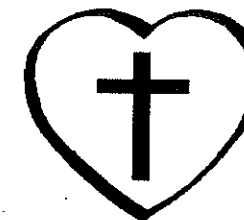


Concordia Lutheran Church

February 1998



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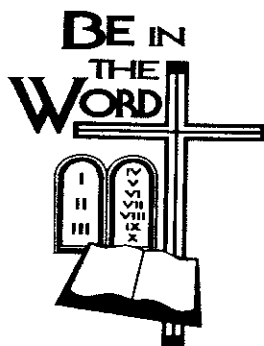
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WORSHIP ATTENDANCE STATISTICS:


(January)

1991.....	139
1992.....	110
1993.....	180
1994.....	183
1995.....	180
1996.....	181
1997.....	193
1998.....	196

January 1998

Week #1.....	88(E)	124(L)	212
Week #2.....	125(E)	62(L)	187
Week #3.....	67(E)	126(L)	193
Week #4.....	94(E)	98(L)	192

Our congregation and community has been hard hit during the month of January by illness and the flu. We have been tempted by the wonderous amounts of fresh powder. We have been seduced by football and Sunday morning athletic events. Yet, this January has been our strongest January to date. We thank God for this reality.



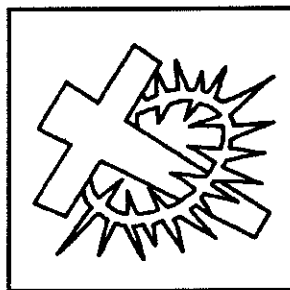
“And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him. In this way, love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment, because in this world we are like him. There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love. We love because he first loved us.”

1 John 4:16-19.

Note from the DCE

“Believing in God is being grounded in the deepest reality there is.”

Lately in our Thursday morning Bible Study we have been studying faith & trust in God. What does it mean to trust, and why do we trust? One participant said simply: “To trust God, means to rely on Him, to know His Goodness.” In John 16:33 Jesus states clearly “In this world you will have trouble, but take Heart! I have overcome the world.”

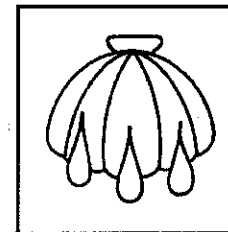


On February 25, Ash Wednesday, we worship together to mark the beginning of Lent. This is a time to rediscover the depth of God’s goodness & love. In the cross, we find that the focus of our trust, (God, in Christ Jesus), merits our complete trust. Can there be any doubt about God’s steadfast love toward us, as we

see Him giving His all for us? In Ephesians 3:17 Paul prays, “May you be rooted and grounded in God’s love, so that you will, together with all the saints, be able to grasp how WIDE, LONG, HIGH, and DEEP is the love of Christ...and to realize that God’s love surpasses all knowledge.” If you would like to know more about this Gracious God, join us for the Lenten season worship and Bible study opportunities. Come be grounded in the “deepest reality there is.”

Marley Cartwright

Director of Christian Education



February Baptismal Birthdays

- Andrea Deepe - February 2, 1986
- Christian Hogrefe - February 10, 1985
- Chloe Banning - February 14, 1993
- Brittany Ryan - February 28, 1993
- Julia Patterson - February 1985

JR. CONFIRMATION 1997-98 CALENDAR

- FEB 8... Baptism 4:30-6:00 PM (SUN)
- FEB 22... Baptism 9:15 AM (SUN)
- FEB 25... Ash Wednesday 7:00 PM (WED)
- MAR 8... Lord’s Supper 4:30-6:00 PM (SUN)
- MAR 22... Lord’s Supper 9:15 AM (SUN)
- MAR 29... Meal/Review 4:30-6:00 PM (SUN)
- APRIL 5... CONFIRMATION 10:30 AM (SUN)



Parents' Support Group

**Friday Nights from 6-8 PM
Pot-luck Dinner
Fun Bible Story Time and
childcare for Kids
Support, Study and Topic
for Parents**

Meeting Dates:

- February 6
- March 6
- May 1
- June 5
- July 3
- August 7
- September 4
- October 2
- November 6
- December 4

An Excerpt from "Quiet Times for Parents" by H. Norman Wright . . .

Have you ever wondered as a parent, What in the world am I doing? Many parents have asked that, especially after a particularly stressful, unproductive, disastrous, exhausting day. One parent said, "There are days when I question whether I've accomplished anything. It seems like I follow one child for a while and then another, either trying to head off a pending disaster or trying to salvage the remnants of the most recent one. Is this what parenting is all about? Is this what I'm supposed to be accomplishing with my life? I feel like a janitor."

Sometimes the task of parenting seems like survival more than anything else. It's so easy to become immersed in the tasks and activities of running the home, of putting out brush fires, instead of focusing on our calling as Christian parents.

Concordia Lutheran is starting a new support group for Parents with young children 2nd grade to newborn. If you have older siblings they are welcome to come.

This will provide a time for parents to make friendships within the church, and the studies will help you find strength, direction and hope as you fulfill God's calling in your life as a parent.

The evening will begin with a *simple* pot-luck. After dinner, childcare will be provided and parents can get together for a video and discussion or a Bible study which focuses on parenting issues. We also will share confidentially common concerns.

Come and be supported and refreshed!

Psalm 116

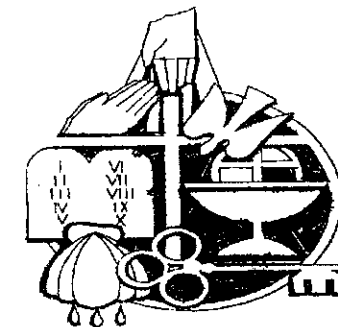
Leslie Brandt, "Psalms Now"

I know that God is here.
I know this because,
my soul bare and body naked before Him,
He looked upon me with love and resonded
to my cry for help.

There was a time when I didn't care! I was
not aware of any particular need for Him.
But then I hit bottom.
Death itself reached out to embrace me.
There was no one else to turn to.
I cried out to God in my desperation.
I could almost feel His invisible hand
encircle me and draw me to
Himself.

Now I am convinced.
God is here, and I shall trust Him forever.
I will no longer wait for pain or suffering to
drive me to Him.
I will walk in His course for my life.
I am committed to His purposes, and I
intend to carry out that commitment.

I can never repay God for His ever-present
love.
I can only dedicate my life to praising Him
and to serving Him wherever I may be.
I am His servant and His son; I shall love
Him forever. I shall proclaim to all the
world: "God is in our midst."



CONFIRMATION

Meeting Dates for February:

February 1
Outing 4:30-6:00 PM

February 8
4:30-6:00 PM

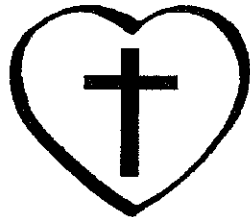
February 22
4:30-6:00 PM

February 25
Ash Wednesday 7 PM
The Confirmation Class is
responsible for preparing the
soup supper (5:30 pm) and
providing the special music.



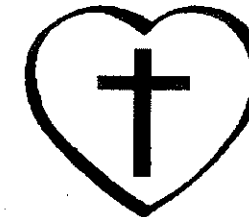
*"Jesus said, "Let the little children
come to me, and do not hinder them
for the kingdom of heaven belongs to
such as these."*

Matthew 19:14



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"Fathers and Faith"

by Roger Sonnenberg from Good News for Families of Concordia Publishing House

A wise proverb says, "You have to dig deep to bury your father." Fathers don't always realize the profound impact they have on their children by the amount of time they spend, or do not spend, with them. Young children tend to base their first picture of God - loving or distant - on their dad.

Assessment Time

A wise father will make periodic assessments of how he is interacting with his children. Ask yourself:

- How many minutes do I spend each day in one-on-one conversation with each of my children?
- How many times a day do I hug my children and tell them I love them?
- How often do I pray with my children and tell them God loves them?
- Do I make every effort to be at my children's activities?
- Do I make it a priority to eat one relaxed meal with my children each day?
- Which is greater - the time I spend in front of the television or the time I spend with my children?

Behave as if You Love Them

Fathers who live out their God-given responsibilities behave in love. Here is what behaving in love might look like.

Spend time with your children. T- i- m- e

spells love. Play games with your children, shoot hoops on the driveway. These kinds of activities require intentional planning. Schedule it into your day.

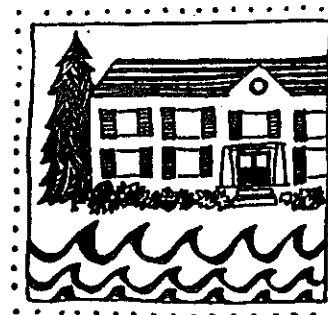
Turn off the television. The television is a Trojan horse in many households. Turn it off, get up from your favorite chair, and get down on eye level with your kids as you play with them and listen to them.

Leave the perfectionism to God. Every dad makes mistakes. Thankfully our heavenly Father sent His Son to the cross to take the punishment for our sins. As our heavenly Father freely offers love and forgiveness, so earthly fathers freely love and forgive their children.

Aid Association for Lutherans (AAL) Members -

Congratulations! We received a gold rating for 1997. We were blessed this year. Our branch Helping Hands program provided over \$8,000. in matching funds for members of Concordia and other organizations. Our Youth Group received \$800.00 from AAL to use for their Habitat for Humanity Project in Greeley. Gifts of crosses were given for Confirmation and baptism. We need to continue these services for 1998. Our branch needs a President and Vice-President for this year. Please consider serving in these capacities. Our short monthly meetings are held the 2nd Sunday after early service. We will meet Sunday February 8th. Your prayers and attendance are needed. Thank you.

In Christ, Jane Hallman (870-8972)
Branch Sec.-Treas. & Lamplighter



Take the vacation of your life ... at Camp Arcadia

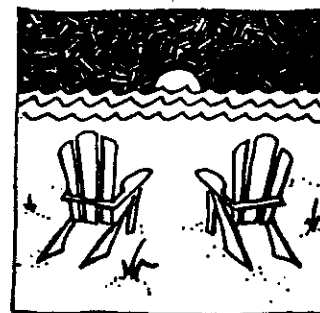
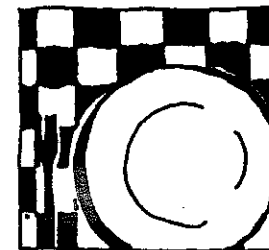
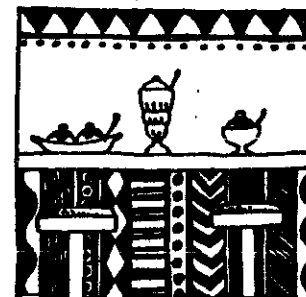
"Vacation with God" at Camp Arcadia this summer! Relax, renew, and refresh along Arcadia's 110 acres of Lake Michigan shoreline and wood land property.

Family weeks run June 27 through August 15, 1998. Lutherhostel weeks for older adults are slated for June 6-13, August 15-22, and August 22-28. Two teen retreats are scheduled for June 14-20 (8th graders) and June 21-27 (high school students).

Guests stay in Camp's comfortable 45-room Inn and eat delicious home-made meals in the dining room. Tennis courts, softball/soccer field, hiking trail, basketball court, indoor game room, Camp soda fountain & much more. Located in the heart of northwest Michigan tourist country amid unbroken dunes, forests, and orchards. Several championship golf courses nearby, outstanding fishing, great hiking, lots of shopping.

Affordable vacation rates! Contact Director Kristin Jas at 616-889-4361 or write P.O. Box 229, Arcadia, MI 49613 for a brochure (the weeks fill quickly — don't procrastinate).

Pastor Tim and Marlys will be the dean & lecturers for the week of July 4-11, 1998.



Reflections by Ardath Rodale, author of "Gifts of the Spirit: True Stories to Renew Your Soul" and "Climbing Toward the Light"

FORGIVENESS Many years ago, I went to see the movie *Wuthering Heights*. It is a story of jealousy, anger, and revenge. I can't seem to forget the scene one particular night, when the young man so full of rage slammed the shutters of the huge house and closed and barricaded himself to aloneness.

I wondered what his heart looked like inside and imagined that it was like his house with dark rooms, damp basements, narrow hallways, cramped spaces, shuttered windows, drawn blinds, and accumulated dust all thriving on his anger.

Looking at our own lives, I suspect we have all gone through periods where we reacted this way, but we can't linger in this state if we want to stay healthy. Anger, like fire, if held close for too long, burns and consumes the person holding it.

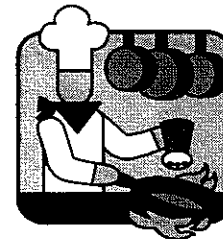
How about having an annual "Forgiveness Housecleaning," maybe at New Year's or any other time of the year that's meaningful for you? How about making a list of all your grievances? Evaluate each one with the following questions:

- Why am I angry with this person?
- What blame do I bear in this situation?
- Is it worth spending my precious energy on this resentment - do I really need it, or could I spend my energy better in another place?
- If I don't need this resentment, why don't I just throw it out now?

For each person you forgive, plant a seed, pull a weed, give a contribution to your place of worship or favorite charity: Do something physical to symbolize purging the anger from your life. Then write a note to that person saying that you forgive him or her. Whether you sent the note or not is up to you.

"If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him. If he sins against you seven times a day, and seven times comes back to you and says, 'I repent,' forgive him."

Luke 17:3-4



ANNOUNCEMENTS

DISCOVERY BIBLE STUDY

Wednesday evening our Discovery Bible study has been taking a gracious look at the Book of Revelations. This study begins at 7:00pm. We are done by 8:15pm.

CONCORDIA COMMUNITY CARES

February 15th (11:30 AM): Meeting for January and February teams. If you have any questions or comments please call Ellyn Myller (871-1860).

MEN'S FELLOWSHIP BREAKFAST

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 14TH 7:00 AM - 8:30 AM
JOIN US! BRING A FRIEND!

Wanted: Old Christmas Cards

Next Year's Christmas Cupboard is only some 300 days away....Lynn Jones is collecting old Christmas Cards to use in her creative crafting. If you are going to dispose of your cards please recycle them instead and give them to Lynn . Thanks!

A Part or Apart?

"When the Bible becomes part of you, you'll be less likely to come apart."

— *Our Daily Bread*

Slow me down, Lord, and inspire me to send my roots deep into the soil of life's enduring values, that I may grow toward my greater destiny.