

Cross Words

Monthly Newsletter of Cross Ev. Lutheran Church

June 2013 Volume 13, Issue 6

**THE VISIBLE CHURCH**

Proclaiming His Praises

“Use me, O Lord,” the new convert prayed. “Use me.” Then he paused to reflect and quickly added, “But only in an advisory capacity.” Some church members are like that. In fact, that’s one problem with which the church has to wrestle. They’re “shopping cart” Christians, people who don’t mind using their church like a supermarket, where they can go down the aisles and pick from the shelves whatever they want. Forgotten is the need for the necessary product—the truth of God’s Word.

That is not what Peter saw when he looked at God’s people. He wrote, “You are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light” (1 Peter 2:9). What beautiful terms Peter used to describe us as believers! Note, though, besides the meaningful labels, he also put forward a meaningful task for us. We are to declare God’s praises. That’s what God desires from those whom he has brought out of darkness into the light of salvation.

Such work is no sideline with the believer, no if-and-when-you-can or if-and-when-you-want-to or if-and-when-all-else-is-done. Declaring God’s praises is to be at the heart and center of the believer’s daily life. We know the places, don’t we? In the workplace, where fellow employees sneer at and test the mettle of everyday Christianity. In the high school hallways and university classrooms, where fellow students scrape through the veneer of protected childhood religion. At home, with a house full of kids and a pileup of work. On the hospital bed, where reality never takes a nap. In the concrete jungle of sales competition and sexual temptation. In the family, where God’s love needs to be verbally and visually conveyed. In the congregation, where there’s always so much to be done and so few, it seems, to do it. In our synod, where we join hands to take the gospel to every nation and to train workers to go in our place.

Some would avoid this work. Others would call it sacrifice. But appreciative children of God consider it a privilege and carry it out to their Savior’s glory. Let the church remind me constantly that God wants to put me to work—to declare his praises—and not just in an advisory capacity.

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Scripture is taken from THE HOLY BIBLE, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION.®

**NEWS FROM CHURCH**

**(From May 9 Church Council Meeting)**

*The current members of the church council are:* ***Chairman****: Doug Roush;* ***Acting Secretary****: John Schuster;* ***Treasurer****: Jim Reader;* ***Elders****: John Schuster, Dennis Goneau, Dan Mutterer, Gary Mueller; Phil Ernst;* ***Trustees****: Tom Ernst, Dan Hanson, Steve Taylor*

**MEMBERSHIP** A release from membership was granted to Tanya Ketcham to join a church not of our fellowship.

 A release was requested by and granted to Marietta Knapp.

**TREASURER** Income for the month of April (includes Easter offering) was $18,207.20. Expenses for April were $11,544.10. The current balance in church account (includes all funds) is $56,169.52

**TRUSTEES** The new windows have been installed on the west end of the church. The trustees also purchased and installed a new window air conditioner unit for the church office.

**PICTORIAL DIRECTORY** A new pictorial directory for our congregation will be [produced this summer. We are using Lifetouch for this. We would like all the members to participate. Each family photographed receives a complimentary 8X10 portrait and a directory. (see information sheet in this newsletter) Photography will be done ***July 22-25, 2:00 pm to 9:00 pm each day.*** You can reserve your time for being photographed by either going on to the church website and clicking on the Lifetouch link or sign up after church on June 2nd or June 23rd. For participating in the directory and for bringing a canned food item (see below) Lifetouch will give each participant a $15 discount coupon. If you have any questions speak to Debbie Ernst or Sharon Koehler.

 Lifetouch is also partnering with Cross for a Food Drive during the month of July (to be divided between the Martin Luther College Food Pantry and the Rockford Food Shelf. Besides a $5 discount, Lifetouch will donate $1 for family photographed, which will be used as part of the food drive donation.

**MEN’S BREAKFAST BIBLE STUDY**

June 21st at 9:00 am is the next scheduled meeting of the Men’s Breakfast Bible Study. We will be continuing our study of the book of the prophet Daniel. Daniel contains lessons from heroes of faith, an important part of salvation history (the Babylonian captivity of Judah) and prophecies concerning the New Testament Church. It is an interesting study.

 Pancakes will be served, in addition to a good helping of fellowship and food for the soul. Men, plan to be there!

**CROSS LIGHTS** will meet on Tuesday, June 4th at 7:00 pm. All women of the congregation are invited to attend.

*(The following is the first of a series of articles concerning the 6th Commandment by Pastor Tim Learman of Trinity Lutheran Church in Lake City, MN They apply what God’s Word says about morality and marriage to current issues in our state and nation. May the Lord gives us the wisdom and desire to apply His holy will to our lives.)*

***Luther on the 6th Commandment***

Since among us there is such a disgraceful mess and sludge of all manner of vice and lewdness, this commandment is aimed against every form of unchastity, whatever its name. Not only is the external act prohibited, but also every kind of source, stimulation, and means. Your heart, the words of your mouth, and your whole body are to be chaste. They are to allow no room, give no assistance, and offer no encouragement to unchastity. And that is not all. You are to defend, protect and rescue your neighbor whenever he is in need or danger in respect to these matters. On the positive side, you are to help and guide your neighbor so that he may keep his honor. For if you are able to prevent a wrong and yet fail to do so, or if you close your eyes to it and if it were no concern of yours, then you are just as guilty as the evildoer himself.

(Luther’s Large Catechism. CPH, Saint Louis, MO)

 Martin Luther’s words on the 6th commandment were a commentary on Scripture for his time. They appropriately described the state of his country and the culture for their age. He hit on the sinful struggles that the people faced at the time. Marriage was under attack. Adultery and prostitution were widespread among the common people. Fornication and “unspeakable acts” took place among the clergy who were told they could not enter marriage. Marriage itself was under attack.

 Without changing much, Luther’s application of God’s Word then fits our society today. Numerous attacks on marriage today include high divorce rates increased through “no fault divorce,” websites designed for cheating spouses to “meet up,” and the common occurrence of couples living together before marriage. The point that every generation has to fight the battle defending the doctrine of church fellowship can likely also be said about the defense of marriage and the 6th commandment. Mankind was going against God’s will for marriage just a generation after the fall into sin when Lamech took multiple wives; King David committed adultery before the nation of Israel; sexual immorality in many forms was common place in Corinth in the time of Paul; and today those who support God’s view of marriage between one man and one woman are declared to be hateful and bigots.

 The CEO of the restaurant chain, Chick-fil-A, Dan Cathy, has been under attack by the liberal press. In a recent interview with the Baptist Press he stated his support for the Biblical definition of marriage. When asked if he did this he proclaimed, “Guilty as charged.” He has never declared hate for homosexuals, but that is how major news corporations have twisted his words. Because his views (God’s) do not fit with others he is branded a hater and is now the target of hate.

 Supporting God’s design for marriage is not an easy task in today’s society. God’s Word is being cut and pasted by many, taken out of context and deleted when it doesn’t fit a certain view. When Christians support God’s Word and stand up for it we are attacked. We are told to be accepting of all people, yet are ironically told at the same time that our views cannot be accepted.

Summer is upon us and it is easy to get busy, so busy in fact that we think we don’t have time for worship. “But it’s summer. Don’t we need a little vacation from church too?” Below are some reasons for taking time for church even in the summer. If you go out of town on week-ends up to the cabin, camping, etc, don’t forget we have a Wednesday service at 7:00 pm.

Some of the reasons to go to church even in summer:

 ***For*** ***all*** ***have*** ***sinned and fall short of the glory of God. They are justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.***

* Ro 3:23-24 (HCSB)

***So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.***

* Romans 10:17 (ESV)

***As a deer pants for flowing streams, so pants my soul for you, O God.   My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and appear before God?***

* Psalms 42:1-2 (ESV)

 Since the state wide ballot in Minnesota this fall includes an amendment to the state constitution to define marriage as between one man and one woman this topic is timely. It is a complex topic, but Scripture is clear. We will look at more points on what God’s Word says about homosexuality in the coming months. This is an opportunity for us to dig into Scripture, to be reminded of what it means to love all people, and to see how important our Savior’s sacrifice is for all people. While we live in a changing world, sin, essentially, has remained the same. Thank the Lord that he remains the same as well, “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.” (Hebrews 13:8)

**SENIOR FELLOWSHIP**

Senior Fellowship will not meet in June.

 On Thursday, July 11, we will go visit the Munsinger Gardens in St Cloud. We will car pool. Watch for information in bulletin.

**FESTIVAL OF FRIENDSHIP**

Cross will have it’s 2nd annual Outdoor Festival of Friendship Day on Sunday, July 28. The day will feature and outdoor worship service at 10:00 am (weather permitting). The service will include the music of WELS singer/songwriter Stephen Bautista. There will also be a potluck cook out. Hot dogs and hamburgers will be grilled. You are asked to bring a salad, side dish or dessert to share. Stephen Bautista will also present an concert at 1:00 pm .

 The main purpose of this special service is to give the members of Cross an opportunity to invite un-churched relatives, friends and neighbors to come and hear God’s Word. It is also a chance for all of us as brothers and sisters in Christ to enjoy some fellowship. Watch for more details in the weekly bulletin and July edition of the newsletter.

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**“19 Minute” Bible Study**

Sundays,

In the Sanctuary

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10:20 am

(June 2 thru August 25)

Grand Themes

& Key Words of the Bible

Cross/Salem Lutheran Day

@

Minnesota Twins

vs. Cleveland Indians



Sunday, July 21

Game Time – 1:10 pm

(Bus leaves from Salem Parking Lot at 11:00 am)

Cost - $28

(includes ticket & bus ride to and from game)

Sign up at church by

June 30

.

**invites you to our**

# FATHER’S DAY BRUNCH

**Sunday, June 16th**

**10:15 am – 11:30 am**

## **Basement Fellowship Hall**

**Menu: Egg Bake, Pancakes, Sausage, Fruit, Coffee, Milk & Juice**

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