

March 2014



Breeze Thru the Leaves

Tree of Life Lutheran Church

Lenten Determination

I have always been struck by the insight Luke offers to how Jesus approached His crucifixion. In Luke 9:51 we read, “Jesus **resolutely set out** for Jerusalem.” That occurs fourteen chapters before His crucifixion! Other translations read Jesus “**steadfastly set His face,**” He “**determined to go,**” He “**made up His mind to go,**” and “He **gathered up His courage and steeled Himself for the journey.**” Already well in advance Jesus was preparing for all that He lay ahead.

Undoubtedly Jesus struggled with what He would face in Jerusalem: fickle crowds, angry priests, brutal soldiers, two-faced friends, along with all the pain and suffering and finally death! Yet He **determined** to go ahead! He wouldn't let anything stop Him.

And He did it for you! That is the message of Lent. Jesus enduring the suffering and pain of crucifixion for you to pay for your sins, to open the door of heaven. As the old Lenten hymn states, “Thousand, thousand thanks shall be, dearest Jesus unto Thee!”

Tree of Life is facing some important decisions in the coming months. The Call Committee is interviewing candidates to help **determine** which will become our next Pastor. Action Teams are working on Outreach possibilities, dealing with inactive members, planning what to do to ensure our new Pastor's ministry will be successful, and much more. In all this it is right to ask: Where is God leading us?

Perhaps part of the answer is found in the **determination** which Jesus displayed in facing Jerusalem. We cannot just sit back in our comfort and expect things to improve automatically. Some challenging and even difficult decisions may have to be made. We may well be jolted out of our comfort zone.



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A WORD
FROM THE
PASTOR

You can reach Pastor
Don at 972-271-1714 H,
972-896-8572 C, or
daberg14@yahoo.com

Action Teams

The Outreach Action Team has decided to partner with Toler Elementary School as their main focus. 75% of the Toler students are on the Reduced or Free Meal Program and we felt that we wanted to help out as much as we could. Needs that were identified after a meeting with the principal were funds for educational field trips, tutoring and volunteers for reading with children and at some of their events. We will be asking for your help as we reach out to these children and their families during the year. Our first fund raiser was the freewill offering at the potluck held on 2/16/14. Thanks to the Board of Fellowship and your generosity, we were able to raise \$200. Next we will be making 3 baskets to be sold at a silent auction at their carnival in April to raise money to defray the cost of field trips. Watch your newsletter for more information on how you can help. The members of the Outreach AT are Judy Berg, Linda Hill, David & Kara Jander, Jan Keitch, Betty Nixon, and Lisa Theriot.

The Inactives and Guests Action Team (Lee Wilson, Ted Keitch and Ken Warren) had a meeting to divide up the attendance list that Ted Keitch keeps for each Sunday. We made some contacts. Pastor Berg, Ken Warren and Kara Jander met to discuss some further action. Pastor is sending out 10-12 letters to members that have not attended in a few years. Ken will send a card to the ones that have not been attending in the last 6 months or more. Ted, Lee, and Ken plan to call or email these if we do not hear from them or see them in church after 2-3 weeks. If they do not reply or indicate some action they want taken in response to our contacts we will refer them to the Board of Elders for review.

These Action Teams can always use your help, as can the New Pastor Action Team and the Prayer Action Team. Please contact the members listed above or stop by the office to find out how your talents can be used.

From the Congregational Chairman

Dear Members of Tree of Life,

I have noticed that as I am getting older the time is going by so much more quickly. Shouldn't things be slowing down? It seems like we just took down the church's Christmas decorations and soon we will be preparing the sanctuary for Lent and Easter. Some of us will be deciding what to "Give Up" for Lent and some of us will decide to be more reflective during this season. This season I ask you to join me as I try to "Give It All Up". What I mean by that is that we give up ALL of our struggles, hurts, anxieties, temptations, anger, frustration, etc. **TO THE LORD.** Jesus proved to us at the end of His life that He could handle the burden of all of the world's sin as He hung on the cross. He continues to encourage us to come to Him with our problems and concerns so that He can help us with them. Soon we will be getting the answer to the prayer we have been praying for a new full time Pastor for our church. This is the time to also add this to our list of things to "Give Up" to the Lord. Even though waiting for the answer will be hard, God knows our needs and will provide for us. May you all be richly blessed during this Lent and Easter season.

Your Sister in Christ,

Linda Hill

(Congregational Chairman)

Thank you!

Janice Nichols sends a heartfelt "Thank You!" to her Tree of Life Family for the cards, phone calls, prayers and kind wishes for her recovery. She is back at home now, but with some healing left to do and some surgery still to come. She appreciates you all so much and looks forward to being able to worship with you again.

Mid-Week Lenten Services

Brief, reflective services each Wednesday at 11:00 a.m. and 7 p.m. focusing on the seven last words of Jesus. Beautiful Lenten and Evening hymns. Soup will be shared following the morning services and dessert will be shared prior to the evening services.

Wed. March 5 Voluntary Imposition of Ashes & Holy Communion
The Forgiveness That Doesn't Stop –
"Father, Forgive Them"

Wed. March 12 The Power That Doesn't Falter –
"Today You Will Be With Me In Paradise"

Wed. March 19 The Concern That Doesn't Cease –
"Woman, Behold Your Son ... Behold Your Mother"

Wed. March 26 The Question That Doesn't Die –
"My God, My God Why?"

Wed. April 2 The Nature That Doesn't Change –
"I Thirst"

Wed. April 9 The Ending That Doesn't End –
"It Is Finished"

Maundy Thursday, April 17 Maundy Thursday Holy Communion

Good Friday, April 18 Good Friday Service of Darkness
The Trust That Isn't Misplaced –
"Father, Into Your Hands I Commit My Spirit"

White Rock Center of Hope

The center is very busy with so many people needing assistance, just to survive a day to day existence. Our greatest need for food is always Mac and Cheese, canned meats, soups and peanut butter and jelly.

We are very grateful for the support that we receive from Tree of Life and I personally want to thank all of you.

Jan Keitch

Senior Youth Garage Sale

Our annual garage sale will be Saturday, March 29th. We ask that the congregation start bringing any items they wish to donate to the Youth House. Proceeds from the garage sale will go to the pavilion repair project. We are getting close!



Cortney Alexander	3-2
Stan Lewis	3-2
Dick Wendt	3-3
Taylor Rattan	3-6
David Jander	3-8
Brett Rattan	3-9
Mike Angelbeck	3-12
Patty Gibbs	3-17
James Karlin	3-20
Linda Angelbeck	3-21
Charles Melton	3-25
Lee Wilson	3-28



David & Ginny Hoppe	3-14
James & Kathy Troxell	3-21
Gerald & Tammy Dixon	3-25
Tony & Helen Anne Iuliano	3-28

New Bible Discussion Group Kick-Off Meeting

On the first Wednesday night after Easter [April 23], a meeting will be held at TOL from 7pm until 8pm to talk about forming a new discussion group called “Dialogues in Christianity.” If you have ever wished that you could ask questions after a particular sermon or TV show, this discussion group may be just the thing you are looking for. The skeleton of topics will be the core beliefs of Christianity but ad hoc Bible topics will be welcomed and rabbit trails will be allowed. Bob Green will facilitate the discussions. This means that when someone asks a new question, everyone in the group, who has an answer or comment, will be encouraged to speak up. If there are differences of opinion, there will be no attempt to wrap up the dialogue with the “correct answer.” The plan is to meet for six weeks and then discuss if people want to continue meeting, take a break for the summer, change to every other week, etc. If you have questions or comments before the first meeting, you can e-mail Bob at bgreen@gpltxas.org.

Silent Auction

The Board of Outreach is hosting a Silent Auction and Baked Potato Lunch after the worship on Sunday, April 6. The Silent Auction contains items that were donated by the vendors at our Craft Fair in November. We would be very appreciative of any members of the congregation who would like to donate additional items for this event. Proceeds from this event will go to an organization that has yet to be determined.

Offerings and Attendance for January

DATE	SS	Worship	General Offering	Growing To the Future	Mission Tithe
1/5/14	36	69	\$5,308*	\$580	\$531
1/12/14	46	88	\$8,647*	\$400	\$865
1/19/14	49	79	\$2,921*	\$300	\$292
1/26/14	44	80	*\$8,132	\$500	\$813
Total for January			\$25,008*	\$1,780	\$2,501

*Planned for each week—\$4,738; Planned for in January—\$18,952

Board of Fellowship

The Board of Fellowship would like to thank everyone for their generous donations collected at our potluck dinner on Sunday, February 16th for Toler Elementary School. We collected \$200.00, which will be a big help in covering some of the many needs of the children there. God Bless You.

Paper Pounding



The Board of Fellowship will be hosting a Paper Pounding the entire month of March to cover the many needs in our kitchen. In addition to the usual paper towels and toilet paper, also included are coffee, creamer, dish washing liquid, large red cups, napkins, and dessert plates. Any help you can give us will be greatly appreciated.

TOL Braille Team

Five members of our TOL Braille Team went to Zion Lutheran in Dallas on February 14th. That day they happily made 6 copies of the book of Leviticus. If you are interested in participating with our Braille Team please speak to Jan Keitch or Patty Gibbs.

Offerings and Attendance for February

DATE	SS	11:00	General Offering	Growing To the Future	Mission Tithe
2/2/14	37	78	\$5,477*	\$300	\$548
2/9/14	42	78	\$5,401*	\$800	\$540
2/16/14	41	83	\$2,649*	\$500	\$265
2/23/14			\$*	\$	\$
Total for February			\$*	\$	\$

*Planned for each week—\$4,738; Planned for in February—\$18,952

Young at Heart News

Please mark your calendar for Tuesday, March 11th, at 11:30 A.M.; join us for a wonderful luncheon provided for us at Christian Care Center. We had a great time last year and they treat us "old people" like we're pretty special. It really is worth a little time to eat and enjoy good fellowship. Please be sure to look for the sign up sheet on the bulletin board. If you would like to meet at church and carpool, we can arrange transportation for you. Any questions: call Christy Kloostra or Jan Keitch.

Call Committee

The Call Committee has finished the interview process and was very impressed with all the candidates. They now begin the process of completing all the required documentation, which is extensive. Once that is completed they will send that off to the district and we will wait to see what happens.

Please keep the Call Committee, the Call Process and the Seminarians in your prayers.

Easter Celebration & Egg Hunt

Mark your calendars now for our annual Easter Celebration and Egg Hunt: **Saturday, April 12th from 10 am to noon.** There will be story time, crafts, games, snacks, the Easter Bunny and of course the Easter Egg Hunt. Please plan to attend and invite your friends, neighbors, cousins, grandkids..... We are looking forward to a really fun time!

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The loving family of Tree of Life, rooted
in God's Word, exists to share the joy,
love, and peace of Jesus Christ with you!



Pastor's Page, *continued from pg. 1*

But we will do it! Because God did not place us here to be comfortable! He does not want us to just keep the institution of Tree Of Life in place. He called us into His family to make disciples of others! That is our mission. That is our goal. And in time He will show us the way!

One final insight to Jesus' approach to His death. The writer to the Hebrews records "for the **JOY** before Him Jesus endured the cross." Amazing! Jesus experienced joy in fulfilling the Father's plan of salvation. He found joy in giving Himself for others, and so do we! When was the last time you experienced such joy?

Pastor Don

