

From the Pastor's Desk:

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

I hope you are having a good summer! As I write this, next week is the celebration of the Fourth of July. As a nation, we celebrate independence and the freedoms we enjoy as citizens of this land. As Christians, the day perhaps calls for us also to recognize and give thanks for the giver of the gifts.

That being said, each week we gather to give thanks to the giver of the gifts in the Divine Service. The Divine Service is an interesting label to attach to our gatherings on Sundays. A great many other traditions might simply call that time "worship." Why do we call it the Divine Service? "Divine" denotes something essential to the whole enterprise: that God is involved and indeed is at the center of the things that take place. But the term "service?" Who exactly is it that does the serving?

Primarily, I would argue, our Triune God does the serving. Within the Divine Service, God gives His gifts to us. In the Invocation, we remember God's gifts in baptism and all His promises to us. In the Holy Absolution, He forgives our sins. In the reading of the Scriptures, He serves us with His Word. Likewise, in the sermon, He places His Word into the context of our lives. He serves us the very body and blood that were given and shed for our salvation in the Lord's Supper, and with these elements we receive forgiveness, life, and salvation. Even in the Benediction, the blessing of our God is placed upon us, just as once it was placed upon Israel (Numbers 6:24-26). In the midst of all of this, the Holy Spirit does His work of creating, sustaining, and strengthening saving faith within us that unites us to Christ and to His cross and resurrection. These things might be accomplished using earthly elements and the mouth and hands of the pastor, but all this is at the command of our Lord. In the Divine Service, our Triune God does the serving.

But the serving does not end there. God serves us with His Word and with His grace. God gives, and we receive. Then, we who have received return praise and thanks to Him. We sing hymns that praise God for His works and confess our faith. We confess our sins and our need for what God gives. We pray to God to ask Him for grace and mercy and to thank Him for all He has done. We praise God in liturgical elements such as the Gloria, the Sanctus, and the Nunc Dimittis. In the Creed, we confess our belief in what God has revealed to us about Himself. We give of what God has given us in service to the ministry of the Word and the body of believers with our offerings.

God gives and we receive, and then we return praise and thanks to Him. God serves us, and then we "serve" in return. But even our service often consists of returning to God what He has given to us. We use God's own words to praise Him, His own self-revelation to confess Him, His gifts He has given in offering to Him. Our service is a confession (in Greek, *homologeō*), which means to say the same thing.

The whole process is important for us. It is important that we are the recipients of God's service – vital, actually. In God's service for us alone, in the work Christ and by the work of the Holy Spirit, do we have life. There is salvation in none other (Acts 4:12). Our service to God gives us the chance to recognize this. It is intentionally denying what our sinful nature would have us embrace. The Divine Service is an opportunity for us to believe, confess, and live out, from start to finish, the truth that God is God and I am not. And this is an important aspect of Godly living, but also of peaceful living.

God gives, and we receive. Because of this, we return praise and thanks to Him. Alleluia! Please be sure to be present with the body of believers here at Trinity each week. Your presence, your service, is a blessing to me, as I pray mine is to you, all because our Triune God's service is a blessing to all of us.

Peace in Christ,
Pastor Lieske



Bible Study Opportunities

- † **Sunday Mornings** ~ 10:30am Adult & Teen Bible Study
- † **Tuesday Mornings** ~ 8:00am Men's Morning Bible Study

LAMP Mission Trip 2024 - The 2024 summer LAMP (Lutheran Assn. of Missionaries & Pilots) mission trip is scheduled for July 25-August 4 for Shamattawa and July 27-August 4 for Norway House, Manitoba. A planning meeting was held via Zoom on April 14. Upcoming planning meeting will be held via Zoom on May 19 and June 23 at 7:00pm. It's not too late to join our team and share Christ with the children of the North!

LYDIA CIRCLE- The Lydia Circle will **NOT** be meeting for Bible Study and fellowship in July, but will resume meetings again in August.

News from the Jastram's in Japan

Trinity continues to support Pastor Dan Jastram and his wife, Joan, spiritually and financially, as they serve the Lord in Asia.

Below are some of their recent newsletter's Praise & Thanksgiving items:

Prayer and Thanksgiving:

- thanksgiving for God's blessings through the May Lutheran Theological Conference, the presentations of Wyoming Dist. Pres. Hill and those of other presenters, and the tireless hosting work of Rev. and Mrs. Wakabayashi;
- † prayer that God might facilitate the work of final copy for text and translation of the conference sessions for printing and distribution to the participants;
- † • prayer that God reaches the hearts and minds of those who view and read the work of the LCMS Communications team members as they publicize the work of Gospel proclamation;
- prayer that God works growth in faith and life for those participating in our online Catechism sessions;
- thanksgiving for wonderful headway on our newest translation project of Shaw, Women's Ordination (LCMS Office of the President 2023) (about 85% completed);
- thanksgiving for God's arrangement of an additional translator and proofreader: Rev. Haga;
- thanksgiving for God's blessings at our three current worship sites: Shinjuku (twice a month), Yokosuka (once a month), and Numata (once a month);
- thanksgiving for our LCMS Asia regional director Rev. Charles Ferry and fellow LCMS Asia missionaries each with individual challenges and blessings;
- thanksgiving for the faithful prayers and support provided by our LCMS Jastram-Asia mission partners.

2024 Summer LAMP Mission Trip:

Please pray for the 12 volunteers who will be serving the Lord in Norway House in July. Final planning details are falling into place at this time.

Unfortunately, we are unable to send a team to Shamattawa this summer, but hope to be able to serve the children there in late fall/early winter, God willing.

Trinity held our annual VBS on June 17-20th. We had around 20 kids attend, and they all enjoyed "Celebrating the Savior"

***If you have an event that took place at the church and would like to report about it in the news letter please submit an email to the church office at secretary@trinityff.org by the 15th of each month.

JULY 2024

Sunday Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday Saturday



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Ongoing Concern: Janet Maack, David Boese, Brian Fitzner, Jeremy Elshaug, Elaine Culp, Gene True, Jennifer Wood (Jerald & Tami Gerhardson's daughter), Jim Anderson (Cal & Helen Johansen's friend), Jon Jastram (Phyllis Jastram's son), Dylan Maack (Bob & Janet Maack's grandson), Robin Roberts (Austin & Elaine Culp's daughter), Doug Litrich (Melvin & Marlene Reed's son-in-law), Stephen Hauser (David Hauser's brother), Tara Reynolds (Sarah Goerdts's friend), Jolene Kubitz (Donna Umlauf's niece)

Homebound: Gary Froehlich, Dick Anderson, Lois Helm, Lucille Harworth, Wally Lubben, Marlys Lueders, Ron Schulz, Evelyn Rud, Lorraine Drews, Lucille Scramstad, Chuck Dale

Military: Lieutenant Colonel Dennis Gerold, U.S.A.F., Travis AFB, CA (Lori & Leon Dawkins' son-in-law), Tech Sargent Isaac Christopher, U.S.A.F., Andrews Air Force Base, Washington D.C. (Donna Christopher's grandson); Major George Hauser, DDS U.S. Army, Ft. Bliss, El Paso, TX; (David & Mary Hauser's son); Gabe Johnson, MN National Guard, (Ken & Toni Erlandson's son); Major Dinsmore, MD MN National Guard (Al & Marcie Koennicke's grandson), Callen Mouritsen, Abrams Hall on Fort Moore, Fort Moore, GA. (Stephen & Branda Mouritsen's son)