

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

# THE ROCK

Issue No. 3

March 2012

## Special Dates

- Feb 27 Ukraine Team Meets
- Feb 29 Lenten Dinner & Service
- March 1 Bible Study
- March 2 World Day of Prayer
- March 3 Young Adult Bible Study & Cleaning of the blinds
- March 3 Confirmation
- March 4-10 Lutheran Schools Week
- March 6 Elders
- March 7 Lenten Dinner & Service
- March 8 Ukraine Team Meets
- March 10 Clocks move forward one hour
- March 12 Book Club
- March 13 Circuit pastors meet at ROA
- March 14 Lenten dinner & service
- March 15 Church Council
- March 17 Youth go to Laserquest
- March 20 Ukraine Team Meets
- March 21 Lenten Dinner & Service
- March 25 Confirmand Questioning
- March 28 Lenten Dinner & Service
- March 30 Youth Lock-in

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## The Season of Lent is Upon Us

“Lent is a season of soul-searching and repentance.  
It is a season for reflection and taking stock.”

Our Lenten worship schedule and activities are as follows:

February 22nd Ash Wednesday—service at 7:00 p.m.

5:30 p.m. Lenten Dinner hosted by ROA Youth Group

Menu: Soup, subs, salad, dessert, etc. Offerings go towards Youth Gathering.

February 29th 2nd Wednesday in Lent—service at 7:00 p.m.

5:30 Lenten Dinner hosted by ROA Ladies Guild

Menu: Casseroles & Crock Pots, Desserts, etc. Offerings go towards Mites.

March 7 3rd Wednesday in Lent—service at 7:00 p.m.

5:30 p.m. Lenten Dinner hosted by ROA Sports Teams

Menu: Pastitsio; Spanakopita; Hummus; Salad; Dessert; etc. Offerings go towards registration fees for the softball and volleyball teams

March 14th 4th Wednesday in Lent—service at 7:00 p.m.

5:30 Lenten Dinner hosted by the Bell & Vocal Choirs

Menu: “Surprise” Symphony Offerings go towards National Youth Gathering.

March 21st 5th Wednesday in Lent—service at 7:00 p.m.

5:30 p.m. Lenten Dinner hosted by the Ukraine Team

Menu: Pork, potatoes, borscht, etc. Offerings go to the Ukraine mission Fund.

March 28th 6th Wednesday in Lent—service at 7:00 p.m.

5:30 p.m. Lenten Dinner hosted by the Ushers

Menu: Duane’s Famous Chili. Offerings go towards ???

April 1st Palm Sunday—Service at 9:00 a.m.

April 5th Maundy Thursday—Service at 7:00 p.m.

April 6th Good Friday—Service at 7:00 p.m.

April 8th Easter—Sunrise Service 6:30 a.m.

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

9:00 a.m. Easter Festival Worship Service

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

Please join us we journey through Christ’s suffering & death  
and then again as we rejoice and celebrate the Resurrection!



## Infectious

Dear Brothers & Sisters in Christ Jesus,

Infectious! Just how does that word strike you? Negative? We've just survived February. It was an infectious month. There were bugs flying around, people catching infectious colds and viruses. And February is a month for catching infectious moods as well. It seemed as if there were a heavy blanket of gloom and doom over the whole country. And such a mood can infect any of us, even in the Church.

Infectious. It can be positive. Just walk through our preschool during the week and watch the little ones at work and play. You can't help but smile. When the little ones come up front on a Sunday morning to hear a message about Jesus, we all smile and wonder just what will happen next. Their smiles and joy are infectious.

So how can you package that sort of infection? What can make a Church's spirit infections? In John chapter three, Jesus has a late night discussion with a church leader, Nicodemus. Jesus told Nic "The wind [Spirit] blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit."

This bothered old Nicodemus and he asked, "How can this be?" The Spirit loose like the wind? Nicodemus may have been a bit like us. Sure we believe that the Spirit will come - in nice calm, orderly, predictable ways. But is God's Spirit limited or confined? Jesus seems to say "Look out! You don't know just where or how He might show up."

What does John recommend in his first Epistle – 1 John 4:1-4? Confession that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh from God is the test. The foremost work of the Spirit is to proclaim Jesus Christ and that is the work of His Church. St. Paul puts it so beautifully in his letter to the Corinthians. "For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know Him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe. Jews demand miraculous signs and Greeks look for wisdom, **but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles**, but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. For the foolishness of God is wiser than man's wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than man's strength" (1 Cor. 1:21-25). "For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified" (1 Cor. 2:2).

How will we be "infectious" in our world when the Lord opens a door for us? How will our lives infect others with the joy we know in the Cross of Christ? Let's go "bug" someone for Jesus.

Your servant in Christ Jesus,  
Pastor Ron

Reschedule date for CPR/AED Training

Saturday, April 21st 9:00 a.m.



[http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/5/5d/PerovVG\\_PervHristianKievGRM.jpg](http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/5/5d/PerovVG_PervHristianKievGRM.jpg)

### First Christians in Ukraine

I have a new backdrop on my laptop- it is an image of a painting called "First Christians in Kiev" painted in 1880 by Vasily Perov. It depicts the clandestine worship that the first Christians in Ukraine experienced in their pagan society from the time Christianity was introduced (around 55 A.D. until about 988 A.D. when the formerly pagan Rus Prince Vladimir converted to Christianity. For almost 1,000 years Christianity in Ukraine was a persecuted religion. I think what first drew me to the piece was the awe on the faces of the worshippers as they are illumined by the light- by Jesus. But as I write this I see also the man who is on the outskirts of the painting- the soldier who despite his obligation to serve the pagans and probably to kill the worshippers, is transformed by the Light- by Christ- and is joining them.

When I first set it as my backdrop, I was thinking only of our beloved sisters and brothers we work with in Ukraine. Many of the older courageous Christians lived through modern USSR times when they also worshipped God secretly. Where they took up the cross of the gospel daily and risked their lives in doing so. I thought of the light the Gospel of Christ, crucified and resurrected FOR THEM, FOR US, has shone for centuries, nay millennia, in their land.

Now, though, as I think about the battles that we ourselves face in taking up our cross, in confessing our faith unashamedly in our neighborhoods and in our nation, I see that this image has power for us too. As we move from Epiphany into Lent, as we shift our focus from the light, through the darkness and on to the cross, may His Word give us the courage to steadfastly cling to Jesus.

Deaconess Sarah

## Library—Monthly Featured Item

**“NIGHT”** – Author Elie Wiesel

Elie Wiesel has been called “The Nazi Hunter” for his work to find and help convict German Nazis who avoided capture after World War II. This book relates the terrifying a record of Wiesel’s memories of the death of his family, the death of his own innocence, and his despair as he confronts the absolute evil of man with his life experiences in concentration camps during WWII.



### **Humor for the month:**

*Most of us have chuckled when reading "Church Signs." Here are some more:*

Whoever is praying for snow, please stop (Area inundated with snow)

To be almost saved is totally lost

Adam blamed Eve - Eve blamed the snake - and the snake didn't have a leg to stand on.

The best vitamin for a Christian is B1

Try our Sundays...they are better than Baskin-Robbins

You are not too bad to come in. You are not too good to stay out.

Try Jesus. If you don't like him the Devil will always take you back.

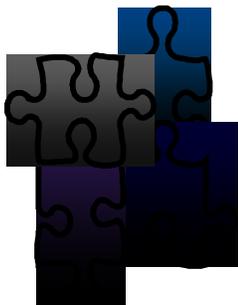
Aspire to inspire before you expire

Under same management for 2000 years

### **PUZZLES, PUZZLES, AND MORE PUZZLES**

For the puzzlers amongst us, the jigsaw puzzles are now located on the library shelves AND also in the brown cupboard right by the library shelves.

Please feel free to take, enjoy, and return.



### **UPDATE ON ROA QUILTERS**

We are currently making "lap robes/quilts" for the LWML ladies to take to the El Paso, TX convention in June. We had a special "coffee" time on Wednesday, Feb 15th, when Shar a "King Cake" rect from a bak-leans, LA. A special cake in a Madri Gras "King" refers to who came to meet the baby Jesus after his birth.



We would like to put out an appeal for donation of sheets to use backing for our quilts. Plain colored sheets are preferred though we welcome all donations. We use all sizes: twin, full, queen, and king.

## “I Will Not Forget You”

“I will not forget you. See, I have engraved you on the palms of my hands.”

(Isaiah 49:15-16)

So said God to the nation of Judah around 700 B.C. and to a seemingly abandoned village near Savron, Ukraine in 2011 A.D.

Often, when the ROA team is in Ukraine, we are asked, “Why has God forgotten us?” If you place yourself in the shoes of an average Ukrainian, it’s an easy, if unsettling, question to understand. As early as 55 A.D., the gospel of Christ reached Ukraine through the evangelism of St. Andrew. However, after generations living under a political regime that outlawed God, the result is a society groaning under the consequences of sin. Instead of seeing the bounty with which God has blessed them, Ukrainians, without the hope of Christ, despairs that God has forgotten them.

During the trip last year, God showed that He has not forgotten but engraved the Ukrainians on the palms of His hands, just as He promises. One of these times occurred when the team was in Savron. Pastor Kola, the pastor of the local Lutheran church, told us that we would be visiting an orphanage. As we drove through the countryside, I imagined a large, institutional building housing many children. Soon, our van stopped in a clearing in a wooded area. There was one dilapidated building that looked like a small community center. For about 10 minutes, we were alone, seemingly in an abandoned village. I was sure that Bogdan, our driver, had made a wrong turn. But then, a woman and two kids appeared at the edge of the clearing. After eyeing us warily, they timidly sat down on a low concrete wall. Several more kids and a few adults joined and we started our program with about twelve people in attendance, almost all guardedly staring at us.

As we sang some songs and led the kids in a skit about Jesus calming the storm, a few more people slowly emerged from the trees. By the time we moved onto crafts, our audience had grown to around thirty-five, both children and adults. We gave the kids blank, nylon Frisbees to decorate with markers. Finally, surrounded by the colors of God’s creation, some shy smiles started to appear on the kids’ faces. Soon, as the children proudly showed off their artwork, the adults began to smile. I even heard a little laughter.

God fully revealed His power when it was time to play games. Gone were the guarded looks and shy smiles, replaced by ear-to-ear grins and joyous shrieks. We played Duck, Duck, Goose with everyone getting caught up in the game. The adults now were cheering as the kids and the team members chased each other in a wide circle.

When it was time to leave, the director (we found out later that this place is a foster home community) thanked us for coming. With tears in her eyes, she said, “Our own country has forgotten that we are here. But you came from America here to us. Surely, God is great to have brought you here. We are not forgotten.”

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

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***ITEMS FOR DONATIONS  
FOR WESTSIDE CARES  
FOR MARCH ARE:***

***Diapers & Baby Wipes***

Newsletter Deadline  
March 14, 2012

**LUTHERAN HOUR TIME**

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

**Upcoming Book Club Selections:**

Book Club Selections:

February/March: Nicholas Carr **The Shallows: what the internet is doing to our brains.** Having attention or concentration problems? Thinking about the shorter attention spans you notice in children? Feeling information overload? This book addresses these and other issues. Come and join us for discussion of the book as well as brainstorming some practical ways of dealing with the online world we live in!

April/May: **The Ragamuffin Gospel** by Brennan Manning. Do you ever doubt God's love for you? Think that you don't measure up? This book encourages believers to rest in Christ's mercy, shown to us on the cross.

June/July: **Man Seeks God** by Eric Weiner. When a health scare puts him in the hospital, Eric Weiner-an agnostic by default-finds himself tangling with an unexpected question, posed to him by a well-meaning nurse. "Have you found your God yet?" The thought of it nags him, and prods him-and ultimately launches him on a far-flung journey to do just that.



**Disclaimer:** The Books chosen for discussion in Book Club do not necessarily reflect LCMS doctrine, beliefs, or practice. Many times they are chosen for this reason! Whether you agree with all that you read, or find yourself disagreeing heartily, it adds to the discussion and we can learn from each other.



**FUNDS UPDATE**

Building Fund = \$210.00  
Scholarship Fund = \$14,151.85  
Capital Improvement Fund = \$16,688.38  
Ukraine Fund = \$3058.73

