

Good News of Peace

February 2016 A.D.

A Caring Family ✦ Reaching Out ✦ Sharing Christ's Love ✦ Teaching God's Word!

From the Pastor's Desk

Dear Friends in Christ,

On Tuesday evening, January 26, we held our annual Orientation meeting for congregational officers and Board and Committee members at the church. I would like to express my gratitude to the 15-20 members who gave of their time to be in attendance. For the benefit of those who were not able to be in attendance, as well as the congregation at-large, I thought I would use my column this month to share a few highlights from the material we covered.

One of the first topics we addressed was the **Church's purpose**. Before any of us can effectively carry out our responsibilities, we must first be reminded why the Church exists in the first place. In Matthew 28:18-20, called the Great Commission, Jesus teaches us that the Church exists to make disciples by baptizing and teaching. This has important implications for the church's activities which have an outward focus to them, but it also has important implications for our activities which have more of an inward focus to them.

In Ephesians 4:11-16, Paul teaches us that God desires that His saints within the body of Christ, the Church, reach maturity when it comes to our faith and our understanding of His Word. That happens only through the proclamation, teaching, hearing, reading, and study of His Word. Those more inwardly-focused activities assure that we are each properly equipped to help carry out the Church's outwardly-focused activities. In other words, once we are made disciples, we must

continue throughout our lives to be nurtured as disciples in order for us to be able to assist in the process of making disciples of others.

Neither one of the above can be allowed to happen at the expense of the other. Emphasizing the importance of inwardly-focused activities, for example, cannot deter us from outwardly-focused activities. Jesus' two parables in Luke 15:1-10, the Parable of the Lost Sheep and the Parable of the Lost Coin, remind us that true outreach constitutes seeking those who are "lost" spiritually. If we were all to remember the urgency of that reality, how might that influence what we do as a congregation?

The next topic we addressed was **the purpose of our own congregation**. This is captured by our Mission Statement, which basically attempts to put Jesus' Great Commission into our own words: "Peace Lutheran Church ... Our mission as a caring family is to reach out to all, share Christ's love, and teach God's Word." Our mission statement lends itself to four target areas of ministry: Caring, Reaching, Sharing, and Teaching. A more thorough statement of purpose may be found in Article 2 of our congregational Constitution. Articles 3-9 of our By-Laws establish the purposes of our Boards, Committees, and Standing Committees. Our Core Values are also helpful for purposes of understanding our congregation's purpose. Copies of our Core Values may be found in the narthex.

After briefly reviewing the responsibilities of each individual officer (see the By-Laws, pages

13-23), we also considered **what it means to be a congregational officer in general**: You are a leader. You are an example, both inside and outside the church. You represent the congregation, as well as Christ. And you are part of a team, a "body" of believers (see 1 Corinthians 12:12-27). That means that it is important to work together, because we need each other. It is important to support, encourage, and assist each other. It is important to be patient with each other when we have differing perspectives and approaches. It is important to communicate with each other. And finally, it is important to be able to admit when we are wrong, to apologize when necessary, and to be ready and willing to forgive.

We also briefly considered **how we should conduct ourselves and treat one another**. The Small Catechism's explanation of the 8th Commandment teaches us to put the best "construction" on everything. Jesus instructs us in Matthew 18:15-17 to address issues of personal conflict one-on-one, rather than behind the other person's back. In Philippians 2:3-4, Paul urges us to humble ourselves by looking always to the interests of others before our own. And finally, James 3:9-10 reminds us that our tongues should not be used for purposes of tearing each other down, but instead for giving praise to God.

If you would like to view the Orientation materials in their entirety, they are available on our congregation's web site (www.peacelcms.org), on the "Handouts" page. On our home page, you will also find a link to a **personality inventory** which I

shared with those in attendance. I am encouraging all officers and Board and Committee members to consider completing the inventory, which should take no more than ten minutes or so, for purposes of their own self-awareness. I would also encourage all Boards and Committees to consider completing the inventory together and sharing the results with one another, for purposes of learning how to better work together and communicate with each other.

Whether an officer, a Board or Committee member, or a member of the congregation at-large, I pray that you have found something useful here. And that God would continue to bless and prosper our congregation's work together in His name and to His glory!

In His Service,

Pastor Derek Riddle

Love Illusions

In the December newsletter, I promised to return in future columns to some of the information Dr. Bryan Salminen shared during the October 31 "Keeping Love Alive" Marriage Workshop. In the second half of the workshop, Dr. Salminen addressed five "Love Illusions." This month I would like to continue by sharing the first illusion: **"Love is a feeling."**

It is a common belief that love is a feeling. Either you have it, or you don't; you can't make love happen. Dr. Salminen suggested, however, that love doesn't just "go out." Rather, it is driven out. That is often what happens when a couple puts their relationship on the back burner and treats everything else in their lives as being more important. Here the old adage, "out of sight, out of mind" applies.

What can you do to avoid this scenario in your marriage? Make a point of having a regular date. Have fun together. Relationships don't survive without attention. There is no real mystery if a couple is having problems but isn't spending time together.

A few other suggestions to consider: Compliment each other. Surprise each other. Do something unexpected for each other. Don't take each other for granted. Say "thank you," even for

small things. Say "I love you," and not just "love you." Listen to each other, and show that you're listening.

In coming months I will share four additional "love illusions" Dr. Salminen shared with us: (2) Relationships should be free of conflict. (3) Our relationship can never change because of my partner's personality. (4) My husband can't communicate. (5) My wife is always nagging me.

The Season of Lent

Ready or not, Lent begins very early this year, on February 10. Below you will find the schedule for this year's mid-week and special services.

Please note that this year's **Soup Suppers**, in order to aid in our observance of the Lenten season, will intentionally be simpler than in past years. Soup, bread, and dessert will be served. These meals will again be served by our high school youth as a fundraiser, for this summer's trip to the National Youth Gathering in New Orleans, in particular.

The theme of this year's midweek services will be **"The Book of Job: Blessed Be the Name of the Lord!"**

2016 Lenten Schedule

Ash Wednesday – February 10

5:30-6:15 p.m. Soup Supper
(Fellowship Hall)

6:30 p.m. Service with Imposition of
Ashes & Holy Communion

Lenten Midweek #2-6 – February 17 and 24 and March 2, 9 & 16

5:30-6:15 p.m. Soup Supper
(Fellowship Hall)

6:30 p.m. Mid-Week Service

Palm Sunday – March 20 at 9:30
a.m.

**Maundy Thursday Service
(with Holy Communion) –
March 24** at 6:30 p.m.

**Good Friday Service – March
25** at 1:00 p.m.

Easter Sunrise – March 27 at
7:00 a.m. (followed by an Easter
Breakfast in the Fellowship Hall)

**Easter Sunday (with Holy
Communion) – March 27** at 9:30
a.m.

*Please mark your calendars and plan
to attend these special services.*

2016 Lenten devotional booklets, from Lutheran Indian Ministries, will be placed in your mailboxes by Sunday, February 7. Extra copies, for visitors or for members to share with family, friends, or neighbors, will also be available in the narthex.

BOARD OF ELDERS

A welcome to David Schaedig and John Gledhill to the Board of Elders. Thank you. With our two new Elders we have changed our Elder Zones. There are five zones, and every church member is assigned to an Elder zone. This information is on the bulletin board between the two office doors. The Board of Elders is here to serve you. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Elder that is assigned to you. If you can't find your name on the list, please contact the church office.

Time! Where does it go? It seems that Christmas was just here yesterday. Epiphany is with us now but will be gone soon, with the Lenten season starting February 10 on Ash Wednesday. We are dust, and to dust we shall return. May we humble ourselves before God and repent of our sins because we deserve nothing but punishment. We go to our Lord in thanksgiving for His suffering and death on the cross for our salvation. We join together for our mid-week Lenten services to pray, praise and give thanks to God for our forgiveness and all the blessings He has given us.

Come join in fellowship with your brothers and sisters in Christ at 5:30, as we enjoy the soup suppers prepared by our youth, before we join together in the sanctuary to hear God's Word and receive the forgiveness of our sins. Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say REJOICE!

BOARD OF STEWARDSHIP

The workshop on money management was received well by those who attended. Everyone learned something about managing our resources. The Board is planning another workshop in the near future. If you have any questions, please contact a board member. We encourage everyone

to read their Stewardship newsletter that is put in your church mailbox. There is great information on how we can be better stewards of what God gives us.

Time! There are nearly 9,000 hours in a year, and that boils down to 168 hours a week to get the things done that we have to do or should be doing. Where does the time go? It seems that we never have enough time, working long hours, taking our children or grandchildren to sporting events, girl scouts, boy scouts, or wherever they need to go. When was the last time the family sat down together for dinner? Did the 168 hours of the week just pass you by? Time is a gift from God, just like everything we have, and God wants us to remember the Third Commandment: a faithful child of God does need to be in worship. In worship the Holy Spirit calls, gathers, enlightens, sanctifies and keeps us in the true faith. When we hear God's Word from the pulpit or in Bible Class, we gladly hear and learn from it so we can be the stewards that God wants us to be. May the Lord guide us to be what He wants us to be. May He also guide us to use our time wisely in serving Him. This the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it!

The Lutheran Hour

The Lutheran Hour can be heard locally on Sunday mornings at 7:00 a.m. on 92.5 FM and at 11:00 a.m. on 1450 AM. You can also listen on-line or via podcast at www.lutheranhour.org. Now you can also download the new Lutheran Hour Mobile App to your mobile device. Instructions for doing so can be found at www.lhm.org/apps/.

February 2016 Schedule:

February 7

"It's Best to Be with Jesus "

Lutheran Hour Speaker: Rev. Dr. Gregory Seltz

Life is not a do-it-yourself project. To live life to its fullest, we need Jesus. (Luke 9:28-36)

February 14

"Call on Him "

Lutheran Hour Speaker: Rev. Dr.

Gregory Seltz

Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. Everyone? Yes!

(Romans 10:11-13)

February 21

"Body and Soul Salvation "

Lutheran Hour Speaker: Rev. Dr.

Gregory Seltz

In Christ, we have a "Body and Soul" Savior for "Jekyll and Hyde" sinners. (Philippians 3:17-4:1)

February 28

"Follow Him "

Speaker Emeritus of The Lutheran Hour: Rev. Dr. Ken Klaus

Is your life is headed in the wrong direction? Jesus says, "Follow Me!" (Matthew 9:9)

Stewardship Corner

We are saved by faith alone, but the faith that saves us is never alone. That is because faith is a living, busy, and active thing. It inhales all of God's riches in Christ and exhales this in love and service to the neighbor.

But who is my neighbor? God in His mercy has placed us into three distinct communities: society, family, and the church. That means we have a duty to those around us in each of these communities. We pray for the people in these three communities daily. We rejoice with them in times of joy and suffer with them in times of sadness. And we give to them from the income that God provides as we are able and as they have need.

So we pay taxes to our governments so that they may do the work that is needed for our neighbors in society. We give to our families so that they have food and clothing, house and home, even educations. And we give to our church—our local congregations—so that the gospel may be preached and the sacraments administered for us and others.

The beauty of this is that God smiles upon all that giving. When you pay your taxes, God is pleased that you have served your neighbor who needs what the government provides. When you provide for your family, God is pleased. That you have helped your neighbor with the necessities of life by sharing with them what He has given to you, God is pleased. And when you give to your local congregation to support the ongoing preaching of the gospel, God is pleased. To all this

giving, He says to you, "Well done, my good and faithful servant."

Looking at giving in this light makes it a joy to give. The joy is multiplied. There is joy in you because you have served your neighbor in his need. There is joy in your neighbor for God has answered their prayers through you. And God rejoices and is pleased with it all. It might just make the humdrum of grocery shopping and mortgage payments a bit more joyous. It might even make April 15 tolerable (St. Paul had to have this pep talk with the Romans, also, "This is why you pay taxes...." Rom. 13:6). And it surely will make the envelope placed into the offering plate a joyful thing.

Indeed God is pleased with you. You are saved by faith alone because of Jesus Christ. And that saving faith is never alone. It is busy and active. It serves the neighbor in society, family, and church with free and cheerful giving.

Taken from www.lcms.org

Planning Committee Update

Have you looked at the "Keep Our Ministry Growing" meter in the narthex lately? Since we began this project, we have paid off almost \$6,000 on the mortgage! Of that amount, \$2,110.25 came from our regular Building Fund offering envelopes, Building Fund Memorials, and Loose Plate Contributions. The remaining \$3,885.00 came from gifts designated especially for this project. We thank you for supporting this endeavor, and we encourage you to keep this project, our congregation, and our future ministries in your prayers. The Planning Committee is continuing to work on the Wellspring Lutheran Services "Together With Impact" program. We have almost completed our External Community Needs Assessment surveys. Over 50 people in our community have been personally contacted to get input for this. We are excited, as together with you we begin to make plans for the growth of our ministries here at Peace and in our community.

Joan Sorgenfrei
Planning Committee Member