

LIFELINES

of

LORD OF LIFE LUTHERAN CHURCH

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Higher Things at CUW

As I write this, I am just back one day from our annual youth trip to the Higher Things conference. This year it was at Concordia University in Mequon, WI. This school was not only my alma mater, but my oldest brother's, my wife's, and my son Ambrose's and it is also where my son, Athan currently attends and my son Sebastian is hoping to attend in a year. We are big fans of the school and top notch Lutheran education is provided. The chapel is also gorgeous and has a tremendous pipe organ, making it the perfect place to host a conference for high school youth with about a dozen worship services over four days. If you want to know more about the conference and see the pictures of our youth and the chapel, you can attend the adult Bible class on Sunday, July 7th for a presentation.

What is a Lutheran?

This was the title of my presentation at the year's conference. The overall conference theme was, "Who am I?" and this invited the youth to think of their identity in terms of baptized children of God and people for whom Christ died –and not merely a member of a group or race or club, as teenagers too often do.

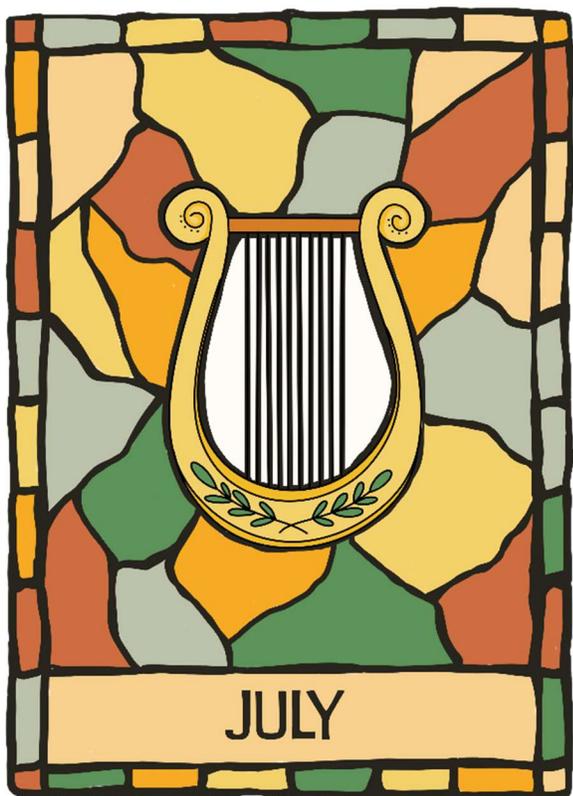
The reason I wanted to do something called, *What is a Lutheran?* is because I believe this is an important question for Lutherans to be able to answer. To be clear, I do not think we all have to give the exact same answer to the question, but there are ways to respond to that question that are much better than others. Specifically, too many Lutherans will answer the question by saying something like: "Martin Luther broke away from the Catholic Church to start his own religion." That is not a good answer, in fact it isn't even true. (Luther was kicked out of the church and didn't start a brand new religion, but called Christians to get back to the historic faith of Christians held in the beginning and corrupted down through the Middle Ages.)

The presentation sought to show how Lutheranism was always meant to be a continuation of the ancient Church handed down from Christ through the Apostles. Along those lines, I showed what happened during the Middle Ages to cause the Church hierarchy and institutions to "go off the rails" and discuss some of the people who spoke out against the corruption and the consequences they faced as a result. Throughout I reference Scripture and try to help the students recognize that in order to know who you are, it is helpful to understand where you come from. Finally, I offered several practical ways to answer the question: What is a Lutheran?

On a very practical level, as a member of a Lutheran church you may be asked that same question someday: What is a Lutheran? If you would like to know more about how to answer that question, then I will be giving my presentation during the Sunday adult Bible class hour on 7/14 and 7/21. I encourage you to attend.

One Service at 10:00 AM on 7/28/24

Our new deaconess intern, Julie Baumann, will be installed on July 28. To welcome her, we decided to have one service that day and thus, only one installation. We will have special music in the service, and a potluck afterwards. Please sign up to bring something and plan to stick around after the service to meet and welcome our new deaconess intern, Julie Baumann.



prepare for worship in July

July 7: Seventh Sunday after Pentecost

Texts: Ezek. 2:1-5; 2 Cor. 12:1-10; Mark 6:1-13
Hymn of the Day: "O Christ, Our True and Only Light," 839

July 14: Eighth Sunday after Pentecost

Texts: Amos 7:7-15; Eph. 1:3-14; Mark 6:14-29
Hymn of the Day: "Jesus, Priceless Treasure," 743

July 21: Ninth Sunday after Pentecost

Texts: Jer. 23:1-6; Eph. 2:11-22; Mark 6:30-44
Hymn of the Day: "The Church's One Foundation," 644

July 28: Tenth Sunday after Pentecost

Texts: Gen. 9:8-17; Eph. 3:14-21; Mark 6:45-56
Hymn of the Day: "Entrust Your Days and Burdens," 754

Installation Sunday



On Sunday, July 28, we will be installing our deaconess intern, Julie Baumann. There will be only ONE SERVICE that day followed by a potluck lunch.

There are sign-up sheets in the narthex, where you can let us know that you will be in attendance, as well as letting us know what delicious, favorite food you will bring. If your schedule permits, there are several opportunities to help set up and clean up the fellowship hall on Saturday and/or Sunday.

Let's give Julie a big Texas welcome and plan on attending this celebration Sunday.

Lord of Life Small Groups

EPIC PARENTING

- † For 30ish couples with kids
- † For info contact Ben Scarth
BenjaminScarth@yahoo.com
- † Usually meets one Sunday a month in the afternoon or evening

FRUITS OF THE VINE CARE GROUP

- † For info contact Scott Peters at 972-898-3351 cell or speters@planolutheran.com
- † Usually meets the 2nd Saturday of the month

GOOD NEWS CARE GROUP

- † For info contact Mike Kunschke at (847) 951-6974
- † Will meet Sat., July 13 at 6:30 PM for Bible study

COLLEGE GROUP

- † For students in college or recent grads
- † For info contact Pastor Shaltanis at PastorShaltanis@yahoo.com
- † Usually meets after the late service for lunch and Bible study



1	Don Bunger
2	Ana Scarth
2	Emily Scarth
3	Nelda Schrank
5	Mike Phelan
8	Emma Padgett
8	Suzanne Smith
10	Brooks Smith
12	Donovan Cawood
12	Suzan Grabow
13	Carter Bunger
13	Sandy Ehrett
13	Ethan Hacker
13	Garrett Hacker
14	Carol Nance
15	Gary & Charlotte Bennefeld (63)
17	Becky Padgett
17	Ben & Melanie Scarth (14)
18	Kathy Plagens
19	Carolyn Moudy
19	Emma Ziegelbein
19	Noah Ziegelbein
20	Don Padgett
20	Magdalena Shaltanis
24	Jonelle Peters
26	David Armstrong
26	John Frinsko
26	Winona Parish
28	Mark Knowles
28	Susan Knowles
29	Phil & Candace Klein (35)
30	Charlotte Bennefeld
30	Linda Francis
30	Kenneth Tabor
30	Charles & Dixie Hacker (30)

Teen Times

Another Higher Things is in the books after our Sr. High youth and a few parents traveled to Concordia University in Mequon, Wisconsin during the last week of June. The theme for this year's conference was, "Who Am I." There, along with over 1000 of our dearest Lutheran friends from all over the country, we attended great worship services and heard many pastors and speakers on the aspects of being created in Christ, our purpose, our identity, and being distinctly Lutheran. This was my ninth Higher Things conference to attend, and I could go on and on about how great it was, but I am going to leave that to the others who were in attendance. The following are thoughts and reflections from our group:



WHO AM I

Robert Duff; (1st time to attend) my favorite part about the conference was the singing and the church services, and my favorite service was Compline. One of my favorite activities was Nine-square during free time because of all of the people.

Rachel Shaltanis; (first time to attend, from North Carolina and niece to Pastor Shaltanis) I really enjoyed traveling alone and really embracing adulthood. Having to "live" on a college campus and navigating the place, going from classes to church services was very important and vital. Another thing I appreciated and loved was being welcomed into the Lutheran family and youth groups. The Plano youth group is incredibly kind, fun, and amazing! While attending the conference, I got to dive deep into my Lutheran faith and explore sides of me I had not seen before. Learning about the history of Lutheranism while also learning how to be a good Lutheran was very important as well. I think taking notes and reflecting on them was very helpful. I had quite a few fond memories of this trip, and I can't name a favorite! I loved seeing my extended family and connecting with my cousin really well! Sebastian was really funny and very cool to hang out and talk with. On Wednesday He and I walked and talked around the stadium track for like 2 hours catching up on life and I loved that! Another fun thing was when he gave an in-depth tour of the campus. It actually makes me want to attend now. My favorite class or session I attended was either "What is a Lutheran?" or "Am I Catholic?" I liked both a lot because both really dived deep into the history of our denomination and what we are truly devised of. Pastor Shaltanis really answered a lot of questions and things I was confused about. Over all, words cannot express how truly amazing this trip was and how eternally grateful I am to go. This was such a blast and I wish to attend next year!

Sebastian Shaltanis; (4th time to attend) my favorite part of Higher Things this year was all of the church services. The combination of the best organist on the best organ I've seen really elevated the worship. Getting to learn the campus was a fun experience that I shared with my group as well as meeting a new friend from Michigan. This year was definitely one of my favorites.

Kaitlyn Hacker; (3rd time to attend) my favorite thing about Higher Things is all the worship services we attend. It is so powerful to be singing and praising God in a room with a thousand other youth. Some of my other favorite parts include all the youth groups attending. It's so much fun to run around a college meeting new people who believe the same thing as you. My favorite breakout was Pastor Goodman's on Self-esteem. All and all it was an amazing time and definitely one of my favorite higher things yet!

Charles Hacker; (1st time, adult chaperone) this was my first trip to a Higher Things conference. What stood out to me the most? Each day we had multiple church services and each of the services were packed. There were 1047 people registered for the conference and it seemed like there were about a thousand people in each church service. The sound of that many people going through the liturgy together and singing together in a chapel with awesome acoustics was really awe inspiring; so many people praising God together was impressive. After experiencing this conference first hand I understand the importance of it. It's great to so see many adults teaching our youth about Jesus.

Dixie Hacker; (2nd time, adult chaperone) I really liked the variety of topics offered in the breakout sessions. The topics were relevant and important to youth and adults alike who are striving to figure out what it means to be "in the world, but not of the world." Some of this year's topics included self-esteem, sex and marriage, God and country music, and what is a Lutheran. I found each breakout session I attended to be skillfully done with Christ at the center of the message. When talking with the youth members about their thoughts on the breakout sessions they chose to attend, they also had many positive things to say.

The purpose of Higher Things is to show the young people in our church what it means to have a distinctly Lutheran identity; to embrace it, cherish it, and hopefully share it. It gives me great comfort to know that the youth from Lord of Life take what they see, hear, learn, and experience at Higher Things and appreciate who they are as a treasured child of God with the hope of salvation through Jesus. There will be a slideshow presentation on the first Sunday in July to share details of our trip at 9:30am in the fellowship hall. As always, our youth ministry is so grateful for the generous support we have through our Christian family at Lord of Life.

Until next time,
Scott Peters

The Rewards of Godliness

It's no secret that you can't bribe your way into heaven. No amount of good works will impress God enough to open heaven's door for their sake. "For the wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23) and the person who "keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become guilty of all of it" (James 2:10). Rather, salvation is "the free gift of God ... in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 6:23).

So, your good works won't earn you the reward of heaven. But does that mean that there are no rewards at all? Consider what the Small Catechism says in the "Close of the Commandments":

What does God say about all these commandments?

He says, "I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate Me, but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love Me and keep My commandments." (Ex. 20:5–6)

What does this mean?

God threatens to punish all who break these commandments. Therefore, we should fear His wrath and not do anything against them. But He promises grace and every blessing to all who keep these commandments. Therefore, we should also love and trust in Him and gladly do what He commands. (SC II)

God promises to bless you in keeping His commandments. What might these blessings be? Well, consider what Paul says about keeping the Fourth Commandment: "Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. 'Honor your father and mother' (this is the first commandment with a promise), 'that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land'" (Eph. 6:1–3).

And think about what your life would be like if you went around stealing (breaking the Seventh Commandment), telling lies about people (breaking the Eighth Commandment), and generally being cruel to those around you (breaking all the commandments!). That is obviously not a blessed way to live. In fact, you'd be miserable living that way.

And Jesus says more about what is in store for those who make sacrifices for His sake: "Jesus said to them, 'Truly, I say to you, in the new world, when the Son of Man will sit on His glorious throne, you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or lands, for My name's sake, will receive a hundredfold and will inherit eternal life'" (Matt. 19:28–29).

So don't grow impatient in doing good. Follow the Lord who has freely given you everlasting life.

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

LCMS Stewardship Ministry – <https://www.lcms.org/stewardship>

Newsletter Article – July 2024

Lord of Life Lutheran Church
Summarized Statement of Activity
5 Months Ending May 31, 2024

	Y-T-D Operating Funds	Y-T-D Budget	Variance	Jan-Dec 2024 Budget
Contributions				
Regular Offerings	242,010	230,842	\$11,168	\$589,196
Other	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Income	\$242,010	\$230,842	\$11,168	\$589,196
Expenses				
Benevolences	30,251	28,830	\$1,421	\$73,650
Elders	150,315	133,600	\$16,715	\$320,639
Education	250	350	(\$100)	\$1,000
Outreach	729	1,820	(\$1,091)	\$3,900
Office Expenses	7,114	4,925	\$2,189	\$12,090
Utilities	15,028	16,315	(\$1,287)	\$38,245
Property Maintenance	28,557	39,030	(\$10,473)	\$85,940
Stewardship	0	350	(\$350)	\$350
Family Ministries	303	1,865	(\$1,562)	\$5,290
Youth Board	1,041	3,300	(\$2,259)	\$6,600
Children's Ministry	1,441	2,250	(\$809)	\$6,500
Admin Council	793	1,650	(\$857)	\$5,200
Total Operating Expense	\$235,822	\$234,285	\$1,536	\$559,404
Surplus or (Deficit)	\$6,188	(\$3,443)	\$9,632	\$29,792
Other Information:				
Operating Fund Balance	\$201,043			
Certificate of Deposit	\$130,373			
Restricted Fund Balance	\$144,211			
Endowment Restricted CDs	\$42,310			

DEADLINE FOR NEWSLETTER ARTICLES IS THE 20th — lol.newsletter.editor@gmail.com