



THE PILGRIM HERALD

March 2017

PILGRIM EV. LUTHERAN CHURCH

The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod

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***MARCH: THE JOYOUS MIRROR OF
LIFE IN THE FACE OF DEATH***

“Never let yourself be disposed in any other way than to remember that you are kept safe in the word of God as in your mother’s womb, from the reception of baptism until your last hour.”

[Philipp Nicolai]

Cold. Cough. Chills. Flu. Body aches. Fever. Bronchitis. Stomach virus. Sinus infection. Mononucleosis. Choose from the list, or I am sure you can certainly add to it. It’s gone through your house, your digestive tract, your nasal passages, or settled in your lungs. Antibiotics, they may help, they may not. Is it bacterial or viral, or is it a combination of both? Sickness and suffering, whether acute or terminal, have a way of bringing a sense of perspective on earthly life, on its duration, on its length and breath. Moreover, it can be downright frightening. While mitigated by the contagious factor, perhaps we shouldn’t get so alarmed when sick saints come into the earthly abode of the Father’s house, the Son’s Word upon their ear, His blood upon their lips. For we sing with that beloved tune, St. Crispin:

*If you are sick, if death is near,
This truth your troubled heart can cheer:
Christ Jesus saves your soul from death;
That is the firmest ground of faith.*

While hymns cannot replace antibiotics, nebulizers, over the counter medications, chemotherapy, and the like. It does, however, give what those things can never give: a troubled heart and soul, peace and rest, and the promise of new life. When the Word of God is set to time honored tunes, there the devil flees, there despite sickness and death, the body is promised restoration, and the soul and body together are promised abundant new life.

Philipp Nicolai (1556-1608) is a man who knew about sickness and death. The son of a Lutheran

pastor, he attended the Universities of Erfurt and Wittenberg. In 1583, Nicolai was called to his first parish in Herdecke, Westphalia, where his father had introduced the Reformation more than thirty years earlier. After relentlessly confessing the Word of God in its truth and purity in the midst of Calvinizing influences, Nicolai accepted a call in 1596 to serve as pastor of a Lutheran congregation in the little village of Unna, Westphalia. Here Roman Catholic authorities had asserted their rights and Reformed immigrants from Holland were constantly bickering with the Lutherans on spiritual matters. All such bickering stopped in the following year when a horrific plague visited Unna. In just seven months more than half of the population—about 1,400 were dead—and 300 alone in July of 1597. Nicolai could have run for the hills. But in keeping with the suggestions published by Martin Luther in a tract entitled, *Whether One May Flee from a Plague*, Nicolai remained throughout the sickness and the death.

As a result of his shepherding his sheep through the valley of sickness and death, he wrote a classic devotional text in 1599 entitled, *Freudenspiegel des ewigen Lebens* (“The Joyous Mirror of Eternal Life”). It is within this book that the two hymns “Wake, Awake, for Night Is Flying” (LSB 516) and “O Morning Star, How Fair and Bright” (LSB 395) appear. He composed both the text and the tune of these hymns. They became known as the “king” and “queen” of the Lutheran chorales. As far as these two hymns, here, I will limit my reflection to the queen, “O Morning Star, How Fair and Bright.” Ladies first.

In reading sections of Nicolai’s “Joyous Mirror of Eternal Life” it is no more than what the title says: a reflection of the joy to come. But for all that, it is also not a method or means to *attain* to that joy; nor is it in itself a vehicle by which one can stand boldly in the face of death. As won-

derful as the blessed contemplation of heavenly life may be for those grieving a loss of a loved one, these contemplations will not stand in the day of horrible sickness, temptation, and imminent death. In day of sickness, in night of death, Nicolai would have the believer hold fast to the clear words of the gospel. He also calls for the singing of hymns, especially, “From Heaven Above to Earth I Come,” (LSB 358) “Now Sing We, Now Rejoice” (LSB 386) “We Praise, O Christ, Your Holy Name” (LSB 382), and also “Christ Jesus Lay in Death’s Strong Bands” (LSB 458). What is notable among the hymns that Nicolai suggests is that they are largely Christmas hymns. In the face of sickness and death, only the flesh-and-blood Christ born of Mary, who was crucified, died, buried, ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father almighty, will do. Nicolai urges a confession that holds fast to Christ alone. Thus, in his “Joyous Mirror of Eternal Life” he writes:

“You must come to the place that you hold onto this man and remain fast in the faith and confession, having ever practiced these in life and in death, saying: I know of no other help or counsel, no salvation or consolation, no way or path than my Lord Christ alone, who suffered, died, and ascended to heaven for me. With this I remain and pass on.”

True life is not some sort of internal experience. True life is not finally the beat of the heart, the fluttering of the stomach, or the inhaling and exhaling of the lungs. True life is, Jesus, who is Word and Sacrament. We sing:

Your Word and Spirit, flesh and blood
 Refresh our souls with heav’nly food,
 You are our dearest treasure!
 Let Your mercy
 Warm and cheer us!
 Oh draw near us!
 For You teach us
 God’s own love through You has reached
 us

It is perhaps a stretch, but then again maybe not. Noting the rhyme scheme, when centered, what does it look like? Got it? It roughly creates the image of chalice. Nicolai prepares to be met by the Lord, who invites him and the church to come to be warmed by His grace there where Christ located himself: on the altar. The nature of the Lord’s Supper is finally confessed by Nicolai in the last two stanzas, and not for the sake of dogmatic completeness, but for the consolation of all those who might be receiving the Lord’s body and blood as their last meal before they enter eternity with Christ. The Lord who comes to give Himself to us also comes to take us to Himself. The horror of the hour of death is converted into the joy of what lies before, combining beginning and end into one:

What joy to know, when life is past,
 The Lord we love is first and last,
 The end and the beginning!
 He will one day, oh, glorious grace,
 Transport us to that happy place
 Beyond all tears and sinning!
 Amen! Amen!
 Come, Lord Jesus!
 Crown of gladness!
 We are yearning
 For the day of Your returning.

The picture that finally emerges from this reflection of “The Joyous Mirror of Eternal Life” is one that connects the certainty of the forgive-

ness of sins that Christ gives to the individual in the Lord's Supper with the communion of all the saints gather before the altar, the throne of God. Such alone is true consolation and solace in the face of sickness and death. Whether it's the common cold or flu, or something far more debilitating and devastating to our earthly life, it sheds a flood light on where true life is found and in whom it resides. It is found and given in Jesus Christ and His gifts. Finally, in January of 1598 the worst was over. Nicolai had some moments to reflect upon the tragic and difficult months he had just survived and relates some of the thoughts that he had carried with him throughout that trying year. I leave you with a portion of those thoughts:

"The plague has ceased its raging, and by God's grace I am quite well. During the entire time of the plague I put all disputations in the back of my mind, replacing these with prayer and with praise-filled reflections upon eternal life and the condition of precious souls in heavenly paradise prior to the Last Day. *Nothing was more precious...than the contemplation of this noble and majestic article concerning eternal life, which was purchased by Christ's blood.*" [Italics mine].

In the bonds of Christ,
Pastor Raffa

Graveside Burial of Joan H. Wille
January 6, 2017
The Epiphany of Our Lord
The Lutheran Cemetery, Watertown WI

Back on February 6 of 2016, we buried Joan Wille, mother of Rev. John Willie, district president of the South Wisconsin District, and one of our members. I wrote a brief homily for the occasion. It was printed in the district news to all the pastors of South Wisconsin District. I was asked to share it with you. I do so gladly and with the

hope that it edifies and comforts the body of Christ, the saints in this holy place.

Rev. John Wille writes: What follows is the graveside homily which was preached by Pastor Chris Raffa at the internment of my mother. I share it with you as an example of a powerful funeral message focused on our Lord Jesus, the Christ. In the darkening haze of her dementia, she often referred to Pastor Raffa as "the archbishop". My family and I express our heart-felt gratitude to Pastors Raffa and Joe Fisher for their ministry to my mother!!

Beloved in Christ, John, Lynn, family and friends of Joan, on this bitter cold Epiphany morn, the light has gone away. Darkness shrouds the earth in death as we lay Joan into the grave. For 85 years, her light shined as reflection of the Light of all lights. She traveled the earth, near and far, teaching the Gospel to little lambs; faithful wife, mother, grandmother, great-grandmother. She crafted Lutheran devotional booklets to catechize those who lived in darkness, in unbelief, into the Lutheran light of justification by faith alone. She saw herself in those booklets, sinner and saint, even as she invited visitors to embrace those pages of honest confession and the light of love that shines in the face of Jesus for all.

As our Lord would have it, I got to know Joan when her light was flickering in the darkness of dementia. Despite this debilitating disease, she took me, her arch bishop, and many others, on exciting adventures as she weaved stories both true and fanciful, which gave light to each darkening day. In her final days, among the many others, she had her son by her bedside, reading Luther, who when speaking of true comfort, would have the grieved in heart focus on what happened to Christ, for what happens to Him, happens to all who are baptized into Him. "Just as Christ also, though he lay in the

grave, yet in a moment he was both dead and alive and rose again like a lightning flash from heaven. So he will raise us too in an instant, in the twinkling of an eye, out of the grave, the dust, the water, and we shall stand in full view, utterly pure and clean as the bright sun.”

Arise then. Hear and receive the Light of resurrection, for He has come. The New Israel shines as if she swallowed a liquid sun. Today, amidst death and grave, is the birth of new light. Nations travel to this light. From You, Father, comes your Son-light who will shepherd Your people into the light knows no darkness. The lost sheep of the house of Judah, of America, of Africa and Arkansas, the lost sheep of West Bend and Watertown, the lost sheep that roam the far corners of the earth. Joan, once a lost sheep herself, now hears her Shepherd’s voice. He is born in Bethlehem, manifested to wise men from afar to be the light of all who sit in darkness and the shadow of death, the root of Jesse, the slayer of sin’s death.

The Light of Christ enlightens Joan alive beyond our eyes. Even as she lay sleeping in death, she worships Him, for there is no other to worship. All other gods are devils. All other ways are pits. All other truths are lies. He is the gold of the Father. He is the frankincense and myrrh of heaven. His sacrificed body is the incense that fills the nostrils of the Father, who happily receives Joan, and all His new born sons and daughters.

On this Epiphany morn, even as the light has gone away, your heavenly Father holds and keeps your mother in heavenly peace. Even as the light has gone away, your heavenly Father listens while you pray, hope, and long for that joy-filled resurrection reunion,

that eternal eighth day. Though the light has gone away today, death doesn’t rule the day. Epiphany does. The Light of all life does. Resurrection does. Jesus does.

So, we lay to rest, Joan, our dear mother, friend, and cherished love one. We lay her to rest here in a Lutheran cemetery, of which Luther would say of cemeteries, “They should be a fine quiet place, separated from other places, a place where the living can go and reverently meditate upon death, the Last Judgment, the resurrection, and pray. Joan wouldn’t have it any other way. She wanted to make me Lutheran, and she succeeded in that endeavor. For I stand here, a Lutheran pastor, burying a Lutheran woman, in a Lutheran cemetery. Her light shines brightly today, for God’s epiphany has enlightened her grave.

So, we pray the ancient prayer, at the close of the day, at the close of earthly life, at the close of the grave. “Guide us waking O Lord/and guard us sleeping/that awake we may watch with Christ/and asleep we may rest in peace.” This prayer, this song of dismissal in the peace of Christ is for us at all times, waking, sleeping, day to day, and night to night. It’s also for us living in this world, while we are awake in this life, in the body as we watch with Christ, and when we are asleep in our beds or in our graves, that we may rest in peace. Peace not simply because the final day of earthly life has come, but because in Christ, His final day is a manifested eternal day to us. It is for us a new world that will never end, never to be subject to the sufferings of this present world. The psalmist tucks us in into bed, even as he tucks Joan into her grave, as we confess with all the saints in light this Epiphany day, “In peace I will both lie down and sleep, for you alone, O Lord, make me

dwell in safety.

In the Name of Jesus, Amen.

Board of Elders Meeting Minutes, Pilgrim Ev.
Lutheran Church

2/6/2017

The meeting began with prayer by Pr. Fisher at 6:31. Present at the meeting were Pr. Fisher, Dave, Brian, Tanner, Ron, Dennis, Gary, and Howie. Absent were Pr. Raffa and John.

Schedules were made through 3/12.

Owing to Pr. Raffa's sickness the study is postponed.

The elders will serve the Lenten meal on 3/23. We will serve brats and burgers. Funding will be from a Thrivent action team. Details will be worked through next meeting.

The elders wish to pursue getting a processional cross. We ask the church council to consider the benefits thereof.

A number of questions concerning the voters' meeting were considered briefly.

The elders will study the Scriptures to consider the question recently raised on whether it is appropriate to continue our fundraising as we are, owing to possible negative effects on the congregation. We note, however, that nothing will be done to interfere with any efforts unless we determine change to be necessary from the Scripture and our Confessions.

The elders considered briefly a few quotes for printing the directory.

The possibility of having a brat fry or such across the street is being investigated.

Envelopes not yet picked up will be stored in the office until asked for by their owners, a number of whom simply being out of state at present.

The elders considered the possibility of posting elder pictures on the bulletin board in the narthex. What is done is largely dependant on the new directory.

To commemorate the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, the local churches will have festivities together.

Pr. Fisher is working to resolve scheduling issues among our organists.

If any parishioners want to buy pictures from the directory shoot they are welcome to contact Mr. Jeff Barger, the photographer. The pastors and elders do not want to imply via our mutual desire to not crassly market to the congregation that pictures cannot be bought!

On March 19th (tentatively), the new Luther movie will be shown at church, along with pizza, snacks, and a live polka band. Free will offerings will be taken to support mission work, as all expenses are generously covered or met via Thrivent.

Pr. Fisher shared a letter for the editor of the Lutheran Clarion wherein he corrects an errant pastor. While he will doubtless be contended against, he was simply asked to publicly correct a public sin, even as any faithful teacher in the Church ought.

The meeting concluded with prayer by Pastor Fisher at 8:00.

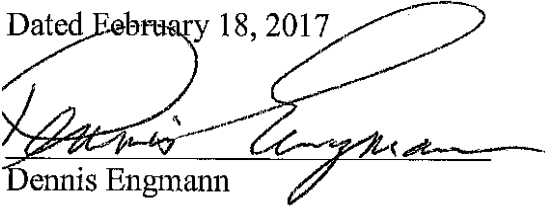
Respectfully submitted,

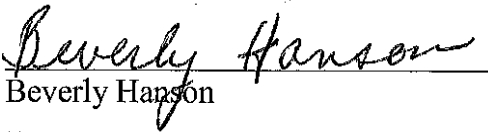
Tanner Schmidt

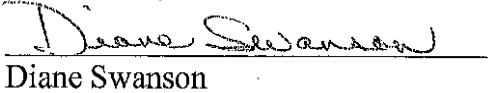
Pilgrim Evangelical Lutheran Church
Financial Statement for 2016

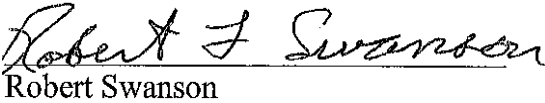
We the undersigned, as members of the Audit Committee, have reviewed the financial statements for the calendar year 2016 and are satisfied that they are true and accurate.

Dated February 18, 2017


Dennis Engmann


Beverly Hanson


Diane Swanson


Robert Swanson

The Pilgrim Food Pantry Needs

The Food pantry is in need of the following items. If you are able to help out, please place the donated items in the blue barrel in the Narthex. Thank you.

Toilet paper and lots of it.. It goes really fast..

Pasta Sauce.

Paper Towels Not as much as the toilet paper.

Fabric softener both liquid & sheets.

Liquid Cleaners, Mr. Clean, Lysol.

Storage bags, Sandwich, Quart & Gallon.

Trash bags, both Kitchen and the 33 gallon bags

Direct Your Thrivent Choice Dollars by March 31.

Eligible Thrivent Financial members who have available Choice Dollars have until March 31, 2017, to direct them. Don't miss this opportunity to recommend that Thrivent Financial provide outreach funding to Pilgrim Lutheran Church. Go to Thrivent.com/thriventchoice to learn more. Or call 800-847-4836 and say Thrivent Choice after the prompt.

SUNDAY SCHOOL CHRISTMAS SERVICE D.V.D.'s are now available. Please stop in to the office to pick up yours. There is a limited number of D.V.D.'s available.

AMAZON

We now have an Amazon Smile account fully set up. If you do shop online at Amazon, I encourage you to go to the link

<http://smile.amazon.com/ch/39-6054843>

When you buy items through Amazon Smile, the church will receive 0.5 percent of your purchases as a charitable donation. If you have any questions, please contact Pastor Raffa.

COME JOIN US ON SUNDAY!

Come to the **Texas Roadhouse** in West Bend every Sunday with your Church bulletin and we will donate 10% of your food purchase back to the Church each month!

We want to welcome you and the rest of your congregation to enjoy a legendary meal with us!

CELEBRATING MARTIN LUTHER IN MARCH.

The first 3 Sunday in March Martin Luther video's will be shown.

March 5th at 12:30 pm. "**A Man Named Martin**" part one will be shown in the New Fellowship Hall.

March 12th at 12:30 pm. "**A Man Named Martin**" part two will be shown in the New Fellowship Hall.

March 19th at 1:00 pm., following a pizza lunch, "**Martin Luther, The Idea That Changed The World**" will be shown in the New Fellowship Hall. Please see the sign up sheet in the Narthex if you are planning on attending "**Martin Luther, The Idea that Changed The World**"

Pilgrim Ev. Lutheran Church, Council Minutes,
February 13, 2017.

Meeting was called to order by President Jerome Sommer at 7:00 PM.

Present were Pastor Fisher, Fred Leffin, Mary Lehtimaki, Judy Frank, Tanner Schmidt, Ron Virchow. (Absent: Pastor Raffa (sick), Jim Behrens, Susan Stadelmayer, Carolyn McAfee)

Pastor Fisher opened with prayer.

President Jerome Sommer asked for any corrections to the last minutes of January 9, 2017

Correspondence received was from Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Tulock, CA who are praying for us. Pastor Fisher received a check from Walter Disen, a retired lawyer, to apply to the Symposium this summer in France. A letter and certificate was received from District to celebrate the Tenth Anniversary of Pastor Raffa's Ordination on August 26, 2017. It was decided to have a celebration and set up a committee for this.

Elders Report given by Tanner Schmidt: Items discussed were (1) using a processional cross on high holy days. This will be on the agenda for the next congregational meeting. (2) The question of selling items in the church is being researched. (3) The Elders will host the Lenten meal on March 23, burgers and brats. (4) Pastor Fisher wrote an opinion letter regarding an article published in the Virginian-Pilot and signed by a LCMS pastor. Pastor Fisher's letter will be published shortly for all to read.

Trustees Report: Ron Virchow stated that there have been a number of breakdowns, eg. The furnace in Pastor Raffa's parsonage. (1) Preventative service will remain with the same vendor but they are looking into another vendor for regular services. (2) Accident and incident forms are needed and purchase of a digital

camera is needed to document any issues that might occur. (3) An upright freezer has been donated for the kitchen from the Schwittau family. (4) A lending library for home schooling books has been approved by the Trustees. A room downstairs is available for this use. (5) Pastor Fisher requested blinds for the bathrooms in his parsonage and it was approved. (6) The eternal flame in church is using quite a few batteries. Trustees are researching an alternative.

Board of Education Report: Pastor Fisher reported that Carolyn McAfee told him that there are four more events scheduled for the Youth. Sunday, April 21, they will have a party, pizza and games and then will fill the Easter eggs. Higher Things Youth Gathering will be held at Trinity, Sheboygan, on February 17,18,19. Ben Grosskreuz will be the organist for that service. A service to honor the Sunday School volunteers is being planned for May 21.

Treasurers Report: Fred Leffin reported that he has an audit committee, Beverly Hanson, Dennis Engmann, Bob and Diane Swanson, who will meet on Saturday, February 18 at 9 am. There is substantial savings, using Brotherhood Mutual Insurance, thanks to the research by Ron Virchow and Fred Leffin. We are still running short per Sunday per week vs the Budgeted amount.

Pastors report: Pastor Fisher stated that St. Andrews Lutheran Church will have another call meeting on Sunday, February 19. Pastor Fisher also reported that he will be teaching for six weeks at Concordia and also at the Youth Higher Things Gathering. He will be attending the Circuit Visitors Conference in Stevens Point on Feb 20 and 21. All students in Confirmation

Class will be confirmed. There are also four adults in Pastor Fisher's class.

We are looking for more Thrivent members to request money for Action Teams. Contact Pastor Fisher.

A question about the Raffle Sale, Silent Auction, Christmas Shoppe has been tabled again to the next meeting. We are waiting for more information. The concern is about holding this event in the church and a conflict with our church doctrine and practicing what we teach. The Elders are studying the issue.

Pastor Fisher closed the meeting with prayer.

Fred Leffin made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:13 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Frank

On December 24th, 2016, a group of clergy persons had an opinion article in "The Virginian-Pilot" which is based out of Norfolk, VA. It is the largest newspaper in Virginia. The article was entitled "Jesus' beginning." This article was co-signed by eight clergy persons in the Virginia Beach-Chesapeake area. One of the co-signers is an LCMS pastor, Rev. Jeff Wuertz, pastor of Chesapeake Community of Hope. I have tried to reach him prior to writing, asking him what was his intention in co-signing the opinion article. As of this date he has not responded to my request. At this point, you might be asking yourself, "why is a pastor in Wisconsin addressing an issue in a Virginia newspaper?" The short answer is that a Norfolk area LCMS lay person asked me, because letter seemed misleading at best as to what Holy Scripture clearly states.

At first glance it might seem like a very loving and caring attempt to reach out to those communities that might feel excluded by the Chris-

tian Church during the time of Christmas. Who could possibly be opposed to that? Well I guess that would be me.

The article begins, "*As pastors of Christian churches who are celebrating the birth of Jesus Christ this Christmas season, we want to publicly honor the people of other faiths whose ancestors honored Jesus at his birth more than 2,000 years ago. First, we want to honor all Jews. Jesus was born a Jew in the Israeli city of Bethlehem. Jewish shepherds were the first people to honor Jesus at his birth. The first 50,000 followers of Jesus were probably all Jewish. The writers of our Bible were all Jewish.*"

It is true that Jesus was born more than two thousand years ago, and that He was born a Jew in Bethlehem as the Scriptures tell us. But to honor the Jews today for Jesus' birth seems to reject what St. John writes, **John 1:10-13(ESV)** **¹⁰He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. ¹¹He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. ¹²But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, ¹³who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.** Nowhere in the birth account of Jesus are we told that the shepherds were Jewish as Judaism is a religion not a nationality (this is a common issue throughout the opinion article). I understand the assumption, but this has not been revealed, just as the statement that the first fifty thousand followers were probably all Jewish. If they became followers of Jesus, they were no longer Jews but Israelite Christians, again Judaism is a religion that still awaits their coming messiah. This also rejects the Biblical fact that Jesus did much of His ministry in Gentile country because His own did not receive Him. The statement that the writers of our Bible were all Jewish is again a false statement. Luke was a Gentile convert and the author the Gospel of Luke and the book of Acts.

The Article continues, "*Next, we want to honor*

what we will call "The People of the Magi." We do not know much about these wise men except that they were not Jews and that they came from lands east of Israel. These Magi could have come from all parts of Asia — China, India, the Arabian Peninsula and the like. So we wish to honor all Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus and people of all faiths from the east of Jerusalem. Finally, we think this is a good time to remember that despite the obvious differences between our faiths today, there was a time when our ancestors honored Jesus at his birth. Why not? Jesus came for all of us. He came to show the world the love of God for all men everywhere."

Again, we can't say that the "wise men" were not Jewish as they very well could have been Gentile converts brought to faith in the coming Messiah through the Word of God taught in Synagogues that would have been established during and after the Babylonian Captivity. What we know is that the wise men or magi (which is a term associated with practitioners of Zoroastrianism) came from the East, seeking He who was born King of the Jews. What we know is that Muslims were not included in the wise men because the Muslim faith didn't exist until six hundred years later. Again, this seems to be an attempt to confuse nationality with religion. Had the ancestors of these pagan religions worshiped Jesus, how horribly sad it is that their children's children have forsaken the worship of the One true triune God for idols.

This opinion articles concludes, *"May all of our neighbors, of all faiths in Hampton Roads, experience deep peace and joy in their hearts and homes this Christmas 2016."*

This seems like a very loving way to conclude their article, however apart from Jesus there is no true peace. So, not only is this article factually inaccurate but it's not loving either. It doesn't call for anyone to repent and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. It doesn't even invite anyone to the services of God's house. It simply leaves the unbeliever in their unbelief, and that is the most unloving thing anyone could do.

Jesus is very clear in His exclusivity of the Christian faith, **John 14:6-7(ESV)** **6Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. 7If you had known me, you would have known my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him."** "Jesus' beginning" are much earlier than His birthday that we celebrate on December 25th, as the Christian Church has faithfully confessed since 325 AD, **"And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made; who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried. And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures and ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father. And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead, whose kingdom will have no end."**

SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS

During our music time we enjoy singing hymns and Sunday School songs. On February 12th we sang hymns and songs with the words “love” and “heart” in celebration of Valentine’s Day. We also had our picture taken for the new church directory.

Our lessons for March will be as follows:

“Jesus Calls Matthew”

Mark 2:13-17

“Jesus Calms a Storm”

Mark 4:35-41

“Jesus Heals Jairus’s Daughter”

Mark 5:21-43

“Jesus Walks on Water”

Matthew 14:22-33

On Sunday, March 19th, Carol Heger will present a lesson on “The Annunciation of Our Lord”. Traditionally observed on March 25, nine months before Christmas Day, the Annunciation is the term used to describe when the angel Gabriel visited Mary to announce her virginal conception. In 2017, the Annunciation is celebrated on March 26th, or the 4th Sunday in Lent. This Lenten occurrence “reminds us that Jesus quite literally traveled with us from the womb to the tomb.” (*Portals of Prayer*, January-March 2017)

Ladies Guild/LWML

The LWML Prayer Service was held at St. John's Lutheran Church in Fredonia on Saturday, February 18. Members from Pilgrim that attended were truly blessed by the prayer service and delicious breakfast.

We thank Adrianna Lubner for the presentation of her Mission Trip to India.

We will meet on Tuesday, March 21. Our hostesses, Janey Heckendorf and Barb Jennrich, will provide dessert and drink. All ladies of the congregation are invited to attend.

Pilgrim Directory

The Directory pictures are now available for preview and for ordering. The orders **MUST** be placed by March 31, 2017.

<https://bargerphotography.shootproof.com/gallery/4012981/>

According to Jeff Barger this is a high quality lab that he has worked with before. They are out of state, they will have your portraits that you order delivered directly to you, for a reasonable cost.

It is set up for traditional color prints, and canvas prints that are stretched on a wood frame (for larger sizes). There is also an option available to buy the digital file.

Please call Jeff at his desk phone (262) 338-9822 with any questions.

To get to the church directory link is: from our website <http://www.pilgrimlutheran-westbend.org>,

click on Resources and

click on Recommended Links.



MARCH BIRTHDAYS

- 1- Brandon Chapman
- 2- Matthew Barger
Andrew Dickmann
Manuel Pintor
Tom Zell
- 3- Leah Hoffman
Miranda Hoffman
- 5- Kyle Voll
Joseph Pajewski
- 6- Norma Krubsack
- 7- Christopher Becker
- 8- Neal Deffenbaugh
Dorothy Hinrichs
Neal Schleif
- 10- Gert Sullivan
Sarah Schnabel
Howard Glassel
- 11- Emma Haas

- 12- Sue Hausmann
Mark Selzler
- 13- Gertrude Raabe
- 14- Judith Spiegel
Alexander Held
Abby Mulvey
- 15- Emma Raffa
- 18- Emily Svien
Nicholas Fry
- 19- Robert Mayer
- 21- Marion Videkovich
- 23- Dennis Gabor

- Nicholas Mieritz
- 24- Joyce Heberer
- 25- Jim Rosenthal
- 26- Lindsey Olig
- 28- Thomas Jahn
- 29- Stacy Knuth
Richard Dembski
Margaret Maffit
- 30- Jill Ortiz
Ginny Schober
- 31- Judith Belling
David Boehlke
Cayden Kleinke
Lanette Weber



ANNIVERSARIES

- 3- Brian & Angie Skrentny
- 12- Richard & Deborah Brathovde
- 15 -David & Olivemae Olson
- 20- Manuel & Elaine Pintor
John and Carol McKay
Conrad & Courtney Castro
- 21- Thomas & Arlyne Becker
- 23- Bernard & Brenda Doyle
- 31- Harold & June Fry
Paul & Amanda Taylor

This outline is a devotional reading plan that covers the entire Sacred Scriptures each year. The selections are based on ancient models and are generally in harmony with the liturgical church year. The average reading is three chapters daily. The lectionary is in accordance with Martin Luther's suggestions: "But let the entire Psalter, divided in parts, remain in use and the entire Scriptures, divided in lections, let this be "Preserved in the ears of the church". Also: "after that another book should be selected, and so on, until the entire Bible has been read through, and where one does not understand it, pass that by and glorify God."

MARCH'S READINGS –

March 1 - Isaiah 64:1-9
Numbers 16-18

March 2 - Psalm 85
Numbers 19-21

March 3 - Psalm 86
Numbers 22-24

March 4 - Psalm 87
Numbers 25-27

March 5 - Psalm 88
Numbers 28-30

March 6 - Psalm 89
Numbers 31-33

March 7- Psalm 90
Numbers 34-36

March 8 - Psalm 91
Deuteronomy 1-3

March 9 - Psalm 92
Deuteronomy 4-6

March 10 - Psalm 93
Deuteronomy 7-9

March 11 - Psalm 94
Deuteronomy 10-12

March 12 - Psalm 95
Deuteronomy 13-15

March 13 - Psalm 96
Deuteronomy 16-18

March 14 - Psalm 97
Deuteronomy 19-21

March 15 - Psalm 98
Deuteronomy 22-24

March 16 - Psalm 99
Deuteronomy 25-27

March 17 - Psalm 100
Deuteronomy 28-30

March 18 - Psalm 101
Deuteronomy 31-34

March 19 - Psalm 102
Luke 1

March 20 - Psalm 103
Luke 2-3

March 21 - Psalm 104
Luke 4-5

March 22 - Psalm 105
Luke 6-7

March 23 - Psalm 106
Luke 8-9

March 24 - Psalm 107
Luke 10-11

March 25 - Psalm 108
Luke 12-13

March 26 - Psalm 109
Luke 14-15

March 27 - Psalm 110
Luke 16-17

March 28 - Psalm 111
Luke 18-19

March 29 - Psalm 112
Luke 20-21

March 30 - Psalm 113
Luke 22

March 31 - Psalm 114
Luke 23-24

IN OUR COMMUNAL PRAYERS

All servicemen at home and deployed, especially Isaac Wirtz (son of Rev. Nick Wirtz) who is stationed in Baghdad.

Lord God of hosts, stretch forth Your almighty arm to strengthen and protect those who serve in the armed forces of our country. Support them in times of war, and in times of peace keep them from all evil, giving them courage and loyalty. Grant that in all things they may serve with integrity and with honor; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Father of all mercy, You never fail to help those who call on You for help. Give strength and confidence to Your [son/daughter] in [his/her] time of great need that [he/she] may know that You are near and that You uphold [him/her] with Your everlasting arms. Grant that, resting on Your protection, [he/she] may fear no evil, for You are with [him/her] to comfort and deliver [him/her]; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

For our Seminaries, especially the Ethiopian Lutheran Church and Seminary

O God, through Your Holy Spirit You illuminate the minds and sanctify the lives of those whom You call to the work of pastors and teachers. Look with favor upon this seminary for the instruction and formation of those who are to serve in the sacred ministry of Your Church. Bless those who teach and those who learn that they may apply themselves with ready diligence to the knowledge of Your Word, which alone is able to make us wise unto salvation; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Note: After much consideration, we have decided to add a page in the newsletter that lists all of those struggling with health issues. (Not published on the website). Each month we will also have various petitions that you can pray at home for various needs all people in Christ, and especially those within our immediate church family here at Pilgrim. In the bulletin we will list those sick and infirm on the basis of need and emergency. In the event that you would like to have your name or your loved one's name removed from the prayer list, please let us know.



Dear Friend of **Issues, Etc.**,

Since our annual "**Making the Case**" Conference has been sold out the past two years, we have decided to host two Conferences this year!

The speakers for the first Conference on Friday, June 9 and Saturday, June 10 in Collinsville, IL (15 miles east of St. Louis) are LCMS President Matt Harrison, Rev. Chris Rosebrough, Aaron Wolf, Terry Mattingly, Rev. Peter Bender and Rev. Todd Peperkorn. The speakers for the second Conference on Friday, November 10 and Saturday, November 11 in Houston, TX are Mollie and Mark Hemingway, Rev. Bryan Wolfmueller, Dr. Scott Murray, Rod Dreher and Dr. Jennifer Roback Morse.

The conference is \$120 per person and includes three meals. **Conference attendance is limited to 400.**

If you have any questions, please send an email to conference@issuesetc.org.

I hope to see you at one or both of these Conferences!

Wir sind alle Bettler,

Todd Wilken, host
Issues, Etc.

www.issuesetc.org

Lenten Services will be held on Thursdays at 1 & 7 pm. with dinners served at 5:30 pm.

The only exception to this is Ash Wednesday with services at 1 & 7 pm. The Ladies Guild will be serving the dinner that night starting at 5:30 pm.

Thursday, March 9 the Altar Guild is serving dinner at 5:30 pm. Soups and Salads.

March 23rd the Elders are serving dinner at 5:30 pm. Burgers and Brats.

The Men's Bible breakfast is also serving a dinner, do not have the date at this point in time. There will be 2 potluck dinners, please watch the bulletin for more information on that.

Holy Week and Easter Services:

Maundy Thursday, April 13. Service at 1 & 7 pm. with Holy Communion.

Good Friday, April 14. Services at 1 & 7 pm.

Easter Vigil, Saturday April 15. 6:30 pm.

Easter Sunrise, Sunday April 16. 6:00 am.

Easter Breakfast: 7:00 am. Served by the Altar Guild.

Easter Sunday Divine Worship with Holy Communion 8 & 10:30 am.

Please do not forget about **the Easter Egg Hunt** on Saturday, April 15 at 10:00 am. 9:00 am we will need Volunteers to help hide the eggs.

Please bring in donations of small individually wrapped candies for the Youth Group to stuff in the eggs on April 12. Thank you

Puzzle!

Are you getting “antsy” for spring? Using the clues provided, fill in the spaces to complete these words that end in A-N-T.

Puzzle!

Are you getting “antsy” for spring?
Using the clues provided, fill in the spaces to complete these words that end in A-N-T.

		A	N	T				
			A	N	T			
				A	N	T		
					A	N	T	
						A	N	T

CLUES (from top row to bottom row):

- ▼ An 8-foot man would be one
- ▼ To take back one’s testimony
- ▼ Opposite of a master
- ▼ Pertaining to, germane
- ▼ A drug that heightens the senses

Answers: giant, recant, servant, relevant, stimulant

God's hands



Our life is like the dial of a clock. The hands are God’s hands, passing over and over again — the short hand of discipline and the long hand of mercy. Slowly and surely, the hand of discipline must pass, and God speaks at each strike. But over and over passes the hand of mercy, showering down sixty-fold of blessing for each stroke of discipline or trial. And both hands are fastened to one secure point: the great, unchanging heart of a God of love.

—Virginia Brandt Berg

Willing to worship

Lamentation is a powerful, and meaningful, form of worship because it places our love for God above even the worst of circumstances in our life. ... God does not ask us to deny the existence of our suffering. He does want us to collect it, stand in those things and make him an offering.

The Holy Spirit, our Comforter, helps us to do this: He aligns himself with our will and says, “I will help you to will to worship God.” The glory of the majesty of God is that he helps us will and do.

—Graham Cooke

PRAYER HANDS

Make these hands as a helpful prayer guide.



What you need:

- 7 pieces of construction paper (different colors)
- Pencil
- Scissors
- Stapler
- Colored pens
- Stickers

What you do:

1. Trace your hand (the same one) on each piece of paper.
2. Cut out and stack the hands. Staple together atop the pinky.
3. On the top hand (the front cover), write "Prayer Hands." Decorate with stickers.
4. On the second hand, write "Praise God." On the third, write "Ask for forgiveness." On the fourth, write "Thank God." On the fifth, write "Pray for others." On the sixth, write "Pray for me."
5. Use your book to remember what to pray for every day.



The psalmist's prayer

The Psalms are full of wonderful verses about God's care and protection.

*Directions: Find each missing letter in the alphabets below.
Use the resulting words to complete Psalm 86:7, NIV.*

A B C E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z _____
 A B C D E F G H J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z _____
 A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R T U V W X Y Z _____
 A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S U V W X Y Z _____
 A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q S T U V W X Y Z _____
 A B C D F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z _____
 A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R T U V W X Y Z _____
 A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R T U V W X Y Z _____

A B D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z _____
 B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z _____
 A B C D E F G H I J K M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z _____
 A B C D E F G H I J K M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z _____

B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z _____
 A B C D E F G H I J K L M O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z _____
 A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R T U V W X Y Z _____
 A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V X Y Z _____
 A B C D F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z _____
 A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q S T U V W X Y Z _____

When I am in _____, I _____ to you,
 because you _____ me. Psalm 86:7, NIV

Answer: When I am in distress, I call to you, because you answer me. Psalm 86:7, NIV