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Grace Lutheran Church & School



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Home Page: www.CLCGraceLutheranChurch.org

Member: CHURCH OF THE LUTHERAN CONFESSION



Pastor: John Hein (Cell 612-408-1635)

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Grades: Kindergarten-8th

Church Year: Pentecost 14

Date: August 25, 2013

✠ THE ORDER OF WORSHIP ✠

Worship Preparation: Psalm 72, TLH p. 138

Hymn: TLH 1: Open Now Thy Gates of Beauty

Liturgy: TLH, p. 5 ff. (Also available on laminated sheet in pew)

Introit:

P: Rise up, O God, and defend Your cause;

C: Remember how fools mock You all day long.

P: Do not let the oppressed retreat in disgrace;

C: May the poor and needy praise Your name.

P: Hasten, O God, to save me;

C: O Lord, come quickly to help me. Glory be to God!

Gloria in Excelsis: TLH 12, st. 2, 5

This day the Lord for sinners slain

In might victorious rose again:

O Jesus, may we rais-ed be

From death of sin to life in Thee!

All praise to God the Father be,

All praise, eternal Son, to Thee,

Whom, with the Spirit, we adore

Forever and forevermore.

First Reading: Hebrews 12:18-24

Instead of coming to the Mountain of God's holy Law, approaching God with fear, we as children of God can approach the Mountain of God's holy Gospel, approaching God with joy for the forgiveness He has given us.

Gradual:

P: Oh the depths of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God!

C: How unsearchable His judgments, and His paths beyond tracing out!

P: For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things.

C: To Him be the glory forever! Amen.

P: Alleluia. Alleluia. The word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, ...

C: Piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, ... and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Alleluia.

Second Reading: Luke 13:22-30

Not all those who call out to the Lord will be saved. God establishes a relationship with those He has called by faith through His Word.

Confession of Faith: Apostolic Creed, TLH p. 12

Hymn: TLH 123: Our God, Our Help In Ages Past

Sermon: 2 Samuel 23:8a, 9-10

⁸These *are* the names of the mighty men whom David had: Josheb-Basshebeth¹¹ the Tachmonite, chief among the captains. ... ⁹And after him *was* Eleazar the son of Dodo, the Ahohite, *one* of the three mighty men with David when they defied the Philistines *who* were gathered there for battle, and the men of Israel had retreated. ¹⁰He arose and attacked the Philistines until his hand was weary, and his hand stuck to the sword. The Lord brought about a great victory that day; and the people returned after him only to plunder. (NKJVTM)

"God Helps"

I. Keep Fighting

II. God Will Bring About Victory

III. Through Jesus Christ

Offertory: TLH, p. 12 f.

Hymn: TLH 658: Onward, Christian Soldiers

Offering, Prayers, Benediction: TLH p. 14

Hymn: TLH 51: Now May He Who from the Dead

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!

A REED IN THE WIND:

When the devil asked Eve, “Has God indeed said...” (Genesis 3:1), he introduced into the world what we are going to call the first instance of “decision” theology. He tempted Eve with a question which Eve should never have entertained. She should have fled in a flash rather than to have engaged Satan in conversation. Since she chose to engage him, her only response should have been, “Get behind me, Satan!” and run! But Eve listened and Satan, plying on her weakness, made all kinds of false assertions that ultimately led her to consider what Satan said. Believing the lie, she made a decision. At that moment the original innocence was irretrievably lost. She and her husband took of the fruit and ate (Genesis 3).

Adam and Eve doubted God and believed the lie. They doubted God’s Word, and His wisdom. They doubted His integrity. Ever since, *in matters of faith and morals*, without the Lord, without knowledge of His Word, confidence in it, and respect for it, sinful man’s decision making is flawed. Now, only by the power of the Spirit of God working through the Word can children of God recognize sin, resist it, and say no to it.

We as children of God confess respect for the Word of God, for it is spirit and it is life. But Satan incessantly works to undermine that respect; he suggests all kinds of excuses why it is permissible to step outside of the Word. Consequently, whenever we step outside of it or fail to stand on the solid foundation of the Word, we sin. Each time we do so, the easier it becomes to buy into the devil’s lies.

We were reminded of this recently when we read a pastor’s comment about engaging in “same-sex” marriages (July 2013). Being in a church body — not ours! — that condones such activity, but not yet being confronted with having to conduct such a marriage, he said about his and his church’s position: “We have decided not to decide.” Apparently until they have to make a decision, they have no position. Compounding that cop-out he followed with, “As pastor of the church, I need to follow the teachings and the policies of the church. If this congregation decided not to perform same-sex marriages, then I would not do them. If this congregation decided to do them, then I would perform them.”

Since when does *church policy* determine morals and matters of faith? If a congregation expects a pastor to act contrary to Scripture, the pastor has a responsibility to lead the sheep away from the edge of the cliff over which they are about to fall. If a pastor himself is misleading the congregation by disrespecting the Word of God he is among those of whom the Lord spoke through Jeremiah, “Woe to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of the pasture” (Jeremiah 23:1).

The sentiment expressed above by that pastor has ramifications for every aspect of our life and hope of heaven. First of all, what is the anchor of our life, and hope of salvation, if we are influenced by the whims of society? What is the anchor of

life and salvation if the *church* determines what is to be taught, believed, and practiced? Furthermore, if we are not willing to confess the whole Word, stand upon it, and confess all of it, how can we be sure about any of it?

Being the weak-knees we are, resisting sin in our own lives is struggle. Contending for the faith is not easy. The will is present, but the flesh is weak so that even Paul acknowledged, “For the good that I will to do, I do not do; but the evil I will not do, that I practice” (Romans 7:19). We cannot overcome sin by our own will or good intent. The *only thing* that we can do is flee to the throne of God and, as beggars, plead for His mercy, and implore His Spirit to fill us with respect for God’s Word, appreciation of the Father’s love, and faith in Jesus and His atonement. Only by the power of the Spirit can we in penitent sorrow and faith confidently ask the Lord for wisdom and strength to make the right decision in the face of temptation.

Joshua was not speaking to the heathen. He was speaking to people whom God had chosen, and who had committed themselves to the Lord. It would have been fatal for the people to respond to Joshua with, “We have decided not to decide” when he confronted them with the necessity of having to make a choice. Joshua challenged them: “Now therefore, fear the LORD, serve Him in sincerity and in truth, and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the River and in Egypt. Serve the LORD! And if it seems evil to you to serve the LORD, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that *were* on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.” So the people answered and said: “Far be it from us that we should forsake the LORD to serve other gods; for the LORD our God *is* He who brought us and our fathers up out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage, who did those great signs in our sight, and preserved us in all the way that we went and among all the people through whom we passed” (Joshua 24:14-17).

We pray that the Spirit will give us such respect for the Father’s love and for His Word that we will listen to it, and have no other desire than to follow it. Only through the Word can we stand as strong trees against the winds of temptation, evil, adversity, and apostasy. Only then will we have a stronghold to which to flee for protection and comfort. Only in the Word can we hear the voice of the Good Shepherd Who soothes our wounded hearts with the assurance that He will attend us until we are safely home with Him.

In this life, we are all fragile reeds. But there is a difference between a reed blown by the wind of societal whims, and the *bruised* reed. The reeds blown by the winds of whim and compromise have no hope unless they repent and become as bruised reeds. We pray that we will be of the latter type, who find comfort in our Lord’s promise, “A bruised reed He will not break, and a smoking flax He will not quench ... I, the Lord, have called you in righteousness, and will hold your hand ...” (Isaiah 42).

Written by Rev. Daniel Fleischer, 7/2013

✝ TODAY AT GRACE ✝

Organist: Jan Davis

Elder: Phil Radichel

Ushers: Larry Brandt, Roger Brandt, Charles Davis, Nick Duehlmeier,
Dale Enns, Lynn Sandhoefner, Ned Sandhoefner

Counting Team 1: Dan Degnan; Larry Nelson; Phil Radichel;
Pat Paplow

Church Cleaners: Ochsner

✝ NEXT WEEK AT GRACE ✝

Ushers: Larry Brandt, Roger Brandt, Charles Davis, Nick Duehlmeier,
Dale Enns, Lynn Sandhoefner, Ned Sandhoefner

Counting Team 2: Gary Gunther; Bill Rust; Bob Vandever;
Clint Welker; Mark Wales

Church Cleaners: ?? (Need volunteers for September)

✝ OUR SCHEDULE ✝

Sun., Aug. 25: 9:00 am – Worship Service

Mon., Aug. 26: 8:00 am – Grace School Opening Service

10:00 am – ILC Opening Service @ Eau Claire, WI

Wed., Aug. 28: 4:30 pm – Catechism for Public School Students Begins

Sun., Sept. 1: 9:00 am – Worship Service

Sun., Sept. 8: 9:00 am – Bible Class & Sunday School

10:00 am – Worship Service (Regular Schedule Resumes)

Wed., Sept. 11: 7:00 pm – Midweek Bible Class Resumes

Sun., Sept. 15: Grace Church Picnic

✝ THE ANNOUNCEMENTS ✝

- ♦ **Service Schedule:** Please keep in mind that the service schedule will be changing on September 8. Sunday School and Bible Class will begin at 9:00 a.m. with regular morning worship at 10:00 a.m.
- ♦ **Among Us:** Corine Kirkham continues with hospice care at the Jack and Sue Anne Kirkham residence. Ryan Oman has been granted a clean bill of health at the Walter Reid Medical Center near Washington DC. He is awaiting the opportunity to return home in September.
- ♦ **Cleaning:** We are in need of cleaning volunteers for September.
- ♦ **Invitation:** Missionary Ed Starkey will be commissioned at 6:30 pm on Mon., Sept. 23, at a special service of the Word conducted at Messiah Lutheran Church in Eau Claire, WI.
- ♦ **CLC News:** Pastor Roland H. Gurgel has returned the call to Rock of Ages in Grand Rapids, MI.

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