

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.

AUGUST NEWSLETTER 2012

We humans all are subject to change

Dear Members and Friends of Pilgrim Lutheran Church,

When I moved from Austin to East Texas last fall, one of my Austin friends in particular was super-sensitive to the changes I was experiencing. He kept talking about all the stress from my making so many major changes all at once, the need for me to get extra rest, and my potentially getting sick as a result of the move. Although I appreciated his concern at the time, I do not know how accurate his dire predictions ended up being. And, now that he has visited and seen me relatively settled into life here, I think that he is far less concerned.

God's making me the full-time, resident pastor of Pilgrim Lutheran Church certainly meant changes for people here, too. When I visited in September while deliberating the call, the Call Committee and I talked about changes the congregation feared, especially movement away from the church's historic liturgy and hymns. Though I have intentionally changed very little, I am aware after the fact that I have changed some things unintentionally. In most of those cases, I was not told and did not ask beforehand what a particular practice of the congregation was prior to my arrival. If you want to know why something has changed, please seek me out, as I am always happy to explain the reason(s) for any intentional or unintentional changes made.

In many ways, change is relative. If I conduct the liturgy the way I was taught and more or less straight out of *Lutheran Worship*, then I have not really changed anything, at least not relative to the way I was taught or to *Lutheran Worship*. However, if what you all were doing prior to my arrival was not the way I was taught or more or less straight out of *Lutheran Worship*, then some things have changed, at least relative to what you all were doing prior to my arrival. But, what we are doing together now or will do in the future may not be much of a change for every individual, depending on the individual's length of time here and exposure to worship elsewhere. In that way, change is relative to each individual (or, change is, what I might call, "subjective"). Thus, hymns can still be "new" to a lifelong individual church member, even if the hymns have been in the 30-year-old hymnal all along and date back to the earliest centuries of the church.

To be sure, the liturgy is itself intended to provide both stability in its parts that do not change from week to week or from season to season (called "ordinaries") and variety in its parts that do change (called "propers"). The intended conduct of the liturgy, generally indicated by the rubrics (the directions in the hymnal printed in red), also

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allows some freedom from place to place and time to time. Within that intended freedom, choices are not so much “right” or “wrong” theologically as they are matters of judgment of what is better, based on such things as historic practice, local custom or circumstances, and, even in some rare cases, preference or taste. (And, individuals may well disagree as to whether any specific choice is better than another.)

One of my favorite Collects (the succinct, structured prayers of the Church) refers to our being “wearied by the changes and chances of life” (see *Lutheran Worship* pp.266-267). People in the Bible certainly were no different in their weariness from change, though not every change brings about weariness to the same extent. When the Bible speaks of “change”, a number of original-language words are in use, with a number of things being “changed”: customs, wages, garments, hearts, minds, behavior, condition, and the like. Sinful by nature, we each need a change of heart, mind, and behavior. God calls us to such a change, which change we call repentance. And, God, by His Holy Spirit working through His Word and Sacrament, brings about such a change in us. For the sake of Jesus’s death and resurrection, God changes our condition from unholy and unrighteous to holy and righteous.

While we all are subject to change, God is not. Saying that God is unchangeable (or “immutable”) has a Biblical basis (see Psalm 102:27; Malachi 3:6; James 1:17), and His being unchangeable has deep theological, philosophical, and practical significance. For, His not changing means that His Good News of salvation for you and me by grace through faith in His Son, Jesus Christ, also is not subject to change. What a blessing for us when so many other things—friendships, jobs, where we live, and even our health—change, sometimes for the worse, when we least want them to change at all! We do well to pray with hymn writer Henry Lyte:

Change and decay in all around I see;
O thou Who changest not, abide with me. (*LW* 490:3 lines 3 and 4.)

Pilgrim’s sanctuary is undergoing interior changes. The Sundays on which the Sacrament of the Altar is offered will change this month (see elsewhere in this newsletter). The exact conduct of the liturgy and choice of hymns may have changed somewhat and may change again. Still other things we may or may not even have noticed may have already changed or may also change in the future. But, *that we find our rest in God* (the petition of that Collect I mentioned) *has not and will not change. The pure preaching of His Word and the right administration of His Sacraments*, the reasons I am here, *have not changed, are not changing, and will not change*—that was my vow at my installation and, no matter what else might change, remains my unchangeable commitment to you all.

*His and your servant,
Pastor Galler*



THANK YOU, Danny and Sharon Sampson for making the time to clean the buildings in July and to prepare the altar. **George A. and Gwen Heil** are privileged to care for the altar and clean the church buildings for the month of August

August Events



ELDERS will meet Tuesday, August 14, at 7:00 p.m.

LADIES AID will meet Monday, August 13, in the parish hall at 6:00 p.m.



Happy Birthday!

Sherry Paetznick	August 4
Arcele Wilburn	August 6
George B. Heil	August 9
Gayle Gardner	August 23

Aurianna Chaisson	August 24
Bob Abraham	August 27
Mackenzie Gill	August 30
Angela Sampson	August 30

Happy Anniversary! Mr. and Mrs. Matthew Smith celebrate their wedding anniversary August 21st; Mr. and Mrs. George A. Heil celebrate their 64th wedding anniversary August 27; and Mr. and Mrs. Edgar Wuthrich, their 46th wedding anniversary on August 28.



SPECIAL VOTERS' MEETINGS

In special voters' meetings after worship services, voters approved new ceiling tiles to liven the sound in the worship area and new windows (with life-time guarantee). These materials have been added and the sound is greatly improved. The worship area is much lighter and we can see outside (or you could say nature has moved inside)! In another meeting the colors were approved for painting the walls, flooring approved for the altar area and for the remainder of the worship area. A bid was also approved for windows in the parish hall.

HELPING HANDS: Our items are crackers, oatmeal, cereal, and rice. They can **ALWAYS** use **canned vegetables, fruit, and meat**. Other desirables are dish soap, laundry detergent, and bath soap. A container for your **donations** is located by the entrance to the church.

Helping Hands has on-going need for clean plastic bags and bread wrappers for sacking up items being distributed to those in need. Also needed are volunteers. If you aren't able to stock shelves, how about filling a shopping bag from a list? Thank you for sharing the love of Christ with those less fortunate.

Volunteers are especially needed Mondays and Fridays (the busiest days). If you can help, please call Amanda at 903-984-1796.

Pilgrim now offers the Sacrament of the Altar on the 1st, 3rd, and 5th Sundays of the month



At our meeting in July, one of the elders asked why Pilgrim offered the Sacrament of the Altar on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of the month, when so many other congregations offer it on the 1st and 3rd (and sometimes also the 5th) Sundays. Another elder immediately commented that Pilgrim's schedule had not always been the same. The best explanation we came up with was that, at some point in the congregation's history, one of the pastors who was celebrating the Sacrament for you all probably served his congregation on the 1st, 3rd, and 5th and served this congregation on the 2nd and 4th. Now that the congregation has its own pastor, the availability of a pastor was no longer a consideration, and so, after some discussion, the elders decided to offer the Sacrament on the 1st, 3rd, and 5th Sundays of the month. The primary reasons for the change were to offer the Sacrament more frequently and to avoid having two weeks in a row where the Sacrament was not offered (specifically, the 4th and 5th Sundays of the month under the previous schedule).

Offering the Sacrament more frequently has good Scriptural and Confessional precedents. Our Lord's words on the night when He was betrayed and instituted the Sacrament indicate what we are to do "often" (see 1 Corinthians 11:23-25), and the earliest believers partook of the Sacrament (that is, "broke bread") every Sunday (the first day of the week, as in Acts 20:7-12 and 1 Corinthians 16:2), if not every day (see Acts 2:42-47). Correctly expressing the teaching of Holy Scripture, our Lutheran Confessions similarly attest to offering the Sacrament every Sunday and on other festivals (for example, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession XXIV:1), if not every day (for example, Large Catechism V:39). Explaining why the Lutheran Church eventually abandoned offering daily Bread or, in some cases, offering the Sacrament only four times each year would take more space than this article has.

Avoiding multiple weeks without offering the Sacrament is well-motivated. Sadly, not everyone is always able to or does come every Sunday, and missing the 4th Sunday on the previous schedule could, in five-Sunday months, force one to go five weeks before it would again be offered. Even with the Sacrament offered potentially three times per month, individuals could still find themselves going several weeks without it being offered, though I am always willing to commune people apart from the Divine Service as circumstances necessitate.

Just because the Sacrament is being offered more often does not mean anyone is obligated to receive it more often. The Sacraments are not law but purest Gospel! Still, we recognize both our, in the words of the Synod's *An Explanation of the Small Catechism*, "need for the forgiveness of sins and the strength for a new and holy life" and that the Sacrament gives us those things, along with life and salvation. Both our great need for what is offered and the great blessings what is offered give us outweigh any other concerns, such as the false idea that receiving the Sacrament more often somehow makes it less special.

The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther admonishes us to not heedlessly pass by the Sacrament and exhorts us to receive it as often as we are able. You can read one such admonition and exhortation in his Large Catechism, part V, paragraphs 39-87, though perhaps more readily available to you are #19 and #20 of his "Christian Questions with Their Answers", as on p.307 in *Lutheran Worship*.

On the 1st, 3rd, and 5th Sundays of the month, your Lord invites you: "Come, the table is prepared! The Holy Things for the holy ones!" How will you answer His invitation?

His and your servant,

Pilgrim’s 2012 VBS Appreciation

Thanks to all who made our Amazing Desert Journey VBS a hit. I think the kids got a lot out of it as we studied God's word and several petitions of the Lord's Prayer.

Many people helped with donations of time, talent, supplies and money that made it all possible. Thank you to the teachers, helpers and decorators: Pastor Galler, Danny and Sharon Sampson, George A. Heil, Tisha Smith, Sallye Key, Barbara Wuthrich, Arcele Wilburn and Brandy Ellis.

We had 6 kids. We enjoyed music, Bible stories and challenges, sign language, crafts, snacks and games.

Thank you to the congregation for your support and prayers.



Love in Christ,
Steven and Angela Sampson
VBS Co-Directors



WELCOME, PAUL GUINN: Our congregation welcomes its newest member during the Divine Service July 29th.

YOUR INPUT IS NEEDED! In preparation for the congregation’s 60th anniversary, there is now a working draft of the congregation’s history at www.pilgrimlc.org/our-history Everyone’s input is welcome! To make corrections or to add information or anecdotes, please email secretary@pilgrimlc.org.

LETOURNEAU UNIVERSITY CHURCH FAIR: Pilgrim is now registered for Saturday, August 25, 2012, from 3-4 PM in the Solheim Arena. Some 400 new students will participate in the fair as a part of their student orientation. We will have a free-of-charge booth at which we can display church banners and other items to tell (and give) the students about our church. We should gather up some of the already-on-hand pens and notepads to give away, generate an updated church brochure, and perhaps consider food/water items to give away as well, if you all see fit. We need volunteers to prepare materials for and staff the booth that day.

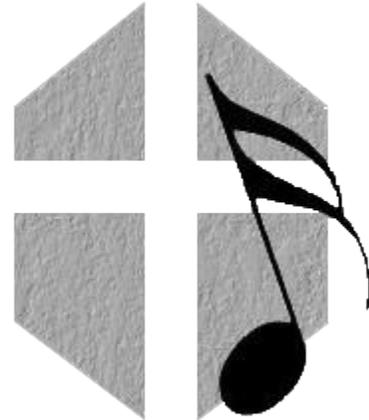
CAN YOU HELP CHILDREN WITH HOMEWORK? The Boys and Girls Club of Kilgore, our neighbor down Broadway, is seeking volunteers for Power Hour, Mondays-Thursdays from 4:00 to 4:45 p.m. No teaching experience or subject matter training is necessary. Pick up a volunteer application at the Club (724 Harris Street), complete it, and return it! For more information, call 903-984-6071.

CANCER PATIENTS NEED YOUR HELP to get to and from their treatment appointments. The American Cancer Society's Road to Recovery program lets you

volunteer your time and vehicle on a flexible schedule. Call 903-597-1383 to learn more and sign up.

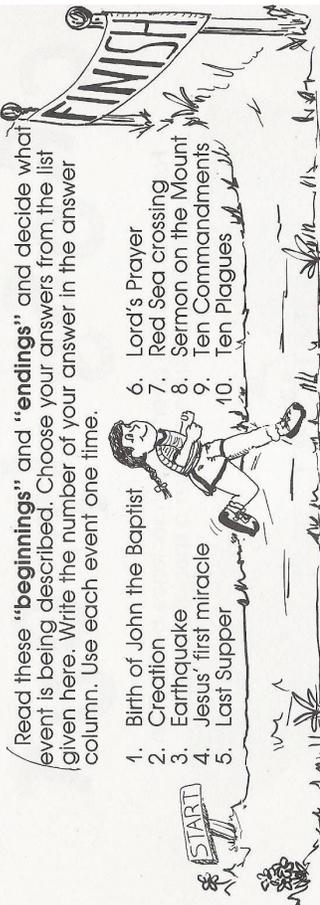
**THROUGH THE CHURCH THE SONG GOES ON
Worship, Music, and Proclamation—15-16 October, 2012**

This conference is devoted to teaching practical skills to musicians (full and part-time), pastors, and interested laypeople as they explore ways to apply the rich treasures of Lutheran hymnody and liturgy in the local congregation. Some of the sessions are highly theological, others emphasize practicality, but all are meant to help musicians think critically and theologically about their ministry, and to help pastors appreciate better the role of music in the proclamation of the Word. Practical sessions on service playing, selecting hymns, as well as some lectures devoted to historical topics, in addition to opportunities for worship and several concerts, are designed to inspire church leaders with ideas they can apply in their home parish as they work to proclaim the Gospel through Word and Sacrament. More details and session titles may be found on the following website: www.lol-plano.org/worshipconference.htm.



Featured presenters include: Rev Dr Paul Grime, Dean of the Chapel at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne; Dr Joseph Herl, Professor of Music at Concordia University, Seward, NE; Dr Charlotte Kroeker, Director of the Church Music Institute, Dallas; Dr Don Rotermund, Minister of Music Emeritus, Zion Lutheran Church, Dallas; Wayne Leupold, music publisher, Colfax, NC.

FROM START to FINISH



Read these "beginnings" and "endings" and decide what event is being described. Choose your answers from the list given here. Write the number of your answer in the answer column. Use each event one time.

1. Birth of John the Baptist
2. Creation
3. Earthquake
4. Jesus' first miracle
5. Last Supper
6. Lord's Prayer
7. Red Sea crossing
8. Sermon on the Mount
9. Ten Commandments
10. Ten Plagues

Beginnings:	Endings:	Answers:
Our Father. (Matthew 6:9)	The glory, for ever. Amen.	
Beatitudes. (Matthew 5:3)	A parable (house built on a rock).	
A chariot chase. (Exodus 14:6)	An army drowned.	
There was light. (Genesis 1:3)	A day of rest.	
Marriage in Cana. (John 2:1)	Water turned to wine.	
A Passover feast. (Matthew 26:17)	A betrayer was revealed.	
Water turned to blood. (Exodus 7:20)	Death of the first-born.	
Paul and Silas in prison. (Acts 16:23)	The jailer's family was baptized.	
A priest became speechless. (Luke 1:20)	A prophet was born.	
Thou shalt have no other gods ... (Exodus 20:3)	Thou shalt not covet ...	