

# LIFELINES

of

## LORD OF LIFE LUTHERAN CHURCH

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### Some thoughts on outreach...

The Board of Outreach has recently undergone a serious reboot effort. We have organized a good group of people comprised of both young and old, as well as people who have been members of Lord of Life for years and some who recently joined. Likewise, there are life-long Lutherans on the board and several who are recent converts to Lutheranism. Ben Scarth, our congregational president, has also been active in meeting with and working alongside the board. All these different perspectives help to bring fresh ideas to the tasks at hand.

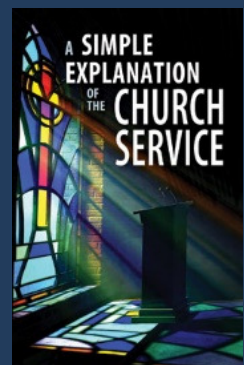
We met twice and discussed our priorities moving forward. We have a clear idea of what kinds of things we are going to pursue and in what order. First and foremost we will be focusing on our website.

In this day and age, if anyone is looking for a church, the internet is where they start. Our goal is to have a first-rate webpage that is up to date, easy to navigate, and represents us well. A new site is currently under construction. We also will be looking into Search Engine Optimization (SEO) which means helping our webpage come up near the top of search results when anyone searches for a Lutheran church in the area. Another question we are considering is how to use social media (Facebook and Twitter) to help people connect with our congregation. We also want to update our outreach tools such as pamphlets and tracts, welcome packet, etc.

The board is also considering how we can train evangelists in the congregation. Do you know that despite all our efforts and programs to reach the unchurched, the vast majority of people still trace their connection to a congregation through a friend or relative? In other words, strangers don't typically wander into congregations or get connected by some random advertisement; rather people join congregations when they are invited by their friends and family.

Along those lines, have you thought about people you know who are not Christian or do not attend a church? Are you interested in learning how to share the faith with them and invite them to church? If so, please talk to me about this. I am looking to identify people who are interested in this and equipping them to do so faithfully.

[Incidentally a helpful new tract was just added to our narthex. Entitled: "A Simple Explanation of the Church Service," this brand new pamphlet from Concordia Publishing House is a brief overview of our worship service –what each part means and why it is done. This addition was suggested by a member of our board who recently became a Lutheran and found our liturgical worship foreign and difficult to navigate at first. Our hope is that we can put this in the hands of people who are curious or overwhelmed about what we are doing in worship. If you yourself would like a refresher on this topic, by all means help yourself to one as well!]



First among the requisite gifts of an evangelist is someone who knows what they believe and why. That is, a Christian must be confident in their own faith before they can attempt to share the Gospel with others. This means the best evangelists are those who are regular in worship and Bible study. Absent this, any attempt to get someone to “join our church” just sounds like some pyramid scheme or cult trying to grow its organization. Instead, what we are ultimately trying to do when we reach out with the Gospel, is not just bring people to church, but to bring people to Jesus so they can trust in Him and receive the salvation He has won for them and for us.

Keeping this distinction clear is an important one when doing the work of outreach, but it is helpful to keep straight as I recently shared with the Board of Outreach members:

There are different kinds of outreach; there is the kind that works to bring people to faith in Christ in general and there is the kind that works to bring people to our specific congregation. I call the first kind working for “kingdom growth” and the second “institutional growth.”

If we only think about what we are doing in terms of “growing our church” and not trying to bring people to faith in Christ, we are not on the right track. At the heart of our desire to reach out, is our wanting to follow Jesus’ command to “Make disciples of all nations.” Simply put, we want more people to believe and be saved, (to be in the kingdom.)

On the other hand, Lord of Life is not a mission institute. We do not exist simply so that some people somewhere will become Christians. We are a specific congregation in a physical location on 15<sup>th</sup> Street in Plano, Texas! We are trying to make and build up disciples through worship and the study of God’s Word here in this place. Here we have fellowship opportunities and we provide pastoral care for people in all kinds of situations. We want more people to join us in this effort of creating and caring for Christians. Our work in reaching out, then, must keep in mind that we are not only trying

to bring people to faith, but we are trying to bring them here.

Please pray for the efforts of our Board of Outreach and give serious consideration to what more our congregation can do and what role you can play in reaching the lost and bringing them to Christ.

PrS



## **prepare for worship in may**

### **Sunday, May 6: Sixth Sunday of Easter**

Texts: Acts 10:34-48; 1 John 5:1-8; John 15:9-17  
Hymn of the Day: “Dear Christians, One and All, Rejoice,” 556

### **Sunday, May 13: Seventh Sunday of Easter**

Texts: Acts 1:12-26; 1 John 5:9-15; John 17:11b-19  
Hymn of the Day: “Christ is the World’s Redeemer,” 539

### **Sunday, May 20: The Day of Pentecost (Rite of Confirmation at 10:45 am)**

Texts: Ezek. 37:1-14; Acts 2:1-21; John 15:26-27, 16:4b-15  
Hymn of the Day: “Come, Holy Ghost, God and Lord,” 497

### **Sunday, May 27: The Holy Trinity (one service at 10am followed by picnic.)**

Texts: Is. 6:1-8; Acts 2:14a, 22-36; John 3:1-17  
Hymn of the Day: “Come, Holy Ghost, Creator Blest,” 498



# Missionaries to the internet



Salem Lutheran Church, Tomball

By Rev. Jon Braunersreuther  
Mission and Ministry Facilitator,  
Area D

**T**hey never imagined it would grow this quickly.

So say Joey Bluege and George Holleway, who are in the Specific Ministry Pastor (SMP) program at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, and serve as vicars at Salem Lutheran Church, Tomball. The SMP program forms men for pastoral ministry through an LCMS seminary while they are serving a congregation. At the beginning of the formation process, they are referred to as “SMP vicars.”

When Salem launched online worship and Bible study in January 2017, the hope was to grow online participation to 500 devices (representing, conservatively, 1,000 people) within a three-year period. Instead, the ministry has been blessed to grow from 80 devices on average in its first month to more than 450 by the end of 2017!

Those participating have connected from 191 cities in 46 states nationally, as well as from more than 60



countries around the world. Some of these countries are so hostile to the Christian message that it would be difficult to share the Gospel there in any other way. Nearly as many people participated in Salem’s online Christmas worship services as the 3,000 who attended in person.

Participation online with Salem is far from the merely passive viewing of an online worship service. Bluege and Holleway regularly converse with online viewers and pray with them, as well as engage in online Bible study. In addition to the regular prayers offered online, there have been 113 specific prayer requests from online participants. One hundred-thirty-five users are “regular users”—actively involved in the online community and receiving Salem’s newsletter. The next step: the formation of an online small group ministry to connect people more



Bluege



Holleway



closely to Jesus and to one another.

Holleway notes that there has been much “counting” done over the course of the ministry’s first year to assess its effectiveness. But he wants no one to miss that those numbers are only important because they represent people — people in touch with the life-giving Gospel of Jesus Christ.

According to the Rev. Tim Niekerk, Salem’s senior pastor, “Salem’s Church Online has provided people in places like Iran, Iraq and Syria the clear Gospel message and the real Jesus we teach every week. That message is like the wind Jesus refers to in John 3:8 — we can’t know why it goes where it goes, but we know if there is one person hearing the message of grace for the first time, the Spirit of God has touched them in a way they have never been touched before.”



## Teen Times

Another school year is coming to a close very soon. It may be the end of one phase in your life but it's the beginning of another. For parents of elementary age kids who are finishing the fifth grade, there is excitement mixed with anxiety as they look forward to their child starting in a middle school this fall. It's a big step as children begin to learn what it means to eventually be a responsible young adult. Or maybe it's the kids in eighth grade who will take the next step of going from middle school to high school. There they will be accountable for even more responsibilities and obligations to complete. Perhaps families will celebrate a teenager completing their high school careers when the graduation season kicks into gear later this month. And of course there is the ultimate academic achievement, graduating from college or graduate school and hopefully enter the working world with the rest of us crazy adults! After completing each stage of your educational journey, there is always another chapter in your life that is waiting to be written. The point is things don't stop just because you have reached a milestone. There is always more to do; **YOU ARE NOT DONE, EVER!**

In the month of May there will be a celebration for four young people who will stand in front of God and our congregation to confess their Christian faith, receive the Lord's Supper for the first time, and become confirmed communicant members of Lord of Life and the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod. It has been a three year journey for them to discover their Lutheran heritage, the importance of a meaningful worship service, to serve as leaders in worship in an acolyte roll, and to study the six chief parts of Luther's Small Catechism. It has taken dedication from both the students and the parents to attend instruction classes on Wednesday nights and Saturdays, be present on Sundays to perform the acolyte duties, and to memorize the written works of Martin Luther that outline the basic principles of our Christian Faith. However, this is just like all of the other stages in your life that you complete;

**YOU ARE NOT DONE, EVER!**

To the four young people that will be recognized this month, I am speaking directly to you. You are making a public confession to the God who created you, loves you, suffered and died for you, forgives you, and blesses you. This is a lifelong commitment and needs to be continually nurtured and recharged. After a person graduates from college they go to work. Being confirmed is NO different. Since you will be recognized as a communicant member of our congregation, you need to commit to regular worship and Bible study which are (NEWS FLASH) **both** present on Sunday mornings! Don't think you are done just because you have been confirmed. The reality is that the rest of your life and the life you have in Christ have only begun!

Until next time, God bless.

Scott Peters

**COMING IN JUNE; Youth ministry car wash, Sunday June 24**



Many Hands Make **LIGHT** Work

Saturday, May 26<sup>th</sup>

9am – 2pm

Lunch Provided

Mowing

Replacing  
Landscaping

Trimming

CLEANING

All Church



**WORK DAY**





# Sunday May 27<sup>th</sup>

Hamburgers, hot dogs, sausages and drinks provided.  
Please bring a side dish to share. Watch for more  
information and signup sheets.



*40th Biennial Convention - LWML Texas District  
July 5-8, 2018 - Waco Convention Center*



*Whoever believes in me, as the  
Scripture has said, "Out of his heart  
will flow rivers of living water"  
John 7:38 ESV.*

Information on Texas District LWML website:  
<http://www.lwmltxdist.org/2018-waco-convention.html>

## 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](mailto:itsparadise.inplano@verizon.net)
- † Will meet on Sat. May 19<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 PM

### EPIC PARENTING

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

### GOOD NEWS CARE GROUP

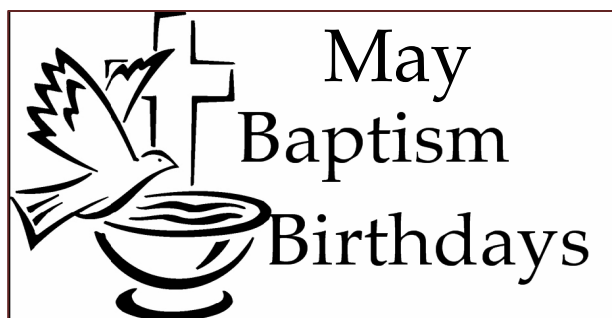
- † For info contact Chris Oltmann at (972) 727-6330 or Mike Kunschke at (847) 951-6974
- † Usually meet the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sat. of each month at 6:30 PM for Bible study

### MIXED BLESSINGS

- † For info contact Fred and Ruth Bernhardt at (972) 398-0771
- † Will meet on Sat. May 12<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 PM

### TWENTY SOMETHINGS

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



Rix Scarth: 5-31-15



- 2 Ambrose Shaltanis
- 3 Gene & Pat Montalbo (23)
- 6 Fred Bernhardt
- 6 Gideon Selvaraj & Annie Joseph (26)
- 8 Mike & Cheryl Scaglione (25)
- 10 Laurie George
- 12 Pat Greer
- 12 Dave Senter
- 14 Elisabeth Bennett
- 15 Alyson Wood
- 16 Abby George
- 16 David Messinger
- 17 Paula Bunger
- 17 Max Tyler
- 18 Cari Reinert
- 19 Jason Sowers
- 20 Charis Bennett
- 20 Aaron Raj
- 22 Elise Crabtree
- 22 Nicholas Moudy
- 22 Jon & Tammi Chumbley (25)
- 23 Greg & Audrey Kostrzewa (31)
- 24 Al McVicker
- 25 Ashley Moudy
- 25 Tom & Georgianna Womack (54)
- 26 Greg & Beverly Moudy (22)
- 27 Trent Barnes
- 27 Audrey Kostrzewa
- 28 Kyle Beaudreau
- 28 June Edelmann
- 28 Dave & Gail Senter (41)
- 29 Cindy Carter
- 29 Paul & Susan Grabow (36)
- 31 Charlie Abbott
- 31 Duffy Carter
- 31 Vickie Frinsko



# Serving in Worship in May

	May 6		May 13		May 20		May 27
	8:00 AM	10:45 AM	8:00 AM	10:45 AM	8:00 AM	10:45 AM	10:00 AM
<b>Elder</b>	Lutek		Ziegelbein		Kunschke		Ziegelbein
<b>Assist</b>	Peters	Ziegelbein			Peters	Hite	Read
<b>Altar</b>	Bette Martin and Nelda Schrank						
<b>Acolyte</b>	Madeline	Emma	Ashley	TBD	Cadence	Nathan	Athan
<b>Greeter</b>	Martin	Dorak	Schrank	Manning	Martin	Abbott/Moore	Vess/Barnes
<b>Sound</b>	Botello	Selvaraj	Wolf	Pittson	Wilkerson	Hite	Hacker
<b>Usher</b>	Scarth Bunger	Ziegelbein Loewecke	Paradise Frinsko Read	Moudy Cruz	Scarth Bunger	Berger Oltmann	Crabtree Buckmeier Short

## FINANCIAL REPORT

### January - March, 2018

		ACTUAL	BUDGET	VARIANCE
<b>RECEIPTS:</b>	<b>Regular Offerings</b>	\$138,048	\$147,873	(\$9,825)
	<b>Other</b>	\$92		\$92
	<b>TOTAL RECEIPTS</b>	\$138,140	\$147,873	(\$9,733)
	<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	\$131,076	\$146,376	(\$15,300)
	<b>RECEIPTS OVER EXPENSES</b>	\$7,064	\$1,497	\$5,567

#### OTHER INFORMATION

1. General Operating Fund Balance	\$101,172
2. Dedicated Funds Balance	\$160,128
3. Building Note Balance	\$327,349