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Lessons from the Garbage

PASTOR JEFF BROWNING

A few years back, my wife and I decided it was time for a massive effort to clean up and enhance our basement. As our efforts progressed, we recognized this was going to be a bigger project than we first thought. So we rented a dumpster. Needless to say, filling that dumpster that was parked in our driveway for a week was an enlightening process.

It's amazing how much stuff had found its way into that basement over the years. Boxes and boxes, little things and big things, bits and pieces from childhood, from the not-so-distant past, and every year in between, all accumulated in a space that was much too small for so much stuff.

Most of the items were things we have been saving. Some have fairly observed that we tend to be overly sentimental in our household. A few items were left behind by my predecessors, previous pastors who had lived in the residence.

A tiny amount of what had accumulated over the years—some pictures, a few books, and a handful of mementos—was actually worth saving. The rest, which was taking up the bulk of space in the basement, could safely and honestly be labeled "junk."

We would open up a sealed box, and the questions would begin: *What is this?*

When did we get this? Why would we save this? What are we going to do with this? At one time all of these things were deemed treasures worthy of saving and storing. Now we recognized that most of it needed to go. The passage of time has rendered them meaningless, obsolete, and destined for the dumpster.

My sense is that this phenomenon extends far beyond the realm of the Browning household. All human beings tend to have a skewed sense of priorities when it comes to such matters. We place such value on owning and accumulating. We fall in love with things and stuff. Our focus becomes all too worldly. So much of what we treasure ends up in the dumpster, whether it's put there by us or those who come after us.

We remember Matthew 6, where Jesus says, *"Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and rust do not destroy and thieves do not break in and steal."*

Fittingly, these verses will once again be featured prominently during the upcoming Lenten season.

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, February 18, and will take us on a six-week journey culminating in the observance

Please turn to page 2



Message from the President

LAURA BAUER

Is there a way to combine Ash Wednesday and Valentine's Day? I think there is. Almost 20 years ago, I was in eastern Pennsylvania visiting colleges with my oldest daughter – Haverford, Villanova, Bryn Mawr etc. It happened to be February break, and like this year, Ash Wednesday fell during the break.

Wishing to attend a service, we located a small Lutheran church. I don't remember too much about the church—it did have closely spaced dark wooden pews, but there is one detail about the Communion service I recently remembered. Instead of each person receiving an individual wafer, the Pastor held a loaf of unsliced white bread and tore off a portion for each person seeking Communion.

The symbolism of this made an impact on me. Here, in common, all were sharing the one body of Christ as we each received a piece of the same loaf. We were not only in Communion with Christ, we were a community sharing the same source of sustenance. And it was an act of love that allowed us to share the same body and allows us to do so every time we share the Communion meal.

As Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent, it inevitably leads us to Jesus' death on the cross; "For God so loved the world, he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." John 3:16. Jesus loves us and made the ultimate sacrifice by dying for our salvation.

Valentine's Day—with the red candy hearts and romantic dinners—does not represent this incomparable love. It is however, a reminder to follow Jesus' command to "love one another as I have loved you" (John 13:34-35) and to "love your neighbor as yourself" (Matthew 22:39). Share the love; share the Communion meal.

Volunteer at Resurrection

**Share God's love, Get involved,
Bring Resurrection Hope to Life!**

Get involved this month—February 2026.

Christian Care -

Meal A Month – Feb. 17, 1:30pm
LSS Food Donations - ongoing

Fellowship -

Sunday Morning Coffee Hour.

Worship Assistants -

Saturday Evening or Sunday Morning.
Ushers, Communion Assistants, Readers

All Volunteers, contact Michelle.Kollmeier@resgc.org

Lessons from the Garbage

Continued from page 1

of Good Friday and the celebration of Easter.

Lent provides a very necessary opportunity for Christians.

In Lent, we are called to refocus, reprioritize, and repent. We seek to cast aside the sin that weighs us down and all that might take our attention away from He who is most important.

We fix our eyes on Jesus, and the all-availing sacrifice he made for us when He died on the cross. Jesus has made us God's children, forgiven, eternal citizens of the Kingdom of God. What Jesus has earned for us and God has given to us as baptized Christians are the only gifts that we will get to keep forever.

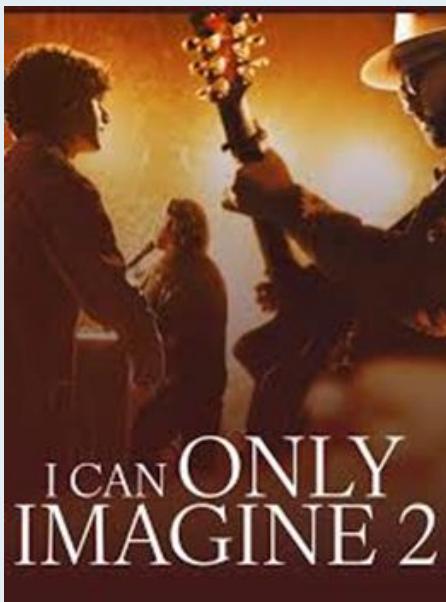
There's so much unnecessary junk in all of our lives that takes our attention away from what's most important. Throw it out.

Fix your eyes on the cross. Join us on Ash Wednesday, for the beginning of a meaningful, necessary journey of faith.

Ash Wednesday services are February 14 at 12, 4:30, and 7:30 p.m. Ashes and Communion will be offered at all services. The church will be open throughout the day for anyone who wants to pray and receive ashes. 



Pastor Jeff Browning
Serves as Pastor
at Resurrection.



I Can Only Imagine 2

Lionsgate, February 2026

I Can Only Imagine was a Christian pop song released in 2001 by the rock band MercyMe. It quickly became the best-selling Christian single ever recorded, and the only Christian single to hit double platinum. Crossing over to both pop and country radio, it also hit #5 on the Billboard Adult Contemporary chart.

In 2018, a movie with the same title was released in theaters. The movie, like the song, told the story of the lead singer and songwriter, Bart Millard, and his complex relationship with his father. It details Millard's life starting with an abusive childhood, becoming a successful musician, finding faith, and reconciling and forgiving his father. The movie, starring J. Michael Finley and Dennis Quaid, was directed by Andrew and Jon Erwin, and became the largest-grossing faith-based movie ever.

This month, the highly anticipated *I Can Only Imagine 2* will be released in movie theaters. This sequel picks up with Bart Millard living a dream life, married with a son, selling out arenas and enjoying stardom. In this story, a newcomer (Milo Ventimiglia, *This is Us*) joins his band and the pair develop an unexpected friendship. Based on faith, family, and finding God, *I Can Only Imagine 2* hits theaters February 20th.

Review by Kimberley Murphy

Stained Glass to Glitter as We Worship

by KEN MEYN

You're sitting in the church on Christmas Eve, and you look up.

Above you, hanging from the nave lights and spinning very slowly in the warm air currents, is a shimmering stained glass angel in white, complete with halo and trumpet.

These works of art - one for each of the eight lamps - were created by Charles List, a longtime member of the congregation whose family were founding members of Resurrection.

"Before I retired, I spent 25 years repairing things for an antiques store," Charles said. He developed an interest in stained glass and researched the methods for creating these objects.

First came small angels. After that, "I wanted to make bigger things, and I decided to try butterflies." He went to the library, which found large pictures of monarch butterflies and printed them out for him.

The next step was to create brass frames, using the library pictures as a guide. The glass was then cut to the same shape and rough edges were filed and smoothed. The final step was to solder the glass into its brass frame.

These eight butterflies were a gift to Resurrection. They were hung in the church for the first time early last Fall.

Afterwards he said, "I liked the angels,

but they were too small for the church, and I decided to make bigger ones." The larger angels are the ones that hung in the narthex at Christmas.

Pastor Browning remarked that "I have gotten so many positive comments about Charles's handmade stained glass butterflies and angels. They add so much to the worship space."

Michelle Kollmeier, Director of Christian Education and de facto artist in residence, said, "It is an honor to call Charles my friend. Charles is the most unassuming and gentle artist I know. His love for Resurrection truly shines in the meticulous work and labor of love he puts into his creations. I am so very grateful to know him."

Last November, Charles experienced some medical issues, and wound up in the hospital and, more recently, rehab. Depending on when he comes home and how things are for him after that, he hopes to continue working with stained glass. He is already contemplating the next items.

"I'm thinking of something like flowers. I like flowers, but I'm open to other ideas. I'd be happy if the people in church would offer suggestions."

Anyone with ideas can send them to Charles at his home address or leave a note in my mailbox. I will forward responses to him. 



Stained glass angel and butterfly designed and created by Charles List.

The SymphoNYChorus

Is coming to Resurrection

Saturday, February 7 at 7 p.m.

Don't miss it!

Stewardship

by JEFF CARSTENS

Dear Church Family, As we step into the new year, the glow of Christmas reminds us of the greatest gift ever given—God's Son, Jesus Christ. In response to this incredible generosity, we are called to stewardship: wisely using what God has entrusted to us. While financial giving is one important aspect, stewardship also encompasses our **time** and **talents**—the unique abilities and hours each of us can offer to serve Him and one another.

The Christmas season brought out the best in us. We saw volunteers decorating the sanctuary, musicians sharing beautiful carols, greeters welcoming visitors with warm smiles, and the congregation coming together to create the wonderful experience of A Night in Bethlehem. These acts of service reflected God's love shining through our community.

Thank you to everyone who gave so generously of your time, talents and treasure during this busy season and throughout 2025. Your generosity enabled Resurrection to maintain our thriving ministry and the many missions we support beyond our church walls.

Now, as we turn the page to February,

let's carry that spirit forward. Your time and talents remain vital to the ongoing life of our church. Areas such as worship support—ushering, altar care and readers are always welcome. Sharing your gifts with our younger folks such as teaching Sunday school and supporting youth activities is a huge help. Of course, with each major event there are opportunities to flex muscles and get in some steps by assisting with set-up and disassembly of tables, chairs, tents, etc. Each pair of hands helps complete the tasks quickly, and the fellowship doing so makes it enjoyable as well.

No talent is too small, and no amount of time is insignificant. Whether you can commit weekly, monthly, or just occasionally, there is a place for you. Prayerfully consider how God might be calling you to use your gifts in 2026. If you're unsure where to start, please reach out to the church office—we'd love to help match your talents with opportunities to serve.

Together, let's continue building God's kingdom with the time and talents He has so graciously given us.

Thank you for your faithful stewardship!

In Christ's service,
Jeff Carstens, Stewardship Chair 

BUILDING BLOCKS

Stories & News from Resurrection Preschool

Patience, Persistence and Positivity

By KAREN SCHOENFELD,
Lead Teacher Time For Two's program

I recently heard of the "Three-P Rule for Potty Training," and I feel it's a great approach.

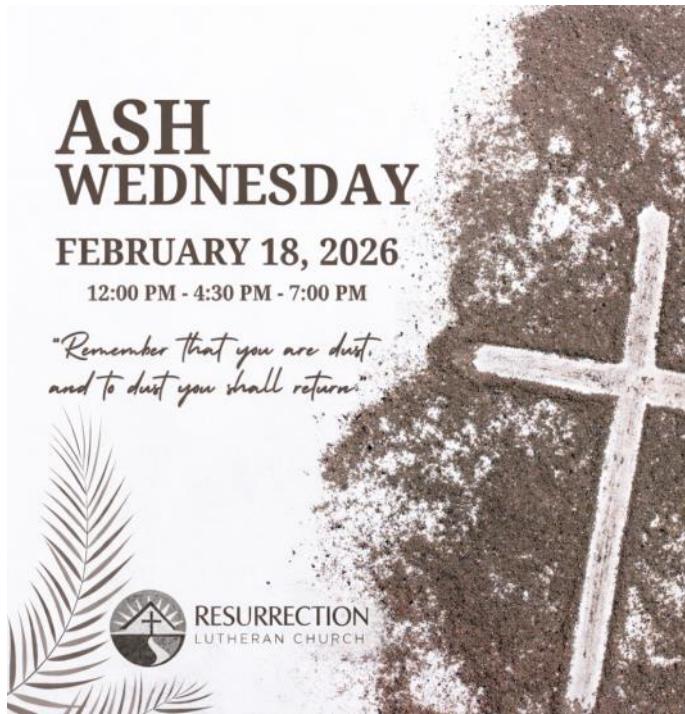
The first P is patience, and we all know this can be tough, but it takes time to learn any new skill and potty training is not always an easy task. Make sure you have time to really allow this process to happen. If you are feeling rushed or pressured, then patience will not be very achievable.

Some people use a three-day approach where they set aside most activities and allow the child and themselves time to get used to the process with limited distractions. We all know accidents will happen, and when they do, exercising patience is key in dealing with them.

The next step is persistence. Experts suggest making frequent trips to the potty is important. In the beginning of training, it is recommended that you go every 20-30 minutes to set up a routine. Also encourage drinking lots of fluids to keep the process moving.

The third P is Positivity! Everyone loves praise, and when you are encouraging and being positive it makes a person happy and relaxed. Not all trips to the potty will be successful, but saying "great job trying, we'll come back in a little while" leaves your child still feeling accomplished.

Hoping these tips will be helpful when you and your child begin the potty-training process!



Easter Day, A Moveable Feast

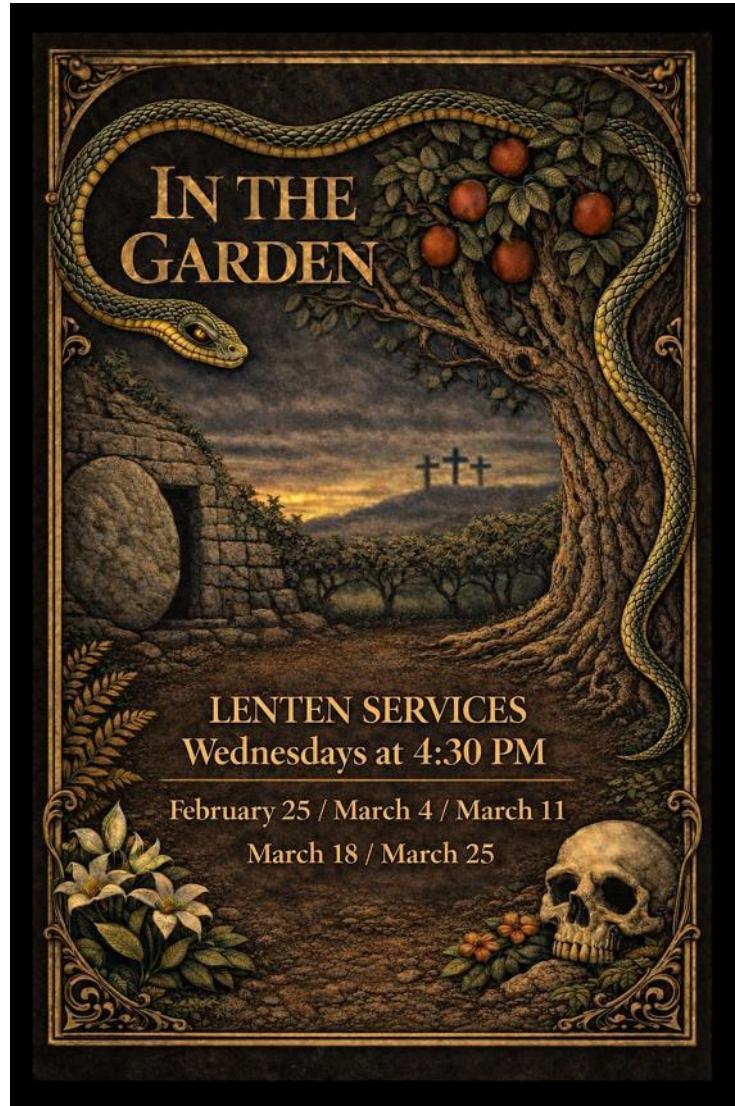
Last year Easter was celebrated on April 20. This year Easter's date is April 5; next year it is March 28.

Why can't the date of Easter be fixed, in much the same way Christmas is always December 25?

The answer to that question goes back 1700 years to the time when Constantine, the first Roman emperor to convert to Christianity, convened the Council of Nicea in 325. (This is the bunch that gave us the Nicene Creed which established the tenets of the Christian faith.)

The Council decided the date of Easter each year would be determined "as the first Sunday after the first full moon (the Paschal Full Moon) that occurs on or after the vernal equinox (around March 21st), linking it to lunar cycles rather than a fixed solar date like Christmas." (Thank you, Google AI)

Got it?



In other words, the first Sunday after the beginning of Spring is Easter. If the vernal equinox falls on a Sunday, Easter is moved to the Sunday after.

The earliest possible date for Easter is March 22, and the latest April 25.

Using the lunar calendar to set Easter's date also means it will line up with the Jewish Passover, which was a significant event immediately prior to Jesus's resurrection.

Because the orthodox churches use the Julian calendar, rather than our Gregorian calendar, Orthodox Easter in 2026 will be celebrated a week later, on April 12. 

Kenneth Meyn
Director of Music and Handbell Choir
Director. He retired after 38 years at
The New York Times.



Pizza at Pastor's

by VICAR TYLER MARTIN



Resurrection youth enjoying a night of pizza and games.

Pizza at Pastor's" has quickly become one of those simple monthly rhythms in ministry that does far more work than you'd expect from a stack of pizza boxes.

Once a month, our youth gather for an evening of games, prayer, and genuine

fellowship at Pastor's house—time set aside to build friendships in Christ and to remember that church isn't only something you attend; it's also a family you belong to.

Each month, the pizza comes from a different local spot, sponsored by a dif-

ferent family in the congregation. That gift sets the table—literally—for a night of fun and connection. From there, things tend to get delightfully chaotic in the best possible way.

We play group games designed to pull everyone in, not just the loudest or most outgoing. One week we're trying to identify fairytale monsters hidden among us. Another week we're protecting the "president" from would-be assailants—who might include mimes, clowns, and even Romeo and Juliet. It's playful, a little ridiculous, and exactly the point: laughter breaks the ice, and shared joy builds trust.

But the real highlights aren't the games (or even the pizza). It's watching students celebrate each other's wins, work together when a game gets tough, and learn how to include the kid who's new or quiet. It's seeing friendships form across grades—the sound of a room full of teenagers laughing without having to perform. And before anyone heads home, we close by practicing what we want to become second nature for them: prayer. We're helping our students learn that prayer is something you practice—bringing real needs, real gratitude, and real people before our Lord. We pray together for friends and families, for our community, for the world, and for faith that holds when life gets heavy.

Thank you for supporting this ministry—through pizza, encouragement, and your prayers. Our congregation is helping raise the next generation of young Christians, and it's a joy to see it happening, one slice at a time. 

Out and About with the People of Resurrection

by KEN MEYN

Resurrection members, Chang Guan and Evelyn Gan, are part of The SymphoNYChorus, “a faith-based community of vocalists & instrumentalists committed to sharing the message of God’s love.”

The group will present a concert at

Resurrection on Saturday, February 7, beginning at 7pm. Admission is free.

For more information on this special event, see ad on [page 4](#). For more information on the group, go to thesymphonychorus.com.



One-Liners

Some people are kind, polite, and sweet-spirited
Until you try to sit in their pews.

++*+*+*+*+*+*+*

Many folks want to serve God,
But only as advisers.

++*+*+*+*+*+*+*

Prayer:
Don't give God instructions, just report for duty!

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When you get to your wit's end,
You'll find God lives there.

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1/20/26



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The views and opinions expressed in this publication are not necessarily held by the Lutheran Church of the Resurrection. If you have questions or comments about any content, please contact Pastor Browning.

“He is the source of your life in Christ Jesus, whom God made our wisdom and our righteousness and sanctification and redemption. Therefore, as it is written, “Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.”

1 Corinthians 1:30-31

OPENING

Imagine standing in front of a mirror that reflects only the grace that placed you there and not your achievements, your status or your strength. In a society obsessed with self-promotion, personal branding and climbing ladders of success, Paul's words in 1 Corinthians cut through the noise with startling clarity.

Everything we possess spiritually originates from God's gift in Christ. All wisdom to understand God's ways, the righteousness that justifies us, the sanctification that gradually transforms us, and the eternal redemption that sets us free—all of these come from God. We didn't

earn our place “in Him”; He placed us there by His doing alone.

As we begin this reflection, let's pause and ask: what have I been tempted to boast about lately—my knowledge, house, morality, accomplishments? Today, redirect that impulse to a better location. Christ is our everything; let our lives echo the Scripture's call to boast solely in Him, the gracious source of it all.

THINK

Most have watched football end-zone celebrations where the player's dance feels more triumphant than the team's actual scoreboard. Pride has a way of turning even genuine accomplishment into something isolating. Paul's words hit like a re-

set button: “He is the source of your life in Christ Jesus....”

PRAY

At the end of a busy day or perhaps when tempted to self-praise, pause and pray briefly: Lord, any good today—any insight, success or growth—was not from me but from You in Christ.

DO

As we go about our daily routines, keep in mind Paul's message to reshape our lives by anchoring our identity in Christ, cultivating humble gratitude and extending grace toward others—all for God's glory.

JEFF CARSTENS

WORSHIP WITH US

Sundays, Traditional Worship

In-Person — 8:30, 9:45 & 11am
Online — 9:45am

Saturdays, Contemporary Service

In-Person — 5:30pm

COMING NEXT ISSUE

Our next newsletter will be the March publication, bringing feature articles and highlights of ministry and people of Resurrection—to inform, inspire and bless you.