



Living Hope Newsletter

Stafford, Virginia February 2012

325 Courthouse Rd, Stafford, VA 22554

Pastor Gary D. Rueter (540) 657-4105

Open Arms Director Lori Schneider (540) 657-2700

FEBRUARY EVENTS/NEWS/REPORTS

Lent Begins Feb 22

To help prepare for celebrating Easter, we will observe the season of Lent with special midweek services beginning on Ash Wed, Feb 22. That service will include an optional imposition of ashes to remind us of our mortality and sinful nature and will include Holy Communion. It will begin at 6:15 pm.

On succeeding Wednesdays a light supper will be served at 6:00 pm with a brief service afterward ending before 7:00 pm. These services will feature hymns and homilies to assist us in our preparations for Easter.



Debra

Holtzhauer is coordinating volunteers for the five meals. Three volunteers are needed for each of them. Please sign up on the list in the foyer, or by contacting Debra at 540-286-6994.

Valentine's Dinner

Feb. 11, 2012 6-9 pm

\$25/couple; \$13/single
Free Day Care

BE
MINE

BE
MINE

Menu:

Filet Mignon or Chicken Breast
Baked Potato, Vegetable, Salad
Glass of Wine
(Coffee, Tea, Lemonade, Water)

Buy a ticket by Feb 7

Sponsored by
Living Hope Youth Group

Shrove Tuesday Pancakes or Pizzas

The Tuesday before Ash Wednesday since 1000 AD in English-speaking nations has become known as Shrove Tuesday. It's better known in other languages as Mardi Gras, or Carnival, the last day for feasting on sugar, fat and eggs before the ritual fasting of the forty days of Lent.

It's also known as Pancake Day, and to continue that tradition, Brenda & John

Greene will prepare pancakes at Living Hope from 6:30 to 8 pm on Feb. 21. Free-will donations will be requested for support of the Open Arms Center. Someone has also offered homemade syrup for the pancakes so this will be a tasty treat.



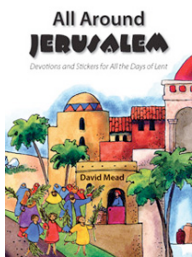
OR, if your taste buds aren't ready for pancakes, then go to the Spirit Night at Cici's for the Open Arms Center on the same night from 4 pm to closing. Just put your receipt in the basket at the register and the CCDC receives a percent of your purchases.

Men's Breakfast, Sat, Feb 4

Living Hope men will gather on Feb 4 at 8 am for breakfast at Jimmy the Greek's Restaurant on Garrisonville Rd (in front of Wal-Mart). Finish at about 9 am.

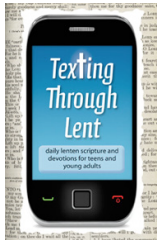
Home Devotions for Lent

Devotions for a variety of households will be provided for home use beginning on Sun, Feb 19. Open Arms families will have the appropriate age level sent home with the children and others may pick up the ones appropriate for their household in the foyer after worship.



Households with preschoolers may choose the Lenten sticker activity series *All Around Jerusalem*. Kindergarten and early Elementary households will want to take home an additional activity, a

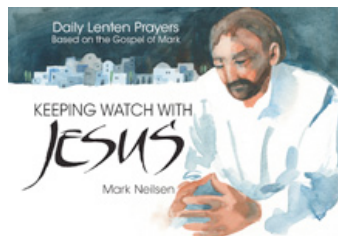
mobile that portrays the story of Jesus' time in Jerusalem in the last days of his life. Tweens, Teens and College households will have the devotional book *Texting Through Lent*



with short Biblical texts and a textable message to share each day.



And adults will not be left out; they will have access to the Lenten devotional book *Keeping Watch With Jesus* with brief devotions and prayers that follow Jesus from Gethsemane to Golgotha. Be sure to pick up the copy (copies) that



are best for your household. Another option is to use the Lenten devotions online from Lutheran Hour Ministries at lhm.org. You can read them or listen on your smartphone or pad.



Preschool Fair at Living Hope



The MOMS Club® of Stafford East will provide a Stafford Area Preschool Fair on **Sat, Feb 4, 10 am to noon** in Living Hope's Hope Center. It's an opportunity to visit with representatives of all major preschools in the

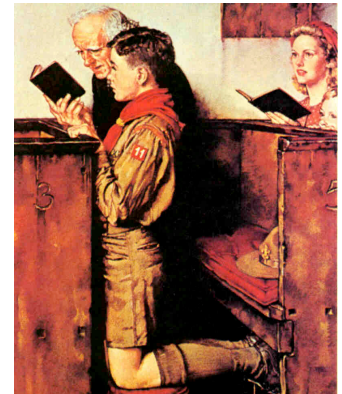
Stafford area. Get your questions answered to make the important decision of where to send your little ones.

The snow date is set for Feb 11, 10 am to noon.

For more information visit the website for the club: www.eaststaffordmomsclub.webs.com.

Scout Sunday Observance

The Boy Scouts of America has designated Sun, Feb 5, as this year's "Scout Sunday". That day boy scouts are asked to attend their place of worship in their uniforms as a sign of respect. This observance reminds scouts of their Scout Oath



which asks them to "do my duty to God" and the Scout Law which states that "a scout is reverent".

Did you know? For every 100 youth who join scouting, 1 will enter the clergy, 5 will earn their church religious emblem, and 12 will have their first contact with a church.

Your Picture Needed

If you did not have your picture for the pictorial directory taken yet, please make arrangements to get a photo to Kris Kuhl who is coordinating the project. Contact Kris Kuhl (540-373-0434; kuhlhome@cox.net) or Pastor Rueter.



Youth Group Happenings

Super Bowl Hoagies: We want to thank everyone who purchased a hoagie during the sale. We hope you enjoy your hoagie as much as we are going to enjoy making them. You may pick them up between 4:30 & 5:00 pm on Sat, Feb 4 or on Sun, Feb 5. Please let us know how they were.

Valentines Dinner: Purchase your ticket to a nice dinner and entertainment for your special sweetheart from any of the Youth Group Members, Barry Hunte or Trudy Taylor...See bulletin insert for details. I promise the entertainment will be priceless but the meal cost \$25 per couple...If you are single you are welcome to come for \$13. Hope to see everyone, please sign up and pay NLT Feb 7.

On Jan 21 12 youth attended a showing of **“To Save a Life”** at Redeemer Lutheran Church in Fredericksburg. They once again displayed a great attitude and respect for the event they were attending. We returned to the Church after the movie for dessert and discussion about the topics

of the movie. The High School Youth will continue to discuss those topics during Sunday School the next few weeks.

In addition, the youth held a where they developed a point system to ensure they distribute all their funds fairly for events they attend that have a fee. In addition they decided to host a valentine dinner for the members of the church and school, and have a lock-in at the church on 16-17 March. Also they will attend the “Big Day of Serving” in Lynchburg, VA on 28 Apr.

Youth Encounter: 5 High School Youth will attend a Youth Encounter Event in Virginia Beach on 2-4 March. The three day event includes a session with Scott Phelps, author of some of the leading abstinence education programs used nationwide, including *Game Plan, Quest, Aspire, Navigator, and Excel.*), the band “Bread of Stone” and many other events. Please remember to say a prayer for their spiritual growth and safe travels.



Work Day on Feb 11

Spruce up the church and its grounds in the monthly workday on Sat, Feb 11 from 9:30 to noon. See Larry Taylor or Pastor for projects.

Lutheran Hour Ministries

The outreach programs of Lutheran Hour Ministries (LHM) will be featured on Feb 12. We live in a time when there is a seismic shift from a Christian to a post-Christian culture. LHM invites us to join them in calling our communities and our country back to God.

LHM is an organization that works every day to reach out with the Gospel on the frontiers of our unchurched culture—and throughout the world. LHM partners with congregations like ours to equip Christ-followers for everyday witness. On Feb. 12, join us for **LHM Sunday** to learn ways that LHM can provide resources and training to support our congregation’s outreach efforts. For information about LHM, visit www.lhm.org.

College Moms Meet

The College Moms group will meet on Mon, Feb 6 at 7 pm at church. They assemble care packages for our twenty college students as well as have a devotion and prayer. Contact: Nancy Rueter, nrueter@mac.com or (540) 322-9400.

Flowers for 2012

The flower chart for next year is posted in the foyer. A donation of \$30 provides this ambience for our worship and honors or remembers a loved one. Sign up for a Sunday and note the occasion for your gift. Indicate “Flowers” in some way when you make your donation. Flowers may be taken after the second service.

Official Acts

Jan 30: Placed on Inactive Member List: Debbie & Stephanie Jones; Danielle, Trinity & Delilah Scordino; Deirdre Mueller
Current membership: Baptized: 231; Confirmed: 175; Inactive: 63; Avg. Worship Attend: 139

Discipleship and the Life of the Church

Discipleship and the life of the church. It is natural that these two things go together almost in one breath as we approach the descent to the cross and can see, beyond it and beyond the empty tomb, stretching out before us in the distance, Trinity -- for me, the season of the Church in the liturgical year. It is natural because the one cannot be separated from the other. But what do we mean by discipleship and what do we mean by church?

In January, I wrote of my taking up again of Dietrich Bonhoeffer's "Discipleship". One of the most striking phrases for me from that work deals with the implication of the call to discipleship. As presented by Bonhoeffer, "...When Christ calls a man, he bids him come and die..." What can this mean for us here, today, as we consider our approach to the cross and to discipleship in the world? As Bonhoeffer subsequently makes clear, while for some this call means a literal, material death, for all called it means a death to us as individuals. His case in point is Martin Luther for whom the call meant not physical death but instead death marked out by his departure from the life of the monastery and out into the world.

So it is with all called by Jesus. For, whether or not it entails a call to physical death, the call

definitely demands the death of our individual selves, our lives as individual selves. With that call we no longer exist for ourselves and, as with Luther, we can no more linger in the comfort of the cell of our personal sin and salvation. In this way we find ourselves taken out of the world while at once remanded back to it. The act is an act of love considered as self-renunciation whereby we give up our personal claims to life as we knew it and personal happiness to work for others.

Whether he intended it or not I can't help but fasten Bonhoeffer's approach to discipleship with his view of the nature of the church. Although discussed throughout his many writings, for me no better treatment exists than in his doctoral

dissertation "Sanctorum Communio" (Communion of Saints). There, Bonhoeffer indicates that the isolation of each of us one from the other and from God is abolished in the life and death of Christ, the exemplar of self-renunciation. As we become followers of Jesus, as we embrace his call to discipleship, to follow him and die to our individual selves, we acquiesce to the community we join as the communion of saints, the church as the revealed body of Christ here on earth.

Keith Klimek

"...When Christ calls a man,
he bids him come and die..."

In Case of Snow

We have engaged a firm to clear the parking lot, driveway, and sidewalks. Pastor intends to hold at least one service if conditions on the roads allow some people to attend safely. If you have doubts, check your email. An email will be sent telling of the plans on any Sunday when snow has fallen.

The Open Arms Christian Child Development Center part-time programs will close or delay the same as Stafford County Schools. Full-time programs will close when Stafford County government offices are closed.

Office Assistance Needed

Pastor is looking for some assistance in the office for six to eight hours each week. He hopes to share the hours between three or more people. Two have volunteered and a third is still sought. If you'd be willing to assist with preparing bulletins, creating worship slides, and making people contacts, please let Pastor know.

Guest Speaker, Feb 26

The Rev. Dan Otto, pastor emeritus of Our Savior Lutheran Church, Nashville, TN, will be our guest worship and Adult Bible Class leader on Sun, Feb 26. He will speak to us on behalf of his work with the interdenominational organization called **Food For The Poor** (FFP). A door offering for this charity will be received after each service.

Now celebrating its 29th year of operation, FFP is an interdenominational Christian relief and development organization working primarily in 17 countries in the Caribbean and Latin America, and also in the United

States, to assist the poorest of the poor (i.e., 2.5 billion people living on \$2 a day or less---the world's population is now over 7 billion!). By working together with pastors, missionaries, churches, and church-related agencies, FFP ensures that aid reaches those who need it most.

Food For The Poor feeds more than 2 million hungry individuals daily. But it also drills life-giving water wells for those who otherwise wouldn't have clean drinking water, provides lifesaving medical care, builds homes for families without adequate shelter, provides micro-enterprise opportunities that put the poor to work, supplies school materials and buildings for children, and sponsors training skills and adult education that assist populations to break free from the cycle of enslaving poverty that has ensnared generations.



Guests attend Worship

Local guests in worship in January:

Patty & Greg Carl
Paul, Kathy Jo, Zach & Zoe Matticks
James, DeeAnn, Avery, Alexis, & Ayden
Strand, Quantico
James & Rebecca Howe
Ronald & Rosemarie Bailey
Jennifer and Eva Estrella

If someone near you is welcomed as a guest after worship, please reach out to them, introduce them to others and to Pastor and check that they leave some information if they are willing. Thanks for all you are doing through your caring to assist guests to know that God loves them.

"Discover" LCEF

Lutheran Church Extension Fund serves the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod by providing congregations and professional workers with low cost loans. Investors provide the funds to make these loans and receive interest on those investments. In February congregations have an opportunity to help members discover the services and the opportunities offered by LCEF. One of those services is the K.I.D.S. stamp program below.



LCEF provides a fun way to encourage children to get involved in saving and in the ministry of the church. When the initial stamp book (\$25) is completed and sent to LCEF, the district staff will award a reflective sports pack to the child.

Dick & Marva Moss, our local LCEF reps, make the stamps available after both worship services on the first Sunday of each month [Dec 4]. Stamps cost \$0.25 or \$1 each



Recent Prayer Requests

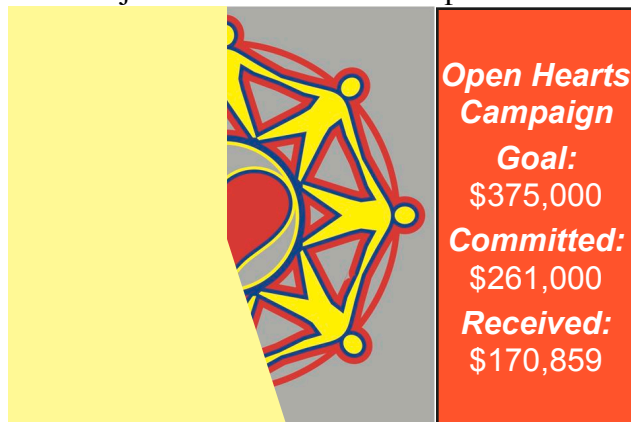
- Guidance: Southeastern District, LCMS Convention in early June 2012
- Sorrow: deaths of former member Rev. Harold Heinlein in Florida, Richard Scofield (Ann Marohn's uncle); Richard Pratt (Tom VanBlaricom's step-father's father); an aunt and an uncle of Stephanie Lloyd; Laura Geske & two children (wife and children of Kansas District pastor, friend of the Rueters, in auto accident); Tony Smith (Evanses' neighbor)
- Missing: Sherry Arnold (near Sidney, MT; friend of Trudy Taylor)
- Birth: Lilly Ann Roller on Jan 24 to Lisa Spence (Lori's daughter)
- Pregnancy: Stephanie Mojica; Sarah Donnelly (Open Arms); Amanda (Bonnie Schleter's daughter)

- Healing: Bill Woods, Taylor White, Brenda Greene, Dick & Carol Hedke, Joyce Prickett, Paul Phillabaum's father, Ruth Thomas (Diana Lautenschlager's mother); Dee Starkey (Greenes' daughter); Vivian Hawkins (Melissa Rossin's mother); Virginia Kauffman (Randy's mother); Hubert Rossin (Mark's father); Virginia Neiswinder (Patti Breitmeyer's aunt); David Niehaus (Nancy Rueter's cousin); Judy Jakubowski, Joan Leinonen's sister; Shirley Helton, Lois Roberson, and Johannes Hedrick (friends of Ruth Angle); David Necikowski (husband of employee at Garrisonville Elementary)
- Battling cancer: Kari Meyer (Erika Jacob's sister); Mark Brackmann (Matt's brother); Debbie Temple and Wayne Giger (Barry Hunte's cousins); Kevin Bentley (co-worker of Barry Hunte); Dorothy Weber (mother of co-worker of Erin Tucker)
- Deployments: Tom Lloyd, Justin Charlton, (Katherine Johannes' fiance); Benjamin Flynn (Kim Silver's brother); Ryan Reiche (Open Arms parent); and Geoff Kent, Joe Murray & Paul Merida (neighbors/friends of Rossins); and Sarah Flynn, Teach for America

Open Hearts Report

Open Hearts is the Capital Stewardship Drive that has already provided funds to furnish the building. It also will help to fund an expansion of the child development center by four more classrooms in the next three years, saving many dollars in planning and interest.

The summary below shows receipts through Jan 22. To join the Open Hearts effort talk with Scott Holtzhauer or Grant Olbrich on the Fulfillment Team or just memo a check for Open Hearts.



Living Hope Values

- Supporting Households in Faith Development
We commit ourselves to providing support for faith development in Stafford households. The primary direction for our activities will be from Living Hope toward those households.
- Community Outreach and Service
We desire to be a church for the community and for others.
- Inspiring Worship with a Lutheran flavor
We believe our worship services should be opportunities for God to connect with people and for people to respond with thanks and praise. We cherish worship that connects both with local culture and with Lutheran worship traditions.
- Unified Fellowship
We believe that the Lord gathers us and keeps us in the one true faith. We long for moments together that express and develop our oneness in him.

BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES Congratulations and God's Blessings to All !!!!



February

- 2nd Ruth Angle
Kathryn Johannes
Daniel Slattery
- 4th Jerry Bessette
Bonnie Schleter
- 6th Paul Phillabaum
- 7th Lorelei Street
Christina White
- 9th Hailey Lemke
- 10th Joan Simons

February

- 11th Mike Kentta
Amanda Lloyd
- 12th Diane Ballman
Jamie Hawkins
- 13th Daniel Klimek
Dick Moss
Kevin Mullinix
- 16th Jason Henslee
Kaidy Tverdal
- 19th Barry Hunte
Kathy Slattery
Bruce Tucker
Gabrielle White
- 20th Cheryl Baker
Erika Jacobs
- 21st Brian Connell
- 23rd Tom Lloyd
Amy Rinehart

February

- 24th Nancy Rueter
- 26th Parker Berg
Shelby Karr
- 28th Clay Street
- 29th Scott Ballman
Richard Karr



- 2nd Dave & Corrine Mayhew
Kimberly & Clay Street
- 6th Alan & Sue Zeiser
- 13th Jim & Brenda Scheel
- 23rd John & Debbie Blatchford
Barry & Lisa Hunte

February Worship Helpers

Date/Time	Acolyte	Assistant	Distributors	Ushers	Counters	
5 th	8:15	Kol Bergstrom	Scott Bergstrom	Heather Clary	Bob Drew, Mark S	-
	10:45	Vincent Rousseau	Gary Rousseau	Kory B, Crystal R	Russ M, Jim E	Dave D, John K
12 th	8:15	Hannah Rossin	Patti Eashoo	Linda M, Grant O	Mark Ro, Dave Duff	-
	10:45	Skylar Tucker	Stephanie Moore	Jim E, Crystal R	Russ M, Tom V	Chuck J, Jerome M
19 th	8:15	Grace English	Keith Angle	Doug Klimek	Will & Collin Clary	-
	10:45	Will Moore	Eric Doyle	Dave Mayhew	Russ Moore	Andy E, Barry H
22 nd	6:15 p	TBA	Larry Taylor	TBA	TBA	TBA
26 th	8:15	Lindsay Duff	Brenda Greene	Kim D, Dan Kerns	Alan Z, Andrew O	
	10:45	Ryan Fard	Jim Evans	Jason H, Erika J	Hrahas	Kory B, Will C

Last Month's Numbers

Date	12/24	12/25	1/1	1/8	1/15
Attendance [Last Year]	234 [219]	58 [57]	81 [130]	69/89 [168]	70/82 [156]
Attend Avg [Last Year]	NA	148 [115]	81 [130]	120 [149]	130 [151]
Offerings (Unrestricted)	\$6,601	\$1,937	\$2,377	\$4,445	\$4,319
Offerings Last Year	\$3,049	\$14,425	\$3,799	\$3,524	\$4,517
Offerings FYTD	NA	\$132,436	\$134,813	\$139,258	\$143,577
Offerings Last Yr FYTD	NA	\$105,778	\$112,429	\$115,954	\$120,471
Open Hearts FYTD	NA	\$14,638	\$15,024	\$15,254	\$16,192
OH Last Yr FYTD	NA	\$26,267	\$26,718	\$27,293	\$27,442

Pastor's Postscript

Dear Living Hoppers,

Grace to you and peace in our Lord Jesus Christ. How wonderful it is to be able to say those words to each other. He reigns over all things and is with us in all things. That is perhaps the most comforting portion of the good news that comes to us as a result of his life and service.

It means even more to me on this last day of January 2012 as I read today of the tragic accident which took the wife and two children of one of my younger co-workers in Kansas. Jeff Geske had just returned to Kansas after five years serving a parish in Amarillo, TX. He and his wife had visited with her family in Leavenworth, KS and were returning to their home in Salina, when a car traveling in the opposite direction came across the median on I-70 and hit them head on. His wife, Laura, and two of their children were pronounced dead at the scene. Jeff and one of his three year old twins were taken to the hospital and later released. A family of five was reduced to two in a moment.

Jeff had only been installed at Christ the King in Salina two months ago. When I served as Mission and Stewardship Executive in Kansas he received his first call at McFarland, KS about twenty miles west of Topeka. Laura taught at the Topeka Lutheran School and her sister was engaged and then married to another pastor in Manhattan, KS. Their parents are ardent members of a parish in Leavenworth, KS.

Jeff and Laura attended our Timothy Gatherings for new pastors and Jeff was a shining star among them. He and Laura were energetic and creative and he was involved enough in the community of McFarland to serve as mayor for a time. They were much loved by that congregation and I'm guessing also by their Texas parish and even their new parish in Salina.

I am heartbroken at the news of this great loss for Jeff and James, for Laura's sister and parents, for the congregation in Salina, for the other leaders and church workers in Kansas and for the church at large. I cannot even imagine what a turn-of-events this is for them. My hope for them and for us is ultimately that God knows and God cares.

***Our hope is in the Lord,
who made heaven and earth.
The Lord knows and the Lord cares.***

We are assured of this because Jesus of Nazareth took on the sins and tragedies of the world and gave his life that we might have life eternal.

This is our hope and our strength and we will gather each week of Lent and Easter to reflect on this love of Christ and our response to it. I urge you to come together with your brothers and sisters in Christ to sustain your faith and life. We do need each other.

Blessings, Pastor