

Messenger

St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church & Day School

1343 Penniman Avenue

Plymouth, MI 48170

734-453-3393

November 2013

The Encouragement and Comfort of the End

In November the church year comes to an end, and we will begin another year of rejoicing in God's gifts. The church year roughly follows the Second Article of the Apostle's Creed which concerns the life and work of our Lord Jesus.

I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord;

Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, Born of the Virgin Mary; (Advent and Christmas)

Suffered under Pontius Pilate, (Lent)

Was crucified, died and was buried; (Holy Week)

He descended into hell; The third day He rose again from the dead; (Easter)

He ascended into heaven (Ascension)

And is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; (Pentecost Season)

From there He shall come to judge the living and the dead. (The Last Sundays of the Church Year-End Times)

It is these Last Sundays that we are preparing to enter, and we will hear a lot about the Lord Jesus' future coming to judge the living and the dead.

How can we properly think about the Lord's return in glory?

First, we are not to speculate about the time of the Lord's return, looking behind every newspaper story or news report for a rumble of the end. Jesus teaches us, *"No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father."* [St. Matthew 24:36] Jesus according to human nature did not know when the time of his coming back would be. He did not tell us that He would return so that we would search and wonder about the timing of His return. We trust that the days and the seasons are in the Lord's hands, and that His return could be at any moment. We live in the hope of His soon return.

Well, if we are not to speculate concerning the timing of the Lord's return, why did He teach us of His return? There are two purposes of this teaching: encouragement and comfort.

Encouragement. After teaching that His return could be at any time, Jesus then encourages His church, *"So you also must be ready, for the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect Him."* [St. Matthew 24:44] We are to be ready, living our lives in love and service to our neighbor. *"And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching,"* [Hebrews 10:24,25] We continue to encourage one another to love and good works as we see the Lord's return.

Comfort. The teaching of the Lord's soon return is also great comfort to us who live in the midst of so much trouble and tribulation. Jesus gives us this wonderful and comforting promise, *"Do not let your hearts be troubled. You trust in God, trust also in Me... I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go to prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with Me that you also may be where I am where I am."* [St. John 14:1-3] This is one of the most comforting promises in all of Holy Scripture, that the Lord Jesus is now preparing a place for us, that we might be with Him forever. It's no wonder, then, that after St Paul teaches about the Lord's Second coming he concludes: *"Therefore encourage each other with these words."* [1 Thessalonians 4:18]

"He will come again to judge the living and the dead." As we think on these words as the Church Year comes to an end, may the Lord encourage us to be ready for His return and comfort us with the promise that He is already preparing a place for us.

A Note from the principal

Friday, November 1, marks the end of the first quarter. The school year is proceeding quickly and much has been accomplished. Report cards will be sent out next week and parent teacher conferences have been scheduled. The boys joined St. John in Westland for soccer and ended up undefeated and tournament champions. The girls also played volleyball with St. John and had an enjoyable season with a second place finish. The whole school took part in the cross country meet at Cross of Glory on October 4. Everyone finished their race, the team was fifth, and seven runners received ribbons for their efforts. The final sporting event of the first quarter was the floor hockey tournament at St. John, Westland. Grades 6-8 participated and returned as champions. We had 5 games and scored a total of 27 goals while giving up only 4. It was truly enjoyable to watch the starters and the subs play their positions well and work as a team. As we rotated our subs in and out of the game it was difficult to notice a drop off in effort and scoring. We would keep the puck in our offensive zone and keep pressure on their defense and goalie, getting many scoring chances. If the puck entered our defensive zone the players were challenged and the puck promptly returned to our offensive zone. Our defenders were able to score three times from beyond half court. Offensively 9 of the 11 players scored goals so our opponents could not focus on only one player. In the final game we scored our first goal in less than 2 minutes and never looked back. We were up 4-0 at half time and cruised to a victory in the second half. The championship was truly a team effort and quite frankly, awesome!

I would also like to thank the parents, the Home and School organization, congregation members, and the teachers. You also have been quite awesome and have been working together as a team! Just like any team has many positions and players, many talents and abilities, so it is with our church and school family. It is quite a blessing to see all of the different people who volunteer to help out and participate in a variety of ways. Whether it is the driving to and from games and practice, chaperoning on field trips, planning for Trunk or Treat, the book fair or Christmas for Kids, being leaders for Pioneers or a sport team, helping with school work, sharing with each other our joys and sorrows, praying for individuals or our school, repairing and cleaning school, it all is very helpful for our students and school. The staff really appreciates all of the help, but especially your prayers.

Our hockey team exhibited many positive characteristics such as hard work, encouraging team mates, playing their positions with gusto, not giving up on a play, and I could go on. The result was a great day and a championship. St. Peter's needs to exhibit the same characteristic, but our goal is not an earthly contest, we are more concerned with the heavenly outcome. We may not be able to see victory as we work here on earth, but we have the most precious Gospel message and the opportunity to share with our children and our community. Thanks for your time, talent and treasures as we proceed to proclaim God's Word in Plymouth and around the world.

As the school year continues we will have more opportunities for you to help out at school. The Board of Education is having a meeting for the whole church to explore ways that St. Peter's can reach out to our communities so more will have the opportunity to experience St. Peter's church and school family. Please plan to attend, even if you do not have any children in school, St. Peter's need everyone's input and help. The date is November 13. We will start with pizza at 5:30 and a meeting from 6-7. If you have any questions, contact Scott Beckerman or Paul Pappenfuss.

In summary, I am very pleased with the first quarter of the school year, but I am looking for even a better second quarter. Three months ago, July 30, who could have imagined all the blessings that we have had? With our prayers, effort and God's continued blessing we will continue to prosper.

Jeremiah 29:11 "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

Principal Paul Pappenfuss

Preschool

If I was to describe the school year up to this point using one word, the word I would choose would be challenging. There are many factors that have made this year what it is. I do not have as many students as some years, but in some ways it feels as if I have many more. I am so thankful for the help of Chris Abbott. She has been a God-send this year and has taken the brunt of some of our challenges. This year would be much more difficult without her help.

One of our challenges and blessings is Zhiqiao, our student from China. Zhiqiao arrived in the U.S. only days before the start of school. He spoke almost no English. Now, his English is improving, and he understands more of what is being said every day. He is a ball of energy and strong opinions. I am honored to be sharing God's Word with him. Please pray for him. Pray that Zhiqiao is able to form friendships and adjust to life in the United States, but most of all, pray that the Holy Spirit works in his heart and brings him to faith as he hears and learns about Jesus. His time here, at most, will probably only be about 2 ½ years.

The kids have been learning about ants, apples, apple trees, trees, leaves and fall. We tasted three different kinds of apples and voted for our favorite. We discussed the results of our graph when we were done. One day, we made applesauce. It filled the school with a wonderful aroma. We went to the Plymouth Apple Orchard at the beginning of October. It turned out to be a nice day despite the threat of rain. After that, we turned our sights to the beautiful fall colors and other changes that have been taking place. We collected leaves and sorted them according to different criteria. We learned a little bit about why leaves change colors and fall off the trees. We went to Nankin Mills on November 1 for the program "Fall Frolic" where we learned how to identify a few basic leaves and trees.

We have also had the opportunity to mingle with the kindergarteners. Mrs. Schroeder invited us over to her classroom for "Scarecrow Day" one day in October. She read a poem and story about a scarecrow, helped us make a scarecrow craft, and we even learned some fun, new kindergarten songs! The kindergarteners will be joining the four-year-old preschool class for their annual Thanksgiving Feast in November.

Besides preparing for the annual Thanksgiving Feast, the next big "project" on which we will be working is the Christmas Eve Service. It takes a lot of time (and patience) to prepare for the Christmas Eve service. However, it is one of my favorite activities. I enjoy hearing the children energetically sharing the wonderful message of Christ's birth through word and song. I hope you are able to make it to the service on December 24.

This is just a little taste of what is going on in the preschool room. Please stop in and check out the classroom if you are curious, or pull me aside after church or before or after school. I would be happy to talk with you more.

In Christ's Service,
Christine Baganz



A few weeks ago in the daily Chapel service at HVL, the question was posed to the faculty, "Have you even heard the words "How can this happen at a Christian high school?" Every faculty member admitted to having heard these words many times. Parents, supporters and those outside the HVL family all might wonder why sometimes the students act no differently than those at a public school. The answer pointed out in Chapel is quite simple; it is because of sin. Even though our students

know their Savior, they each also still have a sinful old Adam within them. But are they any different than us, or even than Jesus' disciples? Those disciples studied with Jesus himself on a daily basis, yet one betrayed Jesus for money, another denied he even knew Jesus despite his earlier claims of how he was willing to die for Jesus, and they all displayed many other moments of weakness. While on this earth we all remain sinners. But students at HVL have the opportunity to hear on a daily basis that their sins are forgiven. They have teachers who correct their behavior using Law and Gospel, and teach all their classes from a Scriptural viewpoint. And it should be pointed out that there are many occasions when outsiders comment that HVL students **are** different; when they go on field trips and when they compete in sporting events, they act differently than other teenagers because of their faith. Every day these students hear God's Word, through which the Holy Spirit works to strengthen faith.

With one quarter of the school year now complete, faculty and students are busy with many activities. The soccer team has already completed its season, but the girls volleyball team is preparing for district play. Last year they won their first district championship and hope to repeat this year. The Hawks Singers are preparing to attend the WELS regional choral festival at Lakeside Lutheran High School on November 8 - 10. 7th and 8th graders from most area Lutheran elementary schools visited HVL on October 17, and 1st and 2nd graders will visit on November 1. On November 16, HVL will host the annual Fine Arts Day.

HVL is making use of the new wireless capability throughout the school. Many students now bring their notebooks or tablets to class to take notes and do assignments. Almost 20% of HVL students are taking classes online, allowing them to take AP courses or courses not previously offered at HVL. Students now have the option of more than 80 new courses through online instruction. In addition, Mr. Baganz and Pastor Schaewe are teaching online students at other WELS high schools in Illinois, Wisconsin, Minnesota and Nebraska. Mr. Baganz is teaching WEB Page Design online and Pastor Schaewe is teaching Latin online.

The next HVL trip to Europe is already enrolling travelers for June, 2015. The next trip will last 15 days and visit seven countries in western Europe. Besides students, alumni and adult supporters of HVL are also allowed to enroll, although adult prices are somewhat higher than student prices. Information on the trip can be found at hvlhs.org/Europe2015.htm.

Work continues on accreditation. A survey is underway in which students, parents, alumni and supporters of HVL can offer their honest opinions of HVL and its programs to identify areas of strength as well as things that can be improved. Faculty members are meeting regularly to study and consider curriculum updates as part of this process. Committees are also working to provide proof of HVL meeting the nearly 300 standards that make up the accreditation report. Mr. Baganz, who is leading the accreditation process, also is getting a first-hand look at the final step in the process, when a team visits the school to confirm the reports. He was a part of the team that visited Michigan Lutheran Seminary as part of their accreditation during the last week of October. HVL's visit is scheduled for November, 2014.

Besides the blessings of the many activities at HVL, there are also challenges, especially in finances. Besides having a smaller enrollment this year, congregational giving is currently about \$22,000 below what was committed. Because of this, HVL has already been forced to delay faculty paychecks this year. Despite times when they are not paid, the faculty members continue to faithfully do their work and share God's Word with students on a daily basis. If you are blessed to be able to do so, please consider giving an individual gift to support the work of HVL. And please keep HVL, its ministry, and its faculty and students in your prayers as they continue the work of preparing young people for lives of service and for eternal life.

LWMS

Fifty six ladies and pastors attended the LWMS Alpha Circuit Fall Rally held at Salem Lutheran in Ann Arbor on October 20th. The morning began with time for a simple breakfast and fellowship. Pastor Hartley welcomed us with a brief history of the historic church and an opening devotion.

The Rally speaker was Dr. Becky Roberts. Becky's sister is a CAMM nurse serving in Malawi. Becky has been able to visit her twice during her three year tenure there. Becky's described some of the duties of the nurses, their living conditions, as well as the daily schedule of the CAMM clinics. The Clinic's day begins with a devotion by a national pastor and a lecture by national nurse. Besides the two nurses from the US, seven to eight national nurses now work in the very busy clinics. Her sister has loved her time serving in Africa!

Pastor Jahnke led a Bible Study titled: "So That the Kingdoms of the World May Know You" II Chronicles 32 and II Kings 19, about King Hezekiah.

We enjoyed a sack lunch with an incredible dessert spread.

Jeanne Martin, the National LWMS President gave a short presentation about the LWMS.

Our day finished with the business meeting:

Mite Box Collections: \$2296.77 (\$197.86 from St. Peter's)

25% sent to the National LWMS

75% divided equally between the two projects we voted on at the meeting:

World: # WM-2012-09 CAMM Projects Malawi: Nutrition Class or Orphan/Infant Care

Home: # HM-2012-11 Vicar in Mission Settings

Details about these projects can be found at lwms.org under the "Projects" tab at the home page. Select "Project Book".

The Spring Rally will be held at St. Peter's, Plymouth on Saturday, May 3, 2014.

I have the details of the responsibilities of the host congregation and will share them as the date approaches.

The National Convention will be in Dallas, Texas, June 26-29, 2014. Information and registration will be available at lwms.org. Room registration is already open!

Our circuit is looking for people who would like to run for office. The positions are:

Vice President, Secretary, Pastoral Advisor, Spiritual Growth Woman, and Spiritual Growth Pastor. If you know of anyone interested in serving in any of these positions, please let me know and I will forward the name to Pres. Vivian Gierach, to be placed on the ballot at the Spring Rally.

The closing devotion was given by Pastor Uhlenbrauch.

November is our month to Befriend a Mission! Look for the display in the Narthex. We have two Home Missions and one World Mission to send cards and words of encouragement.

As always, there is lot of LWMS news and information at their excellent website: lwms.org. You can sign up for occasional newsletters and book mark them for mission updates, devotions and other resources. LWMS is also on Facebook! Search for them and "Like" them for updates!

Lois Bude

LWMS Reporter

734-612-7604 (cell phone)

MUSIC

The St. Peter's Music Department has started another season of making music to the glory of God. The Senior Choir, soloists, and the school children have helped beautify our worship services. The Handbell Choir has started rehearsals with some new members: Tom and Robert Kalish, Yvonne and Bridget Alaniva, and Kim Pappenfuss (also new to Senior Choir). You can see that our adult music groups are family organizations, with several mother/children units.

We are entering the End Times portion of the church calendar, when we look forward to Christ's return, and backward to those who are already rejoicing in heaven with our Lord. Please join us for services centering on the Lutheran Reformation (November 3), Last Judgment (November 10), Saints Triumphant (November 17), and Christ the King (November 24).

The Advent season begins on December 1. This year we will continue an Advent Wreath tradition which was re-started last year. Before the opening hymn, the wreath candles will be lighted by an usher while choir members sing a descriptive verse appropriate for each Sunday. We hope this ceremony will help you focus on the love, peace, joy, and hope that is found in our Savior Jesus Christ. His white center candle will be lighted on Christmas Day.

The Music Department is also working on music for the Candlelight Service (**December 15 at 6:30 p.m.**). This year we will feature some of our soloists singing arias from J.S. Bach's Christmas Oratorio, with the Senior Choir presenting several Lutheran chorales from the same work. Scripture lessons from Isaiah and Luke 2 will be read. The Handbell choir and the school children will have a large role in the evening's music. Once again, there will be plenty of Christmas carols in the program, to be sung by the congregation and choirs. If you enjoy singing these joyful carols, please plan on attending our Candlelight Service.

The Senior Choir, Handbell Choir, school children, soloists, and instrumentalists will be participating in this special service, along with Pastor Schroeder of Good Shepherd, Novi, and Pastor Schaefer. We all hope that you will attend the Candlelight Service, so that your faith may be edified, and so our musicians can demonstrate the fruits of their hard work to a large number of people. Please show support to these faithful volunteers who bring extra beauty to our worship services all year round. The Candlelight offering is used to pay special music expenses (organ and piano maintenance, piano tuning, copyright licenses, etc.) so that cost does not have to come out of the regular budget. After the service, there will be a cookies and punch reception for the congregation.

Blessings on your holiday worship.

Pastoral Acts

Below are Pastoral Acts for the months of September and October.

Marriage

Jeremy Fick to Nicole Groulx
Steven Smith to Lindsay Miller

Members Received by Transfer

Krista Pappenfuss
from Trinity, Nicollet, MN

Loss of Member by Release to Heterodox

Tim Senkbeil
Jamie Senkbeil

Makenzie Senkbeil
Grant Senkbeil

Loss of Member by Transfer to Sister Congregation

Dana Conorman (child: Claire)
to St. Paul's Lutheran, Livonia, MI
Krista Pappenfuss
to Christ Lutheran, Saginaw, MI