



The Christ Messenger

Christ Lutheran Church
Vienna, West Virginia

August 2022

Table of Contents

Pastor Tom's Musings.....	p 1
Birthdays.....	p 3
Good Samaritan.....	p 2
Prayer List.....	p 3
Worship Schedule.....	p 3
Elderberries.....	p 3
Quiet Moments.....	p 2
Lutheran Identity.....	p 4
Stewardship.....	p 5

Our Mission:

As Children of God, nourished
by the Word, Sacrament and
Fellowship of loving, forgiving,
and hopeful believers—

WE are guided by the Holy
Spirit to WITNESS to Christ's
saving presence in the World!

"So we're not giving up. How could we! Even though on the outside it often looks like things are falling apart on us, on the inside, where God is making new life, not a day goes by without his unfolding grace." 2 Cor. 4:16

This musing of mine comes a little more than a month into the summer season. The summer season, in the church year is the time after Pentecost. It's also a time of the year best described by the words of George Gershwin's song "Summertime". "Summertime, and the living is easy. The fish are jumpin' and the cotton is high." Isn't that the way it often is in the life of the church. The church year begins with Advent and Christmas, only to be slowed by the ordinary time that follows the Epiphany, and then she throttles through Lent, Easter and Pentecost. And usually after Holy Trinity Sunday, the visions of the song Summertime become a reality.

The pace slows down, and outwardly, as is lifted up by Paul, "it may look like things are falling apart", but they are not. We all need a Sabbath time to be renewed, so that, as the second verse of the Gershwin song goes, "One of these mornings you're going to rise up singing. And you'll spread your wings and take to the sky." So it is with Christ Lutheran. Even though many of us are traveling, and since our church pews aren't as full as usual, we aren't by any means falling apart. We are regrouping for the upcoming year.

About a year ago we all did some regrouping. Liz and I had just sold our house in Pennsylvania and were making plans to move to our new home here in Vienna. During these past ten months we have accomplished much. We have navigated safe passage through this ongoing pandemic. We have had a wonderful Advent, with meals and midweek gatherings. We have met at the parsonage for bible

studies, have had a good Sunday school year, had Holden Evening prayer over Lent, and a wonderful Easter. We have, I believe, built up one another during this past year. And soon we will start it once again with some additional surprises.

We have also added livestreaming capabilities, that will keep us connected to those who cannot make it in person as well as making us known within the Vienna community. From a planning perspective, as we go into the fall, we will be exploring our Lutheran identity and hopefully either embrace or discern a new mission statement. There will be plenty of educational opportunities connected to that discernment.

Liz and I have loved journeying with you this past year and look forward to this next church year of 2022 – 2023. I hope the rest of your August goes well and rest up some because in September the fun begins once again.

Blessings Pastor Tom

Council Considers Proposed Church Service/Sunday School Time Changes

The congregation council has had discussions (over the last few monthly meetings) regarding continued sparse attendance at the early service during non-summer months (September-May)

The discussion has focused on modifying the church schedule, going to one service that tries to accommodate both service preferences.

The thought is, if a change is endorsed, we'd like to consider implementing in September

Current non-summer schedule

- 1st Service - 8:30 a.m.
- Sunday School - 9:30 a.m.
- 2nd Service – 10:45 a.m.

The proposed change to the Schedule would be

- Sunday School – start time either 9:00 or 9:15 a.m.
- Church Service – 10:00 or 10:15 a.m.

The council would like to consider all viewpoints and is requesting feedback over the next few weeks.

Your feedback to council would be truly appreciated.

QUIET MOMENTS

Give us big hearts, dear God, big enough to embrace all our brothers and sisters especially those in trouble, whether of their own making or because of wrongs done to them. Give us big hearts, dear God; big enough to acknowledge our own weakness before pointing the finger at others; big enough to be humble when blessed with Your good gifts, denied to so many. Give us big hearts, dear God; to reach out again and again to those who cannot help themselves until hope is restored to them, and we, thorn-beaten and bloodied allow our loving to become more like yours.

Kathy Keay, England

Dear Friends,

When I was reading the above prayer during my morning devotional, I felt led to share it with you. We sometimes allow the daily stressors of our private lives and the anxiety of the current status of our world and country that we lose sight of the big picture. We are simply sojourners here. This is not our last destination although during our highest peaks of anxiety it may feel like it. All that is going on is merely temporary. It is not the final word.

Look up to our blessed Savior and Comforter! Spend any quiet moments in your day to talk to Him. It is said it is not necessary to say any formulated prayer...Jesus wants to hear your thoughts and concerns in your own words. It is that simple and that complete.

Blessings to each of you, Liz

Good Samaritan

Item of the Month



Boxed Macaroni

Church Address:

4513 Grand Central Avenue
Vienna, WV 26105

Church Web Page:

<https://christlutheranviennawv.org/>

Church Facebook Page:

[Facebook.com/christlutheranchurchviennawv](https://www.facebook.com/christlutheranchurchviennawv)

Church Phone Number:

304-295-9241

Church Office Hours will resume normal schedule on August 22nd

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday: 9:00-12:00

ELDERBERRIES

Elderberries met for lunch on a nice sunny day at the Fly Away Restaurant on Thursday, July 14, 2022. Once again, we had a good time with great food and fellowship. Their portions were large and the waitress very attentive. And there was no loud music so we could hold conversations, although a long table made that rather difficult for the people on the ends! We even saw an airplane fly in and also a helicopter!

Those attending were Kay Rowan, Loreta Delaney, Fran and Tom Williams, Judi and Ron Clampitt, Jenny and Mike Knotts, Delores and Jerry Steege and we welcomed a visitor, JK Steege.

Next month, we will meet on Thursday, August 11, at noon. The restaurant will be Napoli's in Belpre. We hope many of you will join us. Sign-up sheets at church or call Kay Rowan who will be the coordinator.

Thanks

August Schedule at a Glance

Sundays:

August 7th

9:30 – Outdoor Communion Service

10:45 – Indoor Communion Service

August 14th

10:00 – Service of the Word

CRU will be visiting

Blessing of the teachers and backpacks

Coffee and snacks to follow the service

August 21st

10:00 – Service of the Word

Pastor Darr will be on vacation;

Pastors Ben & Courtney Erzkus from WVU
presiding

August 28th

9:30 – Outdoor Service of the Word

10:45 – Indoor Service of the Word

Activities:

August 5th & 6th – Rummage Sale

August 11 – Elderberries at Noon at Napoli's in
Belpre



Birthdays

August 3rd – Raeven Clampitt

August 7th – Paul Gochstetter

August 14th – Sam Miser

August 16th – Pastor Tom Darr

August 19th – Bob Behnke

Anniversaries

August 1st – Nick and Cynthia Read

August 3rd – Dave and Rocky Freeman

August 6th – Mike and Jenny Knotts

August 20th – Bill and Peggy Rogers

August 30th – Richard and Loreta Delaney

We keep the following people in our prayers: Tamar Allen; Jeff Amos; Russell Behnke; David Bills; Jerry John DiNicola; Sally Ebeling; Becky Ferguson; Pam Goots; Heather; Michael Knight; Judy Lawson; Lora Lemley; Family of Joel McGuier; Carolyn Mendes; Rob Miser; Gary Miller; Lisa Nielsen; Sharen Nicholas; Sharon Niday; Gean Secreto; April Sowards; Tim and Lora Swarr; Caren Thomas; Donna Vincent; Brooke Wilson; Terry & Vicki Wilson; Tiffany Wilson; police and first responders; our troops; Christians and other minorities in the Middle East; people in the Ukraine and eastern Europe; pray for peace; and for our military, especially for Airman Elijah Modesitt (U.S. Airforce); Jon Shorr home from deployment; Conner Allen serving in China; families of all those who serve in the military; for all who have been diagnosed with COVID 19 and/or hospitalized for the virus, for all who have died from the virus, for all of our medical personnel and first responders who are treating patients, for all families and loved ones separated by quarantines, for people who do not have access to medical care to be treated, for folks who are unemployed and the underemployed.

LUTHERAN IDENTITY

Introduction

Prayer:

Gracious Father, we pray for your holy Catholic Church. Fill it with all truth and peace for the sake of Jesus Christ, your Son, our Savior. Amen

When we pray for the Catholic Church, we pray for the whole church in all its diversity- believers who gather as Presbyterians, Methodists, Pentecostals, Baptists, Disciples, Episcopalians, Orthodox Christians, Congregationalists, Roman Catholics, Adventists, Mennonites, Lutherans, Reformed Christians, Friends and Covenanters. We pray for the faithful who gather in storefront missions, suburban structures, prisons and hospital chapels, homes, huts, stadiums, theaters, and cathedrals. We pray for all Christian communities in all lands, all cultures and circumstances, all who confess Jesus as Lord.

Within this beautiful mix we live as Lutheran Christians - a people sure of our name but not of our identity.

You may have had this happen to you. Someone says, so you go to a Lutheran church, do you? What is a Lutheran anyway? And you have a hard time answering that question.

Or you see wonderful things happening, churches growing. You hear about that churches pastor and how their church is growing because of how they worship. And you say, why don't we try that. The problem is when we don't understand and appreciate our identity, we are tempted to adopt whatever is popular and successful, we do whatever works.

You may also have had this statement made to you. "My friend if you haven't accepted Jesus as your personal savior, you will not go to heaven." Or maybe, the one I heard, "If you haven't been baptized like Jesus, it doesn't count."

When we are confronted by religious language which we don't hear in our Lutheran churches, we wonder if Lutheran pastors are really preaching the Bible. Often confused about our identity, unable to answer questions about our tradition and sometimes wanting our congregations to copy, without question what is popular in the religious marketplace we need to ask.

WHAT IS LUTHERAN CHRISTIANITY.

Going forward we will attempt to answer this question that avoids defining Lutheranism as a set of doctrines. We will be describing it as:

A WAY OF SEEING

A WAY OF HEARING

A WAY OF TEACHING

A WAY OF FOLLOWING

As Lutherans we have no monopoly on certain ways of being a Christian. What we will learn is that the total of all we talk about is the Lutheran Way of living. Hopefully when done we all will have a greater sense of what it means to be Lutheran.

STEWARDSHIP

I commend enjoyment, for there is nothing better for people under the sun than to eat, and drink, and enjoy themselves, for this will go with them in their toil through the days of life that God gives them under the sun. Ecclesiastes 8:15

Busy-ness keeps us from living with joy and peace in today's 24/7 world, but Scripture reminds us that this is hardly new. Ecclesiastes was written some 2,500 years ago! Ecclesiastes does not give license for mindless pleasure-seeking, but rather affirms that our hard work should be balanced with time for relaxation and enjoyment with friends and family.

Saints and mystics have long touted the need for rest and renewal. In the monastic tradition it's referred to as *otium sanctum* – Holy Leisure. Not just wasting our free time, but using it for renewal. As steward/disciples, we aim to use our leisure time wisely. Here are some ideas:

Keep the Sabbath: God actually *commands* us to stop working one day per week, as Exodus 20:8-11 makes clear. But there is no prohibition against leisure. (Why else would God give us a day off?)

Plan your vacation: Even if you're taking a STAYcation, *plan* your time for maximum rest and enjoyment.

Manage your schedule: Are you a slave to your appointment book, driven by *other people's* priorities? Put yourself first – scheduling in time for leisure. Even if it's just 30 minutes here and there!

Find an activity you like: What do you do just for you? Discover – or REdiscover – what brings you joy, then make time to do it.

Socialize: Friends and family make life enjoyable. Spend time with them.

Invest, don't waste, time: Many activities pass the time but don't give back much in renewal or refreshment. Choose activities wisely.

God expects us to work, but not work ourselves to death. Sabbath and leisure time provide means for us to find balance in our life, as well as friendship, love, renewal and purpose.

--Rob Blezard *Pastor Blezard serves as pastor of St. Paul Lutheran Church, Aberdeen, Maryland, and works as content editor for www.stewardshipoflife.org. He blogs at www.thestewardshipguy.com.*