

PILGRIM'S PROGRESS



PILGRIM LUTHERAN CHURCH
3650 West 106th Street
Carmel, IN 46032
www.pilgrimindy.org

SUNDAY WORSHIP
 8 a.m. and 10:45 a.m.

Sunday School
 9:30 a.m.

Wednesday Worship
 7 p.m.

OFFICE HOURS

8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
 Monday-Thursday

8 a.m.-noon
 Friday

Church Office(317) 846-2221
 Church FAX(317) 846-3590
 Preschool Office(317) 846-6132



@pilgrimindy



Evangelical Lutheran
 Church in America

CELEBRATING LENT

Join us at 6 p.m. on Wednesday, March 8, and each Wednesday through April 5, for a total of five **LENTEN DINNERS**. An entree will be provided by one of our committees, and participants are encouraged to bring a salad, side dish or dessert for all to share (sign-up sheet on the credenza in the narthex). Plan to join us for dinner (even if you can't bring a dish to pass; you still are welcome to join us!) followed by Lenten worship in the sanctuary at 7 p.m. Let's enjoy this Pilgrim (and *very* Lutheran) tradition as we prepare for Easter.



WELCA WILL BE SERVING the first Lenten dinner. Any ladies who are available and willing to help set up and serve or clean up are invited to come to the kitchen at 5 p.m. on March 8. We will be serving fried chicken (purchased). The congregation may sign up for salads, sides and desserts as mentioned above. We ladies will need to set up dishes and place settings, prepare drinks and clean up after the dinner. Thank you!

MIDWEEK LENTEN SCHEDULE

Ash Wednesday Worship Services..... March 1, noon and 7 p.m.
 Lenten Dinner/Service Wednesdays March 8-April 5, 6 p.m./7 p.m.

HOLY WEEK SERVICES

Maundy Thursday, April 13..... 7 p.m.
 Good Friday, April 14 noon and 7 p.m.
 Easter Vigil, April 15 7 p.m.
 Easter Breakfast, April 16 9 a.m.
 Easter Sunday Worship, April 16 8 a.m. and 10:45 a.m.

VOTERS' MEETING

9:30 a.m. Sunday, March 5, 2017

All communicant members who are 18 years of age or older are eligible and *encouraged to attend*! Please plan now to attend!

MISSION STATEMENT

We are a caring Community called together in ministry by the Holy Spirit through the Gospel and the Sacraments to: believe in Jesus Christ as Savior, worship the Triune God, and serve God by proclaiming the Gospel, joyfully celebrating our God-given gifts, and loving and serving our neighbors with Jesus as our example.

**PILGRIM LUTHERAN
CHURCH STAFF**
Interim Pastor*Rudy Mueller***Education Director***Gloria Worth***Preschool Director***Amy Tucker***Youth Directors***Jenny Pitts**Gail Powell***Cantor to the Congregation***Sarah Gran Williams***Director of Music for****Children & Youth***Gail Powell***Handbell Director***Kevin Donley***Assistant Treasurer***Donna Drew***Office Manager***Debbie Collins***Set-up & Custodial Assistant***Matt Worth***Maintenance***Mark Wylie*

FROM THE ELDERS

Lent will soon be upon us. By definition, Lent is the Christian season (40 days) of preparation before Easter. It is a time of reflection and soul-searching marked by contemplation. Reverend Howard Fehr, a Lutheran minister, stated that the word "lent" came from an old English word that meant "long." Lent comes at a time of the year when the days are getting longer and we are seeing more sun. Lent is supposed to do that for us – shed more light on our lives through the work of the Holy Spirit.

The Bible does not actually state anything about Lent or even Ash Wednesday. However, there are references about ashes being a sign of human mortality "Remember that you are dust, and to dust you will return." (Genesis 3:19) The ashes are presented in the sign of the cross on the forehead. The cross is the very symbol by which the Lord took upon himself the punishment for our sins, in our place. The cross of ashes reminds us that we are sinners, and that Christ died for us.

For me, Lent is a time to slow down. I like to take time to reflect upon the life and suffering Christ went through for us, to read from the Bible, and to pray for forgiveness and spiritual growth. It also means finding time to help others in any way possible. I enjoy this slower pace.

I was brought up with the idea that fasting and giving up something for Lent was not necessary. Yet, as an adult, I find it helpful to give up "something." In doing so, every time I reach for that "something," it makes me stop and reflect. For me the reflection is about Christ's suffering and death. Martin Luther had some insight into the issue of fasting: "...the kind of fasting I want: Free those who are wrongly imprisoned; lighten the burden of those who work for you. Let the oppressed go free, and remove the chains that bind people. Share your food with the hungry, and give shelter to the homeless. Give clothes to those who need them, and do not hide from relatives who need your help. Then your salvation will come like the dawn, and your wounds will quickly heal. Your godliness will lead you forward, and the glory of the LORD will protect you from behind." This gives us a very unique meaning for the word "fasting." Indeed, if we could do all of the above-mentioned

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KRAM-MAU

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McC-POW

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things, wouldn't it be magnificent.

Lent is a time to reflect on our own weaknesses and selfishness, and to prepare ourselves for the death and resurrection of Christ. As you know, I adore music because I feel music is like praying twice. I hope you can find some time to just listen to the following song for inspiration during this season. It is found on YouTube: "O Sacred Head Sore Wounded" arranged by J.S. Bach and sung by the King's College Cambridge. The website is:
https://video.search.yahoo.com/yhs/search?hsimp=yhs-att_001&hspart=att&p=o+sacred+head+now+wounded+lyrics#id=22&vid=4aeaaede533d8fe556b942e9f28e68c2&action=view

Following are the words for you to contemplate as you listen:

*O sacred head, sore wounded, defiled and put to scorn;
O kingly head, surrounded with mocking crown of thorn:
What sorrow mars Thy grandeur? Can death Thy bloom
deflower?*

O countenance whose splendor the hosts of heaven adore!

*In Thy most bitter passion, my heart to share doth cry,
With Thee for my salvation upon the cross to die.*

*Ah, keep my heart thus moved to stand Thy cross beneath,
To mourn Thee, well-beloved, yet thank Thee for Thy death.*

I hope that you can enjoy the season of Lent. Contemplate spending time during Lent reflecting on Christ's life. Help others and share God's love with them. Share with others how generous God was to us on Easter morning. If we consider all this, then we can truly understand and celebrate Jesus' resurrection and our own salvation with joyful hearts. As the hymn states:

*Eternal Lord of love, behold your church
Walking once more the pilgrim way of Lent,
Led by your cloud by day, by night your fire,
Moved by your love and toward your presence bent:
Far off yet here the goal of all desire. (ELW # 321)*

Kathy Bloom, Pilgrim elder

FROM THE PASTOR

Greetings.

For those who haven't met me yet, I am Rudy Mueller. I have served as pastor of three Lutheran congregations (AELC, LCA and ELCA) and the last 16 years as assistant to the bishop of the Indiana-Kentucky Synod. I am here at Pilgrim as your interim, contracted by the Board of Directors to provide pastoral care and leadership until you call and welcome your next pastor. My job is to support that process, and that I will do.

March 1 is Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent, and sometimes called the most somber day of the year. (I know, you are thinking, "What about Good Friday?" That is indeed the day when we remember the death of Jesus by crucifixion. But it is also, um, "good." It is death for the life of the world.)

There will be two opportunities to gather with other Pilgrims for the Ash Wednesday Liturgy – at noon and at 7 pm. In this Liturgy we confess our sin, receive ashes -- an ancient symbol of repentance and a sign of our mortality, and are invited into the discipline of Lent. *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* remarks, "Returning to God's mercy and grace, marked with the cross of Christ, we make our way through Lent, longing for the baptismal waters of Easter, our spiritual rebirth." (p. 248)



The *Lutheran Book of Worship* Ash Wednesday Liturgy invites us into the discipline of Lent with these words: *As disciples of the Lord Jesus we are called to struggle against everything that leads us away from the love of God and neighbor. Repentance, fasting, prayer, and works of love – the discipline of Lent – help us to wage our spiritual warfare.*

This discipline is a way of living out more intensely and intently the way of life and struggle against sin and evil to which we are called in holy baptism. We do this together in the liturgies of Lent, and we do this in our own personal ways throughout our daily life.

In the Sunday liturgies of Lent we will

- confess our sins and wait for the Easter word of absolution.
- sing no Alleluias, our Easter song.
- refrain from sharing the peace as a sign that sin breaks our relationships with others.
- replace distribution hymns with prayer and meditation.
- omit processions, which are signs of joy and celebration.

These disciplines, and the ones we do on our own or as families – like giving up something for Lent (sweets or TV or yelling at our sister), engaging in Lenten devotions, keeping an offering jar for World Hunger funds, are ways we observe Lent as a season of confession. The discipline helps to make it a time of preparation for celebrating with joy Jesus' victory over sin and death. Easter's

50 days trumps Lent's 40. Jesus's resurrection words of peace and forgiveness trump Lent's period of confession.

My job as interim pastor is not to change things; but I can offer you a vision of things that might be different. The Worship Committee and the Elders have supported the idea of thinking about Lent this year from another perspective – not as change, but an opportunity to experience something different. As we walk this Lenten journey together, let us share our thoughts and responses to what we hear and see and feel that is different. And how that brings us to a joyful celebration of Jesus' resurrection.

Peace,

Rudy

WHAT'S HAPPENING AROUND PILGRIM...

PILGRIM LENT OFFERINGS

This year Pilgrim's Lent offerings will be collected for Wheeler Mission Ministries. Wheeler Mission Ministries provides Christ-centered programs and services for the homeless (men, women, and women with children) and those in need. With locations in Indianapolis and Bloomington, their services take a holistic approach to our local homelessness community by providing physical, mental, emotional and spiritual help. These services also include emergency services (short term 30-day program to help assess the reasons for homelessness), residential programs (Six month program to help re-integrate individuals back into society with affordable housing and employment) and addiction recovery (a longer term program to help individuals create a "total" life change). For more information about Wheeler Mission Ministries, please visit <http://wheelermission.org>.



THE ROAD TO EMMAUS
REVEALED

ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL

Susie Pike will be our adult Sunday school teacher during the season of Lent. She begins her class titled "The Road to Emmaus-Revealed" on Sunday, March 12. Susie says the purpose and goals of her class will be finding Jesus in the Old Testament and expositing the writings that Jesus "opened to the disciples concerning Him in Moses and the prophets." The class runs through Palm Sunday on April 9.

VBS 2017

VBS dates are set for 2017. Please mark your calendars for fun under the sun for the week of July 17-21, 2017. We will have a great week of games, music, crafts, snack, missions and bible stories. Be sure to sign up your children soon; we have limited spaces for about 80 children.

Our program remains popular and sign ups come in pretty quickly. If you wish to help, please contact Gloria Worth at gloriaworth@pilgrimindy.org. We are fortunate as always to have our main leadership roles covered but we love to have folks come and help wherever and whenever they are able. We always need camp counselors. Our children who are entering 7th grade and up may sign up to be a group leader, and adults may serve in this capacity as well. Thank you in advance for any and all participation; let's make VBS 2017 one of our best ever!



THE PILGRIM FINE ARTS SERIES PRESENTS...



Hope College Chapel Choir in Concert
7 p.m., Wednesday, March 22, Sanctuary
Free will offering taken

The Pilgrim Fine Arts Series presents the Hope College Chapel Choir in concert at 7 p.m., Wednesday, March 22. This concert is in lieu of Midweek Lenten worship. Directed by Dr. Brad Richmond, Hope Choir is from Holland, Michigan, and performed at Pilgrim several years ago. This 40-voice choir is dedicated to the performance of the finest sacred and secular choral music. Come and be inspired by this talented group of young singers!

ANNUAL INDIANA-KENTUCKY SYNOD ASSEMBLY

WANTED: VOTING MEMBERS, three individuals consisting of a male/female combination, to attend the 30th Annual Indiana-Kentucky Synod Assembly, from Thursday, June 1-Saturday, June 3, 2017, at the Northern Kentucky Convention Center in Covington, KY. (All voting members are eligible including youth who have been confirmed. The costs of registration, housing, and meals for those who attend are covered by a line item in our church budget. Any Pilgrim members interested should contact the RudyMueller@pilgrimindy.org or call (317) 846-2221.

SUPER SENIORS LUNCHEON

Seniors, please mark your calendars for our next event scheduled for noon on Tuesday, March 21, 2017. Watch the bulletin and emails for more information on this upcoming event.

VBS Enrollment Form

July 17-21, 2017 • 9 a.m.-12:15 p.m.

Name of Parents _____

Address _____ City _____ Zip Code _____

Email _____ Cell (mom) _____ Cell (dad) _____

In case of an emergency and parents are not available, please contact:

Name _____ Cell _____

Children must be 4 years of age by June 1, 2017, to attend VBS.

All ages up through those children entering 6th grade are welcome to attend.

Students entering 7th grade and higher may volunteer to be camp counselors (Adults, too).

Name	Gender	Age	Grade Entering in fall <i>Preschoolers list birth date; must be 4 by June 1, 2017.</i>	Allergies/ Special Needs
1. _____	_____	_____		
2. _____	_____	_____		
3. _____	_____	_____		
4. _____	_____	_____		

We do our best to put children together per parent request but it does not always work out as we set our groups. Please understand if we unable to fulfill your request and trust your child will still have a wonderful experience.

We ask for a supply fee at the time of registration:

\$30 per child for non-members and \$20 per child for Pilgrim Lutheran Church members.

Registration and checks may be dropped off at the church office or mailed to:

PILGRIM LUTHERAN CHURCH
3650 West 106th Street
Carmel, IN 46032

Please register no later than **JUNE 30, 2017.**

We need to be sure we have enough supplies to accommodate our campers!

Questions: contact Gloria Worth, Director of Christian Education
(317) 846-2221, ext. 1226, or gloriaworth@pilgrimindy.org.

Thank you!

CHILDREN'S CORNER: What is Lent?

March 1 is a special day in the church; the season of Lent begins. Lent is a time of waiting, watching, and preparing ourselves for Jesus' journey to the cross, grave and finally his resurrection from the dead. We are forgiven because of what Jesus did for us. But is it easy to forgive? Jesus had to suffer greatly for the forgiveness of our sins. When we need to forgive someone do we find it difficult or easy? Look over the situations below and think about whether it would be hard or easy to forgive.

- Your best friend forgets your birthday. Hard or Easy?
- A classmate borrows money from you and never pays it back. Hard or Easy?
- You tell a friend something and you ask for them to keep it a secret. Later you find out your friend did tell others and everyone is talking about you. Hard or Easy?
- You are teased about what you are wearing. Hard or Easy?
- Your parents promise you a sleepover for Friday night. Later in the week plans change for your parents and they have to postpone your sleepover. Hard or Easy?

You may be able to add to the list or think about times you did not want to forgive someone. Remember that God wants us to forgive others, always. During the season of Lent you may wish to work on your forgiveness muscles; it will make you strong! God Blessings upon you,

Mrs. Worth



EDUCATION CALENDAR

Fridays, March 3, 17 and 31.....Kids in Christ meets from 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Sunday, March 5 Voters' meeting

Activities for Children from 9:30-10:30

Sundays, March 12, 19 and 26.....Sunday school for all ages.

Susie Pike leads adult class.

PILGRIM LUTHERAN PRESCHOOL & PARENTS' TIME OUT



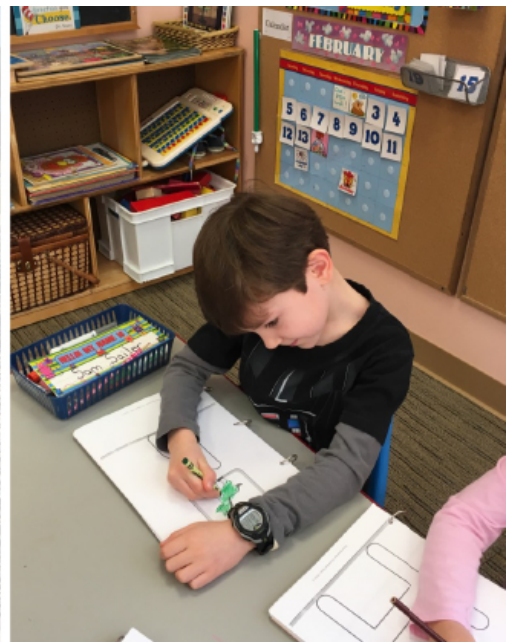
February was a fun and busy month here at the preschool! We started the month with not-so-great news from the Groundhog...although it does seem that we are lucking out with another mild winter. We even have been able to enjoy the playground on several sunny, warmer days. February was the month of love and friendship as we celebrated Valentine's Day. We had fun making Valentines for our family and sharing Valentines with our friends. It also is a wonderful time to remember that God loves each and every one of us!

I made it through my first registration and it seemed to go very well! Many classes filled up immediately and already have waiting lists. In most age levels we only have a couple openings here and there, and we do have openings in the 2s and toddlers since this is the age where most children begin their preschool experience. If you know someone who might be interested in our program, please have them email the school: preschool@pilgrimindy.org or call the school office at (317) 846-6132. The preschool also is currently accepting applications from qualified individuals for teachers for the 2017-2018 school year. Please email or call Amy for additional information.

On March 6 we will have our annual Dad's night for children attending the 4s classes. This is an evening for the students to have a special time with Dad (or another adult) and is always a big hit! The theme is "western," and we will be "panning for gold," eat dinner at the "chuckwagon," make bandanas, have a "cookie walk," play "cowboy toss" (cornhole), and even have a "barber shoppe," where the children will give dad a "shave." We always end the evening with a fun hoedown with singing and dancing. Yee-haw!

Thanks again to all of you who support our ministry to our young children and their families in our congregation and our community. Please continue to keep us all in your prayers.

In His Service,
Amy Tucker



MARCH MINISTRY SCHEDULE

SUNDAYS

MARCH 5, 2017

Elder
Acolyte
Greeters
Lay Assistant
Nursery Worship
Nursery Sunday School
A/V Coverage

8 a.m.

Kathy Bloom
Delaney Hatfield
Hatfield Family
Mike Przybylski
N/A

Marcia Runkel

Steve Bloom

10:45 a.m.

Gwen Knipstein
Nolan Elser
Elser Family
Noel Shilling
Marla Murphy

Mark Tisdale

MARCH 12, 2017



Elder
Acolyte
Acolyte
Greeters
Lay Assistant
Communion Assistant
Communion Assistant
Nursery Worship
Nursery Sunday School
A/V Coverage

Jim Durst
Kyle Fedorcha
N/A
Fedorcha Family
Denny Licht
N/A
N/A
N/A

Barb Bowen

Jim Durst

Bob Schumacher
Marla Murphy
Kathy Hatfield
Hatfield Family
Caroline Williams
Barb Geraghty
Tim Guedel
Sharon Rexing

Mark Tisdale

MARCH 19, 2017

Elder
Acolyte
Greeters
Lay Assistant
Nursery Worship
Nursery Sunday School
A/V Coverage

Jim Durst
Zach Johnsey
Johnsey Family
Karin Veatch
N/A

Jim Durst

Jim Williams
Malik Dorn
Dorn Family
Emma Williams
Yolande Blase

Mark Tisdale

MARCH 26, 2017

Elder
Acolyte
Greeters
Lay Assistant
Nursery Worship
Nursery Sunday School
A/V Coverage

Kathy Bloom
Kyle Fedorcha
Fedorcha Family
Marla Murphy
N/A

Karin Veatch

Steve Bloom

Dave Blase
Elizabeth Rexing
Rexing Family
Tammy Donley

Mark Tisdale

ALTAR GUILD
CHANCEL VOLUNTEER

Peggy Forst

Julie Williams

Herta Baade

Martin Hurford, Fred Baade

USHERS Marv Brethauer, Steve Witte

John Williams, Don Newby

Jim Williams

COFFEE Set Up/Clean Up

Barb Lamb

Heather Zetzi

WEDNESDAYS

MARCH 1, 2017 (noon)

Elder
Dave Runkel
Lay Assistant
Bob Schumacher

MARCH 1, 2017 (7 p.m.)

Elder
Jim Williams
Lay Assistant
Frank Bates

MARCH 8, 2017

Elder
Jim Williams
Lay Assistant
Maureen Jordan

MARCH 15, 2017

Elder
Bob Schumacher
Lay Assistant
John Shilling

MARCH 22, 2017

Elder
Bob Schumacher
Lay Assistant
N/A

MARCH 29, 2017

Elder
Jim Williams
Lay Assistant
Eileen Hintz

MARCH 2017 CALENDAR

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1 9a Preschool 12p Ash Wednesday Worship 2:30p Carmel Library Bookmobile 6p Jazzercise 6:15p Choir Warm Up 7p Ash Wednesday Worship	2 9a Preschool 9:15a MOMs 9:30a Large Print 6p Jazzercise	3 9a Preschool 6:30p Kids in Christ	4 8a Jazzercise 12p United Church of God 4:30p Progressive Dinner
5 8a Worship & Holy Communion 9a Youth Bells 9:30a Sunday School 9:30a Voters' Meeting 10:45a Worship & Holy Communion 12p Fine Arts Committee	6 9a Preschool 11:30a Women's Bible Study @ Serenity 6p Preschool Dad's Night	7 9a Preschool 9:30a Large Print 7p Board of Elders	8 9a Preschool 2:30p Carmel Library Bookmobile 6p Lenten Dinner 7p Midweek Lenten Worship-Vespers 7:30p Combo Group	9 9a Preschool 9:15a MOMs 9:30a Large Print 11:30a Bible Study 6p Handbell rehearsal 6p Jazzercise 7p Choir rehearsal	10 9a Preschool	11 8a Jazzercise 12p United Church of God SET YOUR CLOCKS AHEAD ONE HOUR!
12 DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME BEGINS! 8a Worship & Holy Communion 9a Youth Bells 9:30a Sunday School 10:45a Worship & Holy Communion	13 9a Preschool 6p Jazzercise	14 9a Preschool 9:30a Large Print	15 9a Preschool 2:30p Carmel Library Bookmobile 6p Lenten Dinner 7p Midweek Lenten Worship-Vespers 7:30p Congregational Life Meeting	16 9a Preschool 9:15a MOMs 9:30a Large Print 6p Handbell rehearsal 6p Jazzercise 7p Choir rehearsal	17 9a Preschool 6:30p Kids in Christ 	18 8a Jazzercise 12p United Church of God 1p Piano Recital
19 8a Worship & Holy Communion 9a Youth Bells 9:30a Sunday School 10:45a Worship & Holy Communion 2p Piano Recital	20 9a Preschool 6p Jazzercise 7p Evangelism/Communications FIRST DAY OF SPRING	21 9a Preschool 9:30a Large Print 12p Super Senior Luncheon 7p Board of Directors	22 9a Preschool 1p Preschool Board 2:30p Carmel Library Bookmobile 6p Lenten Dinner 7p Midweek Lenten Worship-Hope Chapel Choir	23 9a Preschool 9:15a MOMs 9:30a Large Print 11:30a Bible Study 6p Handbell rehearsal 6p Jazzercise 7p Choir rehearsal	24 9a Preschool	25 8a Jazzercise 12p United Church of God 3p Violin Recital
26 8a Worship & Holy Communion 9a Youth Bells 9:30a Sunday School 10:45a Worship & Holy Communion	27 9a Preschool 6p Jazzercise	28 9a Preschool 9:30a Large Print	29 9a Preschool 2:30p Carmel Library Bookmobile 6p Lenten Dinner 7p Midweek Lenten Worship-Vespers	30 9a Preschool 9:15a MOMs 9:30a Large Print 6p Handbell rehearsal 6p Jazzercise 7p Choir rehearsal	31 NO PRESCHOOL 6:30p Kids in Christ	

BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES



Jean Keneipp	1-Mar
Daniel Sailer	1-Mar
Flo Westermann	1-Mar
Dick Wiehe	1-Mar
Suzi Dorn	2-Mar
Erica Harriman	2-Mar
Amy Jordan	2-Mar
Michael Miller	2-Mar
Dave Runkel Sr	5-Mar
Kevin Donley	6-Mar
Pat Guedel	6-Mar
Karen Licht	7-Mar
Anna Johnsey	8-Mar
Steve Worth	8-Mar
Trent Brauer	9-Mar
Susie Pike	9-Mar
Timothy Moehl	10-Mar
Billy Bowen	11-Mar
Jacob Campbell	11-Mar
Michelle Proch	11-Mar
John Roeder	11-Mar
Elizabeth Schumacher	11-Mar
Brett Bowen	13-Mar
Kelli Baumgarn	14-Mar
Tim Guedel	15-Mar
Sarah Lein	18-Mar
Kathi Brethauer	20-Mar
Andrew Runkel	20-Mar
Mason Runkel	20-Mar
Miki Ulreich	20-Mar
Vivian Kraabel	22-Mar
Erika Malone	22-Mar
Kevin Willis	23-Mar
Jillian Nobis	24-Mar
Erin Forst	25-Mar
Tyler Keller	25-Mar
Gloria Worth	25-Mar
Lorraine Ransford	27-Mar
Joseph Peeters	28-Mar
Lucille Kraabel	29-Mar
Timothy Murphy	31-Mar



Alan & Susan Maul	3/16/74	43 years
Shane & Susan Hawkins-Wilding	3/18/00	17 years
Brian & Carrie Bowen	3/24/07	10 years
Todd & Marci Kreigh	3/31/90	27 years



You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. (8th Commandment)

As we move through this 500th year since the beginning of the Reformation, many of us are renewing our acquaintance with various writings and resources from and about that medieval movement that changed the church and impacted the world. A great place to begin is with Martin Luther's Small Catechism. A great time to begin is the season of Lent.

Local faith communities might shape Wednesday worship around sections of the catechism or add a brief time for exploration and discussion of the catechism before or after worship. Families could briefly read and discuss parts of it once or twice a week before saying grace at dinner. Individuals might slowly read through, meditate on, and journal about the catechism in devotional time two or three times a week.

However we engage this important booklet, it won't take long to realize that its content is not just for memorization by kids or catechism classes and its wisdom is as relevant today as it was the day Luther wrote it five centuries ago. Take his reflection on the eighth commandment, for example:

What does this mean? We are to fear and love God, so that we do not tell lies about our neighbors, betray or slander them, or destroy their reputations. Instead we are to come to their defense, speak well of them, and interpret everything they do in the best possible light.

If there was ever a time and place when this understanding of that commandment has been

needed it's here and now, in this country, in social media and public discourse, and in our churches. Scan through your Twitter or Facebook feed. Listen to ten minutes of a news program. Reflect back on your own conversations over the last week. How many lies or unverifiable false claims have been made about others? How many times has someone been betrayed or slandered or their reputation sullied in some way?

The answer? Too many. Too much of our conversation (and thinking) about others these days blatantly breaks the eighth commandment. It's one thing to disagree, even vehemently, or to not understand another person's choices. But, it is another thing altogether to use the disagreement or lack of understanding as an opportunity to lie about, betray, slander, or seek to destroy the reputation of a fellow human being created in the image of God.

Every time we catch ourselves in or supporting this sort of sinful behavior it's time to repent, trust the forgiveness offered in Christ crucified and risen, and to lean into and offer to others the new and abundant life of Jesus by taking every opportunity to instead "come to their defense, speak well of them, and interpret everything they do in the best possible light."

Now there's a Lenten discipline that, empowered by the Spirit and by God's grace, will not only change us, but will transform our churches, our communities, our country, our world.

+Bishop Bill Gafkjen

An elegant and free Small Catechism app is available for smartphones and tablets from Media1517 (Augsburg Fortress). Search your App Store for "Luther's Small Catechism Publishing House ELCA." This app can also be upgraded to an illustrated study version for \$1.99.

The Small Catechism can also be found beginning on page 1160 in the back of Evangelical Lutheran Worship (ELW).

I-K Synod Assembly June 1-3, 2017 Covington, Kentucky



About the Assembly

- All synod assembly events will be held at the Northern Kentucky Convention Center, One West RiverCenter Blvd., Covington, KY.
- Highlights include: Celebrating leaders and communities within the Indiana-Kentucky Synod, inspiring worship, a celebratory banquet, motivating and informative plenary sessions, election of Synod Vice President, Synod Council, board and committee members, along with all the other aspects of assembly that help us to be the church gathered together as we are formed, reformed and transformed for God's mission of hope, healing and reconciliation for the sake of the world.

Registration Fees & Other Information

- The registration fee is \$170.00 (which includes the Thursday banquet evening meal, Friday plated lunch, refreshment breaks, and all materials) per voting member.
- Fee for registered visitors is also \$170.00, which includes the Thursday banquet evening meal, Friday plated lunch, refreshment breaks, and materials.
- By action of the IN-KY Synod Council (SC/2017/7), retired professional leaders on the roster of this synod pay a reduced fee to attend the assembly – \$85.00.
- Fees for interim pastors are to be paid by the congregation(s) being served.
- Any congregation or voting member needing assistance with the registration fee must notify the IN-KY Synod Council Executive Committee of that need in writing by April 15, 2017, (mail to the synod office address, attention: IN-KY Synod Council Exec.

Comm. or email the IN-KY Synod Council Secretary,
Judy Bush: jatully@sbcglobal.net

Registration Discount

- Congregations are strongly encouraged to select their voting members early. Registration rates increase to \$200.00 after the **early bird registration deadline, Friday, March 31, 2017.**
- Registration rates increase to \$100.00 for Retired Rostered Ministers after March 31, 2017.

NEW things to pay attention to this year:

- Friday afternoon will provide attendees with various opportunities for learning through breakout sessions and service opportunities. We will not have an evening meal together on Friday, June 2, so that attendees can enjoy the local flavor of the Covington/Cincinnati area. A map with dining options will be provided.
- We are working on several optional activities for Friday evening, such as a group block of tickets to a Cincinnati Reds game (right across the river) and Evening Prayer.
- The registration costs for the 2017 Indiana-Kentucky Synod Assembly were reduced this year to offset the higher costs of the hotels in Covington, as well as lower meal expense (we will have 1 banquet dinner and 1 plated lunch in 2017, rather than 2 evening meals as in previous years). We aim to keep attendee cost as low as possible since we are aware that the expense to attend Synod Assembly can become prohibitive for some congregations and rostered ministers.

Hotel Room Reservations

Hotel reservations are in addition to and separate from your synod assembly registration. A block of rooms has been reserved at two downtown Covington hotels: The Cincinnati Marriott RiverCenter, 10 West RiverCenter Blvd. and The Embassy Suites Cincinnati RiverCenter, 10 East River Center Blvd. To make a reservation online, go to <https://aws.passkey.com/e/48988760>

Bring Your Family This Year!

Child-care arrangements are being organized by a local volunteer. A minimal fee is requested to help compensate the individuals who will provide the child care at synod assembly. Covington, KY is just across the river from Cincinnati, and this area offers many activities and things for families to do. Check out the Northern Kentucky CVB's website for places your family can visit, shop and eat. <https://www.meetnky.com/>