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July  
2023

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## *Thoughts from Pastor Stites:*

### No Passion Nor Suffering

Have you ever tried to move a vehicle in neutral? Even though the engine is running, you can't go anywhere. With some people pushing, you can get the vehicle moving some, but it takes a great deal of effort, and even then you won't go very far.

Apathy is like being in neutral. It comes from the Greek meaning "no suffering," which at first seems nice, who wants to suffer? But apathy also has no passion, no drive, often times it is described as just not caring at all. I do believe this is part of the problem in our society today, people who have been handed everything, who are not suffering, but then they have nothing to fight for, to be passionate about, and their apathy leads to depression, or a search for meaning. While not offensive on the surface, apathy is very dangerous.

Apathy is even worse for the faithful, for the Church. When we are passionate, excited, striving for a goal, we go boldly into the unknown. When we are being oppressed and persecuted, the world trying to hold us down, we fight back, we swim against the current, getting stronger. But when we aren't suffering persecution, and we do not have a goal to strive for, when there is nothing to drive us forward, we grow apathetic, we are in neutral. When we are apathetic, we just accept things the way they are, and have no desire to do or say anything, for the world, for the Church, or for ourselves.

In **Revelation 3:14-22**, Jesus addresses the Church of Laodicea saying, "I know your works: you are neither cold nor hot. Would that you were either cold or hot! So, because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of my mouth. For you say, I am rich, I have prospered, and I need nothing, not realizing that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked. ... Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline, **so be ZEALOUS and repent.**"

For us here in Yuma, we are tempted with apathy in the summer. We do not have the winter visitors here, we do not have as much to do, and those who are still here leave for vacations, or stay inside to escape the heat. It is easy to just sit back and wait for a better tomorrow, or we find ourselves content with the way things are. No passion to drive us forward, no suffering to overcome and make us stronger. Is that what God wants for His Church? Is that what God wants for you?

*O heavenly Father, forgive us our apathy. Fill us with Your Holy Spirit, strengthen our faith that we may have a burning passion to grow in faith, and to do Your will. Strengthen us for the day of persecution, that we may shine the light of Christ in this dark world. And when life seems aimless, lead us on the path where You want us to go; in the Jesus' Name we pray, Amen.*

*Pastor Jonathan Stites*

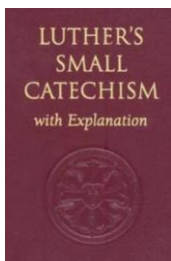
# Announcements & Upcoming Events

\*Phone numbers and addresses will no longer be published. Please use the church directory or call the church office @ 928-345-9694, if you need someone's number or address for an event\*



## Online Services & Bible Studies

Sunday's Services and Bible Studies are available on our YouTube Channel. Just click on the following link: [Shepherd of the Hills Yuma YouTube page](#) or search "Shepherd of the Hills Yuma" on YouTube.



## Online Study: A Review of Luther's Small Catechism

Available online every Saturday by 6:00am and can be accessed by clicking on this link: [Shepherd of the Hills Yuma YouTube page](#) or search "Shepherd of the Hills Yuma" on YouTube.



## Women's Bible Studies

Wednesday, July 5<sup>th</sup> @ 7:30am at Sharie Jasper's\*

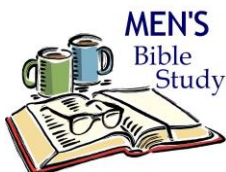
Wednesday, July 19<sup>st</sup> @ 7:30am at Ora Kuebler\*



## Fourth of July Celebration

Tuesday, July 4<sup>th</sup> @ 1:00pm

Hot dogs, buns, condiments and lemonade will be provided. Please bring a favorite dish to share. Everyone is welcome! There is a sign-up sheet in the back of the sanctuary so we can get an accurate count for buying supplies.



The Men's Bible Study on Tuesday, July 11<sup>th</sup> @ 8:00am will be held @ Mike Yelland's\*.



## LWML Annual Planning Meeting

Our Annual Planning Meeting for the upcoming year  
will be: **Wednesday, July 12<sup>th</sup> @ 11:00am.**

Bring any ideas for new events and activities to be considered.

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## *SOTH Evangelism News*

### **Easy Evangelism:**

Judy was in Sam's Club recently. She was waiting for her husband to check out when a woman walked past. Judy nodded and smiled to her as she passed. A few seconds later, the woman came back to Judy, hugged her and said "Ma'am, you don't know how much I needed that smile". There are opportunities all around us to bear witness as Christians, ask God to help you recognize these opportunities – He will, you know.



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## **SHEPHERD OF THE HILLS LUTHERAN CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING June, 2023**

There was no Council meeting in June.



## **STEWARDSHIP: FREEDOM**



July 4<sup>th</sup>. Independence Day. Our thoughts go to celebrations and barbecues; fireworks and hot dogs. Games in the sun and family get-togethers. Fun.

Historically, we are taking the day to remember the signing of the Declaration of Independence (no, it was not signed on this day, but let's just say it is the day the thirteen colonies decided to approve the statement of our desire to become free of King George III's rule.)

The war that followed was costly in lives lost, financially, in suffering and the feelings of hostility

and hatred that grew from the conflict. Still, we celebrate. Our freedom. So what is freedom?

Usually the word tends to imply getting rid of something. Freedom from tyranny; freedom from prison; freedom from oppression; freedom from an addiction. These appear to be desirable conditions. And we, citizens of the United States of America, are among the "free-est" of people. Yes, this is truly something to celebrate and be thankful for.

But what does freedom mean when it is looked at from a Christian steward perspective? We have been set free by Christ.....for what? His life, death, and resurrection set us free *from* the bonds of sin, death, and the powers of the devil. He has done all the "froms" related to freedom. That leaves us, his followers/stewards, to forge ahead fearlessly to accomplish the good works He has set before us. We are free to live and work as agents of God. We are freed *for* service to God, yielding all lordship to God alone.

We are freed *for* loving ourselves. While this sounds strange, loving yourself involves seeing yourself through God's eyes. This is a precious gift because it allows us to no longer see ourselves as weak, sinful, worthless entities but as children of God---redeemed, forgiven, empowered, held in His hands of love, and called into His service.

We are freed *for* service to our neighbor. If we are free and we are stewards in God's kingdom, then our lives are God's gift to us to invest in service to our neighbor. We can joyfully and thankfully make this investment in time/talent/treasure because our only concern is showing God's love and redemption, his peace and his true freedom found in Jesus Christ. All the old fears that haunt the unsaved world---fear of losing status, fear of dying, fear of embarrassment, fear of living---are nonsense to us. We have true FREEDOM. Through our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, we are free to serve. Wherever we are. Wherever He plants us.

Here I am Lord.

Send me.

Soli Deo Gloria

Shannon Cady – Stewardship

## July Birthdays



YELLAND, Samantha	07/04
THOMPSON, Marie	07/05
HANSEN, RJ	07/12
LUNDAHL, Dave	07/14
HEISTAD, Myron	07/18
SHOEMAKER, Mary	07/19
STUCKER, Barbara	07/21
PARKER, Gerry	07/23
STAUFFER, Al	07/29
PETERS, Joe	07/30
LARSON, Alexander	07/31



## July Anniversaries

SHOEMAKER, Lynn & Mary (34)	07/09
HAUGH, Kristopher & Robin (18)	07/19
SCHLOTHAUER, Don & Sandra (62)	07/19
YELLAND, Michael & Samantha (23)	07/22
PETERS, Joe & Lynda (46)	07/23
DOCKTER, Lloyd & Karly (46)	07/30



## FOOD BANK

**June**  
**\$145**

**SEASON TOTAL**  
**January - December**  
**\$1485**

Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the LORD your God which He has given you. Deuteronomy 16:17

## Stewardship Corner

The Apostle Paul talks about the attitude we should have *"as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved."* He counsels us to be compassionate and humble, to be kind and patient, and to forgive others as we have been forgiven. He tells us to let Christ's peace reign in our hearts *"and be thankful"* (Colossians 3:12-15). Too often, when we pray, we put an agenda before God. We tell Him what we want Him to take care of: find that person a job, heal that other person, solve our money problems, and keep our kids safe. We add our thanks as an afterthought. Try spending your whole prayer time offering thanks. In fact, the Bible tells us, *"Give thanks in all circumstances, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you"* (1 Thessalonians 5:18).

## Treasurer's Report for June 2023

### General Fund

Offerings Received: \$11,862

Offerings Needed: \$21,458

**\$9,596 - short**

*(The Offerings Needed per month is the Annual Budget divided by 12)*

### **Fiscal Year to Date 2023**

Offerings Received YTD: \$107,109

Offerings Needed YTD: \$128,748

**\$21,639- short**

## July 2023 at SOTH

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Sunday's Online Service available after 1:00pm - click on following link: <a href="#">Shepherd of the Hills Yuma YouTube</a>			Wednesday's Online Bible Study – click on following link: <a href="#">Shepherd of the Hills Yuma YouTube</a>			
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<b>2</b> 8:15am Adult Bible Study 9:30am Worship w/Communion 10:30am Fellowship 5:00pm Sunday Night Cards	<b>3</b>	<b>4 Independence Day</b> <b>Church Offices Closed</b> 8:00am Men's Bible Study - <b>Cancelled</b> 1:00pm Fourth of July Celebration	<b>5</b> 7:30am Women's Bible Study @ Sharie Jasper's 9:30am Adult Bible Study	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>9</b> 8:15am Adult Bible Study 9:30am Worship w/Communion 10:30am Fellowship 5:00pm Sunday Night Cards	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b> 8:00am Men's Bible Study @ Mike Yelland's	<b>12</b> 9:30am Adult Bible Study 11:00am LWML Planning Mtg.	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>16</b> 8:15am Adult Bible Study 9:30am Worship w/Communion 10:30am Fellowship 5:00pm Sunday Night Cards	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b> 8:00am Men's Bible Study 10:00am Council Mtg.	<b>19</b> 7:30am Women's Bible Study @ Ora Kuebler's 9:30am Adult Bible Study	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>23</b> 8:15am Adult Bible Study 9:30am Worship w/Communion 10:30am Fellowship 5:00pm Sunday Night Cards	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b> 8:00am Men's Bible Study	<b>26</b> 9:30am Adult Bible Study	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>30</b> 8:15am Adult Bible Study 9:30am Worship w/Communion 10:30am Fellowship 5:00pm Sunday Night Cards <b>Mite Box Collection</b>	<b>31</b>					