

Lutherans Falsely Accused of Money Laundering



General Mike Flynn ✓

@GenFlynn



Now it's the "Lutheran" faith (this use of "religion" as a money laundering operation must end):

Lutheran Family Services and affiliated organizations receive massive amounts of taxpayer dollars, and the numbers speak for themselves. These funds, total BILLIONS of American taxpayer dollars.

by security advisor for Trump Administration

Last weekend Lt. General Mike Flynn, a security advisor for the Trump administration, posted on X a message accusing Lutherans of "money laundering". This is NOT true, and he was not using this term correctly. This was likely done to get attention to his post. Unfortunately it portrays our church in a bad light.

His post points to grants given to Lutheran social service organizations for things like helping to care for poor elderly people, people with disabilities, and for helping to settle vetted legal refugees. You can argue whether or not taxpayer money should be spent on these things, but it is NOT "money laundering".

Below is a message from our bishop Nathan Piphon, that he wrote to pastors and other leaders in the New England Synod in response. It's aimed at pastors, but I think it's good for all to hear/read. It includes a list of the Lutheran affiliated organizations in New England that receive federal funds.

Pr. Todd

Monday, February 3, 2025

Dear Rostered and Licensed Lay Ministers of the New England Synod:

Yesterday we experienced shameful attacks on the integrity of the Lutheran expression of Christianity in the United States. Members of the President's team, Mike Flynn and Elon Musk, publicly called our historic Lutheran commitments to loving and serving our neighbors in Christ's name a "money laundering operation" in which we are receiving "illegal payments" from the Federal government. These comments have been widely shared on social media.

Presiding Bishop Eaton responded directly last night with a video posted on the ELCA Facebook page. Bishop Eaton affirmed the ELCA's commitment to witnessing to Christ's

love by feeding people who are hungry, caring for people who are sick, and advocating for justice, peace, and the dignity of all people. She affirmed the decades-long work Lutheran Social Services and Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (now named Global Refuge) have provided serving immigrants and our neighbors in need. She also shared concern for other faith-based and community organizations who have endured similar attacks and called on office-holders at all levels of government to use their platforms to denounce misinformation and baseless accusations.

Presiding Bishop Eaton's response:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Liqz0VdZG1E>

This morning I spoke with Ascentria President & CEO Angela Bovill. I expressed the New England Synod's support and appreciation for Ascentria Care Alliance (formerly Lutheran Social Services of New England) and together we discussed how we can respond in New England. I will share on my blog and social media a more public response. This first communication is directly with you as rostered and licensed lay ministers.

We encourage you to: advocate, educate, and connect.

[1] Advocate

Call, and encourage your parishioners to call your members of Congress in Washington, D.C. to advocate for the full funding of Ascentria and all other social service providers. The rhetoric and intentions of the President's team threaten the continued funding of a multitude of programs serving a variety of our neighbors in need including programs and services for the elderly in nursing homes, children in foster care, homeless teenagers learning to be mothers, disabled individuals seeking to work, and low-income individuals needing transportation. Advocate not just for Ascentria but for Catholic Charities, and all other faith-based and community organizations providing invaluable services to our neighbors in need. While you may have ignored appeals like this in the past, for the sake of our neighbors in need, and whatever your personal politics, please take this appeal seriously.

[2] Educate

Know for yourselves, and teach your parishioners, that Ascentria Care Alliance provides a variety of programs for our neighbors in need across a wide range of demographics. The callous, and dangerous, comments and threats by Mike Flynn and Elon Musk put programs such as these at risk:

In Massachusetts –

Senior Care Services:

\$16.2 million funding for 120-bed Laurel Ridge Rehabilitation & Skilled Care Center, Jamaica Plain (135 employees)

\$17.5 million funding for 107-bed Lutheran Rehabilitation & Skilled Care Center, Worcester (178 employees)

\$17.0 million funding for 122-bed Presentation, Rehabilitation & Skilled Care Center, Brighton (174 employees)

\$21.7 million funding for 147-bed Quaboag Rehabilitation & Skilled Care Center, West Brookfield, MA (245 employees)

Foster Care Services: \$1.3 million funding to provide personalized support for foster families and case management for foster children, including 24/7 on-call support (6 employees)

Young Parent Living Programs: \$2.3 million funding for services helping low income and homeless teen mothers (27 employees)

Disability Services: \$2.2 million funding for services to support children as young as six years old and adults with Developmental Disabilities and/or Autism Spectrum Disorder (43 employees)

In New Hampshire –

In-Home Services: \$11.4 million funding providing 350,000 hours of in-home services to elderly and at-risk clients (over 300 employees)

Specialized Foster Care Services: \$2.7 million funding providing home-based and specialized foster care services for children (14 employees)

Language Bank: \$4.5 million providing interpretation and translation services for medical, legal, academic, and social services

Good News Garage: \$5 million funding for affordable and reliable transportation options to low-income individuals (33 employees)

In Connecticut -

Senior Care Services:

\$19.1 million funding for 120-bed Lutheran Home of Southbury (220 employees)

\$4 million funding for 135-bed Luther Ridge at Middletown (38 employees)

In Maine -

Ascentria Mental Health and Disability Services: \$5 million funding for group homes in Auburn, Hebron, Lewiston, and Waterville and programs for persons who are economically disadvantaged, have disabilities, chronic illness, mental illness, deafness and other challenges to become and remain successful contributors to the communities in which they live and work (58 employees).

Note: I did not include the \$10.9 million dollars Ascentria Care Alliance received last year for Services for New Americans which helped resettle refugees and establish families in the U.S. fleeing conflict and oppression in their home countries. This funding has already been terminated. In addition, a “stop-work” order forced Ascentria, Global Refuge, and other organizations receiving federal funds to immediately stop all work with refugees and immigrants – including those already lawfully and legally in the United States but eligible for help as they get settled into their new homes.

[3] Connect

If you are contacted by the media, or would like further information about the work of Ascentria Care Alliance in New England, please reach out to:

Michaele Leare
mleare@ascentria.org.

You may refer any media inquiries directly to Michaele or you may delay responding to media requests until after you've had a chance to speak with Michaele. She is also available to answer any specific questions you have about Ascentria's work and available to help you share precise and accurate information to reduce and counter misinformation.

Also, consider finding ways to show your appreciation to Ascentria's many employees throughout New England who feel under attack and threatened.

“Truly I tell you, just as you cared for the hungry, the thirsty, the stranger, the naked, the sick and the prisoner, who are members of my family, you cared for me.” (Matthew 25:40).

On a pastoral note as your bishop ...

Now is not the time to retreat in solitude, despair, or apathy or to move forward as a lone ranger. We need Christ in each other. Turn towards each other for consolation and comfort. Turn towards each other for encouragement and insight. Turn towards each other in action, advocacy, and public witness. See in the community of the faithful, nourished by God's Word and the sacraments, the living Christ alive for you and for the world. This is what I am doing as your bishop to be the leader I am called to be in this moment.

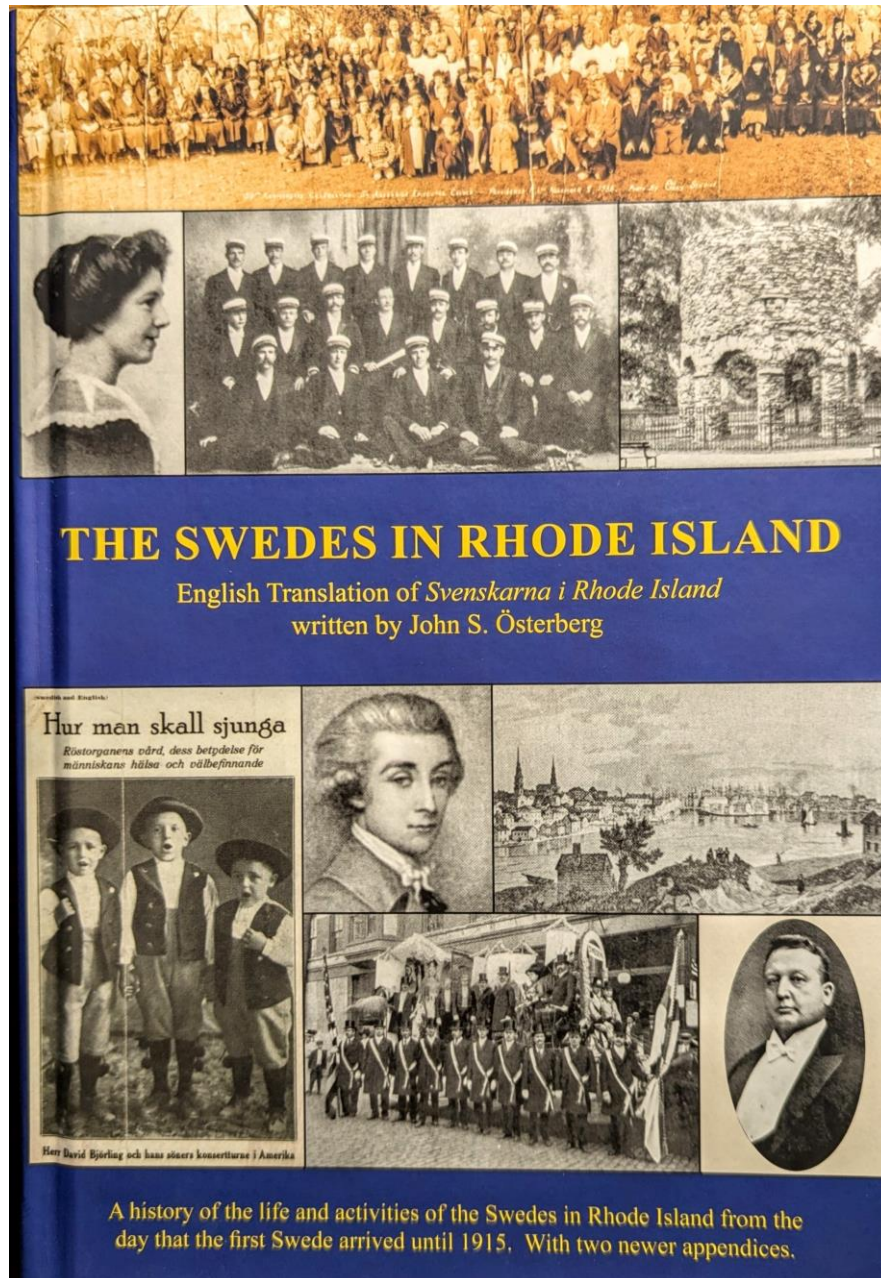
Further, encourage those who support the President's actions, or who don't understand the very real pain being experienced right now among so many, to listen deeply and intentionally to their neighbors. Take time to listen to immigrants and transgender members of the New England Synod who are afraid to go to church and now afraid to leave the country. Listen to fellow congregation members who see in recent actions not just changes in policies that are normal after any close election, but dangerous changes in tone and direction that threaten freedoms we have taken for granted. Listen to those who fear yesterday's attacks on the integrity of Lutherans is just the beginning of even more drastic and unthinkable actions.

Now is not the time for any of us to turn inward. Now is the time to turn outward and join the Holy Spirit, calling us to be the Church of Jesus Christ in love and service to our neighbors.

Beautiful and beloved children of God, thank you for your ministries, for your advocacy, and for your faithfulness.

Yours in Christ,
Bishop Piphó

New Book Includes Emanuel



A new book has just been published titled "The Swedes in Rhode Island" by John Osterberg. Not surprisingly Emanuel is mentioned.

Astrid Drew, who was a longtime member of the Scandinavian Women's Chorus of RI, has generously donated a copy for Emanuel's library. Thank you!

If you are interested in purchasing a copy, please let Astrid or Pastor Todd know. Copies are \$32.

Lakota Star Quilts

for sale



in support of the Oglala Sioux Tribe

Jack Silverman came and spoke at Emanuel last October about his experience living on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota with the Oglala Sioux Tribe. Jack is a friend of Pastor Todd's and grew up in Rhode Island. A grandmother he knows there makes traditional Lakota Star Quilts and is attempting to sell them.

The quilts are \$300. This includes shipping and everything. Each quilt is unique and handmade. Traditionally, quilts are given as gifts in honor of a baby's birth, marriages, funerals, or other rites of passage.

If you are interested in purchasing one, please let Pastor Todd know or contact Jack directly at [**jlsilverman2019@gmail.com**](mailto:jlsilverman2019@gmail.com)
Thank you.

Reconciling in Christ Sunday at Emanuel



This Sunday **February 9th** we will be celebrating that we are a Reconciling in Christ congregation that welcomes all of God's children.

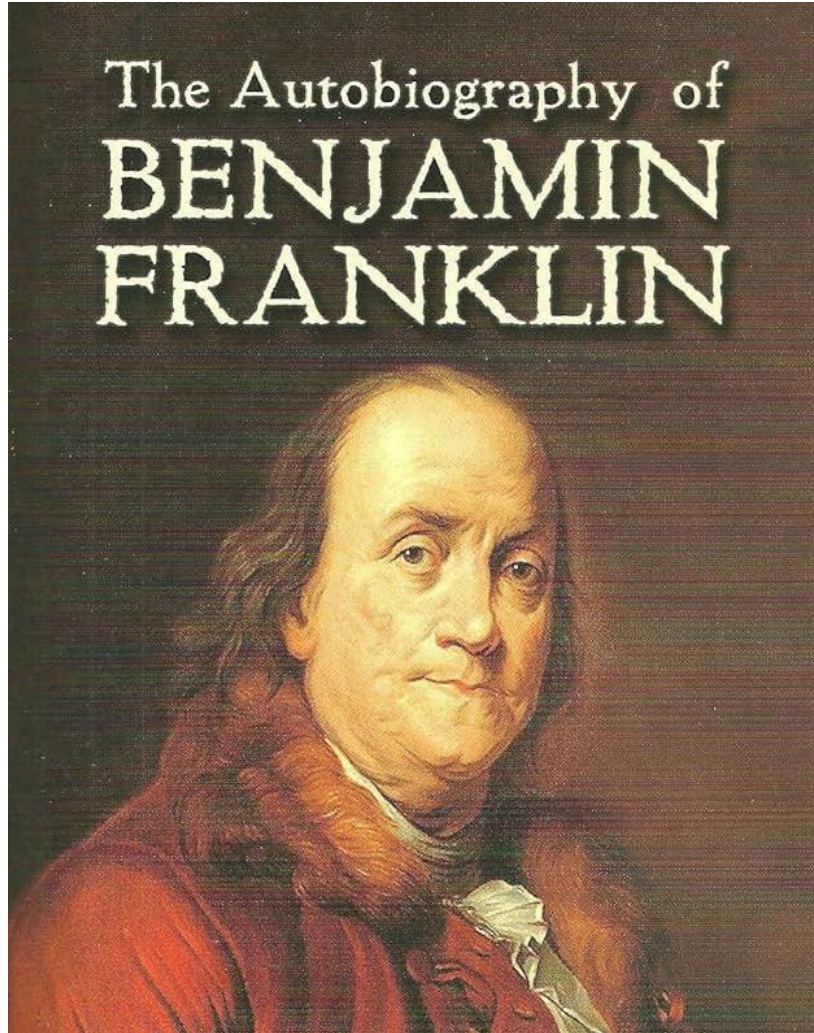
RECONCILING IN CHRIST AFFIRMATION OF WELCOME

If you are Asian, Hispanic, black or white....
If you are male or female or transgender...
If you are 3 days old, 30 years old or 103 years old...
If you've never stepped foot in a church...
If you are Buddhist, Roman Catholic or a life long Lutheran...
If you are singled, married, divorced, separated, or partnered...
If you are straight, gay, lesbian or bisexual...
If you have or had addictions, phobias, abortions
or a criminal record...
If you own, rent, live with your parents or are homeless...
If you are fully abled or a person of differing abilities...

YOU ARE WELCOME HERE!

Emanuel Lutheran Church

Readers of Emanuel



Sunday February, 23rd

The Readers of Emanuel book club is reading
“The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin”
by Benjamin Franklin :-)

Written by Franklin between the years 1771 and 1790, Franklin referred to as his “Memoirs”. In it he describes his journey from boyhood to becoming an internationally famous founding father. Along the way he discusses his practice of vegetarianism, how to make friends, ideas on creating a new religion, the start of public libraries and the start of the first firefighting company.

We will meet Sunday February 23rd after worship
at ~12pm in Jacobs Hall. Everyone is invited!

BLOOMING

4

GOOD!

BUY FLOWERS IN

FEBRUARY

@

STOP & SHOP

**ELC Foodbank will receive donations from
each bouquet sold.**

Quaker Lane S & S

Live Laugh & Learn Lunch



The next lunch will be held:

Thursday, February 20th 12:30PM to 2PM

at **Olive Garden**

31 Universal Blvd, Warwick, RI

Estimated cost \$12 to \$25

If you would like to go, please email, text or call
Michael Groleau at

Cell: 401-465-5021

Email: MichaelKGroleau@gmail.com

Friends welcome!

Wednesday Bible Study of Genesis



Next session Wednesday February 12th @ 7PM

We meet in person in Jacobs Hall at Emanuel.

On February 12th we will be reading about Jacob wrestling at night with an angel/God/himself.

No previous knowledge of the Bible necessary.

Do You Like Coffee?



If so, consider hosting coffee hour one Sunday. If it's your first time (or 2nd or 3rd), people will help you and show you where everything is.

Sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board in the entry way. Thank you.

What's your story?



Sharing Our Stories of God

We are inviting people to share stories of how God has shown up in their lives.

If you would be willing to share a story from your life, please let Pastor Todd know. Thank you.

pastor@emanuelww.org

Bible Readings for Sunday February 9th

First Reading

Luke 7:1-10

A Roman centurion stands to lose a highly valued slave. Jewish leaders consider the centurion worthy, but the Gentile declares himself unworthy. In the midst of this tangle of attitudes, the centurion shows his understanding of authority and his testimony that Jesus has it, even authority over illness and death.

¹ After Jesus had finished all his sayings in the hearing of the people, he entered Capernaum. ²A centurion there had a slave whom he valued highly, and who was ill and close to death. ³When he heard about Jesus, he sent some Jewish elders to him, asking him to come and heal his slave. ⁴When they came to Jesus, they appealed to him earnestly, saying, 'He is worthy of having you do this for him, ⁵for he loves our people, and it is he who built our synagogue for us.'

⁶And Jesus went with them, but when he was not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to say to him, 'Lord, do not trouble yourself, for I am not worthy to have you come under my roof; ⁷therefore I did not presume to come to you. But only speak the word, and let my servant be healed. ⁸For I also am a man set under authority, with soldiers under me; and I say to one, "Go", and he goes, and to another, "Come", and he comes, and to my slave, "Do this", and the slave does it.'

⁹When Jesus heard this he was amazed at him, and turning to the crowd that followed him, he said, 'I tell you, not even in Israel have I found such faith.' ¹⁰When those who had been sent returned to the house, they found the slave in good health.

Second Reading

Luke 7:11-17

Jesus' ministry bears witness to God's coming reign, where the lowly are shown mercy and the dead are raised. Here, Jesus ministers to a widow by raising her only son to life.

¹¹ Soon afterwards he went to a town called Nain, and his disciples and a large crowd went with him. ¹²As he approached the gate of the town, a man who had died was being carried out. He was his mother's only son, and she was a widow; and with her was a large crowd from the town. ¹³When the Lord saw her, he had compassion for her and said to her, 'Do not weep.'

¹⁴Then he came forward and touched the bier, and the bearers stood still. And he said, 'Young man, I say to you, rise!' ¹⁵The dead man sat up and began to speak, and Jesus gave him to his mother.

¹⁶Fear seized all of them; and they glorified God, saying, 'A great prophet has risen among us!' and 'God has looked favorably on his people!' ¹⁷This word about him spread throughout Judea and all the surrounding country.

How do the Bible readings speak to you?

Choir at Emanuel



**Sundays at 9AM
in the sanctuary.**

**All who like to make music
are welcome.**

On-line Worship at Emanuel Sundays at 10:30AM



What to Do - if You would Like to Come to On-line Worship

Just click on the Zoom link below on Sunday at 10:30AM:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/93690864460?pwd=cHZ5RVNsdnFYcDhhNVdMKzA2VENlQT09>

You can also join us by phone by calling (929) 205-6099 and entering Meeting ID: 936 9086 4460 and Password: 933328

A video of the service will be posted on Emanuel's website and Facebook group page later in the day.

Offerings to Emanuel



Thank you!

Thank you to everyone who has been mailing in their offering or giving through Simply Giving and Givelify.

Offerings can be mailed to:

Emanuel Lutheran Church
20 Leaf Street
West Warwick, RI 02893

OR you can use either the Simply Giving program, which allows you to automate the giving of an offering from a checking account, or Givelify, which is online app that allows giving through a debit or credit card.

If you would like to find out more about either of these, please let Emanuel's Treasurer, Carol Johnson, or Pastor Todd know. Thank you.

You can give to Emanuel through Givelify by clicking on the DONATE button on Emanuel's website OR by clicking here: [Donate](#)

www.emanuelww.org

Do you have Thrivent Choice Dollars?



**THRIVENT
FINANCIAL®**

Connecting faith & finances for good.®

HOW TO DIRECT THRIVENT CHOICE DOLLARS®

If you have a Thrivent Financial relationship, you may have Thrivent Choice Dollars.

Thrivent Choice Dollars can be given to many organizations including Emanuel. Last year Emanuel received over \$2,000 in Thrivent Choice Dollars. These funds helped Emanuel's ministries. Thank you!

If you have Thrivent Choice dollars, you have to direct them, otherwise they are not given out.

To see if you have Thrivent Choice dollars and to direct them, go to:

- Online at www.Thrivent.com/thriventchoice.
- Phone: [800-847-4836](tel:800-847-4836) and say "Thrivent Choice" at the prompt. The Member Connection Center is open until 6 p.m. Central time, Monday – Friday.

Tuesday Morning Bible Study



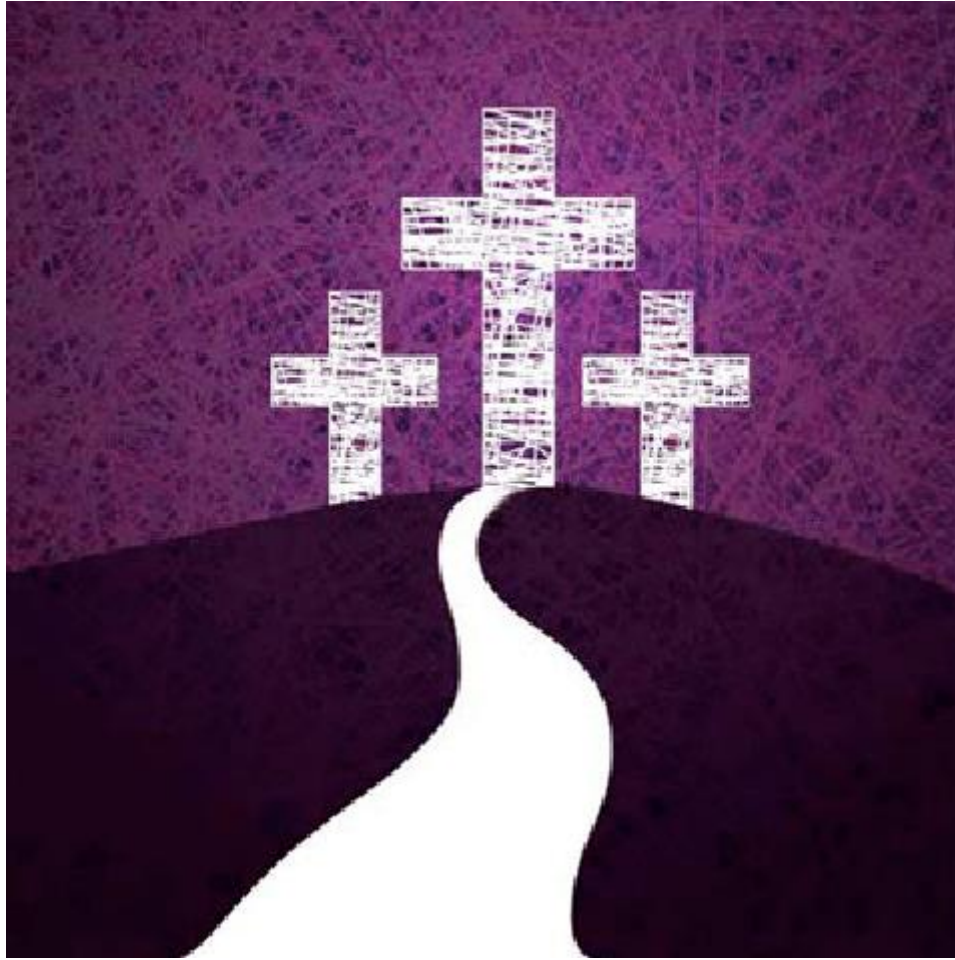
**Join us Tuesdays 9AM to 10AM at Emanuel
in Jacobs Hall for**

Bible Study

**Let's explore the Bible together.
Everyone welcome.**

**Emanuel Lutheran Church,
20 Leaf Street, West Warwick, RI 02893**

Ash Wednesday March 5th



"From dust you come, and to dust you shall return." Genesis 3:19

Dispensation of Ashes at 12PM to 1PM parking lot
Service & Dispensation of Ashes 7PM

Sermon Topics



Narrative Lectionary September 8 – June 8

2/9 Reconciling In Christ Sunday

2/16 More than a Prophet (Jesus is)

2/23 Forgiven at Jesus' Feet

3/2.....Transfiguration Sunday

3/9 The Good Samaritan

3/16 Lament Over Jerusalem

...

The flowers this **Sunday February 9th** are given by Mary Schabek in loving memory of **George “Tom” Fekete.**

Worship Assistants

	<i>Reconciling In Christ February 9</i>	<i>February 16</i>
Counter:	Linda Mensinger Nunez	Ken Wieboldt
	8:00AM	8:00AM
Lector:	Kathy Garriott	Kathy Marco
Acolyte	Tim Hart	Tim Hart
	10:30AM	10:30AM
Lay Minister:	Bruce Johnson	Donna Sennett
Acolyte	Cali LaMountain	-
Ushers	Linda & Ray Nunez	Mary Schabek & Pauline LaVallee
Lector:	Diane Gadoury	Elaine Marsh
Coffee Hour	Principe, Grenier & Hart families	Sue Wieboldt & Diane Plante

February’s Memorial Candle



The Memorial Candle for February is given by Mary Schabek in loving memory of **George Thomas Fekete.**

Upcoming Commemorations

**Cyril, monk, died 869; Methodius, bishop, died 885; missionaries to the Slavs
Friday, February 14, 2025**

These two brothers from Thessalonika, Greece, were monks and were sent to bring Christianity to the Slavic people. In the course of their work they created a written language, inventing the Cyrillic alphabet for it, and translated the Bible and the liturgy.

Double click on link below to see Emanuel's online calendar:

[Emanuel's Online Calendar](#)

The calendar is on Emanuel's web site.