



Dear Good Shepherd Flock,

This month's Newsletter was published late because I couldn't narrow down what I wanted to write about. I couldn't fit everything on one page. There is so much going on in the world that you, as a Christian need to be aware of.

Hosea 4:6 says this: *My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge; because you have rejected knowledge, I reject you from being a priest to me. And since you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children.*

People today don't know what the Bible teaches. They have no knowledge of God, nor of sacred things, nor of the danger to which they are exposed and expose their children to. They walk on blindly, and perish.

The truth is hard to find these days. So, I decided to give you a resource that you can trust to keep you informed on the issues of today.

The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod has launched a religious liberty education and awareness campaign called: **Free to be Faithful®**

<https://www.lcms.org/social-issues/free-to-be-faithful>

From their web page: *"In response to increasing intrusions by government in the realm of the church, the LCMS launched a Free to be Faithful campaign in September 2012 to educate and move people to take informed action to protect religious freedom and all the cultural issues that pertain to it: confessing the faith in the public square, marriage, defending the sanctity of human life, etc."*

The site addresses issues such as:

Child Abuse, Domestic Violence, Human Trafficking, Immigration, Biblical Marriage, Persecution, Racism, Religious Liberty, Sexuality and a whole lot more.

There is a whole section just on the **EQUALITY ACT**.

I encourage you to stay in God's Word. Jesus said, in John 8:31-32

So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.

Blessings!
Pastor Ray



“She [the new teacher] looked at Danny. “God didn’t give you the puppy you wanted. But if you work hard, I will. Only I or someone like me can give you things. Praying to God or anything or anyone for something is a waste of time.” -James Clavell, The Children’s Story (1964).

We live in a culture saturated with change. Sunday School was once the most stable aspect in life, observed The Barna Group; fifteen years ago. The trend then showed a declining priority. Between 1997 and 2004, congregations across all denominations, lost tens of thousands of Sunday School programs according to the research. Then, 14% of congregations surveyed placed top priority on Sunday School. Ten years prior, 26% of congregations prioritized Sunday School. Our own anecdotal evidence is that the pandemic accelerated the trend exponentially.

Sunday School took root in the English Industrial Revolution (1700s). Then, uneducated children worked all week in factories when Robert Raikes took it upon himself to provide an education using the Bible as the textbook. At Sunday School children learned reading, writing, basic Christian teachings, prayers, and hymns. The educational and missionary venture was the forerunner to the modern public school system. Accordingly, the Gospel was transformative as the children were said to have "been transformed from the shape of wolves and tigers to that of [people]."

After two (almost three) hundred years of Sunday School, bible illiteracy is a problem. While we may not expect the secular world to be knowledgeable about the Bible, there is an expectation that Christians are. However, according to data from Pew Research Center, nearly half of Christians don’t realize that the Golden Rule is not one of the Ten Commandments and most believe the Bible teaches, “God helps those who help themselves.” Owning a Bible is more ubiquitous than reading the Bible. Barna researchers expect reading frequency will continue to trend downward.

“Devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation, to teaching. Do not neglect the gift you have,” - 1Timothy 4:13-14a

This September, we are offering in person Sunday School Classes again. Welcome back.

Basic Christianity (Pastor Ray) A course to provide a framework basic Christian teachings and beliefs. Ideal for people who are interested in the Lutheran Church and our congregation.

Corinthians (Family Life Minister Curtis) There are many similarities with the city of Corinth at Paul's time and our modern culture. Paul wrote words of encouragement for us to hold fast to the salvation found only in Christ over which reason and wisdom stumbles.

Faith Lessons (Tom Cox) Experiencing the Bible in historical context. Faith Lessons weave together historical, cultural, and geographical contexts to provide insights into how people in biblical times understood Jesus' teaching that help provide insights into the Scripture's significance for us today.

Scriptures (Chaplin Chad Potts) A study in the Word of God. Scripture is the authority in all matters of faith and life. It is the standard against all teachings (spiritual and secular) are evaluated and judged.

(continued next page)

Spiritual Gifts (Joe Staton) Discovering your gifts may help you enhance your effectiveness in serving God through the congregation.

Grace & Peace,
Curtis

Deacon's Digest

Our small group ministry at Good Shepherd will re-launch in September after we decided to suspend it in 2020 due to COVID 19 pandemic restrictions on social distancing. The church leadership has recently decided that our federal/state authorities have reduced social distancing restrictions, especially for fully vaccinated people, that allow us to safely conduct small group sessions. Our small groups are known as a "Dinner for Eight" and sometimes use a nickname, D-48. (i.e. "Dinner" "4" "8"). These small group get-togethers offer us a chance to talk about God and our faith in an environment outside of formal worship. We conducted a workshop in 2019 to prepare people to be able to use these small group sessions to get to know our church family better and learn about Making Disciples – which is our mission. We are conducting another workshop to help us prepare for the re-launch for Dinner for Eight and it will be held Saturday August 21st in our sanctuary from 10 until noon. The objectives of this workshop are:

- Familiarize small group participants with Discipling concepts
- Provide scriptural basis for the means of discipling
- Familiarize participant with the Discipling church culture at Good Shepherd
- Learn how to seek, recognize, and respond to what Jesus is doing in the lives of people that we are enjoying

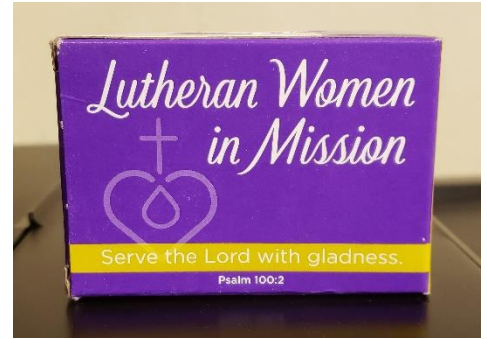
We are learning five practices to be able to help God make disciples as we go through our daily lives. He is doing all the very complicated things that only God can do, and he asks us to simply join Him and do the things we simple humans are capable of doing. We put those things into five practices. 1- Seeking the Kingdom, 2 – Hearing from Jesus, 3- Talking with People, 4- Doing Good, and 5- Ministering through Prayer. We will live stream the workshop for those who would rather view from home and will archive it to be available if the scheduled time is not convenient. Participation in this workshop is encouraged but not mandatory for GSLC small group participants. See your upcoming Sunday bulletins for further information, please email or call me if you have any questions.

Deacon Joe Staton c: 520.954.1200 email joe.staton@g.com

LWML

The ladies of the LWML will postpone their monthly meetings until future notice because of the CDC new guidelines on the new Delta Coronavirus. We will continue to collect mites on the 1st Sunday of each month, or you can mail your offering to Flo Hofman, indicating that it is for mites.

We continue to collect used eye glasses for MOST ministries. The collection box can be found on the table below the TV in the narthex



This year **4 million** pairs of eyeglasses will be thrown away in the U.S. while **158 million** people worldwide suffer from uncorrected vision



PROVIDE THE GIFT OF SIGHT BY ORGANIZING AN EYEGLASS COLLECTION DRIVE AT YOUR CHURCH OR SCHOOL

Mission Opportunities Short Term

Each year, MOST Ministries provides recycled eyeglasses to people living in the developing nations around the world. Generous individuals, churches, and organizations across the US. collect and send used eyeglasses to MOST Ministries, where they are then sorted, tested, and repackaged by volunteers for distribution on the mission field by our team members.

Property Board

FELLOWSHIP HALL FLOOR COVERING REPLACEMENT

- During preparation of the 2021 Church Properties Board Budget request we wanted to be able to also replace the existing 33 years-old floor covering but there was not enough for our regular budget amount and to include that as well. We later received a temporary alternate from our selected contractor to cover the existing floor covering during the remediation work, allowing final completion and air testing samples to be approved.
- Since our Church had just completed paying for the new church organ replacement installation after a long fund raising period, several of us discussed starting a Fund Raiser for the floor covering & installation and asking the Congregation for ideas and what materials they would suggest which would be practical for cleaning, appearance, sound deadening, mold resistance, and having a selection committee make the recommendation. We already have a well-qualified volunteer floor covering expert to head such a committee, if desired.

- During the time that funds are being donated, the suggestions can be coming in and when the amounts are sufficient for the item selected and the removal/installation, the purchase and installation can proceed. We have some preliminary estimates for the removal of the existing floor covering including mastic and floor covering, as well as mastic and tile with asbestos remediation and disposal.
- We have tentatively identified 5 of our Church's Dedicated Accounts which have amounts which could be used of \$9800 to start the Fund Raiser. We plan to ask for approval of that at the next Church Council meeting.



Human Care Board Happenings

We are conducting a summer project involving the “gifting” of Toiletry Kits (each valued at more than \$15) to those in need. We have designated One Hopeful Place as the recipients. Each kit contains toothpaste, toothbrush, deodorant, lip balm, sanitizer, and hand wipes. We already have the kits, so we just need some monetary assistance from the congregation. If you'd like to make a \$10 donation (for each kit), please let Jean Grieve know – jean.grieve@yahoo.com, 850-217-1932. You can write a check to GSLC and designate “HCB Toiletry Kits” in the memo field, donate cash, or donate online through GSLC. We have 60 kits available, so we have a \$600 goal to cover the cost of these kits. The kits are coming from Avon ... we happen to have a connection who is providing them to us “at cost”. We will augment these kits with a special message from GSLC.



We are always in need of food items for the Sharing and Caring basket in the Narthex – non-perishable items only please. We take it upon ourselves to deliver these food items.



Flower Chart

There are still plenty of open spaces on the Flower Chart located in the Narthex. The price for a Sunday flower arrangement is \$25. You have the option of taking the floral arrangement with you after the second service, or you can leave them for our Lutheran Women's Missionary League (LWML) to take to a local shut-in. Your support allows us to continue to beautify the sanctuary. If you have any questions please contact Jean Grieve – jean.grieve@yahoo.com, 850-217-1932.



Our other project involves Back to School Supplies! It's hard to believe, but the kids are going back to school in August. There is a table out in the Narthex with flyers, lists of supplies, etc. Please bring your donations to the Narthex (put under the table) by the end of August. We will determine which schools are in need and deliver the school supplies to them!

Altar Guild Updates

Things are starting to pick up now that we are getting back to some degree of "normalcy" when it comes to communion, etc. We are in dire need of more volunteers when it comes to setting up communion (both early and late services). We are administering both forms of communion until the Elders deem otherwise. As always, we want to ensure the safety and well-being of our congregation.

We are a little late for "spring cleaning" but would like to take care of some things that need our attention within the Sacristy and the Sanctuary. We would like to designate one Saturday a month to address these needs. The next opportunity will take place **Saturday, August 21, 2021 at 10:00 am**. If you are interested in helping us tackle these various "projects" please contact Jean Grieve – jean.grieve@yahoo.com, 850-217-1932. You DO NOT have to be a member of the Altar Guild to join in on these activities.

LCMS Stewardship Ministry

When it comes to stewardship, a favorite Bible verse is the account of the widow's mite (Luke 21:1–4). It's a moving account. Our Lord praises the seemingly small gift of two copper coins given by a poor widow above the abundance of gifts given by the rich, saying, "Truly, I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all of them" (Luke 21:3). And that is usually where we stop. But the text goes on. "For they all contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty put in all she had to live on" (Luke 21:4).

"She ... put in all she had to live on." She gave everything. She held nothing back. She trusted that the Lord who made her and all creatures; who gave her everything she had; who redeemed her from her own sin, from death, and the power of the devil; who called her by the gospel; would continue to do this. He would provide her with all that she needed for this body and life because that is the character of the God she had.

But this is not why we give small gifts. Her gift, though it appeared small, was actually large. When we are tempted to give small gifts, it is precisely because we want them to be small! We don't trust the Lord to provide for us. We give small gifts because we lack faith in the One who created us, redeemed us, sanctifies and keeps us in the one true faith. We give small gifts because we doubt that God will really give us what we need and desire. We give small gifts because we are not content with what God has already given.

We are free, adopted into the family and not slaves under the Old Covenant (Galatians 4). And since we are family, we are also heirs for everything is already ours in Christ. And so, moved by the willing spirit of adoption, we do the will of God in financial matters far beyond all that done by those under the Old Covenant who were forced by legal demands.

We are free to live unselfishly because of the Gospel. We are able to respond to God who gives us all good gifts. In short, we are not free to live unto ourselves, hoarding what God has given us only for us. For love is the fulfillment of the law (Romans 13:10). And the sum of the law is this: Love God and love your neighbor (Matthew 22:34-40). We love because He first loved us. We give because He has given to us.

Luther once said, "Possessions belong in your hands, not in your heart" (LW 14:240). There is a reason your 10 fingers spread apart. With your hands you catch God's gifts for what you need and let the rest fall through your fingers to your neighbors – your family, your friends, your community, your church.



August 3 – True Beauty

Is it really only skin deep?

August 10 – An Immigrant in the Sanctuary

When faith and politics collide

August 17 – Modern Romance

That crazy thing called love

August 24 – “I Lived in a Dumpster”

How a homeless teenager rose to the top of her class

August 31 – Concussions

A former NFL player speaks out

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8/1	Gary Kruschke	8/10 – Graham Binkley
8/1	Joan White	8/11 Jim Keeler
8/2	Mary Keeler	8/13 Gary Graham
8/2	Cooper Olman	8/16 Lance Hofman
8/2	Alice Ostrowski	8/16 Kirsten Lienemann
8/3	Will Binkley	8/18 Calvin Boole
8/3	Karen Criter	8/18 Nicholas Martino
8/3	Ruth Hill	8/19 Virginia Inkrote
8/5	Brenda McElroy	8/20 Robert Moser
8/5	Frank Shaw	8/21 Glenn Howard
8/5	Larry Snider	8/25 Ross Binkley
8/6	Vern Unholtz	8/25 Bob Pruess
8/8	Dottie Steele	8/27 Ronnie Hoppel
8/9	Susan Guentzel	8/30 TJ Olman
8/10	Diane Beck	8/31 Madisyn Hopel



8/8	Gary & Sherry Kruschke	8/21	James & Patricia Crum
8/17	Curtis & Sherry Wiese	8/25	Herb & Bonnie Steeb
8/31	James & Beth Bier		

Kids being kids

