**The Monthly Newsletter of Good Shepherd Evangelical Lutheran Church**

**Lindy, Nebraska**

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**The Rod and Staff**



**September and October 2019**

**School Days**

***“Walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you.”***

* **John 12:35 ESV**

As much as we say that our year begins with January 1, which is technically true, it seems that for most people their “new year” begins with the start of school in the fall, late August or early September. This is especially true among students themselves and their parents. With backpacks and new school supplies, “first day of school” pictures flood social media like Facebook this time of year. It’s “back to school” after summer break.

In the last few years, I’ve gotten used to being on the other side of things. I of course used to be a student, but I began in 2016 with being a teacher of church history for those preparing to be pastors. Imparting information and encouraging learning is difficult enough, but I often ask myself whether anything I am teaching them will make a real difference in their lives. Why does this particular tidbit of information matter to them? That question can be haunting at times.

I often stop to remind myself that learning from history is important. Knowing where we come from, why things we often take for granted are the way they are, helps us in our practice of life as we move forward in our own time. Knowing about history helps clarify what is important and even essential on the one hand and on the other what is less important and even expendable.

So while I try to emphasize to students that history is relevant for them, I point out that their whole process of learning isn’t meant to be bottled up as private information, however interesting it might be. Being a student serves the purpose of forming us for our lives, carrying out the tasks to which we are called.

Is it not the same thing with our faith? Jesus’ public life lasted only three years before he ended up crucified in Jerusalem. His disciples walked with him for those three years. But those three years weren’t just meant to be an interesting experience, where they would learn and then resume their normal lives. Their personal experience with their Lord and Savior shaped them for their future of proclaiming the Good News to the rest of creation. And Jesus emphasized to those disciples that what they learned from him was meant to accompany them long after Jesus was gone. He warned them that darkness would try hard to overshadow them and cause them to despair, to lose faith. Jesus, who described himself as “the light of the world” earlier in chapter eight of John, says this in chapter twelve:

*The light is among you for a little while longer. Walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you. The one who walks in the darkness does not know where he is going. While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light.*

It is obvious that Jesus doesn’t dwell among us in quite the same way as he did with his disciples long ago. But we believe that the light of the world has come among us as well. God has given us the light of the world, his Son Jesus Christ. By baptism, He has adopted us as his own, that we might become his beloved children. And while we live, we believe in that light. Our trust in God’s promise makes us children of light. And children of light naturally reflect the love of the one who has called us to learn from him. Children of light live in a daily relationship with the source of their light: Jesus Christ our Lord. In a way, our whole lives are in “school,” as we live with him.

With the beginning of a new school year, let us remember the importance of remaining connected to the source of light, the light of the world, so that we are fed, nourished, and strengthened to be daily disciples.

* Pr. T. E. Jacobson

**Commemoration of the Saints**

Lutherans do not venerate (pray to) special people called “saints.” Our Lutheran confessional documents speak against that practice. However, those same documents that prohibit the veneration of saints encourage Christian people to look to the lives of significant Christians of the past as a source of encouragement for our lives in the present.

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We remember in September and October the life of the Danish pastor, theologian, author, hymn writer, and poet **Nikolai Frederik Severin Grundtvig**, who is commemorated on September 2. His life is a complex one, as he experienced a significant shift in his perspective during his career.

Grundtvig was, along with his contemporary Søren Kierkegaard, one of the two principal figures in Danish theology in the 1800s. He was born in 1783, and studied theology, following in his father’s footsteps. He also showed interest in Norse mythology and poetry.

In 1810, he was called upon to preach his first sermon, entitled provocatively "Why has the Lord's Word Disappeared from His House?" At the time, the popular movement in theology was called “Rationalism,” which downplayed key Christian doctrines like the Trinity, the divinity of Christ, and spiritual salvation in favor of a “rational” faith, which tended to reduce Jesus to a moral teacher. Grundtvig believed that this movement of Rationalism destroyed the true power of the Christian faith. His sermon caused uproar, and he was censured.

Yet he continued with his studies, and he was ordained as a Lutheran pastor. Eventually, he was even given the title of “bishop,” which was more an honorary designation than anything; he never exercised the administrative role of a church official. It has been suggested that his “promotion” to bishop was meant more than anything to flatter him, creating a sense of indebtedness to the establishment that would silence his outspoken voice.

While Grundtvig remained a foe of Rationalism throughout his life, he experienced a shift in perspective around 1825. He came to believe that, while the Bible is an important expression of the living Word of God, it is the message of the Apostles’ Creed that is the truest expression of the Word of God. Grundtvig erroneously believed that the Apostles’ Creed was written before the Bible and that the Apostles’ Creed, along with the sacraments of baptism and the Lord’s Supper, is the primary way that the Word of God is heard in the church. This was often called Grundtvig’s “churchly view” and was controversial at the time.

Nevertheless, his influence endures today. He wrote more than a thousand hymns. Some of the more famous ones are: "The Bells of Christmas," "Bright and Glorious is the Sky," "God's Word is Our Great Heritage” (written in 1817 for the 300th anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation as a fifth verse to Martin Luther’s “A Mighty Fortress Is Our God"), "Peace, to Soothe Our Bitter Woes," “O Day Full of Grace,” and "Built on the Rock the Church Does Stand." His commitment to education also helped to bring about the establishment of free public high schools. He is also credited with influencing the development of parliamentary government in Denmark.

Some Danish immigrants to America considered themselves Grundtvigian, while others frowned upon his version of “happy Christianity.” The former were known as “happy Danes” and formed the American Evangelical Lutheran Church. The latter were known as “sad Danes” or “holy Danes,” who formed the United Evangelical Lutheran Church.

Grundtvig is influential for his hymns, and yet his witness about the importance of our faith in Christ as Lord and Savior rather than simply that of a moral teacher remains significant for us today.

*Almighty God, we praise you for the men and women you have sent to call the Church to its tasks and renew its life, such as your servant Nikolai Grundtvig. Raise up in our own day teachers and prophets inspired by your Spirit, whose voices will give strength to your Church and proclaim the reality of your kingdom; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen* (prayer from justus.anglican.org)

**Calling Sunday School Teachers!**

The beginning of the school year is when Sunday School usually resumes.

***However, the congregation needs help to make that happen!***

Rather than the responsibility for Sunday School resting on one or two people throughout the year, we are hoping that many different people from the congregation would be willing to sign up to lead Sunday School even one, perhaps two or more different Sundays throughout the year.

There will be a sign-up sheet at church on September 1, and we are hoping to be able to begin with Sunday School the following Sunday, September 8. Pr. Tom can be around to help at least some of the time, along with helpers from the youth group.

Leading Sunday School doesn’t have to be difficult, and if only responsible for one or a couple of Sundays a year, the preparation is minimal. Curriculum can be provided, and Pr. Tom and those who have been involved in recent years can offer their insight.

Please consider assisting with this important part of congregational life. Contact Pr. Tom for more information.

**Featured Hymn for Sept./Oct.**

***Built on the Rock the Church Does Stand***

*Lutheran Hymnal for Church and Home, 91*

Built on the Rock the Church does stand, even when steeples are falling; Crumbled have spires in every land, bells still are chiming and calling, Calling the young and old to rest, But above all the souls distressed, Longing for rest everlasting.

Surely in temples made with hands, God, the Most High, is not dwelling; High above earth His temple stands, All earthly temples excelling. Yet He whom heaven cannot contain chose to abide on earth with men, building in mortals His temple.

We are God's house of living stones, made for His habitation; through his baptismal grace he owns us by His wondrous salvation. Though we were only two or three, he, as he promised us will be here with His grace and His favor.

* Nikolai Grundtvig, 1783-1872
* Trans. Carl Døving, 1876-1937

Note: Grundtvig wrote this hymn based on 1 Peter 2:5, remembering the destruction of the cathedral in Copenhagen during the British bombardment of the city during the Napoleonic Wars.

**Monthly Watchword for September**

“For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul?”

* Matthew 16:26 ESV

**Ushers for September and October:**

* Head Ushers (September):
  + Lacey Barger
* Ushers:
  + Dale and Connie McDonald
  + Doug and Amy Stewart
  + Roger Guenther
  + Jarrin Sage
* Head Ushers (October)
  + Cecilia and Reed Eckmann
* Ushers:
  + Dennis and Dixie Stewart
  + Nolan Poppe
  + Elliot Olson
  + Tatum Olson

**Website:** The web address is as follows:

* **www.gselclindy.weebly.com**

**Martin Luther’s Morning Prayer**

I thank you, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, your dear Son, that you have kept me this night from all harm and danger; and I ask you to protect me this day also from sin and every evil, that in all I do today I may please you. For into your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all that is mine. Let you holy angel watch over me, that the wicked foe have no power over me. Amen.

**From Martin Luther’s Small Catechism:**

**The Sacrament of Baptism**

***What gifts or benefits does baptism bring?***

*It brings about forgiveness of sins, delivers from death and the devil, and gives everlasting salvation to all who believe, as the Word and promise of God declare.*

***What is this Word and promise of God?***

*It is the Word of our Lord Jesus Christ as recorded in the last chapter of Mark, “Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned (Mark 16:16 ESV).*

**Birthdays for September and October**

*Note: This list of birthdays is a work in progress, as we are currently trying to gather membership information from the old congregational record into an electronic form. If your name is not listed in the appropriate month, please let pastor know your birthday so that it can be added in the future. If you would not like your name to be listed, simply let pastor know. The birthdays are provided here as a way of giving thanks for the lives of members of the congregation. Happy birthday to all!*

* September 2: Dixie Stewart
* September 5: Jerome Sage
* September 6: Mayme Cross
* September 7: Brandon Barger
* September 8: Myva Scott
* September 11: Kelsey Custer
* September 13: Dennis Stewart
* September 14: Galen Guenther
* September 14: Madisen Petersen
* September 23: Jeff Barger
* September 28: Sara Arens
* October 1: Connie McDonald
* October 11: Sandra Barger
* October 15: Theodore Branstiter
* October 17: James Carlow
* October 24: Marlin Kumm
* October 25: Colin Kemp

**Baptismal Anniversaries for September and October**

*Note: Just as it is important to acknowledge the beginning of our earthly lives with our birthdays, it is even more important for us as Christians to remember the day when God has given us a new birthday, a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead (1 Peter 1:3). Lutherans confess that baptism is the means by which God gives us as a part of sinful humanity a new relationship with him, a promise that our faith can look to all our lives. In turn, we are called to a life of repentance and faith that trusts in Christ as our salvation. As with the birthdays, this list is a work in progress. Blessed baptismal anniversaries to everyone!*

* September 1: Jerome Sage
* September 3: Lacey Barger
* September 12: Mariah Sage
* September 22: Brandon Barger
* October 3: Arlene Barnes
* October 8: Kelsey Custer
* October 15: Galen Guenther
* October 15: Makenna Guenther
* October 15: Kash Poppe
* October 24: Jim Friedrichsen
* October 24: Kelly Friedrichsen
* October 24: Ryker Guenther
* October 29: Summer Guenther

**News from the North American Lutheran Church**

*Note: This is a summary from the NALC about the convocation that was held in the early part of August in Indianapolis, which Pr. Tom attended.*

The Rev. Dr. Dan Selbo was elected bishop of the North American Lutheran Church by the 2019 NALC Convocation on Friday, August 9, in Indianapolis, Indiana.



Bishop Selbo currently serves as pastor of St. Timothy’s Lutheran Church in San Jose, California. He holds Masters of Divinity and Doctor of Ministry degrees from Luther Seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota.

Bishop Selbo was elected on the fourth ballot over the Rev. Dr. Eric Riesen, pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church in Ashland, Ohio. The Convocation narrowed the list of candidates from 14 nominees to four on the first ballot on Thursday. The four finalists were Pastor Riesen, the Rev. Dr. David Wendel of Jacksonville, Florida, Assistant to the Bishop for Ministry and Ecumenism, and the Rev. Dr. Amy Schifrin, President of the North American Lutheran Seminary in Ambridge, Pennsylvania.

More than 800 delegates and visitors gathered August 7-9 for the 2019 Convocation and Mission Festival around the theme, “Walking by the Spirit with the Fruit of the Spirit.”

A Thursday night banquet honored Bishop John Bradosky for his service to the Church. Bishop Bradosky is retiring and did not seek reelection. The banquet featured the Rev. Dr. Malcolm Guite, a poet, priest and singer from Cambridge, England.

Bishop Selbo was installed as bishop during the closing worship of the Convocation, but his four-year term officially begins on October 1.

The Mission Festival that preceded the Convocation highlighted the NALC’s relationship with Lutherans in Ethiopia and Tanzania.The Rev. Dr. Alex Mkumbo, bishop of the Central Diocese of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania, and the Rev. Yonas Yigezu, president of the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus, were featured speakers for the Mission Festival. They also brought greetings to the Convocation and took part in the installation service for Bishop Selbo.

The Mission Festival also featured a variety of breakout sessions to equip members for mission.

Other Elections: The Rev. Bassam Abdallah of Prospect, Kentucky, and Scott Kramer of Boerne, Texas, were elected to four-year terms on the Executive Council. The Rev. Jennifer Gold of Helotes, Texas, and the Rev. Leslie Haines of Fort Wayne, Indiana, were elected to the Court of Adjudication.

2020 budgets were approved. The Convocation approved a $2.2 million Operating Budget for the NALC. Budgets were also approved for the church’s designated funds: $723,000 for the Theological Education Fund (which includes the North American Lutheran Seminary); $197,500 for the Great Commission Fund; and $123,500 for the Disaster Response Fund. Most of the budgets anticipate spending some cash reserves.

A new NALC Global Worker, the Rev. Heidi Punt, pastor of Christ United Lutheran Church in Granite Falls, North Carolina, was commissioned for service in Haiti with Sundouloi Ministries (SMI Haiti).

Reports of the work of the NALC’s staff, teams, task forces, ministries and ministry partners were warmly received.

Events preceding the Convocation were the Mission Festival, Braaten-Benne Lectures in Theology, Women of the NALC Annual Gathering and the Ventures in Youth Ministry Symposium. The Convocation and the events preceding it comprise the NALC’s annual Lutheran Week.

Documents, photos and videos from the Convocation and other events of Lutheran Week will be posted at lutheranweek.com.

**Worship Schedule**

September 1: Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost with Holy Communion at altar rail (Green)

September 8: Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost (Green)

September 15: Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost with Holy Communion in continuous line (Green)

September 22: Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost (Green)

September 29: Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost (Green)

October 6: Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost with Holy Communion at altar rail (Green)

October 13: Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost (Green)

October 20: Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost with Holy Communion in continuous line (Green)

October 27: Reformation Sunday (Red)

**Important Announcements**

* We will continue, once a month on the fourth Sunday of the month, having a time of adult education during the Sunday school hour, starting at 9:30 AM. This month, it will be on September 22.
* The Church council meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 11 at 7:00 PM.
* The Women of the Word/Women of the North American Lutheran Church will meet at the usual time of 10:00 on Wednesday September 18.
* Confirmation class will begin on Wednesday September 4 at 5:15 PM.
* Unless otherwise announced, we will begin with Sunday School on September 8 at 9:30 AM
* First youth group meeting of the year will be on Wednesday, September 11 at 7:00 PM.



***You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore*. – Psalm 16:11**

**September 2019**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
| 1  Worship, 10:30 with Holy Communion (altar rail)  Green | 2 | 3 | 4  Pr. Tom in Lindy  Confirmation class,  5:15-6:45 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 8  Sunday School, 9:30  Worship, 10:30  Green | 9 | 10 | 11  Pr. Tom in Lindy  Confirmation class, 5:15-6:45  Church council, 7:00 | 12 | 13 | 14 |
| 15  Sunday School, 9:30  Worship, 10:30 with Holy Communion (continuous)  Green | 16 | 17 | 18  Pr. Tom in Lindy  Women’s meeting, 10:00  Confirmation class, 5:15-6:45 | 19 | 20 | 21 |
| 22  Adult education, 9:30  Sunday School, 9:30  Worship, 10:30  Green | 23 | 24 | 25  Pr. Tom in Lindy  Confirmation class, 5:15-6:45 | 26 | 27 | 28 |
| 29  Sunday School, 9:30  Worship, 10:30  Green | 30 |  |  | | | |
|  |  |  |  | | | |

**October 2019**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|  |  | 1 | 2  Pr. Tom in Lindy  Confirmation class, 5:15-6:45 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6  Sunday School, 9:30  Worship, 10:30 with Holy Communion  Green | 7 | 8 | 9  Pr. Tom in Lindy  Confirmation class, 5:15-6:45  Church council, 7:00 | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| 13  Sunday School, 9:30  Worship, 10:30  Green | 14 | 15 | 16  Pr. Tom in Lindy  Women’s meeting, 10:00  Confirmation class, 5:15-6:45 | 17 | 18 | 19 |
| 20  Worship, 10:30; Holy Communion (continuous)  Green | 21 | 22 | 23  Pr. Tom in Lindy  Confirmation class, 5:15-6:45 | 24 | 25 | 26 |
| 27  Adult education, 9:30  Worship, 10:30  Red | 28 | 29 | 30 31  Pr. Tom in Lindy  Confirmation class  5:15-6:45 | | | |
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Good Shepherd Evangelical

Lutheran Church of Lindy

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