



The Christ Messenger

Christ Lutheran Church
Vienna, West Virginia

March 2022

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Our Mission:

As Children of God, nourished
by the Word, Sacrament and
Fellowship of loving, forgiving,
and hopeful believers—

WE are guided by the Holy
Spirit to WITNESS to Christ's
saving presence in the World!

As I write this letter to you, we are about a week away from Transfiguration Sunday and the end of the Epiphany season. From there we journey to Ash Wednesday as we embark on the season of Lent. Maybe some of you have given up something, or plan to during this time, maybe a meal or meat or at least chocolate. So our natural response is that this time before Easter is when we deny ourselves so that we might draw nearer to God. I would like to propose a different way.

Almost all of us, at one time or another, has attended an Ash Wednesday service. You may remember the pastor saying to you, *"Remember, you are dust and to dust you shall return."* It is a somber service, and I must wonder how the experience of that service has set the tone for most of us during the season of Lent. The service's origin comes from the ancient practice of placing ashes on worshippers' foreheads as a sign of humility before God and a symbol of mourning and sorrow at the death which brings sin into the world. It not only places us in a position of mourning the death of our Lord Jesus but places us in a position to realize the consequences of our own sin.

I have come to appreciate the Lenten journey more and more as I have gotten older. Especially when those we love and have grown up with are no longer with us and our own mortality becomes more central to our lives. Then when we hear the words of the pastor reminding us that we are all dust and to dust we shall return – well those words are poignant. Most of us live our lives in the days of

Palm Sunday and of Easter. We live for the glory and will do almost anything to achieve it. But Lent puts God's mirror in front of us so we can see who we truly are and who we have become. Lent begins by humbling ourselves before God. Lent has become for me and, I hope for you, a way to confess our total inadequacies before God, to strip ourselves bare of all pretenses of being righteous and come before God in dust and ashes. It's an opportunity to empty ourselves of false pride and of all rationalizations that prevent us from seeing ourselves as needy creatures.

I hope this upcoming Lenten season will become an opportune time to see ourselves in a new and revealing light. You might say being on the other side of Covid, we will experience new challenges in a year of wilderness to discern how we will live into this new year to which God is calling us. We all will journey together, and I am hopeful that in that walking and listening we be able to hear God in ways we haven't done in a very long time.

May you have a blessed Lenten season, Pastor Tom

March Schedule at a Glance

Sundays:

March 6th

Communion Service
8:30 & 10:45
Sunday School 9:30

March 13th **Daylight Savings Time Begins**

Worship Service
8:30 & 10:45
Sunday School 9:30
LCW meeting after 10:45 Service

March 20th

Communion Service
8:30 & 10:45
Sunday School 9:30

March 27th

Worship Service
8:30 & 10:45
Sunday School 9:30

Mid Week Services

March 2nd

Ash Wednesday Service @ 6pm

March 9th, 16th, 23rd, and 30th

Holden Evening Prayer
Dinner and Service
Begins at 6pm

Events:

March 10th

Elderberries at noon
I Don't Care Restaurant



Birthdays

March 5 – Ron Clampitt
March 12 – Rob Miser
March 15 – Mike Behnke
March 15 – Kelli Alleman
March 20 – Barb Maki
March 21 – Dave Fleming

ELDERBERRIES

Elderberries met for lunch at Cheddars on Thursday, February 10, 2022. We had a smaller attendance but much visiting and fellowship. It was nice to have a corner table with lots of sun streaming in. And we could hear each other.

Those attending were Mike and Jenny Knotts, Loreta Delaney, Kay Rowan, Pastor and Liz Darr, and Delores and Jerry Steege.

Our next luncheon will be on Thursday, March 10, at the I Don't Care Restaurant. It is located at 6255 Grand Central Avenue (right before Scot's Landscaping). Hope you can join us.

Delores Steege (304) 428-2056



ATTENTION!!!

LCW voted to have a sale in the fall (August 5-6 tentative). So, this is a heads-up to start your collection as you clean out drawers and closets and garages, etc.

We seriously weighed both sides of having another sale. It is so much work, takes a lot of time, and we have very few people to organize it. On the other side, we do "recycle", almost everyone in the whole church helps, and there is good fellowship and fun as we work and sell. We have a lot of stories to tell afterward!

SAVE THE DATES—AUGUST 5-6, 2022

Quiet Moments with Liz

May the blessing of light be on you, light within and light within.
May the blessed sunlight shine upon you and warm your heart
till it glows like a great fire
and strangers may warm themselves as well as friends.

And may the light shine out of the eyes of you,
Like a candle set in the window of a house,
Bidding the wanderer to come in
Out of the storm.

May the blessing of rain be on you,
The sweet soft rain.
May it fall upon your spirit
So that little flowers may spring up
And shed their sweetness on the air.

And may the blessing of the great rains be on you,
To beat upon your spirit and wash it fair and clean;
And leave there many a shining pool
Where the blue of heaven shines,
And sometimes a star.

May the blessing of the earth be on you,
The great round earth;
May you ever have a kindly greeting for people
As you're going along the roads.

And now may the Lord bless you,
And bless you kindly. Amen

Irish blessing

Easter Lilies



It is time for Easter lily orders.

Forms to order Easter lilies are available in the narthex. This year the lilies are in 6 inch pots and will be \$10 a piece. Please fill out a form or contact the church office to place your order. Thank you!

Due Date: March 14th

Good Samaritan

Item of the Month



Cake Mix

Church Address:

4513 Grand Central Avenue
Vienna, WV 26105

Church Phone Number:

304-295-9241

Church Web Page:

<https://christlutheranviennawv.org/>

Church Facebook Page:

[Facebook.com/christlutheranchurchviennawv](https://www.facebook.com/christlutheranchurchviennawv)

We keep the following people in our prayers:

Tamar Allen; Russell Behnke; David Bills; Tom Byrne; Jerry John DiNicola; Sally Ebeling; Pam Goots; Heather; Judy Lawson; Laura Lemley; Family of Joel McGuier; Rob Miser; Gary Miller; Sharon Niday; Rosemary Padgett; Gean Secreto; April Sowards; Tim and Lora Swarr; Caren Thomas; Donna Vincent; Brooke Wilson; Terry & Vicki Wilson; Tiffany Wilson; police and first responders; our troops; Christians and other minorities in the Middle East; people in the Ukraine and eastern Europe; pray for peace; and for our military, especially for Airman Elijah Modesitt (U.S. Airforce); Jon Shorr serving in Afghanistan; Conner Allen serving in China; families of all those who serve in the military; for all who have been diagnosed with COVID 19 and/or hospitalized for the virus, for all who have died from the virus, for all of our medical personnel and first responders who are treating patients, for all families and loved ones separated by quarantines, for people who do not have access to medical care to be treated, for folks who are unemployed and the underemployed.

Church Office Hours: Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday from 9:00-12:00

Kelley will be out of the office the week of March 21st. Pastor Darr will have his normal office hours at the church on March 22nd and 24th. If you need to reach Kelley that week, please send her an email (clcvienna@gmail.com) or call her cell phone (225-326-7028).



ASH WEDNESDAY = STEWARDSHIP

“Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return.” -*Evangelical Lutheran Worship*, p. 254

With these ancient words from Genesis 3:19 and the swipe of a dirty thumb across our foreheads, Ash Wednesday propels us into Lent with the proper context to understand our lives as stewards of the riches God entrusts to us.

The essential teaching of Ash Wednesday – that we are just mortals, after all – crushes our ego, dispels our pretensions, and drives us deep into God’s mysteries. Why are we here? What are our lives all about? What’s *really* important? Pray over these questions and profound insights emerge.

We are dust. Yes, but we are *God’s* dust. Our body consists of trillions of atoms, each a speck of “dust” created by of God, billions of years ago. God put us together from the stuff of the universe.

- Therefore, we are quite literally “earthy” beings, made of the same material as air, water, soil and stone. Part of creation, we work to preserve and sustain God’s creation for future generations.
- Therefore, we revere and care for our bodies through healthy living.

We are breath. We are not *only* dust. Genesis 2:7 describes us as “dust” into which God has “breathed the Holy breath of life.” Our lives are the breath of God in our dust.

- Therefore, every breath we take is holy, a prayer that whispers God’s praise.
- Therefore, we look to God to align our lives with God’s holy reality that arcs towards peace, love, joy, justice, and truth.

Our time is brief. The “dust” that is us *will* return to the earth. We have a finite number of minutes.

- Therefore, every hour, every second is sacred. There is not a single moment one to waste. We spend our time wisely, carefully, prayerfully.
- Therefore, we do not cling to our possessions, knowing that we will leave it all behind.
- Therefore, we nourish our lives with lasting treasures – relationships, trust, love, joy, service, generosity, and harmony.

This Lent spend time in prayer, with openness and honesty. See how God will transforming you into the person you were created to be. Reflect each day on Ash Wednesday. “Remember you are dust, and to dust you shall return.”

--Rob Blezard

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