

Peace Lutheran Church

Volume 35 No. 4

April 2022

*From the
Pastor*



MINISTRY TO THE FUNCTIONALLY UNCHURCHED PART IV: GOING AFTER THE SHEEP

³ So he told them this parable: ⁴ “What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the open country, and go after the one that is lost, until he finds it? ⁵ And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing. ⁶ And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and his neighbors, saying to them, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost.’ ⁷ Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance. Luke 15:3-7

Last month I concluded my article with reference to Luke 15. All three parables speak of rejoicing over the “finding” of that which was lost and the celebration that even takes place as the lost was found and returned to the fold. More of that shortly.

Letters have been sent to those outside of our immediate ministry area (offering an arbitrary 30 miles radius) who are residing elsewhere and have not been able to attend church or be involved in the ministry of the congregation. These members were offered to express their desires. They could choose to remain a member or be transferred to a sister congregation or be released to join another congregation, not in fellowship with the LCMS, or simply to be removed from the membership. Also offered was assistance to help find a sister congregation in their area that they might have a church home to grow in relationship with God and fellow brothers and sisters in Christ.

In this way, an attempt of “Going After the Sheep” was made. In May, letters will be sent to those within the 30-mile radius who have not worshipped over the last two years. In this way, an attempt will be made to reach out – “Going After the Sheep.”

In the interim, the Elders have been asked to call on their “groups” to introduce themselves so that all will know who their Elder is. The Elders, with and under the pastors, are sharing in the soul-care of the membership.

Here is the listing of the Elders and their “Groups.” Groups are according to the last names of families.

Ben Hirssig – H & S
Don McDermott – A, b, E & J
Fred Kaun – C, D, G, L & R
Jim Piepenbrink – F, M, V, W & Z
Tim Florek – K, N, O, P & T

This work was put on hold during the time or height of the pandemic. Since Memorial Day 2020, in-person worship has been available.

(Continued on page 2)

(Continued from page 1)

Yet, there has been a number of “peaks and valleys,” and many felt best not to be in person for worship. This was respected. During the two-year period, as you know, the Elders with and under the pastors placed many practices to safeguard the congregation.

Now, it is time to be accountable and once again “Going After the Sheep” for the sake of Christ.

Now back to Luke 15 and especially the verses above

Jesus was criticized for eating and associating with sinners. The three parables – The Parable of the Lost Sheep, The Parable of the Lost Coin, and the Parable of the Prodigal Son – was His response. In essence, He was confronting their smugness, whereas Jesus was doing what He was to be doing, and that is calling back the lost. Each parable concludes with a celebration for restoring the lost. Rather than excluding the “sinner,” they should be looking to restore and celebrate the restoration. The Pharisees never got the point!

However, following the exhortation of our Lord and following His example, we do all that we can to “Going After the Sheep.” The purpose is not to dispose of but rather to restore. Always there should be celebrating to a restored relationship as do the angels in heaven.

It is my prayer that the efforts, though time-consuming, will be blessed by God and that there be a celebration. This is in line with our Mission – “Reaching Out, Serving Jesus, Celebrating His Love.”

Though this is formally the responsibility of the pastors and Elders, all can be involved in “Going After the Sheep.” Why not reach out to those who you have not seen and gently invite them to return!

To God be the glory!

Pastor Schroeder



Come Empty, Leave Overflowing!

I hope that we are all looking forward to Easter Sunday. It is such a wonderful day to come together & see all that God has done for us in Christ: the forgiveness He offers; the salvation He has won for us; the life that He has secured for us.

Throughout our Lenten Season, we’ve heard from various Witnesses of Christ, people who were involved during the course of Jesus’ Passion.

We’ve considered our own sinfulness, been reminded of God’s call to confess Him as Lord & Savior, and have been comforted by the Word that reminds us that our God is gracious & merciful, slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love and that He relents over disaster. Our attention keeps coming back to Jesus and the sacrifice He made to reconcile us to God the Father. Easter is when it all comes together, as we celebrate that Jesus is risen from the dead and that He invites us as His disciples to come and see Him. But why? Why do we do this every year? Because when His disciples see & hear Christ risen from the dead for them, they begin to better understand what it all means. They will begin to, as Ephesians 3:18-19 says, ***“comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that***

(Continued on page 3)

(Continued from page 2)

surpasses knowledge.” And it is this realization that leads us as disciples to share the Good News with others, that they too might come to know “the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding.”

Listen to what the prophet Isaiah wrote hundreds of years before Christ came as one of us to save us. Isaiah was given a glimpse into the future to give us a picture of heaven and what God was preparing for us in His coming Savior & Redeemer.

Isaiah 25:6-9 - *6On this mountain, the LORD of hosts will make for all peoples a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wine, of rich food full of marrow, of aged wine well refined. 7And he will swallow up on this mountain the covering that is cast over all peoples, the veil that is spread over all nations. 8He will swallow up death forever; and the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from all faces, and the reproach of his people he will take away from all the earth, for the LORD has spoken. 9It will be said on that day, “Behold, this is our God; we have waited for him, that he might save us. This is the LORD; we have waited for him; let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation.”*

On this mountain the Lord of hosts will make for all peoples a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wine, of rich food full of marrow, of aged wine well refined. What a vivid picture he paints. A joyful gathering of people “from all tribes and peoples and languages.” (Rev 7:9).

And in this gathering, the Lord of hosts has “swallow[ed] the covering that is cast over all peoples, the veil that is spread over all nations” (Is 25:7). This says nothing less than that the Lord has taken away death & the consequence of sin that would otherwise mean eternal separation from God. And this all sounds pretty appealing, doesn't it? We read Isaiah's account, we picture its fulfillment, and we long to be there.

But how? This “covering” is cast over all people because “all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Rom 3:23). **All: you, me, every single one of us.** This covering is cast over you. And you can't shake it. You can't uncover yourself. You are trapped beneath it. Your sinful nature clings to you so stubbornly that you cannot possibly strip yourself of it. What's worse, you know it. Your conscience cries out against you, and your thoughts accuse you every waking moment. It seems impossible.

We all know this, and lament with the disciples asking: “Who then can be saved?” And to we poor miserable sinners, Jesus tenderly replies: “With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.”

God sent His own Son to deal with this problem. He has provided everything we need. “He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life” (Jn 3:16). God has stepped in and made it possible in Christ.

In Christ, your sin has been forgiven; your salvation is secured. In Christ, you “have an advocate with the Father” (1 Jn 2:1), the One who is perfectly righteous. Jesus, who lived a perfect life, and then turned around to offer His own life & righteousness to you, taking your sin & death in return. Through Baptism, Christ has wrapped you up in the robe of His own righteousness, which covers all your sin.

And Isaiah gives voice to our response, as the Holy Spirit inspired him to write: “I will greatly rejoice in the Lord; my soul shall exult in my God, for He has clothed me with the garments of salvation; He has covered me with the robe of righteousness.” (Is 61:10)

That 1st Easter morning, Jesus emerged from the tomb, resurrected from the dead, fully alive, and His 1st task was to invite the disciples to Galilee to come and see and receive from Him.

Every Sunday morning is now a little Easter, where Christ extends the same invitation to us: Come, see, and receive!

Come and look on the One who was pierced, see that the plan of salvation has been completed, and receive that which can only be received here in God's presence. Come and receive forgiveness of ALL of your sins; come and receive life everlasting; come and receive strength for this day and for all the days ahead.

Come & see? But how? Where? For the disciples, the answer was simple: Come to Galilee. Come to the mountain where you will find Me. And so they did. They came to that mountain, gathering at Jesus' feet, and He gave them a task. It was simple but crucial. You've come & seen. You've received & responded with praise & worshiped. Now, go. Go and make disciples. Go and baptize. Go and teach. Go, and know that I am with you always. Come and see; go and tell.

But we don't have a mountain...? So, Jesus says "Come to Me," and we stand like Thomas at the Last Supper, gawking at Jesus, stunned by His words. "How can we know the way?" (Jn 14:5). But God gives us the way: His Church. That is to say, we know where to find Christ, because God's promises and His Word make it clear where we can find Him every time we go looking: as the Augsburg Confessions remind us, it is in "the assembly of all believers among whom the gospel is purely preached and the holy sacraments are administered according to the gospel" (AC VII 1). "Where two or three are gathered in [Jesus'] name" (Matt 18:20), is where Jesus promises to be present.

We come to church, not because we're supposed to or to do a good work, but because it is here that we get Jesus, for us, for our family, for our neighbor. We gaze on the cross of His crucifixion, pondering the penalty for our sins, which He willingly bore. We can see Him reach down and claim us as His own in Holy Baptism. We can "taste and see that the Lord is good" (Ps 34:8) as we receive Christ's very body & blood in, with, and under the bread & wine of Holy Communion. It is here that you & I get to see Him. Here we can be in His presence together, as He strengthens our faith toward Him and our love toward others.

But then what? Well, it's really no different for us than it was for the disciples: Come & see; go & tell. Isaiah's words are beautiful here: "Behold, this is our God; we have waited for Him, that He might save us. This is the Lord; we have waited for Him; let us be glad and rejoice in His salvation" (Is 25:9).

This is the pattern Jesus lays out for our Christian life: He has acted on our behalf, so we trust, we wait. He continues in action for us, and we rejoice and share the news with others. So simple. So powerful. So we continue to come unto where He has promised to be for us, to see the salvation won for us by our Lord and Savior. As we do, let us be moved to go out into the world, to our families, friends, & to all, that we might share with others what we have seen. "This is the LORD; we have waited for Him; Let us be glad and rejoice in His salvation." Share what Jesus Christ has done with the whole world.

Prayer: *Holy & Everlasting Father, whenever we gather for worship, convict us of sin, move us to repentance, and create faith in Your forgiveness by Your Word & Spirit. Show us Jesus Christ crucified & risen from the dead, and make us ready to go & share Him with others. Alleluia! Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia! Amen.*

Pastor Fitch



NO CONFIRMATION CLASS on April 20th as Pastor Fitch will be on Vacation.

ODDS and ENDS

ADULT INSTRUCTION CLASS On Saturday, April 9th, Adult Instruction Class will be offered. The class will be held from 8:30 A.M.-3:30 P.M., The course's title, is "Basic Bible Teachings: An Introduction to the Lutheran Faith. This is a one-day workshop.

Invited to attend are those who are seeking membership in the LCMS and the congregation, those who are curious as to what the LCMS believes, teaches, and confesses, and for those who would simply like to review the basic doctrines as drawn from the Holy Bible as believed, taught and confessed in the LCMS.

Coffee, lunch, and class materials will be offered at no cost to the participants. Please call the church office if you plan on attending by April 4th. Pastors Schroeder and Fitch will serve as the facilitators for this class.

MIDWEEK SUMMER WORSHIP 2022 The Elders, in their March meeting, after some discussion, decided that there will not be a midweek service this summer.

CELEBRATING LUTHERAN SCHOOLS On Saturday, April 30 and Sunday, May 1, Pastor Keith GeRue, Associate Pastor and Principal from Trinity, Menasha, will be in the pulpit celebrating Parish School Education. Choirs from Trinity Lutheran School will be offering their time and talent in our worship service on that Sunday. Pastor GeRue will also have the Adult Bible study on that Sunday with representatives of Trinity Lutheran School to talk about its ministry, of which we are partners. Pastor Fitch will be filling the pulpit at Trinity on that weekend.

SPECIAL DOOR OFFERING: SCHOLARSHIP FUND A Special Door Offering will be received on Saturday, April 30, and Sunday, May 1. Proceeds will be designated to the Scholarship Fund to assist member families who have chosen to enroll in our local parish schools. This has become necessary due to two years of COVID that prohibited the Pancake Breakfast in the Park that usually takes place on the Fourth of July. Your generous gifts will help families afford Christian Education for their children.

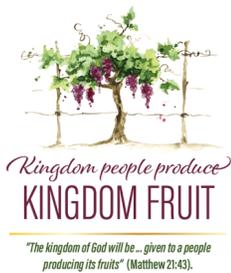


UPDATING OUR PHONE DIRECTORY – Address changes? Phone number changes? Gone cellular....no more landline? Children away at college? If you have moved or are going to be moving soon, *please* call or email the church office (admin@peaceneenah.com) or leave a note with your new address so we can keep our 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.



EASTER BREAKFAST & EGG HUNT will follow after the Easter Sunrise Service. Confirmation Students thru Senior High are encouraged to assist with the Preparations on Saturday (April 16th) from 9 am-12 pm (although we will most likely be done before Noon) and with the Easter Breakfast on Sunday (April 17th) after church. Senior High Youth are asked to bring pastries. This is also an opportunity for Confirmands to earn Service Hours.

CONFIRMATION EXAMINATION will take place during a Special Worship Service on **Wednesday, May 11th**, @ 6 pm. If you are able, please attend in support of our Confirmands! Listen to their confession of the faith as they take up their baptismal faith with their own hands, preparing to make their vows & receive the Sacrament with us on Sunday. This is also a wonderful opportunity to reflect on your own Confirmation journey, the vows, the teachings, and what you have learned & received since. So come one, come all!



Mission Mites are needed now, more than ever. Ponder what your contributions can do to bring the word of God's love and salvation to people around the world. Mission mites will be collected during services on April 1-2. Thank you in advance for your prayerful consideration.

Monday, April 11, Mission Guild- The women of Peace are invited to join the Peace Mission Guild as we explore the topic of "Blessings in Relationships." Our discussions and sharing provide inspiration and motivation to walk in His Word. We meet at 6:30 pm in the Fellowship Hall, and we hope that you will consider joining us.

Women of the Congregation are invited to RETREAT! God's Quilt of Comfort: Wrapping up in the Psalms. On Saturday, April 30, from 8:30 am to 3 pm we will learn how God comforts us through the ups and downs of life as we walk through various Psalms. We will also be doing some faith Journaling by making a paper quilt! Cost is \$20 a person, which will cover a light breakfast, lunch, and supplies. Look for the sign-up forms in the Hallway by the fellowship hall. RSVP to Lynne Schroeder by April 23. Make checks payable to Peace Mission Guild

Missions Abroad - Light of Christ in Eastern Europe. The Lutheran Church is striving to bring the love and light of Christ to Germany and Czech Republic. Recently, many refugees have settled in Europe and Germany. This grant, for \$56,000, will help in the support of 8 missionaries working and reaching out with the message of the Gospel to people in Germany and the Czech Republic.

May 9 - Save the Date! Mark your calendars for the annual Women's Spring Fling at Peace. "Growing in Grace" will be the theme for our evening as we explore God's mission for us. Invite your family, friends, or neighbors to enjoy this evening of learning, love, and laughter. Watch for details of our guest speaker, entertainment, and more.

"The Road Signs Through Detours of Life" is the theme for the Zone 11 Spring Rally, at Hope Lutheran Church, in North Fond du Lac, on Monday, April 25. See the LWML board for more details.

VITAL STATISTICS

Number of Baptized Souls: 468 Number of Confirmed Souls: 391 Number of Families: 244

Brought in by Transfer
Stefan Schroeder

Released
Sarah Schuchhardt

MIDWEEK LENTEN, HOLY WEEK, AND EASTER SERVICES 2022

OVERALL THEME: "WITNESSES TO CHRIST"

Fellowship Supper at 6:00 P.M.

MIDWEEK LENT 5: Wednesday, April 6 at 7:00 P.M. THEME: "Pontius Pilate"

PALM SUNDAY: Saturday & Sunday, April 9 & 10 Holy Communion Celebrated
THEME: "The Disciples"

MAUNDY THURSDAY: Thursday, April 14 at 7:00 P.M. Holy Communion Celebrated
THEME: "Judas Iscariot"

GOOD FRIDAY: Friday, April 15 at 7:30 P.M. THEME: "John, The Gospel Writer"

EASTER SATURDAY – NO WORSHIP SERVICE

EASTER SUNDAY – SUNRISE: Sunday, April 17 at 6:30 A.M. Holy Communion Celebrated
THEME: "Nicodemus"

EASTER BREAKFAST & EGG HUNT FOLLOWING SUNRISE SERVICE

EASTER SUNDAY – FESTIVAL: Sunday, April 17 at 9:00 A.M. Holy Communion Celebrated
THEME: "Mary Magdalene"



YEAH! The **OWLS** have landed, and we're having a **HOOT!!!**

YEAH OWLS

Y(young) **E**(especially) **A**(at) **H**(heart) **O**(older) **W**(wiser) **L**(livelier) **S**(saints).

Our next get-together is Thursday, April 21, 2022. Coffee fellowship begins at 11:00 AM, with lunch served promptly at 11:30 AM. At noon we will have our program. This month we will be joined by Rebuilding Together Fox Valley. For older adults, falling in their homes has become the leading cause of death in Wisconsin. Once a fall occurs, it can have significant reverberations throughout the individual's world, affecting their independence, mobility, and finances. Rebuilding Together Fox Valley has launched an initiative to install simple fall prevention materials. They use volunteers to make critical home modifications and repairs for free for income-qualified homeowners. Signup sheets will be in the Fellowship Hallway 2 weeks prior to the April 21st meeting. Make sure to sign up. We'd love to see you there, and you can even bring a friend.



The outpouring of donations and support for the January VIDA maternal/infant program and Feb-March Hygiene Drive has been a demonstration of sharing our blessings to those within our community that are struggling and in need. Thank you all!



The February Compassionate Hearts bake sale was also a big success in that \$739.95 was raised. As a reminder, these funds are for members of our congregation that may have a financial need for utilities/heating costs. Please see Pastor Schroeder if you have a need; all requests remain confidential.



TREASURE IN THE TRUNK Update: The date is for May 21. The funds raised will help a family in our congregation with medical bills. As the time approaches, more details will be coming but be sure to save the date for a good turnout and get to the spring cleaning for donations to fill trunks! Bargains galore, one man's junk is another man's treasure.



MOTHER'S DAY BULLETIN

Would you like to pay tribute to a special woman in your life? Watch for the pink sheets for the annual Mother's Day bulletin; cost is \$1 minimum per name. *Fill out all information* such as **"in memory of"** or **"in honor of"** and simply place the slip into the envelope along with your money. Be sure to complete the front of the envelope as well, indicating your name, envelope number (if you have one) and the dollar amount. (All checks should be made out to Peace.) Then just drop the envelope in the offering or leave it on the desk in the office. *The deadline to put a name in will be Sunday, May 1st.* Proceeds from this year's Mother's Day bulletin will go to support the ministry of our very own Amy Formella. As you know, Amy is a Lutheran Bible Translator serving in Sierra Leone, Africa.



MOPS is an international organization that exists to encourage, equip, and develop every mother to realize her potential as a woman, mother and leader in the name of Jesus Christ. Neenah MOPS will be meeting on **Tues., April 12 from 8:45 to 11 A.M.**

Peace Lutheran Church

Missouri Synod
1228 S. Park Avenue
Neenah, WI 54956-4252
(920) 725-0510

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



e-mails

pastor@peaceneenah.com
assocpastor@peaceneenah.com

Web site:

www.peaceneenah.com

Worship Services

Sat. 5:00 p.m.

Sun. 9:00 a.m.

Bible Study/Sunday School
10:30 a.m. Sundays

Compassion Garden ...

The Compassion Garden is always looking for people to ...

- plant, water, and weed the garden,
- pick and distribute the vegetables.

If you are interested or want to know more about what we do...

Talk to Joe Belongia or Sue Hardwick

To Christ goes all the glory

