

The Concordia Courier

A Publication Of Concordia Lutheran Church

† JESUS' HARMONY FOR THE HEART OF SARASOTA † April 2024

This Holy Week

Concordia delights to meet Jesus in worship. Have you with us tasted His presence? **Come!** This week crowns the church year!

Palm Sunday.

Celebrate the Sunday of **Jesus' Passion**, **March 23** Saturday 4:30 p.m., or **March 24** Sunday morn, 9 a.m. (praise band) or 11 a.m. (organ, choir). "**Hosanna** to Jesus, son of King David! The Lord saves!" Jerusalem welcomed her King with a parade, waving palm branches. Jesus marched on, not to a golden throne, but to a splintered cross. Our worship will relive the grand story, told in John 12:12-19 and Mark 14-15. "What **wondrous love** You give, Jesus!"

Maundy Thursday, 7 p.m. March 28.

Jesus washes the disciples' feet, an example of His "**new mandate**" (so the name, "Maundy" Thursday). "A new command I give to you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another." (John 13:34)

Then, on this very night before He goes to the cross, He gives us His "**last will and testament**." "This (Passover bread) is My body. This (wine) is My blood, for your forgiveness"

(Matthew 26:26-28, 1 Corinthians 11:23-25).

His will? He will have the last laugh against death. He will come to us alive. In this worship hour, He will give to us His victory's prize, true **forgiveness!**

Jesus then left the Passover feast to pray in Gethsemane's garden, preparing to be stripped of His life. Our worship concludes praying Psalm 22, as the altar guild leaders **strip the altar bare**, preparing for Friday.

Good Friday, March 29 Noon and 7 p.m., the same service midday and in the evening.

This Friday, "good"? The Innocent goes to the cross, goes through hell, "good"? See death swallowed up in victory! Guilt, death, hell He will nail and bury. "It is **finished!**" (John 19:30)

Good Friday's worship recalls Jesus' seven statements from the cross. We call the hour "Tenebrae," that is "darkness." In the successive extinguishing of candles, see **our Champion** stride into the deepening darkness. This very darkness He will defeat once and for all!

The Resurrection of Our Lord

Easter is celebrated **Saturday** 4:30 p.m. **March 30** and **Sunday** morn **March 31**. Sunday's first worship is **SonRise at 6:30 a.m.**, the second led by our praise band at 9 a.m., and then 11 a.m. with hymns and organ. (The SonRise worship gathers before dawn in the church's courtyard, next to our Willer Fellowship Hall.) You'll be invited to friendly chit-chat, the excited joy, the new love, born this day.

This is **the feast of victory** for our God! Worthy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain. His blood set us free to be people of God! Every Sunday is a "little Easter," celebrating Him. The same Jesus who triumphed this day lives to serve us every day! Join us for worship and, when you are ready to receive Him, the Lord's Supper.

"You come, Jesus, not demanding that we serve You, but promising that **You will serve** us?! In Your own innocent blood, You have paid the ransom price. You set free all the guilty, free from every enemy! And still You come, our

Living friend, to serve us today! Gather us and love on us in these holy days. Make us to be more like You, so that we may love one another. Let us give Your love to those who have yet to grasp Your touch. Let it be, **sweet God!**"

P.S. Need directions? More info? Call us. Bring a friend. Bring someone you love. Bring anyone who, like us, needs the Lord's love! Serving all people in worship, Jesus lives. **Happy Easter!**

Please contact me (365-0844) when I or Concordia can serve you or serve with you. Pastor Stephen



Jesus Alive Serves All in Worship!

HOLY WEEK

- Maundy Thursday 7 p.m.
- Good Friday Noon and 7 p.m.
- Holy Saturday 4:30 p.m.

EASTER SUNDAY

- Easter SonRise 6:30 a.m.
- Worship w/ Praise Band 9 a.m.
- Egg Hunt & Breakfast 10 a.m.
- Worship w/ Organ, Choir 11 a.m.

Concordia Lutheran Church
2185 Wood St. Sarasota, FL 34237
(at School Avenue, north of Sarasota High School)
CONCORDIASARASOTA.ORG | 941-365-0844

Bell Ringers

You've always wanted to **learn to ring** the bells!? We need you! Johnora Hildebrand, our musical director (941-922-3142), invites all interested to the choir room on **Thursdays, March 21 at 7 p.m. and March 28 at 6 p.m.** (before Maundy Thursday's worship service).

We're preparing for Easter' worship celebrations! "Lord, Your coming makes our hearts **ring with joy!**"

Faith-Walk Down Main Street

On **Good Friday** March 29 walk your faith in a procession down the center of Main Street. Solemn and reflective, we stop to hear **Scripture and pray** at fourteen Stations of Christ's passion journey. A community choir leads the walk.

Twenty-some Sarasota churches participate, with Concordia part of the **Sarasota Ministerial Association**. Gather at 7:15 a.m. in front of the Hollywood 11 Theater. The final station is at the Church of the Redeemer Episcopal, 222 S. Palm Ave. at 8:30 a.m.

For those who want to park at the final station at Redeemer, Siesta Trolley will transport pilgrims from that church to Hollywood 11 beginning at 6:30 a.m.

"Lord Jesus, let Sarasota walk with You on this **day of Your passion.**"

Easter Break-fast

"Break the fast" of Lent on Easter morn between the worship services (**10 to 11 a.m.**) at Concordia's **Willer Fellowship Hall**. Tell Diane Scott (941-302-4819)... can you help with the cooks or clean-up crew? We'll provide the egg casseroles and sausage links, fruit and pastries, juice and coffee. If you'd like, bring some home made pastries to share. **Bring a friend!**

Easter Egg Hunt

Bring your children (or kids you know) to Concordia's Easter egg hunt, **Easter morn, 10 a.m.** Can you help? Concordia has a generous supply of **plastic eggs** in the narthex of the church that just **need filling**. Please, help yourself and fill some plastic eggs with candy, stickers, etc. But no chocolate... it melts! Then, return the filled eggs to church by Maundy Thursday, March 28. Would you like to help hide eggs Easter morn? Becky Reese (941-544-0656) or Julie Smith 813-361-7325 welcome your suggestions.

Portals of Prayer

"Portals of Prayer," your personal daily **devotional booklet**, would like to put Christ's spring into your spring. April through June, God's new life for you will blossom from His Word's good seed! Take home the daily devotional booklet after Concordia's worship.

Pocket size or large print? Either way, keep your **"Portals"** handy at your bedside or kitchen table. Wake up with Jesus, and feed on His Word! Would you like the church office to mail you your copy? Ask, and you shall receive (365-0844).

What will you do with your **last month's worn copy**? That's why our office helpers put the sticker with the church's name and phone number on it... So that you leave your old

Portals in some public waiting room. That's divine recycling! You never know who the good Lord will bless next when we plant these tiny seeds!

photos-Easter Son-Rise and Breakfast 2023

Worship's Scripture

March 23, 24 - Palm Sunday

Zechariah 9:9-12
Philippians 2:5-11
Mark 14:1-15:47

March 28 - Maundy Thursday

Exodus 24:3-11
1 Corinthians 10:16-17
Mark 14:12-26

March 29 - Good Friday

Isaiah 52:13-53:12
Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:7-9
John 19:17-30

March 31 - Easter SonRise

Exodus 15:1-11
1 Corinthians 5:6b-8
John 20:1-18

March 30, 31 - Easter

Isaiah 25:6-9
1 Corinthians 15:1-11
Mark 16:1-8

April 6, 7 - Easter 2

Acts 4:32-35
1 John 1:1-2:2
John 20:19-31

April 13, 14 - Easter 3

Acts 3:11-21
1 John 3:1-7
Luke 24:36-49

April 20, 21 - Easter 4

Acts 4:1-12
1 John 3:16-24
John 10:11-18

April 27, 28 - Easter 5

Acts 8:26-40
1 John 4:1-11 (12-21)
John 15:1-8



Kids Bell Choir

Kids (and kids at heart) Bell Choir is at Concordia. Practice is prior to the **Thursday Family Nights** at 5:45 p.m. once a month. We would love to have more players so invite your child or grandchild to join us.

Questions – contact director Carol Hill 440-539-4058. Next practice is **April 11** at 5:45 p.m. in our Willer Fellowship Hall.

Family Nights

Our **dinner and faith-building fun** welcomes all on **Thursdays April 11** and May 9 from **5:45-7 p.m.** at our Willer Fellowship Hall. This month, the Lord leads us (**Psalm 100:1**): "Shout with joy to the Lord, all the earth!"

RSVP at the church office (941-365-0844). "Welcome **us, our children, and little ones you love**, Jesus. Bring more to us!"

Good News-letter

Our **May 2024** Concordia Courier seeks articles, due Tuesday **April 16**. Can you **help the crew fold** the news for mailing? Do tell Parish Secretary Lei Ann (941-365-0844).

Thank you to March's Courier folders: Gloria Bruggeman, Joyanne Fathauer, Dave Meadows, and Jim Thomas. Gloria Bruggeman took **260 newsletters** to the postal center. Another **180 homes** prefer their Courier by email.

Thanks also to Don and Sandy Zaloudek for folding **weekend worship bulletins**.

Praise with the Pianist

Dawn Brown has led Concordia's worship with the praise band (Sundays, 9 a.m.) now for **20 years!** She selects beautiful songs to reflect each week's Scripture, prepares the song slides, preps the joyful band and singers, then pours all her amazing talent into the keyboard while lifting her prayer with our praise to our Lord. Sunday **April 21 at 10 a.m.** (the hour between the worship services), help us give Jesus thanks for His servant Dawn with her musical friends.

"Jesus, we thank You for **Dawn and the band** You have gathered to lead Your worship. As Concordia sings **Your song**, send down Your sweet Spirit. Give to all Your harmony."



Proud of Our Graduates

The class of 2024! Help us brag on our **high school and college** graduates in June! Please **email a photo** along with your graduation details and next goals. Send by **April 16** to our Parish Secretary Lei Ann at Concordia5@Juno.com and look for them in our May Courier. Congratulations!

Easter Lilies

Lilies will fill the Lord's sanctuary for Easter. Pick up the **order form** at church or call Parish Sec. Lei Ann (941-365-0844) if you'd like to contribute a bloom in thanks or remembrance.

"Let us joyfully trumpet Your resurrection, Jesus. So sweet, the **new life** You gift to us!"

Altar Guild News

The Altar Guild will **meet again** beginning in **October**. Enjoy your summer!

Any season, you can **help the Guild**. Please call Junne Ulbrich at 815-955-6215. Thanks!

"Lord, bless our serving, just as You have **served us!**"

Bible Groups to Befriend You

Concordia loves Bible groups! **Jesus speaks** to us through His Book, especially when we share His Word with one another.

Sundays, 10 a.m. Pastor Bob Smith leads our discussion and Scripture study. How do we best **share our Christian hope** with those who do not yet know Jesus? **Sundays 10 a.m.** at Concordia's Willer **Fellowship Hall**.

Thursday, 10:30 a.m. The **men's group** now gathers in Concordia's Willer Fellowship Hall **Library Room** (the single red door at the north end). Gary Thomas leads the guys who "**Dare to be Different.**"

Thursdays, 10:30 a.m. GiFtS! The **women "Grow in Faith through Scripture."** The group recently has been hearing from the "**minor prophets**," some of the Bible's shortest books. Visit Concordia's Willer **Fellowship Hall** main room (double red doors).

"Thanks for making us **Your friends**, Lord!"

Choir Rehearsal

The choir practices **each Wednesday 7 to 8 p.m.** **Everyone is welcome!** We sing near the start of the 11 a.m. worship, so that also some who have worshiped at 9 a.m. can add their voice. Sing for a **great time together** and a **great purpose**. Let's serve our Lord with our time and talents!

Your music director - Johnora Hildebrand

"Lord, **renew us** with joyous song. You are our Song!"

You're Invited ... In -Person

Giving Challenge KICK OFF

Tuesday, April 9th

11:30 am -1:30 pm



Where?



Aphasia Community Center
2185 Wood Street, Suite 5
Sarasota, FL

(Concordia Lutheran Church Campus)



Presented by the
Community Foundation of Sarasota County

“Be the One” to help us reach our 2024 Giving Challenge goal \$17,000

- Make your donation in person
- Visit our center
- Meet friends
- Enjoy light refreshments

You can also donate online

Noon April 9 to Noon April 10

Each online donation of \$25 to \$100 will be matched by the Patterson Foundation

Go to givingchallenge.org

Search **Aphasia Community Center**

Your gift to our 501(c) 3 nonprofit organization Will help rebuild the lives of persons affected by Aphasia in our community. Thank You!

Questions?

E-mail aphasiacommunitycenter@gmail.com

Phone (941) 500-4748

Website aphasiasarasota.org

Mission Haiti Thanks

70-some people enjoyed Ash Wednesday's dinner. Over \$820 was contributed towards the ministries of Haiti's Lutherans partnered with Ministry in Mission, Ohio. Our 9 volunteers in 2019 were so blessed serving with our **Jacmel Haiti sisters and brothers**. The Lutherans in Jacmel operate an Elder Care home, orphanage, children feeding program, homebound and hungry ministries, and much more. See MinistryInMission.com.

Worship's Scripture Readers

Volunteer, please, to join the many who read Scripture at our worship services. For each week, we will print the **schedule**. You would be assigned to read the Old or New Testament Scriptures for **your preferred** worship service, Saturday or Sunday. The church office can then email to you **on Thursday the exact text translation** you will speak. If you can't serve on the weekend selected for you, you need only let your church office know. We, or you, will find a substitute. Please **volunteer** with Parish Secretary Lei Ann (941-365-0844) or Worship Chair Cory Biladeau (612-532-3771).

"Lord, let us hear **Your Word on the lips** of even more of Your sisters and brothers!"

Picture Perfect Days Ahead

Say cheese, please! Concordia's new task force seeks to update **Concordia's Directory** of Friends and Members with updated contacts and new photos. Please share your views and ideas on how to make this happen.

What should Concordia's photo book look like? Contact the church office (941-365-0844). Then you will be invited to the next brainstorming meeting, soon. Your creativity counts!

How do we **encourage connections** while also giving each home **easy confidentiality** options? What about **selfies** and/or **snapshots** at church? **Bethany**

Thompson has volunteered to invest the hours needed to bring the vision to beautiful completion. Don't be surprised if you get contacted by Bethany.

"Father, help us always to see each and all with Concordia as Jesus' **brothers and sisters**. Gather many with His joyful Spirit!"



A Note from the President

Greetings Concordia. I hope everyone had a very enjoyable Holy Week. We have more events planned in the coming months. We will be celebrating Dawn Brown's 20th anniversary serving at Concordia. We will update the event in the bulletin. Stay tuned. We are off to a good year in our offerings. A big thanks to you for helping Concordia to continue to grow. The Church is getting stronger and viable every day.



Great to see all the fresh faces coming to Concordia and enjoying the ministry of our Church. I want again to say a big Thank You to Pastor Ted. He filled nicely at the beginning of the Church year and always offers great guidance to Concordia. Ted, thank you and we will see you and Abby this Fall.

Please continue to pray for the Church, the Employees, and the Council. I will continue to make myself available for anything that is on your mind. I appreciate your support and may God Bless you.

Dennis Jesse

Mobile: 614-286-0101

Email: djesse@jessemarketing.com

ConcordiaSarasota.org

Have you visited **our website**? You'll see there our **Facebook** page. (You need not be "on" Facebook.) "Like" us and share the link. You'll also see our **YouTube** page, filled with **our worship**, songs, sermons and Bible studies. The website also offers the latest **Courier**

newsletter and those of the previous year.

Guests often first **"visit" Concordia** by seeing ConcordiaSarasota.org. How can you **help us** improve?

"Jesus, lead people to You! You delight to **serve all people**, in worship giving to us Your Good News and Feast. Help us **welcome** those You love!"

What Is Your Work?

Table of Duties – Certain passages of Scripture for various holy orders and positions, admonishing them about their duties and responsibilities (continued from last month).\

To Workers of All Kinds

Slaves, **obey your earthly masters*** with respect and fear, and with sincerity of heart, just as you would obey Christ. Obey them not only to win their favor when their eye is on you, but like slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from your heart. **Serve wholeheartedly**, as if you were serving the Lord, not men, because you know that the Lord will reward everyone for whatever good he does, whether he is slave or free. Ephesians 6:5-8

To Employers and Supervisors

Masters, treat your slaves* in the same way. **Do not threaten** them, since you know that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is **no favoritism** with Him. Ephesians 6:9

To Youth

Young men, in the same way be submissive to those who are older. All of you, clothe yourselves with **humility toward one another**, because, "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble." Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that He may lift you up in due time. 1 Peter 5:5-6

To Widows

The widow who is really in need and left all alone puts her **hope in God** and continues night and day to pray and to ask God for help. But the widow who lives for pleasure is dead even while she lives. 1 Timothy 5:5-6

To Everyone

The commandments...are summed up in this one rule: "**Love your neighbor** as yourself." Romans 13:9

I urge . . . that **requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving** be made for everyone. 1 Timothy 2:1

Let each his lesson learn with care, And all the household **well shall fare**.

From the "**Small Catechism**." Written by the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther in 1529, the little book is treasured still by the world's 84 million Lutherans for clearly opening the Bible's truth and celebrating the heart of the Christian faith. Translation by Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis ©1992.

*Pastor's note: The Bible always judges as evil one human "owning" another. **We belong to only God!** Christians today still lead the fight to **abolish slavery**. Paul's point here is that even in the most evil work situation (as a slave) we should do good, because **we work for Christ!**



Snowbirds Warmly Welcomed!

Concordia is blessed with many "snowbird" friends who worship with us several months of the year. Many of you already have joined Concordia's **Associate Membership**. If you have not yet, please do so! Your **primary membership stays "home,"** as you settle in for the season to your Concordia church "here." Speak to Pastor Stephen (365-0844).

We promise our associate members:

- 1) A faithful ministry of **Jesus' Word and sacrament**.
- 2) **Pastoral care** and spiritual counsel when requested.
- 3) Our heartfelt prayers (and your birthdays, anniversaries, news, in our "Courier" newsletter) and warm **friendship**.
- 4) Our support as you seize every **opportunity to serve** with Jesus, both in the congregation and in the community, as He leads you.
- 5) Stewardship helps to spur your spiritual growth, offering envelopes, and an annual record of your tithes and **gifts to God** given at Concordia (also for the taxman!).

We invite our associate members to participate fully in **all the blessings** of Concordia's membership!

So, what's the difference between associate and **full members**? Only that you can not exercise the formal vote at the congregational meetings of both Concordia and your home church. And, you probably don't get to enjoy the Florida summertime sun as much as the rest of us! Help Concordia to serve you, and to serve Jesus with you, as best as we can!

"Thank You, Lord, for Your snowbirds! Bless also their home churches, our faithful sisters."

A R I

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
31 Easter Sunday 6:30 a.m. SonRise Worship 9 a.m. Worship with praise band, Holy Communion 10 a.m. Easter Breakfast and Egg Hunt 11 a.m. Worship with organ, hymnal, Holy Communion	1 Easter Monday ***7 p.m. Al-Anon Mtg.	2	3 7 p.m. Choir Rehearsal ***7 p.m. AA Mtg.	4 10:30 a.m. Women's Bible G.i.F.t.S. at Willer Hall 10:30 a.m. Men's Group at Willer Hall Library room	5	6 8 a.m. to 9 a.m. Free Panera Bread 4:30 p.m. Worship with Holy Communion
7 Easter 2 9 a.m. Worship with praise band, Holy Communion 10 a.m. All-Ages Bible Study 11 a.m. Worship with organ, hymnal, Holy Communion	8 ***	9 Giving Tuesday - 11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. Aphasia Community Center's Giving Challenge Kick-Off at Concordia Education Building, Suite 5	10 7 p.m. Choir Rehearsal ***	11 10:30 a.m. Women's Bible G.i.F.t.S. at our Willer Fellowship Hall 10:30 a.m. Men's Group at Willer Hall Library room 5:45 p.m. Family Dinner - Bible story, bells, craft	12	13 8 a.m. to 9 a.m. Free Panera Bread 4:30 p.m. Worship with Holy Communion, Pastor Gary Hill - Guest Pastor
14 Easter 3 9 a.m. Worship with praise band, Holy Communion, Pastor Gary Hill - Guest Pastor 10 a.m. All-Ages Bible Study 11 a.m. Worship with organ, hymnal, Holy Communion, Pastor Gary Hill - Guest Pastor	15 ***	16 May Newsletter Deadline	17 7 p.m. Choir Rehearsal ***	18 10:30 a.m. Women's Bible G.i.F.t.S. at our Willer Fellowship Hall 10:30 a.m. Men's Group at Willer Hall Library room	19	20 8 a.m. to 9 a.m. Free Panera Bread 4:30 p.m. Worship with Holy Communion
21 Easter 4 9 a.m. Worship with praise band, Holy Communion 10 a.m. Celebration of Dawn Brown, Worship's Praise Band 11 a.m. Worship with organ, hymnal, Holy Communion	22 Earth Day ***	23 2 p.m. Elder's Meeting	24 7 p.m. Choir Rehearsal ***	25 10:30 a.m. Women's Bible G.i.F.t.S. at Willer Hall 10:30 a.m. Men's Group at Willer Hall Library room	26	27 8 a.m. to 9 a.m. Free Panera Bread 4:30 p.m. Worship with Holy Communion
28 Easter 5 9 a.m. Worship with praise band, Holy Communion 10 a.m. All-Ages Bible Study 11 a.m. Worship with organ, hymnal, Holy Communion	29 ***	30	1 7 p.m. Choir Rehearsal ***	2 National Day of Prayer 10:30 a.m. Women's Bible G.i.F.t.S. at Willer Hall 10:30 a.m. Men's Group at Willer Hall Library room	3	4 8 a.m. to 9 a.m. Free Panera Bread 4:30 p.m. Worship with Holy Communion

***Concordia's Willer Fellowship Hall and (sometimes) the narthex of the church are used every Monday, Wednesday and quarterly Saturdays by 12-step groups.

April Birthdays

01	Nancy Elmer
02	Jeana Miranda
05	Jaclyn Resh
06	Delaney Riedler Thomas Stochl
08	Patti Lawson Terry Pierson
11	Charlie Scott
12	Lee Woerner
13	Abbie Lutsch Mike Powter Abby Wuerffel
15	Chuck Ahl
18	Nancy Johnson
19	Bob Vierk
20	Mike Bell Sheila Blindman DeAnna Whitlow
23	Erica Berthoud Julie Harris Ezekiel Quamina - 17th
25	Vickie Schaefer
26	Jim Ainslie Linda Garrisi Rosalie Smith - 9th
27	Perry Bartolacci - 6th
28	Dawn Brown
30	Lei Ann Ahl Tarree House

April Anniversaries

05	Dale and Chery Riedler - 34th
10	Myers and Alice Parrish - 25th
12	Russ and Audrey Hart - 49th
15	Gary and Ruth Bogenberger - 35th
20	Bill and Chris Easterday - 50th
21	Brian and Salena Bush - 6th
24	Chris and Christie Basinger - 25th

Concordia Celebrates You

Are we missing your birthday or anniversary dates? Please pardon us. And let us know (941-365-0844) when we miss dates. Let us **share the celebration!**



Sanctuary Lighting

I am in prayer for your help with a project that Doug Kresge and I have been looking into. We have Sanctuary lighting at the ceiling that has not worked for over a year now as they cause interference with our sound system. We would like to replace these lights with the latest **"LED" technology lights.**

To simplify: This project consists of removing the existing gas filled neon lights and transformers which extend **50 feet on each side**, at the ceiling in the artificial balcony of the sanctuary. The lights would then be replaced with RGB+TW Tunable Tape lighting which has the option in **unlimited palette of color** combinations. You also have the ability to adjust true white light ranging from **2700k to 6000k.** This would provide intense color saturation effects for limitless color combination. Colors are red, green, blue, yellow and white.

The cost for this project would be \$10,000. So any donations for this **wish list upgrade** would be appreciated. **Quote and specifications** are with Lei Ann in the church office. Donations towards this expense should state on the memo line of your check "Sanctuary Lighting Fund" and your check should be made payable to "Concordia Lutheran Church.

Thank you,

Jim Thomas

Memorials Received

"Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted." Matthew 5:4

In memory of Denny Williams, from Dennis and Faby Jesse for dedicated Seminarian Euder Paul Fund; and from Debbie Leslie for Seminarian Euder Paul Fund.

"Blessed are those who wash their robes [baptized], that they may have the right to the tree of life and may go through the gates into the [heavenly] city" (22:14).

"This could not have happened to me."

I was running across a road in Calcutta, India and was bumped by someone on my left side. I stumbled into an older woman on my right side. In order to keep my balance, I grabbed her arm and helped her to keep from falling. Finally, when I arrived on the other side, I checked my front pocket for my billfold. It was gone! I quickly gazed around the crowd and said to myself, "This could not have happened to me." Unfortunately, it did happen. All I could think was that whoever did it was a really smooth mover. The person was great at the skill of picking someone's pocket.

This was the third time in my life I had been robbed. Twice my home had been burglarized. Once was when my family and I lived in Fort Wayne, Indiana. The second time was when we lived in Saginaw, Michigan. Each time shock and denial were my first responses.

When evil has been suffered, anger is often a person's emotion. Usually this is not my reaction. Most of the time, I have felt frustration because I was interrupted from fulfilling my goals of that day. Other people feel resentment and/or rage at the thieves. I also feel sorrow for the person whose life is so messed up that he has to steal in order to survive.

At another point of a loss, I have often tried to bargain with God. "Lord, please help me get my billfold back. If you help me, I'll take better care of it." It is typical for a person to want to make a deal with God. S/he will make promises that may be difficult to keep later. In a health crisis, people will sometimes make promises to turn their life to serving Him if their health is returned.

The next stage of grief one often travels through is depression. The reality of what has or is happening is finally and fully perceived. This is when self-pity takes place. I certainly was depressed when I realized my billfold was gone and would probably never be found again. It was not losing the money that hurt, but my credit card, driver license, and pictures that weighed heavily on my heart.

Finally, it came to the stage of acceptance. The loss of my billfold just had to be accepted. It was gone forever.

Let me summarize the theories of Elizabeth Keubler Ross. She is the one who has studied and the stages of grief I just went through for you.

- 1.Shock and denial
- 2.Anger and frustration
- 3.Bargaining
- 4.Depression
- 5.Acceptance



photo - some Thursday 10:30 a.m. Bible Study men, from left: Gary, Tony, Pastor Bob, Kennedy, Euder, Pastor Ted, Rich

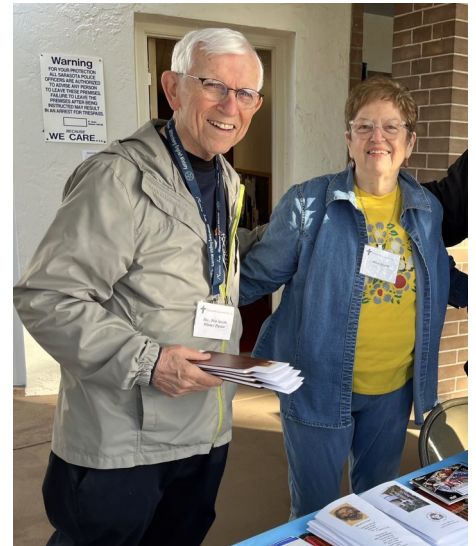
Do these stages always happen in this nice neat progression? No, they don't. They may overlap. The question comes after a loss or catastrophe of any kind "Why did God let this happen to me?" God can use events like robberies to mature and strengthen character. There will be in the future bigger challenges or losses that I will face. I was disappointed but not discouraged.

There were twenty-two other participants in the group I led to Calcutta. They watched very closely how I reacted to being robbed. There were positive lessons for us all to learn.

We praised God for not letting it happen to others.

How will you react in the future to a lost or catastrophe of any kind in your life? Others will be watching.

In His service,
Pastor Bob and Alice Smith, Concordia's Winter Hospitality Pastor



Concordia Council Minutes Thursday, January 11, 2024

Members in attendance: President-Dennis Jesse, Vice President-Alice Williams, Secretary-Ruth Bogenberger, Financial Secretary-Wayne Ulbrich, Treasurer-Tom Mann, Worship-Cory Biladeau, Outreach-Dawn Mowery, Service-Margo Arehart, and Pastor Stephen Gaulke.

Not present: Education-Julie Smith, Properties-Dave Meadows

Guests present: Pastor Bob Smith, Jim Thomas, Phyllis Kirtley, Judy Dennis, Junne Ulbrich and Ryan Hicks

Constitutional Quorum in person

The meeting was called to order by Alice Williams at 6:00 P.M.

Opening Devotion: Philippians 4:4-13 was read and discussed.

Leadership Report: Pastor Stephen highlighted the following from his report: The seasonal worker contract; the invitation to the new church plant meeting; new church members, and that weekend worship attendance is up 14% from last year.

President's Report: Dennis Jesse stated that the financial review needs to be completed in the next several months. Additionally, he plans to remove the trash cans from the property. He continues to search for a new home for our theater organ. He thanked last year's Council members for their service. Pastor Stephen stated that we will be getting a better piano on January 16th. The current piano should be sold or donated to a church in need.

Vice President's Report: A vote was taken among the Council members for a Fellowship Chair to serve during the 2024-2025 term. Diane Scott received 8 votes and Phyllis Kirtley received one vote.

Secretary's Report: November's minutes were read by Ruth Bogenberger and unanimously approved after a few minor clarifications. Alice Williams made the motion which was seconded by Dennis Jesse.

Financial Secretary's Report: Wayne Ulbrich predicted that total donations for the year ending 12/31/23 could exceed \$400,000. Wayne resigned as Financial Secretary, and was thanked for his service.

Treasurer's Report: Tom Mann had nothing to report as year end figures were not yet available.

Worship Report: Cory Biladeau thanked Alice Williams for her dedication and devotion. He said that the elders are working on scheduling greeters and readers for weekend worship. He also said that announcements will be given at the beginning of each worship service. Additionally, the elders at their January meeting reorganized Pastor Stephen's and Pastor Bob's duties to complement each other's strengths.

Education Report: Julie Smith reported to Ruth Bogenberger in an email that family nights are scheduled on the following dates: February 8th, March 7th, April 11th, and May 9th.

Outreach Report: Dawn Mowery stated that 40 volunteers hours were logged before the rummage sale. *[Editor's note: that was as of Jan. 11's Council meeting. In the end, over 50 volunteers gave over 2,500 hours.]* Also, 35 invitations were issued for the January 25th Bread Breakers dinner. Dawn suggested that we should feature new people with their picture and bio on the bulletin board. A motion was made by Alice Williams to suggest that Dawn assemble a task force to develop a new directory. Ruth Bogenberger seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Fellowship Report: None was given.

Service Report: Margo Arehart said that the Christmas drive for refugees was successful. In addition to member donations, Thrivent contributed \$750 and \$100 in gift cards were received. Margo reminded the Council that we still need a SURE representative. Additionally, the LWML Easter card making event will occur on Saturday March 16th.

Properties Report: Jim Thomas delivered the properties report for Dave Meadows. Jim, said that the north garage is being cleaned out to make room for refugee items. Jim provided the Council with a quote from Doug Kresge to replace the side lights in the sanctuary. There is a need for donations around \$7,000-\$8,000 to complete this project. It was noted by Dennis Jesse that the hurricane shutters need to be paid for before the proposed lighting.

Old Business: None

New Business: None

The meeting was adjourned at 7:22 P.M. with the praying of the Lord's Prayer in unison.

The Next Council meeting is scheduled for **March 12, 2024**, at 6:00 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted, Ruth Bogenberger, Council Secretary

The Concordia Courier

Concordia Lutheran Church Mission Statement

The mission of Concordia is to **share Jesus' harmony** ("concordia") with the **heart of Sarasota**. Jesus comes to us in worship, giving to us His Good News for sharing, and His love for caring!

Jesus comes to us
 in **worship** (Jesus is our harmony!),
 giving to us **His Good News** (His Word for us, education)
 for **sharing** (His Word for all, outreach),
 and **His love** (His deeds among us, fellowship)
 for **caring** (His deeds for others, service).



Editor's Notes...



The deadline to submit articles for the **May 2024** issue of "The Courier" is **April 16**. You may mail information to the church office or e-mail "concordia5@juno.com". Please mark "For The Courier" on your news, along with your name. Thanks for your cooperation!

"The Courier" is published every month, with one June/July ISSUE. The purpose is to share with the members of Concordia Lutheran Church, friends and the community Jesus' work among us. He brings harmony to the heart of Sarasota! We welcome your suggestions and contributions.

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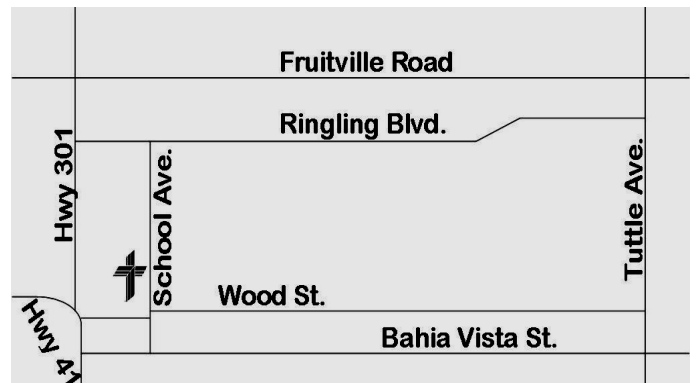
Concordia Lutheran Church

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President..... Dennis Jesse614-286-0101
 Vice-President Alice Williams.....941-957-1090
 Treasurer Thomas Mann660-379-7630
 Secretary Ruth Bogenberger....941-412-4466
 Financial Secretary Rick Reese941-544-0656

2024 Board Chairpersons

Worship Cory Biladeau612-532-3771
 Education..... Julie Smith813-361-7325
 Outreach..... Dawn Mowery678-230-0208
 Fellowship..... Diane Scott941-302-4819
 Service..... Margo Arehart.....419-810-0853
 Properties Dave Meadows941-685-6711



The Concordia Courier
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photo- some Thursday 10:30 a.m. Bible Study women



The Concordia Courier

April 2024

Worship Schedule

Worship Services

Saturday Worship 4:30 pm
Sunday Contemporary Worship 9 am
Sunday School and Bible Study 10 am
Sunday Traditional Worship 11 am

Holy Communion

The Lord's Supper is celebrated at every weekend's worship service. Jesus promises, "This bread is My body. Drink, this wine is My blood for your forgiveness." In worship Jesus serves!

Concordia:
"Jesus' Harmony for the Heart of Sarasota"

Church Staff

Rev. Stephen Gaulke, M.Div., S.T.M.....Pastor
Rev. Bob Smith, M.Div. Seasonal Hospitality
Lei Ann Ahl Parish Secretary/Bookkeeper
Johnora L. Hildebrand . Music Director/Organist
Dawn Brown Praise Band Leader/Pianist



Concordia Lutheran Church, LC-MS

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Usual Office Hours:
M-F, 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

