



GOOD NEWSletter

Proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ throughout Europe

April 2017

COME, LET US RETURN TO THE LORD!

Legend has it that Frederick the Great, King of Prussia, once visited one of his kingdom's prisons. During his day-long visit, he took the opportunity to talk to each and every inmate. As you might imagine, Frederick spent that day listening to endless tales of innocence, of misunderstandings, and excuses. All felt that they had been imprisoned unfairly. Finally the king stopped at the cell of a convict who remained absolutely silent. "Well," said Frederick, "I suppose you are an innocent victim too?" "No, sir, I'm not," replied the man. "I'm guilty and I deserve my punishment." Turning to the guard, the king said, "Release this scoundrel at once before he corrupts all these other fine, upstanding prisoners."

Today our King, Jesus, visits not the prisons of his kingdom, but the hearts of his people. He comes to us in his Word and gives each of us an opportunity to tell our story. So what report will we give regarding sin in our lives? Will we hide behind excuses? Will we run away in denial? We wouldn't be the first. Adam and Eve tried that in the Garden. God's covenant people, Israel, did the same throughout their history.

One of the prophets God sent to Israel was the prophet Hosea. He was sent to call Israel to repentance. He was not the first one God sent. Israel knew the routine well. We repent. God forgives us. Then all will be OK.

The problem was that their repentance was no longer sincere. They said the right

words but they were only going through the motions. Listen to what they said, "Come, let us return to the LORD. He has torn us to pieces but he will heal us; he has injured us but he will bind up our wounds. After two days he will revive us; on the third day he will restore us that we may live in his presence. ... As surely as the sun rises, he will appear; he will come to us like the winter rains that water the earth" (Hosea 6:1-3).

What they said sounded sincere but it wasn't. 'If we simply confess, bring our offerings, God will forgive us. He's done it every time in the past. He'll do it again so let's get this over with.' Their plan didn't work. God saw right through their lack of sincerity.

Lent is set forth as the season of repentance. We repent all the time – every time we pray the Lord's Prayer, every time we worship. Yet the danger we face is that, like Israel, we make light of it. Not that we are trying to fool God, but it is easy to confess with the lips and not with the heart. It's easy to go through the motions and believe all is well.

God wants our confessions to be sincere, from the heart, and that takes work. It means spending time with God in prayer and in his Word. Only then will the Holy Spirit be able to do his job. His job begins as he leads us to see our sins and their consequence. His job is to lead us to confess them and seek the Lord's forgiveness. Finally, his job is to cause us to rejoice in the good news of God's forgiveness and promise of eternal life.

May this process never become routine but, by the grace of God, be sincere and

from the heart through the power of the Holy Spirit.

As we approach the end of the Lenten season and go with Jesus to Golgotha and the cross, we are reminded of the consequences of our sins and what it cost our Savior. Then we hear him proclaim, "It is finished!" What comfort it brings knowing the work of our salvation is complete. What joy we have on Easter when we see again the empty tomb and the living Savior!

Easter Retreat

This year's Easter Retreat will be at Rothenberg ODT, April 13-16, 2017. We have 43 signed up. Sounds like a nice crowd! Please contact us for the address of the hostel and restaurant.

See upcoming emails for more information on the retreat. These emails will go out only to the attendees unless you request them.

April Worship Schedule

There will be no worship services in Munich, Vilseck & Switzerland in April!

Northwood, England -

contact Pastor Stuppy for location details

April 2

Worship at 13:00 followed by Bible study, Sunday School, fellowship and potluck dinner.

Wicker, Germany (Frankfurt Area) -

contact Pastor Stuppy for location details

April 9 and April 23

Worship is at 11:00 followed by fellowship, Bible study, and Sunday school.

Ramstein Air Force Base, Germany -
at the Southside Chapel

April 9 and April 23

Worship is at 16:00 followed by Bible study, Sunday school, and fellowship.

Offerings

March Offerings: Local offerings for the period include 22.473,90 € directly deposited to the church account. We also received \$849.36 in gifts at worship including Euros, British Pounds, and French Francs. In addition there may be gifts made directly to Synod designated for the European Chaplaincy Ministry. We thank the Lord for moving the hearts of his people to make these generous gifts in support of this ministry.

Direct deposit through IBAN

If you make offerings through direct deposit through IBAN, contact me for the information. Pastor Josh Martin's name has been replaced with mine - Donald William Stuppy. If you used "Savior of the Nations Lutheran Church" with the account, it has been changed to "WELS European Civilian Chaplaincy." The number I emailed last month is the correct IBAN for the church account. If you have problems or need more information, please let me know.

CONTACT US

If you have need of pastoral assistance or just want to talk, please make contact. Your e-mails, phone calls, and letters are welcomed. The contact information does not change.

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