

Good News of Peace

July 2016 A.D.

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

From the Pastor's Desk

What's Next?

Dear Friends in Christ,

As most of you are probably well aware, over the past six or seven months, the Lord has blessed our "Keep Our Ministry Growing" campaign tremendously, and we are currently within a few thousand dollars of having our mortgage paid off. Thanks and praise be to Him, who, as our campaign verse reminds us, is the only One who gives the growth (1 Corinthians 3:7)!

As we near the achievement of the goal of the campaign in the coming weeks and months, and as we look forward to celebrating the "burning of our mortgage," it is becoming more and more important that we also look beyond the campaign to the future of our congregation's ministry in the Rogers City community. A handful of members have asked me in recent months, and I have also overheard the question being asked on a couple of occasions, what is next on our congregation's agenda once the mortgage has been paid off. I'd like to utilize this space this month to attempt to answer that question.

You may or may not know that we have a dedicated group of roughly 10 members who have been meeting regularly over the past three years in an effort to map out our congregation's future. This group of members, which initially included a handful of additional members who were involved in the early stages of the planning process, makes up what we have been referring to as our Planning Team and currently meets on a monthly basis. The Planning Team, which was responsible for designing the "Keep Our Ministry Growing" campaign, has also been working very hard to emphasize the ultimate goal of the campaign. That goal is not simply to pay off the mortgage, but it is to free up some congregational funds for **new ministries** that will help to shape our congregation's future.

As I recently shared with our Church Council and Planning Team, I believe that it is vitally important that we understand as a congregation that "new ministries" does not necessarily mean "new building projects." It is entirely possible, of course, that either new or ongoing ministries will require building enhancements or modifications. For example, we have had some discussion in recent years about adding on an "Education Wing" or something along those lines. Ongoing

maintenance of our building and grounds is a priority, as well. However, I believe firmly that we need to work hard as a congregation to avoid the temptation to believe that our building is our ministry. On the contrary, our building is simply the headquarters for our ministry.

What exactly might these "new ministries" entail? That is one of the questions that our Planning Team is in the process of trying to answer, and that is neither an easy nor a quick process. We are currently nearing the completion of the "Together With Impact" process, which we began last October with the congregation's assistance and with which Wellspring Lutheran Services is continuing to assist us, and we are hopeful that some specific possibilities for new ministry opportunities will begin to come into focus during the next few months. Once that process is complete, the Planning Team will be starting to attempt to "divide and conquer" with respect to our four ministry targets – Caring, Reaching, Sharing, Teaching – and that is the point at which some of you will be asked to become more involved with the planning process. If you are invited to participate, please be prepared to say "Yes!"

As we continue this process, as I also recently shared with our Planning Team, there are several questions which I believe we need to keep in mind when it comes to thinking about "new ministries." For one, how can we reach new people in community? In other words, how can our congregation connect with, and have an impact upon the lives of, people in our community with whom we currently have little or no contact? The answer to that question is not necessarily a matter of simply changing the way we do what we currently do, in order to attract more people to us. New ministries are exactly that – something new, something additional. Rather than waiting for people to come to us, new ministries might involve us going to them, wherever they are or wherever they need us to be. The ultimate goal of those new ministries, of course, would be to connect new people to the message of the Gospel, though that may not happen immediately.

Secondly, how can we simply serve the people in our community? Talking with a fellow pastor at a recent pastors conference, who serves a congregation with a tremendous community-oriented ministry, he shared with me that they make a point of never inviting the people they serve to come to church. They simply serve them in Christ's name, expecting nothing in return, and they let their ministry speak for itself. What they have found is

that, when people see and/or experience what their ministry is all about, they want to be a part of it themselves. That, in many cases, is what eventually brings a person to their church. How can we simply serve the people in our community, expecting nothing in return?

Another question which the same pastor shared with me, one which particularly struck a chord with me personally, is what “breaks your heart?” Ask yourself that question. When you survey our community, what kinds of needs exist around us, which are desperately crying out to be met by someone who cares, to which we might be able to become part of the solution? That solution, by the way, may require the involvement of other congregations, maybe even in some instances other churches, in the community. As just one example, what might happen if the five LCMS congregations in our community came together, and rather than competing against one another, pooled our resources and called a full-time Family Life Minister (along the lines of Abi Schmit’s position a couple of years back) who would serve all five of our congregations and, through us, the entire community?

That’s what “new ministries” might look like: Something we’ve never attempted before. Maybe something we’ve never even imagined, or dared to imagine, was possible.

May God, who alone gives the growth, help us as a congregation to answer those questions and continue to lead and guide us in this process and into the future He has planned for us, to His glory and the furthering of His kingdom!

In His Service,

Pastor Derek Riddle

Vacation Bible School is holding their “Family Night Kick Off” on Sunday, July 10, from 6-8 p.m. VBS will continue on Monday, July 11 from 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. Registration can be done on Sunday or beginning at 8:30 a.m. on Monday.

The **66th National Convention of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod** will be held July 9-14 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, under the theme “Upon This Rock: Repent, Confess, Rejoice.” Please keep our Synod, our Synodical leaders, the Convention, and all Convention attendees in your personal prayers in the coming weeks. You may keep up with the Convention beforehand, during, and afterwards by visiting www.lcms.org and by following the LCMS via various social media outlets.

The **LCMS Youth Gathering**, which ten of our high school youth and three parent chaperones will be attending along with a group from St. John’s, will take place July 16-20 in New Orleans, Louisiana. Held every three years, the Youth Gathering provides youth and adults the opportunity to come together as a community of God’s people, to be affirmed in their lives as God’s people, to nurture their relationship with others in the Church, to celebrate their salvation in Jesus Christ through Word and Sacrament, and to recognize that youth ministry happens in a variety of settings in their congregation, community, and world. Please keep our youth and adult attendees in your prayers! A number of opportunities to help our youth raise the necessary funds to attend the Gathering remain available on the “Growing in Christ Tree” in the narthex.

On Friday and Saturday, July 22-23, we will hold our long-overdue **make-up photography sessions** for our pictorial directory, which we began last summer but were unable to finish due to extenuating circumstances. Sign-ups are now taking place on Sunday mornings in the narthex. Please see Brenda Karsten or Linda Scranton with questions.

BOARD OF ELDERS

Garden Time is here, and we have been waiting for the good weather...the longer days of daylight...the warmth of the sun. Gardens are growing, and we tend to the weeds and water the plants to grow. We are faithful to nourish and care for our garden.

Have you walked through your spiritual garden lately? Have you pulled the weeds in the garden (your life) that hinder you from growing in your faith? Have you watered your garden with God's Word? Have you given your garden the SONLIGHT that it needs? Have you nourished your spiritual garden?

The weather is unpredictable at times--as with our lives, we have many good days and bad! Our days should begin with nourishment for our soul through prayer and studying God's Word, and we should water our days (time) with Godly deeds (talent) and give our faith SONLIGHT. At the end of summer we harvest our produce (our treasure). Will our gardens (our faith) show a life fed by the Word, watered by our heavenly Father, and will we grow spiritually with the LIGHT OF HIS SON? It's *Garden Time*.

Board of Stewardship

"Experiencing the Joy of Generosity" was the theme of our recent stewardship emphasis. In April we began with 'The Joy of Receiving and Giving,' and we were reminded that every good gift and every perfect gift is from God. The air we breathe, the food we eat, and the places we live are from Him. Through His Word and Sacrament we receive His grace that gives us eternal life with Him. What a blessing to receive God's love, grace and mercy daily.

As we receive our blessings we, as God's stewards, are called to manage our blessings according to His will. Our goal is to please and honor God with how we manage our blessings. God wants to use us as He did with the heroes of the Bible... remember that Jacob stole his brother's birthright, Peter denied Jesus, and we sin daily, but the Lord uses us as He used the Biblical heroes to be His hands and feet in helping to feed the hungry, house the homeless, build His church and seek the lost. It's easy for us to sit back and do nothing or very little, but we please the Lord when we, through faith, willingly use our time, talent and treasure to help others and His church.

As we receive God's gifts and manage the gifts we receive, we are blessed through our receiving, managing and sharing joyfully. By our joyful giving we honor our Lord for His love and grace given to us through His Son, Jesus. Give thanks to God and Celebrate! Celebrate not the steward but the work that God does in and through stewards. When we celebrate the work of the steward we are really celebrating the work of God. Let the celebration continue as we give JOYFULLY of our TIME, TALENT and TREASURE to our Lord!

KEEP OUR MINISTRY GROWING

Just wanted all to know where we are on our mortgage reduction project. As of the end of May our balance is \$3548.00. Can you believe it? God must have a GREAT NEW PLAN for Peace's future! Isn't it exciting to think that with His help we paid our mortgage down from around \$27,000 to \$3548 in 6 months! TO GOD BE THE GLORY!

Please remember that when we started this project it was to clear the mortgage so we could start NEW MINISTRIES. Our planning committee is waiting on the results of our interior and exterior evaluations that they asked from both the congregation members and members of the community. When we receive the results, we will be asking more members to participate in several "task forces" so that brainstorming may be done

regarding possibilities for NEW MINISTRIES. So PLEASE keep this project in your prayers, asking for God's guidance, for without Him we can do nothing!

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/.

July 3

"Freedom in Action"

Lutheran Hour Speaker: Rev. Dr. Gregory Seltz
In Christ, you are free from being ruled by your burdens, free to serve others for the glory of God.
(Galatians 6:1-18)

July 10

"Extreme Neighborliness"

Lutheran Hour Speaker: Rev. Dr. Gregory Seltz
Through His love and sacrifice, Jesus is the extreme neighbor to you and all people.
(Luke 10:25-37)

July 17

"The One Thing You Really Need"

Lutheran Hour Speaker: Rev. Dr. Gregory Seltz
The story of Mary and Martha is not so much about Mary or Martha--or us. It's really about Jesus.
(Luke 10:38-42)

July 24

"Never to See Them Again"

Speaker Emeritus of The Lutheran Hour: Rev. Dr. Ken Klaus
Opportunity knocks; Christ invites us to receive the gift of faith.
(Luke 9:51-62)

July 31

"Bullies"

Speaker Emeritus of The Lutheran Hour: Rev. Dr. Ken Klaus
When bullies pressure Christians to keep quiet, we can retreat, push back, or choose to endure.
(Acts 5:27-34)

Stewardship Corner

In our Lord's parable of the vineyard workers, the vineyard owner says to those who worked the longest, "Or do you begrudge my generosity" (Matthew 20:15)? It's an unfortunate translation. It's not wrong, but it doesn't give us the full picture. What the vineyard owner actually says is this: "Or is your eye evil because I am good?" Earlier in Matthew's Gospel, Jesus said, "The eye is the lamp of the body. So, if your eye is healthy, your whole body will be full of light, but if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light in you is darkness, how great is the darkness" (Matthew 6:21–23).

This statement comes right in the middle of our Lord's teaching about giving. He said, "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. The eye is the lamp of the body. So, if your eye is healthy, your whole body will be full of light, but if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light in you is darkness, how great is the darkness! No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money" (Matthew 6:19–24).

Having an evil eye does not let in the light. Having an evil eye means that we are so focused on what we don't have, that we are unable to rejoice in what God has given. An evil eye makes us distressed when we see others prosper. It makes us rejoice when others suffer. An evil eye makes us so love ourselves and our money, that we don't want to share with others; we don't want to give of what we have because we are so focused on keeping what we have and getting what we don't.

On the other hand, a good eye is an eye that lets the light in so that our lives are filled with it. This light shines upon all that we have and reveals that it comes from our Father's divine goodness and mercy. A good eye lets in the light, unencumbered by the darkness, so that we have a good will, a benevolent disposition, and a genuine happiness to see others prosper and the desire to be part of it.

Jesus came to give you a good eye and to take away the darkness that fills your life. Christ our Lord, through His death and resurrection, has forgiven your sin, removed your evil eye and given you new eyes that let in His light and truth. "For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich" (2 Corinthians 8:9).

The reality is that you have all that you need and more. You have the love of God in Christ Jesus. You have the forgiveness of sins and life everlasting. You have house and home, all that you need for this body and life. So, lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy. And you will see that your hearts will follow, just as Jesus promised.

Taken from www.lcms.org

Good News of Peace
Peace Lutheran Church -
Missouri Synod
1401 M-68 Highway
Rogers City, Michigan 49779
(989) 734-7621

Peggy Schaudt, Editor
email: pschaudt@gmail.com

Visit us on the web at: www.peacelcms.org
or Like us on facebook at:
[Peace Lutheran Church](#)