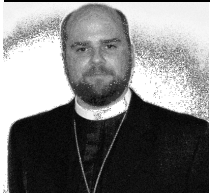


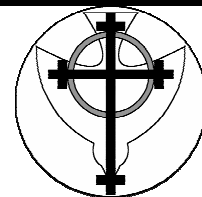
The Peace Post

Peace Lutheran Church ~ Alma, MI

June, 2009



From the Desk of Pastor Messer



“There Is Really No Debating This”

Dearly Beloved in Christ,

There is a lot of debate in our day and age over how Lutherans should worship. There shouldn't be, but, unfortunately, there is. A growing contingent in our synod argues that we should abandon the historic liturgy of the Church and adopt contemporary worship “styles” and “formats,” because the old way of “doing Church” no longer appeals to modern people. “If we are going to reach the lost for Jesus, we need to change our ways and make worship more appealing to the masses,” they say. And, true to their stated position and goals, this contingent sets out to do exactly what it claims is necessary. They change their ways and make their “worship” more appealing by chucking the hymnals for contemporary “praise songs” on the big screen, removing the altar (or, at least, setting it aside) to make room for the “praise band,” getting rid of the vestments in favor of leading “worship” in a suit and tie (at best) or t-shirt (at worst), focusing on rousing emotions via entertainment, replacing law-gospel sermons with upbeat motivational messages (or chancel dramas or video presentations), and so on.

One of the main arguments employed by this contingent revolves around the younger generation in the Church, for it is contended that the Church must make her “worship” more hip and cool if she is to retain her young members. But, this argument falls flat on its face when one takes a look at the statistics of those congregations that have gone out of their way to contemporize the Church for the sake of reaching the youth—their retention rate is no higher than those congregations that retain the historic liturgy! How a congregation worships doesn't really play a factor in the departure of our youth from the Church. There are many reasons why they leave, at least for a time, but the main reason is that they either have not been properly catechized or the catechesis they received from the Church is not supplemented by their parents in the home. But, that is a subject for a different time. The point here is that the argument which posits the necessity of changing how the Church worships in order to keep our youth is a complete fallacy.

On the other side of the debate are the true Lutherans (and, yes, by that I do mean that those who follow the methods described above are not truly Lutherans; they may think they are, but they're not), who follow a true theology of worship, recognizing that true worship is God's Divine Service to His people. We enter His Holy House to receive the Divine Gifts of forgiveness, life, and salvation, which He delivers to us through His Holy Word and Sacraments. This Divine Service is, by nature, reverent and holy, for our Holy God is there among us, and where He is, there is reverence and holiness.

God tells us in His Word, “For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven” (Eccl. 3:1). Certainly, there is a time for fun and games; a time for entertainment; a time for informality; a time for motivational messages, etc. But, the Divine Service, when our Lord gathers His children together in His Holy House around His Holy Word and Sacraments, is most definitely NOT the time for any of that. It is, instead, a time of confession and absolution; a time of prayer and meditation; a time of intimate fellowship with the Triune God and with our brothers and sisters in Christ; a time of refreshing as we are fed on Word and Sacrament; a time to ESCAPE from the world and its ways to rest in the safety and security of our Lord's sanctuary.

Thus, from the perspective of confessional Lutheranism, the debate that continues to rage on in our synod over how we should worship is quite simply ridiculous, because those arguing in favor of abandoning the historic liturgy and adopting contemporary worship “styles” and

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“formats” are really arguing for adopting a completely different theology of worship that neither Holy Scripture nor our Lutheran Confessions know anything about. Furthermore, the worship “styles” and “formats” they endorse and promote are not new, but are the “styles” and “formats” of other Christians with whom we are not in fellowship and whose doctrines and practices our very Lutheran Confessions themselves condemn. And, lastly, the mantra, “If we are going to reach the lost for Jesus, we need to change our ways, etc.” reveals a gross misunderstanding of a) how the lost are reached for Jesus, namely through His Word and Sacraments, not by our efforts, and certainly not by mimicking the unbelieving world or pandering to the wants and desires of people; b) the primary purpose of the Divine Service, which is not to evangelize the lost, but to feed the sheep of the Good Shepherd, Jesus Christ.

I hope and pray that what is written here helps you to understand that our reasons for retaining the historic liturgy of the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic church are not related to some infatuation we have with the past or some desire we have to simply do things the old way, but are rather deeply rooted in the theology of worship revealed to us in Holy Scripture and expounded in our Lutheran Confessions.

It is beyond absurd that the “worship wars” continue to be fought in our midst. There is really no debating how it is that our God desires to be worshipped. He reveals this to us loudly and clearly in His Word, which is why I am utterly amazed by the continuous—and, sadly, increasing—arguments put forth by those who claim to be Lutheran, including our own current synodical leadership, imploring us to embrace a theology of worship contrary to what God Himself reveals to us. For Pete’s sake, pick up the Bible and read it! When is it that God’s people find themselves in hot water and under His wrath and punishment? Whenever they abandon His Word and incorporate the principles of this sinful world and the beliefs of the pagan culture surrounding them into their worship of God. And yet, that is exactly what is being espoused by the growing contingent among us who argue that the Church must change her ways and become more like the world around her. Amazing! And, sad—very, very sad!

With that said, I’m including in this newsletter several articles written by other confessional Lutheran pastors within our synod that reinforce what I’ve written here. Please take the time to read them, for they are excellent and will add to your understanding of why we worship the way we do.

*In Christ,
Pastor Messer*



This is an excerpt from C.F.W. Walther’s “Essays for the Church” (Vol. I), and deals with the false belief, already held in his day, that Lutherans should rid themselves of the ancient church customs and follow the customs of Americanized Christians, for the purpose of looking too much like Rome. Walther was the first president of our synod and one of the best theologians and pastors the Church has ever known.

“We refuse to be guided by those who are offended by our church customs. We adhere to them all the more firmly when someone wants to cause us to have a guilty conscience on account of them.... It is truly distressing that many of our fellow Christians find the difference between Lutheranism and Papism (i.e., Roman Catholicism) in outward things. It is a pity and a dreadful cowardice when one sacrifices the good ancient church customs to please the deluded American sects, lest they accuse us of being papistic (i.e., too catholic!). Indeed! Am I to be afraid of a Methodist, who perverts the saving Word, or be ashamed in the matter of my good cause, and not rather rejoice that the sects can tell by our ceremonies that I do not belong to them?”

“We are not insisting that there be uniformity of perception or feeling or of taste among all believing Christians – neither dare anyone demand that all be minded as he is. Nevertheless it remains true that the Lutheran liturgy distinguishes Lutheran worship from the worship of other churches to such an extent that the houses of worship of the latter look like lecture halls in which the hearers are addressed or instructed (NOTE: if he were writing today, he’d no doubt add: they look like movie theatres in which the hearers are entertained!), while our churches are in truth houses of prayer in which Christians serve the great God publicly before the world.” (Essays for the Church, Volume 1, p. 194, St. Louis, CPH, 1992).

What follows was written by Rev. William Weedon, pastor of St. Paul Lutheran in Hamel, IL. This was one of Pr. Weedon’s many excellent responses in the midst of a debate on his blog where another LCMS pastor was arguing in favor of contemporary “worship.”



I do not believe that the liturgy of the Pentecostals, etc. is ever befitting in any Church of the Augsburg Confession. And by liturgy I am not talking text in a book, but ordered action. There is an ordered action which Christians have held to from the very beginning that is utterly befitting of what they believe and confess about the miracle of the Lord’s Supper; those who do not believe that miracle came up with an ordered action that reflected their view of its relative unimportance. You can’t “wash that out” of their ordered action. It’s part of its fabric.

Lutherans profess that we do not abolish the Mass. And by Mass, no, they didn’t mean just the Lord’s Supper. They meant, and their opponents understood them to mean, the Divine Service Liturgy - that ordered action which has characterized the Supper from the get go; what Dix could call “the shape of the liturgy.” Lutherans have always been most tolerant of variety in human ceremony and rightly called for people not to needlessly dispute about true adiaphora (to swing incense? to chant the readings or to speak them? to elevate or not? to wear alb and chasuble or just surplice? and so on), but the ordered action of the Mass itself was not counted as an adiaphoron in any place where the Lutherans took their Symbols (i.e., Confessions) seriously.

NOTE: “Adiaphora” (singular, “adiaphoron”) are things neither commanded nor forbidden by God in His Word.



“Cwirla’s Top Ten Reasons to Use the Historic Liturgy”

This article was written by Rev. William Cwirla, who serves as pastor of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in Hacienda Heights, CA.

First a definition and a disclaimer. By “liturgy” I mean the western catholic mass form as it has been handed down by way of the Lutheran Reformation consisting of the five fixed canticles (Kyrie, Gloria in Excelsis, Credo, Sanctus, and Agnus Dei) - pardon the Latin, but it sounds cool and we still use it. “Liturgy” also includes the assigned Scripture texts for the Sundays, feast days, and seasons. I recognize that other Christians (and even some Lutherans) use the word “liturgy” to refer to any order of service, but that’s not how I’m using it here. Most of what I will say about the liturgy of the Divine Service will pertain to “liturgical worship” in general.

OK. Good. Now, why the liturgy?

1. *Historic roots.* Some parts of the liturgy go back to the apostolic period. Even the apostolic church did not start with a blank liturgical slate but adapted and reformed the liturgies of the synagogue and the Sabbath. The western mass shows our western catholic roots, of which we as Lutherans are not ashamed. We’re not the first Christians to walk the face of the planet, nor, should Jesus tarry, will we be the last. The race of faith is a relay, one generation handing on (“traditioning”) to the next the faith once delivered to the saints. The historic liturgy underscores and highlights this fact. It is “traditionable,” that is, it can be handed on.
2. *A distinguishing mark.* The liturgy distinguishes us from those who do not believe, teach, and confess the same as we do. What we believe determines how we worship, and how we worship confesses what we believe.
3. *Theocentric and Christocentric.* From the invocation of the Triune Name in remembrance of Baptism to the three-fold benediction at the end, the liturgy is focused on the activity of the Triune God centered in the Person and Work of Jesus Christ. Worship is not primarily about “me” or “we” but about God in Christ reconciling the world to Himself and my baptismal inclusion in His saving work.
4. *Teaching.* The liturgy teaches the whole counsel of God - creation, redemption, sanctification, Christ’s incarnation, passion, resurrection, and reign, the Spirit’s outpouring and the new life of faith. Every liturgical year cycles through these themes so that the hearer receives the “whole counsel of God” on a regular basis.
5. *Trans-cultural.* One of the greatest experiences of my worship life was to be in the Divine Service in Siberia with the Siberian Lutheran Church. Though I spoke only a smattering of Russian, I knew enough to recognize the liturgy, know what was being said (except for the sermon, which was translated for us), and be able to participate knowledgeably across language and cultural barriers. I have the same experience with our Chinese mission congregation.
6. *Repetition.* It is, after all, the mother of learning. Fixed texts and annual cycles of readings lend to deep learning. Obviously, mindless repetition does not accomplish anything; nor does endless variety.
7. *Corporate.* Worship is a corporate activity. “Let us go to the house of the Lord.” The liturgy draws us out of ourselves into Christ by faith and the neighbor by love. We are all in this together. Worship is not simply about what “I get out of it,” but I am there also for my fellow worshippers to receive the gifts of Christ that bind us together and to encourage each other to love and good works (Heb 10:25). We are drawn into the dialogue of confession and absolution, hearing and confessing, corporate song and prayer. To borrow a phrase from a favored teacher of mine, in church we are “worded, bodied, and bloodied” all together as one.
8. *The tyranny of the “here and now.”* When the Roman world was going to hell in a hand basket, the church was debating the two natures of Christ. In the liturgy, the Word sets the agenda, defining our needs and shaping our questions. The temptation is for us to turn stones into bread to satisfy an immediate hunger and scratch a nagging spiritual itch, but the liturgy teaches us to live by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.
9. *External and objective.* The liturgical goal is not that everyone feel a certain way or have an identical “spiritual” experience. Feelings vary even as they come and go. The liturgy supplies a concrete, external, objective anchor in the death and resurrection of Jesus through Word, bread, and wine. Faith comes by hearing the objective, external Word of Christ.
10. *The Word of God.* This is often overlooked by critics of liturgical worship. Most of the sentences and songs of the liturgy are direct quotations or allusions from Scripture or summaries, such as the Creed. In other words, the liturgy is itself the Word of God, not simply a packaging for the Word. Many times the liturgy will rescue a bad sermon and deliver what the preacher has failed to deliver. I know; I’ve been there.

Ten is one of those good numbers in the Bible signifying completeness, so I’ll stop at ten. I’m sure there are more.

“Holy Communion: *The Ceremony of Ceremonies*”



This article was written by Rev. Dr. Richard Stuckwisch, who serves as pastor at Emmaus Lutheran Church in South Bend, IN. In this article, Pastor Stuckwisch shows how all ceremonies conducted in the Divine Service flow to, and from, the Ceremony of the Blessed Sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood, for better or for worse.

Faith lives by and from the Word of God. Faith loves the Word, delights in it and clings to it. And faith follows the Word, where it leads, to the Body of the Word-made-Flesh, to His Breaking of the Bread, to the fellowship of His Altar in His Church. If faith is prevented from that Table on earth, it will yet hope in the resurrection of the body, even as it looks forward with eager expectation to the Marriage Feast of the Lamb in His Kingdom, which has no end. For as faith is never without the Word of God, so the Word, having become flesh, is nevermore without His Body.

The risen Lord Jesus is patient and persistent in demonstrating that He has risen *bodily*; that He is not a ghost or a disembodied spirit, but a man of flesh and blood, of bones and sinew. Not only that, but He catechizes His disciples on the way that leads to His Table, to eating and drinking with Him there. It is in His Sacrament that they see Him, according to faith in His Word, and know Him and love Him. For that is where He knows and loves them, and gives Himself to them, and pours Himself out for them, and feeds them with Himself, His Body and His Blood for their flesh as well as their souls, for the resurrection of their bodies to the life everlasting with God.

The goodness of the body is already established by the Creation of God; it is clarified and fulfilled in the Incarnation of God the Son; and it is gloriously perfected for us by His bodily death upon the Cross and His bodily resurrection from the dead. The giving of His Body, and the pouring out of His Blood, for us Christians *bodily* to eat and to drink in the Sacrament of the Altar, is not simply a further affirmation of these facts. It is the very living of the body in that goodness which is Christ, and thus to live, both body and soul, precisely that good divine life which the Holy Triune God intended when He created man in His own Image, after His own likeness.

Tertullian had it right when he said that the soul has no life or salvation apart from the body, as God Himself demonstrated when He breathed His life-giving Spirit into man through his nostrils. The soul hears and receives the Word of the Gospel through the ears of the body. The soul is cleansed before God in righteousness and purity by the washing of the body with

water and the Word of Christ. And the soul is brought into the intimate fellowship of the Father with the Son in the Holy Spirit, by the bodily eating and drinking of the Body and Blood of Christ. So then does the soul confess the faith, pray, praise and give thanks to God, with the same mouth of the same body. And the soul loves and serves the neighbor in his or her body and life, with the hands and feet of the body, which are redeemed and sanctified for the resurrection and the life.

To be a human being, a man or woman, is to be both body and soul. Thus, with our bodies, we occupy space and time. We are in a place, and we have movement even when we are at rest. It is not possible for us to be otherwise; nor is it simply an accident or coincidence that we are this way, for it is the way that God has created us to be, to live and move and have our being in Him.

So, too, it is no accident or coincidence that the Sacrament of the Altar is a ceremony. Indeed, it is *the* fundamental ceremony of the Christian faith and life, of the Divine Liturgy and Christian worship. Ceremony is nothing else but life in the body. There is no question of whether or not we shall have ceremonies, but whether or not they will be ordered rightly by the

“Every godly ceremony will be a movement to or from the Ceremony of the Altar.”

Word of God in faith and love. Every godly ceremony will be a movement to or from the Ceremony of the Altar. All

the freedom in the world is used rightly and well, when it finds its center in that eating and drinking of the Body and Blood of Christ at His Word.

Freedom there is, to be sure, and faith shall not relinquish it; for it is the glorious freedom of the risen Christ Jesus, the divine and blessed gift of His Gospel. But it is no more a freedom *from* ceremony than it is a freedom from Christ Himself. It is a freedom *for* such ceremony as lives in the Body of Christ. To be free of that would not be life but death. Since the children of man partake of flesh and blood, the Lord also partakes of the same, that man might partake of Him in flesh and blood; not to be saved *from* the body, but *for* life in the body (*in the Body*).

In our wonderful group conversation at Redeemer in Fort Wayne this past January, Pastor Petersen offered the comment that simplicity, or the absence of traditional ceremonies, is its own kind of ceremony. I understood what he said, and I agreed with him at the time, but I did not fully comprehend what a profound point he was making. I wonder if it went past others who were there, too.

There is no division between those who are ceremonial and

those who are not. To live in the body is to be engaged in ceremony, even if we do not normally speak in such terms. If we should prefer to limit "ceremony" to the conduct of the Divine Service, that would be well and good; but whether it is simple or elaborate, elegant or ludicrous, reverent or a farce, there will be ceremony. The ceremony need not be the same from place to place, nor can it be, but it can be measured and evaluated as to whether or how it serves and supports the preaching of the Word of God, and as to whether or how it approaches *the* Ceremony of the Lord's Supper.

To take bread and wine and set them apart; to consecrate these earthly elements with the spoken Word of Christ our Lord; to distribute the Body and Blood Christ to His disciples, gathered together in His Name; and for those Christians to receive, to eat and drink the Holy Communion, it is all ceremony. Collectively, it is *the* Ceremony, as it is *the* Divine Liturgy, and it is most certainly not an adiaphoron. Nor is it possible for the Ministers of Christ and the members of His Church on earth to be so gathered in His Name, to give and receive His gifts with His Word, apart from other ceremonies that bring them to and from that place and that time.

The point being, again, that there is no division between those who are ceremonial and those who are not, but only between those ceremonies that freely approach *the* Ceremony of the Altar in faith and love, and those ceremonies that distract, detract, divert or drive away the disciples of Jesus from that central Ceremony. There are numerous varieties of particular ceremonies within each of these categories, and perhaps there are some ceremonies that may belong to both categories, depending on the temporal circumstances; for love may discern that what is helpful in one place is hurtful in another. By and large, however, any given ceremony will either be in harmony with the Ceremony of the Sacrament, or it will clash and compete with that Ceremony.

Let there be no argument over whether or not to have ceremonies. But let us reason together in faith and love, and consider how those ceremonies that we undertake in the conduct of the Divine Service, especially as stewards of the Mysteries of God, serve the faithful in their bodies and souls with the Body of the Word-made-Flesh. It does finally come down to this: The Lord Jesus desires to feed His Christians with His Body, and to give them drink of His Blood; so there needs to be a way to get those Holy Things into their mouths. Let us do so in such wise manner as confesses with our bodies what we believe in our heart and confess with our lips.



"Taste Worship?"

This article was written by Rev. Larry Beane II (a.k.a. Father Hollywood), who serves as pastor of Salem Lutheran Church in Gretna, LA.

I recently got an invitation to a "worship event" at a local LCMS congregation in which the worship is to be "led" by a guy named Peder Eide. I don't believe he is an ordained minister. I asked him what his denominational affiliation is, and he wrote back that he is a Lutheran.

Sadly, "Lutheran" has become a word that lacks precision these days. Obviously, there are not only many synods, but many theologies covered by the term "Lutheran" even within our own synod.

According to his Taste Worship website, his next event (Jan 21, 2009) will be at Mount Calvary Lutheran Church in Excelsior, MN, a self-described "open and welcoming ELCA congregation" that has a woman "pastor" on staff.

His use of the term "taste worship" is interesting, if not ironic.

The word "taste" can mean different things. "Taste" can be used in a literal sense, as in physical eating - which is indeed central to worship in the Lutheran tradition - as in the Sacrament of the Altar, also known as the Mass or the Lord's Supper (e.g. AC X and AC XXIV). "Taste" also has a more figurative meaning, which conveys propriety and decorum - which is certainly also central to the Lutheran tradition of reverence in Lutheran worship - which is, in fact, clearly spelled out in our Lutheran confessions (e.g. the condemnation of "spectacles" and the requirement that worship embody "Christian discipline" and "evangelical decorum" per FC SD X:7 and the "greatest reverence" of liturgical worship, per AC XXIV:1).

Is either definition of "taste" being used here?

I would certainly describe the worship at my own congregation as tasteful. Not because of any aesthetic talents of our own. But rather only because we follow the reverential historic liturgy of the Western Mass as it has been handed over to us from our Evangelical Catholic (Lutheran) fathers. Our worship is also centered on the physical act of "taste," as every Divine Service is grounded in the miracle of the Holy Eucharist of the Lord's most holy body and blood.

And our worship services really do embody what Mr. Eide dreams about - diversity according to age. Our version "taste worship" routinely includes newborns right up to octogenarians (and occasionally, a nonagenarian) gathered in family groups from every race and socioeconomic status. That is the beauty of traditional worship - our hymns are not bound

by time and style. They don't pit one group against the other. Nobody is left out just because they might not like rock music or fit in with the ever-transient youth culture.

I'm sure he means well, but if Mr. Eide truly wants to "taste worship" in New Orleans, featuring diverse trans-generationalism (even transcending the grave!), he might want to visit a traditional Lutheran church to "taste and see that the Lord is good" (Ps 34:8) through the Most Holy Sacrament, and join with young, old, living, dead, human beings, angels, and even the Lord Jesus Christ in the flesh Himself, in heavenly worship that leaves this fallen culture of death outside the doors of the Holy Ark of the Church, and likewise leaves the guitars, light-shows, and other entertainments to the real rock stars who perform at places like the House of Blues in the French Quarter, or in our many music festivals in New Orleans. If we want to rock, rap, or zydeco the day (and night) away, there are lots (and lots!) of times and places to do that - just not during the Divine Service in our church sanctuary.

Some things are sacred.

And just because I habitually wear all black, cut my musical teeth on hard rock and heavy metal, and one of my parishioners gave me the CD "Black Ice" as a Christmas present (thank you, Barbara, you rock!), doesn't mean I'll be strutting into the sanctuary any time soon to the strains of "Back in Black" or screaming lines from "Rock and Roll Damnation" to those on the "Highway to Hell." As an adult convert to Lutheranism I have to make an observation: you "cradle Lutherans" have a treasure that you too often take for granted, not only in the magnificent corpus of sacred music from 500 years of rigorous sung "theology of the cross" that is glorious, timeless and applicable to every generation, and the envy of all Christendom, but you also have the mother lode of the liturgy, the full richness of ancient words from the very Word of God that breathe life into dead bones and make them live! Please don't take these holy treasures for granted and trade them away for a pottage of mere entertainment.

And in spite of Mr. Eide's good intentions, there are always "unintended consequences" - such as the utterly unrealistic expectation among teenagers that worship (and indeed the Christian life itself) will always be fun, entertaining, pulsating, filled with adoring fist-pumping crowds, and an emotional "high." For when his "theology of glory" rock and roll roadshow has moved on, and when those same young people find themselves back in the real world struggling with family problems, with temptation, with the culture of death, when they find themselves in hospitals, at deathbeds, and dealing with authentic life in the sin-weary flesh rather than a rock and roll fantasy - it will be us pastors who will minister, truly minister to them under the cross, with traditional hymns and liturgical worship,

forged in the furnace of the centuries, which preach Christ crucified, breathe life into fallen flesh, and bequeath salvation and true comfort - not just a catchy tune or a slogan on a t-shirt.

And under the cross, God's people of every generation and demographic will truly "taste worship", drinking the sacred wine of the Lord's blood unto eternal salvation rather than simply slurping the artificial Kool-Aid of sugary pop entertainment.

The Honor of Serving in the Holy of Holies

God has always dictated an order of worship for His people. He, in His infinite, divine wisdom, has not left His people alone, but has told them exactly where He can be found. In the Old Testament, He ordered the building of the Tabernacle, and, later, the Temple, and informed His people that His presence would dwell in the Holy of Holies, the innermost room. The Tabernacle/Temple was a very Holy Place, and the Holy of Holies was, just as it sounds, the Holiest Place within the Holy Place. So Holy was the Holy of Holies that God only permitted the High Priest to enter it once a year, on the Day of Atonement, to make sacrifices for all the people of Israel. If anyone entered the Holy of Holies who wasn't the High Priest, they were struck down dead by God. This teaches us how serious God takes the Holy of Holies!

When Jesus came and fulfilled all the Law and died on the cross for the sins of all people, the curtain that separated the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies in the Temple was torn in two. This symbolizes the blessed truth that all of God's children are now priests and are now permitted access into the Holy Place, and even allowed to see and approach the Holy of Holies, which is where the altar is located in the church, and is where our Lord establishes His Presence in our midst.

This is why our pastor has the duty to see to it that all who serve in the Holy of Holies do so with reverence and respect. I know when I served as an elder, Pastor Messer taught all of us the proper reverence we should show for being privileged to serve in the Holy of Holies, and I considered it a great honor to do so.

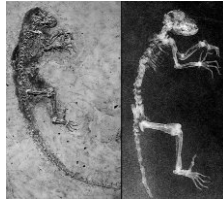
The one thing that bothered me was when I would hear some of our young people who were serving as acolytes complain that they *had* to do this task. That always made me sorrowful, for they were failing to see what a great honor it was for them to serve. The lighting of the candles signifies the beginning of the ritual of the Divine Service. It gains the attention of those gathered to worship, and alerts them the Holy Mass is starting. Quiet is observed as the ritual begins as each candle is lit and the Holy of Holies is becoming brighter. This is an important part of the Service.

Please, my dear young brothers and sisters in Christ, consider the honor bestowed upon you to serve as acolytes in the Holy of Holies. Show up when you are assigned and perform your honor to The Triune God with a joyful heart. Consider this a privilege, not a job, for you get to serve in the Holy of Holies, and you can't even begin to realize how so very special that is!

In Christ,
Bill Harmon

The "Missing Link": Still Missing the Gospel

*By Rev. Mark Buetow, Higher Things
Pastor, Bethel Lutheran, Du Quoin, IL*



Scientists recently announced that they've found what they call the "missing link." No, it's not a problem on our website. It's a cute little animal fossil named "Ida" that is supposedly 47 million years old and shows very clearly a specific branch in the human evolutionary tree. At some point, little mammaly things split, one branch becoming lemur-like creatures and the other branch becoming monkeys, apes and finally humans. Scientists are really excited because they say this proves beyond doubt that their evolutionary theories are right and unquestionable. Remember, the theory of evolution suggests that all life evolved from some glob of proteins that was floating around billions of years ago. From some one celled organism, more complicated life developed. Fish things became crawly things and those became all kinds of organisms. Eventually, you get to "Ida" the little fossil they found which is part-lemur with some "human" characteristics. The missing link! Evolution is proven! God is dead! Blah, blah, blah!

As always, the Word of God demolishes the wisdom of men. In the book of Genesis, it clearly states that when the Lord spoke His Word to create, He made everything "according to its kind" and everything He made He said would reproduce "according to its kind." Those words are important! They teach us that apple trees make apple trees, petunias make petunias, cows make cows, and people make people. People don't come from monkeys and birds don't come from dinosaurs. Our heavenly Father, in all of His infinite creative genius, made our wonderful world with all its diversity of life by the power of His Word. That includes Man, whom God's Word clearly says was crafted by the Lord Himself and into which He breathed the Spirit of life to make Man a living being.

But the evidence! The fossil! It proves evolution! The Christian faith is doomed! The book of Genesis really must be a made up mythical story! Nonsense! Little "Ida" the lemur fossil doesn't prove anything. Evolutionary scientists have long suspected there was some relation between man and other primates and mammals and now they suppose they have this "missing link," this missing piece of the puzzle. But that's no missing link. Show me a fossil that's part fish and part mammal. Show me the fossil that proves some form of life between a fish and a tree. For being a link in the human chain, Ida sure has a big tail! The fact of the matter is this: evolutionary scientists have a certain understanding of how they think life has evolved and when they find some fossils, they are very good at making the evidence conclude what they already think has happened.

Don't be fooled by the propaganda. The demand to be shown a "missing link" is a challenge presented by those who believe what

God's Word says about our origins. For these evolutionary scientists to claim they've found the "missing link" is a direct attack upon the Christian faith. It's as much as to say, "See? Science is right. The Bible is wrong. Christians are stupid. Faith is silly. God doesn't exist. Evolution is how things really work." The fact is, those who trust in their theories of evolution rely upon a huge amount of faith and trust in their view of the world. It's faith at least as much as a Christian has to trust in God's Word. There isn't space in a little article like this to refute evolution at every point but believe it when I say there are plenty of intelligent scientists who don't buy it. In any case, genuine science is in the business of experimenting and collecting data and the fact is, you can't prove evolution anymore than you can prove creation because nobody can create something from nothing.

But the Lord can! He can and did create everything out of nothing. The problem with evolution is not simply that it denies the book of Genesis. The problem with evolution is that it assumes humans are no more special than the creatures they supposedly evolved from. It supposes that death is the natural order of things. It denies that there is a personal God who made us and takes care of us in favor of thinking everything happens by random chance. Against all this we have the testimony of Christ Himself who is God in the flesh. What is unique about the faith of the Christian Church is not that we believe there is a Creator, but that the Creator took on flesh, came to His creation, and saved us from the sin and death we brought that ruined this creation. Christians acknowledge that things are not right with the world but the One who made the world has come down to us and put things right by His death on the cross and His resurrection. Evolutionary scientists look at the suffering and problems of this world and say, "Well that's just the way it is." There's no comfort there! No peace. No wonder these crazy theories are believed by so many: they're a tool of Satan to confuse and cause despair.

What we need is not a "missing link" in the monkey tree but a link from us to God. Evolution says there is no such thing. The Word of God says that "missing link" is not missing at all. It's Jesus Christ! He is the link, the connection between us and God because He Himself is true God and Man. It is Jesus who lifts us up out of the pit of sin and death which we caused ourselves to fall into and raises us to the heavenly places at the right hand of the Father. Where evolution assumes things will get better or at least be different for no particular reason, the Christian faith is not afraid to confess that this world is passing away and only getting worse. But the Good News is that in Christ we have not just biological life, but spiritual and eternal life forever with the One who loved us and made us and has remade us in His Son. So they found a "missing link?" Don't let that bother you! The Word of God will always have the final say. And it doesn't say you share a common past with some monkey thingy. God's Word says you have been created uniquely by Him and it promises that you share an eternal future with Him in Jesus Christ.

Liturgical Gestures During Divine Service

No one would possibly argue that human communication is limited to audible speaking. We all know that we communicate with one another in a variety of ways. One of the ways we communicate with each other is through bodily gestures, which is often referred to as “body language.” In fact, sometimes our body language speaks more loudly and clearly than our words. For example, when someone looks at us with furrowed eyebrows, pursed lips, and crossed arms, that person need not tell us they’re mad at us—we can see that loudly and clearly! We use bodily gestures, signs, and symbols to communicate with one another on a daily basis.

The same is true in the Divine Service. Bodily gestures, signs, and symbols are used to communicate what we believe, teach, and confess about what is being said and done in the liturgy. This has always been the case in the Church. From apostolic times, certain bodily gestures, signs, and symbols were done by both the clergy and laity in the liturgy as a way of confessing what they believe. What follows is a summary of some of the “body language” you will witness during Divine Service here at Peace:

1. General reverence - There is a reason we include the note in our bulletin each week that calls for silence as we enter the nave. It is not because we wish to be unsociable. It is because we want to create a reverent atmosphere which allows for the faithful to gather and prayerfully meditate upon being in the Lord’s Holy House. And, because we believe, teach, and confess that we are in the Lord’s Holy House during Divine Service, all who participate in the Service (pastor, elders, acolytes, ladies guild) are trained to conduct themselves reverently at all times, especially when they are serving in the chancel area (where the altar resides). Congregants likewise participate in the general reverence of the Divine Service as they do their best to put aside distracting thoughts and participate in the liturgy and hymnody, and listen to the Word of God read and preached to them.
2. The sign of the cross - Perhaps the most ancient of liturgical gestures employed by God’s people during Divine Service is making the sign of the cross over themselves. All the evidence seems to suggest that this was a custom handed down by the very apostles of our Lord themselves. Making the sign of the cross over ourselves, we bring to our remembrance that we have received the sign of the cross both upon our foreheads and our hearts at Holy Baptism, and have been marked as one redeemed by Christ the Crucified. Thus, by making this bodily gesture, we are confessing that we belong to Christ. Over time, there came to be fixed points within the liturgy of the Divine Service when the faithful would cross themselves: At the Invocation, Absolution, the conclusion of the Creed, upon receiving the Sacrament, at the Dismissal (blessing after receiving the Sacrament), and at the Benediction. All of these places are marked in our hymnals with a cross (✝) to remind the faithful that this is a customary time to make the sign of the cross over themselves.
3. Bowing - During Divine Service, we are privileged to be in the presence of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Thus, we bow in humility before the One who is King of kings and Lord of lords. Of course, we don’t bow throughout the whole Service (that probably wouldn’t be very good on our backs!), but there are places within the liturgy when bowing is appropriate and customary. Many Christians bow their heads (or bow at their waist) toward the altar as they enter their pew before Service, paying respect to their Lord who will soon be present among them. When we have a Procession to begin the Divine Service, it is appropriate to face the processional crucifix and bow your head and make the sign of the cross as it passes your pew out of reverence and respect for your Lord Jesus who is entering into your midst. It is also appropriate to bow your head (or bow at your waist) whenever the Gloria Patri (“Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit”) is spoken or sung during Divine Service (e.g. during the Introit and the Nunc Dimittis). Whenever you approach the altar, or before departing from the altar, it is appropriate to bow (“reverence the altar”), for the altar is the place where our Lord comes to be with us in His very Body and Blood. A few less familiar places in the liturgy where bowing the head is appropriate is a) whenever the name of Jesus is mentioned (except during the sermon), b) whenever the pastor says or chants, “The Lord be with you,” and c) when the Incarnation of our Lord is confessed in the Nicene Creed with the words, “and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the Virgin Mary and was made man.”
4. Genuflecting - A genuflection is simply a more profound form of bowing, wherein the one who is genuflecting bows down and touches his right knee to the ground and rises upright all in the same motion. While it used to be customary for the whole congregation to genuflect at various points in the liturgy, the introduction of pews made this bodily gesture impractical. Some Christians still genuflect as they enter and depart from their pews, or when they approach or depart from the altar, but most simply bow their heads, or bow at their waist, and that is certainly fine. It remains the custom, however, for the celebrant (the pastor who is celebrating the Communion liturgy) to genuflect before the consecrated Host and Chalice. Congregants may bow their heads (or bow at their waist) as the celebrant genuflects at this point. The reason for genuflecting and bowing at this point in the liturgy should be obvious to all Christians who confess belief in the Real Presence of Christ in the Holy Supper. While our Lord is present with us throughout the Divine Service, here He joins His very, true, real, physical, tangible, crucified and resurrected flesh and blood to the elements of bread and wine in the mystical union of this Most Holy Sacrament. Our genuflecting and bowing confesses our belief that Jesus is really there!

Concluded on page 12

Synopsis of May 5, 2009 Church Council Minutes

Call To Order & Opening Prayer

- President Brown called the meeting to order at 7:01pm. Pastor Messer conducted the opening prayer. The following members were present: Chris Brown, Carol Zeile, Vern Jakolat, Gary Miller, Megan Brown and Larry Elliott. Pastor Messer was also present.

Approval of Agenda

- The agenda was amended to add two business items: ink cartridges and parament color. Motion made by President Brown, supported by Treasurer Zeile to approve the agenda as amended. Motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

- Motion made by Treasurer Zeile, supported by Financial Secretary Miller to approve the minutes from April 14, 2009. Motion carried unanimously.

Report(s)

- **Pastor** – Pastor Messer presented the attached report. The Council received the report into record.
- **Treasurer's Report** – Treasurer Zeile presented the attached report. There was discussion regarding the financial information in the weekly bulletin. The Council received the report into record
- **Financial Secretary** – No report.

Boards

- **Board of Elders** – Councilmember Elliott presented his report. The Council received the report into record.
- **Board of Trustees** – Councilmember Jakolat presented the attached report. The Council received the report into record.
- **Board of Christian Education** – No report.
- **Board of Evangelism** – No report.
- **Board of Stewardship** – No report.

Organization and Committee Reports

- **Peace Lutheran Ladies Guild** – No report.
- **Peace Youth Group** – No report.

Business

- **Ink Cartridges** – Following the discussion at the previous Voters' Assembly, Treasurer Zeile offered to follow-up with Miguel Ortiz.
- **Parament Colors** – Pastor Messer informed the Council that a member of the congregation has offered to donate the green paraments that will be used during Epiphany, Trinity and Pre-Lent. He will be checking with the donors regarding use of memorial funds to supplement the paraments with a matching chalice veil and bookmarks.

General Comment

Pastor Messer informed the Council of the sale on the Treasury of Daily Prayer. He also informed the Council of current proposals by the LCMS Blue Ribbon Task Force for Synod Structure and Governance. For more information visit www.steadfastlutherans.org.

Adjournment & Closing Prayer

Motion made by Financial Secretary Miller, supported by Councilmember Jakolat to adjourn at 8:11pm. Motion carried unanimously. The Lord's Prayer was recited and Pastor Messer conducted the Benediction.

Respectfully submitted,
Megan Brown, Secretary

Synopsis of May 11, 2009 Special Meeting Church Council Minutes

Call To Order

President Brown called the meeting to order at 7:01pm. The following members were present: Chris Brown, Carol Zeile, Vern Jakolat, Sharyn Greening and Megan Brown. With five of the nine voting members present, a quorum was declared.

Business

The Council met to discuss the insurance renewal with Doehring-Schultz. The policy was to expire on June 7 and the Church's agent suggested that the policy be reviewed prior to renewal. The Church is currently covered under Brotherhood Mutual and the costs were continuing to rise. Doehring-Schultz suggested a policy with Hastings Mutual that would provide the same coverage. A major change to the policy was a high deductible. Currently, the policy carried a \$500 deductible and the proposal carries a \$2,500 deductible. The total cost for the premium will be \$1,548 per year, payable in quarterly installments. The total savings would be approximately \$300 per year, including the cost to rewrite the Worker's Compensation rider (\$128.) A background check of Hastings Mutual produced no glaring negatives on their record.

Secretary Brown asked if other quotes were obtained. Councilmember Jakolat said that no other quotes were sought because of the short timeframe. Councilmember Jakolat suggested that the Council renew this coverage for one year and use this year to get an appraisal and obtain quotes from additional agents and/or companies.

Motion made by Councilmember Jakolat, supported by President Brown to have Doehring-Schultz rewrite the policy that is currently with Brotherhood Mutual Insurance Company to be with Hastings Mutual Insurance Company. Motion carried unanimously.

Adjournment

Motion made by President Brown, supported by Councilmember Greening to adjourn at 7:46pm. 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

LIKE TO WALK?



A Walking Group is now meeting on Monday evenings at 7pm for men, women and kids of all ages and abilities. We meet at the Fred Meijer rail trail adjacent to the Alma College Heritage Center parking lot (no permit needed).

Bring a friend or a pet. Hope to see you Monday evenings. Any questions, please see Andrea Elliott.

PYG NEWS

June Events

Monthly Meeting—June 14, Noon-2pm

Greetings in Christ,

With the conference in July getting closer, we will be setting up a couple of preparation meetings with the attendees. I will be getting with everyone in the next few weeks.

Thank you to everyone who assisted us with our bake sale during the S.A.L.T. Second Time Around Sale.

We began a new fund-raising program in May - "used" cell phones. There are several collection boxes in the church at this time. If you or anyone you know has any old cell phones they would like to donate, we have found a company that recycles them and will pay for the used phones. No chargers are needed.

Our pop can and Spartan label programs are going strong. Thank you for your continued support.

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



You are invited to

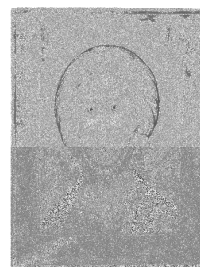
VBS

Age range: 4-12

Dates: June 15-19

Time: 9 am—12 pm

Place: Peace Lutheran Church



Theme: I Am

Seven times in the Gospel of John, Jesus says "I Am" something. He says, "I am . . . the Good Shepherd . . . the Way, the Truth, and the Life . . . the Door . . . the Light of the World . . . the Bread of Life . . . the True Vine . . . the Resurrection and the Life.

In this VBS, the children will learn about what each of these "I Am" statements means. They will learn how these "I Am" statements teach about Holy Baptism, Holy Communion, the Holy Gospel, the Holy Ministry, and the resurrection of the flesh. They will learn about the Person and Work of Jesus Christ through these unique "I Am" statements.

Bring a child to this year's VBS to learn the great mysteries of the "I Am"!



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 and clicking on "Donate." There are also forms available in the church office for any interested in donating monthly via automatic withdrawal.

PEACE NEWS & NOTES Cont'd

**CAMPING
WEEKEND**

JULY 10-12 WILSON STATE PARK HARRISON MI

Sponsored by S.A.L.T. Committee

**ALL ARE WELCOME TO COME FOR THE
DAY ON SATURDAY JULY 11**

**Bring lawn chairs and your own drinks
Day parking available - Day Pass \$5**

Potluck at 6pm

Bring a dish to pass

dinnerware will be provided

Hot dogs and hamburgers will be furnished,

**Donations to defray the cost
would be welcomed**

Any Questions? Please see Andrea Elliott

WEDNESDAY EVENING SERVICES

Every Wednesday at 7:00 p.m. (unless otherwise noted on the calendar), we will have Divine Service with Holy Communion. These Divine Services will be different from Divine Service on Sunday. They will focus on commemorating the saints listed on pages xii-xiii of our hymnals. Thus, they will serve as an additional opportunity for the faithful here at Peace to be fed on Word and Sacrament in the Lord's House. They will also serve as an opportunity for those who may have to miss Divine Service on Sunday to still receive Word and Sacrament that week. We hope many will take advantage of this additional blessing!

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! Information on when and where our next Table Talk will take place will be posted on the bulletin board in the fellowship hall and announced in the bulletins soon. We hope you'll join us!



To my Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

As of April 18, in the year of our Lord, 2009, I am stepping down from my office as an elder of our beloved Church at Peace. I am leaving due to my illness of M.S. It has caused many of you to worry about me due to my health. Due to the erratic nature of my illness, it is causing attention to myself rather than our full attention on Christ during Divine Service. My duty as an elder cannot be carried out under these conditions, therefore for the good of all concerned I must leave my post early.

Submitted with great respect and reverence to Christ and his holy Church, I therefore resign my office as an elder at Peace Lutheran Church.

In Christ,
William Harmon

We are saddened by Bill's departure from the Board of Elders, but understand his desire to resign, thank him for his faithful service among us, and look forward to his service in other areas within our congregation.

PEACE LUTHERAN LADIES GUILD AND



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

Hand towels
Wash clothes
Toothbrushes
Combs (wide tooth)
Metal nail files
Nail clippers (w/file attached)
Band-aids (1/2" to 3/4")
Soap (bath-size bar)

**COLLECTION DATE
EXTENDED
TO JUNE 30**

PEACE NEWS & NOTES Cont'd

"Liturgical Gestures . . ." - Continued from page 8

6. Elevating the Consecrated Host and Chalice - After the celebrant (pastor) consecrates the bread with Christ's own words, he elevates the large, consecrated Host for all to see. He does the same with the Chalice. This liturgical gesture expresses our belief that Jesus is truly present among us and gives us the opportunity to look upon Him and ponder in our hearts the great mystery of our faith. Linked to this is the liturgical gesture employed as the celebrant turns with the consecrated Host and Chalice in hand to face the congregation and pronounce the Pax Domini ("The peace of the Lord be with you always"), to which the congregation responds, "Amen." Here is the very Body and Blood of the Prince of Peace Himself given and shed for us Christians to eat and to drink!
7. Vestments - What is worn by those leading or participating in the Divine Service is also a form of "body language." The wearing of vestments by those serving in the Lord's House was the Lord's idea, not man's (cf. Exodus 28). Vestments are employed to cover the sinful person wearing them and to confess that the Lord Himself is working through His servants in the midst of His people. For that reason, the pastor, elders, and acolytes all wear vestments when they serve during Divine Service here at Peace. In some congregations, the choir will be vested as well. The point of vestments is not to look pretty, but to confess Christ. White is worn by the pastor, elder, and acolytes to signify that they are covered in the holiness and righteousness of Christ when they serve at His altar. The main Eucharistic vestment traditionally worn by the celebrant during the Divine Service is the *chasuble*, which is a colored (matching the liturgical color of the day) and adorned outer garment that is worn over the white alb. The chasuble symbolizes the beauty and richness of the Most Holy Eucharist. The pastor also wears a stole whenever he serves during Divine Service, for the stole symbolizes the yoke of Christ, which is the called and ordained servant's to bear on behalf of the congregation he serves.

So, what's the point of all this? Is it necessary that we participate in all these liturgical gestures? Of course not. The "body language" mentioned here is not meant to be legalistic. No one should worry over whether or not he/she bows or makes the sign of the cross at the right time during the Divine Service. That is not the point. The point is simply that these bodily gestures, signs, and symbols serve to confess what we believe, teach, and confess about what is being said and done in the Divine Service. They have been used by the faithful throughout the centuries (long before there was ever such a thing as Roman Catholicism, for those of you who may be worried that these things are "too Roman Catholic") as a way to show the Lord the reverence and respect He most certainly deserves.

Come join us on the Trail!

The Wittenberg Trail is the online community for people exploring and confessing the Lutheran faith. To join the community, go to:

www.wittenbergtrail.ning.com

To join our Peace Lutheran group on the Trail:

www.wittenbergtrail.ning.com/group/peacelutheranalmamichigan



AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY RELAY FOR LIFE AUGUST 7-8 BRECKENRIDGE HIGH SCHOOL

The American Cancer Society Relay For Life will be held August 7-8 at Breckenridge High School starting at 3pm Friday through 3pm Saturday. Peace Lutheran Church will again have a church-sponsored team co-chaired by Bill Brostrom, Coaline Luplow and Dorothy Trgina. We will partner with the Wheeler MSL Church.

A "Care Abounds in Communities" supplementary grant will be given by Thrivent Financial for Lutherans in the amount of \$750, meaning fundraising and contributions given through the Peace Lutheran/Immanuel Lutheran Church team will be supplemented by TFFL at \$.50 for each dollar fund-raised to a maximum grant of \$750, or we will have to raise at least \$1500 to receive the full grant of \$750 given by Thrivent.

Contributions can now be made/given to any of the captains or myself toward the purchase of Luminaria, or checks can be written/endorsed to the American Cancer Society. Questions? Please contact Don Reithel by cell phone at 989-289-2274 or by email at dreithel@edzone.net



Ladies' & Altar Guild

Ladies' Guild Meeting

Our Ladies' Guild is on hiatus for the months of June, July and August. Our next meeting will be **Monday, September 14, 2009 at 7pm**. Hostess will be Marlene Miller. 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

If you wish to be added to the prayer chain as a caller, see Carol Durst or Beth Brostrom. If you wish to have yourself or someone else "sent through the chain," call Carol Durst at 463-2270.



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



Altar Guild Duty

June
Beth Brostrom

July
Lois Ramsey, Coaline Luplow

August
Andrea Elliott

Coffee Hostesses



June
7 Tina Schafer
14 Beth Brostrom
21 Cheryl Henry
28 Shawna Greening

July
5 Carol Zeile
12 Andrea Elliott
19 Dorothy Trgina
26 Joyce Kohler

August
2 Jenny Baughman
9 Marilyn Oswald
16 Beth Brostrom
23 M. Miller/C. Dargie
30 Mary Jakolat

Ladies Lunch Bunch

WE ARE GOING TO FRANKENMUTH FOR THE DAY ON TUESDAY, JUNE 23!
Our carpool will leave at 9:00 am from church. We will meet for lunch at 1:30 pm at the Bavarian Inn, with time both before and after lunch to visit the castle shops at the Bavarian Inn Restaurant, Foodstore and Bakery at Zehnders, shops at River Place or throughout the town, Bronners, or take a boat ride on the Bavarian Belle Riverboat down the Cass River, a carriage ride tour, or just relax in the various lounges in the Bavarian Inn and Zehnder's in this wonderful German atmosphere.

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

Please sign up on our bulletin board posting and join us!

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION AT PEACE

Sunday School and Adult Bible Class

- Sunday School will reconvene on Sunday, September 13, 2009. Join us for a Rally Day potluck!
- Adult Bible Class is offered **every Sunday at 11am.** for all adult members of Peace and guests. on **Sunday, April 26,** we completed our Lent and Easter series. We reviewed an introduction to the Book of **Hebrews** and are now beginning a detailed study of this very interesting book of the Bible.

Together in the Word

- Our *Together in the Word* Bible Study meets on **Thursday mornings at 10am.** 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 currently studying the book of **Leviticus.** Please plan on joining us soon.

“Christian History 101”

- Weekly classes continue on **Wednesdays at 6pm.** 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 **JUNE**

Happy Birthday to:

5 Marlene Miller	17 Jo Wendt
8 Larry Elliott	18 Beth Brostrom
8 Karla Greening	18 Alex Henry
8 Justin Acosta-Arellano	20 Helen Meyers
9 Bill Harmon	20 Vivian Strom
9 Miguel Ortiz	21 Lois Ramsey
12 Gary Miller	24 Andrea Elliott
13 Janet Isom	24 Jeff Kuehnlein
14 Dick Palmer	29 Susan Ortiz
14 Art Tennant	30 Bruce Bebow
17 Georgia Spindler	30 Terry Luplow
	30 Janice Sager

Happy Anniversary to:

2 Kenneth and Phyllis Hill
7 Michael and Gretchen Harrison
11 Curt and Tammy Oswald
12 Bill and Beth Brostrom
18 Gordon and Lucille Slick
24 Terry and Coaline Luplow

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

From the Lighter Side . . .

A man named Smith climbs to the top of Mount Sinai to talk to God.

Looking up, he asks the Lord. "God, what does a million years mean to you?" The Lord replies, "A minute."

Smith asks, "And what does a million dollars mean to you?" The Lord replies, "A penny."

Smith asks, "Can I have a penny?"

The Lord replies, "In a minute." 😊

PAROCHIAL REPORT

(as of 5/24/09)

Membership at Peace

Baptized - 156; Confirmed - 134

Membership gains: 0

Membership losses: 0

Financial Report as of 5/24/09









YTD Receipts.....\$44,322.28

YTD Budgeted Needs.....\$46,935.00

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

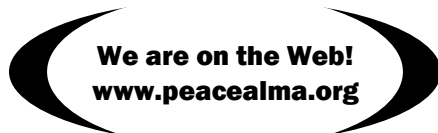
Peace Lutheran Church
 325 E. Warwick Drive
 Alma, MI 48801
 (989) 463-5754
 contact@peacealma.org

June 2009

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
May 31 Whitsunday (Pentecost) 9:30—Divine Service 10:45—Fellowship 11:00—BC, SS 	1 	2 Pastor at Winkel 7 pm—Church Council	3 6 pm—"Christian History" 7 pm—Divine Service	4 10 am—Together in Word 5 pm—Weight Watchers	5 	6
7 The Holy Trinity 9:30—Divine Service 10:45—Fellowship 11:00—Bible Study 	8 	9 	10 6 pm—"Christian History" 7 pm—Divine Service	11 10 am—Together in Word 12:00—Divine Service <i>St. Barnabas, Apostle</i> 5 pm—Weight Watchers 7 pm—VBS Final Planning and Training	12 	13
14 First Sunday after Trinity 7:30—Elders Mtg. 9:30—Divine Service 10:45—Fellowship 11:00—Bible Study 12:00—PYG Mtg. 	15 	16 	17 	18 	19 	20
Vacation Bible School - 9-12 am, Monday-Friday						
21 Second Sunday after Trinity 9:30—Divine Service 10:45—Fellowship 11:00—Bible Study 	22 <div>Newsletter articles due</div>	23 1:30 pm—Lunch Bunch	24 12:00—Div. Serv. <i>Nativity St. John the Baptist</i> 6 pm—"Christian History" 7 pm—Divine Service	25  10 am—Together in Word 12:00—Div. Serv. <i>St. Peter and St. Paul</i> 5 pm—Weight Watchers	26 	27
28 Third Sunday after Trinity 9:30—Prayer and Preaching 10:45—Fellowship No Bible Study 	29 	30 	July 1 	2 10 am—Together in Word 12:00—Divine Service <i>The Visitation</i> 5 pm—Weight Watchers 	3 	4  Happy 4th of July!
2009 Michigan District Convention						
			No Class or Service			

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

June	ELDER	ACOLYTES	ORGANIST	USHERS	GREETERS
7 - 9:30 am (Trinity)	Miguel Ortiz	Samantha Messer BJ Henry	Mary Jakolat	Bill Hendrick Gary Miller	Vern and Mary Jakolat
14 - 9:30 am (Trinity 1)	Dave Zeile	Melanie Penzien Sierra Luplow	Beth Brostrom	Jonathan Penzien Curt Oswald	Dorothy Trgina
21 - 9:30 am (Trinity 2)	Larry Elliott	Tyrel Harwager Phillip Schafer	Mary Jakolat	Michael Gilbert Bill Brostrom	Helen Meyers
28 - 9:30 am (Trinity 3)	Terry Luplow	Jordan Henry Aaron Messer	Beth Brostrom	Chris Brown James Sager	Lisa Messer and Family
July					
5 - 9:30 am (Trinity 4)	Miguel Ortiz	Sarah Messer Natalie Penzien	Mary Jakolat	Vern Jakolat Daren Johnson	Jonathan Penzien and Family

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