

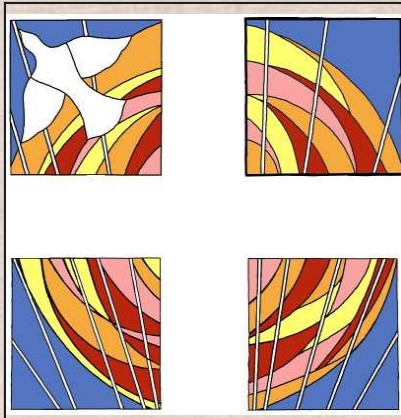


St. Stephen the Martyr, ELCA

*We come together in Word
and Sacrament that we
might go to live and serve
in the grace of Jesus Christ
our Lord*



Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America
God's work. Our hands.



the MARTYR MONTHLY

February 2012 Newsletter

St. Stephen the Martyr Lutheran Church, ELCA

6101 South 51st Street
Greendale, WI 53129
PHONE & FAX: 421-3543
E-MAIL: ssm@ststephenthemartyr.com
www.StStephentheMartyr.com

Office Hours

Mon-Thur 9 AM - 1 PM
Fri 9 AM - 12 PM

SSM Staff

Gail Brodersen-Heins, Pastor
pastorgail@ststephenthemartyr.com
Bill Bravener, Music Director
bbravener@ststephenthemartyr.com
Lynda Shadd, Office Administrator
ssm@ststephenthemartyr.com
Bob Brownell, Maintenance
Bob De Frank, Sunday School Superintendent
Janet Snyder, Organist



inside this issue:

- From Pastor's Desk
- Family Ministries
- Fellowship
- Human Concerns
- Music & Worship
- Stewardship
- Women's Ministries
- Other Notes
- Council Minutes

Lenten Soup Suppers

Once again we look forward to Lenten soup suppers prior to each Lenten service. We welcome everyone to consider making a good old fashion standard soup or surprise us with a new 21st Century recipe. The first supper begins Wednesday, February 29th, the week after Ash Wednesday. By mid-month we will have a sign up sheet for the soup preparers. Other attendees can sign up to do the table arranging and clean up. We typically use disposable bowls which allows the clean-ups to end prior to the service itself. We will encourage one or two people to bring along a loaf of bread or a box of crackers. The soup supper will be 5:50 PM. Join us!

- JP Maschke, Fellowship Chair

From Pastor's Desk

February often brings snow and cold, but it also brings thoughts of love because of two events: Valentine's Day and something greater: Lent. We all think of love when we think of the former, but do you think of love when you think of Lent? That's what it's all about--the great and blessed love of God that sent the world a Savior!

Ash Wednesday is February 22nd this year, and it's time to move forward on our Christian journey as we go down

the road to Christ's cross and His tomb.

This year, members and friends have the opportunity to worship either at 11:00 a.m. or 7:00 p.m. The morning service was requested by a member and this is a good idea which we are trying out. For the remaining five weeks there will be an evening service only. There will be Holy Communion and the imposition of ashes at both services. Come and invite friends, co-workers or neighbors to join you!

Let's travel together on our discipleship journey, dear sisters and brothers, as we pledge our time and energies to regular prayer and worship and pledge our treasures to gifts of love to those in need and our time in service to others as well. Ash Wednesday reminds us of the love of God as we are "marked with the cross of Christ forever". On that day and in the Lenten season, we "go into the wilderness" as Jesus did at the time of his own temptation. Remembering that our days on this earth are numbered, we take time to examine our daily lives. We ask God for courage to repent of our sins: things we've done--hurting others, ourselves, and God--AND things we've left undone--neglecting the poor, refusing to forgive, refusing to care for someone who needs us, neglecting our own health and well-being.

These and many more are things for us to think and pray about in Lent. And there is help! Beginning Wednesday, February 29 and continuing for five weeks, our evening mid-week service liturgy will be the beautiful "Holden Evening Prayer". The sermon theme will be "THE HYMNS OF LENT". Reflections will be shared by Bill Bravener, the Rev. Bob Snyder, and Pastor Gail. Information and inspiration from selected Lenten hymns will be interspersed with singing of that week's hymn.

We'll share how that hymn inspires us for 'holy living' in today's world!

So, make mid-week Lenten worship a priority, as well as prayer and generosity. May this be a blessed Lenten season for us all!

Your partner in the Gospel,

Quotation for Valentine's Day:

"I don't understand why Cupid was chosen to represent Valentine's Day. When I think of romance, the last thing on my mind is a short, chubby toddler coming at me with a weapon." -Author unknown

Family Ministry News

Upcoming Events	
Feb 5	Souper Bowl Sunday —Youth-led Project
Feb 19	Snowtubing at Sunburst
Mar 10 6 PM	Family Gathering @ SSM

Souper Bowl of Caring weekend is February 4th & 5th

Super Bowl weekend our youth will be joining youth across the nation work to fight hunger in their own communities. This year our youth will be collecting donations after each Service to help support our local food pantries. Please consider being part of the movement that is sharing in God's love with those in need.

Come join us for some fun in the snow!!

On Sunday, February 19th, we will be heading to Sunburst in Kewaskum. We will have pizza after the 9:30am Worship service then head out for two hours of snow tubing. Don't worry about climbing back up the hill, they have a "magic carpet"! The sign up sheet will be on the kiosk in the Narthex. Sunburst's website is skisunburst.com and additional details to follow.

Hey Gang! Mark Your Calendars!

30-Hour Famine

Friday, April 20th - Saturday, April 21st

We will join with several other churches from the Greater Milwaukee Synod.

For high school youth (at least 13 yrs. of age).

Come and get hungry with us!!

For additional information regarding this wonderful organization check out their website, 30hourfamine.org

Through the Eyes of a Child

Come In or Stay Out

An exasperated mother, whose son was always getting into mischief, finally asked him 'How do you expect to get into Heaven?' The boy thought it over and said, 'Well, I'll run in and out and in and out and keep slamming the door until St. Peter says, 'For Heaven's sake, Dylan, come in or stay out!''

Love is....

"Love is when my mommy makes coffee for my daddy and she takes a sip before giving it to him, to make sure the taste is OK."

- Danny, 7

"Love is what makes you smile when you're tired."

-Emily, 5

"Love is when Mommy gives Daddy the best piece of chicken."

- Elaine, 5

Courageous

If you haven't seen the movie "Courageous," check it out soon! Now available on DVD!

This faith-based film goes after the issue of fatherhood:

"Fatherhood isn't for the fainthearted. It's a calling every bit as demanding—maybe even more so—as being a, say, fireman or policeman."

This is a skillful blending of moving drama, subtle comedy and several impressive action sequences, including a well-staged foot chase and a harrowing shootout between the cops and bad guys.

The performances are effective all around with director Graham Kendrick quite moving in the central role of Adam, a veteran police officer, who suffers a horrific family tragedy that sets much of the film's plot in motion. God's love and principles win the day and make a few good fathers into great fathers. You'll be inspired!

SHEPHERD'S CORNER LIBRARY

What to do when the weather outside is frightful?

One of the most relaxing things to do this time of year is to curl up on the couch or bed with a warm blanket, a hot cup of coffee or tea on the side and, or course, a good book! This winter, try some reading that speaks to the soul. What could be better than getting away from it all and enjoying an inspirational Christian novel or devotional book? As Christians we should be hungering to know more about God each day! We have, at your fingertips, new and old books in the Shepherd's Corner Library that are ready for you to check out!

Our library is here to honor God and serve you. If you have ideas on good Christian books you'd like to see in our library, please see Cindy Wagner or Carol Birk.

Check a book out today!

Contact our Council Chair for Family Ministries

Char Guliani

minizmom@yahoo.com & on Facebook

Fellowship

CELEBRATE VALENTINE'S AT THE FIRST FRIDAY POTLUCK!

Friday, February 3rd at 6:00 p.m.

In the Fellowship Hall.

Join us for a Valentine's Day celebration! Bring a dish to pass such as a casserole, salad, side dish, or a scrumptious dessert. It can be red or any other color. February is National Heart month. So you may want to bring a heart healthy dish.

Since we will be celebrating Valentine's Day, bring one signed Valentine, to give to another guest. If possible, please insert a joke or story in the card to be read by the recipient.

Bring one or two RED non-perishable food items for the food pantry. Sign up on the bulletin board near the church office, and indicate what you will bring. All are welcome, especially those who live alone.

Human concerns

Next meeting is Feb. 7th at 6:45 p.m. Call Pam Gustafson with questions: 817-3290.

Thanks to all who participated in the Human Concerns Holiday Projects. The pile of gifts for Bay View and the numerous socks on the tree were just another indication of the generosity of the members of St. Stephen the Martyr.

STAFF OF LIFE FOOD PANTRY

We will collect food for Bay View Community Center Food Pantry for February.

Proverbs 22:9 “Anyone who gives generously will be blessed, because they share their food with those who are poor.”

Mt. Meru Coffee Project

In the beginning a coffee farmer in the Mt. Meru region of Tanzania asked a visiting Milwaukee pastor the simple question; “We grow coffee; you drink coffee; would you buy your coffee from us?” With an answer of “Yes”, the Mt. Meru Coffee Project was born.

St. Stephen has been offering Mt. Meru Coffee for years, and we plan to continue supporting the Tanzanian farmers trying to earn a fair wage for their crop. Over 2,000 farmers are contributing to the coffee harvest. This amount earned is often two to four times more than the prices paid by commercial buyers and in many cases 25% to 50% more than other fair trade coffee programs. Project income has provided for new processing equipment and facilitated improvements in the farmer’s cooperative processing centers, the purchase of a truck to facilitate transport of the coffee, and the development of micro credit loan programs to assist the farmers and their cooperatives.

We thank all of you for helping to make this program a success. Just envision yourself enjoying a cup of this wonderful coffee with the confidence that your support is providing economic and social justice for small coffee farmers. If you have not yet purchased Mt. Meru Coffee, please join in helping the Mt. Meru Coffee Project today!

There is coffee available on the table in the narthex or there is an order sheet available for special orders. The cost is \$10.00 per bag. We have bean, drip and decaf.

Asante Sana—Thank you!

The Human Concerns Committee

Unity Soup Kitchen

Our first Unity Soup Supper organized and led totally by members of St. Stephen took place on Wednesday, January 25th. Thanks to all the volunteers who helped prepare food, those who cooked, served & cleaned up afterward. It was a blessing to be part of this mission to the Bay View neighborhood.

We look forward to a successful participation with Unity in the future.

CPR/Defibrillator Training

Human Concerns, after a great deal of phone calls and organization, announces that it will be offering a CPR/defibrillator training class with the Greendale Fire Department on February 16 and 23 from 6-9 pm. Twelve members are signed up to take the training. The Greendale Fire Chief has stated he is pleased that St. Stephen has acquired a defibrillator and is offering this training to its members. The defibrillator will be mounted on the wall near the coat room. - Nancy Mineau

Music & Worship

The next Music & Worship Meeting is February 1st @ 6 p.m.

Come and join us for an hour of discussion and planning for worship in 2012. We have set our plans/goals for 2012 at the SSM annual meeting held on January 29th. We are planning the Lenten season which starts on February 22nd with Ash Wednesday and ends with Easter on April 8th.

This year, we are planning two worship services, with full communion and imposition of ashes at 11:00 am and 7:00 pm.

Lent is the forty day period (minus Sundays which are a commemoration of the Resurrection) before Easter. Purple is the liturgical color. It is a time of preparation, prayer, service and quiet reflection.

Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent, begins the season with a call to repentance and prayer. A medieval custom that once again has become popular in some churches is using ashes to make a mark of the cross on the forehead of each worshipper. While applying this sign of our mortality, purification and blessing, the pastor says, “For dust you are and to dust you will return” (Genesis 3:19). It is from this tradition that Ash Wednesday got its name. During this time of Lent, many choose to live simpler lives, remembering those who do not have the food, money, or resources to simply live.

Flowers to Beautify Our Sanctuary

If you desire to adorn our worship with flowers from a floral shop or a bouquet of your own making, please write your name on the Flower Chart on the office door and specify the month and week that you will be providing flowers.

Please state whether the offering is in memory of a loved one or to commemorate a special occasion in the family. You can have them delivered, or bring your flowers in on the Friday morning before, during office hours, or at 4:30 pm before the Saturday evening service. Gracious thank you!

BILL BRAVENER, DIRECTOR OF MUSIC/ASSOCIATE IN MINISTRY

As we continue through the Epiphany season and begin the season of Lent, our choirs are busy preparing music for worship.

Just a reminder that during Lent Handbell Choir rehearsals remain at 5:30 p.m. and Senior Choir rehearsals will be following the 7:00 p.m. Wednesday Lenten worship services. You are always welcome to join us. A blessed Lent to all of you. See you at worship.

- Bill

Stewardship

Then and Now

“Once you were not a people, but now you are God’s people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.” 1 Peter 2:10

Thoughts on stewardship, comparing the past [then] and the present [now]. Things change, some positive and some negative. Here are a few examples:

[Then] Every mobile citizen was expected to be in church on Sunday morning.

[Now] Society at large cares little if someone attends worship or not.

[Then] Stores were closed on Sundays—it was a day of rest.

[Now] Sunday is the second busiest shopping day of the week.

[Then] When someone moved into a new community, one of the first things they did was join a church.

[Now] If someone decides to join a church, it is only after a long process of church “shopping.”

[Then] There was no youth sports on Sunday morning.

[Now] There’s youth soccer, football, hockey, skiing and more and the play fields are full on Sunday mornings.

[Then] The phrase “under God” was added to the pledge of Allegiance in the U.S. and prayers were routinely offered in public schools.

[Now] Prayer is forbidden at nearly all public school events, including graduation.

[Then] Stewardship, at least for many, was like ‘paying dues.’

[Now] Stewardship means participation in a particular way of life.

Today, the church faces stiff competition in society. Even as things change, we live in the now world and must adapt. Still, as followers of Jesus we are called for generous living. Jesus knew well the call to be compassionate and generous and he lived his life that way. We, too, must help people to grow spiritually by actively practicing that kind of stewardship: compassion, generosity and sharing, and we will in turn be more fruitful. May those who come behind us find us faithful!

It is our prayer that God will shape our hearts and minds for generous living in the here and now.

“Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful.”

1 Cor. 4:2

- Vic Peterson & Your Stewardship Committee

Children in church

A Sunday School teacher asked her little children, as they were on the way to church service, “And why is it necessary to be quiet in church?” One bright little girl replied, “Because people are sleeping.”

Next Stewardship Meeting:

February 7th, 6:30 p.m.

Women's Wellness Day at St. Matthew Lutheran

Date: February 11, 2012

Time: 8 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.

Address: 1615 Wauwatosa Avenue

Wauwatosa WI 53213

Theme: Bless Your Heart

Cost: \$10

The women of St. Matthew's have invited all women of the Greater Milwaukee Synod to join them for this morning of learning, praying, eating, sharing, exercising, participating and connecting—all centering on heart-health.

The morning begins with a light, heart-healthy breakfast and time to visit. Dr. Patricia Dohlun of the Columbia St. Mary's HeartSecrets team will deliver the key note address followed by break-out sessions. Exercise sessions, heart-healthy cooking demonstrations, spiritual practices and panel discussion with dieticians will be offered.

Registration Forms are posted on our SSM kiosk. You will need to choose 2 of the 4 offered breakout sessions. I've attended this annual event at St. Matthew's for the past two years and have always found it to be VERY worthwhile. Get a few of your St. Stephen the Martyr friends together and carpool to Wauwatosa. Parking is available behind the church and across the street from the church parking lot. ~Carole Ropel

Women's Bible Study

Only one Wednesday in February:

February 8th at 10:15 a.m. Join us as we study the scripture texts for the following weekend.

Loose Ends Luncheon

The next Loose Ends Luncheon will be on February 8th, at Meyer's Restaurant on Cold Spring Road and Forest Home Avenue. Meet at church if you need a ride by 11:30 a.m. or meet at the restaurant at 11:45. Contact Karen Hoffman (421-9249) if you have questions.

WOMEN OF THE ELCA SPRING CLUSTER MEETING

When: March 17, 2012

Place: Luther Manor, 4545 North 92nd Street, Milwaukee 53225 Linden Room, North Terrace Dining Rm

Theme: "A Journey in Time"

Cost: \$10

Time: This is a morning event

Your registration form will be posted on the kiosk about the second week in February. Car pooling can be arranged as needed.

Other Notes

In the Event of Inclement Weather...

SSM's closings will air on Today's TMJ4 and posted on their website (www.todaystmj4.com).

You may also find closing information on FOX 6 (MyFoxMilwaukee.com).

We will also post the information on our website as quickly as possible.

Happy Valentine's

—Love, God

When we think of love, it's tempting to focus only on romantic love, but let us be reminded of God's most awesome love for us, in that, while we were sinning against God, He loved us still, by sending His son to die for us.

And of course, keep in mind the commandment for us to love our neighbors. By reflecting on God's love, may we be inspired to love our friends and family a bit more, and maybe even learn to love our enemies as Christ taught.

"God loves each of us as if there were only one of us."

St. Augustine

Pastor Hartmut Barsnick to Visit

Wednesday, February 15th

Our friend from Athenstedt, Germany will share recent experiences of mission work in Tanzania at the Men's Bible Study from 8:00 to 10:00 a.m. on Wednesday, February 15th. In 2011, Pastor Barsnick again spent six months in the central highlands of the country, preaching, conducting confirmations, beginning support groups for orphans and widows, teaching HIV/AIDS prevention, working with local pastors, working with water projects and many other ministries.

Pastor Barsnick is eager to share slides and tales of Tanzanian people overcoming many challenges with faith and courage. So, ALL members, male and female are welcome to attend! Good coffee and rolls await you as well as an exciting program!

Join the fun at 8:00 a.m. on Wed., February 15th.

Bible Study Blog—The Gospel of Mark

Interested in learning more about the Gospel of Mark? Go to <http://fitandfaithful.blogspot.com/> and read, ponder, comment on our guided study of the featured Gospel in our Sunday lessons. Pastor Patricia Lull's study is featured in Gather magazine published by the Women of the ELCA. All blog posts are available for viewing and discussion.

Keep life easy by signing up for updates on the blog site! When a new blog post or comment appears, you will receive an e-mail prompting you to visit the site. I also post a notice on Twitter/Facebook when new posts appear. "Friend" me to see those notices! Contact Julie Starks, jastarks@earthlink.net for more information.

New Every Morning

"Through the Lord's mercies we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning; Great is Thy faithfulness." (Lamentations 3:22-23)

A favorite hymn from this verse is "Great is Thy Faithfulness." This hymn makes us realize that all good things come from the Father above and that He indeed makes a way, where there seems to be no way.

"Great is Thy faithfulness,"

O God my Father,

There is no shadow of turning with Thee;

Thou changest not,

Thy compassions, they fail not

As Thou hast been Thou forever wilt be.

Refrain:

"Great is Thy faithfulness!" "Great is Thy faithfulness!"

Morning by morning new mercies I see;

All I have needed Thy hand hath provided

"Great is Thy faithfulness," Lord, unto me!

God in His mercy will sustain us every day. Each new day He brings a fresh supply of His goodness and mercy.

God is faithful and keeps His promise that there will be another summer and winter, autumn and spring, rain and harvest, shelter and food for us, all the days of our life. But what about when sorrow or tragedy hits, when you are sick and feeling the pain and hurt and when you can't see the future? Can you still say that the Lord's great love and compassion never fails? Yes, the Lord cares for us and is committed to our well being. God's faithfulness, loyalty and love can be realized in the very midst of afflictions and sorrows - not just when life is smooth sailing. (Philippians 4:19-20)

Loving Father we thank you for sustaining us every day, month by month and year by year. Thank you for providing everything we need and for your mercy and unending love. May you find thanks and praise on our lips and in our heart at all times. Please teach us to have mercy, love and understanding toward those around us so they can see your goodness, mercy and everlasting love. In the precious name of Jesus. Amen.

Recycling Aluminum Cans Pays

Thanks to the many members of St. Stephen the Martyr Church who donate their empty aluminum cans; over \$310 was earned in 2011, which equated to 451 pounds of metal! The money was donated to the food pantries of Central City at 30th and Wisconsin Ave., and the Bay View Community Center.

Everyone who saved and brought in cans can be proud that they helped people in need of food in their time of emergency.

We would like to continue this effort to turn "cans into cash into food," throughout 2012. How you can help: Save your aluminum cans, crush them if possible, place in a strong plastic bag and drop off at the garage door of church in the lower parking lot.

Remember—ONLY aluminum cans! NO steel cans, pie tins, aluminum foil "balls," no plastic or glass bottles mixed in—just simply 100% pure aluminum cans. That is all the salvage yard wants. For this they pay 70¢ per pound at present, and 28 to 30 cans equals one pound. Keep them coming!

- Bob Rasmussen, Coordinator

Condensed Council Minutes

Minutes of the Church Council Meeting - January 10th, 2012

Council members present were: J. Bugajski, J. Covert, P. Gustafson, J. Hennessy, S. Jarchow, S. Lubus, H.

Mayer, J. Miller, C. Peterson, E. Sanders and J. Schultz. Pastor Gail Brodersen-Heins was also present. C. Guiliani and J.P. Maschke were excused.

Pastor Gail led devotions.

Approvals: The December Council meeting minutes were approved with no corrections.

Financial Secretary's Report was reviewed. The Treasurer's Report was given. J. Bugajski stated the total offerings as of December 25th 2011 were over \$6,794.13 or 102.6% of the weekly budgeted amount. The Treasurer's Report was approved. Pastor Gail and the entire church Council commented on the generosity of the St. Stephen the Martyr members to end the year over budget.

Pastor's Time: In addition to all musicians and all who worked to make our Advent/Christmas worship joyful and meaningful, Pastor Gail thanked the following people: Jeff and Tasha Kopplin and their baby Adalyn for portraying Joseph, Mary and the baby Jesus at the Christmas Eve 5PM service. S. Falksen, K. Sachse and the entire Sunday School staff and all the children for a wonderful Children's Christmas program on December 18th. 25 SSM members attended the New Year's Eve service at St. Luke's Lutheran. Pastor thanked J. Hennessy for filling in for B. Brownell who is on vacation. B. Bravener and Pastor Gail are currently working on the upcoming Lenten services. Pastor will be on vacation from 2/6 to 2/9/2012.

Old Business:

Annual Meeting - E. Sanders reviewed the Annual Meeting agenda with Council members.

Staff Position: E. Sanders distributed a rough draft of the proposed Shared Ministry Coordinator position that will be presented at the Annual Meeting.

2012 Budget - J. Miller presented a final draft to Council members regarding the proposed 2012 budget that will be presented to the SSM members at the Annual Meeting.

New Business:

Property Chair Opening: E. Sanders indicated that J. Arneson has resigned as Property Chair and informed the Council that he is going to ask A. Woerpel to fill in this position now and consider the Property Chair position when it comes up for election in spring.

Committee Reports

Human Concerns: P. Gustafson reported that her committee is considering the Mt. Meru Diocese and other projects to replace our sponsorship of missionaries, Sara & Peter Grow-Hanson.

Music and Worship: S. Jarchow thanked everyone involved in decorating the church for the Christmas season. Her committee will start planning out the Lenten services in conjunction with Pastor Gail & Bill Bravener.

Youth and Family: The Beginning Youth Group is doing very well with attendance. C. Petersen, filling in for C. Guiliani also wanted to thank D. Sanders, and T. and S. Falksen for all of their help. Char will be talking about her New Orleans youth trip at an upcoming Sunday church service.

Stewardship: J. Covert reported that January's Steward of the Month will be Karen and John Hoffmann. He also reported that the 2012 pledges showed an increase of 4.3% from last year, with a total of approximately \$273,000 pledged.

Christian Education: H. Mayer reported there will be a spring Bible Study class, possibly close to Lenten services.

Respectfully Submitted,
Shellee Lubus
Council Secretary

[About Us](#) | [Site Map](#) | [Contact Us](#)

PHONE 414-421-3543 • FAX 414-421-3543 • 6101 S 51st St, Greendale, WI 53129 • SSM@ststephenthemartyr.com