

Inside this issue:

Theological Jargon	2
Reformation/Our Shepherd	3
Mighty Fortress/VBS	4
VBS cont.	5
Special Days	6
Celebrating our Freedom	7
Books of the Bible Word	8

The Shepherd's Voice

June/July 2017

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There's a Place for You at SOP!

SHEPHERD OF PEACE LUTHERAN CHURCH

The Chancel Upgrade is complete!

We give thanks to God, our anonymous donor and the many hands that went in to making this happen!

**Lindsey Johnston
Stephanie Anderson
Monty Anderson
Parrish Hurley
Karl Krick**

**Paul Repogle
Robert Schievelbein
Ronnie Tilley
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Theological Jargon: Adiaphora

Adiaphora is a Latin word that means “indifferent things,” that is, things that are neither commanded nor forbidden by scripture. There are certain things that we do in the church that are commanded. When Jesus instituted Holy Baptism, he told his disciples to baptize all nations and to do it in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. This means that scripture commands us to baptize all nations (babies, too!), that it’s to be done using the name of the Holy Trinity, and that water is to be used. It would be wrong for us to deny infant baptism, use some other words in baptism, or to use something besides water in baptism because the scriptures give clear instructions on the matter. Likewise, when it comes to the institution of the Lord’s Supper, Christ’s Words are clear. For us to substitute something else for bread and wine, to leave out the words of institution, or to deny Jesus’ presence in the supper would be wrong because, again, Christ’s Words are clear.

There are also things, however, where scripture is silent. For example, a church could use white wine instead of red wine in the sacrament. There is no command here either way. The mode of baptism (sprinkling, pouring, or immersion) is not commanded in scripture. All forms are valid so long as water is used. Some people make the sign of the cross at the invocation, absolution, and at other parts of the liturgy. This is an adiaphoron. You are free to do it or not do it. Some people dress in fine clothing for church on Sunday while others are more casual. There is no dress code laid out in the scriptures.

Even though scripture is silent on many things, we do want to keep in mind that what we do makes a statement. A more helpful question to ask when trying to decide whether something should or shouldn’t be done in the church is: “What will this action (or lack of action) confess?” For example, what if instead of standing to hear the Gospel reading on Sunday morning we all remained seated? There is no command in scripture that everyone stand, after all. The reason we stand for such a thing, though, is out of respect for Christ and his word. It makes the statement about what we believe about Christ and His Word. Think about the firestorm that 49ers quarterback Colin Kaepernick started last year when he refused to stand for the national anthem. Technically, there is no law that says you must stand for the national anthem, but not doing so made a statement.

Sometimes things that are adiaphora cease to be adiaphora. What I mean by that is that when there is a conflict and a confession of truth is called for, then nothing is indifferent in that particular matter. Though some practices may be neutral in and of themselves, in certain contexts they are no longer neutral. For example, some churches mandate that a certain mode of baptism (immersion, namely) be used in order for baptism to be valid. As stated above, this is, technically, an indifferent matter. However, when something is being imposed where God does not impose such a law in the scriptures, we should resist that thing. If we were to baptize using immersion, we would be making a statement that says that those churches that insist on immersion baptism are right.

As a church we always want to make a strong confession about what we believe, teach, and confess. This means looking at a practice and evaluating it not just based on whether scripture will allow it or not, but also considering what statement we’d be making with our actions. May we always be clear in confessing that we are saved by grace alone through faith alone in Christ Jesus!

Summertime!

Summertime means travel time for many as children are out of school. Even if you don’t have children at home anymore, you may find yourself going to visit children and grandchildren as their schedules are more open the next couple of months. Unfortunately, when we are on vacation we have a habit of also taking a vacation from church. If you will be away from home for a weekend, please search for the nearest LCMS congregation near where you’ll be traveling. If you need some help with this, I’d be happy to assist you in finding a place to worship. I’ll even call up the pastor of that church and let him know to be expecting you.

Thank You

Thank you so much for the beautiful plaque commemorating the tenth anniversary of my ordination. It’s found a home atop one of the bookcases in my office. I’m so happy and thankful to be your pastor and look forward to serving you for many years to come!

In Christ,
Pastor Vandercook



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TO: The Churches of the North and South Little Rock Circuits

FROM: Faith Lutheran Church, Fairfield Bay, AR

"Reformation Reverberations: the Lasting Impact of Martin Luther's Reforms"

Christians around the world will be celebrating the 500th anniversary of the Reformation in 2017. Beginning with the *95 Theses*, Martin Luther's religious reforms have had tremendous and lasting effects upon the Western world, both in the roots of the many denominations of the Christian church and in other secular arenas.

In an upcoming presentation at **Faith Lutheran Church, Saturday, June 24th from 9:00 a.m. to Noon**. Associate Professor of Historical Theology Erik Herrmann of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, MO, will examine the long term effects of Luther's influence in three areas: religion, politics and society. **Your congregation members are invited to attend this informative presentation. A light lunch will be served. (It would be helpful to those preparing the lunch if we could get some indication as to the number who would attend. Please notify Mrs. Judy Morris, secretary at Our Shepherd Lutheran Church, Searcy, AR.)**

Professor Herrmann is Director of the Seminary's Center for Reformation Research, and has been a consultant in the production of the recent film, "Martin Luther." He received his Ph.D. from the Concordia in 2005 in Renaissance and Reformation Studies. Before being called to the faculty, he was an assistant pastor at Timothy Evangelical Lutheran Church in the Lindenwood Park neighborhood of St. Louis.

His areas of interest and research include the history of biblical interpretation, with a particular focus on Martin Luther and the Reformation period; history of medieval and Reformation/early modern Europe; 20th century interpretations of Martin Luther and his theology; and the history of American Lutheranism. His most recent publications are in *The Oxford Handbook of Martin Luther's Theology*, *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Martin Luther*, and *The Annotated Luther*.

Professor Herrmann is married to Aliasha (née Ave-Lallemant). They are blessed with five children: Augustine, Constansa, Mathias, Tobias, and Elspeth.

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"Our mission is to use all of God's gifts to reach the lost of the world and shepherd believers with the Gospel of Jesus Christ."



VBS 2017, *A Mighty Fortress*, was a smashing success! THANK YOU to everyone who came out to volunteer or attend the adult study. Throughout the three day adventure, the children in attendance learned about how Joshua tore down the walls at Jericho, how the people greeted Jesus into Jerusalem with a welcome fit for a king, and finally how the King of Kings conquered sin, death, and the devil through His death on the cross and resurrection. Each day, the children were fed a delicious meal, made crafts, enjoyed opening and closing, and rotated through Bible Challenge, Games, Music, and Story Telling. Judging by the smiles on faces and the enthusiasm in voices, a good time was had by all.

This year we had 39 children in attendance (~14 more than last year) and 34 volunteers. We could not have pulled it off without EACH AND EVERY one you. The offering mission project this year collected \$201.22 for Zion Lutheran Church in Avilla as they attempt to get back on their feet after a fire took a portion of their facilities needed for their various ministries.





Now, after a quick breather, we shift our focus to next year's VBS as we attempt to navigate *Splash Canyon*.



Special Days in June & July

6-1 Parrish & Jeanette Hurley (A)
6-3 John & Lisa Nazzaro (A)
 Laura Vandercook (B)
6-5 Allyssa Vandercook (B,10)
6-9 Grady Flakoll (B,3)
6-15 Dan & Jessica Moreth (A)
6-19 Paul & Georgie Reprogle (A)
 Ron Shertzer (B)
6-21 Philip & Ashley Davenport (A)
6-24 Lindey & Karen Johnston (A)
6-25 Lesa Browning (B)
6-27 Lonnie Moreth (B)
6-29 Ken & Georgia Aeberman (A)
 Joe Wheat (B)

7-8 Georgia Aeberman (B)
 Hugh Purnell (B)
 Tracy Wray (B)
7-9 Lindey Johnston (B)
7-13 Mary Womack (B)
 Clarice Wray (B)

June
18th



July
4th



The second year for our CBI group from MMS saw some wonderful advancements for these kids.. This program is enriching their lives and ours as well. We wish them a fun-filled summer and look forward to seeing them again next year...minus the 3 we are losing to high school!

By Rev. Paul Hass
Pastor, Bella Vista
Lutheran Church,
Bella Vista Ark.
Mid-South District
Third Vice-President

MID-SOUTH LUTHERAN

CELEBRATING OUR FREEDOM IN CHRIST

When I think of July, I think of July 4! Perhaps you think about a day off from work to enjoy picnics, fireworks and those red, white and blue flags displayed in front yards around your neighborhood. It is a fact that since we live in the United States of America, we can voice our opinions freely and can vote for the people of our choice. There are very many good reasons why we should never take our freedom for granted.

In July, we will hear, celebrate and be reminded many times about the freedom we enjoy in the United States, where we can worship our God without reprisal and without concern. As citizens of our beloved country, we should give thanks for the many blessings we have, and especially for the many who fought for and paid the price for our liberties.

As we bask in the glow of this holiday, there is also a part of me that wonders if we are engaging in that freedom to its fullest. What if there was more for us to do than we previously thought? What if there were more people around us that are hungering and thirsting for what so many of us have known for so long? What if there were a way to give voice to our faith and to intentionally share the cause for our freedom for all of eternity? We know who that is: Jesus!

While we are reminded of our civil freedoms in this country, there is another real freedom we as Christians share in. We do not need a special holiday to display our freedom found in Christ Jesus.

As those baptized in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, we have the forgiveness of our sins and freedom to love others as we have been loved.

In Rom. 8:2-4, St. Paul talks about freedom by speaking of what we have become free from:

“For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death. For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.”

God, through His Son Jesus Christ, has by your baptism made you His and has set you free. That is what John communicates to us in his Gospel. In John 8:36, Jesus says:

“So, if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.”

Taking Jesus at His Word, that He frees us, means celebrating our freedom by focusing on living in such a way as to worship God in every aspect of our lives. As Christians, we do not need to wait for an annual holiday to recognize true and eternal freedom. Daily, we hold fast to the wonderful news that the battle has been fought and the price has been paid by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, that we may have freedom from sin, eternal death and the devil, now and forever.

The only person that can set us free from the enslavement that captures all humanity is Jesus Christ!

In response to the Gospel, we are challenged to hear and obey the Spirit-inspired words of freedom found in our Bibles. Christ is with us as we share that word of freedom and redemption with a culture around us that is lost.

When we serve others, we share with them the freedom found in Christ, the One who sets us free. Who knows? Your neighbors may well respond and ask you why you are serving them. When that happens, you may be privileged to share the source of your freedom to serve: Jesus.

That means that right where you are, right now at this moment, you have the joyous freedom to love and serve one another as you have been loved and served by Christ. Celebrate!





THE SOP SPOTLIGHT IS ON MAEGHAN GIBSON

At the young age of 13, Maeghan found herself searching for a church she could call home. After several failed attempts at different churches, she began to feel slightly discouraged but accepted an invitation from a friend to attend his church where his dad was the pastor. That next Saturday she took to the SOP Facebook page asking “What do I wear?” and was promptly answered by Carol Mayerhoff who then invited Maeghan to sit with her during the next morning’s service. Before she could find Carol the next morning she was warmly welcomed by multiple members of the congregation, several of whom offered a seat with them. Maeghan immediately realized that this was where she belonged and has been with us ever since. Soon after she joined the church she was baptised and attended the 2013 National Youth Gathering in San Antonio with the youth group. Not too long after, she was confirmed as a member of the Lutheran faith and of our church.

Maeghan graduated from Maumelle High School this last month and also celebrated her 18th birthday. During her time at MHS she served as an ambassador, participated in the Christian Student Union, as well as the Science, Beta, Spanish, Small Business, and Drama clubs. During her freshman year she was made captain of the junior varsity Quiz Bowl team and upon completing the JV season, was promoted to the varsity team which competed in the State Finals on AETN. She continued with quiz bowl and was made co-captain of the varsity team junior year, captain of the varsity team senior year, as well as assistant coach of the junior varsity team. She was also highly involved with her school yearbook, serving as managing editor for her last three years.

Moving forward, Maeghan has plans to work through the summer and has since secured a job at Old Navy. She loves spending time at the lake or playing games with her friends and family and plans to take a cruise with her dad and younger sister in the beginning of July. After completing many of her prerequisites in high school, Maeghan has been accepted to the School of Nursing at UCA with the Excellence, and Arkansas Lottery scholarships; she plans to gain her RN certification and work either in the ER or in Pediatrics.

Maeghan is an outstanding student, with a kind and loving heart. She has been a blessing to us here at SOP. With all of her accomplishments so far, we know she will go forward to do many great things with her life in the service of others. Our prayers are with Meghan as she begins this new and exciting chapter of her life.

