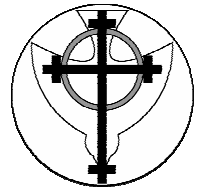
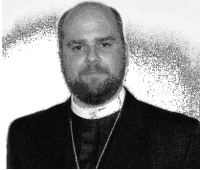


The Peace Post



The peace of the Lord be with you always. Amen!



From the Desk of Pastor Messer

“FOOTPRINTS IN THE SAND” OR PSALM 23?

A few weeks ago, during our Thursday morning Bible Study, *Together in the Word*, I pointed out that I’m not a big fan of the popular poem, “Footprints in the Sand.” Those in attendance were stunned to hear me say that and rightly demanded that I explain what I could possibly have against this beautiful poem.

My initial thought was, “Uh oh, what have I gotten myself into here?” But, shaking that off, I went on to explain that my beef with “Footprints” is that it really doesn’t say much, and what it does say does not agree with Holy Scripture. On the surface, it may seem like a nice, harmless, sentimental poem, which pulls on our heartstrings. But, digging deeper, what does it really say? Let’s look at the poem and find out:

Footprints in the Sand

(Note: There are a few different versions of the poem, but this version seems to be the most popular)

One night a man had a dream. He dreamed He was walking along the beach with the Lord. Across the sky flashed scenes from His life. For each scene He noticed two sets of footprints in the sand. One belonging to Him and the other to the Lord.

When the last scene of His life flashed before Him, he looked back at the footprints in the sand. He noticed that many times along the path of His life there was only one set of footprints.

He also noticed that it happened at the very lowest and saddest times of His life.

This really bothered Him and He questioned the Lord about it. “Lord you said that once I decided to follow you, you’d walk with me all the way. But I have noticed that during the most troublesome times in my life there is only one set of footprints.

I don’t understand why when I needed you most you would leave me.”

The Lord replied, “My precious, precious child, I Love you and I would never leave you! During your times of trial and suffering when you see only one set of footprints, it was then that I carried you.”

First, to be fair, we must recognize that this is just a poem reflecting the thoughts of its author. It is not meant to be deeply theological. But, still, given its widespread popularity, it behooves us to examine the poem’s content against the background of our theology, which is derived solely from God’s Holy Word.

The first question that comes to mind when reading the poem is, “Who is this ‘Lord’ to which the poet refers?” Now, you might reply, “Well, obviously, the author is referring to our Lord Jesus.” Really? How is that obvious? The poet simply uses the generic “Lord” and leaves it up to the reader to identify which “Lord” is being referenced. What would prevent a Muslim, Buddhist, Hindu, Jew, or even a Scientologist from using this poem in devotion to their “Lord”?

In fact, it is the generic nature of the poem which Carolyn Joyce Carty, who currently holds the U.S. Copyright on “Footprints” (although authorship of the poem is widely debated, which is why you will often see “Author Unknown” attached to the poem), praises as its finest attribute. She says that the poem “was written for humankind and those who have dedicated their lives in service of Faith from around the world.” She goes on to say that the poem is useful to all who belong to the “Abrahamic Faith,” including “Christians, Muslims, and Jews,” and even to those beyond the “Abrahamic Faith,” including “Buddhists, Hindus, and all others who call upon God by whatever name they choose.”

What Carty lauds as the poem’s finest attribute is actually its worst attribute. The poem’s generic nature fails to confess the truth that Jesus Christ alone is the way, the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, except by Him (cf. John 14:6).

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While Christians, Muslims, and Jews all trace their heritage back to Abraham, they do not share what Carty labels an “Abrahamic Faith,” by which she means that they all worship the same God. Christians alone worship the God of Abraham; both Muslims and Jews worship a false god that does not exist (cf. John 8). Likewise, all other religions that worship a god other than the Triune God revealed to us in Holy Scripture worship no god at all.

So, the fact that one can simply substitute whatever “Lord” they happen to believe in into the poem is the first problem I have with it. There is only one Lord, and if a poem is written about that one Lord, it should mention His Name.

But, for the sake of argument, let’s assume that the “Lord” referred to in the poem is Jesus. Are there any other problems with the poem? Unfortunately, there are.

Underlying the whole poem is the false theology known as “decision theology.” This is the theology which teaches that the way we come to faith in Jesus Christ is by making the decision to accept Him as our personal Lord and Savior. Holy Scripture makes it vividly clear that we do not have the ability to make a decision to accept Jesus as Lord. We are conceived in sin (Ps. 51:5) and, by nature, we are spiritually blind (2 Cor. 4:1-4; 1 Cor. 2:14), spiritually dead (Eph. 2:1-5), and enemies of God (Rom. 5:6-10). Faith in Jesus Christ is a gift given to us by God (Eph. 2:8-10). This gift is delivered to us by the Holy Spirit through the Holy Word and Sacraments. Thus, we do not come to faith by our own decision, but we are brought to faith by God through the means of grace He Himself has established.

Keeping that in mind, look at what the man says to the Lord when he notices that there were scenes from his life when there were only one set of footprints in the sand: “Lord, you said that *once I decided to follow you*, you’d walk with me all the way.” Bad theology! We do not choose Jesus; He chooses us. To make Jesus’ walking with us dependent upon our decision to follow Him is not only false theology, but will inevitably lead to doubt and despair.

And, what about the idea that when times are good, there are two sets of footprints, but when times are bad, there is only one set of footprints, since the Lord carries us through those bad times? At first blush, this may sound all well and good. But, actually, it misses the mark badly.

It is not just through the bad times that our Lord carries us, dear friends. It is through both the good and the bad times. If we were given a vision of our lives like the one in the poem, the only times we would see two sets of footprints in the sand would be those times when we tried to run away from the Lord and He chased after us to pick

us up and bring us back into His fold. The rest of the time, we would see only one set of footprints, those of our Lord Jesus Christ, who carries us through the good times and the bad. To believe that Jesus only picks us up and carries us when we are experiencing trials and tribulations in this life is to misunderstand the reality that all of our life is lived in Him.

Besides all of that, the poem lacks any real substance. It is superficial and leaves it to the reader to determine why and how the Lord relates to the man throughout his life. Where does the Church fit in? Preaching? Repentance? Forgiveness? The Sacraments? You get the idea from the poem that the man and Jesus have their own thing going on, which is a popular notion in our individualistic society, but lacks Biblical foundation.

While it is true that each and every Christian has a personal, intimate relationship with Jesus Christ, that relationship is lived out within the fellowship of Christ’s Holy Church. Christians are never in a relationship with Jesus all by themselves. The “Me and My Jesus” mentality that permeates American Christendom is blatantly false. It’s not about you and Jesus, it’s about Jesus and His Church, to which you belong.

For all of those reasons, and probably more, I am not a big fan of this poem. But, as I told the class that morning, that does not mean that I think everyone should go home and throw anything that has the “Footprints” poem on it away. I’m not going to start a “Ban the ‘Footprints’ Poem” movement or anything. I also fully realize that most people do not give things like the “Footprints” poem much thought. That they buy bookmarks, plaques, prints, etc. with poems like this on them does not mean that they have analyzed the poem’s theology and endorse it, but rather that they found it inspirational after a cursory read. It’s one of those “Oh, isn’t that nice” occasions. And, that’s fine, so long as these superficial, doctrinally deficient, “Oh, isn’t that nice” things do not inform your theology and lead you astray.

After explaining all of this to the class that morning, I told them that what saddens me is that so many Christians put more stock in, and often find more inspiration in, things like this poem than they do in Holy Scripture. I then had all of them open their Bibles to Psalm 23, a poem that is truly inspirational and far more uplifting than “Footprints.” Psalm 23 is real food for the soul, while “Footprints” is nothing more than cotton candy. Psalm 23 is substantive and deep, not superficial and shallow. Inspired by the Holy Spirit, Psalm 23 contains no false theology, but reveals the truth about the relationship between our Lord and those who belong to Him. When compared to “Footprints,” Psalm 23 simply blows it away!

Let's take a look at this marvelous poem:

Psalm 23

A Psalm of David

*The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.
He maketh me to lie down in green pastures:
he leadeth me beside the still waters.*

*He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of
righteousness for his name's sake.*

*Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil: for thou art with me;
thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.*

*Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine
enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my
life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever. (KJV)*

This beautiful and inspiring poem is all about what our Lord does for those who believe in Him; how He brings them into His fold and keeps them there. Let's take it verse by verse and uncover the depth of its riches.

The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.

First of all, there is nothing generic about this poem. We don't have to figure out which "Lord" we're talking about here. The fact that the word "LORD" is in all caps indicates that the Divine Name is being used in Hebrew here: YHWH (Yahweh). This is the One and Only LORD of the universe, whose Name is Yahweh. This the LORD who created all things, and who came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the Virgin Mary and was made man. This is our Lord and Savior, Jesus, whose Name means, "Yahweh saves."

Our Lord is described as our Shepherd, which is a constant theme throughout Holy Scripture (cf. Ezek. 34; John 10). He calls us, His sheep, into His fold and provides for our every need; we shall not want for anything. He guides us, protects us, and feeds us. He leads and we follow. What beautiful and powerful imagery of the intimate relationship our Lord establishes and maintains with us. The rest of the Psalm reveals just how our Good Shepherd accomplishes this.

*He maketh me to lie down in green pastures;
he leadeth me beside the still waters.*

The Lord, our Shepherd, brings us into the green pastures of His fold, which is His Holy Christian Church, where we feed on the rich food of His Holy Word. How does He bring us into these green pastures? He leads us beside the still waters of the Baptismal font.

So, unlike in "Footprints," there is no individualistic, "Me and My Jesus" mentality here. The Lord calls us into the fellowship of the green pastures of His Holy Church by baptizing us into His Holy family. The reason the poem is written in the 1st Person is because it can be prayed by all those who belong to the Shepherd's flock.

*He restoreth my soul; he leadeth me in the paths of
righteousness for his name's sake.*

What happens at the still waters of the Baptismal font? We have our souls restored, for there in the water which flows from Christ's side, combined with His Holy Word, we are given the Holy Spirit, cleansed from all sin, and ushered into the fold of our Good Shepherd. We receive His Divine Name and are marked by the sign of His Holy Cross upon our foreheads and upon our hearts as those redeemed by Christ the Crucified. We are made new creatures, who from that point on, follow the voice of our Good Shepherd, going forth in His Name upon the paths of righteousness He lays before us.

Only those who have been brought into the green pastures of His Holy Church through the still waters of the Sacrament of Holy Baptism can walk in the paths of His righteousness, for only they have had their souls restored, and only they are clothed in the perfect holiness and righteousness of the One and Only Savior of the world, Jesus the Christ, Yahweh Incarnate.

*Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of
death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod
and thy staff they comfort me.*

As our Good Shepherd sends us forth in His Name to follow in the paths of righteousness, we find ourselves in the midst of the sinful world, where evil reigns. The sinful world hates us because it hates our Shepherd. It seeks to persecute us, even as it persecuted and killed Him. We will most certainly face much trouble, pain, and suffering as we walk through this valley of the shadow of death, but we will fear no evil, for nothing, not even death itself, can separate us from the love of God which is lavished upon the sheep of the Good Shepherd.

Our Shepherd is with us always. He has promised us that He will never forsake us: "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the age." He comforts us with His rod and His staff. He uses His rod to ward off the wolves that want to devour us; those false teachers, empowered by Satan, who seek to lead us out of the green pastures of the Church and into the weed-ridden pastures of the world. He uses His staff, which is the Word of His Law and Gospel, to gather us in when we begin to go astray, so that we might remain in His grace, mercy, and love.

*Thou preparest a table before me in the midst of mine
enemies: thou anointest my head with oil;
my cup runneth over.*

Oh, but our Good Shepherd is not done with us! As He guides us in the paths of righteousness through the valley of the shadow of death, He feeds us along the way, to strengthen and preserve us in the true faith, unto life everlasting. How does He do this? By preparing a Table before us in the midst of our enemies.

This Table is none other than the Most Holy Sacrament of His very Body and Blood. Our Lord is not only our Good Shepherd, but also the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, and the very Bread of Life, upon which His sheep feed. By partaking of our Lord's very Body and Blood in the Holy Eucharist, we, His sheep, are anointed, that is, consecrated, or made holy, for we receive His holiness and righteousness into ourselves, the same holiness and righteousness by which we were clothed at Baptism. We receive the pure, white garments of Christ's holiness and righteousness at Baptism, and we have those garments cleansed in His Blood each time we partake of the Holy Eucharist.

Truly, our cup runneth over, indeed! For our Lord does not just shepherd and guide us along the way, but makes His home within us via His Body and Blood, which we receive from the Table He sets before us. Our enemies may scoff at what we receive from this Holy Table, but they are powerless to take the Divine benefits we receive from it away from us.

*Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of
my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.*

This concluding verse is akin to the Benediction (blessing) we receive each Lord's Day upon our departure from the Lord's Holy House. Because our Lord and Shepherd provides for our every need, we can rest assured that His goodness and mercy shall follow us all the days of our life, and that, when this earthly life comes to an end, we will dwell in the peace, comfort, and joy of His House for all eternity.

Of course, the goodness and mercy of our Lord and Shepherd, and the certainty of dwelling in His Holy House forever, belongs only to those who are continuously nurtured and fed by Him. This is why it is so vitally important that we attend Divine Service on a regular basis, for it is during the Divine Service that the Lord, our Shepherd, gathers His flock together and feeds them with His Holy Word and Sacraments, that they may be strengthened and preserved for the journey through this

valley of the shadow of death until they are finally called home to dwell eternally in His Holy House. To absent oneself from the place where the Shepherd cares for His flock is very dangerous. It is like a lamb straying away from the flock and traveling through the forests and fields by himself. The longer that lamb is out there on his own, away from the guidance and protection of his shepherd, the better the chances are that the wolves will get to him.

Some Concluding Thoughts

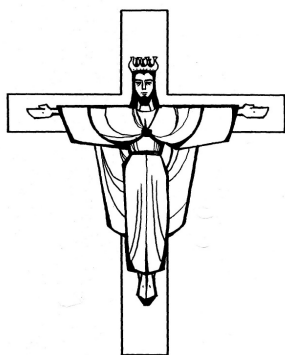
Psalm 23 is more than a nice poem. It is filled with substance and tells the real story of how our Lord cares for us throughout our lives. Every Christian should commit this Psalm, and its meaning, to memory. You want to be comforted, inspired, and uplifted? Psalm 23 does a far better job of accomplishing that than a superficial poem like "Footprints" ever could.

Notice, too, the stark differences between the underlying theology of the poems. Who it is that does the doing here in Psalm 23? It is the Lord, not us. No "decision theology" here! We don't decide to enter the Lord's green pastures; He makes us to lie down in them. We don't decide to come to the still waters; He leads us beside them. We don't decide to fix our souls; He restores them. We don't decide to follow in the paths of righteousness; He leads us in those paths for His Name's sake, that is, because we bear His Name. We don't decide to walk beside the Lord throughout our lives, turning to Him only when things go bad; He carries us throughout our lives, for He is with us always, and His rod and staff comfort us. We don't decide how to provide nourishment for our souls; He prepares a Table for us and feeds us on Himself.

Unlike a poem like "Footprints," Psalm 23 does not just assure us that the Lord is there for us, but tells us exactly how the Lord is there for us. It lays forth a blueprint for the entire Christian life, beginning with the Lord, our Shepherd, calling us into the green pastures of His Holy Church through the Sacrament of Holy Baptism, and then guiding us in the paths of His righteousness, offering us protection and assurance as we tread through this sinful world, leading us to repentance and faith via His Holy Word of Law and Gospel, feeding and nourishing us with His Holy Body and Blood, sending us forth with His blessing and assurance that, when our life ends here on earth, we will dwell with Him forever in His Holy House.

So, "Footprints in the Sand" or Psalm 23? Is there any comparison? Seems like a no-brainer to me! ☺

Your servant in Christ,
Pastor Messer



Reflections on the Eleventh Annual St. Michael's Liturgical Conference

I have been attending the St. Michael's Liturgical Conference annually now for six years. The conference originated out of Zion Lutheran in Detroit eleven years ago, but, due to the departure of Zion's pastor, it has been held at Redeemer Lutheran in Fort Wayne, IN, under the direction of Pastor David Petersen, for the past four years.

Each and every time I have attended this conference, I have been blessed immensely. It is just a one day conference, but there is a wealth of blessings packed into that one day. The conference, which was held on Monday, September 29, began with a beautiful and reverent Divine Service, which is "High Mass," and included the traditional burning of incense, Gregorian chant, a Gospel Procession, and all the other elements of the Holy Liturgy to which we are familiar. I am always amazed at the beautiful singing that takes place during these Services. There were only about 50 men (and about a dozen women), but your ears would think that there were a few hundred. The reverence displayed by all during this Service is simply awe-inspiring. You know you are in a Holy Place during this Service.

After the beauty of the Divine Service, the conference continued with the keynote address, which was based on the conference's liturgical theme, "Preaching in the Midst of Holy Things." The keynote speaker was the Rev. Dr. Karl Fabrizio. It was an excellent presentation and I learned a lot from it.

After the keynote address, we gathered back into the nave for the Midday Office of Sext (Prayer Service), which was beautiful, and then we broke for lunch. After lunch, we attended two workshops, gathered for a third time into the nave for Solemn Vespers, and then concluded the day with Gemütlichkeit, which is a time of fellowship.

What a grand and most blessed day! This year, I had the added pleasure of being accompanied by three of our elders (Bill Harmon, Terry Luplow, and Dave Zeile - Larry Elliott and Don Reithel were not able to attend). It was wonderful to have these men with me this year. They all shared how pleased they were that they came, and how impressed they were with the Services and the theological presentations. We also had the joy of staying overnight and visiting the seminary the next day. We attended Morning Prayer in the chapel, which is always beautiful. As a bonus, we were privileged to hear a homily delivered by none other than Dr. David Scaer. Then, we visited the bookstore, walked around campus a bit, and delivered the donations from our congregation to the clothing co-op before heading home. It was a grand experience, and I'm so glad I was able to share it with these wonderful men of God.

In Christ,
Pastor Messer

The conference at Redeemer Lutheran Church was an eye-opener. During the Divine Service, many of the thoughts and procedures that Pastor Messer has talked about here at our church came to life. For instance, the centrally located altar, the procession to the altar to see the incense being carried, and the reverence throughout the Service, especially during the reception of Holy Communion. The service was beautiful. The men sang with enthusiasm like they really meant what they were singing. At our church, it is mostly the women who sing with enthusiasm, and it would be nice for us men to join them. I enjoyed the conference immensely and recommend that anybody, if given the opportunity, go to one of the future conferences. Please do. You won't be disappointed.
In Christ,
Terry Luplow

The St. Michael's liturgical conference was indeed an uplifting experience for me! I found that Redeemer Lutheran Church in Ft. Wayne is an excellent example of how a confessional Lutheran Church should be. From the reverence shown by the pastors and acolytes, the chanting of liturgy, to the beautiful stain glass of Jesus, the Good Shepherd behind the altar, it was "high church" all the way, and it was beautiful.

Because of my interest in learning more about writing and preaching, I attended the workshops that pertained to that subject. I learned a lot, so if the opportunity comes to again write another sermon under Pastor Messer's guidance the task should not be so daunting.

The next morning, we went to the seminary for yet another "high church" experience at Kramer Chapel. Dr. Scaer's homily centered around the simplicity of the gospel message and how our Lord uses simple language and ordinary people to spread his message of saving grace.

In Christ,
Dave Zeile

On Monday, Sept. 29, our Pastor Messer and three Elders—Terry, Dave and I—were privileged to attend the St. Michael's Liturgical Conference at the beautiful Redeemer Lutheran Church in Ft. Wayne. We experienced a wonderful liturgical Lutheran Service and enjoyed the power and glory of that High Holy Service. I believe if the sainted Dr. Luther was observing this Service, he would find it to be much as he celebrated it. The Service was truly focused on Christ, our Lord, and His holy altar was properly revered with true humility. The altar boys and pastors genuflected and crossed themselves in reverence, as did all who were there. Experiencing this awesome display of reverence was wonderful and I will cherish it in my heart, just as I cherish each Service at Peace. Our Services may not be as "high church," but they are just as reverent and just as holy and wonderful.

We must not turn away from our Orthodox Lutheran heritage, as our liturgy is our worship and our celebration of Christ's Sacrifice and the Gift of Life He extends to us through His Holy Word and Sacraments. Why anyone would want to abandon the Holy Liturgy for praise bands and entertainment is beyond me. Reverent, Christ-centered liturgical worship is what we should always be about. That's what this conference was about, and I'm so glad I was able to attend!
In Christ,
Bill Harmon

THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU!

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

It is truly an honor and pure joy to serve as your pastor here at Peace. I truly mean that. The Lord has truly blessed me by calling me to serve here in your midst, and I thank Him daily for doing so. Our little congregation is filled with so many faithful children of God, who have a genuine desire to grow in the grace and truth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, that it makes my ministry among you a pure pleasure. Our Lord says that we will know those who belong to Him by the fruit they bear in their lives (Matt. 7:16). In the three-plus years I have been here at Peace, I have marveled at witnessing the fruits of faith exhibited by so many of you, and I am especially humbled by the love and generosity you have shown to me and my family. To all of you who participated in planning the Pastor Appreciation Dinner on Sunday, October 12, and to all of you who gave cards and gifts, I offer my sincere and heartfelt thanks and gratitude. Lisa, the kids, and I were truly overwhelmed by this loving show of support. Thank you so much! I also want to share with you that, through the generous gifts we received from many of you, we were able to fill up our propane tank in preparation for the cold weather to come, fix our water heater that went *kerplunk!* a couple of weeks ago, buy some much needed new blinds to cover some of our windows, and do a couple of needed repairs on Lisa's car. So, your gifts came at just the right time, as I truly do not know how we would have done those things without them. Again, thanks so much, and please know that you have my love, support, and appreciation in return. I look forward to serving this beloved congregation in the weeks, months, and years to come!

Your thankful servant in Christ,

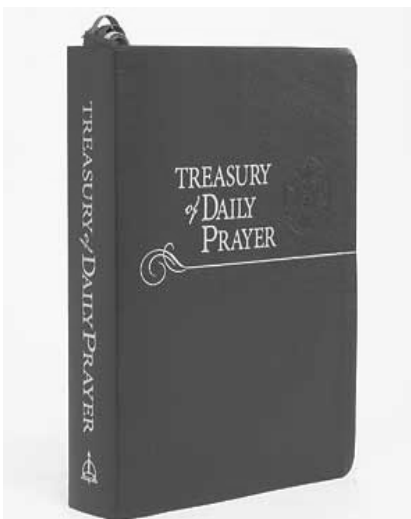
Pastor Messer

Dear Peace Family,

I just want to say thank you so much for the wonderful dinner you provided in appreciation for my husband, our pastor. As Tom's wife, I get to see more than anyone the time and effort he puts into being a pastor. I sometimes worry that he works way too hard and way too many hours, but I know that he does that because he truly loves our Lord and the people he serves at Peace. And I know that he is dedicated to being the best pastor he can be, and I love him for that! So thank you for showing him your appreciation! Tom left for a conference in Illinois after the dinner that day, so it was me and the kids who gathered around the kitchen table and opened the many cards you gave that afternoon. We were simply blown away! And, when Tom called later that evening and I shared with him about all the cards and gifts, he was blown away too! Thank you so much! This meant more to our family than you could possibly know! And, a special thank you to all of you who gave me cards, and especially to the Ladies Guild for the gift certificate for a massage. I am so looking forward to that!

With love,

Lisa



TREASURY OF DAILY PRAYER

I just received my copy of this awesome resource yesterday and I am simply amazed by it. Nothing like this has EVER been put into print, my friends! This is the daily prayer book to end all daily prayer books. It has everything you could ever need for your daily prayer life, and more, all contained within one book. I highly recommend that you consider purchasing a copy of this genuine treasure, especially while CPH is offering their introductory prices (Softcover—\$34.99, will be \$49.99; Bonded Leather—\$55.99, will be \$79.99). Believe me, this is one book that is actually worth way more than it costs. There is a sign-up sheet posted on the S.A.L.T bulletin board (no need to fill it all out; just your name and the edition you want is needed). As soon as we get 10 orders, which earns us free shipping, we'll place an order, so that we can get this into your hands as soon as possible. We'll post another sign-up sheet after that until we get 10 more, and so on. I'll have my copy with me on Sundays so that you can see it. Prepare to be amazed. Your prayer life will never be the same!

In Christ,

Pastor Messer

Synopsis of October 7, 2008 Church Council Minutes

Call to Order and Opening Prayer

- The meeting was called to order at 7:01pm. Pastor Messer conducted the opening prayer. The following members were present: Carol Zeile, Marlene Miller (Board of Christian Education), Gary Miller, Miguel Ortiz, Megan Brown, James Sager, Larry Elliott and Andrea Elliott. Pastor Messer was also present.

Approval of Agenda

- Motion made by Treasurer Zeile, supported by Financial Secretary Miller to approve the agenda. Motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

- Motion made by Financial Secretary Miller, supported by Treasurer Zeile to approve the minutes from September 2. 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. The Council received the report into record. Treasurer Zeile also presented a request from Mary Jakolat to attend the Good Shepherd Institute on November 2-4 in Fort Wayne. This includes a request for funds for registration, room and board and mileage. Motion made by Vice President Ortiz, supported by Councilmember L. Elliott to grant Mark Jakolat's request to attend the Good Shepherd Institute. Motion carried unanimously.
- **Financial Secretary** – Financial Secretary Miller presented his report. He informed the Council that the quarterly statements would be available by mid-October. The Council received the report into record.

Boards

- **Board of Elders** – Councilmember L. Elliott presented his report. He informed the Council that Elder Reithel is resigning effective January 1. The Council received the report into record.
- **Board of Trustees** – Councilmember Sager presented his report. He informed the Council that the Ladies Guild is donating \$500 for a 10'x12' storage shed. The Council discussed if there was a need for the shed. Councilmember Sager will evaluate what storage we currently have before making a decision to purchase the shed. The Council received the report into record.
- **Board of Christian Education** – Marlene Miller informed the Council that Sunday School is going well.
- **Board of Evangelism** – Councilmember A. Elliott presented her report. She informed the Council of various events being planned. The Council received the report into record.
- **Board of Stewardship** – No report.

Organization and Committee Reports

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

Business

- The Council discussed the number of keys in circulation among members of the congregation and the community. The Council feels there is a need to inventory who has keys and establish a system to keep a record of keys for the future. This item will be presented to the Voters' Assembly on October 26.
- The next meeting is scheduled for November 4. The Council would prefer to move the meeting to the following week due to Election Day. Motion made by Financial Secretary Miller, supported by Councilmember Sager to hold the next meeting on November 11 at 7:00pm.

General Comment – None.

Adjournment & Closing Prayer

- Motion made by Financial Secretary Miller, supported by Vice President Ortiz to adjourn at 7:58pm. Motion carried unanimously. Pastor Messer closed with the Benediction.

Minutes respectfully submitted,
Megan Brown, Secretary

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

PEACE NEWS & NOTES



CHURCH DECORATING SATURDAY NOVEMBER 29 10:30 A.M.

Lunch will be provided by the Ladies Guild for all who come and help.

PYG NEWS

November Events

Monthly Meeting - (November 9) - Noon - 2:00 pm

Bazaar Preparation - to be determined

Greetings in Christ,
October plans did not work out well, I apologize to everyone for the cancellation of the Halloween Party. We are going through some changes and getting reorganized and focused.

We elected a President and a Secretary of the Youth Group at our October meeting. I would like to congratulate Sarah Messer [our new President] and Samantha Messer [our new Secretary] and wish them the blessings and guidance of the Lord as they take on these new duties. I also want to thank all the Youth who were willing to accept one of these positions.

With the Ladies Bazaar just around the corner we will be focusing on preparing for our participation in the bazaar and in planning future activities, including the Higher Things event in Grand Rapids this coming summer.

Thanks to everyone for your continued support of the youth of Peace through your prayers, participation in our events and your contributions in our fund raising projects.

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



LADIES GUILD ANNUAL COOKIE WALK AND CRAFT SHOW SATURDAY DECEMBER 6, 2008 9:00 AM—4:00 PM

The Ladies Guild is again asking all the ladies of Peace (who are willing and able) to bake 20-25 dozen small, fancy cookies for our cookie walk. Please have them at the church by Friday evening, December 5, if at all possible.

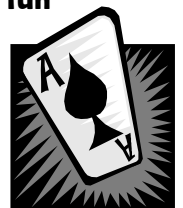
Also, if you are willing to help with setup, selling or cleanup, please speak with Beth Brostrom or Coaline Luplow. We can use all the help we can get!!

Ladies Guild will be trying to make personal calls to everyone this year so we can have a more accurate number of participating people and cookies.

Thanks so much for your help!

EUCHRE NIGHT!

Our next Euchre Night will be Saturday, November 8 at 6:30 p.m. Everyone is welcome to come and have fun playing the great game of euchre. Please bring a refreshment to pass - and a friend. See you there!



PEACE NEWS & NOTES Cont'd



Issues, Etc.TM
Christ-Centered Cross-Focused Talk Radio

Issues, Etc. CDs Available!

S.A.L.T. has undertaken the project of recording episodes of *Issues, Etc.* onto CDs, so that any member of our congregation may check them out and listen to them at their leisure. Every episode of *Issues, Etc.* since the show returned to the air on June 30, 2008 is now available. Cases with the recorded CDs are located in the Adult Bible Study area, along with instructions on how you can check the CDs out. A log of each show's date, guests, and subjects accompanies the cases of CDs to allow you to choose specific shows you would like to listen to. We hope that providing these CDs will enable more of you to listen to this excellent, Christ-Centered, Cross-Focused broadcast. If you have any questions about this, please see Pastor Messer.

ADVENT TEA

The Peace Lutheran Advent Tea will take place on **Tuesday, December 9, 2008**. A sign-up sheet is posted on the S.A.L.T. bulletin board for anyone who would like to attend.

This is a wonderful opportunity for women to get together and focus their hearts on Christ as the Advent season prepares us for the celebration of Christmas!

WE'RE LOOKING FOR A FEW GOOD MEN TO SERVE WOMEN!

The Advent Tea Committee needs men to help during the Tea. Meet with us on **November 9** or **November 16** after church service for a brief meeting.

Questions? Please contact Lisa Messer.

GOTTESDIENST

Gottesdienst is an excellent theological periodical published quarterly. Go to www.gottesdienst.org or see Pastor Messer if you are interested in learning more or to subscribe.

. . . A Note from our Financial Secretary concerning contributions other than general fund using church envelopes . . .

Please attach a separate sizeable note to your donation or contribution and mark it for Peace Youth Group, Ladies Guild, Memorial Fund, etc., when it is for anything other than the general fund. This will assist in proper recording of your contributions. Thank you for your help.

PEACE MOVIE NIGHT

Friday, December 5

Meet at the church at 6:00 p.m.

Expelled! (shows at 6:30 p.m.)

A discussion about movie to follow!

Pizza, chips, and pop provided by

S.A.L.T.

Bring your own snacks, and your own comfy chairs, if you wish!

A freewill offering will be collected to support future movie nights.

Hope to see you there!

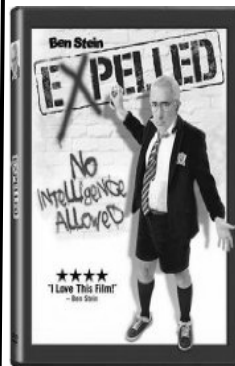


TABLE TALK

Our Table Talks are informal and informative discussions with Pastor Messer on various topics decided by the group in attendance. Our next Table Talk will take place **Thursday, December 4 at 7:00 p.m.** at the church. All are invited to attend!



PEACE NEWS & NOTES Cont'd

ALMA WEIGHT WATCHERS MEMBERS LOSE FOR GOOD AND DONATE FOOD TO PEACE LUTHERAN CHURCH FOOD BANK



Left to right: Sharyn Greening-WW leader, Andrea Elliott-S.A.L.T. Committee Chairperson, WW members-Rosalie Sanford, Barb Janssen, Carol Hawkins, June and Don Kazuk

ALMA GROUP HELPS FILL FOOD BANK SHELVES WHILE SHEDDING MORE THAN 193 POUNDS

Within the last six weeks, the Lose for Good charity campaign has exceeded goals locally and nationally. In Alma, the Weight Watchers members have lost a total of 193.6 pounds and collected more than 87 pounds of food. On Thursday, October 23, the food items were collected from the Weight Watchers meeting and donated to the Peace Lutheran Church food bank sponsored by S.A.L.T. (Evangelism Committee) to help feed families within the congregation of Peace Lutheran who are struggling with current economic crisis.

On a national level, for every pound Weight Watchers members lost between September 7 and October 18, Weight Watchers will donate the cost of one pound of food – **UP TO ONE MILLION DOLLARS** – to two hunger fighting organizations – Share Our Strength and Action Against Hunger.

Contact:

Alma Weight Watchers leader
Sharyn Greening (989) 463-3736

Weight Watchers Territory Manager
Amy Tuttle (Hellwig) (616) 724-7088

A PLEA FROM THE AMERICAN RED CROSS WE NEED YOU!

We are currently at a low level of blood supply for several types, which means we have a 2-day supply. Having a 3- to 5-day supply is our goal. We need your help.

American Red Cross Blood Drives

Tuesday, November 4 at Gratiot Commission on Aging,
515 S. Pine River Street, Ithaca 10:00 am—3:45 pm. Don't forget to vote and come out and give blood.

Wednesday, November 5 at St. Louis High School from
9:00 am—2:45 pm.

Friday, November 21 at Breckenridge High School from
9:00 am—2:45 pm

Thanks to all of you for your continued support in our life saving mission.

B L O O P E R S

A recently arrived immigrant who knew very little English visited a church in High Point, NC one Sunday morning. Because the church was full, the usher put him in the front pew. A tall man was ushered in and sat beside him, so the immigrant decided to do whatever the tall man did. When the tall man stood up, the immigrant stood up. When the tall man sat down, he sat down. When the tall man bowed his head, he bowed his head. When the tall man knelt down, he knelt down.

The immigrant was enjoying the service, but suddenly the church became quiet. The tall man rose to his feet. When the immigrant stood up beside him, the tall man became upset and pushed him back down.

The immigrant was perplexed. After the service, the tall man apologized to him for his rude behavior and tried to explain that it was a baptismal service and the preacher had asked, "Will the father of the baby please stand up?"

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, go to:
www.wittenbergtrail.ning.com/group/

Ladies & Altar Guild

Ladies Guild Meeting

Our Ladies Guild next meets on Monday, **November 3 at 7:00 p.m.**, hostess will be Dorothy Trgina. 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 2008 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 usually lasts about one (1) month. **We would like to encourage 2 persons (families) to purchase flowers each month, one for each plant stand.** Checks may be made payable to Peace Lutheran, marked "Flower Fund," and placed in the offering plate or in the Financial Secretary's inbox in the church office. Thank you for helping to beautify our chancel. Questions? See Beth Brostrom, Cheryl Henry or Marilyn Oswald.

Altar Guild Duty

November

Cheryl Henry

December

Cheryl Henry

January



Coffee Hostesses

November

2 Carol Zeile
9 Dorothy Trgina
16 M. Isaksson/H. Meyers
23 Mary Jakolat
30 Gretchen Harrison

December

7 Jo Wendt
14 Carol Durst
21 Sue Ortiz
28 Carol Zeile



Ladies Lunch Bunch

Peace Lutheran Ladies Lunch Bunch will be visiting Loafer's Glory in Blanchard on **Tuesday, November 18**. Lunch is reserved for 1:30 p.m. in the Wild Flower Tea Room. We will meet at church at 12:00 to share rides. It is approximately 32 miles from Alma and an estimated 40-minute drive.

Come visit a village of yesteryear. An 1800's hardware store uniquely restored with expressions from the past. Explore shop after shop filled with a wonderful collection of collectable and home furnishings. Lunch in the Wild Flower Tea Room, and visit the Sunflower Bakery and Aunties House next door. All ladies of Peace are welcome and also may invite a guest—someone without a church or someone living alone. Please join us!

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION AT PEACE

Sunday School and Adult Bible Class

- Sunday School meets at 11:00 a.m. every Sunday. There are four Sunday School Classes (Pre-K-2nd Grade; 3rd-5th Grade; 6th-8th Grade; 9th-12th Grade).
- Adult Bible Class is offered **every Sunday at 11:00 a.m.** for all adult members of Peace and guests. We are currently studying the **Book of Concord**, which contains our Lutheran Confessions. This is an excellent opportunity for you to come and learn what we Lutherans truly confess and believe. So, come and learn!
- A make-up class is offered on **Tuesday mornings** for those who were unable to attend the Sunday Adult Bible Class. They are scheduled for the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of every month at 10:00 a.m.
- Adult Information Class for prospective new members and all members who want a refresher on Lutheran doctrine and practice class is offered on **Tuesday evenings at 6:00 p.m.** (NOTE: See Calendar for a couple of schedule changes) Members are encouraged to invite anyone who may be interested in learning what we Lutherans believe.

Youth Confirmation Class

- Youth Confirmation Class meets **Thursdays at 5:00 p.m.**

Together in the Word

- Our *Together in the Word* Bible Study meets on **Thursday mornings at 10:00 a.m.** 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 **Exodus**. Please plan on joining us soon.

NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

Happy Birthday to:

- | | |
|--------------------|------------------|
| 4 Brian Stroven | 20 Brian Palmer |
| 7 Jenna Kuehnlein | 21 Aaron Reithel |
| 13 Lillian Manns | 22 Jayden Row |
| 13 Jessica Penzien | 23 Joyce Kohler |



Happy Anniversary to:

- | |
|-----------------------------|
| 9 Pastor and Lisa Messer |
| 10 Michael and Anna Gilbert |
| 22 Ryan and Sarah Cummins |
| 25 Don and Sue Reithel |
| 28 Jim and Yvonne Elenbaas |

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

PAROCHIAL REPORT

(as of 10/26/08)

Membership at Peace

Baptized - 150; Confirmed - 133

Membership gains: 1

Mary Girard by Adult Confirmation on 10/12

Membership losses: 0

Financial Report

YTD Receipts:	\$84,692.17
YTD Budgeted Needs:	\$96,105.00

PEACE OFFICE HOURS

Monday—Friday: 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Pastor Messer's Office Hours

Tuesday and Wednesday

9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Thursday

1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.







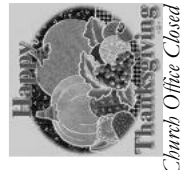






Other times by appointment

Please note: These are the hours Pastor Messer will regularly be available in his office at the church, but please check the monthly calendar to ensure that he is not tied up elsewhere (winkel, conference, etc.). Feel free to pop in on him during these hours, but please know that his duties may call him away from the office from time to time (hospital call, lunch meeting, member visitation, etc.), so if you want to make sure he is there before you come for a visit, call ahead of time. Lastly, please do not hesitate to contact Pastor Messer at any time should you desire or need to speak or meet with him beyond these posted office hours.

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

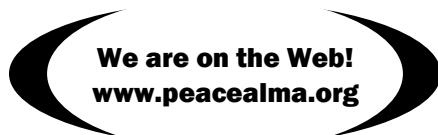
Peace Lutheran Church
325 E. Warwick Drive
Alma, MI 48801
(989) 463-5754
contact@peacealma.org

November 2008

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
2 All Saints' Day 8:30—Choir 9:30—Divine Service 10:45—Fellowship 11:00—BC, SS 	3 7 pm—Ladies Guild	4  7 am—8 pm Election Day Church Office Closed	5	6 10 am—Together in Word 5 pm—Confirmation Class 5 pm—Weight Watchers 6 pm—Adult Info Class 7:30 pm—SS/Board of Ed	7	1
9 25th Sunday after Trinity 8:30—Choir 9:30—Divine Service 10:45—Fellowship 11:00—BC, SS 12:00—PYG Meeting 	10	11 10 am—Elders Meeting 7 pm—Church Council	12	13 10 am—Together in Word 5 pm—Confirmation Class 5 pm—Weight Watchers 6 pm—Adult Info Class 7:30 pm—S.A.L.T. Meeting	14	15
16 26th Sunday after Trinity 8:30—Choir 9:30—Service of Prayer & Preaching 10:45—Fellowship 11:00—SS 	17	18 1:30 pm—Ladies Lunch Bunch	19	20 No Together in the Word No Confirmation Class 5 pm—Weight Watchers	21	22
23 Last Sunday of Church Year 8:30—Choir 9:30—Divine Service 10:45—Fellowship 11:00—BC, SS 	24 <div>December newsletter articles due today</div>	25 10 am—Sunday Bible Study Make-up 6 pm—Adult Info Class	26 7 pm—Divine Service <i>Thanksgiving Eve</i> 	27  <i>Thanksgiving</i> Church Office Closed	28	29  10:30 am Church Decorating Free lunch to workers
30 1st Sunday in Advent 8:30—Choir 9:30—Divine Service 10:45—Fellowship 11:00—BC, SS 	Dec. 1 12 pm—Divine Service <i>St. Andrew</i> 	Dec. 2 6 pm—Adult Info Class	Dec. 3  6 pm—Potluck Dinner 7 pm—Advent Service	Dec. 4 10 am—Together in Word 5 pm—Confirmation Class 5 pm—Weight Watchers 7 pm—Table Talk	Dec. 5 Peace Movie Night 6:00 pm <i>Expelled!</i> 	Dec. 6  9 am—4 pm Ladies Guild Cookie Walk & Crafts

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 November

	ELDER	ACOLYTES	ORGANIST	USHERS	GREETERS
November					
2- 9:30 am <i>(All Saints Day)</i>	Dave Zeile	Tyrel Harwager Natalie Penzien	Beth Brostrom	Michael Gilbert Bill Brostrom	Burt & Cheryl Henry
9- 9:30 am <i>(Trinity 25)</i>	Larry Elliott	Melanie Penzien Aaron Messer	Mary Jakolat	Vern Jakolat Bill Hendrick	Amy Lesinger Lois Miller
16 - 9:30 am <i>(Trinity 26)</i>	Bill Harmon Larry Elliott	Samantha Messer Phillip Schafer	Beth Brostrom	Chris Brown Gary Miller	Jenny Baughman
23 - 9:30 am <i>(Last Sunday of Ch. Yr.)</i>	Terry Luplow	Jordan Henry Rebekah Rodriguez	Mary Jakolat	Jim Sager Miguel Ortiz	Sharyn Greening
26 - 7:00 pm <i>(Thanksgiving Eve)</i>	Terry Luplow	Aaron Messer	Beth Brostrom	Vern Jakolat Gary Miller	
30 - 9:30 am <i>(Advent 1)</i>	Don Reithel	Sarah Messer BJ Henry	Mary Jakolat	Jon Penzien Burt Henry	Larry & Andrea Elliott
December					
3- 7:00 pm <i>(Advent 1 Midweek)</i>			Mary Jakolat		
7 - 9:30 am <i>(Advent 2)</i>	Larry Elliott	Tyrel Harwager CJ Oswald	Beth Brostrom	Bill Brostrom Curt Oswald	LeRoy & Maxine Isaksson

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