

Prince of Peace

THE BELLS



March 2023

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Don't Give It Up – Just Give

For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

Ephesians 2:8-9

The Lenten season is upon us. It's a time to reflect on our sinful condition and our relationship with God who says, "*You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy.*" (Lv 19:2)

The Lenten season is upon us. It's a time to reflect on our sinful condition and our relationship with God who says, "*You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy.*" (Lv 19:2) But often times people seek to "give up" something for Lent. The purpose of abstaining from certain pleasures is to grow closer to God. Because what we are to give up are the things that get in the way of our relationship with God. But the abstinence of things during Lent has become a righteous work, a way of trying to win God's favor or blessing.

The apostle Paul is very clear in his letter to the Ephesians that it is by grace, through faith and not by our own works that we are saved. Just giving up something for Lent negates what Christ accomplished for us, on our behalf, on the cross. Jesus willingly gave up His life to redeem all those who believe in Him. Trying to be holy by giving up something for Lent will not make you holy but will have the opposite effect, it makes you even more of a sinner.

We don't do good works for salvation purposes. We do good works because we are saved. Good works come from the Holy Spirit working in us compelling

us to do the Lord's Will. Paul continued in his letter to the Ephesians with, "*For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.*" (Eph 2:10) God had already prepared good works for us to do. So when we do good works we are only doing what God had already planned for us to do.

So, if you want to do something special for Lent then don't give up something, but give something. Give of yourself, help others out, and look for opportunities to bless others with what God

WORSHIP WITH US
Sunday: 9:00 Sunday School
10:15 AM

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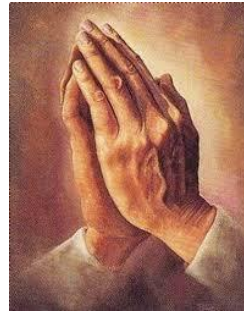
has blessed you with. Not for your salvation, because you are already saved, but to reveal your heavenly Father to others. Jesus said, *“You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.”* (Mt 5:14-16)

It doesn't make God happy when you give up something for Lent. What brings joy to God's heart is when our hearts are broken because of our sins, and we repent of them and confess them to Him. Just as David wrote, *“The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.”* (Ps 51:17) And it pleases God greatly to forgive you of your sins, for Christ's sake, leaving you clean and holy. So, don't give up something for Lent, but joyfully give

from your heart that rejoices in the salvation that Christ has won for you.

Pastor Sean

PRAYER CONCERNS



Please keep the following members & friends in your prayers

- George Shibata,
diagnosed with colon cancer
- Joan Bowen
- Bonnie Nies
- Larry Weimer,
- Patrick Donnelly,
stroke, friend of Hoby
- Kevin Mahoney
- Bill Hewlett
- Angie,
friend of Pam & Tammy,
recently diagnosed with cancer.
- Darryl.
- Katarynia,
recovering from ankle surgery.

Servants in Christ**Acolytes**

03/05 Grace Shibata
 03/12 Brooke Lehman
 03/19 James Shibata
 03/26 Noah Schweikert

Readers

03/05 Noah Schweikert
 03/12 Tammy Eckstrom
 03/19 Karl Borgman
 03/26 Bob Licht

Altar Guild

Mary Lehocky

MARCH BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

BIRTHDAYS

Jim Nord	2
Bonnie Nies	2
Joyce Hewlett	4
Karen McCracken	17
Chuck Szabo	18
Jaclyn Shibata	19
Doug Eckstrom	20
Jase Wilson	23
Matthew Muto	23
Bonnie Schweikert	25
Sandy Parker	31

**ANNIVERSARIES**

Brad & Jennifer Weedon 23

**BAPTISMAL BIRTHDAYS**

Joan Bowen	8
Briana Dulski	10
Amy Wilson	12
Bonnie Keen	20
Joleen Mesing	20
Ethel Clayton	25
Bob Licht	28
Carole Alberts	29



The Lutheran Hour can be heard on channel 1320 WJAS On Sunday Mornings at 7:00 am

March 5

"An Arresting Encounter"

Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler

A devoutly religious person has an arresting encounter with Jesus and learns what it means to be "born again."

(John 3:16)

March 12

"Thirsting for Life"

Guest Speaker: Rev. Dr. John Nunes

Jesus gives living water to those who are spiritually dehydrated.

(John 4)

March 19

"Bad Karma vs. Good Creator"

Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler

(John 9:3)

March 26

"Is God Missing in Action?"

Guest Speaker: Rev. Dr. John Nunes

(John 11)

YOUTH LOCK-IN

If we measure success by the number of tired kids, we hit it out of the park over the weekend. Our theme for the youth lock in was Romans 12:2 “Do not be conformed to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—His good, pleasing and perfect will.”

Hoby Schweikert led the icebreakers, giving the youth and adults an opportunity to get to know each other better. During devotion time, Pastor reinforced the words of Romans 12:2 and stressed the importance of talking to him when the troubles of the world get us down. Ruthann Weedon and Delaney Winterhalter shared their video gaming skills. Willis Voland and Craig and Emma Genser made sure everyone was well-fed. We enjoyed watching the movie “I Can Only Imagine” based on the song written by Bart Millard, lead singer of MercyMe. Tara Dulski and Jaclyn Shibata taught us how to play a few new games. A few of our youth wrote and presented several dramas. Most were able to stay awake all night.

We’ve already been asked if we’re planning to host another event next year. 😊

Yours in Christ,
Tammy



Mrs. Smith & Miss Twila's Preschool News

Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above –James 1:17

Surprisingly, February weather has been mild this year! Which means preschool was in session and we have not had any snow days this month.

To begin the month, on February 2nd we celebrated Ground Hogs Day and learned what it meant if Phil saw his shadow. We each made a hypothesis and charted our results to see how many students believed we would have six more weeks of winter. Only five thought we would have an early Spring. Unfortunately, Phil says we are looking at six more weeks of winter.

We learned three new letters this month during writing skills. We learned the letters; E, V and I. Valentine's Day fell on a Tuesday this year so we focused on creating a Valentine for someone special and even mailed them. During letter I, week we talked about the many different flavors of ice cream.

February is dental health month. We all practiced brushing our teeth and quizzed the kids about good and bad foods for our teeth. Lastly, just for fun we had a day dedicated to Miss. Twila's favorite animal. A SLOTH DAY! We learned some fun facts and created a craft. The students loved it!

Our four-year-old classes are really getting ready to head off to kindergarten in the fall. We have really been brushing up on our number skills too. Kindergarten expects the students to verbally count to 30, and recognize and write numbers 1-20. The students did a math lesson using valentine conversation hearts. They come in a variety of colors. We each got a heaping handful of hearts and had to count them and chart the colors they received. At the end of the lesson, they had a special treat and were allowed to eat them. Yummy!!

Just a reminder: we are now accepting OPEN enrollment for the 2023-2024 preschool year for both the three-year-old and the four-year-old classes. Referrals are always appreciated!

Let's hope Spring comes in like a LAMB!!

Until Next Month, Many Blessings,
Mrs. Smith & Miss Twila



Mrs. Shuttleworth & Ms. Kayla's Preschool News

Did you all blink and February just appear for everyone too? And let's talk about Phil seeing his shadow giving us 6 more weeks of winter! That is just crazy, and our crazy kiddos were so excited about it we celebrated Ground Hog day with Ground Hog Matching, Ground Hog predictions and Ground Hog headbands! We have also been working so hard on Valentines to send to someone near or far. Our three year old class made "Love Bug Valentines" and our four year old class made "Fish in the Sea Valentines." Each class also got to have their annual Parent Run Valentine's Day Party, where they passed out valentines and treat bags, played games and made crafts!

Three Year Old Class

Our three year old class finished off January and started off February with the letter "Mm"; they brought in their own mittens so we could play a matching mittens game and musical mittens! They also decorated mittens to go with the M is for Mittens theme! The second week of February they worked on the letter "Nn"; and made a nightscape in the letter N for the N is for Night theme (they were so cute!) They also had their crazy sock day! For the third week we moved onto the letter "Oo"; played musical hearts and worked on our modge podge Valentine's Day presents for their parents! The fourth week was a short week so we worked on the letter "Pp" and our chapel song so we could make sure they were ready for Chapel in the upcoming week! For the fifth week we continued working on the letter "Pp"; had our crazy hat day and Chapel!

Four Year Old Class

This month we are continuing our journey with the 5 senses, this month we are really focusing on the senses of Taste and smell! Our four year old class finished off January and started February working hard on the letter "Oo" and number 6. The second week they worked hard on the letter "Pp" and number 7. They also worked diligently on their Valentine's Day presents for their parents and helped to wrap them! There were also two birthdays celebrated back to back and crazy sock day! It was a busy week! Our third week started off with the parent run Valentine's Day party where everyone got to decorate their Valentine's Day boxes, enjoy treats, games and crafts! They started to work on the letter "Qq" and number 8 and celebrated another birthday all before a three day weekend! For our fourth week our kiddos started off with crazy hat day, the letter "Rr" and continuing with the number 8 we also played musical hearts!

Stay Tuned to see what March brings!

Mrs. Shuttleworth and Miss Kayla

Mrs. Shuttleworth and Ms. Kayla



PRESCHOOL BIBLE LESSON

This month with our 3 year old classes our lesson was Daniel and the Lion's Den.

With our 4 Year old classes, we taught them about John The Baptist, his clothes made of camel hair and diet of locusts and honey!



John The Baptist
colored and glued
with yarn!

Daniel & The
Lion's Den
Masks!



At Chapel, the 4
year olds enjoyed
singing all about
Brave John the
Baptist wearing
camel
hair...PeeYew!!!!



Our 3 year old classes
loved their version of
Praise Ye the Lord this
month at Chapel!



Register for the LWML 40th Biennial Convention

Date: June 22–25, 2023

Location: Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Theme: Celebrate the Lord of the Nations

**Registration for the 2023 LWML
Convention will be done through an online
form.** When you are ready to register
(beginning January 9, 2023), go to
lwml.org/2023-convention to access the
online registration form.

An Update From Your Local OCC Volunteers

Thank you so much for your participation in Operation Christmas Child. We are pleased to report the following shoebox numbers for the 2022 OCC collection to share with your church or group;

Butler/Armstrong Area	-	11,257
Mid-Atlantic North Region (PA & NJ)	-	610,298
United States total	-	9,303,130
Worldwide total	-	10,559,907

Even in these relatively hard economic times, *all* of these numbers represent increases from last year's totals. Praise God for His faithfulness to His program! Our goal for our Butler/Armstrong Area this past year was 11,001 and you helped smash it!

We praise God that since OCC started in 1993 over **206** million children worldwide have received shoebox gifts and have had The Greatest Gift, Jesus, presented to them. Franklin Graham personally delivered the 200 millionth shoebox to a young girl in Ukraine. Since 2009, **30.9 million** have gone on to enroll in The Greatest Journey with **over 14.9 million** making decisions for Christ. This program consists of 12 colorful and dynamic Bible lessons in the child's own language. Local church members are trained in how to teach it so that the children are able to understand who Jesus is, how to receive Him into their hearts, how to become faithful followers and how to share their faith. The Greatest Journey 12 week discipleship program is also available for use in the U.S.! We want to raise up a generation of believers whose hearts are on fire for Christ and have a desire to share the Good News with their friends and families.

There is a game app based on the Greatest Journey that you can download free just by typing in the search line "greatest journey game app". We've heard good comments from friends who have used it. Be sure to share this info with your church family, groups, and friends. We're sure your children will love it!

For more information on The Greatest Journey, additional shoebox stories, becoming more involved with Operation Christmas Child in our two-county area, or getting someone else more involved with Operation Christmas Child, please visit the website samaritanspurse.org/occ or contact us directly at the number or email address below. We are always available to meet with anyone or conduct a program for any group.

Also, be aware that there is a Facebook site for your group's Project Leader (the person in charge of your collection) to share ideas and gain helpful information. The address is:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/occprojectleaders>.

We also have a Facebook page just for those of us in the Butler/Armstrong Area. Check it out just by typing "Butler/Armstrong OCC Shoeboxes" in your search bar. It's a great place to share all kinds of local information (ideas, info, shopping bargains, etc). We'd love to have you in the group.

Once again thank you for your participation in the world's largest child evangelism program. Let us know how we can better serve you in your service to God's children. God's blessings on your efforts in 2022 and for this fall's collection. National Collection Week for 2023 will be **November 13-20**.

John & Jane Woitas
Butler/Armstrong Counties
Volunteer Area Coordinators
Operation Christmas Child
724-352-9005



March

Sun.	Mon.	Tue.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
<i>The Season of Lent</i> 			1 10:00 Bible Study 7:00 Midweek Service	2 7:00 	3	4 5:30-7:00 
5 2nd Sunday in Lent 9:00 Sunday School 10:15 Holy Communion	6	7	8 10:00 Bible Study 7:00 Midweek Service	9 7:00 	10	11
12 3rd Sunday in Lent 9:00 Sunday School 10:15 Holy Communion	13 6:30 Council	14	15 10:00 Bible Study 7:00 Midweek Service	16 7:00 	17	18
19 4th Sunday in Lent 9:00 Sunday School 10:15 Holy Communion VOTERS MEETING	20	21	22 10:00 Bible Study 7:00 Midweek Service	23 7:00 	24	25
26 5th Sunday in Lent 9:00 Sunday School 10:15 Holy Communion	27	28	29 10:00 Bible Study 7:00 Midweek Service	30 7:00 	31	