



July Edition

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Independence Day

Next week our nation celebrates Independence Day. With fireworks and picnics, we celebrate overthrowing the king of England 245 years ago and gaining our freedom and independence as a nation.

I enjoy celebrating Independence Day, but the Bible doesn't celebrate man's independence. On the contrary, the Bible mourns and warns about spiritual independence.

Independence is what the serpent sold Adam and Eve, and independence is the reward that the enemy continues to wave in front of each one of us. At some time and in some way, we will all buy into the delusion of independence.

The lie of independence is designed to make me believe that I'm wiser and more righteous than I am. It causes me to reason that if I do bad things, I do them not because of what's inside me (in my heart), but because of the circumstances that I am forced to deal with that are outside me. The lie of independence is meant to convince me that I'm capable and okay.

Here's what the Bible makes abundantly clear: **The quest for independence never ends in independence; it always ends in slavery.**

How so? Because mankind was carefully designed by the Creator to live in a dependent, obedient, and worshipful relationship with Him and in humble, interdependent relationships with other human beings.

The quest for independence is not merely a spiritual mistake; it's a fundamental denial of my humanity. The pursuit of independence always leaves me addicted to a list of earthly things that I've looked to for hope, life, strength, and rest.

In a vain attempt to distract myself from the evidence that I'm not independent, I get hooked on things that can distract me, but can never give my heart rest.

The message of Scripture is clear: I'm a person in desperate need of help, and if I were to walk with God for thousands of years, I would continue to need His help as much as I did the first day that I reached out my hand for Him.

The only way you will ever run to the Redeemer – whose name is Jesus Christ – is by running away from the delusion of independence.

In Christ,

Pastor Mike

Restoration Update

In the June newsletter, I speculated that the restoration project could possibly be completed by the end of June. As of this writing, June has but one day remaining and I'm happy to announce that the restoration of the church has been completed. The carpets in the fellowship hall, classrooms and hallway were thoroughly cleaned & sanitized last week which allowed us to start putting things back into place. On June 29th, the kitchen sink was installed and on the 30th, the second range put into place. With that, the renovation of the kitchen was complete. The pastor's and secretary's offices received new carpets and with that they have begun moving their furniture back in.

It's been a long 4 1/2 months since the pipe breakage and subsequent water damage. Here is a listing of the major renovations projects:

- ◆ Kitchen improvements include new flooring, lights, cabinets, countertops, 2 new stainless refrigerators, one new stove, new table & chairs, walls repainted, and a new coffee bar.
- ◆ The secretary's office was completely rebuilt with new sheetrock on walls and ceilings, new LED lights, a new desk, new credenza, new shelving, a new copy machine, new carpet, walls repainted and 2 new guest chairs.
- ◆ The pastor's office received new carpet, repainted walls, refurbished bookshelves, and new lighting.
- ◆ All of the fluorescent lights in the fellowship hall, hallway, and sewing room were replaced with new LED lights.

While not all of these things replaced were damaged by the water, the properties board saw this as an opportunity to make some much needed improvements to our church.

Throughout this renovation process, we on the board of properties have prayed for strength and wisdom. Our physical strength has been tested as well as our mental and spiritual strength—but God has provided. We have prayed for wisdom to make good choices and financial decisions that would glorify God. We want to say thanks for everyone's patience, prayers, support and encouragement. Without that, our jobs would have been more difficult.



Hallway



Yours in Christ,
The Board of Properties,
Faith Lutheran Church

Carroll Wuench, Frank Kukal, Paul & Brenda Hansen, Ron & Edie Nelson, Shelly Meyer, Jim Garton, & Ann Dobbs

Here are some photos of the restoration process over the last 4 1/2 months!

Kitchen

2-24-21



3-12-21



4-28-21



6-2-21



6-18-21



6-30-21



2-18-21



2-19-21



4-28-21



5-7-21



5-19-21



6-2-21



6-9-21



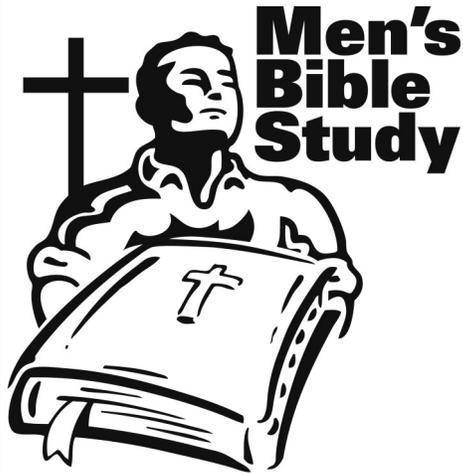
6-18-21



6-30-21



Secretary's Office



Our next "Men of Faith" Monthly Bible Study will be Saturday, July 10th- 8:30 to 10:00 AM.

We are planning on having an in-person gathering at Faith Lutheran Church, 1517 East Valley Water Mill Road in Springfield. Our topic will be **"Stuff They Didn't Teach Me in Sunday School- About the Exodus."** We will be considering Numbers 12, 16, 17, and 20:1-13. Please enter through the door on the northeast side of the "Peters Family Life Center" (north building). We will be meeting in "The Gathering Room." Proceed down the hall and take a right towards the multipurpose room. The room is the first door on the left. We hope to see you there.

Sundays at
10 AM in the
Peters Family
Center

**Fellowship
of the Word**
A Study on the Book of Romans
Wednesday
Mornings
at 9 AM

**THURSDAY
MORNING
BIBLE
STUDY**

**THURSDAYS
9 AM**

**The Inklings
Book Club**
Date: Tuesday Evenings
Time: 8:00 PM
Where: Zoom Meeting
What: A group of J.R.R. Tolkien and C.S. Lewis fans that meets remotely to read and discuss various books by the noted authors.
Please contact Cody Jeffries or Pastor Mike for an invite to the Zoom meeting.

LWML Update

Praise the Lord!! We were able to hold our National Convention in Lexington, KY at normal capacity!! Our new national mission goal for the 2021-2023 biennium is \$2,150,000!! Almost all of the proposed grants were approved!

Our Ladies Guild is taking the summer off and will meet back up in September. Pie making will also resume at that time.

May you all have a blessed 4th of July!

~In Christ, Brenda Owen, President

Thank you so much to all who donated items

for nursing home residents and Sammy's Window. The nursing home items were delivered to Woodland Manor which is to the west of Faith and gratefully accepted. They are still on lockdown. The items for Sammy's Window will be delivered on Friday, July 2nd.

~Sally Clark, Lutherans for Life



ALTAR FLOWERS

Did you know you can donate altar flowers to honor or remember a loved one or to celebrate a special event?

If you would like to donate flowers please mark your name in the 'Altar Flower Calendar' in the narthex under the leadership mailboxes. Cost is \$30 and you can make your check out to Faith Lutheran and note "altar flowers" and place in the offering basket. Thank you!

A BIG THANK YOU TO OUR GROUNDSKEEPERS!



We would like to thank everyone who has helped keep our church so beautiful. We appreciate all the work you do. A special thanks to Jerry Reynolds, Cathy Bowman, Frank Kukal, and Frank Jones for everything you do!

Join us for Sunday School!



Sundays at 10 AM
in the Peters Family Center



It's Pie Time!

We have
Apple Pies!
All Pies are
\$10.00 each



Altar Flowers

Forgiveness

by Steve Buchheit

It's been a long time since I moved to Southwest Missouri. It was September, 1978 and I had accepted a position with a company that was pretty big – at least for a privately owned company. There were five manufacturing plants. Three were in Missouri, and two were in North Carolina. The plant I worked in had somewhere between 800 and 900 employees for most of the time I worked there. My title when I started was Assistant Personnel Manager, and I came in at a time when the company was in the process of trying to catch up to state-of-the-art thinking in the area of Employee Relations, Wage & Salary Administration, and Fringe Benefits to name just a few.

Within a couple of years of my starting there, our company was sold. Our owner was 87 years old and suffered a serious stroke, and at the same time cancer was discovered in him. And so, we became wholly owned by a British holding company. Its name was Hawker-Siddeley Group, and they were traded on the London stock exchange. They were good for us, in that they bought us precisely because we were very profitable. Therefore, they were a source of tremendous capital resources without trying to micro-manage us. And so for the next 13 years or so, those of us in Human Resources (we adopted the more modern name for what we did) continued to push our part of the organization toward better policies, wages and benefits. We made tremendous progress, too.

Then our world collapsed. Hawker-Siddeley was the victim of a hostile takeover on the London exchange, and we watched as all that progress was simply washed away. For example, our health care plan was not a Cadillac plan, but it's most outstanding feature was that it had no lifetime maximum benefit.....you could never "use up" your insurance benefits. Our plan remained the same in how it processed claims, but we were soon told that our plan now had a \$100,000 lifetime maximum benefit.....***retroactive to the day you first got into the plan.*** In our plant, we had four employees who suddenly had no insurance. They had had cancer claims and had already used up the \$100,000. And so it went, one benefit plan at a time. I lasted for 13 months with them, at which point I was replaced with someone loyal to the new company. The same thing happened to nearly everyone with a manager title.

I found myself very bitter about what had happened. I felt that way for a number of years. And then one day it occurred to me that the only one I was making miserable was me. That former employer of mine had moved on, and was doing just fine. Most of their new management team didn't even know my name, and they surely weren't grieving my loss. I had to let it go in order to

return to living a life with peace in it. And letting it go had to begin with forgiveness....there was no other way to bridge that gap.

That's the background.....and here's why I tell you the story.

Do we not find ourselves in much the same position here at Faith Lutheran? Do we not find ourselves divided, and missing a bunch of our church family who have decided not to join us any longer on Sunday mornings? The better question is whether or not we can come back from it? Not everyone has noticed the division that we have in our congregation, but it is there. The Board of Elders has been charged by the voters to get to the bottom of the situation, and to get it fixed. That's quite an assignment, and for just a moment think about how you would go about carrying out that assignment if it were given to you. Boggles the mind just a bit, doesn't it?

We have been trying to gather information from individuals regarding the reasons they are upset enough to stay away from services. When that job is complete, we'll go through the information we have and see if we can actually do anything to correct the situation. In the meantime, we're finding a mixed bag of reasons..... certainly not things that are all going to be fixed with one clever solution.

There is only one solution, given to us by God thousands of years ago. That solution is ***forgiveness***.....even better, we should call it ***Christian Forgiveness***. Jesus showed us what that looks like as He was being nailed to the cross, when He said, "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do." Many of the issues we are finding out about are things that we would have gotten over and moved on from pretty quickly, had the pandemic not played havoc among our church family. The point of this article is NOT to diminish the issues that some of our brothers and sisters have been hurt by. Those issues are real. But are they serious enough for us to allow a church body to be divided? We'll see.

I think it's important to remember that, while each of us probably has a pound of flesh we'd like to extract from someone.....each of us (myself included) probably also owes someone else a pound of our flesh. Each of us gets hurt sometimes, but each of us also hurts others sometimes. The healing only begins with forgiveness. I know.....I've been there.

We need to periodically review the lessons taught in our own confirmation classes about forgiveness. Specifically, we need to remember what we were taught from Luther's Small Catechism:

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And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.

What does this mean? We pray in this petition that our Father in heaven would not look at our sins, or deny our prayer because of them. We are neither worthy of the things for which we pray, nor have we deserved them, but we ask that He would give them all to us by grace, for we daily sin much and surely deserve nothing but punishment. So we too will sincerely forgive and gladly do good to those who sin against us.

Each of us, each and every day, has a choice to make –

and it *is* a choice. We can choose to forgive those who have hurt our feelings and have trespassed against us. Or, on the other hand, we can choose to carry a grudge with us, in which case we fail to live up to the promise we've made to God in the Lord's Prayer. We are not given a choice that lies somewhere in the middle.

Can our differences be overcome? Yes, they can. But it's unlikely that a small group of us will be able to analyze a bunch of data and come up with a clever solution that's going to make everyone happy. It's only going to happen when we look to God and His Word, join hands again, and decide that we are *going* to be reunited. Then, with God's help, maybe we can walk away as one church family again.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY



God's Richest Blessings to all those celebrating birthdays and anniversaries this month!

July 1st

Amanda Bonner

July 4th

Margie Bonner

July 2nd

Amanda Edmonds

July 5th

Josh Bonner

July 6th

George Reynolds

July 7th

Pastor Dave

July 8th

Shelly Meyer

July 12th

Tracy Hadank

July 16th

Pastor Markel

July 17th

Ben Johnson

July 20th

Morgan Bonner

Ann Dobbs

July 21st

Angie Gann

David MacGregor

July 22nd

Lucas Clines

Courtney Locke

Audrey Wuench

July 23rd

Joshua MacGregor

July 25th

William Reynolds

July 26th

Mary Beckers

July 27th

Amy Reynolds

July 30th

Phillip Davis

Waylon Martin

July 31st

Loeta Shook



HAPPY Anniversary

July 2nd

Wilfred & Diane Meyer — 49 years

Carl & Donna Rader—39 years

July 3rd

Eugene & Isabell Ervin — 67 years

Randy & Daphne Smith — 38 years

July 7th

Pastor Dave & Jan Benson — 42 years

July 13th

Jonathan & Erica Poulson— 25 years

July 16th

Eddie & Melinda Wessler — 27 years

July 28th

Doug & Jeanette Nihiser — 20 years

Vacation Bible School

We may not be hosting a VBS this year but that doesn't mean your kids have to miss out! Our sister LCMS churches in Springfield will be hosting Vacation Bible Schools this month.

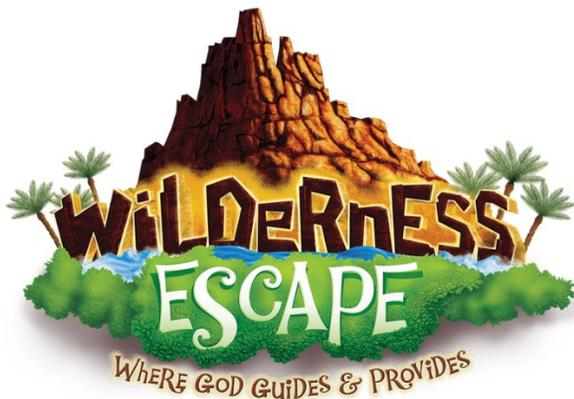
★ 2 different themes

★ 3 different weeks

★ 3 different locations

★ 2 different time options

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH



JULY 12-16
9:00 AM - 12:00 PM

<https://www.trinity-springfield.org/vbs-2021>

REDEEMER LUTHERAN CHURCH



SPRINGFIELD	NIXA
JULY 18-22	JULY 25-29
5:45-8:15 PM	5:45-8:15 PM

<https://growsharecare.org/vbs-2021>

Join us Sunday Mornings

at

8:30 and 11:15 AM

as we continue our study
on the book of Romans.

We look forward to
seeing you
in worship!

**I AM NOT ASHAMED
OF THE GOSPEL FOR IT
IS THE POWER OF
GOD FOR
SALVATION!
ROMANS 1:16**