

**PEACE
LUTHERAN
CHURCH**

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SELAH, WA 98942
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**Pastor
Mark Griesse**

Office Hours
9:00-12:00

Mon. & Thu. @ Peace

Tue. & Wed. @
Bethlehem

Afternoons by Appointment

**Secretary
Tammy Peterson**

9:00-1:00
Mon-Fri

Sunday Worship
9:00 a.m.

**Sunday Adult
Bible Class**
(on summer break)

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peacelutheran-
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Messenger of Peace

Dear Members and Friends,

For the next ten months I will be sharing a sermon series given by the sainted Rev. Herbert E. Hoefer, STM, EdD, professor of theology, missions chair, Concordia University, Portland, Oregon. It will be a good time to get out the catechism and reflect on the Ten Commandments.

Make God Your Model

Exodus 20:3

Before we start on the Commandments themselves, however, we should reflect on why they were given. The Israelites had been slaves in Egypt for 430 years. Finally, through a burning bush on "the mountain of God" (Ex 3:1), where Moses was herding sheep, God called him to lead Israel to the Promised Land.

After nine plagues and then the death of the oldest male child in each Egyptian household, Pharaoh permitted the Israelites to leave. But then he changed his mind and chased them to the Red Sea, where God prepared safe passage for the Israelites but allowed the sea to swallow Pharaoh's entire army. Moses led the people back to "the mountain of God" (Ex 18:5), Mount Sinai, and there God gave him the two tablets of stone on which the Ten Commandments were engraved. In this way, God made a covenant with Israel. He said, "I will take you to be my people, and I will be your God" (Ex 6:7).

The real event of Sinai, therefore, was the establishment of this covenant. God promised he would care for his people, whom he had brought out of slavery in Egypt, so they could be his special people. The Ten Commandments became part of the laws that indicated how God expected his people to live. Yet, as someone has pointed out, these are the Ten *Commandments*, not the Ten *Suggestions*.

Luther begins each of his explanations to the Commandments with these words: "We should fear and love God so that we . . ." If we fear and love God, we will obey him.

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God said to Israel, "I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery" (v 2). He says to you and to me: "I am the Lord your God, who loved you so much that I sent my one and only Son. I am the Lord your God, who loves you so much that I went to the cross to pay the price for your sins. I love you so much I make you mine at your Baptism, fill you with spiritual gifts, come to you often in Word and Sacrament, and keep you in the faith unto life everlasting."

What is your response? Fear, love, and trust above all things? Do you hear and obey the First Commandment, "Have no other gods before me"? In India, different deities fulfill different purposes. If you wish to be artistic, you worship the goddess Saraswati. If you wish to succeed in business, you become a devotee of the god Ganesh. Criminals, typically, worship the black goddess of death, Kali, and warriors worship the fierce god of combat, Skanda. We worship gods like ourselves, or we become like the gods we worship.

At that time, the Israelites were tempted to worship the Baal gods—fertility gods and goddesses. The Israelites were nomadic, shepherding people before they entered the Promised Land. They had to learn to farm. From whom? From the Canaanites, of course, who were already farming the land. However, how did the Canaanites farm? Well first, in spring, before the planting, they went to the nearest Ashera pole and joined with the temple prostitutes there. That would excite the Baal gods and goddesses, who then activated the fertility of the soil.

What kind of people would the Israelites become in this land? Would they become like the Canaanite farmers, or would they be the light to the Gentiles that God intended them to be? That meant only one god—one true God. People who worship a licentious god become licentious. People taught a stern, forbidding god—whether Islamic or Christian—become stern and forbidding. People who worship the true God can become like him—loving, kind, and compassionate. Jesus said, "Your Father is merciful" (Lk 6:36).

God says, "You shall have no other gods before me" because he wants us to become like him. Do we worship with such intensity and purpose that we become like him? That is what is supposed to happen to us as God's people. We are called in Romans 12 "to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship" (v 1). Paul continues, "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" (v 2).

GOD CALLS US TO MAKE HIM OUR MODEL SO THAT HE CAN TRANSFORM US TO BE LIKE HIM.

God calls us to worship, to prayer, to the study of Scripture so that his Spirit can fill us: "Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus" (Phil 2:5). Worship is to make us different from the world around us. Worship is hard work. It is warfare against the world, the devil, and our sinful flesh. It is a battle of God's Spirit

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within us to conquer our old ways and thoughts and to fill us with his ways and thoughts. Then we wouldn't conform to the world. We'll conform to God and show what his will is, what is "good and acceptable and perfect" for all people.

But then comes the real question for us worshipers. Do we really *want* to become like God? Is that why we come to his house? Or are we here basically to use him for our purposes? Do we pray that we will be changed? Or do we pray that God will change everyone and everything around us? I can't change any of the people or situations that aggravate me, but I can let God change me. I can become like him and "approve" his will.

Who is the god we really worship, the god we fear, love, and trust above all things? Often it is ourselves. It is our will that we want done. With that objective, attending worship often is empty and pointless. We don't want anything to happen. We don't want to change. We don't want to fear, love, and trust in God above all things—especially not above ourselves.

Some surveys boast that 95 percent of our society believes in God. But does this truly mean they "fear, love, and trust in God above all things" (Luther's Small Catechism, p. 11)? Not likely. Rather, I think it means that 95 percent of the people believe that God exists. It does not mean that they believe in him. It does not mean that they have no other gods before him.

Most of our society may not openly be atheists, but they certainly are practical atheists. Obedience to God is not their primary goal. They don't want to serve him; they want him to serve them. They don't want to be transformed, but are happy being conformed to the world. They certainly don't want to live and act with the awareness that one day they must give an account to their Maker. Do we? Yet God calls us his own. We are his people, not because we are better than the world around us, but because he chose us and called us.

Why? Not because of us. Not because of you and not because of me, but because of him. God is love. Thank God that he is. He didn't leave his people, the Israelites, when they chased after other gods in Canaan. He doesn't leave us when we chase after contemporary gods—when we forget about him all summer. He remembers and serves and protects and upholds us each day. God does not forget his children. He rejoices to forgive and restore and renew even the pain and shame of the cross. That is his nature.

He looks to me and you to spread that nature. He calls us into his holy presence that he might fill us with his Spirit and send us out as his transformed, transforming people. Will you fear, love, and trust in God above all, and so be conformed to his image? Will you be different from the world around you?

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Griesse

October O.W.L.S. Lunch

O.W.L.S. will meet for lunch at 11:30 a.m. on **Friday, October 11th** at **El Caporal (in Selah)** followed by a visit to Shotwell's Halloween House for those who want to go. If you plan to attend please let Marcia know at 697-4543 or shotwell@elltel.net.



Thank you...

Paul, Grace and all the Rath Family would like to thank everyone for all the prayers and encouragement for their daughter, Cindy Neal, as she battled breast cancer. Thanks to all your prayers and our awesome God, Cindy is now cancer free!

— Paul & Grace Rath



The next **Men's Night Out** is scheduled for **Monday, October 21st**. All Peace Lutheran men and a guest are invited to meet at Tailgaters in Selah at 7:00 p.m. for an evening of relaxing and just shooting-the-breeze.

Bible Study Classes...

- All Peace Bible Study classes have resumed. We have a Sunday Bible Study at approximately 10:30, Wednesday Bible Study at 6:30 p.m. (11:00 at Bethlehem), and our Women's Friday Bible Study at 1:00. Please join us in a Bible Study class!

Church Bazaar Time...

It's time for the annual Our Lady of Lourdes Bazaar and Craft Show. It's scheduled for Saturday, Nov. 9th from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Peace will have tables for selling items, so we need items to sell! Ladies (& Gentlemen) get those hands busy baking, making craft items, knitting/crocheting items, etc. Contact Teri Sanchez for more information.

Spotlight on Peace Member Phyllis Fletcher

Phyllis Fletcher was born in Langham, Saskatchewan, Canada in 1935. She started her schooling there and later moved to Vancouver, Canada. She moved to Seattle where she lived with her elder sister Irma and her husband Bob. Phyllis completed her schooling in Seattle.



Phyllis worked for United Control Corporation for a short time. While attending Messiah Lutheran Church in Seattle with her sister, she met a young gentlemen in the church choir; his name was Don Fletcher. She said, "He kept pursuing me. I just could not 'shake' him off. He 'followed me all over the place.'" After eleven months of this pursuit, she gave in. They got married in 1957.

During that time, Don was attending a "Railroad School" learning station operations. Upon completion Don was assigned to railroad stations around the state of Washington, generally for about two weeks at a time. Phyllis was always with him wherever he was assigned. She said it was somewhat stressful as they could not settle down to set up any type of permanent housing arrangements. They went from Vancouver to Seattle, north to the border, to eastern Washington like Spokane, Ephrata, Wenatchee and ended up in Snohomish.

In 1975, they moved to Selah to the Wenas area. They joined Peace Lutheran Church shortly thereafter. While at Peace Lutheran, both Phyllis and Don were very active. At one time, Don was an Elder, and Phyllis helped in the kitchen assisting with meals, making quilts for Lutheran World Relief, knitting caps for Samaritan's Purse, sewing costumes for the Christmas and Easter Programs, and anywhere else her skills could be put to use. Don and Phyllis accompanied the Mission Team on one trip headed by Larry Smith to Tijuana, Mexico, to help build a church.

Phyllis and Don were blessed with three children—Marie of Yakima, Holly of Oak Harbor, and Kirk of Southern California. Phyllis and Don have four grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

In January, 2018, they sold their home in the Wenas area and moved to Yakima. They are very grateful to have acquired their current home as it requires much less upkeep. Phyllis says she misses the fellowship of Peace's congregation and the worship services, but as she is now limited to a wheelchair it is difficult to get around. On occasion she goes with Don to his church in Yakima. The couple plan to travel to Canada yet this year to visit Phyllis's remaining family there.



Inter-Valley Zone Fall Rally

October 19, 2019

Bethlehem Lutheran Church

801 Tieton Drive, Yakima

11:30 am – 2:00 pm

Theme: "In Praise to the LORD!"

Scripture Verse: *Sing to the Lord, all the earth! Tell of his salvation from day to day. Declare his glory among the nations.*

1 Chronicles 16:23–24a

- ♥ *Delicious Luncheon hosted by Bethlehem Ladies*
- ♥ *Devotion on convention theme*
- ♥ *Mobile, Alabama Convention Presentation – Doris Wurl*
- ♥ *LWML Resources Review*
- ♥ *Ingathering – see separate information flyer*
- ♥ *Mite offering and Love offering to support the Zone*
- ♥ *Short Zone Business Meeting with District Report*

For more information contact Pam Rafferty 509-965-4958

Lutheran Ministry Services N.W.

LMSN has received a matching fund grant in the amount of \$154,465.83 from Amazing Grace Lutheran Church in Skyway from the sale of their property to Crista Ministries. They were so few members at Amazing Grace that it was decided to close the doors and sell the property. Several of the members at Amazing Grace are original supporters of LMSN from its founding in 1938 and that is how we were marked to receive these funds due to the support and encouragement of those individuals. We have the task to raise funds in the amount of \$154,465.83 in order to receive the full amount of the matching fund grant that has been given to LMSN from Amazing Grace Lutheran Church. We are having our Oktoberfest in October to help raise funds but we will need more than just the Oktoberfest in order to reach our total goal. If congregations can think of ways to encourage their members to support this very important task it would be greatly appreciated. One example that we have right now is Messiah Lutheran in Seattle. They have taken all their current non-earmarked memorials and put them together to create a matching fund drive at Messiah. That way they can double the amount that their members will give and then the total amount from Messiah will be matched thus doubling the amount again comes from Messiah.

The money that is received from this fundraising will be used to add a second chaplain to LMSN staff who will be able to concentrate on prison ministries. We have hired Tim Johnson whose father, Bob Johnson (former chaplain with LMSN and Army chaplain in Germany before that), took him along on many visits to the prisons in Germany while his father was a pastor there. We have hired Tim based on a leap of faith that God will provide what is needed to support this additional staff to work with the Puget Sound prisons, as there is currently no money in the LMSN budget for this. The matching fund grant came to us out of the blue along with Tim Johnson so it is very "ironic" that both funding and personnel came to us at the same time.



Spiritual Conversations in the Digital Age

How comfortable are you having spiritual conversations? Lutheran Hour Ministries is offering a free workshop at Bethlehem Lutheran in Hermiston, Oregon, on Saturday, October 12th from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. on how to have more meaningful spiritual conversations with others. Our engaging presenter will guide you through research-based insights and give you tools that will help you more comfortably engage in spiritual conversations. Registration is FREE; refreshments to be provided. The presenter is Rev. Dr. Chad Lakies who is Regional Director for North America of Lutheran Hour Ministries. The event will be presented in two parts as follows:

- **The Eager Conversationalist: A Hopeful Look at What Prepares Christians for Witness**

Jesus called His disciples to go as witnesses throughout the world (Acts 1:8). But how do you do that when more and more of us every year are reluctant to even talk about our faith in everyday life? The latest research from Lutheran Hour Ministries and the Barna Group has revealed five key characteristics shared by Christians who are comfortable, and even eager, to talk about their faith. Come discover this important EAGER Profile, assess your own readiness for witness, and make a spiritual growth plan.

- **The Spiritual Conversation Curve: A practical tool for reluctant witnesses**

Paul encouraged all Christians to wisely discern “how to answer” each non-Christian in their life (Colossians 4). But how exactly do we do that in an age where many non-Christians in their life experienced “church hurt” and don’t show any interest in Jesus at all? Learn the simple but revolutionary tool developed by Lutheran Hour Ministries that can help you, and your congregation, discern how to talk with the non-Christians in their lives.

For further information, contact Gary Treece at gl528@charter.net or (509)833-9725

Show me your ways, O LORD, teach me your paths; guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Savior, and my hope is in you all day long. --Psalm 25:4-5