

LIFELINES

of

LORD OF LIFE LUTHERAN CHURCH

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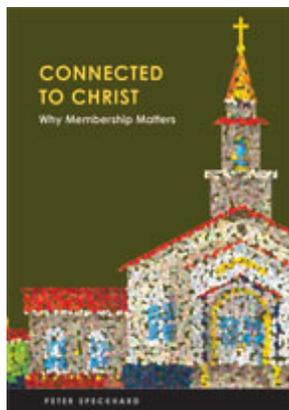
September 2017

On the Lighter Side

Last month I wrote a particularly (some may say “painfully”) long newsletter article explaining many important changes that are happening at Lord of Life. Permit me this month to be brief and share with you some thoughts about a recent book I read.

Connected to Christ: Why Membership Matters

is a new book published this summer by Concordia Publishing House. The author is the Rev. Peter Speckhard, a parish pastor and published author of many articles in several different periodicals. This easy to read, short little book (100 pages) is packed with many gems and throughout makes the case why not just being a Christian, but being a member of a church is important. He talks about two kinds of membership, the purpose of the church and why we go, and why it is more than just “pay, pray, and obey.” The final chapter on “Responding to Objections to Church Membership” is particularly good at shining a light on some of those tired old excuses people make about not joining a church (Ex: “The Church is hypocritical,” or “The Church is judgmental,” or “All they care about is money.”)



This book is a helpful reminder to church members of what it is to be a part of the Body of Christ. For those of us who have been members of churches our whole lives, it's easy to take for granted that church is just something you do on Sundays. This book gets you thinking about why you should go

to church and belong to a congregation. It also speaks to your obligations to your church, but also the many privileges and benefits you have for being a member of a congregation.

Here is one example from the book:

“Christianity is not like a Jesus fan club. But that’s how many people view organized religion. They see it as a bunch of like-minded people forming an official club. By this view, whether you join the official club of Christians at a local church or decide not to join doesn’t have much of an effect on your own personal faith. As we’ve seen, however, that idea doesn’t work well in the case of Christianity. The Church isn’t just a group of like-minded individuals; it is individual members who form a body. So saying you are a Christian but not an official member of a Christian church is really like saying you are a dedicated baseball player but don’t believe in organized team sports. You might be a great baseball player in terms of your skills and knowledge of the game, but if you aren’t actually on a team, then in at least one very important sense, you aren’t a baseball player at all.” Pgs. 27-28

And another:

“When you decide to skip church, you aren’t only deciding for yourself that you can do

(Continued on the next page)

without Word and Sacrament ministry and the mutual consolation of the brethren for an entire week. You're also unilaterally declaring that everyone else can do just fine without you there. But you are wrong. The indelible impression on young minds of seeing widows and newlyweds, troublemakers and respectable folk, black and white, rich and poor, young and old all singing and praying together can never happen if people don't show up.

When you stay home because your toddler is too much of a hassle in church, you might be making your morning more manageable, but you're also declaring that the ninety-year-old who sometimes sits behind you will not have your toddler to smile at and thereby have his faith in the future of God's promises reinforced.

When you as a middle-aged man skip church, you're not only reasoning you have more important places to be, but you are also robbing a fatherless teenage boy whose mom made him go to church that morning of the example your presence in worship might have given.

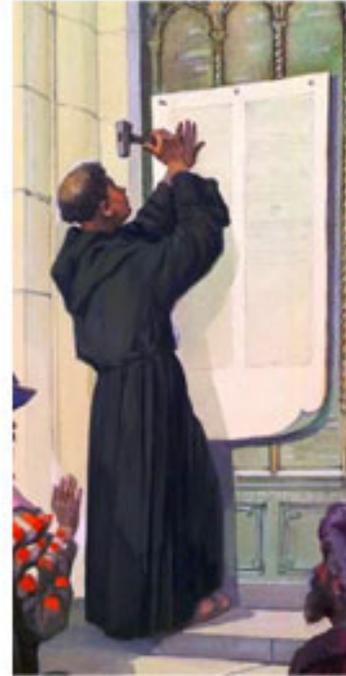
When you stay home because you're too embarrassed to use the wheelchair, you are robbing your church family of the comfort of seeing that gracefully growing old is possible, and that should the day ever come for them to be in a wheelchair, their church would welcome them as it welcomes you." Pgs. 65-67

Copies of the book will soon be available in the church library for you to check out, and I hope you will. Also, if you know someone who used to be in a church but now says they have no time for "organized religion," then this might be a good book to share with them to help get them thinking about why being a member of a church is not only good for them but good for the church. I recently ordered several copies at a bulk discount and would be happy to give you one to share.

PrS

Reformation

1517 - 2017



Sharing God's
Grace through
Jesus for



years.

Suffering

As you may know, both my parents (Paul and Sharon) have made their way onto the church's prayer list in the last few years. Dad is doing well following open-heart surgery for a double bypass. We are thankful to the church for all of the prayers. Mom, however, continues to suffer mental and physical effects from various diseases.

My parents' assorted maladies led me to review what the Bible teaches regarding suffering. It isn't something that might happen to us, suffering is a near certainty: "Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted." 2 Timothy 3:12. Jesus provided a similar guarantee to the disciples—"In the world you will have tribulation." John 16:33. Not only do we suffer, but some "suffer according to God's will." 1 Peter 4:19. Further, we are told, "Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. But **rejoice insofar as you share Christ's sufferings**, that you may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed." 1 Peter 4:12-13 (emphasis added). So, too, Paul writes: "More than that, **we rejoice in our sufferings**, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us." Romans 5:3-5 (emphasis added). Rejoicing in suffering is not an easy instruction to follow.

I recently heard something interesting on the radio regarding suffering. When we suffer, we can choose to be either the victim or the student. We can sit back, and bemoan our current circumstances, holding a pity party for ourselves. Or, as we go through hardship, we can cry out to God and try to understand what he is trying to accomplish with suffering. God can use suffering for our benefit—"And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose." Romans 8:28. Additionally, "[f]or the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it." Hebrews 12:11.

I am grateful to God that Dad has recovered well from his surgery. But that it is only temporary: he will die one day. And it saddens me to see Mom struggle. Fortunately, that state of affairs is also temporary. Because with the promise of suffering comes the greater promise of eternal joy and freedom from suffering. For example, Paul writes, "For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison." 2 Corinthians 4:17. And in his letter to the Romans, Paul states, "For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us." Romans 8:18. Further, "He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away." Revelation 21:4.

Mark Ziegelbein,
Board of Elders

Suffering is but a moment
Glory in Christ is FOREVER

And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you.

1 PETER 5:10 ESV



Teen Times



At the end of August, the State of Texas was greeted with the first major hurricane in over 40 years. The gulf coast region had just a few days to prepare for a tropical storm that formed off the coast of Mexico and very quickly grew into a category 4 hurricane. Residents along the Texas coast from Corpus Christi to Houston had to scramble to evacuate or risk serious consequences if they did not leave their homes, and as we have seen from news channels and social media, the devastation has been quite severe. Other areas around the state had to prepare to receive evacuees who might not have a home to return to. It has been a very difficult time for literally millions of people who have suffered much and lost loved ones. Thankfully, God is working through the first responders and volunteers who are stepping up to help wherever needed. If we can't personally help our neighbors in need, the least we can do is pray for them and hope they find peace among the chaos. But if you are faced with a situation in your life that will challenge your faith, here is the big question; are you prepared?

Are you ready for what is coming? Do you even know what the future holds for you? Our lives are filled with times of preparation for what lies ahead. No matter what stage of life you are in, preparation is necessary. As a teenager you are instructed by people in your life to get ready for the next step. When you begin Jr. High School, you are faced with new challenges from your parents, teachers, coaches, and even your pastor that require you to plan ahead. Your parents tell you to get organized in the evenings so when you wake up in the morning, you are ready to go to school. Your teachers give you homework in order to learn what will be on the math test at the end of the week. If you play an instrument, your music instructor expects you to practice at home so you know the music for the band concert in a few weeks. Sports require practice too. Your coach wants you to be at practice during the week so you will be ready for the game this weekend. Our pastors help prepare us in our walk of faith for the day we will meet Jesus face to face. He gives us God's Word and instructs you with the catechism during confirmation classes. You are given memory work to learn the basics of the Christian faith. The Holy Spirit is using all of these people to help you to be ready, but it doesn't stop when you reach high school. You are given more challenging homework, required to practice harder at sports and band, but what about after you are confirmed? The preparation does not stop. You are still given the opportunity to continue in your spiritual journey through life with the study of God's Word and the blessing of the Sacraments. Sunday mornings are a time that God has blessed us with in worship and Bible class. Don't wait for the storm to hit, don't blow it off or it may be too late!

As the Director of Youth Ministry at Lord of Life, it is my desire and privilege to see teenagers being prepared on Sunday mornings for what lies ahead. My goal is to have 100% attendance in worship and Bible class. I pray that the Holy Spirit will work in you, keep you in the one true faith, and prepare you for the storms that lie ahead in your life.

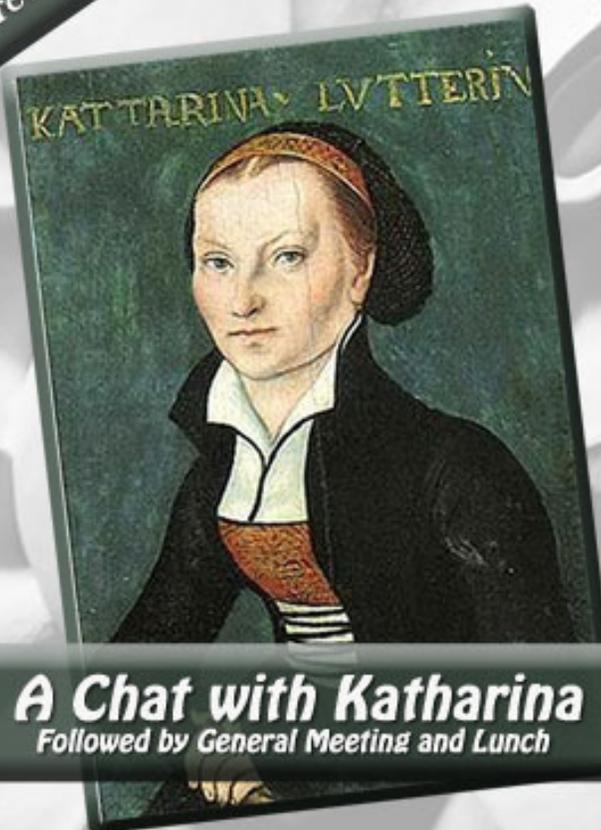
Until next time,
Scott Peters

Da-North Zone Fall Event

The grass withers, and the flower falls, but the word of the Lord remains forever 1 Peter 1:24b-25a

Saturday, October 21, 2017

9:30 AM Registration / 10 AM Start Time



Program: A Chat with Katharina von Bora

Followed by General Meeting and Lunch

Cost
\$8 for Lunch

Host Church
Lord of Life Lutheran Church
3601 West 15th Street
Plano, TX 75075

RSVP
Please provide a head count
to Charis Bennett at
charisbennett@mac.com by
Monday, October 16, 2017.



REAL OPTIONS

FOR WOMEN

Crisis Pregnancy Center
Ingathering: Diapers Size 0 and 1
Baby Bottles
Cash Donations (or
checks payable to
Lord of Life)

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. September 16th 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. September 9th at 6:30 PM

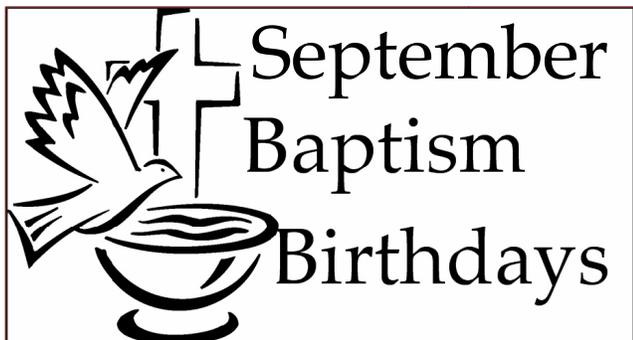
TWENTY SOMETHINGS

- † 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



Rachel Adcox 9-30-07

September's Birthdays & Anniversaries

- 1 Devrie Hahn
- 2 Bill Bennett
- 2 Candace Klein
- 2 Fred & Ruth Bernhardt (49)
- 3 Gail Senter
- 4 Vera Hemingway
- 4 Sarah Sims
- 6 Joshua Prescott
- 6 Hannah Sims
- 6 Dave & Dee Peters (52)
- 9 Brian Gibson
- 9 Mike & Monique Phelan (6)
- 10 Chris & Deb Dorak (33)
- 11 Stan Brown
- 12 Carrie Ziegelbein
- 12 Dick & Vera Hemingway (69)
- 12 Bob & Carol Nance (46)
- 15 Marian Krehmeyer
- 16 Pete Ehrett
- 16 Abigail Nash
- 16 Andrew Short
- 18 Ernie & Susan Gromatzky (45)
- 19 John Ehrett
- 19 Christian Klein
- 21 Angie Buckmeier
- 21 Christi Hampton
- 21 Daniel Sanford
- 21 Mike Scaglione
- 22 Mike Kunschke
- 23 Nora Parrent
- 23 Rob Reinert
- 25 Rick & Malinda Pittson (23)
- 26 Mirien Senter
- 27 Jerry Parish
- 29 Carl Carper
- 29 David Dorak
- 30 Ardis Bang
- 30 Beverly Moudy

Women's Bible Study starts Tuesday Sept 5th at noon. "Peter, from Fisherman to Fisher of Men" Workbook \$15. See Charis Bennett. Bring your lunch and study God's word. (16 weeks)

In Memoriam

"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." Psalm 116:15

Paul F. Stueckler

Paul passed away peacefully on August 11th at the ripe old age of 84. He lived a full and good life. He and his dear wife Gay, were married 63 years. They had two children, four grandchildren, and one great grandson. Paul was the son of the Rev. Paul F. Stueckler, a pastor who served churches in Alabama and Texas. For the funeral, the readings were read from the old King James Version out of Paul's father's Bible, which the family had beautifully restored. Paul loved the Lord and thought about pursuing a career as a pastor, but his true passion was in sports. He would go on to coach high school basketball with great success. He is the fourth most winning high school basketball coach in Texas history with 700 wins. He was also a great teacher and taught Sunday school at his church for many years. At his funeral, many of his former players were present to pay their respects to their beloved Coach Stueckler and many stories and fond memories were shared following the service. One gets the distinct impression that he was more than merely a coach, but also a father figure to many young men. I include myself in the category of men whom Paul influenced. He had a real gift for taking complex truths and distilling them down to a short and memorable saying. For example, when talking about some of the hard sayings found in Scripture, he would say, "There are some things in the Bible I cannot understand, but there are many things I cannot misunderstand." He shared many of these sayings with me and also talked frankly with me about my preaching and ministry in general. "That sermon was a little long," he would say, and not to be critical, but to help remind me to get to the point. And he wasn't only critical, he was also very encouraging and complimentary when a sermon was on point. When I would visit him in the hospital or at rehab centers, we would talk deeply about the Scripture readings for the week and he would offer many helpful insights. He was a devout and faithful Christian man I am a better pastor for having known him. He will be dearly missed by all and especially by his wife Gay who is doing well, all things considered.

Daniel Georg

I received a call on Tuesday August 22nd, from the daughter of Dan Georg informing me that her father had been found dead in his apartment the day before. He was 65. We held a private funeral for immediate family members only that Friday afternoon (8/25) at Lord of Life. Dan had been a member of the congregation since 2004, and yet he was not well known. This is because Dan was home bound and had been disabled for nearly two decades. He suffered from a disease called peripheral neuropathy, a muscle degenerative disease similar to MS. Despite his long time of suffering, Dan was always cheerful and appreciative when I would visit him. His long term illness meant that "his world was very small" (to cite the words of one of his daughters.) He had caretakers and his family (two daughters, a son and 9 grandchildren) looked after him, but he could not venture far outside of his little apartment. In fact, often times it was a struggle for him to walk to the door when I would visit. In the two decades before his disability, Dan served as an LCMS pastor in South Dakota, Iowa, and Texas. During our visits we would pray and I would give him communion, and we would also talk extensively about the readings for that week. He had a Masters of Sacred Theology, (STM) –an academic degree in addition to his professional Masters of Divinity degree that all graduates of the seminary receive. Dan thought deeply about the Word and I will miss having those conversations with him. While his disease affected his mobility, there was no indication that death was imminent. His loss was sudden and unexpected, thought to be the result of a heart attack. While I will miss him, I rejoice with his family that his long time of disability and suffering have ended and now he rests in peace, never to suffer again.

Serving in Worship in September

	September 3		September 10		September 17		September 24	
	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	Peters		Lutek		Kunschke		Ziegelbein	
Common Cup	Read	Kunschke			Hite	Ziegelbein		
Altar	Carol Nance, Bette Martin and Barbara Sinclair							
Greeter	Martin	McVicker	Schrack	Barnes	Vess	Manning	Ehrett	Dorak
Sound	Wilkerson	Selvaraj	Hacker	Pittson	Wolf	Raj	Botello	Hite
Usher	Scarth Bunger	Loewecke Ziegelbein Ozowski	Paradise Read Frinsko	Moudy Cruz	Dinquepalmi Bunger	Berger McVicker Oltmann	Schrack Hacker	Short Crabtree Buckmeier

FINANCIAL REPORT

January - June, 2017

		ACTUAL	BUDGET	VARIANCE
RECEIPTS:	Regular Offerings	\$391,237	\$413,213	(\$21,976)
	Other	\$3,504	\$200	\$3,304
	TOTAL RECEIPTS	\$394,741	\$413,413	(\$18,672)
	TOTAL EXPENSES	\$383,781	\$416,092	(\$32,311)
	RECEIPTS OVER EXPENSES	\$10,960	(\$2,679)	\$13,639

OTHER INFORMATION

1. General Operating Fund Balance	\$110,841
2. Dedicated Funds Balance	\$156,130
3. Building Note Balance	\$384,961