

Good News of Peace

September 2017 A.D.

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

From the Pastor's Desk

Dear Friends in Christ,

I'd like to begin this month by saying another word of thanks to everyone who assisted in any way with our fifth **Back-to-School Night** on Monday evening, August 21. This event has grown each year thus far, to the point that we were privileged to give away twice as many school supplies to children and families in our community this year as we did when we held our first Back-to-School Night in 2013!

We could not have done that, of course, without all of our willing volunteers. Nor could we have done it without all of our generous donors, whether monetarily or in terms of school supplies themselves. Many, many thanks to each of you who helped make it possible for us to serve our community through this event again this year and to share the love of Christ in a tangible way with the people who attended.

This past Sunday I spoke briefly about Back-to-School Night being an example of doing our best as a congregation to **show Jesus** to our community, rather than simply inviting people to come to us and hear about Him if they are interested. As strange as it may seem to most of us, more and more people around us, even in a small community like ours, don't necessarily know what the church is all about and why it should matter to them. For many, the church doesn't connect with them where they are in their lives, which means that our overall ministry simply can't operate the way that it did even as recently as 20 years ago.

Another way of thinking about this would be to say that we are doing our best to find ways to **take Jesus to** the people in our community, rather than waiting for them to come to us. For people who don't know who Jesus is, and there are plenty of them, we can't count on them seeking Him out on their own. But we can go to them where they are! And we can show them Jesus in concrete ways!

As I also mentioned on Sunday, I think our Hygiene Pantry is another good example of the same kind of community-focused, service-oriented ministry. That is another endeavor, on a monthly basis in this case, which simply would not happen without your generous donations and the financial support of our congregation. Nor could it happen without the time and effort of many willing volunteers. Even better, it could not happen without the time and effort of many willing, mission-minded servants.

A book that I am currently reading suggests that congregations stop thinking in terms of looking for volunteers to keep the congregation's ministry going, but rather think in terms of looking for **servants** who are committed to carrying out the congregation's mission, and advancing Jesus' mission in the process, while utilizing their unique gifts and passions. I really like that way of thinking, and it got me wondering how things might look different here at Peace if we stopped trying so hard to fill all of our volunteer positions. And if we instead simply encouraged our members to pursue forms of service about which God has caused them to be passionate and for which He has uniquely gifted them.

I also want to take one more opportunity to extend a warm word of welcome to two of our newest members. You may not know that this summer we were privileged to receive Jesse Fenstermaker (last month) and Catherine (Cattie) Wenzel (earlier this month) into both baptized and communicant membership. That means that both of them made the personal commitment to meet with me one-on-one over a period of a number of weeks to learn more about the basics of Christianity and what it means to be a follower of Jesus. The end result in both cases was an adult Baptism and Confirmation (the two are generally combined in the case of adults who have first undergone instruction), and we should be heartily **celebrating** with both of them and their families! Indeed, there is nothing more exciting than welcoming two new members, not just into our congregational family, but into the family of believers in Jesus Christ! Thanks and praise be to Him for these wonderful blessings!

That also has had me wondering about who – or what – might be in store for our congregation next. Maybe God has been putting a family member or a close friend or a neighbor on your heart recently, and that person has been waiting for some encouragement (even if they don't know it), and maybe you're the one to provide it. Or maybe God has been putting a new ministry possibility on your heart recently, and you have been waiting for a little nudge forward, and now is the time to find out if anyone else might be interested in pursuing it with you.

Periodically I will either hear or overhear a well-intentioned comment from a member about how our congregation is getting older, our members are slowing down, and we are not growing. From a certain perspective, all of that may well be true. However, that is not all that I see happening at Peace. What I have seen in recent months is evidence that God is still stirring hearts amongst us. A new face here. A new family there. A new member stepping forward to give leadership to a still relatively new congregational ministry there. Even while we have been experiencing some congregational changes, God has been continuing to do His work in the lives of our members. That is what I see, and I don't believe for a moment that He is finished.

As the end of the summer draws near and another school year gets underway, God's continued blessings to each of you in Christ, our Savior!

In Christ,

Pastor Derek Riddle

Board of Elders

This is the day the Lord has made; let us **rejoice** and be **glad** in it! The Lord blesses us every day, so let us **rejoice** and be **glad** with all that the Lord has given us and give thanks for everything.

September is here again, and we can **rejoice** with the start of our Sunday School and Bible Class sessions. We get to study God's Word with family, friends, and brothers and

sisters in Christ. We can be **glad** for our leaders who lead us in the studying of God's Word. Come, join in, one and all (children, youth and adults)- let us **rejoice** as our faith grows as we study God's Word and be **glad** as we share God's Word with whomever God sends our way.

The number totals on the Worship Music Preference Surveys were put in the member mailboxes. If you have any questions, you may ask an Elder. This will be on our agenda this month. Keep Peace Lutheran Church and all members in your prayers. Thank you one and all for your input.

In Christ,
Board of Elders

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/.

September 3

"Finding Life in Jesus' Steps"

Lutheran Hour Speaker: Rev. Dr. Gregory Seltz

Take joy in the gift of being a follower of Christ who is willing to take His lead and be ordered by His steps.

(Matthew 16:24-25)

September 10

"Who's the Greatest?"

Lutheran Hour Speaker: Rev. Dr. Gregory Seltz

Jesus redefined greatness. He came, not to be served, but to serve and to give His life as a ransom for many.

(Matthew 18:1-20)

September 17

"Unleash the Power of Forgiveness in Your Life"

Lutheran Hour Speaker: Rev. Dr. Gregory Seltz

Life with God is not about keeping score; it's about living for others in the grace Jesus earned for us.

(Matthew 18:21-35)

September 24

"The Latest Polls"

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

Believing the latest public opinion poll is not the same thing as believing the truth.

(Matthew 21:8-11 and Luke 23:23-25)

Stewardship Corner

"Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might" (Eccl. 9:10).

God bids us to be faithful in the tasks He calls us to do. He calls us to be members of a family (husbands and wives; fathers and mothers; sons and daughters). He calls us to be members of society (those who govern and those who are governed). And He calls us to be members of His family, the Church (those who preach and teach and those who hear and learn). Each of these callings from God places a duty on us.

As members of a family, husbands are given the duty to die for their wives as Christ gave His life for His bride, the Church; while wives are given the duty to respect their

husbands and submit themselves to them as the Church does to Christ. Fathers and mothers are to raise their children in the fear and admonition of the Lord, teaching them the Ten Commandments, the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Scriptures concerning Baptism, Confession, the Office of the Keys, and the Lord's Supper. Children are to honor their parents throughout their lives, and even when their parents are no longer alive, serving and obeying them, loving and cherishing them, and speaking well of them.

As members of society, God calls those who govern to bear the sword, that is, to punish those who do evil—those who live contrary to God's will—and to reward those who do good—those whose lives are lived in conformity with God's will. Those who are governed are to obey their leaders as to the Lord Himself, for their leaders bear the sword of God's temporal justice for a purpose.

As members of God's own family, the Church, He calls those who preach and teach to do so in faithfulness to His holy Word. They are to preach and teach the Law of God to convict the hearts of hearers of their sin and to encourage, admonish, and exhort them to do good works in accordance with God's will. They are to preach and teach the Gospel, the full forgiveness of their sins accomplished by Christ and received through faith, not by works. They are to administer the means of grace in accordance with the Gospel and the Word of God. They do all this for the young and old alike, for those who are near and far off. Those who hear and learn are to submit themselves to their preachers and teachers. They are to support them by their prayers and their gifts.

Each of these callings from God places a duty on us. They make a claim on our presence, our prayers, and on our time, talents, and treasures. So, "Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might" (Eccl 9:10). Pray for your family, for your government, and your church. Give of yourself by means of your time, your talents, and your treasures to your family, your government, and your Church. That is what it means to be faithful in the tasks that God has given us. That is what it means to do it with all your might.

Taken from www.lcms.org

Thrivent Financial Upcoming Events:

Tunnels to Tower Race – Saturday, September 16, beginning at 10:00 a.m.; meet at the Alpena Band Shell. Thrivent will pay for the first 20 members to run for this great cause! Call (989) 356-1330 to sign up.

On September 11, 2001, firefighter Stephen Siller ran back into the World Trade Center and risked his life to save others. Please join in this memorial run/walk in honor of this great American hero and ALL first responders and military who dedicate their lives to our safety.

Kids Coalition Against Hunger meal packing event at the Alpena Mall on Saturday, October 21, beginning at 10:00 a.m. Please call (989) 356-1330 to sign up.

Some kids and their families around the world (and in our own community) lack the proper foods that deliver stable nutrients to them. Please join us in packaging meals to help these households become more self-sufficient by providing nourishing food to them.