

Cross Words

Monthly Newsletter of Cross Ev. Lutheran Church

July 2013 Volume 13, Issue 7

**THE VISIBLE CHURCH**

Waiting for Glory

The day is coming when the church now invisible on earth will be fully visible in heaven. Don’t you wonder what it will look like? who will be in it? how will it be different?

First of all, might we be surprised as to who is in God’s church? John saw a “great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb” (Revelation 7:9). In heaven we will see people we know and people we have never met, people who look and speak like us, and people who are far different. From the east and the west, the north and the south, they will have come to stand before the throne and in front of the Lamb, who shed his blood for them.

Might we also be surprised at the complete unity of God’s church in heaven? Here on earth there are differences and divisions. Yes, we want unity even here on earth. We pray for, long for, and work for agreement in teaching and practice. In heaven it will be so. Knowledge and understanding will be complete. Mind and faith will be made perfect. The image of God will be restored fully in each of us. And we will be as Adam and Eve once were, knowing God’s will completely and following it fully.

How will God’s church in heaven be different? John again gives us a hint. He writes, “Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away” (Revelation 21:3,4). How do we describe such perfect joy and peace? Maybe we have to do what John did and use the negative. Gone will be all that caused our tears in this world. No more sin means no more temptation. No more troubles that sin once brought into the world. No more death or mourning or crying or pain. The old has passed away. The new has come.

We can’t fully imagine what standing in God’s church in heaven will be like. Perhaps our first response when we get there will be to exclaim, “I can’t believe what I’m seeing!”

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

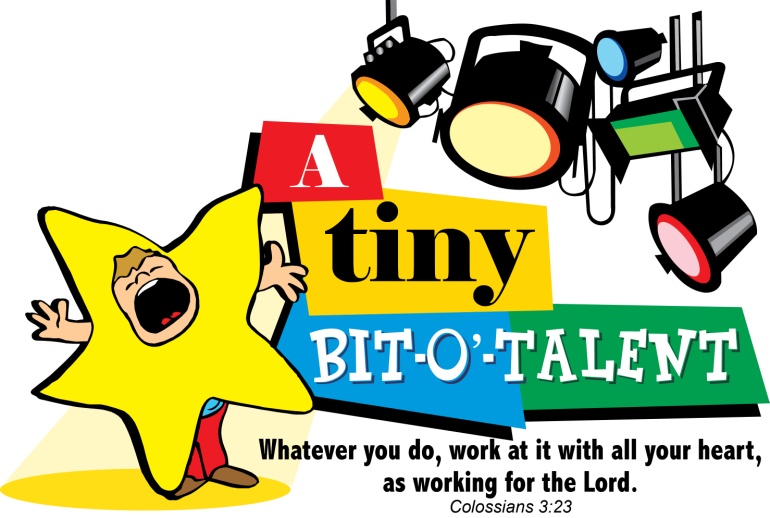
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**FESTIVAL OF FRIENDSHIP**

Cross will have it’s 2nd annual Outdoor ***Festival of Friendship Day on Sunday, July 28.***  The day will feature an 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. Invites your friends to have lunch with us!

***Stephen Bautista will also present a concert at 1:00 pm . This concert is open to the public. It is an excellent event to invite someone to, besides a worship.***

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 .



**VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL**

**August 12, 13,14**

**9:00 am - 4:00 pm**

**Preschool through 6th Grade**

**763-477-5292**

[**www.crosslutheranwels.org**](http://www.crosslutheranwels.org)

**Sign up at church or online**

**NEWS FROM CHURCH**

**(From June 13 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*

**TREASURER** The treasurer’s report showed income of $10,503.52 for the month of May, with expenses of $12,194.75. The balance in the General Fund at the end of May was $54,478.29

At the end of June, the semi-annual contributions for our Synod Mission Offering, West Lutheran High School, LIMA and the Lutheran Home will be remitted.

We are still investigating changing phone service for the church to save money on phone and internet.

**TRUSTEES** We thank Lon & Laverrne Torblaa, Ken & Sharon Koehler and Ethel Holslin for the time, effort and donations made in doing the landscaping on the south side of the church.

The church council is considering three bids for the proposed landscaping project along the hill on the south and east sides of the church property. The plan is for the council to chose the best bid and present it to the congregation and voters for approval at a special meeting to be called.

**CROW RIVER DELEGATE MEETING** We thank all who donated food items and who helped serve coffee and sweet rolls and lunch at the June 11 Crow River Delegate Meeting. The food was delicious and the service was excellent!

At the meeting, the delegates heard reports of items that will be discussed at this summer’s Synod Convention (July 29-August 1 at Martin Luther College in New Ulm, MN).

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**PICTORIAL DIRECTORY**

A new pictorial directory for our congregation is being produced this summer. We are using Lifetouch Photography 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 22-24, 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 Pictorial Directory link (User Name: Host; Password: 167957) or sign up after church. 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.

**JULY FOOD DRIVE**

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**Bring Non-Perishable food items to church during the month of July**

**Benefits the Rockford Food Shelf & the MLC Food Pantry**

**Lifetouch Photography 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 $15 in discounts, Lifetouch will donate $1 for each family photographed, which will be used as part of the food drive donation.**

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

*(The following is the second 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.)*

*“Therefore I have always taught that we should not look down upon marriage or undervalue it as the blind world and the false clergy are doing. We are rather to view it in the light of the Word of God which adorns and sanctifies it. Marriage is not merely to be placed on a level with other estates; it is to be put ahead and above them all, whether that be emperor, princes, bishops, or anyone else.”*

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

“This is how I am. I was born this way.” These are statements many have made concerning the homosexual lifestyle. At times there are questions, “Why do I have these feelings? Will they go away? Is this wrong?” A change in the DSM manual used to diagnose mental health disorders removed the distinction of homosexuality as a sexual deviation in 1973. This landmark change for homosexuals in how this lifestyle is viewed by mental health professionals did not, however, change God’s view of homosexuality.

For many years it was understood among churches labeled “Christian” that homosexuality is a sin. Today, a variety of church bodies now teach the opposite. Clear Scripture has been ignored by some clergy who have “inserted” their own interpretations instead of letting the Word speak for itself. They explain away Paul’s condemnation of the acts as the ramblings of a homophobe (or himself a closet homosexual) who was only speaking about rape or did not have the understanding of different sexual orientations that we have today. They will look at the sin of Sodom and Gomorrah, remove the clear truth, ignore the supporting passages, and refer to their faults as being “an unwelcoming society.” One must so severely twist the Word of God to find that it does not condemn homosexuality as a sin.

From Romans 1, “24Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. 26Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones. 27In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed indecent acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion.” And a passage from Jude noting the sexual acts of Sodom as sin: “7In a similar way, Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding towns gave themselves up to sexual immorality and perversion. They serve as an example of those who suffer the punishment of eternal fire.”

A temptation for conservative Christians is to condemn someone else’s sin and ignore ours. “All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” And, “The wages of sin is death.” (Romans 3:23 and 6:23) In God’s eyes it makes no difference what our sin is. We all deserve condemnation for our faults. Many will try to use the excuse, “I can’t help it, I was born this way.” Whatever the sin, some may say, “It makes me happy, that’s what God would want.” The fact is the way we were born is not a scientific excuse for any sin, but the truth. King David exclaimed, “Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me.” (Psalm 51:5) Whether we have a tendency toward anger, pornography, fornication, homosexuality, greed or any other sin, they come from our own sinful natures as a result of the corruption of mankind through the fall into sin.

Many might quote Scripture and say “do not judge” (Matthew 7:1) ignoring the context of the call for all to be aware of sin, as well as ignoring Matthew 18’s command to call others to repent of sin. God even tells us in 1 Corinthians 6:2 “The saints will judge the world.”

Whether it be our sin, or the sins of others, God warns us of the grave danger of avoiding repentance and a refusal to trust in his forgiveness. With our Lord, there is hope for all sins, “13For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, 14in whom we have redemption,the forgiveness of sins.” (Colossians 1:13, 14) May we “speak the truth in love.”

**SENIOR FELLOWSHIP**

On Thursday, July 18, we will go visit the Munsinger Gardens in St Cloud. We will car pool. Watch for information in bulletin.

Cross/Salem Lutheran Day

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Minnesota Twins

vs.

Cleveland Indians

[](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Minnesota_Twins_Insignia.svg)

Sunday, July 21

Game Time – 1:10 pm

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

**“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

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| **OKLAHOMA DISASTER RELIEF** |

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| During a recent visit to the Oklahoma City area, a sobering reality set in as I saw the destruction that two tornadoes, a week apart, left behind. We visited neighborhoods that were hardest hit. Storms of this magnitude hit with such great force, almost seeming to be choosy. It was eerie to see many homes in a row that were utterly destroyed, leaving only a few walls standing, then the next house would only have a few roof shingles blown off and windows blown in.  In the Moore, OK, area, two dozen people lost their lives, hundreds were injured, and thousands of buildings sustained damage-from minor problems to complete loss of property as a result of the tornado that struck on May 20. A little over a week later, another tornado unleashed its fury on the nearby town of El Reno. Here, 18 people were killed. Both tornadoes were rated EF5, the highest possible.  Four member families of Holy Cross Lutheran Church, Oklahoma City, lost their homes and currently live in temporary housing. "People, especially the children, have been traumatized by this experience. Panic tends to set in now when a storm approaches," Pastor John Strackbein. Counselors from Wisconsin Lutheran Child & Family Service - Christian Family Solutions are providing Christian counseling.  There's still a lot to do, not just for the Holy Cross members, but for the community. Kingdom Workers, in partnership with WELS Christian Aid and Relief is organizing volunteers to help with repair and clean up, and at the same time reaching out to community members with Christ's love and message of salvation. Repair work includes, roofing, gutters, fencing, and window replacement. We ask that volunteers consider a 10-day stay, and that they be at least 16 years old (exceptions may be made). Lodging is provided on air mattresses, dormitory style, in the Gethsemane Lutheran Church (Oklahoma City) gym. Christian Aid and Relief will provide reimbursement of gas, food, and lodging for the trip to and back from Oklahoma.  Can you help reach out to the victims of disasters in Oklahoma? We are currently assembling our next group of volunteers to arrive in Oklahoma on July 15, and anticipate need for volunteers through the end of July. To be considered for future project dates, please complete the online application form at [KingdomWorkers.com/DisasterVolunteerApp](http://r20.rs6.net/tn.jsp?e=001fHPLyZA6WfbpZ9cX1uUyLjdKPhAs_avtDefw9SAI3OhYukBQf2-9F6o5fRrkrPBrAICQe687wHSaDRx6buyEUcEcvtTUn0LbFDtRN5PVYqyNmgPRihY6skxmAe8dJZ0k7-kraqx-hAwpEBkiOvcQqBgugDLyiDzhRHQUqi5Hu6hlX9OWZ2vG5DxNKgVTQ-SCN-AnIbScMFlJYYJOAwp5IRaF84irFaiiNae3Ht_y7rvA1_mFOtTcsiJUjtVwJavPJkNOqlfb_FilpV8aOhGhsmulN5p-LAONFU8-JZd2Hs3MUnwH3qIz-TuM7aP55R0VJHcV5QKmD949-FiZSXhiqudT7XRmRITuwYugx1vLBTOtraN-JFRbzjYMWnKaouMYgPpHNuRNjJBOhVM8slAQs-N2VMOjATSe12SUZEA6cKk=) or call 414-771-6848.  Neil Hankwitz  [nhankwitz@kingdomworkers.com](mailto:nhankwitz@kingdomworkers.com) Kingdom Workers Domestive Volunteer Manager |

**WEST LUTHERAN GOLF TOURNAMENT**

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Monday, August 5, West Lutheran High School hold its annual Golf Tournament at Wild Marsh Golf Course in Buffalo. Cost $90 – golf, cart, supper & prizes (includes $20 donation towards West Lutheran High School Athletic Department. Registration forms are in the back of the church. Deadline to register is July 23.

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