



The Pacific Hills Messenger

WEEKLY NEWSLETTER — MARCH 29, 2019

PACIFIC HILLS LUTHERAN CHURCH

VOLUME 4 NUMBER 13

What's an Ebenezer?

This Sunday's entrance hymn is the much-loved "Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing." Written by Robert Robinson, a Methodist and then a Baptist evangelical preacher around 1760, the hymn first appeared in print in *Wyeth's Repository of Sacred Songs* in 1813.

The second stanza of the hymn begins with these words: "Here I raise my Ebenezer, hither by Thy help I've come." I can remember being curious about these words when I first played this hymn as a young boy. "What's an Ebenezer? Ebenezer Scrooge? No....that can't be it..." Then I thought, "Our church is on Ebenezer Road.... No, that can't be it either."

When you unpack the scripture behind this text, though, it makes a strong statement of faith and relates beautifully to this week's Gospel lesson, the parable of the prodigal son. 1 Samuel 7 begins with a warning by Samuel to the people of Israel to return to the Lord, to put away idols and foreign gods, and to serve the Lord only. The Israelites repented. As the fear of an attack from the Philistines approached, they then asked Samuel to pray to the Lord on their behalf. While Samuel was offering a sacrifice and praying, "the Lord thundered with a mighty sound that day against the Philistines and threw them into confusion, and they were defeated before Israel. Then Samuel took a stone and set it up... and called it Ebenezer (which means "stone of help"), for he said "The Lord has helped us hitherto."

Just as Samuel raised his Ebenezer as a testimony to the Lord's help and presence among us, so we too raise our Ebenezer, our song of praise, declaring "Hither by Thy help I've come; and I hope, by Thy good pleasure, safely to arrive at home."

But, just as the prodigal son wandered far from his father's love, so we too confess in stanza 3: "Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it, Prone to leave the God I love." When we then follow Samuel's warning and return.... return to the Lord.... we can sing joyfully in stanza 4: "Oh, that day when freed from sinning, I shall see Thy lovely face; Clothed then in the blood-washed linen, How I'll sing Thy wondrous grace!"

The Lord has helped us hitherto. Let's raise our Ebenezer, fellow saints at Pacific Hills.

Peace,
Jeffrey Blersch

Church Events

| | | |
|-----------|---------|-----------------------|
| Sunday | 9:00am | Eucharist |
| | 10:00am | Fellowship |
| Monday | 6:30pm | Quilters |
| Tuesday | 9:00am | Tai Chi |
| | 9:30am | Alanon |
| Wednesday | 9:30am | Eucharist |
| | 10:00am | Fellowship |
| | 2:00pm | Worship |
| | 7:00pm | Worship |
| Thursday | 6:30pm | Tai Chi |
| | 7:00pm | Gamblers-12 Step |
| Sunday | 9:00am | Eucharist |
| | 9:15am | Choir |
| | 9:15 am | Education Hour |
| | 10:30am | Eucharist |
| | 12:00pm | Worship & Music Comm. |

Sunday's altar flowers are given to the glory of God by anonymous.

THANK YOU: The total for the door offering for Floor Relief is \$2,844.

Usher/Greeter Training for all, Saturday, March 30, 9am. Coffee and donuts.

We will have a "5th Sunday" service on March 31 at 9am. Bob Vandervort will be giving a campaign update at the end of the service. After the service, there will be an hour of fellowship.

Senior Lunch Bunch will meet on Tuesday, April 9, at 11:30am at Jimi' D's Food and Spirits (6303 Center Street, south side of Center in strip mall) for food and fellowship. Everyone is welcome. No RSVP needed.

Our Midweek Lenten Themes

The Trials Of Jesus

Like a courtroom drama, a series of witnesses comes forward to give testimony about their experiences with the accused—Jesus Christ. Through their accounts we come to know the truth, that Jesus came to take our place in the defendant's chair.

Ash Wednesday, March 6

"The Voice of Satan" • Matthew 4:1-11

Jesus faces the tempter in the wilderness.

Week 1, March 13

"The Voice of Judas" • Luke 22:1-6, 22-48, Matthew 27:3-10

Judas betrays Jesus

Week 2, March 20

"The Voice of Annas" • John 18:12-24

A chief priest discusses Jesus' arrest.

Week 3, March 27

"The Voice of Caiaphas" • Matthew 26:57-68

The high priest faces off with the Son of God.

Week 4, April 3

"The Voice of Peter" • Luke 22:54-62

The rock that crumbled.

Week 5, April 10

"The Voice of Herod" • Luke 23:1-12

One king of the Jews testifies against another.

The Bible Verse of the Week

"We had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours ... was lost and is found."

Luke 15:32

Philippians 1:3-5 — "I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now."

We are so very thankful to PHLC for the support, cards, prayers, and love offered to us throughout Bryan's surgery and cancer journey. You have all been such a blessing to us. Bryan is doing very well and was discharged from Mayo Clinic on March 27th. All praise and thanks be to God! We look forward to transitioning back home this weekend. God bless and be with you all!

Cheryl and Pastor Bryan Drebes

Children Youth and Family Events:

- Easter breakfast is coming. Once again the youth and CYF board are hosting the meal between services. Please be looking for a sign-up sheet for donations and help. The meal is a free-will offering that goes into an account that supports youth ministry activities.
- The board is helping to pay 50% of the cost for youth to attend summer Lutheran camps. Please keep your receipts and give them to Sandra Glissmann for reimbursement.
- The board is planning summer Bible study and mission activities for our youth, their families and the congregation this summer. One activity will be preparing a meal for the Ronald McDonald House on July 20. Be watching the newsletter for more activities and information.

Thank you! Questions? CYF Board: Alice Osborn, Cheryl Drebes, Sharon Irvin, Kay Storck, Pam Hafsaas, and Sandra Glissmann

Giving Thanks...

...means giving back. God loves a cheerful giver.

Pacific Hills' Forward in Faith – Together campaign – to support our renovation projects and the Nebraska District LCMS – is our chance to give thanks by giving back. Please join your fellow members who already have made their pledge or gift. Haven't been contacted about making your pledge? Alert Joann at the church office.

For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.
-Matthew 6:21

