

Announcements

- ◆ A warm welcome to all our visitors and guests, friends both old and new. We pray that God has blessed your time among us with His Word and Holy Spirit. We cordially invite you to join us this morning for coffee & donuts downstairs following the Divine Service; and we ask that you please sign the guest book at the back of the church.
- ◆ We rejoice this morning with Brigitta Grobien, as she receives her First Holy Communion in the Divine Service today. Let us pray that our Lord would preserve her—and all of us—in the daily catechesis of His Word, and in the Christian faith and life of Holy Baptism, even unto life everlasting.
- ◆ Following coffee & donuts, our Family Bible Class continues a study of First Samuel. Parents and children, youth and adults are welcome and encouraged to attend and participate in this class together.

Care for the younger children (under four years of age) is provided in the nursery downstairs, so their parents and families are able to attend the class.

- ◆ Thanks to those who supported our Emmaus Youth by contributing to the car wash yesterday. Please note that there will be a final **BAKE SALE** next Sunday (22 June) before the Youth leave (on Monday the 23rd) for the Poconos in Pennsylvania for the Higher Things conference there. With the high gas prices, any help that you may be able to provide them toward their travel expenses would be most helpful and appreciated. **MANY THANKS!**

The Emmaus Youth will be meeting this Wednesday, the 18th of June, following the usual service of Evening Prayer (to which all are invited).

- ◆ Pastor Stuckwisch will be vested and available in the Emmaus Sanctuary for Individual Confession & Absolution this Saturday (21 June) from 5:00 until 7:00 p.m. This means of grace and forgiveness, instituted by Christ our dear Lord Himself, is freely offered to be freely received in repentant faith. Those with questions concerning this Christian practice are urged to review the Fifth Chief Part of the Small Catechism, and are invited to speak with either Pastor Stuckwisch or Pastor Grobien any time.
- ◆ Note that Emmaus will be gathered for the Divine Service in celebration of the Feast of the Nativity of St. John the Baptist on Tuesday the 24th of June.
- ◆ Members of Emmaus who would like to have their e-mail address listed in the new pictorial directory should send that information to Dave Smith at: emmaus24@emmaus24.org (Questions? Please speak to Dave at church.)

- ◆ The Altar flowers this morning are provided by Altar Circle to the glory of God, in thanksgiving for His gracious providence of all that we need.
- ◆ COLLECTIONS FOR 8 JUNE 2008: \$2171.81
- ◆ IN THE LORD'S SERVICE THIS MORNING: (ELDER) David Seyboldt; (USHERS) Don Pritz & Robert Tharp; (ACOLYTE) Matthew Horner; (ORGANIST) Sandra Rhein; (GREETERS) Carrol McCarty & Pat Nering.
- ◆ Rev. D. Richard Stuckwisch, Pastor Home Phone: (574) 233 – 0574
- ◆ Rev. Gifford Grobien, Assistant Pastor Home Phone: (574) 231 – 9572

On the Epistle to the Galatians

“The passage from Genesis 21 about Ishmael’s persecuting Isaac is interpreted by the Jews to mean that Ishmael was forcing Isaac to commit idolatry. I do not disapprove of their interpretation. Still I do not believe that the idolatry was as crass as the Jews imagine, namely, that Ishmael fashioned images out of mud in a heathen way and forced Isaac to worship these. Abraham would never have stood for this. I think that Ishmael was a saintly man in outward appearance, like Cain, who also persecuted his brother and finally killed him, not because of something physical but chiefly because he saw that God preferred his brother to him (Gen. 4:4–5). Therefore Ishmael was devoted to his religion, offering sacrifices and being busy with good works. He made fun of his brother Isaac and wanted to seem superior to him on two counts, both because of worship and religion and because of his civic dominance and his inheritance. He seemed to have the right to claim this, for he thought that since he was the firstborn, both the priesthood and the kingship belonged to him by divine right. Therefore he persecuted Isaac spiritually on account of religion and physically on account of the inheritance.

“Whenever the teaching of the Gospel flourishes in the church, there is always this persecution, that the sons according to the flesh persecute the sons according to the promise. Today we endure persecution from our Ishmaelites, the papists and the fanatical spirits, for this one reason, that we teach that righteousness comes through the promise, not through works. The papists persecute us because we do not worship their idols; that is, we do not preach that the righteousness, the works, and the forms of worship invented and instituted by men avail to obtain grace and the forgiveness of sins. They also try to cast us out of the house. That is, they boast that they are the church, the sons of God, and the people of God, and that the inheritance belongs to them.

“On the other hand, the papists excommunicate us as heretics and revolutionaries; and if they can, they kill us as an act of service to God (John 16:2). As much as they can, therefore, they cast us completely out of this life and out of that which is to come.

“The fanatical spirits, for their part, hate us bitterly for attacking and rejecting their errors and heresies, the innovations they are planting in the church. These men, and especially the Anabaptists, regard us as much worse than the papists; therefore they hate us more bitterly than they hate them.

“As soon as the Word of God appears, the devil becomes angry; and in his anger he employs every power and wile to persecute it and wipe it out completely. Therefore it cannot be otherwise than that he should stir up endless sects and offenses, persecution and slaughter. For he is the father of lies and a murderer (John 8:44); he plants his lies in the world through false teachers, and he murders men through tyrants. Thus he occupies both realms, the spiritual and the temporal; the former through the lies of wicked teachers — to say nothing of how he continually urges everyone individually to heresies and ungodly opinions with his flaming darts (Eph. 6:16) — and the latter through the tyrants’ sword. And so on both sides the father of lies and of murder stirs up spiritual and physical persecution against the children of the free woman.

“The spiritual persecution, by which the fanatics attack us today, is the more vexing and unbearable, because of the offenses with which the devil distorts our teaching; for we are forced to hear that the sects of the Anabaptists and of the Sacramentarians and all other evils have arisen from our teaching. The physical persecution, when the tyrants lie in ambush for our possessions and our bodies, is much more bearable, because it is due, not to our sins but to our confession of the Word of God. Therefore let us learn from the very name of the devil as ‘father of lies and murderer’ (which Christ ascribes to him in John 8:44) that as long as the Gospel flourishes and Christ reigns, it is necessary for such sects of perdition to arise and for everything to be filled with the raging of murderers who persecute the truth. Anyone who does not know this will be very easily offended; he will forsake the true God and true faith and will return to his old god and to his old faith.

“Therefore Paul is fortifying the godly here, so that they are not offended by those persecutions, sects, and scandals. He says: ‘As at that time he who was born according to the flesh etc.’ (Gal. 4:29); as though he were to say: ‘If we are sons born according to the spirit, we must certainly expect persecution from our brother who was born according to the flesh. That is, it is not only the obviously wicked enemies who will persecute us . . . but even our dear friends.’”

(From Dr. Martin Luther’s Lectures on Galatians, A.D. 1535)

Walking with Our Savior this Week

TODAY **Divine Service of Communion** **9:00 a.m.**
Coffee & Donuts Downstairs 10:30 a.m.
Family Bible Class 10:45 a.m.

MONDAY Catechesis Class 5:00 p.m.
Vespers **7:00 p.m.**
Bible Class 7:30 p.m.

TUESDAY *Pastor's Writing Day (but do call in cases of emergency)*

WEDNESDAY *Evening Prayer* **7:00 p.m.**
Emmaus Youth Meeting 7:30 p.m.

THURSDAY *Pastor's Family Day (but do call in cases of emergency)*

SATURDAY Individual Confession & Absolution 5:00—7:00

NEXT SUNDAY **Divine Service of Communion** **9:00 a.m.**
Coffee & Donuts Downstairs 10:30 a.m.
EMMAUS YOUTH BAKE SALE
Family Bible Class 10:45 a.m.

You may also want to keep in mind, in your observance of daily prayer at home:

*The Appointed Readings for next Sunday, the Fifth after Holy Trinity:
Jeremiah 20:7-13; Romans 6:12-23; and St. Matthew 10:21-33*