

SOUL 57

YOUTH GRIEF SUPPORT

Soul 57 Youth Grief Support will be the focus for the Human Care for the first quarter of 2024 as one percent of our offerings will support them. A representative from Soul 57 will be present during the education hour on January 7 to tell us all about the care they provide for our community. Go to www.soul57.org to learn more.

Pillars of Soul 57

1. Vulnerability

We let down our armor and share our stories. Being sad is not a weakness. It's an opportunity to learn more about yourself and other human beings. It is a way to understand that we all feel, and letting down the walls and allowing others into help is a strength.

2. Trust

This is a safe space. We come to make connections and communicate shared feelings. We will not judge anyone, repeat what we've heard, or use the information someone shares against them.

3. Community

Again, this is a safe space. Everyone here is grieving, suffering, and sorting through emotions that are new and unwelcome. We are here as a group to offer support and provide encouragement. Although your situations and grief look different from one another, nobody is suffering alone. We are in this together.

4. Courage

Sharing stories is hard. Being vulnerable is hard. Taking advice and learning tools to move forward every day is hard. And even though it won't always be easy, and some days the sadness will feel greater than the good, we will have the courage to keep moving forward and supporting each other and letting others support us.

5. Empathy

This is not the same as sympathy. We are not lesser than or weaker because of our loss. We don't need people to feel sorry for us or treat us differently because we are grieving. Having empathy and receiving empathy means we understand there will be good days and bad days and we are here to support each other and find compassion and understanding for each other and ourselves.



Lutheran Family Service +



North Dakota District



Dr. Carolyn DeLorme, Ph.D. is wrapping up her work helping Lutheran Family Service screen local counselors with the assistance of our pastors. Be on the lookout for our list of reliable, Christ-centered counselors already serving in North Dakota in the new year.



Dr. VandeBraak will offer congregational training for the ND District at St. Mark's Lutheran in Minot on April 6 and at Immanuel Lutheran Church in Grand Forks on April 7 regarding infant death including miscarriage, still birth, SIDS and other losses including care for couples not able to bear children. Registration and details will be provided soon!

- ❖ Marriage & family counseling
- ❖ Mental health counseling
- ❖ Pregnancy support
- ❖ Adoption services
- ❖ Church worker wellness
- ❖ Grief education & support

We walk with people who are experiencing hard times and are there for them just as God has been there for us.

Lutheran Family Service is a place of hope. We live in a time in which the church - those who love God and love people - has an incredible opportunity to share its hope and passion for healthy living with those who are struggling to make life work. Through LFS, the church is actively engaged with people who need a word of hope and a little help along the way. Every day, the men and women of Lutheran Family Service bring the good news of the Savior and His love to the world, one hurting or needful person at a time.

We are here to help. We want to show you that nothing is impossible with God.

-Pastor Max Phillips, Executive Director

Rev. David Gunderson, tLMFT and Lindy Hinckley, tLMFT are both master's trained mental health professionals working under a licensed supervisor to obtain their permanent independent clinical license. In addition to their counseling training and experience, both build their work on a strong foundation of mature LCMS Christian faith.

Dave is an LCMS pastor and has served in a parish and as a military chaplain for over 30 years. **Lindy** is an LCMS member, married to an LCMS pastor in South Dakota. Both are ready and able to help by providing confidential, professional counseling consistent with your faith and world view. No fees will be charged for sessions with Dave or Lindy, until they complete their independent licensing.

To schedule an appointment via telehealth with either Lindy or Dave, call 701-532-0996.

Happy Birthday!

January

Kristina H	1/4
Jacob F	1/8
Sherrald K	1/11
Steph I	1/15
Don G	1/19
Shaylee I	1/20
Luella R	1/20
Brekken Z	1/20
Alice G	1/21
Corrin F	1/21
Angie V	1/22
Cindy B	1/24
Joshua L	1/26
Larry W	1/26
Bruce K	1/29



January

Doris W	1-12
Leona M	1-13
Dwight C	1-19
Patrick R	1-20
Kristina H	1-29



Joel & Brittni W 1-05



1-15 Rob Burkhardtsmeier
16-31 Martin Bjgaard



Jan. 7 Sam N.
Jan. 14 Madison G.
Jan. 21 Mackenzie G.
Jan. 28 Abby Z.



"The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness." Lamentations 3:22-23 We are often asked what "New Year's resolutions" we are making. While this may be helpful for some people, we Christians realize that each new day brings *"new mercies"* from the Lord, and each act of repentance and forgiveness brings a fresh start! May today and every day be lived in the assurance of such great mercy and fresh starts – all because of Jesus!

Please continue to share information about our LCMS "Main Street Living" media ministry with others. In addition to being broadcast each Sunday morning, you can view archived programs anytime at www.mainstreetliving.com – then click on the link identified as **"Fargo / Bismarck"**. Worship services from the five other MSL broadcast areas, as well as the weekly *"This Is the Life"* programs, are also available for viewing on the website.

Thank you for your needed financial support! Checks may be sent to "Main Street Living NORTH," 821-5th Ave S, Fargo, ND 58103, or donate by Credit Card or your PayPal account on the website. God's blessing in Christ!

-Ken Koehler / MSL North Volunteer Coordinator

"MSL North" Programs for January 2024:

Jan. 7th: Rev. Arie Bertsch, President of the ND District, LCMS, presents the message: **"Anchored in Christ"** based on Mark 1:4-11. *"This Is the Life"* program: ". **"The Other Wiseman"** - Another Magi, making his journey to the Christ child, encounters others and shows kindness along the way.

Jan. 14th: Rev. Richard Jones, Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch, Minot, ND, presents the message: **"Selective Hearing Loss"** based on I Samuel 3:1-10. *"This Is the Life"* program: **"The Priceless Book"** - Money and health troubles on the farm lead a father to God's Word for comfort.

Jan. 21st: Rev. Jim Lamb, Lutheran Family Service, Fort Dodge, Iowa, presents the message: **"The Trinitarian Value of Human Life"** based on Isaiah 43:1. Visit www.MainStreetLiving.com for more information. *"This Is the Life"* program: **"Live Option"** - A 15-year-old pregnant daughter and her mother disagree on the future of her child.

Jan. 28th: Rev. Timothy Stout, St. Peter's Lutheran Church, Sawyer, ND, St. Martin Lutheran Church, Anamoose, ND, and St. John Lutheran Church, Kongsberg, ND, presents the message: **"Depart, Thou Unclean Spirit"** based on Mark 1:21-28. *"This Is the Life"* program: **"In Search of Dignity"** - Two factory workers struggle to find meaning after they are replaced by machines.

"MAIN STREET LIVING" is a locally produced TV program that includes a 30-minute worship service led by participating pastors of the Minnesota North and North Dakota Districts of our LCMS, along with a 30-minute Lutheran Hour program (normally *"This Is the Life,"* along with occasional church-season specials).

Programs are broadcast starting **at 10:00 am Central Time 9:00 am Mountain time** on the following **WDAY XTRA Channels:** Bismarck/Dickinson: KBMY Xtra Channel 17.3

We are truly grateful for the warmth of your love expressed in your thoughtful greetings and gifts given to our families at Christmas. It continues to be our joy to serve you with the precious Good News of sins forgiven through faith in Christ crucified and risen.

Pastor Wolfgram and Pastor Woodside



The Board of Elders is looking forward to meeting with the members of their group in January. You have been assigned an elder whose responsibility it is to assist Pastor Wolfgram and Pastor Woodside in caring for you. We will be offering three elder group visit evenings to present current ministry goals and opportunities and to address any questions or concerns that you may have. The meetings will be held January 10, 16, and 17 starting at 7:15. We plan to meet for less than an hour. You will receive an invitation from your elder in the coming weeks.

Shepherd of the Valley will host the Banquet at the Dream Center on Sunday, January 14. We will serve lunch from 11:45-1:00. We will also share Christ as we lead a worship service over the lunch hour for the roughly three hundred individuals as they enjoy the meal. There is a sign up sheet in the narthex for those interested in helping with this effort.



You are invited to join your brothers and sisters in Christ at Shepherd of the Valley for our annual planning voters' meeting on Sunday, January 21st. We will assess where the Lord has brought us as a congregation and discuss how we can reach even more of our neighbors with the Good News of Christ crucified and risen.

Shepherd of the Valley will offer AED training on Saturday, January 13 at 10:30 am. You are welcome to join us for this special training. There is a sign-up sheet in the narthex. Sign up today.



The Board of Stewardship is hosting a BINGO night on Friday, January 26 at 6:00 pm. The evening will start with a pot-bless meal and continue with several rounds of BINGO with fabulous prizes being offered the winners. Plan to join us for an evening of fun and fellowship.

Welcome 2024!

How did you do with your resolutions for the year 2023? About the same as for other years? Can you even remember what those resolutions were? Why do we struggle so much with resolutions? Is it because they are not realistic? Is it because we try to do it completely on our own without any outside help (even from God)? Failure is one of the biggest disappointments in life. Is it possible to start over successfully?

As we enter into this New Year we have another opportunity to start over. Having the privilege of starting over is one of the things in life that gives us hope and courage as we look to the future. As we take down our 2023 calendars and replace them with 2024 calendars we really can start over.

In Romans 12:12 (NIV) the Holy Spirit gives us some great ingredients for a really good New Year's resolution. The encouragement is to ***“be joyful in hope, patient in affliction and faithful in prayer.”*** Life would be so sweet if everyone could adopt and live out those three pieces as a New Year's resolution.

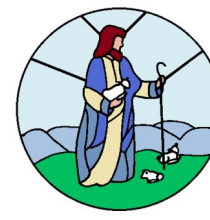
“Be joyful in hope” should be pretty easy for Christians because our hope is in Christ and ***“that hope will never disappoint us, because God has poured out His love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom He has given us.”*** (Romans 5::5 NIV)

“Be patient in affliction” can be considerably more difficult because we do not like affliction. Who of us likes to be mistreated by people who are rude, inconsiderate and downright nasty? Where can we get the strength to be patient in affliction? It takes a giant transformation to behave so nicely when afflicted? Our comfort is that the power to do that does not come from within us, but from outside of us. No one in the history of mankind had to deal with as much affliction as Jesus, our Savior! And He did it out of love for us so that we do not have to fear eternal affliction!

“Faithful in prayer” keeps us in touch with God--Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Jesus spent entire nights in prayer with His Father in heaven so that He would have the strength to carry out His mission of dying for sinners so that they might have the forgiveness of sins, life and salvation. Prayer is an excellent way to stay in touch with God and His love and power.

May God bless you and your family in this New Year of 2024!

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
		<u>6:00pm</u> Bible Study	<u>6:00pm</u> Worship			<u>9:30am</u> Take down Christmas Tree
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
<u>9:00am</u> Divine Service <u>10:30am</u> Education Hour/Soul 57		<u>2:30pm</u> Stewardship <u>6:00pm</u> Bible Study	<u>6:00pm</u> Worship <u>7:15pm</u> Elder Group Meeting	<u>10:00am</u> People Matter		<u>10:30am</u> AED Training
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
<u>9:00am</u> Divine Service <u>10:30am</u> Education Hour <u>11:00am</u> The Banquet		<u>6:00pm</u> Bible Study <u>7:15pm</u> Elder Group Meeting	<u>6:00pm</u> Worship <u>7:15pm</u> Elder Group Meeting	<u>7:30pm</u> Elders		<u>8:00am</u> Men's Network @ Messiah <u>4:30pm</u> Hang Out
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
<u>9:00am</u> Divine Service <u>10:30am</u> Voter's Planning Meeting <u>1:00pm</u> Middle School Youth		<u>6:00pm</u> Bible Study	<u>6:00pm</u> Worship		<u>6:00pm</u> Bingo and Potluck Supper	
28	29	30	31			
<u>9:00am</u> Divine Service <u>10:30am</u> Education Hour/Dennis Voss <u>1:00pm</u> Senior High Youth <u>7:00pm</u> Council		<u>6:00pm</u> Bible Study	<u>6:00pm</u> Worship			



Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church
"A church family that shares, nurtures, and lives our faith in Christ"
 December 2023, Newsletter

Thoughts on Lutheran Worship - Part II

Christ's Gifts to Man

Last month we looked at the meaning of "divine service", and the idea that when we gather together, we are doing so, not primarily to serve God, but to be served by Him. As wrong as this may sound, we recall Jesus words in Mark's Gospel that the 'Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many' (Mark 10:45). Certainly Christ's sacrifice on the cross is the ultimate example of serving His people. Winger points out that "when Christ settled his disciples' argument as to who was the greatest, he pointed to the priority of giving over receiving in the Messiah's work of salvation" (Winger, 1).

I. How Does God's Service Occur- What are the Means?

The word liturgy means "public duties", and in a broad sense it can be used to describe Christian worship in general. In a narrow sense it deals with the distribution of Christ's gifts to His Church. A gift, by its very nature, is free, and must only be received. Additionally, a gift is not a thing one earns. The Lutheran Confessions concur. "Faith is that worship which receives the benefits (gifts) that God offers: the righteousness of the law is that worship which offers God our own merits" (Apology VI 49). Again, the Augsburg Confession says that "the Church is the assembly of saints in which the gospel is taught purely and the sacraments are administered rightly" (AC VII). The gifts are Word and Sacrament. Christian worship has revolved around Word and Sacrament since the 1st century as the disciples met for the breaking of bread.

II. The Primary Gift

The gift we receive in worship is God's forgiveness. This is delivered by means of Word and Sacrament. The Word is that Gospel of the cross. As Paul says, "I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified" (1 Cor 2:2). This word which produces faith is the gift of God to us. The second is the Sacrament in which we receive Christ's true Body and Blood concerning which Christ specifically says "This is my Body which is given for you" (1 Cor 11:24) Why do we take and eat? It is for forgiveness of sins. Just as Jesus served by washing the feet of His disciples, He also washes us of our sins every time we worship, through the strengthening of our faith in Word and Sacrament.

III. The Gospel is the Heart of the Liturgy

It is this receiving from God that is at the heart of our liturgy. When one looks at the Lutheran Service Book, the Divine Service Settings center around the proclamation of the Word and the distribution of the Holy Sacrament.

The service is essentially divided into two halves. During the first half, the Service of the Word, we see a sharp focus on scripture. The Introit, the Kyrie, and the Gloria in Excelsis are all based on scripture. Then we have the lectionary readings each week, in which God's Word is publicly proclaimed, climaxing with the reading of the Gospel, the Creed, and the sermon expounding on the text (LSB, 184-193).

The second part of the Divine Service is the Service of the Sacrament, in which the Sanctus and the Lord's Prayer build up to the Words of Institution, the Agnus Dei, and finally the Distribution, in which the people are given the Body and Blood of Christ for forgiveness of sins. It is the Gospel in tangible form! The entire service, from beginning to end is about God serving us! This is not selfish, it is, in fact, God's plan of salvation. We can never save ourselves! We need Jesus to come and do the work to save us!

The next month we will look at the other side of the coin: giving thanks and praise, at which point we will conclude our study on the Divine Service.

In Christ,

Pastor Woodside