

St. Paul's News

475 State Street Albany, New York 12203

Today you and I are challenged in ways we don't like to be challenged. The economic, environmental, social and political ground has shifted beneath our feet. It is all requiring new thinking. You and I are fundamentally challenged with how we see almighty God. The challenge for those of us who follow in "the way" is that we're being asked to rethink the limits that we have placed on God. Those limits are being expanded, and we're kicking and screaming all the way. One of Germany's early theological giants, Meister Eckhart appeared in the 13th century. Eckhart was a great preacher and teacher, a fascinating individual, possessing the enormous inner spiritual life of a mystic. Meister Eckhart went so far with changing the concept of God for his people that the church began to try him as a heretic. He disappeared right before he was to be condemned as heretical.

Probably one of the most famous statements of Meister Eckhart's: *"The eye with which you see God is the same eye with which God sees you."* That means, if you see God as a policeman, the only way you can feel God coming into your world is as a policeman. Or if you see God as Santa Claus, the only way you can receive God's presence into your life is as a Santa Claus figure. How you

and I perceive God is the way we understand God's presence in our lives.

Lent is a Lens. It helps us to bring God into focus. Lent is the time when we try to take the lens with which we see God and make it more of a wide-angle lens rather than a telephoto lens. We want to expand it as much as we can so



that we might receive from God more than we have ever received from God before in our lives. The more we can do this, the more we're blessed by the enormity of the presence of God's love and compassion and acceptance of me and of you. Lots of us are stuck with a telephoto lens.

Jesus had a fisheye lens of God. He was constantly pushing the people in his day to enlarge their image of the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Almost everything he said was challenging people and making them think differently about how they had perceived God. Every hair on your head is numbered. Remember that? A little boy hearing that in Sunday school reached up and pulled one out and asked, I wonder what number that is.

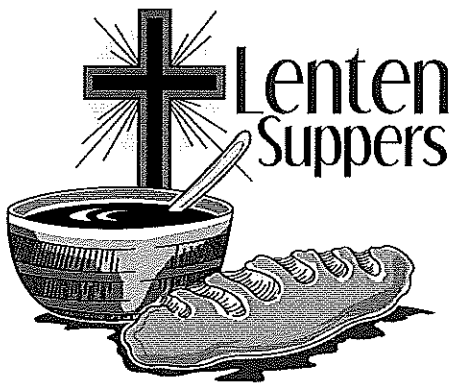
Remember Jesus telling stories about a good Samaritan. There was no such thing as a good Samaritan. All Samaritans were bad. Imagine what it was with that lens - when Samaritans can be good. No wonder they put him to death. Or the one that's even worse, about the prodigal - the prodigal can be forgiven. Not the prodigal, maybe other people. Open your Lenten lens a little wider, get a little bigger view of the nature of God.

Pastor

Ash Wednesday

Ash Wednesday is on February 25th. We will have a Communion service with ashes, if you choose, on that evening at 7:30.

This marks the beginning of the forty days of Lent. Please plan to attend as we begin our Lenten journey toward Easter.



Lenten Soup-Supper-Service Series

Finding a Grown-Up Faith: Five Steps to a Faith that Works

What questions of faith do you struggle with? Do you share your faith with others? Do you question faith and its place in your life? Do you understand clearly Jesus' place in your journey of faith? Journey this Lent toward a wider understanding and sharing our faith:

3/4/09

Asking the Right Questions
St Paul's Lutheran Church
Pr Rees-Rohrbacher

3/11/09

Deepening Your Faith
St John's Lutheran Church
Pr. Hempel

3/18/09

Jesus and Faith
Good Shepherd Lutheran Church
Pr. Victorson

3/25/09

Practicing Faith: Faith in Action
First Lutheran Church
Pr. Strawn

4/1/09

Sharing Faith
Holy Spirit Lutheran Church
Pr. Knarvik

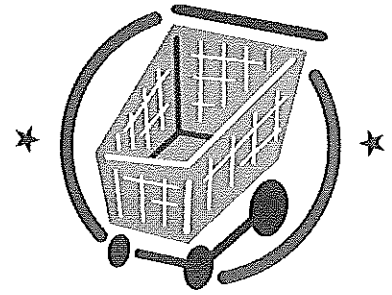
Join us for supper each Wednesday of Lent starting March 4, 2009 @ 6PM - Liturgy @ 7.



KING'S CLOWN TROUPE

Once again we will be treated to a wonderful interpretive worship service by the King's Clown Troupe. This is a Christian mime troupe from the Prince of Peace Lutheran Church in Clifton Park, NY. The troupe is comprised of about 25 youth who volunteer their time and talents to spread God's Love and Forgiveness.

The date is February 22nd at our 10 AM worship. Please mark your calendars and plan to attend. Bring a friend or neighbor – they will enjoy it also!!!



CLUSTER COLLECTION

Our January/February Cluster Collection is being donated to the Regional Food Bank. We are collecting **jars of peanut butter**. Any size, brand or flavor is greatly appreciated. Each of the cluster churches is being asked to collect at least 200 jars so that we'll have a thousand jars to give to Regional Food Bank.

F.Y.I. –Peanut Butter in jars has not been associated with the "peanut butter scare"

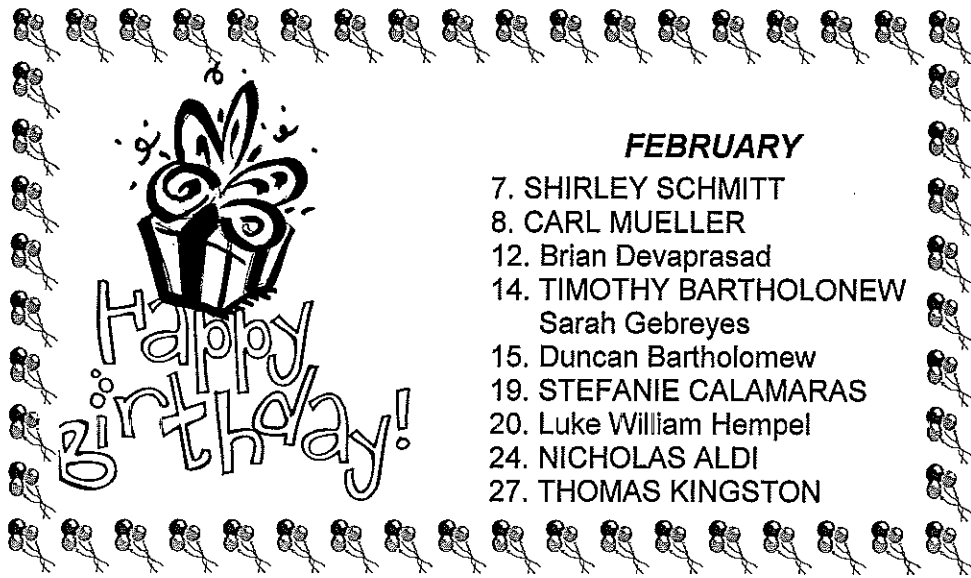


Men's Club News:

The St. Paul's Men's Club is collecting its annual dues of \$50 for 2009. All existing members and all aspiring new members may give their dues payment to either Andrew VanAcker or Alan Alexander. Please make all checks payable to St. Paul's Ev. Lutheran Church and indicate Men's Club dues 2009 in the memo section. The Men's Club has plans for a very eventful 2009. Preliminary plans are in place for a Bowling event, breakfast seminars, spaghetti dinners, Movie Night, and a West Point football game trip. We look forward to a fun year of fellowship and camaraderie.

Andrew VanAcker - Men's Club President

Alan Alexander - Men's Club Secretary and Treasurer



FEBRUARY

- 7. SHIRLEY SCHMITT
- 8. CARL MUELLER
- 12. Brian Devaprasad
- 14. TIMOTHY BARTHOLONEW
Sarah Gebreyes
- 15. Duncan Bartholomew
- 19. STEFANIE CALAMARAS
- 20. Luke William Hempel
- 24. NICHOLAS ALDI
- 27. THOMAS KINGSTON

WORSHIP HELPERS

**ELDER
MARTHA HEMPEL**

DATE	FLOWERS	LAY READER	SERVICE STEWARD	Communion Assistant	Coffee Hour
Feb 1	Alida Earl in memory of Dad's birthday	Tina Harris	Martin Kahler	George David	Hempel
Feb. 8	Brady/ Calamaras Family in memory of Joseph Brady	Joan Aldi	Andrew VanAcker	Tina Harris	Deveprasad
Feb. 15	The Alexanders in celebration of their wedding anniversary	Thalita Ushe	Andrew VanAcker	Lori Seim	Harris
Feb. 22	Joan Aldi in memory of her mother, Kathleen Lawler	"Send in the Clowns"	Sheryl Baum	Tina Harris	Voters' Meeting

Lent 2009 - Connecting Worship and Daily Living in Lent

Lent a time for the church community to journey together toward Easter and the reaffirmation of the baptismal covenant. Lent is not about being miserable, sad, and funereal in anticipation of Good Friday. Fasting and giving up something can be part of Lenten disciplines, but so can taking on some new things. This year, make Lent both an inward and outward journey.

My Preparation for Easter

Lent is a time to prepare for Easter. It is a necessary prelude. The death and resurrection of Christ are true whether or not I prepare for Easter. However, without my heart and life being ready, I may not experience the depth and power of Christ's death and resurrection. So with my brothers and sisters, I commit myself to disciplines for conversion from sin and death to love and life in Jesus Christ. With the aid of the list below, I make the following commitments to discipline and growth for the next six weeks:

(Check the ones you desire or feel prompted to do; circle the ones you then decide to do.)

Inward and Personal Disciplines


- Spend time in solitude each day.
- Share in the Lenten Supper Series on Wednesday evenings.
- Read a book for inner growth.
- Read through the Gospel of Mark at least once.
- Begin to keep a journal of prayer concerns, questions, reading.
- Focus on thanksgiving, rather than on asking, in prayer.
- Give myself a gift of three hours to do something I always say I don't have time to do.
- Find a way to go to bed earlier or sleep in so I get enough rest.
- Make a list of people with whom I need to be reconciled. Pray for them and let Jesus guide me in my thinking and feeling toward them.
- Take control of my life by _____.
- Go to all of the Holy Week services as an act of love and waiting with Jesus.
- Take one hour to inventory my priorities and plan how I will reorder them.
- Give up a grudge or a rehearsal of a past event.
- Forgive someone who has hurt me.
- Dance my prayers to a favorite tape or CD.
- Use *Portals of Prayer*.
- Other promptings:

Outward and Social Disciplines

- Take on some loving task:
- Plan to visit a "shut-in" neighbor or church member weekly.
- Write a letter of affirmation once a week to a person who has touched my life.
- Listen and respond to Christ's call to a ministry of service:
- Go to coffee or dinner with someone I want to know better.
- Begin to recycle waste from my home and workplace.
- Give blood and recall the cross.
- Say "NO" to something that is a waste of money and time.
- Pray to God to help me resist ethnic prejudice and to give me courage in opposing it.
- Decide to become a member of the church and speak to a pastor or lay leader.
- Rebuke the spirit of criticism and my own tongue out of control.
- Find a way to live out the baptismal promise to "renounce the forces of evil, the devil, and all his empty promises" in the power and liberty God gives us by _____
- Other outward and social promptings:

February 2009

St. Paul's Monthly Planner

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 9:00 AM SUNDAY SCHOOL AND ADULT FORUM 10:00 AM WORSHIP	2 7:00 PM PLANNING COUNCIL	3 7:03 PM DARTS AWAY at New Covenant	4 7:00 PM CHOIR REHEARSAL	5	6	7
8 9:00 AM SUNDAY SCHOOL AND ADULT FORUM 10:00 AM WORSHIP	9 12:00 PM Albany Maritime Ministry Board Meeting	10 7:03 PM DARTS HOME vs. Holy Spirit	11 7:00 PM CHOIR REHEARSAL	12	13	14
15 9:00 AM SUNDAY SCHOOL AND ADULT FORUM 10:00 AM WORSHIP	16	17 7:03 PM DARTS HOME vs. Nassau	18 7:00 PM CHOIR REHEARSAL <i>Newsletter</i> DEADLINE	19 7:00 PM Cluster Meeting @ Holy Spirit	20	21
22 9:00 AM SUNDAY SCHOOL AND ADULT FORUM  10:00 AM KINGS CLOWN TROUPE	23	24 7:03 PM DARTS AWAY at Castleton	25 7:30 PM ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE 8:30 PM Choir rehearsal	26	27	28

Jan 2009						
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18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

Mar 2009						
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22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				