



NEWSLETTER



March 2016 Volume 11, No. 3

From the Pastor

Building Projects are Worthy of Your Support

I Chronicles 29:14-16

“But who am I, and who are my people, that we should be able to give as generously as this? Everything comes from you, and we have given you only what comes from your hand. We are foreigners and strangers in your sight, as were all our ancestors. Our days on earth are like a shadow, without hope. Lord our God, all this abundance that we have provided for building you a temple for your Holy Name comes from your hand, and all of it belongs to you”.

A number of years ago, a man named David was involved in a building project. The building project was to build a temple. David had managed to raise the necessary funds for the project. He had laid the groundwork for the order of service. However, the project would not be completed during his lifetime. His son Solomon would see the project completed. Nevertheless, David was excited at how this temple would be a wonderful blessing for God’s people.

As David looked back at his life, he saw how richly the Lord had blessed him. He was the eighth son of a shepherd. He began with nothing, not even land to call his own. But over the years he had acquired considerable savings. As a result, he was

able to give large quantities of silver and gold toward the building of the temple. God blessed him and he knew it. In fact, he recognized that everything had come from God and belongs to God. David was just a temporary steward of God’s abundance. In verse 16 David says: “It comes from your hand, and all of it belongs to you.”

While we may believe these words theoretically, we are tempted to believe that we have earned our own way by the sweat of our brow. We can tend to hold on to our possessions tightly as our own. It is good to be reminded with the words of the hymn:

We give Thee but Thine own,
Whatever the gift may be;
All that we have is Thine alone, A trust, O Lord,
from Thee.

Like King David, the Lord has blessed us richly as we look back at our lives. Like King David, we have a wonderful opportunity to be involved in a building project. Like David, we should be excited about this project, and lend our financial support to it. Like David, we should say, “It comes from your hand, and all of it belongs to you.”

Open Bible Lutheran Church is reaching so many souls in our community with the good news message of a Savior from sin. As a result, these people will one day be in heaven with us. We are establishing forever friendships. As you look at numerical numbers, the Lord has blessed us with a growth rate of more than 50% in the past 3 years.

A building project will expand our building

so that it can be an even greater blessing to souls who still don't know the Savior, and to nurture those who are saved. 3 new classrooms will provide additional teaching space for both old and young alike. A library will provide opportunity for spiritual growth. An expanded fellowship hall, will allow space for a greater number of souls to gather, to encourage, and enjoy Christian fellowship. A storage space section will allow us a place for Christmas and Easter displays, banners, grill, power sprayer, lawnmower, edger, tables, handbells, chairs, records, janitor supplies, maintenance bench with tools, and even a used golf cart that could be used to offer people a ride to the front door either from our parking lot, or one of the assisted living homes nearby.

A building program will spur enthusiasm both in our congregation and in the community. The message being given is: "This church is growing, people are excited about its ministry, and why not come and join us as we grow." We would pray that more guests would be coming to worship on a Sunday, to check us out, as a direct result of this building program. In the next two months, a Capital Funds Drive Committee will be formed and begin to implement a funding drive to turn this project into a reality.

"With God, all things are possible." We see His hand richly blessing our congregation as we continue to reach many new souls, and share with them the Gospel message of Jesus Christ. Let's get behind this effort, and give it our support. James Kraft, Founder of Kraft Foods once said, "The only investment I ever made which has paid consistently increasing dividends is the money I have given to the Lord."

Lenten Services

Places of the Passion

The scenes of Lent are familiar: the Upper Room, the Garden of Gethsemane, the halls of Pontius Pilate, and the hill of Golgotha. These are

the places we remember when we meditate on our Lord's Passion. Yet when Jesus enters a place, He never leaves it as He found it.

These are not the only places that our Lord enters. When Jesus visits the most troubling places of our lives, they become the most amazing place of God's grace. Places of the Passion will enable us to gaze in wonder on the spiritual work that our Lord does in those places. We will enter the Places of the Passion only to discover our Lord there...waiting for us and willing to share with us a love that was set in place before the foundation of the world.

March 2nd, 2016 "The Betrayal: A Place of Eternal Love"

Soup-Salad Supper: 4:30-5:15 P.M.

By: 466A Group & 466AAA

Worship: 5:30 P.M.

March 9th, 2016 "The Courtyard: A Place of Renewal"

Soup-Salad Supper: 4:30-5:15 P.M.

By: The Women of Open Bible

Worship: 5:30 P.M.

March 16th, 2016 "The Trial: A Place of God's Will"

Soup-Salad Supper: 4:30-5:15 P.M.

By: SPLASH & Women's Bible Study

March 24th, 2016 Maundy Thursday, "The Last Supper: A Place of Forgiveness"

March 25th, 2016 Good Friday "Golgotha: A Place of Simple Love"



Who's Who at Open Bible



Claudette and Doug Tharp have had such an interesting and varied life that I simply don't know how to begin this article.

The Tharps will celebrate 59 years

of marriage in December. They have four children, all adopted as infants. In fact, they were newborns taken straight from the hospital into the Tharp household. Doug and Claudette actually adopted five children but unfortunately one daughter as an infant did not survive. Two of their children live in Pennsylvania; one in Florida and one in Michigan. They are grandparents to eight. During the course of their marriage they've lived in 26 different places. Doug served as a helicopter pilot with the United States Navy and consequently they moved often. At one point Doug was stationed in Kwajalein, one of the islands in the Marshall Island chain. While there, Claudette opened a school for children of the military personnel as well as children of the people who were under contract to the U.S. government. Claudette would pedal her bicycle down the street with all the books and curriculum delicately balanced on both sides of the bike. (Must have been a sight to see). The first graduating class consisted of four students. After leaving the navy, Doug, Claudette and four children moved to Pennsylvania. All four children graduated from high school in Pennsylvania. Doug worked for the railroad but eventually both Claudette and Doug went to work at Penn State University, from which they both retired and moved to The Villages.

They have lived in the Villages for sixteen years, residing in the Village of Polo Ridge along with their two cats. Retirement did not slow Doug down. He became active in politics and served as

President of the Villages Homeowners' Association. Presently he is an ambassador and starter at Palmer golf course. He laughingly tells people that he is not a golfer, but he goes golfing. Meanwhile, Claudette enjoys sewing, socializing and is an avid reader. Both Claudette and Doug feel they are very Blessed. Open Bible also feels Blessed by having them as members.

By Jan Britton

Capital Campaign

Dear members of Open Bible,

As you are all aware, we, as a congregation, will begin an exciting building program in the near future. By the grace of God this was approved by the congregation on Sunday February 14. We are still in the planning process in a number of areas - thus, the reason for this note.

Dan Blaho and I will be heading up a capital funding campaign and we are looking for a few members who may have some prior experience and/or interest in working with us in this vitally important area. If you are such an individual please contact either Dan or myself in the very near future so we can begin laying the groundwork for this important task of helping to further the growth of God's kingdom.

Yours in Christ,
Greg Wendorf

Easter Services

Sunday, March 27th

7:00 am Sunrise Easter Service

8:00-9:00am - Breakfast

9:30: Easter Festival Service "The Empty Tomb: A Place of Remembering"

Small Group Ministry

Summerhill Seekers: The Topic: “From Promise to Glory” led by Pastor Dale. This Bible study is 8 sessions, and will meet twice a month. It will be an overview of the New Testament. The March meeting will be on Thursday, March 3rd from 2:00 – 4:00 at the home of Ron & Mary Helen Schultz.

God’s Promise is a multimedia Bible Study tool designed to help a person gain a good understanding of the Bible in a relatively short time. It uses a combination of illustrations, text and 3-D worlds, and interactions to help users learn about the people and events in the Bible and about God’s promise of a Savior. Travel from Matthew to Revelation with us!

466AAA Topic: Take Two – 19 Minute Bible Studies with the Messiah! This group will meet twice a month at the home of Ron and Diane Brutlag. They will meet Thursday, March 10th and Thursday, March 24th from 1:00 – 2:30pm. All are welcome to join this group regardless of where they live. Please call Ron & Diane if you plan to attend.

These studies cover stories from the life of Jesus. (The Barren Fig Tree, The Friend at Midnight, The Sower, The Two Debtors and many more.

Book Club: Topic: Evidence for the Resurrection Location: Open Bible Lutheran Church. Date: March 29th, 2016.

Time: 4:00 PM Facilitator: Pastor Schulz
In this fascinating look at the claims of the Gospel writers and 2,000 years of believing Christians, bestselling author Josh McDowell and his son Sean examine the compelling evidence and conclude that Jesus Christ conquered death and the grave. In clear,

concise, and accessible chapters, Josh and Sean present the facts about the resurrection and what it means for readers today.

Ladies Tuesday Bible Study- Tuesdays 1:00pm at Open Bible. Pam Johnson is the leader of this study. Join us as we study the best-selling book - *Having a Mary Heart in a Martha World*. This Bible study is by author Joanna Weaver. Come discover the intimate relationship with God we were designed to enjoy.” It will consist of 12 lessons.

Defenders: (Led by Ken Wells and Bill Sigurdson) Will be meeting Thursday, March 31st at 11:00am. This group meets at the Gun Range on SR44 in Leesburg. There is a shoot being planned in Ocala for the 2nd or 3rd week of March. The group shoots from 100-150 rounds. The cost is \$10.00 if you have your own ammunition and targets. Once the group completes their shooting, they have a time for prayer as they bring requests to God to protect our soldiers, and to continue to bless America. Then, they head off for lunch. Ladies are welcome to join this group!

SPLASH

ATTENTION SINGLE PEOPLE: Tuesday, March 8th Bible Study at church beginning at 10:00am. Sunday, March 20th Brunch at Water Oak after the second service.

Other future activities include, Thursday, April 7th “The Strummers at Savannah Center, 9:00am to 11:00am followed by brunch at Glenview Country Club. And Sunday, May 8th 2:00pm. Going to see “Brigadoon” pat the Mellon Patch Players in Leesburg.

Fellowship Group: (led by Joe & Paula Malec, Dan & Karen Pearson)
March 19th we will be going to the Carriage Museum in Weirsdale. We will be having lunch at their Bistro and take a tour of the museum.

information is provided on the sign-up sheet located in the kitchen pass-thru. If you have any questions, please contact Karen Pearson or Paula Malec.

Men of Leisure: (Led by Dennis Duessler.) Enjoy 19 Minutes Bible Study: Take a look at the parables and some special stories of the Bible.

The Men are planning a boat ride down the Withlacoochee River. The trip will be Friday, March 18th from 10:00 – 12:00. Cost is \$18.00 per person plus tax. Plan on having breakfast or lunch. See sign-up sheet in the kitchen Pass-thru or Dennis Duessler. There are a limited amount of seats available.

North County Group: (Led by Alan Johnson) The North Country's Bible Study meets twice a month. The topic :*Government a Godly Perspective*. This is a CD generated Bible Study from Kramer Publications. Studies for March will be on Sunday March 13th from 6:00-8:00pm at the home of Alan & Pam Johnson.

Fore-Giving Friday Golfers:

MORE GOLFERS WELCOME

Every Friday afternoon, a group of "Fore-Giving Golfers" from Open Bible plays on one of The Villages Executive courses. The location varies, but the friendliness does not. If you are a beginner, a hacker or an old duffer, we invite you couples or singles to join us. Leslie, (352) 753-2484, leslien42@comcast.net, puts in the request every Monday evening during the winter months. She will need your ID# and email address.

Happy Hearts-Happy Hands Handiwork Meeting Friday, March 4th from 9-12:00pm. This group creates quilts for those in need in our community. Also if you have knitting, crochet or embroidery you are working on, join the group for fellowship as you work on your project!

Women of Open Bible

The Ladies have their monthly meeting on Wednesday, March 9th beginning at 1:00pm. We are having our meeting and plan on staying for serving at the Light Supper.

466A Group Topic: A Look at Luke (Luke 2, 10, 15). Tuesday, March 15th from 2:00 – 4:00pm at the home of Klaus & Helga Maass.
Leader: Pastor Mark Schulz

Women of Riches: Bible study at Pam Riches' home continues Monday's through March 21st at 1:00pm. There are 10 faith lessons, it is the series called "That The World May Know" by Ray VanderLaan, volume 4, entitled The Death And Resurrection of The Messiah. Should be a good study especially before Easter!

Welcome Back Associate Members

Here at Open Bible Lutheran Church, people come from all over the country. Florida is home to transplants and the guest visitors, who want to winter in the warm sunshine.

It does not take very long from the time one comes through the doors of Open Bible to know they are welcome and what a special person they are. The members are happy to see them and embrace them with open arms. Wanting each person to feel at home, questions are asked, like, "do you live in the area?" If visiting, "where are you from?" Even if you say California, North Dakota, or Rhode Island, they will be matched up with a member from their home state. Name tags are worn by all our members. Each interested guest will be given one and be called by their name.

On Sunday, March 6th, we will "Welcome Back" all of our Associate Members with a special fellowship and extra breakfast items. So join us during Fellowship.



Flowers

The new 2016 Flower Calendar is located on the window by the conference room. Two arrangements are required per Sunday. Please consider signing up to provide flowers for a special occasion such as a birthday, anniversary, memorial, etc. for a particular Sunday. The cost is \$40.00 per arrangement plus \$7.00 delivery charge for a total of \$87.00. Open Bible Lutheran Church has included money to help cover the cost of having fresh arrangements every Sunday. **Therefore, individuals need only contribute \$70.00 for both arrangements.** You may share a Sunday with another family, and then your cost is \$35.00. Please place your check in the offering plate indicating the amount is for the Flower Fund. Please direct any questions to Carol Stauske at 352-292-3079.

Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary Chorus



The Seminary Chorus at Our Congregation
The news is out: The Seminary Chorus from Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary is going to present a concert at our church on **Thursday, March 31st at 1:00 pm.**

What can we tell you about the Seminary Chorus? Well, the choir has been making music since 1931 and has presented concerts in almost every state of the Union. Its objective has always been to proclaim God’s good news in music, and it does this in a variety of musical styles, old and new. We’ll hear voices; wait till you hear 50 future pastors singing their hearts out! We’ll also hear instruments: everything from organ and brass to piano, guitars, and drum set. We’ll have a chance to stand and sing along on several numbers. The choir’s reputation is that its concerts are never dull!

The concert will last about an hour and fifteen minutes, and we’ll have a chance to visit with the young men afterwards. There’s no admission cost, although the choir will be thankful for a generous offering to offset expenses. Be sure to bring your whole family; children love to see the choir as well as hear it, so sit close to the front. Invite your friends and neighbors, too. We’re sure they will enjoy the experience, and you can introduce them to our church at the same time.

The choir members are coming to our church not only to sing for us, but also to tell us about the school they attend, Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary. The seminary was founded just before the Battle of Gettysburg, way back in 1863, and ever since has been training men to be pastors in WELS congregations. The seminary is located in Mequon, a suburb of Milwaukee, Wis., but its graduates are serving congregations and missions all around the country and all over the world. Pastor **Mark Schulz** is a graduate of the seminary, class of 1983. You can learn more about the seminary at its website, www.wls.wels.net.

As we would expect, the Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary takes its work of training pastors seriously. Every year it strives to train men to be:

Confessional – who learn to put integrity above popularity and preach and teach “what is in accord with sound doctrine.”

Evangelical – who have a gospel-centered approach to ministry and a love for souls entrusted to their care.

Mission-minded – who have a Christ-like heart for those who are still lost.

Culturally sensitive – who do not put barriers between themselves and the cultures they are called to serve.

Appropriately flexible – who remain committed to the Scriptures but understand that where God has not commanded or forbidden, some things may or must change for the sake of the gospel.

Zealous to nurture and equip the saints – who are eager to serve alongside brothers and sisters in Christ who and strive to be partners in the gospel. So that tells you something about Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary and the Seminary Chorus. Come to the concert and learn a much more!

She will be explaining about the proper etiquette of serving tea in England. We will also have a Silent Purse Auction with donations used for a special mission project.

Invitations will be available if you wish to invite friends and neighbors. There will be a sign-up sheet available in the fellowship hall. Space is limited to 100. Hats and white gloves are not necessary to attend.

We promise this will be a delightful event!

A note about Tricia Bennett:

Tricia is a widely known author and public speaker and also the proud owner of Polly’s Pantry Tearoom in Wildwood. She has an interesting background and will be offering several of her books for sale the day of the “Southern Luncheon Tea.”



Tea Time Not Tee Time



Calling all ladies. You are cordially invited to our “Southern Luncheon Tea” here at the church on Friday, April 8th at 12:00 noon.

This is a new event for us. We will be serving finger sandwiches, scones and scrumptious desserts.

We will also feature our wonderful British lady, Tricia Bennett. (See the note below about Tricia)

LWMS Spring Rally



The Spring Rally will be held Saturday, March 12 at Redeemer Lutheran Church in Merritt Island. Registration and coffee starts at 9:15am/Rally begins at 10:00am

Happy Anniversary



Jim & Eva Orcutt – 8
Bill & Jeri Leeper – 17
Craig & Jean Marshall – 23
Jim & Joanie Musiel – 26
Pastor Mark & Jeanne Schulz – 27
Vern & Kathy Griffin - 31

Happy Birthday

Christian Schmolke – 2
Susan Parker -3
James Malone – 5
Feg Henkel - 6
Bonnie Farnsworth – 7
Pam Johnson – 7
Pam Riches – 7
Ty Miter – 8
Arline Kiewra – 14
Betty DeWitz – 17
Richard Kuhlman – 22
Elisabeth Pittel - 25
Greg Wendorf – 26
Chris Moellring – 27
Jean Butts – 27

