

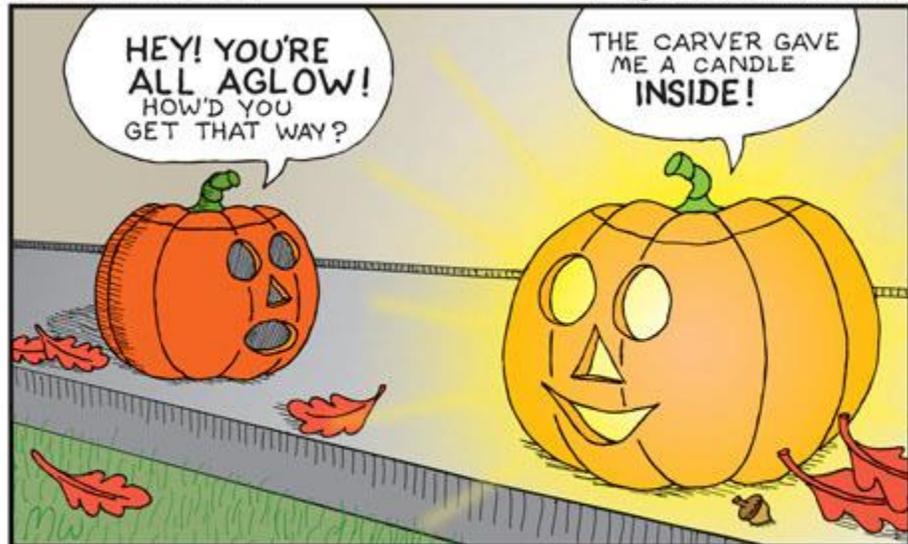
GOOD SHEPHERD NEWS

October 2013

Halloween

INNER LIGHT

A Joyful 'toon by Mike Waters



For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ. - 2 CORINTHIANS 4:6 NIV

We know that Christmas is the holiday which brings the most income to business. But do you know which holiday is second most profitable? Valentine's Day? No. Easter? No. Thanksgiving? No again. The answer is Halloween. It is very popular and very profitable in the United States.

But where did Halloween come from? "Hallow" in Old English means "holy" or "sacred" (as in the Lord's Prayer's "Hallowed by Thy Name"). "Hallow's Eve" or "Halloween" simply means the "evening of holy persons" and refers to the evening before All Saints Day, which is observed on November 1 on many Christian calendars.

In the early years of the Church, Christians were persecuted and many died as martyrs for their faith in Jesus Christ. About the year 610, the Church set a special day aside to remember and honor them.

In the eighth century Pope Gregory II moved the church festival of All Saints to November 1, partly to substitute for the popular pagan celebration of the Celtic New Year, which honored both the Sun god and Samhain, the lord of the dead.

The Celts and Druids believed that at the New Year (which began on November 1) the dead came back to mingle among the living. These evil spirits and witches would run rampant. The evening before the New Year, they were greeted to the tables laden with food. After feasting, masked and costumed villagers, representing the souls of the dead, paraded to the outskirts of town, leading the ghosts away. Seeking protection from such evil, treats were given to keep the evil away. It was a time of fear.

Christians, however, do not need to fear. For we know that Jesus is our protection. We know that the evil one has already been defeated through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus.

In today's secular culture, Halloween has seen a mixing of the Christian and pagan. Kids run from home to home "trick or treating." Movies are made to scare us. All for a good night of thrill. Yet, the reality is that evil still exists and is real.

Halloween can be a time when we Christians rejoice in the life and salvation we have through the death and resurrection of Christ, our Lord. It is a time when we can proclaim Christ's victory over sin and death. We can let our light shine so that others may know Jesus Christ.

Blessings,
Pastor Gerken

Men's Breakfast / Bible Study October 19th

Join us **Saturday, October 19th** 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." This month our topic is: "Anything But Snakes" (Numbers 21:4-9). *Pastor Dan*

A Real God

A question I was asked recently, had to do with whether or not, when I read the Scriptures, do things strike me in new or surprising ways. My answer was a resounding yes—and I think most, if not all of the Church’s servants over the long history of the People of God have experienced the same. And there are many reasons for this, not least of which is that the Word of God is alive, breathed out by God Himself, and as such it will always be deeper and more profound than we weak-minded humans will ever grasp. No matter how old we are, or how long we meditate upon them, we shall never find the end of their depth and worth. Even Luther thought he would never get to the bottom of even the First Commandment.

As our lectionary readings brought us into the book of Ezekiel last month, it fell upon me again to refresh my reading of this prophet, since the lectionary often gives only vignettes of these much larger works. Meditating again upon the Word of the Lord given through Ezekiel, several things struck me anew, and I thought I would share one of those with you for this month’s newsletter. It has to do with the firm reality of our God, across all time and space—even right here, and right now.

In the hustle and the bustle of daily life, I think this can easily slip from our minds. We get up in the morning, prepare for our day, go to work or school, come home, do things around our house or our community, and then go to bed... ready to start over again the next morning. Our breakfast tastes very real to us, as also our labor feels very real to us. We get really tired, really frustrated, and really happy.

We feel real pain, and real joy, as we use our real bodies to do real things, in a very real world. Surrounded and immersed in the real material universe all around us, we can sometimes forget that there are realities that aren’t necessarily material, and aren’t necessarily tangible in the present moment. For example, while we work in this world, we may easily forget the gravity that keeps us planted on this orb, or the moon which governs our tides, or the sun which tethers our world into our solar system. These are all true and active in the world around us, but we can become dull of mind to their existence.

The same I think is true, regarding God and His people. Ezekiel reminds us that not only is God very real, but he is really involved in the world around us. There is nothing done in this world which escapes His attention, and no evil which goes unpunished. The wicked may think they are off the hook because God has not acted quickly according to their timetable, but whether God’s judgments falls upon them in this world or the next, it still falls just as surely. God is a real God, who has spoken real Words and done real things in His real universe. In fact, of all the things we think are so real, none of them exists apart from His good and gracious will. He is the very ground of existence itself, and this whole universe—you and I included—cannot live, or move, or have our being apart from Him. He really is the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end.

And just as surely as God has spoken judgment against all wickedness and evil, he has spoken a real Word of grace and redemption through His Son, Jesus Christ. This real God of ours enters our real and broken world to seek and to save real sinners of which we are chief. He really takes on our flesh, suffers for our sins, dies and rises again. He really ascended into heaven, intercedes with the Father on our behalf, and is really coming again to judge both the living and the dead.

One of the great truths that leapt out at me as I reread Ezekiel, is that our God is more real and more involved in the lives of His people, than anything else we may get fixated on in our daily lives. Whether we are hungry or full, cold or warm, healthy or broken, prosperous or poor, whether we have great or lesser troubles, He is the reality to which we cling. As Jesus told us, heaven and earth will pass away, but His Word—especially His gift of forgiveness, life, and salvation through His finished work upon the Cross—shall never pass away. You and I live in the reality of the present and eternal grace of Jesus Christ, in a life that transcends everything we encounter in this world. We are really alive in our very real God, and to Him we shall really live to all eternity. Thanks be to our very real God, who gives us so great and real a salvation. Amen.

Pastor Brad

Music in God's Ears

Technology is a wonderful thing. It makes many everyday tasks easier and opens possibilities that we never even dreamed of. Think of the CD player (*oh, excuse me, that is already passé*) or the Cell phone, E-mail and the Internet. How they have changed our lives! The variety of music and information! The social interaction that was heretofore unavailable!

Of course technology can be a bad thing too. The CD player (or MP3s) can provide sound we would be better off not listening to. The Cell phone, E-mail and the Internet can open doors better left shut. For every blessing technology brings, there is often a downside or even a danger to be careful of.

So let us think critically about technology in Worship:

In older ages, Churches were built of stone and wood; hard surfaces that reflected sound so that the smallest whispers of the Pastor would echo throughout the space. When the ability to electronically amplify sound became possible and affordable, Churches were able to add cushions to the pews and carpets to the floors. Good? Yes. But what of the distractions when the sound is suddenly too loud or too soft?

Today we have the Projection Screen. It is, indeed, a blessing for those who may have vision difficulties and aids those too frail to hold the Hymnal for the whole service. For those reasons alone, its continuing presence is probably laudable. On the other hand, what of the disruption to the whole congregation when a slide transition is late or the whole system fails?

However comfortable relying on the projections may be, allow me to list a few reasons why you might wish to return to using the Hymnal, at least for a season.

1. By using the Hymnal, we are better able to see the arc that stretches over the entire service from Confession to Word to Sacrament. This journey is much easier to track when you can see it laid out in the Hymnal.
2. When we use the Hymnal we are aided in understanding the vocabulary of worship. For example, did you ever wonder what Sabaoth means? Just look at the bottom of the page and there is the definition! A few weeks ago we sang a Hymn about "raising my Ebenezer." Confused? Just look at the footnote.

3. In the Hymnal, every passage that is based on or quotes scripture is referenced. You quickly realize how much of our Liturgy is based on the words given to us by God.
4. And of course, there is the music. I personally learned to read music using a hymnal.
5. Finally, one use of the Hymnal that more people should take advantage of: As a home devotional tool. Our Lutheran Service Book contains the entire Psalter, the Smaller Catechism in addition to a wealth of Prayers and Hymn texts worthy of meditation. Consider buying a copy for your family's use at home.

I'm not suggesting that we banish the projections. But perhaps we could return to the Hymnal, if even for just a season. There are blessings there that can too easily go untapped.

Selah.
DVP (Denes Van Parys)

If you would like to continue the discussion of things related to worship, please join me at my website: denesvanparys.com. Also known as "Music in God's Ears" (musicingodsears.com).



-Preschool News

www.littlelambstacoma.com

Praise and glory to our living God who blesses us each and every day. Our preschool has twenty children to date and we request prayers for them and their families. Most of the students are new to our preschool and it is a special honor to share Jesus with all of them.

Thank you to those who submitted photographs for the 2014 Preschool Fundraiser Calendar. Look for a sample calendar the first part of November.

Mark your calendars! Our Annual Sunday Sundaes is **Sunday, October 13th** at 4 pm in the Fellowship Hall. All church families and preschool families are invited to attend. Come join us for ice cream, toppings, and fellowship! This is your first opportunity of the year to meet some of our preschool families. Following our Sunday Sundaes will be the 5 pm Casual Chapel led by Pastor Brad Varvil. Please join us!

Thank you for your continued prayer support.

Bonnie Huset
Director / Teacher

Lunch Bunch News

LUNCH BUNCH is back to meeting at church for the Fall and Winter months. During the summer our outings took us to Chase Gardens in Orting; Tacoma Zoo and Aquarium; a picnic at Boetchers; and a "trek" out by Eatonville to see the animals at NORTHWEST TREK. We are hoping that more of you will join us on the first Tuesday of each month. Our program for the rest of the year is BINGO in October, a video in November, a Christmas

party in December with a visit from Mrs. Wright (Right). We are considering a presentation of the church art in various churches of the area that was done by Ernest Schwidder. In the chancel area of Good Shepherd is an example of his talent. This we are hoping to have on the program for either January or February. If you have a program to suggest for the Lunch Bunch next year contact either the Retzloffs or the Myron Schmidts. Better yet, come to one

of our meetings and share the idea with us.

Don't forget - our next meeting is **Tuesday, October 1**. We will play bingo - so join us, please bring a dish to share for the noon meal and a wrapped "white elephant" for the bingo game.

Pastor Ken Boetcher



Women in Mission

Mark your Calendars:

- Tuesdays: 9:15 am – LWML Bible Study
10 am – Quilting
- Sunday, October 6 – LWML Sunday –
“You Are My Witnesses”
Mites collected
- Saturday, October 19 –
Rainier Zone Fall Rally
- Tuesday, October 22 at 12 noon –
Seafarers’ Auxiliary
- November 1-2 –
Quilt Lutheran World Relief Shipping

Sisters in Christ.

“You are My Witnesses” – LWML Sunday on October 6th, designed by the Rev. Dr. Dien Taylor reminds us that we each are Christ’s witnesses in all we do and say. Our LWML Hymn: “Serve the Lord with Gladness,” reminds us “There’s no greater joy than to Serve the Master, work in His employ.” What a wonderful God we have!

Opportunities available for you here at Good Shepherd: Operation Thanks-Giving, Altar Guild, Sunday School, Bible Study, Quilting, etc... to Serve with Gladness!

We look outside Good Shepherd for other opportunities, such as the Rainier Zone Fall Rally on Saturday, October 19th at Immanuel Lutheran Church (720 West Main, Puyallup), and the Washington – Alaska District Convention in June 2014, and praying for our Mite grants. We are His Witnesses in all we do and say!

Serving the Lord
with Gladness

Jane Oberg



LADIES, LADIES, LADIES

Tacoma Seafarers’ Auxiliary invites you to visit us at our regular Auxiliary Meeting of The Tacoma Seafarers’ Center.

Who are we? We are Christian women from various churches in the area who have come together to support the ministry of the Tacoma Seafarers’ Center through

prayer, gift offerings, and special events. Our main focus is the Christmas Boxes for the sea-going men and women from around the world.

We meet on the fourth Tuesday of the month. (No meetings in June, July, and December)

We gather around noon for the hostess provided light dessert and meeting begins at 12:30 for approximately 1-1 ½ hours. The next meeting is **October 22nd** Please join us!

Questions? Talk to Jane Oberg

Sunday School News

Our Fall Quarter of Sunday School is off to a great start. We began on September 8th and are continuing with the curriculum, "Growing in Christ." A special THANK YOU to those of you who are teachers, helpers, and substitutes when needed. Our offering this quarter will be for Lutheran Hour ministries.

September 8th the students explored the story "Nathan Rebukes David" Just as God accepted and forgave King David and other great saints who

committed grave sins, so He accepts and forgives us all, for the sake of Christ.

September 15th we studied about "The Wisdom of Solomon." Solomon, though wise, needed what we and all sinners need: Christ, Wisdom Himself, and the forgiveness He brings.

September 22nd focused on "Solomon Builds the Temple." Though He was hidden, God resided within the Old Testament temple; Jesus is the unveiled, human Most Holy Place and is

truly accessible to all, enfolding believers in the arms of His Word and Sacraments.

Look for bulletin blurbs occasionally that will share the topic studied and suggested questions to ask the students.

Coming in October, memory verse challenge. WE will be handing out memory verse sheets on Sunday, October 6th.

Katie Reinitz

GOOD SHEPHERD'S HOLIDAY FAIRE COMING SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 23RD -- WE NEED YOU!

If you have not already been busy with craft items for our annual Holiday Faire, now is the time! Your donations of crafted items are much appreciated. There will also be a bake sale and a "gently used" area. We need "all hands on deck" as the time nears for setting up and cleaning up after the sale. The monies brought in for the Holiday Faire are used to help needs here at Good Shepherd as well as other ministries. We can't do it without you! Thank you for your help!



GROW 2013 DINNER & AUCTION OCTOBER 5 - OKTOBERFEST!

*This year's Grow auction is fast approaching!
Saturday, October 5th, beginning at 5 pm.*

This year's theme is Oktoberfest so come for a delicious German Dinner and the silent and oral auction. Your attendance and participation is important!



...IF YOU DIDN'T GET ENOUGH OF OKTOBERFEST

on the 5th, join us on **October 27th** for our annual **Reformation / Oktoberfest Celebration** at noon, following the 10:45 service. Since we are gathering for a meal on the 27th, there will be no pot blessing on the 13th.