

NAZARETH LUTHERAN CHURCH

February 2026 |

From the Pastor

Yes, Lent is just around the corner. The dates begin with Ash Wednesday, February 18; 1st Sunday of Lent, February 22; 2nd Sunday of Lent, 3/1; 3rd Sunday of Lent, March 8; 4th Sunday of Lent, March 15; 5th Sunday of Lent, March 22; Palm Sunday, March 29; Maundy Thursday, April 2; Good Friday, April 3; Easter Sunday, April 5.

The following is the theme this year is "Road Trip." We will be taking a trip to the crucifixion through the presentations of five monologues of artisans of the crucifixion. Through these monologues we will introduce the congregation to those who crafted items used in the crucifixion. Presentations will introduce those who crafted the whip through the artisan Tanner;

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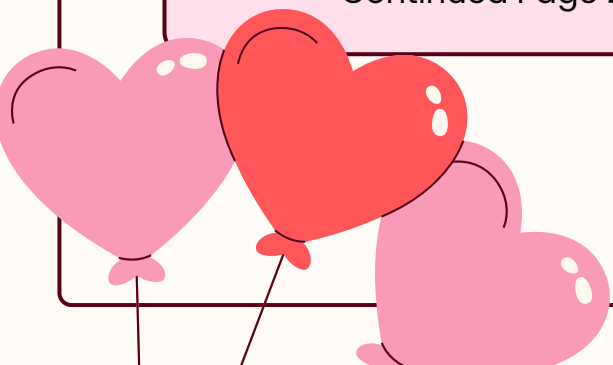
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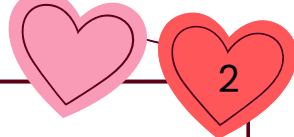


PRAY - FAST - GIVE

40 days of Lent

Return to Our Lord Jesus





From the Pastor continued

the one who wove the crown of thorns through the artisan Basket Weaver; the one who forged the nails through the artisan Blacksmith; the one who constructed the cross through the Carpenter; and the one who chiseled out the tomb.

We will include each week a map that will give us ideas of ways to journey through Lent. We hope to spend the 5 weeks sharing the gospel with others, helping those in need, caring for friends and family, and being kind. Many times during Lent we are asked to give something to us during the Lenten season but this year let us give something to others on our journey.

I look forward to being on this special journey with all of you as we learn of those who were there with Jesus and how we can continue to travel with Jesus each day on this special trip.

We are also looking for people to present special music. I have several special songs either for solos or for the congregation. If you would like to present your gift on this journey through Lent just let me know. I also will be contacting a few of you.

Who was Saint Valentine and how did he come to inspire Valentine's Day?

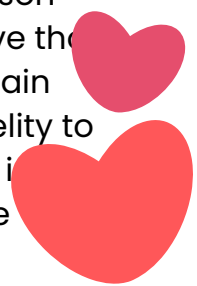
In the early martyrologies, three different St. Valentines are mentioned, all sharing Feb. 14 for a feast day. Unfortunately, the historical record is sparse. The first St. Valentine was a priest and physician in Rome. He along with St. Marius and his family comforted the martyrs during the persecution of Emperor Claudius II.

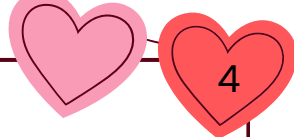
The second St. Valentine was the Bishop of Interamna (now Terni, located about 60 miles from Rome). Under the orders of Prefect Placidus, he too was arrested, scourged, and decapitated, again suffering persecution during the time of Emperor Claudius II.

The third St. Valentine suffered martyrdom in Africa with several companions. However, nothing further is known about this saint. In all, these men, each named St. Valentine, showed heroic love for the Lord and His Church.

The popular customs of showing love and affection on St. Valentine's Day is almost a coincidence with the feast day of the saint. While it seems that the exchange of "valentines" is more the result of secular custom rather than the memory of St. Valentine, and that the celebration has been further paganized with cupids and the like, there is a Christian message that should be remembered. The love of our Lord, depicted beautifully in the image of His most Sacred Heart, is a sacrificial, self-less, and unconditional love.

On this Valentine's Day, looking to the example of this great saint, each person should offer again his love to the Lord, for only by doing so can he properly love those who are entrusted to his care and any other neighbor. Each person should again pledge his love to those loved ones, praying for their intentions, promising fidelity to them, and thanking them for their love in return. Never forget Jesus said, "This is my commandment: love one another as I have loved you. There is no greater love than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends" (Jn 15:12-13). St. Valentine fulfilled this command, and may we do the same.





February Music and Lectionary

Sunday Feb 22 – First Sunday in Lent

Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7

Psalms 32

Romans 5:12-19

Matthew 4:1-11

Prayer of the Day

Lord God, our strength, the struggle between good and evil rages within and around us, and the devil and all the forces that defy you tempt us with empty promises. Keep us steadfast in your word, and when we fall, raise us again and restore us through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Sheila

Sanctuary

Beneath the Cross of Jesus #338

The Glory of These 40 Days #320

As the Grains of Wheat #465

It is Well With My Soul #785

December Church Council Meeting Minutes

Nazareth Lutheran Church Council was called to order at 11:47 AM by President Mark Lewis following fellowship. Present for the meeting were Mark Lewis, Lisa Smith, Arlys Peterson, Nathan Hovland, John Egeland, Pastor Marcia, and Church Administrator Eileen Lewis. Also sitting in was Joyce’s Granddaughter, Zoey. Minutes from the November 15th meeting were approved as read.

Finance Report: Income and payments were fairly equal this month, which still keeps us happily in the green. Income for the month totaled \$6,673.69. Expenses for the month were \$8,783.71. We still are going along in the Black, the closing bank account balance is \$25,598.03. Previously we had planned to move some money from the checking account to the Mission Investment Fund, Lisa indicated we would do that at the beginning of January.

Pastor’s Report: Confirmation is going very well. The pastor really enjoyed writing the script for the Children’s Christmas pageant.

Pastor Marcia asked if the council would be ok with finding someone to shovel the snow at the church and the parsonage. We would pay them to do it. The man who plows for us is not able to do that. There was discussion on how to find someone, and how much to pay them. It was decided to place an ad in the Ballard school Digital Back Pack and also on Facebook to find someone. Although we still don’t know what we would pay them.

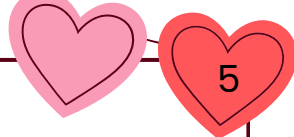
Committee Reports:

Property: Arlyss mentioned that she was concerned that there were no smoke detectors in the parsonage. John will look for some and purchase at least 5 and have them installed asap.

Christian Ed: We continue with both Adult and Children’s Sunday school (when children are in church). Bible study on Thursday evenings continues when the weather cooperates.

Stewardship: nothing to report





December Council Meeting Minutes continued

Inreach / Outreach: Kringla, Lefsa and Krumkaka sales have exploded! They are keeping the bakers busy rolling and Eileen busy delivering. Projected sales over \$2,500.00

Music and Worship: Music is completed through the end of May.

Old Business: After School snack budget was discussed with the grant of \$5,750 from Immanuel Vision Fund we have enough funds to purchase more substantial snacks for distribution. We will be purchasing chef boy ardee meals and mac and cheese cups to add to each weekly snack. Befor Thanksgiving break we purchased items to give a chicken Al Fredo meal to each child. We are also planning to continue giving a meal for each family before the Christmas break and spring break as well. We are thinking of Spaghetti and tuna and noodle meals.

New Business: Discussion then fell to preparing for the annual meeting in January. Special offerings were proposed as Synod Mission support \$1,000.00 and the rest to MICA. The offerings from Holy Thursday and Ash Wednesday will go to MICA.

Pastor Marcia moved that Christmas gifts for Sheila, Dave and Ellen be \$100.00, Lisa seconded. It was discussed that since Ellen never accepts our Christmas gift we would send a check in her name to the Cambridge Food Pantry. The motion passed.

The election of officers and church council were discussed and the current officers will run again and at this time they are unopposed. Lisa indicated that she is considering retiring from the treasurer position in the next few years, and would like people to consider who would be willing to take over that role.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:07 by President Mark Lewis, and closed with The Lord’s Prayer.

Respectfully submitted by Eileen Lewis,
Administrative Assistant

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING MINUTES

SUNDAY, JANUARY 18, 2026

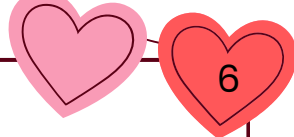
Nazareth Lutheran’s congregational meeting was called to order at 11:13 by President Mark Lewis following worship. Ten voting members were present for the meeting.

Eileen Lewis motioned to approve the agenda, seconded by Vince Tomlinson, motion carried. Next item on the agenda was the minutes, which Vince motioned to approve as written, seconded by Ellen Olson, which was approved as well.

Discussion then opened regarding inreach/outreach, and how our church can reach out to the community. Eileen pointed out that Fareway in Huxley has a program where bags of food can be purchased for \$20 which are then donated to local food pantries. They will also match gift card amounts that customers can donate to the pantry. Many grocery stores ask customers to round up their totals to the nearest dollar for various charities.

Arlys Peterson had a question regarding the Memorial Fund contributions. She questioned why the drive through dinner was named after Richard Ness when Roger Thorson contributed more money. Eileen explained the Thorsons requested their funds go towards Kringla making instead of the dinner. It was pointed out that the Nazareth Bakers made \$3,000 in lefsa, kringla, and krumkaka sales.





Congregational Meeting Minutes continued

Vince moved to accept the committee reports as presented, seconded by Dave Lewis, motion carried.

Old Business: None

New Business: Pastor Marcia made a motion to continue to send \$1,000 to Synod and MICA, Eileen seconded, which was approved. Dave moved to keep MICA amounts and designations the same but with the omission of Christmas Day since we no longer have services, seconded by Eileen.

Discussion then was opened to the changes to Nazareth's Constitution. Eileen explained the changes were requested by Bishop Current due to an incident at another church. The church wanted to close, but due to dwindling membership, there weren't enough people to make a quorum to vote for it per their constitution. In order to form a quorum, the synod had to delegate their people to fill in for them.

So that was one of the changes made to the constitution – to redefine what constitutes a quorum. It was decided three members of different households had to be present to vote on issues. There was also a question about the amount that can be spent before needing congregational approval. The old constitution had the amount set at \$1,000, but considering how expensive any repairs or even estimates can be, the revision read \$3,000. However, the amount should have been \$5,000. Pastor Marcia moved we approve the new constitution with the \$5,000 correction, Vince seconded, motion carried.

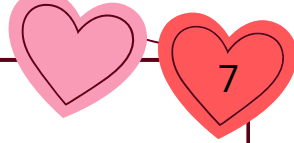
Election of officers was brought up next. Jane Rohde offered to let someone else take over the Memorial Fund, but everyone thought she does such a wonderful job (aka, no takers) so she will continue. There was an error on the election ballot, reflecting 2025 instead of 2026. Eileen moved to amend the ballot from 2025 to 2026, seconded by Joyce Allen, motion passed. Then Dave Lewis motioned to accept the amended ballot, seconded by Lisa Smith, and it was approved.

Pastor Marcia then made a motion to approve the budget, Dave seconded it, all approved. Meeting was adjourned at 11:36 by President Mark Lewis, and closed with The Lord's Prayer, followed by fellowship and cookies.

Respectfully submitted by
Joyce Allen, Council Secretary.

Happy Valentine's Day



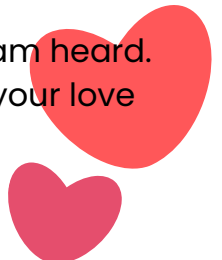


A Litany of Belovedness

Too often we let that voice inside our head tell us that we are unlovable, unworthy and just wrong. Please share this litany with someone who may need to know that in God's eyes we are perfect just the way we are. And that God is the one we should be listening to, not that little voice in our head.

Deliver me Jesus From the belief that I am worthless
Deliver me Jesus From the belief that I am not good enough
Deliver me Jesus From the belief that I am defined by my past
Deliver me Jesus From the belief that I am broken
Deliver me Jesus From the belief that I am only as good as my accomplishments
Deliver me Jesus From the belief that I am a failure
Deliver me Jesus From the belief that I am not gifted in any way
Deliver me Jesus From the belief that I am alone
Deliver me Jesus From the belief that I cannot change or grow
Deliver me Jesus From the belief that I am unwanted
Deliver me Jesus From the belief that I am undesirable
Deliver me Jesus From the belief that I am unlovable
Deliver me Jesus From the belief that I am what others think
Deliver me Jesus From the lie of perfectionism
Deliver me Jesus From the trap of comparison
Jesus help me To believe that i am your beloved child
Jesus help me To believe that I am precious in your sight
Jesus help me To believe that I am wanted
Jesus help me To believe that I am who you say I am
Jesus help me To believe that I am delighted in
Jesus help me To believe that I am chosen
Jesus help me To believe that I am a work in progress
Jesus help me To believe that I am never alone
Jesus help me To believe that through you I am capable of love
Jesus help me To believe that through you I am capable of healing and wholeness
Jesus help me To believe that I belong
Jesus help me To believe that I am not a mistake
Jesus help me To believe that I was made in your image
Jesus help me To believe that you have a plan for my life
Jesus help me To believe that you are holding and leading me
Jesus help me To believe that I am known seen and loved just as I am

Father, thank you for your great, unending love. In you I am seen. In you I am heard. In you I am known. In you I am loved. Today I choose to embrace the reality of your love for me. Today I choose to own my belovedness. Amen



A QCD distribution from your IRA

If you have an Individual Retirement Account (IRA) and are age seventy (or getting close), you should know about a way you can give to Nazareth that will strengthen the church's ministry and produce tax savings for you! Here are some important facts you should know.

Individual Retirement Accounts – people have been putting money away without having to pay federal taxes on it. (That part is important.)

To Avoid Paying Taxes. In 2006, pension protection legislation allowed for tax-free use of RMDs for charitable contributions, saving the tax that people would have had to pay when they took this money out of their IRA accounts. These are called “qualified charitable distributions” or QCDs. There's an important distinction: these are NOT tax deductions. They do not provide a

charitable deduction they exclude the donated distribution from taxable income!

From Ira to “Nazareth Lutheran”—never in my pocket! With a qualified charitable distribution (QCD), a check goes directly from your IRA to your church or the charity you select. Many people who are facing RMDs that will have tax implications could pay all their annual tithe or offering at one time, or fund a repair project, through their QCD and never have to show it as income.

You don't have to wait for 73 to do the QCD! QCDs can happen for anyone who has reached the age of seventy and a half. Retirees who are over that age and want to continue to be generous to our church should consider a qualified charitable distribution.

We encourage everyone to discuss this with a financial planner, tax consultant, or attorney—and be sure to let your family know! It could be a savings for you and a blessing to our church!

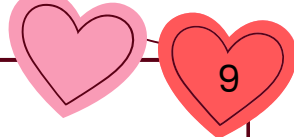


What is Lent?

Lent is the 40-day period leading up to Easter, (excluding Sundays) that starts on Ash Wednesday and ends on Holy Saturday, the day before Easter. The 40 days of Lent involve fasting, prayer, and almsgiving as a way to connect deeper with God. Commonly observed by many Christian churches, many use the 40 days of Lent as a time of personal reflection to prepare your heart and mind for Good Friday and Easter.

Lent starts with Ash Wednesday, the day when you might see people with a cross of ashes on their foreheads. These ashes are a reminder of our need for repentance and the reality of our human frailty. The ash marks symbolize sorrow and mourning over sin. The Biblical support for this observation comes from the following verse:

Then I turned my face to the Lord God, seeking him by prayer and pleas for mercy with fasting and sackcloth and ashes (Daniel 9:3).



What is Lent? continued

The 40-day period of Lent is symbolic of significant biblical events, including:

- Jesus' 40 days of fasting and temptation in the wilderness (Matthew 4:1-11).
- Moses spending 40 days on Mount Sinai receiving the Ten Commandments (Exodus 34:28).
- Elijah's 40-day journey to Mount Horeb (1 Kings 19:8).
- The 40 days of rain during the Great Flood (Genesis 7:12).
- The Israelites' 40 years of wandering in the desert (Numbers 14:33).

There are numerous ways to approach Lent, some more legalistic than personal spiritual growth. Still, the origins of Lent seem to be rooted in Christians giving up food or money in order to emulate Christ's obedience to the Father.

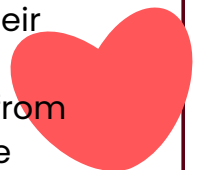
During Lent, Christians honor the 40 days and nights following Christ's baptism when He went into the wilderness without water and food and was tempted by Satan. During that time, Christ did what we do today when we fast: wrestle with temptation. This was not the first fast; biblical figures often fasted when petitioning God for something important. "So we fasted and implored our God [...], and he listened to our entreaty" (Ezra 8:23). The Israelites "mourned and wept and fasted till evening for Saul and his son Jonathan, and for the army of the LORD and for the nation of Israel, because they had fallen by the sword" (2 Samuel 1:12).

The three main ways people engage in Lent are through fasting (abstaining from something to focus on God), prayer, and almsgiving (giving to charity). Fasting during Lent typically involves abstaining from certain foods or luxuries as a form of self-discipline and solidarity with the sufferings of Christ. Today, some still observe fasts that restrict quantity and type of food, but many view Lent as a time in which to give up a particular vice, bad habit, or pleasurable thing.

Partner with other Christians. Historically, entire church congregations would support one another during Lent. Whether this is through weekly or daily worship services, Bible Study, or prayer groups, Devoted friends encourage each other to be specific in their prayers and help one another seek Christ's strength to stay the course.

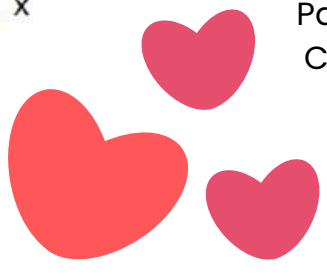
Undertaking something difficult (giving to charity, serving the poor, abstaining from certain foods, memorizing Scripture) makes one feel needy and weak; humble: the perfect posture from which to approach God Almighty. For people whose lives are generally easy, Lent is a time to empathize better with those who genuinely go without luxuries or even simple needs.

It's important to remember the primary purpose of Lent is meant to be a time of repentance. That's not a feeling of shame but an awareness that sin separates us from God and what Christ endured to save us from sin, death, and the devil. "Shame has its place, but feeling shame over sin is not the same thing as repentance from sin" because "our tempter can take our obedience to God and turn it into a source of pride." Lent should always lead us toward gratitude for Jesus' sacrifice on Good Friday and his resurrection on Easter.





Saint
Valentine
Physician
Priest
Christian
Night
Martyr
Rome
February
Papyrus
Crocus
Love



Each of the numbers goes either horizontally from left to right (→), or vertically downwards (↓).

Can you spot all of the numbers in the grid?

7	7	1	4	3	2	2	5	1	5
2	4	8	0	1	8	3	3	9	0
5	4	8	7	4	5	3	6	7	4
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4	1	7	3	8	7	0	9	8	0
2	8	1	4	2	2	2	5	5	7
7	6	7	2	0	0	2	0	3	5
2	0	5	3	5	8	0	1	3	2
1	5	6	3	7	2	5	5	0	8
9	7	2	2	6	0	4	0	7	5

Each of the numbers goes either horizontally from left to right (→), or vertically downwards (↓).

Can you spot all of the numbers in the grid?

3	0	1	0	4	0	6	2	5	8
6	8	6	1	4	5	8	0	1	1
4	7	6	4	1	8	5	0	4	2
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4	7	1	4	1	0	0	0	7	6
9	8	6	6	2	2	6	2	2	8
3	0	0	7	8	3	0	5	8	2
1	2	3	5	6	7	4	5	6	0
7	1	3	6	6	3	5	5	1	8

1432	4075	7075	123	1603	5030
1738	4801	7934	258	2262	6068
1978	5242	8013	384	3010	6756
2002	5637	8537	456	3551	7668
2337	6057	9501	614	4577	8305
3307	6717	9722	870	4764	9317