

Pastor's Thoughts

MAY 2024

To the saints of God who are at Holmes Evangelical Lutheran Church, Clarion, IA. Grace to you and peace in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Well... April sure has been fun. March ended with us celebrating our resurrected Lord. April moved quickly toward preparation for a God provided time away to gather our thoughts and enjoy the provision of His bountiful goodness. We are truly blessed people. I thank God for His provision and look forward with great anticipation to fulfillment of His promise to guide all who live with faith in Him on an ultimate and everlasting journey home. I long to go home, my prayer is that you likewise share in this longing.

The journey we just completed was beautiful and exciting. But reality proclaims that our earthly journeys all have an end. The anticipated journey promised to us is filled with beauty that man cannot capture with words. The benefit of our anticipated journey is the reality that it will be our forever experience. What a blessed thought both for our families who proceed us in death and for us who pray for that blessed day.

Tales of peaceful journeys are not the only headlines afforded to us today. Wars and rumors of war are increasing, we who live by faith in Jesus see with clarity that victory is on our horizon.

While that is our blessed hope and our divinely appointed promise, it is not a reality that most in the world share. Deceptive words have led sinful man away from the only source of truth. Many ways to God fill the ears and the hearts of men vainly searching for peace that comes from within. Our peace is not the product of our desire, it is not the result of a new world government, or the empty promises of self-absorbed politicians.

If peace is our true desire, then we must look to Christ with eyes of faith and wait with patience.

The testimony of the Holy Spirit proclaims that, ***"All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work."*** 2 Timothy 3:16-17. The Holy Spirit is God who loves His created order. We should not be surprised that He chooses to teach us in an orderly way how every jot and tittle of Scripture is given to us for the strengthening of our faith.

Divine order informs us that we first receive instruction from the Lord. We require a fundamental understanding of God's instruction prior to us receiving the benefit of the power that God's Word that is promised. Therefore, we are to be in the Word where we will receive the benefit of God's wisdom.

Once we receive God's instruction, He begins the process of reproof, and His loving action intended to correct the course we have determined to walk. Reproof is a divine warning that we are walking on the wrong path. God's Word warns us when we are wrong. Some of us heed God's warning, some of us choose to ignore His guidance and walk through life in accord with the desire of our hearts. Our hearts are revealed throughout scripture to be completely deceitful. Our heart leads us from God. Our heart depends on feelings and leans on our own understanding. When you are being challenged by God's Word do not depend on your gut feeling, you must for the sake of your eternal soul trust God's guidance through His Word. Instead, we are called by God to trust Him and live with the guidance of His wisdom. Scripture is clear, ***"Trust in***



Pastor's Thoughts Continued...

the Lord with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding, in all of your ways acknowledge Him and He will make your paths straight.” Proverbs 3:5-6. Making our paths straight is God’s action of correcting our lives toward the eternal future God has prepared for us. That is the next step in the order of God.

Scripture corrects us. Correction is God’s way of resetting our life’s course. As an example, a ship that is listing to the left or to the right must be corrected. Balance is essential for arriving at the desired destination. Once the ship is corrected it will successfully complete the charted journey.

Teaching, reproof, correcting are a part of the process. All through the process God’s Word trains us up in Jesus’s righteousness as the only righteousness that has the power to save our souls from hell. By His Word and through His Spirit, God helps to prevent our lives from swerving left or right. He by His grace turns our lives from evil and He makes sure that our way is protected. (*Proverbs 4:26-27*)

So together we wait and as we wait God is moving. We wait with the attitude of confidence in God’s promises and Word.

To reiterate my point, we use the basic categories from *2 Timothy 3:16-17*. God’s Word instructs us while we wait. God’s Word rebukes us while we wait improperly. God’s Word corrects us back to the right way of waiting and God through His Word trains us to wait with assurance safely covered by the perfect righteousness of His Son. His righteousness is imputed to us. His righteousness alone gives us confidence to wait with anticipation for the great day of God’s judgement. To wait without the imputed righteousness of Jesus is a period that is wrought with worry and guilt. Waiting with worry and guilt is no way to wait. We, when we choose to live outside of faith in Jesus Christ alone can never be assured that what we have done is enough to get us into heaven.

Christ loves you too much to allow your life to be stained with worry and guilt.

While we are waiting, we pray Lord Jesus come. But waiting is not the act of sitting on the porch doing nothing. Waiting implies living within the fullness of God’s provision, always being mindful to never abuse or neglect God’s gift. That means there will be more journeys, more experiences, more joy, and more peace. I can only assume that they will always be there until God determines that they are not there anymore.

After easter we prepared for our journey abroad. We anticipated the drive to the cities, the flights to Paris, into Tunis and Palermo. We packed too much, we worried about short layovers, we worried about driving in unfamiliar surroundings. In the end none of our worries came to fruition. God clothes the sparrows and the lilies; how could we not believe He would guide our journey. *“Oh, yea of little faith,”* came to mind. God our Father remains in control of our lives, trust Him, and live in His joy. Along life’s way stop. Take time to enjoy the sweet smell of the roses, the beauty of the thunderstorm, marvel at the power of the wind, enjoy the wetness of the rain as it covers our faces and soaks our ground.

It is too easy for us to forget the power of our God whose will is for our salvation. Rest in Him and know He teaches you with His voice, He reproves you when your life is out of line, but in the end, He corrects your course back to Him.

I look forward to the days God has prepared for us as we wait for the consummation of His eternal promise. May His presence with you be the source of your peace.

Be blessed to be a blessing.

Pastor George

Home Circle

Wednesday, May 1

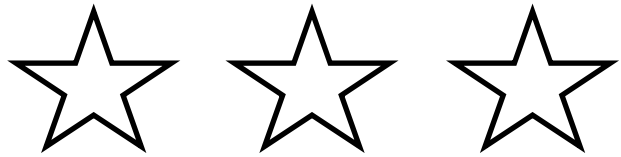
1:30pm

Devotion/Lesson: Naomi Lette

Hostess: Mary Barb Larson

Altar Flowers:

Nancy Rosendahl



Happy Birthday!!!

MAY

1- Ed Wagner

5- Brad Johnson

6- Dean Hamer

13- John Esler

15- Jana Gangestad

21- Rick Nelsen

26- Charlotte Steffenson

28- Mike Thompson

30- Keith Pate



JUNE & JULY newsletter and calendar items are due by Thursday, May 16th.

Items can be emailed to:
holmeslutheran@gmail.com

Thanks!

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Holmes Lutheran Church

2139 Hancock Avenue
Clarion, IA 50525

www.HolmesLutheran.net
www.facebook.com/holmeslutheranchurch

Pastor George Lautner

Cell: 412-874-9878
Email: aflcgeo@gmail.com

Church Secretary - Jill Gangestad

Cell: 515-689-0282
Email: HolmesLutheran@gmail.com