ST. JAMES LUTHERAN CHURCH – HOLLAND, MN July 2021–NEWSLETTER 7

**Treasure in Clay Pots**

2 Cor. 4:5-7 “ For what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. [6] For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. [7] But we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us.” [ESV]

 Christians are like treasure found in clay pots. The treasure is not the clay pot, but the items contained within it. We proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord. Christian ministry is not about the pots, it is to focus attention on the gem or jewel contained within. The difficulty in much of Christendom today, is that the focus becomes the messenger, not the message. So much is made of Christian television stars and religious celebrities that we forget the main focus is not to be on the bearer of the gospel. St. Paul here reminds us the focus is to be solely on Christ. Jesus has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. God’s Holy Spirit has given us the gift of faith through the word shared and people are saved.

God works through that proclaimed word to change hearts to believe in Jesus as Savior. The servant or pot is the bearer of that word to the lives of others. When Christians speak God’s word and administer his gifts, they serve as the “mouth and hands” of Christ, but they are not Christ. In important ways we need to make strong distinctions, a clear contrast between the servant and God. Too often due to pride or conceit we forget the difference and confuse the lines which separate the messenger from the master.

God however, sent his only Son Jesus to die on the cross, and save the clay pots, human beings from certain death. He uses them to be his ambassadors who proclaim Jesus to all who ask. Every human is important to God. Every clay pot is significant, for Jesus died to save the whole world. That is our task, our ministry, to share the good news of Jesus with all, in spite of our sinfulness which often gets in the way of our sharing. To Him always be the glory forever. Amen. Pastor Petrich

**Sunday Lessons and Hymns**

**Sunday June 27th** : Ps, 30; Lamentations 3:22-33; 2Corinthians 8:1-9,13-15; **Mark 5:21-43**. **LSB** DS #3 **HYMNS**: #584 “Faith and Truth and Life Bestowing”, #846 “Your Hand, O Lord in Days of Old”, #739 “Precious Lord, Take My Hand”, DISTR: #782 “Gracious God, You Send Great Blessings”, #571 God Loved the World”, #818 “In Thee Is Gladness”.

**Sunday July 4th** : Psalm 123, Ezekiel 2:1-5**; 2Corinthians 12:1-10;** Mark 6:1-13.  **LSB**: DS#1 **HYMNS**: #717 Eternal Father Strong to Save; #727 “On Eagles’ Wings”; #965 “God Bless Our Native Land”; DISTR: #839 “O Christ, Our True and Only Light”; #718 “Jesus, Lead Thou On”; #643 “Sent Forth By God’s Blessing”

**Sunday July 11th** : Psalm 85:8-13; **Amos 7:7-15**; Ephesians 1:3-14; Mark 6:14-29. **LSB**: Matins **HYMNS**: #686 “Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing”; OFFICE: #819 Sing Praise to God, the Highest Good”; Between Readings: #836 “O God of Light”; Sermon: #682 “God of the Prophets”; Offering: #808 “O Sing to the Lord”; “Abide with Us, Our Savior”

**Sunday July 18th** : Psalm 23; Jeremiah 23:1-6; Ephesians 2:11-22; **Mark 6:30-44**; **LSB** DS#3 **HYMNS**: #793 “Praise My Soul the King of Heaven”; #510 “A Multitude Comes from the East and the West”; #748 “I’m But a Stranger Here” DISTR: #711 “Savior Like a Shepherd Leads Us”; #644 “The Church’s One Foundation”; #625 “Lord Jesus Christ Life-Giving Bread”

**Song for July 11th : “Abide with Us, Our Savior”**

1. Abide with us, our Savior, Nor let your mercy cease;
From Satan’s might defend us, And give our hearts your peace.
2. Abide with us, our Helper, Sustain us by your Word:
Let us and all your people To living faith be stirred.
3. Abide with us, Redeemer, O Light, eternal Light;
Your truth direct and guide us To flee from error’s night.
4. Abide in princely bounty With us, large-hearted Lord,
Our lives with grace and wisdom Enriching through your Word.
5. Abide as our protector Among us, Lord, our strength;
Let world and wily Satan Be overcome at length.
6. Abide among us always, O Lord, our faithful friend,
And take us to your mansions When time and world shall end.