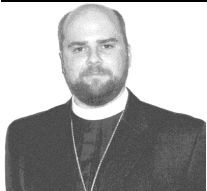


# The Peace Post

Peace Lutheran Church ~ Alma, MI

✠ Reformation Edition ✠

October, 2009

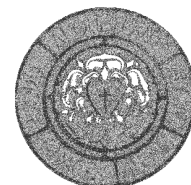


## From the Desk of Pastor Messer

A Reformation Sermon from Yesteryear

“Abide In My Word”

John 8:31-36



*In the Name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

“If you abide in My Word, you are truly My disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”

Abiding in the Word of Jesus. That is our privilege and high calling as those who have been redeemed through His death and resurrection, and made children of the Triune God through our Baptism into Christ. To abide means to dwell, to stay put, to remain in one place forever. No straying, no wandering, no flitting about like a butterfly from flower to flower in search of something better. Sticking with Jesus. Sticking with His Word. That’s what true disciples of Jesus do. Indeed, there is no alternative, for the Lord’s statement in reverse is equally true: “If you do not abide in My Word, you are not truly My disciples, and you will not know the truth, and the truth will not set you free.”

As children of the Lutheran Reformation, God’s Word is our great heritage. Abiding in the Word of Jesus is what the Reformation was all about. It’s what true Lutheranism continues to be all about. The question is, do we take that heritage lightly? It’s easy for us sinners to do that, isn’t it? It’s so easy to get caught up in various activities and other pursuits and priorities to the neglect of the Word of God. That’s always a danger. The history of the Church shows that. Indeed, it’s always been easy for the Church to treat casually the precious treasure we have in the Word of God. The sad circumstances of the Church at the dawn of the Reformation show just how easy it is. The Church had lost the Word then. It can lose it again today. In fact, in many and various ways, it already has.

In the centuries prior to the Reformation, the Bible had lost its preeminent place of honor in the Church. Oh, it was given lip-service; it was spoken of highly; it was carried about in procession and ceremony. But the Word and its message of salvation by grace through faith in Jesus Christ were dreadfully obscured by human tradition and the fallible opinions of men. The Word of God was forced to the back of the bus while the declarations of pope and council rode in the seats of honor. If the pope said that by the purchase of an indulgence you or your loved one could be freed from the temporal penalties of purgatory, that was widely believed. The pope said it, that settles it. Never mind that the Scriptures say nothing about purgatory, and nothing about the

power of the Bishop of Rome to release by papal decree the souls who supposedly languished in purgatory.

Human decree can’t free us from the slavery of sin. Only the truth that the Son of God suffered and died for the sin of the world makes us free indeed. The Word of God teaches us that. But 500 years ago, that saving Word had largely been covered up by sinful men who failed to honor it rightly.

After all, what honor does it show the Scriptures if the Church does not draw its doctrine from Scripture alone? If we make it up as we go along, determining by fallen human reason, or by popular vote, what we think the Christian Faith should be, does that show respect for the Word of God? If we fail to listen to the Scriptures and take them to heart, fail to read, mark, learn and inwardly digest them, and proclaim their message, what value do we really place upon the Bible as the written Word of God?

This was the situation in the Church prior to the days of the Blessed Reformer, Martin Luther. Because of adherence to human tradition, to invented doctrines that contradicted the clear teachings of the Scriptures, the Church was failing to abide in the Word of our Savior Jesus Christ. To abide in Jesus’ Word is to be His disciple, our Lord says. It’s to know the truth of the Gospel, the truth that sets us poor wretched sinners free from the darkness of sin, from temporal and eternal death, from the dread unending horror of hell. But when the Church fails to abide in the Word of our Lord, as it did in the years prior to the Reformation, it is in effect saying to those for whom Jesus died: I don’t care. Just go to hell.

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

“Abide In My Word” .....	1-2	Peace News & Notes .....	10-11
About Reformation Day .....	3	Ladies Guild Info .....	12
Rev. Petersen Ref. Homily .....	4	Altar & Coffee Schedules .....	12
Ref. Thoughts from Krauth .....	5	Christian Education .....	13
Rev. Weedon Ref. Homily .....	6	Birthdays & Anniversaries .....	13
A Mighty Fortress .....	7	Parochial Report .....	13
40 Days for Life .....	8	Pastor Appreciation .....	14
“Genocide in the U.S.” .....	8	October Calendar .....	15
Voters’ Assembly Minutes .....	9	Serving in October .....	16

Thanks be to God that He raised up a man who recognized the critical nature of abiding in the Word of God. Thanks be to God that Martin Luther, by God's grace, determined to cling to the Scriptures alone, to preach and teach nothing but what was in the Bible. Thanks be to God that Luther was led to recognize that Christ alone, for the sake of His Cross and vacated tomb, is the One who eternally frees us from the guilt of our sin and the condemnation we deserve on account of our fallen nature.

Luther recognized how necessary it was for the Christian to abide in the Word. That's why he took the trouble to translate the Scriptures into the language of the people. He knew that all the Scriptures, from beginning to end, bear witness to the crucified and risen Son of God, our only help and refuge against sin, death, and the devil. So Luther translated the Word. He preached the Word. He taught the Word. And by God's grace, the Word of God was restored to the Church. And the Church was restored by the life giving Word of truth that sets sinners free.

Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of Christ, the Scripture says. We can abbreviate that statement. Faith comes by the Word of Christ, whether it be the written Word, the preached Word, or the visible Word of Holy Baptism. That's how precious and absolutely essential the Word is. You no more brought yourself to faith than you made yourself alive. Just as the heavens and the earth and all things in them were brought into being by the Word of God, so it was with your faith in Jesus. In His first epistle, St. Peter speaks of this creative power of God's Word when he writes, "You have been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the Word of God which lives and abides forever . . . This is the Word," he goes on to say, "which by the Gospel was preached to you."

As those who have been graciously born from above by the Word of God, we are to cling to that Word as our greatest treasure of all. We are to abide in that Word, to remain in it and never sway from it. That's why we offer Sunday School for the children – so they can be raised up and taught the importance of holding fast to God's Word their whole lives long. That's why we have adult Bible Class on Sundays and Tuesdays, because even as adults we never outgrow our need of God's saving Word in which we are always to abide.

My friends, God's Word is absolutely vital to our life as a Christian congregation. That's why you, dear people of Peace, are to demand of me, your pastor, that I teach and preach nothing but the Word of God to you. You are to demand of me that my ministry among you be completely faithful to that inspired, inerrant Word of God. When I visit our sick and dying members, you are to demand of me that I bring them the comfort of the Gospel Word of life and freedom and forgiveness centered on Jesus Christ. When I catechize your children, or you yourselves in our Bible Classes, you are to demand of me that it be a catechesis of the Word, as summarized in Martin Luther's Small Catechism.

And you are to demand of me something else, that I myself would abide in the Word, that I would take time to read and study it, for the sake of my soul and for the sake of my ministry among

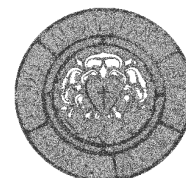
you. You are to demand of me that I would show proper honor to the Word of God by confessing my sins when God's Word of Law condemns me, and by believing that God's Word of grace and forgiveness in Christ Jesus applies to me also.

What all of this means is that you are to demand of me, your pastor, that I abide in the Word of Jesus, so that I can rightly exhort you to do the same, for it is only if you abide in the Word of Jesus that you can truly be His disciples. This is essential, my friends, for truth be told, things are not all that different today than they were at the time of the Reformation. Do not think for a moment that the Reformation we celebrate today was an isolated historic event. It continues, my friends. It must, for enemies of the Word of God and Christ's Church continue to arise among us, preaching and teaching a perversion of the Gospel, which is no Gospel at all, the same perversion which Luther was raised up by God to confront in his day, namely that we are justified by works and not by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone.

And so, on this Festival of Reformation Day, listen once more to the abiding Word of Jesus which alone makes true disciples. That abiding Word hearkens you to examine yourselves against God's Holy Law, that you would come to the realization of your sinfulness and be led to repentance. And when that abiding Word accomplishes that in you, it then points you to the Lamb of God who takes your sins away. And, that same abiding Word assures you that Christ your Savior is here in your midst in His Word to instruct you, to preach to you, to correct you, and to absolve you of your sins. He is among you as One who serves, for He is present for you, His redeemed people, in the Word and Water of Holy Baptism, and in His very Body and Blood in the Holy Supper for the forgiveness of your sins. He is among you to invite and encourage you to abide in His Word and be His true disciples, that you would know the truth that sets you free.

It is the Word of God, the message of Christ crucified and risen, that assures us of these things. That is why we Lutherans honor the Word. That's why we want to know the Word. That's why we should be convinced, through study of the Scriptures, that the teachings of our Church are faithful and true to the Word of God. And that's why we Lutherans – if we're really going to be Lutheran, not just in name only – abide in the Word. God grant that we would never take our heritage of the Word of God lightly. God grant that when we sing, "Lord, Keep Us Steadfast in Your Word," we truly mean it. God grant that we would always treasure the Word of our Lord for what it is – the truth that sets us free. In Jesus' Holy and Precious Name. Amen.

*Now the peace of God which passes all understanding keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus, unto life everlasting. Amen.*



## About Reformation Day



*On October 31, 1517, an Augustinian monk posted ninety-five statements for discussion on the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg, Germany. Dr. Martin Luther hoped that posting his theses would bring about an academic debate regarding repentance, the sale of indulgences, and other matters of concern within the Roman Catholic Church. However, Rome eventually excommunicated Luther, judging him to be a heretic. Luther's reforms, centered on the teaching that a believer is justified by grace through faith in Jesus Christ, sparked religious reforms not only in the German states but also in many European countries. In 1667, Elector John George II of Saxony standardized the custom of observing Luther's October 31 posting of the Ninety-five Theses.*

*—Treasury of Daily Prayer, p. 868*

May you ever cherish and treasure this thought. Christ is made a servant of sin, yea, a bearer of sin, and the lowliest and most despised person. He destroys all sin by Himself and says: "I came not to be served, but to serve" (Matt. 20:28). There is no greater bondage than that of sin; and there is no greater service than that displayed by the Son of God, who becomes the servant of all, no matter how poor, wretched, or despised they may be, and bears their sins. It would be spectacular and amazing, prompting all the world to open ears and eyes, mouth and nose in uncomprehending wonderment, if some king's son were to appear in a beggar's home to nurse him in his illness, wash off his filth, and do everything else the beggar would have to do. Would this not be profound humility? Any spectator or any beneficiary of this honor would feel impelled to admit that he had seen or experienced something unusual and extraordinary, something magnificent. But what is a king or an emperor compared with the Son of God? Furthermore, what is a beggar's filth or stench compared with the filth of sin which is ours by nature, stinking a hundred thousand times worse and looking infinitely more repulsive to God than any foul matter found in a hospital? And yet the love of the Son of God for us is of such magnitude that the greater the filth and stench of our sins, the more He befriends us, the more He cleanses us, relieving us of all our misery and of the burden of all our sins and placing them upon His own back. All the holiness of the monks stinks in comparison with this service of Christ, the fact that the beloved Lamb, the great Man, yes, the Son of the Exalted Majesty, descends from heaven to serve me.

*—From a sermon by the Blessed Reformer, Dr. Martin Luther*

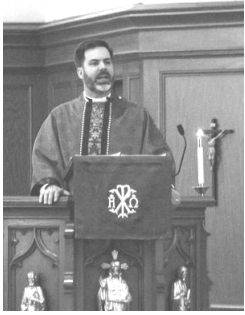
### Luther's Response at the Diet of Worms

*"Unless I am convicted by the testimony of Scripture or by evident reason - for I trust neither in popes nor in councils alone, since it is obvious that they have often erred and contradicted themselves - I am convicted by the Scripture which I have mentioned and my conscience is captive by the Word of God. Therefore I cannot and will not recant, since it is difficult, unprofitable and dangerous indeed to do anything against one's conscience. Here I stand. I can do no other. God help me. Amen."*



### Thesis 1 of 95

**"Our Lord and Master Jesus Christ, when He said, 'Repent,' willed that the whole life of believers should be repentance."**



**A Reformation Homily**  
**Rev. David H. Petersen**  
**Redeemer Lutheran Church**  
**Fort Wayne, IN**  
**Text: Matthew 11:12-15**

*In the Name of the Father and of the + Son  
and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

I do not know what they will do in Wittenberg today. I doubt they will let the anniversary pass unnoticed. But Luther's faith is gone from that place. After four hundred and eighty-seven years, dictators, swastikas, tanks, and guns, after that perversion a hammer and a sickle, all that is left is the inheritance of violence and the shallow allure of tourism. The faith is gone. The seat of the Reformation, where by pen and by speech Luther revealed God in His mercy and turned the hearts of the fathers to their children, where freedom and truth rang in purity, where God's Word and Sacrament were received anew by grace: Wittenberg is now a wasteland, all but devoid of faith. Where are Luther's heirs?

Sixty years ago Herman Sasse, a German by birth, exiled to Australia by the Church he served, thought that the Missouri Synod was the future. I suppose it was. But now it looks quite uncertain. And what if Missouri goes the way of all flesh. What if she falls like Jerusalem, Rome, and Wittenberg before her? So what? Do not be afraid. It is in God's hands. And the Reformation blooms again. Buds have broken through the snow in Siberia! There is a re-emerging Church, awaking from her slumber, in Latvia, in Lithuania, and in Kenya! Who knows where else? The Word of God does not fail. It does not return empty. It never belonged to us by right. Luther's children, like Abraham's, are not those who share his blood, but those who share his faith. From Wittenberg to St. Louis to Klaipeda and Novisibirsk. If that be God's will, God be praised!

But what of our children, trapped in this post-modern lie, in a Church as rife with corruption as medieval Rome? Must they move overseas to have the Truth? Not quite. But they must fight for it. They cannot rest in the false comfort and opulence of an institutional lie. They must grasp the Word of God and hold Him to it. They might limp away like Jacob, but not without a blessing. Let them make sacrifices for their church. Let them become missionaries and evangelists who will not settle for lukewarm anesthesia, but who insist upon the Word of God in all its strict, unbending sternness and the full liberating sweetness of the Truth. Let them seek fellowship with fellow confessors around the globe and cherish the comradery that comes only from unity in the Word of God. Let them fight, hurt, and grow to know that nothing else in this world can be trusted, nothing else in this world lasts. For all things pass away save this: The Word of God made Flesh for our redemption!

We've often said "The Church is not built of mortar and stone." True enough, but neither is it built upon paper, logos, and slogans from headquarters. The Church is built upon the death of Jesus Christ. It is sustained in His resurrection. It is not found in

corporate offices, radio programs, or tax shelters. It is found around the Altar of God's Body and Blood. There hearts are broken and rebound. Old men are drowned. New men arise. Sins are forgiven. The devil is defeated. Faith is born and lives.

Thus it is written: The prophets and the Law prophesied until John and if you are willing accept it, he is Elijah who is to come. The Passover is complete. Our tears in Babylon have ended. The resurrected Temple abides in the new Jerusalem and we are a people who were no people. The gates of Hell cannot hold us. If this building crumbles, this synod falls, this country ceases, still Our God remains. Our salvation is secure. Our hope is not in Jerusalem, Rome, Wittenberg, or St. Louis. It is in Christ alone. His triumphal march through Hell is done. The demons know the truth.

Still, the kingdom of heaven, even the kingdom within you, suffers violence. And it hurts. But if there is no violence, no struggle, then there is no kingdom. And that just may be what history sees as the demise of the Church in America: no struggle. When Church and culture are indistinguishable, the devil has won.

The kingdom of heaven suffers violence and the violent take it by force. The suffering kingdom must be seized by violent faith: foolish, reckless faith like that of John in the desert speaking truth to power without fear, losing his head because he would not pretend that adultery was okay, because he would not tolerate the false doctrine of the Pharisees; foolish, reckless faith of pioneers who would not settle for an American gospel of prosperity but begged their brothers overseas to send them missionaries trained in the Scriptures; foolish, reckless faith of African Bishops who will not take the blood money of abortion and depravation but dare to speak the Truth from their poverty. This is your heritage. In Baptism God gives this violent, strident faith that risks all for Jesus Christ is Lord.

That is why I am not sad at the prospect that our children might have to rebuild this Church, make sacrifices, learn discipline, do the work of evangelists. If that is the case, it will be good for them. It will be good for us. And in this sense I am glad for the troubles in Missouri and the Church in America. For wherever the Gospel is preached it brings trouble. He did not come to bring peace, but a sword. When the fighting stops our churches become tourist attractions, nothing more than symbols of the past. But not yet! By Grace, not yet!! The warning is there in Jerusalem's rubble and Wittenberg's brochures. But yet, by Grace, our churches are not symbols of the past. They are icons of the future: a witness to the kingdom won, a promise of the kingdom to come.

What will happen on this earthly plane, I do not know. But I know that soon we will not care. We will be free at last of all politics, elections, synods, building and anniversary committees, homeland security and terrorism, of past sins and regrets, of fear and sadness. We will abide in our Father's home won by grace, born in love, raised to life because Jesus Christ is Lord.

He who has ears to hear, let him hear.  
In Jesus' Name. Amen.





## Thoughts on Reformation Day

Charles Porterfield Krauth

*C. P. Krauth was a Lutheran pastor and theologian in the 19th century, who contended for orthodox Lutheranism at a time when many Lutherans were abandoning the Lutheran Confessions and following after the Americanized Protestants in America. What follows are some thoughts he expressed concerning our observance of Reformation Day—thoughts still every bit as applicable today as they were when he penned them.*

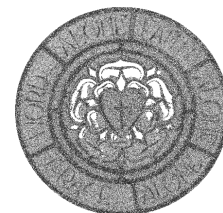
It is from the nailing up of the 95 Theses the Reformation takes its date (October 31, 1517). That act became, in the providence of God, the starting-point of the work which still goes on, and shall forever go on, that glorious work in which the truth was raised to its original purity, and civil and religious liberty were restored to men. That the Reformation is the spring of modern freedom is no wild assertion of its friends. One of the greatest Roman Catholic writers of recent times, Michelet, in the Introduction to his Life of Luther, says: "It is not incorrect to say, that Luther has been the restorer of liberty in modern times. If he did not create, he at least courageously affixed his signature to that great revolution which rendered the right of examination lawful in Europe. And, if we exercise, in all its plenitude at this day, this first and highest privilege of human intelligence, it is to him we are most indebted for it; nor can we think, speak, or write, without being made conscious, at every step, of the immense benefit of this little intellectual enfranchisement;" and he concludes with the remark: "To whom do I owe the power of publishing what I am no inditing, except to this liberator of modern thought?" Our Church, as clearly, in one sense, the mother of the Reformation, as, in another, she is its offspring, the first, and for a time, the exclusive possessor of the name Protestantism, its source and its mightiest bulwark, our Church has wisely set apart a day in each year to commemorate this great deliverance, and wisely has kept her great Jubilees. There are other ways of noting time, besides by its loss. The Church Festivals note it by its gains, the Church Year marks the time which has been redeemed for ever. An old writer describes the Church of All-Saints at

Wittenberg, as a manger, where in his lowly glory the Son of God was born again. Blessed forever be the day! On it, through all time, men shall gather, bringing their offerings of praise; remembering, treasuring, and keeping untarnished, the holy faith whose restoration was thus begun.

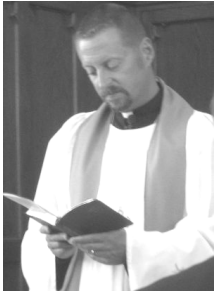
It is well, then, to have added to the grand order of the Church Year, the Festival of the Reformation, and to the revolution of the centuries, its Jubilee. Whether as the child or as the parent of the Reformation, whether she would awake her heart to gratitude as its daughter, or arouse herself to an earnest sense of responsibility as its mother, our Church can claim it, as pre-eminently her privilege, and acknowledge it as pre-eminently her duty so to do. When the Festival of the Reformation shall come and shall wake no throb of joy in her bosom, her life will have fled. For if the Reformation lives through her, she also lives by it. It has to her the mysterious relation of Christ to David; if it is her offspring, it is also her root. If she watched the ark of the Lord, the ark of the Lord protected and blessed her, and when it passes from her keeping, her glory will have departed. Let her speak to her children then, and tell them the meaning of the day. In the pulpit, and the school, and the circle of the home, let

*When the Festival of the Reformation shall come and shall wake no throb of joy in [the Church's] bosom, her life will have fled.*

these great memories of men of God, of their self-sacrifice, of their overcoming faith, and of their glorious work, be the theme of thought, and of word, and of thanksgiving. The Festival of the Reformation is at once a day of Christmas and of Easter and of Pentecost, in our Church Year; a day of birth, a day of resurrection, a day of the outpouring of the Holy Ghost. Let its return renew that life, and make our Church press on with fresh vigor in the steps of her risen Lord, as one begotten again, and born from the dead, by the quickening power of the Spirit of her God. Let every day be a Festival of the Reformation, and every year a Jubilee.







**A Homily Upon the  
Festival of Reformation Day  
Rev. William Weedon  
St. Paul Lutheran—Hamel, IL**

[Rev. 14:6-7; Rom. 3:19-28; Matt. 11:12-19]

In the artwork of the Reformation, when they drew that angel flying directly overhead with an eternal Gospel to proclaim, well, that angel had a face you'd recognize. The folks in those days thought that Revelation 14, our first reading, pointed directly to the events they were experiencing. The angel bore the face of Luther for them, for his was indeed a loud voice that called for all those who dwell on the earth to "fear God and give Him glory...and worship Him who made" all things.

"Eternal" Gospel suggests that the good news was from the very creation of the world hidden in God and that when the appointed time came, God revealed to all people His hidden heart, and He revealed this heart in His Son.

Today's second reading gets at this glorious good news. First the bad news: God speaks a word of law that shuts the mouths of sinners. When the Law of God thunders, no room for your or my pitiful excuses. The Law demands one thing of us and one thing only: love. And it demands it whole and entire and unbroken – running through our being from start to finish, in all our words, our thoughts, our actions.

Then the Gospel comes after the Law has shut up our mouths and silenced our excuses; after the law has condemned our lovelessness and made us face our helplessness to fix it. The Gospel comes apart from law, apart from anything you do. Through it, God unveils for you a righteousness that is perfect, flawless, holy. A righteousness that is unending love itself. And that righteousness has a name: Jesus Christ. And God reaches Him to you and says: "Take Him, He is all yours."

God reaches this gift to all and He wants all to receive it. "There is no distinction: for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God – that's the Law; and are justified by His grace as a gift through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." That's the Gospel.

This redemption, says St. Paul, this Jesus, God put forward, He gave Him, to be the propitiation by His blood to be received by faith. Faith clings to the blood of the Lamb of God, shed to cover the sins of the world – yours, mine, everyone's – and so we see the unfathomable love of our God for us.

He had passed over former sins. It looked like folks had got away with murder – literally. But then He reveals, that not one sin was left unpunished in His Son. All were answered for in the Man hanging dead upon the tree, His blood spills down and wipes out mankind's sin. So that God is both just – He punishes sin – and He is the Justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus – He credits Christ's perfect love to all who cling to the blood of their Lamb, their Jesus, for dear life.

Boasting then? No room for it in any Christian's life. It's all God's work, all God's gift. Room then only to fear God and give Him glory, as the Angel flying directly overhead said in today's first reading. There's the everlasting Gospel. It's more solid than anything you'll ever encounter in this world. You can build an eternity on it – your

eternity. Trust Him! You won't go wrong. And that's how God justifies you – apart from your doings, apart from works of the law. He justifies you by giving you Jesus and you hold to Him through the gift of faith.

Another name for holding to Jesus through the gift of faith is "the kingdom of heaven." We heard about that kingdom in today's mysterious Gospel.

Our Lord declares quite matter-of-factly that from the days of John the Baptist, the kingdom of heaven has suffered violence. John came announcing some great good news. The Messiah was soon to follow. The Forgiver of all sin was upon the earth. But this news wasn't welcomed by all. It was opposed by many, by folks who were quite happy with their lives the way they were and didn't see the need for this meddlesome man preaching repentance, calling them to turn from all that they thought was so important and to embrace the Coming One.

Violence began with John and his arrest and you know how his story ended up. His head on the platter. Violence wouldn't end with John. It would go on. Our Lord's own gift of love and pardon would be given to the world precisely as His Kingship was being rejected, mocked even. He would be crucified for being exactly who He said He was, for telling the truth, and inviting all people to turn from what is not life to the God who alone IS life.

"He who has ears to hear, let him hear" says the Lord. The Word that He invites us to hear is the Gospel Word, the Word about the Lord who comes eating and drink, befriending tax-collectors and sinners. Inviting them and all people to find in fellowship with Him, in union with Him, the very purpose for which they were created. Such union is His gift. Nothing that we could ever earn, deserve, merit. We had no ladders high enough to climb to heaven where He was, so in His unfathomable love, He climbed down to where we are. And that's where He goes on meeting us even today. Where we live. No accident then, that He comes to you in the stuff of this world. He doesn't ask you for flights of spiritual fancy to soar up into the heavens. Heaven comes all the way down to you. Just like at Bethlehem, the Divine Love was born and wrapped in human flesh. Just like at Calvary, the Divine Love suffered and covered the sins of the world with His bright red blood. So today He comes to you in the stuff of creation – the same Divine Love, the same Lord Jesus, now risen from the dead and glorified. In water, in bread, in wine, in the words of sinful people spoken to each other. He comes and the One who comes is always the same. The Propitiation, the One who is the blotting out of all sin, the Eternal Son of the Father come into the flesh and then back from the dead to bring you to union with God.

That eternal Gospel – that the One who once came for you now comes also to you to live in you and fill you with a life that death cannot destroy, a pardon stronger than all your sin – that's the Gospel that the angel in Revelation was shouting about. And Martin Luther would take us to task for wondering about the face of the angel. He'd say: "His face? What does that matter! Rather, LISTEN to what he says. Listen to the eternal Gospel given him to speak, rejoice in the Jesus to which He points you. The Jesus who is your Propitiation, your At-one-ment with God." For that gift, free, unmerited, undeserved and ours by faith, we cry out with saints and angels:

All glory be to God on high! Amen.

# “A Mighty Fortress Is Our God”

*The Battle Cry of the Reformation*

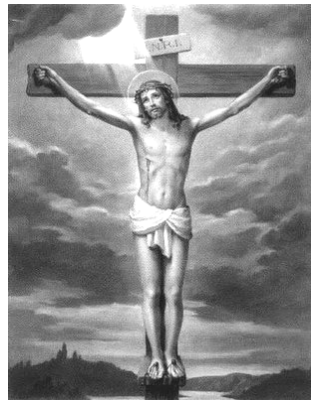
1. *A mighty fortress is our God,  
A trusty shield and weapon;  
He helps us free from every need  
That hath us now o'er-taken.  
The old evil foe  
Now means deadly woe;  
Deep guile and great might  
Are his dread arms in fight;  
On earth is not his equal.*



2. *With might of ours can naught be done,  
Soon were our loss effected;  
But for us fights the valiant One,  
Whom God Himself elected.  
Ask ye, Who is this?  
Jesus Christ it is,  
Of Sabaoth Lord,  
And there's none other God;  
He holds the field forever.*



3. *Though devils all the world should fill,  
All eager to devour us,  
We tremble not, we fear no ill;  
They shall not over-pow'r us.  
This world's prince may still  
Scowl fierce as he will,  
He can harm us none.  
He's judged; the deed is done;  
One little word can fells him.*

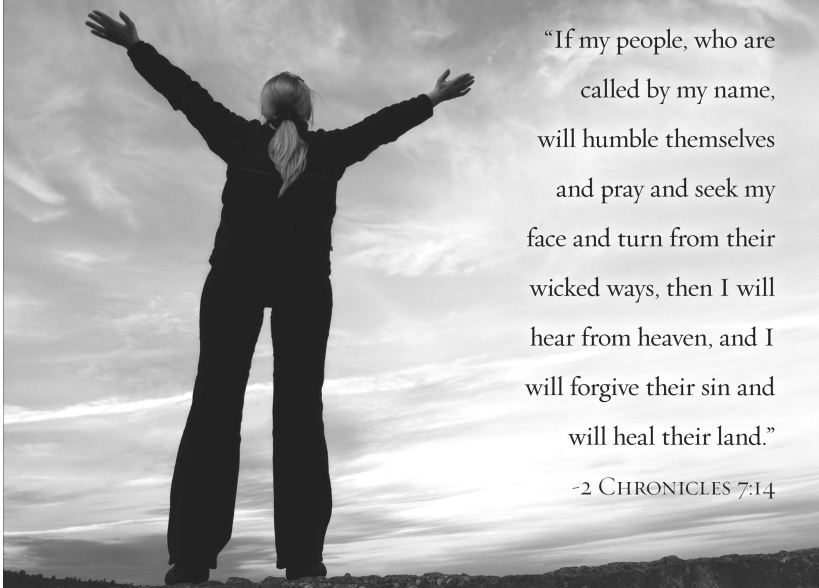


It Is Finished!

4. *The Word they still shall let remain  
Nor any thanks have for it;  
He's by our side upon the plain  
With His good gifts and Spirit.  
And take they our life,  
Goods, fame, child, and wife,  
Though these all be gone,  
Our victory has been won;  
The Kingdom ours remaineth.*



# PRAY TO END ABORTION



"If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land."

-2 CHRONICLES 7:14

SEPTEMBER 23 - NOVEMBER 1

This fall, join the hundreds of thousands of people participating in 40 Days for Life across North America and internationally.

We are hoping to gather **a group from Peace** to participate in a peaceful prayer vigil outside an abortion facility in Saginaw sometime this month. Look for info posted soon!

40  
DAYS  
FOR  
LIFE

## Genocide in the United States

By William Harmon

Peace Lutheran Church ~ Alma, MI

I, William Harmon, do so formally charge the United States of America with Genocide of unborn children, denying these individuals their rights under the 5th article of the Bill of Rights in our Constitution that "no person shall be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law"

What is Genocide? It means, in the simplest form, the organized targeting of one group of people by another group of people with death for religion, social status, or any other number of reasons.

The United States, since Roe vs. Wade, (when the Supreme Court of the United States legalized abortion), has allowed the mass killing of unborn children. Our government has sanctioned no less than 60 million murders. These children have not been given "due process" of law; their "mothers" are judge and jury and have condemned them to die with a simple signature on a medical release form.

Our Government has sanctioned more deaths than Hitler did in his concentration camps. I think that many of us wipe abortion out of our minds, as it does not impact "our lives." I would have you just stop and think. If we accept the idea of committing genocide of the unborn, how far are we from committing financial genocide on the chronically ill or elderly? I know

people say this will never happen, but it already is in some countries. And it is already happening here in our own country in an "unofficial" way as doctors and nurses make decisions about who they will and will not treat every day, based on what they perceive to be "quality of life." When we, as a society, do not value the life of the unborn, we are not very far from placing little value upon the life of the chronically ill and elderly. We are lying to ourselves if we think that our Government will protect the lives of the chronically ill and elderly if it has no sense of duty to protect the lives of the precious unborn.

I would also have you think about this: Who did we lose when we allowed these sixty million to be aborted? We may have killed a team of scientists who would have cured cancer. We may have killed the doctor who discovers a way to tell the body to repair itself from many ailments. The loss of how many talented people, who would have contributed to our lives to make things better in the world, has the Government allowed to be killed?

And even if some are not convinced by the moral and ethical arguments, let alone the Constitutional arguments, let them consider this tragedy from a financial point of view. Money is what seems to peak the interest of most, after all—sad, but true. What did the Government lose when they aborted sixty million babies? We lost sixty million taxpayers who would have contributed to our Social Security System that is going to be insolvent in thirty years, not to mention sixty million consumers who would have contributed to the health of our economy, which we have seen go down the tubes recently!

Yes we all have lost something since Roe vs. Wade. A little of our humanity has been lost year after year. Let us not be like many of the German people who turned a blind eye to what was happening in the concentration camps, because it didn't "touch their lives." It did. And many have expressed deep regret over the years for not doing something to prevent it. May we not experience the same. Let us pray daily to end this abomination, and let us speak out and seek to stop the killing.



## **Synopsis of July 26, 2009 Voters' Assembly Minutes**

### **Call To Order & Opening Prayer**

- President Brown called the meeting to order at 11:02am. Pastor Messer conducted the opening prayer. 25 voting members were present.

### **Approval of Agenda**

- Motion made by Miguel Ortiz, supported by Chris Brown to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

### **Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes**

- Motion made by Chris Brown, supported by Gary Miller to approve the minutes from April 26 and June 21. Motion carried unanimously.

### **Report(s)**

- **Pastor** – No report.
- **Treasurer** – Carol Zeile presented the attached Treasurer's report. The report included information comparing FY2008 to FY2009.
- **Financial Secretary** – Gary Miller reported that offerings have increased from last year.

### **Boards**

- **Board of Elders** – Larry Elliott reported that the Board of Elders voted to accept the removal of Connie Saxton by her request.
- **Board of Trustees** – Vern Jakolat reported on various projects being undertaken: storage shed, west side soffit, hot water heater, etc. He also thanked all volunteers
- **Board of Christian Education**
- **Board of Evangelism**
- **Board of Stewardship**

### **Organization and Committee Reports**

- **Peace Lutheran Ladies Guild**
- **Peace Youth Group**

### **Business**

### **Adjournment & Closing Prayer**

Respectfully submitted,  
Megan Brown, Secretary

## **Synopsis of September 20, 2009 Special Voters' Assembly Minutes**

### **Call To Order & Opening Prayer**

- President Brown called the meeting to order at 10:55am. Pastor Messer conducted the opening prayer. 18 voting members were present.

### **Business**

- The only item of business was to elect a nominee to serve as lay delegate for our circuit to the 2010 LCMS national convention in Houston. Larry Elliott offered his name for nomination. There were no other nominations from the floor. Motion made by Chris Brown, supported by Gretchen Harrison to nominate Larry Elliott. Motion carried unanimously.

### **Adjournment & Closing Prayer**

- Motion made by Megan Brown, supported by Chris Brown to adjourn at 11:00am. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,  
Megan Brown, Secretary

(Note: Complete minutes with all attachments are available in the church office for review.)

# PEACE NEWS & NOTES

## PYG NEWS

September Events  
Monthly Meeting

Sunday, October 18— 5pm-7pm  
Fellowship Hall

Greetings in Christ,

We had our first meeting for the year and although our numbers were small (only two youth were able to make it), we did have it. The new meeting format is gathering/fellowship 5-6 and then Bible study/discussion from 6-7. Youth are encouraged to attend as much of it as possible and bring friends. If anyone has any questions, please get with me during Sunday fellowship or call me at 989-681-3485. We will be planning additional activities during Sunday fellowship.

Our collection drives are continuing well. I want to thank everyone who has helped us collect our Spartan labels, pop cans and cell phones. We are close to \$300 for the year so far.

May the Spirit of the Lord be with you,  
Jonathan Penzien



## Ladies Lunch Bunch

*In an effort to open our luncheon up to more people, we would like to try meeting on Mondays. After consulting the majority of those who have been attending, it has been determined that it may be best to remain local to keep costs at a minimum. With this in mind, we will go to JJ Ruby's on Monday, October 19, at 1:30 pm.*

*All ladies of Peace are welcome and also may invite a guest—someone without a church or someone living alone. Please join us!*

## S.A.L.T. News

*Sharing with All the Love and Truth of Jesus Christ!*

Carolyn Johnson has graciously accepted the appointment to serve as chairperson of our Evangelism Committee, S.A.L.T. We held our first meeting of the year on Wednesday, September 30, and had a good discussion on how this committee can be more effective in the future. We put several ideas on the table and will seek to implement them in the near future, so keep your eyes open. The next S.A.L.T. meeting will be held on **Tuesday, October 20 at 6:00 p.m.** We would love to have you join us as we seek to put some of our plans into action.

## PASTOR MESSER IS BLOGGING!

[www.abideinmyword.blogspot.com](http://www.abideinmyword.blogspot.com)

*Check in from time to time  
to see what's on his mind.*



Abide In My Word!

# PEACE NEWS & NOTES Cont'd



**August 30-October 17, 2009**

Weight Watchers launched its Lose for Good campaign on August 30 for six weeks. For every pound members lose from then until October 17 Weight Watchers will donate up to a million dollars to help combat hunger.

Local meetings can also help the cause by collecting food and donating it to a local food bank. **Last year the Weight Watchers members who meet at Peace donated 90 pounds of food to our food bank.** This year we have also designated the food bank at Peace during Lose For Good.

**I invite members of our congregation to take part in this worthwhile cause until October 17 and also help stock our food bank.** A corner of the Fellowship Hall in the adult Bible study area has been set up to bring your donations.

Please see me if you have any questions.

Sharyn Greening



## Issues, Etc.™

Christ-Centered Cross-Focused Talk Radio

Please consider supporting this Christ-centered, Cross-focused Worldwide Outreach. You can send a donation at any time by making a check payable to:

Lutheran Public Radio  
P.O. Box 912  
Collinsville, IL 62234

You can also donate online via PayPal by going to [www.issuesetc.org](http://www.issuesetc.org) and clicking on "Donate." There are also forms available in the church office for any interested in donating monthly via automatic withdrawal.

## ADVENT TEA

*Planning for our Advent Tea is underway! Look for information in upcoming bulletins and on the SALT bulletin board soon!*



## PEACE MOVIE NIGHT

**Tuesday, October 27**

**ALMA COLLEGE LIBRARY**

**"Luther" - 6:00 P.M.**

**Pizza and pop will be served**

**Look for more info soon!**



## TABLE TALK

Our Table Talks are informal and informative discussions with Pastor Messer on various topics decided by the group in attendance. Plus, THEY'RE FUN! Our next Table Talk will take place on **Thursday, October 8 at 7:00 p.m.** at the Church.

We hope you'll be able to join us!



# Ladies' Guild

## Ladies' Guild Meeting

Our next meeting will be **Monday, October 5, 2009 at 7pm.** Hostess will be Coaline Luplow. All Ladies of the congregation are invited to attend our Guild meetings. If you are a confirmed female member of Peace, you are a member of Guild. We would sincerely encourage you to participate and be an active member of the Guild.

## Altar Flowers

There is a Flower Calendar for 2009 posted on the fellowship hall bulletin board. If you wish to place flowers on the altar sometime during the year, please fill your name in on the calendar and contact the church office with any information that you wish to have included in the bulletin. A bouquet costs \$25 and usually lasts about one (1) month. **We would like to encourage 2 persons (families) to purchase flowers each month, one for each plant stand.** If paying the church for the flowers, checks should be made payable to Peace Lutheran, Church with a separate sizeable note marked "Flower Fund," attached and placed in the Financial Secretary's envelope in the church office. Thank you for helping to beautify our chancel. Questions? See Beth Brostrom, or Marilyn Oswald.



## Ladies Guild Announcements



Thank you to all who donated materials for the Sewing, Health and School Kits to be sent to Lutheran World Relief. Kit collections for LWR 2010 will resume in November.

Still collecting:

New bars of soap (in wrappers) until October 11.

## PLC Women's Prayer Chain

The Prayer Chain list is in the process of being updated. Requests for prayers should be referred to Marlene Miller (463-3710) to begin the prayer chain. Anyone interested in being added or removed from the list is requested to contact Beth Brostrom or Marlene Miller.

## Coffee Hostesses

The Coffee List for 2010 is being prepared. Should you like to be added to serve as a coffee hostess during 2010, or if you wish to be removed from the list, please speak to Beth Brostrom.

## Altar Care



### October

Carolyn Johnson

### November

Janice Sager/Sally Pease

### December

Carol Zeile

## Coffee Hostesses

### October

4 Janice Sager  
11 NO COFFEE/ PASTOR  
APPRECIATION DINNER  
18 Lisa Messer  
25 M. Isaksson/H. Meyer

### November

1 Shawnna Greening  
8 Dorothy Trgina  
15 Marilyn Oswald  
22 Mary Jakolat  
29 Gretchen Harrison

### December

6 Jo Wendt  
13 Carol Durst  
20 Cassie Tennant  
27 Coaline Luplow



# CHRISTIAN EDUCATION AT PEACE

## Youth Confirmation Classes

- First Year Confirmands meet for instruction on at 10 am, followed by Second Year Confirmands at 11 am.

## Sunday School and Adult Bible Class

- Sunday School and Adult Bible Class is offered **every Sunday at 11 am** for all children adult members of Peace and guests. We are currently using **"A New Song Unto the Lord"**.

## Together in the Word

- Our *Together in the Word* Bible Study meets on **Thursday mornings at 10 am.** All men and women of Peace who are available at that time are encouraged to join us. Guests are always welcome as well. We are beginning the study of the book of **Romans.**

## "Christian History 101"

- Weekly classes are held on **Wednesdays at 6 pm.** The class is studying the history of the Christian Church from the time of the apostles to today. Few Christians today really know and understand the history of the Christian Church, so this is a study that will benefit all who attend.

## Birthdays & Anniversaries

# OCTOBER

### Happy Birthday to:

1 Marlene Wiltshire	15 Carolyn Johnson
3 Jack Lesinger	23 Dale Palmer
4 Richard Kohler	24 Jayce Kuehnlein
7 Charlotte Dargie	27 Darlene Palmer
12 Brent Meyers	28 Burt Henry
13 Jordan Henry	30 Myka Luplow
15 Lucille Slick	

### Happy Anniversary to:

14 Gary and Marlene Miller
14 Kevin and Linda Sellke
28 Thomas and Sally Pease

*If we ever miss your birthday or anniversary, please let us know so that we can update our records.*

## Lord, Keep Us Steadfast in Your Word

*Lord, keep us steadfast in Your Word;  
Curb those who by deceit or sword  
Would wrest the kingdom from Your Son  
And bring to naught all He has done.*

*Lord Jesus Christ, Your pow'r make known,  
For You are Lord of lords alone;  
Defend Your holy Church that we  
May sing Your praise eternally.*

*O Comforter of priceless worth,  
Send peace and unity on earth;  
Support us in our final strife  
And lead us out of death to life.*

(LSB 655)

## PAROCHIAL REPORT

(as of 9/27/09)

### Membership at Peace

Baptized - 159; Confirmed - 137

Membership gains: 0

Membership losses: 0

### Financial Report as of 9/27/09

YTD Budgeted ..... \$87,165.00

YTD Receipts..... \$77,184.98

Difference ..... \$-9,980.02

# October is Pastor Appreciation Month

*We ask you, brothers, to respect those who labor among you and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love because of their work. 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13 (ESV)*

The Ladies' Guild requests your participation in our celebration of Pastor Appreciation Month. A dinner in honor of Pastor Messer and his family is planned for Sunday, October 11 (Pastor Appreciation Day), following Sunday School and Adult Bible Class. Please join us and express your appreciation to Pastor Messer for his work among us. The Guild will furnish the meat. The rest of the meal will be potluck. Please bring a dish to pass (salads, potatoes, vegetables, desserts). Coffee, tea, soft drinks, plates and utensils will be provided. As a gift to Pastor and Lisa, there will be a basket in the fellowship hall for cards. Our love and support is an integral part of the ability of our pastor to serve us effectively. Please consider showing your appreciation through a written message and/or a monetary gift.

Although we are setting aside this time to specially recognize Pastor Messer and his family, we all need to remember that pastor appreciation is a year-round activity. Ultimately, pastor appreciation by a congregation is thanking God for sending His servant to us. Loving and appreciating our pastor shows that same love and appreciation to God and reveals more about the congregation than it does about the pastor. Leadership in any organization requires risk. Pastors risk being emotionally hurt when they open up to us and love us unconditionally. Pastors risk being disliked if they make an unpopular decision. Pastors risk criticism for nearly every choice they make, every sermon they preach and every person they love. And, pastor appreciation encourages him to continue to make the difficult choices and to risk loving people who might criticize him in return. There is no way that we can completely understand the trials of our pastor, but we can tell him that we appreciate his dedication to our Lord and to us.

Following are a few examples of things that all of us can do to show our appreciation throughout the year.

1. Tell him you appreciate him and why. And, if you have a concern or complaint, speak directly to him about it.
2. Consider your commitment of time and talents and do something to assist the work of the church.
3. Support your church financially.
4. Approach him sometimes just for a friendly chat.
5. Ask him how you can help him and then do what he asks.
6. Compliment him when he does things right.
7. Remember him in your prayers, just as he remembers you in his. Ask our Lord to give Pastor Messer the love, hope, joy, faith, peace, power, wisdom and courage to serve Him.
8. Smile a little during his sermon.
9. Quit complaining and think of ways to correct the problems.
10. Give him a hug and tell him that you love him.
11. Show the same love and appreciation to Lisa. Her support is important to Pastor and to the congregation.








**PASTOR APPRECIATION DAY**



Rev. Thomas C. Messer  
 (989) 463-3093—Home  
 (989) 388-2037—Cell  
 pastor@peacealma.org  
 pastormesser@gmail.com  
 www.abideinmyword.blogspot.com

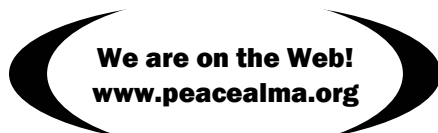
Peace Lutheran Church  
 325 E. Warwick Drive  
 Alma, MI 48801  
 (989) 463-5754  
 contact@peacealma.org  
 www.peacealma.org

# October 2009

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 10 am—Together in Word 5 pm—Weight Watchers	2	3 10 am—1st Yr. Conf. 11 am—2nd Yr. Conf.
4 <i>17th Sunday after Trinity</i> 9:30—Divine Service 10:45—Fellowship 11:00—BC, SS 	5 7 pm—Ladies Guild	6 7 pm—Church Council	7 6 pm—"Christian History" 7 pm—Vespers	8 10 am—Together in Word 5 pm—Weight Watchers 7 pm—Table Talk	9	10 10 am—1st Yr. Conf. 11 am—2nd Yr. Conf.
11 <i>18th Sunday after Trinity</i> 9:30—Divine Service 10:45—Fellowship 11:00—BC, SS 12:00—Pastor Appreciation Dinner 	12 <div>Pastor attending Liturgical Seminar in Kewanee, IL</div>	13	14	15 10 am—Together in Word 5 pm—Weight Watchers	16	17 10 am—1st Yr. Conf. 11 am—2nd Yr. Conf.
18 <i>St. Luke, the Evangelist</i> 8:30—Choir 9:30—Divine Service 10:45—Fellowship 11:00—BC, SS 5-7 pm—PYG 	19 1:30 pm—Lunch Bunch	20 6 pm—SALT Meeting	21 6 pm—"Christian History" 7 pm—Divine Service <i>St. James of Jerusalem, Martyr</i> 	22 10 am—Together in Word 5 pm—Weight Watchers	23	24 10 am—1st Yr. Conf. 11 am—2nd Yr. Conf.
25 <i>Festival of Reformation Day</i> 8:30—Choir 9:30—Divine Service 10:45—Fellowship 11:00—Voters' Assembly 	26 <div>Newsletter articles due</div>	27 Peace Movie Night Alma College Library "Luther" - 6 pm	28 6 pm—"Christian History" 7 pm—Divine Service <i>St. Simon and St. Jude, Apostles</i> 	29 10 am—Together in Word 5 pm—Weight Watchers	30	31 <i>Reformation Day</i> 10 am—1st Yr. Conf. 11 am—2nd Yr. Conf.  "Here I stand!"

Peace Lutheran Church  
325 E. Warwick Dr.  
Alma, MI 48801

Church: 989-463-5754  
E-mail: [contact@peacealma.org](mailto:contact@peacealma.org)  
Mary's Home: 989-463-3067  
Pastor's Home: 989-463-3093  
Pastor's Cell: 989-388-2037



*The mission of Peace Lutheran Church is to welcome all people into the fellowship of God's love by proclaiming the forgiveness of sins through Jesus Christ and to nurture our members with God's Holy Word and Sacraments.*

## *Serving in October*

October	ELDER	ACOLYTES	ORGANIST	USHERS	GREETERS
4 - 9:30 am (Trinity 17)	David Zeile	Samantha Messer Natalie Penzien	Beth Brostrom	Daren Johnson Bill Brostrom	Helen Meyers
11 - 9:30 am (Trinity 18)	Larry Elliott	Aaron Messer Sarah Messer	Mary Jakolat	Jonathan Penzien Bill Hendrick	Miguel and Susan Ortiz
18 - 9:30 am (St. Luke, Evangelist)	Terry Luplow	Phillip Schafer Melanie Penzien	Beth Brostrom	Chris Brown Bill Brostrom	Jim and Janice Sager
25 - 9:30 am (Festival of Reformation)	Miguel Ortiz	Sierra Luplow Tyrel Harwager	Mary Jakolat	Daren Johnson Vern Jakolat	Sharyn Greening
<b>November</b>					
1 - 9:30 am (All Saints' Day)	David Zeile	Natalie Penzien Samantha Messer	Beth Brostrom	Gary Miller Jim Sager	Bob and Jo Wendt

*"Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not men" (Eph. 6:7)*