



St. Luke Lutheran Church
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Open doors, open hearts, open minds.

Parish Times September 2015

For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven.
 Ecclesiastes 3:1



Can it really be September?? It doesn't seem possible, but here we are about to enter fall. I love fall, but it seems like summer went by a little too fast....like the blink of an eye... I don't know about you, but I often think or plan to do something, that just doesn't get done. Time slips by... Maybe it is a thought for a renewed prayer life, or contacting a long-lost friend, or repairing a friendship, or...the list goes on....but life takes over, we are thrown into high gear and everything becomes a blur, except perhaps, our regrets. We say summer is the time to slow down, right? I don't know about you, but my summers are anything but slow. In the end, we need to decide to slow ourselves down, listen for that quiet, peace-filled voice of our Lord, and do what we all know is good and life-giving. Come worship. Come listen for that voice. Pray. Let your hearts be quieted, let them be turned to God and to one another. When we do that, no matter what the season, we find ourselves smack dab in the season of a blessed life! May you know that fully and celebrate it!

See you in worship,
 Pr. Dave



Our heartfelt thanks to our Bun Run volunteers for August: Doug and Jo Klein, Julie Ellingson, Larry Litzkow, Mike Hegdahl, Joan Wilson.



Sept. Acolytes:
 6 Evan Nelson
 20 Alek Landenberger



Micro-lending

We will meet on Tuesday, September 22 for a delicious dinner at 6:30 (cost \$5.00), followed by making micro-loans to people all around the world. Come join us for some good food and fellowship, as we help make it possible for people to help themselves by making micro-loans around the world! Please sign up on the kiosk so we know how much food to purchase. See you there.



Ladies Night Out

Ladies Night Out in September will take place on Tuesday, September 15th at House of Wong – 1163 Larpenteur Ave. in Roseville at 5:30 p.m. If you are interested in car pooling, please meet at church at 5:00 p.m. Please notify Joyce Bluel (651-690-4614) if you are planning on attending by Sunday, September 6th so we have an idea of how many for the reservation.



Loaves and Fishes

St. Luke workers served 110 hungry men, women and children at St. Matthew's Catholic Church on July 27th. St. Luke workers were Pastor Dave Person, Joyce Bluel, Larry Litzkow and Roger and Dianne Diestler. Would you like to come along with us in August?? Talk to Pastor Dave or any of the above. We can tell you all about it.



Usher Notes

Many thanks to our ushers for August: Matt Brummund, Gwen and Steve Brummund, Lisa Vandrovec, Mike and Nancy Hegdahl, Linda Funkhouser, Michael Hoffman. Our ushers for September will be: Eva Mac Niven, Jim Kroschel, Doug Nelson, Wanda Mathison, Larry and Carol Vigdal, Pam Ballis, Katy Eggert.

September Worship Assistants: Readers:

- 6 Jennifer Fredrickson
- 13 Laurie Herrmann
- 20 Wendy Bjorklund
- 27 Beth Peterson

Communion:

- 6 Joyce Bluel
- 20 Wendy Bjorklund



We warmly welcome you to Rally Day, Sunday, Sept. 13th! We have lots of fun things planned for the day, which culminates in a potluck lunch at 11:00 a.m. (Please bring a dish to share.) It is sure to be a festive day for all...mark your calendars and plan on participating!



Ian Walter and his Nana (Nancy Hegdahl) are collecting Box Tops for his school. The bright pink Box Tops logo is on hundreds of grocery products and is easy to spot when you are walking down the grocery aisle. Please place the clippings in the marked basket on the Welcome Table. Box Tops are each worth ten cents; it adds up quickly! More info at www.boxtops4education.com. THANK YOU!

National Night Out at St. Luke

Our annual National Night Out at St. Luke was a big success with approximately 60 people in attendance. The police and fire departments made appearances and both young and old were eager to talk with them and check out the equipment. Mississippi Market provided a \$25 gift card that supplied our veggie tray for the evening.

A big shout out to Jo Klein, Dan Gryzwinski, Jerry Ludden, Barb Jensen, Wendy Bjorklund and our resident harmonica player, John Clinkenbeard, for providing the entertainment for the evening. Thank you to all who helped clean up and put tables and chairs away at the conclusion of the evening, it was much appreciated.

We look forward to continuing this tradition in the years to come.



Farmer's Market at St. Luke



THE ST. LUKE FARMERS MARKET IS UP AND RUNNING, EVERY SATURDAY THRU SEPT. 26, 8am to 12pm! Come join us, and invite your neighbors! We are very grateful for all your support thus far. But more help is needed in the weeks to come. PLEASE, can you pitch in? This is a fantastic outreach opportunity for our congregation....let's make this happen, folks! The sign-up sheet is on the kiosk. Please prayerfully consider your part...SIGN UP ASAP!



Ladies, Ready for the 3 "R"s...RETREAT, RELAX and READING?

Join us for relaxing, reading, shopping, games, crafts, Bible studies, puzzles, laughter, seeing old friends, making new friends and lots more.

When: Friday, Oct. 16th through Sunday, Oct. 18th.

Where: Camp Onomia

Who: St. Luke Ladies

Cost: \$82.00 per person for the weekend, which includes Friday snack, 3 meals Saturday and Sunday breakfast.

\$10.00 extra for linens or bring your own.

How to sign up: Send a \$10.00 deposit to Julie Gaarder at St. Luke Lutheran, 1807 Field Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55116



September Birthdays:

- 3 Victor Landenberger
- 4 Kelly Johnson
- 6 Deltah Niemi, Audrey Rongstad
- 9 Ken McGrew
- 10 Aiden Johnson, Michaela McGough,
Lue Roth
- 11 Jane McGrew, Gene Spray
- 12 Mike Walter
- 15 Sandy Grzywinski
- 17 Connor Burchill Riley,
Corinn Burchill Riley
- 22 Carol Vigdal
- 25 Nahoko Person, Ashley Peterson
- 26 Samantha Brummund
- 27 Gwen Brummund
- 29 Jordan Brandt, Eric Ellingson



Adult Forum

On September 20 and 27 after worship we will hold adult forum in the library once again. We will finish up our study of the Lord's Prayer. Or maybe, we should begin it once again! Come and be deepened in the faith as we study and learn about this prayer our Lord Jesus taught us.

Scholarships are available to any St. Luke member attending a Lutheran College. Deadline for the Spring semester 2016 is due to the church council no later than **November 1, 2015**. Please contact Ruth Carlson to get instructions and an application for qualification.



Fall Bazaar Update

Joyce Bluel & Judy Salaba, Committee Co-Chairs

Just a reminder, the Fall Bazaar is just weeks away; mark your calendars for Saturday, October 10th.

Bring all of those gently used or unneeded items you cleaned out this summer to the Rummage Sale. This year we will again be accepting gently used and clean clothing. Also, we will **NOT** be accepting furniture, exercise equipment, appliances or electronics. You may bring your items to church; starting on September 6th and place in Sunday school room nearest the offices.

Anyone willing to bake pies or other baked goods for the Bazaar please contact Joan Wilson (651) 253-6111 or Deb Vigdal (651) 681-0865 It's a *delicious* way to support our bazaar!

Do you sew, knit, crochet or like to make handmade gifts? If you are planning on making crafts for the Bazaar, **we would like to know in advance**, please contact Judy Salaba (651) 698-8572 or Joyce Bluel at (651) 690-4614.

The raffle tickets will be ready for distribution soon. The Raffle Committee could use help with collecting donations, selling raffle tickets and working the raffle table the day of the event. If you can help in any way, please contact Dianne Diestler (651) 699-4938 or Katy Eggert (651) 777-8796

Back by popular demand will be the General Store. We are looking for donations of new or gently used items to be raffled off at the General Store.

This year bingo will be played in the Library from 10:00 to 11:00. The bingo games are open to everyone. The Kiddie Room will be in operation from 9:00 to 12:00.

The proceeds from this event have been used to make some substantial changes both to our church building and to people's lives through donations to charities. This is also a way for us to reach out and give our neighbors a chance to get to know us better. There is something for everyone to get involved with, just contact one of the following chairs:

Rummage Sale Chair: Jo Klein

Bake Sale Co-chairs: Joan Wilson & Deb Vigdal

Kitchen Chair: Beth Peterson

Kiddie Room Chair: Bev Eckstrom

Raffle Chair: Dianne Diestler & Katy Eggert

Crafts Co-chairs: Judy Salaba and Joyce Bluel

Crafts Co-chairs: Judy Salaba, Sue Grzywinski and Joyce Bluel

Commentaries on the Gospel Readings for September

Slow down and take time to read the gospel readings for the coming Sundays as well as the commentaries found below. Be blessed in the Lord. Slow down, take deliberate, quiet time to read, think, meditate and pray about the upcoming gospel readings. Start the Monday before and let the gospel readings fill your heart that week, then come worship. Be blessed in the Word of the Lord!

September 6: Mark 7:24-37

We read that Jesus went to the region of Tyre. This is a place generally occupied by Gentiles (non-Jews). Why did he go there? Did he go alone? Who owned the house he entered and why didn't Jesus want anyone to know he was there? What is going on? The answers to these questions are...we don't know. We also don't know how the Gentile woman of Syrophenician origin found him. Apparently, Jesus didn't do a very good job of hiding because we read that she IMMEDIATELY (there is Mark's favorite word again) heard about him and found him. Maybe she found him so quickly because she believed Jesus could help her daughter who had an unclean spirit. Perhaps it demonstrates a mother's love and a strong faith in Jesus! She went to him immediately, bowed down at his feet in all humbleness and BEGGED Jesus to heal her daughter. Jesus replies to her with what seems to be an insult. Jesus says, "Let the children be fed first, for it is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs." The "children" are generally interpreted to mean "Jews." Calling someone a "dog" in that culture is still, to this day, considered one of the worst insults a person could make. Why did Jesus say that? This is so out of character with the Jesus we see elsewhere. Nowhere else in the gospels did he ever refuse to heal someone. What is going on? Is he just feeling a little crabby? After all, he is 100% human (as well as 100% divine). Is he testing the woman? Is he hoping to open her heart in new ways? Or, on the other hand, is this an opportunity for her to teach Jesus something? This passage has been interpreted both ways. When Jesus said, "Let the children be fed *first*, did he mean the time wasn't right yet, that he would heal Gentiles later? We don't know. What we do see is that the woman is not deterred by Jesus' rebuke. She fires back, "Sir, even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs." Even a crumb will do. Had she heard about the feeding of the 5,000 in which the crumbs, the leftovers, filled 12 baskets (Mark 6:30-44)? Did she see the grace and love of Jesus spilling out all around him? That is all she needed, just a crumb of grace and healing power for her child. Jesus apparently saw this in her and in what she said. He replied, "For saying that, you may go – the demon has left your child." She went home and found her child well. Did this persistent woman teach Jesus? Did she change Jesus? After this he goes to the region of Decapolis, another area generally populated by Gentiles. There he heals a deaf man who had a speech impediment, without any hesitation. Right after that he feeds 4,000 people – again in this mainly Gentile land, without hesitation. Did Jesus' ministry take a new direction thanks to the Gentile woman? What do you think? One more thing, just before Jesus healed the deaf man, it says in verse 34 that he looked up to heaven and sighed. I wonder why he sighed. Why did Mark include the fact that Jesus sighed? It is such a small thing, why include it? There is only one other place where it says Jesus sighed, soon after this, in Mark 8:12. A sigh is such a down to earth human thing to do. But I wonder why Jesus sighed and why Mark included such a thing in his account, just in these two places? Was Jesus tired? Was he a bit crabby? What he a little frustrated? What do you think? Finally, Jesus orders them to tell NO ONE about this healing. Why? Is it part of the Messianic secret? Who is this Jesus?

September 13: Mark 8:27-38

Many scholars see this passage as the beginning of a major shift in the Gospel of Mark. Here we see Jesus begin his journey to Jerusalem, and the cross. Up until this point, people have been asking who this Jesus is. Now Jesus asks it of his disciples and Peter answers "Messiah" (Christ), a word used for the first time in Mark. Jesus also tells his disciples what will happen to him and what is required of them as disciples. It is not what they expected... This all takes place in the village of Caesarea Philippi, home of a temple dedicated to Caesar as well as various shrines dedicated to Greek gods. In this place dedicated to many gods, Peter declares Jesus to be Messiah, the true Son of God! Jesus asks the disciples, "Who do people say that I am?" The disciples reply with the same list mentioned in Mark 6:14-16 when Herod was asking about Jesus. For more on their list of Elijah, the prophet, and John the Baptist, check out my commentary on July 12. Jesus then asks the disciples who THEY think he is and Peter answers, "You are the Messiah." Jesus then STERNLY orders them not to tell anyone! Why? As I have mentioned in other passages in Mark, the Gospel of Mark is known for the "Messianic Secret." Jesus constantly orders people to be quiet about their healings (and they usually blab all over the place) as well as refusing to let the demons say who he is (for example Mark 1:23-26, 34). Why the secret? The answer is never stated. What do you think? After this Jesus refers to himself as the "Son of Man." What does this mean? There is no simple answer. Jesus uses it to refer to himself as a human person, but also as the Son of God who will come again in glory. He uses it to say the Son of Man will give his life as a ransom for many. In other words, Jesus uses it to refer to his humanity, to one who comes in angelic glory, the one who is the Messiah and Son of God, as well as the one who will suffer, give his life for others and rise from the dead. As Jesus uses it for himself, "Son of Man" is packed with meaning. Take note whenever

Jesus uses it. Jesus tells the disciples that he must suffer, be rejected, killed and after three days rise again. Peter can't believe his ears. How can this happen to the Messiah? He couldn't imagine a suffering messiah. So Peter took Jesus aside and began to rebuke him. This word "rebuke" is the same word used for casting out demons in Mark. Peter needs to cast this idea out of Jesus and talk some sense into him! The disciple attempts to teach the master! Who does Peter think he is?! However Peter finds the tables turned when Jesus in turn rebukes him and calls him Satan! Peter had it all wrong. He was thinking of GLORY and POWER when he spoke of Messiah, but Jesus spoke of the one who comes to suffer for the sins of the world. This is the first of three predictions of suffering (Mark 9:30-32; Mark 10:32-34). Jesus then tells the crowd that if they want to follow him they need to deny themselves and take up their crosses. As one commentator puts it, self-denial is not self-annihilation, rather it is a complete redefinition of oneself as a follower of Jesus. Jesus is our Lord and it is to him that we give ourselves completely and find true life.

September 20: Mark 9:30-37

Jesus and his disciples passed through Galilee on the way to Capernaum where Jesus made his home. Jesus took time with his disciples in order to teach them. Once again, like last week, he told them that the Son of Man (Jesus) is to be betrayed, killed and will rise again. The disciples always seem to hear the first part about being killed, but never seem to hear the last part about rising again. They never ask about it. They can't believe that the Messiah, the chosen one of God will be killed! That is the only thing they can hear. Isn't the Messiah supposed to ride in on a white horse and set them free from the Romans? What good will suffering and dying do?? It says they did not understand and were afraid to ask. I imagine they remembered what happened to Peter when he rebuked Jesus the first time Jesus brought this up. Jesus called him Satan and told him to be gone! Perhaps they thought it best to just be quiet and suffer through their lack of understanding. We are not sure... But it seems they were talking about something as they walked along. Jesus asks them about it and once again they are quiet because they were talking about who was the greatest among them. They were all about glory again and being the greatest, like the savior on the white horse. Jesus said, no, whoever wants to be first must be last of all and servant of all. In fact that is what our Lord Jesus did and we, as his disciples, are called to follow him. Paul said it well in Philippians 2:5-11, "Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death – even death on a cross. Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Then Jesus put a child in the midst of them and said, "Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes not me but the one who sent me." We do not become great by riding a white horse or attaining an important office, but by serving the least of people in the name of Jesus, with no thought of gain. For when we do that, we serve Jesus himself.

September 27: Mark 9:38-50

Jesus is now moving with his disciples through Galilee on the way to Jerusalem and the cross. As they go the disciples see a man casting out demons in the name of Jesus, yet not following with them. They tell Jesus about him, perhaps thinking that Jesus will rebuke the man. However, Jesus tells the disciples to leave the man alone so the man may continue casting out demons. In fact, waging the battle against evil, Satan and demons is a major theme of Mark. Jesus' first miracle recorded in Mark is the casting out of a demon. Jesus tells the disciples, "Whoever is not against us is for us." They should leave the man alone. In the battle against Satan and evil, all who work in the name of Jesus are valued. Not only are we called to battle evil, we are also called as disciples of Jesus to reach out to the neighbor in love, even offering something as simple as a cup of water to someone. We do this not to gain a reward, but out of loving service. For when we serve our neighbor (or the little child like last week) we serve the Lord himself. This is what we are called to do as disciples of Jesus. All throughout the gospels, we see Jesus' love for children and the powerless. "Little ones" can mean children, but it can also mean those who are powerless in society or those who are new or "young" in the faith. In speaking of them now, Jesus pronounces a word of warning. If anyone puts a stumbling block before a little one who believes in Jesus, it would be better for that one if a great millstone were hung around their neck and they were thrown into the sea! We are called to nurture the faith of little ones, so they may know the love and salvation found in Jesus. Beware to anyone who does otherwise! Jesus then says that if your hand, foot or eye causes you to stumble (sin), get rid of it! It is better to live without such an appendage than to go to hell! Jesus is teaching us in very drastic terms the importance of faith and discipleship, that is, following Jesus. Jesus is central. Please do not literally cut off your hand or foot or gouge out your eye. Jesus is using this to emphasize the importance of faith. In the end, it is not a foot, eye or hand that leads us astray, rather our hearts. Give your heart, your whole self to Jesus. It is in Christ that we find new life. In fact, it is in Christ that we find we are held in the loving arms of God, receivers of eternal life! It is in Christ that we find the salt that gives us a new flavor, the flavor of LIFE, and peace with ourselves and our brothers and sisters.

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