

# Peace Lutheran Church

Volume 34 No. 3

March 2021



## **“THE STEADFAST LOVE OF THE LORD,” OR “HE REDEEMED THEM FROM TROUBLE” PSALM 107**

In preparing for the final lesson of the study of the Acts of the Apostles, it was suggested to read Psalm 107. It was suggested by the author of the study that St. Paul may have known of this Psalm and how it may have brought comfort to him in the trials and tribulations he suffered in his trek to Rome.

I began to think about the comfort of God’s Word. I came to realize that Psalm 107 could offer hope and confidence in the Lord. Let us take a moment to review the Psalm and perhaps garner insight that would also allow for comfort in the trials and tribulations we have been experiencing in these last several months.

Please read Psalm 107. As you read it, note the outline below and some insights. The insights are taken from, [A Commentary on Psalms 73-150](#), John A. Burg, NPH, 2005.

First, note the following, It is held by many theologians that this Psalm was first written following the Captivity in Babylon. It was added to the Psalter at that time. It is suggested that even though there are many events that are eluded to were the experience of God’s Old Testament people but can easily be illustrations of hope for God’s New Testament people.

### **Verse 1-3: Invocation to Give Thanks**

Throughout the history of the Israelites, there were times that they were captives. Indeed, as often Almighty God showed His mercy. There are many times that we, today, find ourselves captive, and God intervenes. Consider, if you will, the beautiful hymn, “Now Thank We All Our God.”

### **Verse 4-9: First Crisis: The Wilderness**

As the Israelites wandered in the wilderness so we today wander in the wilderness of this sinful world. God shows His mercy and will bring us to our heavenly home.

### **Verses 10-16: Second Crisis: Imprisonment**

The Israelites were imprisoned in Egypt and in Babylon. In Babylon, it was brought about on account of their disobedience towards God. So also today, God’s people find themselves imprisoned on account of sin. The Good News is that in the blood of Jesus, the ransom has been paid.

### **Verses 17-22: Third Crisis: Foolish Rebellion**

In the life of the Israelites, and as is witnessed in the periods of the Judges and the Kings, foolish rebellion brought forth God’s wrath; this is also the case today. God’s people must heed the warning of God’s wrath. To hold on to unconfessed sin brings forth distress of body, soul, and spirit.

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Verses 23-32: Danger on the Sea

Though God's people were not mariners, they had great respect for it and left it to God's control. Consider if you would the plea of the disciples as recorded in Mark 4. They cried out in fear of drowning. It was Jesus who calmed by the storm by simple words, "Be still!" This is reflected in Christian hymnody today. Consider the hymn, "Jesus, Savior, Pilot Me."

Verses 33-42: Blessings and Curses

This is obvious. Obedience brings forth blessing, disobedience yields curses. The ultimate blessing is heaven – the ultimate Promised Land.

Verse 43: Application: Be Wise

This is the final exhortation. Remember that the definition of wisdom, as is recorded in Proverbs, is the knowledge and fear of the Lord. God's children in the present, like in the past, are called to wisdom.

As you may have noted in your reading, there is much to be thankful for. Witnessed is the trials and tribulations of God's people. In all circumstances, God remained faithful. His love indeed endures forever. So take heart!

To God be the glory!

*Pastor Schroeder*

**MIDWEEK LENTEN, HOLY WEEK & EASTER SERVICES 2021**

**Lenten Theme: "Return to the Lord"**

***Due to Covid-19, at this time, we are not planning to hold Midweek Lenten Suppers, but this is subject to change as we move forward.***

**MIDWEEK LENT 2:** Wednesday, March 3 at 7:00 P.M. THEME: "Return from Betrayal"

**MIDWEEK LENT 3:** Wednesday, March 10 at 7:00 P.M. THEME: "Return from False Witness"

**MIDWEEK LENT 4:** Wednesday, March 17 at 7:00 P.M. THEME: "Return from Denial"

**MIDWEEK LENT 5:** Wednesday, March 24 at 7:00 P.M. THEME: "Return to the Kingdom of God"

**MAUNDY THURSDAY:** Thursday, April 1 at 7:00 P.M. \*THEME: "Return to the Table"

**GOOD FRIDAY:** Friday, April 2 at 7:30 P.M. THEME: "Return to Truth"

**EASTER SATURDAY – NO WORSHIP SERVICE**

**EASTER SUNDAY – SUNRISE:** Sunday, April 4 at 6:00 A.M. \* THEME: "Return to the Church"

***We are hoping that we will be able to hold the Annual EASTER BREAKFAST & EGG HUNT, but we plan to wait and see where things are at as we get closer to Easter. A decision will be made in the near future, and notice will be given once a decision has been reached.***

**EASTER SUNDAY – FESTIVAL:** Sunday, April 4 at 8:00 & 10:45A.M. \* THEME: "Return and See"

\*The Lord's Supper will be offered in these services.



## The Art of Asking "Why?"

**Why does our Church exist? Why do we do what we do?**

**Why do we choose to invest our resources where we invest them?**

A tradition, for tradition's sake, is worthless. "Progress" for the sake of progress is madness. As the body & bride of Christ, we look forward to the day our Lord will return to lead us unto our heavenly home. At the same time, we remember where we as the Church have

been, harkening back to the time of our forefathers in faith to see where they were and what they dealt with, and where we are now and how similar/different our own day is. The fact of the matter is, the issues we face today are not so different from those of Luther's day or even of St. Paul's Day. The issue of Christian complacency is still at large, and ministry gets messy and tangled up. Yet, we have no reason to worry or fear. We must look to Christ for our way forward.

We at Peace Lutheran Church are focused on the Gospel. If you look at our website under the "About Us" section - "Mission and Vision," you would see that the mission of Peace Lutheran Church is 3-fold: Reaching Out, Serving Jesus, Celebrating His Love. We 'reach out' as our Lord has called each of us to do so in our Lord's Great Commission given in Matthew 28:19-20; We 'serve Jesus' as we provide opportunities for members of Peace and visitors to grow spiritually in their relationship with Jesus Christ, and we 'celebrate His love' as we come together for the fellowship and care of one another and our neighbor. At first glance, things look fine and good. But when you really sit and think and ponder on it, these three focal points are outward reaching, yet we seem to be reaching and looking more inward than outward. Does this mean that our Mission statement is in need of change? By No Means! Our Mission as a church is in this 3-fold Ministerial focus. What we seem to be hung up on is the fact that we do not begin with the question of 'why.' Instead, we easily get stuck on the 'What' of ministry and continue things for the sake of continuing them, without the results we hope for. There is one of two possible drivers for any given congregation: Vision or Structure. Vision is clear goals for the future, whereby we become intentional in our ministry by asking the 'Why' question. Structure is not the church building but the bodies that oversee the ministry and programs within the church. When Vision is the driver, Intentionality and Relationships give purpose to the church. When Structure is the driving force, we become preoccupied with programming and with the question of 'what' we do, and in fact, begin to slow the growth of the church.

There are three questions that every organization **must** answer to be able to grow dedicated members: **Why do we exist?; How will we accomplish our mission?; What will we do to accomplish our mission?** In this order, we focus on what is necessary and then how we accomplish it, rather than continuing for the sake of continuing tradition alone. You see, in the 'Why' is the Gospel. **In the 'Why' is Jesus.** To not ask the question of 'Why,' we lose the very reason ministry exists in the first place.

So, before we decide to start something new, we intentionally ask the questions of 'why?', and if the focus is anything other than leading to a deeper relationship with Jesus, we then need to ask what its purpose is at all. To grow, we also need to look at the programs we currently have in place and ask the same question of 'why?' Why does this program exist?

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Why would we start doing this today? Why should we continue to do this? Does this follow our mission of reaching people with the gospel? Does this give a real opportunity for people to grow in Christ as they receive His gifts of forgiveness, life, and salvation?

Once we've had the opportunity to evaluate what we have in place and begin the habit of being intentional about starting new things, we can begin to make the movement as a congregation to seeking the lost outside our walls and continuing with our Mission and Ministry being our focus. We exist as a congregation to reach people with the Gospel and to provide members and visitors with opportunities to grow in their relationship with their Savior. We as the body of Christ are focused on sharing His Word, Worshiping Him together, teaching the Faith through catechesis and Bible Study, and being good Stewards of the talents & treasures our Lord has given us.

*Pastor Josiah J. Fitch*

**BEING IN THE WORD OF GOD** It is good to be in the Word of God in order to be enlightened, equipped and encouraged. The strength of a Christian is founded on the Word of God. This is also the strength of the congregation. At Peace we have a number of opportunities to get into the Word of God. Besides various small group Bible studies in the home, the following opportunities are offered

**NEW!! Sunday Morning:** Beginning this month we will embark on a study of I & II Corinthians. This class meets in the larger classroom beginning at 9:30 A.M.

**Tuesday Morning Men's Bible Study:** We meet at Four Seasons in Neenah at 7:00 A.M. Being studied is, Blessed Is the Man: A Man's Journey Through the Psalms: Psalms of Praise.

**Thursday Mornings:** This class meets at 9:30 A.M. "Jesus: A Study of Matthew, Mark Luke and John" is the theme. Cost for the book is \$14.00.

**Saturday Mornings:** This class meets at 8:30 A.M. on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturdays of the month. Being studied is, The Augsburg Confession.

Other offerings are:

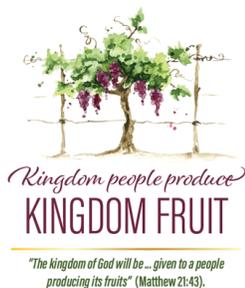
**Men @ Peace** which meets at 6:30 P.M. on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Thursdays of the month. The men are studying a book entitled, Man Up! This book explores biblical manhood and is intended to help men grow in their roles as a man as a husband and as a father.

**Women's Bible Studies** are offered periodically and are announced as they are scheduled.

Consider attending one or more of these so that you might grow in relationship with the Lord and

**Address changes? Phone number changes? Gone cellular....no more landline? Children away at college?** If you have moved or are going to be moving soon, **please** call or email the church office (admin@peaceneenah.com) or leave a note with your new address so we can keep our mailing lists up-to-date. We're also looking for your new phone numbers. Your help will be greatly appreciated, as we will be creating a new phone/address directory. If you are not receiving emails from the church about services, newsletters and other items please contact the church office also so we can get you on the list to receive these things.

**Everyday Evangelism.** Many people would shy away from the thought of talking about Jesus to someone. "I wouldn't know what to say", or "I might say the wrong thing." I am sure that the disciples had the same concerns and fears. One way to gain confidence in sharing His love, is to start your day with a devotion and/ or reading the Bible. As you go about your day, reflect on your reading, as you interact with people at work, the grocery store or home. "For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do."



**March 8 (Monday)- Peace Mission Guild Gathering.** We are returning to our Monday, 6:30 pm gatherings. Do you wonder what God’s plan is for you? This month, we will be exploring the topic of “God’s True Desire for His Children”. We invite the women of Peace to join us, as we search God’s Word for our mission, while on this earth. Masks and social distancing guidelines will be observed.

**Mission Moment-At Just the Right Time/Mission Central.** a grant of \$15,000 will be used to provide financial support for a large campus in Iowa, which provides a place for missionaries to stay when on home service, offices for some of 104 volunteers to work, facilities for mission events and worship space.

LWML Reaches 2019-2021 Mission Goal!

Sing the Doxology, “Praise God from Whom all blessings flow!” The LWML, by God’s grace, has reached the mission goal of \$2.1 million set for the 2019-2021 biennium. This means that all mission grants selected for this biennium can be funded! God has great plans for spreading His Gospel story through those ministries. He has great plans for the 2021-2023 mission grants as well. Of the 65 completed mission grant submissions, 34 were selected for the 2021 LWML Convention ballot and approved by the LWML Board of Directors (BOD) and Presidents Assembly in January.

The LWML BOD and Presidents Assembly will meet in March to approve the 2021-2023 mission goal – and after the end of the biennium (March 31, 2021) – any surplus mite offerings not given to mission grant recipients in this biennium will be added on top of the allocation for the 2021-2023 mission grants. What a joy and privilege it will be to pray, consider, discuss, and vote for those recipients!

LWML Treasurer Karla Koehler wrote, “We thank God for the many women and men who have generously shared their material blessings so that the LWML can share the love and forgiveness of Christ!” Let the trumpets sound and the cymbals crash, in praise to the Lord!

Praise God from Whom ALL Blessings Flow!



Joanne	3-4
Donna	3-27



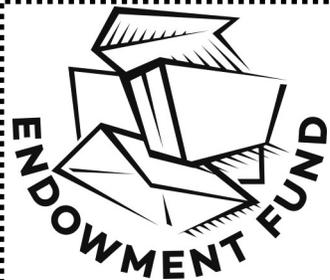
We are collecting NEW hygiene and cleaning items for local crisis agencies through The Family Radio’s annual “Help for the Homeless” hygiene drive, Feb. 14 – March 7. Please place your donations in the *Help for the Homeless* collection box located in the back hallway by the donation rack by March 7.

Supplying these items to local shelters will help them direct their limited funds to provide qualified staff, counseling, food, and shelter to those they serve. **Your donations will remain in this community.** There is a sheet in the back of the Narthex with needed items

March Hymn of the Month: “Trust and Obey”

In 1886, Daniel B Towner wrote down the words of a man that spoke at a revival in Brockton, Massachusetts. The young man stood in the middle of hundreds of people and said, “I am not quite sure—but I am going to trust, and I am going to obey.” A year later Towner sent the sentence and story to Presbyterian minister John H. Sammis, who quickly turned the phrase into a hymn. The hymn was first published in the 1887 work, *Hymns Old and New*. It has since been published in countless hymnals spanning many different denominations.

The words and message of Sammis’ hymn are fairly straight forward, laying out the rewards for trusting God’s word and obeying God’s will. But a quick examination in the context of lent, we can also see the feelings of the Israelites anticipating the Messiah, trusting the promise and obeying the law. We now know that the promise was fulfilled through the death and resurrection of our Lord and Savior who is the new Law.



Peace Endowment Committee oversees the Peace Endowment Fund. Each year 5% of the prior year's December 31 balance is available for small projects. This year approximately \$16,000 is available. Forms to request a portion of the available funds are available in the church office.

## **ODDS and ENDS**

**COMMUNION APPOINTMENTS** If you are in need of receiving Holy Communion, you can call the church office and one of the pastors will arrange an appointment with you. **This is not intended as a substitute for attending worship.**

**ELDER PHONE CONTACTS** The Elders in their February meeting were assigned their groups and given the task to call all those in their groups to: Introduce themselves, and to Give encouragement to the membership as well as to Check on our member families. It will soon be a full year that we have been with COVID-19. It was felt that it would be good to check on the members of the congregation.

**ATTENDANCE CARDS, BIBLES AND HYMNALS** In moving forward to re-establishing what was once normal (prior to COVID-19) the attendance cards, Bibles and hymnals will be slowly placed back in the pews. Beginning on Ash Wednesday, attendance cards will be placed, in early March the Bibles will be returned and by Easter (early April) the hymnals will also be placed back in the pews. Members can exercise their level of comfortability in using these again. The whole of the worship service will be printed out for some time.

**THE LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR (L.Y.N.) FUND** For several years members of the congregation have been helping each other through the LYN Fund. This Fund was started many years ago as a vehicle to facilitate anonymous financial gifts from member to member. Not even the pastor knows who forwarded the gift. This is an excellent way of helping an individual or family in times of crisis. Envelopes with instructions can be found in the middle hallway on the bulletin board across from the library. This has been used often throughout the duration since its inception. If you have any further questions, please contact Pastor Schroeder.



During Lent, the senior high youth group will be hosting an in gathering that will benefit a local alternative high school. In past years, we've shopped for specific items these students need, including clothing and food items. This year, these students are in need of non-perishable food items, hygiene items, and new clothing items like socks and T-shirts. Gift cards for gas stations and Walmart in \$10-\$20 amounts are always helpful, too. If you are moved to make a donation, we will be collecting these items in a basket in the hallway near the senior high youth room. We plan to bring all donated items to the school after Easter. Thank you for your consideration. — The Senior High Youth Group

### **VITAL STATISTICS**

**Number of Baptized Souls: 453 Number of Confirmed Souls: 380 Number of Families: 241**

## “Faithful Stewards of God’s Gifts”

We’re excited to inform you that our stewardship emphasis for this year is **Faithful Stewards of God’s Gifts**. We’re confident that the three weeks of messages will help you grow in your spiritual and stewardship journeys.

The three-weekly themes are:

Saturday/ Sunday March 6/7: “Stewards of God’s Varied Grace”

Saturday/Sunday March 13/14: “As We Have Opportunity, Let Us Do Good to Everyone”

Saturday/Sunday March 20/21: “Generous and Ready to Share” (Commitment Weekend)

In our short time on earth, we are called by God to take care of His things. Through faith, we understand that all we have belongs to the One Who created us. Being a steward is faith in action. The following quote from Thom and Art Rainer in their book *Simple Life* will help us better understand what it means to be God’s stewards:

Stewardship is a word we often hear from behind the pulpit but rarely outside the walls of the church. A steward is traditionally one who takes care of another’s household. A steward watches over the domestic affairs so that the master may focus on whatever he deems most important. Much trust is placed in the steward by the master. He is expected to act in the best interest of his master, with or without his oversight. So stewardship consists of managing those obligations given to the steward. By nature of the word, stewardship requires some type of higher authority. It is a position of submittal to a greater good. It is the denying of oneself and the exalting of another. It is commitment to the well-being of another, knowing that his happiness will result in your happiness.



What a privilege and honor that God Who has created us and recreated us in Baptism chooses us to be His stewards! In this honored position, we are expected to be responsible and accountable. The Apostle Paul wrote, *“Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found trustworthy”*

(1 Corinthians 4:2). With the help of the Holy Spirit, we become **Faithful Stewards of God’s Gifts**.

We pray that our stewardship emphasis, **Faithful Stewards of God’s Gifts**, will be a blessing to us all. May God continually bless us as faithful stewards of the many blessings He has entrusted to our care.

Your fellow stewards in Christ,

The Stewardship Board

Barb Kaun, Chairman, Sue Boettcher, Secretary and Phil Nickolai

Pastor Ricky P. Schroeder

**Peace Lutheran Church**

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Rev. Ricky P. Schroeder  
Pastor  
Rev. Josiah Fitch  
Associate Pastor



**Peace  
Lutheran Church**  
NEENAH, WISCONSIN – LCMS

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

*Reaching Out . . . Serving Jesus . . . Celebrating His Love*



**FAX**  
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**e-mails**  
pastor@peaceneenah.com  
assocpastor@peaceneenah.com

**Web site:**  
www.peaceneenah.com

**Worship Services**  
**Sat. 5:00 p.m.**  
**Sun. 8:00 a.m.**  
**10:45 a.m.**

Bible Study/Sunday School  
9:30 a.m. Sundays



Daylight Saving Time starts Sunday, March 14th. Don't forget  
to set your clocks ahead 1 hour before you go to bed  
Saturday, March 13.