What’s Inside:
A Pastor’s Pen
A schedule for worship assistants for the month
2 great View from the Pew articles
Our Lenten rotation schedule
And more!
Well, we’re now half way through the season of Lent.

And just as Jesus knew his destination, so too, we, as followers of Christ, know how the story ends.

And not to ruin it for anyone, but Jesus is going to be crucified, die, and then be raised from the dead.

But I’m getting ahead of myself.

Suffice it to say, there’s a happy ending.

An ending that has brought each of us the promise of both forgiveness and eternal life.

And that’s some pretty darn good news!

But there’s more good news I want to share this morning and that’s just how much I’m enjoying the theme of this year’s Grace in the Park Lent series.

Because “Walking by Faith Together” is really what it’s all about to be a Christian.

Sure, some people will say they are spiritual, but not religious, but too me that’s just poppycock.

Being spiritual might be good from of personal discipline or devotion aspect, but real worship can never be done alone or in a vacuum.

And that’s where the church comes in as a community of faith is really the glue that holds us all together.

Now, I know lots of people take issue with various religious theologies that rub them the wrong way, but I’d argue that most people don’t even know the theology of the church they attend let alone the churches they often times rail against.

Because the truth is we’re drawn into a worshipping community not because of theology, but because it just feels right and there is enough we have in common that makes our differences seem meaningless.

Why even within the ELCA there is all kind of wiggle room when it comes to belief and that’s a good thing I think.

In fact, that’s why I’m enjoying worshipping with Wooddale and Prince of Peace again this year.

Because when we walk together in faith we learn from one another and we’re given the opportunity to forge new and hopefully lasting relationships that will make both our individual congregations stronger and, more importantly, our entire community here in St. Louis Park will grow stronger too.

So let’s enjoy this time we have together and let’s also keep finding ways to be the church for all who need to feel loved.
And isn’t that the greatest commandment?
To love. To love everyone. Love everyone all the time!
Blessing, Pastor Durk

Worship Assistants This Month

**Sunday, April 7th**
- Lector: Nikki Christensen
- Ushers: Team 7 (Leroy Murray, Anne Kraft, Dick and Nancy Brammer)
- Money Counters: Dina Strachota

**Sunday, April 14th**
- Lector: Dina Strachota
- Ushers: Team 8 (Renee Compo, Marcee Larsen, Deb Schmitz, Jeanne Worm)
- Money Counters:

**Sunday, April 21st**
- Lector: Dina Strachota
- Ushers: Team 9 (Mark and Carolee Cohen, Harding Hanson, Bruce and Dina Strachota)
- Money Counters:

**Sunday, April 28th**
- Lector: Glen Soderberg
- Ushers: Team 1 (Samantha Andrew, Courtney Hanson, Mae Harmsen, Sophia Wasvick, Alyssa Willis)
- Money Counters: Anne Kraft
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Events</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Tuesday, April 2</strong></td>
<td>6:00pm CYF meeting</td>
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| **Wednesday, April 3**| 6:00pm Lenten Dinner  
6:20pm Pop up choir rehearsal  
7:00pm Lenten Worship at Spirit of Christ |
| **Thursday, April 4**| 6:30pm Men’s Group  
7:00pm Prayer Shawl Group |
| **Sunday, April 7**  | 9:15am Men of the Choir  
9:45am Choir  
10:00am Sunday School  
11:00am Worship  
12:00pm Fellowship |
| **Wednesday, April 10** | 6:00pm Lenten Dinner  
6:20pm Pop up choir rehearsal  
7:00pm Lenten Worship at Wooddale |
| **Thursday, April 11** | 7:00pm Church Council |
| **Saturday, April 13** | 5:30am Shelter Breakfast  
9:15am Men of the Choir  
9:45am Choir  
10:00am Sunday School  
11:00am Worship  
12:00pm Fellowship |
| **Sunday, April 14**  | Palm Sunday  
9:15am Men of the Choir  
9:45am Choir  
10:00am Sunday School  
11:00am Worship  
12:00pm Fellowship |
| **Thursday, April 18** | 1:00pm Active Adults  
6:20pm Choir Rehearsal  
7:00pm Maundy Thursday Worship at Spirit of Christ |
| **Friday, April 19**  | 6:00pm Choir Rehearsal  
7:00pm Good Friday Worship at Wooddale |
| **Sunday, April 21**  | Easter  
8:45-10:30 Breakfast  
9:15am Men of the Choir  
9:45am Choir  
10:00am Sunday School  
11:00am Worship  
12:00pm Fellowship |
| **Sunday, April 28**  | 10:00am Sunday School and Choir  
11:00am Worship  
12:00pm Fellowship |
| **Weekly Monday**    | 7:00pm Boy Scouts (Fellowship Hall) |
| **Tuesday**          | 5:30pm Women's AA (Green Room) |
| **Friday**           | 7:00am N A  
7:30pm Desire AA (Green Room) |

**Calendar – April 2019**
Social Action Calendar – April to June 2019

April 2019
13 Shelter Breakfast 6:30 to 8:30am

May 2019
10 Shelter Supper 6:00 to 8:30pm

June 2019
8 Shelter Breakfast 6:30 to 8:30am

Our Saviours Shelter Breakfast – April 13th
On Saturday, April 13th, Spirit of Christ will serve breakfast at the shelter. We will be serving French toast, bacon, sausage, juice, fruit, and milk. We serve breakfast at 7am and leave church between 6:15 and 6:30am. If you would like to join us for serving or make a donation, talk to Mark or Carolee at church, email c-cohe@umn.edu or call 952-935-5608 to learn more.

SLP BirdFeeder Donations
During the month of April, we will collect donations for the food shelf at SLP Bird Feeder. If you are not familiar with this program at the St. Louis Park High School, it is managed by student volunteers to help their classmates with a supply of food to get them through the weekend and holidays, check out their website https://theslpbirdfeeder.weebly.com/
Recommended food items are ones that do not involve the use of stoves or ovens. The best things to donate are full packaged meals that require few outside ingredients, along with meals that can be made within their packages. These are appreciated by the families who don’t have access to other cooking equipment. Their top ten list is below!
Place donations on the collection table near the front door The Social Action team will bring the donations to the high school at the end of April for you!

Top Ten Food Items to Donate
1. Canned Fruits
2. Microwavable Meals
3. Bread/ Tortillas
4. Nutritional drinks/ Bottled water
5. Jelly
6. Pasta Sauce
7. Backpacks
8. Snacks
9. Canned Meat
10. Rice

Share the Spirit Sunday
With our new model for mission funding in 2019 as part of the SOC annual budget, the Social Action team made donations to SLP Bird Feeder and STEP. Both organizations gave temple talks during the service to update the congregation on their current activities. In February, BirdFeeder received $300 in Cub gift cards that the students can use to supplement food donations needed to fill backpacks. In March, STEP was given a check for $500. Since March is Minnesota FoodShare month, this donation can be used to gain matching grant funds to help them meet their goal of collecting 100,000 in pounds or dollars. This is in addition to support the shelter meal groceries. Thank you SOC members for your continued commitment to supporting our neighbors in need.
Get involved with Social Action!
The Social Action team (aka SOC SAC) welcomes everyone in the congregation to join us to plan and organize mission and social action events. This could be an ongoing activity or a one-time commitment. Talk to anyone on the Social Action Team: (Mark or Carolee Cohen, Wendi Harmsen, Pat Latvala, Deb Schmitz, Joanne Stone or Jeanne Worm) if you want to help!

Announcements

Easter Breakfast
The youth group will be serving breakfast before Easter service on April 21st. Due to last year’s success, they will be serving made to order omelettes, amongst other things. Breakfast will be served from 8:45-10:30.

Palm Sunday Lions Club Pancake Breakfast
On Sunday, April 14 (Palm Sunday) from 8:00 am till noon come join the St Louis Park Lions Club for a wonderful meal of pancakes and sausage at their 62nd Annual Pancake Breakfast. Tickets can be purchased from either Bruce or Dina Strachota in advance for $6.00 (a savings of $2.00 off the regular price of $8.00) As always children 5 and under eat free! Proceeds from this event will go to St Louis Park organizations such as STEP and Children First. For the second year in a row we will also be having KidSight Vision Screening for kids 6 months to 6 years of age and we will also be handing out educational books to kids.

All Call for Photos from the last 10 years
As we prepare to celebrate 10 years as a church, we are collecting photos- and we need your help! If you have any photos from the last ten years at church, email them to Nikki at infosoccommunity@gmail.com.

10 Year Anniversary = $10,000 goal
In honor of our 10 year anniversary, we have a goal of raising $10,000 to support local mission work. The money will be split between Our Saviour’s Community Services, S.T.E.P., the St. Louis Park BirdFeeder Program, and the Minneapolis Area Synod.
Sometimes, all you have to do is ask --

Sometimes all it takes for someone to get involved in an activity or group is a simple request. I think many times, we are all guilty of assuming that since an individual does not willingly come forward to volunteer or help, he or she is not interested. Everyone is different, of course, and praise the Lord for that. Some naturally throw themselves into civic, church or youth activities, and end up doing more than expected. And then there are the casual or non-joiners, those who have a tendency to not get involved in traditional activities because they do not have the time or inclination.

Or maybe they have had bad experiences in the past with being overworked, unappreciated or burned out. And that is fine, because a lot of these folks again go on to do so many wonderful things for other people, only out of the spotlight this time. And then, it seems to me, there is a fairly substantial group that, seemingly, is disinterested in helping out various causes — until they are asked. And then, once given the chance, they shine. I bring this up, because what Glen Soderberg said following the passing of former First Lutheran Church member Martha Haugen of St. Louis Park on Feb. 11, at the age of 81, provides an excellent illustration of the point that help, like many other things in life, is only a call away.

“Martha Haugen was a quiet, private person,” said Glen recently. “Her husband, Hoagie, was active in the choir, and outgoing, so maybe that’s why she wasn’t. She didn’t attend church much, but the last time I connected with her was 2006-07, I was president (of the council), we had an interim pastor, so volunteers covered the office and most everything was done by them. “One of our tasks was a monthly newsletter mailing, of 200 pieces,” Glen said. “I called her, she ended up coming each month, sometimes bringing a son living at home with her. Eventually, we called a pastor, got an office person, and that was the end of our volunteers.

“And that was probably the last time I saw Martha. But it is a perfect example of a phone call, and then she got involved, knowing that she felt useful — and she loved it.”

Thanks, Glen, for sharing the power of a simple request. Martha was able to contribute in ways she might never have thought possible, while receiving the immeasurable benefits of service beyond one’s self. She was preceded by her husband, and is survived by four children. A memorial service was held Feb. 21.

We all have something to contribute, in unique and varying ways. While within in the walls of what is now SOC, she was a child of God, doing God’s work. RIP, Martha: cherished wife, mother, volunteer.

Local kindness trumps bad news of the world -- Just about every morning, Renee and I start our day with coffee, the paper, our feline house guests jumping around, knocking things over, and channel-surfing the early local and national TV news broadcasts. And every morning we come to the same conclusion: The world is full of people behaving badly. And then, just as predictably, we each backtrack somewhat from our blanket condemnation of society, and stick in a bunch of qualifiers as we each soften our comments: “Well,
some people in the world cause a lot of trouble, but not a lot of the good ones.” Something like that. And, of course, I should know better than to complain. News, in large part because of its unexpected, uncovering and unpredictable nature, is often about rotten things. Small-town, community journalism is less this way, because advertisers and subscribers won’t pay to read about cat-hangings in Chicago. Local news is a lot more about achievement and recognition than the infrequent boiling of the books down at city hall. Not that bad doesn’t happen in small towns, it’s just that there aren’t the numbers to support large outbreaks of it. Dog bites man, no story. Man bites dog, aha! That’s a piece worthy of coverage from the viewpoint of both parties – plus photos! I bring this up because it occurred to me, during the wonderful service dedicated to the late Coleman Arlen Berge, held March 8th at Spirit of Christ, that the tribute-filled salute to him was in such stark contrast to the daily dose of negatives we wake up to each morning. Listening to the heart-felt stories of devotion that this long-time member of our congregation had for his family, made me think that CBS, NBC, ABC, CNN, etc. would all be forced out of business if more Coleman Berge’s populated the planet! His keen interest in others was demonstrated when he would ask, after a long flight home, “What kind of a plane were you on?” He is now well-known for his avid interest in aviation and his rapid identification of DC10s, 747s and all things flight-worthy, as they passed over his St. Louis Park home, with his eyes skyward from a comfortable chair on the deck he had built.

But the question about the air conveyance used to travel back to his, and loving wife Joyce’s, home here, was only a small part of his interaction. I think this was just another insight into the involvement and kindness he had for his family and friends. To me, Coleman’s opening flight question seemed to be just the beginning of a strong connection he had with those around him.

It’s futile for me to mention in this space even a few of his accomplishments and interests, they were so many and varied. Coleman passed on Feb. 26, at the age of 90, leaving his wife and children (Carolee [Mark] Cohen, Joni Berge, and Michael [Suzanne] Berge) and their families to grieve. His family said that Coleman’s happiest times were when he was surrounded by them – wife, children and grandchildren. And judging from comments made at his funeral, the feelings were mutual.

From all accounts, he was an extraordinary individual. But the daily news cycle would be empty if it had to rely on people like Coleman. Wouldn’t that be great?