

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.

JULY NEWSLETTER 2012

We are Blessed with Divine Service and its Sacred Space

Dear Members and Friends of Pilgrim Lutheran Church,

Before humankind's fall into sin, God was present and communed in His perfect creation with those whom He had created. Recently I read one author who even referred to the example of that communion seen in Genesis 3:8 as "Vespers" (a late afternoon or early evening service). How sad that the man and woman's sinful disobedience broke that perfect fellowship with God for them and for us and so resulted in God driving them and their descendants from the garden (Genesis 3:23-24).

Thanks be to God, however, that, in His great love for all humankind, including you and me, He sent His Son, Jesus the Christ, to die on the cross and rise again and so restore that fellowship with us. With the promise and fulfillment of the forgiveness of sins, God is again present with His people, in the places where He puts His Name and for the purpose of forgiving our sins. (Solomon's prayer at the dedication of the first Temple in 1 Kings 8:22-53 and Jesus' teaching about Private Confession and Individual Absolution in Matthew 16:18-20 are great examples of this truth.)

For some sixty years God has blessed the people of East Texas with the forgiveness of sins distributed in connection with our Pilgrim Lutheran Church in Kilgore and her daughter congregations in Longview and Henderson. For most of that time, our Florey Street sanctuary, dedicated in 1954, has been where the forgiveness of sins has been faithfully given, in the context of the historic liturgy of the Christian Church. I have heard and seen first hand what a blessing that forgiveness has been in this place. We praise and thank God that He is present here with us and provides for us what we so very much need!

Apparently after two decades in the sanctuary, remodeling was done: curtains (including the current dorsal curtain behind the altar), air conditioning and a suspended ceiling, paneling, and new carpeting. As God had done with His people of old (see, for example, Exodus 35:4-29), God blessed His people sufficiently for them to provide the materials for the improvements, and He led them to make the decisions they made, as difficult as they may have been at the time. We certainly are grateful for what they gave, and we respect their decisions.

Now, nearly four decades later, God has again blessed His people sufficiently for them to provide offerings for improvements and is leading them to make similar decisions. People have

indicated a desire to change windows and window treatments, ceiling, walls, and flooring. An important overriding goal—pertaining to window treatments, ceiling, walls, and flooring—is improving the acoustics so that the Word of God can be better heard by those assembled and their praise of Him can better resound. Another goal, as part of changing the flooring, is to reconfigure the chancel area with the communion rail at ground level so that communicants can receive the Sacrament of the Altar without going up and down any steps. Sky blue walls in the chancel might better reflect our overall understanding of heaven and earth coming together in the Divine Service.

More than anything, we pray that any changes made serve well our purpose for being here and do not get in the way of God's drawing others to Himself. We pray that the changes are completed in time for our 60th Anniversary celebration and rededication in September, if that is God's will. And, we certainly pray that we continue to live as brothers and sisters in Christ, regardless of the specifics of the changes made! Emotions sometimes can get the better of any one of us, and you and I might say something we should not, but we can and should live together in the forgiveness of sins. None of us may agree with each and every decision made, but we do agree to submit to the will of the majority in such matters.

As important as such things as the material and color of the walls and the type and color of the flooring might seem to be, ultimately, of course, what matters the most is that God continues to be present and commune with us, giving us the forgiveness of sins in a place where He has put His Name. The building and all the decisions related to it serve their purpose, but the Church is holy believers and sheep who hear the voice of the Shepherd, and the Church's glory is not the external or internal appearance of the building but the Word of God and true faith (Smalcald Articles III:xii:2-3). May God continue so to manifest that glory among us!

*His and your servant,
Pastor Galler*



July Events

LADIES AID will meet Monday, July 9, at 6:00 p.m. in the office building.

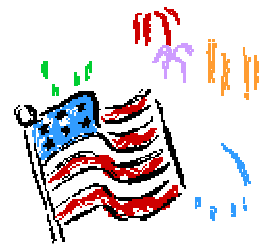
ELDERS will meet Tuesday, July 11, at 7:00 p.m. in the parish hall.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL will be held July 16th through 19th in the evenings from 6:00 to 8:00.

SPECIAL VOTERS' MEETING will follow the worship service July 15.

POTLUCK DINNER will follow the worship service Sunday, July 29.

VOTERS MEETING will follow the potluck dinner July 29.



SUMMER'S HERE! Feel free to leave the nylons, ties, and jackets at home in order to stay comfortable during worship services. If you are cold natured, remember to bring a sweater or jacket for the delightfully cool air conditioning.

THANK YOU Sallye and Jerome Key for taking time out of your busy schedules to care for the altar and clean the church buildings. **DANNY AND SHARON SAMPSON** are privileged to prepare the altar and clean the church buildings for the month of July.

PORTALS OF PRAYER for the third quarter are still available. If you don't have a copy, be sure to take one home for your family as you leave today.

VOTERS MEETING

You will want to make a special effort to attend the July voters meeting. The nominating committee and the budget committee for October's election and budget approval are usually named at this meeting. If you have a preference for serving on one of these committees, please let our Congregational President, Steven Sampson, know by appointing time.

HELPING HANDS still needs **peanut butter, crackers, and cereal**. They have a hard time keeping these items on hand. They can ALWAYS use canned vegetables, fruit, and meat. If your garden is producing more than you need, Helping Hands welcomes **fresh produce**. A container for your donations is located by the entrance to the church. Helping Hands also needs clean plastic bags to sack articles for distribution, and clean bread wrappers will hold two rolls of toilet paper. Thank you for sharing the love of Christ with those less fortunate.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Carl Gardner July 5
Zylan Ellis July 13
Betty Miller July 25

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL is drawing near. Can you bring children and/or adults to VBS? Can you teach or help? If you can help, notify Angela or Steven Sampson. You can also go to Pilgrim's web site to volunteer.

59TH REGULAR TEXAS DISTRICT CONVENTION

"Live to Tell"

We arrived in Lubbock rather late on Wednesday night, at around 9:30 PM. The weather was nice and it portended the rest of our stay; a very enjoyable summer time temperature with little humidity and wind. The next morning we prepared ourselves and went to the convention center. Before the convention even started, there were floor committee meetings where the resolutions the three committees were proposing could be discussed and debated. On the topic of the availability of information for the call process, Pastor Galler presented an alternate resolution to an overture the committee wanted to decline, which alternate resolution we had discussed and drafted with Pr. Bragdon of Longview on the trip out. Once the morning's floor committee meetings were over, the rest of the convention began Thursday afternoon in the main hall. The opening devotion was by The Rev. Joel Schiewe, a missionary pastor in Macau, China; it was very informative about the work taking place in China to spread the Holy Gospel. The first of a three-part Bible study that followed was led by The Rev. Dr. Walter A. Meier, III, and showed how throughout the Bible many important figures' lives were protected by God and how afterwards they told others of the protection and mercy of God. This Bible study was very much on point with the "Live to Tell" theme of the convention. The Rev. Dr. Matthew C. Harrison,

LCMS President, gave a presentation that encompassed all three aspects of his vision for the synod: witness (such as mission work), mercy (such as relief efforts), and life together (such as a unified confession of faith). Learning about the efforts of the church around the world was very interesting. President Harrison answered questions directly from the floor, covering a wide range of topics that included candidate-status pastors relative to the call process and the Synod's relationship with other Lutheran synods, such as the Wisconsin Synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Elections for the District President and Vice Presidents also took place Thursday afternoon, with President Hennings and other incumbents eligible being re-elected. Thursday evening, we had a worship service in the main theater with Communion. President Harrison preached a strong sermon with a proper distinction of law and Gospel, and the singing was great.

On Friday the opening devotion was led by The Rev. Tim Radkey of Lubbock about his work in Uganda, and Dr. Maier continued his Bible study. There were more elections to various District positions, and the convention essayist, The Rev. Dr. Robert Scuderi, spoke about changing church structures to better serve our teaching about salvation (basically about the need to increase our mission work and various controversial methods for accomplishing that work). Neither Pastor Galler nor I (nor other pastors with whom we spoke) fully agreed with his ideas. Also on Friday, we voted on all three committees' resolutions. There was some debate on these, but it was done with good Christian respect and harmony. The appropriate floor committee brought forward a revised version of the resolution we had drafted, and 90% of the delegates approved it. So, next year at the Synodical Convention a floor committee will have to decide what to do with what becomes an overture out of the Texas District. Friday night we went out to dinner with several conservative pastors. I learned a lot about that state of the Synod and District as it relates to the struggle between liberal and conservative wings of the church. While the struggle will be long I believe we have conservative champions who will not shy away from the conflict, and ultimately we have Christ's promise that His Church triumphs over the gates of hell.

On Saturday the devotion was by the Rev. Eloy Gonzalez, our area's new district vice president, and it was good, following an order out of the latest hymnal and including a number of hymns. Next, we finished out the Bible study and then went through the anniversaries of ordained ministers and commissioned church workers. We had our closing worship service in the theater, which service included remembering all the ordained and commissioned workers who during the previous three years had received their crown of life, including Pastors Lowery and Gruell, especially known to us. President Henning's daughter, who is training to be a tier-one opera singer, sang a medley of hymns such as "Amazing Grace". The service essentially ended the convention, and we started the journey home.

Attending the District Convention as your lay delegate was a very rewarding experience, and I highly recommend going to any who are interested. You did not have to be a delegate to attend, and, if it is close enough to Kilgore in three years, you should make an effort to attend.

Pilgrim was represented by Pastor Galler and our lay delegate, Steven Sampson.

The sermon this morning: "Jesus Walks on the Water."

The sermon tonight: "Searching for Jesus."

--Church Ladies with Typewriters

July 2012

Pilgrim Lutheran Church

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 5TH SUN. AFTER PENTECOST (G) 9:30 AM - 10:30 AM SS & Bible Class 10:45 AM Matins Service	2	3 5:00 PM - 8:00 PM Pastor in his study	4 Independence Day	5 Carl Gardner (B)	6 7:05 PM Pump Jacks Baseball Game	7
8 6TH SUN. AFTER PENTECOST (G) 9:30 AM - 10:30 AM SS & Bible Class 10:45 AM Worship w/Comm.	9 6:00 PM Ladies Aid Meeting	10 5:00 PM - 8:00 PM Pastor in his study	11 7:00 PM Mid-Week Bible Study	12	13 Zylan Ellis (B)	14
15 7TH SUN. AFTER PENTECOST (G) 9:30 AM - 10:30 AM SS & Bible Class 10:45 AM Worship	16	17 5:00 PM - 8:00 PM Pastor in his study	18	19	20	21 Newsletter articles are due tomorrow.
11:45 AM Special Voters Meeting	6:00 PM - 8:00 PM Vacation Bible School					
22 8TH SUN. AFTER PENTECOST (G) St. Mary Magdalene (v) 9:30 AM - 10:30 AM SS & Bible Class 10:45 AM Worship w/Comm.	23	24 5:00 PM - 8:00 PM Pastor in his study	25 St. James the Elder, Apostle (r) Betty Miller (B) 7:00 PM Mid-Week Bible Study	26	27	28
29 9TH SUN. AFTER PENTECOST (G) 9:30 AM - 10:30 AM SS & Bible Class 10:45 AM Worship 12:00 PM Potluck Dinner & Voters Meeting	30	31 5:00 PM - 8:00 PM Pastor in his study	9:00 AM - 12:00 PM Pastor in his study			

June						
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	17	18	19	20	21	22
	24	25	26	27	28	29
						30

August						
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	19	20	21	22	23	24
	26	27	28	29	30	31