



St. Luke Lutheran Church
 1807 Field Avenue
 St. Paul, MN 55116
 Phone: 651-698-9443
www.saintlukechurch.org
 Editor: Jo Klein

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Open doors, open hearts, open minds.

Parish Times July 2016

Let the little children come to me. Matthew 19:14

When the disciples tried to prevent people from bringing their children to him, Jesus rebuked the disciples. Jesus welcomed and blessed the children. As disciples of Jesus, we are called to do the same. You can do this in a very practical way this month by helping out with Vacation Bible School. I need your help. VBS is just three days long, July 11, 12, 13 (Monday-Wednesday). It runs from 5:30-8:00 p.m. Although I would welcome your daily participation, even if you can help out for just an hour one day, I would be very appreciative. There is a sign up on the kiosk where you can sign up to lead a craft, help with play time, teach, or simply be a general helper. You can sign up for all three days, one day, or even just one task on a certain day. I need your help, for the children. Please sign up and help.



Thank you,
 Pr. Dave



Ladies Night Out in July will take place on Tuesday, July 19th at Chili's 3625 Pilot Knob Rd in Eagan at 5:30 p.m. If you are interested in carpooling, please meet at church at 5:00 p.m. Please notify Joyce Bluel (651-690-4614) if you are planning on attending by Sunday, July 10th so we have an idea of how many for the reservation.

Scholarships are available to any St. Luke member attending a Lutheran College. **The deadline for Fall Semester 2016 is July 1, 2016.** Please contact Ruth Carlson to get instructions and an application for qualification.



Usher Notes

Many thanks to our ushers for June: Eva Mac Niven, Jim Kroschel, Doug Nelson, David NedreLOW, Larry and Carol Vigdal, Pam Ballis, Katy Eggert.

Our ushers for July will be: Joan Wilson, Bruce Magnuson, George Heriot, Rob Herrmann.



LOAVES AND FISHES

96 hungry men, women and children enjoyed a delicious meal at the Loaves and Fishes Program at St. Matthew's Catholic Church on May 23rd. Workers from St. Luke were Joyce Bluel, Pastor Dave Person, Larry Litzkow and Roger Diestler.



Vacation Bible School

July 11, 12 and 13: those are the days we will have Vacation Bible School this year. We generally run from about 5:30 to 8:00 pm on those three nights with times for eating, study, playing games and crafts. I need help. Even if you can only help one night for a short time, I need you, as do the children. Can you cook one meal of, for example, hot dogs or hamburgers or pizza for about 10 people? Could you lead a craft or help with a game? Could you help me in a class as I try to teach the children? Maybe you could help lead a song or two. It is not a huge commitment, but it is a very important one. Please help. Sign up on the kiosk; thank you!

--Pastor Dave

Canoe Trip

Are you ready for BIG adventure? Sign up for the church canoe trip! The cost will be about \$75.00. We will leave on Thursday, August 18 in the early afternoon and return on the evening of Monday, August 22. We will put in on Sawbill Lake, which has a number of options for fun and adventure. Sign up on the kiosk.



July Birthdays

- 7 Ruth Carlson, Ian Walter
- 8 Joyce Bluel
- 9 Nancy Greatrix
- 10 Cyndy Stadem
- 11 Dave Grzywinski
- 14 Al Baird
- 15 Doug Wasko
- 16 Wendy Bjorklund
- 17 Bob and Pam Ballis
- 18 Dick Holtz
- 20 Peter Klein, Dallas Erickson
- 23 Jo Klein
- 26 Jill Burchill, Tatum Herrmann
- 27 Jennifer Kroschel
- 28 Dan Grzywinski
- 30 Jason Woodford



July Anniversaries

- 6 Kevin and MaryJo Brandt: 1991
- 13 Larry and Bev Eckstrom: 2001
- 19 Richard and Paula Siltberg: 1975
- 26 Dave and Sandy Grzywinski: 1980



Volunteer Opportunity for Fall Bazaar

The Fall Bazaar Committee is looking for a volunteer or two to head up this year's raffle. The raffle is a popular part of the Bazaar and a great way to raise funds. This would be a great opportunity for a family to work together to support their church. Training is abundant in this area as many of our members have been involved in the raffle in the past. If you are interested or have any questions, please feel free to talk to Judy Salaba or Joyce Bluel. The 2016 Fall Bazaar will take place on Oct. 8.



Our heartfelt thanks to our Bun Run volunteers for June: Julie Ellingson, Mike Hegdahl, Joan Wilson and Ken McGrew.

July WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

Readers:

- 3 Wendy Bjorklund
- 10 Julie Ellingson
- 17 Beth Peterson
- 24 Mike Hegdahl
- 31 Jill Burchill

Communion:

- 3 Wendy Bjorklund
- 17 Katy Eggert



July Acolytes:

- 3 Victor Landenberger
- 17 Zach Moore

FINANCIAL REPORT

May receipts: \$14,213.32
 May expenses: \$10,769.37
 Complete treasurer's reports are available upon request.

St. Luke's Farmers' Market

Our second annual Farmers Market is underway! We are working hard to make it even better than last year through more vendors and greater publicity. We will need some help throughout the summer, so please put it on your mental checklist to help out at least one Saturday this year. We will run through Saturday, October 1. We will take July 2 off. The times are 8 a.m. to noon. Please help get out the word and plan on serving at the market. It is a beautiful way to serve our neighborhood and welcome people to our church.



Musings from the Music Director

Dear Members of St. Luke,

As you can see, the absence of choir/bell choir creates a lot of opportunities for special music. I strongly encourage all of you with musical gifts to give it a try! Being a part of special music is so rewarding for you and for the congregation! I'm still somewhat "new" and do not know everyone's musical abilities. So, if you would like to participate or talk about participating please don't hesitate to email me or approach me on a Sunday!

Blessings,
Katie

BLOOD DRIVE, AUG. 6!

MARK YOUR CALENDARS for a Red Cross Blood Drive, Saturday, Aug. 6, 9am to 3pm, here at St. Luke Church! Did you know a single donation can save up to three lives? You CAN make a difference! Registration will be a snap, either online or by phone. Specifics to follow in the August Newsletter. **SAVE THE DATE!**



**American
Red Cross**



POLICE - COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

National Night Out

St. Luke is sponsoring National Night Out for our neighborhood on Tuesday, August 2 at 6:00 p.m. Come, meet neighbors, enjoy some food and good fellowship and live music with our neighbors.



**HAPPY
4TH OF JULY**

Commentaries for the July Gospel Readings

Below please find the commentaries for the July gospel readings. For resources I used "Preaching Luke's Gospel" by Richard Jensen, "Luke" by David Tiede and my own notes. Please read the gospel as well as the notes found below, and then take time for prayer as you prepare for worship each Sunday. If you have any questions or comments about the gospel lesson, I would absolutely LOVE to hear them. Let's grow in and through God's Word!

July 3, Luke 10:1-11, 16-20

In Luke 9:1-6 Jesus sends out the 12 disciples with power and authority over all demons, to cure diseases, proclaim the kingdom and to heal. In today's reading we see an expansion of that mission in the sending of the 70. Remember, in Luke 9:51 Jesus had set his face to go to Jerusalem. Jesus was journeying to Jerusalem and the cross. The 70 were sent out two by two to all of the towns and places Jesus intended to go. Like John the Baptist before them, these 70 went out to prepare the way for the Lord. They were to announce the coming of the Kingdom of God and cure the sick. They were to travel light (no purse, no bag, no sandals), trusting in the Lord to provide for their needs. In Luke 22: 35 Jesus will remind the disciples that all of their needs were met at this time. The Lord did indeed take care of them. They were to be very focused in their mission, not even greeting people on the road. They were also to realize that their mission was fraught with danger. Jesus told them he was sending them out like lambs in the midst of wolves. Those declaring the Word of God were often met with opposition and even death, like John the Baptist, many of the prophets....and of course, eventually, to Jesus. In our present age, we live in a country in which we might simply be ridiculed for our faith. But there are those in this world who are still killed for their faith. When the 70 came to a house, the first thing they were to do is announce, "Peace to this house!" If the homeowners share this peace, it would remain on the house. If not, it returned to the disciples. This is more than just a greeting; it is an official declaration of the presence of the kingdom of God. It confronts the homeowners with God's salvation and authority. It is a blessing. The authority of this blessing comes not from the disciples, but from Jesus himself in sending them out. Notice too that evangelism in the name of Jesus begins not with a threat or judgment, but with a word of peace. That word is then received by a child of peace or rejected. We too are sent out as disciples and evangelists in Jesus' name with this word of peace which we offer to people around us. Heaven knows this world is desperately in need of peace. We are those agents of the Lord's peace. The 70 are told to stay at the first house that welcomes them. In other words, they shouldn't go shopping around for the best place in town to stay, but be satisfied and grateful for the place they have been given. They are told to eat what is placed in front of them, heal the sick and declare that the Kingdom of God has come near. One meaning for that is that the Kingdom of God has come near through the word they speak in the name and authority of Jesus. Wherever Jesus and his word are, there is the Kingdom of God. They are not to judge the places that do not welcome them (Matthew 7:1-2), rather simply brush off the dirt from their sandals, along with a warning about rejecting God. They are to leave the judging to God. After all of this, the 70 returned to Jesus with joy, announcing all that had happened. We see through them the triumph of God's reign over the power of Satan. This is done not by the power of the 70, but by the power and authority granted them by Jesus. Jesus then warns the 70 not to dwell on the victories as their own, but to find joy in the fact they are part of the work and mission of God.

July 10, Luke 10:25-37

According to Rev. Richard Jensen, some years ago people in the United States were asked why they give to charity. The number one answer was a reference to the story of the "Good Samaritan." "You just can't pass by on the other side," they said. This story has become part of the fabric of many people's lives. Actually, the word "good" is never mentioned in the story, yet it is always referred to as the story of the Good Samaritan. It begins with a lawyer wishing to test Jesus. "Teacher," he said, "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" This is a question that people of that time loved to debate. No matter what answer Jesus gave, the lawyer could quote a different answer from some famous teacher. But instead of answering the question, Jesus turns the tables, as he often does, and asks the lawyer what is written in the law. The lawyer answers by quoting from Leviticus 19:18 and Deuteronomy 6:5. In Matthew 22:34-40 and Mark 12:28-31 Jesus answers the same question by giving the same answer as the lawyer. As Rev. Jensen writes, "Love of God and neighbor is *the* biblical word on the divinely intended shape for human life." Jesus himself said "On these two commandments hang all the law and prophets (Matthew 22:40). Jesus then tells the lawyer, "you have given the right answer; do this and you will live." But the lawyer isn't

satisfied. He wants to justify himself. In order to do that he wants to know who his neighbor is so he can love that person and live. He really isn't interested in his neighbor. He is interested in saving his own neck and how to *do* that. The problem is that justification is not something we *do*; it is a gift from God. One good example is found in the story of the Pharisee and the tax collector (Luke 18:9-14). In this story it is the sinner who cries, "Lord, be merciful to me," who goes home justified. Justification is a gift. So Jesus tells a story. As we recall this story, we also need to remember that one of the themes of Luke is that of the "great reversal." This theme is found in the Magnificat (Luke 1:46-55) when Mary sings of the powerful being brought down from their thrones and the lowly lifted up, the hungry filled with good things and the rich sent away. We see it when the priest Zechariah is struck mute by the angel Gabriel, while women (Elizabeth and Mary) trust God's word. We see it at the end of Luke too when the women (thought to be unworthy as witnesses) became the apostles to the apostles after the resurrection of Jesus. The women (lowly) believed while the men (people in authority) doubted. In the story of the "Good Samaritan" we find that a Samaritan is the hero. Jews and Samaritans did not like one another, to put it nicely. In fact, they were known to kill one another. We can't even begin to imagine how shocking this story was for the Jewish audience. A "good" Samaritan?? Unthinkable. Not only that, but the two who passed by the beaten man were a Jewish priest and a Levite, part of the priestly tribe. The best, the ones normally thought of as heroes, passed him by while the worst helped him out!! How could Jesus dare tell such a story?! It was audacious!! Yet he did and he ended by asking the lawyer, "Who was the neighbor?" There was only one answer the "tester" could give, "The one who showed him mercy." Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise." Remember, Jesus tells this as he is journeying to Jerusalem and the cross. After hearing this story, you can be sure some of the leaders were sharpening their swords in anger. As for us, we are called to follow Jesus, knowing that even those people we least like, such as the hated Samaritans, are also called...just as we are called to show mercy.

July 17, Luke 10:38-42

After the story of the "Good" Samaritan, we come to Mary and Martha. Jesus is on his way to Jerusalem and the cross (9:51). We see Martha welcoming Jesus into her home, where her sister Mary also lived. While Martha slaved away at various tasks, Mary sat at Jesus' feet listening. Seeing this, Martha got a bit perturbed and complained to Jesus saying, "Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to do all the work by myself? Tell her to help me." Jesus then gently reproves Martha saying, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and distracted by many things; there is need of only one thing. Mary has chosen the better part, which will not be taken away from her." As it says in the Book of Ecclesiastes, "For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven." (3:1). There is a time to work and a time to listen, to learn. This isn't saying that work is bad. Instead it is emphasizing that there is also a time to be quiet, listen and learn, *even for women*. Jesus, the Son of God was with them. This was a time to set aside work for a moment and listen. But not only that, it says that Martha was *distracted*. When we are distracted, we cannot concentrate on what is truly important. We see that with tragic results nowadays when people text and drive. Let go of what distracts and pay attention to what is central. But not only that, in those days it was the woman's job to be in the kitchen serving while the men took care of the "important" business. By taking time to teach Mary, Jesus was turning the tables on that world. Once again, it is the "great reversal" that we see over and over again in Luke. In those days women were not given the opportunity to sit at the master's feet; they were to stay in the kitchen, working for the men. Jesus shows another way. He did it again when he spoke to the Samaritan woman at the well in John 4. There we see the disciples *astonished* to find Jesus speaking with this Samaritan woman (John 4:27). Whether it is the story of the "Good" Samaritan, the Samaritan woman at the well, or these two women, Mary and Martha, Jesus beyond and past stereotypes to the heart of people, all beloved children of God. Work is good and necessary. Quiet time with the Word of God is also good and necessary. Jesus sets us all free to be enriched by both work and the Word.

July 24, Luke 11:1-13

As Jesus journeyed to Jerusalem and the cross (beginning at 9:51), he taught his disciples many things. Jesus often could be found in prayer (Luke 3:21; 5:16; 6:12; 9:18, 28) and his disciples asked him to teach them to pray. In our gospel reading for today we have what we commonly call "The Lord's Prayer." You can also find it in Matthew 6:9-11. Jesus begins this prayer with "Father." This isn't the "Abba – Daddy" we find in other prayers, but a little more formal "father." Yet, for people of that time, this would have been a shockingly familiar way to address God because it was not as authoritarian or regal as the way they normally addressed God in prayer. We see here that Jesus introduces addressing and praying to God in a more intimate way, the way a child speaks to a loving father. In his prayer Jesus stresses a language of loving relationship. What we may not understand unless we read this whole passage carefully is that prayer to the Father elicits the gift of the Holy Spirit (13).

As Dr. Tiede put it, "(Luke) clearly shares the understanding of the early church that it is God's own abiding Spirit which invites and authorizes the kind of intimate speech that characterizes trusting children and loving fathers. Luke's understanding of the address brings the followers of Jesus within the intimate identity of will and purposes which characterized Jesus, the Holy Spirit, and God." We are invited into the Trinity, the heart of God. It is here that we can say from our very heart, "hallowed be your name." One meaning of "holy" is that which is "totally other". But another commentator says one meaning of holy is, "that which works as it ought." When we pray that God's name is holy, we are praying that God's name work as it ought. God's name is the name of salvation, so when we pray that God's name be holy, we pray that salvation be brought about. Heaven knows we need it. In effect, when we pray "your kingdom come" we are repeating what we just said in the first petition, that salvation will be brought about, here and now. It is not just a future event. We also pray for that which sustains us physically, our daily bread. We pray too that our sins be forgiven as we forgive others. Forgiveness can be a two-way street. It is difficult to receive forgiveness if we do not know how to give it. Jesus emphasizes this in Luke 17:1-10 and other places. The forgiveness of God is much greater than we can imagine (Luke 12:32) and the Lord wishes us to take part in that forgiveness by both giving and receiving it. There we see the in-breaking of the kingdom. We also pray that we will not be brought to the time of trial. We are in spiritual warfare and pray that we be protected from the trials of the evil one. After this Jesus gives an example of persistent prayer (Luke 18:1-8 is another example). We are told to bring our needs to God our loving father. We then come to the famous ask, search, and knock passage in which Jesus stresses the need to bring all our thoughts, cares and worries to our Father. It is then that we find what the Father gives us, the Holy Spirit (13). About this, Dr. Richard Jensen wrote, "When we pray to God, God sends Godself in answer to our prayers! This is an incredible assertion. Prayer does not just get the attention of a far-off God who decides what to do with our petitions. Prayer to a God as near as a Father results in God joining Godself to the one who prays. God doesn't just answer prayers. *God is the answer to our prayers.* God allies Godself with us in the form of the gift of the Holy Spirit."

July 31, Luke 12:13-21

A major theme running through Luke 12:1-13:9 is that of fear and anxiety. We can see that playing out in our reading for today, as well as the need for trust and security. In whom or what do we put our trust? Where is the source of true security and treasure? What do you think? What does your life say? The gospel reading begins with a person asking Jesus to help divide up an inheritance. According to laws of that time, based on the Scriptures, there were designated ways of going about the process of dividing an estate. Jesus showed no interest in taking part in that task. Instead he used this as an important teaching opportunity. Jesus begins with a warning. "Take care! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; for one's life does not consist in the abundance of possessions." In making this warning, Jesus is following the teachings of the Scriptures as found in the psalms and proverbs, as well as other places (Psalm 39:6; Ecclesiastes 2:18-19; I Samuel 25). Jesus then tells the parable of the rich fool. In it the rich man talks to his soul about security and happiness. As Dr. Tiede writes, "The foolishness of the man is that he thinks this hoard is enough to bring security and happiness to his soul. Wrong! The soul is not merely his own concern, and he could never accumulate enough to bring security to his soul. He is not the one to give it orders, because it is not his own possession or under his control. The fool did not understand that God would "ask back" his soul, to which he was giving such bad counsel about security and pleasure. ...he was blinded to the truth. His life, his soul – he – was accountable to God." Rev. Richard Jensen writes, "In the Travel Narrative (Jesus' journey to the cross, beginning in Luke 9:51) there are several other passages which deal with this theme of possessions: 16:1-31; 18:18-30; and 19:1-10. As we have seen, this theme carries over also into the book of Acts as the story of Ananias and Sapphira clearly illustrates. It should not be surprising to us that the early church had a very different evaluation of poverty and wealth than we do today. *Most of the great "fathers" of the church held economic views which would be considered quite radical in our day. Ambrose of Milan, for instance, says that "the earth has been created in common for all, rich and poor. Why do you (the rich) claim for yourselves the right to own the land?" ...Basil the Great says to the rich: "The bread that you hoard belongs to the hungry. The cloak that you keep in your chest belongs to the naked. The shoes that trot in your house belong to the unshod."* - Justo L. and Catherine G. Gonzalez, *The Liberating Pulpit*. The words are well worth our contemplation and reflection.

The Lord bless thee, and keep thee. -Numbers 6:24