

## Pastor's Column

I appreciated his books. But I never knew how to pronounce his name. He was T.A. Kantonen. I pronounced it "Can't-OH-nin". Then I moved to Ashtabula where there are Finns. Here I learned to pronounce his name KANTonin. He was a professor who taught at Hamma Divinity School in Springfield. Hamma had been the LCA seminary in Ohio prior to merging with an ALC seminary to form what is now Trinity Seminary. Kantonin, I learned, actually lectured in Ashtabula. He spoke at Bethany Lutheran in the Harbor.



In one of his many books ("Theology of Evangelism" – Muhlenberg Press, p.44ff.), Kantonin summarized the significance of the cross event. Jesus was crucified. Jesus was raised. What exactly does that mean? How is that impactful for us? Why are crucifixion / resurrection referred to as the "hinge of history"? Kantonen described four models that best explain the significance of Jesus' death that Friday afternoon.

1. Our ransom was paid. By sinning, humanity came under the domination of Satan. God chose to redeem humanity, to buy us back from Satan's dominion. Christ surrendered himself in death. When Satan took the sinless Christ, Satan forfeited his claim on sinful humans.
2. A sacrifice was made. We understand sacrifice. For life to happen life must be given. We eat protein and carbohydrates because the lives of livestock and grains are taken. We understand military and law enforcement sacrificing their lives in the line of duty. Parents comprehend the sacrifices they must make if their children are to live secure and meaningful lives. Similarly, Christ nobly sacrificed his life in order to save us "from the calamitous consequences of our blunders."
3. Reconciliation was won. Christ re-knit the broken ties between God and us wayward children. We put a barrier between ourselves and God. Christ breaks the barrier down.
4. Victory is won. (Swedish theologian Gustaf Aulen associates this victor motif as the best way to describe Luther's theology.) The cross of Christ was not the snuffing out of a hapless victim. The cross was Christ dominating death and devil. Love stayed on the cross. Love conquers death as light conquers darkness.

Thru the years I've relied on Kantonen's four summaries in pastoral conversation and preaching.

- 1) Our ransom has been paid. Be confident in the knowledge we belong to God.
- 2) The sacrifice for us has been made. Concentrate now on how we may invest ourselves for neighbor and creation.
- 3) Reconciliation with God has been won for us. We are unencumbered now to seek reconciliation with others.
- 4) Victory over death has been won. Because we know who won that day on Calvary, we know who will win on the last day. Because we do not have to be anxious over the future we are free to invest more love in the present.

Blessed 50 Days of Easter to all! Easter season has been referred to as "living in the afterglow". We have 50 days to liturgically celebrate what happened during Holy Week. We have the rest of our lives to integrate the gifts that Christ won that Holy Week.

Faithfully your pastor  
Michael Meranda



## ATM Loan At \$141,078

*By: Lanny Anderson for the Finance Committee*

Our balance due on the ATM Loan with the Messiah Foundation was \$141,078 at the end of February. We pay the Foundation \$1,889 per month. Seen in the picture at the left is work being done on waterproofing the foundation and installing new perimeter drains. Our thanks to the late Dick Reinker for the picture. Dick did a marvelous job of documenting work as it progressed with pictures.

Our loan with the Foundation will be paid off in December of 2024.

This mammoth project of 15 years ago assures future generations that they will have a Church to worship in. ATM Project Manager was Nick Dieglio of Lake County. He oversaw the entire project from roofs to drainage work. We will be forever indebted to him for his careful attention to details.

## Church Mouse Wants To Know: Where Did The Ashes Go?

Pastor David Anderson and Deacon Sue Riley conducted Ash Wednesday Service for us. Pastor Meranda was out of town overseeing a wedding for a relative in Cabo, Mexico. They used Pastor Meranda's ashes.



Sue thought the pewter vessels that held the ashes were in need of a good scrubbing so she cleaned and polished them. Sue reported this at a Sunday Forum meeting after Pastor returned. Pastor asked her "What did you do with the ashes?" she said "I threw them out!" Pastor said "Oh no, those ashes moved with me from Washington to Oregon to Wisconsin and now to Ohio." Emelia Lindberg rushed over to Sue and presented her with a get out of Hell free card and said "here, you need this more than I do".

## More About Tapestry

*By: Barb Ranta*

Women's Tapestry of Faith Bible Study group began in 2002. Victoria Wagner (daughter of Katy Sandberg) started meeting with a small group of women in her "cottage".



"Tapestry" as we refer to our group, has continued on and continues to grow. New people are always welcome. We are a group of women from different denominations: some go to Church, some do not, and we are all at different places in our life-long faith journey. My personal goal for this wonderful group of women is that we:

- ◆ Grow in our knowledge of the Bible
- ◆ Grow in our understanding of the Bible
- ◆ Grow in our ability to put our knowledge and understanding of God's word into action in our daily lives.
- ◆ Our thoughts, words, and actions continue to look more and more like Christ's.

Prayer is a very important part of our time together. We have a group Prayer Journal where you can write the names of people you would like us to pray for.

We open and close our weekly Bible Study with prayer. Monthly, a different person from each group volunteers to lead an opening and closing prayer.

There are two Tapestry Groups that meet weekly at Messiah. There is a Monday group that meets from 9:30am to 11:00 am. And a Tuesday group that meets at the same time. Each group studies the same lesson.

Participants are welcome to attend either group. Just let me know if you are going to switch groups

## An Easter Message

*By: Presiding Bishop, Elizabeth Eaton*

"All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the Lord; and all the families of the nations shall worship before him...and proclaim his deliverance to a people yet unborn, saying that he has done it."



This is the wisdom of God.

Jesus' crucifixion is the death of our death. His innocent suffering has reconciled all of creation to God. He has done it.

## Theology on Tap April 18

The Ashtabula Arts Center is producing the musical "Ghost" on April 6,7,8; 14,15,16; 20,21, and 22. Theology on Tap is at Halcyon in the Harbor at 6:00 pm on April 18. Our topic is "Ghost and the Afterlife".

## Outreach Volunteers Needed

We are reaching out to the Church Community for a few people to work on the outreach committee. If you are interested please contact Brenda Greenawalt at 440-964-2941. Our first meeting is tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, April 4, at 6:00 pm.

## Coffee Hour Hosts Needed

*By: Ruth Hlinovsky*

Hospitality Committee is looking for volunteers who can host September and December Coffee Hours. Contact Ruth if you can help.

## Spring Fling April 14

Youth oriented Spring Fling comes to Messiah April 14 from 5:00 to 8:00 pm. The Youth Committee will supply pizza, ice cream, games, and movies for all school aged kids. Any questions contact Emelia Lindberg.

## Mid Week Lenten Services



A parade of different Lutheran Pastors from the area appeared at Messiah's Mid Week Lenten Services this year.

Pastor David Anderson, retired, above left, led the parade and started our Lenten series with a discussion about Noah and The Flood.

Our own Pastor Meranda, above middle, was second in line and discussed Moses and the Red Sea.

Pastor Paul Bailie, above right, came from Good Shephard, Conneaut and discussed Isaiah 55.

Our fourth service was conducted by Pastor Brandi Bailie, left, of Trinity in Madison, who taught the Creation Story.



And our fifth and final speaker was Pastor Fred Grimm, right, from St. Paul's in Jefferson, who taught the Fiery Furnace story.

About 20 to 30 members attended each of these mid week Lenten services. The services were preceded by soup, bread and dessert dinner that was greatly enjoyed by all who participated.

### Church Mouse Heard This:

One of the Community Church pastor's favorite premarital counseling jokes is this one: Adam and Eve had an ideal marriage. He didn't have to hear about all the men she could have married, and she didn't have to hear about the way his mother cooked.



### Free Clinic April 20

A Free Remote Area Medical Clinic is at Ashtabula Town Square on April 20. For more information visit [www.Ramusa.org](http://www.Ramusa.org) or phone 865-579-2555. This event is very similar to the Free Clinic held at Messiah in January 2017.

Participants and volunteers to assist are needed.

**Messiah Lutheran Church**  
615 Prospect Road  
Ashtabula, OH 44004

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## Messiah Messenger

**April 2018**

**Worship:**  
11:00 am - Sunday

**Adult Sunday Forum**  
9:45 am—Sunday



**Welcome  
Home To  
Messiah**



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**Red Brook Vespers is June 20.**