



THE PILGRIMAGE

The newsletter of Pilgrim Lutheran Church (LCMS), Broadway at Florey, Kilgore, Texas
June 2019

We glorify God by receiving the forgiveness of sins by grace through faith in Jesus Christ and sharing that salvation through word and deed with those in our midst, in our community, and throughout the world.

Some judgment of preaching and practice has a place

I was blessed on my recent vacation to hear two good sermons. One sermon was preached by a former seminary classmate and roommate, and the other was preached by a pastor whom I knew when I was in Austin. Both sermons were soundly based on a text appointed for the particular day, rightly handled law and Gospel (2 Timothy 2:15) with the Gospel predominating, and even had some rhetorical flourishes.

The rhetorical flourishes were nice touches but ultimately not essential, of course, and may even become barriers to the hearers' benefiting from a sermon's message. In 1 Corinthians 2:1-5, for example, the Divinely-inspired St. Paul says that his proclamation lacked "lofty speech" so that his hearers' faith might not rest in "the wisdom of men" but in "the power of God". Truly, as St. Paul says elsewhere, the Gospel itself "is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes", for "in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith" (Romans 1:16-17).

Now, there is tension around the sufficiency, perspicuity, and efficacy of the Word of God, its not only teaching everything that people must know to obtain salvation and doing so in language that can be understood by all, but also effecting such things as far exceed human power, that is, being the means by which the Holy Spirit both brings about repentance and creates and sustains faith. Pastors and people must avoid two extreme views. Pastors must think neither that they are adding anything to the Word by their preaching, much less bringing about conversion, nor that they can be so indifferent to what and how they preach that they become an obstacle or a hindrance to the Word's efficacy. Similarly, people must think neither that the efficacy of the Word depends on the pastor nor that they can be indifferent to major obstacles or hindrances a pastor might raise to the Word's efficacy.

So, what does that mean in practice? Well, perhaps being served by some human wisdom of rhetorical strategies, pastors still should do all that they can do to deliver a soundly textual

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sermon that rightly handles law and Gospel with the Gospel predominating. And, hearers should not think that what they might deem to be poor content or poor delivery is necessarily keeping God from satisfactorily feeding them, unless His law and Gospel are not being rightly handled or the Gospel is ultimately not predominating (recognizing that, after any individual sermon, individual hearers may be more or less indicted by the Holy Spirit's use of the law and more or less comforted by the Holy Spirit's use of the Gospel).

In such regards, the two pastors of a congregation to which I used to belong provided a sharp contrast. One delivered his dynamic messages almost completely free of any notes but also too often devoid of any textual connection, law, or Gospel. The other sometimes almost completely read his sermon manuscript that usually always was textually-based and rightly-divided law and Gospel with the Gospel predominating. I was always thankful when the latter preacher was preaching on Sundays I was in the pew there.

As the called under-shepherd here at Pilgrim, I am rightly critical of non-Lutheran and even Lutheran preachers who teach falsely or fail to meet what can be rightly regarded as a sort of minimum-standard for good preaching, including their sermons' being largely-original to them or at least being transparent when and from where they have borrowed from others. And, I am rightly so-critical *publicly* in order to, in some cases, counter public error or at least help the sheep of this fold better know and follow what is ultimately the voice of their Good Shepherd (John 10:3-5, 8, 14, 16, 27).

Similar to such a role in judging preaching, the sheep have a role in judging practice. For example, is the historic Christian liturgy being used? Are only doctrinally pure (regardless of whether or not they are synodically approved) hymns being sung? Is the regular practice of Holy Communion open to those who on any given Sunday should receive it and closed to those who on any given Sunday should not receive it?

If you think there is a problem with the preaching and practice at Pilgrim, I for one want you to talk to me about it, and I think I can also speak for Pilgrim's Elders when I say that they want you to talk to me or to them about it, too. Let us not neglect meeting together for wrong reasons, such as avoiding the truth of God's law or being too averse to positive change, but let God's Word in all of its forms encourage us, all the more as we see the Last Day drawing near (Hebrews 10:25).

*His and your servant,
Pastor Galler*

DAILY BIBLE READING	
1	Isaiah 12:1-6 Acts 15-16
2	Psalm 150 Acts 17-18
3	Psalm 1 Acts 19-20
4	Psalm 2 Acts 21-22
5	Psalm 3 Acts 23-24
6	Psalm 4 Acts 25-26
7	Psalm 5 Acts 27-28
8	Psalm 6 Joshua 1-5
9	Psalm 7 Joshua 6-8
10	Psalm 8 Joshua 9-11
11	Psalm 9 Joshua 12-16
12	Psalm 10 Joshua 17-21
13	Psalm 11 Joshua 22-24
14	Psalm 12 Judges 1-3
15	Psalm 13 Judges 4-6
16	Psalm 14 Judges 7-9
17	Psalm 15 Judges 10-12
18	Psalm 16 Judges 13-15
19	Psalm 17 Judges 16-18
20	Psalm 18 Judges 19-21
21	Psalm 19 Ruth
22	Psalm 20 1 Samuel 1-3
23	Psalm 21 1 Samuel 4-6
24	Psalm 22 1 Samuel 7-9
25	Psalm 23 1 Sam. 10-12
26	Psalm 24 1 Sam. 13-15
27	Psalm 25 1 Sam. 16-18
28	Psalm 26 1 Sam. 19-21
29	Psalm 27 1 Sam. 22-24
30	Isaiah 12:1-6 1 Sam. 25-27

JUNE 2019



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Pilgrim Lutheran Church
 www.pilgrimlc.org
 903-984-4333

Pastor's Regular Study Hours
 Tuesday 5:00–8:00 PM
 Wednesday–Friday 9:00 AM–Noon
 Saturday Noon–3:00 PM

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
2 SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER (W) 9:15 AM Refreshments 9:30-10:30 AM SS & Bible Class 10:45 AM Divine Service	3	4	5 Noon Rotary Mtg. 7:00 PM Midweek Bible Study	6 Pastor Galler gone to the Study Group in Plano Margot McMillen (B)	7 Sharon Sampson (B) Dan West (B) M/M Paul Guinn (A)	1 10:00 AM Service at the Willows 8 10:00 AM Service at the Willows
9 DAY OF PENTECOST (R) 9:15 AM Refreshments 9:30-10:30 AM SS & Bible Class 10:45 AM Divine Service	10	11 6:00 PM Elders' Meeting	12 Noon Rotary Mtg. 7:00 PM Midweek Bible Study	13	14 Debbie Smith (B)	15 9:00 AM-3:00 PM Vacation Bible School M/M David Smith (A)
16 HOLY TRINITY (W) 9:15 AM Refreshments 9:30-10:30 AM SS & Bible Class 10:45 AM Divine Service	17 Jeanette Heil (B)	18	19 Noon Rotary Mtg. 7:00 PM Midweek Bible Study Gwen Rittenberry (B)	20 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM Circuit #14 Meeting (location TBA)	21 Dana Renae Freeman (B)	22
23 2 ND SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST(G) 9:15 AM Refreshments 9:30-10:30 AM SS & Bible Class 10:45 AM Divine Service	24	25	26 (No Rotary Mtg.)	27	28	29 Gwendolyn Freeman (B)
Pastor Galler and Phoenix Murrill gone to Higher Things at Concordia University in Seward, Nebraska						
30 3 RD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST (G) 9:15 AM Refreshments 9:30-10:30 AM SS & Bible Class 10:45 AM Divine Service Fifth-Sunday Meal (after the Service)	Elder On Duty – George B. Heil Cleaning Volunteers – <i>Adopt a room or a task!</i>					

“Blessed be the Holy Trinity and the undivided Unity. Let us give glory to Him because He has shown His mercy to us.”
 (Ancient Liturgical Text)

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The Pilgrimage is a monthly newsletter for the members and friends of



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