

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, Dcs. Rhein will be giving a presentation on the recent LCMS Stewardship Conference that she and Pastor attended. One and all are encouraged to remain for the presentation, including youth and young adults, and to participate in the conversation.

A summer catechesis class for the younger children meets at the same time.
- ◆ Emmaus Family Biking Day! We'll be meeting at the YMCA parking lot on Northside Avenue at 2:00 p.m. to bike the path along the river. Looking ahead: Our annual Rum Village Picnic will be on the 13th of August.
- ◆ This Saturday (15 July), Pastor Stuckwisch will be vested and available in the Emmaus sanctuary for Individual Confession & Absolution from 5:00 until 7:00 p.m. This means of grace and forgiveness, by the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ, is freely offered to be freely received in repentant faith.
- ◆ Next Sunday (16 July), those attending the Higher Things conference later this month will be meeting after Bible Class. Then, after lunch together, the Emmaus Youth will be having a regular business and planning meeting.
- ◆ As was discussed at our last Voter's Meeting, plans are underway to replace one row of cabinets in the church kitchen. Seed money for this renovation and improvement is being provided by the Women's Service League — LWML. Donations of both time and money are of course welcome. Please contact Mr. Lester Shankle or Dcs. Rhein for more details.
- ◆ **COLLECTIONS FOR 2 JULY 2017: \$ 3,193.00**

In order to meet our financial obligations and commitments, an average of \$2400 is needed each week.
- ◆ The Altar flowers this morning are provided by Charley & Karin Horner to the glory of God, in celebration of their son Evan's birthday.

- ◆ IN THE LORD'S SERVICE THIS LORD'S DAY:
(ELDER) Dave Smith; (USHERS) Ariksander Stuckwisch & Egon Tribble;
(ACOLYTE) Stefan Horner; (ORGANIST) Deaconess Sandra Rhein;
(GREETERS) Lois Veen & Marilyn Dulmatch.
- ◆ Rev. D. Richard Stuckwisch, Pastor Home Phone: (574) 233 – 0574

On the Epistle to the Galatians

“At the very outset Paul explodes with the entire issue he intends to set forth in this Epistle to the Galatians. He refers to the resurrection of Christ, who rose again for our justification (Rom. 4:25). His victory is a victory over the Law, sin, our flesh, the world, the devil, death, hell, and all evils; and this victory of His He has given to us. Even though these tyrants, our enemies, accuse us and terrify us, they cannot drive us into despair or condemn us. For Christ, whom God the Father raised from the dead, is the Victor over them, and He is our righteousness. Therefore ‘thanks be to God, who has given us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ’ (1 Cor. 15:57). Amen.

“But note how Paul speaks to the point here. He does not say: ‘Through God, who has made heaven and earth, who is the Lord of angels, who sent Moses to Pharaoh, who brought Israel up out of Egypt,’ as did the false prophets, who boasted of the God of their fathers, the Creator and Preserver of all things, doing wonders among His people. No, Paul had something else in his heart, namely, the righteousness of Christ, which he taught and defended as Christ’s Apostle. Therefore he uses words that contribute to this. He says: ‘I am an Apostle — not from men or through men but through Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised Him from the dead.’ You see, then, how fervently Paul’s spirit is led in this issue, which he proceeds to establish and maintain against the entire kingdom of hell, against all the powerful and the wise of the whole world, and against the devil with his apostles.

“[Galatians 1, verse 2]: ‘And all the brethren who are with me.’ This helps to stop the mouths of these false apostles, for it is the purpose of all Paul’s arguments to enhance and exalt his ministry and to discredit theirs. It is as though he were saying: ‘It is indeed sufficient that by a divine call I have been sent as an Apostle through Jesus Christ and God the Father. Yet in order not to stand alone, I add all the brethren — even though I do not have to — who are not Apostles but comrades in arms. They are writing this Epistle as well as I, and they are bearing witness with me that my doctrine is true and divine.

“Therefore we are sure that Christ is present in our midst, and that here and in our church He is teaching and speaking. So far as the false apostles are concerned, if they are anything at all, they have only been sent from men or through man; but I have been sent from God the Father and from Jesus Christ, who is our life and resurrection (John 11:25). My other brethren have been sent from God, although by man, that is, by me. Therefore to avoid the impression that I set myself proudly against so many all by myself, I have my brethren with me — all of one mind, as faithful witnesses who think, write, and teach exactly as I do.’ So far the signature [of the Epistle]; now comes the address:

“[Galatians 1, verse 2, continued]: ‘To the churches of Galatia.’ Paul had preached throughout Galatia. Although he had not entirely converted it to Christ, he still had many churches there, into which the false apostles, the devil’s ministers, had sneaked.

“Thus in our time the fanatics do not come to those places where the enemies of the Gospel have the upper hand but to those where there are Christians and good people, who love the Gospel. They insinuate themselves among such people, even in the territories of the tyrants and persecutors of the Gospel. Sneaking into houses under false pretense, they spew out their venom and undermine the faith of the common people. But why do they not rather go into the cities, countries, and territories of the papists and confess and support their doctrine there before evil princes, bishops, and theologians in the universities, as we have done by the grace of God? These precious martyrs are not willing to take any chances but move into places where the Gospel has already established itself and where they can live without danger and in great tranquility. Thus the false apostles would not run the risk of going to Caiaphas in Jerusalem or the emperor in Rome or to some other place where no one had ever preached before, as Paul and the others did. Instead, they came to Galatia, which had already been gained and prepared for Christ by the toil and trouble of Paul, and into Asia, into Corinth, where there were good men and Christians who were not persecuting anyone but were suffering everything quietly. There the enemies of the cross of Christ could live in great smugness, without undergoing any persecution.

“Here you should learn that pious preachers have this lot in life. In addition to the persecution that they have to endure from the wicked and ungrateful world and the hard labor that they experience in planting churches, they are forced to see the quick overthrow of what they had taught for so long in its purity, at the hands of the fanatics, who thereupon lord it over them and get the upper hand.” (To be continued)

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

