



St. Luke Lutheran Church

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Editor: Jo Klein

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Open doors, open hearts, open minds.

Parish Times

June 2017



We are blessed to be a blessing.

I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing.

Genesis 12:2b: The Lord speaking to Abram....

There are many times when I was told to "count your blessings." I often heard this after something unfortunate happened to me or someone else. But I think it is good advice for our daily lives, no matter what the circumstances. How often do you count your blessings? I don't do it often enough, but when I do, I find my day brightened and my eyes opened to the myriad blessings all around me. Those blessings really are innumerable! In the same way, how often to you count the blessings that you both give and receive through St. Luke? Just last week (as I write this) I officiated at Helen Klein's funeral. What a blessing to have this loving community surround the Klein family with love and support! I have seen that same support year after year in this church for others who lost loved ones. This kind of support doesn't only happen at times of sorrow, but also in times of joy, for baptisms, confirmation, graduations, weddings, baby showers and other such occasions of joy. What a blessing to belong to this family of God and share one another's joys and sorrows. Through this wonderful family of God, we do not carry our sorrows alone and our joys are multiplied! This all happens through our Lord who binds us together in his love. That is what produces blessings, being bound by the love of God. Through these next months, I am going to write about some of the ways I see that we are blessed and are blessings through St. Luke. I can't cover ALL those blessings, so I invite each one of you to share your experiences of being a blessing and being blessed through St. Luke. You can share by writing a short article for the newsletter, or, if you wish, share a short talk during worship. Send Jo your articles and talk to me about sharing during worship.



Usher Notes

Many thanks to our ushers for June: Jill Burchill, Doug Nelson, David Nedrelow, Larry and Carol Vigdal, Pam Ballis, Katy Eggert.



75 hungry men, women and children enjoyed a delicious meal at Loaves and Fishes on April 24th at St. Matthew's Catholic Church. Workers from St. Luke were Pastor Dave Person, Joyce Bluel, Larry Litzkow, and Roger and Dianne Diestler.



Ladies Night Out in June will take place on Tuesday, June 20th at House of Wong on Larpenteur Avenue in Roseville 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) by Sunday, June 11th if you are planning on attending so we have an idea of how many for the reservation.



St. Luke's Farmers' Market

This is the third year of our farmer's market. We need your help! Please volunteer to help one or two days this summer. The market begins on Saturday, June 17 and runs through October 7. It is open 8 AM to noon every Saturday. You can help by coming on the day you sign up to help set up, greet customers and then help tear down. It's not hard; in fact, it is very enjoyable. Sign up on the kiosk today to help out at this valuable mission of community and outreach for our area.



Many thanks to our June Bun Run volunteers: Doug and Jo Klein, Larry Litzkow, Julie Ellingson, Mike Hegdahl.



June Acolytes

- 4 Zach Moore
- 18 Evan Nelson

Scholarships are available to any St. Luke member attending a Lutheran College. **The deadline for Fall Semester 2017 is July 1, 2017.** Please contact Ruth Carlson to get instructions and an application for qualification.



Vacation Bible School

VBS is scheduled for June 19, 20, 21 (Monday-Wednesday) evening from 5:30-8:00. We will be studying some good stories from the Old Testament, making some crafts, eating treats, playing games, all while growing in the Lord! Come one, come all children from 4 years old up to sixth grade. We need help from all adults for just an hour of time or if you are able, helping all three days. You could make one simple meal (hot dogs, pizza, hamburgers, mac and cheese are some examples), help with games, crafts, treats or class. All gifts of time and talent are appreciated! Please sign up on the kiosk!



Financial Report

Receipts

April	\$14,274.25
Four Months	\$47,177.25

Expenses

April	\$12,623.19
Four Months	\$51,073.92

Please see me with any questions, comments, or for a copy of the treasurer's report.

-Ruth Carlson, Treasurer

JUNE WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

Readers:

- 4 Christine Olson
- 11 Joyce Bluel
- 18 Wendy Bjorklund
- 25 Julie Ellingson

Communion:

- 4 Joan Wilson
- 18 Wendy Bjorklund



June Birthdays

- 2 Lynda Mathison
- 3 Arlene Drier
- 5 Betty Nelson
- 6 Luke Stadem, Mike Wobig
- 8 Phroah Mathis
- 10 Andrew Stadem
- 16 Brian Spray, Evan Nelson
- 18 Alex Grzywinski
- 21 Pastor Dave, John Clinkenbeard
- 22 George Heriot, Diane Nelson
- 24 Christine Olson, Allan Amlee
- 25 Jenifer Drier, Carter Alcenot
- 27 Sandi Gordon
- 30 Karl and Charles Gaarder



June Anniversaries

- 4 Larry & Carol Vigdal: 1961
- 8 Roger & Dianne Diestler: 1963
- 15 Jane & Ken McGrew: 1991
- 18 Allan & Phillis Amlee: 1955
- 19 Steve & Gwen Brummund: 1999
- Donald & Ann Annala: 1948
- 23 Patricia & Mark Stadem: 1990
- 27 Jeff & Chris Kinglsey: 2014

Church Canoe Trip

We will be going on a great adventurous canoe trip to the BWCA, leaving the afternoon of Thursday, August 17 and returning the early evening of Monday, August 21. The cost will be approximately \$75.00 per person (a total of nine people may go – we will figure out final costs after we know the final expenses). Please sign up on the kiosk. If you have any questions, ask Pr. Dave. We will be putting in on Sawbill Lake in the BWCA!



Fall Bazaar: Crafters or Vendors

Do you know any crafters or vendors who would be interested in renting out a table at our Fall Bazaar this year? The date is Saturday, October 28th from 9:00 to 3:00 and the fee for an 8-foot table is \$35.

If so, please have them contact either Judy Salaba 651-698-8572 or Joyce Bluel 651-690-4614 for a vendor registration form. Space will be considered reserved at the time of submission of registration form and payment.



The committee that is meeting with St. Mark to discuss how both churches can move forward in fulfilling their missions for their congregations and larger communities will be meeting Sunday, June 4th, 11:15 am at St. Mark. We will plan our July 30th joint worship, lunch and adult forum at St. Luke. The committee also will meet Sunday, July 2nd, 11:00 at St. Luke to continue our "talks." Please share your thoughts and concerns with the committee members: Pr. Dave, Nancy Hegdahl and Wendy Bjorklund, or consider attending one of the meetings.

Mark the date! St. Luke is hosting a joint worship with St. Mark on Sunday, July 30th! We will worship together, have lunch, and then attend an adult forum presented by Rev. Joe Lees from the ELCA, which will focus on the many ways churches can work cooperatively to accomplish their missions. Please plan to attend. Details to follow!

--Wendy Bjorklund

Commentaries for the June Gospel Readings

Below please find the commentaries for the June gospel readings. For resources I used "Preaching Matthew's Gospel" by Richard Jensen, Working Preacher 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 LOVE to hear them. Let's grow in and through God's Word!

June 4, John 20:19-23 Pentecost (taken from my April 23 commentary on the same verses)

John begins by setting the stage: it was the evening of the first day of the week, Sunday. This was the day of the resurrection. In fact, that morning some of the women claimed they met the resurrected Jesus. The disciples didn't know what to believe. It sounded like an idle tale to them... could it be? One thing they did know, there was an immediate threat; they could be next. So they had all of the windows and doors locked in fear. That is when Jesus suddenly appeared in the midst of them, showing them the wounds on his hands and side. He did this to show the fearful disciples that it was indeed him in the flesh, and not just some apparition. He shared his peace with them twice. This is the peace, which as Paul said, "Goes beyond our understanding." It is the peace of the Holy Spirit who prays for us with sighs too deep for words (Romans 8). It is the peace that helps us see that which we have trouble even imagining, such as the conquering of death. This is the peace that Jesus gives to his disciples. It is a peace that calms their fears and opens their hearts and minds to all the possibilities of God, endless possibilities that have now become our possibilities. "Peace be with you." After giving them peace, Jesus then breathed on them saying, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained." Remember, in both the Hebrew and Greek languages (the original languages of the Old and New Testaments), the word for "spirit" can also mean "breath or wind." This scene of Jesus breathing the Holy Spirit on the disciples takes us all the way back to the creation of Adam in Genesis. The Lord formed Adam from dirt and breathed into him the breath (spirit, wind) of life (Genesis 2:7). In the same way, Jesus formed a new creation in the disciples (and us) by giving them the Holy Spirit, by breathing on them. With that came the gift of forgiving and retaining sins. In his Small Catechism, Martin Luther calls this the "Office of the Keys." Matthew 18:18 is also noted. Luther writes, "What is the Office of the Keys? It is the authority which Christ gave to his church to forgive the sins of those who repent and to declare to those who do not repent that their sins are not forgiven." Jesus declared this to all of the disciples gathered. Jesus declares it to you and me.

June 11, Matthew 28:16-20 Holy Trinity

When we look at the context of this reading from Matthew we see that it comes after Jesus rose from the dead and told the women to tell the disciples to meet him in Galilee. As they were going there, the priests and elders paid the soldiers who had guarded the tomb a bribe. The soldiers were to say that the disciples had secretly stolen the body of Jesus. With this in the background, we see the eleven disciples coming to the mountain in Galilee to which Jesus had directed them. When they saw Jesus, it says they worshiped Jesus, but some doubted. The Bible is a very honest book. It doesn't attempt to cover up such things. It reports very honestly that some doubted. It seems hard to believe that they could doubt even while seeing the resurrected Jesus, yet they did. This doesn't seem to faze Jesus in the least. He tells all of them, doubters and those of strong belief alike, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations..." Jesus sends them all to share the good news and make disciples. You do not have to be a "super" Christian to do that. Jesus calls us all. Jesus calls us with all the authority found in heaven and earth! One person said that true authority gives people the confidence to follow. Jesus has ALL authority. Jesus tells us to baptize people in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit (the Trinity) and teach them to obey all Jesus has taught and commanded the disciples. So we are to evangelize, baptize and teach. All disciples are called to do that. Jesus then ends with the promise that he is with us always, to the end of the age. Jesus is with us in the everyday joys and grind of life. This is emphasized in the Gospel of Matthew. Do you remember the other name given for Jesus at his birth? Matthew 1:23 says, "Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel," which means, "God is with us." Matthew begins and ends his Gospel reminding us that Jesus is with us always, from the beginning until the end.

June 18, Matthew 9:35-10:8

In Matthew 4:23 we see a statement almost identical to the opening found in today's gospel. There it says, "Jesus went throughout Galilee teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and curing every disease and every sickness among the people." Right after this we find the Sermon on the Mount. Jesus teaches. In today's gospel, right after the statement in 9:35 the emphasis is on discipleship. Jesus sends out his disciples, giving them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out and cure every sickness. One reason Jesus does this is because he had *compassion* on

the people who were harassed and like sheep without a shepherd. Richard Jensen comments on this word *compassion* writing, "This is a translation of a Greek word which literally means "bowels." Metaphorically the word refers to that which comes from the very depths of a person. This word for describing Jesus' attitude is used only of Jesus in the New Testament." Compassion for people is central to Jesus' mission. As followers of Jesus, it is to be central to our mission as well. Jesus sends his disciples out to the lost sheep of Israel. They are to reach out only to their fellow Jews. God has not given up on Israel. Israel is still a mission field. In order for Israel to be a light to the nations (Isaiah 49:6), it needs to be enlightened! John the Baptist (as well as the prophets of old) preached to Israel, and Jesus continues that (but also reaches out to Gentiles, such as the Samaritan woman and others). The disciples' message is simple, "The Kingdom of God has come near." This is the same message John the Baptist preached (3:2), as well as Jesus (4:17). In fact, we see the Kingdom of God in Jesus. The Kingdom of God can be found wherever God reigns, and God's reign is found in Jesus. The disciples are to travel light, trusting in God to provide for their means. They are to teach, preach and heal the sick. If their message is received, it is well and good. If it is not received, they are to move on. In 16-23 Jesus also issues them a warning; they will be met with resistance too. There will be conflict and danger. They are to be innocent and trusting, but also use their heads. We are given our brains for a purpose; use them! And when you are faced with danger, know that the Holy Spirit is with you to guide you. Jesus then tells them of the conflicts they will encounter and indeed they did encounter conflict and danger. It is said that all but one of the disciples was killed for their faith. We here in Minnesota certainly do not face such danger because of our faith. I am thankful for that. We sometimes face derision, but like the first disciples, we are called to be faithful in living and declaring God's saving word. In fact, the Gospel of Matthew ends with Jesus' call to us all to "make disciples of all nations (not just Israel) baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." That was the first disciples' mission; that is our mission.

June 25, Matthew 10:24-39

This is a continuation of last week (see above). Jesus is preparing his disciples for mission, to preach the word and heal the sick. But part of that mission includes danger. People will reject them, persecute them, even attempt to kill them. Because of this, in this section of Matthew, Jesus tells his disciples three times not to be afraid (26, 28, 31). Throughout the gospels, this is the command Jesus uses the most, "Do not be afraid (or Do not fear)." It is his number one command and if you read the gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John) carefully, you will see Jesus saying it over and over again. Fear cripples. Fear prevents us from doing what is possible to do. And as Paul says, all things are possible in Christ. When fear strikes, we are to keep our hearts and minds on Christ; there we see all of our possibilities that fear would have us abandon. Do not be afraid. Jesus repeats this over and over as he prepares his disciples for mission. If persecutors accuse Jesus of being "Beelzebul," the devil himself, they will accuse the disciples too. If they persecute and kill the master, they will try to do the same to the disciples. This is a warning of preparation Jesus gives his disciples before he is in fact tortured and killed by the authorities. Be aware and know that God loves you so much that he knows the number of hairs on your head. Let the knowledge and assurance of God's love be the determining factor in your life and fear will lose its control over you. Jesus also says that he comes not to bring peace, but a sword. What does he mean by that? Is Jesus promoting violence? Dr. Stanley Saunders writes, "his (Jesus') mission does not bring peace, but a sword, so long as the powers resist God's rule and will. The very act of peacemaking, as Jesus' ministry demonstrates, generates violence, for healing, restoration, and the conquest of death threaten the foundations of all human assertions of power in defiance of God." In fact, when a disciple drew his sword and cut off the ear of the slave of the high priest, Jesus said, "Put your sword back into its place; for all who take the sword will perish by the sword." (Matthew 26:51). Jesus also called on us to love our enemies and pray for those who persecute us (Matthew 5:44). Jesus does not promote violence. Violence is at work trying to stop the work of God. The way of Jesus is the way of reconciliation, forgiveness and love.

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