

*LUTHERAN
SINGLE
ADULT
MINISTRY*

Iowa District West, LCMS

May 2009



Dear Single Friends in Christ,

February 25 is Ash Wednesday, which marks the beginning of the season of Lent. Perhaps it is good for us to review: what exactly is Lent? We may know that Lent is the 40 days before Easter (it is actually 46, but the Sundays don't count; they are Sundays *in* Lent rather than Sundays *of* Lent), and we have some vague idea that Lent is a penitential season as we tend to sing more somber hymns and omit the joyful parts of the liturgy like the "This is the Feast." But where did Lent come from, and why do we observe it today?

Well, the church year as we know it did not always exist. Early Christians thought of every Sunday as a celebration of the events of Good Friday and Easter; in fact, Sunday was chosen for the day of worship because it was the day Jesus rose from the dead. In about 325 A.D. Easter became the first yearly Christian festival. The Council of Nicaea declared that it shall be celebrated on the first Sunday after the first full moon of spring. Easter is still the central festival of the church year today.

Not long after Easter was established as a yearly festival, the church instituted a period of fasting and prayer in preparation for Easter, which we now know as Lent. (Hence the custom of "giving something up for Lent.") Originally the length of the fast varied, but soon a period of 40 days was settled on, to mark the 40 days of Jesus' temptation. Sundays were not included, for Sunday was still a celebration of Easter, and fasting would be inappropriate.

The early Church used this 40 day period of Lent for instructing converts to the faith in preparation for Baptism. These candidates were then baptized at the Easter Vigil on Holy Saturday and received Holy Communion for the first time on Easter Sunday. Perhaps this is the origin of the custom of confirming on Palm Sunday, which is still the practice in some Lutheran churches.

Today Lent is used in most cases to focus the attention of the baptized on the suffering and death of Christ. We journey to the cross in repentance, searching our souls and humbling our hearts, remembering that our sins brought all of this suffering upon Jesus. But our meditation on the suffering and death of Jesus is also to make us aware of God's great love for us, so that we see the price of our salvation and trust in His mercy for the forgiveness of our sins. We are called by the Ash Wednesday Old Testament reading, "Return to the Lord your God, for He is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love." (Joel 2:13)

Lent also reminds us that our journey through life is one of taking up our own cross and following Jesus. The disciple faces, as Jesus did, temptation, persecution and threats, suffering, and rejection. We are reminded that Jesus has faced all of these obstacles for us, and we are called and empowered to respond as Jesus did, bearing our sufferings humbly and with patient trust in God, forgiving those who sin against us.

Above all, Lent is preparation for Easter. Jesus' suffering and death were not the end of the story. Easter rings with the triumphant cry, "He is risen!" and the assurance that the battle with sin has been fought and won. Death has been defeated. And just as Jesus passed through suffering and death to resurrection and life, so too we pass through the sufferings of this life to resurrection and life with Him.

May God bless your journey to the cross with Jesus this Lenten season and grant you joy in His resurrection!

Pastor Richard Merrill, IDW Singles Ministry

IDWS Spring Activity is a Trip to Living History Farms

11121 Hickman Road, Urbandale, IA 50322

Saturday, May 30, 2009

Living History Farms in Urbandale, Iowa, tells the amazing story of how Iowans transformed the fertile prairies of the Midwest into the most productive farmland in the world.

While at the 550-acre open-air museum, visitors travel at their own pace through five historical time periods spanning 300 years. On-site interpreters provide a unique learning environment of seasonal activities and demonstrations. A complete visit lasts three to four hours

HISTORICAL SITES

The **1700 Ioway Indian Farm** shows how Iowa's first farmers worked the rich black soil. On the **1850 Pioneer Farm**, oxen do much of the heavy work and the family lives in a log cabin. The **1875 town of Walnut Hill** recreates a bustling frontier community with craftsmen and merchants in 16 shops along the town's main street. At the **1900 Farm**, draft horses supply the power for the field work while the family lives in a white frame farm house. The **Henry A. Wallace Exhibit Center** depicts the history of the 20th Century.

Sites are connected by walking trails and tractor-drawn carts. Each site is authentically farmed or worked by interpreters in historical clothing.

Admission

Adult, \$11.50; Child, (4-12), \$7; Senior Citizen (60+), \$10.50.

The day will start with a delicious brunch at the Iowa Machine Shed restaurant at 10 a.m.

Then we would tour Living History Farms

For those who could stay we will go for supper (group's choice) around 4:00

Wheelchairs donated by the Iowa Paralyzed Veterans group are available to use free of charge.

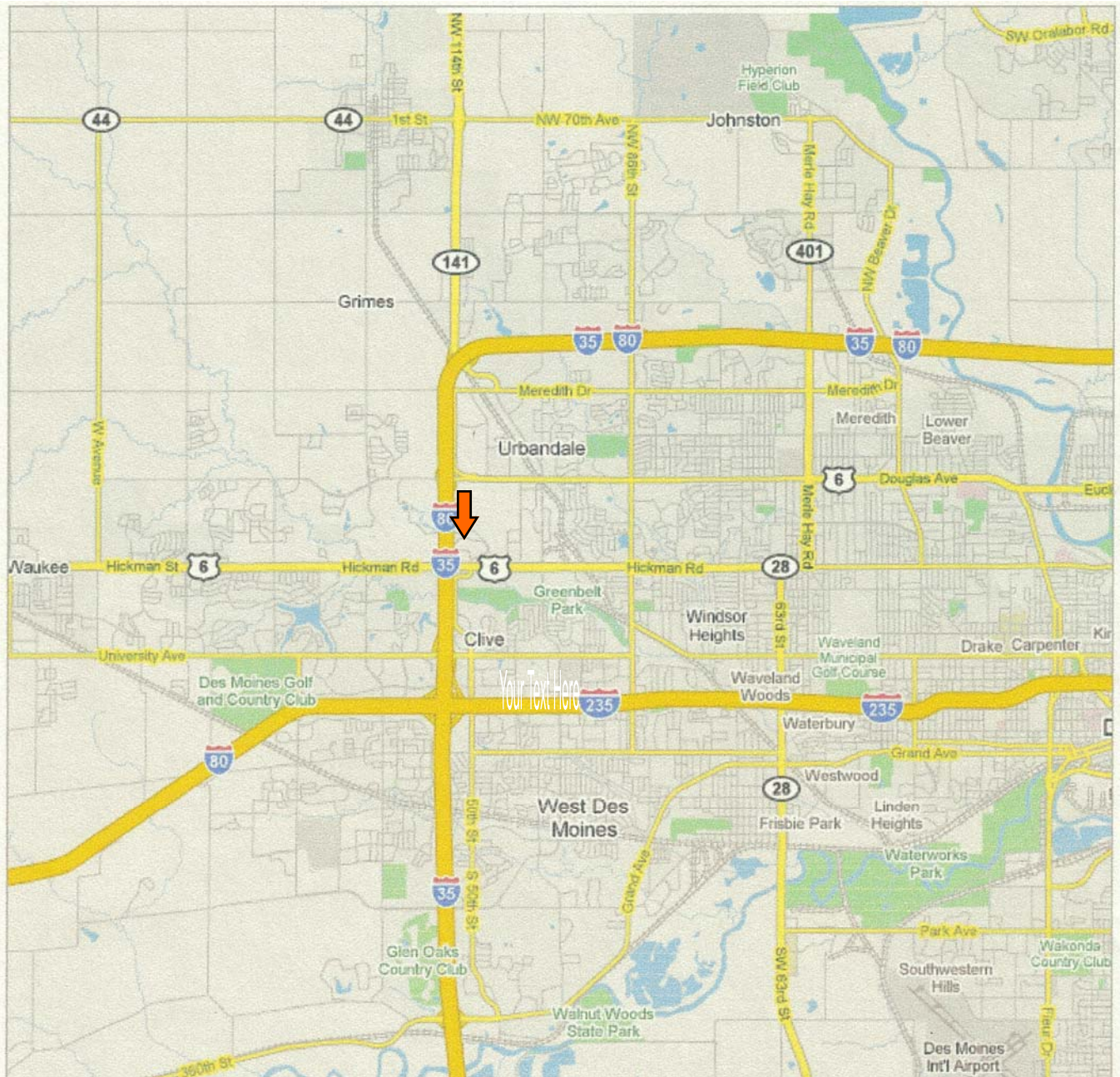
Please call ahead to reserve a chair at **515/278-5286**.

Unreserved chairs are available on a first come, first serve basis.

Open-air carts have an aluminum ramp for wheelchair boarding.

Map to Living History Farms

11121 Hickman Road, Urbandale, IA 50322



All I Need to Know About Life I learned From the Easter Bunny

Don't put all of your eggs in one basket
Walk softly and carry a big carrot
Keep you paws off other people's jellybeans
Good things come in small sugarcoated packages
Everyone needs a friend who is all ears
All work and not play can make you a basket case
Everyone is entitled to a bad hare day
An Easter bonnet can tame even the wildest hare
Let happy thoughts multiply like rabbits

Lutheran Singles Association

2009 Lutheran Singles Association Conference

June 25 – 28, 2009

Concordia University

275 Syndicate St. N., St. Paul, MN 55104

Workshops:

Creation Science
Single Ministry Group Training
Ideas for Singles Events
Successful Single Life
Single Traveler
Plus Open Forums: Widow/Widower, Divorced, Never Married

Service Project:

LWR Speaker on Service Project & Making Quilts for Lutheran World Relief

Entertainment:

Dinner Cruise on Paddleboat on Mississippi River w/ Entertainment & Photos

Rooms:

Dorm Rooms
Fees: Full Conference (Includes, Rooms, Meals, Entertainment, & Registration Fee) \$375.00
Daily rates available

Registration Deadline: May 22, 2009!

For More Information LSA website: www.lsalcms.org

Keynote Speakers:

Dr. Micah Parker

Trust Guy Ministries

www.trustguyministries.com

Rev. Terry Dittmer

Director Youth Ministries, LCMS

www.lcms.org

PUZZLE FOR SMART PEOPLE....

See if you can figure out what these words have in common.

Answer on back page

Banana

Dresser

Grammar

Potato

Revive

Uneven

Assess

Are you peeking or have you already given up?

Give it another try.

Look at each word carefully.

(You'll kick yourself when you discover the answer.) Answer: to puzzle on page 5

IDWS Fall Service Project

**The service project will be at The Orphan Grain Train in September
More information in the next newsletter**

Iowa District Events

- July 7—20 IOWAY Mission Trip to Los Angeles, Ellie Menz 515.386.8420 ellie.menz@idwlcms.org
August 1 Son Fest Christian Music festival at Camp Okoboji
Dec 28-Jan 4 New Years CA trip Pasadena, CA Ellie Menz 515.386.8420 ellie.menz@idwlcms.org

THE BUZZARD:

If you put a buzzard in a pen that is 6 feet by 8 feet and is entirely open at the top, the with no top. This bird, in spite of its ability to fly, will be an absolute prisoner. The reason is that a buzzard always begins a flight from the ground with a run of 10 to 12 feet. Without space to run, as is its habit, it will not even attempt to fly, but will remain a prisoner for life in a small jail

THE BAT:

The ordinary bat that flies around at night, a remarkable nimble creature in the air, cannot take off from a level place. If it is placed on the floor or flat ground, all it can do is shuffle about helplessly and, no doubt, painfully, until it reaches some slight elevation from which it can throw itself into the air. Then, at once, it takes off like a flash.

THE BUMBLEBEE:

A bumblebee, if dropped into an open tumbler, will be there until it dies, unless it is taken out. It never sees the means of escape at the top, but persists in trying to find some way out through the sides near the bottom. It will seek a way where none exists, until it completely destroys itself.

PEOPLE:

In many ways, we are like the buzzard, the bat, and the bumblebee. We struggle about with all our problems and frustrations, never realizing that all we have to do is look up! That's the answer, the escape route and the solution to any problem! Just look up.

Sorrow looks back, Worry looks around, But faith looks up!

Live simply, love generously, care deeply, speak kindly and trust in our Creator who loves us.

Answer: to puzzle on page 4

No, it is not that they all have at least 02 double letters.

Answer:

In all of the words listed, If you take the first letter,

Place it at the end of the word, And

Then, spell the word backwards, It will be the same word.



Iowa District West Singles Committee – 2009

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