



THE MESSENGER

Our Saviour Lutheran Church

April 2015

Pastor Anita

This is clearly the winter that seems to go on forever. I walked Shema this morning and came back with frozen cheekbones and cold feet. I heard the weather guy say that the average high for today is twenty degrees higher than we expect for today. We still have at least six inches of snow on the ground in the level places. It will not end.

Here is my prediction, meteorologist that I am not. I believe that when Spring comes in will be like BANG it is Spring. I believe that we will not have a little bit of Spring a little bit of winter, a little bit warmer a little bit colder. This year one day the snow will be gone and it will be full blown Spring. This is my evidence. In front of my house where the snow has melted away my flowers are coming up – lots of them! My theory is that as soon as the snow is gone we will have flowers blooming. I think this is the way it ought to be.

Let's reflect on Easter. It was a surprise! We who have been celebrating Easter all our lives are pretty much used to it by now. We can be critical of the disciples and the women who come to the tomb for not knowing that Jesus would raise from the dead. We can point to Jesus' resurrection predictions in the Gospel and saying to ourselves "See, he told them what would happen. They just did not believe it." The deal with Easter is that Jesus was dead – dead – dead. No one expects life to come from death. Jesus did not get a little more alive and gradually ease into life. Jesus was dead and then Jesus was alive. It is a surprise! It is amazing! It is supposed to be amazing!

Easter is supposed to be amazing! It is supposed to be a church full of people and Alleluia's. It is supposed to children painting windows and Easter eggs and laughing and playing together. It is supposed to be trumpet playing along. It is supposed to be a sanctuary filled with Easter lilies and sweet smells. It is amazing!

It is also supposed to change our lives. It is also supposed to help us to know that God will bring life where we have only seen death. It is also supposed to help us look for the flowers under the snow. It is also supposed to let us die to all those things that we cling to that do not give us life. It is also supposed to let us admit that some addictions, some relationships, some of the crutches that we have always depended on are death dealing – not life giving. When we do we can expect a surprise. We can expect resurrection. We can expect that, not because of our own striving – not because of anything that we have done – God will bring life from death.

It is almost Easter. It is amazing! Expect amazing this Easter season.

Pastor Anita



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REMINDER—please mark your calendars.

**The deadline for the May 2015 issue of
The Messenger is April 15, 2015.**

Be sure that your group's upcoming events are included. All members of the congregation are welcome to submit information for the monthly Messenger. Articles may be sent to the church office, dropped off in the office or e-mailed to oslc-utica@verizon.net.

OUR SAVIOUR LUTHERAN CHURCH CONTACT LIST

Visit us on the Web!

Check us out!

www.oursaviourlutheranchurchutica.org

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JAM Coordinator Pam Donovan

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Paul Douglass, Treasurer. 733-9240
Katherine David. 507-7218
Erma Gaspa 797-0913
Youth Group Member Rotates



Our Community Outreach

Members of Our Saviour live among God's faithful people, serve all people, and strive for justice and peace in all the earth by sharing our building and supporting these programs:

Alcoholics Anonymous® a fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism holds regular meetings in our facility.

Seeds of Hope, a local food pantry is a collaborative effort of First Presbyterian—Utica, Our Saviour, New Hartford Presbyterian, and New Hartford United Methodist churches.

Hope House, a safe haven providing meals and other services in Utica is supported by volunteers from our congregation.

SPAN, a resource program for individual nurses who are affected by an alcohol or drug-related problem or related mental health problem meets weekly in our building.

HIV dinners which provide dinner and a place for people who are HIV positive to network and learn about the latest trends in treatment are held each month at our church.

Oneida County Lifeworks, peers helping peers build bridges to new lives, connecting people through enhancement of personal recovery, providing a safe, drug & alcohol free environment, providing local community resource guidance and enhancing life and social skills through peer to peer.

Congregational Ministries

JAM Jesus and Me Time



Each Sunday during worship a JAM time is offered for all children during worship. Children are invited to leave worship after the Children's sermon time to go with one of our JAM leaders and learn about Jesus and Bible lessons for the day. Our April JAM leader is Pam Donovan.

Easter Fun Day!



**WELCOMING ALL CHILDREN
SATURDAY, APRIL 4, 2015
10:00—11:30am
OUR SAVIOUR LUTHERAN CHURCH**

**Join us to hear the Easter Story.
Join us for a time of fun—decorating of
the sanctuary windows,
Easter egg coloring and snacks!**

Spring Clean-Up

**SATURDAY, APRIL 25, 2015
9:00 AM—3:00PM**

Volunteers of all ages and skill levels are
WELCOME!

Come for an hour—come for the day.

SIGN UP IN THE NARTHEX

Refreshments to fortify and energize.



For questions contact Jim
Lenahan, 859-0747 or Clare
Thiem, 853-1933.



New Member Gathering

Interested in learning about
membership at Our Saviour
Lutheran Church? Pastor Anita
invites all who would like to
learn about church
membership to gather on
Sunday, April 19 after church.



Church News

Message from the Council President—

The Congregation Council meets on the 3rd Thursday of each month at 7pm. Anyone is welcome to attend and take part in the discussions. The March meeting began with devotions, focusing on what it means to say that “Jesus is Lord.” It means nobody or nothing else can be Lord. Our Lord is the one who meets us at the cross and continually surprises us with his grace and mercy.

Several items were acted on. Due to illness, John Andereck has not been able to serve in his elected position on the Council. Sally Townsend has been appointed to serve in his place until the annual meeting of the congregation in June. With sincere thanks for all her years of service, the Council accepted Edween Ham’s resignation as the coordinator of the worship volunteers. We are very grateful that Erma Gaspa offered to take on this responsibility. Please let her know if you are interested in serving as lector, worship assistant or greeter. We are excited that Our Saviour will soon have a new sound system and a new stove which we were able to purchase using memorial funds.

At the annual meeting of the congregation on June 7, we will be electing members to serve on the Congregation Council for the next 3 years. Please prayerfully consider serving in this way.

Pam Donovan
Council President

FEBRUARY 2015 TREASURER’S REPORT

	<u>2014</u>			THRU JAN	<u>2015</u>		
	BUDGET	ACTUAL	VARI		BUDGET	ACTUAL	VARI
INCOME	\$ 9,861	\$ 8,659	-12%		\$ 9,861	\$10,772	9%
EXPENSES	\$15,748	\$22,628	44%		\$15,748	\$14,350	-9%
OUTSTANDING OBLIGATIONS	(\$ 5,887)	(\$13,969)			(\$ 5,887)	(\$ 3,578)	
				FEBRUARY			
	BUDGET	ACTUAL	VARI	BUDGET	ACTUAL	VARI	
INCOME	\$ 9,861	\$ 8,766	-11%	\$ 8,805	\$ 8,231	-6.5%	
EXPENSES	\$15,748	\$ 9,688	-38%	\$15,514	\$19,528	25.9%	
OUTSTANDING OBLIGATIONS	(\$5,887)	(\$ 922)		(\$ 6,709)	(\$11,297)		
WITHDRAWN FROM INVESTMTS.		(\$30,000)			0		
TOTAL OUTSTANDING	(\$11,774)	(\$ 4,891)		(\$12,596)	(\$14,875)		

NOTE: Current Month Our income is 6.5% BELOW estimate and our expenses are 25.9% ABOVE budget. We are \$11,297 in the RED for the month of February

Year to Date: Our income is 1.8% ABOVE estimate and our expenses are 8.4% ABOVE plan. We are currently \$14,875 in the RED based on our budget

Paul Douglass, Treasurer

Our Outreach Ministries

Your Neighbors, Inc.

Your Neighbors will be holding its Annual Garage Sale on May 1 and 2, 2015 at Our Saviour.

Plan ahead now. As you sort through items, clean house, and do your spring cleaning, think about Your Neighbors and set aside anything that would be beneficial for the sale. Remember when the time comes Your Neighbors will also pick up your items if they are large or if you are unable to deliver them yourself. Items will be able to be dropped off at the church beginning on April 27. As always, no clothing please! For more information contact Sara Looman at 235-7149.



SAVE THE DATE
Our Saviour
Congregation
Annual
Meeting
June 7

Central
Crossroads
Conference
Spring
Assembly
May 2, 2015



SEEDS OF HOPE NEEDS YOUR HELP!



The Canstruction event is scheduled for April 24 and 25. Seeds of Hope is receiving some of the food. To qualify, we need to have a presence at Sangertown Mall during the event. We will have a table with some information about Seeds of Hope for visitors, and **we need volunteers to give an hour or more just to be at the table.** Members and friends of all four Partner Churches are being asked to help. The specifics are not available to us at this time but please check your calendars for times you are willing to share. The major need will be Saturday, April 25 and Sunday, April 26 during the hours the Mall is open. Watch the Sunday bulletins for more details. Please contact Liz Douglass (733-9240) with questions and to volunteer.

In the larger Lutheran Community



Subtle shift to works righteousness

Jesus didn't die to change behaviors, political systems, institutions

By Elizabeth A. Eaton

We are in the middle of Lent—the season of spiritual warfare, or at least really good intentions. Many of us now engage in some form of Lenten discipline. We give up something: chocolate or coffee or FreeCell. Or we add something: Scripture reading, midweek worship or service projects. This seems normal and familiar to us just as the imposition of ashes on Ash Wednesday or crossing ourselves has become normal and familiar in many of our congregations.

I remember a time when none of these practices would be considered Lutheran by large segments of our church. Too works righteous, too showy, too ... Roman Catholic! We didn't need to, nor could we make ourselves holy or righteous. That was the whole point of justification by grace through faith apart from works of the law (Romans 3:21-28, Article IV of the Augsburg Confession).

We overcorrected. Fasting, prayer, Scripture study, acts of service, imposition of ashes and making the sign of the cross are classical spiritual disciplines that not only have an ancient history in Christian practice but also serve to engage our whole selves in devotion to God. These practices serve to draw us closer to and make us more aware of the love of God shown through Jesus' death and resurrection that justifies sinners, but they aren't what justifies us.

As scrupulous as we have been in proclaiming grace and eschewing works in our faith practices, I've noticed the not so subtle shift to works righteousness in the work we do as the church. This exists in all three expressions—congregations, synods and churchwide—and all across the cultural spectrum. Jesus' invitation to repentance and discipleship have become a kind of transaction between us and God where we figure out what we have done wrong, promise to work really hard to be better people, and then God forgives us. What we see as the moral wrongs that must be repented depends largely on our place on the cultural spectrum. The cultural right is preoccupied with private mores and behavior and the cultural left is preoccupied with political rights and the activities of government and business institutions.

Here's how that plays out. While driving through the Smoky Mountains on a family road trip, I saw a billboard that declared: "No smoking, drinking, card playing, dancing, movie going, swearing ... there is no sin within 7 miles of our church!" Wow. There must not have been any people within 7 miles of that church. That is the works righteousness of the right.

The works righteousness of the left plays out a little differently. If there are enough sit-ins or protests, or boycotts or enough petitions, we could inaugurate the kingdom of God. Then we could extricate ourselves from this bondage to sin. We could build a perfect world.

There is a purveyor of high-end, organic, locally sourced groceries that is the temple of this persuasion. You can buy veal there without guilt because its source of veal is the little calf that, after gamboling across the fields, turns itself in to the butcher and declares (quoting Charles Dickens): "It is a far, far better thing that I do, than I have ever done." No. Something has to die so we can live. We are complicit in the world's brokenness.

We may work for justice or righteousness with the best intentions, and God knows there is plenty of work to do. But Jesus didn't die to change behaviors or political systems or institutions. Jesus died to end the fundamental brokenness and estrangement from God that is the result of human sin, our rebellion against God that infects every aspect of our lives.

Just as Jesus' miracles in the Gospel of John are called signs that point to the new thing God is doing in Christ, so should our work for justice be signs that point to the new life we have in Christ. We're pointing in the wrong direction if our work becomes the new life instead of a sign of the new life.

Lent can be a time to ponder this priceless gift. The death and resurrection of Christ has changed everything, a change no human effort could ever bring about.

A monthly message from the presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Her email address: bishop@elca.org. This column originally appeared in the March 2015 issue of The Lutheran. Reprinted with permission.

In the larger Lutheran Community



MARTY RICHARDS MSW, LICSW
BUILDING A DEMENTIA FRIENDLY:
Community, Congregation and Family

Thursday, April 30, 2015

9:00am—12:30pm

NOLTE AUDITORIUM

LutheranCare, 108 Utica Rd., Clinton

8:00—9:00 informal coffee, conversation,
registration and vendors' fair

Practical ways to build on the strengths and resiliency of all involved will be offered as a way to maintain hope. Ways that faith communities can assist persons with dementia and their carers in ministry will be presented.

Registration: \$20 Individuals
\$15 Students
\$10 Groups of 3+

Register at www.lutherancare.org/ or call
Pastor Brian McCaffrey at (315) 235-7125.



Aluminum can tabs - start collecting now! At the Upstate New York Synod Assembly, *God's Story, Our Voices*, (May 28—30, 2015) we will collect aluminum **can tabs**

with the proceeds benefiting a local ministry. Add your tabs to the collection jar in the Narthex at church and we will get them there.



ACTIVE DAY SENIORS PROGRAM

A Social Model Adult Day Program located on the LutheranCare Campus in Clinton. Transportation is provided and hot nutritious meals are served daily. Hours are Monday—Friday, 9:30am—2:30pm. The social Adult Day Center provides assistance for your loved one to remain home. Family and caregivers benefit by being able to continue working and knowing that their loved one is being cared for. Come take advantage of a Free Day Pass! For information call Sara Looman at 235-7149.



CALL FOR BASKETS

Lutheran Campus Ministry / STEP Center
Spring Festival 2015
Sunday, April 19, 2:00—5:00pm
Luther Memorial Church
435 S. Main Street, N. Syracuse
TICKETS—\$5.00



Enjoy music, delectable
desserts and appetizers, competition for
your favorite basket and fellowship.

Support vital mission outreach
on campus at SU and SUNY ESF.



Donations of Themed Baskets, Collectibles, and
Skills to Share are appreciated. Drop off points in
the Syracuse area are available.



For more information email
Lutheran@syr.edu.

Learning at the Crossroads

April 11--Merging, Emerging, Re-emerging or Sub-
merging: What future for Central Crossroads? by

Tom Henry. Cost: \$20. Central Crossroads congregations stand literally at a crossroad, facing not only the ongoing challenges of modern Protestantism but also local issues of aging and diminishing congregations, limited and shrinking resources, increased resource demands, and, interestingly, a significant clergy turn over in a compact time period not far in the future. How we will respond? We will have some discussion on problems, problem-solving, trends and ideas in our session directed at our local concerns and options. 9am registration; class 9:30—2:30pm, lunch included.

May 20—Stain Glass Worship at Vanderkamp

Limited to first 20 registrants! Rev. Dan Hoffman will help each attendee create their own work of art. Lunch is offered. Cost: \$35 + \$15 for supplies = \$50. Registration at 9:00—class begins at 9:15 and will conclude no later than 3:00pm.



Holy Week and April 2015 Schedule



	April 2 Maundy Thurs. 2 and 7pm	April 3 Good Friday 2 and 7pm	April 5 EASTER	April 12	April 19	April 26	May 3
GREETER	7pm—Norris Eillinwood	N/A	Sandy and Jim Lenahan	Pam Donovan and Paul Douglass	Mary Ellen Riemenschneider and Alex Dudajek	Sandy and Jim Lenahan	Pam Donovan and Norris Eillinwood
ACOLYTE	7pm—Joey Abraham	N/A	TBA	Anthony Robles	Joey Abraham	Michael Robles	Michael and Anthony Robles
WORSHIP ASSISTANT	7pm—Emily Donovan	Matt Wilbur	Norris Eillinwood	N/A	Clare Thiem	N/A	Liz Douglass
LECTOR (L) READER (R)	7pm—Mary Tollerton (L)	7pm—Sandy Lenahan (L)	Sandy Lenahan (L)	Erica Tollerton (R)	Dave Wilbur (L)	Erica Tollerton (R)	Scott Donovan
NURSERY	N/A	N/A	N/A	Kathy and Katherine David	Susan Morris	Judy Petroski	Kathy and Katherine David
Coffee hosts	N/A	N/A	Charlotte Williams and Barbara Magnusson	Bev and Lou Lombard	Garry Brombacher	Pam Donovan and Bev Smith	Gerry Presser and Sharon Jacintho



Ushers—Scott Donovan, Jim Lenahan, Dale Klingensmith, Lou Lombard
Altar Guild— Gerry Presser and Sharon Jacintho



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Rev. Anita Mohr, Pastor

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JOIN US FOR WORSHIP

Worship at 10:00am

*Children's **Jesus and Me (JAM)***

Holy Week Services

Maundy Thursday, 4/2—2 and 7 pm

Good Friday, 4/3—2 and 7pm

EASTER—10am on 4/5

*As faithful believers of Our Saviour Lutheran Church
we profess the covenant God made with us in our Baptism:
to live among God's faithful people,
to hear the word of God and share in the Lord's supper,
to proclaim the good news of God in Christ through word and deed,
to serve all people, following the example of Jesus,
and to strive for justice and peace in all the earth.*