

#32-2
PUBLISHED MONTHLY
MT CALVARY LUTHERAN CHURCH
2055 S FRANKLIN ST RD
DECATUR, IL 62521
(217) 428-0641



February, 2012

Brothers and sisters in Christ,

As I sit at my desk thinking about February, two themes stand out. The first theme is love. On February 14th, the world, or at least part of it, will celebrate Valentine's Day. On February 22nd, the Church, or at least part of it, will observe Ash Wednesday, which marks the beginning of Lent.

Now just in case you have forgotten, Lent is the 40-day period, not including Sundays, between Ash Wednesday and Easter. "It is a period of penitential reflection." It is a time for us to reflect on our lives; to reflect on our thoughts and actions, to reflect on our attitudes. It is a time to ask ourselves "Is what I see in my life pleasing to God?" "Does what I see bring glory to Him?" "Am I observing His law, or have I become a law unto myself?"

As we take that action, unless we are kidding ourselves, we start to see the necessity of Good Friday. We identify the need to drop to our knees and say simply and clearly "Lord, have mercy on me a sinner."

And in God's response, we see the connection between love and Lent. The Apostle John says it this way "*No greater love hath a man than this, that He lay down His life for a friend.*" Jesus Christ laid down His life for you.

So perhaps it is good that the world's day of love falls in the same month as the churches first day of Lent. Lent and love are absolutely and completely connected.

As we go through the season of Lent, it is my prayer for you, that you would spend more time in God's Word. A Lenten devotional booklet is being mailed to each family. If you need additional copies, they are available in the office. Please share them with a friend. Put one in your physician's office; in the place where you get you oil changed. We would like to share the Good News of Jesus with as many people as possible.

It is also my prayer that you will be at the Lenten midweek services. It disappoints me, and pastors everywhere, that the midweek services seem to get smaller every year. It is an opportunity once again to hear the great things God has done for us and respond without thanksgiving and our praise.

Lastly, there is the tradition of giving something up for Lent. Luther was very clear; fasting is indeed great outward preparation; as long as we remember Jesus Christ gave up everything that needed to be given up. He did it for you.

In His love

Pastor D