

Gold Hill Evangelical Lutheran Church

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**Empowered by the Holy Spirit,
United to Serve**



The Nugget E-News

March 9, 2020

Gold Hill News

Lenten Schedule

This year we are sharing our Wednesday worship services with our sisters and brothers at Gloria Dei. We are alternating between our churches for soup & bread suppers (at 5:45 PM) and worship services (at 6:30 PM). This week on March 11 we will meet here at Gold Hill. *Please see the soup & bread signup sheet in the Fellowship Hall.*

Gold Hill Choir practices Wednesdays in Lent following the evening Lenten service.



We Deliver - Sack Lunch Ministry

Please note! Sack Lunch Ministry WILL MEET this month on March 16th. We did not meet in January and February due to Federal holidays. There is a signup sheet in the Fellowship Hall for the donation of lunch items prior to that date.

Schotte Scholarship Applications

It's that time of year again!

Applications are available on the ramp hall rack and you can send yours in to the church office at goldhill.elca@gmail.com.

And if you previously applied for and received a scholarship, you can do so again!

As long as you meet the requirements a scholarship can be received more than one time. The minimum requirement is a 2.5 GPA.

Pick up your application now!



Calendar:

Stephen Ministry Leadership
meets at 6:00 pm
Monday, March 9
Stephen Ministry Supervision
meets at 7:00 pm
Monday, March 9

Women's Gather Bible Study
meets at 10:00 am
Big Sky Senior Living Center
Tuesday, March 10

Great Divide Cluster meeting at 10:00 am
Gold Hill ELC
Tuesday, March 10

Church Council
meets at 5:30 pm
Tuesday, March 10

LWR Quilters
meet at 9:30 am
Wednesday, March 11

Soup & Bread Supper
at 5:45 pm and
Lenten Service
at 6:30 pm
at Gold Hill Lutheran Church
Wednesday, March 11



Butte Emergency Food Bank

The Food Bank items for March are pancake and muffin mixes. Let's tackle hunger in our community!

You can bring your donation to the church to leave in the Fellowship Hall, one of the baskets at each sanctuary door, or in the church office. Thank you for your generosity in supporting our local Food Bank. Everything you do helps to feed someone who is hungry.

Women's Spring Retreat

You're invited!

Women's Spring Retreat

April 17-19, 2020

Flathead Lutheran Bible Camp

Lakeside, MT

You are committed to your church. You have friends in your congregation and a history of participating in the activities there. Working together, your church continues to bless its membership, your wider community, and the world.

But do you ever feel overwhelmed by what is needed to make your ministries sustainable? Do you feel divided by differing viewpoints and pressing issues that compete for your time and resources?

Pastor Stacey Siebrasse will teach us practical skills that help identify personal and congregational priorities. Using scripture to guide us, we will see what is possible when we work in unison, with the Spirit, to revive God's church and its people.

Register by April 1 to save!

* Register by April 1: \$145.00 (Includes two nights lodging, all activities, and meals)

* Register between April 2-12: \$155.00

* \$60.00 One Day Only (Two meals, speaker, workshops, no lodging)

Please see attached **FLYER** for registration or register online **HERE**.

QUESTIONS? Call or email Nancy Solum at 1-406-240-0023 or email at WomensSpringRetreatMT@gmail.com



Gold Hill Choir

meets after

Lenten

Service on

Wednesday, March 11

Overeaters Anon.

meets at 6:15 pm

Wednesday, Mar. 11

Al-Anon

meets at 7:30 pm

Wednesday, Mar. 11

Copper Cloggers

meet 1 - 4 pm

Thursday, March 12

Crafts & Conversation

meets 6:00 - 9:00 pm

in Room 104

Thursday, March 12

Overeaters Anon.

meet at 5:00 pm

Friday, March 13

Worship Service:

at 9:30 am

Sunday School:

at 10:45 am

Coffee Hour:

at 10:45 am

Sunday, March 15

Bible Study Opportunities:

Group Study every Thursday at 6:30 am @ Perkins Restaurant

Women's Gather Bible Study meets

the second Tuesday of the month at 9:30 am at Big Sky Senior Living Center on Waterford Way, in the Library



Words from the Bishop:

Following Christ through the Law

What does God's Law of Love have to do with following Jesus? Everything, according to Jesus in his Sermon on the Mount. (Matthew 5-7) Jesus begins his Sermon by blessing his followers with the abundant life that comes only in him. "Rejoice and be glad, for your reward of new life is great in God's kingdom."

Then he gives his followers their identity: "You are the salt of the earth. You are the light of the world." This is not you must try to be salt or light, but you ARE already. We as his followers are those who flavor the earth and light up the world.

He then calls his followers to live out this identity in Christ into the world, so that following Jesus means living in ways that let Christ's light shine and let Christ's salt flavor the world. "Let your light shine before others so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven." These

are the same words that are said to us during our baptism.

And then throughout the rest of the Sermon, Jesus describes what it looks like to let Christ's light shine: by fulfilling God's law of love in the world, not just in its most basic form but in its fullest. "For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth pass away, not one letter, not one stroke of a letter, will pass from the law until all is accomplished. Whoever annuls one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others to do the same, will be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven."

The problem is that some days, we don't care for God's law of love very much. The law is always telling us what to do. It gets in the way of our freedom and keeps us from doing, saying, and thinking the things we want. When we don't follow God's law, it has this annoying tendency to make us feel guilty and accuse us. And when we feel accused we fight back, demanding the law be repealed because we believe it takes away our freedoms.

That is until someone hurts us. Then we're crying "there oughta be a law" and demanding someone be punished. I used to tell my ethics students that "everybody is moral relativist until their car gets stolen. Then the law is their best friend." For many, the law works great when it's used against others; but when it's about us, then we'd just as soon be rid of it.

So, if we dislike the law so much, why spend time talking about it? Especially in church where we come to feel good about ourselves. In church, we want to be comforted and consoled. We want to be given good news, uplifted and encouraged. We want to be told how much God loves us and we want to be confirmed as mostly good people who mostly follow God's commands.

What we don't want from the church (the body of Christ) is to be given a bunch of laws to follow or ways we're supposed to behave. And we certainly don't want someone, including our pastor, pointing out how we fail to follow those laws. Often the implication is, "Church isn't supposed to tell me how to live my life. Church is supposed to be a safe zone where I can go to feel good about myself and escape the demands of God and my neighbor."

Dietrich Bonhoeffer, German pastor and theologian who stood up to the Nazis and was killed for it, calls this "cheap grace." "Cheap grace" is when we receive the free gifts of Christ but don't let them change how we live in the world. It's when we turn the gospel into something meaningless by refusing to recognize the power that the gospel has to change how we live together.

A little boy really wanted a new bike. So he sat down to write God a letter. He started by writing, "Dear God, I've been a very good boy..." Then he stopped and thought, "No, God won't believe that!" So he started his letter again. "Dear God, I've mostly been a good boy..." Then he stopped, thought a moment, and then shook his head. "No, God won't believe that either." Standing, he went into the bathroom and grabbed a big towel from the shelf. Then, he went into the living room where his parents kept a ceramic statue of the Virgin Mary. He took the statue, wrapped it safely in the towel and stowed it under his bed. Then he returned to his letter. "Dear God," he wrote, "if you ever want to see your mother again, you'll get me that bike."

Too often, we humans are like that boy. Although God has given us the law of love to help protect our lives here on earth, we keep trying to turn it into a tool of power against God and neighbor or use it to manipulate God and others into giving us our way. We use it as a weapon to prove our own righteousness and judge others. Or we use it as a tool to earn our moral righteousness by climbing over others' backs.

But when we finally admit that we can't follow the law on our own, it's only then that we realize just how much we need Christ. It's only then, in our

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**Interim Pastor
Trina Johnsten**

inability to follow the law, that we're willing to turn to the gospel, saying, "God save me! I can't do it myself." It's only then that we are able to hear Jesus' invitation to follow him into his new life in which we will let the light and love of God shine in all that we do.

God's law of love is indeed life...as it governs our lives here on earth. It protects us, serves us, and guides us into a safer, kinder, healthier life together when we follow it. The law is God's gift to us and it blesses us in a sinful world. But at the end of the day, it has no power over our salvation before God. The law can't save us from our sinful selves. Only Jesus Christ can do that, by giving us new life in relationship with God and empowering us to live as the salt and light he's made us to be.

Your fellow follower of Christ,
Bishop Laurie

Gold Hill Lutheran Church Welcomes You!

Are you looking for a place to connect with a faithful community, grow in faith, and put your talents to work in serving others? Look no further, we welcome you at Gold Hill Lutheran Church! To learn more about the mission and ministry of Gold Hill Lutheran Church, please contact us at 406-723-4242.