

GABRIEL'S GAZETTE

MARCH 2020



St. Patrick's Breastplate



*"Loving, Sharing, Serving
Jesus with you."*

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Do you ever feel like you have no strength left to meet the days ahead of you? Maybe you feel like whatever you do, you are bound to fail. The forces against you – wicked persons, a godless culture, chronic sickness, death of a loved one, divorce, estranged family, strained finances, spiritual doubt and despair, temptation, and so on – can feel overpowering.

I invite you to take a look at St. Patrick's Breastplate. The full text can be found online, but a portion of it is in our Lutheran Service Book, hymn 604, with the title "I Bind unto Myself Today." St. Patrick (c. 372-466) lived in a tumultuous time for the British Isles. The Roman Empire had retreated, leaving a power vacuum for the native tribes. At the same time Angles and Saxons were invading from German lands and Denmark. Patrick was sent to Ireland, where he was formerly enslaved, to convert a people almost entirely tribal, pagan, and uneducated. He faced off against the death threats of kings, the spells of sorcerers and witches, and the constant, bloody invasions of warring peoples. Miraculously, by the grace of God, Patrick lived to see a large population of Ireland converted to Christianity.

St. Patrick's Breastplate was written in the form of an incantation, like the druids would use to bind the forces in nature to themselves for magical powers. But St. Patrick's hymn called upon the power of the Creator of the universe and Savior of the world, the Holy Trinity, against the deadly forces that opposed him. He knew that the power of God's holy name invoked at his baptism had already snatched him from Satan's grip, destroyed the power of sin and death, and gave him everlasting salvation. Bound to the powerful and holy name of God, Patrick would have the strength of Christ's saving work to

continue to battle sin, devil, and anything that opposed Christ's kingdom. Not only so, but although Patrick went by himself, he was joined by angels and archangels, patriarchs, prophets, and apostles, and all the saints of God, whose preaching, prayers, and lives cheered him on through the battles of life.

Patrick saw his life as a spiritual battle against the devil, a battle which Christ had already won by dying on the cross and rising from the grave. Thus, Patrick did not rely on any physical weapons or worldly power and wealth. He wore the armor of God (Ephesians 6:10-20). He was ready to go and preach the gospel wherever the Lord called him. The shield of his faith enabled him to go without fearing failure or what harm might come to him. He spoke the truth boldly and by the power of the Holy Spirit princes and princesses and their kingdoms were baptized and converted. And he called upon the Lord at all times for strength and salvation.

Patrick may not have actually driven snakes out of Ireland, but he did drive out the devil. The same saving power is in your baptism, to fulfill your calling in Jesus Christ. It is the power to forgive your sins, to strengthen you for service to Christ for the good of your neighbor, deliver you from evil, and give you eternal life. Try using St. Patrick's Breastplate as a morning prayer, as a battle cry against that day's troubles and temptations, and may Christ be with you!

If you are interested in more about St. Patrick and want to sing with us, come to our next Hym'n Ales at McGinnis Pub (227 W. 7th St., Michigan City) on March 9th from 6-8 p.m.

Pastor

FROM THE STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE . . .



We are at the beginning of Lent. During the Lenten season, the church calls to our attention the sufficiency of what God gives. It points to the sufficiency of God's grace in the atoning work of Jesus. It shows us the sufficiency of faith in Jesus' work for us. It makes known the sufficiency of God's Word in faith and life.

But Lent doesn't just remind us of the sufficiency of God's spiritual gifts, the gifts that pertain to our redemption and salvation. Lent also reminds us of the sufficiency of the physical, temporal gifts of God, those that pertain to this body and life. In other words, it reminds us of the importance of godly contentment and of outward discipline and training of the body.

This outward training of the body teaches us not to give in to every desire of our flesh but to learn to say no to them. And it does this in such a way that if you fail, it is no sin. It is a way to practice without putting yourself into a compromising situation.

The easiest example of this is fasting. When you fast, you are practicing saying no to the desires of your body. But if you fail in this, if you break your fast, you have not sinned. You have, though, learned something about how your flesh works, how difficult it is to fight against it, and how you need help from above in order to do it.

There is another example of this. It is alms-giving. This is an increase in giving to the church and its mission during this time. We all know that our flesh finds security in money and stuff. By committing to give more to the church, you are training your flesh. You are, by this outward discipline, training yourself to be content with what God gives. You are

practicing saying "no" to your desires. Again, if you fail, you have not sinned. But you've learned just how powerful your flesh is in leading you instead of you leading it. You've learned how you need help from above in being content with what God gives.

This is why St. Paul instructs young Pastor Timothy in this way:

"But godliness with contentment is great gain, for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world. But if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content. But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs." (1 Tim 6:6-10)

Our sufficiency is not of ourselves; it is in God. Let us learn this without sin by training our flesh this Lenten season.

--LCMS Stewardship Ministry Newsletter, March 2020

 **JOIN US FOR
MIDWEEK WORSHIP SERVICES
DURING THE LENTEN SEASON.
WEDNESDAY EVENINGS 7:00 PM
Come early for supper at 5:30 PM**



Toddlin' to Jesus is a free music class for children ages 0-4 and their caregivers. We meet on **Tuesdays at 10 a.m.** in the nursery. The current session runs until April 28th. Please register with the church office, 872-4419 or immanuellutheran1237@gmail.com, or with Lisa Solum, 219-872-6420.

**Quarterly Voters Meeting
Tuesday, March 10th
At 7:00 p.m.
All members of the congregation
are encouraged to attend.**

THANKS TO GOD

*Hello God,
 I called tonight
 To talk a little while.
 I need a friend who'll listen
 To my anxiety and trial.
 You see, I can't quite make it
 Through a day just on my own ...
 I need your love to guide me,
 So I'll never feel alone.
 I want to ask you please to keep
 My family safe and sound.
 Come and fill their lives with confidence
 For whatever fate they're bound.
 Give me faith, dear God, to face
 Each hour throughout the day,
 And not to worry over things
 I can't change in any way.
 I thank you God for being home
 And listening to my call,
 For giving me such good advice
 When I stumble and fall.
 Your number, God, is the only one
 That answers every time.
 I never get a busy signal,
 Never had to pay a dime.
 So thank you, God, for listening
 To my troubles and my sorrow.
 Good night, God, I love You too,
 And I'll call again tomorrow!*

(submitted by Bill Marshall)



Church Bowling and Youth Lock-in

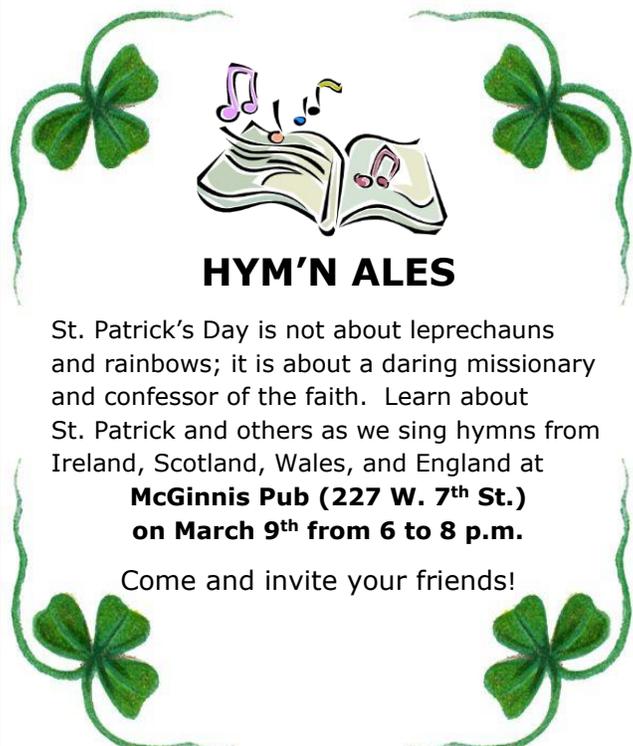
The whole congregation is invited to join the youth for bowling on **March 20 at 7:00 p.m.** at City Lanes (1901 S. Woodland Ave.).

That night will be a lock-in for youth 6th grade and up. Youth will meet at the church at 6:30, bowl at 7:00, and then return to church for food, games, and Bible study. The lock-in will end the next morning at 8:00 a.m. Any youth interested should fill out permission and release forms and turn in \$8 by March 8.



Some of our teens are planning to attend this summer's *Higher Things* Youth Conference. They will gather with many other Lutheran youth to grow in the fullness of their Christian faith. In the coming months, watch for ways that you can help support these youth in their journey. Below is a thank-you from one of last summer's attendees:

Thank you for sponsoring our trip to Higher Things. I learned a lot and overall, it was a great experience and it taught me a lot about my faith. I also met new people and got the chance to spend time with them and learn from them. I enjoyed my time and I'm excited to go again. -- Evia Vandercar



HYM'N ALES

St. Patrick's Day is not about leprechauns and rainbows; it is about a daring missionary and confessor of the faith. Learn about St. Patrick and others as we sing hymns from Ireland, Scotland, Wales, and England at **McGinnis Pub (227 W. 7th St.)** on **March 9th from 6 to 8 p.m.**

Come and invite your friends!



Shepherds & Lambs

The Sunday School Newsletter March 2020



Nine Students had Perfect Attendance in January. Great Job!

Blessings to your family during this season!

*Lynette Johnston-Martin
Superintendent*

When I was a young child, the Lenten season was more meaningful to me than any other part of the church year. It especially called to my attention my shortcomings and my forgiveness through Jesus. Especially during this Lenten season, I feel it is so important that we, as parents, pay special attention to reviewing the salvation story with our children. Here is a short guide to work with.



Do you know what it means to share the *salvation* story? The word *salvation* comes from the word *save*. We often say that Jesus died to *save* us from our sins. To save someone means to rescue him or her. Someone who needs to be saved or rescued is in serious trouble. Lifeguards save people from drowning. Firefighters rescue people trapped in fires.

We needed to be saved, or rescued, because of our sins. Sins are things we do that are wrong. They are also good things we should have done, but didn't do. Our sins hurt us, and they hurt others. Our sins hurt Jesus, too.

When we do something wrong, there's often a punishment. Because of our sins, we deserved to be punished. Can you imagine how big that punishment would be? It would be worse than we can even imagine.

We'll never know, because God sent his Son, Jesus, to be punished in our place. Jesus died on a cross, taking all the punishment we deserve. That's how much Jesus loves us! Because of Jesus, all our sins are forgiven.

Jesus died for us. Jesus saved us! But he didn't stay dead. Three days after he died, he rose from the dead. He lives! He is with us forever—it's true, even though we don't see him right now.

That's God's salvation story. And that's *our* salvation story. We want to share that story of Jesus' love and salvation with everyone! We want them to believe in Jesus and be saved, too! Let's think of people that we know who need Jesus and have our families concentrate on sharing this Salvation Story with them.



**IMMANUEL'S
VACATION BIBLE
SCHOOL**

JULY 6 -10

**RAINFOREST EXPLORERS:
JESUS LEADS THE WAY**

**It's easy to get lost.
That's why we need Jesus!**

The rainforest is a wild place. To make it through this unknown world safely, kids need a guide who can keep them on the right path. At *Rainforest Explorers*, learn how Jesus is our ultimate guide in the rainforest and throughout our lives. We might feel lost, but He'll show us the way. He'll never leave us!

Registration will begin in May for children ages 4-11 (or just finished 5th grade).





2020 MEN'S GATHERING
APRIL 17 – 19
Lakeview Villages
Seymour, IN

RETREAT TOPIC: LOST THINGS

*I BELIEVE IN GOD, THE FATHER ALMIGHTY,
 MAKER OF HEAVEN AND EARTH. – THE FIRST ARTICLE*

We confess it every week, but do we really think about what we're actually saying? Do we teach it to our children? Do we understand what it means for our everyday life? Does it guide our daily decisions?

Join us at the 2020 Men's Gathering as *The Mad Christian* himself, Reverend Jonathan Fisk, teaches us how to rediscover the First Article. Come learn about time, information, and life management. You'll leave with the tools to redesign your lifestyle with The First Article as the foundation and understand how to keep all three articles in the right place to sustain your faith.

~ ONE GREAT GOD ~
 ~ 150 CHRISTIAN MEN ~
 ~ ONE UNFORGETTABLE WEEKEND ~

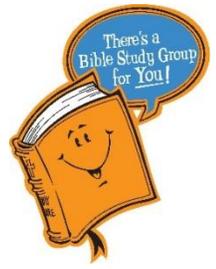
**VISIT WWW.MENSGATHERING.US
 FOR INFO AND REGISTRATION.**

BIBLE STUDY CLASSES . . .

Do you attend a weekly Bible study?

We offer many opportunities and a variety of topics—check out the ones below and watch for updates in the weekly bulletin.

All are invited to attend and are always welcome at any of these sessions.



SUNDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDIES

On Sunday mornings these classes are offered at
8:45 AM:

Pastor Solum leads a study of the book of *Exodus*. This class meets in the Fellowship Hall.

A Women's Bible Class meeting in the Office Conference Room is studying the books of *1 & 2 Timothy* and *Titus*.

MID-WEEK BIBLE STUDIES

Tuesday, 6:30 PM – Pastor Solum leads a study on four of the minor prophets: *Hosea, Joel, Amos, and Obadiah*.

MONTHLY BIBLE STUDIES

1st Saturday of each month, 8:00 AM – The Men's Network meets in the Fellowship Hall and is studying *The Baloney Shop* by Ken Klaus.

1st & 3rd Saturdays of each month, 8:30 AM – Ladies Bible Study & Tea meets in Fellowship Hall and is studying material from the *LWML Lutheran Women's Quarterly*.

A Different Approach to Fasting

1. Fast from anger and hatred. Give your family an extra dose of love each day.
2. Fast from judging others. Before making any judgment, recall how Jesus forgives our faults.
3. Fast from discouragement. Hold on to Jesus' promise that he has a perfect plan for your life (Jeremiah 29:11).
4. Fast from complaining. When you find yourself about to complain, close your eyes and recall some of the little moments of joy Jesus has given you.
5. Fast from resentment or bitterness. Work on forgiving those who may have hurt you.
6. Fast from spending too much money. Try to reduce your spending by ten percent and give these savings to the poor.





**You are invited to
Immanuel in Tracy
for their annual
Soup Supper fundraiser.**

Join Pastor Albertin on **Saturday, March 14th**, from **4 to 7 p.m.** Cost is only \$6.00 per person and includes a wide variety of the best soups in the county! They will have plenty of desserts too.

8705 S. 100 E.
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Daylight Savings Time begins Sunday, March 8. So, mark the date and remember to change your clocks on the right day. You won't want to miss out on a minute of the worship services, Sunday School, and Bible classes.



PLEASE NOTE: The deadline for submitting items for the April *Gazette* is **Monday, March 2.**

