

PASTOR'S MESSAGE

Grace, mercy and peace to you from God Our Father and Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

“Behold the days are coming,” says the Lord God, “That I will send a famine on the land, not a famine of bread, not a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord.” Amos 8:11

Over the past few months we have seen store shelves empty. People trying to prepare for the worst leaving with carts full of groceries. More recently we have seen looters carrying out arms full of stolen property from the restocked shelves. In contrast, news reports show people forced to stay home from their workplaces with empty freezers and refrigerators resulting in empty bellies while others flaunt their overabundance of sweet desserts of indulgence.

How does it make you feel when we see people flaunting their overabundance while others starve? My guess at the very least we might feel some disgust. Not that we should ever begrudge what God has given our neighbor because to do so are the sins of coveting and envy. But I suspect it is the insensitivity of flaunting their comfort in the face of another's anguish and discomfort. In many of us, this may even cause outrage and anger.

How do we feel when we see looter's stealing the product of others delivered to be distributed? Again our feelings probably range from disgust to anger.

Now stop. What if those empty freezers and refrigerators were instead empty beliefs, promises, or worldviews? What if it was an empty attempt to replace reliance on God with a reliance on government? What if those empty bellies were instead empty hearts and starving souls?

What if the looters were the devil and his legions carrying away the seeds of faith delivered from the scriptures by the Holy Spirit through the words preached by your pastor? Or perhaps words spoken by yourself? Words that were to be distributed to those without Christ?

What if those who flaunt their overabundance of sweet desserts were instead Christians who preach destruction to those outside of the church. Christians sitting back in comfort certain of their relationship with Christ and assurance of life eternal while others hide in the corner of their fears dreading the last day?

Does it cause us to feel the same way? Do we feel the same disgust and anger? There is a hunger for the word. There is a hunger for community. There is a need for the peace that passes all understanding and the security that can only come from knowing Jesus when the world seems to be tearing itself apart.

We have been given an overabundance of the love of God to share. A bounty that only becomes larger and more precious the more we share it, like the loaves and the fish. God loves His children so much that by the plan of the Father, the sacrifice of the Son, and the work of the Holy Spirit we can feed those who hunger. We can feed the hungry who starve for lack of God's word. God loves us so much He did not hold anything back but sacrificed all that we could be His. Dying on the cross, despite its shame, despite that the thief and enemy of this word seemed to take everything from Him, even His life. Instead, He who gave up everything now has everything to give. Even as in Him we do also.

To spread the word we must pray for those who don't know Christ. We must, ourselves, restock the shelves of our mind, with the knowledge of God and His word, for distribution to others. We must pray for God to show us the truth of what is going on in that person's life. We must look and pray for an opportunity to be Christ to them. The devil will try to loot those times of their significance. God's word, however, will not return void.

So are we ready to feed those that hunger, stop the looters, and share the abundance with others?

SDG,
Pastor

News of The Lutheran Academy!

Working in partnership with God's people to raise up a new generation of faithful Christian men and women!

Here are some words shared by our Principal, Jan Wells, at the Academy Awards Night on May 28th.

Praise for a Difficult Year

Are you familiar with the song that starts, "What a difference a day makes.."?

I would like to change that to "What a difference a *virus* makes..."

With very little notice we've gone from school-in-a-building to school-in-a-box.

Some of us have been scared, confused, challenged, isolated, stretched, frazzled, angered, surprised, exhausted, worried.....the list could go on.

Some of us have had to change plans, make do, be creative, carry on, reinvent, ...and learn!

This is a defining time in history, and it reminds me of a Bible story.

A Jewish girl named Esther was reared in Persia by her cousin Mordecai. By simply winning a beauty contest, she became King Xerxes's queen. This was an amazing honor, though Esther surely didn't know it would bring her to the only chance to save her people, the Jews, from certain annihilation.

When Esther's godly cousin wouldn't bow to Haman, the king's special assistant, wicked Haman hatched a plan to do away with all the Jews. He convinced King Xerxes to put the plan into action. So Mordecai called on Esther to use her influence as the queen to rescue her people.

Mordecai says to Esther in 4:14: "Yet who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"

Dr. Tony Evans calls this a "kingdom assignment"... a defining moment in history when God asks us to use all we have been given to further the kingdom of God... to set our own plans aside and to seek His plan, and to carry it out.

Author Kristine Brown says it's "trusting God right where you are."

What might WE call living through this pandemic?

A difficult assignment?

An unusual circumstance?

A boring imprisonment?

An interesting challenge?

A chance to learn something new?

A chance to wait on the Lord, to pray more, to meditate more?

A chance to think outside the box while being trapped in it?

One commentator asked, "How would you tell this story if this verse (from Esther) were about YOU?"

In this time in history, it IS about us...the teachers, families, and students of TLA.

YOU have come to such a time as this, and YOU have defined this moment in glorious ways:

- Your teachers and students have quickly learned to use new technology.
- Your teachers and students have adapted to new classrooms.
- Your students are completing their work!
- You have expressed faith and support to encourage others.
- You have prayed.
- You have sympathized and assisted.
- You made the best Teacher Appreciation Week I've ever seen!
- You persevered and pushed forward.
- Your students have focused on praise, joy, and accomplishment rather than loneliness, monotony, and isolation.
- You have *given* when it would have been easier to *give up*.
- You have worked together with TLA to make us stronger and better.

It hasn't been an ideal situation. It hasn't been an easy three months. It has been hard for our teachers to be separated from their students and our staff. We have wondered how you all are *really* doing, and we have prayed for you! We have been pondering the future.

But for right now, in this defining moment in history, we have seen your faith in our precious Jesus, and we have seen you answer God's call for such a time as this. These three months have been a testament to God at work in you!

I will miss the hugs and in-person fellowship tonight. Thank you for being here!

Pray without ceasing - I Thes. 5:17

Remember to ask: "How can I pray for you?"

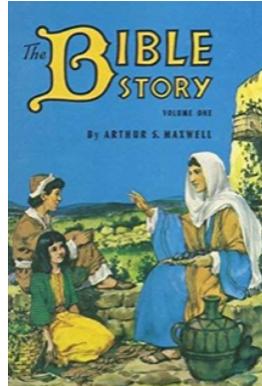
CHURCH NEWS AND NOTES:

What if you could listen to the Greatest Stories ever told in small clips of 4 to 7 minutes a day?

Though the stories are written to engage young children, if you listen carefully you will probably find something during this daily reading for you as an adult. Enjoy 7 readers, 7 days, 7 stories a week.

The series will bring us through many of the Bible's Stories. As of the end of June we completed recording and sharing 39 stories that comprise the first of 10 volumes in the Bible Story Series.

A story is posted daily on Facebook and then on our church YouTube channel. So tune in yourself or pass the info along to a family with young children so they too can enjoy these readings!



May Challenge Reminder

Pastor sent a letter in May sharing two video challenges for the congregation. We are still collecting the video clips.

Video #1 Please video tape yourself and anyone in your household saying "Our God is an awesome God". We will splice these together to make a video for the Michael W Smith song.

Video #2 with the letter there was a figure of Jesus to color and put a Popsicle stick. You will also find a verse to hold up. The video is to be 10 seconds long no more. Have someone throw you the Popsicle stick figure from your left. Catch the figure and then hold it up with your right hand. Then hold your verse with your left hand so that we can read it with the Popsicle stick Jesus in your right hand. When you get to 10 seconds throw your Popsicle stick figure to your right. We will be splicing these together so that it looks like you are throwing the stick figure to one another.



Please email them to the office at amybetts@yourpeace.org, or pastor@yourpeace.org.



Summer Hours

ONE Sunday service at **9:18 a.m.**

Saturday night service at 5:00 p.m.

If you have a prayer need or praise to share, please contact Pastor or Amy Betts in the church office anytime at 570-703-0607.

+ HYMN OF THE MONTH: God of Our Fathers SJ #599

Daniel C Roberts was a civil war veteran of the Union Army who was ordained an Episcopal Priest in 1866. In 1876, he wrote the hymn "God of Our Fathers" for a centennial Fourth of July celebration in Brandon, Vermont. The hymn was originally sung to a different tune but became very popular sung to the one George Warren composed for it in 1892.

The hymn gives praise to God as ruler of all things. It expresses thanksgiving and requests his guidance and protection for our nation now and in the future even as he has in the past.



July

Birthdays

Joann Roberts 11

Baptism Birthdays

Tanya Babbitts 3
Ky Betts 14



Prayer Coordinator

As you can see by this picture our new prayer coordinator is off to a great start! On Flag Day we prayed for our nation and for revival after church. This special time of prayer will continue after church and one day during the week as she goes to businesses and other places to offer a brief prayer for their recovery and well-being. Theresa needs volunteers to join prayer teams to go and pray with her. In addition, in August she will be asking if she can prayer walk with you near the houses in your neighborhood. Please join her as she carries out this important work and outreach.

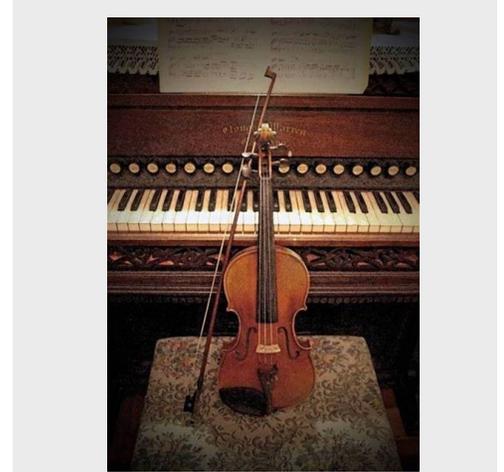
A response received from those we lift on our Prayer Calendar

Dear Pastor Babbitts, and the Saints at Peace Lutheran Church:

I was presently surprised by your recent, hand-written letter, and for the fact that you prayed for me in the words of Colossians 1:9-14, which I have just read and appreciated in the original Greek. (I teach Greek and New Testament course at all levels here at the seminary.) Wow! What a wonderful text. I am preparing to teach beginning Greek to 25 incoming seminary students (we start Monday 15 June), so I'd appreciate it if you'd lift them and me in prayer: for their safe travels, for a pleasant adjustment to life in Fort Wayne for their wives/families, and (above all!) that they actually learn the language which is quite challenging for most.

Also, since you asked to pray for me, I'd appreciate your petitions as I work each day on a commentary I am writing in the Concordia Commentary Series on Paul's letter to the Philippians. I've been working on it ten years already and still have a long ways to go. So any prayer support you have for me would be most appreciated. Blessings to you and your saints in Christ Jesus in Scranton, PA.

John G. Nordling



If you have attended or watched a recent worship service at Peace in recent weeks, besides the accomplished organ playing of Carsten you have heard the beautiful violin playing of Tess Nichols. The two have been playing some awesome duets but as they say the more the merrier so....(you know where this is going right?) If you play an instrument and are willing to join in please let Pastor, Carsten, or Amy know!



2020 HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE John Babbitts III

John Babbitts graduated from Delaware Valley High School

College Attending: College of William and Mary

Dual Majors: History and Environmental Science & Policy

John most looks forward to the college atmosphere, meeting new people, and doing research as part of his course studies.

What does Peace mean to you? "Peace is where I have my moral and religious foundation. It is nice to have a place to converse with other brothers and sisters in Christ."

How we can pray for you specifically? "Please pray for **guidance**. For guidance for my future, but on a spiritual level as well."

May 30, Rev. Dr. Anthony Steinbronn gave another great presentation which was again very timely. The presentation was split into two parts and was entitled "Clarifying the Reformation." In it Dr. Steinbronn discussed prayer (Oratio), meditation (Meditatio) and temptations/struggles (Tentatio). These three practices focus us on God's Word and result in spiritual attacks upon the person performing them.

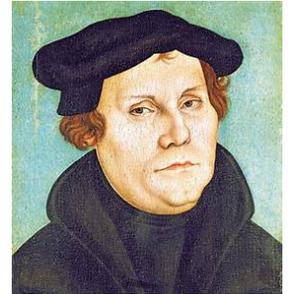
To illustrate this and the importance of these practices Dr. Steinbronn quoted Luther saying "I did not learn my theology all at once, but had to search constantly deeper and deeper for it. My temptations did that for me, for no one can understand Holy Scripture without practice and temptations."

Below are a few of the points made by Tony concerning Luther's spiritual struggle:

- The person who meditates speaks God's Word to himself and listens attentively to it with his whole heart to discover what the Holy Spirit means in it
- Without the Holy Spirit's illumination, the teaching of the Scriptures remains mere theory without any reality
- It is best to meditate out loud, if possible, for the spoken word needs to go through the ears to penetrate the heart
- When we walk away from the mirror we forget what we look like
- The more a person inwardly contemplated the Scriptures, the more he would outwardly live a life of service to one's neighbor
- These attacks of the Devil are counter-productive in the life of the believer who relies on prayer and meditation...for it only serves to drive him back to God's word.

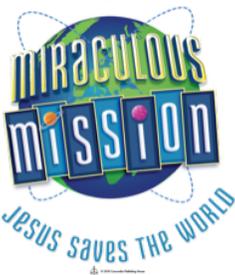
Dr. Steinbronn then turned to Luther's Life using film clips from Luther (2003) with Joseph Fiennes to show parts of his spiritual journey. Among those included were:

- Is God Merciful?
- Suicide and knowing the Father's heart
- 95 Theses
- Diet of Worms
- Augsburg Confession



For those who would like to receive the handouts from the event which included a copy of the PowerPoint slides, a piece entitled "The Concrete Spirit" and another entitled "The Cross and His way of Governing His People: The life of Jacob, The Life of Joseph" please see Pastor or e-mail him.

Dr. Steinbronn will join us for one more presentation this year. Reformation Day October 31, 2020, he will serve as the key note speaker for our Mission Festival. Please put it on your calendar and plan to attend!



Vacation Bible School 2020

Lift off for an intergalactic adventure with Miraculous Mission:

Jesus Saves the World. Explore God's miraculous mission and learn about His plan of salvation from creation to the cross!

August 3-7, 2020

5:30-8:00pm

(5:00pm Optional Light Dinner)

Held at the Lutheran Ministry Center
1546 Monsey Ave, Scranton PA

Volunteers and participants (of course) are needed. Sign up sheets for both will be at the back of the church throughout July. You can also sign up by calling the church office at 570-703-0607.

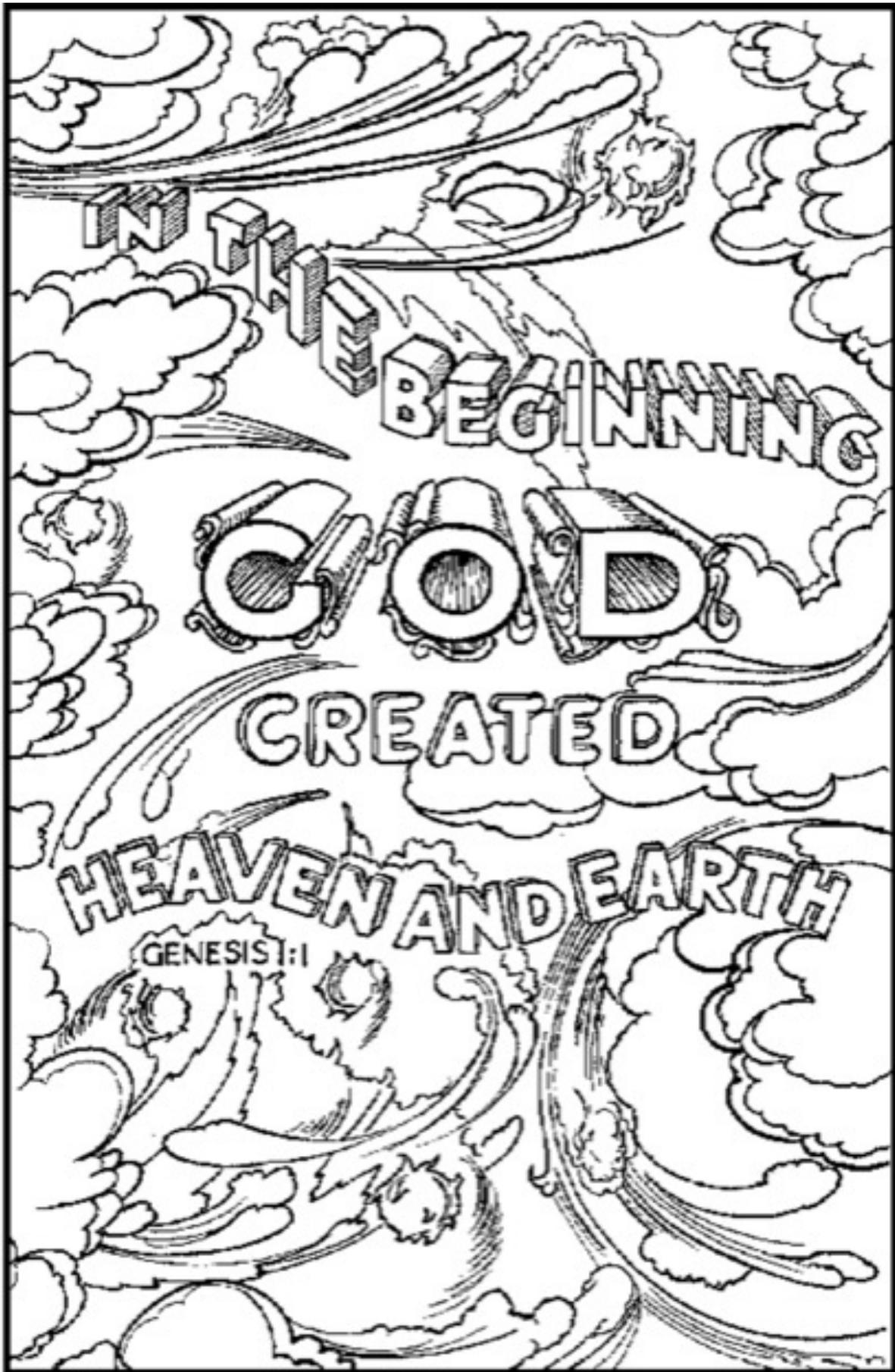
Thank you to the many who have continued to send in their offerings.

If you chose not to attend services for the near future, we ask that if you are able, please continue to send in your offerings.

Some options for getting them to the church:

- 1) **Mail** your contribution by check right to Peace Lutheran Church
2506 N Main Ave Scranton, PA 18508
- 2) Another way to contribute is to use your **bank's** bill-pay service.
- 3) Submit an **online** offering through the church website at www.yourpeace.org.

Thank you and may God continue to bless you and keep you safe.



God Bless You! From your friend _____
at Peace Lutheran Church.

JULY 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4 Happy Independence Day! 5:00pm Worship with Holy Communion
5 9:18am Worship Service	6	7 9:30-10:00am Prayer Team	8	9	10	11 5:00pm Worship with Holy Communion
12 9:18am Worship Service	13	14 9:30-10:00am Prayer Team	15	16	17	18 5:00pm Worship with Holy Communion
19 9:18am Worship Service with Communion	20	21 9:30-10:00am Prayer Team	22	23	24	25 5:00pm Worship with Holy Communion
26 9:18am Worship Service	27	28 9:30-10:00am Prayer Team	29	30	31 Looking Ahead: Vacation Bible School August 3-7	

JULY 2020

Sunday Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday Saturday

PRAAYER CALENDAR

**Sister Congregations in the Eastern District
and one outside the district**

5

Rev. Benjamin Berteau & St. Luke Lutheran Church, Cabot, PA

6

Rev. Howard Alexander & St. Mark Lutheran Church, Ridley Park, PA

7

Rev. John Pingel & Salem Lutheran Church, Buffalo, NY

8

Rev. Marcus Sims & Saint Philips Lutheran Church, Philadelphia, PA

9

Rev. Joshua De Young & St Peters Lutheran Church, Wilkes-Barre, PA

10

St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Tunkhannock, PA

11

Rev. Alan Bauch & St Michael Lutheran Church, Wolcottsville, NY

12

Rev. Michael Schumacher & St Matthew Lutheran Church, Pittsburgh

13

Rev Domenick Letteri & Saint Matthew Lutheran Church, Colden, NY

14

Rev. Galen Purpura Jr & Saint John's Lutheran Church, Depew, NY

15

Rev. Peter Saie & Redeemer Lutheran Church, Wampsville, NY

16

Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, Freedom, PA

17

Mount Olive Lutheran Church, Beaver Falls, PA

18

Martin Luthera Lutheran Church, Punxsutawney, PA

19

Rev. Timothy Anas & Lutheran Church of Our savior, Buffalo, NY

20

Rev Kenneth Craig & Immanuel Lutheran Church, Lockport, NY

21

Rev. Dr. Richard Mokay & Hope Lutheran Church, Levittown, PA

22

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Albion, PA

23

Rev. Richard Wolf & Holy Cross Lutheran Church, Middleport, NY

24

Hananiah Lutheran Church, Buffalo, NY

25

Rev. Berton Greenway & Grace Lutheran, Penn Hills, PA

26

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, South Hills, PA

27

Faith Lutheran Church, Herdon, PA

28

Rev. David Triplett & Concordia Lutheran Church, Brockport, NY

29

Christ Lutheran Church, Freemansburg, PA

30

Rev. David Weeks & Calvary Lutheran Church, Murrysville, PA

31

Rev. John Rushton & Alpha Deaf Lutheran Church, Rochester, NY