

LIFELINES

of

LORD OF LIFE LUTHERAN CHURCH

Phone: (972) 867-5588

Fax: (972) 985-5588

Internet Home Page: <http://planolutheran.com>

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July 2026

Beautification Committee Presentation: Sunday July 26th, 9:30 AM

Last year I sought the Administrative Council's consent to form a Beautification Committee to look into updating a few things around the church. With the Council's approval, a committee of 7 people of various ages was formed and in early November we got to work. Initially, we discussed creating a master plan with cohesion throughout the narthex and sanctuary area as well as the hallways and the rest of the building. However, we thought the very first area to concentrate on should be the narthex as this is what so many guests see first giving them their first impression. While the sanctuary is the most important, the narthex is also smaller and easier to do. Our hope is that if a narthex upgrade goes well, the congregation will ask us to continue on with the sanctuary as phase two.

A major concern throughout the process has been keeping an eye on the cost. We don't (and shouldn't) do something like this very often, but every couple of decades, it seems good to keep things looking nice and up to date. For example, many of us have had the experience of going into a church that feels like we just walked back into 1960. Typically, that is not a sign of health but rather, it sends the message that the church peaked a long time ago! Times change and the styles change along with the times. I remember in the 1970's my house had orange shag carpet in the family room. I haven't seen anything like that in a long time and I would be shocked if I saw it in someone's home today, nor can I imagine a realtor trying to sell a house with that kind of flooring in place. Fortunately, our church isn't that far out of style, but we definitely reflect the trends of the 1990's and so it seems a reasonably priced upgrade is in order.

The committee has done a tremendous amount of work thinking through many possibilities for improving the narthex and we are now ready to share our recommendations. A presentation was given at the June Administrative Council meeting and the council responded very positively. The next step is to share the presentation with the congregation, which we will do on Sunday, July 26, during the Bible class/Sunday School hour.

If this is something that interests you, then I hope you will attend to hear the recommendations of the committee. If you would like to know more about their recommendations but cannot attend the presentation on the 26th, then send me an email and we can try and figure out a time to meet.

Blessings,

PrS





A Letter from Our Deaconess Intern

Grieve with Hope

Death. It's the consequence of sin; the last great enemy. It surrounds us every day, whether in the news, where the latest tragedy is reported, or closer to home in the death of someone we love dearly. Death feels vile. It's wrong. This isn't how it was supposed to be at all.

On June 22, my Grandma, or, as we lovingly called her, Bunk, was called home to eternal glory. Which is a nice, comfortable way to say that she died. The woman I have known my whole life, who was there for all my formative years, who supported me from afar when I went to college and seminary, is gone. And that stings. Badly. She lived a very long life (94 years), but to me, she should be immortal. Bunk isn't allowed to die because I don't want her to. But that's not how this works.

We know because of the sin of Adam and Eve in the garden that the world is fallen. There's pain, suffering, and death. That curse, condemning us to what seems to be an eternal separation. You know, the place where there is no light, with weeping and gnashing of teeth? That's terrifying. And death tries its hardest to be terrifying. Psalm 23 describes it as a shadowy valley. It's dark. And it seems hopeless. Bare and void of anything good. What can we do against such a great enemy? All we can do: turn to Christ.

Christ was sent into the world to conquer the very thing that we fear: death. He went willingly to the cross to bear the sins of the world—all of those things that separate us from God—and to crush them by dying and rising for our salvation. Death has no victory over Him who was crucified and is risen. Therefore, death has no victory over those for whom Christ has died. Death has been drowned in the blood of the Lamb. Although on this side of glory, there is still sorrow, pain, and death, it is not our eternal fate. "For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. For one who has died has been set free from sin. Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him." (Romans 6:5-8)

Grief is a powerful thing, but thanks be to God that we do not grieve like those who have no hope. Paul speaks these words of comfort: "But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep." (1 Thessalonians 4:13-14) Our God does not abandon us to death and eternal separation from Him. He loves us too much. We get to grieve with hope because we have a God of hope. I encourage you, if you are grieving, to read 1 Corinthians 15, the great resurrection chapter. This is where we find the words: "Death is swallowed up in victory." 'O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?' The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." (v. 55-56)

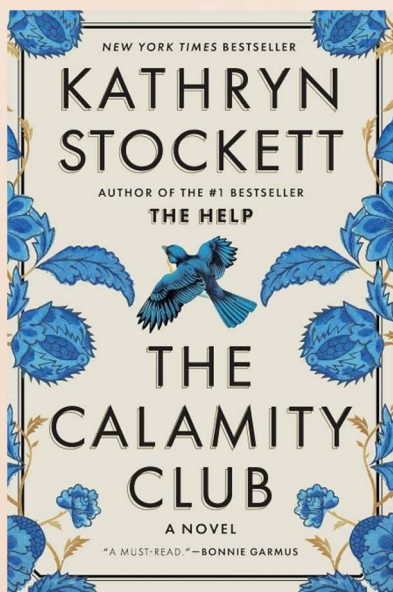
So, grieve with hope. It won't be easy, and it will still be painful. For some people, grief takes hold and lingers for a while. For others, grief hits hard and retreats quickly. I am one of

those people who takes a while to process grief. I know I'll be sad. I'll cry. I'll be mad, and I'll shout to the Lord, "Why did this have to happen?" But through all of that, I'm still grieving with hope because I know my Savior. I know Bunk knew her Savior. She heard His voice and followed him from the time she was a child. And I know that when I'm in worship on Sunday, and we take Communion, she is there with angels and archangels and all the company of heaven, communing with me like all the saints who have gone before. Here, her body sleeps. There, her soul sings eternal praise to her Lord Jesus Christ. She is with her Heavenly Father, and on the Last Day, she will be raised with all believers, too. That is my hope. Thanks be to God.

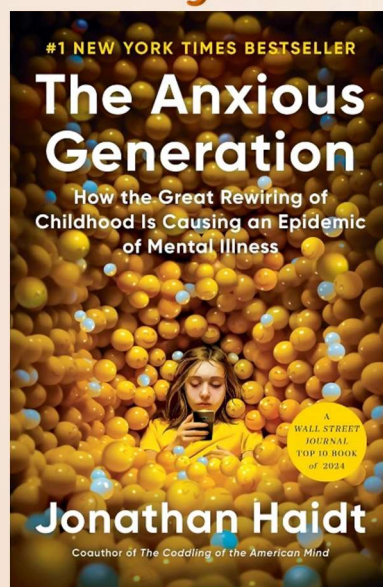
Women's Summer BOOK CLUB



June



July



Women of all ages are invited to join our Summer Book club! We'll be reading *The Calamity Club* by Kathryn Stockett in June and *The Anxious Generation* by Jonathan Haidt in July.

Join us for discussion nights:

- *The Calamity Club* - **July 9 at 6PM**
- *The Anxious Generation* - **August 6 at 6PM.**

Bring a light potluck dish to share along with any discussion ideas or favorite passages from the books. We look forward to meaningful conversation, good food, and great company - *hope to see you there!*

Teen Times

During the last week of June, a small group traveled to Higher Things in St. Louis, MO on the campus of Washington University. The theme this year was *Dying Church Rising Hope*, how satan and the world will tell you that the church is failing. There were five of us; our Deaconess Paige Rebber, Melanie, Ana, and Emily Scarth, and myself. This was my 10th Higher Things to attend and there were many parts that took place which are always uplifting, enjoyable, and spirit-filled. The opening and closing Divine worship services, the plenary sessions where all conference attendees listen to one main speaker, the breakaway sessions on specific topics with smaller groups, and the time spent with the youth who attend. The following thoughts are some of the reflections from the week.

Quick Highlights for the Higher Things Youth trip to Washington University, St. Louis.

MONDAY

Drive to St. Louis

Disney Sing along for Hours!

Emily; I loved that part!

TUESDAY

Opening Divine Service Sermon

Self-Reliance, Pride and Arrogance:

Satan's favorite color is not black, or red. It is off-white. He doesn't shock you with boldness, he sneaks in with almost the right color...just a little off.

It is very easy to go from Christ Alone to Christ in me...i.e. Arrogance and pride of "That's ok Jesus...I've got this" we are taught that self-reliance is something to be proud of and so thinking that we can do it alone is respected and revered in the world.

So. We need to be sober minded and watchful about relying too heavily on our own strength. We need Jesus to be saved. We cannot save ourselves.

Emily; This might have been my favorite sermon of the week. It was very detailed, and I thought his words spoke truthfully, and related to the topic of the conference.

Plenary 1 - Rev. Goodman

The gates: The church was placed near the gates of Hell. It is hot here. But it should be. Have faith that Jesus knows

Breakaway A - Fight Back! (Defend your Faith [Wirtz])

This taught the high level basics of Apologetics. The takeaway from this whole break out was this:

When defending your faith against someone who also professes to believe in the bible, yet has misconceptions one question will suffice.

"What in the Bible led you to believe that?"

Ana; Got a lot of questions answered and good ways to defend the faith we talked about infant baptism and Mormons. Definitely my favorite part of that day.

Emily; My questions were the ones on baptism. The speech was very good, interactive, and all the questions were answered masterfully, which was, and I quote, "what in the bible led you to believe that?" Overall, in my opinion, a very good breakaway.

WEDNESDAY

Plenary 2 - Rev. Dr. Egger

Memento mori - What must die in the church??

Our Lord Jesus must die.

Our sins must die.

Best news...when Christ comes again, Satan will die

Breakaway B - Jesus is not a spork

He is not Batman - human dressed up as something else
 He is not Superman - Alien pretending to be Human
 He is not Spiderman - Modified Human pretending to be human
 He is not the Hulk - Man who turns into a "god"
 He is fully human, and fully God.

Ana; I liked this one, it was super helpful and honestly I hadn't thought about this topic much and was not looking forward to it but overall it surprised me at how in depth he got without saying I don't know, or making assumptions.

Emily; I chose this breakaway, because I wanted to see what it was about. I hadn't thought of the topic in the way he explained it. It made me realize that a lot of people are trying to fit Jesus in the box of their cognitive ability. They can't wrap their heads around the fact that Jesus is both man and God, so instead they make him into something they *can* wrap their heads around.

Breakaway C - Beyond the Music: The story behind our conference hymns

This breakaway was delightful, but really just delved deeper into the meaning of many of the hymns.

Ana; We got to talk about my all time favorite hymn and we sang a lot. Overall the best part of my day.

Emily; It was interesting to hear and learn about the 'backstories' of some of the hymns that we sing in church. He talked about how some hymns had been rewritten, how verses had been added, and taken out. Also singing with people who aren't completely one deaf for once was great!

THURSDAY**Plenary 3 - Rev. Daniel Voth**

Elijah, he fled into the wilderness to escape Queen Jezebel, who wanted to kill him. Feeling completely alone, he complained to God that he was the only faithful person left. (Chicken Little Screaming "The Church is dying!") God comforted him by revealing that there were 7,000 others who had not worshiped false gods. The Church may be dying by what we see, but it doesn't belong to us. It is HIS. Our Rising Hope is in the Word. Ephesians 4:5-6

Matins Sermon

The Church is dying. Reasons:

1. Less people are going/less babies being born
2. Clergy and Congregation failing the 2nd Commandment

Not the first time. Philosophy members from Rome started a downfall. It took 300 years before anyone noticed.

Why do you go to Church? (Go home to your church and ask members why they go to church)

Some will answer well and many will answer with Sunday school answers.

But don't worry, God has not been silent, and he will not be silent. He is STILL at work in the hearts and minds of the people. The Bible tells us God will not let his church die.

Breakaway D - All about Angels

This broke down some myths surrounding angels. Also, it just answered many of the questions with "I don't know. No one does, because the Bible doesn't explain"

Ana; I did not like this one as much as I had hoped, all the questions I asked he answered with "I don't know" and I get that the bible doesn't say much about angels but you could have formulated a better response. I did not enjoy it.

Emily; I had a lot of the same feelings as Ana, how some answers were left unanswered. I chose this breakaway to learn more than I already know about angels, I am just fascinated by them! My all time favorite angel has got to be Michael the Archangel. I had thought about a hierarchy with angels, but not quite on the scale he was talking about. He never actually got to the speech part, because he took breaks for questions that he could not answer. I think he just needed to save questions for the end, and actually get to his speech part.

Breakaway E -Hurt (Or...What I wished I knew to tell Ashley)

Platitudes do not help. They tell the person who we are with that we don't want to spend any more time on them, and so we tell them it will all be ok with different types of platitudes.

Ana; We got to this one a little late but as late as we were it still made sense. This one was really heavy but he mixed a little humor in appropriate places to lighten it up. It made a lot of sense what he was saying and it really spoke to me. This was my favorite part of the day.

Emily; I absolutely loved this breakaway! I felt the topic so personally, and related to it very well. Even though we arrived late, it didn't take away from the experience of Pastor Goodman's words. He is such an amazing speaker. He drives the points home, and just sounds so passionate in delivering his words. I feel like this story with his friend Ashley relates a lot with what a lot of teens and young adults have to face. Platitudes don't work, and he delivers that so well, that sin breaks stuff, and we have not the power to fix it ourselves. The power of Christ alone can fix the stuff sin breaks. I'm sad we don't get to know what happened to Ashley, but overall my favorite breakaway.

FRIDAY**Plenary 4 - Rev. Goodman**

Hope:

The Church militant vs the Church Triumphant:

The Church Militant - We often feel like we are in a fight for our lives and we are the warrior. This is wrong. Jesus is the Warrior, and he is fighting for us.

"Why?" is not a helpful question. A better question is "Who?" in which the answer is Jesus.

The warzone is not on our shoulders. We have already won through the blood of Jesus.

The Church Triumphant -

The votes are in - we are the victors through Christ. Christ has risen. The dark is always overcome by the light.

Conclusion: The church militant and Triumphant are ONE!

Friday Divine Service Sermon

LIVE!! Until the church rises again with the return of Christ - LIVE. Do not despair.

Emily; Oh this sermon was so good! It made you sit on the edge of your seat, wanting more. Like I said, Pastor Goodman's words speak straight to the heart.

We would like to share more stories and pictures from our trip with you on Sunday, July 12 during the Bible class hour. Please plan to attend to see how Higher Things is helping many people to express and live out their faith, and to know that we have hope in our Lord Jesus that HIS church will live until the end of time. So, until next time, God's blessings.

Scott Peters



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

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
- † Will meet July 24th at 6:00 PM for Bible study

GOOD NEWS CARE GROUP

- † For info contact Mike Kunschke at (847) 951-6974
- † Will meet Sat., July 11th at 6:30 PM for Bible study

YOUNG ADULTS

- † For those in their 20's and 30's
- † For info contact Lauren Moudy at laurenemoudy@gmail.com or (214) 415-8939
- † Will meet Sun, July 19th at 6 PM for Bible study and dinner

PREPARE FOR WORSHIP

In July

July 5: Sixth Sunday after Pentecost

Texts: Zech. 9:9-12; Rom. 7:14-25a; Matt. 11:25-30

HotD: "I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say," 699

July 12: Seventh Sunday after Pentecost

Texts: Is. 55:10-13; Rom. 8:12-17; Matt. 13:1-9, 18-23

HotD: "Almighty God, Your Word Is Cast," 577

July 19: Eighth Sunday after Pentecost

Texts: Is. 44:6-8; Rom. 8:18-27; Matt. 13:24-30, 36-43

HotD: "In Holy conversation," 772

July 26: Ninth Sunday after Pentecost

Texts: Deut. 7:6-9; Rom. 8:28-39; Matt. 13:44-52

HotD: "From God Can Nothing Move Me," 713



- 1 Don Bunger
- 2 Ana Scarth
- 2 Emily Scarth
- 3 Elijah Padgett
- 3 Karla Rempert
- 3 Nelda Schrank
- 5 Mike Phelan
- 8 Suzanne Smith
- 10 Brooks Smith
- 12 Suzan Grabow
- 13 Carter Bunger
- 13 Eleanor Conrad
- 13 Sandy Ehrett
- 13 Ethan Hacker
- 13 Garrett Hacker
- 14 Carol Nance
- 14 Eric Wilde
- 15 Gary & Charlotte Bennefeld (65)
- 17 Annie Joseph
- 17 Ben & Melanie Scarth (16)
- 18 Kathy Plagens
- 19 Carolyn Moudy
- 19 Emma Ziegelbein
- 19 Noah Ziegelbein
- 20 Robert Padgett
- 20 Magdalena Rector
- 21 Shreyas Dalal
- 24 Jonelle Peters
- 26 David Armstrong
- 26 John Frinsko
- 26 Winona Parish
- 28 Henry Peters
- 28 Mark Knowles
- 28 Susan Knowles
- 29 Phil & Candace Klein (37)
- 30 Charlotte Bennefeld
- 30 Linda Francis
- 30 Charles & Dixie Hacker (32)