

# THE SERVANT

The monthly newsletter of Servants of Christ Lutheran Church, a congregation of The North American Lutheran Church serving the Cedar Rapids area

Meeting at Robins City Hall Community Room, 265 South Second St., Robins, Iowa 52328  
Worship: 9:00 am; Fellowship & Coffee: 10:00;  
Bible Class and Sunday School: 10:15  
Ron Voss, Pastor

## \*\*\*\*\*February 2020

Dear Servants,

“We now commit the body of our to earth, ashes to ashes; dust to words, perhaps many times. hun- ones . . . faithful parishioners now deaths after long illness . . . many gone. They all run together in the dust.”



brother/sister to the ground; earth dust.” Each of you has heard these dred of faces . . . sorrowing loved gone . . . unexpected deaths . . . different cemeteries . . . loved ones mind. “Ashes to ashes, dust to

You will hear those words again on Ash Wednesday (the 26th of this month). You’ve heard those words every Ash Wednesday for years, perhaps decades. Those words are spoken as the pastor dips a finger into a bowl of ashes and makes the mark of the cross on your forehead. And I have always found it fascinating, comforting, and encouraging to go into stores on Ash Wednesday, or restaurants, or a Casey’s, or even watch the news on television and see people I don’t know with that symbol on their foreheads. Just as one scans the crowd at an NFL game and sees fans dressed or painted or sporting headgear of their team and sees/feels the affinity those fans feel for one another, so “people of the ashes” feel the identity, the partnership with unknown fellow believers. Perhaps more than any other day of the year, more than any other event/worship in the Church, we acknowledge that we are dying. We are faced with the numbing truth that because of sin, we are doomed and, to borrow a line from a M.A.S.H. episode, “there ain’t one thing you can do about it.”

But remember, the ashes on the forehead are not just a smear but a symbol . . . the symbol of a cross. The cross shouts the joyful news that though “there ain’t one thing YOU can do” about sin, destruction, and death, there *IS* One who can and who has. Although our focus in Lent is on our sin, our rebellion, our death, the *focal* point is on Jesus, the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. As the pastor repeats the words, “From dust you came and to dust you will return,” if you listen carefully, in the background you can already hear the words of the “Hallelujah Chorus.”

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The “ashes to ashes” is surrounded by the pronouncements of a risen Lord: “Today, you will be with me in paradise;” “I am the resurrection and the life;” “The free gift of God is eternal life (Romans 6:23).” That is why we are able to sing during Lent, “In the cross of Christ I glory!”

“Earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust.” But these are not the final words uttered at the grave of a believer. The benediction provides the exclamation point: “May God the Father, who created this body; may God the Son, who by His blood redeemed this body; may God the Holy Spirit, who by Holy Baptism sanctified this body to be His temple, keep these remains to the day of the resurrection of all flesh. Amen”

In His grace,  
Ron



## **LIVING LIFE BACKWARD**

A Biblical study of Ecclesiastes continues through February

What if it is death that teaches us how to truly live??? Keeping the end in mind shapes how we live our lives in the here and now. Living life backward means taking the one thing in our future that is certain—death—and letting that inform our journey before we get there.

Looking to the book of Ecclesiastes for wisdom, *Living Life Backward* was written to shake up our “expectations and priorities for what it means to “live the good life.” Considering the reality of death helps us pay attention to our limitations as human beings and receive life as a wondrous gift from God, freeing us to live wisely, generously and faithfully for God’s glory and the good of His world.

Join us on January 5.



Sunday, February 23

## February Servants

Greeter/Usher: Tami Gerdemann  
Communion Assistant:

Gerald Retzlaff

Snacks:

\*\*February 2—Mary Collins

\*\*February 9—Judy Waugh

\*\*February 16—Tami

Gerdemann

\*\*February 23—Brunch

Flowers: Mary Collins

Called to *Serve*

## February Mission Giving

NALC General Fund—\$500

Friends of Madagascar Mis-  
sion—\$1,500

Lenten offerings directed to  
Mater Mission

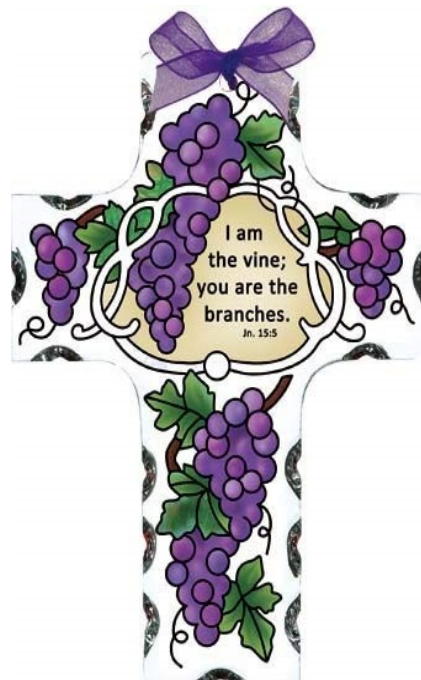
## LEGACY GIFTS MATTER!

Prayerfully consider including  
the North American Lutheran  
Church and/or the Seminary in  
your will or estate planning.  
Pass on the love of Jesus to  
future generations.

## Bi-monthly Brunch February 23

Following the meal we will pre-  
pare the Bible by marking them  
before they are sent to Lutheran  
Disaster Assistance.

Let Ron know  
of any prayer  
requests.





**Lent begins on Ash Wednesday**, February 26. Worship will be held at 6:30 pm at the home of Ray & Mary Collins, 225 Stamy Rd., Robins.

Midweek Lenten service will be held each **Tuesday** at 6:30. Locations will be listed in the March newsletter.

### Lenten Outreach Projects

- \*\*50 Bibles will be purchased and donated to NALC Disaster Assistance.
- \*\*Supplies for Health Kits will be purchased during Lent and assembled on Maundy Thursday.
- \*\*Financial Donations received at Lenten worship will go to Water Mission.

**Lenten devotional booklets will be available on Sundays, beginning February 23.**



### Lenten Sermon Series for Mid-week Services Road Signs to Calvary

Signs show us what to do, what not to do. Signs keep us safe. Everyday traffic signs can guide us on the road to Calvary.



Ash Wednesday



March 10



March 24



March 3



March 17



March 31