

# PASTOR JANNEKE'S PAGE

FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH, SIOUX FALLS, SD

JULY 24 & 25, 2016

## SOAK UP THE PSALMS!

When was the last time you meditated on a Psalm? This weekend, the theme of our worship revolves around the gift of prayer. The Psalms are a gift from God's people who have gone before us, a prayer book and song book, just as relevant in 1000 B.C. as in 2016 A.D. My favorite is **Psalm 28**. I've been able to share it with some of you in your hospital room or across your kitchen table. If you haven't reflected on a Psalm lately, turn to Psalm 28 and see David's confidence in the Lord, despite his troubled circumstances. As you read, look for the five pictures that David paints of the Lord's care for us.

I would also encourage you to *memorize* a *Psalm* – a word from the Lord that you can use to speak with Him in prayer, to give you courage, and to change your perspective or attitude. Start with **Psalm 100** – it's just 5 short, but powerful, verses!

A final note on reading the Psalms: aside from the historical narratives of Israel and the patriarchs, much of the Old Testament is written in "sound bites." If you find yourself reading a Psalm and you don't understand or relate to some of the verses at first, that's okay! Start by focusing on what *does* make sense to you and what *does* apply to your life in Christ. The Psalmists set the history of God's people to music. Many of them also share very personal challenges that they faced. Yet the Lord who carried God's Old Testament people is the same Lord who carries us, the sheep of His pasture.

## A SHEPHERD'S VBS

Without a doubt, the most famous Psalm is the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm. Many of you probably have it memorized, likely in the King James Version of Scripture. We tend to associate this beautiful passage with the end of life and with funerals. However, the Lord shepherds *all* His people—young and old. **This week, our young people will get to know the message of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm through our "Barnyard Roundup" Vacation Bible School.** The theme verses for each evening, drawn from Psalm 23, focus on Jesus' care for us, Jesus' provision for us, Jesus leading us, Jesus' forgiveness for us, and Jesus' salvation for us. If you have not done so already, please visit our VBS information table, either to register your children or to look for ways that you can serve the Lord by serving His lambs this week! And please make a point to invite friends or neighbors to join you this week for VBS!

## "STATE OF THE CHURCH"

You can't possibly miss the fact that we are in the thick of election season in our country! One political party has taken its turn to rally its supporters and propose a vision for the nation, and now the opposing party is about to do the same. Each candidate for elected office makes a case for his or her view of the state of the nation, the state of the state, or the state of the community.

**This weekend, I would like to share a brief "State of the Church" report during our Voter's Meeting. The meeting will be held at 10:15 a.m. this Sunday in our Christian Life Center (gym).**

My focus will be on the state of Faith Lutheran Church in particular, rather than on the state of the Church in general ... As with a "State of the Union" or similar address, I will focus upon both strengths that need to be affirmed, and also growth areas that need to be addressed.

As we prepare for the transition of welcoming our new Senior Pastor and his family, this is also a good time to take stock of where we are currently as a congregation and where we are headed. This is a good time to re-emphasize some of the points that one of our elders, Mark List, shared several weeks ago in Bible study about receiving Pastor Aker and his family and supporting his ministry among us.

This summer, I've been encouraging our elected leaders to consider their *goals* for the coming months or years. I'm of the opinion that each board or committee of the congregation should have several specific, achievable goals to be working toward. Our members have also shared about their hopes and goals for the congregation in the past several years. In 2013, over 100 members participated in a series of in-home visits called "Forward In Faith." I tracked all of the comments that were made at these visits and recently shared them again with our elected leaders. Once again last year, over 100 of Faith's members submitted a Congregational Self-Study Survey. I've also encouraged Faith's leaders to review your comments and ideas on the survey for assistance with developing goals for their areas of service.

Finally, please consider what *your* goals are as a member of this community of believers. How will *you* seek to know Christ better, to grow in receiving His Word and gracious gifts, and to show His love and care for others during this next year?

"SERVE THE LORD WITH GLADNESS!" (Ps. 100:2)

PEACE IN CHRIST,

PASTOR KORY JANNEKE