that they didn't need some massive state apparatus after the revolution. They needed communities who stuck together, and from that the workers could be liberated from the oppression of both the government and the wealthy. His brand of anarchism was not what the Soviets liked apparently, and the anarchists were suppressed after he died, but I want to quote from his book *The Conquest of Bread*:

"Bread, it is bread that the revolution needs! Let others spend their time in issuing pompous proclamations, in decorating themselves lavishly with official gold lace, and in talking about political liberty!... Be it ours to see, from the first day of the revolution to the last, in all the provinces fighting for freedom, that there is not a single man who lacks bread, not a single woman compelled to stand with the wearied crowd outside the bakehouse-door, that haply a coarse loaf may be thrown to her in charity, not a single child pining for want of food."

Kropotkin was writing to anarchist revolutionaries, but he could have been writing to Christians as well. The Kingdom of God will come. Let the theologians argue about what that will look like. Let the Bible scholars argue about the varied understandings of God's kingdom in the Scriptures. Let the planners talk about how it will be organized the day Jesus comes back. Be it ours to see that no one goes hungry, that the lessons of Communion break free from the church so that no child will ever fall asleep in school because they are too hungry ever again. Be it ours to share our bread so freely that all may feel welcome and none will leave unsatisfied.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

March 28th - LYF Service Project - Wymore Country Club Cleanup
10 a.m. to 12 p.m.

April 2nd - Maundy Thursday Service @ 7:30 p.m.

April 3rd - Good Friday Service @ 7:30 p.m.

April 5th - Easter Sunday Service @ 8:00 a.m.

April 19th - Confirmation Service Project - Roadside Cleanup

April 23rd - Bible Study @ 6:30 p.m.

April 23rd - Council Meeting @ 7:30 p.m.

April 26th - LYF Outing - Location & Time TBD



REMINDER:

There are sign up sheets on the table in the entryway for the classes that Pastor is offering to the congregation. If you are interested in any of these, please sign up. There are also descriptions of each class beneath the sign up sheet.

Please have any announcements for the bulletin to Pam by Wednesday noon each week. You may text or call her at (402) 239-2715 or send an email to the church at oursaviorslutheranwymore@gmail.com.

Thank you.



APRIL

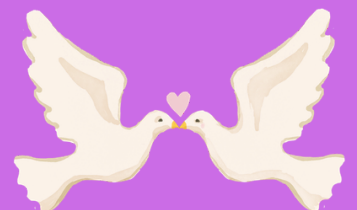
BIRTHDAYS

- 01 - DAVE CREEVAN
- 05 - MARYN MARTIN
- 06 - PAM GERDES
- 07 - KELLY DIETER
- 08 - SEAN RICKERS
- 09 - DANA DORN
- 13 - AVA JERRAD
- 13 - JUSTIN WEYER
- 15 - LARISSA GRINVALDS
- 19 - MARIAH MURPHY
- 19 - DARCIE SCHMIDT
- 20 - BRIGSLEE DIETER
- 20 - DUSTIN WEGNER
- 20 - RYKER WHITWER

APRIL

ANNIVERSARIES

- 02 - SCOTT & DEE BEDNAR
- 09 - JOSH & AMY SCHMIDT
- 10 - LARRY & DARCIE SCHMIDT
- 12 - JOEL & STACY FOSSLER





THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO
HELPED LEAD SERVICES THIS
LENTEN SEASON

