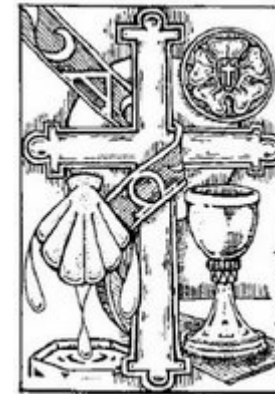


Saint Athanasius Lutheran Church



St. Athanasius Lutheran Church

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Pentecost Newsletter
(August/September 2023)

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From the Pastor . . .

A Summer This 'n That

Some things of note . . .

(1.) In the month of August, my family and I will be vacationing in Germany! This is the trip you all as a congregation so kindly and graciously provided me for the 25th anniversary of my ordination. Unfortunately, that took place during Covid in 2020 (remember that?), when most things were shut down. So we put off that trip until everything finally opened back up and we could enjoy the sites without restriction. So that's this summer! So **THANK YOU** all for providing us with this opportunity, and we look forward to sharing with you all that we did and saw when we return. :-)

(2.) Remember, a little while ago, we started looking into starting a school for our children and the children of the community? *Whatever happened to that?* Well, we still would like to, but we need a location first. Our Building Committee is still working to find a location to purchase (or build upon) for our church and school. Again, unfortunately, this is not the ideal time to be doing that! Interest rates are up, availability is down, and the market is tight. But they are working and searching. Thank them for their efforts for us!

(3.) Hope Lutheran Mission is chugging along in the Hamilton/Purcellville area. We've been discussing ways we can do outreach in the area and are looking forward to doing so. Please keep this effort in your prayers, that the Lord would lead to us, and lead us to, those who need Him and the good news of the forgiveness of their sins.

(4.) We had a great Good Shepherd Seminar this year - probably our best attended ever. It was a wonderful presentation. If you missed it, go to our church website and listen to the recordings. (And there are lots of previous years there, too!)

(continued on next page)

(5.) Keep up with our missionaries! Your offerings help to support three missionaries - one in Africa (John Wolf, an Athanasian), one in Canada (Charles St-Onge), and one here in the US (Rob Kieselowsky in Philadelphia). Go to our church website, click on the "Our Missions" picture and keep up with the latest!

(6.) When you travel or go on vacation, don't forget church! Don't take the Sunday off. Make finding a good church to go to part of your pre-vacation planning! If you need help, Pastor will be more than happy to help find a place for you to attend where you will be. And don't forget to bring back the bulletin! We often get good ideas from them for our own church. Thanks!

(7.) Enjoy your summer. Take some time to rest and relax. Pray for your fellow Athasians. Thank God for all His goodness to you, and all that He has provided for you. **You are precious! Both to Him, and to us.**

His servant and yours,

Pastor Douthwaite



Help us spread the word about our church!

You are the best person to reach out to others on social media and point them to our electronic church resources. Make sure to like our church page on Facebook.

Make sure to follow our church on Instagram. Point others to our YouTube channel - there's an easy link on our church web site. And there are lots of resources there, too! Sermons, audio files, videos, and more. As Jesus said in His Parable of the Sower, scatter the seed far and wide - some of it will grow and produce a harvest!



From the Commission on Mercy . . .

"If the preaching of Christ has occurred with power within that community, if it has begun to grow deep roots, it will also be the case within the community as a whole that this love more and more will come into evidence."

[from "Intentional Care of the Poor and the Sick
is Essential for the Well-being of a Christian congregation"
by Theodore Julius Brohm, 1861]

Your Commission on Mercy is tasked with helping our congregation be involved in works of mercy in our community. Therefore it identifies, investigates, implements, informs, and inspires various opportunities to help those in need, not only physically, but also as a means and bridge to help them spiritually. Many of you have helped in various ways, and that is great! Keep it up! Christ has blessed us that we be a blessing to others.

But we not only help folks as a congregation - you do so in your individual, everyday lives. But what if you have a friend, neighbor, or family member who needs help but you do not know how to help or where to direct them? **We can help!** On our church website, at the top of the page, you (or anyone!) can click on the **"Need help?"** words (in red!) and go to our Commission on Mercy page which lists many organizations which can provide help for various needs. But if you or someone you know has a need that is not listed there, you can **call 211** - this is the United Way help line. Trained professionals can suggest resources from a variety of public, private, and community-based organizations that are ready and able to provide assistance.

Finally, **thank you!** for all that you do for others - with the congregation, but also those things you do that no one else sees. Your Saviour does! And such works are precious to Him. Well done, good and faithful servant!

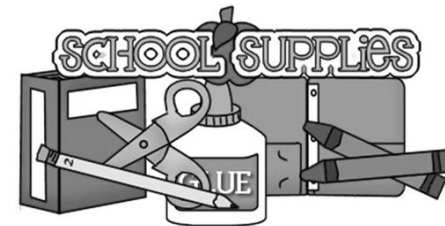


August Is Seminarian Offering Month

The month of August is one of our three special "Seminarian Offering Months." These offerings will help our adopted seminary student **Caleb Hoverson** (former Patrick Henry College student who attended our Hope Lutheran Mission in Purcellville) pay his fall quarter expenses. If you would like to contribute, please put your donation into the offering (or give online!) *specially marked* for Caleb's support.

And please remember - this is a *special* offering above and beyond your regular giving to the church. Don't reduce your regular giving! We need that for our regular expenses and as we look to the future. Thanks for your generosity and love, both for the students and for the congregations they will one day be called to serve.

+ + + + + + + + +



THANK YOU! to all who donated school supplies this summer to help the children in our area in need. You are always all so generous and loving. Thank you for showing the love of Christ in our community.

NARRATIVE DIVINE SERVICE



We will have our annual “Narrative Divine Service” on **Sunday, September 17th**. This is the service with the explanations of *what we do* and *why we do it* embedded into the service. Bring a friend and learn again about our liturgy and how it reflects our theology and how our theology is embedded in all that we say and do.



Don't forget!
Start each day
in the Word of God and prayer.
Morning Prayer on the Web
Every Monday-Friday, 7:00 am
In our WebEx room

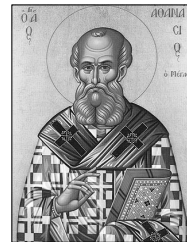


From Luther . . .

[Luther speaks of the knowledge of sin and the desire for Confession and Absolution worked in the Christian by faith.]

You should . . . come and compel us to give you the opportunity [for Confession]. . . . When I urge you to go to Confession, I am doing nothing else than urging you to be a Christian. If I have brought you to the point of being a Christian, I have thereby also brought you to Confession. For those who really desire to be true Christians, to be rid of their sins, and to have a cheerful conscience already possess the true hunger and thirst. . . . [S]o I yearn anxiously and tremblingly for God's Word, Absolution, the Sacrament, and so forth. See, that would be teaching right about Confession, and people could be given such a desire and love for it that they would come and run after us for it, more than we would like.

[from "Exhortation to Confession" in the Large Catechism,
in *Concordia: The Lutheran Confessions* (first ed.), © 2005 CPH, p.470]



From St. Athanasius . . .

[Athanasius speaks of the coming of the Son of God to rescue fallen humanity and make us whole again.]

For whereas man sinned, and is fallen, and by his fall all things are in confusion: death prevailed from Adam to Moses, the earth was cursed, Paradise shut, Heaven offended, man, lastly, corrupted and brutalized, while the devil was exulting against us; — then God, in His loving-kindness, not willing man made in His own image to perish, said, 'Whom shall I send, and who will go?' But while all held their peace, the Son said, 'Here am I, send Me.' And then it was that, saying Go Thou,' He 'delivered' to Him man, that the Word Himself might be made Flesh, and by taking the Flesh, restore it wholly.

[from "On Luke X.22", §1
in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Second Series, Vol. 4*, p. 87]



On the Catechism . . .

As we continue in the Pentecost season and its emphasis on growth in the Christian life and faith, our Catechism focus is on Confession and Absolution, for as Martin Luther wrote in the very first of his 95 theses, “When our Lord and Master

Jesus Christ said, ‘Repent,’ He willed the entire life of believers to be one of repentance.”

What do you believe according to these words?

I believe that when the called ministers of Christ deal with us by His divine command, in particular when they exclude openly unrepentant sinners from the Christian congregation and absolve those who repent of their sins and want to do better, this is just as valid and certain as if Christ our dear Lord dealt with us himself.

Christ says [John 20:23], “Those whose sins you remit and retain.” . . . [This means] to help troubled and anxious sinners from sins and, on the other hand, to leave shameless and stubborn sinners stuck in sins and to show them that they are condemned. It is a divine, Christian, salutary office by which the people should be served for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. For this the apostles and ministers of the Word are placed in office, to deliver the people from sin to righteousness, from death to eternal life, from the kingdom of the devil to the kingdom of God, from damnation to blessedness. . . .

Now if you want to know how and through what means a human being becomes righteous before God . . . it is through the Gospel of Christ’s passion and resurrection. It is this Gospel that He places in the mouth of His disciples . . . It is as though He were saying, “Through your mouth you are to make the people righteous, that is, you are to proclaim to them the forgiveness of sins in My name. Whoever now hears this word from your mouth, ‘Your sins are forgiven you,’ and believes this word, his sins are forgiven him and he is righteous before God in heaven.”

[from “Sermon for Easter Tuesday Morning” [John 20:19-23, March 30, 1529] in *Luther’s Works*, Vol. 69: *Sermons of the Gospel of St. John: Chapters 17-20* © 2009 CPH, p.369-71]

Preparing for the Divine Service

To give you the opportunity to look ahead and prepare for our Divine Service each Sunday, the Office Hymn, Holy Gospel, and Theme of each week for August and September are listed below.

Pentecost 10 (August 6):

Holy Gospel: Matthew 14:13–21 (Jesus feeds over 5,000 people.)

Office Hymn: LSB #642 “O Living Bread from Heaven”

Pentecost 11 (August 13):

Holy Gospel: Matthew 14:22–33 (Jesus walks on water.)

Office Hymn: LSB #717 “Eternal Father, Strong to Save”

Pentecost 12 (August 20):

Holy Gospel: Matthew 15:21–28 (Jesus helps a Canaanite woman.)

Office Hymn: LSB #615 “When in the Hour of Deepest Need”

Pentecost 13 (August 27):

Holy Gospel: Matthew 16:13–20 (Peter confesses Jesus is the Christ.)

Office Hymn: LSB #645 “Built on the Rock”

Pentecost 14 (September 3)

Holy Gospel: Matthew 16:21–28 (Jesus preaches the cross.)

Office Hymn: LSB #531 “Hail, Thou Once Despised Jesus”

Pentecost 15 (September 10):

Holy Gospel: Matthew 18:1–20 (The way of the kingdom of God.)

Office Hymn: LSB #689 “Let Me Be Thine Forever”

Pentecost 16 (September 17):

Holy Gospel: Matthew 18:21–35 (Parable of the Forgiving Master.)

Office Hymn: LSB #555 “Salvation Unto Us Has Come”

Saint Michael and All Angels (September 24)

Holy Gospel: Luke 10:17–20 (Angels and demons.)

Office Hymn: LSB #521 “Christ, the Lord of Hosts, Unshaken”

Note: The Liturgy through Pentecost 15 (September 10) is **Divine Service 4** (p. 203). The Liturgy beginning on Pentecost 16 (September 17) is **Divine Service 2** (p. 167).