

The King's

Business



Grace Lutheran

179 Holiday Island Drive
Holiday Island, AR 72631

479-253-9040

www.gracelutheranhi.org



August 2023

We at Grace Lutheran Church are called to reach, teach and be the people of God, as stewards of the Word and gifts of God.

From The Pastor's Desk

Dear Grace Family,

It's that time of the year when we all start looking forward to Fall. Fall is my favorite season of the year for a variety of reason, not the least of which is we normally see a few weeks of consistently pleasant weather. With the better weather we are able to get outdoors to do some of those things we weren't able to accomplish in the short season of Spring. It's in the fall that we can dig into the garden areas to prepare for the coming season of Winter and its following season of Spring.

It is also now that time of year that pastors give a lot of Summertime thought concerning preaching and

teaching. A month from now (following Labor Day) we will begin gathering again on Thursdays to spend time in God's inspired Word, and we will continue to meet each Sunday after the Divine Service for the same.

On Thursdays we will return to a weekly study of the Pericopes for the following Sunday. The term pericope(s) is used for verses of Scripture usually used as one of the assigned readings and read during the Divine Service, or any service of the Church. It comes from a Greek word that means "a cutting-out." So, a pericope is a portion of Scripture "cut out" to be read where God's people gather around His Word.

The pericopes are included in the portions of a Worship Service called the "propers". A "prop-

er" is a part of the liturgy that varies depending upon the date, season, or festival... Anyway, that's a long way of saying we will be studying the readings for the following Sunday each Thursday afternoon beginning September 14 (as I will be out of town on the 7th).

On Sunday mornings, beginning in September, we will be discussing the church's Liturgy. "Liturgy" refers to the form according to which public religious worship, especially Christian worship, is conducted. As we are not an audience when we gather together in Divine Service, but rather participants, it is helpful to understand why we say what we say and why we do what we do.

[continued next page]

As one of our hymnals reads in it's introduction:

"Our Lord speaks and we listen. His Word bestows what it says. Faith that is born from what is heard acknowledges the gifts received with eager thankfulness and praise. Music is drawn into this thankfulness and praise, enlarging and elevating the adoration of our gracious giver God.

Saying back to Him what He has said to us, we repeat what is most true and sure....

The rhythm of our worship is from Him to us, and then from us back to Him. He gives His gifts, and together we receive and extol them...." (from Lutheran Worship, page 6)

Plan to join us each Sunday morning as we spend a couple of

months learning, or re-learning, the gracious gift we have as we gather each Sunday, or weekday, as we come together to be united in the Divine Conversation that is liturgy.

In His Service and Yours

Pastor Schultz

The Church Word for August: Congregation



From the very beginning of the church, Christians gathered together to read scripture, sing the praises of God, hear their pastors preach and celebrate the Lord's Supper. This should not surprise us — Jews had been doing that for centuries — beginning sometime during the Babylonian Exile. Those gatherings became known in Greek as συναγωγή — Synagogues — meaning “to lead, gather together; assemble.” The New Testament calls these groups ἐκκλησία — churches — literally to be called up (to assemble). The Greeks used the word for civil assemblies and the calling up of militias. The word “Congregation” is the Latin trans-

lation of these words and means “to gather together.”

The church continued to worship after the pattern of the synagogue with two exceptions — they met for worship on the Lord's Day (Sunday) and not the Sabbath (Saturday) because it was the day on which Christ rose from the dead. They also added readings from the Gospels and letters from the Apostles and other respected leaders. These are the books that would be very quickly (for the most part) recognized as Holy Scripture along with the Old Testament.

For the first generation of Missouri Synod leaders, the distinction between the local congregation and the universal Church was crucial. They used the German word *Gemeinde* only for a local church and the word *Kirche* for the universal Church. They deliberately did not call their church body a church. They called it a *Synode* — a Synod.

Why were they so picky? Because most of the action in God's king-

dom is not done in Church Bodies, which get most of the press, but in the local congregation. They represent the universal Church, the invisible Church. In behalf of the Church, congregations baptize, teach the Word of God, celebrate the Lord's Supper, use the Office of the Keys to forgive and retain sins and extend God's call to men to exercise the Office of the Holy Ministry and other church workers to support it. The work of synods are done as local congregations band together to do things no one can do alone.

Congregations are much more than social clubs or private charities. They are God's kingdom on earth, proclaiming the gospel and giving his gifts to all. In them, the lost get to meet Jesus and through the word preached by them, people are saved. So come! God is waiting to meet you — and we are too!

Rev. Robert E. Smith
Concordia Theological Seminary
Fort Wayne, Indiana

Reports from the Mission Field

Dear Grace Family,

As a means to help us better connect to the work that goes on in the Mission Field, and the work of our LCMS Missionaries, I've asked the Rev. Christian Tiews permission to reprint some of his reports in our monthly newsletter. This month, I submit the following. Pastor Schultz

"...There are some who trouble you and want to distort the Gospel of Christ" (Gal 1:7).



I recently chatted with Saman (See photo), an Iranian parishioner in Hamburg who will begin pas-

toral formation at Riga Luther Academy this September. He commented on how in Iran, Muslim theologians claim that there are many contradictions in Christianity, with some Christians saying that it was Jesus who was beaten shortly before His crucifixion, while others claim Judas was whipped. Similarly, some say Jesus was crucified, while others

postulate that Judas was slain on the cross—so the assertion of the Iranian mullahs. I pointed out that the Bible unequivocally states that only Jesus experienced these tribulations (Mt 27, Mk 15, Lk 23, Jn 19). Shedding light on this matter, Saman explained that, while in Iran conversion to Christianity is punished with prison or even death, there is one particular “Bible” that, surprisingly, is allowed. However, this is not Holy Scripture but rather a non-canonical and pseudepigraphal text known as the “Gospel of Barnabas”—a document attributed to Paul’s travel companion Barnabas (see Book of Acts), but which is a forgery, written hundreds of years after Barnabas’ first-century travels. Orthodox Christianity has always dismissed this fake document. Yet the “Gospel of Barnabas” conveniently fits

with Islamic teaching, which denies Jesus’ crucifixion and contains countless other errors that contradict biblical teaching. No wonder the Iranian government is quite happy to permit the circulation of this fraudulent document, which can easily confuse people who might be interested in Christianity. Praise God that you live in a free country and have access to the true canonical books of the Bible, faithfully translated, through which our Lord speaks to you clearly and without contradiction, declaring that even though you are a sinner, *He* died for you, rose again, and, if you believe and are baptized (Mk 16:16), grants you eternal life.

**Rev. Christian C. Tiews
Hamburg, Germany**

THE LITTLE UNDERSTOOD BURDEN’S OF PARISH MINISTRY

Pastors rarely speak of, let alone share, the struggles of parish ministry with others. I’ve often refrained, and found other Pastor’s hesitant in the fear that it sounds like complaining. Most Pastor’s understand it as their calling to share the life joys, sorrows, struggles and frustrations of the members of their congregation. With that in mind I found the following, shared by a friend, to be pretty accurate for one who has spent most of his adult life in parish ministry as well as years of speaking with, counseling, and encouraging other parish pastors in their ministries. Pastor Schultz

According to recent studies... 4,000-5,000 pastors quit each year. They don’t quit because they have a lack of faith in God. They don’t quit because they don’t believe in the calling God has placed on their life. Most don’t even quit because of financial reasons. Pastors quit because they are overwhelmed

with mental exhaustion.

Until you’re a pastor you’ll never fully understand what it’s like to carry spiritual burdens for people. Getting up in the middle of night, praying for your family of faith. Awakened in the middle of night with someone on your heart. Overwhelmed with concern by a per-

sons absents or distance. Your mind continually occupied with the presentation of the upcoming Sunday message - how to preach it, what to teach on, how do we apply it? Getting critiqued on a continual basis. Being told you need to do better or that some areas of the church simply need to be better.

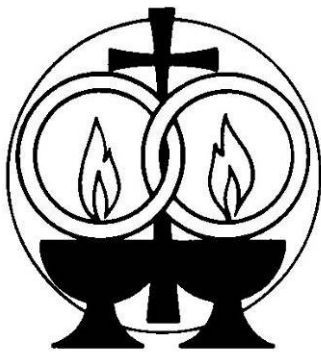
Pastors invest their whole life into people and yet people will turn their backs on their pastor at the first sign of a storm, usually without a conversation. Pastors stand in the middle of disputes. Pastors stand in the middle of gossip. Pastors council broken marriages. Pastors comfort those who have suffered loss. Pastors navigate the waters of imperfect people with a desire to see each one thrive in their faith. They long for spiritual breakthroughs. Your pastor craves the

very best for you. All of this, while trying to battle their own flesh and grow in their own relationship with God. Pastors see the posts. Pastors hear the whispers. Pastors endure the negativity. Pastors are continually caring for the sheep while fending off the wolves. Pastors pour out and pour out - rarely being poured into.

What keeps a pastor going? You. You - the person who is genuinely hungry. You - the person who worships with passion and freedom.

You - the teenager who is striving to be a follower of Jesus. You - the single mom who understands the beauty of the hope found in Christ. You - the one who walks through the door for the first time because you're in search of peace, hope, and community.

Pray for your pastor. Serve with your pastor. Talk with your pastor. Encourage your pastor. They are human. They need you more than you think. [Copied]



August
Anniversaries

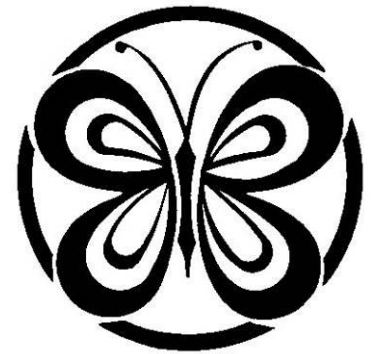
Mike & Jane Smith

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Grace Women's Guild

Grace Women's Guild needs volunteers for our **Altar Committee**. Members of this committee are primarily responsible for preparing the weekly Holy Communion. There are other responsibilities as well.

Currently, only two of our members are serving on this committee so more ladies are needed. Training will be provided. Please give this prayerful consideration and contact Terri Herman, Dianna Mancuso, or Jane Bleser if you would be willing to serve our church in this way. This will be on the agenda for the Guild meeting in September.



August
Birthdays

Freddie Bleser	11
Eddy Bleser	13
Charlotte Bonner	18
Ruth Wegener	19
Ken Wegener	22
Diana Senica	27
Nancy Harris	29

The Women's Guild

Will hold another Luncheon on Tuesday, August 15th at 11:00am at the **Three Sisters Café** at 3 Dogwood Ridge. Eureka Springs See also the signup sheet in the narthex.