



Newsletter



March 2018

Volume 13 No. 3

From the Pastor

by Pastor Schulz

I Peter 1:6,7 Thank God You're Tested

A test involves pressure. Whether an engine, a structural beam or a person is being tested, the method is the same. Pressure or stress of some kind is applied to the object of the test. Without stress, the test wouldn't really be a test. Giving a second-grade math test to high school seniors wouldn't be a true test.

The purpose of all testing is the same, too. A test is meant to discover any weakness so that it can be corrected, so that the product (whatever it is) can be improved. If the object passes the test, of course, it has been proven to be genuine, the real thing. It is fit for its purpose.

Now we see why the Apostle Peter speaks so highly of trials in the Christian's life. They are all important tests of our faith, and they have wonderful results, because God's own purpose is behind them.

Even while we rejoice in our eternal inheritance, Peter says, we may be suffering grief in all kinds of trials. Sometimes the cross-suffering because of our confession of Christ. Sometimes the loss-of people or things dear to us.

Sometimes physical pain and weakness, or disappointment or another kind of trouble.

Difficult, yes! Distressing, yes! But thank God when you're tested! For it is your gracious God himself who tests your faith. He himself is in the test. He applies pressure to reveal and to correct any weakness. And if he brings you through the fire of affliction, it is not to harm you, but only to refine, to purify, to temper and to strengthen your faith.

"One Christian who has been tried," wrote Luther, "is worth a hundred who have not been tried, for the blessing of God grows in trials...When faith is thus tried, all that is dross and false must pass off and drop away. Then will result a glorious reward, praise and commendation when Christ will be revealed."

It's great to be alive, even when you're being tested in the fire, for your loving God is purifying and proving your faith. He is refining and strengthening it for your eternal benefit. You can indeed thank God when you're tested and continue to "rejoice."

President's Message

Another Friendship Sunday has come and gone. A good number of members brought guests and that was wonderful to see. It was a tremendous opportunity for our guests to experience God's love in the message as well as seeing that same love on display in the warmth and friendship of members of Open Bible. But that number was quite small in comparison to the large number of people in our own community who have never been exposed to that love. It quite simply means that we all still have a lot of work to do. Many times, our efforts are met with broken promises or outright rejection which can be discouraging. I myself had invited a friend who failed to come and another who I wanted to invite but who quickly pointed out to me that he could see no reason to attend Church. I will continue to attempt with God's help, to convince him that just the opposite is true.

That takes me to a printed story I recently came across that spoke to a very similar issue. This time it was a Church goer who wrote a letter to the editor of a newspaper and complained that it made 'no sense' to go to Church every Sunday. He wrote: "I've gone for 30 years now, and in that time, I have heard something like 3,000 sermons, but for the life of me, I can't remember a single one of them. So, I think I'm wasting my time, the preachers are wasting theirs by giving sermons at all".

This started a real controversy in the "Letters to the Editor" column. Much to the 'delight' of the editor, it went on for weeks until someone wrote the clincher:

I've been married for 30 years now. In that time my wife has cooked some 30,000 meals. But for the life of me, I cannot recall the entire menu for a single one of those meals".

"But I do know this: They all nourished me and gave me the strength I needed to work and get through each day. If my wife had not given me these meals, I would be physically dead today".

"Likewise, if I had not gone to Church for nourishment, I would be spiritually dead today!"

I don't think that any of us want to even be thought of as spiritually dead. We thank God every day for both our physical and spiritual nourishment. Our thankfulness should serve as a reminder that our good fortune needs to be shared as often as possible.

Friendship Sunday is highlighted once a year on the Church calendar but the purpose of sharing the good news of what God has done for us is something to be shared as often as possible. Let's each make it our mission to share our faith and the reason for that faith.

Faith sees the invisible, believes the incredible and receives the impossible!

All God's blessings,

Greg Wendorf

Mornings with Mommy



"Mornings with Mommy" is a fun and easy way for a mom to enjoy activities with her children and meet other moms. There will be age appropriate activities for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers. And the best part is...we do all the planning, you just sign up! Snacks and activities are FREE! Moms can mingle with each other while enjoying activities with their children including: Arts and Crafts, Sensory Tables, Flannel Stories, Story Time, Music, Educational Toys, and a Yummy Snack. Register online today at: www.openbiblelutheran church.com (right side of home page) or Call 352-753-9038 Every first and third Tuesday of the month, March 6th & 20th 2018. March 6th activities focuses on "Fun with Food."



Thursday's
at Open Bible

This program features biblical, Christ-centered teaching that focuses on grief topics associated with the death of a loved one. The DVD seminar features nationally respected grief experts and real-life stories of people, followed by a small group discussion about what was viewed. Past participants have related how helpful the information and follow-up discussions were to them.

Many grieving people find they are only beginning the work of healing when friends or family have returned to their daily life routines. Too often people, including Christians, tend to stuff their grief instead of allowing it to do the God-given work for which it is intended. Don't allow fear of what others may think to keep you from what could help you. Confidentiality is very much a part of this program.

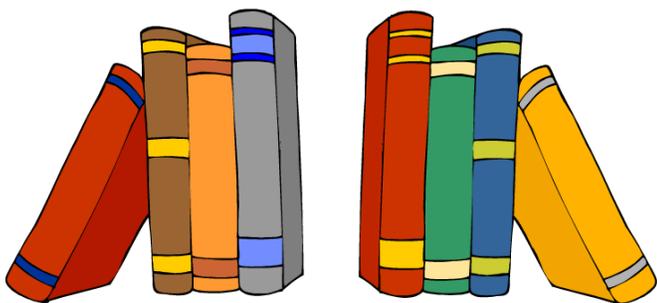
Your bereavement experience may be recent or not so recent. You will find encouragement, comfort and help in grieving the death of a spouse, child, parent, sibling, other family member or friend. No matter what the cause of your loved one's death, this is an opportunity to be around people who understand what you are feeling. You will learn how to recognize the symptoms of being stuck in grief and that you do not need to live in bondage to certain emotions. You will learn valuable information about facing your new normal in life and renewing your hope for the future. Grief-related books/materials are available for

participants to borrow.

GriefShare will be held (on Thursday afternoons from 1:00 P.M. to 2:30 P.M)
Cost: (\$12.00 for student book)
Any questions, call Pastor Schulz at 989-525-5514
To register, call the church office (352-753-9038.)

Open Bible Library

We have begun the first step in having a functioning lending library by developing a complete list of the books that will be available. But there is much to be done. The books all need to be prepared for circulation. This involves stamping the books and mounting the library pockets inside. We also need to prepare the checkout cards for each book. If you have some time to assist with this project please let Pastor, Karen Pearson-church secretary, or Peggi Carrier know. My phone number is 906-753-4930.



Ask the Pastor:

“Why was Jesus so upset about people selling in the temple area?”

After Jesus’ triumphant entry into Jerusalem on the previous day, He entered the temple area. The activity going on there angered Him. (Luke 19:45-46) Tradesman and moneychangers had created a flourishing business by displaying their wares in the

limited space of the outer court of the Gentiles. In order to purchase animals to sacrifice at the temple, the religious leaders required people to use special temple coins. They considered Roman coins idolatrous because the coins had the image of Roman gods. The moneychangers used exchange rates designed to produce a tidy profit. Animals for sacrifice were also sold at exorbitant costs to out-of-towners who had come to worship and had no alternative means for acquiring the animals. Jesus expelled all those merchants for turning the temple, His Father’s House, into a den of robbers.

New Life in Christ

Led by: Pastor Mark Schulz.
Group meets at church for seven weeks on Thursdays, from 2:30 - 4:00 PM. This is a class for people interested in becoming a member and a good refresher course for members. It is a wonderful review of the basic teachings of Scripture.



LWMS



Our Spring Rally is coming up soon, so mark your calendars for Saturday, March 17th, at Good Shepherd Church in Deltona, FL. A sign-up sheet is on the counter near the entrance to the fellowship hall.

Small Group Ministry

Please sign up or let Dennis know you are interested in going.

Happy Hearts, Happy Hands

Handiwork

Facilitator is Sandy Pawlowski
The first meeting of the fall will be held on Friday, March 16th 9:00 – noon. This group creates quilts for those in need in our community. Also, does knitting, crochet, and embroidery. So, if you have any craft project you are working on, please come and enjoy the fellowship.

Journey with Jesus Bible Study

Led by: Judy Hainen
Journey with Jesus Bible Study will be every Monday in March at 9:15 am. Please call Judy if you would like to come. We meet at various homes. Topic this semester is "End Times-- Practical Heavenly Mindedness" by R. Paul Stevens.

The Defenders

Led by: Bill Sigurdson & Jim Johnson
The Defenders will meet on the first Thursday of the month. Next meeting will be sometime in April because the men are going on a fishing trip in March!

Fellowship Group

Led by: Dan & Karen Pearson, Joe & Paula Malec
A fun fellowship activity is planned for Sunday, March 18th. We will be going to the Whispering Oaks Winery for a tour and dinner. Please see the sign-up sheet for details or ask Joe, Paula, Karen or Dan.

Men of Leisure—Men's Breakfast Bible

Study Group: Led by Dennis Duessler
This month the meeting will be Tuesday, March 13th at Tom & Jerry's Airboat Tours in Lake Panasoffkee. Afterwards lunch at Catfish Johnny's.

WinGS: Women in God's Service

Led by: Jane Valley
The WinGS Womens group meets the second Wednesday of each month. March's meeting (March 14th) will begin at 1:00pm. Come and find out what that's all about! After our regular meeting we will be preparing for our upcoming Spring Luncheon by making the giveaway gifts.

SPLASH: Single People Loving and Serving Him, Led by: Pastor Rodger Dale

SPLASH is meeting on Monday March 12th, at 1 pm for a Bible Study. The Topic: Angels and Demons. If you are new to the church or know someone interested in joining us for our Bible study, come join us. SPLASH is open to singles. This is not a match making function, but rather organized to share our faith and grow through caring for others. Other activities are planned for Sunday, March 18th. We are going for Brunch at Water Oak right after the 9:30am Worship Service. Please meet at the back of the church for car-pooling and directions.

Future event— "The Wedding Singer" at Leesburg Mellon Patch Theater, Sunday, May 6, 2:00pm

North Country Group

Facilitator: Alan Johnson
This Bible Study will be on Sundays, March 11th & 25th from 6:00 – 8:00pm. Meet at Alan & Pam Johnson's home in Ocala. The Topic: The Book of Acts.

Ladies Tuesday Bible Study

Led by Pam Johnson

The Ladies Bible Study will continue Tuesday's at 1:00 pm in the new fellowship hall. Topic is "Gospel in Psalms" lesson #3. Please contact Pam Johnson at 352-390-6982, if you will be attending.

Friday Fore-Giving Golfers

Facilitator is Sandy Fehlhaber

This group meets once a week on Friday afternoons to golf the Executive courses in The Villages. Teams are determined by the Sunday prior to the golf date. Each golfer is equipped with a small plastic bag with extra-long tees and a business card from Open Bible to hand out to unchurched golfers. Contact Sandy at jim.fehlhaber@gmail.com

Saturday Duffers Golfing outside

The Villages. Join a group of golfers at different Golf courses on Saturdays. If interested, please contact Joe Malec: MalecJoe@gmail.com

Sunrise Saturday Morning Golfers:

A new group is formed for those of you that would like to golf at The Villages executive golf courses in the morning. This group's coordinator is Leslie Nelson. She will try to schedule starting times about 8:30 – 10:00am. So, if you are interested, she will need your information by Tuesday to make the request. Contact her at: Leslien42@comcast.net

made their debut Sunday, February 25th at the 9:30am worship service. It was a glorious rendition of "It Is Well With My Soul." Members are: Jean Butts, Peggi Carrier, Amy Hand, Carol Mehlberg, Mark Mehlberg, Jeanne Schulz, Mary Shara, & Doug Tharp. We are very blessed to have the opportunity to start our own handbell choir! If you are interest, or have played handbells before, please speak to Pam Johnson. The handbell choir will rehearse on Wednesdays, at 4:00pm.

466A Small Group Bible Study

Pastor Rodger Dale will be the facilitator of the 466A Group. They will be meeting on the 2nd & 4th Tuesdays of each month. The next Bible Study will be March 13th from 2:00 – 4:00pm. The Hosts will be Mike & Pat Holmes. The next meeting will be March 27th at the home of Jutta Owens. The Topic of discussion will be HEAVEN: Seeing God Face to Face. All are welcome to join.

Men's Annual Fishing Trip

Sign-up for Thursday, April 5th. Leaving the Villages area at 4:30am and returning approximately 7:00 pm. Fishing out of Cape Canaveral for snapper, Mahi Mahi, Amberjack & Trigger Fish. There is a waiting list now. Cost is \$165 per person plus tip. Any questions, contact Jim Orcutt.

Handbells



Director: Pam Johnson
Excitement! Is happening here at Open Bible. The handbells

Care for the Care Givers

A group has been established for members who are caregivers for loved ones and friends. Whether it is Alzheimer-Dementia, or chronic illness, all are invited to join us on the first and

third Wednesdays of each month at 2 pm. The meeting includes a brief devotional for encouragement and then attendees share their concerns, challenges, and lessons learned. All benefit through interaction with each other. Together we can persist through difficult times. The greatest obstacle is isolation and believing "we can handle our own challenges," alone. This support is not limited to only church members, so if you know someone that needs help bring them to the meetings.

Easter Lily Plants

We will be purchasing Easter Lily plants for Easter Sunday, April 1st. If you would like to donate for the purchase of these plants the cost is \$7.00 per plant. You may pay in cash or write a check to Open Bible Evangelical Lutheran Church, place in the offering plate & indicate the amount is for the Flower Fund/Easter Lilies. The plants may be taken home after the last Easter Sunday service. If you have questions, contact Carol Stauske at 352-292-3079.



Did You Know?

Can Collection: Bring your "crushed" & "rinsed" cans to church on the 1st & 3rd Sunday of the month. Put your cans in the back of the red car parked out in front of church. Thank you from the Women of Open Bible.

Food Pantry Collection: Please bring non-perishable food items on the 1st Sunday of the month. A collection bin is located by the front doors. Gordon & Shirley Roback will take the items to the donation site for the Wildwood Food Pantry and Soup Kitchen.

The 2018 Flower Calendar has been placed on the bulletin board near the water fountain. The cost is \$35.00 per arrangement or \$70.00 for both. Please indicate on your envelope payment is for "flowers". Two families may sign up for a Sunday and share the cost. If you have questions, please call Carol Stauske at 352-292-3079.

Outreach to the Independent Living Facilities: Did you know that Pastor Rodger Dale has Devotions at "The Willows" at 9:00am on Mondays, March 5th and March 19th. Also, he conducts a Bible Study at 1:00 on the same day at Buffalo Crossing. The topic: Heaven: Seeing God Face to Face. Also, on the 2nd and 4th Sundays at 10:30am, Pastor Dale preaches to a group at Carriage House. What a blessing to be able to minister to those who cannot attend our regular Worship Services.



Coffee Hour Help: Open Bible is in need of men and women to help in the kitchen on Sundays for our Fellowship hour after the 9:30am Worship Service. Please sign-up today!

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

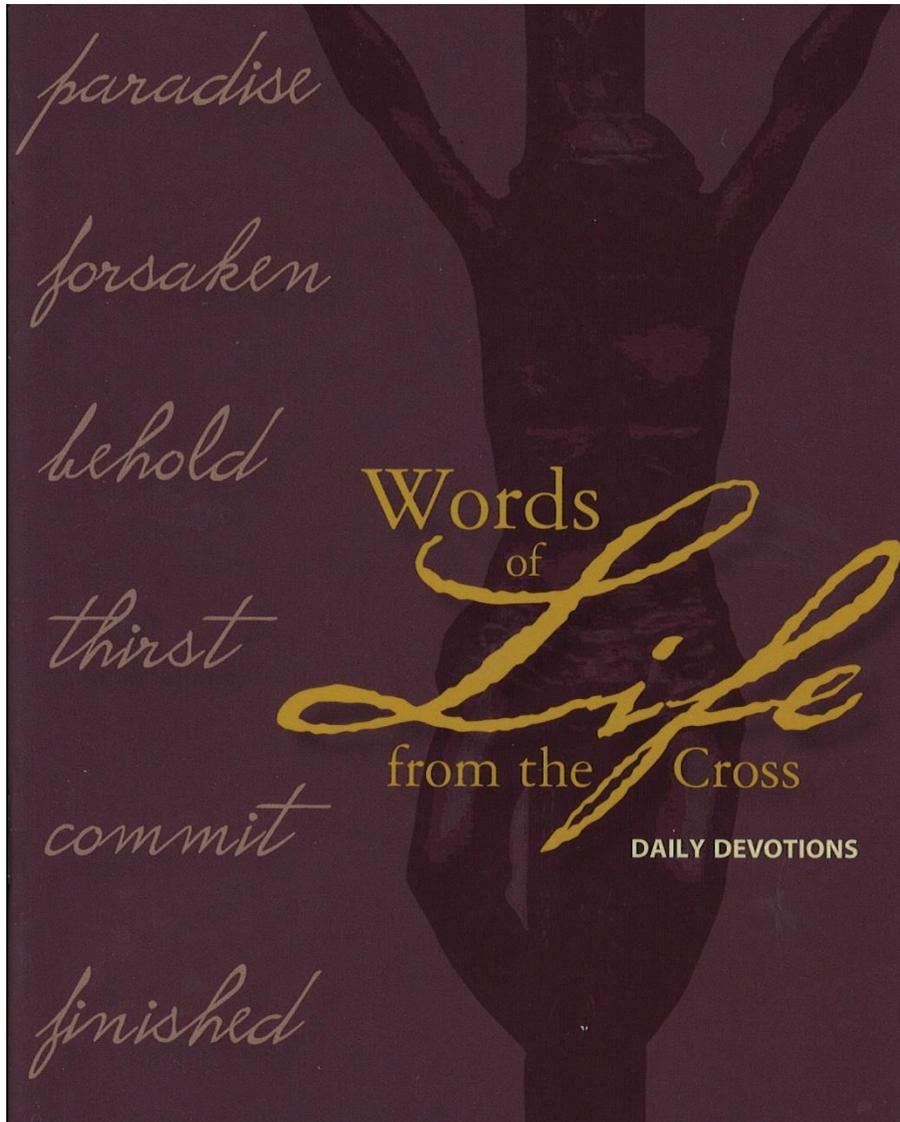


Happy Birthday

Christian Schmolke - 2
Stan Cobb - 2
Susan Parker - 3
James Malone - 5
Feg Henkel - 6
Bonnie Farnsworth - 7
Pam Johnson - 7
Pam Riches - 7
Ty Mitra - 8
Emily Drake - 10
Arline Kiewra - 14
Betty DeWitz - 17
Richard Kuhlman - 22
Elisabeth Pittel - 25
Greg Wendorf - 26
Chris Moelling - 27
Jean Butts - 27
Mary Shara - 28



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This year's theme is "Words of Life from the Cross."

Lent Midweek March 7th: The Compassionate Word: "Woman, behold, your son!" ... "Behold, your mother!" (John 19:26-27)

Lent Midweek March 14th: The Suffering Word: "I thirst" (John 19:28)

Lent Midweek March 21st: The Dying Word: "Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit." (Luke 23:46)

***Maundy Thursday March 29th: The Remembering Word:
(1 Corinthians 11:23-26)***

Good Friday March 30th: The Fulfilled Word: "It is Finished" (John 19:30)

Easter Sunday April 1st: The Vindicated Word: "He is risen!" (John 19:30)



Wisconsin Lutheran Choir • James A. Nowack, conductor

SUNDAY, MARCH 11 • 7:00 PM
 Open Bible Lutheran Church
 4671 Bellwether Lane
 Oxford, Florida
 352.753.9038



Concert is free and open to the public. Questions may be directed to the number listed above.
 To learn more about the Wisconsin Lutheran Choir, visit wlc.edu/choir.

WISCONSIN LUTHERAN COLLEGE
 Milwaukee, Wisconsin
wlc.edu

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