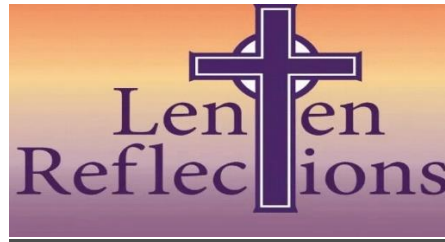


Cross of Glory & West Freeborn Lutheran Churches – March 2023

Sunday Morning Worship times: Cross of Glory – 9:00 a.m. West Freeborn – 10:30 a.m.



What Is Lent All About, and Why Is It Important?

Have you ever wondered what people are talking about when they say they're giving something up for Lent? Do you want to understand what Lent is and how it relates to Easter?

Lent is the 40 days (not including Sundays) from Ash Wednesday to the Saturday before Easter. Lent is often described as a time of preparation and an opportunity to go deeper with God. This means that it's a time for personal reflection that prepares people's hearts and minds for Good Friday and Easter.

Ash Wednesday is the first day of Lent. You may have noticed people with a smudged, black cross on their foreheads. Those are ashes from the Ash Wednesday service. The ashes symbolize our grief for the things we've done wrong and the resulting division of imperfect people from a perfect God.

Maundy Thursday is the day before Good Friday. It commemorates the night before Jesus died, when He shared the Passover meal with His closest friends and followers.

Good Friday is the day Christians remember Jesus' death. The "Good" reflects how Jesus' death was a sacrifice on our behalf so we can receive God's forgiveness for our wrongs, or sins.

Easter Vigil is the night of salvation! At the Vigil of Easter, we gather around fire, word, water, bread, and wine, proclaiming through story and song that ours is a God who continuously brings life out of death. On this night we experience again the heart of God's baptismal promise and the center of our faith; we are claimed and cleansed, renewed in the death and resurrection of Christ. We gather with all the saints of every time and place to celebrate the good news: Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!

Easter Sunday is the joyful celebration of Jesus rising from the dead to give us the opportunity of eternal life. While people still die, Jesus made the way for people to have a relationship with God in this life and to spend eternity with Him in heaven.

The three main things people focus on during Lent are prayer, fasting (abstaining from something to reduce distractions and focus more on God) and giving, or charity.

Prayer during Lent focuses on our need for God's forgiveness. It's also about repenting (turning away from our sins) and receiving God's mercy and love.

Fasting, or giving something up, is a very common practice during Lent. The idea is that giving up something that's a regular part of life, like eating dessert or scrolling through Facebook, can be a reminder of Jesus' sacrifice. That time can also be replaced with more time connecting with God.

Giving money or doing something good for others is a way to respond to God's grace, generosity and love. For example, some people spend time volunteering or donate money they would normally use to buy something, like their morning coffee.

It's important to note that doing these things can never make us earn or deserve Jesus' sacrifice or a relationship with God. People are flawed and will never be good enough for a perfect God. Only Jesus has the power to rescue us from ourselves. Jesus sacrificed Himself on Good Friday to bear the punishment for all our wrongdoings and offer us forgiveness. He was raised from the dead on Easter Sunday to give us an opportunity to have a relationship with God for eternity. Spending time during Lent praying, fasting and giving can make Jesus' sacrifice on Good Friday and His resurrection on Easter even more meaningful.

Greetings in the name of God our Creator, Christ our Redeemer and the Holy Spirit our Sustainer...Amen!

Today is a day I never thought would come...the day AFTER votes held to call me as your pastor. Not too many seminarians have their ending in sight at the beginning of our first classes, only that we are led by the Holy Spirit to embark on a journey as the prayer below states, a prayer that I refer to often but also one that has been a grounding point at many times during my life. And today that journey brings us together...officially.

Today, it has a new vision as together we enter a season of called ministry...where we can dream and hope and vision together for the futures of your congregations, both individually and collectively...together. I'm honored to have received by vote this call from your congregation...to stay. I think when Becky Ausen delivered the results of the votes during announcements at West Freeborn, I think she used the words "forever" ...which is a long time! Though that isn't a reality for any of us, I'm thrilled to envision a future together in mission for the Gospel of Christ with you all! Thanks be to God for this call and your faithfulness in the process!

A special thank you to Call Committee members including Emily Wakefield, Angela Bell, Ronnie Bartness, Jade O'Byrne, Becky Ausen, and Sue Bakken, Council Presidents Jerry Morstad and Glenn Ausen for your hard work and faithful leading during this Bridge Contract time period; to the congregational councils at both Cross and West; and to you, the congregation members who showed your presence on Sunday, February 26th to vote to call me as your Pastor. It has been an honor getting to know you as this Bridge Contracted time comes to an end and a time of Called Ministry begins with you all! It is an honor to walk with you as your pastor, and I'm looking forward to the future as we live, serve and grow together!

Plans are in the works for a Service of Ordination to the Ministry of Word and Sacrament to come following April. Feel free to "Save the Date" of April 23rd, 2023 at 2 p.m. for this service, that will be held in my sending/home congregation at Our Savior's Lutheran in Austin, MN. We anticipate some sort of fellowship to follow...we are so thankful to finally have this date in sight. Though there are more details, semantics but still necessary, that will come, today is a day when I can exhale...as I look out the office window in Hartland. Though the sky may be dreary, my heart is full as I look forward to our future together!

Thanks be to God for the people of Cross of Glory and West Freeborn, and to the journey ahead of us as Christ's Church...together!

Lord God, you have called your servants to ventures of which we cannot see the ending, by paths as yet untrodden, through perils unknown. Give us faith to go out with good courage, not knowing where we go, but only that your hand is leading us and your love supporting us, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

With blessings and a grateful heart, Pastor Marcia Pedersen

Do-it-Yourself Bible Study

For our Bible Study this month, let's look at the scripture readings for March 12th.

If you find this intriguing I hope that you will join others to go deeper.

In today's gospel the Samaritan woman asks Jesus for water, an image of our thirst for God. Jesus offers living water, a sign of God's grace flowing from the waters of baptism.

Read Exodus 17:1-7. Because the thirsty Israelites quarreled with Moses and put God to the test, Moses cried out in desperation to God. God commanded Moses to strike the rock to provide water for the people. The doubt-filled question – “Is the Lord among us or not?” How would you react in this situation?

Though we often hear that God helps those who help themselves, here Paul tells us that through Jesus' death, God helps utterly helpless sinners.

Read Romans 5:1-11.

Since we who had been enemies are reconciled to God in the cross, we now live in hope for our final salvation. In today's world, do we feel this hope?

The early church used this gospel to deepen baptismal reflection during the final days of preparation before baptism at Easter. As we journey to the resurrection feast, Christ comes among us in word, bath, and meal – offering us the life-giving water of God's mercy and forgiveness.

Read John 4:5-42.

Jesus defies convention to engage a Samaritan woman in conversation. Her testimony, in turn, leads many other to faith.

Are we willing to talk to those people that are different from us?

**JOINT COUNCIL MEETING -
TUESDAY, MARCH 7 – 7:00 P.M. AT CROSS OF GLORY**

West Freeborn Lutheran Church Council Meeting – February 07, 2023

The West Freeborn Church Council met on Feb. 07, 2023, via Zoom. Members present were Glenn, Pat, Mike, Kristin, Steve, Corky, Pastor Marcia and Becky. Glenn called the meeting to order. Pastor Marcia gave a prayer when she joined the meeting.

Pastor's Report: See the memo on the refrigerator in the Social Hall. Becky read the secretaries report. Mike made a motion to accept the report as read. Steve seconded it. Motion passed. Pat read the treasurer's report. Unfortunately, we did not make budget in January 😊. Steve made a motion to pay the bills as possible. Corky seconded it. Motion passed.

Old Business:

- **Repair of the walls in the Church:** Glenn, Mike, Mark, Corky and Dave have been working on the walls. Glenn and Mike have been doing their monkey climbing on the scaffolding and have the walls repaired and are painting.
- **Parsonage Update:** Steve Bakken and Ron Bartness from Cross of Glory are taking care of the repairs in the basement of the parsonage. Thank you to them!

New Business:

- **Call Pastor Marcia:** Kristin made a motion that we extend a call to Pastor Marcia. Pat seconded it. Motion passed. We will announce it at church and do a congregational vote on February 26, 2023.
- **Lenten Services:** Ash Wednesday is Feb. 22 with Cross of Glory hosting. We will be having a light supper before each service with the supper starting at 6 PM. West Freeborn's nights to serve supper will be March 01, 15th and the 29th. March 01 will be group 2...March 15th will be Group 1 and March 29th will be the officers and council.
- **Benevolence:** Corky made a motion to revisit this in 4 months to see how our finances are doing. Steve seconded it. Motion passed.
- **Fuel:** Corky will check to see what the price is for more fuel as we will probably be needing more in the near future.

Kristin made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Steve seconded it. Closed with the Lord's Prayer
Respectfully submitted, Becky Ausen, Secretary

Cross of Glory Council Minutes – February 7, 2023

Present: Bridge Pastor Marcia Pedersen, Steve Bakken, Ron Bartness, Linda Brekke, Matt Hoelscher, Carol Light, Paul Lynne, Jerry Morstad, Jill Morstad, and Emily Wakefield. President Jerry Morstad called the meeting to order and Pastor Marcia led us in devotion and prayer. Carol read the minutes of the January 10, 2023 meeting. Report was approved as read with the following correction to the minutes: Jim and Dude's Plumbing and Heating fixed the toilets and urinals, not Jerry. Ron made the motion to accept the Secretary's report and Steve seconded it. Motion carried. Linda gave the Treasurer's report. Paul made the motion to approve Treasurer's report as read and pay bills as allowed. Jill seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Pastor's Report: Pastor Marcia presented a detailed report to the council. Information regarding worship, pastoral care, Christian education, meetings and questions to be explored further are addressed in the report for the month of January. If you would like to see the report, there will be one in the office to view.

Parsonage Update: The parsonage basement needs to be cleaned. Ceiling tile and partitions need to be removed. Jerry will be in contact with council members as to when this will be completed.

Old Business: The ELCA Good Gifts donations to date is \$840.11. It was decided to go ahead and present the gift of money towards the "farm" through the Good Gifts program. A Valentine's Brunch will be held on February 11 instead of a "Souper" Luncheon. The Cross of Glory Altar Guild will be hosting this event. Jill and Jerry have repaired the kitchen counters. The handbook updates were reviewed and modified as needed. A motion to accept updated handbook schedule of charges was made by Steve and seconded by Paul. Motion passed.

New Business: The call committee had its first meeting and recommended the hiring of Pastor Marcia Pedersen as our permanent pastor. The council did a roll call vote to accept this recommendation. The vote passed unanimously by council members present. The congregational vote will be held on February 26, 2023 following the service. Cross of Glory will host the Ash Wednesday service on February 22, 2023. The council and Wednesday Worship/Confirmation families will host the meals on March 8th and March 22nd. The ELCA SE MN Synod has asked us to increase our financial contribution. Jill made a motion to move \$1000.00 from the Mission Fund to the General Fund checking to go towards the ELCA SE MN Synod support. Ron seconded this motion. Motion passed. The new member by transfer policy was discussed. We are expecting some new members as we move forward. An insurance meeting is scheduled for February 9 with our agent. Jerry and Ron will attend this meeting. Emily made a motion to designate our Lenten offering to the N.R. Area Food Shelf. Linda seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Financial Support: Thanks to everyone for your fiscal support of Cross of Glory. It is much appreciated. Ron made a motion for adjournment, seconded by Jill. Motion carried. Meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Next Council Meeting: March 7, 2023 @ 7:00 p.m. A request will be made to have a joint council meeting on this date with West Freeborn Council.

Respectfully submitted by: Carol Light, Secretary

The Ecumenical Food Pantry

308 Water St. Albert Lea, MN - Open: Tuesday & Friday mornings from 9:00 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.



An interfaith organization with a mission to help others in need by providing food and personal care items. This assistance is made possible through donations received from the community. The Ecumenical Food Pantry was established in 1979 and is located in the First Presbyterian Church of Albert Lea.

March 18, 2023 is National Quilting Day

*In this past year 28 million quilts have been given!
"Those who sleep under a quilt, sleep under a blanket of Love"*



West Freeborn Ushers for March: *Roger Bakken, Kaleb Bjornstad, Dave Ausen, Steve Hannegrefs, Sue Bakken.

Attendance for Jan. 2023 – WF: Jan. 1 – joint service @ CG; Jan 8 – 17; Jan. 15 – 36; Jan. 22 – 14; Jan. 29 – 34.

“ “ Feb. 2023- WF: Feb. 5 – 20; Feb. 12 – 29; Feb. 19 – 25; Feb. 26 – 52.

Attendance for Jan. 2023 – CG: Jan. 1 – 27; Jan. 8 – not recorded; Jan. 15 – 27; Jan. 22 – 23; Jan. 29 – 19.

“ “ Feb. 2023 – CG: Feb. 5 – 26; Feb. 12 – 37; Feb. 19 – 33; Feb. 26 – 47.

Printing January, 2023 again –wasn't complete in the Feb. newsletter
Statistics for Cross of Glory Lutheran Church

Date	General Fund	Improvement Fund	Mission Fund	Cemetery Fund
Jan. 1, 2023	\$ 2,450.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 50.00	\$ 0.00
Jan. 8	1,480.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Jan. 15	970.00	40.00	0.00	0.00
Jan. 22	843.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Jan. 29	786.00	100.00	0.00	0.00
TOTALS	\$6,529.00	\$ 140.00	\$ 50.00	\$ 0.00
Feb. 5, 2023	\$ 2,585.00	15.00	0.00	10.00
Feb. 12	1,240.00	0.00	30.00	0.00
Feb. 19	895.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
TOTALS	\$ 4,720.00	\$ 15.00	\$ 30.00	\$ 10.00

Sun. Feb. 26 was not recorded at print time.

Cross of Glory email address: cgwf@smig.net - Cross of Glory Website: www.crossofglory.weebly.com

West Freeborn Website: www.westfreebornlutheranchurch.weebly.com

Pastor Marcia Pedersen – Office Hours: M-TH – 9:30 – 5:00 p.m. Cell # 507-509-3396.

Jerry Morstad, Cross of Glory President 507-373-0085 - Glenn Ausen, West Freeborn President – 402-4287

Church Office – 507-845-2818 – Fax # - 507-845-2732 - Stacie Madson, West Freeborn Custodian 845-2525

Cindy Morstad – contact for funerals, etc. 845-2255 (home) – 402-4577 (cell) - Alvin Morstad, Grounds keeper & boiler maintenance – 845-2813 (home) – 402-8612 (cell)

Kristin Malmberg – Custodian – 612-816-3271



March-2023 ✠ Cross of Glory & West Freeborn Lutheran Churches, Hartland, MN

Worship times: Cross of Glory – 9:00 a.m. West Freeborn – 10:30 a.m.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 Meal @ 6:00 p.m. Lenten Service 7:00 p.m. @ WF	2	3	4
5 Worship – CG – 9:00 a.m. Worship – WF – 10:30 a.m. Communion	6	7 Joint Church Council meeting @ CG – 7:00 p.m.	8 Quilting @ WF – 9:00 a.m. 5:30 – 6:15 Communion class. 6:00 p.m. meal 7:00 p.m. Lenten Service @ CG	9	10	11
12 Worship – CG – 9:00 a.m. Worship – WF – 10:30 a.m.	13 Hartland Hi-Liners 4-H club meets at CG – 6:30 p.m.	14	15 Meal @ 6:00 p.m. Lenten Service 7:00 p.m. @ WF	16	17	18
19 Worship – CG – 9:00 a.m. Baptism of Brynn Hannah Ovrebo Worship – WF – 10:30 a.m.	20	21	22 Quilting @ WF – 9:00 a.m. 5:30 – 6:15 Communion class. 6:00 p.m. meal 7:00 p.m. Lenten Service @ CG	23	24	25
26 Worship – CG – 9:00 a.m. Worship – WF – 10:30 a.m. Communion	27	28	29 5:30 – 6:15 Last Communion class. 6:00 p.m. meal 7:00 p.m. Lenten Service @ WF			