

NEWSLETTER, Volume 62, Number 2

February, 2013

Website address: [goodshepherdgilroy.org](http://goodshepherdgilroy.org)

## A NEW APPROACH TO THE THREE DAYS

THE THREE DAYS, FROM MAUNDY THURSDAY EVENING THROUGH EASTER SUNDAY, ARE AT THE HEART OF OUR LIFE AS GOD'S PEOPLE, FOR THEY TELL THE ESSENTIAL SALVATION STORY OF GOD'S LOVE FOR US IN JESUS CHRIST, HIS LIFE, DEATH AND RESURRECTION. WE HAVE NOT BEEN DOING A VERY GOOD JOB OF OBSERVING THESE DAYS AT GOOD SHEPHERD. ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION LAST YEAR WAS AT AN ALL TIME LOW. WHAT CAN WE DO TO CHANGE THAT AND RESTORE THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE HEART OF THE CHURCH YEAR TO OUR HEARTS AND LIVES?

I must confess that I am part of the problem. When I want something done well and efficiently, it's often easier for me to do it myself than to ask for help. Enlisting others takes more time and sometimes means that what happens is out of my control. Maybe an assigned task will get done; maybe not. Maybe it will be done well, or maybe not so well. With my desire to have beautiful and meaningful worship, I have kept the good people of Good Shepherd out of the loop. Well, I am ready for a change. I want you to join in the celebration and ritual keeping of the Three Days. I want you to volunteer! It is your worship and your celebration and your observation of the Three Days, and you need to make it your own.

Therefore, I'll set up a schedule of opportunities for assisting ministers (that's you) to volunteer your talent and time and effort so that we get a wide level of participation. For instance, we need readers for the many stories of the Passion and Resurrection. We need people to help adorn the sanctuary and make the "scene changes" as we move through the three days. We need people to help strip the altar, bear the cross down the aisle, hang banners, light and tend the Easter fire, pass out candles, tell the Vigil stories so that everyone is engaged, including the children. We need some food after the Vigil as we share our first fellowship meal of the new Easter.

Worship is at the heart of our congregation's life, and it should be. We assemble to worship God and re-center our lives around the Gospel. We do this as a community because it is very difficult to do alone. Nothing replaces real people in our sanctuary, praying and singing and eating and hearing and offering themselves together. Modern communication devices keep us in control of what and with whom we will share our time. The Christian Assembly is not like that: we meet with all comers with all their skills and shortcomings. We meet to share real humanity, not some virtual world. We willingly are "out of control" in regard to who can come and share in worship. God welcomes all; so do we! Can we really mean it? Can we let go and let God? Can we make community better by participation? Does our presence give a witness to God's love? Is our willingness to share with others who are not like us, in any way like the message of the Gospel? And as for the Three Days, can we make *that* center of Christian worship *our* center as a congregation? Can we make this be a community-building event? Of course we can.

Who are your companions, people or things? It had better be people, because companion comes from *conpanne*, literally, with bread. With people we can share bread. Not so much with a cell phone or computer. Come and be a companion to your fellow members. Come and participate in the Three Days.

Your Pastor & Friend,  
*Ronald E. Koch*

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<h1>February, 2013</h1>						<b>Church Cleaning Day <u>9am</u></b>
					<b>1</b>  N.A. 8 pm	<b>2</b> church cleaning N.A. 9:30 am Flowers: Needed N.A. 8 pm
<b>3</b> Epiphany 3 9:30 am Worship N. A. 4 pm	<b>4</b>  N.A. 6 & 8 pm	<b>5</b>  N.A. 6 pm	<b>6</b>  Handbells 7:30 N.A. 7 & 8:30p	<b>7</b>  N.A. 8 pm	<b>8</b>  N.A. 8 pm	<b>9</b> N.A. 9:30 am Flowers: Weyland N.A. 8 pm
<b>10</b> Transfiguration of Our Lord, 9:30 a.m. Worship N. A. 4 pm	<b>11</b>  N.A. 6 & 8 pm	<b>12</b>  N.A. 6 pm Council 7:30	<b>13</b> ASH WEDNESDAY Worship 7 pm N.A. 7 & 8:30p	<b>13</b>  N.A. 8 pm	<b>15</b>  N.A. 8 pm	<b>16</b> N.A. 9:30 am  Flowers: Patti Johansen N.A. 8 pm
<b>17</b> Lent 1 9:30 am Worship <b>3<sup>rd</sup> S. Brunch</b> NA 4 pm	<b>18</b>  N.A. 6 & 8	<b>19</b>  N. A. 6 pm	<b>20</b>  N.A. 7 & 8:30p	<b>21</b>  N.A. 8 pm	<b>22</b>  N.A. 8 pm	<b>23</b> N.A. 9:30 am Flowers:Needed N.A. 8 pm
<b>24</b> Lent 2 9:30 am Worship NA 4 pm	<b>25</b>  N.A. 6 & 8 pm	<b>26</b>  N. A. 6 pm	<b>27</b>  Handbells 7:30 N.A. 7 & 8:30p	<b>28</b> Thrivent Pizza/Planning for Kids Ed 5p N.A. 8 pm		

#### February Birthdays

7 Norma Wiedeman 10 Herm Weyland 22 Jack Rymers

#### February Anniversaries

11 Ervin & Ellen Heinrich

#### February Assisting Ministers

Date	Coffee Time:	Acolytes	Lectors	Ushers
	<u>Set up</u>	<u>Clean up</u>		
3	Karen Spence	Sharon Hammelev-Pauls	Will Anderson	Carolyn Carver
10	Sally Hammelev	Mariah Garcia	Ben Anderson	Rozanne Koch & Ben Anderson
17	3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday Brunch: <b>Team 4</b>		Elena Finucane	Patti Johansen
	<b>Team 1</b> is <u>Michelle Anderson, Carolyn Carver, Kirsten Finucane, and Zita Weyland</u>			
24	<b>NEEDED</b>	Carolyn Carver	Abigail Finucane	Jo Brooks
				<b>NEEDED</b>

FLOWERS: February 3 Needed February 10 Zita Weyland  
February 17 Patti Johansen February 24 Needed

If you have a birthday or anniversary that you would like included in the monthly list, please let us know, and we'll add it. Thanks.



## Stewardship Updates

Expected Offerings based on last year: \$42,120.  
That is \$1620/week for 26 Sundays. [We are now going by a July to June fiscal year, so these are half-year numbers].

### Stewardship Update through January , 2013

Average attendance for 4 Weeks: 28  
Expected to date at \$1,620 for 4 weeks: \$6,480  
Actual Offering: \$6,172  
Shortfall: \$308  
Average shortfall per week: \$77

Thank you!

## Pastor Koch is Out of Control

Special to the Good Shepherd Newsletter

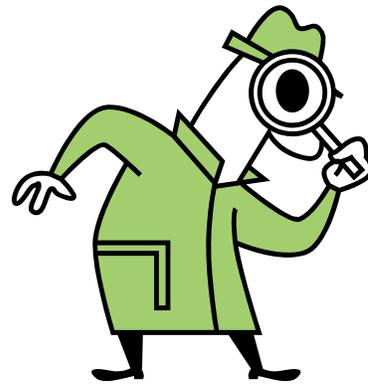
by

R. U. Kidding and Kan-it B. True

A recent report in the Newsletter of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church exposes the truth about the congregation's pastor, Ron Koch. In the article, the pastor actually owns up to being a control freak. This is a condition that has been well hidden from the congregation for over 30 years. The affable pastor has seemed to be so relaxed and easy-going about many things in church life, but the latest news is striking in bringing to light something that has been hidden.

Your canny reporters are wondering if there may be some connection to being in the season of Epiphany (Revelations, Manifestations and Openings) that may have led the pastor to this admission. Or, perhaps he is slyly trying to get more control by owning up to his pathetic condition. Hoping for congregational sympathy, he may be attempting to get people to feel sorry for him and then manipulate them into doing what he wants.

We will be diligent, as were the Wise Men in following the star, to follow this unfolding story. Stay tuned for next months' issue of The Newsletter for the latest updates.



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**Thrivent Financial for Lutherans** has scheduled a "Pizza and Planning" event for Thursday, February 28<sup>th</sup> in the Social Hall. This is open to **Vineyard and Good Shepherd** parents with a view to planning for children's college education costs. Pizza at 5 Planning at 5:45 (child-care provided) Done by 6:30 pm. RSVP to Pastor Koch.

### Statement of Good Shepherd's Welcome

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church of Gilroy is an inclusive Christian community. St. Paul, in Galatians 3, reminds us that baptism makes us children of God, and therefore, "there is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus." Therefore, we welcome people of all sexual orientations and gender identities fully into the life of our congregation.

## Early Ash Wednesday means Early Easter

Ash Wednesday this year is February 13. We will gather for worship at 7 pm to remember that we were dust, and that unto dust we shall return. That part of the worship, the ritual imposition of ashes on the forehead or the back of one's hand, historically begins the season of Lent. For 40 days (akin to Jesus' experience in the wilderness after his baptism) we will take up the discipline of Lent: to repent, fast, and pray. Some people give up candy or liquor. Some add daily prayer and devotions to their lives. Some "repent" from neglecting works of mercy and intentionally add a good deed to each day. Our congregation gathers in worship to hear the Word and share the Meal as we begin these forty days.

To be reminded of our mortality with the ashes of death is a powerful recognition of our reliance on God to give our lives ultimate meaning. Old and young, frail and healthy, we all get our ashes. Life can end for any of us and any time for almost any reason. Life is a fragile gift; we are reminded not to take it lightly, but to treasure it and the world God has made with all its beauty and luster.

In the presence of a holy and yet loving God we confess that we don't live up to our calling to be God's people, God's voice, and God's hands in the world today. We seek deeper meaning through more thoughtful and intentional living for others. And we await God's gift of insight and clarity about God's purpose for us.

Lent is an ancient season of the Church Year. It was a time of special preparation of those to be baptized at Easter. The Candidates for Baptism were mentored and guided through the season with special attention to those stories in the Holy Gospels that made clear the work of Jesus to forgive us and make us

one with God in compassion and justice. After they had been instructed and expressed their desire to unite with the holy community, they were received by baptism into the community. The baptisms were held in clear, cold water (enough for complete immersion). They were held at the first light of Easter, lining up their new birth into Christ with the new life coming forth from the tomb in Jesus' resurrection.

The poet, Robert Frost, who died 50 years ago, once gave a sermon at a synagogue about religion. A passage from that message seems to catch the spirit of our Lenten journey with Jesus. "Now, religion always seems to me to come around to something beyond wisdom. It is the straining of the spirit forward to a wisdom beyond wisdom."

Isn't that what we seek: a sense of deeper meaning and purpose for our lives that only comes with a wisdom from God, and with working out in our daily living those things that bring about a connection to the Higher, the Eternal, the Word incarnate. Lent brings us closer to God through repentance, prayer and fasting. Those things put us in touch with our own humanity that has been touched by God in Jesus. What does that touch from God do? What does it mean? Can the Holy One so touch our lives that we sense the divine in ourselves? Can that be a call to pass it on? Is that "wisdom beyond wisdom?"  
Come to Lent, come home, and find out.

And to complete the story of an early Ash Wednesday, know that Easter this year is also early: March 31<sup>st</sup>. Then we will begin to live out of our experience of Holy Week and the Three Days into greater service and community. Let's make the most of this opportunity this year.



**Easter**