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**June 2025**

To many people, church is an inconvenience. We want to get to the lake. Our child is playing select baseball. I am too tired to go to church. These are not reasons for skipping church. They are excuses. The reason is much deeper.

In a book study group which I have attended, we read “The Fire and the Staff,” by Klemet Preus. From the Concordia Publishing House (CPH) website: **"The Fire and the Staff captures the relationship between doctrine and practice. Doctrine is like a fire. It lights our way and warms us. Doctrine and practice are more closely related, even interdependent, than is often realized. Doctrine affects practice and practice affects doctrine. The two are so intimately woven together that when you change one, you will inevitably change the other, sometimes without realizing what has happened." — from the Introduction.**

From one of the chapters, we read the following quote that gets to the heart of this issue. “**If the Divine Service is viewed primarily as our praising God, then you can do that just as well at home. In fact, once we have looked at the topic of vocation, you will see that we can serve God better in the world than in the church building. But if the service is understood as God giving us the forgiveness of sins, then you've got to be there. It is very possible that the low attendance at Sunday services seen in so many churches today is a reflection of how we define the service. If I am acting, then I can do it another time. If God is acting, I better be there.”**

When we start to think of reasons why we don’t need to be in church, it is at that moment that we should check our thoughts on the Divine Service. Is this my work? Or, Is God the one that is working? When we realize that God is the one “doing”, and I am the one receiving, we tend to want to be in church. It is no longer looked as an obligation: I must go to church. It is a reward: I get to go to church.

On the next page, President Harrison’s **Letter From the President**, from the May 1, 2014 Lutheran Witness covers the same issue.

On another subject, in order to become more visible in the Bowie community, I have been volunteering at the Bowie Clinic. Helping to prepare boxes of food for those who need assistance. This is a wonderful outreach and it is supported by many of the churches in the area.

— Pastor De Young

A paraphrase from President Harrison’s Letter From the President, from the May 1, 2014 Lutheran Witness:

“I don’t need to go to church to be a Christian.” Oh, yeah? God says you do.

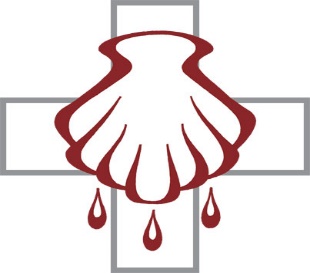
“Do not give up meeting together.” (See all of Hebrews 10.) But better than the Law (which says you should go to church) is the blessed Gospel! We cry like the tax collector at church, “God, be merciful to me, a sinner!” (Luke 18:13). And the pastor says, “In the stead and by the command of Christ, forgiven!” (see John 20:21–23). He makes the sign of the cross to remind us that we’re baptized, forgiven (Titus 3:5). The Scriptures are read, and they contain both Law (demand, threat) and Gospel (forgiveness, promise). The sermon is preached, and the texts explained. The Law threatens and drives us to Jesus! The Gospel is not merely described or spoken about; it’s delivered! “The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation” (Rom. 1:16), right now, for you!”

“At the heart of virtually every problem in the church, at the bottom of every strained relationship, at the center of every reason an inactive member stays home on Sunday or leaves the LCMS is the issue of the proper distinguishing between the Law and the Gospel. Without this understanding, the Scriptures make no sense, we will have no idea why we go to church (or worse, the wrong idea) and we will have no clue as to why orthodox Lutheranism reflects New Testament Christianity in the best sense.”

“Most people who stop going to church or get church wrong think it’s about ethics. They think it’s about following the rules (following the Law). No, it’s finally about sinners receiving forgiveness (Gospel). And blessed by the Benediction (“The Lord bless you and keep you! The Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you”—Gospel!) and all the forgiveness given, forgiven sinners head back into their vocations in life to be a beautiful leaven. If I know I’m a real “hard-boiled sinner” who’s been forgiven (Luther), I cannot be an unforgiving jackass to those around me. It’s a matter of Law and Gospel. I cannot but speak forgiveness—the Lord’s own forgiveness—to others.”

Pastor Matthew Harrison - “*Let’s go*!” Mark 1:38

https://witness.lcms.org/2014/back-to-basics-law-and-gospel/



Celebrate June’s Baptism Birthdays

& their years as heirs of God’s kingdom!

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Name** | **Years** |
| 1st | Terry Henry | 44 |
|  | Chanda Lee | 42 |
|  | Jack Morgan | 86 |
|  | Jeannine Yowell | 48 |
| 3rd | Tonda Rice | 42 |
| 5th | Ailey Pickett | 14 |
| 9th | Jo Kleinhans | 79 |
|  | Glenda Roth | 73 |
| 14th | Cade Roth | 27 |
|  | Emily Roth | 27 |
|  | Grant Roth | 27 |
| 17th | Nealee Allen | 13 |
|  | Chance Gilmore | 35 |
| 19th | Jenna McCarty | 31 |
| 20th | Lee Allen | 44 |
| 25th | Lark Shaw | 8 |
| 26th | Debbie Herriage | 33 |
| 30th | Maleisa Belcher | 47 |

**Serving in God’s House this month**

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| --- | --- |
| **Elder of the Month** | David Geis |
| **Counters** | Lee Hughes / David Geis |
| **Altar Guild** | Kristin Henry / Rebecca Horton |
| **Altar Care** | Maleisa Belcher / Becky Geis |
| **Guest Monitor** | Kelly Roth |

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Week** | **Acolytes** | **Reader** |
| June 01 | Emily Keyes & Parker Lawson | Arn Anderson |
| June 08 | Bella Caswell & Ailey Pickett | Bryan Roth |
| June 15 | Avery Henry & Aiden Henry | William Pickett |
| June 22 | Davin George & Dillon George | Lee Hughes |
| June 29 | Archer Ferguson & Max Gilmore | Arn Anderson |

A collage of objects and objects

AI-generated content may be incorrect.

A collage of people and objects

AI-generated content may be incorrect.

A collage of people in a church

AI-generated content may be incorrect.

A collage of children eating

AI-generated content may be incorrect.

A collage of photos of people and neon lights

AI-generated content may be incorrect.

A collage of images of people and a cat

AI-generated content may be incorrect.

A collage of people in different poses

AI-generated content may be incorrect.

A group of people sitting at tables

AI-generated content may be incorrect.