

“Trust in the Lord forever, for the Lord God is an everlasting Rock.”
Isaiah 26:4

THE ROCK

Issue No. 3

March 2010

Special Dates

- Feb 28 Youth Night
- March 1 Ladies Bible Study
- March 2 Elders Mtg.
- March 3 Lenten Dinner hosted by Bell Choir
- March 3 Lenten Worship
- March 4 Thursday Morning Bible Study
- March 5 World Day of Prayer
- March 5-7 Middle School LVR Retreat
- March 9 Circuit Pastors meet at Buena Vista
- March 10 Lenten Dinner hosted by Sports Teams
- March 10 Lenten Worship
- March 13 Discipleship Workshop
- March 15 Ladies Bible Study
- March 17 Lenten Dinner hosted by Ukraine Team
- March 17 Lenten Worship
- March 18 Thursday Morning Bible Study
- March 18 Church Council
- March 19 Third Friday
- March 24 Lenten Dinner hosted by Board Of Education
- March 24 Lenten Worship
- March 27 Discipleship Workshop
- March 28 Palm Sunday
- April 1 Maundy Thursday
- April 2 Good Friday

March is Lutheran Schools Month

Christian day schools have been a vital arm of ministry of congregations in the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod from its early days. Lutherans Christians have taken very seriously the words of Scripture, Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it (Proverbs 22:6 ESV).

On an increasingly secular culture, the ministry of our Christian schools is more important than ever, both in feeding the Good Shepherd’s little lambs as well as a mission outreach to those who He wants to draw into His fold. Within our Rocky Mountain District, there are more than 70 schools, serving 5,900 students. Christian care and instruction is shared with the young beginning at the preschool level and continuing all the way through high school.

Our Lutheran schools are worthy of the strongest possible support. Lutheran educators and administrators serve joyfully, willingly, and faithfully. Not only do they minister to a wide variety of children with an assortment of needs, but they also minister to the school families as well.

Here at Rock of Ages, helping families help their children grow in faith is also a major concern. To answer that concern, we established a Christian Preschool and Day Care Center where families can be assured their children receive the best in Christian love and care while growing in early Christian education.

Children of all faiths and backgrounds from all over our community are nurtured daily in our Christ-centered environment where our goal is a safe and educational setting to help young children develop spiritually, socially, intellectually, physically, and emotionally.

Rock of Ages Lutheran Child Care Center provides quality preschool and daycare programs for children ages 2 ½ (and potty trained) up to age 8 years. Hours are 6:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Janice Clymer joined us in 1986 as Director of the Child Care Center. Our staff includes Marybeth Zurcher, Assistant Director; Barbara Lang, Group Leader; Aaron Clymer, Aide and Tiffany Lampert, Aide.

Please include our Child Care Center, it’s ministry, and it’s staff in your prayers. We encourage you to share a word of appreciation and encouragement to the staff. Ask if there is anything you can do to help them (I know during the Summer clean-up they can always use extra hands with cleaning, etc.).

Perhaps you would like to treat the staff to Starbucks, or some home-made goodies. Anything that you can do to let them know that we appreciate what they are doing and view their service as an important part of our outreach ministry would be appreciated.

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Tried and True

Dear Brothers & Sisters in Christ Jesus,

Our journey through Lent has begun. The traditional Gospel for the First Sunday in Lent this year comes from Luke's account of Jesus in the wilderness. We've been following Luke's story since Christmas. He revealed the angels who sang to shepherds "Glory to God in the highest." And at Jesus' baptism a voice from heaven spoke "You are My Son, the Beloved." One who reflects God's glory, One who is God's only-begotten.

All of these accounts revealed something about Jesus' identity. But they still leave us with some questions. It is in the confrontation in the wilderness that we get an intimate personal look at Jesus – on the basis of what He rejects.

Identity theft is a major problem in our society today. We are advised that we must take careful steps to safeguard all the pieces of our lives against those who would steal them. In Luke, chapter four, Satan is out to steal Jesus' identity. Satan begins with a little experiment in identification: "If You are who the Voice said You are, that is, 'Son of God,' then turn these stones into bread. Your Father did that in the desert didn't He?"

Jesus refused. Jesus becomes known to us by what He renounces. He is known on the basis of His "NO!" Even tired and tested by forty days in the wilderness, Jesus remained true to His identity. "I AM the Way and the Truth and the Life" (John 14:6). The devil offered a career in government – Jesus refused. The devil tried wealth and the world. Jesus refused. [I have to wonder about just how Satan got control of all the governments of the world. Satan claimed they were given to him. Who gave Satan politics?]

On the surface, these offers would look good to any politician. Who wouldn't want to do some powerful good for all the suffering and the oppressed of the world? And what kind of God would just spend His time hanging out in the wilderness just quoting Scripture? The very kind of God who would just hang there on the Cross and from that place quote Scripture.

We somehow, deep down, think that God should just smash Satan, destroy him – not get into theological debates out in the wilderness over just who owns this world. But then we remember – this is Jesus who not only resisted all these temptations, but taught us to pray – not just for ourselves or our family or our friends – but for our enemies! Even to pray for those who abuse us.

The First Commandment tells us "You will worship, serve, talk about, attempt to understand, and to obey *this* God and no other." Period. But then all around us the devil continues to throw his questions to divert our attention, to distract us, to mislead us. And we must constantly stand firm in Jesus example on the firm Word of God in Scripture and ask "Which God?"

That may well be why Jesus quoted from Deuteronomy chapter six in this first part of His ministry as He faces Satan's temptations. For Satan is not offering Him just any old temptation. It's temptation to *identity theft*. It's a temptation to set aside His very dangerous mission and to take up a more agreeable path. "If You are... then..." It is a temptation to be the God He is not, to be the god that Satan once thought he should be.

The Good News? Jesus did not give in. Jesus will not be tempted to be the God we thought we were awaiting. He will be who He is – the One who came to save us – on His terms. Thank God.

Jesus defeated Satan in this first encounter with the Word of God. Satan departed "until an opportune time." Satan still seeks that opportune time in our lives. Come join our Sunday morning adult class as we spent these weeks of Lent in a review of *Luther's Small Catechism*, grounding ourselves once again in that firm Word of God.

Your servant in Christ Jesus,
Pastor Ron

Library—Monthly Featured Item

Gilead, by Marilynne Robinson

My reaction when I finished this book was “Stunning. Extraordinary.” I often found myself holding my breath as I read, waiting to see what was coming next. I couldn't get over how the author got into the head of her main character. I want to gush, but instead I'll give you an excerpt of an article by David E. Anderson. Other than that, I just want to say, “Read it.” Helen Mauss

Review of Gilead:

"A good sermon," Marilynne Robinson writes, "is one side of a passionate conversation." It has to be heard in that way. So, too, a good novel. It is a conversation among the novelist, the reader, and--as in the case of a sermon, perhaps, for some--God.

...the best novels are always a dialogue--perhaps an argument, perhaps a prayer-- with the world and its meaning. In GILEAD, ...God works as a second, unstated addressee, a mostly implied presence whose reality is suggested by the pervasiveness of prayer.

GILEAD is better than a good book. It is a slim, spare, yet exquisite and wonderfully realized story that will long stand as one of fiction's finest reflections on the sacramental dimensions of life, especially the Christian life lived in the routines and wonderments of prayer. It is, like a good sermon, a passionate meditation. David E. Anderson

Demolishing Strongholds—A Discipleship Study

Today it is important to be ready when challenged to take a stand for our faith. Whether it is in the supermarket, the work place, or in the hallways at high school. We want answers to the potentially embarrassing questions about Christianity that come up in our day-to-day life situations.

Demolishing Strongholds features four highly engaging speakers: Ken Ham, Bill Jack, Charles Ware, and Carl Kerby. Each will prepare you to stand firm on the authority of God's Word, and each will equip and challenge you to activate your faith!

Demolishing Strongholds' strategic topics include developing a biblical worldview, tips on how to engage and reach friends for Christ, confidence boosting ideas on how to confront our evolutionized culture, examples of “cultural brainwashing,” and an inspiring challenge on how to be God's players in the game called life.

We will be starting a 6 week comprehensive DVD-based study that will inspire you to go to the next level in your Christian walk and will also challenge you to live out your faith. We will start on February 13th and meet on the 2nd and 4th Saturdays through April. We will meet from 10:00 a.m. until Noon on these days.

Anyone who is interested is invited to attend and the material also works well for teens so please encourage your youth to attend also.

Our sessions will be:

Feb. 13—War of the Worldviews—Ken Ham

Feb. 27—Evolution in Pop Culture—Carl Kirby

March 13—Counterfeit Reality—Bill Jack

March 27—Answers to Difficult Issues: How to Share Your Christian Worldview—Carl Kerby

April 10—Simple Tools for Brain Surgery—Bill Jack

April 24—Special Forces for the Savior—Charles Ware—this day we will go until 12:30 to wrap up everything from the weeks before with a final short video.

A Picture of Jesus?

What image comes to mind when you hear the name Jesus? For me, it is a white middle aged man with long hair and a beard. This was the first thing that greeted me each morning as I grew up- a picture hanging on my wall that many of you probably can relate to. He was a very serious sort, never cracking a smile, and very holy looking.

It is amazing to me that my daughter is beginning to recognize Jesus' "picture" already. (Well, maybe not that amazing since He knit her together and all) At any rate, in her books and in the pictures hanging around the church she can point Him out and has even begun to say "JESH" in her little baby way. It strikes me that this is not quite the same as recognizing mommy in a picture...I recently saw a young girl on U-tube (via a CNN report) who, although brought up by an agnostic and never exposed to the Bible, began receiving dreams and painting scenes that reflect the Biblical narrative. One is of a suffering man who looks remarkably like those pictures of Jesus we have in our heads. It is titled "Father Forgive Them."

How do we see Jesus? The second person of the Trinity, the Word, took on human flesh. Too bad he lived before we had digital cameras and Facebook to post His picture all over the world! Seriously, we know that Jesus was a Jewish man living in the Middle East. He likely resembled Osama bin Laden rather than Charlton Heston.

I have a nativity scene on my computer. In it, the infant Jesus has slanted eyes. I've seen pictures of Jesus as an African living in a mud hut. Are these any different from the blue-eyed white Jesus? I've also seen Jesus wearing modern clothes- blue jeans or a business suit. But I rarely see a picture of Jesus that reflects his depiction as the suffering servant in Isaiah 53: "He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him. He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering. Like one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not..."

Ultimately, any picture will fall short of the reality of Jesus Christ. Nothing can convey the humiliation of his incarnation or the suffering of his death. Conversely, nothing can convey the glorious triumph of his resurrection or the depth of his love for us. Perhaps, though, we can catch through these pictures a glimpse of our creator, our redeemer, our friend; the God who became man.

Deaconess Sarah



Rock Of Ages Book Club

Our next selection is *Gilead* by Marilynne Robinson, this is the one talked about in the "Featured Library Item of the Month" on page 3. If you choose to read this selection, please plan to join the ROA Book Club on April 6th at 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. where we will discuss this book and explore our own thoughts and feelings about the topics that the book brings up.

Our next selection will be *The Shack* by

All are welcome. March's book is in the church library, the Pikes Peak Library; available at Christian and secular bookstores or online. If you have any questions, please ask Deaconess Sarah or Karen Grassi.

Parish Ministry Assistant

Grace, Blessings, and Peace of Mind from Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Lent. A special time of the year in our church calendar set aside for our personal and corporeal meditation and reflection of the life and passion of our Lord Jesus Christ. Have you?

Life is crazy. Everyone and everything at times seem to be screaming at us for our attention. Ever feel that way? It reminds me of the musical/movie "Jesus Christ Superstar" in a scene where everyone seems to be clawing at Jesus and demanding that he heal them or give them food or listen to them or whatever their needs may be. The scene climaxes with Jesus seemingly spinning round and round and finally just yelling out. I wonder if our Lord ever felt like that? I mean, after all, He was True God *and* True Man. Scripture tells us that amid the craziness He did seek out quiet times to be alone so He could pray and meditate--spending time with His Father.

Telemarketers on the phone. Demands for money on the television. People ringing doorbells selling this or that. Surveys. Internet. Radio. Family needs. Friends. Pets. Work. Groceries. Bills to pay. Sports. Books. Honey-do lists. Yardwork. Chuck-E-Cheese. Church--just fill in the blanks with more and more things that apply to yourself, faster and faster spinning you around and around with musical noise crescendoing in your head like the end of the Beatle's song "A Day in the Life" getting louder and louder until you just want to scream -- ENOUGH!

Okay, maybe it's not that melodramatic.

"Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth." Psalm 46:10

Just like Jesus did to recharge His batteries (so to speak), I encourage you to find time to meditate, reflect, and pray this Lenten season focusing on what our Lord did for us. He died on a cross. He rose. He took our sins away and gave us the Holy Spirit so we would be able to have faith in Him. *He prayed for you and me (John 17:20-21).*

So put the breaks on the next few weeks and slow down a bit. Don't let the devil run you ragged and distract you from the truth of the cross. Pastor is talking about Jonah--maybe we could go fishing? Amen.

In Jesus' Name,

Troy Dieters, PMA

Vacation Bible School

"Egypt—Joseph's Journey from Prison to Palace"

July 12 through 16

Imagine living in ancient Egypt—the Nile drifts past Pharaoh's palace...sounds of a busy marketplace echo through crowded streets...and you hear whispers about a former slave Pharaoh's plucked from prison and put in the palace!

Help us take our Vacation Bible School children on this exciting journey!

*If you are interested in helping in anyway,
please talk to Cindy George, Suzie Ricker, or Kim Foster*

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LORD GOD IS AN EVERLASTING ROCK."
ISAIAH 26:4**

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Newsletter Deadline February 17, 2010

LUTHERAN HOUR TIME

Sun. 7:30 a.m. KZNT 1640 AM

LWML/LADIES GUILD

*******Our Hospitality Committee needs your help!*******

**If you are interested in donating food, time, or funds
for our funeral luncheons,**

**PLEASE contact: Marlys Klessig, Fran Gierard, or
Mary Ann Collins.**

**Thank you to all who have helped in the past, espe-
cially Ellen Herrmann who has given years of service
to the planning, set up, and serving of the Rock of
Ages funeral lunches.**

Lenten Meals and Services

It's time again to start thinking about Lent and Easter and along with that comes our Lenten Dinners and worship services. Following is our schedule thus far:

February 17th—Ash Wednesday—5:30 p.m. Lenten Dinner hosted by Child Care Center
7:00 p.m. Lenten Service—"God is Calling"

February 24th—Wednesday—5:30 p.m. Lenten Dinner hosted by Ladies Guild
7:00 p.m. Lenten Service—"Saved in the Storm"

March 3rd—Wednesday—5:30 p.m. Lenten Dinner hosted by Bell Choir
7:00 p.m. Lenten Service—"Our Providing God"

March 10th—Wednesday—5:30 p.m. Lenten Dinner hosted by Sports Teams
7:00 p.m. Lenten Service—"Praying in the Belly of the Great Fish"

March 17th—Wednesday—5:30 p.m. Lenten Dinner hosted by Ukraine Team
7:00 p.m. Lenten Worship—"The God of the Second Chance"

March 24th—Wednesday—5:30 p.m. Lenten Dinner hosted by Board of Education
7:00 p.m. Lenten Worship—"About Face"

March 28th—Palm Sunday—9:00 a.m. Festival Worship with Holy Communion

April 1st—Maundy Thursday—7:00 p.m. Worship with Communion

April 2nd—Good Friday—7:00 p.m. Tenebrae Service

April 4th—Easter—6:30 a.m. Sunrise Service

7:30 a.m. Easter Breakfast hosted by the Elders

9:00 a.m. Festival Worship with Holy Communion

10:30 a.m. Sunday School Easter Carnival and Egg Hunt

April 5th—Easter Monday—CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED



FUNDS UPDATE

Building Fund = \$210.00
Scholarship Fund = \$12,741.15
Capital Improvement Fund = \$13,126.36
Ukraine Fund = \$8374.70
Bathroom = \$1272.00

