

GOOD SHEPHERD NEWS

January 2014

Happy New Year!

THE FAMILY CIRCUS By Jeff and Bill Keane



"Daddy said 'Happy New Year,' but
I don't think he really meant it!"

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Happy New Year! Do you really mean it? The words of Saint John might shed some divine light upon the year which has just passed. John says, "For from His fullness we have all received, grace upon grace" (1:16). We have all *received*, he says.

Many of us are maybe thinking more about the things we have lost this past year rather than the gifts we have received. Likely we have all lost something during the past year. Some have perhaps lost a great deal. Some may have lost a job. Some have lost money. Others, their health. And still others, a loved one.

During this New Year season you may have perhaps felt how poor you are now and how rich you were at the beginning of last year. Yes, what a change can take place in a home in one year.

Nevertheless John says, "We all received."

Yes, we all received, even those who lost a great deal. This is what God would remind us of as we begin a new year.

We have all received, for God only *gives*. Moreover, He gives to all, both to the evil and to the good. And He gives only good gifts. But He cannot give equally much to all because there are many who will accept only His *temporal* gifts.

We have all received *grace*. For all of God's gifts, both temporal and spiritual, are grace. None of us has merited a single one of the gifts we have received. And yet, God continues to love and care for us, no matter what comes our way.

It is good to bring the old year to a close when we can see that it has brought us grace from God. And it is good to begin the new year when we can see that we are to receive grace. We are not to receive according to our merits. Each day is to bring us new grace wrapped up in the loving-kindness of our Lord and God.

God's blessings,
Pastor Dan

Revisiting the Augsburg Confession

Introduction

As I sit here at the beginning of a new year, trying to think of something to write for the January Newsletter, it occurred to me that it might be a good idea to walk through some of our more historic Confessions, article by article. I figure it may take us several years to finish, but in the end, we'll have walked through the most important things the Scriptures have to say to Christians in our day. And, in the end, if you save these articles for future reference, you'll have some notes you can go back and think about as time goes by. For our first series, we'll consider the Augsburg Confession—the document that really framed the 16th century Reformation. If you need a copy, come see me, and I'll help you get one.

The Augsburg Confession was presented in 1530, in the city of Augsburg, by the princes and theologians of the German lands, to the Holy Roman Emperor and delegates from the Pope. Controversies had broken out due to Martin Luther's disputes over several key doctrines that Rome was pushing, and since Luther was a doctor of Holy Scripture, a priest (pastor), Augustinian monk, and university professor, his opinions carried some weight... particularly because he argued mainly from Holy Scripture, rather than from canon law. Luther challenged the Pope's authority to do a lot of things, including the selling of indulgences to fund his civil works

projects, and wanted to get rid of the corruption which clouded the Gospel of Justification (salvation) by grace through faith for Christ's sake alone. And to top it off, he translated the Bible into the language of his German people, so the people could understand what the theologians were arguing about... and the people were becoming more convinced, day by day, that Luther was right in holding up Scripture over any other human teacher, even the Pope himself. Since Holy Scripture is God's own Word, Luther argued that any mere man's word must be subject to it. Hard to argue with that, and the people got it.

By 1530, the Pope and the Emperor were afraid they were losing control of parts of Europe they claimed political leadership for. To ensure the Germans were not becoming insurrectionists or planning to split the empire, the Emperor and the Pope's delegates summoned the German leaders to Augsburg, to explain what exactly they were teaching in their churches. Answering that call, together with several German princes, was Luther's right hand theologian, Philip Melancthon (who represented Luther, since Luther could not come... he was under the Pope's death sentence of excommunication at the time.) Using some documents that had been prepared earlier, Melancthon crafted the Augsburg Confession to present a relatively full

explanation of their doctrine and practice.

While Philip and the princes intended the Augsburg Confession to broker peace with the Emperor and the Pope's delegates, that's not what happened. The papal delegation incited the Emperor to denounce the princes and theologians of Germany, and to demand that they return to Roman doctrine and practice—Roman control. The German princes refused, even offering to let the Emperor cut off their heads, rather than leave their solid Confession of the faith. The Emperor relented from executing them, but controversy continued for many years after. The churches of Germany, particularly those associated with the princes and theologians of the Augsburg Confession, were able to practice the Christian faith according to their Confession... though wars and tumults and intrigues tried to stop them.

Today, the Unaltered Augsburg Confession of 1530 is the most recognized symbol of Lutheran Christianity, continuing to point Christians back to Holy Scripture, in continuity with the ancient Church and the Church Fathers. It is our Confession, and next month, we'll begin with Article 1: God. Amen.

Pastor Brad



-Preschool News

Happy New Year! May God bless your 2014 as He also continues to bless our preschool.

We will be having our first Open House on Wednesday, February 5th from 6:30 – 7:30 pm. Information about our preschool, 2014-2015 tuition prices, a tour, and an opportunity to ask questions as well as receive registration information will be available. If you or anyone you know is interested in Little Lambs Preschool, please mark our “Open House” date on your calendar!

www.littlelambstacoma.com

Thank you for all the support through the many prayers, encouraging comments, and donations. We truly appreciate all of it and humbly ask for your continual prayer support.

Thank you,

Bonnie Huset
Director / Teacher

Lunch Bunch News

Our next meeting is Tuesday, January 7 Again - we start with a devotion by Pastor Gerken, then a shared meal and our program. This month please bring your favorite game - maybe someone will play it with you.

Also come with some ideas for programs in the future. We would like to plan about 4 months in advance so we could interest others in attending. Oh - do not forget a dish to share at meal time. See you there.

Pastor Ken Boetcher

Open Gym

Our church has use of Concordia’s gymnasium on Sunday afternoons from 2 – 4 pm. We are mostly meeting every other Sunday to help accommodate busy schedules. You are welcome to come join us

as we have use of the gym through the month of April. Please check with Tony or Bonnie Huset about specific Sundays we will be there. Thank you!

Bake Sale

On Sunday, January 19th, Sanctity of Human Life Sunday, we will hold a **Bake Sale** to raise funds of this year’s 4US event. Thanks to your support, last year our Good Shepherd team raised over \$1100 4US. This amount helped purchase ultrasound machines and the related training for 4 crisis pregnancy centers in Washington and 1 in New York (A total of 27 ultrasound machines have been delivered to date, including many of the local Care

Net of Puget Sound centers.) These centers offer free care, counseling and ultrasounds for pregnant women in crisis. One machine can save over 2000 lives, because 96% of those women choose life. Those who ultimately benefit from the work of 4US are mothers and their children that are saved each day. The mission of this charity is simple: make abortions rare. This year’s event will be August 17th at Fort Steilacoom Park.

2014 Grow auction Announcement from your Stewardship/Fellowship Board

In an effort to increased attendance and enthusiasm for next year's Grow auction the committee has set the tickets at \$15 per person and \$25 per couple.

We are asking everybody that is so inclined to donate to next year's auction any unused gift cards or unwanted and unused Christmas gifts received this year.

If any church members and/or individuals have any crafts that they want to donate to next years of auction, they will would gladly welcomed. Crafts included but not limited to painting, woodworking, cooking, labor, brew master, etc. This list it is intended to get everybody thinking. Everybody has a talent.

Also in early 2014 committee members will ask businesses to remember the Grow auction in their charitable giving for 2014.

If you know any businesses or business owners that might be willing to donate to next year's auction, please let the committee members know.

Our intention is to make the next auction the biggest and the best auction we have ever had!

Remember the proceeds of the auction go to the endowment fund which provides scholarships for our students.

In Christ,
*Norman Gerken, Caron Long, Mike Burgardt,
Kathy Popplewell, Kathy Brazell*



Women in Mission

Mark your Calendars:

Tuesdays: 9:15 am – LWML Bible Study and Quilting
Saturday, January 11th – Surprise!

To **ALL WOMEN OF GOOD SHEPHERD,**

The “Event” on January 11th is for all of you! Women’s Ministry, Altar Guild, Craft Guild, Volunteers, etc. all are sisters in Christ. Let’s join together to enrich each other in the Lord and accomplish His will.

(LWML is the official women’s auxiliary of the LCMS)

Highlight your January, 2014 calendar for 1/11/14 at 11:30am in the social hall.

Serving the Lord with Gladness
Jane Oberg

Men’s Breakfast / Bible Study January 18th

Join us **Saturday, January 18th at 8 am** for a delicious breakfast, wonderful fellowship, and in-depth Bible Study. We are going through the series “Stuff They Didn’t Teach Me in Sunday School.” We will be discussing the chapter “Sorry Moses, But I wasn’t Even Born Yet!” (Deuteronomy 5) *Pastor Dan*

