

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.
- ◆ Contributions for the good Gillespie coffee have recently been exceeding the cost of the coffee, which means that extra will be given to Rev. Gillespie and his family. Thank you! It is “Epiphany” coffee for now, so that is what you’ll have the chance to drink on the Sundays during Lent.
- ◆ Following coffee & refreshments, our Family Bible Class continues a study of Genesis, making special use of Dr. Luther’s commentary on that book.
Catechesis class for younger and beginning catechumens meets at the same time. Older children, especially between the ages of eight and twelve, have class with Nathaniel Rhein & Nicholai Stuckwisch. And Dave Smith is teaching a catechesis class for teenagers and others who are interested.
- ◆ Pr. Stuckwisch will be attending the Circuit Visitors Meeting in Fort Wayne on Monday and Tuesday of this week (*therefore, no Vespers on Monday*). Please remember him and the other pastors of the District in your prayers.
- ◆ Throughout the Season of Lent, there will be Vespers each Wednesday at 7:00 p.m., and a brief, spoken Divine Service each Friday at 9:00 a.m.

As in past years, there will be soup supper served prior to the Wednesday evening Vespers, from 5:30 until 6:30 p.m. One and all are welcome to enjoy the good soup and to share that opportunity for fraternal fellowship.
There is a sign-up sheet for those who are willing and able to contribute to the soup suppers or to assist in serving, cleaning up, and so forth. Thanks!
- ◆ Dcs. Rhein is in Ethiopia yet this weekend, working on the hymnal project there. She will be traveling home to South Bend this Wednesday, the 21st of February. Please remember her in your prayers and intercessions.
- ◆ This Saturday (24 February), Pr. Stuckwisch will be vested and available in the Emmaus Sanctuary for Individual Confession and 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.

◆ COLLECTIONS FOR 11 FEBRUARY 2018: \$ 3,435.00

In order to meet our financial obligations and commitments, an average of \$2400 is needed each week.

◆ IN THE LORD'S SERVICE THIS LORD'S DAY:

(ELDER) Dave Smith; (USHERS) Caleb Smith & Ariksander Stuckwisch;
(ACOLYTE) Stefan Horner; (ORGANIST) Sarah Osbun; (GREETERS)
Lois Veen & Marilyn Dulmatch.

◆ Rev. D. Richard Stuckwisch, Pastor

Home Phone: (574) 233 – 0574

On the Epistle to the Galatians

“Those who opposed Paul and claimed that the Gentiles were to be circumcised had on their side first the Law of the land, then also the example of the Apostles, and finally the example of Paul himself, who had circumcised Timothy. Therefore if Paul said that he had done this, not out of compulsion but out of Christian charity and freedom, to keep from offending the weak, who among them would understand him or believe him? The response of all the crowd to this defense would be: ‘Since it is obvious that you have circumcised Timothy, you may say what you please. The fact remains that you did it.’ This was a matter that transcended the understanding of the crowd. Besides, when a man has lost favor with the people and has come under such bitter hatred, no defense is of any avail. Seeing that this controversy and this outcry were increasing every day, and having been warned by a divine revelation, Paul went up to Jerusalem to compare his Gospel with that of the other Apostles, not indeed on his own account but on account of the people.”

“‘With Barnabas, taking Titus along with me’ (Gal. 2:1). Paul associates himself with two witnesses, Barnabas and Titus. Barnabas was Paul’s companion in preaching to the Gentiles about freedom from the Law. He was also a witness of everything that Paul had done; he had seen that merely through the preaching of faith in Christ the Holy Spirit had been granted to Gentiles who were not circumcised or subject to the Law of Moses. He was not only one to support Paul in the insistence that it was not necessary to burden the Gentiles with the Law, but that it was enough for them to believe in Christ. Therefore he testifies for Paul and against the zealous and legalistic Jews on the basis of his own experience that the Gentiles became children of God and were saved solely by faith in Jesus Christ, without the Law or circumcision.

“Titus was not only a Christian. He was an archbishop, to whom Paul had committed the rule of the churches in Crete (Titus 1:5). This Titus was a Gentile.

“‘I went up by revelation’ (Gal. 2:2). Otherwise Paul would have been stubborn and would not have gone up. But he went because God warned him by a special revelation and commanded him to go. He did this to restrain, or at least to appease, the Jews who were believers but continued to argue about the observance of the Law. His purpose was to promote and establish the truth of the Gospel.

“‘And I laid before them the Gospel.’ Here you are told that finally, after eighteen years, Paul went up to Jerusalem and argued with the Apostles regarding his Gospel.

“‘Which I preach among the Gentiles.’ Paul means that among the Jews he had permitted the Law and circumcision to stand for a while, as had the other Apostles. ‘I have become all things to all men,’ he says (1 Cor. 9:22). Yet he always maintained the true doctrine of his Gospel, which he elevated above the Law, above circumcision, above the Apostles, yes, even above an angel from heaven (Gal. 1:8). For this is what he says to the Jews in Acts 13:38: ‘Through this very Christ forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you.’ And he adds very plainly (v. 39): ‘And by Him everyone that believes is freed from everything from which you could not be freed by the Law of Moses.’ This is the reason he teaches and defends the doctrine of the Gospel so diligently everywhere and refuses to let it be endangered. Nevertheless, he did not make a radical break right away; but he took account of those who were weak. In order not to offend the weak he undoubtedly spoke to the Jews as follows: ‘The observance of the Law of Moses is superfluous and contributes nothing to righteousness. Still, if you like it so well, you may go on observing it for all I care — just so that the Gentiles, who are not bound by this worship, do not have it imposed upon them!’

“Thus Paul concedes that he discussed the Gospel with the Apostles. ‘But,’ he says, ‘they did not do me any good or teach me anything. Quite the contrary. We were the ones who prevailed on behalf of the freedom of the Gospel. Tell this to your false apostles when they say that it was at the behest of the Apostles that I circumcised Timothy, cut my hair at Cenchreae, and went up to Jerusalem; for they are lying. No, I am proud that when I went up to Jerusalem, not at the behest of the Apostles but by a divine revelation, and discussed my Gospel with them, I succeeded in obtaining the opposite result, namely, that the Apostles approved me rather than them.’”

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

