



Sandy Run Lutheran Church

March Tidings

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This was the scene I witnessed one afternoon a few weeks ago as I passed the Columbia airport:

The early rush hour traffic was brisk on Airport Boulevard.

A black car was stopped in the center turn lane, and a man stood outside the car trying to stop four lanes of traffic – two lanes each direction.

I stopped – the first driver in my lane – and looked around to determine why we all were stopping for this man waving beside his car.

And then I saw it: A dog as large as my Labrador loose in all of that traffic.

The man from the stopped car was trying to catch the dog – and my heart stopped, wondering whether he would be able to grab hold of this obviously scared pup.

And, then my eyes caught one more sight in my side mirror. From behind my car and the others stopped going my direction, a man was jogging up the center turn lane.

Just about the time he reached the black car, the man who had stopped all of the traffic grabbed the dog's leash – and the dog was reunited with its owner, who lovingly gathered all 50-plus pounds of dog in his arms and started back down Airport Boulevard.

So why do I tell you this story – other than it was such a heart-warming scene on a busy weekday afternoon?

We have entered the season of Lent with its three disciplines: Prayer, Fasting, and Almsgiving.

Prayer is easy to understand. Jesus gives a clear example of the best way to pray: *Whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret.*

Fasting: Many of us giving up something for Lent – a food item usually – or we delay eating at certain times or on certain days.

But almsgiving? That might be the toughest of all. Almsgiving makes it sound as if we are being asked to dig deeper into pockets that already have been emptied by inflation and economic woes.

Instead, consider this definition I found for almsgiving: *Charity, or almsgiving, is an outward sign of Christian love for others. Generally, it involves some type of sacrifice on behalf of the giver in order to provide for the needs of the other. In doing this, bonds of community are formed.*

Christian love – even for a man and his dog.

Christian love – for the neediest, those who are grieving, those who are hurting, those who are lonely, those forced into a new life.

Sacrificial Christian love – giving of our whole selves, not just money, to improve the lives of others. That is almsgiving.

Pastor Pam



South Carolina Synod Assembly:

June 8-10, Columbia

Sandy Run may send a male delegate and a female delegate.

Cathy Spilde has volunteered to serve as the female delegate. We are looking for a male delegate.

If you are willing to attend Synod Assembly, please see Charles Ott or Pastor Pam,



Evening Lenten services will be held Sundays beginning February 26.

The theme is *Stories of Hope*.

A light supper will be served at 6:15 p.m. Candlelight worship is at 7 p.m.

The Evening Lenten services will follow the *Prayer Around the Cross* order of worship similar to that used at our congregational Lutheridge retreat last fall.

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Bible Study will resume Wednesday, March 1, with a comparison study of the crucifixion/resurrection stories across the four Gospels.

We will watch a dramatization from the movie *The Gospel of John* on March 29. You are welcome to attend just the movie if you like.