



Peace Lutheran Church

Volume 35 No. 10

October 2022

*From the
Pastor*



THE PRIESTHOOD OF ALL BELIEVERS

PART I: INTRODUCTION: CHRIST'S RELATIONSHIP WITH THE BELIEVERS

⁴ As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, ⁵ you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. ⁶ For it stands in Scripture: "Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious, and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame." ⁷ So the honor is for you who believe, but for those who do not believe, "The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone," ⁸ and "A stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense." They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do. 1 Peter 2:4-8

For this last quarter of the calendar year, and having written concerning spiritual gifts and offering of time and talent, I want to address an age-old teaching entitled, "The Priesthood of All Believers." Luther wrote much concerning this topic. C.F.W. Walther, parish pastor, Seminary President, and the first President of the LCMS, echoed much of what the Scriptures and Luther addressed. The purpose of these three articles is to help us understand the role of the priesthood of all believers, which consists of the Office of Public Ministry (the Pastoral Office) and the Laity.

We begin with the foundation of the priesthood of All Believers, namely, go figure, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Some of this might sound familiar as it is a re-writing of a sermon that was delivered in the Summer of 2014, a part of a sermon series on I Peter.

I Peter was written to novice Christians that were part of the diaspora around the Mediterranean, in Asia Minor, and in western Europe. They were being tempted to abandon the faith as a Christian in order to avoid persecution. The whole of Peter's Letter is to offer hope and encourage them to remain faithful.

The Letter opens with a general word of encouragement to the living hope that was theirs found in Jesus, their Lord and Savior. Heaven was the goal for them to attain on account of their faith relationship to Jesus. This was important as they were suffering hostility towards them.

I would encourage you to read the verses prior in order to grasp what Peter was saying by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

With the text before us, we begin the second cycle of Peter's Letter, which focuses on the "living stone." This is perhaps some of the most exquisite gospel presentations found in the new testament apart from the four gospels.

In this portion of our text, we learn of Jesus, the living stone, and what it meant for the readers then and for us today as they/we are living hope in a hostile world.

Peter informs us that Jesus the living stone. He, namely Jesus, was rejected by men. We know this because it was at the hands of humans that Jesus suffered and died. Their actions were caused by ignorance and unbelief.

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Peter goes on to say that God had chosen Him and established Him as precious. Three metaphors express this. Jesus is the cornerstone. It is He that determines rightness. He is the capstone – upon all which depends – no need to fear while living in a hostile world. Finally, He is a stumbling stone – the result of unbelief.

Peter then teaches us that we are the living stones - chips off the old block. There is no room for shame on account of our relationship with the Living Stone. Each person is unique. As living stones, we offer sacrifices of prayers, time, talent, treasure, and our whole being. Our whole being is offered as a living sacrifice on a daily basis. We are empowered by God's Word and Sacrament – our source of hope in a hostile world.

Next month we will explore the identity/titles that are given to us as living stones of the Living Stone. We will again learn that we are a royal priesthood, which then informs us as the Priesthood of All Believers.

To God be the glory!

Pastor Schroeder



The Art of Asking Why Part 2 - Why Ask "Why?"

As mentioned in last Month's newsletter, "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 most important first, and then how we accomplish our mission, rather than just continuing for the sake of continuing alone. For in the '**Why**' is the Gospel. **In the 'Why' is Jesus.** To not ask the question of 'Why' is to lose the very reason ministry exists in the first place, Jesus! This also leads to disunity, decreased effectiveness, undermines discipleship, and did I mention we lose Jesus!"

The following quote is from C.F.W. Walther, the first president of the LCMS: Walther writes, "What would happen if we really would make the saving of souls the ultimate purpose, the end and aim of our joint work? [...] [W]hat an influence it will be on our dear congregations and their pastors and on their relationship toward one another if all acknowledge the saving of souls as the end and aim of our joint work! They will all pull, as peacefully as they do zealously, on the same yoke. Even though all kinds of strife-causing questions might arise – yet the question: "Which course is best for the salvation of souls?" will quickly give the right solution. [...] Then our dear congregations will say to one another, as Abraham said to Lot: "Let there be not strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdsmen and thy herdsmen; for we are brethren...." (Gen. 13:8f.). Whatever will win the most souls for Christ, that would decide between us."

What do you hear this quote saying, and how does this connect to last Month's newsletter on the importance of asking why?

Proverbs 3:6-7 says, "***In all your ways acknowledge [God], and he will make straight your paths. Be not wise in your own eyes.***" When we at Peace make the "why" about what God wants this church to do instead of what we as individuals or segmented groups want, Scripture tells us that God will make straight our paths. That's the picture C.F.W. Walther gives us – a church that has at its center the saving message of Christ "***will all pull, as peacefully as they do zealously, on the same yoke.***" Once the "why" is in place, the next big question is "how" – i.e., "How do we do this?" But we need to insert a **BIG** word of caution here. The first impulse all of us have is to jump straight into listing different programs or ministries. Yet, why do we do this? And why could this be dangerous?

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Before you or I can talk about any specific ministry or program (Sunday School, VBS, Youth Group, Yeah-Owls, Peace MoMs-MoPS...), we must first have a set of standards/values that help us to measure whether or not any specific ministry is *actually* fulfilling the mission. Yet, “how” would we evaluate whether or not a ministry or program is helping or hindering the mission of the church?

The good news is that Peace has already given us a set of standards/values that we can use to evaluate the relationship between any program and the mission of the church. When I was deliberating the Divine Call to serve as Associate Pastor, Peace’s Values Statement and the people of Peace, through interview questions, expressed to me that Peace needs to be a church emphasizing the values of Worship – Peace needs to be a congregation whose members have a deep connection with Jesus through Word and Sacrament ministry of Peace. Discipleship – Peace needs to be a congregation whose laity has a solid and firm Lutheran/Scriptural worldview centered upon Christ and His gifts to us in Word and Sacrament. Fellowship – Peace needs to be a congregation whose members have a deep connection with one another. Evangelism – Peace needs to be a congregation whose members seek the lost and share the Gospel. Mercy – Peace needs to be a congregation whose members show care and concern for the needy. Effective Leadership – Peace needs to be a congregation whose leadership shows itself to be efficient in the practical day-to-day operations that fall outside Word and Sacrament ministry.

So “how” will Peace accomplish its mission? By making sure that all of our ministries/programs promote discipleship, worship, fellowship, evangelism, works of mercy, and effective leadership. With these values in place, notice that the “how” of the church *stops* being what you do. Instead, the “how” becomes promoting discipleship, worship, fellowship, evangelism, works of mercy, and effective leadership. Because of this, if what you *do* (as a church) *doesn’t* promote these things, it fails to advance the mission of the church. The “how” ensures that “what” we do is *actually connected* to “why” we do it!

When we look at future or existing programs or ministries, we should ask ourselves, “How well will this program promote discipleship, worship, fellowship, evangelism, works of mercy, and effective leadership?” If an existing or future program/ministry does very little to promote these values, we can be fairly sure that it is not connected to the mission of the church and, therefore, not centered in Christ (the “Why”).

Think about this: Let’s say someone tells you that we need a food bank and a comfort dog ministry. How would you respond, and how would you determine whether or not these would be ministries we should move forward with? (Hint: We ask “why” & then “how” because once you have the “why” and the “how,” then you can use those to determine what we should do.) Cart before the horse – Signs that the church’s focus has shifted off the *why* & *how* onto “*what we do*”: More time is spent in meetings *talking about* ministry than actually spent *doing* ministry; Decisions are not implemented or are implemented poorly because of post-decision fall-out – i.e., second-guessing/push-back/poor-follow through; Decisions are reactive, not proactive; People’s leadership roles are motivated and directed by boards and committees – i.e., leaders feel like they must run everything through a board rather than just reaching out to people and getting the work of ministry done; The method and means of mission and ministry are determined by the boards and committees and not vice-versa – i.e., the structure ends up choking the organic development of the ministry.

What are your options when this happens? Do nothing – the issues will grow and so will decline; Respond to the issues by creating more boards and committees – you often end up entrenching the very problem you are trying to overcome; Impose Change Singlehandedly – dangerous because it can seem individually motivated & heavy-handed, and the individual or group can become a

scapegoat if things go badly (which covers up the real problem); Change from the inside out – Internally change the leaders' mindset, with Pastors shepherding leadership & members; members in leadership leading/mentoring others; begins with asking the "Why?"

When the 'Why?' of Jesus and His mission here at Peace is always at the center, we, in turn, become Christ-centered! This leads to increased unity, increased effectiveness, decreased fear, increased intentionality, increased coherence, and less individually driven.

So, we intentionally ask the questions of 'Why?' so that together as a congregational family, we are led toward a deeper relationship with Jesus! But we must always be clear about *where* you & I encounter Jesus in a very real and unparalleled way. Worship is the center and hub of both who we are and what we do. Everything we do together in ministry flows from the sanctuary outward to the rest of the church, continuing into the community surrounding us.

To grow in health as a congregation, we must be intentional about "who we are" **and** "what we do" as the hands & feet of Jesus – as the very body of Christ. Let us walk together as a congregation that looks to Christ in all things, and let Him lead us to love one another and seek the lost outside our walls, with Mission & Ministry as our focus. We are here to reach people with the Gospel, inviting and providing members and visitors alike 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. This is who Christ has created us to be. To God Be The Glory! Amen.

Pastor Josiah J. Fitch



YEAH OWLS

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).

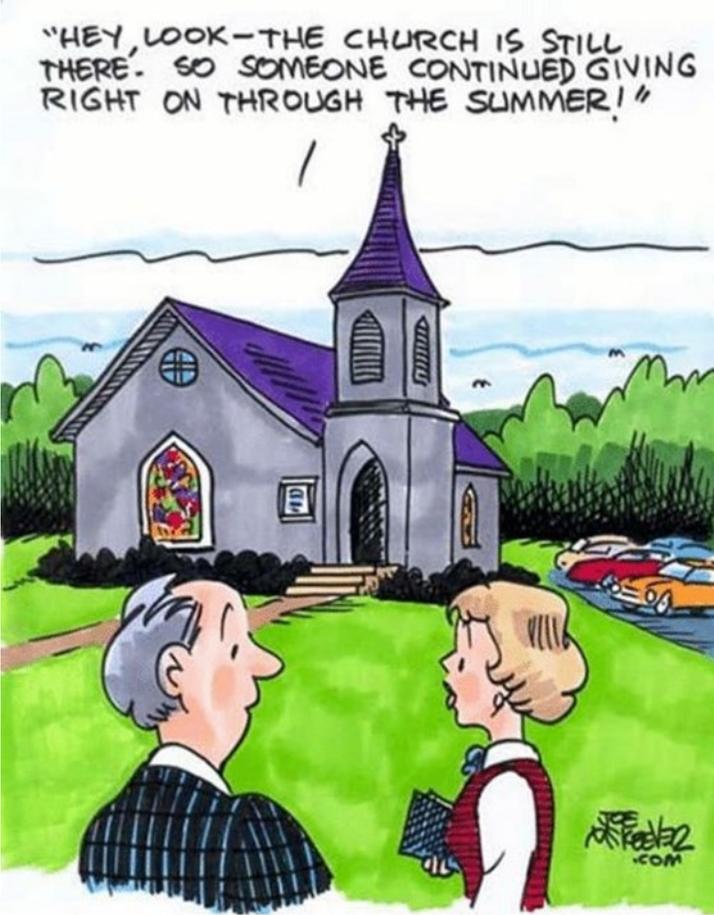
Our next get-together is Thursday, October 20, 2022. Coffee fellowship begins at 11:00 AM, with lunch served promptly at 11:30 AM. At noon we will have our program. This month we will be joined by Bev Jurgensen and the Y-Nots, a singing group. Signup sheets will be in the Fellowship Hallway 2 weeks prior to the October 20 meeting. Make sure to sign up. We'd love to have you join us, and you can even bring a friend.



"Neenah MOPS will be back in session! Are you the mother of a young child? Are you looking for community and support? Do you need a break? Come join us! Our next meeting will be October 11th 9am at Peace Lutheran Church. If you are not the mother of a young child, perhaps you know someone locally who could benefit from our community. Please,

invite them! If you are interested in serving as a caregiver, have any questions about our group, or would like to learn more, email neenahmops@gmail.com."

October 15th at 10 a.m. Pumpkin Painting at the Doyle House: Neenah MOPS invites you out into the woods for pumpkin painting at the Doyle home! This is a bring your own pumpkin event. Paints & brushes will be provided. If you would like to carve, please bring your own carving tools; please keep sharp objects away from young children. If you plan to attend, please bring a snack to share! Come prepared for clothing suitable for enjoying the woods (boots if rainy, long sleeves, hat). We are located at N1310 Pine Valley Lane in Fremont. For GPS purposes, use address N1304 Pine Valley Lane Fremont. We share a driveway with this neighbor. Pass their house & follow the driveway left into the woods. You will come to a train track. STOP, & look for trains, there is no crossing bar, & the tracks are VERY ACTIVE. Follow the driveway past a bar, up to the brown house. Call Rebecca Doyle at 810-357-7742 for questions or directions.



| Away to close up the cottage, or are you
 | enjoying being a snowbird?
 | E-giving is available. Visit the Peace
 | website
 | <https://www.peaceneenah.com/home> and
 | click on the Online Giving photo scrolling
 | at the top of the page.

 | Donations to the Foundation for the
 | Future Fund reduce loan debt.
 | Loan balance as of August 31, 2022 was
 | \$117,775.



Saturday, October 29th 6:30 p.m.

VITAL STATISTICS
Number of Baptized Souls: 443 Number of Confirmed Souls: 375 Number of Families: 270

Death:
 August 13, 2022
 Joe Belongia
 August 9, 2022
 Matthew Shukoski (NM)

Funeral:
 August 19, 2022
 Joe Belongia
 August 26, 2022
 Matthew Shukoski (NM)

Transferred out of Peace:
 Santy, Vahn, Santy Jr., Jaylen & Audrina Vongkhamsaeng
 To Shepherd of the Hills Greenville

Released
 Sarah Patschke
 The Core (WELS)
 Rosemary LaCroix (asked to be released)

Baptism:
 August 21, 2022
 Rosalie Ann Meerbott
 William George Meerbott VI-
 adult baptism

Birth:
 August 22, 2022
 Navy Elle Peters
 Parents: Ryan & Brielle Peters

Wedding:
 September 10, 2022
 Terry Crober & Tanya Potratz



Through our **Mites**, "you can lead the little children to the Savior's waiting arms." As stated in the hymn, "Hark! The Voice of Jesus Calling." On Mission Sunday, October 1 & 2, Mites will be collected to help fund a grant for South Wisconsin District Church Worker Students, with mission speaker Rev. Dr. Charles Cortright.

October 17, at 5:15 p.m., the mission-minded from LWML Zone 11 and Circuit 14 will gather to exercise their **Divine Muscle** while praising God and praying for the ministry of Rev. Dr. Charles Cortright, who teaches at the Luther Academy of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Latvia (ELCL). Sign up on the Fellowship hallway bulletin board to join us.

Save the date November 14 for an Advent Tea.

Do you enjoy helping the helpers? You'd be a great fit for the **Workers' Room!** Sign up to support the volunteers who will make the 2023 LWML Convention possible while we "Celebrate the Lord of the Nations" in Milwaukee. Go to <https://www.lwml-swd.org/events/other> for more information, or contact Allison at allisonlwmlmke23@gmail.com.



Doris Andre 10/14
Linda Jensen 10/25
Patti Marohn 10/29



The school items that members of the congregation generously donated were delivered to Trinity Lutheran School. Thank you for your donations!

The Compassion Garden is winding down. The efforts of many individuals volunteering their time to tilling, planting, weeding, watering, picking produce, and delivering are truly beneficial to the success of being



able to provide fresh produce to local food pantries and members of the congregation that are homebound/unable to maintain their own garden. This summer, there was an abundance of fresh produce delivered to 5 food pantries regularly as the vegetables ripened. To God be the Glory!

Social Ministry October – Support our Troops. Ingathering of items for care packages to be provided to military chaplains to use to reach out to our men and women in uniform. With simple daily items, chaplains can build relationships to spiritually support our service personnel. There will be a collection box in the back hall labeled to place donated items: chap-stick, lens cleaners, emery boards, black or white tube socks, toothpaste/brushes, chewing gum, beef slim Jim's, granola and power bars, all sizes freezer-weight Ziploc bags, and batteries AA and AAA.



A Thanksgiving Day Meal is being planned as previously held before COVID. Details will be provided in further newsletter updates. A meal will be held in the fellowship hall for all to attend, and meals will only be delivered to homebound members of Peace Lutheran. This event will require volunteer support and donated food items; as the time approaches, there will be sign-ups in the hallway.



LWML SUNDAY On Saturday, October 1, and Sunday, October 2, we will again celebrate what is affectionately known as LWML Sunday. Featured this year is a guest preacher, Rev. Dr. Charles Cortright. Below is a brief Biography of Dr. Cortright and his wife, Connie.

Rev. Dr. Charles and Connie Cortright serve the Lord through The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) in Riga, Latvia. In this role, Charles teaches at the Luther Academy of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Latvia (ELCL), an LCMS partner church. He assists in the formation of ELCL pastors and guest seminarians from other countries attending the Academy. He teaches seminars and makes presentations to pastors and church workers throughout the region. Charles also serves as the Eurasia region's chaplain providing pastoral care to the other LCMS personnel serving in this region. Charles received his bachelor's degree from Northwestern College, Watertown, Wis.; his Master of Divinity from Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Mequon, Wis.; and his doctorate (Ph.D.) degree in historical theology from Marquette University, Milwaukee. Before coming to the LCMS, Charles served in the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) parishes in California and New Jersey. He taught theology at Wisconsin Lutheran College, Milwaukee, for 14 years, and from 1996 to 2002, Charles served as a visiting professor in Ukraine. Connie received a bachelor's degree in education from Dr. Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minn. She has taught in Lutheran elementary schools, served as a librarian, and worked as an office coordinator for a law firm. Connie has written two historical romance novels and publishes a weekly blog about life in the countries in which she and Charles have lived. Charles and Connie have four sons and thirteen grandchildren. Rev. Dr. Cortright will also briefly share his work in the Adult Bible Class on Sunday.

ADULT INSTRUCTION CLASS On Saturday, October 15, 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 like to review the basic doctrines as drawn from the Holy Bible as believed, taught and confessed in the LCMS. There will be coffee, lunch, and class materials offered at no cost to the participants. Please call the church office if you plan on attending by Monday, October 10. Pastors Schroeder and Fitch will serve as facilitators for this class.

Men's Bible Study "Embracing Godly Character" to begin Thursday, October 13th! **Please Sign-up via the sheet in the Fellowship Hallway, or email Pastor Fitch.** As has been our custom, we will generally meet on the 2nd & 4th Thursdays of the Month @ 6:30pm. We live in a godless culture. What are we to do when the faith of the next generation is threatened/challenged? We respond by embracing Godly character. As such, we will explore how to center our lives on God's Word and promises, learn how the Christian community of old responded to similar cultural challenges, and seek to be rooted in the identity God has given us through Christ. Faith leaders (and parents!!) within the Christian community are essential to raising up Godly leaders & families, and it all begins with starting a conversation about the role that character formation plays in equipping the next generation to stand firm in the faith—for now and for generations to come.

Mark Your Calendar: *Every One His Witness* 6-Week Series

On Sunday, October 16th (during the S.S./Bible Study Hour) the E1HW 6-Week Series is set to begin. This is a wonderful Video led course, which aids us and brings confidence to us in our Witness of our Lord & Savior Jesus Christ. Often when we have opportunity to witness to others, we skip out on the opportunity, because we are afraid, or lack confidence in our abilities or in God's Word. This can happen when talking with people we've never met before, with our own De-churched family members, and with our friends. So come and be refreshed in His saving Word, even as you are strengthened in your faith in Him and love toward others, and so be made more able (& willing) to share your faith with confidence! Coffee & Class Materials are offered at no cost to members of Peace. Please Call the Church Office if you plan on attending by Monday, October 10th. On behalf of the Board of Evangelism & the Pastors, we hope to see you there!

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

TIMELESS TREASURES Christmas Bazaar.

This year's bazaar is on Saturday, December 3rd; mark it on your calendar.

Our bazaar committee will start having regular meetings. If you have an interest or desire to join our team and help plan and organize this great church fundraising even, please see Kris Belongia or call 920-233-3999 for more information. Some of the areas we address and have leaders for are cookie sales, children's room, baked and canned good sales, craft project day, cashiering, advertising, and logistics to get us all put together for the day of the bazaar, etc., etc.

"YOU", the congregation, are what make this event a success every year. So, I ask that you start praying for God's support as we move forward. I also challenge you again this year to start making your crafts, there are only a little more than 2 months left and we will need lots and lots of items. Please watch for updated news about the bazaar in future bulletins and newsletters. Thank you for all your support. Kris Belongia and the Bazaar Planning Committee