

THE PASTOR'S PONDERINGS

“Proclaim liberty throughout the land unto all the inhabitants thereof.” (Leviticus 25:10)

On July 4th, 1776, a bell in Philadelphia’s Independence Hall rang out the news of our nation’s Declaration of Independence. But, actually, that is not why it’s called the Liberty Bell. You may not know the real reason it is called the Liberty Bell is because of a Bible verse which is inscribed upon it: (you guess it, it’s the verse above from Leviticus 25:10)

The Christian foundations of our nation are seen in the Biblical quotation from Leviticus 25:10 which is cast around the top of the Liberty Bell and from which this famous bell actually received its name: “Proclaim liberty throughout the land unto all the inhabitants thereof.”

The July 4th holiday means much more than just parades, family gatherings, barbecues and fireworks. It is a celebration of the God-given freedom and liberty that we have been blessed with in our nation. As citizens of the United States and as Christians, we have been blessed with two kinds of freedom: political freedom in our nation, and spiritual freedom through our Savior.

In the National Archives at Washington, D.C. you can view the Declaration of Independence and the two other important documents our early government adopted to insure freedom and liberty in our land, the Constitution and its first ten amendments, known as the “Bill of Rights.” The first of the Constitution’s amendments is very unique among the laws of the nations, and it is especially important and appropriate for us as Christians. Because, the very first right, the very first freedom you are guaranteed as an American is: **“Congress shall make no law respecting an**

establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.” By the grace of God, we are blessed to live in a country where the government promises not to interfere with our spiritual beliefs, or our right, as Jesus says, to **“worship Him in spirit and in truth”** (John 4:24).

Many years ago a Missouri Synod missionary was stationed in a foreign country where it was unexpectedly announced one New Year’s Day that beginning immediately all gatherings for Christian worship were forbidden. When the missionary heard that news on the radio, he wondered what would happen. For, that very day he was scheduled to have a New Year’s Communion service in his apartment for the members of his flock. Would they still come? At the appointed time there was a hesitant knock on the door, and then another and another, as the congregation gathered. They were right in the middle of their communion service when there was a loud banging on the door and demands that it be opened. They all sat quietly and said nothing. After a few minutes the banging stopped, they heard footsteps marching away down the hall, and they continued their communion service. But, that was the last service that missionary would conduct there. For he was soon captured by the secret police and thrown out of the country. That true story helps us appreciate the first and greatest political freedom we are blessed with in our nation, freedom of religion, freedom of worship.

What is it we are celebrating when acknowledge a national holiday that isn’t mentioned in the Bible? What we celebrate as we worship on July 4th, is what focus on every week. We use the political freedom we

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have to worship to celebrate the spiritual freedom that is ours through our Savior.

In ancient Israel every 50 years a Year of Jubilee was observed, a very unique, year-long holiday. The Bible verse that is on the Liberty Bell originally proclaimed this special year: "Proclaim liberty throughout the land unto all the inhabitants thereof." During the Year of Jubilee all debts were cancelled, all slaves were set free, and all property reverted to its original owners. The Year of Jubilee was a living prophecy in the history of Israel, pointing forward to a future time when all spiritual debts would be cancelled, when we would be set free from slavery to sin, when we would be returned to our rightful owner, the Lord our God. At the beginning of His ministry

Jesus announced the fulfillment of that prophecy and the arrival of the never-ending, spiritual jubilee: **"The Spirit of the Lord is on Me, because He has anointed Me to preach Good News to the poor. He has sent Me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor"** (Luke 4:18-19).

Scripture tells us that because of our sinfulness we have all lost our spiritual freedom and we are by nature in bondage to Satan, and the slaves of sin. This means every one of us, as Paul says in Galatians 3:22,

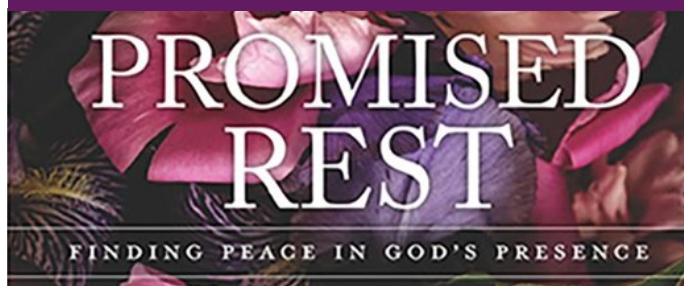
"The Scripture declares that the whole world is a prisoner of sin." But, through the sacrifice of His life, death and resurrection, God's Son Jesus Christ earned for the world a spiritual "Declaration of Independence" from sin, death and the Devil. As Hebrews 2:14-15 says, **"By His death He destroyed him who holds the power of death—that is, the Devil—and freed those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death."** And as Paul says in Romans 6:22, **"Now you have been set free from sin and have become slaves to God."**

God has declared for the whole world a spiritual "Bill of Rights," the right to be His children, to come to Him and call upon Him as our heavenly Father, and the right to enter eternal life. As Paul says in Galatians 4:4-5, "God sent His Son... to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons." In Romans 8:21 Paul describes our spiritual freedom in Christ as, "The glorious freedom of the children of God."

This month we remember our calling as God's people, we are called to **"Proclaim liberty throughout the land unto all the inhabitants thereof."** So, as we worship and celebrate on July 4th, we are celebrating the two kinds of freedom with which we have been blessed: political freedom in our nation, and spiritual freedom through our Savior.

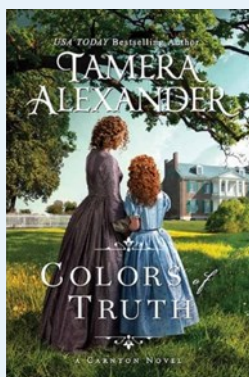


MN SOUTH LWML FALL RETREAT



Save the date for the MN South LWML Fall Retreat! It will be held on **September 15-16, 2023**, at Omega Lodge in Waterville. Special guest is author, Michelle Diercks. Look for registration details this summer!

BIBLE BOOKENDERS



Bible Bookenders will be meeting on **Tuesday, July 25 at 7:00 pm**. Our selection for July is *Colors of Truth* by Tamera Alexander.

In 1866 Catriona O'Toole arrives in the town of Franklin, Tennessee, searching for her younger brother, Ryan, who, according to his last letter, was headed for Franklin only days

before the catastrophic Battle of Franklin. Ryan's last note contained a stack of cash -- enough money to bring his entire family across the ocean from Ireland. But after disease and illness tear through County Antrim and the O'Toole family, only Catriona and her seven-year old sister Nora are left to make the journey.

Our next Bible Bookenders meeting will be Tuesday, **October 24 at 7:00 pm**. Our selection is *A Flame in the Dark - A novel about Luther's Reformation* by Sarah Baughman. This rich and authentic historical fiction novel is set against the backdrop of the Reformation, showing how the reverberations of this religious reform echoed throughout the world and in the lives of ordinary people. Invite your friends to join us, all are welcome, men, women and teenagers. Questions? Ask Bonnie Nowak, Patricia Harvey or Michele Lein.

Upcoming EVENTS

- July 19** Summer Women's Bible Study
- July 25** Bible Bookenders
- July 26** Summer Women's Bible Study

WEEDING VOLUNTEERS



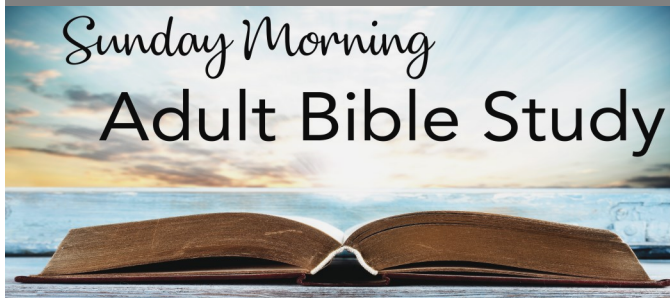
We are in need of more volunteers for weeding and taking care of the plants and flowers outside the church. If you'd like to help, please talk to Dinah or the Trustees.

PRAYER REQUESTS



If you have a prayer request on Sunday, please fill out the form in the pew and put it in the offering plate. Pastor will include them in Prayer of the Church during the service. You can also email weekly prayer requests, and any prayers that should go out to the whole congregation, to megan@holycross-pl.org.

ADULT BIBLE STUDY



Join us for Sunday Morning Study on **THE TRUTH PROJECT**. Join Dr. Del Tackett, as he takes you through these engaging video lessons on the relevance and importance of living the Biblical worldview in daily life.

NEWSLETTER REMINDER!

Reminder to get you newsletter additions in to Megan by the 15th of each month. We'd love to have some new ideas, articles, anything you find relevant to add to the Newsletter!

LCMS STEWARDSHIP MINISTRY - JULY 2023

Go... Sell All You Have?

"What must I do to inherit eternal life?" asked the rich young ruler. Jesus said, "You know the commandments." And he replied, "All these I have kept from my youth." And Jesus said to him, "One thing you still lack. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me" (Luke 18:18-22).

When we hear this story, this question comes to mind: is Jesus speaking to us also, or only to the rich young ruler? In other words, is Jesus telling us to sell all that we have and give it to the poor?

As good Lutherans, we answer, "No!" But why? Why should we not sell all that we have and distribute it to the poor? The simplest explanation is this: if we sold everything we have, our wife and our children would be neglected. In other words, to sell everything we have and give it to the poor would ignore, even abandon, those whom God has placed in our care. Our money, everything we have, is not to be used solely for the church. But that doesn't excuse us from using our money for the purpose God intends.

Everyone has three stations in life, three spheres in which we live and are to be of service to our neighbors. These stations are the church, the family and society. We are members of all three of these by birth. We are born into the church by water and the Word of God, and our duties to others in the church arise from our Baptism into the church. We are born into a family, and our duties to others stem from our birth into that family. Finally, we are born into society, which is simply a further extension of our birth into our family. The duties we have toward other members of society come from either our own birth or the birth of others into the same society.

All that we have and all that we are ought to be pressed into service for the church, the family and society. If we were to sell all we have and give only to one, the other two would be neglected, and we would falter in fulfilling our duties.

So, consider your life and all that you have in light of these three stations. You pay taxes to support and help those in society. You save for college for your children, and provide food, clothing and shelter for the members of your family.

But the station that is usually thought of last is the church. Since the needs of the family and society are more immediate, the church is often given what is left over. This is not how it should be. Rather, we are to give of our first fruits, from off the top, the best, even as Abel gave the best of his flock.

This requires forethought. It means that you sit down and make a plan of what you will give from the beginning. It means sticking to it even when it seems that there are other more immediate and pressing things.

And this is all the more necessary now as we enter into periods of time where giving is low due to high unemployment or where restrictions on meeting in church limit opportunities to give. If we love God and His gifts of forgiveness given through the means of grace, which we receive at church and only at church, then we will support it, just as we love our country and our family. For all that we have and all that we are is given to us by our gracious God. He spared no expense for us and our salvation. He gave up His Son to death so that our sins are forgiven, and we will live. What's more, He provides for all that we need for this body and life. And our lives in this world, among these three spheres of church, family and society are to mirror the generosity of the one who gave us life in all three at birth.

Don't let the church, your divine family, be an afterthought or even ignored. It is nurturing you, bringing you up in salvation through Word and Sacrament.

LCMS Stewardship Ministry
lcms.org/stewardship

COFFEE FELLOWSHIP



Please check out the coffee signup in the Commons. I encourage those who haven't as yet chosen to do so to pick a Sunday. Serving with another person/couple is a good option for first-timers. Thank you to those who

always faithfully sign up to serve.

MOWING VOLUNTEERS



We are in need of some volunteers to help with mowing the church grounds. It's a great way to get outside and get some sunshine, fresh air, and exercise. Lawn mowing can also be a form of therapy, no one bothers you and you can't hear your phone! Talk to Dave Albrecht, Denny Case, or Rich Vannett to help out.

NO GARAGE SALE THIS YEAR!

This year we will not be holding a garage sale. **But please hang onto your items for next year's sale!**



ATTITUDES

Words can never adequately convey the incredible impact of our attitude toward life. The longer I live the more



convinced I become that life is 10 percent what happens to us and 90 percent how we respond to it. I believe the single most significant decision I can make on a day-to-day basis is my choice of attitude. It is more important than my past, my education, my bankroll, my successes or failures, fame or pain, what other people think of me or say about me, my circumstances, or my position. Attitude keeps me going or cripples my progress. It alone fuels my fire or assaults my hope. When my attitudes are right, there's no barrier too high, no valley too deep, no dream too extreme, no challenge too great for me.

- Chuck Swindoll



- Mike Hentges July 5
- Bonnie Nowak July 5
- Meg Batchelder July 7
- Shari Schulze July 8
- Daniel Vannett July 9
- Brad Lein July 12
- Norma Jabs July 16
- Tyler Drangstveit July 17
- Larry Sasse July 18
- Randy Drangstveit July 20
- Corey Einarson July 20
- Steve Cordell July 21
- Doug Schulze July 24
- Jonas Petrie July 31

JULY


 WORSHIP SCHEDULE
July 2**5th Sunday after Pentecost**

"First Commitment" Matthew 10:34-39

Jeremiah 28:5-9

Roman 7:1-13

Matthew 10:34-42

July 9**6th Sunday after Pentecost**

"The Line of Demarcation Seen With New Eyes"

Romans 7 15 17

Zechariah 9:9-12

Romans 7:14-25a

Mathew 11:25-30

July 16**7th Sunday after Pentecost**

"Living With A Christ-Consciousness" Matthew 13:1-9

Isaiah 55:10-13

Romans 8 12-17

Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

July 23**8th Sunday after Pentecost**

"Weed Pullers or Grace Givers" Matthew 13 24 30

Isaiah 44:6-8

Romans 8:18-27

Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

July 30**9th Sunday after Pentecost**

"Me A Treasure Yes You Are" Matthew 13 44-52

Deuteronomy 7:6-9

Romans 8:28-39

Matthew 13:44-52

TEN WAYS TO LOVE

**Listen without interrupting****Proverbs 18****Speak without accusing****James 1:19****Give without sparing****Proverbs 21:26****Pray without ceasing****Colossians 1:9****Answer without arguing****Proverbs 17:1****Enjoy without complaint****Philippians 2:14****Trust without wavering****1 Corinthians 13:7****Forgive without punishing****Colossians 3:13****Promise without forgetting****Proverbs 13:12****Share without pretending****Ephesians 4:15**

MAIN STREET LIVING NORTH

*Main Street Living*

Main Street Living is an hour-long Lutheran television program that airs new episodes each Sunday morning. The Twin Cities program is broadcast at 9 am Central time on WFTC channel 29/9-2. Each Sunday, viewers enjoy a 30 minute remastered episode of "This is the Life," a popular Lutheran Hour Ministries series from the 70s and 80s. The episode is followed by a modified Lutheran worship service—led by a different local pastor each week. Main Street Living (Twin Cities) is endorsed by the Minnesota South District of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod; however, the program receives no funding from the District. It is totally funded by viewers and congregations of the WFTC viewing area.

www.mainstreetliving.com/twincities

MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY



**MEMBER
DIRECTORY**

The membership directory has been updated! You can pick up a new copy in the back of the church. If your contact information is incorrect or needs updating, please let Megan know.

2 MINUTE MULTIPLIER

FIVE TWO

A WEEKDAY 2-MINUTE DEVOTION THAT HELPS YOU SEE JESUS AT WORK IN YOUR WORLD

Napkins

The a/c wasn't carrying its weight. Hadn't been for at least a year. The 200k+ miles on the odometer squelched any desire to invest more. The passenger side never cooled like the driver side. Often blew hot air while the other chilled fast. Never really bothered me since I always drove.

The engine overheating provided an opportunity. "Could you also look at the a/c? The passenger side heats instead of cools. Maybe a little door or something that's stuck?" The little door was a little sticky. Got replaced. "We think one of the main issues, though, was napkins." "Napkins?" "Yeah. We removed a lot of napkins from around the fan and cabin filter. They must have fallen out of the glove box." I love napkins. Can't ever have enough. Constantly putting extras in the glove box. Subconsciously wondered who was using them all. Too many napkins hobbled the a/c. Too much of a good thing makes one sweat.

The author of Proverbs writes similarly of honey: "If you find honey, eat just enough—too much of it, and you will vomit." (Proverbs 25:16) Easy to think the problem is with the honey. Simply too sweet to indulge too much. Same with napkins. Had a mind of their own.

Definitely a poor glove box design. Sorry, but no. The problem's with the eater. "Like a city whose walls are broken through is a person who lacks self-control." (Proverbs 25:28)

Amazing the varieties of coveting that consume us. From more napkins to better jobs to sweeter spouses. Lusting can raise the temp but a few degrees. Or it can burn down the home. The world's brokenness impacts both little and large. Whether desiring more or worried about the what-if's. Dissatisfaction with the present reveals a design flaw fixable only on that Final Day.

While we wait, Jesus gives His family self-control. The fruit of possessing His Spirit. The byproduct of His Spirit living in you. Not intended to make honey taste worse. Or napkins more scratchy. Simply to curb the appetite. Alleviate the anxiety. To protect you from yourself. Remind you Jesus has you. His grace covers you. He lives in you. Your strength is not your own. It all flows from Him. Dial back on the napkins. They're not worth the sweat.

Rev. Bill Woolsey
President and Founder
FiveTwo Network

Sign up to receive the *2 Minute Multiplier* emailed to you! www.fivetwo.com/2mm

LUTHERAN NIGHT AT THE TWINS

The annual Lutheran Night at the Twins will take place on **Tuesday, August 15, 2023** as the Twins take on the Detroit Tigers! Groups of 20 or more will receive discounted tickets and may, if interested, participate in the Lutheran Night National Anthem Choir! It's also a "Dollar Dog" night and family value concessions are available for certain sections. See the flyer posted on the bulletin board for more info.



TIME OF GRACE



Straight talk about God's Word and real hope for this life. A strong gospel message delivered in an informal Bible study style.

Subscribe to **Time of Grace** (www.timeofgrace.org) resources to be delivered to your email inbox daily. You will receive daily devotion emails with "Grace Moments" written devotions and "Grace Talks" video devotions.

Pastor Mike Novotny • The Core, Appleton, WI • KARE (NBC 11) 10:30 am

THE LUTHERAN HOUR



The Lutheran Hour can be heard each Sunday on WCCO (830 AM) at 6:05 am. And it can be streamed online too, www.lhm.org. Check-out LHM's daily devotions too.

July 2

"Give Me Life?!"

Guest Speaker: Pastor Keith Haberstock

Finders, weepers; losers, keepers: Pastor Keith Haberstock talks about finding life by losing it, for the sake of Christ. (Matthew 10:39)

July 9

"Lean Into the Villain's Story"

Lutheran Hour Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler

Jesus changes the way we see ourselves and others, even our villains. He died and rose for them, too. (Romans 7:24)

July 16

"Two Mindsets"

Lutheran Hour Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler

The Law of God is a test that judges all who take it. The Gospel is the Good News that Jesus passed the test, in our place. (Romans 8:1-7)

July 23

"Pulling for Others"

Lutheran Hour Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler

How did two young men start out with similar circumstances but end up in such different places? Was it the choices they made or the pull that others had on their lives? (Romans 8:31-39)

July 30

"If It Seems Slow, Wait for It"

Lutheran Hour Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler

Some ideas spread slowly. That doesn't make them bad ideas. Dr. Michael Zeigler talks about God's slow solution to setting a broken world right. (Habakkuk 2:3 Romans 10:9)

WHAT IS A BIBLICAL COMMUNITY?

The Christian Community is the body of Christ expressing the life and message of Christ in order to build up one another for God's glory.

Believers in Christ are called to live in mutually accountable relationships as they strive to reflect the loving character of God in their lives. It is God's plan that those who call on His name should be like Him in attitude and behavior. The Church exists not just to collect the saints, but to transform them. As St. Paul exhorts in the 5th chapter of Galatians, this begins by walking in step with the Holy Spirit as He builds up and transforms the Church.

The Church exists to produce "The Five G's" in its members lives.

Grace - the individual appropriation of the saving work of Christ.

Growth - the ongoing evidence of a changing life in Christ

Group - connection with others in significant relationships

Gifts - serving Christ's body according to one's spiritual giftedness

Good Stewardship - honoring God with our resources in first fruit giving

The ultimate goal of all of these is to help members of the church to grow in their Christ-like character through learning, loving one another and in sharing of themselves.

"I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you." (John 13:15)

POBLO TEACHERS WANTED



POBLO ESL teachers wanted for the Prior Lake IFC. Mondays at 4:30pm and Wednesdays at 6pm. Please contact Shari Schulze at 612-387-6469 for more information.

4TH OF JULY QUOTES TO REMEMBER



You have to love a nation that celebrates its independence every July 4, not with a parade of guns, tanks, and soldiers who file by the White House in a show of strength and muscle, but with family picnics where kids throw Frisbees, the potato salad gets iffy, and the flies die from happiness. You may think you have overeaten, but it is patriotism.

~Erma Bombeck

Those who expect to reap the blessings of freedom, must, like men, undergo the fatigue of supporting it.

~Thomas Paine

Let freedom never perish in your hands.

~Joseph Addison

CAMP OMEGA GOLF BENEFIT



**Tuesday 8/8/23
1PM Shotgun
Start**

**At Faribault Golf
Club**

Register as a
two-some or four-some-
\$100 per golfer

Help Camp Omega grow its Campership Endowment Fund! Each year, \$15,000 - \$25,000 is given out to help children have Christ-centered experiences at Camp Omega. You can help by participating in this fun golf benefit held at Faribault Golf Club on **Tuesday, August 8**. Contact Russ Schwichtenberg at 507-384-7947 or email Russ@campomega.org.

SUMMER WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY




CALLING ALL WOMEN TO JOIN US IN

**WOMEN'S
Bible Study**

THANK YOU to all who have joined us for the first half of this Summer's Study. We have had lively and wonderful discussions on 1 Peter. Join us anytime for 2 Peter. We will be taking a two week break and come back on **July 19 and 26** to finish 2 Peter. Themes for 2 Peter include knowledge, the historicity of this book, the connection to the Old Testament, the challenge to live authentic Christian lives and how scripture so beautifully guides and preserves our faith. Please join us for one week or all the rest of our study. **ALL are welcome!**

July 2023



SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
2 5th Sunday after Pentecost 9:00 am Worship 10:15 am Bible Study	3		5 12:00 pm Happenings Articles Due	6 7:00 pm Choir Practice	7	1
9 6th Sunday after Pentecost 9:00 am Worship 10:15 am Bible Study	10 7:00 pm Church Council Meeting	11	12 12:00 pm Happenings Articles Due	13 7:00 pm Choir Practice	14	15
16 7th Sunday after Pentecost 9:00 am Worship 10:15 am Bible Study	17	18	19 12:00 pm Happenings Articles Due 7:00 pm Women's Bible Study	20 7:00 pm Choir Practice	21	22
23 8th Sunday after Pentecost 9:00 am Worship 10:15 am Bible Study	24	25 7:00 pm Bible Bookenders	26 12:00 pm Happenings Articles Due 7:00 pm Women's Bible Study	27 7:00 pm Choir Practice	28	29
30 9th Sunday after Pentecost 9:00 am Worship 10:15 am Bible Study	31					