

"Wisdom Warriors mentorship program update: The Boards of Education and Stewardship have been working behind the scenes laying the foundation for our upcoming mentorship program launch, a program that pairs a registered adult mentor with a registered student at SOTV, working with parents and families to build fellowship and intergenerational relationships across our congregation. The Boards will host a 'Wisdom Warriors: Q&A' during Education hour Sunday May 12, 2024, served over a Mother's Day Brunch. Plan to attend with your questions!"



### **Wisdom Warriors (Mentoring Church Youth)**

Welcome to the Wisdom Warriors' third newsletter article! In this article, we'll cover some of our initial plans for the program.

We're excited about our mentoring program for the youth, called Wisdom Warriors. As we embark on this initiative, it's crucial to plan the steps involved to ensure its success. Here is a brief overview of our planned process:

1. Define the goals: Building on 2 Peter 3:18 (But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and til the day of Eternity. Amen.) our mission is to equip children with the whole armor of God through relationship

building through all generations.

2. Identify potential mentors: We need to find members of our church who have the skills, experience, and passion to mentor our youth effectively.

3. Match mentors and mentees: We need to match our mentors and mentees based on compatibility, shared interests, skills, and goals. This helps to build strong relationships and ensures effective mentoring.

4. Provide training and support: We will provide training and support to our mentors to ensure they feel confident and equipped to provide meaningful mentoring to our youth.

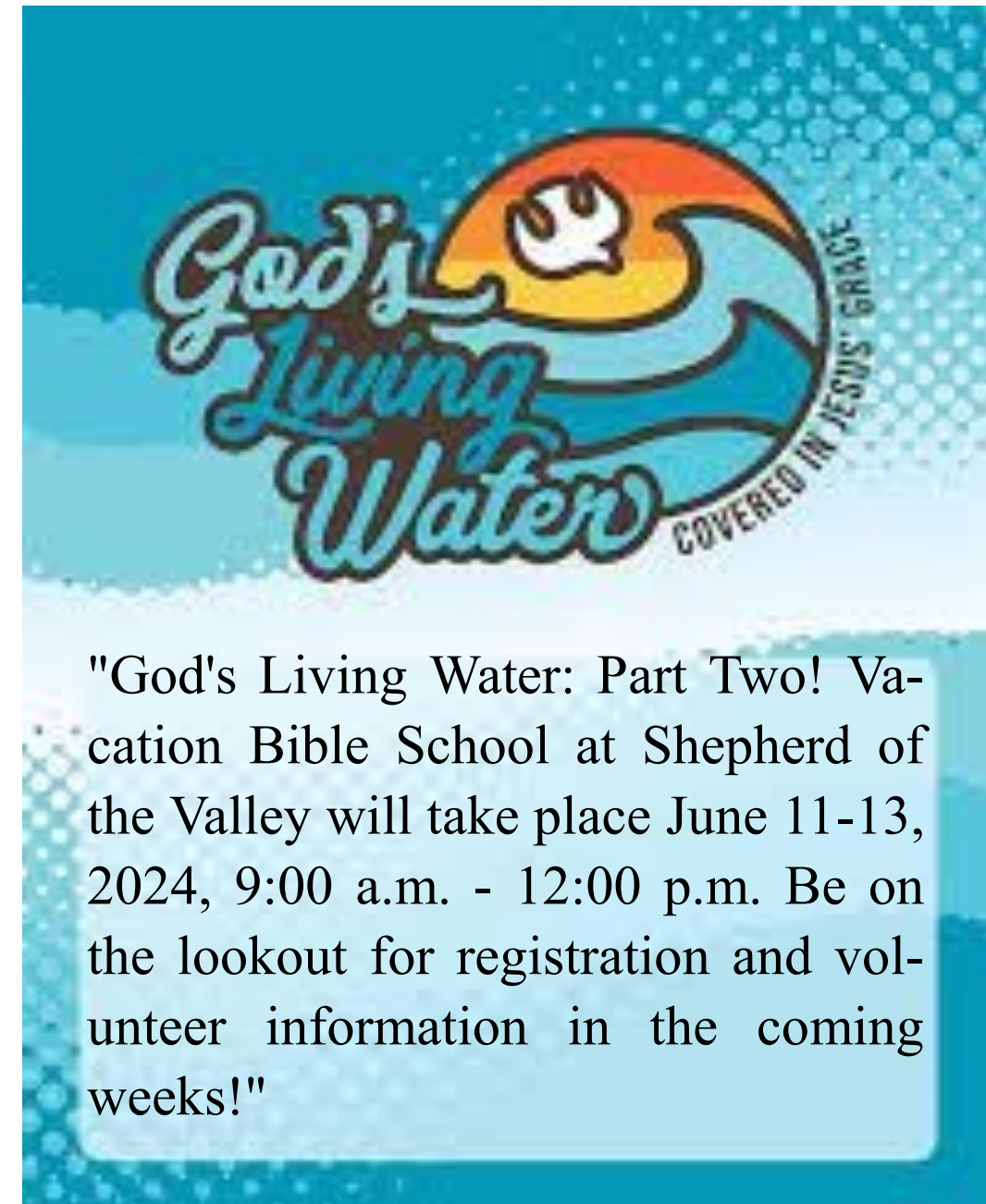
5. Monitor and evaluate: We will monitor and evaluate our mentoring program regularly to identify what's working well and what needs improvement. This feedback can help us refine our approach and make the Wisdom Warriors program even better.

We believe that these planning steps are crucial for a successful mentoring program. We're thrilled to have the opportunity to support and empower our youth through the Wisdom Warriors program, and we're grateful for your support and involvement.

Thank you from the Wisdom Warrior leaders/contacts (Michelle Dever, Sam Henke, Carrie Harling and Korri Lang) for taking the time to read this article. We hope that you are inspired to consider becoming a Wisdom Warrior and that you'll reach out to us if you have any questions or want to get involved. We also ask for your prayers as we continue to pour into the lives of these children. Please pray for this important work. If you are a parent of a Sunday School child, prayerfully consider signing up your child for the Wisdom Warriors mentoring program when sign-up becomes available. Together, we can make a meaningful impact on the lives of our young people and our church.



"The Sunday School students will be leading service on April 21, 2024 presenting 'The Six Chief Parts of the Small Catechism.'" Please plan to attend as usual to this special setting of the Divine Service. Sunday School families and students should plan to meet at church by 8:30 that morning."



"God's Living Water: Part Two! Vacation Bible School at Shepherd of the Valley will take place June 11-13, 2024, 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. Be on the lookout for registration and volunteer information in the coming weeks!"



# Happy Birthday!

Brittni W	4/1
Brad N	4/2
McKinlee H	4/6
Hunter P	4/7
Walter R	4/9
Marion M	4/10
Andrew W	4/11
Ken P	4/14
Lyric P	4/15
Micheal H	4/15
Lowell F	4/16
Joel W	4/18
Marge G	4/20
Julie L	4/22
Jim H	4/28
Kevin O	4/29



Sam N	4/1
Doug H	4/5
Joe K	4/7
Bryce O	4/8
Dorrie B	4/12
Carla U	4/13
Brent P	4/14
Cheryl P	4/17
Josh L	4/19
Dan H	4/20



Uriah & Bobbie B 4-12



## April 2024

**1-15 Dick Dever**  
**16-31 Rob Burkhardsmeier**

**Apr. 7 Madison G.**  
**Apr. 14 Mackenzie G.**  
**Apr. 21 Abby Z.**  
**Apr. 28 Olivia D.**



**HE IS RISEN – HE IS RISEN INDEED!** Of all the truths taught and believed, this is the most important one, that Jesus rose physically from the dead! “So the Jews said to Him [Jesus], ‘What sign do You show us for doing these things?’ Jesus answered them, ‘Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.’ The Jews then said, ‘It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?’ But He was speaking about the temple of His body. **When therefore He was raised from the dead, His disciples remembered that He had said this, and they believed the Scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken.**” (John 2:18-22) May we also continue to REMEMBER and BELIEVE!

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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](http://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 blessings in Christ!

-Ken Koehler / MSL North Volunteer Coordinator

### “MSL North” Programs for April 2024:

**April 7<sup>th</sup>:** **Rev. Daniel Provost**, Trinity Lutheran Church, Drayton, ND, and Zion English Lutheran Church, Grafton, ND, presents the message: “**Peace**” based on John 20:19-31. “This Is the Life” program: “**Three Days**” - The disciples' reactions and interaction in the days between Jesus' death and resurrection.

**April 14<sup>th</sup>:** **Rev. Mark Chepulis**, Our Savior Lutheran Church, Cavalier, ND, St. Paul Lutheran Church, rural St. Thomas, ND, and Redeemer Lutheran Church, Langdon, ND, presents the message: “**The Good Shepherd Laid Down His Life for You**” based on John 10:11-16. “This Is the Life” program: “**Break up**” - A divorced couple struggles with direction in their lives after meeting again.

**April 21<sup>st</sup>:** **Rev. Jim Meyer**, member of St. John Lutheran Church, Thief River Falls, MN, presents the message: “**What Kind of Shepherd Is Christ?**” based on John 10:11-18. This Is the Life” program: “**Alibi**” - A father tries to reconnect with his estranged son after the death of his mother.

**April 28<sup>th</sup>:** **Rev. Clark Jahnke**, St. Andrew Lutheran Church, West Fargo, ND, presents the message: “**Where is Jesus?**” based on Acts 8:26-40. “This Is the Life” program: “**No Place to Hide**” - A pastor, who has to face the death of his wife, cannot find comfort.



Again in Ephesians 1 we read: “<sup>11</sup> **In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been *predestined* according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will,**” (Eph 1: 11, ESV)

- Look at the words here: foreknew . . . predestined . . . called . . . justified . . . glorified . . . the counsel of His will.

These passages are clearly intended to provide great comfort. You should not doubt your salvation, for you were predestined, called, justified, and glorified by God in Christ Jesus. God will not strip you of your inheritance in Christ, and “**He who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.**” (Phil 1: 6b, ESV) There is no condemnation in Christ (Rom 8:1).

Now there are two ways of falling off this horse.

Error #1: SIN FREELY!!!! This is the logic: Since I am elect and predestined, I can live a sinful, licentious life with no eternal consequences! I am untouchable! As the marquee in front of the heterodox ELCA congregation, Good Shepherd said recently “God is forgiving. EAT THE APPLES!” To take this view is perilous to one’s soul. Justifying an openly, brazen, sinful lifestyle is the opposite of repentance. If one concludes that he/she can live any sinful lifestyle they please, it is difficult to see that that person’s conscience hasn’t been so seared and calloused that he/she would not even seek or desire forgiveness. Not that we are saved by works or anything we do, however, one can harden one’s own heart to the point that faith is destroyed and the Holy Spirit is driven out.

Error #2: Since God predestines some to salvation, he must destine others for damnation. How do I know which I am? This can lead one either to despair or to brazen sin as discussed above (especially if the individual concludes that it no longer matters what he does since God already decided his fate.)

This is also false. God does not predestine to hell. What do we read in 2 Peter? “<sup>9</sup> **The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you,<sup>[a]</sup> not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.**” (2 Pet 3:9, ESV) God does not will anyone to perish. However, some will reject the Gospel. Additionally, it is possible that one may believe the Gospel for a time, and be saved, only to reject it later on, thus losing salvation (see the parable of the Sower.)

### Back to Paradox

So here is the question: how is it possible that both of the following could be true at the same time?

1. God’s elect children are predestined from the foundation of the world.
2. Nevertheless, it is still possible to fall from the faith.

This is the kind of paradox that Gene Veith is talking about in the quote at the beginning of this paper. If we declare this impossible, we have to also declare the incarnation, the Trinity and the Lord’s Supper to be impossible. There is a point at which we, as Christians must simply submit to scripture. What does it say? Okay then, God has revealed this . . . so this is where I stand. Just because I cannot grasp it with my fallen human reason does not mean it is untrue. Just because a dog cannot grasp astrophysics (and maybe neither can I) doesn’t make it untrue. Maybe my brain isn’t built to understand the mysteries of destiny and freewill. As Luther put it: <sup>26</sup> *And of this we should not judge according to our reason, nor according to the Law or from any external appearance. Neither should we attempt to investigate the secret, concealed abyss of divine predestination, but should give heed to the revealed will of God.* <sup>[1]</sup>

Our reason is fallen, so we do not put even human reason above scripture. Reason submits to scripture. We submit to the Word of God.

### Take Comfort

Do not let this cause you to fear losing your salvation. It is, in many ways, wrapped up in the distinction between Law and Gospel. The Law reminds us not to be comfortable in our sin. Thus, there are strong warnings about those who have gone astray, ultimately abandoning the faith and rejecting Christ. On the other hand, if you are tormented and perplexed by sin and temptation, you are to be pointed to the Gospel. You are forgiven in Christ. You are a new creation. And you have been predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son (Rom 8). The fact is . . . if you are worried that you have lost the Holy Spirit, that would indicate that you have not, for if you had you wouldn’t care.

Pastor Woodside

## A FEW NEW ADDITIONS

You might have noticed a few additions around Shepherd of the Valley. Jackie Jansen, a member at Messiah Lutheran Church in Mandan crafted our new paraments for Lent, Easter, Christmas, and the green non-festival half of the church year. We are grateful to the members of the altar guild who helped with the design phase of these beautiful new altar and pulpit cloths. Funds from the Marilyn Brandner Memorial were used to pay for the altar cloths. We are also grateful to Larry and Denise Walker for their donation to help cover costs for this project.

We have also acquired some new cameras. The cameras that were installed in the back of the sanctuary have greatly increased our ability to live-stream and record our services. Our thanks to Kari Kramer for directing moneys from the Art and Shirley Wohl Memorial to be used for this purchase. A Scheels Charitable gift given in behalf of Becky Gildea also helped to supplement the purchase of the cameras.

We have also installed new security cameras on the exterior of the church building to keep a watchful eye in all directions around our property. We are grateful to the Lord for His ongoing providing for our physical and spiritual needs as we celebrate and proclaim Christ crucified and risen for our sins.



Swivel Optical Zoom Camera



Paraments for Christmas season

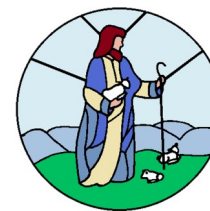


Green Paraments for Non-festival half of the church year.



Exterior Security Camera

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
		<u>10:00am</u> Bible Study	<u>6:00pm</u> Worship			
		<u>6:00pm</u> Bible Study				
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
<u>9:00am</u> Divine Service		<u>10:00am</u> Bible Study	<u>6:00pm</u> Worship	<u>10:00am</u> People Matter		<u>8:30am</u> Education
<u>10:30am</u> Education Hour		<u>2:00pm</u> Stewardship				<u>10:00am</u> Trustee's
		<u>4:30pm</u> Evangelism				
		<u>5:00pm</u> Human Care				
		<u>6:00pm</u> Bible Study				
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
<u>9:00am</u> Divine Service		<u>10:00am</u> Bible Study	<u>6:00pm</u> Worship	<u>7:30pm</u> Elders	<u>6:00pm</u> Bean Bag Toss	<u>8:00am</u> Men's Network
<u>10:30am</u> Education Hour		<u>6:00pm</u> Bible Study			<u>Indoor Picnic</u>	<u>4:30pm</u> Hang Out
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
<u>9:00am</u> Divine Service		<u>10:00am</u> Bible Study	<u>6:00pm</u> Worship			
<u>10:30am</u> Education Hour		<u>6:00pm</u> Bible Study				
<u>1:00pm</u> Middle School Youth						
28	29	30				
<u>9:00am</u> Divine Service		<u>10:00am</u> Bible Study				
<u>10:30am</u> Education Hour		<u>6:00pm</u> Bible Study				
<u>1:00pm</u> Senior High Youth						
<u>3:00pm</u> MVCO Concert						
<u>7:00pm</u> Council						



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

April 2024, Newsletter

### Is Once Saved/Always Saved True?

In his book *The Spirituality of the Cross*, Gene Veith writes that "the distinctive characteristic of Lutheran theology is its affirmation of paradox." What does this mean? Our theology is fundamentally biblical. It is based on the clear teaching of scripture wherever it may lead. Veith writes, "Luther developed his theology in Bible commentaries, following the contours of scripture wherever they led and developing its most profound polarities: law and gospel; Christ is both true god and true man; the Christian is simultaneously saint and sinner; justification by faith and baptismal regeneration; Holy Communion is the real presence of Christ in material bread and wine." (Veith, 115)

Why do we believe the apparent paradox that Jesus is both fully God and thus infinite, and also fully man? Why do we believe in the Trinity? There we understand from scripture that although there is only one God, he is revealed in three persons. So why do I bring this up? When we're dealing with the question of whether one can lose his salvation it delves into the issue of election or predestination.

### Losing Salvation

To begin with, what is the scriptural basis for the idea that one can lose his or her salvation?

1. In Hebrews 6 we read **"4 For it is impossible, in the case of those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, and have shared in the Holy Spirit, 5 and have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the age to come, 6 and then have fallen away, to restore them again to repentance, since they are crucifying once again the Son of God to their own harm and holding him up to contempt."**

- If we believe the teaching once saved/always saved, how do we reconcile this passage? Here we have a person who has "shared in the Holy Spirit" and "tasted the heavenly gift" (Likely referring to The Lord's Supper). What is this describing but a saved believer in Christ?

2. We also read in the Psalms where David writes:

**"Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right<sup>[bl]</sup> spirit within me. 11 Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me. 12 Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit."**

- If we believe in once saved/always saved, then how can we explain the idea of having the Holy Spirit, and then losing Him?

3. We also see the example of the Parable of the Sower in which Jesus speaks of seed which falls on **"rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and immediately they sprang up, since they had no depth of soil, 6 but when the sun rose they were scorched. And since they had no root, they withered away. 7 Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them."** (Matt 13:5-7, ESV)

- Are we to consider that the rocky soil and the thorny ground people were never saved to begin with?

4. In Baptism we understand that the child is now a saved child of God. However, from experience we know of people who, although baptized, have fallen away from the faith . . . are we to say that this person, once saved ---cannot lose salvation?

Okay, so I realize that this is troubling. Obviously, if you look just at these verses, it could lead to despair and uncertainty. "What if I have lost my salvation?" "What if I do?" This is where the doctrine of election comes in.

### Predestination

In Romans 8 Paul writes: **29 For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. 30 And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.** (Rom 8:29-30, ESV)