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Grace Lutheran Church & School

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Home Page: www.CLCCGraceLutheranChurch.org

Member: *CHURCH OF THE LUTHERAN CONFESSION*

Pastor: John Hein (Ph. 763-784-8784)

Organist: Maureen Ochsner

Principal: Ryan Libby (Ph. 763-784-6340)

Grades: Kindergarten-8th

Church Year: Trinity 12

Date: August 14, 2005

We live in a world that is obviously imperfect. Things do not always go the way we wish. This is also true for the conscientious Christian who desires that all people be saved, the same desire that our Lord has. It can cause great grief as we see Christ and His Word rejected by those around us. But as we are reminded, we need to individually rely upon the love of Christ in our own lives, something that can never be taken away!

> **THE ORDER OF WORSHIP** >

Worship Preparation:..... *Psalm 75, TLH p. 139*

Hymn:..... *TLH 1: Open Now Thy Gates of Beauty*

Liturgy:..... *TLH, p. 5 ff.*

Introit:

P: Surely God is my help; the Lord is the one who sustains me.

C: Praise, O servants of the Lord, praise the name of the Lord.

P: From the rising of the sun to the place where it sets ...

C: The name of the Lord be praised, both now and forevermore.

P He raises the poor from the dust and lifts up the needy from the ash heap;

C: Surely God is my help, the one who sustains me. Glory be to God!

Gloria in Excelsis: *TLH 237, st. 1: All Glory Be to God on High*

P: All glory be to God on high, who hath our race befriended!

C: To us no harm shall now come nigh, The strife at last is ended.

God showeth His good will to men, And peace shall reign on

earth again; Oh, thank Him for His goodness!

First Reading:..... *1 Kings 19:9-18*

Elijah is reminded that the Lord is found in the silent sound of the Gospel.

Gradual:

P: Great is the Lord and most worthy of praise;

C: His greatness no one can fathom.

P I will meditate on Your wonderful works,

C: And I will proclaim Your great deeds.

P: Alleluia. Alleluia. Now faith is being sure of what we hope for ...

C: And certain of what we do not see. Alleluia.

Second Reading:..... *Matthew 14:22-33*

Jesus demonstrates that He can overcome all obstacles. We are called upon to simply trust in Him through all the storms of our own lives.

Confession of Faith:..... *Apostolic Creed, TLH p. 12*

Hymn:..... *TLH 419: O'er Jerusalem Thou Weepest*

Sermon:..... *Romans 9:1-5,32-33*

(1) I tell the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit, (2) that I have great sorrow and continual grief in my heart. (3) For I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my countrymen according to the flesh, (4) who are Israelites, to whom *pertain* the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God, and the promises; (5) of whom *are* the fathers and from whom, according to the flesh, Christ *came*, who is over all, *the* eternally blessed God. Amen. ... (32) Why? Because *they did* not seek it by faith, but as it were, by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumbling stone. (33) As it is written: "Behold, I lay in Zion a stumbling stone and rock of offense, And whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame."

“Heartache for Christ”

Offertory:..... *TLH p. 12 f.*

Hymn:..... *TLH 466: Christ, Thou Art the Sure Foundation*

Offering, Prayers, Benediction:..... *TLH p. 14*

Hymn:... *WS 776: Lord, 'Tis Not that I Did Choose You (see insert)*

Welcome to our guests and visitors. We appreciate the opportunity to share God's Word with you

today. Please come again! Those interested in learning more about the Scriptures and our doctrinal position, please speak with Pastor Hein. He would be delighted to visit with you!

> **THE ANNOUNCEMENTS** >

- ◆ **Church Picnic:** Many thanks to those who helped organize and make it possible for our church picnic to be successful. It appeared that the members enjoyed French Regional Park, with about 70 people present. We thank the Lord for the good weather and great fellowship He provided us.
- ◆ **Among Us:** Lyle LaCroix returned home from the hospital on Wednesday. Lyle and Florence express their thanks to the congregation for the cards which were sent. Also, this coming Sat., Aug. 20, member Jeffrey Auel will be married to Heidi Hennen. The Lord who has instituted marriage will richly bless it as His Word becomes the focus. May their union be so enriched with Christ.
- ◆ **Hospitality Sign-Up:** A reminder that there is still a sign-up sheet for those who are willing to be added to a hospitality team. This may help create an additional team or two in order to spread the load. Should you have any questions about this, please consult one of the Elders: Ed Lentz, Mike Dick, or Al Rosendahl. Thanks for considering this as an opportunity to express your love for your Savior.
- ◆ **Grace's Men's Retreat:** Men of all ages are invited to this retreat for the weekend of Sept. 24. Cost is \$40. Signup is by the guest book.
- ◆ **Berea Golf Open:** This is the last call to register for next Saturday's golf tournament in Hastings, MN. Details are located by the guest book.
- ◆ **Parenting Group:** A member from Berea, Rachel Sullivan-Nightengale, would like to find out what kind of interest there may be in the Twin Cities area to start a parenting group. Should you have any interest you may contact her at rsnight@yahoo.com or at (651) 489-1225.
- ◆ **Cruise:** Bob and Barb Ruegge from our CLC congregation in Cheyenne, WY, are planning a Panama Cruise comprised of CLC members for Jan. 3-13. Those interested in this may contact them for more information at (307) 632-2982 or ruegge@worldnet.att.net.
- ◆ **Thanks:** You may recall that Fran McDonald had to resign her duties as dorm parent at ILC due to health difficulties. She conveys her thanks to those assisted her financially during this difficult time: "To my CLC Family, Heartfelt thanks to all who supported me with cards, gifts and letters during my illness. Your acts of kindness will never be forgotten. God knew the best way to express His love to me, and He did it through you. 'As for God, His way is perfect.' Psalm 18:30. The Lord bless you. Fran McDonald"
- ◆ **Church Dedication:** We would like to announce the dedication of the CLC church in Cadillac, MI, on Sun., Sept. 11, 2005 at 4:30 PM EDT, with Pastor Walt Schaller delivering the message. If you are able to attend, you may RSVP to Bob Remus, 1529 S. Lakola Rd., Reed City, MI 49677 or popremus@msn.com. If you are unable to attend, please remember our efforts in your prayers. God's blessings on you all. The Members of Our Saviour Evangelical Lutheran Church.

WHAT ATTRACTS PEOPLE TO A CHURCH? First of all what is the Church? The Church in the real sense of the Word is composed of "called-out" ones, that is, people who have been called out of unbelief. It consists of believers only, that is all those who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and who believe that their sins are forgiven for Jesus' sake. Christ is both the Head and the Foundation of Church which is His body, of which each believer is a part (Ephesians 2:19-22), and which we confess in the Creed as the Holy Christian Church.

One is not attracted to the Church. One is brought into it through the gracious working of the Spirit of God. The Spirit of God works through the Means of Grace, the blessed Gospel of salvation. "... It is by faith in the Gospel alone that men become members of the Christian Church" (*Brief Statement*, 1932,

p.12). Since there are no imperfections in the body of Christ there are no hypocrites in the Holy Christian Church.

This Church is identified with no denomination. Membership in the Holy Christian Church is through faith, and faith alone. At the same time, while we are in the world it is God's will that believers, His children, gather together around Word and Sacrament. They who gather together around Word and Sacrament identify one another by the confession of the mouth. A prerequisite for church membership among us is agreement in faith and confession. We recognize one another, e.g. in our Lutheran church, through verbal confession of faith. We acknowledge one another as fellow believers on the basis of what we hear, because we cannot read the heart.

So what is it that attracted members of our church to identify with it? We choose to believe that members are here because they were drawn by the Word, and by the faithfulness to the Word that is preached every Sunday. Since members of our church have at heart the welfare of their souls, and desire the assurance of salvation, they want only the Word of God and not a mixture of human wisdom and Scripture, or tradition and Scripture.

But we live in a day of gross theological shallowness. In this shallowness people have little if any understanding of what the Holy Christian Church is, and what the commission of the Church is. This shallowness is grossly evident in what it is that attracts many people to a church. Contributing to this sad state of affairs are churches themselves which have become more corporate than spiritual, more entertaining than theological, and more mercenary than faithful to the Word.

The headline in the *Corpus Christi Caller-Times* (August 6, 2005) reads: "Some churches try variety of names- Attempts made to attract new participants." So a church in Milwaukee has changed its name. This is not unique in our age. This is all part of the so-called church growth movement which promotes mega churches "in which denominational identities are eliminated or downplayed for broader appeal in an era when people shop for churches." Shop for churches? Then how about this one in Portland across the bridge? An invitation came informing us of "A church that's not just a worship service & tradition. It's time for a change ... New worship gathering every Sunday @ 10:30 a.m. at EXPRESSO.COM ... Shorts, Shirt, & Shoes Welcome ... Free coffee drink/ smoothie for all guests." We know of a church that advertised that they invited motorcycle bikers. The pastor rode his Harley-Davidson down the church aisle to identify with the bikers.

The more people are satisfied to be religious without regard to substance, the more inclined they are to be persuaded by the size of the church building, the number of people that attend, contemporary worship, youth groups, opportunities for seniors, gymnasiums, etc. This mindset is encouraged by churches that change their name so that they don't offend anyone by their name- what does a community church stand for theologically, what is its confessional position? Even Lutheran churches that compromise God's Word to be more attractive to the masses feed this false mindset. Many churches appeal to the emotion of church shoppers whose spirituality is no deeper than what makes them feel good. But an Anglican priest quoted in the most recent *Lutheran Commentator* got it right when he said, "We must get away from the 'gentle Jesus come and squeeze us when it please us.'"

The Apostle Paul declared that he had not shied away from bringing the Ephesians the "whole counsel of God" (Acts 20:27). That meant that Paul preached the Law to uncover sin, and condemn the sinner. But Paul was a compassionate preacher. He brought the Gospel message that the troubled sinners might be comforted, and find the certainty of salvation in the meritorious atonement of the Lord Jesus. Paul himself was a member of the Body of Christ because He had been drawn by Christ and the Gospel, and therefore in keeping with the Lord's commission in Matthew 28:19-20 "Pastor" Paul said to the Corinthians, "I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified" (1 Corinthians 2:2) We would be delighted if the walls of our church bulged and we had to build bigger. We are not averse in principle to utilizing modern means of communication to carry out the responsibility of the Church. We recognize that different approaches may be necessary in different cultures.

But we are not ashamed of who we are; we are not apologetic for what we preach- how can we apologize for God's Word? We will not change who and what we are and what we believe to be more attractive to church shoppers! We are more interested in being tools in God's hand to build the HOLY CHRISTIAN CHURCH, than we are in attracting people into the church. Our first and only concern is to be faithful to God's Word. Our message shall continue to be first and foremost the message of eternal salvation in Christ. If that is "attractive" to people, the Lord be praised! Therefore we issue our invitation to:

"All who are in distress of mind and heart because of their guilt and condemnation in the sight of Almighty God, and who seek the pardon and comfort, which only the Gospel of Jesus Christ can give;

All who are bewildered by the confusion of many voices offering the theories of human wisdom in the name of religion, and who desire to hear the voice of the Good Shepherd Whom God raised from the dead and of Whom we are witnesses;

All who, though members of Christian churches have come to fear or to know that their churches have departed from the truth of Holy Scripture and therefore “ask for the old paths where the good way is ...” (Jeremiah 6:16);

All who have strayed from the faith and desire to be restored to the Shepherd and Overseer of their souls (1 Peter 2:25)” (CLC *Statement of Faith and Purpose*).

“But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts” (1 Thessalonians 2:4).

Written by Rev. Daniel Fleischer; 7/31/2005

> **TODAY AT GRACE** >

Elder: **Ed Lentz**

Ushers: **Mike Dick; Larry Nelson; Larry Brandt; Roger Brandt; Dale Enns; Scott Dauer; Lynn Sandhoefner**

Counting Team 4: **Paul Lentz; Al Rosendahl; Dave Rust; Lynn Sandhoefner; Jeff Radichel**

Hospitality Team 1: **Phil & Jackie Radichel; Lynn & Janice Sandhoefner; Bill Ryan**

Cleaners: **No Volunteers**

> **NEXT WEEK AT GRACE** >

Ushers: **Mike Dick; Larry Nelson; Larry Brandt; Roger Brandt; Dale Enns; Scott Dauer; Lynn Sandhoefner**

Counting Team 5: **Mike Dick; Brad Kitzman; Ed Lentz; Roger Ochsner**

Hospitality Team 3: **Dan & Cindy Degnan; Ed & Verona Lentz; Angela Valley**

Cleaners: **No Volunteers for next 3 weeks**

> **OUR SCHEDULE** >

Today: 9:00 am – Worship Service
10:00 am – Hospitality in Fellowship Hall
10:15 am – Boards; 11:00 am – Council

Thu., Aug. 18: 7:00 pm – CEA Meeting

Sat., Aug. 20: 8:30 am – Church/School Cleanup Day

Sun., Aug. 21: 9:00 am – Worship Service
10:00 am – Hospitality in Fellowship Hall
10:30 am – Sunday School Teachers' Meeting

Mon, Aug. 22: 10:00 am – Opening Service at ILC (Eau Claire, WI)

Tue., Aug. 23: 8:00 am – Grace Christian Day School Begins

Sat., Aug. 27: 12:00 pm – Berea Golf Tournament @ Hastings, MN

Sun., Sept. 10: Softball Tournament

Sun., Sept. 11: FALL SCHEDULE BEGINS
9:00 am – Bible Class and Sunday School
10:00 am – Worship Service

Sept. 24-25: Grace's Men's Retreat