



The Spirit of St. Paul's

ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH, SASKATOON, SASKATCHEWAN

www.stpaulslutheran.ca

JUNE 2023

Pastor

MEDITATE "DAY AND NIGHT"

In the first psalm we learn that one is blessed when "his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night" (Psalm 1:2). The word "law" in this context doesn't just mean God's Law in the way that we normally understand it (e.g., the Ten Commandments), but is the whole of God's Word, His full teaching, including the Gospel. We are blessed when we meditate on God's Word. A good question to ask then is what is meditation?

The word "meditate" in the verse from Psalm 1 above is translated from the Hebrew word hagah which is defined as "to muse, utter, groan, growl, speak, ruminate." In other words, it is to engage in God's Word deeply. One author described it this way: "Meditation is best described as reflection. That is, there is something there which I can't immediately make out. I fix my thoughts on it to the exclusion of everything else. I rest on it. I look at it. I think about it. And all this without any strain, relaxed and easy! I let myself dwell on it. It has to do with me personally. That's meditation!" We are blessed when we meditate on God's Word in this manner because the Holy Spirit is present giving us strength, comfort, help, and hope through these words of eternal life.

Education



KIDS CORNER GROWING HEARTS OF FAITH

One Lord, One faith, One baptism (Ephesians 4:5)

SEE SEPARATE DOCUMENT ONLINE AND PRINT.

Meditating on God's Word like this requires discipline, especially for those of us who are used to being inundated with all kinds of information on screens. Online we encounter headlines and other so-called "click-bait" links that lead us to news and articles and often useless information that we quickly glance at without giving too much consideration.

Engaging in deeper reflection on what we read takes work. As we enter the time of summer and vacations I encourage you to take time for personal devotion by meditating on God's Word. You will be blessed.

Below is a simple pattern for meditation suggested by Dr. Martin Luther consisting of recollection, reading, reflection, and prayer. I pray it assists you in hearing, reading, marking, learning, and taking God's Word to heart that you may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of eternal life.

- Collect yourself together. Let your thoughts and concerns come and go as they please. Gradually become more and more still inside. Turn your heart to God. Remain with him and know that he sees you.
- Read the chosen passage. Open the Bible. Read the passage slowly, moving your lips. Try to be totally attentive. Write down your thoughts in a few sentences.
- Think about the passage by asking the following questions: 1) What does this say to me? How am I meant to take it?; 2) For what should I thank God? What has he done for me?; 3) What do I have to confess? What have I done wrong?; 4) For what should I pray? Spend quite a bit of time at this stage.
- Pray as you have been prompted.

God's blessings, Pastor Keith

Reminders

- Please remember that, because we have a number of members with allergies to nuts, any foods brought to church events should be nut-free.

- Also, several have allergies to fragrances. Please consider them when choosing toiletries and whether or not to wear perfumes.

- LWMLC mites and society offerings may be put in the offering plate, mailed to the church or given to society treasurer, Marion Hollinger. Please make any cheques payable to St. Paul's Lutheran Church but mark them clearly as being for LWMLC. Indicate the amount for mites and the amount for society funds.

Classifieds

Something to sell or give away? Need something? Services to offer to fellow members? Try The Spirit Classifieds first. No cost. Leave your ads at the church office or give them to the editor.

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Stewardship

What Do You Want?

One of the best-known and most-beloved psalms is Psalm 23, the "Shepherd Psalm." There we learn that the Lord is our Shepherd. And since He is our Shepherd, we will not want. We will not suffer want because the Lord, our Shepherd, will lead us to green pastures and beside still waters. In other words, the Lord, our Shepherd, will provide for all that we need in both body and soul.

Yet, we live as though this is not the case. We live as though we *actually* suffer from want, that the Lord, our Shepherd, will not provide for all that we need. And thus, we live as though the Lord is not our Shepherd. And that means that we live as though we are not the Lord's sheep.

When do we live as though the Lord is not our Shepherd? When we put anything else before Him and His provision for us. When we think that going to work is more important than receiving His gifts in church on Sunday (in violation of the First and Third Commandments). When we fail to give generously of the first fruits of what the Lord has provided for us because we don't know what the future will bring (even though He has promised that He will lead us to

green pastures and still waters).

We live as though we are not the Lord's sheep when we think that the Lord is only in the business of helping those who will help themselves. We act this way because our minds are set on earthly, temporal things and not on heavenly, eternal things. We act this way because we have stopped hearing the call of our Shepherd, which comes through His Word.

Through the Word of God, the Shepherd calls us to Himself. Through the Word, the Holy Spirit gathers and enlightens us with His gifts. Through the Word, we are kept holy and nourished in the one true faith, the faith that follows our Shepherd wherever He leads us. He promises to lead us to our true home, to the land flowing with milk and honey, to a better country, not of this world, but a heavenly one.

And so, here's the Good News: the Lord is your Shepherd, even and especially for wayward sheep. For Jesus seeks and saves those who are lost. He finds the lost sheep and carries them back to the fold. He is the Shepherd who lays down His life for His sheep. The Lord is your Shepherd. Let us live as His sheep.

Board of Stewardship

Lay Ministry

We hope everyone has been enjoying our warm spring weather. The Board of Lay Ministry has met over the last few months to discuss the ministry at St. Paul's. These discussions with Pastor Keith included his overall ministry to the congregation, and specifically

Bible classes and confirmation classes as well as providing private communion to those members of St. Paul's who are not able to attend worship services in person. There have been additional discussions led by Pastor Keith with respect

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In his article at the beginning of this newsletter Pastor Keith encourages us to meditate on God's Word. As I put this newsletter together I found I had extra space so rather than leave a page blank I selected a Bible study from the summer issue of Tapestry that could be useful in helping us spend time in the Word. It can easily be spread out over the summer. *M. Hollinger, editor*

JOYFULLY FRUITFUL

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law (Galatians 5:22-23).

In his work *A Little Book on Joy*, Rev. Matthew Harrison wrote: "In the Holy Scriptures we are told that joy is one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. This means that it is by definition something beyond our own doing, there is no forcing it, no coercing it, no measuring it, no cooking it up. To try and do so would only extinguish it." He also profoundly noted that "Peace is joy at rest." The moment I read those words I couldn't get them out of my head.

So often we approach joy with a one-size-fits-all approach. If you are joyful, then your life will look one way and you will act like everyone else who is joyful. But do we? Can we? What if joy takes on all kinds of shapes and nuances in the lives of those who belong to the Faith? What if we viewed joy as the foundation of all the gifts of the Holy Spirit? Would that change the way you look at this holy gift list? Would it change the way you seek to live out each of these gifts? Would it give you a deeper understanding of the many ways we can and should joyfully respond to God's grace? Let's try it ...

Peace is joy at rest.

This world can be a hard and unforgiving place. Some people believe peace is found only in the absence of strife. But peace is the

presence of joy in the midst of strife—a joy that gives us rest.

- **Read John 20:19-29.** Why were the disciples hiding behind locked doors? Did any of that danger disappear after Jesus' appearance? What did change? How might their peace be rooted in the new-found joy they also experienced?

- **Read Ephesians 2:11-22.** What is the peace that Jesus brings us? How did He accomplish it? What reasons does this give you for joy?

- Where in your congregation, community, or personal life is peace needed most? How can you seek to instill, increase, or encourage peace? What concrete steps toward peace can you take?

Patience is confident joy.

I sometimes think I could be more patient if only it wasn't so hard and didn't take so long. Patience

is not simply the ability to suffer without; rather, this godly patience begins with the joyful confidence in what we already have.

- **Read 1 Samuel 1.** Hannah, while patient with her sad lot in life, was not serene or happy. What was she, that was even more important than remaining patient? Much of her distress came from feeling forgotten. How did God answer her? Where is joy in this story?

- **Read Romans 8:18-30.** In so much of the bad news and heartache of this world that threatens to steal our patience, it can seem like God has forgotten us. Has He? What is His promise to us even now? How does this bring us joy, even in suffering? How does this help us be patient even when things are so frustrating?

- Where in your congregation, community, or personal life is

continued next page



Joyfully fruitful, continued

patience needed most? How can you seek to instill, increase, or encourage patience? What concrete steps can you take to become more patient?

Kindness is joy shared.

The golden rule, as most people understand it, is anything but golden. If I do for you in the hopes that you will do for me, am I not really just doing for me with an extra step in the middle? Kindness is not a calculating “have to,” but a joyful “want to”!

- **Read or review the Book of Ruth.** Why do you think Ruth showed such kindness to Naomi?

What could she expect to gain from it? Why did Boaz show such kindness to Ruth? How is joy woven into the fabric of this otherwise very sad story?

- **Read Titus 3:3-7.** Does anyone deserve kindness? Why was God kind to us in Jesus Christ? So what motivation, then, do we have to be kind to others in return? What does kindness have to do with joy?

- Where in your congregation, community, or personal life is kindness needed most? How can you seek to instill, increase, or encourage kindness? What concrete steps can you take to be a kinder person?

Now it's your turn. As a group (if you have time) or on your own, do the same for each of the following Fruits of the Spirit. Can you think of a biblical example? How does Jesus both exemplify the idea and give us all that is necessary to live out this holy gift? How can you joyfully incorporate this understanding and attitude into your daily life?

Love is joy unleashed.

Consider 1 Corinthians 13:1-13

Goodness is joy suffused.

*Consider Acts 10:34-43;
Romans 12:9-21*

Faithfulness is joy reciprocated.

*Consider 1 Timothy 1:12-17;
Hebrews 3:1-6*

Gentleness is a humble joy.

*Consider Galatians 6:1-6;
Mathew 11:25-30*

Self-control is joy dignified.

*Consider 2 Timothy 3:10-17;
John 19:7-19*

The joy we have in Jesus Christ and the salvation He has accomplished for us guides, informs, and enables so much more of our words and actions than just mere happiness. So, how is God leading you to respond in joy today?

Closing Prayer: Merciful Father, through Holy Baptism You called us to be Your own possession. Grant that our lives may joyfully evidence the working of Your Holy Spirit in love, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control, according to the image of Your only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ, our Saviour. Amen.

Hymn Suggestion: (LSB 691)
“Fruitful Trees, the Spirit’s Sowing”

Rev. Ken Maher, Christ Our Hope Lutheran Church, Collingwood, Ont.



BRINGING CHRIST TO THE NATIONS AND THE NATIONS TO THE CHURCH

For ninety years, Lutheran Hour Ministries has faithfully proclaimed the Good News of Jesus Christ to nations around the world. This has been carried out through the airing of Lutheran Hour broadcasts on multitudes of radio stations, the creation of resource materials, and the equipping of God's people through workshops and other resources.

One way to partner with Lutheran Hour Ministries is to sponsor a broadcast of The Lutheran Hour on our Saskatoon radio station, CJWW. Sponsored messages can highlight a specific occasion, a memorial or in thankfulness for God's blessings. The current cost to fully sponsor a CJWW broadcast is \$286. Partial sponsorships are also accepted. For more information, please visit www.lll.ca, email helpful@lll.ca or call 1-800-555-6236.

On behalf of you, the members of St. Paul's, our board has arranged to sponsor the CJWW broadcast on Thanksgiving Sunday, October 8, 2023, in thanksgiving to God for His many blessings to our congregation.

*Board of Evangelism
and Public Relations*

Evangelism and Public Relations

GOOD NEWS: THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Jesus Promises the Holy Spirit

“If you love Me, you will keep My commandments. And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him. You know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you.” (John 14:15-17 ESV)

The Ascension of our Lord

“So when [the disciples] had come together, they asked [Jesus], ‘Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?’ He said to them, ‘It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by His own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end

of the earth.’ And when He had said these things, as they were looking on, He was lifted up, and a cloud took Him out of their sight. And while they were gazing into heaven as He went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes, and said, ‘Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw Him go into heaven.’” (Acts 1:6-10 ESV)

The Coming of the Holy Spirit

“When the day of Pentecost arrived, [the disciples/apostles] were all together in one place. And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy

Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. Now there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men from every nation under heaven. And at this sound the multitude came together, and they were bewildered, because each one was hearing them speak in his own language. And they were amazed and astonished, saying, ‘Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? And how is it that we hear, each of us in his own native language?.....we hear them telling in our own tongues the mighty works of God.’” (Acts 2:1-8,11b ESV)

So it was that the disciples saw Jesus lifted up into heaven as He returned to His Heavenly Father. And so it was that they were prepared for the coming of the Holy Spirit who would empower them to carry out the “great commission” with which Jesus had entrusted them (as recorded in Matthew 28:18-20 ESV): *“And Jesus came and said to them, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.’”*

So it is that, through Holy Baptism, we also have received the gift of the Holy Spirit and the gift of faith to believe the good news that God’s Word proclaims. And so it is that the Holy Spirit equips us to share this good news with others who will be equipped to pass it on until that great day when Jesus comes again in glory and majesty!

Barry Walter

Verla Schmirler

Lay Ministry, continued from page 2

to implementing formal funeral and wedding policies for St. Paul’s as well as potential evangelism and outreach initiatives for the congregation and its members through education opportunities. We anticipate more information will be shared with the congregation in the coming months. We continue to be thankful for the ministry that Pastor Keith provides to St. Paul’s in carrying out the ministry of word and sacrament.

We continue to be thankful for the dedication of Laura Neufeld and others as they share their musical gifts for our worship services. We recognize their commitment of time and talents. Thanks as well to Natalie for the technical assistance to Pastor Keith in recording the

services that are made available to members who are not able to attend worship services in person.

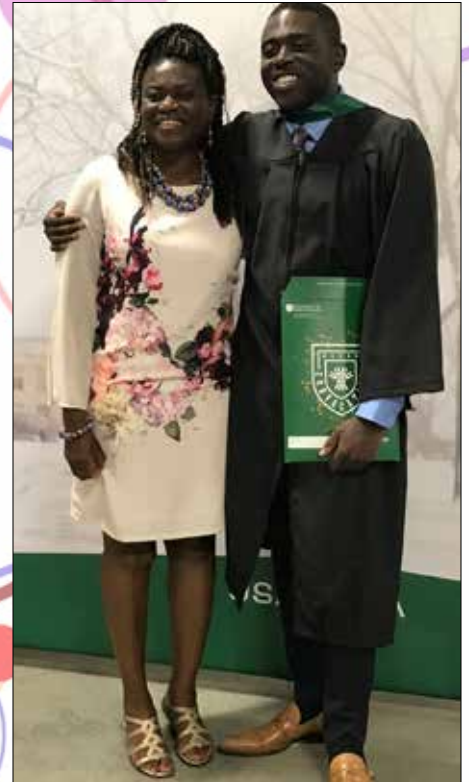
We continue to use a small group of people for the altar guild and usher teams. We thank those individuals for their faithfulness in preparing for communion and in ushering for worship services. Thank you to Doreen Morris and Daryl Walter for coordinating the altar guild and ushers respectively.

We hope everyone has a great summer and can enjoy the summer weather. For those who will be taking well-deserved holidays or going out of town during the next few months, we look forward to seeing you and worshipping with you in the fall.

St. Paul's FAMILY NEWS



Ezra, son of new members Timothy and Jocelyn Seibert was welcomed into our St. Paul's family on April 2, 2023. The Seiberts live in Birch Hills. Welcome to Timothy, Jocelyn and Ezra.



Our brother in Christ, Kwame Asiamah, convocated from the College of Medicine on June 8, 2023. He has received a residency for internal medicine at Royal University Hospital, Saskatoon.

Congratulations to Dr. Kwame Asiamah!!

On April 2, 2023, Eli Sira became a confirmed member of St. Paul's family. Welcome Eli.

