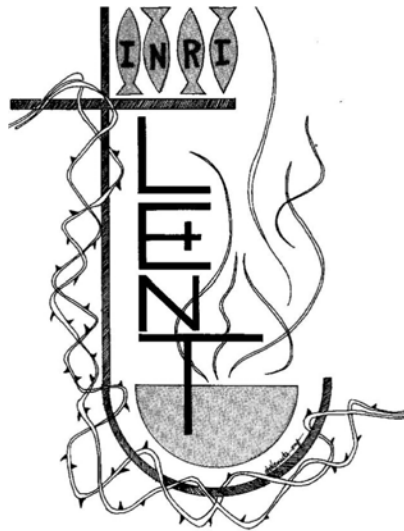


March 2017 Newsletter



Christ Our King Lutheran Church,
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SAVE THE DATE!
Vacation Bible School

Christ Our King Lutheran Church
2150 Dundas St. West
JULY 10 – 14, 2017
from 9:00 – 11:30 a.m.



Please mark your calendars, plan to bring your children, and invite your neighbours to attend our Vacation Bible School this summer. Children ages 4 (by Dec. 31st) to Grade 8 are welcome to come for a week of singing, Bible stories, crafts, outdoor play and of course snacks.

The Planning Committee is preparing in order to be ready for another exciting week in July.

Our most URGENT NEED right now is a Craft Coordinator. That would be someone who would look at the lessons for each day and choose a craft appropriate for each level, and make sure that the craft material is ready each day for the classroom Craft Helpers to pick up and take to their classrooms. If you feel you have a gift in this area or there is something in the Craft area that you feel you could do, please let Delaine Magwood know ASAP. We need you to be part of our Planning Committee!

I  **VBS**

We are also looking for teachers, classroom craft helpers, playground leaders and kitchen help.

Please don't wait to be called to volunteer. See if you can be the first to call Delaine at 905-822-1432. You can also register your children now as well by phoning that same number.

Beloved in Christ Jesus,

Early on in the Gospel of Matthew, people came to John at the Jordan in repentance and desiring to receive baptism. Jesus came also to be baptized, not because he had sins that needed forgiving, but to stand with us sinners. The reality is that Jesus' baptism puts wonderful blessings into this Sacrament, so that we can receive those blessings from it.



It's good to continue the topic today because you can't exhaust the wonder and miracle of baptism in one sermon. In 1 Corinthians 6:12-20 St. Paul leads us into the results baptism has in your life and mine.

The first truth is this: God's promises to you in your baptism are the foundation and cornerstone of faith. Someone told me one day, "I've lost the awareness of God's Spirit in my heart and my life." They are convinced that God has abandoned them and left them to drift. They are sure that God has withdrawn his Holy Spirit and condemned them forever.

It's true that when sin and guilt, or fear and worry well up in us, that our awareness of God's presence can fade, but it doesn't mean that "Elvis has left the building." Think about this: "God demonstrated his own love for us in this, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

Did you ever buy a used car "as is"? The salesman tells you "we stand behind every car we sell." What he doesn't tell you is that not only do they stand behind it, they keep a safe distance and stay back about 25 feet, just in case something happens when you start it up. When you buy a used car, you don't always know what you are getting. Did God know what he was getting when he made you his child in baptism? Has your life brought any surprises to him, or did he already know every sin you were going to commit?

Jesus knew Peter would deny him three times, yet he called him as a disciple anyway. God knows all the sins you have committed. He knows all the ones you will do tomorrow. As a matter of fact, Jesus already died for tomorrow's sins. God's promises to you in your baptism can be the reassurance of his forgiveness and of your place in his eternal family.

It's true that there are times when our awareness of God's nearness fades. "Trust your feelings, Luke" might be good advice for a Jedi knight, but not for Christians. We cannot rely on our feelings or an inner awareness. That is not a solid foundation. They only solid foundation we have are the words and promises of God. It is classic New Age philosophy to rely on feelings and inner awareness and inner strength. It is also a dead end road.

Consider Job from the Old Testament. Did anything in his life experience or his feelings help him to trust in God? His feelings and his life experience all told him he was abandoned by God. So how could he say, "I know that my Redeemer lives?" He could say it because he had the promise that God would never abandon him or forsake him.

In John 4 when Jesus sat down to talk to the Samaritan woman at the well, did he already know she was a Samaritan? Did he already know that she had had five husbands and was now living with someone else? Did that deter him from talking to her? When Jesus saw Zacchaeus up the tree, did he know that he was a tax collector? Did he know he was a thief? Did he know that he was a traitor to his own people? Did Jesus know that he had spent his whole life centred on the pursuit of money and the satisfaction of his own selfishness? Of course Jesus knew! So why did he say to Zacchaeus, "Come down, I'm going to your house today"? We don't have to guess the answer, because Jesus himself tells us the answer, "the Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost."

When we look at our lives of sin, we have to ask, "How do I get right with God?" As we look back over the years, there is so much garbage in our lives. We don't know what to do. We don't have a shovel. We can't clean it up, so how can we get right with God?

The jailer in Philippi had some unique guests one night. They were unique not only because of who they were, but because of what they did to entertain themselves. Paul and Silas were locked in the inner part of the jail. They were praying and singing all night. In the middle of the night the ground shook and all the jail doors fell open. Fearing that the prisoners had escaped, the jailer was ready to kill himself. He thought to himself, "Better a quick death at my own hand than slow torture for me and my family."

Then Paul called out, "We are all still here! Don't hurt yourself." The jailer called for lights and went into the prison. There he fell prostrate at the feet of Paul. The awareness of sin and the reality of death had caught up with the jailer. "What must I do to be saved?" "Believe in the Lord, Jesus Christ" was Paul's answer.

Do you know why Jesus came? He came to bring forgiveness for the problems and sins we can't fix. More than anything else, that's why we need forgiveness. Sometimes we have hurts and sins that we can go back and correct and make right. That's one thing, but what do you do when you have the weight of a lifetime of things that you can't go back and fix? That's what we need forgiveness for. That's what the cross is for. That's why Jesus suffered and died. He died for all the wrongs, the problems, the hurts that we can't fix because they're too big or too old or it's too late.

What does your baptism mean on those days when you are confronted with a crisis of faith? How does it help on those days when doubts arise? In baptism, God made you his child. By baptism God has broken sin's power and sin's hold on you. God each day gives you forgiveness and new life.

Sometimes along with the feeling that God has abandoned us, comes the feeling that Satan has us and will have us when we die. We think that we cannot escape the devil's clutches or his power. What do your feelings tell you then?

A pilot needs special training for flying on instruments. If you are in the midst of clouds or a storm with reduced visibility, or at night over water, a pilot cannot trust his feelings, he has to trust the instruments. There is a condition called spatial disorientation. It's what happens when a pilot has difficulty determining whether the plane is climbing, descending or in a turn. With no visible outside points of reference, a person can become disoriented to the point where it feels as if up is down and down is up. If a pilot doesn't know how to fly the plane solely by reference to instruments, in those conditions, pilots often lose control of their aircraft, sometimes within seconds. If a pilot is in trouble he or she is supposed to ignore physical sensations and instead focus on key navigation equipment. People who have abandoned their instruments and tried to fly by feel have flown full throttle right into the ground.

In times when life is foggy, you have to rely on an outside source, because your feelings can deceive you. It's good advice for a pilot. It's also good spiritual advice because we can suffer from spiritual disorientation. When our awareness of God's nearness fades, we need to go back to the book, back to his word and his promises.

Who's stronger, Jesus or Satan? Who won at Calvary and at the tomb where Jesus was buried? If Satan had won, Jesus would still be there in the grave, but Jesus rose from the grave and from the dead. He won the victory and by that victory gives us victory over Satan and sin and death.

We can have the confidence that God's help and strength is with us, that nothing can separate us from him, not death, not Satan, because God is stronger. Romans 8:31-32 says, "What, then, shall we say in response to this? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all-- how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?"

That confidence is the first result of baptism in your life. You can have confidence in God's word and promises, confidence in your eternal destination.

But that's not all that baptism does. The second result of baptism is this, "Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit?" In and through baptism, God has given you his Holy Spirit to live in you and be part of you.

What does that do? Scripture promises that the Holy Spirit will teach you and remind you of God's word and

promises. He is God's cure for fearful and troubled hearts. In John 14:25-27 Jesus says, "All this I have spoken while still with you. But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid."

The Holy Spirit in us means that we are never alone. God is near, he is there to help, he is there to hold and preserve us in faith, he is there to be our greatest and closest friend, and he is there to give us peace.

There is one more result of baptism in our lives that I want to hold up before you today. In baptism, God gives us the power to live a life that is pleasing to him, and oh, how we need his help to do that! If you have any doubt about it, just consider this, "flee from sexual immorality."

The truth is, few people can run fast enough to keep ahead of all the temptations that the world throws at us from every direction. Sexual immorality is not unique to our world today. It was rampant in Corinthian society. In truth, the temptation of every age is summed up in the OT words, "everyone did what was right in his own eyes."

Too often in the areas of immorality, we're not so much interested in running away from it as we are in stopping for a look, or a touch, or a sample. Why do we envy those with multiple partners and feel sorry for those who are faithful to one, as if sinners are the ones who have more fun? We don't mind the call to follow Jesus, that's why we're here. What we do mind is that Jesus would suggest that there is some baggage we must leave behind, when we want to bring it along. But now, consider what "follow me" means. It means "be my disciple." It means "pattern your life after me, put away sin, shun immorality."

Why is immorality so particularly devastating? It is so devastating because it pollutes our mind and heart. All other sins a person commits are outside, but this one gets inside. Such sins are dangerous and deadly because they are addictive and they dull our conscience and our sense of right and wrong. God gave the 6th commandment not to spoil our fun, but to keep us from hurting ourselves and others, and to protect God's gift of family.

What I want you to see here is the third benefit of baptism. In your baptism, God gave you the power to live a life that is pleasing to him. Romans 12 tells us that our Christian life flows from our faith. Here Paul writes, "Present your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual act of worship. We are called to live under grace, and under that grace we have, for the first time, the power to say no to sin."

In the verses that precede our text Paul says, "Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God."

Take notice of the power and freedom that the Gospel can give to those who are trapped in sin. Paul says some of the believers in Corinth "used to be" that way. In Titus 2:11-14 Paul writes, "For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, while we wait for the blessed hope-- the glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good."

Sin and the temptations of the world are stronger than our own will power and determination. By ourselves we are no match for them. By our own power we cannot begin to live a Christian life, but baptism breaks sin's hold over us. It gives us the Holy Spirit to live in us. He brings the power of God to our hearts and lives to say no to sin and temptation and yes to God's will.

Peace and Joy in Jesus,

Pastor Larry Flohr



The Reformation was a reclamation of what had become obscured in the minds and hearts of the multitude as manmade conventions confounded the confession of the Church, confusing the people in regard to God's Law and His Holy Gospel. The Church itself— both its clergy and laity— were in desperate need of proper catechesis, that is, sound instruction in the core content of the Christian confession. The Reverend Doctor Martin Luther's catechisms, *The Small Catechism* and *The Large Catechism*, were not prepared for the purpose of serving as confessional statements, but as tools for teaching; however, by being readily embraced by the people who recognized their content as that of God's Word, having found a place in the hearts and lives of the Lutheran laity and leaders, both works were fully incorporated into the body of Lutheran confessions which we know as *The Book of Concord*. These tools of instruction proved to be so instrumental in returning the common people to the crux of the Christian faith that they could rightly come to be considered as the people's confession, the confession of every household that confesses Christ as its head. Yet, before these books could make their way to the people, the very recognition of the desperate need for such catechesis had to be made clear to those who sought to reform the Church.

In the years prior to the posting of Luther's *Ninety-Five Theses* onto the door of All Saints' Church in Wittenberg, the Reformer struggled with that struggle that wasn't uncommon among the common folk, namely, questions around finding peace with God. The Reformer struggled with the reality that God's Law rightly condemns all those who sin against His Law, calling down judgement against each and everyone of us. The Reformer was in desperate need of the Gospel. So too were all of God's people. With the rediscovery of the revelation that reconciliation with God was not about what sinners had to do to satisfy the holy demands of God's Law, but all about what God Himself, in Christ Jesus, did to satisfy those demands in our stead, Luther came to reclaim that confession of faith upon which the Church is both founded and sustained. Luther had come to an understanding that God's grace toward sinners was at the heart of God's message for all of mankind. He came to conclude that much of the confusion that had caused Christians so much consternation concerning their relationship to God had come from those teachings and practices that were contrary to the Church's true confession of Christ Jesus as the sufficient Saviour from sin and its most fearsome consequence. Luther rightly spoke out against such teachings and practices— beginning with the matter of purgatory and plenary indulgences— and soon found himself having to speak in defence of the Gospel before those who purportedly were its stewards. At the Diet of Worms, Luther stood before the assembly, in the presence of princes and even the emperor himself, stating that,

being beholden to God's Word, he could not renounce his stance against those that stood against God's grace, the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and that he would not recant of his words which were written in accord with, and in the defence of, God's Word. Luther, however, did not stand alone. Alongside his efforts, God providentially provided protection for the Reformer by means of powerful princes with whom God's promise of peace found its rightful place of prominence. These princes came to conclude that the teachings that gave them peace should be taught to the people of their territories; and therefore, they stood firm in their support of Luther's efforts and assisted him in organizing the churches to this end. However, they soon came to recognize that the task at hand was not going to be a simple one because those who were responsible for teaching were themselves, to state the matter in the simplest terms, poorly prepared. Indeed, the teachers needed to be taught. At the instigation of the Elector of Saxony, Frederick III, also known as Frederick the Wise, a series of visitations to inspect the churches took place. The result was that, given the sorry state and sheer ignorance of even the most basic knowledge of the Christian faith, by both clergy and laity, Luther was then prompted to prepare a course of catechesis for parishioners and pastors. Of course, such books were not unknown at the time; and therefore, Luther began by building upon these books for the sake of teaching God's truths so that they, in turn, could continue to be taught. This process gave birth to two books: *The Small Catechism* and *The Large Catechism*.

Both of Luther's catechisms adopted the historic catechetical use of the Ten Commandments, the Apostles' Creed, and the Lord's Prayer for the purpose of conveying the most elementary and essential truths of Christianity. Yet, to these three he also appended sections on the sacraments of Holy Baptism, Holy Communion, and Holy Confession and Absolution (the Table of Duties and Daily Prayers were added later as further helps). In the preparation of these teaching tools, Luther was cognizant of the need to be faithful in his exposition of Law and Gospel for the sake of the people; hence, he deemed it necessary to rework the content of the previous catechisms so as to restore what had been either obscured or lost altogether. Again, the purpose was to instruct the people in the basics of the Biblical testimony to the truth of God's grace given in Christ. Both of Luther's catechisms were prepared over the same time so as to be used in tandem: *The Small Catechism* was prepared for young and old alike, for use in the home, as a simple compendium of the chief parts of the Christian faith's content; and *The Large Catechism*, which was based upon a series of sermons that Luther had preached, was prepared to assist the clergy and all who sought to instruct others through the use of *The Small Catechism*. Both of these teaching tools, as previously stated, were well received because the people, both laity and clergy alike, acknowledged them as being faithful expositions of God's Word. Indeed, these works would eventually come to serve as a confessional standard even though, in and of themselves, they were not created to be confessional statements.

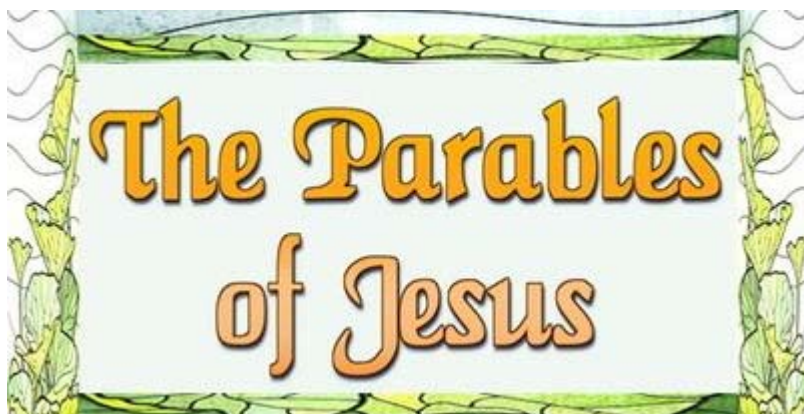
As to the enduring value of *The Large Catechism* and *The Small Catechism*, Luther's own words ought to be soberly considered for our own continued profit as heirs of The Reformation:

But for myself I say this: I am also a doctor and preacher, yea, as learned and experienced as all those may be who have such presumption and security; yet I do as a child who is being taught the Catechism, and every morning, and whenever I have time, I read and say, word for word, the Ten Commandments, the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, the Psalms, etc. And I must still read and study daily, and yet I cannot master it as I wish, but must remain a child and pupil of the Catechism, and am glad so to remain.

In nomine Christi,
Pastor Christi

Midweek Lenten Services 2017

This year for our Midweek Lenten services we will explore six parables from the Gospel of Matthew. Each one reveals something special about who Jesus is and about the new life we have with Him.



Bottom line is simple. These are Parables that have the power to change us!

Ash Wednesday, March 1 st	Matthew 18:23-34	Because of Jesus, I am Forgiven
Communion Service with Imposition of Ashes		
Wednesday, March 8 th	Matthew 25:31-46	Because of Jesus, I am Different
Wednesday, March 15 th	Matthew 22:2-14	Because of Jesus, I am Clothed
Wednesday, March 22 nd	Matthew 25:1-13	Because of Jesus, I am Ready
Wednesday, March 29 th	Matthew 20:1-16	Because of Jesus, I am Called
Wednesday, April 5 th	Matthew 13:44-46	Because of Jesus, I am Treasured

Join us each Wednesday at 7:30 pm. for our Vespers Service and a time to explore who Jesus is and what we are because of Him.



Holy Week Schedule

Holy Thursday, April 13 ... Holy Communion

Thursday: The night on which Jesus was betrayed. The night on which the King served and washed His own with water and Word. The night on which the Lamb of God shared with His disciples the very body and blood that gives them life. As we gather together for this time of worship, we remember Him. We remember the One who loves, who serves, who forgives, and who calls us to do the same. Gathered in the name and remembrance of Jesus on this Holy Thursday, may He ready our hearts to receive what is His alone to give.



Good Friday, April 14, 10:00 a.m.



The Good Friday Tenebrae helps us experience the time of darkness that occurred during Jesus' crucifixion. The Tenebrae (Latin for "darkness") is a worship service observed during Holy Week to impress upon us the horrifying consequences of our sin and the magnitude of our Savior's sacrifice for us. Candles are extinguished to remind us of the darkness of that day and the darkness of our sinful world. We use seven candles as we remember Jesus' seven last words from the cross. The removal of the Christ Candle near the end of the Tenebrae signifies the death of Jesus. The loud sound—the *strepitus*—represents the closing of the tomb. However, we do not leave in total darkness. The return of the Christ Candle reminds us that death is not the end of Jesus, nor the end of us. We depart in both silence and confidence, knowing that the light of Easter will soon scatter the darkness of Good Friday.

Urdu Good Friday Service, April 14, noon.



Urdu and English Easter Sunrise, April 16, 6:30 a.m. (We gather around the cross)

Easter dawn is here as the sun rises to signal the beginning of this new day. On the first Easter, the real dawning happened inside Mary, Peter, and John, and eventually all the disciples, as they realized what had happened: Jesus had conquered death and returned to resurrected life, unbound by time and space.

Easter Day, April 16, 8:30 & 11:00 a.m. ... Holy Communion

Easter Breakfast 9:30 a.m.

Easter Concert at Erinview Lodge at 10:00 a.m.



Without Easter, there is no hope. Without Easter, there is no *real* life. Simply put, without Easter, there's no Christianity. The Resurrection of Our Lord is the day on which the Church throughout the world celebrates the new reality we are given because Christ Jesus is indeed risen from the dead, *never to die again!* For many people, Easter Day is no different from any other day, except perhaps for a few special traditions involving a bunny, a ham, and an egg hunt for the kids. We know better, don't we? And we have a blessed opportunity today, don't we? As we gather for worship this morning, we confess our risen Lord and His saving Gospel before the world! May the world know what we know! Without Easter, we have nothing. Yet with Easter and because of Easter, we have everything! Forgiveness and new life are ours in Christ—both to receive and to share! *Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia!*

Elders Plans for 2017

At our last Voters' Meeting, we discussed the Elders' and pastors' over-arching focus for 2017 will be to help improve our connections with our church's members and friends, and to equip our church and its members for outreach.

In order to better know one another, we are planning two initiatives. First, we are updating our church's photo directory, so that we can all know one another better. Please see the separate page for more information on this!

Secondly, the Elders plan to improve our contact with our church family by assigning all of our congregation's members and friends to a specific elder who will pray for and strengthen connections to this group of families, with the goal of encouraging participation in our church's worship, Bible Studies and joyful service to our Lord. This is how we've organized this:

<u>Last Name Beginning With</u>	<u>Elder Assigned</u>
A, B	Kanwal Dean
C-F	Rob Jackman
G-K	Rudy Beharrysingh
L,M	Martin Prusha
N-R	Jurgen Beier
S,T	Bill Agnew
U-Z	Jeff Kriwetz

In order to equip ourselves for outreach, you will see much more information about what we as Lutherans believe, presented by our pastors in Bible Studies, newsletter articles, and bulletin inserts. This ties in very well with 2017 being the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation!

Some special activities are also being planned to help with understanding and explaining the hope that we have in Christ! One event occurred in February with many attending Pastor Christi's two part seminar entitled "Cross Examination". This information on how to share our faith was very well received by those that attended, and he plans more seminars on topics related to this in the near future.

Please keep these plans in your prayers as we continue to equip ourselves for service to Him here in Mississauga!

Updating our Church's Photo Directory

Our church's photo directory was last one done in 2010 and things have changed quite a lot since then, you included! An updated one would really help us know one another's names better and also assist our new pastor to get to know people's names!

Since technology and software have improved so much, we would like to create our directory on our own! That is, this time we won't be using a company that produces the directories for us and tries to sell photos, but we'll be taking the pictures and creating the directory booklet and photoboard ourselves.

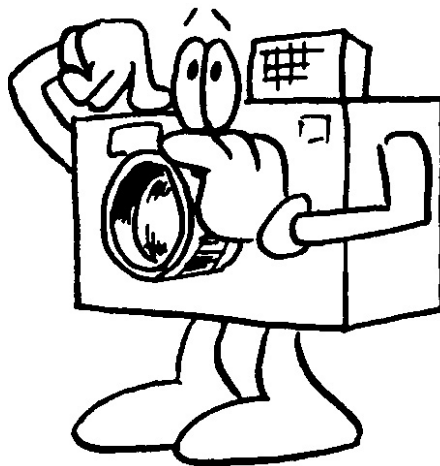
One advantage of this is that we can update it more frequently. Also, by taking the pictures after services (not by special appointment), and encouraging others to send in a picture, we hope to get a higher percentage of the congregation's members and friends captured in photos! We're basically doing quick shots, like getting your picture taken for your pass at work.

After each service in March, volunteers will be taking pictures in the library in the upper narthex. We'd like to take one family shot for the photoboard, and one "head shot" of each person in your family.

Please drop by to have your pictures taken after each service in March. The sooner that we get everyone's photos taken, the sooner we can update our church's photo directory and the photo board in the narthex.

If you have any questions, please speak to Jurgen Beier, Bill Agnew or Martin Prusha.

Thanks for your help and cooperation as we get to know everyone in our church that much better!



Bible Class Bits and Bites

Walking by Faith

When Stephen was brought before the Sanhedrin on charges of blasphemy, he defended himself by recounting the history of Israel and showing that, although those who believed the Word of God and walked by faith in His promises, the majority of the Jewish people walked by sight and did not realize that the promises of God were being fulfilled right before their very eyes. This was true of the ancient Israelites as well as those now sitting in judgment of Stephen.

Stephen's history lesson began with Abraham. While Abraham lived with his family in Ur of the Chaldees and worshipped the false gods of Mesopotamia, God spoke to him. "Now the LORD said to Abram, 'Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.' So Abram went, as the LORD had told him, and Lot went with him. Abram was 75 years old when he departed from Haran", (Genesis 12:1-4). God told Abraham to leave everyone and everything that was familiar to him. God told him to leave his comfort zone and go to a place yet to be revealed. Although Abraham began to exercise faith in God, he did not yet have the faith that would enable him to obey God and sacrifice his only son of the promise. To do this Abraham learned to walk by faith in God's word for another 45 years until he was 120 years old. Having walked by faith for all those years, Abraham trusted God so fully that whatever God told him to do he would obey, even when it meant sacrificing Isaac, the son God had promised to him. Since God had given him Isaac in his old age, Abraham believed that God could bring him back from the dead, (Hebrews 11:17-19). Though he had been promised numerous descendants and land, Abraham received them only by faith, not by sight. Abraham is Stephen's first example of a person walking by faith not by sight.

Stephen next recalls the history of Joseph, the eleventh son of Jacob. God spoke to Joseph in his dreams and gave him a prophecy of the future, (Genesis 37:5-11). Joseph believed God's words and trusted Him even though his brothers sold him into slavery and he was accused of adultery by his master's wife. Despite being innocent, Joseph was put in prison where he met the Pharaoh's baker and cupbearer. God gave Joseph the interpretation of their dreams and eventually even the interpretation of the Pharaoh's dream. Soon his dreams began to come true. Joseph trusted the Word of God and God used him, not only to feed Egypt during the seven year famine but to also feed much of the middle-east including Palestine. To survive the famine, Joseph's brothers were sent to Egypt to buy grain and eventually did bow down to Joseph just as God had revealed to him in a dream. Through all these hardships, Joseph continued to walk by faith. As He had with Abraham, God allowed Joseph to have a role in His plan of redemption. Joseph was sold into Egyptian slavery and raised to second in command of all Egypt to provide a place for the family of Jacob to grow into a nation. Joseph's walking by faith, not by sight, was crucial to God's plan of redemption.

Next Stephen recalls the life of Moses. Moses was saved as a baby from death by exposure in the Nile River, raised in the Pharaoh's palace, given the best education in Egypt, and set in line to become the next Pharaoh. Though he had heard about the misery and suffering of his people the Hebrews, it was not until he visited them and saw them being badly treated that he decided to intervene. But he was walking by sight, not by faith, because God had not yet called him to be their deliverer. He stopped an Egyptian taskmaster from beating a Hebrew slave by killing the Egyptian. His attempt to improve the Hebrew's treatment failed miserably. Moses was forced to flee to Midian to save his own life. In the wilderness of Midian as he tended sheep, God taught Moses to walk by faith. When God called Moses through a burning bush, he finally realized that he could not lead the Hebrews by his own might or will, (Exodus 3:1-15). Only by faith in the word of God could such a great task be accomplished. All of Moses' great education and training in Egypt had prepared him to walk by sight, but to be useful in God's plan of redemption, Moses needed to learn to trust in God above all things and thereby to walk by faith. Only when Moses was ready to walk by faith, did God allow him to lead the Hebrews to freedom.

When we look at the lives of these heroes of faith in the Old Testament, we must not think that their lives were without doubt, that they were super human, or that they never sinned. They were just as human and prone to rebellion against God as we are but, by the power of the Holy Spirit working in them to bring them to faith and enabling them to walk by faith in the Word of God, they have given us examples of walking by faith. Walking by faith is not just knowledge of God's providence in history. Nor is walking by faith simply a matter of understanding. Walking by faith is a matter of the will. It is a personal trust in God and His desire to do what is best for us. Walking by faith is not just passive knowledge; it is an active trust that accomplishes God's purposes. So what does it mean to walk by faith? Perhaps the easiest way to understand this is to analyze the words themselves.

The Greek word translated as 'walking' (περιπατέω peripateo) means to walk, walk about, and figuratively to live your life. 'Walking' is how the Bible describes a person's lifestyle. Lifestyle includes a person's behavior pattern in activities, attitudes, interests, opinions, values, and beliefs. The lifestyles of Abraham, Joseph, and Moses were much the same; each one reacted to everyday situations by trusting in God's promises. In each situation they learned to trust in God's providence, wisdom, and strength rather than their own. Their lifestyles reflected the submission of their own wills to God's will.

The Greek word translated as 'faith' (πίστις pistis) means faith, assurance, belief, conviction, and persuasion. Faith consists of knowledge, agreement, and trust. Knowledge alone is not faith, for even the demons know, (James 2:19). Agreement alone is not faith. You can know what the Bible says about God and agree that all these things are true, but that is not a faith that saves. Trust alone is not faith. Saving faith is knowing God exists and who He is, agreeing with that knowledge and putting your complete trust and confidence in God. "Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. For by it the people of old received their commendation", (Hebrews 11:1-2).

From the examples of people walking by faith that Stephen gives in Acts, we can understand how we also can walk by faith and not by sight. First, in each of these heroes of faith, we see that they knew the word of God and were obedient to it. Today, God has given us His Word in the Old Testament and the New Testament of the Bible. In the Bible we learn about God, what He has done for us in redeeming us from our lost and sinful state through the sacrificial death of His only begotten Son – Jesus the Christ, and how He wants us to live our lives for Him. Just as these Old Testament heroes heard the Word of God and then lived their lives based on that Word, we too can live the same way. Second, each of them received a promise from God and trusted in that promise as they lived their lives. "And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose", (Romans 8:28). What is God's purpose for our lives? His purpose is that we become more Christ like every day. That is the process of Sanctification. The writer of Hebrews gives an example of living for God with another promise, "Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for he has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you", (Hebrews 13:5). Always remember that we are not in this alone. God has not only redeemed us, but He has also promised to never forsake or abandon those who believe in Him. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life", (John 3:16). God loves us. He wants us to live each day with Him and He wants us to spend eternity with Him in heaven.

Those who walk by sight rely upon human instincts and temporal pleasures to make decisions. They are concerned with the present rather than the eternal and with blending in with the world rather than being set apart from the world. Walking by sight is selfish, shallow, and according to the Scripture, a totally insensible way to live. Walking by faith makes sense when we know the Word of God and the promises of God and understand what faith is and the profound glory of what it accomplishes for us both now and in eternity. Walking by faith is knowing God and His Word, believing He is who He says He is, and trusting in Him to do what is best for us here on earth and what is best for our eternal salvation.

Jim Mulligan
Bible Class Teacher

NEWS FROM THE WOMEN'S GROUP

"Above all, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers

a multitude of sins." - 1 Peter 4:8

On Thursday, February 9th, our Women's Group met once again to celebrate another wonderful evening of warm fellowship, delicious food, and God's holy and instructional Word. As per usual, we had a great turnout for our monthly event, and we give much praise and thanks to our good and gracious Lord for the great weather, to allow us to come out in the middle of winter with good driving conditions. As always, we started off our evening with a delicious meal, and this month we were treated to a large variety of home-made soups, lovingly prepared by Elina Isic, and hearty sandwiches along with mouth-watering desserts and fruit. What a wonderful meal to enjoy on a cold wintry night!



After our dinner, we then enjoyed a few funny and more serious stories, and a little bit of musical entertainment by one of the ladies in our group, followed by a special Bible Study led by Barb Jurgens. Barb had travelled in December to Central America with a group of other Lutheran ladies from across the country to participate in a mission project called "Sisters to Sisters." We were delighted to also participate in one of the Bible studies that Barb was involved in, and this evening we learned more about the life of the Christian woman. Through this study, we saw some similarities and differences between seven women of the Bible, six women from Canada and the women of Central America, all sisters in Christ. By studying scripture, we learned about the meekness of Hannah, and how we should also strive to be more like her and acknowledge our weakness and put our full trust in God. We discovered more about Esther and how she sought God's wisdom and guidance, trusting in the plan that He had for her. Eunice taught us also an important lesson in that we should strive to become a woman of God with a servant's heart, following Jesus as our Guide and Mentor, teaching those in our lives all about God and His saving grace. The life of a Christian woman isn't always easy, but we also know that God will provide all our needs and guide us in our daily growth in Him.

After our Bible Study session, we concluded our time together in closing worship and singing of some beautiful hymns. As always, the evening seems to just fly by, and before we knew it, it was time to clean up and leave for home. What a blessing it is to come out once a month and spend a few hours with other sisters of the faith growing together in fellowship, friendship and faith here at COK!

Our next Women's Group event will be taking place on **THURSDAY, MARCH 16th** starting with dinner as usual at 6:30 p.m. Please take a moment and mark the date down on your calendar, and prayerfully consider coming out that evening for a great time. Please see this also as an opportunity to invite a friend or two along! We would be delighted to have them join our circle of love!

In His service,

Donna Prusha



Lutheran Women's Missionary League
UPDATE

THE LATEST NEWS AND VIEWS FROM LUTHERAN WOMEN'S MISSIONARY LEAGUE—CANADA

It's hard to believe that we are already approaching the season of Lent.

A big thank you goes out to all who supported our efforts to collect mites, which provide funding for mission projects, both close to home and abroad.

A thankyou goes out to Renate Bartos, who used her sewing machine to finish off the edges of flannelette receiving blankets which we prepared earlier in January .We were successful in sending away 38 of these to Medical Missions.

We certainly enjoyed our night of Bible Study and fellowship with our own Dorothy Dirstein and are glad that she is feeling better after some health issues within the past few months.

Please join us in our monthly meeting which takes place on Monday March6th .On this evening, we will have a work night and business meeting.

If you have not as yet ordered your \$10 Tapestry subscription for the upcoming year, please place your order with Mary Mulligan by April 30th.

Our mission focus for March is that of providing transportation funding to enable workers to lead VBS programs in Newfoundland.

Heavenly father, You continue to spread Your saving message to the world through steadfast missionaries. Immerse them with the wisdom to discern Your will, courage to speak Your Word, and strength to carry out your work. Enable us to gather together the mites needed to successfully fund this VBS initiative, so that communities and hearts in Newfoundland will have a greater opportunity to learn that Jesus is the Savior of the world. This we ask in Your Beloved Name. Amen.

March

Partners in Prayer

<i>Sun</i>	<i>Mon</i>	<i>Tue</i>	<i>Wed</i>	<i>Thu</i>	<i>Fri</i>	<i>Sat</i>
			1 LCC Pastor Choi Elfriede Wendland	2 LWML COK NS Brian & Lisa Wernham; Andrew, Nicole	3 CLWR COK Shut-ins John & Berit Weyland	4 LLL Sunday School Matthew & Lara Wheeler; Wynne
5 CLTS Pastor Flohr Richard & Olga Wheeler	6 CLMS Pastor Christi Bart & Medoline Witteveen; Aisia	7 CLS Pastor Luke Zaheer & Rukhsana Young	8 LFL-C Pastor Choi Jim & Judy Zarazun	9 LBT COK NS Norma Zieroth	10 Our Saviour, Etobicoke COK Shut-ins Hijab Abraham	11 Good Shepherd, Barrie Sunday School Bill & Lisa Agnew; Eric, Lauren
12 Risen Christ, Mississauga Pastor Flohr Aslam Alamshah	13 Immanuel, Georgetown Pastor Christi Zahir David & Shoni Alamshah	14 Holy Trinity, Bradford Pastor Luke Wally & Toni Albrecht	15 Redeemer, Brampton Pastor Choi Marjorie Allan	16 Grace, Oshawa COK NS Alisha & Mark Almas; Sarina	17 Clarington Lutheran, Bowmanville COK Shut-ins Ivan Ame	18 St. Paul's, Cobourg Sunday School Anita & Graeme Anderson
19 Trinity, Toronto Pastor Flohr Kay Atkinson	20 Toronto Korean Pastor Christi Karl & Friedl Ballaban	21 Loving Saviour, Barrie Pastor Luke Renate Bartos	22 Living Faith, Orangeville Pastor Choi Immanuel & Parveen Bhatti; Noureen	23 Rev. Paul Zabel, East District President COK NS Rudy Beharrysingh	24 Rev. Dr. Robert Bugbee, LCC Pres. COK Shut-ins Jurgen & Ghezel Beier; Simone	25 LCC Sunday School Howard & Janet Bender
26 LWML Pastor Flohr Robert Beskau; Tim	27 CLWR Pastor Christi Elfrieda Betsch	28 LLL Pastor Luke Arthur & Carolina Bezerra	29 CLTS Pastor Choi Rob & Sharon Brennen	30 CLMS COK NS Dave & Pat Brezynskie	31 CLS COK Shut-ins Larry & Anita Browne	

LCC– Lutheran Church Canada

LWML– Lutheran Women's Missionary League

CLWR – Canadian Lutheran World Relief

LLL – Lutheran Laymen's League

CLTS – Concordia Lutheran Theological Seminary–St. Catharines

Our sister congregations in the Toronto circuit and our synod and district presidents

CLMS – Concordia Lutheran Mission Society

CLS – Concordia Lutheran Seminary-Edmonton

LFL-C – Lutherans for Life-Canada

LBT – Lutheran Bible Translators

2017

God's Love Is a Haven in the Storms of Life

God's love is like an island in life's ocean vast and wide,
A peaceful, quiet shelter from the restless, rising tide.
God's love is like a fortress and we seek protection there
When the waves of tribulation seem to drown us in despair.
God's love is a sanctuary where our souls can find sweet rest
From the struggle and the tension of life's fast and futile quest.
God's love is like a tower rising far above the crowd,
And God's smile is like the sunshine breaking through the threatening cloud.
God's love is like a beacon burning bright with faith and prayer,
And through all the changing scenes of life we can find a haven there.

Great Faith that Smiles Is Born of Great Trials

It's easy to say 'In God we trust' when life is radiant and fair,
But the test of faith is only found when there are burdens to bear.
For our claim to faith in the sunshine is really no faith at all,
For when roads are smooth and days are bright
Our need for God is so small,
And no one discovers the fullness or the greatness of God's love
Unless they have walked in the darkness with only a light from above.
For the faith to endure whatever comes is born of sorrow and trials,
And strengthened only by discipline and nurtured by self-denials.
So be not disheartened by troubles, for trials are the building blocks
On which to erect a fortress of faith
Secure on God's ageless rocks.

The Mystery of Prayer

Beyond that which words can interpret or theology can explain
The soul feels a shower of refreshment that falls like the gentle rain.
On hearts that are parched with problems and are searching to find the way
To somehow attract God's attention through well-chosen words as they pray,
Not knowing that God in His wisdom can sense all man's worry and woe
For there is nothing man can conceal that God does not already know.
So kneel in prayer in His presence and you'll find no need to speak
For softly in silent communion God grants you the peace that you seek.

March

<i>Sun</i>	<i>Mon</i>	<i>Tue</i>	<i>Wed</i>	<i>Thu</i>	<i>Fri</i>	<i>Sat</i>
VBS 2017 ... July 10 – 14 ... 9:00 to 11:30 a.m.			1 Ash Wednesday 1:00 Bible Study 6:00 Pancake Supper 7:30 Communion Service	2 7:00 Choir	3	4 10:00 Toronto Circuit Forum at Christ our King
5 8:30 & 11:00 Worship Service 9:45 Sunday School & Bible Class 2:00 Korean Worship	6 7:00 LWML	7 6:30 Confirmation Noon - Knitting at Joanne Tate's 7:45 Evangelism Board Meeting	8 1:00 Bible Study 7:30 Midweek Lenten Service	9 10:00 LIFT Bible Study 7:00 Choir	10	11
12 8:30 & 11:00 Communion Service 9:45 Sunday School & Bible Class 2:00 Korean Worship	13 	14 Circuit Pastors' Meeting in Scarborough 7:00 Radio Ministry Meeting	15 1:00 Bible Study 7:30 Midweek Lenten Service	16 6:30 Ladies' Night	17 7:00 Urdu Communion Service 	18
19 8:30 & 11:00 Worship Service 9:45 Sunday School & Bible Class 2:00 Korean Worship	20 	21 6:30 Confirmation Noon - Knitting at Joanne Tate's	22 1:00 Bible Study 7:30 Midweek Lenten Service	23 10:00 LIFT Bible Study 6:30 Men's Bible Study Supper 7:00 Choir	24	25 6:00 pm Christ in the Passover Seder Meal with Jews for Jesus
26 8:30 & 11:00 Communion Service 9:45 Sunday School & Bible Class 2:00 Korean Worship	27	28 6:30 Confirmation	29 1:00 Bible Study 7:30 Midweek Lenten Service	30 7:00 Choir	31 	

Easter Schedule:

Maundy Thursday Communion Service - 7:30 p.m.
 Good Friday Service - 10:00 a.m.
 Good Friday Urdu Service - noon
 Easter Sunrise Urdu Service - 6:30 a.m.
 Easter Sunday Communion Service - 8:30 & 11:00 a.m.
 Easter Breakfast - 9:30 a.m.
 Easter Concert at Erinview Lodge - 10:00 a.m.

Prayer Vigil 6:00 a.m.
 on Good Friday to
 midnight on Holy
 Saturday

2017