

March Lamplighter

ISSUE 25 - VOLUME 9 - 2025

PASTOR MARK'S MINUTE:

Need a fresh start? Lent is the perfect time to embark on that journey. Maybe you need a fresh start in your personal finances, or perhaps you need a reset in your marriage. Maybe you need to reboot a relationship with a child or a parent, or possibly you need a fresh start in your health and well-being. It could even be that you need to turn a corner in your career. The 40 Days of Lent is the perfect time for a fresh start.

At church we have large bags used to collect items that you are giving up for Lent. One item a day is suggested. Place it in the bag and bring it to church on Easter Sunday. The idea is to give up something that is in your way or slowing you down from growing closer to Jesus. You will find a suggested list of items below.*

You might be wondering, what exactly is Lent? Lent is 40 days long and is the six-week season that leads up to Easter. This year, Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, March 5th. Sundays are considered a day of joy and not a day of fasting or penance, they are not included in the calculation of the 40 days of Lent. Lent ends three days before Easter Sunday, on Maundy Thursday. The Lenten season is a time of preparation for remembering the death and resurrection of Jesus at Easter. Ash Wednesday starts Lent with a day of remembering our sin, the reality of death, and the need for repentance. It is a customary time for giving something up, or abstinence. The purpose of Lent is to fully recognize our need for a Savior. Lent invites us to prepare our minds and hearts for glorifying Jesus' life, death, and bodily resurrection. The main observation of Lent, fasting, is done to clear distractions and focus on Christ. Giving up something and replacing it with prayer, worship, and scripture gives way to a deeper relationship with God.

Observing Lent and What to Give Up for Lent. Everyone can participate in the purpose of lent to set aside time to reflect, repent, and grow. Here are three things you can do this Lenten season: 1. **Repent of sin.** Identify a sinful activity that keeps coming up in your life, something you know you need to work on. If you can't think of a sin, pray and ask God if there is anything you are missing that He wants you to know about. You can probably identify several sins, but choose one for now so you don't lose focus during Lent. Confess that sin to God and ask for repentance. If you are in a church community with Christians you trust to hold you accountable, arrange to talk to each other about how you're doing. 2. **Set a prayer time.** If you don't already, pick a time each day to spend time with God in prayer. There are many prayer guides that you can use to guide this time. If you want a Bible passage to meditate on during this time, consider reading the passion story in Matthew 26:1-27:66.

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3. **Choose something to give up.** Fasting is traditionally associated with food, but you can fast from anything you ordinarily devote time to. Use the time you normally spend on those activities in prayer or Bible reading. If you have other Christians in your life who are interested in fasting, consider becoming each others' accountability partners. Remember that the important thing is not to make fasting an obligation but something that focuses your mind on God. So, have grace with yourself and with others and enjoy what God accomplishes in you.

***Here are some common things you can choose to give up for Lent:** **Clothes:** Declutter your house and/or your closet and place the item in the bag. **For the following items, write it on a notecard, include the name of the item and the date you give it up and place it in the bag.** **Chocolate:** Many people abstain from sweets during Lent. **Sugary Drinks:** Giving up soda or energy drinks promotes health. **Social Media:** A break from social media will create more time for prayer and reflection. **Fast Food:** Avoiding fast food will help you eat healthier. **Alcohol:** Abstaining from alcohol will promote sobriety and self-control. **Smoking/Vaping:** Focus on improving your health. **Caffeine:** Giving up caffeine, such as coffee or tea, will lead to reduced dependency. **Shopping:** Avoiding purchases helps curb unnecessary spending and materialism. **Swearing:** Some people choose to give up using profanity to promote positivity and better speech. **TV or Streaming Services:** Reducing screen time will create more space for praying, reading, or spending time with loved ones. **Video Games:** Temporarily giving up video games will encourage productivity and self-discipline. **Gossip:** Abstaining from gossip and negative talk will foster healthier relationships. **Junk Food:** Cutting out junk food will lead to better nutrition.

Remember that the goal of giving up something for Lent is a means to grow spiritually, develop self-discipline, and draw closer to God. Lent is your chance to discover the abundant life Jesus invites us to enjoy at Easter. Are you ready for a fresh start?

"...if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come."

Galatians 2:20

Lord bless you, I'm excited to see you on Sunday!

EASTER 2025

For Easter this year, we are beginning a brand-new sermon series called "Collide." Since the beginning, the Christian faith has been on a collision course with the culture around us. The values of the world do not align with the values of our faith. The priorities of the world do not align with the priorities of our faith. The kingdom of man is not seeking the same things as the kingdom of God.

Be sure to pray and then invite your friends, your family members for this valuable series which begins Sunday, March 30th.

"See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the elemental spiritual forces of this world rather than on Christ." Colossians 2:8



His Strength for Our Journey

A One Day Women's Retreat

Guest Speaker: Ginger Millermon

Date: Saturday, March 8th - Time: 9:00am - 2:00pm

Location: Norway Community Center, Norway, KS

Registration Deadline: March 2nd

TO REGISTER ON-LINE GO TO: www.bellevillewesleyan.church

TO REGISTER IN PERSON GO TO: Belleville Wesleyan Church

@ 909 Wesleyan Drive, Belleville, KS 66935

Registration Fee: \$20.00 (Includes breakfast, lunch, a notebook and pen)

Payment Form: cash or check*

*Make checks payable to Our Saviors Lutheran Church

c/o Allison Carlgren - 629 30th Road - Courtland, KS 66939

Allison Carlgren @ (785) 545-8856 or allisoncarlgren@gmail.com

Ginger has written two books: Grace Thus Far and Everything We Need: His Strength for Our Journey. Her books have been featured on Focus on the Family and she has spoken to thousands of churches, women's conferences, and retreats across the United States and Canada. She is a nationally recognized author, songwriter and recording artist and is also a certified Biblical Counselor. This event is hosted by: Courtland and Scandia United Methodist Churches, Belleville Wesleyan Church and Our Saviors Lutheran Church, Norway. Door prizes will be given!

BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

If we do not have your special day in our records, or that of your loved one, please contact Pastor Mark ASAP with that information @ (785) 527-3510. Thank you!



COMMUNION

Sunday will be March 23rd during our morning service.

MEALS-on-WHEELS

We will deliver Meals-on-Wheels the week of March 17th – 21st. Please sign up in the foyer.

DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME

Turn your clocks forward one hour on Saturday night, March 8th.

PRAYER TIME

On the first Sunday of each month @ 6:00pm we come together to pray for the youth of our community.





CONGRATULATIONS!

To our very own Bentley Melby, Emberlynn Simon and their Pike Valley Junior High Future City Teammates. They earned the National Land Surveyor Award during the national competition in Washington, D. C.

POT LUCK MEAL

Our St. Patrick's Day Pot Luck Meal will be on Sunday, March 23rd after church. Join us and bring your favorite corned beef and cabbage. If you are not Irish, bring your favorite meal or dessert. Yummy!

AWANA

Awana meets each Wednesday from 6:00-7:30pm in the Fellowship Hall. Kids from 5 year-olds to 6th grade are invited to join us. We play games, have snacks, learn Bible stories and memorize Bible verses.

YOUTH GROUP

The High School Youth Group (10th-12th) meets each Sunday @ 7:00pm. The Junior High Youth Group (7th-9th) meets each Wednesday @ 6:00pm.

Upcoming Events:

1. Youth Sunday will be April 27th.

After church the Youth will be serving a taco all-you-can-eat meal with a free will donation.

2. Youth Camp @ Lakeview Christian Camp is set for June 1st – 6th.

MEN'S GROUP

Our men meet each Sunday evening @ 6:30pm* to study God's Word and encourage one another. All men are welcome to join us in the upstairs classroom.

*On the first Sunday of the month, we meet @ 7:00pm due to our prayer service from 6:00pm-7:00pm.

Belleville Wesleyan Church

909 Wesleyan Drive

Belleville, KS 66935

"Because we care...about you!"