

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 and other refreshments downstairs following the Divine Service; and we ask that you please sign the guest book at the back of the church.
- ◆ Following coffee & refreshments this morning, and for the next few weeks, our Family Bible Class will consider and discuss what the Word of God has to say concerning marriage and family and their significance in the world.
- ◆ Emmaus will be gathered to celebrate the Feast of the Beheading of St. John the Baptist this Monday, August the 29th, in the Divine Service at 6:00 p.m.
- ◆ Please see Betty Shankle for pre-sale tickets to the PORT-A-PIT-CHICKEN fundraiser that Emmaus will be hosting on September the 17th.
- ◆ The Altar flowers this morning are provided by Pat Nering to the glory of God, in honor of her goddaughter, Rebecca Tribble.
- ◆ COLLECTIONS FOR 21 AUGUST 2016: \$ 4,017.85
In order to meet our financial obligations and commitments, an average of \$2360 is needed each week.
- ◆ IN THE LORD'S SERVICE THIS LORD'S DAY:
(ELDER) Robert Rhein; (USHERS) Erik & Matthew Horner; (ACOLYTE) Frederick Stuckwisch; (ORGANIST) Dcs. Sandra Rhein; (GREETERS) Marilyn Dulmatch & Lois Veen.
- ◆ Rev. D. Richard Stuckwisch, Pastor Home Phone: (574) 233 – 0574

On the Church Year

“Helena, Emperor Constantine’s mother, is a good example of the new outlook [that emerged as Christianity became the favored religion of the empire]. With Helena’s gold and her zeal, the faithful at Jerusalem began to seek out those sites closely associated with the life of Christ—where He was buried, where He was crucified, where He was born. Great basilicas began to spring up, and there was a renewed interest in relics, whether of Christ, the apostles, or the martyrs.

“Throng of pilgrims began to make their way toward Jerusalem—nobles, bishops, kings, even the poor and lowly. What they discovered there was not merely the place where Jesus had lived but a great and thriving church, and one which had developed a complex pattern of rites and ceremonies connected with the life of the Savior. From these rites much of the church year has developed.

“One such pilgrim was an adventurous lady from Spain, perhaps the abbess of a convent, variously called Silvia or Etheria. Silvia journeyed to Jerusalem in the 380s or 390s and kept a diary of what she found there. This Pilgrimage of Silvia gives the first and most detailed picture of the church year.

“The major festival about which Silvia writes, as we would expect, is Easter. In the three centuries since the death of the Apostles, Easter had developed the kind of ritual and splendor one would expect in the Near East, with glorious chants, pantomimes, readings, prayers, pennons, and processions.

“Already at the time of Silvia most of the holy days we now consider important were in existence in Jerusalem. Christmas was the only major exception. The rest were already going strong—Epiphany (which dealt in the Christian East not with the Magi and Christ’s appearance to the Gentiles, but with His birth and baptism), the Presentation, Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday, Easter, the octave of Easter, and finally Pentecost, which in Silvia’s account was a joint celebration with Ascension.

“What makes Silvia’s diary of unusual value is her keen eye for detail and her realistic description of the rites and services in which she took part. She writes of the wondrous church life in Jerusalem as if it were far more organized than what she had known in Spain. Doubtless it was pilgrims of her status and enthusiasm who helped spread the whole idea of the church year from Jerusalem to the West.

“This is not to say that the festivals which Silvia mentions were celebrated only at Jerusalem. Doubtless they were kept with equal fervor at Antioch, Constantinople, and Alexandria. Yet, being customary at Jerusalem gave them a sacred prestige, since they came from the land where the sacred events had actually taken place.

“Thus, by the end of the fourth century, the church year had assumed a form we would recognize today. Christmas still had considerable growing to do, and Lent and Advent were little more than unsprouted seeds. Yet the outline was all there.

“The whole life of the Christian is an act of worship, in the New Testament sense: ‘litreia.’ Worship is not merely what one does on Sunday morning or before meals or before going to bed. It involves every hour of every day of every year. Thus Luther can properly speak of the Virgin Mary ‘worshiping’ when she is mopping the floor, dusting the stove, or washing diapers.

“In the more usual meaning, ‘worship’ refers to the public act of Christians who have come together for praise, confession, absolution, intercession, offering of selves, and celebrating the Sacrament—expressed in various traditions within Christendom in such phrases as ‘the service,’ morning prayer, common prayer, public worship, Holy Communion, mass, or the divine liturgy.

“To a degree even those churches which pride themselves in having no liturgy at all make of public worship something liturgical—invocation, lections, offering, instruction, communal singing, Baptism and the Lord’s Supper. They, too, have a considerable heritage from the Hebrews and the early Christians, even though they may not be aware of it.

“Strictly speaking, the growth and development of the order of common worship is a subject all its own, like church architecture or hymnody, but one cannot completely overlook it in a study of the church year without losing perspective. How the Easter vigil differed from the ordinary mass or how both differed from the litany of a Rogation day means nothing unless one knows something at least of the normal order.

“The word ‘liturgy’ comes from two Greek words and refers to ‘people’ and to a ‘public work.’ If a Greek gave a banquet for his village or built a well at the crossroads, he was performing a ‘leitourgia,’ an act for the common good. In the New Testament the word comes to be reserved for conducting divine worship—as in Acts 13:2.

“The Eastern Orthodox churches quite properly call their service the divine liturgy—an excellent choice, not only because it is historic but also because it involves the concept of a ‘people of God’ (‘laos theou’), in the fine old sense of the Old Testament. In the Western tradition, once Latin took the place of Greek in the liturgy, the technical word for the service was ‘mass’ (Latin, ‘missa’), as we still find it in words like Christmas or Candlemas. The word comes from the closing phrase in the service, ‘Ite, missa est,’ which can variously be translated: ‘Go, it is over,’ ‘Go, you are dismissed,’ or ‘Go, you are sent forth.’

“Strictly speaking, ‘mass’ means the dismissal or the benediction. Though ‘mass’ eventually came to mean only the highest and most important of the orders of worship, or ‘offices,’ namely the Eucharist, for many centuries it referred to any kind of religious function where there was a benediction. . . .”

(From THE YEAR OF THE LORD, by Theodore J. Kleinhaus, CPH 1967)

Walking with Our Savior this Week

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

MONDAY THE FEAST OF THE BEHEADING OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST
 Divine Service of Communion 6:00 p.m.

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

WEDNESDAY **Evening Prayer 6:00 p.m.**

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

FRIDAY *Dcs. Rhein leaving for hymnal work in Taiwan*

NEXT SUNDAY Divine Service of Communion 9:00 a.m.
 Coffee & Refreshment Downstairs 10:30 a.m.
 Catechesis / Family Bible Class 10:45 a.m.

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

*This Monday (29 August) is the Feast of the Beheading of St. John the Baptist
Readings: Revelation 6:9–11; Romans 6:1–5; and St. Mark 6:14–29*

*The Appointed Readings for next Sunday, the Fifth in Martyrs' Tide:
Deuteronomy 30:15–20; Philemon 1–21; and Saint Luke 14:25–35*