

**SAINT PETER LUTHERAN CHURCH (LCMS)  
880 NEAL AVE. SO., AFTON, MN 55001**

**Rev. Dennis Drews, Vacancy Pastor  
Church Office: (651) 436-3357**

**Rev. Dennis Drews' Cell Phone: (952) 886-0882  
DCE Tony Engen Cell Phone: (651) 283-3478**

**9:00 A.M. Sundays: Alternating with Traditional &  
Contemporary Services (Communion - all Services)  
10:15-11:00 A.M. Sunday School; 10:30-11:00 A.M. Adult Bible Class  
6:30 P.M. Wednesdays: Devotional Service with Communion**

**Office E-Mail: [stpeter@stpeterafton.org](mailto:stpeter@stpeterafton.org)  
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**Web Site: [stpeterafton.org](http://stpeterafton.org)**

**May 27, 2018**

**HOLY TRINITY**

**Vol. 58, No. 26**

**TUESDAY:** 7:00 Prayer Shawl Ministry  
**WEDNESDAY:** 6:30-7:00 Devotional Service  
with Communion  
**NEXT SUNDAY:** 9:00 Traditional Service with Communion  
10:00 High School Graduate Reception  
10:30 Elders' Meeting

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**ACOLYTE:** Charlie Veith **READER:** Sue Clare

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**BIRTHDAYS:** TODAY: Sheila Craig TUES: Hannah Nelson WED:  
Judy Richert SAT: Derek Veith

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**BAPTISMAL DATES:** TODAY: Laura Nelson THURS: Art Tobin  
FRI: Laura H. Fritsche, Gayle Schneider

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**HEARING ASSISTANCE RADIOS ARE AVAILABLE IN THE  
NARTHEX.** Please see an usher. Turn to 97.8 or 98.0 for the  
best reception.

**CUSHIONS ARE AVAILABLE IN THE NARTHEX.** You may leave  
them in the pews after the worship service.

**ATTENDANCE LAST SUNDAY: 92.**

**THE HOLY TRINITY**  
**CONTEMPORARY SERVICE WITH COMMUNION**

**May 27, 2018 – 9:00 A.M.**

**AS WE GATHER** – In the cry of the seraphim calling “Holy, holy, holy” there is an eternal echo that announces the presence and power of our God, the Holy Trinity. There is a sense of both majesty and mystery as Isaiah the prophet is commissioned to go and speak on behalf of the Lord. He is blessed with a holy vocation, a vocation that is ours to share. We are called to proclaim that God is Three in One, known and praised as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Joining our praise with the hosts of heaven, we proclaim the truth that God has revealed Himself to us. Like Isaiah, we are the called people of God.

**WELCOME** (*Worshippers greet one another.*) (*Stand.*)

**OPENING SONG:** “10,000 Reasons”

**Chorus**

Bless the Lord O my soul,  
O my soul,  
Worship His holy name.  
Sing like never before,  
O my soul,  
I'll worship Your holy name.

**Verse 1**

The sun comes up, it's a new day dawning.  
It's time to sing Your song again.  
Whatever may pass and whatever lies before me,  
Let me be singing when the evening comes. (Chorus)

**Verse 2**

You're rich in love and You're slow to anger.  
Your name is great and Your heart is kind.  
For all Your goodness I will keep on singing,  
Ten thousand reasons for my heart to find. (Chorus)

**Verse 3**

And on that day when my strength is failing,  
The end draws near and my time has come.  
Still my soul will sing Your praise unending,  
Ten thousand years and then forevermore. (Chorus)

**(Ending after Verse 3 chorus)**

Worship Your holy name,  
Lord I'll worship Your holy name.

**THE INVOCATION**

Pastor: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**People: Amen.**

**OPENING SENTENCES** (*Isaiah 6:3b, Psalm 38:21–22; 43:3–4; 41:13*)

Pastor: Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts;

**People: the whole earth is full of His glory!**

Pastor: Do not forsake me, O Lord! O my God, be not far from me!

**People: Make haste to help me, O Lord, my salvation!**

Pastor: Send out Your light and Your truth; let them lead me;

**People: let them bring me to Your holy hill and to Your dwelling!**

Pastor: Then I will go to the altar of God, to God my exceeding joy,

**People: and I will praise You with the lyre, O God, my God.**

Pastor: Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel,

**People: from everlasting to everlasting! Amen and Amen.**

**CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION** (*1 Thessalonians 5:23–24*)

Pastor: Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden, cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of Your Holy Spirit, that we perfectly love You and worthily magnify Your holy name, through Jesus Christ.

**People: Amen.**

Pastor: Let us with true hearts confess together that we, through sinful thoughts, careless words, and loveless deeds, have transgressed God's righteous Law and deserve His punishment now and eternally.

**People: Almighty God, merciful Father, we acknowledge our sinful nature and repent of our sins in thought and in word and in deed. For the sake of Jesus, grant us Your forgiveness so that, as Your redeemed people, we be fit places for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit and serve You in time and in eternity.**

Pastor: In the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful; He will surely do it.

**People: Amen.**

## **THE SALUTATION**

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

**People: And also with you.**

## **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Pastor: Let us pray. Almighty and everlasting God, You have given us grace to acknowledge the glory of the eternal Trinity by the confession of a true faith and to worship the Unity in the power of the Divine Majesty. Keep us steadfast in this faith and defend us from all adversities; for You, O Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, live and reign, one God, now and forever.

**People: Amen.**

*(Be seated.)*

**FIRST READING:** Isaiah 6:1-8 (ESV)

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

**SECOND READING:** Acts 2:14a, 22-36 (ESV)

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

*(Stand.)*

**HOLY GOSPEL:** John 3:1-17 (ESV)

*(Before the reading)*

Pastor: The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the third chapter.

**People: Glory to You, O Lord.**

*(After the reading)*

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**People: Praise to You, O Christ.**

*(Be seated.)*

**SERMON SONG:** "Praise the Father, Praise the Son"

### **Verse 1**

O sov'reign God, O matchless King,  
The saints adore, the angels sing,  
And fall before the throne of grace,  
To You belongs the highest praise.

(Continued)

## **Verse 2**

These sufferings this passing tide,  
Under Your wings I will abide.  
And ev'ry enemy shall flee,  
You are my hope and victory. (Chorus)

## **Chorus**

Praise the Father, praise the Son,  
And praise the Spirit Three in One.  
Clothed in power and in grace,  
The name above all other names.  
(to bridge after Verse 3 chorus)

## **Verse 3**

To the valley for my soul,  
Thy great descent has made me whole.  
Your word my heart has welcomed home,  
Now peace like water ever flows. (Chorus)

## **Bridge**

Yours is the kingdom, Yours is the power,  
Yours is the glory forever.  
Yours is the kingdom, Yours is the power,  
Yours is the glory forever. (Chorus)

## **CHILDREN'S MESSAGE**

### **SERMON**

Text: John 3:1-17

*(Stand.)*

### **APOSTLES' CREED**

All: I believe in God the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth.  
And in Jesus Christ His only Son our Lord, who was conceived by  
the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius  
Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell.  
On the third day he rose again from the dead, he ascended into  
heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father almighty. From  
thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in  
the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian church, the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life  
everlasting. Amen.

*(Be seated.)*

## **THE OFFERING**

*(Note to our visitors: You are our guests this morning! Please do not feel the need to make a contribution to our Offering. We would ask all visitors and members to sign the Register Pad as the Offering is being collected. Also, Prayer Cards are available in the pew racks for special intercessions during the time of congregational prayer.)*

## **OFFERING SONG: “Revelation Song”**

### **FOR ALL WHO DESIRE TO RECEIVE THE LORD’S SUPPER**

*We believe that Christ’s Body and Blood is present in, with and under the bread and wine for the forgiveness of sins. In this sacred meal Jesus gives Himself in love to His Church to build us up in faith, hope and love. Since Christ is truly present, the Sacrament is not to be received in a careless or indifferent manner. St. Paul writes: “Whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. **Examine yourselves**, and only then eat of the bread and drink of the cup.” (1 Corinthians 11.27-28)*

*We believe that such self-examination necessarily includes the following points: 1) Do I believe that the only true God is the Triune God, Three Divine Persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, within One Divine Being? 2) Do I humbly acknowledge before God that I am indeed a sinner in need of His grace? 3) Do I believe that Jesus Christ the Son of God is my personal Lord and Savior? 4) Do I believe that in this Sacrament Christ is truly present for me for the forgiveness of my sins? 5) Do I have a sincere desire, with God’s help, to live a life that is pleasing to Him?*

*For those who can answer these questions in the affirmative, we welcome you to join us at the Lord’s Table. For those who have a different religious understanding, or are unclear as to the points listed above, we ask that you talk to the pastor before receiving the Sacrament.*

### **PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH (Stand.)**

**Pastor:** Let us pray for the whole people of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs. As we grow in the Christian faith, we pray for an increase of the Word, that it be freely shared and bring the Good News of sins forgiven through Christ to every place. Triune God in mercy,

**People: hear our prayer.**

**Pastor:** We pray for the world in which we live, asking that there would be times of peace and security in our days and that we know days of blessings and joy. Triune God in mercy,

**People: hear our prayer.**

**Pastor:** We pray for the Church and for this household of faith, that we be the radiant Bride of Christ, daily growing in love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Triune God in mercy,

**People: hear our prayer.**

(Continued)

People: We lift our petitions now for the sick, the shut-ins, and all who this day are in need of our intercession, that their prayers soon be answered and that they be supported by God's people as they honor Christ. Triune God in mercy,

**People: hear our prayer.**

Pastor: As we pray, we remember with gratitude those valiant people of the armed forces of our nation who have fought and died to protect the liberties that are central to our way of life. Triune God in mercy,

**People: hear our prayer.**

Pastor: In our time of prayer, we give thanks for the countless saints who lived out the faith in their time and who have entrusted it to us. Grant us courage to be faithful in confessing God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, looking forward to our eternal reunion in the courts of heaven. Triune God in mercy,

**People: hear our prayer.**

Pastor: Into Your hands, O Lord, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy through Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

**People: Amen.**

## **PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING**

Pastor: O Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, in giving us Your body and blood to eat and to drink, You lead us to remember and confess Your holy cross and passion, Your blessed death, Your rest in the tomb, Your resurrection from the dead, Your ascension into heaven, and Your coming for the final judgment. So remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray:

## **THE LORD'S PRAYER**

**People: Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven; give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.**

## **THE WORDS OF OUR LORD**

## **PROCLAMATION OF CHRIST**

Pastor: As often as we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim the Lord's death until He comes. (*1 Corinthians 11:26*)

**People: Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.** (*Revelation 22:20*)

## **PAX DOMINI**

Pastor: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**People: Amen.**

## **THE DISTRIBUTION** (*Be seated.*)

## **DISTRIBUTION SONGS**

"Here I Am, Lord"

**(BOB 86)**

### **Verse 1**

I, the Lord of sea and sky, I have heard my people cry.  
All who dwell in deepest sin, My hand will save.  
I, who made the stars of night,  
I will make their darkness bright.  
Who will bear my light to them?  
Whom shall I send?

### **Chorus**

Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord?  
I have heard you calling in the night.  
I will go, Lord, if you lead me.  
I will hold your people in my heart.

### **Verse 2**

I, the Lord of snow and rain, I have borne my people's pain.  
I have wept for love of them, They turn away.  
I will break their hearts of stone,  
Give them hearts for love alone.  
I will speak my words to them,  
Whom shall I send? (Chorus)

### **Verse 3**

I, the Lord of wind and flame, I will send the poor and lame.  
I will set a feast for them, My hand will save.  
Finest bread I will provide,  
'Til their hearts be satisfied.  
I will give my life to them,  
Whom shall I send? (Chorus)

**Verse 1**

There is a Redeemer, Jesus God's own Son.  
Precious Lamb of God, Messiah, Holy One.

**Chorus**

Thank You O my Father,  
For giving us Your Son,  
And leaving Your Spirit,  
Till the work on earth is done.

**Verse 2**

Jesus my Redeemer, name above all names,  
Precious Lamb of God, Messiah,  
O for sinners slain. (Chorus)

**Verse 3**

When I stand in glory, I will see His face.  
There I'll serve my King forever, In that holy place. (Chorus)

“Jesus, Lover of My Soul”                      **(BOB 130)**

Jesus lover of my soul,  
Jesus I will never let You go.  
You've taken me from the miry clay,  
You've set my feet upon the rock,  
And now I know.

I love You, I need You,  
Though my world may fall.  
I'll never let You go,  
My Savior, my closest Friend,  
I will worship You until the very end.

*(Stand.)*

**POST-COMMUNION THANKSGIVING**

Assistant: Let us pray. God, the gracious giver of all blessings, we thank You for having fed us with the body and blood of our Savior Jesus Christ, assuring us thereby that we are truly members of His Body, the Church. Sanctify us by the working of Your Holy Spirit that we continue in this faith and fellowship and do the good works which You desire us to do; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, to whom, with You and the same Spirit, be all honor and glory, forever and ever.

**People: Amen.**

## **THE BENEDICTION**

Pastor: The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you. The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace.

**People: Amen.**

## **CLOSING SONG: “You Never Let Go”**

### **Verse 1**

Even though I walk through the valley Of the shadow of death,  
Your perfect love is casting out fear.  
And even when I'm caught in the middle Of the storms of this life,  
I won't turn back, I know You are near.

### **Pre-Chorus**

And I will fear no evil, For my God is with me.  
And if my God is with me, Whom then shall I fear,  
Whom then shall I fear. (Chorus)

### **Chorus**

Oh no, You never let go,  
Through the calm and through the storm.  
Oh no, You never let go,  
In ev'ry high and ev'ry low.  
Oh no, You never let go,  
Lord You never let go of me.

**(to bridge after Verse 2 Chorus)**

### **Verse 2**

And I can see a light that is coming,  
For the heart that holds on.  
A glorious light beyond all compare,  
And there will be an end to these troubles.  
But until that day comes,  
We'll live to know You here on the earth.

**(Pre-Chorus)**

### **Bridge**

Yes I can see a light  
That is coming for the heart that holds on,  
And there will be an end to these troubles.  
But until that day comes,  
Still I will praise You,  
Still I will praise You. (Chorus)

## **(Be seated.)ANNOUNCEMENTS**

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## **PRAYER PAGE – OUR MINISTRY OF PRAYER**

**May 27, 2018** (\*Added this week)

Family of Leona Volkert, sister of Viola Miller and sister-in-law of Mary Lou Volkert, who passed away on May 20<sup>th</sup>\*

Family of Darlene O'Malley, grandmother of Angie Engen, who passed away on May 18<sup>th</sup>\*

Patrick Love, grandson of Kathy Bauer, for strength & spiritual guidance

Maron Ackerman, mother of Brenda Richert and grandmother of Alicia, Aaron & Tyler, recovery from back surgery

Janice Goebel, sister of Phyllis Richert, recovery from foot surgery

Angie Graves, family friend of Jay & Autumn Zahn, recovering from open heart surgery (She needs a heart transplant to survive long term and is on the waiting list. Pray for complete recovery and long life.)

Loren Richert, recovering from a stroke

Jamie Grenier, husband of Cyndi Grenier, health & healing after heart procedure

Deb Zwick, friend of Gayle Schneider, for relief of pain & healing after surgery

Kathy Hatanpaa, cousin of Lois Fritsche, A.L.S.

Cole Wegner, son of Jenny Veith's cousin, Cystic Fibrosis

Jeff Riemenschneider, brother of Autumn Zahn, Parkinson's

Kellen Giddings, friend of Maverick Schiltgen, recovery from a brain tumor

Grace Hedtke, Melissa Oberdeck's Godchild, bone tumor

Breck Fewer, son of Joe & Lindsey Fewer, recovering from heart surgery

LaDonna Freitag, daughter of Faye Freitag-Schiell, for health & healing

Laurel Bonine, for health and healing

Holly Bonine, for health and healing

Melissa Oberdeck, for health & healing

Jessica Polinske, for health and healing

Beth Larson, daughter-in-law of Ron & Joanne Larson, health & healing (brain tumor)

Alicia Cleveland, daughter of Betty Richert, Muscular Dystrophy & Leukemia

Sandy Bushinger, daughter of Hubert Schiell, cancer

Barbie Erickson, friend of the Swanson family, cancer

Loretta Freitag, sister of Faye Freitag-Schiell, cancer

Karen Carter, niece of Cheryl Richert, kidney cancer

John Schmidt, treatment for cancer

Greg Rubenstein, husband of Marlys Albrecht, good health & healing (cancer free)

Carl Benning (requested by Alicia Benning), cancer

Nancy Wesley, friend of Gayle Schneider, treatment for recurrence of cancer

Mike Morley, friend of Bruce Albrecht, good health after cancer treatment

Anita Bruch, lymphoma cancer

Richard Miller, Viola Miller's grandson, treatment for Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma

Maureen Busacker, sister-in-law of Dale & Janel Busacker, cancer

Teresa Kopps, spiritual blessings and successful treatment of Stage 4 cancer

Tim Sachi, friend of Steve & Sharon Wellner, cancer

Don Goodwin, son-in-law of Stan Simkins, cancer

Jerry Mueller, son of Evie Mueller, health & healing (cancer free at this time)

Jason Bauer, nephew of Kathy Bauer, cancer

Sue Dickey, friend of Kathy Bauer, cancer

Marilyn Stalhiem, aunt of Linda Veith, cancer

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If you would like to include the needs of a sick relative or friend in our weekly Prayer Page, call the church office at (651) 436-3357, or submit the request via E-mail: [stpeter@stpeterafton.org](mailto:stpeter@stpeterafton.org) by Wednesday afternoon. Prayer requests will be kept on our list for two months unless otherwise directed. To request a prayer for our "Prayer Chain" that you would like us to send out via E-mail, call the church office. If anyone would like to be added to this list, call the church office with your E-mail.

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**VOLUNTEERS FOR NEXT SUNDAY'S SERVICE:**

USHERS: Mark Suckow, Elder; Dan Ellifson; Stan Simkins; Bruce Albrecht; Jerry Hundertmark; ACOLYTE: Logan Knight; READER: Joann Decker; GREETERS: (Open).

**AV TEAM NEEDS REGULAR VOLUNTEERS TO ASSIST DURING WORSHIP SERVICES.**

This is not high tech. Basic PC knowledge is all you need to help. Please see or call Jay Zahn, (651) 235-1381.

**IF YOU ARE A HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE, WE WILL BE HAVING A GRADUATE RECEPTION**

for you next Sunday, June 3<sup>rd</sup>, during Coffee Hour. Call the church office and let us know if you will be graduating this year. (This is also for any college graduates who missed the April 22<sup>nd</sup> college graduate reception.)

**VALLEY ACCESS CABLE CHANNEL #18** will air our worship service on Fridays, 1:00 p.m. & 7:00 p.m.; and Saturdays, 1:00 a.m. & 6:00 a.m. **WE CAN ALSO PROVIDE DVD'S** for shut-ins if requested. They can be picked up by a family member or friend, or mailed. Call the church office.

**A DEVOTIONAL SERVICE WITH COMMUNION** will be held this Wednesday 6:30-7:00 p.m.

**UNION GOSPEL MISSION IS THE MISSION-OF-THE-MONTH FOR MAY & JUNE.** See the mission board in the narthex for more information. If you would like to support this Mission-of-the-Month, there are special Mission envelopes in your offering envelope box, in the pews, or on the Mission Board.

**PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY MEETS EVERY OTHER TUESDAY AT 7:00 P.M.**

We will meet on May 29<sup>th</sup>. Join us if you like to knit or crochet or would like to learn. If you have questions, call Gayle Schneider or Linda Craig

**SECOND HARVEST HEARTLAND** - We will work a shift on June 8th at 1:30-3:30 P.M. Please sign up on the sheet on the kiosk. If you have any questions, call Cheryl Schmidt

**“SPLASH CANYON” VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL will be held July 16<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup>, 9:00 a.m.-12:00 Noon.** Life is full of thrills and spills; we may not know what's around the bend, but God does! At “Splash Canyon VBS” your kids will discover that, on life’s wild ride, Jesus is by our side! Come join us at St. Peter for a week of awesome fun where we will learn that God saves us through Jesus and gives us life and hope every day and forever! All Pre-K through 4<sup>th</sup> grade students are welcome! Register online at [VBSmate.com/stpeterafton](http://VBSmate.com/stpeterafton).

**VBS VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED!** VBS will be held from July 16<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup>, and we need lots of volunteers to make this another great experience for the youth of our church and surrounding community! If you or anyone you know is interested in serving in any capacity, please talk to DCE Tony Engen.

**DO YOU HAVE A PRAYER CONCERN?** Please contact Pastor Drews, Cheryl Richert, Gayle Schneider or any of the Elders with your request. We will send an e-mail for you so that we can pray for that individual’s needs. There is power in prayer! If you would like to be a part of this Prayer Chain, provide Cheryl with your e-mail address.

**THE YOUTH GROUP IS COLLECTING “ALUMINUM CANS”** for a fundraiser. Please leave them by the garage door and let Tony Engen know when you bring them. Please just bring aluminum cans.

**FATHERS’ DAY PANCAKE BREAKFAST** - Our annual Pancake Breakfast will take place on Fathers’ Day, June 17th, in the Parish Hall immediately following the 9:00 a.m. worship service. Come and join us! All are welcome!

**ELDERS' MEETING** will be held on Sunday, June 3<sup>rd</sup>, at 10:30 a.m.

**ATTENTION 5<sup>TH</sup>-12<sup>TH</sup> GRADERS!! CATALYST will be held the second Friday in June!** (Monthly Youth Night). **On JUNE 8TH from 6:30 p.m.-9:00 p.m.** come join us for **Catalyst**. In Matthew 6:33 Jesus tells us to seek God's kingdom above all else. At Catalyst this is exactly what we will be doing! Come for a night of worship, prayer, games, music, and friendship. Snacks and refreshments will be provided. As always, please bring your friends!

**WHO'S MISSING IN MY PEW???** Each Sunday there are members and friends of the congregation that we might not see at our worship service. They may be on vacation, sick, or just not feeling connected. God has called each of us to bring others to Him, so let's challenge ourselves to do just that. If you missed someone at church, give them a call, send an e-mail, or send them a note to let them know they were missed. Wouldn't you feel good knowing you were missed!

**STEWARDSHIP NOTES: (John 3:6)** – *“That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.”* In Holy Baptism we receive a new birth: spirit from Spirit. With that rebirth we receive new desires, new lives, and new purposes. To the (fleshly) world, Christian generosity makes no sense: the total minus a percentage is less than the original total. But Spirit-reborn Christians know that God's math works differently (as we might expect from the Trinity!): a blessing received from God becomes more of a blessing when it is used in generosity to bless others.