

LIFELINES

of

LORD OF LIFE LUTHERAN CHURCH

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Apocrypha

“What is the Apocrypha?” “Why do Catholics have extra books in their Bibles that I’ve never heard of?” “Are these lost books of the Bible?” I have been asked questions like these many times over the years and most recently the questions came up when choosing a topic for our Wednesday morning Bible class. So, it was decided that we would take some time to study the Apocrypha and learn more about it. Since most of you are unable to attend this midweek study, let me tell you a little about it in case you have ever wondered.

While the word “Apocrypha” literally means “hidden”, the word itself more commonly is used to denote something that is legendary. For example, if one says that a story is apocryphal, they likely mean it is a tale or myth and likely not historical. That sense gets at how Protestants have come to view these additional books that appear in Roman Catholic Bibles. Throughout Church history these books were not always held in the same regard. Some Church Fathers included them as books of the Bible, though most did not. Martin Luther did not accept them as Scripture, yet he did translate them and include them in the back of his translation of the Bible as “recommended reading” but not on the same level as Holy Scripture. It was the Council of Trent, the Roman council that responded to the Reformation in the mid-16th Century, that officially deemed these books “Deuterocanonical” that is, a second canon, or on the same level of importance as the rest of the Bible.

Since Trent, most Protestants have abandoned the Apocryphal books, not even including them in their Bibles, while Roman Catholics have retained them. But even though Protestants have largely rejected these works, popular English translations of the Bible, like the King James Version, The Revised Standard Version, the Oxford Bible, and most recently, the English Standard Version have included translations of the Apocrypha. Along these lines, in 2012, Concordia Publishing House published *The Apocrypha: The Lutheran Edition with Notes*. This resource was provided to help familiarize Lutherans with these books that were known to Luther and many Christians throughout the history of the Church. It contains many helpful resources and notes to aid readers in learning about this time period and these writings. (A copy of this book is in our church library collection, though it is currently out on loan.)

The books themselves were written in the time between the Old and New Testament, about 200 years before Christ. Around that time, Alexander the Great had conquered the Persians and began Hellenization, the process of introducing or sometimes even forcing Greek culture and language on the people they conquered. This had quite an effect on the Jews, and among other things, they commonly used a Greek version of the Old Testament called the Septuagint, even

(Continued on the next page)

though the Old Testament was originally written in the Hebrew language. It is in this Greek translation of the Old Testament that the Apocryphal works first appear.

Some Apocryphal books are later additions to books of the Bible. For example: Susanna, Bel and the Dragon, The Prayer of Azariah and the Prayer of the Three Holy Children are all additions to the book of Daniel. Other additions were added to the book of Esther (107 verses!) while two books, Baruch and the Letter of Jeremiah, claim to be written by the prophet and his faithful scribe. Some books in the Apocrypha are similar to the book of Proverbs, in that they contain a collection of wise sayings (Wisdom of Solomon and Ecclesiasticus) while others tell fables about faithful Jews (Judith and Tobit). And some are histories of the Jewish people and their struggle to be faithful under Greek rulers who persecuted them (1st and 2nd Maccabees). These last two books also inform us about the basis for the Jewish festival of Hanukkah, a festival that even Jesus observed (John 10:22).

Since these books are not on par with the books of the Bible, some will rightly wonder if it is worth our time to study them, much less to use our Bible study hour to focus on something that is not in the Bible. -Fair question! And while I do not think it is worth spending a great deal of time learning about the Apocrypha, nevertheless, I do think a brief study of the books is worthwhile, and I think so for the following reasons: First, learning about the Apocryphal books that some Christians have and continue to hold as part of the Bible provides a chance to learn about why some books are included in the Bible and others are excluded. Furthermore, in a day and age where popular news stories sensationalize reports of "lost books of the Bible" and liberal scholars claim that long ago rejected "gospels" are just as valid as the Biblical writings, it is good to have knowledge about why some books are in the Canon and others are out. Second, there is historical value in learning about these books. Not only

do they themselves record the history of Israel in the years leading up to Christ, but their stories have been a part of the history of Christian culture for 2,000 years. Many in the Body of Christ have studied and read them as Scripture. Having at least a passing familiarity with these works helps us to better understand so many other Christians and what influenced them. Finally, reading inspiring stories, learning wise sayings and good moral lessons is always beneficial. Don't we as Christians benefit from reading all kinds of non-biblical writings? If we think of the Apocryphal works as religious fiction, or faithful advice, one can see how spending a little time with them can be easily justified.

If you have ever wondered about the Apocrypha, I hope this helps.

God bless,

PrS

SACRED MUSIC SCHOLARSHIP COMPETITION

Lord of Life's Music, Youth and Outreach ministries are sponsoring the third annual Sacred Music Scholarship Competition for high school students. Seven talented local high school applicants have been selected by a committee to advance to the final rounds, to be held on Sunday, 23 April, at 4.30pm at Lord of Life. Three independent judges will listen to these live performances and will announce their selections for first (\$1500), second (\$1000) and third (\$500) place scholarship prizes. Repertoire for the final rounds will feature much music that is "sacred." This competition seeks to encourage the performance and appreciation of music written to the glory of God generally and for the service of His Church specifically. The finalists are:

Suzie Chang, violin
 Anna Weyenberg, piano
 Matthew Cinquepalmi, saxophone
 Anthony Wang, piano
 Jasmine Lin, cello
 Richard Liu, piano



**prepare for worship
in april**

Sunday, 2 April: Fifth Sunday in Lent

Texts: Ezekiel 37:1-14, Romans 8:1-11, John 11:1-45

Hymn for the Word: "My Song is Love Unknown," 430

Sunday, 9 April: Palm/Passion Sunday

Texts: Isaiah 50:4-9a, Philippians 2:5-11, Matthew 26:1-27:66

Hymn for the Word: "A Lamb Goes Uncomplaining Forth," 438

**Thursday, 13 April, 7pm: Maundy Thursday
Divine Service**

**Friday, 14 April, 7.30pm: Good Friday Tenebrae
Service.**

Sunday, 16 April: Easter Sunday

Texts: Acts 10:34-43, Colossians 3:1-4, Matthew 28:1-10

Hymn for the Word: "Jesus Christ is Risen Today," 457

Sunday, 23 April: Second Sunday of Easter

Texts: Acts 5:29-42, 1 Peter 1:3-9, John 20:19-31

Hymn for the Word: "O Sons and Daughters of the King," 470

Sunday, 30 April: Third Sunday of Easter

Texts: Acts 2:14, 36-41; 1 Peter 1:17-25; Luke 24:13-35

Hymn for the Word: "Who Are You Who Walk in Sorrow," 430

YOUTH

{FUN}draiser

AT

DICKEY'S

BARBECUE PIT

(Coit and 15th in Plano)

Sunday

April 9

11am-9pm



*10% of the Lord of Life
proceeds will be donated
back to youth ministry*

Caring for our Wonderful Seniors

I have always had a special place in my heart for our senior citizens. I never thought the time would come when I would achieve senior citizen status, but here I am.

It goes back to my early years growing up in northern California. My mother and father both worked and my grandparents cared for my sister and brothers and me. I also bonded with a senior neighbor (88 yrs.) who lived across the street. That relationship began when I was 11 or 12 years old. His name was Grandpa Burton. Other than my Father or Grandfather, he was one of the smartest people I knew. He had such a fascinating life as a wildcatter in the oil fields. His stories were incredible and many of them dealt with his early days working in the south Texas oil fields. He gave me advice based upon his experiences related to work, relationships and mistakes he had made. I was really blessed to have had a friend and role model like Grandpa Burton.

Today I am an Usher at Lord of Life and have been for about 2 years (I think). I have so much fun greeting our members, especially the seniors (*Proverbs 16:31*), that I come early each Sunday just to greet people. I so enjoy saying a warm hello or giving a big hug to members as they come through the narthex.

I am also one of the new Elders. I have chosen to retain my usher duties because I really enjoy greeting our members and giving out hugs.

I'll bet we have some seniors at Lord of Life that have not had a 'hug', or a 'kiss on the cheek', or 'someone to hold their hand and talk to them' in far too much time.

Our Lord of Life membership is like a big family. A significant percentage of our membership are seniors (+29%), and a similar percentage of our membership are approaching or transitioning from middle age to senior (+20%). Many of our senior members have been around for decades and have witnessed marriages of members, births, baptisms, marriages of our children's children and baptism of our children's children. We are so blessed to have a diversity of ages within our congregation. Because we are so diverse, we need to make sure we don't lose track of our middle aged and senior members. (*1 Timothy 5:1-2*)

Do we really know what shape their life is in today? Do we know if they are hurting? We may have attended the funeral of their spouse or a friend. We may even have attended the untimely funeral of one their children. Senior Citizens are very good at keeping things to themselves. They don't want to bother anyone or impose upon anyone for help. They know how busy we all are. We seem to use that excuse a lot! Consequently, the situation continues to get worse and worse as time goes on.

I pulled the following 2 paragraphs off of an article I read on the internet as follows:

"With the aging of the 'baby boomers', the number of older people is increasing throughout the world. As individuals grow older, they are faced with numerous physical, psychological and social role changes that challenge their sense of self and capacity to live happily. Depression and loneliness are considered to be the major problems leading to impaired quality of life among elderly persons.

At the same time, old age can also be an opportunity for making new friends, developing new interests, discovering fresh ways of service, spending more time in fellowship with God. "



(Loneliness, depression and sociability in old age -Archana Singh and Nissan Misra)

My challenge to each of you is to walk up to one of our senior members every Sunday and give them a hug, or gently rub their shoulder, take their hand and strike up a short conversation. Be sincere and mean it! After you do it once, you will get such a wonderful feeling in your heart that you will soon be warming up to several of our seniors every Sunday.

Don't be afraid to hug our seniors. They have been there for us through the generations. They have been giving us love and hugs throughout our lifetime of ups and downs. *(Galatians 6:2, 9-10)*

God Bless You!
Tom Read

Save the Date!

Reformation 500 VBS

June 5-9, 2017

Join us for VBS as we explore the Reformation and learn that Jesus has won for us the victory over sin, death, and the devil!

Mighty Fortress
In Jesus, the Victory is Won!



Teen Times

The world in which we live today is totally dependent on technology. Can you imagine what our lives would be like if we did not have the kinds of digital tools which we are so accustomed to using on a daily basis? It is unfathomable to think about a day without using a computer or heaven forbid our smartphones! I am sure that you have experienced the same feelings I have when you realize you left home in the morning and you don't have your phone with you. It's as if you are missing one of your eyes and or hand. Today, smartphones are almost considered a vital organ that we just can't live without. Our phones have become a crutch on which we lean to stay connected, to feel accepted, to be socially recognized, and to gain access to all kinds of information. Technology has changed our world forever, so much so that people are realizing just how much it plays a part in religion. Churches are live streaming, tweeting, and using all kinds of social platforms to enhance their cause. I am not saying that it is all wrong and we should avoid using it all together. Almost every day I look at my phone and open up the Facebook app to see people post inspirational verses from scripture or a video showing some of the good things people are doing for their fellow man. But sometimes we miss the important stuff that lies outside of what we read or see on our phone screen. One example is reading the Bible.

I recently read an article that was linked to an email I received a few weeks ago (yes, I was using technology for my information). It was penned by a freelance writer from the UK named Chris Stokel-Walker for BBC.com entitled "How Smartphones and Social Media are Changing Christianity." He writes about the way smartphones are changing the way people are reading the Bible. Stokel-Walker quotes the Reverend Pete Phillips who is director of the Codec Research Centre for Digital Theology at Durham University in the UK. This is a sample of his article:

"The ubiquity of smartphones and social media makes them hard to avoid, however. And they are changing the way people practice their religion. Faiths are adopting online technologies to make it easier for people to communicate ideas and worship", says Phillips, "but that technology has shaped religious people themselves and changed their behavior. Many people scrolling through their phones in Christian churches are probably looking at a Bible app called YouVersion, which has been installed more than 260 million times worldwide since its launch in 2008. One of the first things Christians did with the computer was to put the Bible into digital formats," says Phillips. Those digitized Bibles then made their way onto phones. "To some extent, the mobile phone Bible is now replacing the book Bible."

According to the company behind YouVersion, people have spent more than 235 billion minutes using the app and have highlighted 636 million Bible verses. But reading the Bible in this way could be changing people's overall sense of it. "If you go to the Bible as a paper book, it's quite large and complicated and you've got to thumb through it," says Phillips. "But you know that Revelation is the last book and Genesis is the first and Psalms is in between. With a digital version you don't get any of that, you don't get the boundaries. You don't flick through: you just go to where you've asked it to go to, and you've no sense of what came before or after." Quite how interacting with the Bible in bite-sized nuggets might affect people's views of it is now being explored by researchers like Phillips. The way religious scriptures are read can influence how they are interpreted. For example, studies suggest that text read on screens is generally taken more literally than text read in books. Aesthetic features of a text, such as its broader

themes and emotional content, are also more likely to be drawn out when it is read as a book. In a religious text, that distinction can be crucial. “When you’re on a screen, you tend to miss out all the feeling stuff and go straight for the information,” says Phillips. “It’s a flat kind of reading, which the Bible wasn’t written for. You end up reading the text as though it was Wikipedia, rather than it being a sacred text in itself.” (Chris Stokel-Walker, 23 February 2017, http://www.bbc.com/future/story/20170222-how-smartphones-and-social-media-are-changing-religion?inf_contact_key=0df3e1b5f75f16c1202f8f0718add21e50506fb0d3419b6f6f22f742e16c3215)

I must admit that I have the YouVersion Bible app on my phone as well and I do use it from time to time. But when it comes to really discovering the substance in God’s Word, you need more than a phone screen. When preparing lessons for Bible class or a devotion for a youth night, I open the Lutheran Study Bible. In book form, there is more to learn and understand when you discover what surrounds the verses or the background of the story you are reading. Study notes, scriptural references, charts, diagrams, and maps are tools available to us in the Lutheran Study Bible to help us and our journey of faith in Jesus as our savior. God’s Word is a Means of Grace and we should use it to its fullest extent. Smartphones have been around for a little more than a decade and may someday be replaced by newer technology, but the Bible has been around for millennia. As the apostle Peter wrote in his first letter;

“All flesh is like grass and all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, and the flower falls, but the word of the Lord remains forever.” And this word is the good news that was preached to you. (1 Peter 1:24-25)

Until next time, read up and God bless.

Scott Peters



Lord of Life Small Groups

EMPTY NESTERS' CARE GROUP

- † For info contact Mike and Sandra Paradise at (972) 424-2951 or itsparadise.inplano@verizon.net
- † Will meet on Sat. Mar. 22nd at 6:30 PM

EPIC PARENTING

- † For 30ish couples with kids
- † For info contact Ben Scarth BenjaminScarth@yahoo.com
- † Usually meet one Sunday a month in the afternoon or evening

GOOD NEWS CARE GROUP

- † For info contact Chris Oltmann at (972) 727-6330 or Mike Kunschke at (847) 951-6974
- † Usually meet the 2nd Sat. of each month at 6:30 PM for Bible study

MIXED BLESSINGS

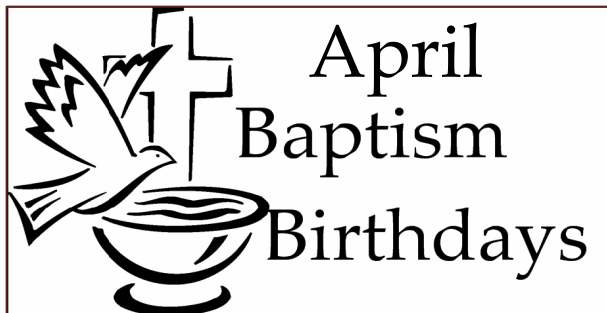
- † For info contact Fred and Ruth Bernhardt at (972) 398-0771
- † Will meet on Sat. Mar. 22nd at 6:30 PM

TWENTY SOMETHINGS

- † For couples and singles in their twenties
- † For info contact Pastor Shaltanis at PastorShaltanis@yahoo.com
- † The group is currently in transition, but has usually met on Sundays after late service

NEW SMALL GROUPS FORMING

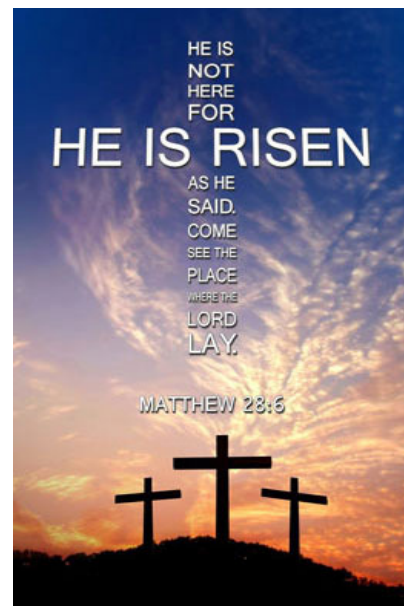
- † Watch for information about new small groups starting in 2017
- † One will be led by Tim Ozlowski and aimed at people in their late forties and early fifties. Times and dates TBD
- † In the works: a group for professionals without kids, a group for folks in their fifties, and a Gen X group



Luke Reinert – 04-23-2007
 Asher Schutz – 04-27-2014
 Sarah Schutz – 04-27-2014

BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

- 1 Lorin & Jenn Hoepfner (17)
- 2 Brandon Lund
- 2 Sharon Davis
- 3 Kathy Hite
- 5 Rick Pittson
- 8 John Chumbley
- 8 Brian Wolf
- 11 George Hawkins
- 11 Grant Kostrzewa
- 12 Jim Roberts
- 14 Bob Helms
- 14 Kristin Lutek
- 14 Cadence Tischler
- 15 Dudley Hall
- 15 Carl & Jan Carper (41)
- 16 Karen Lund
- 17 Jeff Berger
- 17 Peter Kun
- 17 Luke Reinert
- 18 Lorin Hoepfner
- 19 Lynda Abbott
- 22 Scott & Christine Messinger (22)
- 22 Rhonda Tabor
- 23 Tibor Kun
- 25 Kathy Helms
- 25 Rix Scarth
- 27 Mike & Sandra Paradise (54)
- 29 Gideon Selvaraj
- 30 Rachel Cinquepalmi
- 30 Earl & Karen Lund (29)



Serving in Worship in April

	April 2		April 9		April 16		April 23		April 30	
	8:00 AM	10:45 AM	8:00 AM	10:45 AM	8:00 AM	10:45 AM	8:00 AM	10:45 AM	8:00 AM	10:45 AM
Elder	Lutek		Read		Lutek		Ziegelbein		Kunschke	
Common Cup	Womack	Hite	Lutek	Hite	Peters	Kunschke			Peters	Hite
Altar	Lynda Abbott and Carol Nance									
Alcolyte	G Hawkins	N Ziegelbein	G Hacker	N oah Reinert	A Shaltanis	Tischler	Adcox	Sims	Ozowski	Tischler
Crucifer	Messinger	E Ziegelbein	E Hacker	Nathan Reinert	J Hawkins	K Crabtree				
Greeter	Sparks/Vess	Abbott/McVicker	Schrank	Dorak	Martin	McVicker	Sparks/Vess	Manning	Schrank	Barnes
Sound	J Hacker	Hite	Botello	Selveraj	Wilkerson	Pittson	Wolf	Raj	J Hacker	Hite
Usher	Scarth Parrent	Ozowski Oltman Ziegelbein	Frnsko Read Paradise	Moudy Dolginoff Cruz	Hawkins Cinquelpalmi	Loewecke Berger McVicker	Kun Schrank Hacker	Crabtree Buckmeier Short	Paradise Read Frnsko	Cruz Moudy Dolginoff

Midweek Services

	April 5 7:00 PM	April 13 7:00 PM	April 14 7:00 PM
Elder	Peters	Womack, Ziegelbein	Kunschke
Sound	Raj	J Hacker	Wolf
Usher		Oltman Buckmeier Crabtree	Cinquelpalmi Kun

FINANCIAL REPORT

January - February, 2017

		ACTUAL	BUDGET	VARIANCE
RECEIPTS:	Regular Offerings	\$117,237	\$119,136	(\$1,899)
	Other	\$58	\$100	(\$42)
	TOTAL RECEIPTS	\$117,295	\$119,236	(\$1,941)
	TOTAL EXPENSES	\$117,183	\$122,925	(\$5,742)
	RECEIPTS OVER EXPENSES	\$112	(\$3,689)	\$3,801

OTHER INFORMATION

1. General Operating Fund Balance \$97,877
2. Dedicated Funds Balance \$150,362
3. Building Note Balance \$445,145

DEADLINE FOR NEWSLETTER ARTICLES IS THE 20TH — lol.newsletter.editor@gmail.com