

GE†HSEMANE

LUTHERAN CHURCH

News from 4040 N. 108th Street, Omaha, NE 68164

August, 2017



The Struggle Against Sin

I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. For what I do is not the good I want to do; no, the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing. ... What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? Thanks be to God—through Jesus Christ our Lord! - Romans 7:18-19, 24-25

“I wanted to be done with that bad habit, but there I went and did it again.” Does it surprise you that even when you are a Christian, and have a heart that wants to follow God, you still struggle against sinful impulses, and too often fall to them?

You are not the first Christian to feel that way. Almost 2000 years ago the apostle Paul wrote: “I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. For what I do is not the good I want to do; no, the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing.” Right before that verse, he explained why this was so. He wrote, “I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature.”

When God brings people to faith in Christ, he covers them with Christ’s forgiveness and counts them as completely holy. He creates in them a new heart that loves the Lord and wants to walk in his ways. But as long as we are in this life, the old, sinful self that we have from birth still wants to do what is evil and fights against the good desires of the new heart God created within us.

So Christians still struggle against sin every day. They often stumble and do sinful things their new hearts don’t want to do. And it frustrates them! Paul wrote, “What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death?”

But there’s good news: “Thanks be to God—through Jesus Christ our Lord!” Though we struggle each day, each day God forgives us because of Jesus’ perfect sacrifice that was complete payment for all our sins. At last, Jesus will come and take us to be with him in heaven. There will be no sin there, around us, or inside us, to fight against or drag us down.

Keep looking forward to that day. Meanwhile, let your daily struggle with sin make you appreciate even more how good it is to have Jesus as your Savior, and to be covered by his mercy and forgiveness.

Out of town on the weekends?

Monday evening worship is available at our sister congregation, Living Hope, located on 168th Street just north of Q from now through Labor Day. The services start at 7 p.m.

All are welcome!

CHILDREN OF ABRAHAM

Galatians 3:6-9

Consider Abraham: "He believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness." Understand, then, that those who believe are children of Abraham. The Scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, and announced the gospel in advance to Abraham: "All nations will be blessed through you." So those who have faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith.

If considering their own conversions didn't drive home the point to the Galatians that they were saved by grace alone through faith alone, Paul asks them to consider the father of believers - Abraham. Abraham didn't do anything to enter into any kind of covenant with God. He didn't do anything to receive God's blessing of forgiveness. No, he believed God and it was *credited* to him as righteousness. If the righteousness of God was credited to Abraham - the father of believers - then certainly the spiritual children of Abraham needn't do anything to receive God's righteousness either. As it was for Abraham so it will be for Abraham's children. God will justify them - that includes us - by faith. God kept his promise to Abraham that all nations would be blessed through him. The Galatians who still believed that we're saved by grace alone through faith alone in Christ were part of the "all nations" - you and I are part of the "all nations" - who are blessed through Abraham for through the line of Abraham our Savior was born.

PRAYER: I thank you, Lord, for keeping your promise to Abraham. I thank you for sending your Son to be my Savior. I thank you for the blessings of forgiveness, peace and righteousness that I have through him. Amen.

Pastor Helwig



SCHOOL NEWS

Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

What kind of aspirations did you have for your life before you turned five years old? Where did you see yourself at the conclusion of the first handful of years of your life? Obviously at that age you and I were not in any position to need or want to set any specific or major goals. It wouldn't make a lot of sense. Granted by year five, we would have had things on our mind, but much of the planning and execution of the steps leading to our goals would have all had to be done in the years leading up

to our fifth year. Thanks a lot to expect out of a two or three year old.

But that is what Gethsemane Lutheran did. About 75 years ago, a group of like-faithed people gathered together and officially formed a congregation in the Wisconsin Synod church body. Less than five years later they were ready to open an elementary school! That was a great aspiration. That was a significant undertaking for a still brand-new church.

And here we are 70 years later. I hope you know that this year marks 75 years of our Gethsemane Lutheran Church and also the 70TH year of operation of Gethsemane Lutheran School. May we thank and praise our God for his goodness to this church and its school! We know that we could never do anything in our mission and ministry without God's grace and blessings. Join us in celebrating these two milestones!

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GLS's 70TH school year opens on August 17. Nearly 90 kids will end up coming through our doors again this year. Please pray for our school. Pray for our teachers. Pray for our students. Pray for our school parents and families. We appreciate all of the prayers, love, and support that Gethsemane gives to its school. From an earthly standpoint, we cannot operate even one day without you!

Last month we registered 67 kids from school and church for six teams for the fall YMCA soccer season. We look forward to soccer Saturdays from August 19 through October 15.

Our student body will be traveling to Nebraska Lutheran High School on our third day of school (August 21) for the Eclipse Watch Party. What a wonderful natural phenomenon to witness and recognize the wonders of God's creation. NELHS is expecting at least 550 people for this special event. All are welcomed to attend. Contact Mr. Otte or Mrs. Dorn at NELHS.

God bless you all!
Mr. Pederson

OWLS

(ORGANIZATION OF WELS LUTHERAN SENIORS)



Our meeting was held at Soaring Wings Vineyard in Springfield! The day was beautiful and we were on the shady veranda of the Soaring Wings Vineyard. Plenty of talking, laughing and eating, and, of course, wine and beer tasting for all. We enjoyed the music and fellowship and even had a meeting.

For August 2017, we are sailing down the Missouri River on the River City Star Riverboat! Date to be announced later! Come join us if you can, if interested call Dick or Sandy!

Sandy T, Secretary



LWMS

(LUTHERAN WOMEN'S MISSIONARY SOCIETY)



The 54th Annual LWMS Convention was held in Orlando, Florida. One of the highlights was the opening service on Thursday night. The procession of all of the flags of the countries where missions are currently was amazing. The morning devotions were edifying. Each informal missionary's talk was interesting. The small breakout groups were very informative. It was nice having a free night on Friday to explore Orlando and take in local cuisine. Finally, during the closing service, it was wonderful to again witness the procession of flags and hear more information about each country. It was truly a blessing to be able to go and spend time with so many other wonderful men and women from different foreign countries and right here in our own country.

Joy R



NELHS

(NEBRASKA EV. LUTHERAN HIGH SCHOOL)

- School News:
 - Our theme for the 2017-2018 school year is "We follow the Good Shepherd" and is based on Psalm 23.
 - Call News
 - The NELHS Board of Control met on July 9 and issued a call to Pastor Jonathon Rockhoff who currently serves at Messiah Lutheran Church in Wichita, KS. We pray for him and his wife Deb as they consider where to serve the Lord.
 - We welcome our new tutors to our campus family. Here are their bios:
 - **Ben Olsen** grew up and was raised in Spooner, Wisconsin, as the older of two boys. As of now, Ben's parents still reside in Spooner, WI while his younger brother actively pursues a career as an air force mechanic. Ben graduated Spooner Public High School and after, continued his education at Martin Luther College where he graduated with degrees in education and Spanish. He will be serving NELHS as Dorm Supervisor, Spanish teacher, and track coach/assistant.
 - **Sarah Schulte** grew up on a small farm outside of LaValle, WI. She is the youngest of seven in her family. She graduated from Luther Preparatory School in 2013 and continued her education at Martin Luther College. Sarah graduated this spring of 2017 with a degree in Education. She was called to NELHS as a dorm supervisor in the girl's dorm and be an instructor in Art and Digital Media. She will also be the concessions director and assistant soccer coach.
 - All the dorm rooms have been painted! Thank you so much to the approximately 40 volunteers who came to NELHS to do this project. With new beds, dressers, desks, mirrors, chairs, painted rooms, and refinished floors, our students and parents will be amazed as they return to campus in a couple weeks. This certainly sends a clear

message of how **important** our students are to us. Thanks also to the *Friends and Family* organization who financed this project.

- **“This is Our School” Campaign:** As of July 22, we have **37 donors** making gifts totaling **\$2,760 monthly** which adds up to **\$33,120**. The goal is to get to 100+ donors and a total annual impact of \$100,000.
- **Budget update:** Our fiscal year ended on June 30. Our budgeted amount for donations from congregations and individuals by June 30 was \$506,000. We received \$566,321! We thank God for all of the gifts we received from our congregations and supporters!
- **Upcoming events:**
 - Football and Volleyball Reports: Sunday, August 6
 - Registration for all students: Saturday, August 12 from 3 to 5 p.m. or Sunday, August 13 from 2 to 3:30 p.m.
 - Opening Service: Sunday, August 13 at 4 p.m.
 - Friends and Family Annual Meeting: Sunday, August 13 after the opening service
 - First Day of School: Monday, August 14
 - Solar Eclipse Bash: Monday, August 21 (to RSVP or to get more info contact Katelynn Dorn at kdorn@nelhs.org, already 550 have RSVPd!)
- **Sponsorships needed:** We have several students who due to extreme financial hardship need full or almost full tuition assistance. We are seeking individuals who would be willing to sponsor these students so that they can attend Nebraska Lutheran. Please contact Mr. Otte if you would be interested in learning more about these students and are interested in helping them.
- **Recruitment:** Our goal is 40 new students for next year. So far, **30** have applied (20 freshmen, 5 sophomores, 3 juniors, and 2 seniors). If you know of a family whom we can contact to tell about our ministry, please e-mail Administrator Mark Otte at motte@nelhs.org or call 402-728-5236. Keep praying for more students!

Mark Otte, Administrator

DEACONS



Thank you to our volunteers who took time to help with the huge job of moving items so that the floors could be stripped and waxed. It was a big undertaking and many hands made for quicker work, especially when moving items back into the classrooms and out of the hallways. What a great crew! There's a noticeable difference in the floors!

We are working to shape up the rest of the building in anticipation of classes starting on August 17th. Painting and cleaning were some of the tasks undertaken.

As always, if you see something that needs to be repaired, please let the church office know. Thank you for helping us to keep the property in ship shape!

DISCIPLESHIP



Vacation Bible School dates for 2018 have been announced!

Mark your calendars!

June 25-28, 2018, 9-noon

A BRAND NEW SERIES OF ADULT CATECHISM CLASSES TO BEGIN

(also known as BIC - Bible Information Class)

NEW MATERIALS

NEW APPROACH

SAME CONTENT

SAME RESULT

NINE LESSONS

NINE NIGHTS

Plan to join us for a timely review of the basic teachings of the Bible. Think about someone who could benefit from these classes. Pray about them. Invite them. Pray some more. And then come with them when they say "yes."

Save the date!

MONDAY, AUGUST 21 AT 7:00 P.M.

Please let Pastor Helwig know if you plan to come.

TUESDAY WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY

Six o'clock in the morning seems like a crazy hour to begin a Bible study; however, once you get out of bed and show up, your day goes amazingly well! Everyone is welcomed to join us as we study together on Tuesday mornings at McDonald's on 108th & Emmet. We are studying, "Connecting Sinai to Calvary" by John Jeske. It's a lay-person-study-together type of gathering. We read together and discuss what we read. This study is wonderfully written and is easy to understand. Please come! We have lots of room for more!

PUBLIC SCHOOL CATECHISM

Classes for kids in grades 6 through 8 who don't attend Gethsemane Lutheran School will begin on Wednesday, September 13th. The blue catechism (written by Kuske) will be used for class.

Parents of these students should have received an email from Pastor Helwig. If you have a child in that age group but haven't heard from Pastor Helwig, please contact him or the church office.

FALL SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS

A few more teachers are needed for Sunday School this fall for grades 3/4 and 5/6. These classes should be just the right size with great kids! If you would love to share Jesus with these kids on Sundays even if you are only available half time, please give the church office a call or send an email to office@gethsemanelutheran.com. We will help to put teacher teams together.

STEWARDSHIP



ANNUAL GETHSEMANE CAMPING TRIP

The annual Gethsemane Camping Trip will be held August 4th and 5th at Fremont State Lake's Recreation Area. Join us for fun, relaxation and a camp-side devotion. There are 2 tent spots and 1 camper spot still available. All have electric! Cost for two nights is \$47.74. Please let the church office know ASAP if you are interested!

GOOD SHEPHERD CALL NEWS

Pastor Dave Schneider announced that he has returned the Divine Call that Good Shepherd had extended to him to be their next pastor. (It turns out that his congregation will be breaking ground on a new building this fall. We ask God to bless him and his congregation in that project!)

The next Call meeting at Good Shepherd has been scheduled for Monday, August 7 at 7 p.m.

Please keep Good Shepherd and her ministry in your prayers. Pastor Helwig continues to serve as the vacancy pastor.

BOOK CLUB

HAPPINESS IS



...talking about books
with friends.

Well here we are at the "almost" end of summer, so it's time once again to get back in the mode of reading and some fun fellowship. So mark your calendars for Tuesday, August 29th at Becky Golden's house. That evening we will be discussing one of the following books from our summer reading list (we have to decide in the next couple of weeks which one of our summer reading list we'll discuss first - stay tuned to the bulletin for an update).....

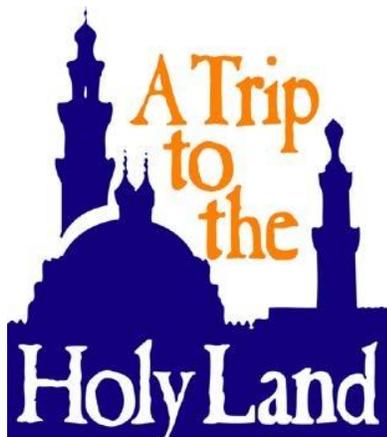
- **The Foundling** - Paul Joseph Fronczak
- **Hacksaw Ridge** - Booton Nerhdon
- **Watching Over Me: A World War II Story of Survival and a Quest for Peace** - Elfi Lee
- **If I Run** - Terri Blackstock

At that first evening we'll also discuss if we want to continue on Tuesday evenings (has seemed to be working so far but we're open for change) as well as deciding which of the books we'll discuss next as well as what new ones to add to our reading list.

If you're looking for a great "evening out," plan to join us this year for book club!!! We always have a great time—good discussion, great snacks and outstanding fellowship!!! We look forward to seeing you on the 29th.

Becky G

TRAVEL OPPORTUNITY



Pastor James Humann, retired WELS pastor, invites you to him and fellow WELS/ELS members as he hosts his fifth tour to the Holy Land. The ten day tour leaves March 12, 2018, and returns March 21, 2018. The tour will take you to Bethlehem where Jesus was born, to Nazareth where he grew up, to the Jordan River where he was baptized, and to Jerusalem where He was crucified and rose again from the dead. Look into the empty tomb. Wade in the Dead Sea. Take a boat ride on the Sea of Galilee. Take a cable car to the top of Masada where 957 Zealots made their last stand against the Romans in 73 AD.

A trip to the Holy Land is the dream of many Christians. For a brochure describing the daily itinerary, General Conditions and price, e-mail Pastor Humann at JHumann383@aol.com or call 253-839-9055.