



# Hope Ev. Lutheran Church

5218 Neosho St, St. Louis, MO 63109 • 314-352-0014

[www.hopelutheranstl.org](http://www.hopelutheranstl.org)



## ✠ THE HOPE LUTHERAN ✠

Vol. 100, No. 6

Share life and hope in our Savior Jesus.

August 2023

### Gospel Identity

From our earliest days on God's good earth, we wrestle with the question, "Who am I?" We learn to find our identity in the families of our birth. We strive to express who we are as we learn to walk and talk, and then more so as we mature through our teen years. When we exit our years of classroom learning, after high school or college, we again tackle the matters of "Who am I?" as we begin our own families and careers. These are healthy and natural processes.

Our culture also wrestles with questions of "identity," and in ways that are *not* so healthy or natural. For several decades, we have been taught and persuaded to believe that we human beings are "sexual beings." That is, we are conditioned to believe—by education, by Madison Avenue, by Hollywood—that we find our true identity and meaning in life by means of sexual activities and "fulfillment." This has led to the "sexual revolution" of the 1960s, to the rise of "same-sex" advocacy, and to the current debates over "gender identity."

When it comes to "identity," however, we Christians do best to turn to God's Word and discover—or rediscover—what our gracious God says about *who we truly are*, both as individual human beings and as His holy people. When we

wrestle with questions of "Who am I?" we find our truest identity and our surest meaning for all of life in the identities that our gracious Lord and Savior gives as His gifts.



**WALK THEN,  
AS CHILDREN  
OF LIGHT,  
FOR THE FRUIT  
OF THE  
LIGHT IS IN  
GOODNESS  
AND JUSTICE  
AND TRUTH**

Let's start at the beginning. In Genesis, God made Adam and Eve—and thus all human beings—in His image, after His likeness. "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them" (Genesis 1:27). Couple this with what the *Small Catechism* confesses: "I believe that God has made me and all creatures; that He has given me my body and soul, eyes, ears, and all my members, my reason and all my senses, and still takes care of them" (Creed, First Article).

God makes each of us who we are, with all the requisite body parts, physical characteristics, and personality traits that He wants us to have. We can and should receive them as gifts from our loving heavenly Father.

When it comes to things sexual—whether a person is male or female or the purpose of sexual activity—these also are gifts from God. God even gives the genuine and ultimate purpose for sexual activity when He says, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth" (Genesis 1:28). Sexual activity is not

merely for individual “pleasure” or “fulfillment,” as our culture trumpets; it is also—and chiefly—for procreation. This is why God wants it to be saved for the one-flesh union of marriage between a man and a woman, a husband and a wife, a father and a mother.

Of course, the fall into sin has corrupted and spoiled God’s good design. We see the fruits of the fall in the false and faulty teachings of “sexual identity,” “same-sex unions,” and “gender identity.” Sin takes God’s good design and curves it in on the self of the fallen human being. Martin Luther famously said that sin is being “curved in on self” (Latin: *incurvatus se*).

This is why we must hold on to the new identity that God gives us through His Son Jesus Christ. In Jesus we see the perfect human being. He does not curve God’s good design in on Himself, but He uses His identity to love and serve us fallen creatures.

*“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.... For our sake he [the Father] made him [the Son] to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God”* (2 Corinthians 5:17, 21). Our new “Gospel identity” is that we *are* “the righteousness of God.” Now, by the mercies of God, we can present our bodies as living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God, which is our spiritual worship (see Romans 12:1).

In Romans 12:2, St. Paul urges us to be different from the sin-infected, self-pleasing world around us: *“Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.”* Yes, we Christians—you and I—are called to be different and help other people be different from the mistaken notions of “identity” all around us.

St. Peter also strikes the note of identity as he speaks of the people of God, the whole Church. *“You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light”* (1 Peter 2:9).

Who are you? A person, either male or female, created by God and made righteous by His Son. You are also part of God’s holy people, belonging to Him, not only in your soul, but also in your body and what you do with your body. This is your true and genuine identity. Because of this new “Gospel identity,” each of us individually and all of us together as His Church have the joyous task of helping others around us receive and rejoice in their God-given identity.

✠ Pastor Randy Asbury

email: [rasbury@hopelutheranstl.org](mailto:rasbury@hopelutheranstl.org)

Hope’s Website: <http://www.hopelutheranstl.org>

On Facebook: [www.facebook.com/hopelutheranstl](http://www.facebook.com/hopelutheranstl)

### Identity, Security, and Meaning

“That we need to put our trust in someone or something outside ourselves should immediately tell us something about who and what we are—and are not. That someone or something else must give our lives foundation and framework suggests that we are not in ultimate control of our own lives. Deny that as we may, we always come back to putting our trust in someone or something, for we cannot exist without a sense of identity, a sense of security, and a sense of meaning. We must have a reliable and dependable source of identity, security, and meaning—or die....

“God provides all three. He has created us as His children; that is who we are. He is our primary and ultimate source of identity, security, and meaning. He has placed us in relationships with others that also identify us as His servants and theirs. These relationships of service are secondary sources of identity, security, and meaning.

“God dotes on us as His children and is determined to preserve and protect us. He has shaped us in His image and commissioned us to carry out a host of tasks for Him, as instruments of His loving care of His creation. Luther remarked that we are to trust only God. From him we expect good things, for he gives us all that we need for this body and life as well as for eternal life.” (Robert Kolb, *Teaching God’s Children His Teaching*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition [Concordia Seminary Press, 2012], 38.)

## Notes from the Kantor

### Hymn Tunes, Culture, and Divine Service Music

This summer I've had the opportunity to read a few books that I've picked up over the past year. One of them was a short new book by Daniel Zager, "Lutheran Music and Meaning". While this is an oversimplification of the concept, Zager points out the connection between hymn tunes, their texts, and how those tunes are used within the Divine Service. He writes that hymn tunes often have a strong connection to certain texts and seasons of the church year. Try singing "Away in a Manger" (LSB 364/365) to the tune of "Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise" (LSB 802)! It works...but it's uncomfortable and changes the aesthetic of both text and tune. Zager argues that text + tune = meaning. A hymn shouldn't be judged solely on the merits of its text. A hymn tune is not neutral. He argues that our classic Lutheran (even generally Christian) hymnody should not be confused with popular song. He uses the following two examples. While not included in *Lutheran Service Book*, some hymns are paired with the tune for "Danny Boy". The song "Danny Boy" is still well known in the context of our popular culture, and not always in a sacred nature. It is hard to disassociate a wonderful hymn text

pointing to Christ from a tune describing a dead lover's grave. Not to mention the tune has a wide range of notes which is challenging for the average singer to navigate. It is just not the ideal combination. Meanwhile, the hymn tune THAXTED (LSB 941) is an English folk song used by Gustav Holst in his epic symphonic work "The Planets". Used in the Jupiter movement, the tune symbolizes joy and jollity (Jupiter, the bringer of jollity). However, it has no strong associations in our popular culture and is more manageable for the singer in the pew. Zager goes on to discuss the use of instrumental music within the Divine Service and how hymn tune-based music can still point the listener to Christ simply by its association with a specific text. I try to incorporate this ideal from the organ bench each week. If you listen carefully, you will notice that most of the service music (prelude, postlude, etc.) is based on the hymn tunes for that service. The tunes, combined with the composer's setting, can set the mood. Often its softer or lighter during the prelude and joyful and energetic at the postlude. Some interesting things to ponder the next time you ponder such things!

Together in Christ,  
Kantor Janssen

### Coming Soon...Choir Resumes!

#### *Schola Cantorum*

Hope's adult choir is made up of singers in high school and up. They sing 2-3 times per month and on feast and festival days. Rehearsals are held weekly on Sundays following Bible Study for about an hour.

#### *Kantorei*

A Lutheran, liturgical community-based children's choir for St. Louis! One of the hallmarks of the Kantorei is its outreach into our community for membership and incorporating children from Hope and the St. Louis area into the rich liturgical life of our congregation. The Kantorei sings approximately one Sunday per month and for evening services to celebrate Epiphany and Ascension. Rehearsals are held on Wednesdays from 4:00-5:30.

*Come and join!*

### Music in a Sacred Space 2023-2024

Friday, October 20  
7:00 PM

Sing Boldy: Music Tour  
St. John-Seward, NE  
Paul Soulek, director

Sunday, January 21  
3:00 PM

Organ Vespers  
for the Transfiguration  
Justin Knabach, organist

Sunday, March 17  
3:00 PM

Choir Concert  
St. Louis Metro Singers  
Shawn Portell, director

Sunday, April 14  
3:00 PM

Hymn Festival  
Sam Eatherton,  
organist & composer

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# Ministry Expansion Campaign

It is time. The plans for our basement renovation, giving us much improved classroom and fellowship spaces, continue quickly ahead. Over the past months the Building Committee, tasked to oversee the funding of the project, has brought forward a proposal to engage Lutheran Church Extension Fund in a Ministry Expansion Campaign. The Church Council approved that proposal. It is time.

Over the coming weeks the Executive Team and Campaign Team will be formed, and initial work will begin. The goal is to complete the campaign this fall, prior to Thanksgiving. That means we have work to do.

What does a campaign look like? The campaign will have three phases: Inform, Inspire, and Commitment.

During the Inform Phase we make sure everyone connected to Hope has the information they need to understand the details of the ministry expansion project we are undertaking. FAQs with costs, timelines, and detailed breakdowns of the projects, as well as giving options, and any other relevant information will be provided. The campaign team will also offer forums to discuss the project and answer any questions. The goal is to remove any technical concerns upfront so that we can set the details aside and talk about the most needful things, the ministry impacts this project will have in the life of our congregation.

During the Inspire Phase we focus on the ministry opportunities this project provides. We will endeavor to cultivate and grow our members in mature giving, which is always motivated by the grace and mercy of Christ. A sermon series will be preached, Bible studies on stewardship and mission will be taught; all to allow the voice of Jesus to speak. Every member will be invited into the conversation and invited to be a part of what God is doing at Hope.

During the Commitment Phase we invite our members to consider how they financially support the opportunity based on the blessings God has bestowed upon them. There will be a commitment Sunday and opportunity to celebrate as a congregation. A Voters Assembly a week or two afterward will solidify the commitment total and approve the allocation of the resources toward the campaign project.

Exciting. There is much to be done, but great blessings are already provided. We have been blessed by our renovated sanctuary and organ. The basement will be another step in improving our space to ensure our current members and those yet to join us have improved space to learn the Word of God and share in our life together. Exciting. We know the Lord will provide beyond our need.

Keep an eye out for more detailed information in the coming weeks. Please step-up if you are asked to serve on a committee or team. There is much to be done. Please begin to pray about how the Lord has blessed you and how you might respond to the call of sacrificial giving. The project will require each of us to do our part.

We promise open and transparent communication throughout the process, including when the time comes to determine the final scope of the project and the funding necessary. We are blessed to be members of Hope, blessed by those who came before us and gave of themselves for the space we enjoy, and blessed to be a part of providing something today that will live long into the future.

Thank you for your support.

The Building Committee,

Rev. Randy Asbury,  
Diana Brown,  
Bart Day,  
Kevin Robson,  
Carol Spyers

## 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.

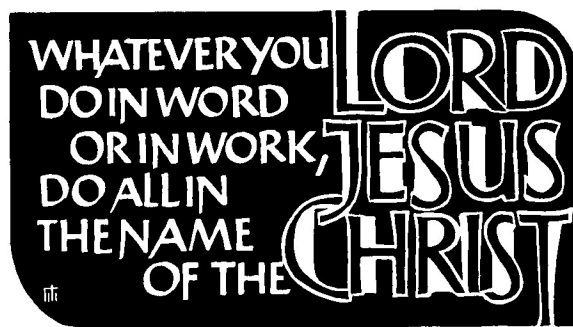
All that we have and all that we are ought to be pressed into service for the church, the family and society. If we were to sell all we have and give only to one, the other two would be neglected, and we would falter in fulfilling our duties.

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.

- LCMS Stewardship Ministry  
[lcms.org/stewardship](https://lcms.org/stewardship)

## LCMS Stewardship Ministry Newsletter article - August 2023

### Define Your Life by How You Give

Winston Churchill reportedly said that "we make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give." According to Churchill, our lives are defined not by what we have gotten, but by what we give away.

Our Lord's life is defined in this way. He gave completely of Himself for us. He became man for us. He taught the truth of God's Word. He healed those with many and various diseases. He died the death that we deserved for our sins. He gave of Himself in order to save us from sin, death and hell. And so it is that by giving completely of Himself, He got for Himself us, making us citizens of His eternal kingdom by grace.

As it was for Jesus, so it also is for us. We get more from giving than we do from simply getting. For giving softens our hearts and frees us from the grip which the worries of this world and making a living have on us. For when we are singularly focused on making a living, we are singularly

focused on what we get. That mindset begins to bleed into all areas of our lives — our relationships with friends and family, with neighbors and coworkers, and with the Lord. It shifts our focus

from asking the question, "How can I be a friend, family member, neighbor and servant to others," to asking the question, "What have they done for me lately?" We become more selfish instead of selfless.

But when we give, we do not have less, we do not become less; rather, we have more and become more. When we give, we join in the bond of friendship and family, the bond of service to those around us out of love for them. And love is the fulfillment of the Law. It is the

nature of God Himself, for God is Love. Thus, we are participating in the divine nature. As Jesus said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35).

- LCMS Stewardship Ministry  
[lcms.org/stewardship](https://lcms.org/stewardship)



*“Therefore everything in this Christian community is so ordered that everyone may daily obtain full forgiveness of sins through the Word and [Sacraments] appointed to comfort and encourage our consciences as long as we live on earth”* (Large Catechism, II:55). Here’s what’s coming up in the Divine Service for August as we continue to learn and live the Christian faith and life.

Date	Day in Church Year	Gospel Reading	Gospel Focus (Theme of the Day)
August 6	<b>Ninth Sunday after Trinity</b>	Luke 16:1-9	<b>The Wise Steward</b> – The unjust manager gives us a lesson in wisdom. Christians are to be wise in their dealings in the world and not succumb to the world’s pressures and delights. We are called to use everything in life for Christ’s glory.
August 13	<b>Tenth Sunday after Trinity</b>	Luke 19:41-48	<b>The Lord and His People</b> – Jerusalem was blind to God’s gracious visitation in Jesus the Christ. Are we blind to God coming to visit us in His Word and Sacraments? Jesus wants His people to be attentive to His gracious presence.
August 20	<b>Eleventh Sunday after Trinity</b>	Luke 18:9-14	<b>The Pharisee and the Tax Collector</b> – The Pharisee worshiped himself, but the Tax Collector humbly confessed his sinful state. This is true godliness! God delights in people who tell the truth of their sin and live in His forgiveness.
August 27	<b>Twelfth Sunday after Trinity</b>	Mark 7:31-37	<b>The Healing of the Sick</b> – The Lord Jesus restores His good creation by opening our hearts to hear His Word and loosing our mouths to praise and confess Him. Thus healed, we confess not only Jesus’ forgiveness but also His creation.

### MR. & MRS. CLUB

On Wednesday, July 26, about 18 of us from our group met in the church auditorium at Hope Church. We brought our brown bag lunches to enjoy while we visited with everyone there. A great time was had by all and it was good to see each other again, since it had been at least 6 months since we had seen some of our members. Some of us see each other every Sunday, but quite a few from our group worship elsewhere and we don’t get to see them.

Hope everyone has a good rest of the summer—keep cool and stay well. See you at church!!

### PRO-LIFE INFORMATION

The recent Coalition Life Gala shared information about its work of helping mothers and babies. A good portion of the work is having sidewalk counselors outside abortion clinics to offer help to mothers. Through the help they offer, many abortion-minded women change their minds and save their babies' lives. Their work has expanded beyond the St. Louis area to Carbondale and Chicago as well as Kansas City. The featured speaker was Mark Houck from Pennsylvania who shared his story about his home being raided by an FBI SWAT team and his arrest. His experience as a pro-life sidewalk counselor and standing for life was

very inspiring.

Thrive Parent University continues to be held every Thursday night at Hope. There is a Bible lesson by Pastor Asbury and then a parenting lesson by a Thrive staff member. Dinner is provided several times a month by members of Hope and Ascension Lutheran. To volunteer with the Hope group on the second Thursday of the month, please contact Judy Maichel.

The Lutherans For Life National Conference is scheduled for October 11-13, in Erlanger, Kentucky, just outside of Cincinnati. In addition to the wonderful speakers, there will be opportunities to volunteer at Care Net Pregnancy Services and to visit the Creation Museum and Ark Encounter. More information and registration details can be found at - <https://lutheransforlife.org/conference/>

#### **SALEM LUTHERAN NOW HIRING**

Salem Lutheran School, located at 5025 Lakewood Ave., Affton, MO 63123, is seeking individuals to fill some vacant positions: for full description see flyer on bulletin board at Brannon Street entrance:

**Cafeteria Manager** - Duties of the position include planning a monthly menu, dealing effectively with food and supply vendors, food preparation, student counts, and meeting the kitchen budget. Contact Principal Matthew Foster at [matthewfoster@slcas.org](mailto:matthewfoster@slcas.org).

**Marketing and Enrollment Manager**- Seeks to market Salem Lutheran School by promoting the school through marketing and social media, directs the admissions process from the point of inquiry through enrollment, and works to secure retention of current families.. 15-18 hours per week. Contact Principal Matthew Foster at [matthewfoster@slcas.org](mailto:matthewfoster@slcas.org).

**Preschool Before and Aftercare Staff** - Supervise students during snack, homework, and playtime before and/or after school. Perfect for college students! Hours are 6:15 - 8:15 a.m. and/or 3 - 6 p.m. Contact Early Childhood Director Marie Wilson-Fluegge at [mariewilson@slcas.org](mailto:mariewilson@slcas.org).

**Preschool Assistants** - Preschool Assistants are responsible for helping our Lead Teachers with their lessons, assigned tasks, and classroom management. Hours are 8 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. If interested, please contact Early Childhood Director Marie Wilson-Fluegge at [mariewilson@slcas.org](mailto:mariewilson@slcas.org).

#### **LUTHERAN PRAYER BREAKFAST**

The Lutheran Prayer Breakfast will be held Wednesday, November 8, 2023. Registration and Fellowship (7-8am) with Breakfast & Program (8-9:30 am). Reserve your space today: [Concordiasem.regfox.com/lutheran-prayer-breakfast](https://Concordiasem.regfox.com/lutheran-prayer-breakfast). For more information contact Kim Braddy: 314-505-7362 or [braddyk@csel.edu](mailto:braddyk@csel.edu).

**Rev. Tim Carter**, author of *The Executioner's Redemption*, is the featured speaker. Come early and enjoy the expanded time for fellowship before the program begins.

Before attending Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Tim Carter retired from a 21-year career with the Texas Department of Criminal Justice as a death row prison captain. A Seminary professor connected Carter with Concordia Publishing House upon learning that Carter came to faith in the middle of that violent first career that included participating in more than 150 inmate executions. The resulting book, *The Executioner's Redemption*, has led Carter to serve as consultant to many prison ministries. His presentation details his journey from executioner to pastor.

Carter was born and raised in Houston, Texas. He received his undergraduate degree in Criminal Justice from Sam Houston State University, where he met his wife, Jill. The couple has been married for 31 years. They have two children and three grandchildren.

Carter served as pastor at Salem Lutheran Church in Tomball, Texas, for nine years, and is currently in his second year as a pastor at St. Peter's Lutheran Church in Columbus, Ind.



Phone: 314-352-0014

# August 2023

[www.hopelutheranstl.org](http://www.hopelutheranstl.org)

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>Elder:</b> 6 – Scot Kinnaman 13 – Jim Frost 20 – Scot Kinnaman 27 – Jim Frost	<b>Altar Guild:</b> 6 Spyers/Truebe 13 Asbury/Bergdolt 20 Brown/Patton 27 Keller/Janssen	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>  6:00 ThriVe Parent University	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b> <i>Pastor's day off</i>
<b>6</b> <u>Trinity 9</u> 9:00 Divine Service 10:30 Bible Class/Summer Sunday School	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>  6:00 ThriVe Parent University	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b> <i>Pastor's day off</i>
<b>13</b> <u>Trinity 10</u> 9:00 Divine Service 10:30 Bible Class/Summer Sunday School	<b>14</b>  7:00 Board of Elders	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>  6:00 ThriVe Parent University	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b> <i>Pastor's day off</i>
<b>20</b> <u>Trinity 11</u> 9:00 Divine Service 10:30 Bible Class	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>  6:00 ThriVe Parent University	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b> <i>Pastor's day off</i>
<b>27</b> <u>Trinity 12</u> 9:00 Divine Service 10:30 Bible Class	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>  6:00 ThriVe Parent University		