

the REPORter

Editor's Entry

Our talented contributors have excelled once again! Lots to sink your teeth into here, so let's get started:

- Two bittersweet entries to note right away: 1) Pastor Knox reflects on the closing of Christ Lutheran and the welcoming of many its former members; and 2) Vicar Grills, Angelica, and Gus bid a fond farewell as Vicar prepares to return to Ft. Wayne for his fourth and final year at CTS.
- Jennifer Thornton gifts us with her first *rePORter* article. Can you guess what it's about? Education—of course!
- Sara Lair provides an excellent recounting of a special day in our history: the installation of Rev. Brian Saunders.
- Chairman Dave Kmoch pats us all on the back with the story of our new, debt free existence!
- Tim Koch relates his experiences at the 6th ACELC Conference in Nashville.

—Greg Gerjerts

Also In This Issue:

- A guest column by Larry Bricker; a *From the Pews* column by your editor; a profile of the Thielens; and a reminder that we've got a pig (from the Chris Fink spread) to roast in July. Yum!
- Plus hymns and readings and even more goodies!



Pastor's Post

A Bittersweet Day

By Pastor Michael Knox

Sunday, June 12, was a bittersweet day for me and for many of the saints of God, former members of Christ Lutheran, who now call Our Redeemer their church home. This was the day that we bade farewell to Christ Lutheran Church nearly 60 years after she was founded as a mission congregation. I think Paul's message to the Thessalonians, though written for those who were wondering about the death of those they loved, applies to those who, like me, shed tears at the closing service:



"Brothers, we do not want you to be uninformed about those who have fallen asleep, or to grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope." (I Thess 4:13)

At the closing service we sang one of my favorite hymns, and it also happens to be a hymn that was sung at the dedication service of Our Redeemer in 1962. I don't have a copy of the dedication service that was held at Christ Lutheran, but it would not surprise me to know that it was also sung back in 1956 when Christ Lutheran was founded.

It is the Danish hymn, "Built On The Rock," written by Nikolai F. S. Grundtvig. Born in 1783, Nikolai was raised in a Lutheran home, the son of a faithful and confessional Lutheran pastor. Unfortunately, when Grundtvig attended the University of Copenhagen, his faith came under attack from the influences of rationalism. Rationalists denied the inerrancy and sufficiency of the Scriptures, the miracles of God described in the Bible, and ultimately the existence of God altogether. Rationalists, to this day, believe that the use of reason, rather than God's revelation in His Word, is how one arrives at truth.

One biographer of Grundtvig described him at the time of his graduation from the University with these words, "He gave up his aspirations to become a minister, lost all interest in religion, and completed his education 'without spirit and without faith.'"

It wasn't until he was nearly 30 years old that Grundtvig returned to the faith of his youth. He became a vocal critic of those who denied the truthfulness of God's Word and, in his preaching and hymn writing, faithfully confessed the work of God in the means of Grace. Perhaps no clearer confession of that truth can be found than in what we number as verse 4 of this great hymn:

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Parishioner Profile

Carol and LaVerne Thielen

By Sara Lair

Carol and LaVerne Thielen are long-time members of Our Redeemer and native Iowans. Both grew up in large families and were married in Latimer, Iowa, 66 years ago. Family is of utmost importance to the Thielens, who are the parents of three children (Steve, Craig, and Janae, Janae having been baptized in 1963 at College Hill by Pastor Edgar Brammer, whom some of you may remember), grandparents of eight, and also great grandparents of eight.

But, in talking with the Thielens, one quickly learns that in addition to their biological family, they have another “family,” and that is their church family! Both Carol and LaVerne say that the success to a long marriage is putting Christ and His Church at the center of their lives.



LaVerne worked for a pipeline company, and later worked for the co-op elevator in Cedar Falls. Carol and LaVerne were married at St. Paul's Lutheran in Latimer, and lived in Oxford, Clear Lake and Mankato. Carol relates that the “constant” in those years was active participation in Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod congregations wherever they lived.

But it is Cedar Falls, and particularly Our Redeemer, that the Thielens have called home the majority of their lives. Carol has served as Sunday School teacher, helped with the church preschool and nursery (“I seemed to be the official diaper changer in those days.”), planted and weeded flowers in the flower beds, and served as church treasurer. Carol and LaVerne babysat the children of former members, Lance and Kristi Banwart, so the Banwarts could participate in choir. In doing this, the Thielens became “second grandparents” to the two Banwart girls.

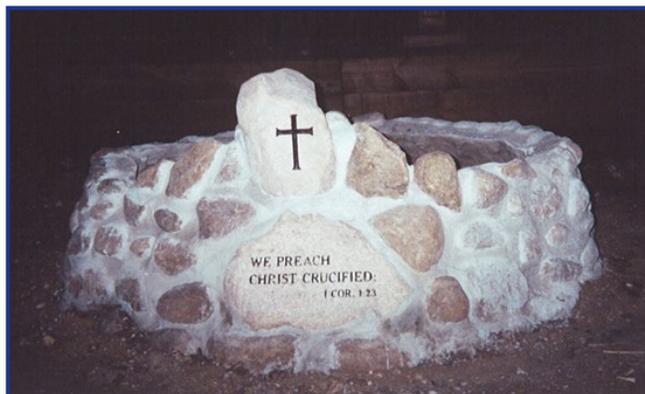
One of Carol's favorite memories is serving as church treasurer and attending a council meeting. Rick Glenn, then the congregation's president, asked for the balance on hand in the church treasury, and Carol replied, “50 cents,” which was the truth! By God's grace, Carol was always able to pay the congregation's bills, but church finances in those days were extremely tight.

Carol presently serves on the Altar Guild, which is a favorite activity for her, having been on the Guild since its inception, and she loves working with the altar flowers.

LaVerne has also been active in the congregation: ushering, serving as Sunday School Superintendent, and spending many hours of loving work on the church remodeling project, where he put his carpentry and woodworking skills to great use.

A highlight for Carol and LaVerne in the life of the congregation was accompanying the Youth Group on trips to Lutheran Island Camp. LaVerne introduced many of the youth to fishing—helping them put worms on their fishing poles and casting the lines to fish. They specifically remember a young boy named Jason Knox who reeled in a fish and wasn't so sure he really enjoyed the experience!

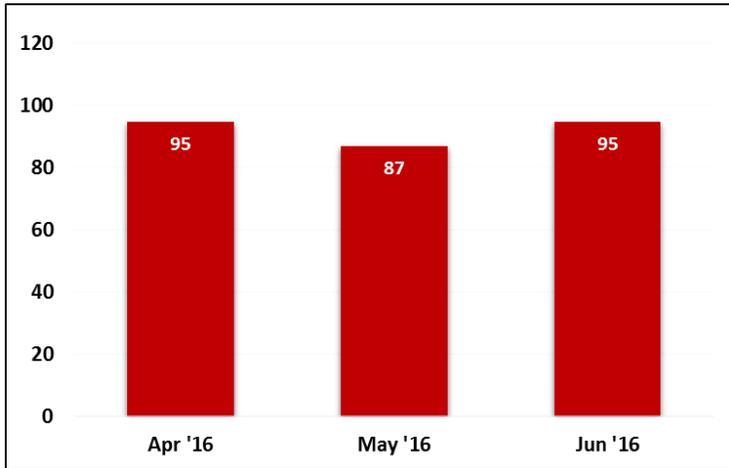
A visit to the Thielens' home showcases their hobbies and collections. They enjoy antiquing and collecting. LaVerne is a talented woodworker and is teaching a grandson the craft. They both enjoy gardening and flowers. They also are avid UNI Panthers fans, and a highlight for them was attending the Missouri Valley Basketball Tournament in St. Louis several years ago. Both are avid students of God's Word, regularly attending Bible classes at Our Redeemer.



A photo of Carol and LaVerne's creative handiwork—a fire pit built at Lutheran Island Camp, Henning, Minnesota. Also joining in the project was the Our Redeemer Youth Group, as well as Pastor and Tammy Knox.

ORLC By The Numbers

Divine Service Average Attendance

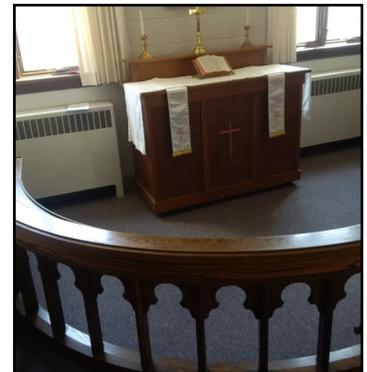


Divine Service Total Contributions



Answer to Last Edition's "Impress the Editor" Question

Last edition, we showed a photograph (right) of something "new but old" in the choir room and asked if you knew anything about it. We got no answers! Nobody impressed the editor! (But it's hard to imagine that no one, besides those helped transport it, actually knew what it was from the photograph. Come on people, step forward!) What you see in the photo is the original Communion rail from our beloved Sanctuary. Our Redeemer gave it to Nazareth Lutheran at the time of our remodeling in the early 1990's. It then served for many years as a display protector at the Cedar Falls Historical Society. After it had served its useful purpose at the CFHS, it was returned to Nazareth, which by this time was just starting significant remodeling of its own. Needing additional storage space, Nazareth asked if we'd like it back. We said, "Why, yes!" Now, Our Redeemer has a chapel suitable for all sorts of special occasions—small Baptism or wedding ceremonies, Confession & Absolution, and whatever else comes our way. (Pretty cool.) Special thanks to the editor's sister, Terri, and her husband, Brad, for being instrumental in shepherding the railing back to its original home!



Pig Sooie!

Our Redeemer will once again host a congregational pig roast this year. It will be held on Sunday, 17 July, from about 3 p.m. until 5 p.m. (or whenever . . .). It will be at Orchard Hill Park in Cedar Falls, just like last year. Elizabeth Peterson is organizing the effort and will likely call for help with some of the preparations. In case you need a reminder of last year's extravaganza, we include some photos to jog your memory. What? Didn't go last year? Well, go this year.

And we especially want our new



The Great Education Partnership

By Jennifer Thornton, Education Chair

There was once a church that was plagued by bats in its belfry. They had tried everything to rid themselves of the pests without luck. Eventually they decided to go ahead and confirm them. They haven't been heard from since.

This story, while it might have created a small chuckle, is sadly something that happens all too often in many of our congregations across the country. A child enters confirmation, completes it, and then, when thrust into the world, never returns. In faithful Lutheran homes, the worst nightmare for parents is that they didn't give their children the tools needed to be confident in their faith.

So then, what are parents to do? Thankfully, they can rely heavily on the Church to educate their children in the faith. And while the Church rightly looks to its faithful pastors for public preaching, teaching, and administering the Sacraments, the influence and importance of parents' roles in their children's faith cannot be denied:



Fathers do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord. (Eph 6:4)

Modern Reformation Magazine presented a study that showed church attendance between the ages of 17 and 19 often drops. Major factors influencing this are how important children see that faith is to their parents, how the Church helps them make decisions in everyday life, how relevant sermons are, and how influential members of the congregation have been to them. So let's break these points down.

How do parents show that faith is important? Common sense tells us that children will copy what they see. Modeling for children is one of the main ways they learn. Even while young, children can participate in the worship service: learning to fold hands in prayer, to stand for the gospel, and to follow the liturgy. But that shouldn't be where it ends. Going to church on Sunday is important, but if it is the only time all week a family practices the faith it can seem like that is the only place it is needed. Practicing faith as a family is much more: praying, reading the Word, and worshipping together immerse a child in vital parts of the Lutheran faith.

But what about how a child makes decisions and relates to a sermon on Sunday morning? These points can be addressed by instruction in the faith. Instruction teaches the fundamentals of the faith and how they apply to everyday life. Here is where a great partnership between parents and Sunday School begins.

Teaching the biblical stories is an important building block for understanding the narrative of salvation. This should start at an early age so that reinforcement can take place in Sunday School. Parents and children can read stories together and memorize simple prayers and hymns at this stage. Later, students tie these things to doctrine and practice using the Catechism.

Here is where the Church and parents can work together again. At a young age, children are great sponges that soak up information. Between the ages of 8 and 11, children have a great capacity to learn and memorize. Studying and memorizing the Catechism at this age is one of the best times to start. It is never too early. The sooner you start, the deeper the knowledge and understanding will be later. At this age, however, many children do not have the spatial reasoning required to truly understand or wrestle with the content. As they get older they are able to think more abstractly and deal with the questions in the Catechism and how they apply to their life. To be able to discuss the Catechism, they need to feel confident that any questions they have will be taken seriously.

Parents can do something as simple as sitting down after dinner and taking one question from the Catechism and discussing it openly. Answering honestly even when it makes you look imperfect reinforces the idea of everyone's need for salvation. One can never come back to what Jesus has done for us too many times.

Finally, members of the congregation can have a great influence on how a child sees the Church. Including the youth in the congregation is so important. Education does not stop after confirmation. Those years can be critical in a young person's life. Even while they are still learning, we should include them and take interest in them as people. This helps them not only start to assume their adult roles in the church, but also helps



them feel more comfortable when asking questions.

While parents can do a lot to encourage their children to question and wrestle with the Catechism, students' confidence to do so can also rely on members of a

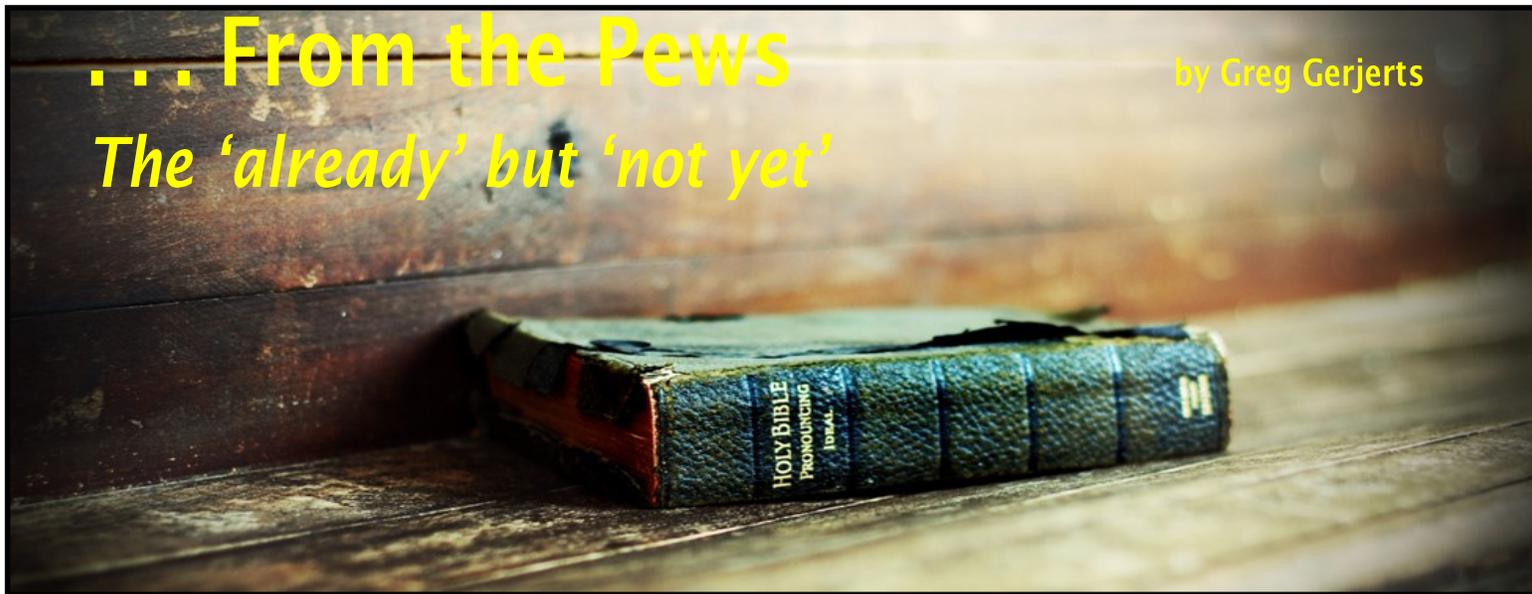
congregation being willing to listen to those questions and take them seriously. Soon after this they will venture off into the world. We want to encourage them to ask those questions now while they can wrestle with them under good guidance.

In the end, the education of our youth starts at home, is reinforced by the church, and is nurtured by the congregation. If at any point you are unsure of how you can help, talking to the elders and Pastor is a great place to start.

... From the Pews

The 'already' but 'not yet'

by Greg Gerjerts



On Thursday, May 5, we heard from Ephesians Chapter 1:

¹⁵ For this reason, because I [Paul] have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, ¹⁶ I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, ¹⁷ that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, ¹⁸ having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, ¹⁹ and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might ²⁰ that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, ²¹ far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. (ESV)

Pastor Knox has been leading Divine Service on the evening of Ascension Day here at Our Redeemer since 1997, but I did not realize until 2016 that it had become my “favorite” Service of the Church Year. Agreed, it makes no sense to declare any Divine Service a favorite. One is no better than any other. God serves us perfectly each time and always.

But, like Christ’s ascension itself, the Ascension Day Service is wonderfully unique. This year, the small flock of parishioners who gathered on Ascension Day heard God speak to them through Holy Scripture, listened to Christ’s own sermon, and sang the marvelous hymns commemorating this blessed event.

Perhaps my labeling this service as “favorite” is because of the vision God gives us of a glorious kingdom which is “already” but “not yet” (a phrase first attributed to Princeton theologian Gerhardus Vos early in the 20th century). Here is what we sang, emphasizing the “already” . . .

LSB 494 “See, the Lord Ascends in Triumph”

4 Now our heav’nly Aaron enters
With His blood within the veil;
Joshua now is come to Canaan,
And the kings before Him quail.
Now He plants the tribes of Israel

In their promised resting place,
Now our great Elijah offers
Double portion of His grace.

5 He has raised our human nature
On the clouds to God’s right hand;
There we sit in heav’nly places,
There with Him in glory stand.
Jesus reigns, adored by angels;
Man with God is on the throne;
By our mighty Lord’s ascension
We by faith behold our own.

. . . and here is what we sang, emphasizing the “not yet”:

LSB 492 “On Christ’s Ascension I Now Build”

1 On Christ’s ascension I now build
The hope of my ascension;
This hope alone has always stilled
All doubt and apprehension;
For where the head is, there as well
I know His members are to dwell
When Christ will come and call them.

3 Oh, grant, dear Lord, this grace to me,
Recalling Your ascension,
That I may serve You faithfully,
In thanks for my redemption;
And then, when all my days will cease,
Let me depart in joy and peace
In answer to my pleading.

Such a Service. Such a Sermon. Such a Gift. As Paul wrote to the Ephesians, he now says to us: *may the eyes of our hearts be enlightened, that we may know the hope to which Christ has called us.* And, as the editors of the Lutheran Study Bible wrote regarding the Ascension account, “Your good standing today [the already] and your eternal tomorrow [the not yet] flow from Jesus’ victory over the grave and His enthronement at the Father’s right hand.”

*Let us continue to gather each Lord’s Day (and Ascension Day!) as God speaks to us and we listen . . . **from the pews.***

Installation of The Rev. Dr. Brian Saunders

Members of Our Redeemer, guests, clergy from Iowa District East and family and friends of Rev. Brian Saunders gathered on Sunday, June 5, for the Divine Service celebrating the Installation into the Office of the Public Ministry of Rev. Saunders.

Some may wonder: why “celebrate” the installation of a pastor? As liturgical Lutherans, we understand the call of a shepherd is not done by human means; rather, the call is of God. It is with joy and thanksgiving that we celebrate God’s gifts to us—the gift of a pastor in our midst.

The text used by Pastor Max Mons, St. Paul Chapel, Iowa City (serving as 1st Vice President of Iowa District East), was the day’s Old Testament reading, I Kings 17:17-24, the account of Elijah and the widow at Zarephath. We see that the Word of the Lord came to Elijah: “Go . . . to the widow.” Much as God guided Elijah to that place, the Lord has placed Rev. Saunders at Our Redeemer, in Cedar Falls.

There are many parallels in the events at Zarephath and the role of a pastor in a present-day congregation. As Elijah spoke the Word of the Lord, so our pastor speaks the Word to us: each Sunday in the divine service, in times of trial, reminding us of God’s love and mercy as we struggle with sin and the effects/results of sin in our lives—illness, sorrow, death. The pastor points us to Jesus: “For God so loved the world that he gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life.” (Jn 3:16)

It is important to look at Scripture with regard to the revelation from the Word of God regarding the Office of the Public Ministry—the institution, responsibilities, strengths, and promises.

All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father

and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. (Mt 28)

Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, I am sending you. (Jn 20)

Feed my lambs . . . Take care of my sheep . . . Feed my sheep. (Jn 21)

The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. (Lk 24)

The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, ‘This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me.’ In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, ‘This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.’ For whenever you eat this bread and drink

this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes. (I Cor 11)

Be diligent in these matters; give yourself wholly to them, so that everyone may see your progress.

Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers. (I Tim 4)

So then, men ought to regard us as servants of Christ and as those entrusted with the secret things of God. (I Cor. 4)

Such confidence as this is ours through Christ before God. Not that we are competent in ourselves to claim anything for ourselves, but our competence comes from God. He has made us competent as ministers of a new covenant – not of the letter but of the Spirit. (II Cor 3)

If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come. (II Cor 5)

I give you this charge: preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction. (II Tim 4)

It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God’s people for



works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. (Eph 4)

Keep watch over ourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God. (Acts 20)

Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers – not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. (I Pet 5)

You are the salt of the earth . . . You are the light of the world. (Mt 5)

Let him who boasts boast in the Lord. For it is not the one who commends himself who is approved, but the one whom the Lord commends. (II Cor 10)

Continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you have learned it, and how from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. (II Tim 3)

Those participating in the service were Liturgists Pastor Michael Knox, Vicar Willie Grills, Pastor John Wegener (College Hill Lutheran, Cedar Falls), Pastor Max Mons (St. Paul Chapel, Iowa City, and 1st V.P. of Iowa District East), Pastor Matthew Rueger (St. John Lutheran, Hubbard, and 2nd V.P. of Iowa District East), the Our Redeemer Adult Choir, and organist Roxann List. Following the service, a reception was held in the parish hall.

Pastor Saunders was born in Sioux City on July 8, 1958, and is married to Karen. They have four children and seven grandchildren (his daughter, Michaela, a member of Our Redeemer, is married to Jason Knox). He earned a Bachelor of Arts in Biblical Languages from



St. John's College in Winfield, Kansas (1986); a Masters of Divinity in Exegetical Studies from Concordia Theological Seminary in Ft. Wayne, Indiana (1990); and a Ph. D. in Pastoral/Historical Theology from Trinity Theological Seminary in Newburg, Indiana, in association with Christ Church College in Canterbury, England (2012). Prior to election as President of the Iowa District East in 2009, Pastor

Saunders served congregations in Ft. Wayne, Indiana, and Muscatine, Iowa.

We warmly welcome Pastor Saunders to our congregation!



Hymn Cycle

Pentecost Season Readings and Hymns

SUNDAY, 3 JULY 3 2016, 7TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST, DS SETTING THREE

The Readings: Isaiah 66:10-14; Galatians 6:1-10, 14-18; Luke 10:1-20	
Hymn of Invocation: Awake, My Soul, and With the Sun.....	868
Hymn of the Day: Preach You The Word	586
Dist Hymn: The Gifts Christ Freely Gives	602
Dist Hymn: Lord Jesus Christ, With Us Abide.....	585

SUNDAY, 10 JULY 2016, 8TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST, ORDER OF MATINS

The Readings: Leviticus 18:1-5, 19:9-18; Colossi 1:1-14; Luke 10:25-37	
Hymn of Invocation: Today Your Mercy Calls Us	915
Office Hymn: O God, My Faithful God	696
Final Hymn: Oh, How Great is Your Compassion.....	559

SUNDAY, 17 JULY 2016, 9TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST, DS SETTING THREE

The Readings: Genesis 18:1-14; Colossians 1:21-29; Luke 10:38-42	
Hymn of Invocation: Thy Strong Word	578
Hymn of the Day: One Thing's Needful..... 536 (including verse 2)	
Dist Hymn: For All the Faithful Women	855 (with Verse 9)
Dist Hymn: Lord Jesus Christ, With Us Abide.....	585

SUNDAY, 24 JULY 2016, 10TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST, ORDER OF MATINS

The Readings: Genesis 18:17-33; Colossians 2:6-19; Luke 11:1-13	
Hymn of Invocation: Father Most Holy	504
Office Hymn: Our Father, Who From Heaven Above.....	766
Final Hymn: Come, My Soul, With Every Care	779

SUNDAY, 31 JULY 2016, 11TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST, DS SETTING THREE

The Readings: Eccl 1:2, 12-14, 2:18-26; Colossians 3:1-11; Luke 12:13-21	
Hymn of Invocation: Light Of Light, O Sole-Begotten	914
Hymn of the Day: I Leave All Things To God's Direction.....	719
Dist Hymn: Jesus, Priceless Treasure	743
Dist Hymn: What Is the World to Me	730

SUNDAY, 7 AUGUST 2016, 12TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST, DS SETTING THREE

The Readings: Genesis 15: 1-6; Hebrews 11: 1-16; Luke 12: 22-40	
Hymn of Invocation: Holy Spirit, Ever Dwelling	650
Hymn of the Day: O Little Flock, Fear Not The Foe.....	666
Dist Hymn: Lord Jesus Christ, the Church's Head	647
Dist Hymn: I Come, O Savior, To Thy Table	618

SUNDAY, 14 AUG 2016, 13TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST, DS SETTING THREE

The Readings: Jer 23:16-29; Hebrews 11: 17-40, 12:1-3; Luke 12: 49-56	
Hymn of Invocation: Come, Holy Ghost, Creator Blest	498
Hymn of the Day: Jesus, Thy Boundless Love To Me	683
Dist Hymn: O Lord, We Praise Thee	617
Dist Hymn: If Your Beloved Son, O God	568

SUNDAY, 21 AUG 2016, 14TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST, DS SETTING THREE

The Readings: Isaiah 66:18-23; Hebrews 12:4-29; Luke 13:22-30	
Hymn of Invocation: Christ the Eternal Lord	829
Hymn of the Day: Christ Is Surely Coming	509
Dist Hymn: Jesus Comes Today with Healing.....	620
Dist Hymn: You Are the Way; Through You Alone	526

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SUNDAY, 28 AUGUST 2016, 15TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST, DS SETTING THREE

The Readings: Proverbs 25:2-10; Hebrews 13:1-17; Luke 14:1-14	
Hymn of Invocation: Lift High the Cross.....	837
Hymn of the Day: The Tree of Life	561
Dist Hymn: I Come, O Savior, to Thy Table	618
Dist Hymn: Your Table I Approach	628

The Window Project

By Dave Kmoch, Congregation President

In early 2015, Our Redeemer initiated a significant project to replace the windows in the education wing at a cost of nearly \$54,000. Project milestones:

18 Jan 2015—Voters approve \$54,000 window replacement project

Mar 2015—Work completed by Huff Contracting of Waterloo; target payment date is 10 April 2015

Mar 2015—Financing plan identified:

\$25,000 from savings

\$29,000 borrowed from Lutheran Church Extension Fund (LCEF)

\$20,000—existing line of credit (LOC)

\$9,000—new loan

06 Apr 2015—\$29,000 funds received from LCEF

10 Apr 2015—\$54,000 invoice paid to Huff Contracting

06 May 2015—Monthly repayment plan to LCEF initiated

01 Dec 2015—LOC renewed with LCEF

29 Jan 2016—LOC (\$20,000) completely repaid

05 May 2016—Loan (\$9,000) completely repaid

Working out the financing of the window project proved to be a bit of a challenge. Our Redeemer has traditionally maintained a significant cash reserve and it was necessary to consider how much to use for the window project while determining the minimum acceptable level of cash to keep on hand. In the end, we decided to use the vast majority of the cash available by applying \$25,000 to the project, leaving only about \$2,500 in our checking account.

The financing decisions were also made against a backdrop that included a number of complicating factors, many of which were unknown at the time:

- No rental income due to parsonage vacancy: -1,250 per month

The last renters vacated in December 2014 and we decided not to rent it again because we would need it if our vicarage application was accepted.

- Potential increased expense to support vicarage program: \$1,000 per month (est.)

When the financing decisions were made in March 2015, we did not know whether our vicar application would be filled. It was ultimately approved in late April 2015.

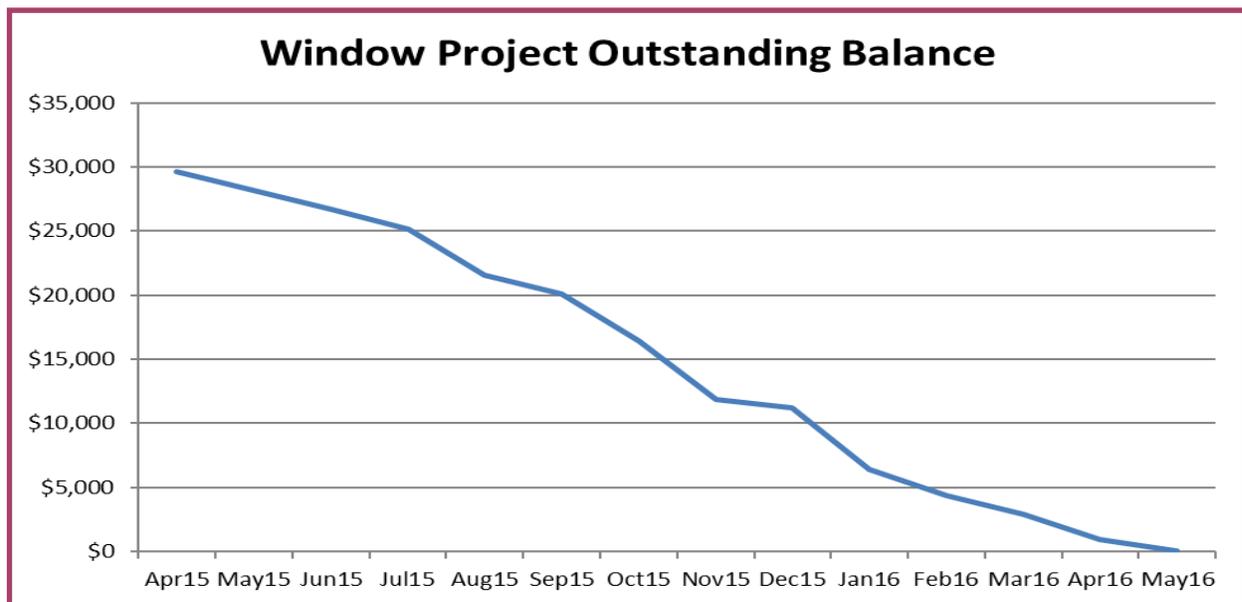
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The Window Project Continued from Page 8

- Potential reduced income due to elimination of joint parish: \$2,000 per month
In March 2015, the timing of Christ Lutheran's closure was unclear. It was estimated to occur as early as Jan 2016, but it didn't take place until June 2016.
- Reduced expense due to elimination of property mortgage: \$2,100 per month
This is the only "good guy" on the list of mitigating factors. We knew we were on track to satisfy our mortgage obligation in 2015 but the timing was unknown. It was ultimately paid off in June 2015.

We celebrated with a mortgage burning ceremony in July 2015, knowing we had recently assumed a new liability for the window project. Thanks to the generous support of our congregation, we completed the repayment on the window project in just 12 months. Our last payment was made on 5 May 2016. We are now completely debt free!

Thanks be to God!



LWML News

Iowa East District LWML Fall Retreat:

God's Plan for Salvation: Everyone Prepared—Everyone Saved

By Westgate 2016 Fall Retreat Co-Chairs Rhoda Baldwin & Doris Dawson, and Judy Fink

Set your minds on things above, not earthly things. (Col 3:2)

Building on what we have gleaned from the district convention in Oskaloosa, September's Retreat at Io-Dis-E-Ca on 9 and 10 September will continue to encourage us to be active in sharing the Gospel. Our hearts should burn, knowing that there are people surrounding us who still don't know their Savior. In Bible study, song, skits, speakers, and in playing, we will learn about being servants of Christ.

The most important item to pack is your Bible! Be prepared to dig deep into His Word. You are also invited to bring non-refrigerated snacks to share.

"Gifts from the Heart" items will be given to Io-Dis-E-Ca. Needed are: paper towels, toilet paper, laundry detergent (any brand), paper napkins, and postage stamps.

Exciting News: All beds at Camp have new mattresses this year. Comfort is back! (Special thanks to a Mission Grant from the Iowa District East LWML.)

All Retreat costs are on the Registration Form found in the 2016 Summer Issue of "Alive" and on the LWML IED website (<http://www.lwml.org/iowa-east-district>), as well as on the table in the Parish Hall. Also, if you need more information on any of this, please speak with Judy Fink.

The Westgate Zone is looking forward to hosting you at this year's Retreat. Please mark your calendars and make plans to attend!



As if You Were There

6th ACELC Free Conference

By Tim Koch



In April, Vicar Grills and I traveled to Nashville, Tennessee, to attend the Sixth ACELC Free Conference at Redeemer Lutheran Church. The event was hosted by ACELC member congregation Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church of McMinnville, Tennessee.

Each year the topic for the free conference is chosen from the identified errors that are listed in “A Fraternal Admonition to Correct the Errors of Our Beloved Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod.” The admonition document can be found at:

http://www.acecl.net/page/acecl_admonition_error_documents_a_dmonition_signers

This year’s topic was the Synod’s “Dispute Resolution Process,” the problem with which is briefly explained by the admonition document:

“Holy Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions declare that all things within the Christian congregation should be done in a spirit of Christian love, be ordered ethically, and in accord with God’s Word. Today the Dispute Resolution Process of the LCMS has placed a man-made Constitution and Bylaws, convention resolutions, and CCM opinions above Scripture and the Confessions, and has therefore failed to provide either a fair hearing or justice to aggrieved members of the Synod. We reject this error.”

During the two-day free conference, seven presenters delivered pa-

pers. Some could be considered case studies of past mishandlings of conflict. Others offered more constructive points of view and historical perspectives. The highlight of the Free Conference was Pastor Paul Nuss’ paper, which proposed the use of dialectic disputations as a better way to settle disagreements. I encourage you to take the time either to read Pastor Nuss’ paper or to watch the videos of Nuss delivering his paper and the time of questions and answers that followed. These videos and papers can be found at the ACELC’s website:

http://www.acecl.net/page/2016_free_conference_resources

The third day of the conference was the business meeting. Unfortunately, due to air travel deadlines of many of the ACELC members, a large portion of the agenda items was tabled. There was not much work done, for example, on the “Theses on the Holy Communion.” (You may remember the time Pastor Knox and Vicar Grills led us in studying this document in Bible Class on Sundays.) Two pastors offered to continue to work on the theses and will offer their changes to ACELC member congregations.

I was going to close this report by trying to explain the importance of unity in our doctrine and practice. But, Vicar Grills’ sermon on 8 May, based on the Gospel reading from John 17, explained this far better than I could even attempt. I encourage you to try to obtain a copy of his sermon (and I’m sure Vicar will oblige).



Begging Your Attendance

(All locations @ ORLC unless noted otherwise.)

July

- 5 Brunch Bunch @ Gravy’s, 9:00 a.m.
- 5-8 Higher Things Youth Conference @ UNI
- 9-14 LCMS Convention @ Milwaukee
- 9 Breakfast/Catechism Study, 7:30 a.m.
- 11 Church Council, 6:30 p.m.
- 17 Church Pig Roast @ Orchard Hill Park, 3:00 p.m.
- 17-21 VBS @ Faith-Waterloo, 5:30–8 p.m. (supper at 5:00 p.m.)
- 20-29 Pastor Knox on Vacation
- 18 Confession/Absolution, 7:00 p.m.
- 21 Nursing Home Service @ Shell Rock, 4:00 p.m.

August

- 2 Brunch Bunch @ Gravy’s, 9:00 a.m.
- 7 Vicar Grills’ last Sunday and Farewell after Church
- 13 Breakfast/Catechism Study, 7:30 a.m.

September

- 6 Brunch Bunch @ Gravy’s, 9:00 a.m.

Updated Data

Nineteen new families have joined Our Redeemer! We warmly welcome the members of our former sister congregation, Christ Lutheran, Waterloo, as well as Pastor and Karen Saunders. You greatly enrich us, and we cherish your presence among us!

LEFT:

- The banquet was at The Nashville City Club, downtown Nashville.
- People in the picture are: (from the left) Dan Koch, Kim Ansley, Tim Koch, Vicar Willie Grills, Kay Selby, Pastor Kevin Johnson, and Dave Selby.
- Dan, Kay, Pastor Johnson, and Dave are members from Holy Cross, Carlisle.

Let the Children Come to Me

By Larry Bricker

Editor's Note: Larry is a member of Zion LCMS, Hiawatha, IA. His daughter is Gretchen Lewis, wife of Adam. Larry likes to write for Zion's newsletter, and today we reprint one of the many columns he has been kind enough to share with us.

Do you remember those carefree days of your youth? Come on now. If I can remember some, I know that you can. We were always running around and having fun wherever we could find it. I think all of us have many of those special memories tucked safely inside our minds. Above everything else, we found safety when we were with our parents. The safety and security I found by being with my parents still puts a smile on my face. How about you?

We should think about the traits of little children. They are generally trusting and joyful, have blind faith, and are happy go lucky. They are full of energy and always enthusiastic. Admittedly, I am focusing on the good traits of young children. I am sure there are other words which you might use to describe your children, the children you know, or your grandchildren.

Do you find that special feeling when you come to be at peace with God and yourself? For me, this is the result of feeling especially close to Jesus, our Lord and Savior. Knowing He holds me in His loving arms, as our parents once held us, brings me great joy. Let's take a look at Scripture and maybe we will discover why we feel such completeness and safety in our Savior's arms.

In Luke 19:13-15 we find: "Then children were brought to him that he might lay his hands on them and pray. The disciples rebuked the people, but Jesus said, 'Let the little children come to me and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven.' And he laid his hands on them and went away."

Jesus tells us that we must receive the Kingdom of God like a little child. He continues by telling us if we do not receive His Kingdom as a little child, we will not enter His Kingdom in Heaven. Can you imagine being one of those little children upon whom Jesus laid His hands? WOW!

When I think back to the words which I used to describe little children, I hope you begin to understand what Je-

sus is telling us. We should be joyous and excited about the good news that He gives to us. The attributes which I assigned to little children apply to our Christian lives as well. Does your life as a Christian demonstrate the attributes of a little child? If not, what can we do to recapture the excitement of our youth?

Reading and re-reading the words found in the New Testament help me to rekindle those feelings of excitement. Wonderful Christian music also plays a large role for me in finding peace and



joy. As a child, I always wanted to share my fun and excitement with others. We should feel the same joy and excitement when we share Christ Jesus with others whom we meet and know. When we share Him with others, they may also come to the same eternal joy we feel. What a gift you are giving them!

In Matthew 11:25-27 we find: "At that time Jesus declared, 'I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to little children; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. All things have been handed over to me by my Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal Him.'"

We are also blessed to know that God chose us to be His little children. If He had not chosen us to be in Him, we

would not know Christ Jesus. If we do not know Christ Jesus, neither will we know His Father and our eternal Father. Because Jesus chose us, Scripture has been revealed to those of us who are in God's Word. This is the result of what Jesus has done for us: that we may believe. If you are like me, it surely is not anything we did to deserve His love. I would absolutely love to say that I know everything about God the Father. But I do not.

It is enough for me to know that He is the creator of everything! He deserves our unending love, and He is our eternal Father. God the Father is He who sent Jesus into the world to die for our sins. Just think about it: Jesus chose to reveal Himself and His Father to us! We are richly blessed to have been chosen by Jesus. We should receive this incredible gift with joy, enthusiasm, and the faith of a little child.

Christ Jesus encourages us to recapture a bit of our youth. We are called to become, in some ways, a little child again. Jesus told this to His disciples over and over again.

They were to become as little children when sharing the Gospel with the world. Jesus goes on to tell His disciples that they cannot enter the Kingdom of God unless they receive it as a little child receives a precious gift. From the message which Jesus gives us, we also learn that we must receive His good news as a young child. This means we should be filled with excitement, joy, and the deep trust which a child has in his or her parents. How fitting this is when we think about God and Jesus being our eternal Fathers!

Oh, it's wonderful to be child once again. Can I go outside and play now?

I pray, "Oh Lord, help us to behave as little children when we have the opportunity to share Jesus with others. Seize those opportunities just as little children run to the open arms of their loving parents." Amen

A Year To Remember; A Year To Cherish

By Vicar Willie Grills



Our year in Cedar Falls is rapidly drawing to a close. It has flown by so fast, and has been a wonderful experience.

I've learned much over these months—participating in worship, preaching, visitation, and teaching, among other things. Vicarage enables one to get “boots on the ground” in a

way that the classroom setting does not. I am proud to have been your fourth vicar. Hosting a vicar is an invaluable resource to the Church.

With that in mind I wanted to use my last newsletter article to thank you. You have invited us into your homes and into your church. You've given me a tremendous opportunity. Iowa is good and it has been a pleasure to serve in Cedar Falls, Waterloo, and Shell Rock. You've been so welcoming and gener-

ous, not with me alone, but with Angelica and Gus as well.

Serving under Pastor Knox has been wonderful. I have learned much from him. He is a mentor exemplar. Under his tutelage I have seen a true shepherd at work. A man in the trenches faithfully serving his flock. A gift to the church.

Serving you, I have had the privilege to see a church that cares for one another and for the Scriptures. You have given much to us and have taught me more than you know. Thank you for your kind words, thank you for your hospitality, thank you for your support, thank you for your patience, thank you for everything.

In August, we return to the seminary for one final year of study. We will never forget you nor the Christian love you've shown to us. Please keep us in your prayers as you will surely be in ours.

“I thank my God in all my remembrance of you . . .” (Phil 1:3)

Pastor's Post

Continued from Page 1

*Here stands the font before our eyes,
Telling how God has received us.
The altar recalls Christ's sacrifice
And what His Supper here gives us.
Here sound the Scriptures that proclaim
Christ yesterday, today, the same,
And evermore, our Redeemer.*

This verse serves to remind each of you how God has blessed you with His grace throughout your life and how he will continue to bless His people until we count days and measure time no more. Sit down in a pew in Our Redeemer's beautiful sanctuary as you contemplate this verse. Your eyes fall upon the white marble of the Baptismal font. At the font God gave you new birth, declared you his child, marked you with the cross of Christ forever, and received you into His kingdom.

The white marble is itself a reminder of the righteousness of Christ you received there. Your eyes now rise to the pulpit and lectern from which God's Word sounds forth. There is proclaimed Christ crucified and raised from the dead. From the pulpit God's Law rebukes and condemns you, bringing about contrition and repentance. Yet from that same pulpit sounds the Gospel which gives life, salvation, and peace through the faith that is created and strengthened through that Word. In the center of the Chancel your gaze stops at the Altar. From here not only do you remember Christ's atoning sacrifice but, as the hymn reminds you, you receive Christ Himself, his body and blood for the forgiveness of sins.

So, welcome, former members of Christ Lutheran. On behalf of all the members of Our Redeemer, we rejoice to call you fellow saints and members of the body of Christ in this place. Christ Lutheran's history came to an end, but the faithfulness of our God has not. We shed some tears, but as those tears dry we look to the future together with great joy and hope!

Our Redeemer 904 Bluff Street



To: