

Messenger

St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church AND PRESCHOOL

1343 Penniman Avenue

Plymouth, MI 48170

August 2016

WE ARE BEGGARS ONLY

Martin Luther had many qualities and gifts. But perhaps his most valuable or important was his writing. I have mentioned in years past that before his burial in Wittenberg a traditional death mask was made of Dr. Luther, and that the sculptors went a step further and also made a casting of his hands. The cast shows his hands fixed in their natural position, which interestingly had the left hand flat (as in holding down a piece of paper), and the right hand in a writing position.

If you realize how much Dr. Luther wrote, this would be very understandable. He was a prolific writer to say the least. His catechisms, booklets, hymns, lecture notes, sermons, letters, the entire Bible translated into German. If you've had the opportunity to see an American edition of Luther's works, there are now around 60 volumes that have been translated into English. I can't begin to tell you how much is left to be translated from the German and Latin.

When one has written that much, and written powerful, world-changing stuff, you would probably want to pay close attention to what that person wrote on his deathbed. As he lay dying almost in the very shadow of where he had been baptized into Christ and life eternal 62 years earlier and on the verge of entering that full joy begun at his baptism, what was he thinking? What thoughts, what insights would he leave behind to those he cared for? And indeed, Luther's family and friends found a scrap of paper in his pocket that Luther had written some of his last thoughts. A few lines that ended with these words: "We are all beggars. This is true." I love that story.

On his deathbed, with eternity at hand, Luther reminds himself and us that we are all beggars – those who can cling only to the grace and promise of God given to us in Christ Jesus for salvation.

It is at the deathbed when things can become very simple, and very clear. Your perspective on life can become very focused. With death and your eternal destination right before you, there are no more distractions from the temporary stuff of this world – no plans, no concerns about the cares of life in this world. Eternity is before you. What's going to happen?

It is at that time when we sadly can do what we've often done throughout our life, and that is to look inside ourselves. Look at and review how we lived our life. Were you a good enough husband, wife, father, neighbor? Were you faithful enough to God? Did you truly love Him? Were you truly repentant? How will you stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ? Will you go to heaven or hell? Have you done enough? Oh, how the devil loves to torment in those moments,

to get us to look not at Christ but inwardly, at ourselves and thus our failures, in order to hopefully kill faith and hope.

But by the mercy and love of God, who would not abandon Luther or the rest of His children to such self-deceit, we are made to see ourselves as we really are – beggars before the throne of God. The Law of God strips away all pretense and pride. Before the presence of God, we know that we are sinners, and deserve nothing but God's judgment and condemnation. All we can do and rely upon is the mercy of God.

We are beggars only. That is the reformation truth and gift given to us that we celebrate every day. As Luther prepared to go before the judgment seat of Christ, he would not look to his many accomplishments or faithfulness to God, rather he knew and confessed that he was a beggar only – a sinner in need of the grace, mercy and forgiveness in Jesus Christ. That was the faith he professed with his dying breath, the confession that leads to life eternal through the mercy of Jesus Christ.

Today could be your last day on this earth. You don't know. You could find yourself on your deathbed, about to face God's Judgment Seat. Will you look to yourself and what you have done, your faithfulness? Or will you rely solely upon the mercy of God in Christ as a beggar? Your Reformation heritage and gift given to you is that by God's grace you are enabled to realize that you are a beggar only, one who depends solely upon the grace and mercy of God given to you in Christ Jesus – and that mercy is truly what you can depend upon! We are beggars only. This is true.

In Christ's service,
Pastor Schaefer

Music

During the summer months, the Music Department has continued to support St. Peter's worship activities with vocal music in service to our Lord and to the congregation. I have heard many appreciative comments about our soloists Lois Bude, Mark Castellese, Jim Cutler and his daughter Catherine Skoog, Joan Kalish and her family, and Doris Tomlin. Thanks to them for the faithful use of their considerable talents and for the time taken to prepare their selections. You will continue to hear from them throughout the year.

With the fall season our adult choir begins a season of singing to the glory of God. This is a good time for those of you who wish to serve our Lord with your musical talents to join the Senior Choir. Please give prayerful consideration to participating in our group. The commitment is one hour during the week, plus singing two or three services per month. The rewards are many: the joy of making music in praise of our Lord, the development of musical abilities, and the fun of fellowship with other Christians. Senior Choir meets at 7 p.m., every Thursday evening, starting August 25, in the church balcony. We are finished by 8 p.m. When the Senior Choir sings, we practice at 9 a.m. on Sundays, before the morning service. Any instrumentalists are also welcome to join

us for special services such as Reformation and Easter, as needed.

The Handbell Choir often plays for Sunday services and other occasions.. We can always use ringers who can read music. We will be starting our Thursday rehearsals (6:30 p.m.) around September 8 or earlier, depending on the availability of ringers.

Both the Senior Choir and the Handbell Choir have lost several members because our school teachers have taken divine calls elsewhere. Some of our ringers are attending school out of the area. We hope that some of you will respond to our request for musical help.

There will be no Candlelight Service this year because of the suspension of our congregation's school and because of declining attendance in past years. Instead, there will be a 7 p.m. Hymn Festival on Christmas Eve. We hope you can come to this special service to sing your favorite carols. The Senior Choir will participate, and possibly the Handbell Choir, if there are enough ringers. There will also be the traditional 11:00 p.m. divine service on Christmas Eve, and a Sunday Christmas Day service at 9:30 a.m.

If you have any questions about music activities at St. Peter's, don't hesitate to call or text me, Jan Jacobi (Music Director), at 734-502-0576, or email me at HYPERLINK "<mailto:janjacobi@comcast.net>"janjacobi@comcast.net.

Preschool

It's over. August is here and summer vacation is almost over. This might make some of you sad, but to a teacher it can be a very exciting time! We have been busy planning and preparing over the summer and now it is almost time to put those plans into action. Now it is time to look ahead to a new school year. We are really looking forward to seeing some familiar faces as well as meeting new people! We will have an Orientation night on Tuesday, August 30th, from 6:00pm to 7:30pm. This will be for Parent and Tot as well as Preschool.

Our Parent and Tot program will begin on Wednesday, September 14, 2016. They meet on Wednesdays from 9:30am to 11:00am. This is an interactive program for 2-year-olds and their parents, grandparents or caregivers. Many parents have found it to be a great time to get to know other parents while they are engaging in activities with their children. Some of the topics covered include: God's Wonderful World, Fantastic Food, Incredible Imaginations, Wacky Weather, Super Science, Fabulous Feelings and Family, Beautiful Bugs, Amazing Animals and Terrific Transportation. We have openings so please spread the word to any parents of 2-year-olds. Mrs. Karen Beckerman and Mrs. Carol Schwartz are our loving leaders who run this program.

Our 3-and 4-year-old preschool program will run from 8:30am to 11:30am beginning after Labor Day. (Please note that this is a slightly later start than last year.) We have two day, three day and five day options. We are still accepting applications. We have lots of exciting things planned. Mrs. Chris Abbott will continue to be our amazing aide in our classroom. It is such a blessing to serve with her!

Please call the office 734.453.0460 or e-mail me at HYPERLINK "<mailto:stpeterspreschool@hotmail.com>" stpeterspreschool@hotmail.com if you have any questions about our programs.

We are about to begin another new and exciting year in preschool, but I want to take a moment to look back at the old years. I want to say "thank you" to the many teachers and pastors who have taught faithfully, to the secretaries who have served diligently, to the parents who have volunteered endlessly and to the children who have brought joy and laughter to the halls of St. Peter's. Mr. and Mrs. Paul Pappenfuss, Ms. Michele Diener, Mrs. Laura Schroeder, Mrs. Cheryl Smith, parents and students, you will be missed. Our way forward may look different than it did in the past, but the one thing that will not change is that God is with each and every one of us no matter where we are. "I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD." Jeremiah 29:11.

I would ask for your continued prayers and support as we begin another year of sharing God's love and God's Word with these young children and their families.

In Christ's Service,
Rebecca Lohrmann

Board of stewardship/ EDUCATION

Recent Board Activities:

The May 21st pasta/game night was well attended and everyone seemed to enjoy the food, games and fellowship. The first lemonade on the lawn for this year was served by the Board on May 29th following The Divine Service. There are still a few Sundays that are open if you wish to serve, just check the sign-up sheet in the Narthex. The Wels Connection is being shown once a month in The Church Basement following The Sunday Service. The video usually lasts only 10-15 minutes and shows what is going on in The Synod.

Upcoming Activities:

We are planning an appetizer game night on August 27th at 6 pm. Come join us for appetizers, desserts and games with plenty of Fellowship. A Stewardship Program is being planned for October. On October 22nd we will be having a progressive dinner. Watch your bulletins and e-mails for more details. On September 18th the annual Church Picnic will be held in Hines park.

Ernie Honke
Chairman, Board of Stewardship/ Education

LWMS

Christ Alone, Our Cornerstone: The 53rd Annual LWMS Convention was held in St. Charles, Illinois on June 23-26. There were 1054 attendees

representing 56 of the 60 LWMS circuits. Some highlights and important information from the convention include:

Mission Presentations

Steve W. ~ Asia Lutheran Seminary

Michael Quandt ~ Redemption, St. George, Utah

David & Holly Beckman ~ India

Luis & Carolina Acosta ~ Risen Savior, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Workshops

"Small Space, Great Opportunity" ~ Pastor Andrew Johnston, Antigua

"A Day in the Life of a Missionary" ~ Luke Wolfgramm, Russia

"His Name Is Popular but His Work Is Unknown" ~ Pastor Michael Quandt, St. George, Utah

"Stepping Stones to Spiritual Growth" ~ Spiritual Growth-Mission Awareness Committee

kids c.a.r.e.

2016-2017 Home Mission Project: Family Ministry for Outreach

2015-2016 World Mission Project: Central Africa Medical Mission Orphan/Infant Program ~ \$60,816.17

Mission Projects Selected *

Ballot

Project #HM-2014-11 ~ Summer Student Assistants - \$41,529.28

Project #WM-2014-32 ~ Television Broadcast for Muslim World and Theological Seminars - \$41,529.29

Worship Service Offerings

Project #HM-2014-20 ~ Outreach to Asians - \$25,805.14

Project #WM-2014-26 ~ Apache Leadership and Maintenance - \$25,805.15

Offering Totals

Mission Projects Offering - \$143,874.74

Worship Services Offering - \$51,610.29

Mission projects to be voted on in 2016

Home Missions

Project #HM-2016-02-Equipment Fund

Project #HM-2016-15-Cross-Cultural Mission Conferences and Training

World Missions

Project #WM-2016-02-Repatriation Conferences

Project #WM-2016-32-Nepal Project

*Detailed Mission Project information can be found at LWMS.org under the "Projects" tab. Look for "Projects Booklet" and search for the project #.

Future Convention Sites

2017 - 54th Annual LWMS Convention, June 22-25, 2017 ~ hosted by North Florida, Florida Sun Coast and Tampa Bay Circuits, Orlando, Florida

2018 – 55th Annual LWMS Convention, June 21-24, 2018 ~ hosted by Paperland Circuit, Green Bay, Wisconsin

Mite Box Money is Due Sunday, September 24!

I must send the money to the circuit treasurer by Sept 30. The last Sunday to get your mite box in is **September 24!**

Start collecting that loose change! If you care to write a check, it should be made out to: **St. Peter's Lutheran Ladies Guild.**

Mite box collections go to various mission projects approved but not funded by the synod. Our circuit votes on which projects we will fund at our semi-annual rallies. Mite boxes will be available in the narthex. If you put your name on yours, I can return it to your mailbox for you to use again.

Save the Date: LWMS Alpha Circuit Fall Rally – Oct 15.

The Fall Rally will be held on Saturday, October, 15 at St John's, Riga. It's an great time of year to enjoy a ride in the countryside to an LWMS Rally!

LWMS Website

Check out the LWMS website: HYPERLINK "<http://www.lwms.org>"www.lwms.org for mission updates, information, and devotions as well as photos and videos from the Convention.

Lois Bude
LWMS Reporter

Pastoral Acts

Baptisms

Curtis Krallman

Kelsey Reynolds

Members Received by Child Confirmation

John Lovell

Michael Moore

Kai Pearce

Burials

Eileen Cook (non-member)

Ronald Wendland

Beatrice Reeves

Loss of Member by Removal

Loss of Member by Release to Heterodox

Marriages

Rachel Sylvester to

Nicholas Chacuti to

Loss of Members by Transfer to Sister Congregation

Amy Burger to Calvary Lutheran, Chandler, AZ

Michele Diener to St. Peter's Lutheran, Sturgeon Bay, WI

Kim Pappenfuss to Cross of Glory Lutheran, Peoria, AZ

Paul Pappenfuss to Cross of Glory Lutheran, Peoria, AZ

Roster Updates

Delete

Amy Burger

Michele Diener

Kim Pappenfuss

Paul Pappenfuss

Ronald Wendland

Beatrice Reeves