

THE
CRESTVIEW LUTHERAN
NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2025



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“Jesus took with Him Peter and James, and his brother John, and led them up on a high mountain by themselves. And He was transfigured before them; and His face shone like the sun, and His garments became as white as light. And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with Him. Peter responded and said to Jesus, “Lord, it is good that we are here. If You want, I will make three tabernacles here: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.” While he was still speaking, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and behold, a voice from the cloud said, “This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to Him!” When the disciples heard this, they fell face down to the ground and were terrified. And Jesus came to them and touched them and said, “**Get up, and do not be afraid.**” And raising their eyes, they saw no one except Jesus Himself alone. Matt 17:1-9

FROM THE PASTOR

My offering for this month. A sad topic but one we all must face. Let's do it with our Lord at our side!

Pax Christi,

Pastor Parent



What About...

Death and Dying

Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. As Christians we have a unique perspective on death, a perspective that is radically different from the world around us. This pamphlet is intended to help you, or someone you know, face death and understand what death is, and how Christians face death and deal with grief.

What is death?

The Bible teaches that death is not an annihilation in which we cease to exist. The Scriptures teach that death is the separation of our eternal soul from our mortal bodies. Our bodies rest in the grave, awaiting the final day when soul and body shall be reunited. At the moment of death, our souls, and the souls of all those who die in faith, immediately are in the presence of Christ, and will enjoy His presence, peace and joy until the great day of the resurrection of all flesh.

Is death natural?

It is popular to think of death as something that is "natural." Some

people even are heard to say, "Death is a friend." Nothing could be further from the truth! Death is a horrible reality. It is the enemy we each face at the end of our lives. Death is the awful curse that fell on creation through the sin of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. Through that sin, death came into the world and so death spread to all of humanity because all people sin.

God did not create human beings to die, but to live—to live forever and enjoy Him forever. Death was not part of our created nature, but only something that came about as a result of the sinful disobedience of our first parents—a sinful disobedience that has been passed down to every human being since that time.

Why must Christians die?

Scripture clearly indicates that Christians too must pass through death to life. We learn that our bodies are actually dead right now because of sin ("The body is dead because of sin" Romans 8:10). And so Christians too must die.

The sting of death and sense of God's judgment are horrible punishments on those who have no faith in Christ as their Savior. They face, at the end of their life, only the prospect of an unknown future, or a terrifying vision of eternal damnation. However, the death of a Christian is not death in as full a sense

as it is for the non-Christian. For the Christian, eternal life and joy follows death, for our Lord Jesus Christ is the One who walks with them through the “valley of the shadow of death” (Psalm 23).

What is the Christians response to death and dying?

“Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil.” These familiar words of Psalm 23 chart the direction for a Christian individual or family facing the reality of death. Here God identifies our greatest enemy in such times—fear. Since none of us among the living has ever tasted death, we respond to the prospect of death (whether our own or that of someone we love) with fear. Fear is natural.

Now, if fear is the enemy, who is our ally? The Psalmist continues: “For Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff, they comfort me.” Jesus, our Good Shepherd, the One who laid down His life for the sheep, is our companion on the dark, winding road that leads through the valley of the shadow of death. The journey is not optional. Sooner or later each of us, no matter how old or young, will walk that path. This will happen until that day when Jesus comes again—when, at the last trumpet, the faithful will be changed in the twinkling of an eye (1 Corinthians 15:51–52).

What happens after we die?

For unbelievers, there is the “second death” (Revelation 20:14) in which their souls are immediately in the presence of Satan and immediately begin to suffer the torment of eternal punishment in hell, from which there is no possibility of escape. On the day of judgment, their bodies join their souls in hell.

Those who trust in the redemption won by Christ our Lord pass from death to life. This is why the Bible uses so many comforting images to describe the death of the child of God. Here are some of the phrases the Holy Spirit uses to describe a Christian’s death: being gathered to one’s people; departure in peace; departure and being with Christ; a turning away from the evil to come; sleep; rest; passing from death to life; deliverance from all evil; and, finally, “gain.”



Gain? How can death be gain? When a baptized child of God passes through death—a son or daughter of God who has been redeemed by the blood of the Lamb of God—then death is gain. Through death the children of God pass into an eternity of joy and peace with their heavenly Father.

Each Christian, therefore, may rejoice in the life that Christ has won and gives to him or her through the Word and Sacraments. When we die, our souls await the final consummation of all things on the day Christ returns. We shall receive glorified bodies that are free from

tears, pain, sickness and age—perfectly renewed and glorified resurrection bodies.

In these new and glorified bodies, we shall spend all eternity in heaven, enjoying the presence of God and all His saints, forever and ever. The overwhelming joy of this truth is almost too much for us to even begin to comprehend, but it is true!

How do Christians face death?

Christians face death as they face life—with their eyes fixed firmly on Jesus. We cling to the promises of His Word, which, when facing death, seem even more wonderful and powerful. One of the most beautiful promises our Lord gave to us is found in St. John 14:2–3 where He says, “In my Father’s house are many rooms; if it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And when I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.”

We realize that no matter how our lives may end, there is one thing of which we can be absolutely certain. We shall pass from death to life, from this life to the life beyond, with our Lord. And there we shall rejoin all of our loved ones and others who have gone before us trusting in Christ their Savior.

How does a Christian deal with grief?

Christians should not hesitate to cry. Our Lord wept at the tomb of His friend Lazarus. We too find ourselves

in tears at the pain of our loss. But we do not sorrow in the same way as those who have no hope. Since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep (1 Thessalonians 4:14). We look forward to a grand reunion with loved ones who have died in faith. Still, we miss them. The separation can seem overwhelming at times. This pain is part and parcel of grieving; it is to be understood, not resisted. Grieving for most people is a journey. It is a journey from the initial pain of parting, toward healing and reconciliation with our loss. The pain gradually subsides, but the loss remains. Grief has many dimensions and may seem unpredictable in its ebb and flow; yet in Christ we find strength along the way. For in this journey we are not alone.

Christians find that family and friends are God’s gifts to help them bear the pain of loss, which at times seems unbearable. Such company is important in dealing constructively with grief. It must be consciously sought out by those who mourn. Most who mourn find it very helpful to tell the story of the death of those they love to family and to trusted friends. The repeated narrating of that story brings release and insight into the joy and sorrow of the parting. Friends and family will want to lend a listening ear and heart for such telling and retelling; it is a rare privilege to be entrusted with such treasures. “Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ” (Galatians 6:2).



FROM THE DEACONESS

Lent is fast approaching. Soon, we will enter the cycle of Lenten Mid-week Services to culminate in Holy Week where the gravity of Christ's suffering and death hits us squarely in the heart and mind. The Lenten season is a perfect time to focus on piety. In brief, piety is those healthy spiritual habits wherein the Holy Spirit can do His work in forming us in our Baptismal gift of Sanctification. It is not our work but His in us. Examples are attending Divine Service, daily devotions and meditation on Scripture, and listening to our beautiful hymns. All done out of loving our good and gracious God. Piety is not only good for our spirit but also benefits our mind and body (it is all connected, after all). Our piety does not end in ourselves; our piety is essential for loving our neighbor. When we take care of ourselves in piety, we are better equipped to serve our neighbor in whatever capacity that may be.

During this time, I'd like to share resources with you to hopefully bless your journey in piety. The first resource is one I've used for years –

Lutheran Public Radio (LPR). They have a smart phone app or you can access them on the web. Either way, their site is divided in two sections: Talk and Music. Admittedly, I listen to the music side more than anything because of my profound love of our Lutheran hymnody. Usually, you will find me listening to it while I'm writing - like right now as I sit at my keyboard.

If you are interested in learning more about piety, what it is and is not, then I highly recommend Pastor Will Weedon's book, "Praise, Thank, Serve, and Obey: the Joys of Piety." This is the first book the women studied in book club and the kid's Sunday School class is reading it now. We have a copy in the church library and it is available for purchase on the Concordia Publishing House website (CPH.org) and Amazon.

My deepest prayer is that the Holy Spirit would draw you to Himself during this Lenten season. The peace of our Crucified and Risen Savior, Christ Jesus, be with you, Dcs. Heather

Above all, Christian mourners will turn to the worship fellowship of the Church and the rich comfort of God's Holy Word and Sacrament for healing along the path of grief. For Jesus Christ abides within His Church through His sacred means of grace. Through these channels He bestows the riches of His forgiveness, life and salvation now, and to all eternity. One day we too shall stand with that great multitude of heaven who hear these blessed words:

“Now the dwelling of God is with men, and He will live with them. They will be His people, and God Himself will be with them and be their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away” (Revelations 21:3-4).

—Dr. A. L. Barry President
The Lutheran Church—
Missouri Synod

Private Confession and
Absolution
Available on
Thursdays, 8:00-8:30 a.m. and
Sundays, 8:00-8:45 a.m.
Or by appointment, See Pastor
Parent

COFFEE WITH PASTOR



Coffee with Pastor
begins with
Matins at 9:00 a.m.

Women's Bible Study
Thursdays at 10:00 a.m.
Join us in the study of Proverbs

Sunday Readings (Lectionary)

Date	Old Testament	Epistle	Gospel
Feb. 2	1 Samuel 1:21-28	Malachai 3:1-4	Luke 2:22-32
Feb. 9	Exodus 34:29-35	2 Peter 1:16-21	Matthew 17:1-9
Feb. 16	Exodus 17:1-7	1 Corinthians 9:24-10:5	Matthew 20:1-6
Feb. 26	Isaiah 55:10-13	2 Corinthians 11:19-12:9	Luke 8:4-15
Mar. 2	1 Samuel 16:1-13	1 Corinthians 13:1-13	Luke 18:31-43

OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE AT OSEL C

Serve on a Board - See Alex Franco, Pres.

Sign up for Flowers—See sign up list in the Parish Hall

Sign up for Refreshments—See sign up list in Parish Hall

Serve on the Altar Guild—See Dcs. Heather Bien

Ongoing Project on Campus—See Brian Hull, Trustee

Serve as an Usher—See Julie Blaylock

Sunday School—9:00 a.m. Sunday, Parish Hall

Reminder!

If you are the last to leave the premises, please check all doors to assure they are closed securely and locked.

Thank you!

FROM THE BOARD OF CHRISTIAN LIFE

“Come now, let us reason together, says the Lord, though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be white as snow. (Isaiah 1:18a)

Where has sin stained your life? Take comfort and rejoice that in the washing of your Baptism, you are covered with Christ’s robe of righteousness... white as snow.

"We do not become righteous by doing righteous deeds but, having been made righteous, we do righteous deeds."
- Martin Luther



Unwrapping the

Gifts

FROM LWML

Serve the Lord with Gladness! Psalm 100:2

The Lutheran Women in Mission (LWML) places a major emphasis on the support of mission and ministry throughout the world by means of Mite Box offerings. These mite offerings funded over 100 million dollars in mission grants since the organization's inception in 1942.



Mites donations 2025

Jan: \$38.01

Total: \$38.01

Mite box Sunday is the first Sunday of each month. You may bring the mite box any Sunday. If you prefer to donate by check, please make it payable to Our Savior LWML. Mite donations are sent monthly to the Gulf States District LWML to fund mission grants and district expenses and national mission grants.

23 of 31 mission grants are fully funded and 4 are partially funded.

The Lutheran Woman's Quarterly Winter 2024 issue is available from the magazine rack in the Narthex. This issue has details about the upcoming national convention in Omaha, NE June 26-29, 2025. Registration to attend the convention open

March 1.

I will host a Zone LWML Board meeting in February or March after I attend the Gulf States District LWML Board meeting on Saturday, February 9, 2025 and the Zone Presidents meeting via Zoom prior to that. One of the matters we'll be voting on is the Gulf States District Young Women's Representative. One nominee is our Clare Jones. Thank you Dcs Bien for the recommendation letter that accompanied her application.

Daily Mustard Seed devotion is available on the LWML website.

Websites:

<http://www.lwml.org>

<http://www.lwmlgulfstates.org>

UPCOMING EVENTS:

OSELC LWML Meeting Date TBD in March.

Emerald Coast Zone Christian Growth Workshop, Date/Location TBD

LWML 41st Biennial LWML Convention, June 26-29, 2025, Omaha, NE, "Growing in God's Grace" 2 Peter 3:18

Gulf States District LWML Convention, April 24-26, 2026, Gulfport, MS, "Jesus our Hope, Anchor of our Soul" Hebrews 6:19

Linda Urda, LWML President

FROM THE BOARD OF SOCIAL MINISTRY

Happy February everyone! I don't know about you all, but I had a lot of fun and a lot of laughs at the board game event last month! Thank you to everyone who came and played games!

This month we have 2 events to put on the calendar!

First of all, we look forward to seeing you, your family, and your friends at our Valentine's Day Party on February 15th! It starts at 1:30 PM and goes until 4:30 PM. There will be food, fun, dancing, and games! Activities for us all to enjoy a fun afternoon together. Come ready for fun in

your Valentine Attire. See you there!

Second, it is a Voters' Meeting month, which means we have a Voters' Meeting Potluck on February 23rd! There will be a sign up sheet in the Fellowship Hall. I can't wait to see what yummy goodies everyone brings!

That's it for this month! As always, let me know if you have any questions, suggestions, or ideas!

~Clare

Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. John 15:13

Men's Group

7:00 pm

Tuesday, February 18th

Pastor Parent's house.



Birthdays:

Eden Stapp	2/1
Pastor Parent	2/7
Bruce Anthony	2/18
Cindy Parent	2/18



Follow the Youth Group on Instagram!

OSELC Women's Book Club Starting
Soon

**Reading Materials Will Be Given Out
At Feb. 6th Meeting**

The OSELC Women's Book Club will be viewing from a Lutheran perspective poems that have been inspired by art. I know that sounds a bit unusual, but several authors have written poems based solely on their study of famous works of art. I have some knowledge of how to analyze poems, but I zero knowledge of how to do that with art! However, as usual, we will share our ideas and learn

together. We will meet for about an hour beginning around 11:30 on the third Thursday of the month (with one exception for Holy Week), but anyone who cannot meet at that time can arrange an alternate time with me.

Dates: Feb. 20, Mar. 20, April 10 (2nd Thurs. due to Holy Week), and May 15

Please join this wonderful group of women as we apply our Lutheran beliefs to the world of literature. Blessings, Jennifer Currid (850-803-1196)

Our Savior Evangelical Lutheran Church
Council Meeting Minutes (TEAMS)

January 8, 2025



President – Alex Franco

Vice-President- Alan Widener

- 1) Attendance: Pastor Parent, Dcs Heather Bien, Alan Widner, Brian Hull, Mahlon Haunschild, Julie Blaylock, Emily Bien, Clare Jones, Cindy Parent, Melania Ruef, Jennifer Currid
- 2) Alex called the meeting to order at 6:30, and Pastor Parent opened the meeting with prayer.
- 3) The previous council minutes were approved with amendments. See corrected copy of minutes in church office (Alex / Mahlon).
- 4) Welcome, Melania Ruef, to the Church Council!
- 5) Reports:
 - a) Pastor's Report (Fr Parent) - New members Ben Adkinsson and Alicia Herman. Dennis and Ashly Barnett have plans to join the church. The January 21st Winkle will be held at OSELC: individual confession at 9:00, Mass at 9:30. Pastor has made plans to visit Linda Combs and Rich Urda.
 - b) Deaconess Report (Dcs Bien) – The rose and gold paraments have arrived. However, the gold one is a bit shorter than ordered. Heather has contacted Gaspar

- to rectify this. We currently have 3 homebound members that we need to be in contact with to maintain their connection to their church family: Linda Combs, Nancy Novy, and Bobbie Parent. Cindy and Heather are planning a retreat for pastors' wives in our area. More details to be announced.
- c) Financial Report (Mahlon) – See attached. The end-of-the year statements have been delivered either in person or through our in-house mailbox system.
 - d) Treasurer (Brian) - Brian is debating whether to make a claim with our property insurance company for the electrical damage the church sustained recently. He is still trying to contact our agent. Brian made a motion to close the parament fund (Brian/Alex). See the attached resolution.
 - e) Board of Security (Julie) – No recent security issues.
 - f) LWML (Linda) – See attached.
 - g) Board of Christian Life (Linda) – No report yet, as Linda is still learning her new board position.
 - h) Board of Education (Cindy) – The children are watching the video series for Will Weedon's Thank, Praise, Serve and Obey. The Sunday morning adult study is still on the Book of Revelation, and the Thursday morning women's study is still on Proverbs.
 - i) Board of Youth (Emily) – The cookies were much appreciated by the police department and the staff at Crestview Manor. The Stapp girls loved having an activity that accommodated their needs. Emily said to contact her when you are having an activity so she can suggest ways the Stapp family could participate. They want to do more with our church.
 - j) Board of Elders (Alan) – No report. Brian requested that Trish be notified to remove names of members from our rolls who have not responded to our numerous attempts to contact them. It was agreed that she should move forward with the final stage of culling that was begun a few years ago.
 - k) Board of Trustees (Brian) – See attached. Brian is meeting with Cox to explore a wireless phone system since lightening loves to travel through the cable of our current phone. Due to issues with the cypher locks during the electrical issues, it was decided that Pastor, Deaconess Bien, Financial secretary Mahlon, security head Julie, and trustee Brian should have keys to the church and Fellowship Hall doors. Julie will make copies of the keys to distribute.
 - l) Board of Social Ministry (Clare) - See attached. Clare presented a video about Operation Child. After some discussion, it was decided to look into similar outreach programs offered through the Lutheran Church and through local organizations. Kudos to Clare for planning ahead for outreach to our neighbors near and far.
 - m) Board of Evangelism (Melania) – Melania had updated our media presence through our website, Facebook page and Google search. She has created a QR code to link to our website. Any items for FB or our website should go through Melania. Kudos to Melania for creating a strong social media presence for our church.
 - 6) Unfinished Business: Compiling church policies in one binder. More discussion on how to do this to follow.
 - 7) New Business: Nave electrical repairs- see trustee's report.
 - 8) Alex made a motion to adjourn at 7:53 (Alex/Clare). Pastor closed the meeting with prayer.

Respectfully submitted,
Jennifer Currid

**OUR SAVIOR LUTHERAN
EVANGELICAL CHURCH**

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We are on the Web!

www.Oselc.net



Council President: Alex Franco

Council Vice-President: Alan Widener

Secretary: Jennifer Currid

Treasurer: Brian Hull

Financial Secretary: Mahlon Haunschild

Board of Elders: Alan Widener

Board of Christian Life: Linda Urda

Board of Trustees: Brian Hull

Board of Education: Cindy Parent

Board of Youth: Emily Bien

Board of Evangelism: Melania Ruef

Board of Social Ministry: Clare Jones

Board of Security: Julie Blaylock

LWML: Linda Urda

Library: Jennifer Currid

Usher Director: Julie Blaylock

Organist and Kantor: Brian Hull

Office Administrator: Trish Hull

Newsletter Editor: Dcs. Bien

Pastor Raymond Parent · Deaconess Heather Bien