



Lifetimes

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February 12, 2017

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Lent Begins March 1

The season of Lent begins this year with Ash Wednesday on March 1. There are a number of ways to engage in this season of reflection and preparation for Jesus' journey to the cross.

Midweek Worship & Sermon Series

On Ash Wednesday, worship will be at 12:00 p.m., 5:00 p.m., and 7:00 p.m. All services will include the imposition of ashes and communion. The remaining Wednesdays in Lent, worship will be at 12:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.

The focus for the sermon series during midweek Lenten worship is "The Way to the Cross." Using the scriptural Stations of the Cross as a frame, the goal of this series is to be immersed in Jesus' journey to the cross, to savor the details, to confront our human realities and actions that drove Jesus to the cross, and experience the abundance and counter-cultural nature of God's grace.

Each week will focus on a different scene from the Stations of the Cross and the following themes:

- March 1: Ash Wednesday
- March 8: Betrayal
- March 15: Denial
- March 22: Crowning with Thorns
- March 29 Promise
- April 5: Care

Soup Lunch & Soup Supper

Each Wednesday during Lent, a meal of soup and sandwiches will be served immediately following 12:00 p.m. worship in Grace Hall and from 5:30 - 6:30 p.m. in the Gathering Space. Cost: \$5 per person or \$15 max per family. Volunteers are needed to help serve at these meals, if you are interested sign up at incarnationmn.org or in the Incarnation Office.

40-Day Prayer Experiment

The 40-Day Prayer Experiment returns this Lent. If you are interested in building a new habit of regular prayer, deepening your prayer life, or connecting with another person or as a family through prayer, the 40-Day Prayer Experiment is an opportunity to do all of these.

What's the commitment? Between Ash Wednesday and Easter, spend 15-30 minutes a day for guided Bible reading and prayer plus time interacting with your prayer partner (you can choose who or we'll match you with someone), including checking in once a week to talk through provided questions and pray for one another. This year, the guide for the 40-Day Prayer Experiment is being written in house. The daily entries will connect with the midweek Lenten sermon series, "The Way to the Cross," and help participants gain familiarity with the Faith 5, five practices for connecting in faith every day. Learn more at incarnationmn.org/prayer.

Lenten Day of Prayer

This year the Lenten Day of Prayer will be held on Wednesday, March 29 from 7:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m. The goal is to have the people of Incarnation praying throughout this day in personal reflection consistent with the season of Lent and for the needs of our larger community and the world. People are encouraged to commit to a 30 minute time slot. Written prayer materials will be available during the event to guide you through your prayer time. Sign up in the Incarnation Office.

All Hands On Hope MobilePack™

All Hands On Hope: Incarnation Celebrates 10th Feed My Starving Children MobilePack™ Event, May 1 - 4, 2017.

*"I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full."
- John 10:10*

Do you remember the thrill of Incarnation's first MobilePack™ event back in 2007? For the first time ever, Incarnation raised funds outside its operating budget, to buy Feed My Starving Children ingredients to the tune of \$40,950, and 1,100 volunteers packed 274,115 meals, the equivalent of feeding 751 children for a year! A group of 20-something young adults put their hearts, minds, and gifts together to orchestrate the event, never doubting for a minute that the goal couldn't be reached. It was exciting and moving to see what this faith community was capable of doing together, and by the end of the event, EVERYONE was saying "we're going to do this again, aren't we?!" Since 2007, almost 5 million meals have been packed, enough food to feed 13,360 children for a year, with 18,400 volunteers, and close to one million dollars has been raised through MobilePack™ events hosted at Incarnation.

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Founded in 1987, Feed My Starving Children (FMSC) is a Christian non-profit based in Coon Rapids, MN that provides nutritionally complete meals specifically formulated for malnourished children across the world. Volunteers pack the food in one of the permanent sites or at a MobilePack™ event where the host site raises the funds to pay for the food that will be packed during the course of an event.

With the recent adoption of Incarnation’s new mission statement “Filled by God’s grace, we feed the hungry in heart, mind, body, and spirit”, it makes even more sense that we partner with Feed My Starving Children to accomplish this important work together. Not only do recipients of these highly nutritious meals get fed, but all those who pack are fed in their hearts, minds, bodies, and spirits! Says Pastor Gary Medin, “Having watched thousands of people over the years walk into Incarnation to be the hands and feet of Jesus through the MobilePacks™, and then watching the joy on their faces as they pack, and the look of accomplishment and gratitude as they leave, I know that these events have had great effect on us living out God’s mission to feed the hungry in heart, body, mind and spirit. Having had the privilege to deliver Feed My Starving Children packed at Incarnation to children in Haiti, I have witnessed first hand the feeding of physical hunger through our efforts together. And in making multiple trips to Haiti I have seen that physical feeding lead to feeding of the heart, mind and spirit as well. These MobilePacks™ have changed us. They have changed thousands in this world.”

As is Incarnation’s practice, registrations to reserve packing shifts for this spring’s event, will open on Ash Wednesday, March 1, 2017. Make your reservation by going to incarnationmn.org/fmsc, or by calling the Incarnation Office for assistance if you don’t have access to the web. What else can you do to be part and heighten the energy around this ten year celebration, ensuring we successfully pack 750,000 meals, with 3300 volunteers, feeding the equivalent of 2054 kids for a year?



- Take on the 10 Year Challenge - Invite 10 friends to pack with you during this MobilePack™ event.
- Donate money to help meet the goal of \$165,000 needed to pay for the food we’ll pack. Make out a check to Incarnation writing FMSC MP in the memo or donate online at incarnationmn.org/fmsc.
- Approach your company about doing a company match or if you are Thrivent member, form an Action Team. Instructions for both can be found on Incarnation’s Feed My Starving Children page.
- Follow Incarnation’s Facebook page or “FMSC MobilePack™ at Incarnation” for updates, and share, Share, SHARE! Use #AllHandsOnHope as way to draw attention, to organize, and to promote this endeavor.

Don’t miss out on this wonderful opportunity to join the congregation and the community to be “all hands on hope” for feeding the hungry in heart, mind, body, and spirit!

From The Staff

Gary Medin

Senior Pastor



Some 31 years ago I ran into a magazine interview of a Christian writer by the name of Henri Nouwen. The gist of that interview has stayed with me and had great effect on how I have chosen to try and view life in this world. In fact, two years ago I came upon some Haitian metal art with the essence of that interview and since it was a merging of two life-changing experiences in my life -

Haiti and the 31 year old interview - I purchased the only two pieces available at a metalworks shop, one for my office and another for one of our children. I have been on the search for two more ever since at the request of our other children.

The words of that article, the words of that Haitian metal art, that constantly rattle around in my head and affect how I choose to live as a follower of Jesus Christ, are: “Love is greater than fear.”

Here is some of that interview 31 years ago. An interview that it seems could have taken place yesterday:

“What, in your opinion, is the most important issue that people are struggling with today?”

Nouwen: Fear.

“Fear of what?”

Nouwen: There are many kinds of fear. First, there are the inner fears. . . . Another kind of fear is fear of the other; the fear of the stranger. There is an enormous amount of fear today of the person who is not like us because of color, race,

or sex. . . . There is also the fear of God, the fear that one day God is going to get them.

“How does one deal with these fears?”

Nouwen: You don’t attack fear directly. Fear engenders fear. Obviously, there are times when you have to be aware of your fear. But letting go of fear is only possible when you are in love. It’s fascinating that, in Scripture, the opposite of love is not hate but fear. Jesus kept saying, “Don’t be afraid, it’s me. You have to pay attention to me. . . . The world tries to rule us by fear. The Christian is the person who says, “No. Love is stronger than fear.” “Do not be afraid. Fear not.” Those are words that God constantly speaks to us. Depending on how many variations of “fear not or do not be afraid” you include, it is spoken by God or God’s messengers between 100 and 150 times in the Bible.

We live in a world that often seems to be working hard at trying to get us to be afraid. If we consider how many times God tells us in the Bible to not be afraid, those many and often very loud voices in our world today telling us to live our lives in fear, may just be the opposite of messengers from God. We are surrounded by messages that tell us the world is a scary place, that we need to

fear for our safety, our economic well-being, our job performance, our health, our neighborhoods, our families, our future. Everywhere we look, someone, something is telling us we need to live our lives in fear. But that is not God’s message to us as those who trust in God’s love for us. God says to us, over and over again, “I love you. Be not afraid.”

Whenever we gather in worship with others, we are reminded of God’s faithfulness, of the incredible lengths God goes to show us how much God loves us. God comes to us every moment of our lives and calls us to live life without fear, to live life trusting that God truly loves us. God

invites us to let go of our fears and worries about the past, about the present, and about the future. God comes to us and reminds us that we can live without fear, we can spread God’s love freely to all people in this world, because we know that God has come into



Help Create Incarnation's Future: Sign Up for a Focus Group

The Long Range Planning Committee (LRPC) has been meeting since fall of 2015 to provide guidance and clarity of focus in shaping the future of Incarnation. After a long season of research, prayerful reflection, and reworking Incarnation's Mission, Vision and Values statement, the LRPC is now in the process of making recommendations that will help Incarnation live out this mission: Filled by God's grace, we feed the hungry in heart, body, mind and spirit.

An Executive Summary, which includes recommendations around worship, prayer ministry, hunger initiatives, care ministry, stewardship, and communications, was delivered to Council and staff in December. The next step will be to conduct focus groups to assess the suitability of these recommendations, their alignment with our mission, and likelihood for being impactful for our future. There are two opportunities for Incarnation members and participants to participate in the focus group process:

- Thursday, February 23 from 4:30 - 6:00 p.m. (Sign up by Wednesday, February 22); or
- Monday, February 27 from 7:00 - 8:30 p.m. (Sign up by Sunday, February 26. Childcare available at this session.)

Sign up for the focus group in the Incarnation Office or by emailing Joan Volkmann at jvolkmann@incarnationmn.org. When you sign up for a focus group, you will receive a packet of materials to read in advance of the meeting.

After the focus groups are completed, the recommendations will be fine-tuned and a final report will be presented to the Council for potential action. Please continue to pray for the Long Range Planning process and ongoing discernment through the focus group sessions.

INCARNATION LUTHERAN CHURCH GENERAL FUND - INCOME & EXPENSE REPORT FOR THE MONTH ENDING DECEMBER, 2016

REVENUE	YTD ACTUAL	YTD BUDGET	YTD VARIANCE
Member Envelopes/Loose	\$1,870,642	\$1,900,000	(\$29,358)
Special Env./Misc.	\$33,280	\$66,000	(\$32,720)
Total Offering	\$1,903,922	\$1,966,000	(\$62,078)
Other Income	\$10,610	\$13,000	(\$2,390)
Total Income	\$1,914,532	\$1,979,000	(\$64,468)

EXPENSES	YTD ACTUAL	YTD BUDGET	YTD VARIANCE
Missions	\$223,787	\$224,600	(\$813)
Salaries/Wages	\$1,318,869	\$1,375,000	(\$56,131)
Ministries	\$103,363	\$107,350	(\$3,987)
Administration	\$64,485	\$73,500	(\$9,015)
Building	\$186,732	\$198,550	(\$11,818)
Total Expenses	\$1,897,237	\$1,979,000	(\$81,763)
Net Income (loss)	\$17,295	0	\$17,295

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

Beginning of the Month balance	\$164,351
Net Income for the month	157,135
Mortgage Payment	(28,540)
Additional Principal Payment	(100,000)
Other Capital Expenses	(453)
Monthly Ending Balance	\$192,493

Thank you for supporting the ministries, missions, and programs of Incarnation with your continued contributions. Your gifts are greatly appreciated.

From the Staff, continued from pg. 2

our world and is with us today, and will be with us tomorrow, no matter what tomorrow may bring. The real messengers God sends into our lives, tell us to not live our lives in fear because we are loved and cared for by the God of the entire universe, the God who is greater than any of our fears. Let's commit to listening more to God's voice telling us his love his greater than this world's fear, and then pray for the courage to be God's messengers in this world spreading love rather than letting this world rule us and others by fear. Living as though God's love given to us through Jesus Christ, love is always, always greater than fear.



Incarnation Lutheran Church

Worship, Prayer & Among the Congregation

Those hospitalized: Ray Lorenz; Ed Hagen; Bill Fitzsimmons.

Sympathy to: Ann Oswood and family on the death of her father; Chris Knopf and family on the death of his mother; The family of Carol Nelson on her death; Claudia Wiebold and family on the death of her father; Kathy Hartley and family on the death of her mother; The family of Jean Alsop on her death; Rolf Hauck and family on the death of his father; LeAnn Sullivan on the death of her brother.

Congratulations to: Lesley and Charlie Vollhaber on the birth of Jacob Edmund; Jessica and David Reelfs on the birth of Bija LuAnn; Karen and Pat Varro on the birth of Josephine Marie; Alyssa and Blake Wilking on the birth of Benjamin Carter.

Connect and Grow

Sunday Morning Small Groups

Meet and connect with others, while taking a new step in your faith on Sunday mornings. New small groups will connect once a month, for 60 minutes, to take part in a short faith study and guided conversation. If you're new to small groups, this is a great starting place. Register: dfloe@incarnationmn.org.

When: Once/month on Sundays, 9:45-10:45 a.m., February-May

New Small Groups

Interested in a small group, but haven't found one that works for you? Contact dfloe@incarnationmn.org to learn about groups planned for the future. New groups start throughout the year. Also, if you've been part of a small group and you'd like to learn about the small group leader training, contact dfloe@incarnationmn.org.

Save the Date - Discover Incarnation

Discover Incarnation is offered for anyone who wants to learn more about Incarnation's mission, vision, and values, and is required for those who wish to step into membership. Childcare is available for those who make an advanced registration. Registration is due by 4:30 p.m. March 29.

When: April 1, 8:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Children, Youth and Family

Butter Braid Fundraiser - Support Children and Youth Camps

Youth and mission trip participants will be selling Butter Braids in the Atrium and Gathering Space February 19, February 26 and March 5 to raise money for the summer camps. Butter Braids are \$12 and can be picked up after all worship services on April 9, just in time for Easter!

When: February 19, 26, and March 5.

Preschool Silent Auction and Carnival

The 20th annual Preschool Silent Auction & Carnival event returns to Grace Hall on Sunday, February 26! Buy & take items will be available for purchase beginning at 9:00 a.m. Silent Auction bidding continues until 2:00 p.m. Carnival games and concessions will run from 1-3:00 p.m. Interested in participating? Visit the Incarnation website under "serve" to see varied opportunities and shifts for volunteer assistance

When: February 26.

Serve

March is MN FoodShare Month

A portion of all donations of food and dollars to Ralph Reeder Food Shelf in March is matched by Minnesota FoodShare. Dollars can be stretched as food is purchased through discounted suppliers. Drop off donated items in the large bin near the nursery. Thank you for your continued generosity.

When: During March

Volunteers for Solid Ground Graduation Ceremony and Dinner at Incarnation

Help graduating parents from Solid Ground celebrate their accomplishments with family and friends. Join others from Incarnation to make this a festive event by volunteering. Contact Cindy Spellman at rooskie0825@gmail.com or 651-728-0575.

When: February 28. Decorate and set up: 4 - 5:00 pm.

Prepare dinner: 4:30 - 6:30 p.m. Serve dinner and clean up: 6:15 - 8:15 p.m.

Lenten Soup Lunch & Supper Servers

Each Wednesday during Lent, a meal of soup and sandwiches will be served immediately following 12:00 p.m. worship and from 5:30 - 6:30 p.m. Volunteers are needed to help serve at these meals. If you are interested, sign up at incarnationmn.org or in the Incarnation Office.

When: Wednesdays, March 1 - April 5, 12:00 p.m. & 5:30 - 6:30 p.m.

Soup Supper Volunteer Coordinator

Incarnation is looking for one or two volunteers to coordinate the efforts of the soup supper volunteers during Lent. For more information, contact Joan Volkmann at jvolkmann@incarnationmn.org.

When: March 1 - April 5.

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