



Pilgrim Lutheran Church

BROADWAY AT FLOREY

KILGORE, TEXAS

***Mission Statement:** Pilgrim Lutheran Church is to glorify God in proclaiming the saving Gospel of Jesus Christ with Word and deed in our midst, in our community, and throughout the world.*

MARCH NEWSLETTER 2012

Reconciliation is not easy, but it is what we all need

Dear Members and Friends of Pilgrim Lutheran Church,

Misunderstandings, differences of opinion, and honest-to-goodness sins against one another happen, from time to time, between acquaintances, good friends, and family members. Too often such disruptions occur even in the church, in the relationships of brothers and sisters in Christ. God would have us all reconcile with one another as soon as possible (Ephesians 4:26 says, "Do not let the sun go down on your anger" [ESV]). But, we may prefer to avoid the situation, hoping it will go away on its own, or to stew and to steam, expecting the other person to come to us. In some cases, the longer we go without reconciling, the harder reconciliation can become, as we may pridefully become too entrenched in our position to give it up or to admit that we were wrong.

All of that is only in our relationships with our fellow human beings, not to mention our relationship with God. What we might consider even the smallest single sin against Him is enough to earn our earthly death and for Him to damn us to hell for all eternity (and, as with a Lays potato chip, no one stops with just one sin). Dead in our trespasses and sins (see Ephesians 2:1), we are powerless to reconcile ourselves to God, but God, out of His great love for us, sent His Son, Jesus the Christ, to die and rise to save us from our sins, so that by grace through faith in Him we might have eternal life (Ephesians 2:8-9). "Through Christ," St. Paul writes to the Corinthians, God "reconciled us to Himself" (2 Corinthians 5:18 [ESV]). St. Paul goes on to write, "in Christ God was reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them," and "For our sake He made Him to be sin Who knew no sin, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God" (2 Corinthians 5:19, 21 [ESV]).

Resolving a difficult situation between acquaintances, good friends, family members, and even brothers and sisters in Christ is not easy. Yet, when we refuse to forgive another person, we in the Lord's Prayer essentially ask God not to forgive us (see Matthew 6:12 or Luke 11:4). And, we similarly put our own spiritual welfare in peril when we come to the altar to receive forgiveness without first having reconciled with others (see Matthew 5:21-26, especially verses 23-24).

Hearing how we hurt people we care about or telling them how they hurt us can be difficult and painful for all concerned. Much more difficult and painful, of course, was our Lord Jesus Christ's effecting our reconciliation with God, as we are reminded while again hearing the reading of our Lord's Passion during our midweek Vespers services at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesdays this penitential season of Lent. (Naturally, you are invited to join us for those services!) To be

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sure, God's grace on account of Christ is neither cheap nor easy. Yet, even as it was our sin that put Christ on the cross, He endured that difficulty and pain for us and for our salvation!

Reconciled with God, we are compelled by Christ's love to reconcile with one another and live our lives for Christ (see 2 Corinthians 5:14-15). We receive God's forgiveness through Word and Sacrament (through "the ministry of reconciliation" entrusted to the pastoral office [see 2 Corinthians 5:11-21]). God's forgiveness in turn enables us to forgive one another, and, eventually, as God wills, also to forget what we or they had done. Reconciled, we can say with the psalmist, "Behold, how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity!" (Psalm 133:1 [ESV])

*His and your servant,
Pastor Galler*



CIRCUIT #14 HOLDS WORKSHOP AND FORUM

The Circuit Pastor/Lay retreat was held on February 11, 2012, and was entitled "Being Lutheran in the Present Political Environment." Pastor Galler, Danny Sampson, Steven Sampson, and J.D. Sampson attended. The Rev. Dr. Laurence White spoke about what it means to be a Christian, and specifically a Lutheran, in light of certain political topics. Dr. White reminded us that God does not dictate or choose one form of government over another and that as Lutherans we are to be defined by doctrine and not polity. Furthermore, he said that to be Lutheran means to have convictions based on the word of God, and he stressed how important it is for us to stand strong in those biblical convictions. Dr. White spoke extensively on the political issue of abortion. He felt that the abortion topic is one where our Christian convictions need to guide our political motives, and he encouraged us to investigate political candidates' policies and views on abortion. At the conclusion of the retreat, pastors and lay delegates convened in a circuit forum to make a nomination for our circuit counselor. Pastor Bergman from Palestine was the unanimous choice and received the nomination. The Texas District in convention this summer is expected to approve the nomination, and Pastor Bergman should begin serving in the fall.

*Respectfully submitted,
J.D. Sampson*



HELPING HANDS: Our items for the month of March continue to be **crackers and peanut butter**. They can always use **canned vegetables**. A container for your items is located by the entrance to the church. Don't forget those clean bread wrappers. They hold two rolls of toilet paper for distribution. Thank you for sharing the love of Christ with those less fortunate.



FESTIVAL CHOIR: The suggestion was made that since we have some good voices in the congregation we ought to have a choir! Are you willing to make a short-term commitment to practice and sing with a

festival choir for Easter and maybe also for Holy Week? If so, please speak with Pastor Galler. (Practice times will depend on the availability of the participants.)

ARE YOU WILLING AND ABLE TO TEACH SUNDAY SCHOOL? If and when all the children who have been to Divine Service recently come to Sunday School, we will need to have three different classes. So, we could use a third teacher! Maybe you have taught in the past and would like to teach again now, or maybe you have never taught but would like to give it a try. The curriculum we use makes teaching easy, so please speak to Danny Sampson or to Pastor Galler if you can serve in this way.

WHAT'S HAPPENING THIS MONTH

Lenten Vespers Services start at 7:00 p.m. Wednesdays from March 7 through April 4. We will hear the narrative of our Lord's Passion for us and for our salvation, as combined from the four Gospel accounts.

Daylight-Saving Time starts at 2:00 a.m. on March 11. Remember to "spring ahead" or risk showing up to Bible Class and church Sunday morning an hour late!

Ladies Aid will meet Monday, March 12, in the office building at 6:00 p.m.

Elders will meet Tuesday, March 13, at 7:00 p.m. in the Parish Hall.

Clean Up At The Church will start at 9:00 a.m. March 17th with the 24th as a backup date if the weather is too bad to work outside. Clean up of the Office Building will take place at the same time as the Church Clean Up.



TITUS FUND: Did you know that Pilgrim has a special discretionary fund for its pastor to use to help people in need? Several outlays over the holidays have left the fund itself in need. Monies for the fund come from our donations specially designated for the Titus Fund. (The name of the fund apparently comes from passages such as 2 Corinthians 8:16-21, where St. Paul's co-worker named Titus is commended to the churches at Corinth for his role in collecting their offering to help those in need in the city of Jerusalem.)



HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

Olene Herricks
Cooper Paul Sampson
Sarah Lowery

March 5
March 13
March 28

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!

Mr. and Mrs. George B. Heil celebrate their wedding anniversary on March 19.

THANK YOU, Sharon and Danny Sampson for making the time and giving the effort to keep the buildings clean in February and for preparing the altar. **Mr. and Mrs. Edgar Wuthrich** are blessed with caring for the altar and cleaning the church buildings for the month of March.

RECIPE EXCHANGE

Occasionally we print recipes that have been requested by our members. We usually feature a dish that's been new to us when served at a church meal. The following recipe for white chili was served by Olene Herricks at our last pot-luck dinner following the voters meeting on January 29.

WHITE CHILI

4 chicken breasts
2 cans cream of mushroom soup
2 cans great northern or navy beans
2 cans shoepeg corn
1 can rotel
1 lb mexican velveta
1 onion

Cook chicken breasts, let cool, debone, save some broth
Simmer everything in a large pot, add broth if needed

JUST FOR KIDS



what a name!

A	M	A	S	T	E	R	J	E	S	U	S	O
L	O	L	M	A	V	B	M	A	L	S	R	Y
P	R	I	N	C	E	O	F	P	E	A	C	E
H	N	G	U	L	R	C	R	C	R	V	S	L
A	I	H	T	U	L	H	A	P	A	S	O	N
D	N	T	S	N	A	R	P	A	S	O	N	A
R	G	M	E	S	I	A	H	E	R	O	V	E
E	S	I	M	E	T	S	D	L	O	E	F	F
H	T	G	M	L	I	T	O	F	F	I	A	T
P	A	H	A	O	N	C	G	F	S	I	A	T
E	R	T	N	R	G	O	F	R	H	L	A	T
S	B	G	E	D	A	E	N	D	R	A	Y	O
D	B	O	L	R	T	G	O	N	O	U	W	L
O	I	D	K	O	H	A	S	O	N	T	E	I
G	N	A	Z	A	R	E	N	D	X	H	H	L

Jesus
Nazarene
Everlasting Father
Prince of Peace
Truth
Wonderful
Alpha
Messiah
Lily of the Valley
Light
Lamb
Rose of Sharon
Morning Star
Good Shepherd
Omega
Emmanuel
Rabbi
Son of God
Son of Man
Christ
Mighty God
Word
The Way
Door
Life
Master
Savior
Counselor

In the Bible, Jesus is called by many different names. All of them are very special. Find these special names in the puzzle and circle them.



February 14, 2012

LCMS reacts to contraceptive mandate 'accommodation'

In response to President Obama's announcement Friday concerning an "accommodation" to a previous mandate that health plans must cover all forms of birth control (even those that can kill the unborn), The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) remains deeply concerned. We strongly object to the use of drugs and procedures that are used to take the lives of unborn children, who are persons in the sight of God from the time of conception. Drugs such as "Plan B" and "Ella," which are still included in the mandate, can work post-conception to cause the death of the developing child, so don't be fooled by statements to the contrary.

We see President Obama's action Friday as significant, in that it appears to have been prompted by the many voices united in concern over an infringement of our religious liberties. But the "accommodation" did not expand the exemption for religious employers, nor did it restrict the mandate in any way. It simply described a temporary enforcement delay and a possible future change—a change that, unfortunately, would not adequately protect religious freedom or unborn lives.

We remain opposed to this mandate because it runs counter to the biblical truth of the sanctity of human life. We are committed to working to ensure that we remain free to practice the teachings of our faith, that our religious rights are not violated, and that our rights of conscience are retained. Freedom of religion extends beyond the practice of our faith in houses of worship. We must be free to put our faith into action in the public square, and, in response to Christ's call, demonstrate His mercy through our love and compassion for all people according to the clear mandate of Holy Scripture.

The government has overstepped its bounds. This controversy is not merely about "birth control" and the Catholic Church's views about it. It's about mandating that we provide medications which kill life in the womb. And moreover, and perhaps even more ominous, it is about an overzealous government forcing coercive provisions that violate the consciences and rights of its citizens. We can no longer expect a favored position for Christianity in this country. But we can, as citizens of this great nation, fight for constitutional sanity against secularizing forces. As we have vividly experienced in discriminatory state legislation with respect to homosexual adoption, we, and our institutions (and those of other religious citizens of good will), are being robbed of the right to the free exercise of religion absent government intrusion or threat. The next assault will come upon church-related retirement facilities. How much longer will it be legal in this country to believe and act according to the dictates of biblical and creedal Christianity?

Jesus bids us, "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's" (Mark 12:17). We will pray for and support our government where we can, but our consciences and lives belong to God.

The Rev. Dr. Matthew C. Harrison
President
The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

