

St. John's Lutheran Church, New Ulm, MN
November, 2017 *Fortress*

It's the End of the World!

Daniel 12:2-3 Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt. ³Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever.

Often when things don't go the way we had planned or when we make a mistake we might say, "Oh well, it's not the end of the world." In spite of our foibles and errors life will still go on and the earth will not fall apart on account of us. Or will it?

Truth be told, it is the fault of mankind that will ultimately bring an end to this world and all that is in it. When Adam and Eve sinned against God their sin brought death and destruction upon the whole human race. Not only did it bring physical and spiritual death, but in the end, eternal death to all who are estranged from God because of sin. As a result of sin, there will be a Day of Judgment in which everyone will stand before God to give an account of their lives. God, the perfect Judge will pass judgment on each and every individual.

Thus it gives a different perspective to the old saying, "Oh well, it's not the end of the world." The end of the world is a terrifying thought to those whose lives are bound to what is here on earth. If our goodness is the measure of all things and our accomplishments are all we have to rely on, then with the end of the world all is lost. Furthermore, the Bible makes it clear that those who trust in themselves or something other than the living God as their hope and source of joy, will not only lose their reward, but they will be lost eternally in hell. So what if it is the end of the world?

Thankfully, God offers hope for everyone. No one needs to fear the end of the world because God has given us a promise of comfort which guarantees better things than anything this world has to offer. The hope and comfort for every member of this human race is Jesus Christ. Jesus came to be the Savior of all mankind. When we failed to live a perfect life because we followed in the footsteps of our parents, Adam and Eve, Jesus lived a perfect life in our place. Because God demanded that payment be made for our sin, because the wages of sin is death, Jesus also died in our place and paid our debt with his own blood.

But Jesus did not remain dead. He rose from death to prove that our sins are really forgiven, and that God has accepted his sacrifice on our behalf. He then ascended into heaven where he promises he is preparing a place for us. He also promises that he will return on the last day to take us to that place of eternal happiness in heaven. What joy and glory await us there!

During this season of the Church Year which we refer to as "End Time," we focus on the end of the world and those events which lead up to it. Daniel wrote about it some 2,600 years ago. He warned the wicked to turn from their sins. He warned that those who do not will awake to "shame and everlasting contempt."

However, those who trust in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior will find eternal peace. God said to Daniel: **Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever.**

With eager joy and anticipation we therefore await that day. Heaven is promised to us by God who always

keeps his promises.

Therefore, when someone says, “Oh well, it’s not the end of the world,” we as Christians are able to say, “No, but I wish it was.” What a wonderful day that will be. Even so, come Lord Jesus!

In Christ,
Pastor Jeffrey A. Bovee

OUR SYNOD AT WORK

THE SYNODICAL COUNCIL

Although we have looked at the Synodical Council in a previous column, it might be a good idea to review their activities. The Synodical Council is responsible for the implementation of all decisions and resolutions made by the synod in convention and for overseeing all activities of the synod in pursuit of its mission. The Synodical Council also has the authority to act on behalf of the synod between conventions when proper and necessary.

As it carries out its broad oversight, it is responsible for monitoring, evaluating, and overseeing all programs of ministry carried out by the synod. A major responsibility is the management of all financial activities of the synod, assuring fiscal soundness, preparing and updating support forecasts, and monitoring expenditures in order to maintain a balanced financial plan.

The Synodical Council made the following modifications to the Fiscal Year 2016-17 ministry financial plans. Here are some of those modifications:

1. A \$100,000 increase for refurbishing upgrading the chapel organ at Luther Preparatory School. It was funded mostly through special gifts received and partially through the use of reserves.
2. A \$530,000 additional use of reserves for Martin Luther College to cover both a shortfall in anticipated revenue due mainly to a lower than planned tuition rate increase and lower enrollments.
3. A \$150,000 increase in the expenditure of special funds for Home Missions related to the new Pastoral Studies Institute international recruiter position.
4. A \$40,000 increase in the use of special funds to enable the calling of one director to serve the Commission for Youth and Family Ministry and the Commission on Adult Discipleship.
5. A \$63,100 increase in synod support to Congregation and District Ministry to compensate for under-budgeting for the operational costs of the districts.
6. A \$675,000 increase in synod support for the remaining synod debt.

There continues to be cooperation and communication with the Conference of Presidents. This relationship is strengthened by the fact that both groups share the same chairman (the synod president).

Gerald Woodley

From Your Staff Minister

A Return to Grace: Luther's Life and Legacy will be shown in the auditorium at Martin Luther College on November 6 at 7:40 pm. It is intended that the movie would be used as an outreach tool to those who don't have a church home. The plan is to have tickets available with the two WELS churches in town and service times on them. There will be no charge for the tickets. If you know of someone who might benefit from seeing the movie, please contact St. John's at 354-6744 for ticket information.

"But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man. For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive. (1 Co 15:20-22)

Kelly Emde

Library News

The library now has a copy of the Holy Bible - Evangelical Heritage Version which was produced by the Wartburg Project. It is a translation of the New Testament and the Psalms. It is called Evangelical because its goal is to proclaim the good news of salvation through faith in the atoning works of Jesus Christ. It is called Heritage because it looks to the past as faithful translators passed the Bible down to us.

A recent addition to the theology section of the library is "Grace Abounds" by Daniel Deutschlander. It is subtitled "The Splendor of Christian Doctrine." The author has written about creation, original sin, justification, the means of grace, and other chief doctrines of the Bible as taught by confessional Lutheran church bodies. Prof. emeritus Deutschlander wrote this summary of doctrine for lay people as well as pastors and teachers. Because of the format of the book, it is possible to study a specific doctrine that you might want to study.

Linda Schroeder and I recently inventoried the library and found that some of the materials which had not been checked out were missing from the library. Some of the missing materials are: DVD End of the Spear, DVD Facing the Giants, CD Celebrate Jesus Vol. 2, and the books One God - Two Covenants, Words Begin in Our Hearts, A Bible Handbook (People's Bible) and Franzman's Bible History Commentary O.T. Please check your home library for these missing materials and return them to the library at your convenience.

Eleanor Runke, Church Librarian

Martin Luther Movie

St. Paul's and St John's Lutheran churches, along with Martin Luther College are inviting the New Ulm community to a complimentary showing of the critically acclaimed movie "A Return to Grace" commemorating the 500th anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation. This film tells the great story of Martin Luther, a man God used in the 1500's to bring about much needed reform and a Return to God's Grace in Jesus Christ. At the same time, the film examines Luther's quest for truth - questions we all must face – including "Who am I?" and "What is my purpose in life?"

The film will be shown at the MLC Auditorium on Monday, November 6 at 7:45 pm. St John's will have complimentary admissions tickets, which also promote WELS Christmas services and concerts in our area.

Please pick up complimentary admissions tickets in the church gathering space and share them with your friends and coworkers. The tickets will also be available at the MLC reception desk, St. Paul's, or the Chamber of Commerce.

If you are interested in seeing the Luther movie, there will likely be room at the Nov. 6 showing, or you are also welcome to join the MLC campus family for a showing on Wednesday, Nov. 1 at 1 pm. Visit the MLC website for more information.

Archives

Saints Triumphant

Each year in November on Saints Triumphant Sunday we take note of those members whose deaths we celebrated during the past year and thus have joined the Church Triumphant with their Savior in heaven. This month we'll also note some others from past years which might also bring back some special memories.

1957, Pastor was Rollin Reim: Edmond LeBert (age 56), Paul Cazett, Brenda Evers (age 2).

1967, Pastor was Frederick Nitz: Eleanor Beilke (age 53), Cpl Allan Hoffman (age 24), Roy Grebe (age 65).

1992, Pastor was Norval Kock; Director of Christian Education was David Zabel: Lillian Haar (age 87), Harold Hempel (age 76).

2007, Pastors were Jeffrey Bovee and Wayne Laitinen; Administrative Teacher was James Dretske: Armin Dittbenner (age 88), Dorothy Schugel (age 90), Bill Bertz (age 76), Arley Rolloff (age 90), Margaret Juhnke (age 85), Ann "Lucy" Brei (age 95), Shirley Laabs (age 78), Alice Erickson (age 91), Hazel Peuser (age 92), John Bode (age 43), Robert Ring (age 84).

2017, Pastors were Jeffrey Bovee and Wayne Laitinen; Administrative Teacher was James Dretske: Howard Wessel (age 84), Laneta Havemeier (age 95), Alice Otto (age 101), Ken Ubel (age 72), Phyllis Rolloff (age 99), Terry Marks (age 60), Jean Johnson (age 71), Patricia Gutzke (age 81), Ted Hartwig (age 96), Jane Pekrul (age 97), Jone Lenz (age 101).

This month's Archives report is brief but important for it emphasizes that our time on earth as Christians who believe in a risen and living Savior who have an even greater goal and hope in life which may be realized at any age or time. It also reminds us that St. John's past is important for the future—even beyond life in this world.

By way of an added note: the total number of deaths and burials since 1951 is 382.

Bob Krueger

Divine Call

On Tuesday, October 24, St. John's extended a divine call to Pastor Steven Hillmer, who currently serves The Springs Lutheran Church, Sparks, NV. He is the father of four children: 16, 14, 11 and 8- years-old and is married to Jennifer (née Schramm).

Please remember Pastor Hillmer in your prayers as he deliberates this divine call placed before him by our congregation in the name of Christ our Savior. May the Lord grant him the wisdom to choose how his talents and gifts will best be used for the sake of the Kingdom.

November Sermon Texts

Nov 5	Mission Sunday	Pastor Michael Duncan
Nov 12	Daniel 7:9-10	The Lord is Coming in Glory
Nov 19	Revelation 19:1-9	An Eternal 'Hallelujah Chorus' Awaits
Nov 22/23	Thanksgiving	Wednesday: 7 pm / Thursday: 9 am
Nov 26	1 Corinthians 15:20-28	Death to Death, The Last Enemy

Council Digest - October 2017

The St. John's Church Council met on October 17. The majority of the meeting was spent in preparation for the voters' meeting a week later. The council also adopted a recommendation from the Board of Elders that both Pastor Bovee and Staff Minister Kelly Emde be granted additional monetary compensation in appreciation for handling extra responsibilities during our pastoral vacancy over the past 10 months and continuing until the vacancy is filled.

A summary of other reports and action not reported elsewhere in the Fortress follows:

- Thirty-six voters were present on Tuesday evening, October 24, for the third quarter voters' meeting. The agenda included extension of our tenth call for an administrative associate pastor. The calling process was led by Rev. Charles Degner, Minnesota District president. The voters' unanimously extended a call to Rev. Steven Hillmer, currently serving The Springs Lutheran Church, Sparks, Nevada. We await his decision in about a month. Meanwhile, please keep Pastor Hillmer in your prayers as he considers the call.

- The voters ratified earlier Church Council action by approving membership changes from the last quarter.

Transfer Out

- Cindy Kewatt to St. Peter's, St. Peter, MN

Transfer In

- Ann Arnold from First, Racine, WI

Baptisms

- Charlie Kathlyn Bisel: 24 Sep
- Elizabeth Anna Gieseke: 1 Oct
- Lincoln Kenneth Weber: 21 Oct

Funeral

- Jane Pekrul: 23 Sep

Following reports from the called workers, congregational officers, and boards and committees, two items of new business were considered.

- A report listing candidates for elective and appointive positions from the Nominating Committee prepared by Vice President Greg Diersen was approved. The following individual was elected to a three year term on the church council beginning January 1, 2017: Heath Dobberpuhl (Board for Youth and Education chair). Three board chair positions remain unfilled: Elders, Trustees and Stewardship. The following appointments for the same timeframe were also ratified: Gerald Woodley and John Bauer (Finance Committee); Dennis Jaspersen (Endowment Fund Committee); Jeremy Berg (Board of Youth and Education); Peter Baganz (MVL alternate delegate); and Scott Deters (Board of Trustees). A Board of Stewardship position also remains vacant. The council will continue to work at filling the vacant positions by the annual meeting in January and present the names for ratification at the annual meeting. If you are a voting member and willing to serve in one of these positions (or know of someone you would like to nominate), please contact Nominating Committee Chair Greg Diersen.
- The 2018 congregational budget recommended by the church council and presented by Treasurer Paul Gunderson was approved by the voters. The \$983,000 budget includes salary increases averaging between 1.5% and 2% for our workers. The portion of the budget supporting worker compensation and ongoing expenses (office supplies, plant maintenance and improvement, debt repayment, etc.) is \$834,000. The remaining \$149,000 represents two percent increases for our congregational mission offering (\$85,860), MVL support (\$58,140) and the status quo for smaller ministries like the Lutheran Institutional Ministry Association (LIMA), the Lutheran Chapel Service and Jesus Cares.

The annual voters' meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, January 23, 2017.

Steven R. Thiesfeldt,
Congregational Chairman

St. Paul's School

School Website: www.splnewulm.org/school

This Quarter at School

- School began on Tuesday, September 5th, with the MVL shared theme: Grace – Faith – Scripture. It is based on Ephesians 2:8-9: *“For it is by Grace you have been saved, through faith”* joining the Synod’s emphasis on celebrating the 500th anniversary of Luther’s posting of the 95 theses.
- Mrs. Jaspersen and Mrs. Lisa Thiesfeldt are being used to provide release time with part-time teaching roles. Mrs. Kate Carlovsky was hired as a paraprofessional in the PreK room as sessions have grown to maximum levels. Mr. Tim Plocher was hired as the new director of the after school care (ASC) program which has now changed its name to Raider Kids Care.
- There are a total of 271 (90 SJ 33.2%) students enrolled in Grades K-8 and 48 children in PreK
- Students in grades three through eight took the first of three MAP (Measures of Academic Progress) tests to be taken this year. Focusing on the areas of math, reading, and language, these formative tests provide immediate results that teachers can use to shape instruction for their classrooms.
- The WELS Minnesota Teachers Conference was held at MLC on Thursday and Friday, Oct. 19-20.

MNSAA Accreditation Self-Study

(Minnesota Nonpublic Schools Accrediting Association)

The process for accreditation began on Oct. 16, 2016 and is drawing to an end with final narratives of subcommittees due in December. The committees are also securing final documents which show evidence for their particular standards. The steering committee will finalize a strategic plan and make final preparation for an April 2018 visitation by a MNSAA team.

Building Project at St. Paul's

The Lord has continued to bless the project with continued gifts from members of both St. Paul's and St. John's congregations. The project has reached \$2 million in gifts with updates given in the weekly bulletins. There is a lot to do to prepare for construction. Requests have gone out to interview for a general contractor as well as a site manager to monitor the progress when the construction takes place. The Building Committee has been meeting with the architect to discuss the steps that are needed for successful construction. The committee is taking a proposal to their council to move utilities during 2018, so that the actual construction can begin in

the spring of 2019. St. Paul's will be looking into loan options for any funding that is not raised to meet the cost of construction of the first phase. Right now the first phase includes current building refurbishing which includes changes to the current kitchen, new entrance with offices near the entrance, Handicapped-Accessible elevator, new education room and storage area in the 2nd floor of entrance, and the new Early Childhood wing. May God continue to bless the work of those who are involved in the process of building planning.

Parent/Teacher Consultations

The end of the first quarter is November 3rd. Report cards will be sent home on Nov. 10th and Parent/Teacher Consultations are scheduled for Tues – Wednesday, Nov. 14th - 15th.

Calendar

- Nov 5 Jr. Choir sings at 11 am: Mission Festival Sunday: Potluck follows service
- Nov 6 NO SCHOOL - Teacher In-Service
- Nov 8 Gr. 5-8 to MVL: Veteran's Recognition Program
- Nov 14-15 Parent/Teacher Conferences
- Nov 17 Forensic Family Night
- Nov 22-24 NO SCHOOL - Thanksgiving Break

Dec 7 Jr. Choir (Gr. 5-8) sing at 6 pm
Dec 14 Gr. K-4 sing at 4 pm

Respectfully Submitted,
James Dretske, SJ Administrative Teacher jdretske@splnewulm.org

MLC Ladies' Auxiliary

MLC Ladies' Auxiliary Annual Meeting Report. Please contact Jeneane Thiesfeldt with questions or for more information at thiesfjm@gmail.com or 507-359-7018.

Ladies' Auxiliary Annual National Meeting Summary October 14, 2017

Attendance for the day: 75
Offering for the day: \$ 3790
Results of officer elections
 Second Vice President: Rachel Tacke
 Treasurer: Judy Lemke

Results of Project Selection (in order of funding)

1. Travel Assistance for Student Teachers Cost: \$2,500
2. AED for Campus First Aid Cost: \$1,348
3. Special Education program organization Cost: \$600
4. Spanish Immersion Grants Cost: \$2,000
5. Financial Literacy Resources Cost: \$1,023
6. Paper Jogger for Print Shop Cost: \$1,300
7. 3-D Printer for Science Dept Cost: \$ 2,400
8. Library Markerboards and Tables Cost: \$1,600
9. Rowing Machine for Fitness Center Cost: \$1,300
10. Fall Bulb Planting Cost: \$150
11. Microphones for Instruments Cost: \$985
12. Baseball Pitching Screen Cost: \$819
13. Dinnerware for Events Cost: \$1,650
14. Concrete Planters (2) Cost: \$1,042

2018 annual meeting date will be Saturday, Oct. 6, 2018

Homebound Member Care

Our St. John's congregation has a number of members for whom we would like to demonstrate a special measure of love and concern because they are at a point in their lives where they have special needs. If possible we want to support them not only with our prayers, but also with visible expressions that will give them a feeling of being a part of our church family.

There is no set number of visits, cards, or prayers that anyone is pressured to do. Family members and friends can be included in this labor of love also. Whatever you do will be more attention than these members would otherwise get and, no doubt, will be appreciated. If there is a rare person who doesn't want a visit we respect that; you can still pray for them, call them, or send a card.

Contact Mary Thom at maryjt.5511@yahoo.com or 217-6884 if you would like to be included in this labor of love or if you have any questions. I also have other suggestions for connecting with these fellow believers. Let me know if you would like to receive a copy of these suggestions, and I will put it in your box at church. Also, if you would like to have love and support yourself or if you know of someone else who does, please let me know.

As Thanksgiving approaches and we consider the Lord's amazing love for us, may He grant each of us a spirit which finds ways to express our thankfulness to Him through our love to others. Being part of a church family is such a blessing!

"Let us not become weary in doing good... Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers." - (Galatians 6:9-10)

Mary Thom

Cards of Caring

The volunteers for making Christmas cards for our St. John's homebound members and others will meet on Saturday, November 18, from 9 am until noon in the church basement fellowship room. Everyone is welcome to come for fellowship and fun, including Martin Luther College students. No talent needed. We acknowledge and appreciate the recent donations that have been received. Contact Lois Willems at 359-7403 with questions.

Women of St. John's

The Women of St. John's met at the New Ulm Country Club at 6 pm on Oct. 3. Pastor Bovee began the evening with a short devotion based on Romans 8, focusing especially on verse 28, "And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose." God uses every event in our lives – both the good and the bad – for our *eternal* good. Those present then enjoyed a hamburger/chicken sandwich buffet which included salad with all the fixings along with other picnic type foods. We played several fun games that helped us bond and get to know each other better. One game involved finding five unusual ways that everyone at the table was alike. Another found us digging through our purses to see if we were carrying certain items. The person with the most items from the list found in her purse was the winner, and, yes, the winner even had rock in her purse! A big thank you goes to Denise Karstens for making the arrangements with the country club and for coming up with the fun games and to Mary Hussman and Dorothy Klockziem for creating the beautiful flower arrangements.

You are invited: Our next gathering will be **Tuesday, Nov. 7 at 7 pm** in the church basement. We will view a few Reformation Vignettes which are short clips from the movie *A Return to Grace: Luther's Life and Legacy*. The short clips will give us a peek at this newest movie about the life Martin Luther and the important questions he sought to answer. Elections are scheduled to be held that night as well. We hope you are able to join us!