

NEWSLETTER
AUGUST, 2017

Dear Ones in Jesus,

There's a line in the old hymn, "Abide with Me" that pierces my heart every time I sing it...

"Change and decay in all around I see..." (LSB #878, Stanza 4)

George Barna Research tabulates lots of information that is helpful to churches and congregations in ministry. The landscape of America's people is in constant change, and that includes "The Greatest Generation" (born before 1946), "the Boomers" (1946-1964), "Gen-Xers" (1965-1983), and "Millennials" (born 1984-2002).

What does Barna see, and how does it affect our congregation's ministry? Christianity in America is moving from "churched" to a "post-churched America." More than 4 in 10 (44%) of the nation's people do not claim church membership. 59% of millennials who grew up in the church have dropped out, 52 % haven't attended a worship service in the last six months, and 1/3 don't see "church" as being important in their life.

What are the influences of all this? I see many factors of deception which Satan is employing to attack us:

- 1) a "me-focused" faith rather than God-centered faith... emphasis on my needs, my wants, my goals, etc.
- 2) New Age (which grew out of humanism) which claims that all have God within us.
- 3) Truth is not an absolute concept, where there is but one truth and it applies to all, but rather, it is relative (relative to each person's experience and life).
- 4) Every religion or philosophy of mankind (Christian, Jewish, Hindu, Confucianism, Buddhist, Islam...and the list could go on and on) has a piece of God's divine truth, but no one religion / philosophy contains all God's truth. (Pluralism)
- 5) Style & format of worship are more important than substance. (Contemporary vs. traditional) - we sacrifice fellowship/oneness for the style we like/prefer.
- 6) Politics of religion - mechanics of ministry - division - conflict - pointing to differences rather than building on the oneness we have... a) Grace alone; b) Faith alone; and c) Scripture alone.

Where are we heading in all this? I'm not sure, but I know this... God is the Shepherd, the Pilot, and Keeper of His Church (invisible multitude of true believers in the world and all the saints in heaven already!) He knows where we're heading. He knows what we need. He will provide.

Acts 2:17-21 "And in the last days it shall be, God declares, 'that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophecy.....and everyone who calls upon the Name of the Lord shall be saved.'"

We all face changes. I'm retiring soon (Sept. 3). All of you at St. Peter will be prayerfully considering how this will change the scope and direction of new leadership as you prepare to call a new pastor. So, let's view it positively, not negatively; not as a threat, but as an opportunity. Let's not look within ourselves for wisdom, light, and strength, but look to God, trust His Word, walk with Jesus! Remember what God has said... "Fear not," "Don't be afraid," for "I am with you. I will never leave nor forsake you." Trust His Word. Seek to know His Word. Every bit of it is true, and God is a shield to those who take refuge in Him. (Proverbs 30:5)

***Swift to its close ebbs out life's little day; Earth's joys grow dim, its glories pass away;
Change and decay in all around I see; O Thou who changest not, abide with me." (LSB #878, st. 4)***

Sincerely in Christ,

Pastor Asmus

Our weekly worship services: (Bring your Bible!)

+ *Planting with Jesus*

The Lamb of God, Savior of the world, Lord of life.

The difference CHRIST makes in a believer's life.

Wednesday - August 2

6:30 p.m. - Devotional Worship with the Lord's Supper

Sunday – August 6 - Ninth Sunday after Pentecost

9:00 a.m. – Traditional Worship with Holy Communion

Sermon: "Come to the Waters" (Isaiah 55:1-5)

Bible Class: Discussion: Lessons of the Day & Issues of Today

Wednesday – August 9

6:30 p.m. - Devotional Worship with the Lord's Supper.

Sunday – August 13 - Tenth Sunday after Pentecost

9:00 a.m. – Praise Worship with Holy Eucharist

Sermon: "The Making of a Disciple" (Matthew 14:22-33)

Bible Class: Discussion: Lessons of the Day / Issues of Today

Wednesday - August 16

6:30 p.m. - Devotional worship with the Lord's Supper

Sunday - August 20 - Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost

9:00 a.m. - Traditional Worship with the Sacrament of the Altar

Sermon: "A Story of Mercy" (Romans 11:1-2a, 13-15, 28-32)

Bible Study: Discussion: Lessons of the Day / Issues of Today.

Wednesday - August 23

6:30 p.m. - Devotional Worship with the Lord's Supper

Sunday - August 27 - Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost

9:00 a.m. - Praise Worship with The Sacrament of the Altar

Sermon: "Rock Solid" (Matthew 16:13-20)

Bible Class: No Bible Class today.

Wednesday - August 30

6:30 p.m. - Devotional Worship with the Lord's Supper

Sunday - September 3 - Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost

9:00 a.m. - Traditional Worship with Holy Communion

Sermon: "Have You Filled a Bucket Today?"

(from Pastor's first sermon given in February, 2010)

Bible Class: No Bible Class today.

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE!! NEWSLETTER ARTICLES FOR SEPTEMBER ARE DUE IN THE CHURCH OFFICE NO LATER THAN **MONDAY, AUGUST 14TH**.

IF YOU OR A FAMILY MEMBER ARE FACING SURGERY OR HOSPITALIZATION, please contact Pastor Erland Asmus: Cell #: **(651) 308-8492** Church Office: **(651) 436-3357**. PASTOR ASMUS WILL BE HAPPY TO MAKE A CALL (OR IN HIS ABSENCE, ONE OF THE ELDERS), BUT WE DO NEED TO BE INFORMED.

During the remaining Sundays of this summer, Pastor will lead some open discussion, based on the Scripture lessons of that Sunday, insights, and issues stemming from these lessons. Come, join in! (10:30-11:00 a.m. on Sundays). (No class on August 27th or September 3rd.)

CALL COMMITTEE UPDATE!!

The Call Committee is open to nominations for the position of Pastor from congregation members. If you have someone in mind that you would like to be considered, then please fill out a nomination form at the church. The deadline for nominations is August 15th. Any question, please contact Rick Bauer.

ELDERS' MEETING will be held on Sunday, August 6th, 11:00 a.m.

CHURCH COUNCIL FAMILY POTLUCK PICNIC will be held on Tuesday, August 15th, 6:30 p.m. (Bring a dish to pass. Meat & beverages will be furnished.)

WEDNESDAY EVENING WORSHIP SERVICES OFFERED AT ST. PETER!

When: Wednesdays

Time: 6:30 – 7:00 P.M.

Format: A simple format of Scripture, song, message, prayer, Lord's Supper; offered in a devotion setting so as to meet the spiritual needs of all who can't attend Sunday worship, include families with children. No altar guild, no ushers... just a simple worship whereby Jesus offers you the "green pastures" and "quiet waters" of His mercy and grace.

Save August 12th at 3:00 p.m. for a PRAISE TEAM FAMILY POTLUCK PICNIC at Pete and Gayle Schneider's (2430 Mendel Ave N, Lake Elmo). Please bring a dish to pass, (salad, or dessert, or appetizer) and we will have the main dish. There will be guitar and piano so we can sing, practice new songs and have a great time. Are there some songs that you would like to try? Tell Pete and he will find words and music! PS: If you are thinking about singing or playing with the Praise Team, this is an easy way to see if it works for you. No pressure! Just come and have fun! There will be a sign up sheet on the kiosk. Questions, call Pete or Gayle Schneider.

Valley Outreach—"The Closet" takes all your unwanted clothing! Worn out stained or torn – we won't use it but we recycle it. We get 2 cents per pound for recycling. 100% goes back into the clothing program to buy items such as new socks and undies. We need kids' clothes, work wear, and seasonal clothing to meet our client needs. Clothing is free for clients. **Please leave items in the designated area by the coat rack marked "The Closet". THE CLOSET provides clothing to about 100 families each month.**

KITCHEN CLEAN-UP!! On Thursday, August 24th, we will start at 6:30 p.m. Please come that evening to lend a hand. We want to keep our NEW kitchen looking great! Your help is appreciated. Please call Joan Jordan if you have any questions.

SECOND HARVEST HEARTLAND We will work a shift at Second Harvest Heartland on Friday, August 11th from 1:30-3:30 p.m. Sign up on the sheet on the kiosk. If you have any questions about volunteering, please contact Cheryl Schmidt.

A "Life-thought" (From "Life Date" a quarterly journal from Lutherans for Life)

He who commands the winds and waves (Matthew 14:27), Who controls all human history and destiny (Job 38: 4-18), also manages the sufferings and situations of our lives. Even the unborn, unconscious, unhealthy, and unproductive do not fall outside His everlasting arms. God's love for all bestows riches without distinction. (Romans 10:12-13). Almighty Maker of heaven and earth, with Your mighty hand, take hold of all who live in fear and save us from the storms of life. Amen.

HAM DINNER - September 10, 2017

Join us on Sunday, September 10th for our 62nd annual HAM DINNER. Serving is from 11:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Invite your family, friends and neighbors – everyone is welcome!

Prices are: \$13.00 for adults, \$6.00 for children ages 6 – 12, and age 5 and under are free.

Our Country Store always has a wonderful assortment of baked goods, crafts, garden vegetables, jellies, jams, and pickles for your shopping pleasure.

There are many ways YOU can help to make this event a success. Check out the sign-up sheets in the Narthex for volunteer opportunities and donations needed for the dinner; don't forget the Country Store needs your donations as well. **Cash donations are also welcome.**

There is something for EVERYONE – seek out how you can be a part of this annual tradition at St. Peter! See Karen or Doug Stoltzmann if you have any questions.

Save the date and plan to join us! Check out the car show here at St. Peter that day, too!

PACKS FOR HOMELESS (WHAM WEEK) We would like to fill 50-100 bags; any size donation would be much appreciated! Contact Tony Engen with questions. Items needed: Chapstick (in bulk at Sam's Club), antibacterial gel or wipes. (Dollar Store), a note of hope/encouragement or a prayer or Bible verse, granola bars or another snack, a small water bottle, a small pack of Kleenex (Dollar Store), cough drops. Other things you could include: a pair of socks or gloves, rain poncho, tuna snack or lunch pouch, wet wipes packet, hotel/travel size lotion, a pen and pad to write on. Put items in the basket in the hallway by the office.

PINT MASON JARS ARE NEEDED for the farewell dinner for Pastor Asmus. Please leave them in the kitchen. You can get them back after August 27th. If you would like your exact jars back, please mark on the bottom. Thank you. - Laura H. Fritsche

SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS NEEDED! Our young people are the lifeblood of the church and training them up in the life God has for them is a big responsibility that falls upon all of us. As it says in Proverbs: "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it." Being a Sunday school teacher is a fantastic and rewarding way to help train up the young people in our congregation. If you are interested but have questions, talk to Tony Engen. If you are super interested, sign up on the sheet in the narthex.

During the remaining Sundays of this summer, Pastor will lead some open discussion, based on the Scripture lessons of that Sunday, insights, and issues stemming from these lessons. Come, join in! (10:30-11:00 a.m. on Sundays). (No class on August 27th or September 3rd.)

MISSION-OF-THE-MONTH FOR JULY/AUGUST
UNION GOSPEL MISSION

THE UNION GOSPEL MISSION, founded in 1902, offers help for the homeless, poor and addicted in the Twin Cities through meals, shelter, recovery, education and job training programs. Their goal is to encourage each person to value themselves as God values them, to see the gifts they have to offer the world, and to help them seek out a bright future as a fully contributing member of our community. **THEIR MISSION IS CHANGING LIVES!**

Union Gospel Mission Twin Cities ministers to men, women and children who are experiencing homelessness, battling addiction and stuck in poverty. With the help of generous donors and volunteers, they meet the basic needs for food and shelter of the people who come to them for help, but they also do much more than that! The Gospel is the foundation of all that they do, because they believe the ultimate life change is a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. After more than 114 years of service, their recovery, education and job training programs are fine-tuned and effective.

Homelessness can happen to anyone. A job loss, a long-term disability, divorce, abuse – the reasons for homelessness are as different as the people who come through their doors. At Union Gospel Mission Twin Cities they offer more than a safe night of sleep. Union Gospel Mission Twin Cities provides more than 400,000 meals each year to hungry and homeless neighbors, poor families and seniors on limited incomes. A good, hot meal is often the first step to real and lasting change for a person. They provide time to heal and the tools to rebuild a life. Their Christ-centered programs care for the whole person. Like the Good Samaritan in the Gospel of Luke, they meet immediate needs and care for people until they can get back on their feet. Their shelter programs not only provide safe housing and care for men, women and mothers with children struggling with homelessness, but a full program designed to build life skills and stability.

Alcohol and drug addiction are often at the core of chronic poverty and homelessness. Their 12-step resident recovery program helps men break the grip of addiction. On May 13th, St. Peter Lutheran Church welcomed men to spend a day at our church from the Christ Recovery Center, through “Little Church of Hope”. This is a program started by Brian Smiley in 1990 to give love and hope to the homeless that evolved to the men of Union Gospel Mission’s Christ Recovery Center.

UGM has the most effective and comprehensive job coaching support network for the “difficult-to-employ” in the Twin Cities. They offer education and career opportunities for all, from earning a GED through finding a rewarding career. Union Gospel Mission also has a long history of engaging at-risk children and teenagers in positive activities that give them a shot at success in spite of their circumstances. In fact, a path to a loving God is clearly laid out in every youth program the Mission offers—from their Child Development Center to their teen outreach programs.

PLEASE CONSIDER SUPPORTING UNION GOSPEL MISSION DURING JULY & AUGUST. (Mission envelopes are available in your offering envelopes, in the pews, and on the Mission Board.)

THE PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY GROUP WILL CONTINUE TO MEET DURING THE SUMMER. They meet every other Tuesday at 7:00 p.m. They will meet on August 8th & 22nd. Join us if you like to knit or crochet or would like to learn. If you have questions, call Gayle Schneider or Linda Craig.

GET READY FOR WHAM WEEK 2017!!! - WHAM week will take place from Monday August 7th through Friday the 11th, 8:30 A.M. - 3:30 P.M. This year we will be serving at Feed My Starving Children, Emma Norton Services, Union Gospel Mission, and Good in the Hood, an organization that serves homeless people in the Twin Cities. On Friday we will have a special event. All those going into 5th grade through 12th grade students are welcome!! There is a sign-up sheet in the narthex. See Tony Engen if you have any questions.

Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod Mission – our call to proclaim

It is a blessing to walk and work together in witness and mercy with the 35 districts of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. Of particular interest is our Synod's work in Africa, where the LCMS has 36 official partner churches and 25 "allied church bodies," which have some degree of partnership but do not yet have altar and pulpit fellowship. An additional 14 "emerging church bodies" have made contact with the LCMS to learn more about its doctrine and practice. You might ask why these church bodies are not drawing into the more liberal Lutheran World Federation. Because Scripture is God's Word, and we are subject to it as our authority for faith & life. The so-called "higher critical" method of interpreting Scripture has led other Christian denominations & other Lutheran synods to deviate from the Bible to a more open view of such issues as women's ordination, immorality, and LGBT lifestyles. The Rev. Dr. Al Collver, director of Church Relations for the LCMS, points out that the International Lutheran Council exists to encourage, strengthen and promote confessional Lutheran theology and practice. For these reasons, and others, Lutheran church bodies in the Global South are seeking closer ties with the ILC and the LCMS. Rev. Collver said, "There is no time like the present to have a significant impact on world Lutheranism." For a closer look at our LSMS Mission work being done today, take a walk down the hallway to Pastor's office, where you will see a bulletin board display, showing all the countries in the world where we are actively engaged in Missions, along with recent news articles describing what's happening in these areas.

Celebrating
Pastor Erland Asmus
Shepherd, Sower, Servant

With thanks to God for his 37 years as a called minister of the Word, we invite you to celebrate with Pastor Erland and Wendy Asmus upon his retirement.

A worship service of thanksgiving and praise will be Sunday, August 27, 2017 at 9 o'clock am.

There will be a catered dinner served (at no charge) in the Parish Hall following the service, with time for reminiscing and fellowship. *Kindly RSVP for the meal before August 14 --*

by telephone to Church Office: 651-436-3357

by email: stpeter@stpeterafton.org

or on the sign-up poster in the narthex.

"The farmer sows the word..."

Mark 4:14

AUGUST, 2017

ACOLYTES FOR AUGUST

August 6 - 9:00 a.m. Gabriella Richert
13 - 9:00 a.m. Izaak Schmidt
20 - 9:00 a.m. Callie Koller
27 - 9:00 a.m. Ryan Bernath

GREETERS FOR AUGUST

August 6 - (Open)
13 - Lorraine Hansen
20 - (Open)
27 - (Open)

COFFEE HOSTS IN AUGUST

August 6 - (Open)
13 - (Open)
20 - (Open)
27 - Church Council

READERS DURING

WORSHIP SERVICES IN AUGUST

August 6 - 9:00 a.m.. Laura Bauer
13 - 9:00 a.m. (Open)
20 - 9:00 a.m. (Open)
27 - 9:00 a.m. (Open)

USHERS FOR AUGUST

Doug Stoltzmann, Elder
Jerry Tank
Judy Tank
Dave Hauch
Mary Hauch

OFFICIAL ACTS FOR JULY, 2017

FUNERAL:

Eldo Thielfoldt, July 18, 2017

WEDDING

Marissa Meyer & Edison Geis, July 22, 2017

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Getting those annoying pop ups?

**You Have Viruses that you are sharing with your friends and family...
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Recycled items Fund a Christian Ministry!**

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