



GE + HSEMANE

Lutheran Church

News from 4040 N. 108th Street, Omaha, NE 68164
September, 2017



Living with Real Purpose

We are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.
- Ephesians 2:10

Your life matters. You are living for a reason. Your life has purpose. Without purpose, life is boring and meaningless; there is little sense of life's significance and value. Having a life filled with purpose is not just for the super-successful and highly important. God doesn't just look after famous people who have accomplished great feats or individuals who have been placed in high positions of leadership. He cares for everyone. From the macro to the micro level, he declared his love for the world. There is no doubt, he loves you and gives your life real purpose. He does all this, not because you are deserving, but purely by his grace.

God demonstrated his grace when he saved you through your Savior, Jesus Christ. Jesus' perfect life counts for you. He suffered and died as your substitute. His rising from the grave means that you will also rise from the dead. And since he has saved you for all eternity—the greater thing—does he not also have great purpose for you in this life, the lesser thing? Yes! What is more, God says that he has created you to do what he has already planned for you. With every task and responsibility God has given your life purpose.

There is purpose in the mother who cares for her newborn and the father who teaches his son to double-knot his shoelaces. There is purpose in children who obey, just as there is purpose for the soldier who follows orders, the citizen who respects leaders, and the employee who goes to work.

Even your average day has purpose, for God has equipped and called you for each task of life. He does not intend life to be mundane mediocrity. Life is not meant to be compartmentalized into significant and insignificant pieces. Instead, God wants you to see his purpose for you as the fiber seamlessly woven through fabric of every facet of your life.

You have important purpose in life. Primarily, it is to know God's love for you through Jesus. Motivated by his grace, you can willingly follow his lead through life and lovingly serve the people he brings into your life. That's living with real purpose!



BLESSED THROUGH A CURSE

Galatians 3:10-14

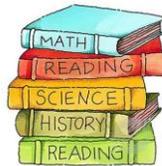
All who rely on observing the law are under a curse, for it is written: "Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the Book of the Law." Clearly no one is justified before God by the law, because, "The righteous will live by faith." The law is not based on faith; on the contrary, "The man who does these things will live by them." Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: "Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree." He redeemed us in order that the blessing given to Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Christ Jesus, so that by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit.

The law makes no promise of salvation. The law does not say, "Do this and live." The law does not say, "I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." The law does make a promise, however. The law says, "Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the Book of the Law." That curse is a promise of death. It is a promise of death in hell. The law does not justify us before God; it only convicts us before God. Why would we ever try to rely on the law for salvation?

Rather, the Christian - through the faith God has given him - relies on Christ, who "redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us," for salvation. Jesus took our place under the law. The law, however, could not convict him because Jesus kept every single requirement of the law. The curse that Jesus endured as he hung on the tree was the curse that we deserved. By becoming a curse for us Jesus bought us back - he freed us - from the curse of the law. With sins forgiven we are now free to live by faith, not by the works of the law. We are moved to live by faith because our promise of salvation rests on what Christ has done for us rather than on what we do.

PRAYER: I will never fully realize what you went through to become a curse for me, Lord, but for doing that I thank you with all my heart. I pray that you would enable me to live by faith, serving you and giving glory to you in all I do and say. Amen.

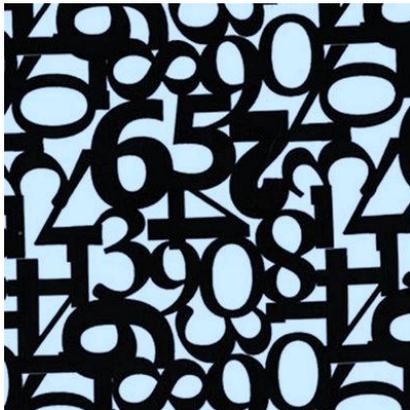
Pastor Helwig



School News

School-year greetings!

A little less than a month ago, I had the privilege of running the eastern Nebraska District principals' conference meeting. These meetings are held anywhere from 2-4 times annually and are a gathering of the brothers from our WELS elementary schools in Nebraska, Overland Park (KS), and also our Nebraska Lutheran High School. It's a pretty small group that has seen a good deal of change in the last half dozen years or so - with longstanding guys leaving the district or schools seeing



turnover even to the point of having three different principals in three years. But the group tries to remain a tight group, leaning on the others around them for help, advice, encouragement, etc.

At that meeting, my encouragement to them in our devotion at the start of our meeting was actually more of an encouragement to myself. I used the forum of that meeting to force myself to say my encouragement out loud. Then, having said and heard it, I would be without excuse when it would come to following that encouragement. The stated encouragement in the devotion was "Don't get caught up in numbers." As I looked around the room, I saw twelve schools represented, and each one had a very different story in terms of numbers. Some might be struggling to keep numbers up and remain open. Some might be

seeing community student numbers grow, but member student numbers hold or decline. Some might be seeing surges in Early Childhood ministry and needing more space. Some might be building to have appropriate space for their numbers.

For me, my number story was thinking about the 128 GLS students in MAY of 2015 and 89 GLS students in AUG of 2017. To be honest, I struggled with getting caught up in those numbers. But my encouragement to my brothers and myself has helped turn me around - to look at what is there, rather than what is not there. Better for me to celebrate 89 little lambs than be frustrated that there aren't any more. Better for me to celebrate 14 new kids in our school and three families new for 2017-18 than to dwell negatively that the other prospects didn't pan out. Better (or best) for me to celebrate that for the 70TH time, a teacher (or several teachers) were able to open a school year at a school that proudly shares God's Word as the key element of its curriculum.

I already knew that it is very easy to get caught up in numbers. But I learned that it's OK to get caught up in the numbers - as long as it is celebrating the numbers.

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+ We are thankful for our 89 God-given lambs for us to minister - coming from 55 families from our church and community.

+ We thank Pastor for opening our school year with church services dedicated to the opening of a new school year. If you have a chance, maybe dig that one up and watch the sermon on line. (If you like what you see there, see if you can find the sermon from the NELHS opening service too. It also was very good - especially if you have high school / college-aged children.)

+ We thank everyone who helped out with summer projects in and around school. We also thank those who helped with donations for purchase made during the summer months, including a laminator machine, soccer nets, and an AED for church/school.

+ We thank our teachers for their summer preparations, home visits, and time logged helping out in the building. We thank them for their continued service to the Lord, our church, and the GLS students/families.

+ Fall soccer is up and running. GLC / GLS kids are filling up rosters on six teams through the YMCA league. We thank our coaches for donating time to this effort.

+ GLS students and parents joined with over 600 other people at Nebraska Lutheran for the Eclipse Bash. What a neat thing to view the wonders of God's creation in a once-in-a-Nebraska-lifetime event!

God bless you all!  
*Mr. Pederson*



FOCE  
(Friends Of Christian Education)

School is back in session, and so is FOCE (Friends of Christian Education)! FOCE is holding their first meeting of the school year on Tuesday, September 12 at 7:00 in the fellowship hall. Anyone with children in the school or anyone who wants to support the Christian education provided here at Gethsemane Lutheran School is welcome to attend!

Watch for more details concerning our first fundraiser of the school year. We will be doing Yankee Candles again. These make excellent Christmas gifts for friends, family, co-workers and colleagues, etc.

Have a wonderful September!

*Liz K, Secretary*

## Box Tops

Do you have a collection of Box Tops that you are ready to turn in? There are boxes conveniently located in the fellowship hall and school hallway. This is free money for our school and has earned us over \$400 per year in the past years. Please take a minute to clip these out and turn them in. If you have questions, please contact Dawn Beck. Our first submission will be mailed in late October. Thank you!!!!



## OWLS

(Organization of WELS Lutheran Seniors)

On August 15, the OWLS went on a boat ride on the RIVER CITY STAR! It was such a great, beautiful day. We saw the Leahy Bridge, and the Omaha Outline as well as the submarine and ships in Freedom Park. We then went for something to eat at the Old Mattress Factory. Next month, we hope to get together to see a HUSKER game and either tail gate or have a luncheon. To be announced at a later date! Please come if you can! Remember, there is no membership fee between June and December of the year!



*Sandy T  
Secretary*



## WINGS

(Women IN God's Service)

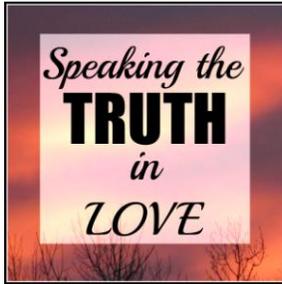
WINGS (Women In God's Service) is a wonderful opportunity to help by serving the congregation in various ways AND to enjoy some fellowship! ALL women of the congregation are invited to attend the first WINGS meeting, on Thursday, September 7<sup>th</sup>. Snacks are served at 6:45 with a meeting to follow.

You will see on the doors to the cleaning closet that we are having a kitchen shower! Please take the water droplet of whatever item you wish to donate off of the door and place it with the item on the counter in the kitchen. We appreciate your help!

Please join us at our first meeting!

# LWMS

(Lutheran Women's Missionary Society)



## “I leave all things to God’s direction”

Thank you to Joy R for sharing the details from her trip to the LWMS Convention. What a wonderful experience!

The Fall LWMS Rally will be held at St. Paul’s Lutheran Church in Norfolk on Saturday, October 7<sup>th</sup>. The rally will begin at 9:00 a.m. and will finish at 12:30 p.m., with a lunch to follow. The speaker is John Sebald, who will speak on the topic, Truth in Love Ministry. The rallies are such a fantastic way to hear about mission work being done throughout the Synod.

Look for a sign-up sheet and poster in the fellowship hall soon!

Thank you for the pill bottles that have already been donated! They will be shipped to Africa in October. Feel free to continue to donate any empty pill bottles. They can be placed underneath the table in the fellowship hall.

We will be giving gifts to the new Befriend a Missionaries in October. Look for more details about what is needed for them in the upcoming weeks.

Green Bay, WI! That is the location for the 55<sup>th</sup> Annual LWMS Convention! This is one that we could definitely drive to!

### September Prayer Requests

~Our new Befriend a Missionaries

- The work being done in our ministerial education schools.
- The work being done with the Hmong Ministry in Kansas City.

*Leslie B  
Reporter*



# NELHS

(Nebraska Ev. Lutheran High School)

- The opening service for the 39<sup>th</sup> year of Nebraska Evangelical Lutheran High School was held on Sunday, August 13. Pastor Kendall Cook from Shepherd of Peace, Norfolk, and Pastor Steve Kahrs from Clatonia and Cortland preached and presided over the opening service.
- The NELHS Friends and Family organization held a meeting after opening service and highlighted their two big events. The fall auction will be on Sunday, October 15, and the spring “Knight Out” will be on Saturday, March 10. We pray that many of you will be able to attend and contribute to these two events. Items are already being donated for the fall auction. The goal for this year is to raise \$32,000 between the two events and to do roof repair for our newly-furnished dormitories.
- We are thankful to the 60 golfers who joined us on July 29 for our annual “Tee-It-Up for Tuition” golf outing at El Dorado Hills Golf Course in Norfolk. Through their efforts, \$6,000 was raised for our families in need this year.
- Fall sports are up and running. Football has 34 participants, volleyball has 12 young ladies out for it, and cheerleading has 6 ladies on the squad.

- The NELHS Board of Control met on August 20 and issued a call to Pastor John Qualmann who currently serves at Immanuel Lutheran Church in Greenville, WI. We pray for him, his wife Leah, and their four daughters as they consider where to serve the Lord.
- Around 800 people enjoyed attending the Solar Eclipse Bash at NELHS on August 21.
- Enrollment update: The school year has started, and we are thankful for all of the students on campus. This year we welcome 30 new students to campus (20 freshmen, 5 sophomores, 3 juniors and 2 seniors). We have 94 students on campus who get to learn more about Jesus every day. This is 4 more students than a year ago. Praise the Lord!
- The “This is Our School” campaign update: As of this writing we have 38 donors making gifts totaling \$2,860 monthly which adds up to \$34,320. The goal is to get to 100+ donors and a total annual impact of \$100,000.
- **Upcoming events:**
  - Patriot’s Day Chapel Service: September 11
  - NELHS Day: September 22
  - Homecoming: October 6
  - Reformation Festival: October 21
- **Recruitment:** We are beginning our recruiting efforts for 2018-2019. 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](mailto:motte@nelhs.org) or call 402-728-5236.

Mark Otte, Administrator

## Deacons



The heating and cooling units for the church are all over 25 years old and have gotten to a point where they are starting to fail. Right now we have one air conditioning unit that has completely stopped working and we have a temporary unit in place to get us through the summer. We need to replace all four of our units for a total cost of approximately \$25,000. Since this was not a foreseen expense, this will be above and beyond our budget and we need your help. Please prayerfully consider a special offering towards covering these costs and include “HVAC” on either your offering envelope or the memo line of your check.

Volunteers continue to keep the property in ship shape by cleaning the sanctuary and mowing and trimming faithfully as well as watering the flowers in front and cleaning the parking lot. Thank you to all who are helping out!

If you see anything that needs repairing, please let the church office know so it can be addressed. Thank you for helping to keep God’s house maintained!

## Discipleship Sunday School News

**Sunday School Starts Sunday, September 17<sup>th</sup>!**

Dear Parents & Students

Welcome back to another great year of Sunday School. We hope you all had great summers! We are ready to get back to class and share God’s word with your children. We invite students in preschool through 8<sup>th</sup> grade to join us for songs, stories, games, crafts and discussions that teach us God’s Word!

Sunday school starts each week at 9:15 a.m. Please help your child to be on time and attend as often as possible. We carefully prepare lessons each week and look forward to sharing God's word with as many students as possible.

Preschool through 6<sup>th</sup> grade will meet in the sanctuary from 9:15 to 9:30 for the opening, offering, and songs and then will proceed with their teacher to their classrooms for their lessons. 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students will report to their classroom for their lesson.

We will be using the Christ-Light for Sunday Schools Year 1.

A big thank you to all our teachers, helpers and substitutes who put in time, talents, and resources to have lessons and activities planned for their classes.

We are looking forward to seeing all preschool-8<sup>th</sup> grade students on Sunday, September 17<sup>th</sup>, at 9:15 a.m.

Nickie L  
Sunday School Coordinator



## Thursday Women's Bible Study

After a summer hiatus, the women's Bible study will resume on Thursday, September 7<sup>th</sup>. We will study the book of James. We will be using the People's Bible for our discussion. If you joined us for Bible study before, you should have this book, which is included with 1, 2 Peter; 1, 2, & 3 John; and Jude. If you don't have the book, no worries! We have a few copies here at church that you can borrow. We will begin at 9:45 a.m. There is lots of room. Join us!

## Wednesday Men's Bible Study

The men of the congregation continue to study at HyVee at 108<sup>th</sup> and Fort at 6 a.m. on Wednesdays. We will be completing our study of the book of James and will begin a new study soon. Join us!

## Tuesday Women's Bible Study

Join us at McDonald's on 108<sup>th</sup> & Emmet at 6 a.m. on Tuesdays. We're studying "Connecting Sinai to Calvary" by the late John Jeske. Lay led. Great discussion. Great conversation.

### Mark your calendars! Unusual worship times coming up!:

- † Sunday, October 29 Area Reformation @ Bennington High School Auditorium  
10 a.m. NO SATURDAY SERVICE on October 28
- † Sunday, December 17 Christmas Service @ Bennington High School Auditorium  
10 a.m. NO SATURDAY SERVICE on December 16
- † Sunday, December 24 Christmas Eve  
9 a.m. Song Service  
5:30 or 7 p.m. Christmas Eve Candlelight service  
NO SATURDAY SERVICE on December 23
- † Sunday, December 31 New Year's Eve  
9 a.m. Service  
(5:30 service on December 30<sup>th</sup>)

# Stewardship

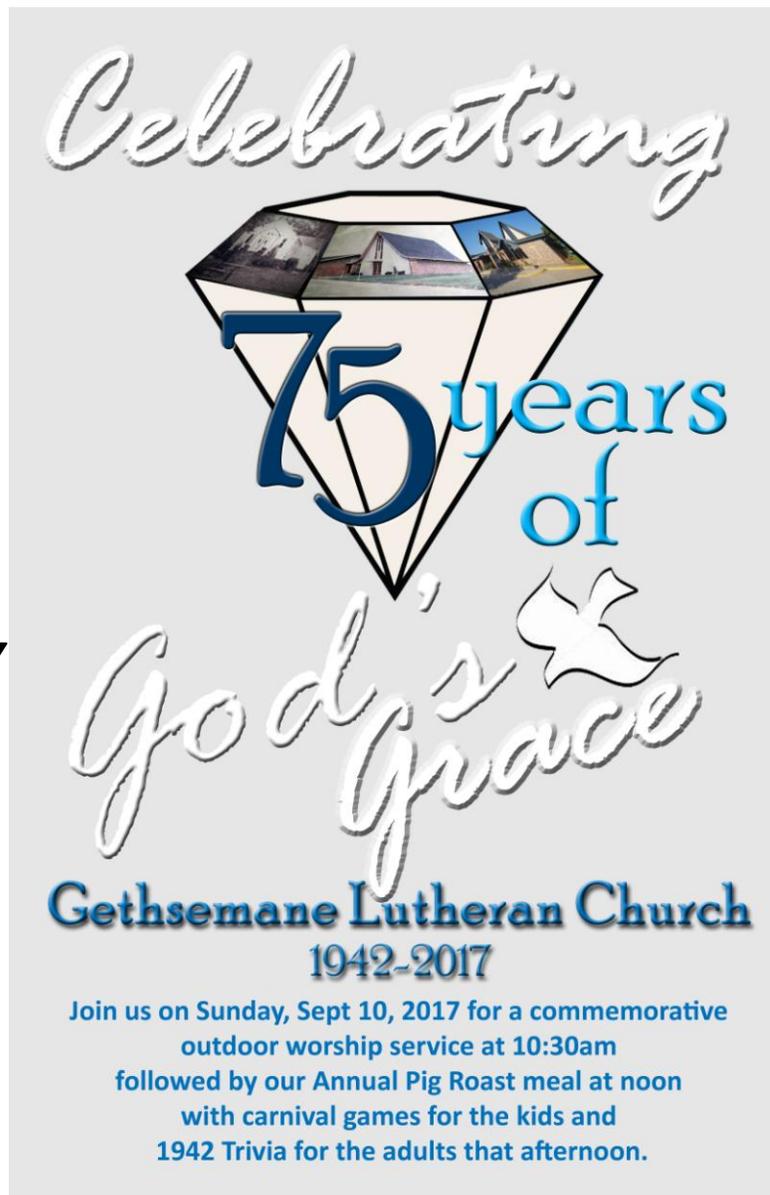
## Junior Choir and Junior Tone Chimes

Junior Choir and Tone Chimes will begin on Wednesday, September 13<sup>th</sup>, at 4:45 p.m. and 5:15 p.m.

Junior Choir is for anyone in 5<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> GRADE, and Tone Chimes is for anyone in 3<sup>rd</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> GRADE. No previous music experience is needed! Just simply a love for music, of wanting to sing and learn how to play a tone chime, and love for their Savior! They will have the opportunity to participate in church throughout the school year, and grow together as a group.

If your child is interested in participating in one or both of these groups, and so that I can better prepare for the upcoming year, please contact the church office.

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*Celebrating*

**75** years of  
*God's Grace*

**Gethsemane Lutheran Church**  
1942-2017

Join us on Sunday, Sept 10, 2017 for a commemorative outdoor worship service at 10:30am followed by our Annual Pig Roast meal at noon with carnival games for the kids and 1942 Trivia for the adults that afternoon.

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## Good Shepherd Call News

On Monday, August 7<sup>th</sup>, the saints at Good Shepherd called Pastor Kevin Boushek from LaPorte, Indiana, to serve as their new shepherd.

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

## Book Club

September sees us into month two of our 'book club year.' At the time of this writing we have yet to have our August get-together, so some things have not yet been decided (and if you're reading this before August 29<sup>th</sup> and you have the evening free, why not join us - Becky Golden's house - and see what book club is all about!!!). As soon as we decide which book to discuss and where to meet for September, we'll post updated info in the bulletin.

For now, we typically meet on the last Tuesday (or 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday) of the month. We will post the for sure dates as soon as we have them. October will see something different as author Elfi Lee will join us to discuss her book **Watching Over Me: A World War II Story of Survival and a Quest for Peace**. Leslie B will host, but we will deviate from the normal and perhaps meet on a Sunday afternoon in order to accommodate Elfi driving up from Lincoln.

Potential books for discussion in September are **If I Run** by Terri Blackstock or **Hacksaw Ridge** by Booton Herndon. We invite you to join us for an evening of wonderful fellowship accompanied by some great snacks. See you in September (probably the 26<sup>th</sup>).

*Becky G*