

The Churchman

Sts. Peter and Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church
250 Woodside Road, Riverside, Illinois 60546 * (708) 442-5250
“Faith Active in Love”
www.stspeterandpaulriverside.org

Volume 42

February 2020

Issue 2

We are called together by the Holy Spirit around Word and sacraments to glorify God the Father, creator of all things, through our Lord Jesus Christ. We trust God to nurture lives of faith and hope, as we serve and give witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ for the salvation of the world.

The Disciplines of Lent

Almsgiving: Giving alms, Jesus teaches, means making the hardships and needs of others our own: the young and the old, the sick and the suffering, next door neighbors and people in distant lands—people it would be easy to forget. Rather than simply looking out for ourselves, Jesus urges us to see those in need. And what shall we give? Some time, some of our talent, material resources. Whatever we give should be something that costs us, given in a spirit of gratitude to God for the life that fills us each day. What shall we give (up) in Lent? Maybe a visit to a shut-in or hospitalized neighbor or friend or member of the congregation; maybe some time after school helping a child with homework; maybe an evening at a shelter for homeless men or women; maybe a gift to Lutheran World Relief; maybe a new niche for ministry in the congregation. After all, before us are the great alms Jesus gave: “He loved us, and gave himself up for us.”

Prayer: The Lenten season calls us to pray, but prayer, Jesus teaches, is much more than saying words. “Go into your room, and close the door, and pray to your Father in secret.” Before we pray, we need to shut the door to the noise, the trivialities, the distractions, the countless cares grabbing for our attention. In the quiet place of our hearts, we speak and listen to God. We trust that God helps us pray in this season. For those who have stopped praying, or pray with little fervor, God gives graces for praying again. Usually the graces come as we turn to prayers and practices already there: reflective reading of the Bible and devotional materials, the liturgies of the Lord’s Supper and other opportunities for public worship, simple grace-filled prayers, like the Lord’s Prayer or the psalms. “What a Christian should be doing at all times should be done now with greater care and devotion,” Pope Leo told Christians of the 6th century who were beginning their Lenten observance.

Fasting: This discipline is likely the greatest challenge. Our society looks on fasting itself as peculiar, perhaps even abysmal. Urging everyone to eat, drink, and buy more and more, our world today has made fasting unfashionable and perhaps even un-American. Yet the gospel message warns us that more and more can ruin creation. An acquisitive spirit is a selfish spirit. The taste for too much can destroy. The good things of life can turn into our captors. In our society, fasting could be viewed as a gift to free us from those things to which we have attached our lives. This Lent, recognizing the hold some things have on us, we can try with God’s help to keep them in their right place. For many good reasons, not all of us are physically able to fast due to health problems, work situations, family responsibilities, etc. But some reasonable abstaining from something which

obstructs our relationship to God can be a liberating experience. Some may find that they are able to do without food during a day of the week, perhaps Friday in remembrance of our Lord’s passion, or Saturday evening before Communion on the Lord’s Day. Others may find it helpful to set aside certain ways of spending time or money, addictive behaviors or manners of treating others. We need to develop a leaner, less wasteful way of life for the sake of all creation. Can the discipline of fasting lead us to a gentler style of living in communion with the earth and one another?

However you decide to practice the disciplines of Lent, let them be offered freely and generously, not unwillingly and begrudgingly, and in love for our Lord and in gratitude for the gift of life and redemption.—*djl*

Ash Wednesday and the Forty Days of Lent

The holy season of Lent begins Ash Wednesday, February 26th. The service times are noon (spoken Liturgy of the Word) and 7:15 p.m. (spoken Liturgy of Holy Communion). Christians gather on this holy day to mark the beginning of Lent’s baptismal preparation for Easter. On this day, we receive an ashen cross on the forehead—a gesture rooted in baptism—make extended confession, hear the solemn proclamation to keep a fast in preparation for Easter’s feast, and contemplate anew the ongoing meaning of our baptism into the Lord’s death and resurrection. While marked with the ashes of human mortality, the church hears God’s promise of forgiveness and tastes God’s mercy in the bread of life and the cup of salvation.

Sunday Worship Schedule

9:15 a.m.	Confirmation Class
9:30 a.m.	Adult Choir Rehearsal
10:15 a.m.	Liturgy of Holy Communion
11:30 a.m.	Youth Choir Rehearsal

Choir Rehearsals

Wednesdays, February 5th, 12th, and 19th at 7:30 p.m.
February 26th following the Ash Wednesday Liturgy.

From the Parish Register

Burial:

Jerome M. Gaydusek, 78 years old, husband of Helen, father of Karole and James, passed from this life on January 10th and was buried from Sts. Peter and Paul on January 15th. Interment was at Bohemian National Cemetery.



February 4: Isabelle Boike	February 18: William Londak
Lois Mika	February 19: Gretchen Kostelny
February 6: John Borysek	February 21: Peter Drahos
February 7: David Richards	Adriana Kubova
Ann Vana	Sarah Michaels
February 9: Robert Skudrna	February 22: Robert Kany
February 11: Donovan Byrne	February 23: John Kostelancik
Christopher Greer	February 25: Gary Drahos
February 12: Jack Bute	James Triska
Susan Hassel	February 29: Marie Kamp
February 13: Valerie Smith	

Birthdays and Anniversaries

February 5, 1972: Gary and Jocelyn Drahos
February 14, 2008: Vincent and Valerie Smith
February 27, 1965: George and Joyce Hodul

Happenings

Congregation Council Meeting
Thursday, February 20th, 7:30 p.m.

Mardi Gras and Talent Night
Saturday, February 22nd

Ash Wednesday
February 26th, noon and 7:15 p.m.



“Legends of the Game” Volleyball meets
every Monday at 6:30 p.m. beginning
January 6th through April 27th.

Overeaters Anonymous meets weekly on
Tuesday evenings at 7 p.m.

Co-Dependents Anonymous meets weekly on
Wednesday evenings at 6:30 p.m.

AA Big Book Study Group meets weekly on
Saturday mornings at 11 a.m.

AA Group meets weekly on
Saturday evenings at 7 p.m.

*All groups meet in the lower level classroom
adjacent to the dining hall.*

River of Grace

by lectionary poet Andrew King

*River of God's grace,
where will you touch us this morning?
Through whom, river of grace,
will you pour out today?
May all God's children know
your gift of acceptance.
And may all who seek that strength
taste the fullness of joy.*

*Dove of the Spirit,
where are you flying this morning?
On whom, Spirit Dove,
will you rest today?
May all God's children know
the peace of your presence.
And may all who bow in prayer
feel the wingbeats of joy.*

*God who is love,
where will you speak this morning?
In whom, God of love,
will your voice ring today?
May all your children know
their call to be loving.
And may all who respond in faith
share the good news of joy.*

*Jesus our Lord,
where will you lead us this morning?
As whom, Christ our Lord,
will we leave here today?
May all God's children know
the new life of the river.
And celebrate its blessings
on our way toward joy.*

News from the Riverside Preschool at Sts. Peter and Paul

February is going to be a “sweet” month. We will be busy making crafts, celebrating Valentine’s Day, and talking about heart health.

On our annual pajama day we will be watching a movie and popping some popcorn.

—Lisa Manganiello, Preschool Director

Twenty-Four Hours a Day

Meditation for the Day, December 27th

Build your life on the firm foundation of true gratitude to God for all His blessings and true humility because of your unworthiness of these blessings. Build the frame of your life out of self-discipline; never let yourself get selfish or lazy or contented with yourself. Build the walls of your life out of service to others, helping them to find the way to live. Build the roof of your life out of prayer and quiet times, waiting for God’s guidance from above. Build a garden around your life out of peace of mind and serenity and a sure faith.

Quoted from the app Twenty-Four Hours a Day. Find recovery resources at Hazelden.

February Announcements

- ★ A reminder to the congregation, especially during the months of winter weather, that complimentary cab service is available on Sunday mornings for rides to and from worship services. Please contact Blue Village Cab Company at (708) 583-6900 as early as possible to make arrangements for pick up. When arranging your pick-up, please remind the dispatcher that the ride is to be billed to account number #101755.
- ★ If you will be leaving the Chicago area during the winter months for warmer climates, please notify the church office before then so the monthly newsletter can be forwarded to your temporary residence or cancelled until you return. The congregation incurs a fee for each newsletter that is undeliverable; stopped mail delivery to your permanent residence is considered "undeliverable" and returned to the church for a fee. Thank you for your assistance.
- ★ Remember that 12-Step groups meet at the church weekly and are here for you to participate in. Co-Dependents Anonymous meets weekly on Wednesday evenings at 6:30 p.m. and Overeaters Anonymous meets on Tuesday evenings at 7 p.m. Two AA groups meet weekly: a Big Book study group meets on Saturday mornings at 11 a.m. and a group meeting is held on Saturday evenings at 7 p.m. All meetings are held in the lower level classroom adjacent to the dining hall.

Memorials and Honorariums

❖ For the Church ❖

Ann Vana, in memory of +Steve Michael+.
Esther Meksto, in thankfulness for her birthday on January 6th.
Earl and Rita Mika, Jr., in memory of father +Earl Mika, Sr.+ on the twentieth anniversary of his passing.
Ed and Joyce Svancara.
In loving memory of mother, grandmother, sister and aunt +Laverne Hanzel+ on the anniversary of her death from remembering children Karen Cox, Kevin Hanzel and David Hanzel and their families; sister Audrey Bucz and her family; and niece Adrienne Gana.
Betty Jane Licko-Keel, in memory of mother +Marie Michalic Licko+ on the anniversary of her death, and husband +William Jerry Keel+ and father +Stephen Licko+ on the anniversary of their births.
John and Nancy Phelan and Family, in memory of mother, grandmother and great-grandmother +Mildred Melka+.

❖ Special Appeal for Replacements and Repairs ❖

Total donations received as of January 23rd:
\$10,521.00



A History of Saint Valentine's Day

Valentine's Day started in the time of the Roman Empire. In ancient Rome, February 14th was a holiday to honor Juno who was the Queen of the Roman gods and goddesses. The Romans also knew her as the goddess of women and marriage. The following day, February 15th, began the Feast of Lupercalia.

The lives of young boys and girls were strictly separate, however, one of the customs of the young people was name drawing. On the eve of the festival of Lupercalia the names of Roman girls were written on slips of paper and placed into jars. Each young man would draw a girl's name from the jar and would then be partners for the duration of the festival with the girl whom he chose. Sometimes the pairing of the children lasted an entire year, and often they would fall in love and would later marry.

Under the rule of Emperor Claudius II, Rome was involved in many bloody and unpopular campaigns. Claudius the Cruel was having a difficult time getting soldiers to join his military leagues. He believed that the reason was that Roman men did not want to leave their loves or families. As a result, Claudius canceled all marriages and engagements in Rome. The good Saint Valentine was a priest at Rome in the days of Claudius II. He and Saint Marius aided the Christian martyrs and secretly married couples, and for this kind deed Saint Valentine was apprehended and dragged before the Prefect of Rome who condemned him to death. He suffered martyrdom on the 14th day of February, about the year A.D. 270.

At that time it was the custom in Rome, a very ancient custom indeed, to celebrate in the month of February the Lupercalia, feasts in honor of a heathen god. On these occasions, as noted above, amidst a variety of pagan ceremonies, the names of young women were placed in a box, from which they were drawn by the men as chance directed.

The pastors of the early Christian Church in Rome endeavored to do away with the pagan element in these feasts by substituting the names of saints for those of maidens. And as the Lupercalia began about the middle of February, the pastors appear to have chosen Saint Valentine's Day for the celebration of this new feast. So it seems that the custom of young men choosing maidens for valentines, or saints as patrons for the coming year, arose in this way.

Thank You!

Thank you to the following individuals and families who purchased poinsettias to decorate the chancel of the sanctuary for our Christmas services:

Carl Busch, Karyn Bute, The Gaydusek Family, The Kozik and Jones Families, Fred Kuzel, Ladies Altar Guild, Charlene Patula, Martin and Ann Pennino, Carole Pollitz, Joseph and Carol Ruiz, the Slahor and Babyar Families and Olga Zavodny.

JOIN THE ADVENTURE



PANDA-MONIUM

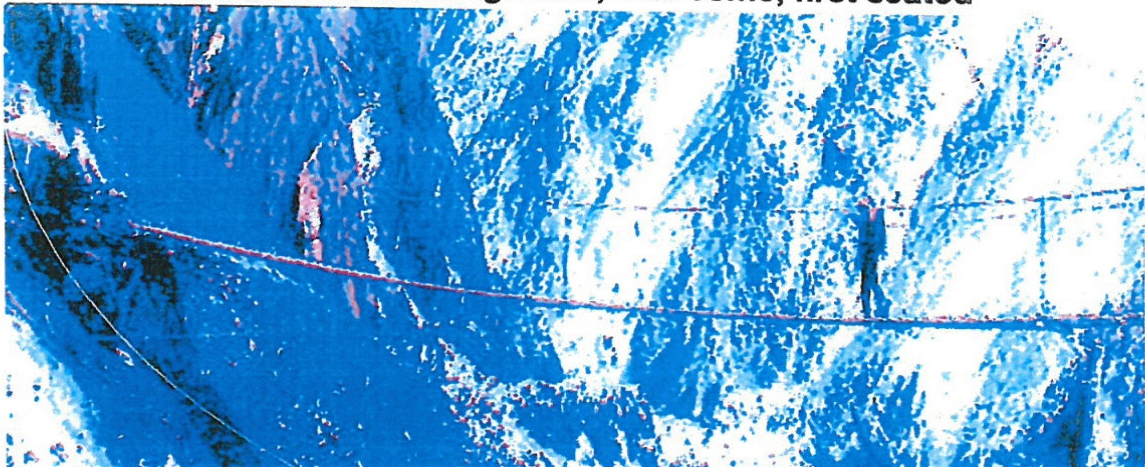
"LAUGHING WITH COURAGEOUS THOUGHTS"

presented by Vera Borysek

WEDNESDAY February 5th 7PM

THE INCREDIBLE TRUE STORY OF RUTH HARKENESS WHO
BRAVED THE MOST FORBIDDING PLACES ON EARTH TO
BRING THE WORLD AND ENDURING TREASURE

Lower level meeting room, first come, first seated



RIVERSIDE LIBRARY 1 BURLING ROAD RIVERSIDE IL

Every Penny Is from Heaven

by Scott Marshall

What do financial advisors, prosperity preachers, and Jesus all have in common?

As a financial advisor, I'm constantly providing counsel to all types of people about how to manage their money well. Prosperity preachers talk about money as if it were some type of investment seed: you give to God and he must give it back to you and more. As for Jesus, some scholars say that a third of Jesus's parables revolve around money and possessions—and that the New Testament accounts of Jesus's teachings mention more about money and possessions than faith and prayer combined.

Financial advisors, prosperity preachers, and Jesus all consider money to be significant.

A Great and Dangerous Gift

It's clear that Jesus didn't dodge the touchy topic of money and possessions. He recognized its potential power for good or evil—too powerful to ignore or neglect. On the one hand, Christians can use money for the glory of God, the expansion of his church, and the common good of all mankind by funding organizations, sending missionaries, and building schools and medical clinics.

But money is also extremely dangerous if we're enslaved to it. It can be used to promote sin, and it is often the root of broken marriages, murder, and all types of sinful behavior (1 Timothy 6:10). What does it mean to serve money? John Piper says it well: "To serve money means to calculate all of your behaviors, all of your life, to maximize what money can give you, always asking what benefits can come to you from money."

If we would glorify God with our money and possessions, we need to treat them as Jesus would, not as prosperity preachers or mere financial planners. One way to confront our love of money is to remind ourselves of its ultimate proprietorship. Scripture's clear acknowledgment of divine ownership reshapes how we steward what we've been given.

Toward a Tenth and Beyond

Regardless of a person's religious background, most are somewhat familiar with the concept called "tithing." But in case you're not, tithing refers to giving a tenth of one's "increase" (Deuteronomy 14:22) or, we might call "income." In the Old Testament, the tithe is referenced many times in relation to giving a tenth of produce to the Lord.

In all of Jesus's recorded teachings about money and possessions, how often did Jesus speak about the tithe? Only twice: Matthew 23:23 (also reported in Luke 11:42) and Luke 18:12. And significantly, the New Testament apostles encourage us to go above and beyond in our giving, rather than limit our giving to ten percent.

D. A. Carson offers this memorable commentary on tithing and the New Testament: "The most penetrating New Testament passage on giving is 2 Corinthians 8–9. Under severe trial, the Corinthians' 'overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity'" (2 Corinthians 8:2, NIV). Carson concludes,

So why not aim for 20 percent in your giving? Or 30? Or more, depending on your circumstances (2 Corinthians 8:12)? "For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that... for your sake he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich" (2 Corinthians 8:9, NIV).

Like our lives, our money is not our own. Every penny belongs to the

Lord (Psalm 24:1). There is no contract between you and God that says he gets ten percent and you own ninety percent. He owns a hundred percent of our possessions, but he graciously enables us to steward it.

However, I have found in my own life that it's easy to preach the message of generosity, but much harder to live it. In practice, I'm prone to act as if, after I give a certain amount, the rest is *mine*. Such an attitude runs opposed to what Scripture teaches.

How often have you given, wiped your hands clean, then lived as if the rest is yours?

Called to Generous Living

Jesus's words about money and possessions, viewed in light of eternity, make me passionate to help people give money through sound, biblical financial planning. Thinking carefully about how we spend our money positions us to give as much as we possibly can and further the cause of the gospel in the world.

The Christian, renewed and transformed by Christ, is called to generous living, and this should shine in every aspect of our lives. Such a person wants to spread the good news through generosity and give as much as possible to support God's global mission and the needs of fellow members and neighbors.

And while we should give generously, our giving always flows as a result of our relationship with God, not a way to earn it. We don't give in order to gain God's love, but we give because we've been loved. We are given grace through *faith*, therefore we graciously give in faith. We don't even give in order to be given double or triple in return. We give freely with no expectations other than to see God glorified.

New Testament giving is:

- ▶ willing and cheerful (2 Corinthians 9:7),
- ▶ a regular pattern of life (1 Corinthians 16:2),
- ▶ proportionate to one's ability (2 Corinthians 8:3),
- ▶ generous (2 Corinthians 8:2–3; 1 Timothy 6:18), and
- ▶ sacrificial (Mark 12:42–44; Acts 4:32; 2 Corinthians 8:3).

How much you should give is a personal conviction to lay before God. Pray for wisdom, study his word, and act in faith as God leads you by his Spirit and in the fellowship of the local church. The message to the materially rich may be, "To whom much was given, of him much will be required" (Luke 12:48). And to the materially poor, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness" (2 Corinthians 12:9).

Scott Marshall is founder and president of Rivertree Financial Planning. He and his wife live in Jackson, Mississippi, with their three children. Scott is a deacon at Redeemer Church.

—submitted by Charles Matthies

Thank You!

Thank you all for again remembering our family at Christmastime with your many cards and gifts. You are always so kind and thoughtful to think of us in this way at this time of year, and it makes for a brighter, warmer Christmas in our home. As always, we cherish your love, support and encouragement throughout our years with you. We pray that the light of Jesus' presence will shine in your lives and guide your steps throughout the coming year.

—Pastor Dennis and Jane and Family

How Do People Come to Church?

Missional Evangelism

Missional evangelism is indirect, authentic and real. It arises out of relationship in the family, the neighborhood, the workplace and social situations. It does not depend totally upon the person giving witness. It connects with the support system provided by the community that lives under the reign of God.

The Christian brings the unchurched to a healthy vibrant community of faith and, through association with an embodied community, faith is discussed and caught as the gospel is overheard. This form of personal contact is the primary means of bringing people to Christ and the church.

According to the research of the of the American Growth Institute, people who come to church come because they have been influenced to do so by:

Friend or Relative: 79%

Pastor: 6%
Sunday School: 3%
Walk-In Visit: 3%
Program: 3%
Special Need: 2%
Door-to-Door Visitation: 1%
Evangelism Crusade: .5%

Clearly, the statistics show that personal contact within social networks is the point of most fruitful contact.

—submitted by Pastor Dennis

Greetings from the Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in Slovakia...



...and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was (Matthew 2:9b NRSV).

Wishing you a blessed Christmas and successful New Year 2020.
Evangelical Diakonia of the Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in Slovakia.
—Jan Gasper

FEBRUARY WORSHIP SERVERS

February 2nd:

Greeters: Carl Busch and Carole Pollitz
 Acolyte: Bryan Galdun
 Assisting Minister: Tom Michaels
 Comm. Minister: Tom Myers
 Lectors: Paul and Carrie Watkiss
 Ushers: Gregg Valek and Paul Watkiss

February 9th:

Greeters: Paul and Carrie Watkiss
 Acolyte: Abby Tarbox
 Assisting Minister: John Broussard
 Comm. Minister: Vicki Michaels
 Lectors: Keith Altavilla and Charles Matthies
 Ushers: Janet Broussard and Gregg Valek

February 16th:

Greeters: Ann Kmet and Vicki Michaels
 Acolyte: Ben Myers
 Assisting Minister: Brandon Michaels
 Comm. Minister: Carrie Watkiss
 Lectors: John and Shirley Kostelny
 Ushers: Walter Cudecki and Gregg Valek

February 23rd:

Greeters: Larry Crachy and Karen Kubik
 Acolyte: Sebastian Myers
 Assisting Minister: Vicki Michaels
 Comm. Minister: Paul Watkiss
 Lectors: John Broussard and George Valek
 Ushers: Gregg Valek and John Kostelny

Ash Wednesday, February 26th:

Greeters: John and Shirley Kostelny
 Acolyte: Aidan Altavilla
 Assisting Minister: Carrie Watkiss
 Comm. Minister: Charles Matthies
 Lectors: Robert Melnyk and Kristine Boike
 Usher: Fred Kuzel

Sacristan and Altar Care:
 Janice Hapgood



December 2019

Current, Benevolence and Freewill Offering

Budgeted Offering: \$2,597.00

<u>Date</u>	<u>Offering</u>
12/1	\$1,624.00
12/8	\$2,108.00
12/15	\$3,115.00
12/22	\$4,386.00
12/29	\$1,597.00

MARCH WORSHIP SERVERS

March 1st:

Greeters: Donald and Elaine Haase
 Acolyte: Ben Myers
 Assisting Minister: Tom Myers
 Comm. Minister: Tom Michaels
 Lectors: Claire Watkiss and Isabella Myers
 Ushers: Donald Haase and Johnathan Haase

March 8th:

Greeters: Philip and Linda Painter
 Acolyte: Abby Tarbox
 Assisting Minister: Charles Matthies
 Comm. Minister: Beverly Tarbox
 Lectors: Tom and Vicki Michaels
 Ushers: Walter Cudecki and Rafael Martinez

March 15th:

Greeter: Ann Kmet
 Acolyte: Bryan Galdun
 Assisting Minister: Tom Michaels
 Comm. Minister: John Broussard
 Lectors: J. T. and Beverly Tarbox
 Ushers: Gregg Valek and John Kostelny

March 22nd:

Greeters: Ed and Joanne Sefara
 Acolyte: Aidan Altavilla
 Assisting Minister: John Broussard
 Comm. Minister: Martin Pennino
 Lectors: Jane Lauritsen and Brandon Michaels
 Ushers: Janet Broussard and Rafael Martinez

March 29th:

Greeters: Carole Pollitz and Carl Busch
 Acolyte: Sebastian Myers
 Assisting Minister: Brandon Michaels
 Comm. Minister: Paul Watkiss
 Lectors: Tom Myers and Lavinia Myers
 Ushers: John Kostelny and Gregg Valek

Sacristan and Altar Care:
 Ruth Bakalich

We are in need of congregation members and friends to serve as greeters, lectors, ushers and Communion ministers. If interested, please speak with Pastor Dennis or a member of the Worship and Music Committee.



**Coffee Hour Hosts are
 Welcome!**



A sign-up page is available on the sign board located at the kitchen serving window for hosting Sunday morning coffee hours. Hands-on orientation for hosting these events will be provided by Janet Broussard, Ann Head or Sue Skudrna. Please speak with any of the three for further information.

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DATED MATERIAL

Save the date. . .



Mardi Gras and Talent Night

Benefitting Summer Youth Service Projects
and the Church General Fund

Saturday, February 22nd, 2020

Doors Open at 6 p.m.

6:30 p.m., Food Served

7:30 p.m., Talent Show

Adults: \$15.00

12 and under: \$5.00

Includes Mardi Gras Food and the Show
(Beverages Available for Purchase).

If interested in sharing your talents, please contact
John Broussard or Brandon Michaels.

Entertainment provided by talent
from the congregation and communities.
Pinata for the children!

