

ST PAUL & ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH NEWSLETTER



**"Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path."
— Psalm 119:105**

July 12, 2026

"Faithfully Reporting God's Word"

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July 12, 2026
The Pathlight

*Your Word Is A Lamp To My Feet
And A Light To My Path.
PS 119:105*

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Is God's Word Relevant Today? Trust It!

“For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return there but water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, ¹¹ so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it. ¹² “For you shall go out in joy and be led forth in peace; the mountains and the hills before you shall break forth into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. Isaiah 55:10-12

There are a lot of words being spoken and written today and very few of those words are blessing anyone. Most words today are to divide and conquer. Most words today are used to grab or grant power, rather than to guide and bless. The words that concern me most are those which are opposed to God's moral words in Scripture. Because without hearing God's moral word which brings us to repentance, there is no need for God's good news of life and salvation in Christ. Words matter, and only God's Word saves and gives life.

I sincerely thank God that you are still hearing God's Word today. Because it gives us direction. It sets boundaries on what is ethical and moral. It disciplines, rebukes, and corrects. It judges, forgives, empowers, and blesses. God's Word always holds true. Better still, God's Covenant words hold us! His words are needed more than ever as we live in a society that is confused, a culture whose answers to problems only cause more confusion and destruction. Who would have imagined that today, what we thought of as immoral because God so, is now not only tolerated, but celebrated? Then to top it off, we are told to find solace in our own words and in our own wisdom that has absolutely no connection with God's everlasting truth.

I have heard of articles and workshops with the titles like, “Is the Bible still relevant today?” HOLY BLASPHEMY BATMAN! It's not only relevant. It's necessary. And I'm not referring to some watered-down version to satisfy society's latest whim. I'm talking about the concrete word from God that has the power to bring life and salvation where there are only despair, death, and destruction. That is the Word that God gave to us! Why? Because without it, we can never find our way back to God. His Word is necessary because it brings real joy, peace, and change amidst all of the “noise” of useless words that is Satan's tool to distract us from a relationship with God and with each other on God's terms in Jesus Christ.

God's Word gives us God's “No” and God's “Yes,” and never a message of “tolerance of sin.” No, God's Word is a message of redemption and reconciliation! His Word GIVES life and MAKES life worth living now and forever. God's Word is the only Word powerful enough both to condemn with perfect justice and to then create faith graciously to save. Peter reminds us that, “There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.” (Acts 4:12). Who is that? The “WORD made flesh,” is Jesus Christ (John 1:14). God's Word “***shall accomplish that which I purpose.***” God's Word will hold and uphold you like He promises it will.

Pastor Christensen

For now we see in a mirror dimly but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known. 1Cor. 13:12

Lutheran Service Book

Order of Service

HYMN # 901 “Open Now Thy Gates of Beauty”

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION pg. 184

INTROIT pg.186

KYRIE

SALUTATION and COLLECT OF THE DAY pg.189

OLD TESTAMENT READING: Isaiah 55:10-13

EPISTLE: Romans 8:12-17

HOLY GOSPEL: Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

APOSTLES CREED pg.192

HYMN # 577 “Almighty God, Your Word Is Cast”

OFFERING

PRAYER of the CHURCH

LORD’S PRAYER

SALUTATION pg. 201

HYMN # 717 “Eternal Father, Strong to Save”

SILENT PRAYER

Servants this morning

St. Paul

Ushers/Greeters- Randy Renquist/ Chuck Juhl

Organist-Gail Nicolaus

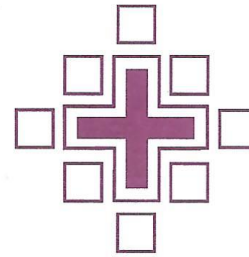
Zion

Greeters and Ushers – Randy Schlake, Altar Guild-Jodi, Shelle, Tonia

Organist-Gail Nicolaus

Seventh Sunday after Pentecost

July 12, 2026



INTROIT *Ps. 103:15–19; antiphon: Ps. 103:8*

The LORD is merciful and | gracious,*
slow to anger and abounding in | steadfast love.
As for man, his days | are like grass;*
he flourishes like a flower | of the field;
for the wind passes over it, and | it is gone,*
and its place knows | it no more.
But the steadfast love of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting on those
who | fear him,*
and his righteousness to children's | children,
to those who keep his | covenant*
and remember to do his com- | mandments.
The LORD has established his throne in the | heavens,*
and his kingdom rules | over all.
Glory be to the Father and | to the Son*
and to the Holy | Spirit;
as it was in the be- | ginning,*
is now, and will be forever. | Amen.
The LORD is merciful and | gracious,*
slow to anger and abounding in | steadfast love.

COLLECT OF THE DAY

Blessed Lord, since You have caused all Holy Scriptures to be written for our learning, grant that we may so hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them that we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

GRADUAL *Rom. 11:33, 36*

Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowl- | edge of God!*
How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable | his ways!
For from him and through him and to him are | all things.*
To him be glory forever. | Amen.

DAILY READINGS

July 12: Judg. 7:1–23; Gal. 1:1–24; **13:** Judg. 13:1–25; Gal. 2:1–21; **14:** Judg. 14:1–20; Gal. 3:1–22;
15: Judg. 15:1–16:3; Gal. 3:23–4:11; **16:** Judg. 16:4–30; Gal. 4:12–31; **17:** 1 Sam. 1:1–20; Gal. 5:1–26;
18: 1 Sam. 1:21–2:17; Gal. 6:1–18.

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Old Testament Reading:

Isaiah 55:10–13

- ¹⁰ “For as the rain and the snow come
down from heaven
and do not return there but water
the earth,
making it bring forth and sprout,
giving seed to the sower and bread
to the eater,
¹¹ so shall my word be that goes out
from my mouth;
it shall not return to me empty,
but it shall accomplish that which I
purpose,
and shall succeed in the thing for
which I sent it.
¹² “For you shall go out in joy
and be led forth in peace;
the mountains and the hills before
you
shall break forth into singing,
and all the trees of the field shall
clap their hands.
¹³ Instead of the thorn shall come up
the cypress;
instead of the brier shall come up
the myrtle;
and it shall make a name for the
LORD,
an everlasting sign that shall not
be cut off.”

Epistle: Romans 8:12–17

¹² So then, brothers, we are debtors,
not to the flesh, to live according to the
flesh. ¹³ For if you live according to the
flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit
you put to death the deeds of the body,
you will live. ¹⁴ For all who are led
by the Spirit of God are sons of God.
¹⁵ For you did not receive the spirit of
slavery to fall back into fear, but you
have received the Spirit of adoption as
sons, by whom we cry, “Abba! Father!”
¹⁶ The Spirit himself bears witness with
our spirit that we are children of God,
¹⁷ and if children, then heirs—heirs
of God and fellow heirs with Christ,

provided we suffer with him in order
that we may also be glorified with him.

Holy Gospel:

Matthew 13:1–9, 18–23

¹ That same day Jesus went out of the
house and sat beside the sea. ² And great
crowds gathered about him, so that he
got into a boat and sat down. And the
whole crowd stood on the beach. ³ And
he told them many things in parables,
saying: “A sower went out to sow. ⁴ And
as he sowed, some seeds fell along the
path, and the birds came and devoured
them. ⁵ Other seeds fell on rocky ground,
where they did not have much soil, and
immediately they sprang up, since they
had no depth of soil, ⁶ but when the sun
rose they were scorched. And since they
had no root, they withered away. ⁷ Other
seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns
grew up and choked them. ⁸ Other seeds
fell on good soil and produced grain,
some a hundredfold, some sixty, some
thirty. ⁹ He who has ears, let him hear.

...
¹⁸ “Hear then the parable of the sower:
¹⁹ When anyone hears the word of the
kingdom and does not understand it,
the evil one comes and snatches away
what has been sown in his heart. This
is what was sown along the path. ²⁰ As
for what was sown on rocky ground,
this is the one who hears the word and
immediately receives it with joy, ²¹ yet
he has no root in himself, but endures
for a while, and when tribulation or per-
secution arises on account of the word,
immediately he falls away. ²² As for
what was sown among thorns, this is the
one who hears the word, but the cares of
the world and the deceitfulness of riches
choke the word, and it proves unfruitful.
²³ As for what was sown on good soil,
this is the one who hears the word and
understands it. He indeed bears fruit
and yields, in one case a hundredfold,
in another sixty, and in another thirty.”

*Weekly Church
Announcements*

St. Paul

July 13-17-9:00AM-11:20AM-**Vacation**

Bible School

July 19 - 8:00AM-Bible Study

9:00AM-Worship Service/Communion

Servants for Worship-Jeanie Boehm/Les

Ebke/Gerald Orth

Zion

July 19-10:00AM-Sunday School

11:00AM- Worship Service/Communion

Servants for Worship- Jeanie

Boehm/Randy Schlake/Altar Guild- Jodi,
Shelle, Tonia

Get ready for an exciting Bible School!

Thanks to your continued support, we'll be setting off on our **Tropical Trek** from **Monday, July 13 through Friday, July 17**. It's going to be a week filled with faith, fun, friendship, music, crafts, games, and unforgettable Bible stories!

As we journey through the tropics together, we'll discover how God is at work through these amazing lessons:

 **God Saves Baby Moses**

 **Ruth and Naomi**

 **Jesus and Zacchaeus**

 **Jesus Rises from the Dead**

 **Jesus Appears to Paul**

We can't wait to learn, laugh, grow in faith, and enjoy wonderful fellowship together!



Happy Birthday



**July 13-Judy Abts, Wanda Trennepohl, Ellory Lange
7/15-Bradyn Miller**

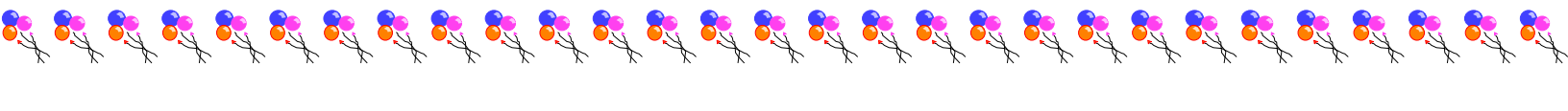
Rocky Mountain District wishes to introduce “The District Ambassadors Initiative”

Through this initiative, we are asking each congregation, with the help of its pastors, to identify a District Ambassador. This may be an individual or a married couple willing to serve together. The District Ambassador(s) will serve as a simple liaison between the congregation and the district.

The District Ambassador(s) role, the ambassadors will serve as a point of contact and

collaboration to communicate information between their congregation and the district.

We are seeking faithful and trusted people who love the Church and are willing to help keep their congregation connected to the broader mission we share. District ambassadors will also be invited to a kickoff event this fall. The date and location will be shared soon. **The Rocky Mountain District LCMS, 88 Inverse Circle East, Unit A210, Englewood, Colorado 80112, (303)-695-8001.**



BIBLE JEOPARDY!

OLD TESTAMENT	NEW TESTAMENT	MIRACLES	LUTHERAN FAVORITES	BIBLE CHALLENGE
This judge's 300 soldiers defeated the Midianites using trumpets, jars, and torches. \$100	This disciple doubted Jesus' resurrection until he saw the nail marks. \$100	Jesus turned water into this. \$100	Martin Luther called this doctrine "the article on which the Church stands or falls." \$100	This prophet challenged 450 prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel. \$100
Jacob wrestled with this mysterious being until daybreak and received a new name. \$200	Paul wrote this shortest New Testament letter to appeal for a runaway slave. \$200	This prophet made an iron axe head float. \$200	"The righteous shall live by faith" first appears in this Old Testament book. \$200	This woman hid the Israelite spies in Jericho. \$200
This prophet saw the valley of dry bones. \$300	This woman became Europe's first recorded Christian convert. \$300	Jesus healed this official's servant without ever entering his house. \$300	The Small Catechism contains this many Chief Parts. \$300	This king discovered the forgotten Book of the Law during Temple repairs. \$300
This king became leprous after offering incense in the Temple. \$400	Peter raised this disciple from the dead in Joppa. \$400	This widow's flour and oil never ran out. \$400	This Psalm begins, "The Lord is my shepherd." \$400	This prophet married Gomer as a picture of God's love for Israel. \$400
Naaman dipped in the Jordan this many times. \$500	Paul spent two years under house arrest in this city. \$500	Jesus raised this man after he had been dead four days. \$500	According to Ephesians 2:8-9, we are saved by this—not by works. \$500	This Old Testament book never mentions God's name. \$500

† Bible Jeopardy Answer Key

Old Testament

- **\$100:** Who is **Gideon**?
- **\$200:** Who was **the Angel of the Lord (or God)**?
- **\$300:** Who is **Ezekiel**?
- **\$400:** Who is **King Uzziah**?
- **\$500:** What is **seven times**?

New Testament

- **\$100:** Who is **Thomas**?
- **\$200:** What is **Philemon**?
- **\$300:** Who is **Lydia**?
- **\$400:** Who is **Tabitha (Dorcas)**?
- **\$500:** What is **Rome**?

Miracles

- **\$100:** What is **wine**?
- **\$200:** Who is **Elisha**?
- **\$300:** Who was **the centurion**?
- **\$400:** Who is **the Widow of Zarephath**?
- **\$500:** Who is **Lazarus**?

Lutheran Favorites

- **\$100:** What is **Justification by Faith Alone**?
- **\$200:** What is **Habakkuk**?
- **\$300:** What are the **Six Chief Parts** of Luther's Small Catechism?
- **\$400:** What is **Psalm 23**?
- **\$500:** What is **Grace through faith**?

Bible Challenge

- **\$100:** Who is **Elijah**?
- **\$200:** Who is **Rahab**?
- **\$300:** Who is **King Josiah**?
- **\$400:** Who is **Hosea**?
- **\$500:** What is **Esther**?



"Trust in the LORD with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make straight your paths." — Proverbs 3:5–6

Have you ever reached the end of a chapter in your life and wondered, "Now what?"

Perhaps the children have grown and moved away. Retirement has arrived after decades of faithful work. A loved one has entered heaven. A job has ended. A friendship has changed. Maybe a dream you held for years has quietly faded, leaving you standing in unfamiliar territory.

We often wish God would hand us a detailed map showing exactly where to go next. Instead, He usually gives us something better—His presence.

There is an old story about a hiker who loved exploring the mountains before sunrise. One morning, a heavy fog settled over the trail. He could no longer see the path stretching ahead. Frustrated, he stopped and said, "How can I keep walking when I can't see where I'm going?"

An older guide smiled and handed him a lantern.

"It only lights a few steps ahead," the hiker complained.

"That's all you need," the guide replied. "Walk those few steps, and the light will move with you."

The hiker wanted the entire trail illuminated. Instead, he learned to trust the light he had been given.

Our walk with Christ is often much the same.

God rarely reveals the entire journey at once. He asks us to trust Him one faithful step at a time. The Israelites experienced this in the wilderness. They were not given food for months in advance. Instead, God provided manna each morning—enough for that day. He was teaching them dependence, not self-sufficiency.

Jesus echoes this same truth when He tells us, ***"Do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble."*** (Matthew 6:34)

When one chapter closes, our first instinct is often to search for answers. But perhaps God is inviting us to seek Him before we seek the plan.

The Apostle Paul experienced many unexpected endings. His missionary journeys changed direction. Doors closed. He faced imprisonment, shipwreck, rejection, and uncertainty. Yet Paul never believed God had abandoned him. Instead, he confidently wrote:

"And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to His purpose." — Romans 8:28

Notice that Paul does not say **all things are good**. Rather, God is able to work through every ending, every disappointment, every surprise, weaving them into His greater purpose.

Sometimes the next chapter begins quietly. It may look less like a dramatic calling and more like a simple act of faith: encouraging a neighbor, volunteering at church, spending time in prayer, forgiving someone, or opening your Bible with fresh expectation.

God often writes extraordinary stories through ordinary faithfulness.

The psalmist reminds us:

"Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path." — Psalm 119:105

Not a stadium spotlight.

A lamp.

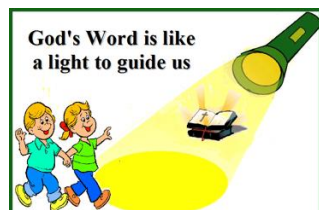
Just enough light for the next step.

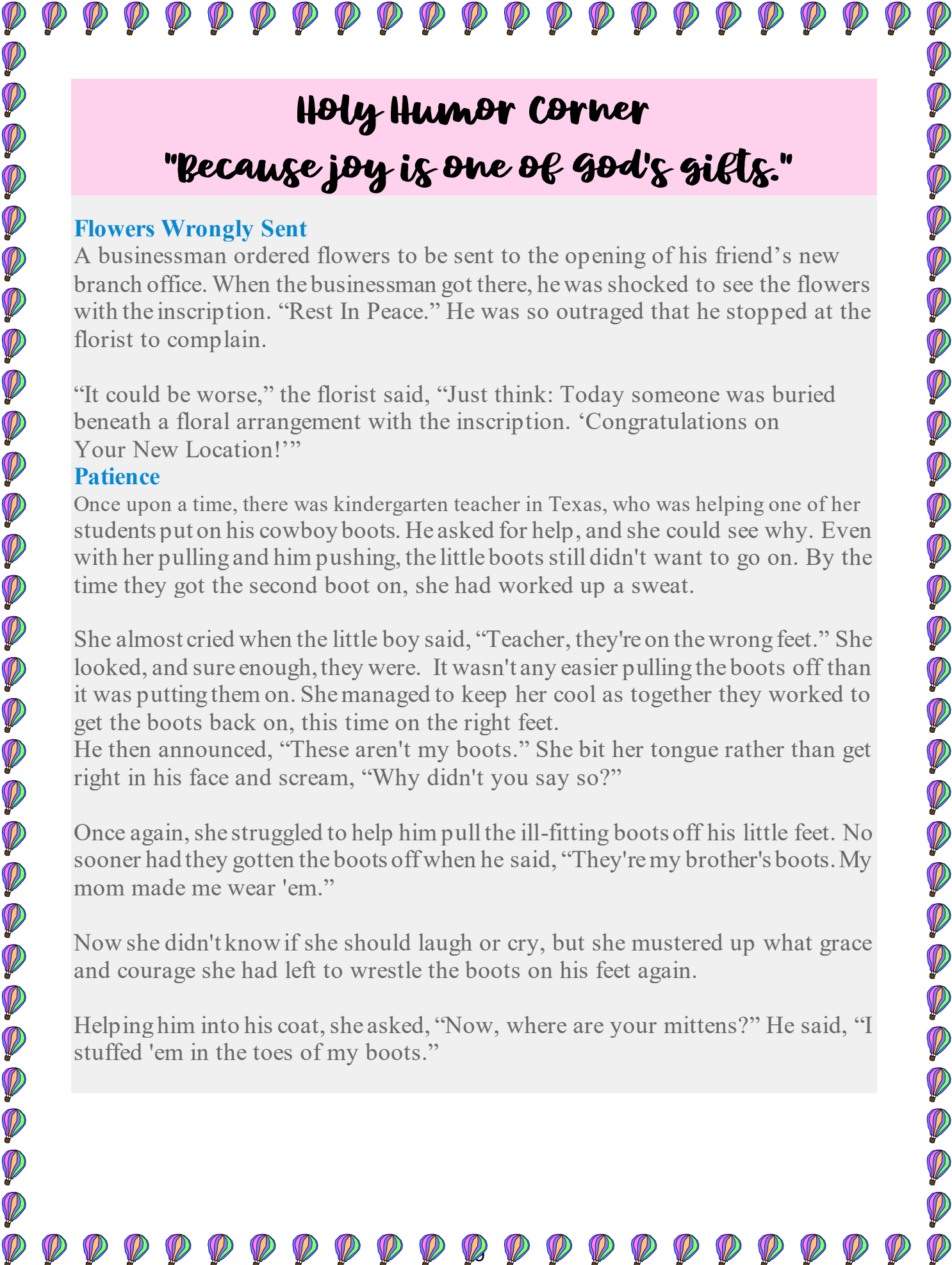
If you find yourself between chapters today, remember this: God is already present in the pages you haven't read yet. The Author of your faith has never lost the plot. He is not surprised by your circumstances, nor has He finished His work in you.

The next chapter may not be the one you expected—but with Christ, it can become the one that grows your faith the most.

Prayer

Heavenly Father, when the future feels uncertain and one season of life comes to an end, help us to trust You instead of our own understanding. Give us courage to take the next faithful step, even when we cannot see the whole path. Remind us that You go before us, walk beside us, and never leave us. Open our hearts to the opportunities You place before us and let every new chapter draw us closer to Jesus Christ, our Savior. In His holy name we pray. Amen.





Holy Humor Corner

"Because joy is one of god's gifts."

Flowers Wrongly Sent

A businessman ordered flowers to be sent to the opening of his friend's new branch office. When the businessman got there, he was shocked to see the flowers with the inscription. "Rest In Peace." He was so outraged that he stopped at the florist to complain.

"It could be worse," the florist said, "Just think: Today someone was buried beneath a floral arrangement with the inscription. 'Congratulations on Your New Location!'"

Patience

Once upon a time, there was kindergarten teacher in Texas, who was helping one of her students put on his cowboy boots. He asked for help, and she could see why. Even with her pulling and him pushing, the little boots still didn't want to go on. By the time they got the second boot on, she had worked up a sweat.

She almost cried when the little boy said, "Teacher, they're on the wrong feet." She looked, and sure enough, they were. It wasn't any easier pulling the boots off than it was putting them on. She managed to keep her cool as together they worked to get the boots back on, this time on the right feet.

He then announced, "These aren't my boots." She bit her tongue rather than get right in his face and scream, "Why didn't you say so?"

Once again, she struggled to help him pull the ill-fitting boots off his little feet. No sooner had they gotten the boots off when he said, "They're my brother's boots. My mom made me wear 'em."

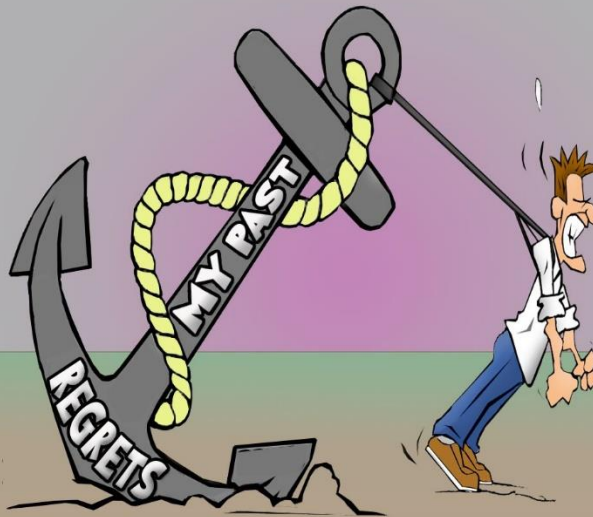
Now she didn't know if she should laugh or cry, but she mustered up what grace and courage she had left to wrestle the boots on his feet again.

Helping him into his coat, she asked, "Now, where are your mittens?" He said, "I stuffed 'em in the toes of my boots."

Don't Let Your PAST... Anchor You

DON'T BECOME ANCHORED TO YOUR PAST

We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure. It is Jesus. **Hebrews 6:19-20**



Forget what is **BEHIND** and strive
strive toward what's **AHEAD**. **Ph 3:13**

THEBACKPEW.COM - Jlatson

Philippians 3:13

Forget what is **BEHIND** and strive toward what is **AHEAD**.

WHERE IS YOUR ANCHOR?

This cartoon is particularly personal to me. It comes straight out of my own struggles with regret and the times I've allowed my past to hold me back. Like many of you, I've spent too much time looking in the rearview mirror — replaying mistakes, failures, and what-ifs. But I'm learning that Jesus offers us something far better: a secure anchor for our souls that frees us to move forward rather than stay stuck.

We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure. It enters the inner sanctuary behind the curtain, where our forerunner, Jesus, has entered on our behalf. Hebrews 6:19-20

Credit: The

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