



PASTOR'S ARTICLE

PASTOR WILLIAM MATLACK

Thank you to Liesa Helfer for sharing this with me. It is an excellent article written after Christmas 2017, but applies during Lent as well.



CHRISTIANS NEED A NEW RIGHT-TO-LIFE MOVEMENT

At least since Martin Luther nailed his theses to the church door in 1517, Christians have disagreed on what Jesus calls them to do in the name of faith. There are nearly 34,000 Christian denominations worldwide, a number that doesn't account for American Christians - nearly one in six, according to a Gallup poll last summer - who belong to no denomination at all.

But as lively as Christian debate can be, the special Senate election in Alabama has exposed how closely conservative Christianity is now in lock step with the Republican Party. I grew up in Alabama, and I don't doubt the sincerity of my fellow believers on the other side of the political aisle, but when faithful Christians vote for a man credibly accused of child molesting, something is terribly wrong with Christianity. (With white Christianity, that is: Black Christians overwhelmingly supported the Democratic candidate, Doug Jones.)

Eighty percent of white born-again Christians voting in Alabama backed Roy Moore, and there is no skirting the damage they've done to their own moral standing.

The day of the election, the editor in chief of Christianity Today, Mark Galli, identified the biggest loser in Alabama: Christian faith itself. From now on, Mr. Galli wrote, "When it comes to either matters of life and death or personal commitments of the human heart, no one will believe a word we say, perhaps for a generation."

Christianity presents a conundrum for evangelicals considering a monstrous political candidate who is also a Christian. The very foundation of our faith lies in the infinite mercy of a loving God, and it's hard for an ordinary sinner to cast the first stone.

Last year I asked an evangelical friend how she could bring herself to support a presidential candidate like Donald Trump, whose behavior is so at odds with her own. "He says he's changed," she said, "and I believe in God's redemption. If I didn't, how could I get out of bed in the morning?"

I believe in redemption myself, though if I were in charge I think I'd be looking for evidence of repentance, too. And I'd be asking why people so deeply invested in redemption also tend to be so deeply invested in sending their fellow human beings to death row.

But I'm trying to understand the country I've found myself in since last year's election, and these days I look hard for common ground. It isn't easy to find. In her new book "Moral Combat: How Sex Divided American Christians and Fractured American Politics," R. Marie Griffith explains wars"- disagreements over women's rights, birth control, abortion and LG.B.T. issues. By the time the Supreme Court's Obergefell v. Hodges decision legalized same-sex marriage in 2015, she writes, "the rupture between Christian antagonists in the sex wars felt irremediable: one could plausibly argue that Christianity had flat out split into two virtually non overlapping religions."

What Christians need is a new right-to-life movement, one in which we agree to disagree about contentious issues of sexuality and focus instead on what we share, on what we *all* believe.

Jesus had nothing to say about birth control or abortion or homosexuality. He did have quite a lot to say about the poor and the vulnerable, and maybe that's a good place to start.

Surely Christians across the political spectrum believe we're called to feed the hungry, heal the sick, protect the weak and welcome the stranger. If we can agree on that much, and if we can keep our shrieking differences from wrecking the quiet conviction of shared belief, we could create a culture of life that has a chance of transcending the sex wars. I find myself hoping for a day when conservative Christian voters can elect conservative representatives for whom feeding the hungry and caring for the sick and welcoming refugees aren't political issues at all.

Here in Nashville, through an ecumenical program called Room in the Inn, nearly 200 congregations of many faiths take in our homeless neighbors during the winter months. Every night from November through March, volunteers arrive at the program's base of operations downtown to pick up around 250 homeless people and drive them to area churches. Guests get a good meal, a hot shower and a clean bed for the night. The next morning they get breakfast and a sack lunch to take when another set of volunteers arrives to drive them back downtown.

That night the cycle starts all over again with another set of congregations. The other day, I found a toddler's sippy cup lodged between the seats in the third row of my minivan. Our youngest child is 19, and we have no grandchildren. I held it, puzzled, until finally it dawned on me: My husband had taken his shift at Room in the Inn the night before, and this cup must belong to one of the homeless families he drove to our church.

Homeless babies. The very thought is enough to make a person weep. It's Christmas, the day Christians celebrate a baby wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger because there was no room for his family at the inn.

We owe it to that infant to do better by the babies here among us. To do better by their parents, trying so hard to keep them fed and clothed and healthy. We owe it to him to throw open our arms and the doors of our inns. "You who are hungry and hurting and alone and afraid, come inside," we will say. "You belong here."

Margaret Renkl is a contributing opinion writer. A version of this op-ed appears in print on December 25, 2017, on Page A21 of the New York edition with the headline: Christians Need a New Right-to-Life Movement.

**PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY
MEETS ON TUESDAYS
@ 10:00 AM**



to knit/crochet or do
handwork together.

Please join us and bring
a project to work on
or we can supply you with yarn
to make a prayer shawl.

We continue the fellowship by
going out to lunch afterwards.

**MEN'S GROUP
MEETS TUESDAY,
MARCH 6 @ 6:30 PM**

for food & fellowship at



The Lodge Grill & Bar
2812 Orchard Lake Rd
Keego Harbor

All men of Holy Spirit are
invited to attend.

**MARY FREED MEMORIAL
CONCERT - WEDNESDAY,
MARCH 7 @ 7:30 PM**

**FEATURING
THE RONDO STRING QUARTET**



RECEPTION FOLLOWING

**DINNER WITH FRIENDS
FRIDAY, MARCH 9
@ 6:30 PM**



El Mariachi
Mexican Restaurant
31150 Novi Rd
Novi, MI

Please see the
bulletin board to sign up.

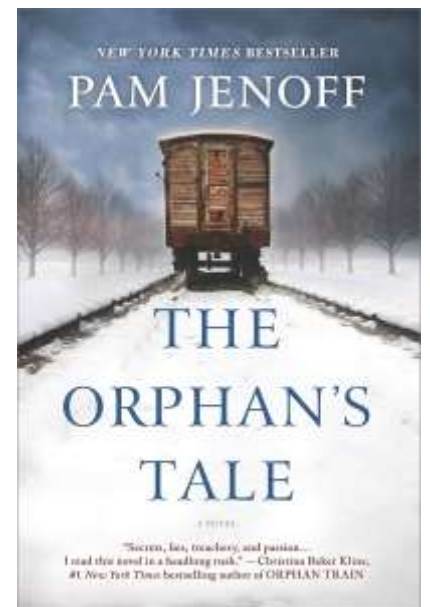


**WELCA
THURSDAY, MARCH 15
@ 6:00 PM**

Hosted by Liesa Helfer

Please see the bulletin board
to sign up.

**BOOK CLUB
THURSDAY, MARCH 22
@ 7:00 PM**





**MARY FREED MEMORIAL CONCERT -
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 7 @ 7:30 PM**

The first in an on-going series of fine-music concerts, honoring the memory of Mary Freed will take place at Holy Spirit Church on March 7, Mary's birthday.

The Rondo String Quartet has been chosen to perform at this event. Rondo is well-known in southeast Michigan and recently received from Gigmaster, THE BEST OF 2017 Award. They perform a wide variety of music, classical, rock, nostalgic, jazz, current and even polkas. The group consists of two violins, a viola and a cello.

Mary and three of her sisters once performed as a string quartet, using instruments that had been made for them by their grandfather. In fact, at the March 7 concert, Tracey Riggs will play some music using Mary's own violin. Tracey is a former Orchestra Director for Farmington Schools.

There is no charge for the concert, since memorial gifts will cover the cost. It is planned that there will be three or four memorial concerts each year.

Reception following.



**Per Nancy Green,
Holy Spirit is collecting for 12 families . . .**

Hams
Dressing
Canned Fruit
Canned Vegetables
Cereal
Peanut Butter
Jelly
Pasta
Pasta Sauce
Rice
Gravy (Jars or Mix)
Canned Soup
Raisins
Eggs
Cheese
Bread
Potatoes
Carrots

+ Bags to put donations in

Please see the bulletin board for further information and to sign up.

Speak with Nancy if you have any questions.

RECEIVE "THE SPIRIT" NEWSLETTER VIA EMAIL

If you're not yet receiving the monthly "Spirit" electronically and would like to begin receiving it by email instead of by US Mail, please let us know!

This helps Holy Spirit be good stewards of the earth as well as saving printing and postage costs.

Send an email to office@spiritdrivenchurch.com and you'll be added to the email list.

HOST A COFFEE HOUR AND CONTINUE THE FELLOWSHIP



Everyone seems to enjoy coffee hour after church as a way to continue our fellowship so consider signing up to host one! It doesn't have to be fancy. Napkins, plates and coffee are provided by Congregational Life.



Birthdays

Thomas Butler	March 2
Nick Casagrande	March 5
Jean Butler	March 7
Ken Casagrande	March 7
Barb Church	March 7
Kay Grabenstein	March 8
Trent Curlee	March 9
Nicole Voorhees	March 10
Valarie Ceccardi	March 14
Barb Eliason	March 16
John Johnsen	March 17
Matt Ceccardi	March 19
Thomas Kuljurgis	March 20
Luke Dexel	March 23
Sophia Dexel	March 24
Tim Sweda	March 24

Anniversaries

George & Chris Kuljurgis	March 27
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BULLETIN ANNOUNCEMENTS & NEWSLETTER INFORMATION

- ❖ Please submit weekly bulletin announcements and information to Cheryl by calling or emailing the church office.
- ❖ Deadline to be included in the upcoming Sunday bulletin is by 10 AM Wednesday.
- ❖ Spirit Newsletter information is due by the 15th of the month.

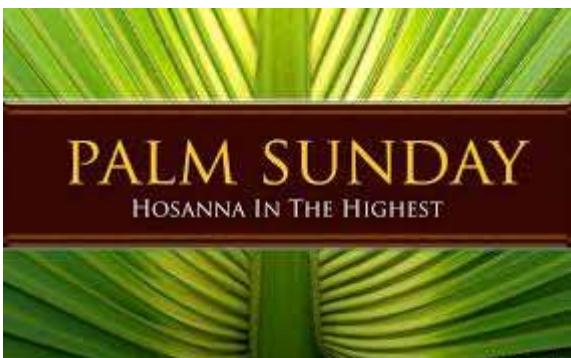


Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
				Zumba 6:30 PM	AA Meeting 7 PM	Zumba 9:30 AM
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Choir Rehearsal Worship Sunday School NA Meeting 7 PM	Zumba 6:30 PM	Yoga 9 AM Prayer Shawls 10 AM Men's Group 6:30 PM	Mary Freed Memorial Concert 7:30 PM	Zumba 6:30 PM	Dinner with Friends 6:30 PM AA Meeting 7 PM	Zumba 9:30 AM
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
Choir Rehearsal Worship Sunday School NA Meeting 7 PM	Zumba 6:30 PM	Yoga 9 AM Prayer Shawls 10 AM	Soup Supper 6:30 PM Bells Rehearsal 7 PM NA Meeting 7 PM	WELCA 6 PM Zumba 6:30 PM	AA Meeting 7 PM	Zumba 9:30 AM
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Choir Rehearsal Worship Sunday School NA Meeting 7 PM	Zumba 6:30 PM Finance Meeting 7 PM	Yoga 9 AM Prayer Shawls 10 AM Council Meeting 7 PM	Soup Supper 6:30 PM Bells Rehearsal 7 PM NA Meeting 7 PM	Zumba 6:30 PM Book Club 7 PM	AA Meeting 7 PM	Zumba 9:30 AM
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
Choir Rehearsal Palm Sunday Sunday School NA Meeting 7 PM	Zumba 6:30 PM	Yoga 9 AM Prayer Shawls 10 AM	Zumba 5:45 PM Bells Rehearsal 7 PM NA Meeting 7 PM	Potluck Dinner 6 PM Maundy Thursday Service 7 PM	Good Friday Service 7 PM	Easter Vigil @ Antioch Lutheran Zumba 9:30 AM

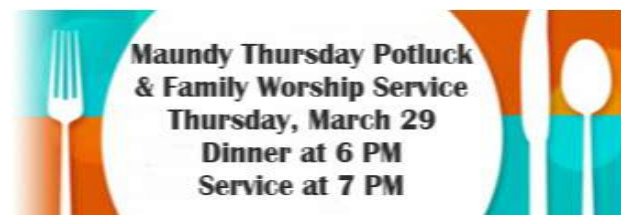
THANK YOU TO OUR MARCH WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

	3/4	3/11	3/18	3/25
Lector & Greeter	Cindy Ward	Terry Rowland	Doug Opthoff	Liesa Helfer
Ushers	Dan Bergman George Kuljurgis Andy Meyer Bob Frick	Dennis Kunkel Doug Opthoff Bill Thayer Tom Sweda Bob Burns	Jarrold Dexel Jeff Parko Stan Samuelsen Lukas Mattern	Janet Martin Mary Martin Hilda Sawicki Jeanne Myers
Counters	Stan Samuelsen Ken Casagrande	George & Chris Kuljurgis, Jeanne Myers or Sandy Thayer	Nancy Green Barb Kunkel	Janet Martin Mary Martin
Altar Guild	Ruth Dziuba and Cindy Ward			

WORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES COMING UP @ HSLC



March 25 Service @ 10 AM



Maundy Thursday, March 29
Potluck Dinner @ 6 PM
Service @ 7 PM



March 30 Service @ 7 PM



April 1 Service @ 10 AM

Visitors Welcome

We warmly invite you to join us for worship, study, and activities.

Worship Schedule

10:00 AM. Sunday Worship

Christian Education

10:45 AM Sunday School

Location

NW corner of Orchard Lake and Green Road (across from West Bloomfield HS)

Connect With Us

spiritdrivenchurch.com

facebook.com/spiritdrivenchurch

Contact Us

248-682-5441

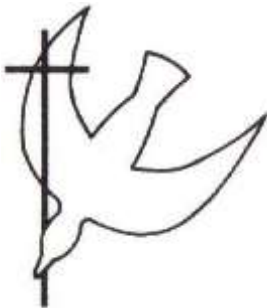
office@spiritdrivenchurch.com

Our Mission: We are CALLED by Christ in Baptism, GATHERED into community and SENT out to share God's grace.

A Monthly Publication of

Holy Spirit Lutheran Church

4800 Orchard Lake Road
West Bloomfield, MI 48323



Pastor William J. Matlack

**Mary Freed Memorial Concert**

Wednesday, March 7 at 7:30 pm

Featuring the Rondo String Quartet

Reception Following

