



LENT AND EASTER SERVICES

Lenten Series: Restored in Christ

Lenten Service 5 – April 2nd 4:00 & 6:00 PM
“Broken Promises Restored” • Matthew 26:69-75

Peter’s broken promises to never deny Jesus are restored by the surpassing love of Christ.

Light Dinner served from 4:45 – 5:45 PM

Lenten Service 6 – April 9th 4:00 & 6:00 PM
“Broken Justice Restored” • 2 Corinthians 5:20-21

A broken justice system put Jesus on the cross; we are restored when by his death we are declared not guilty.

Light Dinner served from 4:45 – 5:45 PM

Maunder Thursday – April 17th 4:00 & 6:00 PM
“Thoughts at the Communion Rail”

Good Friday – April 18th 4:00 & 6:00 PM
“Broken Curtain”

The Good Friday service will conclude with the service of the nails. Each worshipper that day will receive a nail. At the end of the service, if a person wants to, they can come forward to pound their nail into the cross.

Easter Worship – April 20th

Sunrise Song Service 7:00 AM

The Easter Sunrise service will be a song service with Communion

Easter Breakfast 8:00 AM

Easter Festival Worship 9:30 AM

“Broken Seal” There will be no communion in the 9:30 AM service.



FROM THE PASTOR

Forward With Confidence

A number of years ago, Joshua stood on the banks of the Jordan river, ready to lead the Israelites into the promised land. As he looked ahead, he saw all kinds of potential challenges. The Canaanites did not want the Israelites in their land. The Canaanites would fight to protect their land. Joshua would need to fight some tough battles in order to occupy a place to live. He would need to organize a large number of people and settle them into smaller communities. He would need to establish worship practices and government. Obviously, Joshua had some apprehensions and worries about the large task before him. But God came to him with this reassurance, “As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you.” The Lord would guide this new adventure, and everything would work out just fine.

As Joshua stood ready to cross the Jordan, so Open Bible stands ready to cross the Jordan and experience a new phase in its life as a congregation. The Lord has blessed us with numerical growth. It appears that this growth will continue. As a result, we need to assess our situation and plan for the future. An Open Forum will soon take place to do some brainstorming. A planning committee will be formed to study expansion ideas. They will assess the need for more space for worship, for Bible classes, for fellowship, for welcoming, for offices, and for storage. The planning committee will assess how we can move to two services and retain the fellowship and closeness that we already have. They will need to determine how we can finance this project with the gifts that God’s people are

presently giving. Finally, they will need to present their ideas to us, so that we can gain consensus on the best way to proceed.

What we always need to remember is that God wanted a church serving the Villages and its immediate community. Most of us know how God's hand could be clearly seen in how this church came into existence. And you can be sure that the same God who was with Joshua, guided him, and established his people in the promised land, will guide and lead us. Go forward then, Open Bible with confidence!

Latest New Developments

1. Our New Church sign is up on Woodridge Drive. Special thanks to the Hartshorn's and others who made this directional sign possible.
2. The Evangelism Committee has just ordered 500 Open Bible license plates. They will be available for golf cart and auto use to promote our church. The cost to purchase will be two for \$5.00 or \$3.00 apiece.
3. The children of King of Kings will be putting on a musical on Monday, May 12th at Steeplechase. The time of the performance will be 11:00 AM. The musical will last for 35 minutes. Please show your support to these children by your attendance at Steeplechase that day.
4. Friendship Sunday is being planned for Palm Sunday! A great day to invite someone to church, the Sunday before Easter. Start thinking now who you might invite to church on April 13th!

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Do you have, or have you ever had a family tradition of giving and/or receiving gifts for Easter? Maybe you got an Easter basket full of candy or a new article of clothing to look your best at Easter Sunday services. And quite often it is meaningful when we receive a gift, be it at Easter, or any time

of the year. Gifts can come in many shapes, sizes and forms.

The story is told of a young man who received a very special gift. He was a college football player who loved the game but simply lacked the talent to be an effective starter for his college team. He was however, a real inspiration to his teammates with his infectious attitude and work ethic. He made sure everyone on the team kept their spirits up even under difficult circumstances. The young man was especially proud whenever his father came to campus. He could be seen proudly walking arm in arm with his dad throughout the campus.

The week before the biggest game of the year his father unexpectedly passed away. God had called him home, and his passing left everyone in a state of shock. The grieving mother, out of desperation, telephoned the coach and pleaded for his help in informing the son of his father's death. You can imagine how difficult that must have been, but the coach complied and the son, immediately left the team to attend his father's funeral. He returned late in the week and approached his coach with the idea of possibly being able to honor his father's memory by being able to start the big game. The coach thought for a moment and realizing the circumstances and what an impact the young man had on the team, decided to comply with his wish. He told him he could start but would probably only be in for a few plays. The game began and the young man performed so well that he played the entire game. He played truly inspired football and led his team to victory. After the victorious celebration the coach approached the young man to congratulate him on his surprising success. He asked the young man how he was coping with things and questioned him on why he thought he had played so well. The youngster thought for a moment, swallowed hard and explained to the coach that his father was totally blind and today in heaven was the first time he had ever seen him play.

On that particular day the young man and his father had both received a special gift from God. The boy was rewarded for his wonderful attitude and the father was given the gift of sight. But these gifts, as wonderful as they were, pale in comparison to the gift we all received from Christ

at that very first Easter. By His suffering and death he did what no other person on earth could even begin to do. He satisfied God's wrath against sinful mankind. It was the ultimate gift of God's unfathomable love. Christ's subsequent resurrection is the greatest tribute to God's grace and power. God sent His eternal Son to die for all sinners. Christ's resurrection proves that He paid for all our sins. He snatched us out of the jaws of hell. He successfully overcame sin, death and hell for us.

Easter also gives us the promise that God will never desert us. Remember how Jesus put it: "...and lo I am with you always, even to the end of the age". (Matthew 28:20) Don't miss the great promise of Easter.

When God is ready, the glory we now see by faith, we will see in person as we join Him in celebrating the victory He won for us on Calvary.

Whatever you do in this life, don't miss out on the gift of eternal life that God has secured for you.

Happy Easter and all God's blessings,
Greg Wendorf

SMALL GROUP MINISTRY

April 2014

New Life in Christ Class- Taught by Pastor Schulz

A great refresher class on the basic teachings found in God's Word. This seven week study will look at the natural knowledge of God, the work of Jesus Christ, the work of the Holy Spirit including spiritual gifts, Baptism, the Lord's Supper, the end of the world with discussions on Judgment Day, Heaven and Hell, church fellowship, the history of the Lutheran Church, and the differences in Lutheran Church bodies today. If a person would like to join Open Bible as a full-time member and is not already WELS, this class would be a pre-requisite to membership.

The class will begin again on Wednesday, April 9th from 12:00 – 1:30 PM at church.

Wednesday in the Word-Taught by Pastor Schulz

Nothing Happens By Chance- A study of the book of Esther and Ruth

Starts on Wednesday, April 30th from 5:00-6:00 PM

Are you wondering how certain things that have happened in your life fit into a much larger plan that God has for you? Do you want to see how God always will be there for you no matter how dark it gets?

Join us for this 6 week study on the lives of Esther and Ruth

Book Club- Facilitator is Pastor Dale

April 29th from 4:00-5:30 PM at Open Bible.

Discussion will again be on the book "Total Truth" by Nancy Pearcey.

SPLASH (Single People Loving and Serving Him)- Facilitator is Pastor Dale

Wednesday April 9th SPLASH will be serving the Lenten Supper together with the Defenders. Joan Sanderson and Ruth Vance are on the Planning Committee (along with Bill Sigurdson from The Defenders Group).

Monday April 14th, 1:00 PM at Church, we will have a regular Bible study and meeting. Since April 14th is the eve of Passover we will study the Passover and its meaning in our lives today.

Tuesday, April 22nd - Planning a trip to Homosassa. More information to come. For our service project, we are looking into ways we can help Steeple Chase and The Carriage House.

Godly Men of Leisure- Facilitator is Dennis Duessler

The group is discussing a Bible study booklet on some of the issues retired men and men in general face. They meet monthly at Perkins Restaurant off of 466. Their next meeting is on April 25th at 8:30 AM.

The Defenders- Led by Ken Wells and Bill Sigurdson

This group meets once a month to shoot 50-100 rounds at the Gun Club off 44 near Leesburg. Ken and Bill supply everyone with targets or you can buy one for \$1.25. The cost to use the range is \$10.00.

Following the activity, the group has lunch at Beef O' Brady's and devotes time to pray for our country and military. On some months, to save on ammunition costs, the group will look at battles in

the book of Judges. Next meeting April 25th at the Gun Club at 11:00 AM.

The 466A Group- Taught by James Fehlhaber

This group meets twice a month for two hours at homes of members at Open Bible who live in the southern portion of the Villages in the 466A area. The group meets on Thursdays from 2:00-4:00 PM. They start off with a few mixers, have a 50 minute study with discussion, devote time to prayer, and then have some light food and drinks provided by the host family.

Come Follow Me, a study on the last days of Jesus, is our topic for April 2014.

April 10th- Home of Dave and Nancy Gonia
Topic: Longing For Belonging

April 24th- Home of Jim and Eva Orcutt
Topic: Leading Others to Jesus

The North County Group- Led by Alan Johnson

These are a group of Open Bible members from the Ocala area who meet twice a month on Sunday nights from 6:00-8:00 PM. The topic is on Heaven and Hell. April 13th at Alan & Pam Johnson's house, April 27th at Langer's house. For more information please call Alan Johnson at 352-390-6982.

Grief Share: Meets on Mondays in April from 4:00-5:30 PM.

Grief Share is a special seminar and support group for people grieving the loss of someone close. Each Grief share session includes a video and group discussion. A Grief share workbook assists you with note-taking, journaling and grief study. During the small group discussion time, you'll have the opportunity to interact with others who have experienced a recent loss, learn about their experiences and share your own.

Women of Open Bible- Led by Sandy Hahm

Meets on April 9th at 1:00 PM in the Fellowship Hall. Women join together for devotion, service planning, activities and fellowship. Hostesses for April are Connie Dale and Chris Moellring.

Quilters- Facilitator is Ruth Niermeyer

No meeting in April. Next meeting May 2nd at 9:00 AM.

WHO'S WHO AT OPEN BIBLE

Angela Spengler



Angela Spengler said "I was fished out of the pool instead of the ocean". The explanation is that she was in a Village swimming pool when she happened to have a conversation with Ina and

Jerry Taylor, who invited her to visit Open Bible. Even though Angela was raised Catholic, the outcome of the invitation led to Angela becoming a member at Open Bible after the appropriate classes with Pastor Schulz.

This was just one of the significant transitions for Angela as she moved to the Village of Woodbury in the Villages in September of 2011, transitioning from Concord, North Carolina. North Carolina was the first retirement area for Angela and her husband, Dwight, who worked 30 years for General Motors in Detroit. Unfortunately, his retirement from 1995 to 2007 was short lived when Angela lost Dwight. Angela worked as a secretary-receptionist in North Carolina for 10 years after raising their children, which includes a son in Arizona, a daughter in North Carolina and a daughter in Atlanta, Georgia. Angela now has seven grandchildren.

Angela had many good friends in North Carolina and it was difficult to leave them to come to Florida. Her brother and his wife, who live in Glenbrook of The Villages, physically went to North Carolina and brought Angela here, as they were so sure she would want to stay in Florida. The transition was a bit difficult, but Angela loves people and through water aerobics, Village game activities, neighborhood gatherings and Open Bible, she now has many friends she has bonded with since September 2012.

What makes Angela happiest? She says it is her activities, which include friendships and her Open Bible activities. She truly enjoys people. Angela said, "Life is too short to have disagreement situations. Family, friends and church are so very

important.” When asked what she would do different, or tell young people about life, she only slightly regrets that in her young years, schooling for women was not stressed like it is today. As she was a very good student, she wishes that she had believed in herself enough to get a college degree. Later in life, however, Angela did take college business classes.

One last thought, Angela wishes that high schools offered a class so that boys and girls could better understand how the thinking process of men and women are so different. (I am sure all of our wives wish us men had taken a class like that!)

Angela is a wonderful new addition to Open Bible and her love of people helps make our church the special place it is.

By Michael Benrud

OPEN FORUM

ATTENTION!

The Long Range Planning Committee is having an Open Forum for the congregation on Monday, April 21st, 2014 at 6:30 PM. The purpose of this forum is to present some of the early findings of the committee and then open the floor for additional ideas or suggestions for both the short and the long term. Please think about what you see around our present facility and grounds and your experiences. Any problems you have observed or potential problems you feel we may have in the future, (keeping in mind that we have been experiencing, conservatively, a 22% growth per year and our current membership of full time residents is 124 souls, plus approximately 67 associate members).

If you should have some thoughts or ideas before this meeting, please put them in writing and hand them in at the meeting to help facilitate the process and allow better record keeping of the meeting. Also, any associate members who may be moving back home before this meeting, please write your comments and place them in my mail box at church, (Dan Blaho) before you leave. Any and all suggestions are greatly appreciated.

This will essentially be a brainstorming session, so there is no right or wrong. Please write whatever comes to mind, even if it seems to be off the wall or way out in left field. The findings of this committee will be presented to the council at the May meeting and then to the May congregational meeting on May 25th, 2014.

CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

March Council Highlights

The church council met on March 20th. Here are the highlights from the meeting:

- February income was \$1,034 more than expenses. Adjustments were made to the January financial statements which now show that there was a positive balance for January instead of the negative balance originally reported.
- 7 new full time members were accepted.
- Open Bible license plates will be ordered and offered for sale to church members. These can be used for golf carts or on the front of cars.
- The King of Kings kids will present their musical at Steeplechase on Monday May 12th.
- We have obtained some used choir robes for the cost of shipping from a church in Wisconsin. There are 38 navy blue ones and 32 black ones.
- Game nights are scheduled for the 1st and 3rd Saturdays of March and April. They are being run by Jerry and Carol Yahn.
- A list of duties and a schedule for the Building and Grounds committee has been set up.
- The Maundy Thursday church service will include the stripping of the altar.
- The Good Friday service will again include a time during the service when member's pound nails into a cross.
- A pamphlet titled "Holy Week Devotions" will be handed out to members on the Sunday prior to Palm Sunday.

- Effective next year, we will eliminate the practice of putting flowers on the altar during Lent (Ash Wednesday thru Good Friday).

WORSHIP COMMITTEE

The Lutheran worship service was of course promoted by the great reformer, Martin Luther. He borrowed many of the liturgical elements from the Mass that was familiar to him. However, he stressed the fact that the form of worship was never more important than the Gospel. He committed himself to making sure that the form and style of the worship service was liturgical. He established his service based on four principles drawn directly from God's Word. These four principles are as follows:

1. The Predominance of the Gospel

The service needs to be arranged in such a way that the proclamation of the Gospel is the primary function of the service. The service needs to be focused on what God has done for us and not what we can do for God. Congregational participation is important but not to the expense of the Gospel proclamation.

2. The Participation of the Congregation

In the early church of Luther the clergy and the clergy choirs were the only participants in the service. Luther changed this so that the worshipers were part of the service not just passive observers. He added congregational hymns, congregational responses and congregational prayers. Thus the worshiper could sing and say a response to God's greatness. Faith could become active.

3. The Historic Voice of the Church

The service that Luther promoted had its roots in the Scriptures and in the early church. He kept many of the early church practices because he considered them to be a faithful witness to the voice of the Gospel. Thus the liturgical service was born and is in practice today in our Lutheran Churches. Forms have been modernized but the service is still liturgical.

4. God's Gift of Music and the Arts.

Luther was an advocate of making use of music and the arts in the worship service. He believed that both music and the arts were gifts from God and his passion for music prompted him to include such things in the worship service. From this point of view, Luther called music the "living voice of the Gospel." Both music and art are used by God to carry His message to the human heart.

The Worship Committee operates under these same principles as we plan the weekly services and all the special services. We believe in the value of good music in the hymns we choose, the choir selections that are sung, the preludes and postludes played by the organist, and the special instrumental music that is part of our services. We believe that God is praised through all of our music. This is also the reason we have banners and paraments. They both can and should proclaim a theological message as do any cross, statue, candles, and flowers that adorn our chancel.

As you can see, the Worship Committee has a number of principles to follow when planning our services. With the makeup of our committee we feel we have a good representation of our congregation so that our services will always be done to the glory of God.

We hope that our members liked the new arrangement of the Venite that the choir sang last Sunday. We hope to use that arrangement whenever Morning Praise is used on the fifth Sunday of the month.

We are in the planning stages to have special choir or group or ensembles or instruments all year round. Judy Hainen is working with a quartet as well as ladies ensemble for the coming months when the choir will be reduced in numbers.

Holy Week services as well as our Easter services have been scheduled. They are as follows:

April 13 Palm Sunday 9:30 AM

Procession of Palms by the choir

April 17 Maundy Thursday 4:00 and 6:00 PM

April 18 Good Friday 4:00 and 6:00 PM

April 20 Easter Sunrise at 7:00 AM and Easter service at 9:30 AM (two different services)

Let's remember to greet one another on Easter Sunday with this greeting:

HE IS RISEN, HE IS RISEN INDEED

ASSIMILATION COMMITTEE

Involvement in Open Bible: What is your motive?

People who become active in any religious body do so for a variety of reasons. Some become involved because of peer pressure, some by coercion – even under threat of violence or death as Islam has demonstrated throughout its history. Some get involved out of a sense of guilt and some just for something to do or to feel better about themselves.

What are the reasons for Christians to get involved in the work of their church? Is it any of the reasons listed above? Sometimes. And yes, Christians are vulnerable to being “guilted” into doing something “Christian.”

What are reasons new members get involved in Open Bible? Speaking to new members of Open Bible as I am, I discovered that finding a like-minded group was a conscious decision. So now that we are among a group of folks who share common values we probably also share similar reasons for getting more involved – not just “attend” - but become *truly* involved.

Hopefully our reasons are Biblical. The main reason we involve ourselves in the ministry of our church is to express our appreciation to Christ who first loved us. Not out of guilt, not just for something to do, but by the power of the Gospel, working within us, which draws us to serve the Church and all it represents. The Gospel motivates us to serve. In addition, the Bible itself gives us many practical reasons as well as to why we want to serve.

Here are a few, but there are dozens of others:

1 Peter 4:10-11

As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength

that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

Galatians 6:10

So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.

1 Corinthians 12:4-11

Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. For to one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit,

Romans 12:1-21

I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect. For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.

The work of Open Bible's new Assimilation Committee – and actually the role of every member of Open Bible - is to assist those already inspired by the love of Christ through the Holy Spirit to find activities and ministries in their new church home. Joy will come when those activities and ministries are matched to both the Spiritual needs and Spiritual gifts that God has identified and provided to each one of us. Our involvement truly is our spiritual gifts in action.

Next month: A Spiritual gifts refresher. Hint: Everyone has several.

Until then, Happy Assimilating, Jerri Mucci

OPEN BIBLE QUILTERS

Twelve of our hand-made quilts are on their way to Africa! Dee Mathiak, one of our fellow WELS members who has served in the Zambia mission field for a few years, called to say that there will be 12 young people graduating in May. The missionaries traditionally present them with the gift of a quilt. Luckily, we had precisely 12 on hand! So Dee's husband Dave picked them up from my home on a Friday evening. My brother Dale happened to be visiting from Tennessee, and were they ever surprised to see each other! Dee and Dave had been members of Carol's and Dale's church a few years back. God blesses us in so many ways, not the least of which is surprising us with running into old friends.

Dee asked me to thank our ladies for all their hard work. She will try to get some pictures back of the families receiving our quilts at their graduation celebration. Pray that God will bless each one of the new graduates in Zambia with success in their chosen fields.

By Leslie Nelson

THANK YOU

We thank the Open Bible members for the Christian love and caring you showered on us this past year. It has been a year of many bumps but you kept us focused on looking to the cross at all times for physical and spiritual healing. We thank Pastor Schulz for his many visits for devotion and communion and for leading the congregation in prayers for Elisabeth.

The many well wishes in cards, hugs and encouragement along with your fervent prayers have been comforting. We thank you for remembering us with delicious food, beautiful flowers, gifts of needed items while in The Club Rehabilitation Center, and the happy visits while I was there and in the hospital.



We thank the people who so willingly and cheerfully took time out of their schedules to take Elisabeth to chemo sessions and take her home. Thank you for the many phone calls of concern and comfort so that we were never forgotten.

A special thanks to a certain Bill and Sharon who always got the first phone call right after 911. They responded to the call immediately, kept Pastor Schulz informed and the Minnesota family advised of all procedures and updates.

The best of all thanks goes to our gracious God who sent his Son to save us from our sins and bring us Salvation. God be praised for hearing and answering all the prayers in our behalf. It is only by his grace and healing hands that we walked through this valley of discomfort and tears. We thank him for sending skilled medical people to use their skills. May he continue to favor us with his goodness and mercy all the days of our lives. We thank God for sending us so many wonderful Christian friends at Open Bible Lutheran Church.

In His mercy,
Elisabeth and Kenneth Wells

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

Bob & Sharon Sanner – 7
Ted & Sandy Hahm – 15
Jim & Marion Petrie – 16
Ron & Joanne Stuedemann – 27

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Gene McConkey – 4
Norma Phillips – 5
Jim Petrie – 6
Jerry Brooks – 10
Walt Farnsworth – 10
Barb Matthias – 11
Jerry Mucci – 12
Richard Langer, Sr. – 16
Shane Thise – 20
Marion Petrie – 22
Bill Stocks – 22
Mike Butzow – 23
Huns Gustrowsky – 27
Pastor Dale – 29