



RISEN CHRIST
LUTHERAN CHURCH

Pastor's Pen

Once there were three trees on a hill in the woods. They were discussing their hopes and dreams when the first tree said, "Someday I hope to be a treasure chest. I could be filled with gold, silver and precious gems. I could be decorated with intricate carving and everyone would see the beauty." Then the second tree said, "Someday I will be a mighty ship. I will take kings and queens across the waters and sail to the corners of the world. Everyone will feel safe in me because of the strength of my hull." Finally the third tree said, "I want to grow to be the tallest and straightest tree in the forest. People will see me on top of the hill and look up to my branches, and think of the heavens and God and how close to them I am reaching. I will be the greatest tree of all time and people will always remember me."

After a few years of praying that their dreams would come true, a group of woodsmen came upon the trees. When one came to the first tree he said, "This looks like a strong tree, I think I should be able to sell the wood to a carpenter," and he began cutting it down. The tree was happy, because he knew that the carpenter would make him into a treasure chest. At the second tree the woodsman said, "This looks like a strong tree, I should be able to sell it to the shipyard." The second tree was happy because he knew he was on his way to becoming a mighty ship. When the woodsmen came upon the third tree, the tree was frightened because he knew that if they cut him down his dreams would not come true. One of the woodsmen said, "I don't need anything special from my tree, so I'll take this one", and he cut it down.

When the first tree arrived at the carpenters, he was made into a feed box for animals. He was then placed in a barn and filled with hay. This was not at all what he had prayed for. The second tree was cut and made into a small fishing boat. His dreams of being a mighty ship and carrying kings had come to an end. The third tree was cut into large pieces and left alone in the dark.

The years went by, and the trees forgot about their dreams. Then one day, a man and woman came to the barn. She gave birth and they placed the baby in the hay in the feed box that was made from the first tree. The man wished that he could have made a crib for the baby, but this manger would have to do. The tree could feel the importance of this event and knew that it had held the greatest treasure of all time. Years later, a group of men got in the fishing boat made from the second tree. One of them was tired and went to sleep. While they were out on the water, a great storm arose and the tree didn't think it was strong enough to keep the men safe. The men woke the sleeping man, and He stood and said "Peace" and the storm stopped. At this time, the tree knew that it had carried the King of Kings in its boat. Finally, someone came and got the third tree. It was carried through the streets as the people mocked the man who was carrying it. When they came to a stop, the man was nailed to the tree and raised in the air to die at the top of a hill. When Sunday came, the tree came to realize that it was strong enough to stand at the top of the hill and be as close to God as was possible, because Jesus had been crucified on it.

Jeremiah 29:11: *For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Isaiah 55:8-9:* *For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the LORD. As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.* When things don't seem to be going your way, always know that God has a plan for you. If you place your trust in Him, He will give you great gifts. Each of the trees got what they wanted, just not in the way they had imagined. We don't always know what God's plans are for us. We just know that His ways are not our ways, but His ways are always best. Reflect on the story of **The Three Trees** and these two Bible passages this month as we prepare for Lent and face the challenges God has put before us. Grace to you and your family!

Pastor Chris

My Heavenly Prayer

Let the Holy Spirit be your guide
Jesus be your leader
And God be your Heavenly Father
God Bless



Linda Pierre

CHANGE

Change can be perceived
Critically or positively,
With change comes
Confusion and hope.

Linda Pierre



CHANGE



Worship Committee Notes

USHERS: When ushering up for communion please usher anyone sitting on the side chairs of the church first then the pews.

Ash Wednesday will be on Wednesday, February 22. **Lenten services will be at 7:00 PM.**

If you are interested in the vital role of counter please contact Amy Larson. If we could have 2 additional counters we would be able to spread this responsibility out.

Thank you to everyone who participates on the Worship Support Team for your work in our church!

-Amy Larson



College Care Packages - We will be assembling care packages for our Risen Christ college students on **Sunday, February 12th**. Donations of small items or treats for these care packages are welcome. See the table in the narthex for more information or contact Lori Raebel with donations or to provide updated school addresses.

Risen Christ Lutheran Church

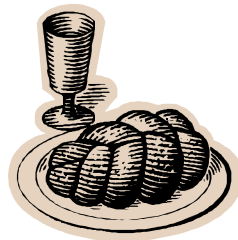
Mardi Gras Brunch **Cancelled**



Lenten Soup Dinners

Before the celebration of the Wednesday Lenten services, we will be having soup and sandwich dinners again this year. A menu of soup, sandwich, condiments, dessert and beverages will be served. Mike Prokosch will supply the sandwiches and most of the soups, but donations of soup and desserts are requested. The dinners are free to all, but any free-will donations will be given to the LCRC general fund. The serving will start at 5:30PM.

Volunteers to oversee the kitchen operation are needed on some of the evenings, as Mike Prokosch will not be available during the serving of the meal.

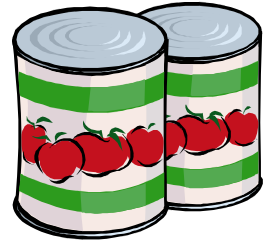


Seder Dinner

On Maundy Thursday (April 5), we will have a Seder Dinner. An explanation of the dinner and its traditions will be included in the service. Small portions of the traditional Seder dinner components will be available for tasting. However, a soup dinner following the intent of a Seder dinner will be served for all.



Be a Souper Hero!

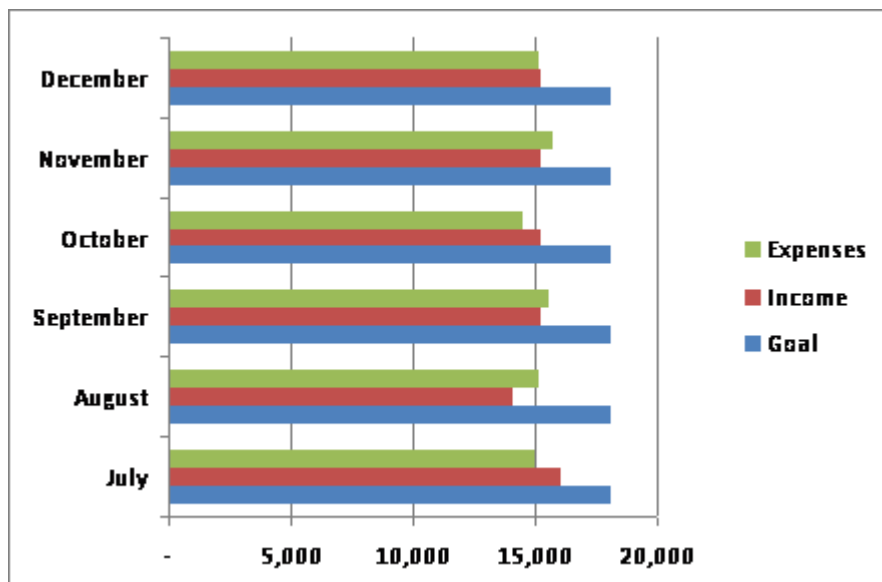


March is Minnesota FoodShare Month. Items and funds donated will be matched by Minnesota FoodShare so your donation will be multiplied. Please bring soup or anything you would like to donate before the last week of March and we will get it to our local Valley Outreach Food Shelf in Stillwater.

Please contact Carolyn Fernandez at the church office 770-3618, office@risenchristlutheran.com or Joan Converse 779-1837 with questions.

General Funds 2011

	Goal	Income	Expenses
July	18,000	15,989	14,933
August	18,000	13,986	15,073
September	18,000	15,201	15,462
October	18,000	15,197	14,396
November	18,000	15,123	15,648
December	18,000	15,134	15,101



February 2012



22nd of February

- *5:30pm Soup Supper*
- *7pm Worship w/ Communion*

9050 60th Street North
Stillwater, MN 55082
(Grant)

To: Friends of Risen Christ Lutheran Church

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Www.risenchristlutheran.com

PROCLAIMING CHRIST IN A CHANGING WORLD

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