The Peace Post

Peace Lutheran Church ~ Alma, MI

Vol. 9, No. 6 June 2013

Peace Lutheran Church is a member congregation of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. We believe, teach, and confess the doctrine of the evangelical, catholic faith as it is taught by Holy Scripture and faithfully confessed in the Book of Concord of 1580. We are committed to the pure preaching of God's Word and the right administration of the Holy Sacraments, catechesis of all people in the Christian faith, and liturgical worship consistent with our Reformation heritage. We are an evangelical, orthodox, and catholic congregation, proclaiming Jesus Christ crucified, risen, and reigning for the salvation of the world!



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From the Desk of Pastor Messer "God Is In Our Midst"

The argument is often used that God doesn't tell us *how* to worship Him in Scripture. This argument is used by those who promote different *forms* of worship among us. "If you want to use the historic liturgy and sing traditional

Christian hymns, fine," they say, "but it is equally fine to use more contemporary forms of worship, and to sing contemporary Christian praise songs. After all, God has not told us *how* to worship Him in Scripture. He has not given us a set order we are to use when we worship Him. We are free in this regard."

While it is true that God has not given us a set order we are to use during the Divine Service, and while it is also true that there is some freedom in this area, it is *not true* that God has not told us *how* to worship Him in Scripture. He has most definitely told us how, and He has been pretty specific about it.

Read Exodus, chapters 25-30 and 35-40. There you will find very explicit instructions from God on how to build, adorn, and furnish the Tabernacle, the place where He is to be worshiped by His people. Then, throughout the book of Leviticus, God gives explicit instructions for how His people are to worship Him. He tells them exactly what they are to do. He creates for them the sacrificial system that is to be employed to atone for their sins. He appoints for them many specific Feasts to be celebrated among them. It is all extremely liturgical in nature, and the controlling principle through it all is this: God is Present among His people to save them.

This, dear friends, is the *how* of Christian worship: God is in our midst. God has not changed. What was true in Exodus and Leviticus is still true today, the difference being that everything in Old Testament worship pointed forward to, and has been fulfilled by, the coming of the Messiah, our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. The covenant of circumcision has given way to the Sacrament of Holy Baptism. The sacrificial system and all the Old Testament Feasts find their fulfillment in the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world on the Cross, whose very Body and Blood are distributed to His people in the Holy Supper. The controlling principle established by God in the Old Testament remains firmly in place today: God is Present among His people to save them; God is in our midst.

When it comes to Christian worship, it is this controlling principle that makes all the difference in the world. True Christian worship is one that is guided and controlled by this principle and, for the first fifteen centuries of Christian history, it was this principle that universally guided and controlled Christian worship. It was not until the Reformation in the sixteenth century that some Christians set aside this principle and began worshiping God with the understanding that He was *not* in our midst.

Many modern Lutherans are sadly unaware of the fact that our Lutheran forefathers fought a two-front battle during the Reformation era. On one front was the Roman Catholic Church; on the other was the Reformed and Radical Anabaptists. When it comes to worship, our Lutheran forefathers went out of their way time and time again to make it clear that they, like their Roman Catholic counterparts, believed, taught, and confessed that the guiding and controlling principle for them was that God is Truly Present among His people in the Mass (Divine Service). They corrected the abuses against the Gospel that had crept into the Roman Catholic Mass, but they never parted from that principle, as did the Reformed and Radical Anabaptists, who began teaching that Jesus could not possibly be Present among us in worship, since He is seated at the right hand of God in heaven.

For that reason, the Reformed and Radical Anabaptists began to adopt new *forms* of worship, which were centered on what we do in worship, rather than what our Lord does in our midst. They began eliminating the liturgy and all the salutary customs and ceremonies that had been used by Christians for a millennia and a half. They were doing something new, which was built upon a new theology never before confessed in the Church. For them, God was not present in our midst, and so the guiding and controlling principle became man's work in reaching and pleasing God in heaven.

What went hand in hand with this new theology of worship was the new understanding the Reformed and Radical Anabaptists held regarding the Holy Sacraments. In short, they rejected them. Baptism was no longer viewed by them as God's gracious work of cleansing sinners from their sin and bringing them into His Divine Kingdom, but rather the pledge of allegiance to the Christian faith made by Christians old enough to make a decision to accept Jesus Christ as their Savior and pledge to obey Him. The Lord's Supper was no longer viewed by them as the very Body and Blood of Jesus Christ given to Christians to eat and to drink for forgiveness, life, and salvation, but rather just a memorial meal held from time to time in the Church to remember the sacrifice Jesus made and to show forth their obedience to Him. They rejected the Holy Sacraments because they rejected the guiding and controlling principle taught everywhere in Scripture and confessed by all Christians up to their day, that God is Present among His people to save; that God is in our midst.

When our Lutheran forefathers were accused by Roman Catholics of going along with the Reformed and Radical Anabaptists in rejecting this guiding and controlling principle, they made it vividly clear that they were not guilty of this false accusation, confessing:

Our churches are falsely accused of abolishing the Mass. The Mass is held among us and celebrated with the highest reverence. Nearly all the usual ceremonies are also preserved, except that the parts sung in Latin are interspersed here and there with German hymns . . . At the outset, we must again make this preliminary statement: we do not abolish the Mass, but religiously keep and defend it. Masses are celebrated among us every Lord's Day and on the other festivals. The Sacrament is offered to those who wish to use it, after they have been examined and absolved. And the usual public ceremonies are observed, the series of lessons, of prayers, vestments, and other such things. (Augsburg Confession XXIV, Apology of the Augsburg Confession XXIV)

In other words, "Don't you dare lump us in with the Reformed and Radical Anabaptists! We are nothing like them. We continue to believe, teach, and confess that God is Present to save in the Mass. We continue to

believe, teach, and confess the Holy Sacraments. We continue to believe, teach, and confess the historic liturgy, continue to follow the historic church year calendar, continue to teach and use the ancient and salutary customs and ceremonies, continue to wear vestments, and so forth. The reforms we have made to the Mass are only to correct the abuses against the Gospel that have crept in over the years, which you Roman Catholics refuse to eliminate, but we have not abandoned the guiding and controlling principle in the Mass, that God is in our midst. Not by far! In fact, our Masses are even more reverent that yours, O Roman Catholics, for you ruin them with your emphasis on works-righteousness, while we let the salvific work of our very Present Lord and Savior Jesus Christ reign in our Masses."

So it is that when modern Lutherans adopt worship practices that have their origin among the descendants of the Reformed and Radical Anabaptists, they are abandoning our Lutheran theology of worship. To suggest that this is okay, since God doesn't tell us *how* to worship in Scripture, is just plain false. He does. The *how* is wrapped up in the eternal truth that He is Present among His people to save them. That's what Old Testament worship was all about, and it is still what New Testament worship is all about. God gathers His people around Himself, where He locates Himself and is Present among them. In the Old Testament, that was in the Tabernacle and, later, the Temple. It was also in the synagogues, where God's Word was read and preached to the people. In the New Testament, our Lord Jesus tells us that He is Present wherever two or three (or more) Christians are gathered in His Name for Divine Service. He is Present in His Holy Church to create and sustain faith through His Holy Word and Sacraments. True Christian worship is guided and controlled by this sure and certain truth and principle: God is in our midst!

Bo Giertz, one of the most beloved and faithful, confessional Lutheran theologians of the twentieth century, who served as a Bishop in the Lutheran Church in Sweden, and who is most famous for his excellent book, *The Hammer of God*, puts it this way:

The miracle that took place in the incarnation when the Word became flesh continues in the church and the sacraments. He who does not understand the sacraments will not understand the depth of what Christ has done for us. Faith becomes a philosophy, Jesus becomes a moral role model. The Spirit is replaced with the idealism of good intentions. But faith in God's world-embracing liberation deed in the incarnation, the jubilation in God's having come to us in His Son and freed us from sin and death, everything that is part of the great drama of our salvation, is dissolved. Living and genuine Christianity is in its innermost essence faith in the incarnation and the atonement. It is in its innermost essence sacramental, it is the message of God's real and wondrous presence in the midst of the fallen creation, in the Lord Christ and His Church.

The means of grace is of old the designation for the vehicles that God has chosen to realize His presence in our midst . . . [The holy sacraments] are the Church's external, visible organs, the earthly vessels in which the flow of life from above is channeled and brought into our everyday existence. They are externally insignificant. Yet, they are holy for the sake of God's promises. It is because of them we have the right to say with steadfast certainty: God is in our midst. God is present here. (Giertz, Bo. Christ's Church: Her Biblical Roots, Her Dramatic History, Her Saving Presence, Her Glorious Future. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2010, p. 103)

God is in our midst in the Mass (Divine Service), dear friends. Thus is true Lutheran worship liturgical, sacramental, incarnational, Christ-centered, Cross-focused, holy, and reverent. It must be, since that is *how* God teaches us to worship in Scripture, from Genesis through Revelation.

In Christ,
Pastor Messer

OUR 2013 CONFIRMANDS

On Sunday, May 26, we were blessed to witness the confirmation of our six confirmands, the largest group of youth confirmands Peace has seen in a long time. Prior to their confirmation, which occurred during Divine Service, the six confirmands did a stellar job answering the 155 questions asked of them during the Order of Matins with Public Questioning that same morning.

Sunday marked the end of two years of intense study for these confirmands, the first year consisting of Old Testament Catechesis and New Testament Catechesis, the second year digging deeper with Lutheran Catechesis. They were tested on every lesson in each of these sections and also required to complete two big projects their second year: 1) Essay Project - they had to choose a topic from the index of Luther's Small Catechism, research it, and write an essay at least seven pages in length on it; 2) Confirmation Verse Project - they had to research the Confirmation Verses they chose for themselves and complete several parts of a study outlined for them on that verse, which also had to come in at least seven pages in length. These will eventually be edited and reformatted as a pdf to be sent out to the congregation.

Here is a list of our six 2013 confirmands, along with their confirmation verses:

Farrah Elaine Blair: "Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified or discouraged; for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go" (Joshua 1:9).

Savannah Suzanne Blair: "For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your doing; it is the gift of God" (Ephesians 2:8).

Aaron Daniel Cross: "For you equipped me with strength for the battle; you made those who rise against me sink under me" (Psalm 18:39).

Paige Nicole Harwager: "Jesus replied, 'What is impossible with men is possible with God'" (Luke 18:27).

Morgan Mabel Johnson: "Jesus said to them, 'I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst" (John 6:35).

Myka Isabel Luplow: "Jesus said to him, 'I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me'" (John 14:6).

Some pics (continued on next page):











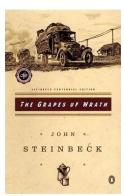
PEACE NEWS & NOTES

Peace Book Club

In May, the Book Club discussed *Revelation* by Doug Couse. Even though none of us particularly liked the book (we gave it a rating of 1, the lowest possible!) we had a great discussion after having read it. In a nutshell, *Revela-*



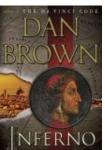
tion is a short, first novel, whose main character is a "Christlike" figure. Much prose is spent on describing conflict between demons and angels who, unbeknownst to the humans, rule life on earth. It was thought provoking and elicited a wonderful discussion.



The Book Club will take a break from meeting for a few months, although we will be busy reading. We selected four very different titles for summer reading: The classic,

The Grapes of Wrath by John

Steinbeck, the thriller, *The Hit* by David Baldacci, Dan Brown's *Inferno* and *Q Road* by Michigan author Bonnie Jo



Campbell. If you are looking for something to read this summer, why not try one of our choices and join us in September (date to be an-



nounced later.)

SALT NEWS

SALT will take a break from meeting during the summer and will reconvene in September.

Please see our Meeting Minutes on the SALT Bulletin Board

FATHER'S DAY BARBEQUE

(Saturday, June 15 - See page 10)

SUPPORT FOR OUR TROOPS

This is an ongoing outreach for the SALT Committee. Please get in touch with Carolyn if you know of a person in the armed forces who is serving abroad. (email ckj1969@yahoo.com).

SECOND TIME AROUND SALE

SALT and the Ladies' Guild are planning another Second Time Around Sale. The dates are July 12 and 13. Please begin setting aside any items that you might like to donate to the sale. You may begin bringing items to the church on Sunday, June 9. Please put them in the grades 3-5 classroom.

Also, on the SALT bulletin board in the fellowship hall there is a sign-up sheet for volunteers to help with set-up and the sale. Helpers are needed on the 12th and 13th during the sale and also in advance for pricing items and setting up. Please see Dorothy Trgina or Coaline Luplow with questions. Thanks for your support!

CHURCH PICNIC

Sunday, August 11
Details in next month's newsletter!

Cleaning Supplies Needed!

If ever you have a chance to provide any cleaning/paper supplies for the church, they will be most appreciated. Right now we especially need all purpose cleaner, hand soap and deodorizers. Any other cleaning or paper products (toilet paper, rolls of paper towels, tissues, trifold paper towels, garbage bags) can be donated at any time. Items may be put in the cleaning closet in the storage room or given to Marlene Miller. If you have questions, please contact Marlene. Thanks so much!

PEACE NEWS & NOTES Cont'd



JUNE Happy Birthday

5 Marlene Miller

8 Larry Elliott

8 Karla Greening

8 Justin Acosta-Arrellano

9 Bill Harmon

9 Miguel Ortiz

12 Gary Miller

13 Janet Isom

14 Art Tennant

17 Jo Wendt

20 Helen Meyers

20 Vivian Strom

21 Lois Ramsey

24 Andrea Elliott

29 Sue Ortiz

30 William

DeGrandchamp

30 Terry Luplow

30 Janice Sager

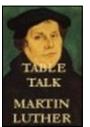
Happy Anniversary

- 2 Ken & Phyllis Hill
- 7 Mike & Gretchen Harrison
- 18 Gordon & Lucille Slick
- 24 Terry & Coaline Luplow

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

Table Talk

Our Table Talks are informal and informative discussions with Pastor Messer on various topics decided by the group in attendance. Table Talk is a great time to take advantage of the opportunity to ask any questions you may have. Our next Table Talk will be



held on **Thursday, June 20** <u>at 7:00 p.m. at</u> <u>Braveheart's Pub</u> in Downtown Alma.

Hope you can join us!

REMEMBERING OUR SHUT-INS

We all love to receive greetings from people who care for us. What better way to remember our shut-ins (when it is difficult for us to make a personal visit) than to send a note or a card periodically to let them know we are thinking of them and to give them something to look forward to in the mail, and especially at this time of the year! Please consider dropping a few lines to our shut-ins during the course of each month.

Marlene Wiltshire Vivian Strom
Warwick Living Center Masonic Pathways
842 W. Warwick Dr. 1200 Wright Ave.
Alma, MI 48801 Alma, MI 48801

Joan Burch Schnepp Health Care Center 427 E. Washington St. Louis, MI 48880

Also, while correspondence is not requested for him, please remember our dear brother in Christ, Dick Wiser, who is at Pine River in St. Louis, in your prayers.



LADIES' LUNCH BUNCH

Ladies' lunch bunch is taking a break for the summer. Stay tuned for more information as we resume in the fall.



LAST DAY OF SUNDAY SCHOOL WILL BE SUNDAY, JUNE 2

To be reconvened in September . . .

Ladies' Guild

Ladies Guild Meeting

Our Ladies Guild will break for the summer. Next meeting is WEDNESDAY, September 4 at 12:00 pm. with Lois Ramsey as hostess. 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.

PLC Women's Prayer Chain

The current list is posted on the Ladies' Guild Bulletin Board. All participants should have a copy. If you wish to be added to the prayer chain as a caller, or if you wish to have yourself or someone else "sent through the chain," please see or call Marlene Miller at 463-3710.

Altar Flowers

There is a flower calendar for 2013 is posted on the fellowship hall bulletin board. We are now working toward ordering altar flower arrangements that coordinate with and enhance the liturgical colors of each Season of the Church year. Depending on the dates, flowers may not always be displayed for a calendar month. Some Seasons of the Church year cross calendar months. If you wish to place flowers on the altar sometime during the year, please put your name on the calendar. A bouquet costs \$25. We encourage two persons (families) to purchase flowers each month, one for each plant stand. Please make checks payable to Peace Lutheran Church, attach a note marked "Altar Flowers" and place in the Financial Secretary's envelope in the church office. Any questions may be directed to Carol Zeile or Coaline Luplow. Thank you for helping to beautify our chancel.

PEACE LUTHERAN LADIES GUILD



The Ladies' Guild is collecting the following items to send to Lutheran World Relief:

PERSONAL CARE KIT

1- BATH SIZE TOWEL
2- BATH SIZE BARS OF SOAP
1 TOOTHBRUSH (IN ORIGINAL PKG)**
1- STURDY COMB
1 METAL NAIL CLIPPER (REMOVE FROM PKG.)

**TOOTHBRUSH MULTIPACKS MAY BE USED BY SEALING AN INDIVIDUAL TOOTHBRUSH IN A BUSINESS ENVELOPE.

COLLECTION DATES:

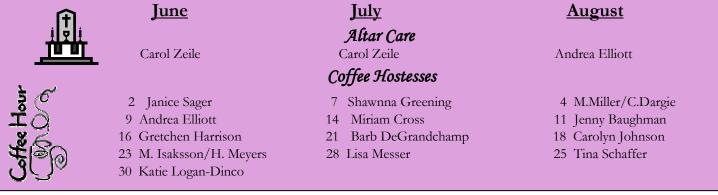
April 1 - June 30

PEACE LADIES GUILD COOKBOOK

Cookbooks are available for \$10.00 and can be purchased during fellowship time from any member of the Guild. Please see Coaline Luplow with any questions.

LADIES GUILD SELLS CUTLERY

Rada cutlery is on display the 3rd Sunday of each month in the fellowship hall during the coffee hour., We have seven different items in stock: Paring Knife, Large Slicer Knife, Tomato Slicer, Serrated Steak Knife, Spatula, Pie Server, and Veggie Peeler. A product catalogue is available for viewing and orders may also be placed through the catalog.



CHRISTIAN EDUCATION AT PEACE

Sunday School and Adult Bible Class

• Sunday School and Adult Bible Class (currently studying *Revelation*) is offered on **Sundays at 11:15 a.m.** (Last day of Sunday School is June 2 and will reconvene in September).

Together in the Word

• We meet every **Thursday at 10:00 a.m.** We are currently studying 2 Kings. All are welcome to join us!

Wednesday Bible Study

Meets every Wednesday at 6 pm for a study of Acts.

First Communion and Confirmation Classes

• First Communion Classes take place as arranged (see Pastor Messer if interested); Confirmation starts in fall.



PASTOR MESSER IS BLOGGING!

www.abideinmyword.blogspot.com

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



TALK RADIO FOR THE THINKING CHRISTIAN!

Listen to what you want, when you want, at: www.issuesetc.org

PAROCHIAL REPORT (as of 5/31/13)

Membership at Peace
Baptized - 144; Confirmed - 119

Membership gains: 0

Membership losses: 0

Financial Report through 5/31/13
YTD Budgeted....\$45,675.00
YTD Receipts.....\$44,873.36
Difference......\$801.64

The Green Season, Liturgically Speaking

As you may recall, most of the summer we will be using the green superfrontal, pulpit bookmark and sanctuary banner on Sundays. After Pentecost and Holy Trinity Sunday, we enter the "Green Season." This is a non-festival time of the church year, sometimes called "Ordinary Time" since these Sundays have no seasonal name and are indicated by ordinal numbers. You will see that we use Trinity 1, Trinity 2, Trinity 3, etc. to denote the Sundays after Holy Trinity. The color green was chosen as the liturgical color since it is often considered the color of life and growing things. Even the "ordinary" time of the church year we continue to grow in faith as we receive Lord's gifts of Word and Sacrament.

Our Summer Barbecue

Join us for a barbecue party for Father's Day at Peace Lutheran Church

June 15 at Noon

RSVP to: Cassie Tennant,

radar1214@yahoo.com

or to (989) 481-3027

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

June 2013

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

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
2 Trinity 1 9:30 am - Divine Service 10:45 am - Fellowship 11:15 am - SS & BC		4 7:00 pm - Council	6 pm - Bible Study (Acts) 7:00 pm -Divine Service St. Boniface of Mainz, Archbishop	6 NO Together n the Word 5 pm - Weight Watchers	2	&
9 Trinity 2 9:30 am - Divine Service 10:45 am - Fellowship 11:15 am - Bible Class	C	11	6 pm - Bible Study (Acts) 7 pm - Divine Service St. Barnabas, Apostle (Obs.)	13 10 am - Together in Word 5 pm - Weight Watchers	14	15 Noon - Father's Day Barbecue
16 Trinity 3 9:30 am - Divine Service 10:45 am - Fellowship 11:15 am - Bible Class		18	6 pm - Bible Study (Acts) 7 pm - Divine Service Nat. of John the Baptist (Obs.)	20 10 am - Together in Word 5 pm - Weight Watchers 7 pm - Table Talk @ Braveheart's Pub	21	22
23 Trinity 4 9:30 am - Divine Service 10:45 am - Fellowship 11:15 am - Bible Class	4	25 7:00 pm - Stewardship Committee Meeting	6 pm - Bible Study (Acts) 7 pm -Divine Service St. Peter & St. Paul (Obs.)	27 10 am - Together in Word 5 pm - Weight Watchers	58	29
30 Triniy 5 9:30 am - Divine Service 10:45 am - Fellowship 11:15 am - Bible Class	July 1	a	5 6 pm - Bible Study (Acts) 7 pm -Divine Service The Visitation (Obs.)	4 NO Together in the Word 5 pm - WW	ıc	9

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

Church: 989-463-5754

E-mail: 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 June

To a c	ELDERS	ACOLYTES	USHERS	GREETERS
June 2 - 9:30 am Trinity 1	Larry Elliott	Paige Harwager Aaron Messer	Terry Luplow Jon Penzien	Lillian Manns Lois Ramsey
9 - 9:30 am <i>Trinity 2</i>	Terry Luplow	Morgan Johnson Farrah Blair	Chris Brown Tyrel Harwager	Lisa Messer
16 - 9:30 am <i>Trinity 3</i>	Miguel Ortiz	Myka Luplow Aaron Cross	John Lemmermann Daren Johnson	Helen Meyers
23 - 9:30 am <i>Trinity 4</i>	Gabriel Blair	Sierra Luplow Savannah Blair	Miguel Ortiz Gary Miller	Penzien Family
30 - 9:30 am <i>Trinity 5</i>	Larry Elliott	Natalie Penzien Aaron Messer	Vern Jakolat Gabriel Blair	Jim and Janice Sager
July 7 - 9:30 am	Terry Luplow	Paige Harwager Morgan Johnson	Jon Penzien Chris Brown	Dorothy Trgina

[&]quot;Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not men" (Eph. 6:7)