

Life Together

Volume 27, Issue 5

May 2020

Grace and peace to you,

“Be still and know that I am God. Psalm 46:10” This mantra was lodged in my brain by a beloved youth worker. He would use this phrase every time he wanted us to refocus before prayer or a lesson. Throughout my life there have been countless times where this verse floated to me out of the nether in order to bring me some sort of comfort. Recently, it has surfaced again as the world has faced the current pandemic; however, probably not for the reason you might think.

While it certainly is a great reminder that God is still God even in the midst of all this, the part that has struck me is the command to “Be still.” Life certainly seems to have come to a grinding halt. Our lives tend to be defined by business. We cram our schedules full of all kinds of events and meetings and appointments that time of rest and relaxation have become a rarity. Through this pandemic, however, God has caused our schedules to be cleared so that we “be still.”

In this stillness many families have returned to a more simple life. They have spent more time together: talking together, learning together, working together, playing together, supporting one another. This is how God has designed the family to operate, and this is when the family is at its best. When the family is together, its members are healthier in mind, body, and soul.

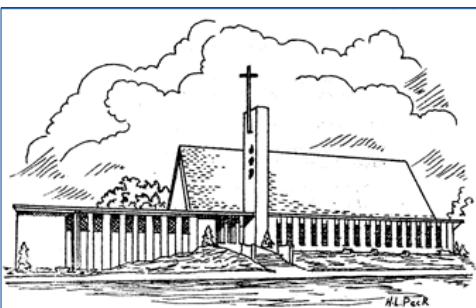
But we aren't commanded to just be still. “Be still and know that I am God.” It has been my sincere prayer that families have also been reading God's Word together, praying together, worshipping together. Even for those who do not have others, God has given us time to spend focused on our life in Him. All of the “extras” (sports, activities, entertainment, travel, social gatherings) have all literally been cancelled and life has still gone on. However, without Christ, there is no life to begin with.

If you have not taken advantage of this time to “Be still and know that I am God,” there is still time! Take a moment to declutter your schedule in order to spend time with God. Seriously consider what you have had to go without these last several weeks that you could continue on without in order to replace it with spending regular time with Christ, who is your life. And take the opportunity to reprioritize how you spend the rest of your time. Make sure you invest the precious time we have left on this earth things that have eternal value, like spending quality time with family.

May the Lord bless you and yours.

In Christian love,

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Catechetical Corner

LESSONS FOR THE LIFE LONG LUTHERAN



The Augsburg Confession

Article VII The Church

What is the Church? A simple question, but simple questions can prove the hardest to answer. We don't discuss it much because we assume everyone knows the answer, but in that unspoken assumption many answers form "behind the scenes" so that we end up on completely different pages.

For example, this question has come up a lot in the recent weeks. Many have taken up the mantra, "The Church isn't a building," to sooth either a burdened conscience or the ache we experience. While true, this answer, or rather lack of one, doesn't satisfy. Yes, the Church is not a building but how does this sooth the troubled mind? For it neglects to actually answer the question: what is the Church.

Let us then consider what our confession testifies concerning this question of the Church:

Our churches teach that one holy, Church is to remain forever. The Church is the congregation of saints in which the Gospel is purely taught and the Sacraments are correctly administered. For the true unity of the Church it is enough to agree about the doctrine of the Gospel and the and the administration of the Sacraments. It is not necessary that human traditions, that is, rites and ceremonies instituted by men, should be the same everywhere. As Paul says, "One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all," (Ephesians 4:5-6).

So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.

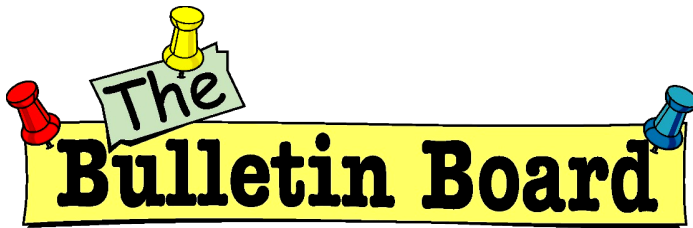
-Ephesians 2:19-22

Let's simply say it: how this question is answered has eternal consequences. Christ tells us the Church is His own body, and where the head is the body will be also. But if you are not connected to the Body then you are not connected to the Head. Salvation is found nowhere else.

Those "in" are saved; those "out" are condemned. If there is to be any assurance and comfort, we much come to this answer honestly, meaning, we must come to it by Christ. How we ourselves would answer is meaningless, as we are not the Head. Therefore, we must search the Scriptures and see what they testify concerning the Church.

In Matthew 16, Jesus asks the disciples who the world says that He is. At that time, and even now, the world has a lot of answers to the question, "Who is Jesus?" But when Jesus asked the disciples who *they* say that He is, Peter confesses, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus tells Peter that upon this rock, this confession of who Jesus is, the Church would be established. As long as the Church holds to this confession, it will not be overcome by all the fury of hell.

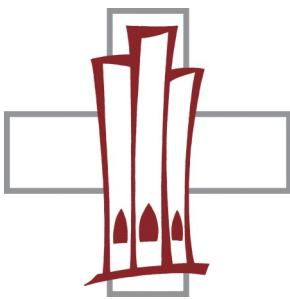
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The Bulletin Board

Hymns of the Summer

Is there a hymn you think we should be certain to pass on to the next generation? Is there one we haven't sung in a long time you'd love to sing? In July, August, and September we will take requests for our hymn of the month.



You may request as many as you'd like, but prioritize them according to your preference. We will use everyone's "top" hymn before moving to the next and so on. The amount of Sundays we sing a hymn will depend on the total number of hymn requests.

The guideline is the hymns you request must come from one of our hymnals. Please turn in your list to the office with your name and the hymns you're requesting.

Vacation Bible School

"Let Us Pray" VBS is still planned for July 12th—16th!



Let Us Pray
VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

With the threat of COVID-19 still lurking and continued calls for social distancing the Board of Education has decided this year we will do "virtual" VBS.

Please keep us in your prayers! This will push our creativity as we determine what we can do and how we can do it in this format. We are looking to our schools as an example and hope

to gather supplies for parents to pick up at the beginning of the week. Our plan is to create videos for parents and children to watch together for worship, Bible Study, catechesis, and crafts. Who knows, this might be an opportunity for parents and children to grow in faith together!

First and foremost, the confession of Jesus as Christ and the Son of the living God establishes and defines the Church. But don't confuse this with the mere mention of Jesus. Paul writes in Ephesians 2, "Built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit."

If you read the Epistles, letter after letter after letter warns against false teaching and calls the Church into action against it. Jesus Himself warns of false teachers and false Christs. Therefore, the church is built *only* upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, that is what is written in the Old and New Testaments. Any other "knowledge" about Christ must be rejected as a "different gospel."

In 2 Corinthians 11 Paul writes, "I am afraid, however, that just as Eve was deceived by the serpent's cunning, your minds may be led astray from your simple and pure devotion to Christ. For if someone comes and proclaims another Jesus than the one we proclaimed, or if you receive a different spirit from the one you received, or if you accept a different gospel from the one you accepted, you put up with it readily enough. ...For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, masquerading as apostles of Christ. And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light. It is not surprising, then, if his servants masquerade as servants of righteousness."

Therefore, the Church is only found where the Word of God is taught rightly. Now, don't misunderstand me on this point; we are all "simultaneously saints and sinners." Therefore, even our teaching of the pure doctrine is not always 100% pure. So we are not saying that if we believe someone to be in error on a certain point of faith that they are not within the Church and beyond salvation! Salvation is by grace through faith in Christ. What we *are* saying, then, is that if because of their error they have then wrong Christ, *then* they are outside the embrace of the Church. We make the distinction between heterodoxy, false teaching within the true Church, and heretical, false teaching that places you outside the Church.

When we think of other Christian denominations, we consider them to have heterodox teachings, but still fully acknowledge that they are our dear

Catechetical Corner—Continued from Page 3
 brothers and sisters in Christ for they still cling to the person and work of Jesus. However, those religions that teach wrongly about the person and work of Jesus do in fact teach “a different gospel.”

For example, Mormonism teaches that Jesus is God’s Son and our Savior, but they reject the teaching that He is uniquely God’s Son. Instead, they believe that we are all existed before our conceptions as God’s sons and daughters and were placed in the flesh in order to learn how to be good on our own and become gods ourselves. Jesus, then, volunteered to be the scapegoat for our sins and teacher to lead us in the proper way. In other words, Jesus is only different than us according to His work, but not His person. Judaism, Islam, Jehovah’s Witnesses, Seventh Day Adventists all, then, are heresies because they teach wrongly about the person and work of Jesus.

So the Church is established and defined by the confession of who Jesus is. Next we look to the things that Jesus has given to His church as the means of His grace among us, that is, His Sacraments. The Church, then, is those who gather around these means, the confession of faith, the Word of God, Baptism, the Lord’s Supper, *and clings to them by faith*. It is not enough to simply be present in order to be part of the Church, but to have

faith. Only faith receives the salvation that Christ delivers to His Church.

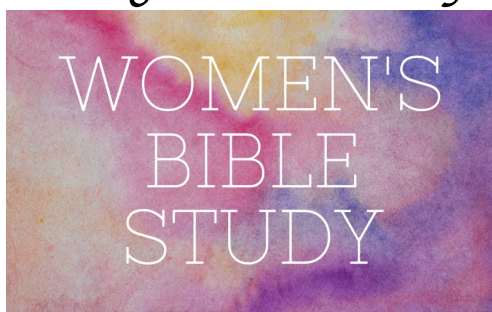
This means too that those who simply congregate together with the Church, or who are on a congregation’s rolls, are not actually part of the Church if they do not have faith. Faith is what connects the Body to the Head and receives salvation. Salvation is poured out like water, if you have no receptacle to receive it then you do not receive its benefit.

So may we always be found in the presence of God’s Word and Sacrament, so that we may always be found in the Church, standing strong against the gates of hell. Amen.

the Church: those that know they are sinners in need of God’s grace.

Why does this all matter? First, because someone who is not inside the church is heading for eternal death. Second, because those who are within the church but have false “handholds” are in greater danger of slipping. Sin, Satan, and death are ruthless in their deception to draw people out of the church. They constantly try to replace the real Jesus with a powerless knockoff. Therefore, we should work hard to continue bringing the truth of God’s Word, even if it hurts feelings, to keep people safe and secure within the ark of Christ’s church.

Waiting — A Bible Study on Patience, Hope, and Trust



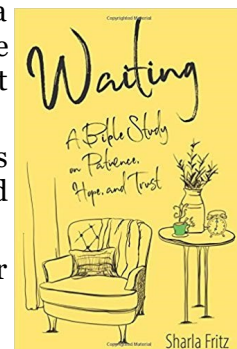
We wait. And . . . wait. But what if the waiting rooms of life are God’s best classrooms? What if the Holy Spirit changes us through the uncomfortable delays of life? This study focuses on the lives of eight biblical women who waited and yearned and ached. Women like us. Come and learn how to surrender your worries to God, handle the daily-ness of waiting, and draw closer to Jesus.

Classes will be held weekly on Thursday afternoon at 5 PM and end at 6 PM. This is not a “Lutheran only” Bible study as all women need the comfort of Jesus, so please feel free to invite your friends! If you can

make the weekly classes that would be wonderful. But if you chooses to only come once in a while that’s fine too. If you think you would be a little late to class, that’s okay too! We are there to study God’s Word, grow in our knowledge of Him and enjoy the fellowship. It doesn’t matter if there is one person or twenty, God’s Word will not be withheld!

Books are available in the Pastor’s Office. If you’d like to help offset the cost of a book it is \$15.00. Those funds will go back into to the Board of Education’s budget as they furnished our books.

Homework for this week is to read Chapter One in the book. At class we will begin our discussion of the questions. Read pages 9 through 23.





The Apple Friends Orchard



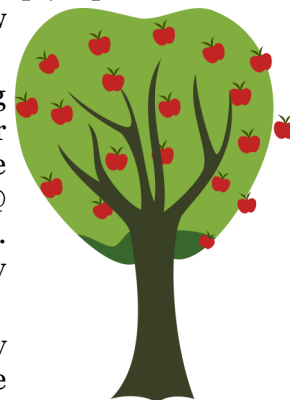
Where Friendships are Planted and Nurtured

Thank you to everyone who sent encouragement and a little Easter cheer to our youth last month!

School is winding down and with this new found freedom comes a new round of reminders on how COVID-19 has impacted our lives. The parks remain closed, pools left unfilled, movie theatres sit empty, sports canceled, sleepovers unscheduled. Our youth and their parents are going to have to find new outlets for their energy.

Give them some inspiration by sharing with them some of the things you enjoyed doing as a kid in the summer, especially with your parents. Recommend one or two of your favorite childhood books. Share with them a Bible verse that has reminded you of the promises of God and kept you going when times are hard. Direct them to the "Faith @ Home" page on our website where there is a link for free family devotions from CPH. Tell them that you'd love to be their pen pal this summer and hear about what all they are doing.

Lastly, don't forget to remind them of Jesus' love for them, that He is bigger than any virus, and that He will bring us safely with Him into eternal life. Maybe send a little note of encouragement for their parents as well!



Cookbook Fundraiser

Stewardship is working on a cookbook fundraiser. We'd love to fill it with your favorite dishes. If you're willing share your recipes send them either through email or snail mail to the church. You can also leave them in the church office. The categories are:

Appetizers & Beverages, Soups & Salads, Vegetables & Side Dishes, Main Dishes, Breads & Rolls, Desserts, Cookies & Candy, This & That.

The proceeds will go toward our general fund.

Munro Twins' Birth and Gift Card Fundraiser

Martin Johannes and Andrew Lynn Patrick were born to Israel and Ryan Munro on May 6th. The boys will be spending the rest of the month in Wesley Medical Center in Wichita.

To help celebrate the twins' arrival and to help with the cost of spending time in Wichita, the St. Peter's family would like to coordinate a gift card shower for the young family. Gift cards for meals, gas, and baby supplies are appreciated.

Cards may be dropped off in the teal gift bag in the office or given to Marie Roth. Any questions? Please contact Marie.



Martin Johannes Munro



Andrew Lynn Patrick Munro

Belize Fundraiser Postponed

The dinner had been rescheduled to the end of May, but with the current uncertainty we are postponing again. This time we won't schedule it until things have become more stable. Keep an eye out for more information about the dinner as the new normal settles in.

LCMS Stewardship Ministry Article



Our Savior calls us to follow Him in generosity. “For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you.” (John 13:15) We cannot give our lives for the salvation of the world, of course. Praise God – that job’s already done!

But with hearts full of thanksgiving for what Jesus has given us, we can follow Jesus’ example of generous giving. And this is not merely an example alone. It’s also our Lord’s command. “The one who contributes, (let him give) in generosity.” (Rom. 12:8)

So, when we give to help others who are in need, and when we bring offerings to the Lord, we should strive to heed His command and follow the pattern He has established for us. Jesus did not give us leftovers. He gave His best. So, we should not give leftovers, either, but the first and best of what He has given us. Jesus did not give as an afterthought, but according to the plan of salvation God established from the foundation of the world.

So, when it comes to our offerings to the Lord, we should make a thoughtful plan to give generously, in proportion to the way He has blessed us. Like the Macedonian Christians, who gave according to their ability – and even beyond their ability (2 Cor. 8:3) – we can and should give a generous portion of the income that God provides us to honor the Lord.

We want you to know, brothers, about the grace of God that has been given among the churches of Macedonia, for in a severe test of affliction, their abundance of joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed in a wealth of generosity on their part. For they gave according to their means, as I can testify, and beyond their means, of their own accord, begging us earnestly for the favor of taking part in the relief of the saints—and this, not as we expected, but they gave themselves first to the Lord and then by the will of God to us. Accordingly, we urged Titus that as he had started, so he should complete among you this act of grace. But as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in all earnestness, and in our love for you—see that you excel in this act of grace also. *2 Corinthians 8:1-7*

So also, we should give freely, just as Jesus gave freely for us. There is no compulsion involved in our works of love and our offerings to the Lord. Nor do we give grudgingly. We should give freely and cheerfully because we want to out of thanksgiving. “Each as he purposes in his heart,” as the Lord says. (2 Cor. 9:7) There is no New Testament ceremonial law involved here. Rather, we are free to give as generously as our Savior has given for us.

In the same way, our Lord teaches us to give generously out of love – love for Him and for our neighbor. Genuine love is always love in deed (1 John 3:18), love such as Jesus showed us all. It is love that sees our neighbor in need and gives generously to help him. It is love that hears the Word of the Lord and does what it says. If we truly love, we give generously. If we give without love, our giving is not truly following Jesus.

Finally, we follow Jesus in generosity when we give for a good purpose to thank the Lord and support His gospel ministry and other works of mercy. The people of Israel gave generously for the service of God’s gospel purposes, to construct and support the operation of the tabernacle. For that was the place where the Lord received the Old Testament sacrifices, through which He bestowed the forgiveness of sins on His people. So, they gave abundantly – so abundantly that they had to be told to stop giving. (Ex. 36:5-6)

In the same way, we should bring generous offerings to support the Lord’s work of bestowing His gifts of forgiveness, life, and salvation in our congregations through the preaching and teaching of His Word, Baptism, and the Lord’s Supper. We should support the Lord’s work of caring for those who are poor and needy.

Our Savior calls us to follow His example in generous giving. Let us then, with thankful hearts, rededicate ourselves to following Him in generosity.

THE S.E.A. SIDE WOODS

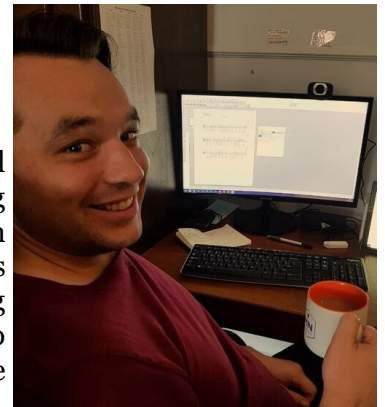
*Rev. Matthew, Kali, Laurel, Elenore, and Caroline Wood
Ministry in Southeast Asia—Based in Medan, Indonesia
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Work from Home

Posted April 22nd, 2020

We have been finished with language classes for about a month. Our final presentations have been postponed indefinitely. So now Kali and I are getting used to life after language class which includes me working from our home in Medan. Of course with the self-isolation orders and social distancing measures being taken this isn't exactly the regular routine that we will eventually be getting used to, but we must get used to it for the time being. This time has allowed me to focus on the Indonesian Hymnal, study, and look forward to the projects that are waiting at the other end of the isolation.

The plan was always to do a majority of work from my home study here in Medan. The self-isolation and social distancing efforts to slow the spread of covid-19 have provided ample time to focus on the Indonesian Hymnal project. Right now we are working through some of the nitty-gritty editing and formatting. At the moment there are two major editing and formatting projects that I am working on.



3¶

¶
3:1·Ya·TUHAN, betapa·banyaknya·|lawanku!·*
Banyak orang yang bangkit menyerang |aku,¶

¶
3:2·banyak orang yang berkata ten |tang aku·*¶
"Baginya tidak ada pertolongan dari pa |da Allah."¶

¶
3:3·Tetapi Engkau, TUHAN, adalah perisai yang melindu |ngi aku, *¶
Engkaulah kemuliaanku dan yang mengangkat ke |palaku.¶

¶
3:4 Dengan nyaring aku berseru kepa |da TUHAN, *
dan Ia menjawab aku dari gunung-Nya |yang kudus.¶

¶
3:5·Aku membaringkan diri, la |lu tidur, *
aku bangun, sebab TUHAN menopang |aku!¶

¶
3:6·Aku tidak takut kepada puluhan ri |bu orang *¶
yang siap menge |pung aku.¶

¶
3:7·Bangkitlah, TUHAN, tolonglah aku, ya |Allahku! *¶
Ya, Engkau telah memukul rahang semua musuhku, dan mematahkan gigi orang-o |rang fasik.¶

¶
3:8·Dari TUHAN datang per |tolongan, *
Berkat-Mu atas |umat-Mu!¶

¶
Kemuliaan kepada Bapa, |Putra, *¶
Dan Roh |Kudus,¶
Seperti pada per |mulaan, *¶
sekarang, selalu, dan sepanjang masa. |Amin.¶



3¶

¶
¶Ya·TUHAN, betapa·banyaknya·|
lawanku!·*
Banyak orang yang bangkit menyerang
|aku,¶

¶
¶banyak orang yang berkata ten |tang
aku·*
"Baginya tidak ada pertolongan dari pa-
|da Allah."¶

¶
¶Tetapi Engkau, TUHAN, adalah perisai
yang melindu |ngi aku, *
Engkaulah kemuliaanku dan yang
mengangkat ke |palaku.¶

¶
¶Dengan nyaring aku berseru kepa |da
TUHAN, *
dan Ia menjawab aku dari gunung-Nya
|yang kudus.¶

¶
¶Aku membaringkan diri, la |lu tidur, *
aku bangun, sebab TUHAN menopang
|aku!¶

¶
¶Aku tidak takut kepada puluhan ri |bu
orang *
yang siap menge |pung aku.¶

¶
¶Bangkitlah, TUHAN, tolonglah aku, ya |
Allahku! *
Ya, Engkau telah memukul rahang
semua musuhku, dan mematahkan gigi
orang-o |rang fasik.¶

¶
¶Dari TUHAN datang per |tolongan, *
Berkat-Mu atas |umat-Mu!¶

¶
¶Kemuliaan bagi Sang Bapa dan |Putra, *
Dan bagi Sang Roh |Kudus,¶
Seperti pada per |mulaan, *
Kini dan selamanya. |Amin.¶

First is the proofing of all hymns that have already been translated and set to music. This is mainly checking for typos, and making sure the division of syllables is correct. If you think that doing this in Indonesian makes it more difficult for me. You'd be correct. It is not exactly how I imagined keeping up with my language learning, but it no doubt helps.

This task requires rudimentary knowledge of the Finale music program and knowledge of Indonesian. I have just enough knowledge in both to start working through it. Once the self isolation mandates ease up a bit I will be meeting with a local pastor in the Indonesian Christian Lutheran Church (GKLI) to double check and proof all the hymns again.

The second big task that I am working on is formatting the Psalms for the hymnal. The GKLI hymnal committee was adamant that the Psalms be included in this hymnal, all of them. So I am busy editing the Teks Alkitab Terjemahan Baru from the Lembaga Alkitab Indonesia (The New Translation of the Text of the Bible from the Indonesian Bible Institute). Thankfully much of this work has already been done by previous workers in Indonesia. We already have an electronic document with the text of all 150 Psalms, which I am formatting to the specifications of the new hymnal. It's tedious and sometimes I wish someone else was doing it, but it is an important job for me because it helps to keep the GKLI hymnal committee focused on translation and obtaining all the necessary copyrights.

This is obviously not how I imagined ministry would look after language learning, but like most people around the world today, we must adapt and adjust expectations. It is important for me to remember that this new hymnal is important to the ministry of the GKLI. All the tediousness and editing will pay off as the GKLI uses this new hymnal as a tool to educate their members and bring people into the worship life of Christ's church.

Nevertheless, I look forward to when the self isolation comes to an end and opportunities to teach at conferences and meetings return. The pastors and elders of the GKLI have a lot of questions about prayer so that might be in the future. The GKLI leadership would like to better understand the Augsburg Confession. So that is another possible topic of a future meeting or conference. This time of Isolation has provided ample time for study in both of these areas.

I also look forward to being able to work with Bishop Esra Sinaga and Pastor Eben Ezer Aruan on developing a Christian education podcast which will be able to reach the congregations in the smaller villages around Sumatra. These will be a series of podcasts focused on the Small Catechism and taught at about a confirmation class level. I will be working with Pastor Eben Ezer Aruan to produce each episode and with Bishop Esra Sinaga on the best way to disseminate each podcast.

Peace of Mind Amid Pandemic

Posted April 5th, 2020

Recently I have read many Facebook posts from my mom-friends in the States who are struggling with this new normal of their children doing part homeschooling and part

distance learning. This pandemic has changed their lives drastically.

For us, it has calmed down our lives and brought us into a very stable place. Because Matt and my Bahasa Indonesia classes have finished, we are now home all the time with the girls. Matt can jump into his work full-time and I can focus on my vocation as mother/teacher/wife.

Now that I don't have to focus on going to class and my own homework I can focus on teaching Laurel and Eleanor. With the extra time we have together we have been able to do some fun learning as well as our basic subjects. We have done science experiments, art and lots of extra reading.

While we miss seeing friends each week at playgroup or play dates, we are happy to be spending more time together. I have found time to cook more, try out new recipes and make things we can't buy here (like homemade bagels). Matt and I have found time to pull out some of the board games we brought and have some in-home date nights.

We have been given a time to reset as a family, to explore our vocations that God has given us and to trust that He will continue to care for us as we go about our daily lives.



Hello friends and partners in mission!

Greetings to you in the name of our risen Lord, Jesus Christ. I reach out to inform you that, as the good work of our Mission Society continues in Belize, it is undergoing a noteworthy shift. As one of our partners it is important for you to stay informed. As you know, just as this novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) has affected so many individuals and organizations around the globe, it has also impacted the operations of the

Belize Mission Society. We have seen issues of health, safety, travel, finance, and stewardship call come into play as we have scrambled to figure out how best to respond and continue our work of service. The Board of Directors of the Belize Mission Society has wrestled with and prayed about these various challenges and their potential solutions and has settled on the following that I share with you today.

Rather than continue with our pre-virus plans of expanding our mission work throughout the country of Belize, the Belize Mission Society will be re-focusing her efforts at this time in the area where her work began 17 years ago: on and around the peninsula in the Stann Creek District. This re-focusing will allow the Belize Mission Society in this challenging season to maintain the level of attention and resources devoted to its historic mission sites and avoid spreading itself too thin. If circumstances allow any of the remaining 2020 teams to follow through with their planned mission trips, the Belize Mission Society will work to attach them to a needed project in one of those areas. There is still much good work to be done in places like Seine Bight, Riversdale, Georgetown, and in the partner schools.

In the interest of good stewardship, the Belize Mission Society has also decided to reduce its own executive position from full-time to part-time. As a result, by July 31st this summer I will help the Belize Mission Society transition to new leadership so that I can be available for full-time Ministry in some other capacity within our Lord's church. My five years of full-time missionary service will come to a close for a country and among a people I have grown to love so dearly. As such, this change will be difficult for both me and the mission society, but we are also excited to see what God might have in store for us in the next chapter of our lives of service. My family and I welcome your prayers. I remind myself what I regularly taught when visiting supporting congregations: We're all missionaries, regardless of where in the world we live and serve. We are all people on a mission from God.

The Belize Mission Society has a rich history of Christian service for the people of Belize, all of which has been made possible by partners like you. Our partners have given us their time, talents, and treasures to see projects completed, missionaries supported, mercy programs developed and the Gospel shared. For that the Belize Mission Society will always be thankful. These may be uncertain and challenging times, but the work of the Belize Mission Society goes on. Indeed, she needs support like yours perhaps now more than ever. She needs Christian prayers as adjustments are made to continue outreach to a Belizean people struggling through the effects of this virus every bit as much as others. She needs Christians talking about and preparing for future mission trips once it is determined that they can resume safely and responsibly. She needs Christians to continue partnering with her through financial gifts to fund her ongoing feeding and scholarship programs for Belizean school children, and to sustain her own operations. She needs us all to remain hope-filled Christians of service in the face of adversity. The work we do may be challenging, but it continues by God's grace and with His power. God bless us all as we take our next steps forward, wherever that may be.

In the Name of our Risen Lord, Jesus Christ,

Rev. Duane Meissner

For more info on the Belize Mission Society, please visit www.belizemissionsociety.net.



Devoted to Worship:

Service of the Sacrament, Part II

Prayer of Thanksgiving

This prayer is a newer element in Lutheran rites. We gather at the Table with Jesus Himself and give thanks to God for the blessings about to be received from our Lord, as He did before blessing the bread and wine.

LCMS Commission on Worship says this prayer is “a careful synthesis of various historical models that remain faithful to the Lutheran understanding of the Sacrament of the Altar.” It recalls God’s blessings as well as the gathering of God’s guests to praise Him for His saving work for us in Christ. Thus the prayer is intended to offer the guests the opportunity to ponder the mystery of Christ’s real presence and the gift of forgiveness, life, and salvation.

“Blessed are You, Lord of heaven and earth,” is a traditional invocation of God in Jewish prayers of blessing and echoes the Benedictus, “Blessed is He.” It continues with a reiteration of John 3:16 in which the pastor recalls God’s mercy and grace. Because we “do this in remembrance” of Christ, we recall the reason for His incarnation, then we thank God for the redemption He has prepared.

We then ask for the Spirit’s continuing aid in making us worthy recipients of the Sacrament. It is faith strengthened by the Spirit that makes for worthiness, and so the Spirit prepares our hearts to receive Jesus, our Redeemer and Lord.

Proclamation of Christ

The pastor speaks 1 Cor 11:26 that “as often as we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim the Lord’s death until He comes.” The congregation respond with Rev 22:20, “Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.”

Yet this proclamation of word points to the greater proclamation of Christ’s death in the elements being taken, consecrated, distributed, received, eaten, drunk as we participate in this Holy Meal of Christ’s

own body and blood for the forgiveness of sins.

Lord’s Prayer

The Lord’s Prayer was associated with the Lord’s Supper early on. The petition for “daily bread” was understood to include the spiritual food received in Communion. In a concrete yet spiritual manner, this prayer recognizes God’s full and free forgiveness is to be shared with others. We are to go into the world as God’s kingdom bearers, instruments of His will.

Sometimes it is paraphrased, varied translations used, or set to music in order to aid the worshipers to reflect on the words more meaningfully.

From the seventh century only the priest said the Lord’s Prayer. This practice was continued in most Reformation-era congregations and into Walther’s service for the LCMS. The practice was used in *The Lutheran Hymnal* and is retained in Divine Service, Setting Three. Recent North American orders return the Lord’s Prayer to the people.

Verba (Words of Our Lord/Institution)

The Words of our Lord, *Verba* (Latin for “the words”), Words of Institution are Christ’s own words that the pastor uses to consecrate, or set apart, the bread and wine for God’s special use. The pastor may simply make the sign over the elements or hold them up as he does so. Either way, it is indicated that it is in *this* bread and wine Jesus promises to be with us. Time and space are bridged and the past is a contemporary experience as we hear the words.

We confess that Christ gives His body and blood “in, with, and under” the consecrated elements, so we show respect because of their divinely mandated function. Again the Good News is proclaimed and we receive the benefits of His saving act on Calvary.

Pax Domini

Jesus’ Easter greeting (Jn 20:19) is recalled as the pastor states the proclamation of peace—“The peace of the Lord be with you always.” Luther suggests this

Continued on Page 11

Devoted to Worship—Continued from Page 10

is another place in the service where the people receive a statement of absolution. The congregations responds with a joyful “Amen.”

Agnus Dei

Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. John the Baptist pointed to the Paschal “Lamb of God” (Agnus Dei in Latin) at the beginning of Jesus’ earthly ministry. We are reminded in this canticle that Jesus alone is our sacrifice for sin and through whom we have access to God’s mercy and peace. In this scriptural song we adore the one who comes to us as the Lamb slain for sinners.

This first Communion hymn was originally included in the liturgy so that the bread, brought forward during the Offertory, could be broken into pieces for distribution. All activities during this hymn are performed in a dignified and respectful manner, anticipating the distribution of Christ’s body and blood. It is a devotional moment in the liturgy that provides the congregation time to savor the words as the worshipers recall God’s gracious gift of Himself.

Distribution

Distribution of the Elements. Distributing the Communion elements, while a practical concern, is done in a dignified and respectful manner. There is no “one-size fits all” method of distribution. The specific context of a congregation, such as church architecture and flow, should be considered.

As to the specific manner of distribution the Lord largely leaves free. The congregation may receive the Sacrament kneeling or standing; by a continuous method or by tables at the altar rail; from one baked loaf or as wafers; in a common cup or individual cups. The diverse practices do not undermine the unity we have at the Lord’s table. No matter the practice of distribution, however, care should always be taken to communicate dignity and respect because the gathered guests are receiving the greatest gift from the Host—Himself!

Regardless of how the Sacrament is received, the presiding minister ordinarily distributes the bread so the practice of close(d) Communion can be followed. The typical manner of receiving the wafer into the hand is into the right hand, which is placed on top of the left. The typical manner of receiving the common cup is to hold out your hand and assist the minister by gently holding the cup at its base and helping guide it to the mouth. It is appropriate to make the sign of the cross either before or after

receiving the elements as a reminder of the continued baptismal relationship with God.

Children are invited to approach the altar with their parents where they will receive a blessing. It is encouraged that they cross their arms over their chest.

Hymns during Distribution. Many congregations normally sing several hymns during the distribution of the Communion elements. Another option used is special music by musicians that focus on the mystery and blessing of the Sacrament. A third option is silence for meditation on the words and reflection on the mystery.

Dismissal. After communicants receive the bread and wine, the pastor dismisses them. The words of the dismissal may be spoken to each table or at the end of distribution all together.

Post-Communion Canticle

Thank the Lord. The natural response after receiving a gift is to give thanks. The supernatural gift of God’s forgiving grace in Christ elicits a grateful response from all communicants. This hymn is a newer hymn and is based on Psalm 105. It illustrates the evangelic emphasis of the liturgical service.

Nunc Dimittis. Traditionally used in Compline and Vespers, Simeon’s Song is a distinctively Lutheran contribution to the Communion liturgy. Simeon’s beautiful expression of spiritual satisfaction is repeated by the congregation in appreciation for the manifestation of God’s salvation.

Post-Communion Collect

The three collects offered underscore the blessings of the Sacrament. The first is from Luther. After giving thanks, the dual blessing of strengthening of faith and strengthening of love are recognized. The second is from a priest’s prayer used in thirteenth-century England. The third comes from *Hymnal Supplement 98* and emphasizes a heavenly theme.

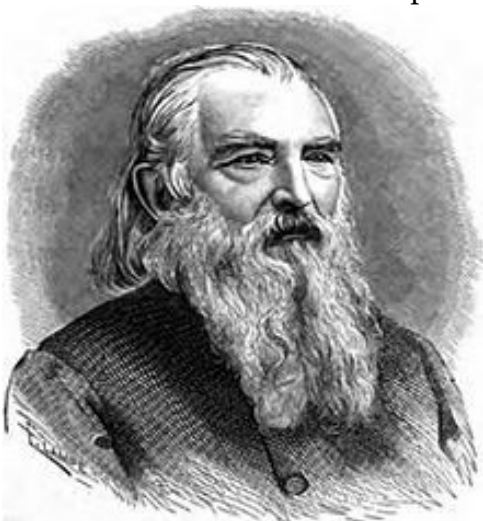
Benediction

Using Num 6:22-27 the pastor speaks a trinitarian blessing on the people. The last word of the liturgy comes from God, who hosted the service. The Benediction is more than a prayer or wish, but bestows God’s blessings on the people for the rest of the week. The Aaronic benediction is a uniquely Lutheran choice, but underscores the unity of praise with all God’s people. Worshipers are encouraged to make the sign of the cross as we conclude..

Adapted from Gathered Gusts by CPH.

May 4: Friedrich Wyneken, *Pastor and Missionary*

Born in Hannover in 1810, Friedrich Wyneken was the son of a Lutheran pastor. Like many before him, he followed in his father's footsteps. The Evangelical preaching he heard as a young man planted firmly in his heart a desire to bring the saving Gospel to those who had never heard it. He arrived in Baltimore in 1838 and was eventually sent by the mission society of the old Pennsylvania Ministerium to labor in the "west."



His health began to fail somewhat due to the primitive conditions and the enormity of what he was facing. He returned to Germany and literally begged for help in his task. Wilhelm Loehe was among those who heard and heeded the call to support his mission. When Wyneken came back to America, he did not come alone. He brought a number of pastors with him, and they in turn brought others. Not only was work begun in reaching many Germans who were already living in the new land and continued to flood in, but the Gospel was brought to the Native Americans in Michigan.

Through Wyneken's efforts and with support from Loehe, a practical seminary was established in Fort Wayne, Indiana, to supply the "emergency preachers" that the frontier conditions so desperately required. In 1845, Wyneken returned to Baltimore as the pastor of St. Paul's Lutheran Church. His strong confessional convictions led to a rupture with the General Synod, and he sought union with a fledgling body that became The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. He joined the Synod at its second convention and was eventually elected its second president in 1850, after he had been called to serve Trinity Lutheran Church (Old Trinity) in St. Louis, Missouri.

Health issues eventually caused him to be given a leave of absence from his congregation. He returned to the scene of his old labor in Fort Wayne and devoted himself full time to His work as Synod president. He discharged that office faithfully and with zeal, carrying out the required visitations of congregations and pastors under difficult conditions. He



stressed the importance of

maintaining doctrinal purity, catechizing the young, and living a holy life. He knew how easily Christians could be conformed to the sinful world. His increasing age and ongoing health issues eventually led to his being unable to fulfill the stringent demands of the presidency, which he left in 1864 in the midst of the Civil War. His final work in the Church was as pastor at Trinity Lutheran Church in Cleveland. He died this day in 1876.

Lord Jesus Christ, You want all to come to the knowledge of the truth. We give You thanks for sending Friedrich Wyneken as missionary and pastor in Indiana, Ohio, and Michigan to evangelize the Native Americans in these states, to be a founder of th Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne, and to serve as second president of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. Protect and encourage all missionaries who confess the true faith among the nations by proclaiming Christ crucified; for You live and reign with the Father and Holy Spirit, one God, not and forever. Amen.

*Hark, the voice of Jesus calling,
"Who will go and work today?
Fields are white and harvest waiting—
Who will bear the sheaves away?"
Loud and long the Master calleth;
Rich reward He offers thee.
Who will answer, gladly
saying,
"Here am I, send me,
send me"?"*

LSB 826:1





Readings and Prayers for This Month's Sundays

Fourth Sunday of Easter (5/3)

Acts 2:42-47; Ps 23; 1 Pt 2:19-25; Jn 10:1-10

Almighty God, merciful Father, since You have wakened from death the Shepherd of Your sheep, grant us Your Holy Spirit that when we hear the voice of our Shepherd we may know Him who calls us each by name and follow where He leads; through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Fifth Sunday of Easter (5/10)

Acts 6:1-9, 7:2a, 51-60; Ps 146; 1 Pt 2:2-10; Jn 14:1-14

O God, You make the minds of Your faithful to be of one will. Grant that we may love what You have commanded and desire what You promise, that among the many changes of this world our hearts may be fixed where true joys are found; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Sixth Sunday of Easter (5/17)

Acts 17:16-31; Ps 66:8-20; 1 Pt 3:13-22; Jn 14:15-21

O God, the giver of all that is good, by Your holy inspiration grant that we may think those things that are right and by Your merciful guiding accomplish them; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

The Ascension of Our Lord (5/21)

Acts 1:1-11; Ps 47; Eph 1:15-23; Lk 24:44-53

Almighty God, as Your only-begotten Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, ascended into the heavens, so may we also ascend in heart and mind and continually dwell there with Him, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Seventh Sunday of Easter (5/24)

Acts 1:12-26; Ps 68:1-10; 1 Pt 4:12-19, 5:6-11; Jn 17:1-11

O King of glory, Lord of hosts, uplifted in triumph far above all heavens, leave us not without consolation but send us the Spirit of truth whom You promised from the Father; for You live and reign with Him and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Pentecost Eve (5/30)*

Ex 19:1-9; Ps 133; Rom 8:12-27, 22-27; Jn 14:8-21

Almighty and ever-living God, You fulfilled Your promise by sending the gift of the Holy Spirit to unite disciples of all nations in the cross and resurrection of Your Son, Jesus Christ. By the preaching of the Gospel spread this gift to the ends of the earth; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

The Visitation (5/31)*

Is 11:1-5; Ps 138; Rom 12:9-16; Lk 1:39-56

Almighty God, You chose the virgin Mary to be the mother of Your Son and made known through her Your gracious regard for the poor and lowly and despised. Grant that we may receive Your Word in humility and faith, and so be made one with Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Pentecost Day (5/31)

Num 11:24-30; Ps 25:1-15; Acts 2:1-21; Jn 7:37-39

O God, on this day You once taught the hearts of Your faithful people by sending them the light of Your Holy Spirit. Grant us in our day by the same Spirit to have a right understanding in all things and evermore to rejoice in His holy consolation; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.



Readings and Prayers for This Month's Sundays

Pentecost Evening (5/31)

Is 57:15-21; Ps 43; Acts 10:34a-42-48; Jn 3:16-21

O God, who gave Your Holy Spirit to the apostles, grant us that same Spirit that we may live in faith and abide in peace; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Pentecost Tuesday (6/2)

Is 32:14-20; Ps 27; Acts 8:14-17; Jn 10:1-10

O God, in the paschal feast You restore all creation. Continue to send Your heavenly gifts upon Your people that they may walk in perfect freedom and receive eternal life; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Other days of the Church Year This Month:

1—St. Philip and St. James, *Apostles*

2—Athanasius of Alexandria, *Pastor and Confessor*

4—Fredrich Wyneken, *Pastor and Missionary*

5—Frederick the Wise, *Christian Ruler*

7—C. F. W. Walther, *Theologian*

9—Job

11—Cyril and Methodius, *Missionaries to the Slavs*

21—Emperor Constantine, *Christian Ruler*, and Helena, *Mother of Constantine*

24—Esther

25—Bede the Venerable, *Theologian*

31—The Visitation

“Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off every encumbrance and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with endurance the race set out for us.”

PRAYING FOR CONGREGATIONS & PASTORS: CIRCUIT 12

Immanuel Lutheran Church, Canton; Rev. Brent Horne

St. Paul Lutheran Church, Haven; Rev. Russell Bonnie

Our Redeemer Lutheran Church, Hutchinson; Rev. Quentin Nuttmann, Rev. Henry Blickhahn

Grace Lutheran Church, Lyons; Rev. Kenton Abbott

Grace Lutheran Church, McPherson; Rev. Dale Dumpert

St. John Lutheran Church, Moundridge; Rev. Ronald Rather

Christ the King Lutheran Church, Salina

Trinity Lutheran Church, Salina; Rev. Mark Boxman, Rev. Dennis Kootz

St. John Lutheran Church, Ellinwood; Rev. Thomas Thierfelder, Rev. Kenton Abbott

Candidate and Emeritus: Rev. Wendell Haubein, Rev. LeRoy Pralle, Rev. Gerald Radtke,

Rev. Victor Streufert, Rev. Allen Woelzlein.





- 01 Melvin Baker*
- 04 Glenna Wulf
- 08 Breckyn Gean
- 09 Wanda Nordt*
- 18 Chloe Daniels
- 25 Wanda Davidson
- 26 Joan Colvin*
- 30 Sydney Daniels

**Special Birthday
80 years & older*




COMMUNION PREPARATION
?????????



Happy Anniversary
MAY

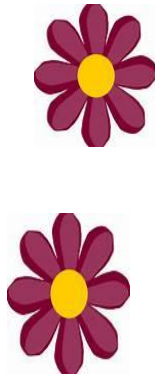
- 04 Frank & Janice Schomaker – 57 Years!*
- 17 Ralph & Cathy Norris – 36 Years!
- 21 Bob & Glenna Wulf – 48 Years!
- 25 Leon & Janet Storck – 35 Years!

**Special Anniversary
50 years & over*



SERVICE to the LORD
ELDER
USHER
GREETERS


**Will update when
we are allowed to have
larger services**




MAY

- 01 Sue Adams
- 04 Marge Clements
- 07 David Avery
- 10 Hadley Galloway
- 12 Eileen Robertson
- 12 Vesta Leroy
- 15 Bill Cavins
- 17 Ken Lumley
- 19 Heather Daniels
- 20 Alin Martin
- 23 Glenna Wulf
- 27 Sydney Hutton
- 28 Lynn Lytle
- 28 Samuel Hull
- 30 Sandy Hildinger
- 31 Janice Schomaker

Fear Not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.
Isaiah 41:10



Service to the Lord
MAY
ELDER
USHER
GREETERS

**Will update when we
are allowed to have larger
services**

COMMUNION PREPARATION