



# *In the Spirit*

A newsletter for the Libertyville Covenant church community about local happenings and Christian issues.

**March 2023**

**Volume 30 Issue 3**

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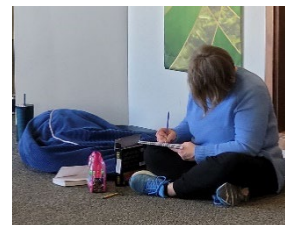
## **The Gift of Lent**

We all have seasons in our lives when we find ourselves taking stock of our life. Maybe this is a deeper look at our career choice or current job. Maybe this is about family and the future. Maybe it's about health of life balance. For me, last summer was a chance to take stock of my spiritual life. Having finished a year of participating in St. Ignatius' Spiritual Exercises and learning new ways to pray, my sabbatical was an opportunity for me to spend significant time with God pondering faith, theology, and life. Much was decided, much more observed and noticed, but it was a turning point for me spiritually.

Lent can be an annual season for all of us to take stock of our spiritual life. In this season of contemplation, confession, repentance, and quiet, we find a gift from God – time to reflect. In our busy, overfilled, stuffed-to-the-gills schedules, this is indeed a gift that is rare and deeply valuable. When else do we take time to sit quietly with God for an extended season? When else are we encouraged to say “No” to overscheduling, to visual and audible and mental noise, to the drone of “progress and success” that so often drowns out the Still Small Voice of God? Lent is a gift given to each of us, if we will simply take it.

But that's the problem, isn't it? Lent offers us time, yet we are so resistant to accepting it. We fear we'll fall behind at work, miss an opportunity with family, or hinder a friendship we'd like to develop if we say yes to this gift of reflective time. And so too often we fall behind in our relationship with God, miss opportunities with Him, and hinder our own spiritual growth instead. Every gift is a choice – to receive it or not – and God's gifts are never forced upon us.

Could you receive this gift this year passing it by? Could you give up your a time each day and take that time to sit assess? Could you, in receiving God's gift year, also give Him the gift of your during Lent? It's a risk, there's no doubt



instead of hectic life for with God and of time this attention about it. You

risk missing out on the things of this world. You risk being fully known and in so doing finding acceptance. You risk hearing God speak of next steps and growth in your relationship with Him.

Let me encourage you, as one who has accepted this gift and found it a blessing, to take time each day with God this Lent. Take time to look honestly and truly at your own Spiritual life. Assess your maturity, and enlist help if you need it. Read a book like Thomas Ashbrook's "Mansions of the Heart", take an online spiritual assessment tool (be careful to research good ones first), or find a Spiritual Director (I'm happy to help you find someone). Consider what you need to take the next step along the spiritual journey and then do it.

Lent is a gift of God for each of us, the gift of time with Him. Will you accept it this year?



## Lent 2023

As we enter this Lenten season, we want to give you plenty of opportunities to celebrate this church season together as a congregation and as a household, whether that is 8 of us or 1 of us.

Mitzvah Chains – at our Ash Wednesday service, each household created a “Mitzvah Chain” for Lent. “Mitzvah” literally means command in Hebrew, but has taken on the idea of a Good Deed. So our chain is made up of a different idea for each day of Lent, an idea for a good deed, a time of prayer, or a thought to ponder. At a set time when the household is together, you read your chain for the day together and then do what it says. Some require action, some prayer, and some an activity together. Use the Mitzvah Chain to prepare yourself for the holiest day of the Church year, Easter Sunday!

Worship Theme – our theme for Lent this year is “A Table in the Wilderness”. We’ll be looking at biblical stories of God’s provision for people in the wilderness, people like Jesus, David, Elijah, Hagar, the Israelites, and the Disciples. We have a whole lineup of speakers, so join us each week for worship.

Communion – Each week in Lent, we will celebrate God’s provision for us in our own wildernesses at the Table of the Lord’s Supper. Unlike our usual monthly schedule, through Lent, we will celebrate Communion every week until Holy Week. Each week we will focus on a different image of the Table, and often we will celebrate it in different ways. Come to the Table together this Lent.

Personal Devotion – It is not uncommon for people to give something up or take something on during Lent as a personal devotional practice. If you choose to skip our Immerse reading and our Mitzvah Chain, then let us encourage you to a Lenten fast. You can give up food for a day, or a kind of food for the season. But you can also give up Facebook or social media, TV, complaining, gossip, or coffee. Or you can choose to take on a devotional activity like bible reading, prayer, care for the poor, or almsgiving. Each of us can benefit from our own unique devotion, and God is pleased with our attempts more than our successes, so give it a try this year.

# March Worship



With the advent of Lent this month (see what I did there?) we begin our new theme, “A Table in the Wilderness”. For Lent we will focus on God’s provision in our wilderness times by looking at stories of people who found God’s provision for themselves in the literal wilderness. We will hear from a number of speakers, and have a number of unique worship opportunities. So bring a friend and join us for worship every Sunday at 10:30am in the sanctuary or on our [YouTube channel](#).

- |         |  |                          |
|---------|--|--------------------------|
| Mar. 5  | A Table in the Wilderness for Israel (Pastor Steve)              | Ex. 16:1-18, 31-32       |
| Mar. 12 | A Table in the Wilderness for Elijah (Max Anderson & Thor Papak) | 1 Kings. 17:1-24, 19:1-8 |
| Mar. 19 | A Table in the Wilderness for Hagar (Rev. Karen Hinz)            | Gen. 21:8-20             |
| Mar. 26 | A Table in the Wilderness for David                              | 1 Sam. 25:1-42           |



**Welcoming 11 new members: Dave and Barb Scheibe, Norm and Sharon Johnson, Kristy Miller, Grace James, Max Anderson and Brooke Sparks. Not Pictured: Brian and Cindy Johnson and Thor Papak**





**Celebrate Purim, March 5<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 p.m.**

Do you think God has a sense of humor? Laughter is one of God’s gifts to humankind. Mark your calendar for Sunday, March 5, 5:30 pm for an appetizer supper as we celebrate the Jewish holiday of Purim. Purim tells the story of God’s deliverance when the Jews were subjects of the Persian Empire. Our Jewish neighbors celebrate Purim with a melodramatic acting-out of the story of Esther, complete with BOOing the villain and cheering the hero. We are going to try it! Come for a hilarious evening of high-camp storytelling. Come ready to cheer and boo. Kids, grownups, elders. Friends. Come. Bring an

appetizer to share, and some shelf-stable food for the local food pantry. Let’s make this gathering a blessing to our neighbors in need! Don’t miss out on this opportunity to fellowship and laugh uproariously as we remember just how good our God is! See you there! Questions? Call Karen 262-745-7020

**Libertyville Township Food Pantry needs (for Purim celebration)**

- Canned meats, corned beef hash, stews, tuna, salmon, sardines, chili, spaghetti o’s, beef-a-roni, ravioli, Sloppy joe mix, pork and beans, soups, baked beans, kidney beans
- Spaghetti sauce, gravy, and sauce mixes
- Rice, beans, mac and cheese, Rice-a-roni, Pasta-roni, Tuna Helper, Chicken helper, Hamburger Helper, crackers, cookies, snack food, spices
- Ketchup, mustard, mayonnaise, barbeque sauce, salad dressing
- Canned fruits/vegetables

Jams and Jellies, peanut butter

Hot and cold cereals, pancake mix, syrup

Jellos, puddings

Sugar free products

Milk: powdered, evaporated, and condensed only

Baking supplies: sugar, flour, salt, baking powder, baking soda, vanilla, chocolate chips, nuts, raisins

Vegetable oil/cooking oil

Coffee, tea, juices



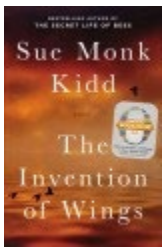
I M M E R S E: The Bible Reading Experience™



**Immerse update**

We are well into our congregational reading of Immerse: Kingdoms. We have finished Joshua, Judges, and Ruth so far. We’ve been meeting weekly or bi-weekly to discuss what we’re reading. And the great thing about Immerse is that you can join us anytime! Even if you haven’t done any reading yet, you can just pick up with today and start reading with us. There’s always room in our small groups, so consider joining us as we do our theology together! Email the church office if you need a book, a small group, or with any questions.

Our next Book Club selection will be The Invention of Wings by Sue Monk Kidd



The story follows Hetty "Handful" Grimke, a Charleston slave, and Sarah, the daughter of the wealthy Grimke family. The novel begins on Sarah's eleventh birthday, when she is given ownership over Handful, who is to be her handmaid. "The Invention of Wings" follows the next thirty-five years of their lives. Inspired in part by the historical figure of Sarah Grimke (a feminist, suffragist and, importantly, an abolitionist), Kidd allows herself to go beyond the record to flesh out the inner lives of all the characters, both real and imagined"

All are welcome to join the discussion about our next read. Guaranteed to be lively and fun! We will be meeting at church on Friday, March 10, 2023, 7:00 pm. Questions? Contact Caren Vollrath [carenvollrath@gmail.com](mailto:carenvollrath@gmail.com) 224-637-4422

### LCC Coffee Hour & Wednesday Night Dinner



food.faith.fellowship - LCC FUN!

Fellowship is a big part of LCC as it gives up great ways to connect with one another. But, we need your help. Please consider serving on Sunday mornings and/or Wednesday nights. If you are willing to help please see the details below and click on the link to signup. Thank you! **-Christy James & Heather Larson**

#### Sunday Coffee Hour

Responsibilities:

- Set up and clean up Coffee Hour
- Make coffee (regular and decaf) and hot water thermoses
- Provide snacks (or use the ones we will have available in the kitchen downstairs; see Christy James or Heather Larson for info.)

#### Wednesday Night Dinner

Variety of Options (you don't have to do it all)

Set -Up Responsibilities:

- Put up round tables and chairs
- Put decorations in the middle of the tables
- Help the person making dinner to put out food & supplies

Dinner Responsibilities:

- Purchase meal items (or let Christy or Heather know what you need purchases at least 1 week in advance; reimbursement is possible)
- Make dinner
- Help with setting up and serving dinner

Like to bake? - Bring a Dessert to Share (you don't have to sign up for this)

Clean-Up Responsibilities:

- Wash down tables and chairs then put them away along with the decorations
- Collect and store leftover food
- Do dishes and put them away
- Vacuum floor, if needed

Please click [HERE](#) to sign up.

# Children's Ministries



**Maren, Kajsa, Genevieve and Lennon on their retreat to Covenant Harbor with Darilyn and Sarah.**



# Youth Ministries



**FOCUS: A 4-WEEK STUDY FROM THE GOSPELS & PSALMS ON SPIRITUAL GROWTH**

## **SERIES OVERVIEW:**

It's not easy to stay focused. Especially these days, when we're connected to a never-ending stream of new notifications, ads, messages, videos, posts, and entertainment, it makes sense if we feel a little distracted sometimes. Maybe you've struggled recently to stay focused on your homework, or on the story your friend was telling you, or on the movie you were watching — but have you ever struggled to stay focused when you were spending time with God? In this four-week series, we're going to get honest about how difficult it can be to stay focused when we're trying to pray, read the Bible, or grow in our faith. Each week, we'll explore passages from Psalms and the Gospels as we challenge ourselves to focus on practicing four spiritual disciplines that can help us grow. Together, we'll try focusing on **what God has said**, on **giving something up**, on **talking to God**, and on **rest**.

**Junior High January Programming**

**(Confirmation) Sunday School Dates and Times: 3/5, 3/12, 3/19 from 9:00 to 10:00 a.m. There is NO Sunday School on 3/26 due to spring break.**

**Wednesday Youth Group Dates: 3/1, 3/8, 3/15, 3/22 from 6:30 to 7:45 p.m. No YG 3/39.**



**Our Junior High Youth Group bringing cheer and fellowship to Bev Schmidt.**



Our next **PADS Dinner** will be served at on Wednesday, March 22!! We will be meeting at 4:45 p.m. Our Jr. High young people will be assisting in setting up beds, serving the meal and packing lunches. On April 26<sup>th</sup>, our Sr. High teens will be providing that service for the last meal of the season. The junior high families are invited as well. After serving dinner, we will go to Culver's for a meal and fellowship.

A Google Doc will be sent out two weeks in advance for people to sign up to contribute items for the dinner and items to put together lunches for the following day.

Our church has been supportive of this important program that feeds and shelters the homeless for many years. Thank you for caring!!



**Senior High Winter Programming**

**Sunday School Dates and Times: 3/5, 3/12, 3/19 from 9:00 to 10:00 a.m.** (We invite our youth to bring their Immerse Kingdom books each of the 16 weeks for the rest of the year.)

**There is NO Sunday or Youth Group 3/26 due to spring break.**

**Youth Group Dates and Times: 3/5, 3/12, 3/19 5:00 to 7:00 p.m.**



**The Senior High One Life Retreat at Covenant Point.**



## Financial Summary thru January 2022

### EXPENSES VS. BUDGET

Budgeted Expenses YTD	\$46,109
Actual Expenses YTD	\$40,672
Cost Savings / (Overrun)	\$5,437

### GIVING VS. BUDGET

Giving YTD (Including spec)	\$34,830
Budgeted Giving YTD	\$46,109
Giving Surplus / (Deficit)	(\$11,279)

### INCOME VS. EXPENSES

Income YTD	\$34,830
Expenses YTD	\$40,672
Operating Surplus / (Deficit)	(\$5,842)

The Leadership Team thanks you all for your continued generous support of the ministries of LCC. We thank God for you and His good work that can be accomplished through your faithfulness. If you have any questions or concerns regarding our finances, please contact our Treasurer, "Kansas" Dave Anderson at 847-910-1696 or [danderson@proactiongroup.com](mailto:danderson@proactiongroup.com).

**Thanks, Dave for your work on our behalf!**

## LCC LEADERSHIP

Please pray for the church

**LEADERSHIP TEAM, COUNCIL & STAFF,**

**Contact them if you have questions, ideas or would like to get involved in a particular ministry.**

### STAFF:

**Pastor:** Steve Larson (815/508-4450)

**Associate Pastor to Youth:**

Paul Couleur (847/331-3640)

**Pastor to Senior Adults:**

Bruce Thorson (847/421-2732)

**Office Administrator:** Debbie Tometz

**Choir Director:** Kris Nikkel

**Worship Leader:** Jeanette Mottl

**Tech Coordinator:** Noah James

**Organist:** Su-yi Su

### LEADERSHIP TEAM

**Church Council Chair:**

Caren Vollrath

**Church Council Vice Chair:**

Dave Anderson

**Church Council Secretary:**

Karen Lundstedt

**Treasurer:**

Dave L. Anderson

**LT Members at Large:**

Julie Dahlberg

Dennis Dieball

Owen Youngman

**Financial Secretary:**

John Bethancourt

**Christian Education and Discipleship (CED)**

Angela Kocinski/Ann Frost

**Deacon Team:**

Wes Lindahl

**Evangelism & Service Team:**

Teresa Anderson

**Worship Ministry Team:**

Trevor James

**Finance & Properties Team:**

Kerry Monson

# March Volunteer Schedule

Date	Coffee Hour	Lay Reader	Greeters	Ushers
3/5	Dennis & Carol Dieball	Heather Larson	Nancy & Tom Borkman	Bill (Marti) Anderson and Jim Krueger
3/12	Michelle & Jim Pas	Dan Frost	Dwight & Susan Samuelson	Same
3/19	Ben & Sarah Palmberg	Lisa Kindstrom	Mark & Christine Cederberg	Same
3/26	Claudia Nauman & Vicki Herrick	Vicki Herrick	Donna Clark & Nikki Papak	Same
	Sunday School	SS Nursery	Children's Church	Worship Nursery
3/5	PreSchool Angela Kocinski, K-2 Kansas Dave, 3-5 Merileen Thorson & Lee Vollrath		Jim Gillette	Kat Tranel & Caren Vollrath
3/12	PreSchool Angela Kocinski, K-2 Paul & Karin Lundstedt, 3-5 Merileen Thorson & Lee Vollrath		Jim Gillette	
3/19	PreSchool Angela Kocinski, K-2 Paul & Karin Lundstedt, 3-5 Merileen Thorson & Lee Vollrath	Nancy Borkman	Jim Gillette	Nancy Borkman & Dallas Family
3/26	PreSchool Angela Kocinski, K-2 Paul & Karin Lundstedt, 3-5 Merileen Thorson & Lee Vollrath		Jim Gillette	Kirsten Peterson & Karin Hildebrandt





# March Birthdays

Birthdays		Anniversaries
3/3 Saly Lichter, Niki Papak	3/18 Tina Gillette, Pauline Raia	3/2/91 Lee & Caren Vollrath
3/6 Steve Larson	3/19 Klara Cederberg	3/29/03 Mark & Christine Cederberg
3/10 Angela Kocinski	3/21 Scott Anderson	
3/12 Heather Larson	3/23 Max Anderson, Kajsa Dalton	
3/13 Rachel Hickok, Kris Nikkel, Craig Splinter	3/28 Art Nikkel	
3/15 Julie Dahlberg, Michelle Pas	3/31 Carol Nielson	

# March

## Recurring Weekly Events

<b>Sunday:</b>	9:00 a.m.	Immerse online
	9:15 a.m.	Sunday School
	10:30 a.m.	Worship
	12:00 p.m.	Choir Rehearsal
	5:00 p.m.	Sr. High Youth Group
<b>Monday:</b>	7:00 p.m.	Monday Night Small Group
<b>Tuesday:</b>	7:00 p.m.	2 <sup>nd</sup> WMT Mtg.
	7:00 p.m.	4 <sup>th</sup> Deacon Mtg.
	7:00 p.m.	Immerse online (twice a month)
<b>Wednesday:</b>	5:30 p.m.	Wednesday Night Together
	6:30 p.m.	Middle School Youth Group
<b>Thursday:</b>	9:30 a.m.	Women's Bible Study
	4:00 p.m.	3 <sup>rd</sup> Leadership Team Meeting
	7:00 p.m.	Immerse Small Group
	1 <sup>st</sup> /3 <sup>rd</sup> 7:00	Men's Ping Pong
<b>Friday:</b>	7:00 a.m.	Men's Bible Study
<b>Saturday:</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> Sat 8am	Furniture Ministry
	2 <sup>nd</sup> /4 <sup>th</sup> 9:30	Women's Group

## March Special Events

3/5	Purim Service
3/18-19	Confirmation Lock-In
3/26	PADS Service Event

# March

# 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 5:30 WNT Together 6:30 MS Youth	2 9:30 Women's BS 7:00 pm Ping Pong 7:00 Immerse SG	3 7 Men's Bible Study	4 8 Furniture Ministry
5 9:00 Immerse Online 9:15 Bible Study 10:30 Worship 12:00 Choir 5:30 Purim Service	6 7 pm MNSG	7 7:00 Immerse online	8 5:30 WNT Together 6:30 MS Youth	9 9:30 Women's BS 7:00 Immerse SG	10 7 Men's Bible Study	11 10 SG w/Lisa
12 9:00 Immerse Online 9:15 Bible Study 10:30 Worship 12: Choir 5:00 Youth Group	13 7 pm MNSG	14 7 pm WMT	15 5:30 WNT Together 6:30 MS Youth	16 9:30 Women's BS 7:00 pm Ping Pong 7:00 Immerse SG	17 7 Men's Bible Study	18 Confirmation Lock In
19 9:00 Immerse Online 9:15 Bible Study 10:30 Worship 12: Choir 5:00 Youth Group	20 7 pm MNSG	21 7:00 Immerse online	22 5:00 PADS 5:30 WNT Together 6:30 MS Youth	23 9:30 Women's BS 4:00 Leadership 7:00 Immerse SG	24 7 Men's Bible Study	25 10 SG w/Lisa
Spring Break <sup>26</sup> 9:00 Immerse Online 9:15 Bible Study 10:30 Worship 12: Choir	Spring Break <sup>27</sup> 7 pm MNSG	Spring Break <sup>28</sup> 7 pm Deacons	Spring Break <sup>29</sup> 5:30 WNT Together 6:30 MS Youth	Spring Break <sup>30</sup> 9:30 Women's BS 7:00 pm Ping Pong 7:00 Immerse SG	Spring Break <sup>31</sup> 7 Men's Bible Study	Spring Break



**ONLINE GIVING PORTAL:** To give online, simply to go the LCC website ([www.libcov.org](http://www.libcov.org)) and click the “give” on the menu. Thank you for your ongoing support.

[LINK to online giving](#)

Checks mailed to the church will also be received and processed on a regular basis. If you have questions, contact John Bethancourt, [jb covenant@gmail.com](mailto:jb covenant@gmail.com) or 847/837-1690



## Libertyville Covenant Church

### Our Mission is...

to grow disciples, grow the church, and grow the Kingdom of God

### Our Vision is...

We grow disciples as we praise and learn together

We grow the church as we love and give together

We grow the Kingdom of God as we serve and share together

### Our Core Values are...

Community: everyone is welcome to join us on the journey

Authenticity: being real people with real issues before our real God

Relationships: with God, each other, and the world around us

Engagement: all are gifted, all are called, all have a place in the ministry

### Libertyville Covenant Church

250 S. St. Mary's Road, Libertyville, Illinois 60048

(Corner of Route 176 and St. Mary's Road)

Pastor: Steve Larson Church phone: 847/362-3308 [www.libcov.org](http://www.libcov.org)

**NOTES:**