

# Good Shepherd Lutheran Ministries, GSLM

# "In the beginning"

Pastor's Epistle

"In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.... Genesis 1:1

Beloved of God.

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and our Risen Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Above you see a fragment from the Dead Sea Scrolls, first discovered in 1947 a.d., in Khirbet, Qumran, by Bedouin shepherds in caves.. The scrolls go back (through dating estimates) as far as the third century b.c., and are thus at least two thousand years old. The portion above is from the very beginning of the Bible, the Word of God, and Genesis 1:1, hand written on parchment (animal skin).

The portion above (in the white box added for emphasis purposes) has the first couple of Hebrew words virtually destroyed, but we will list them in parentheses, and the rest without. It reads "(In the beginning) God (created) the heavens and the earth." Of course the chapter of Genesis continues, but we list this for simplicity's sake. The

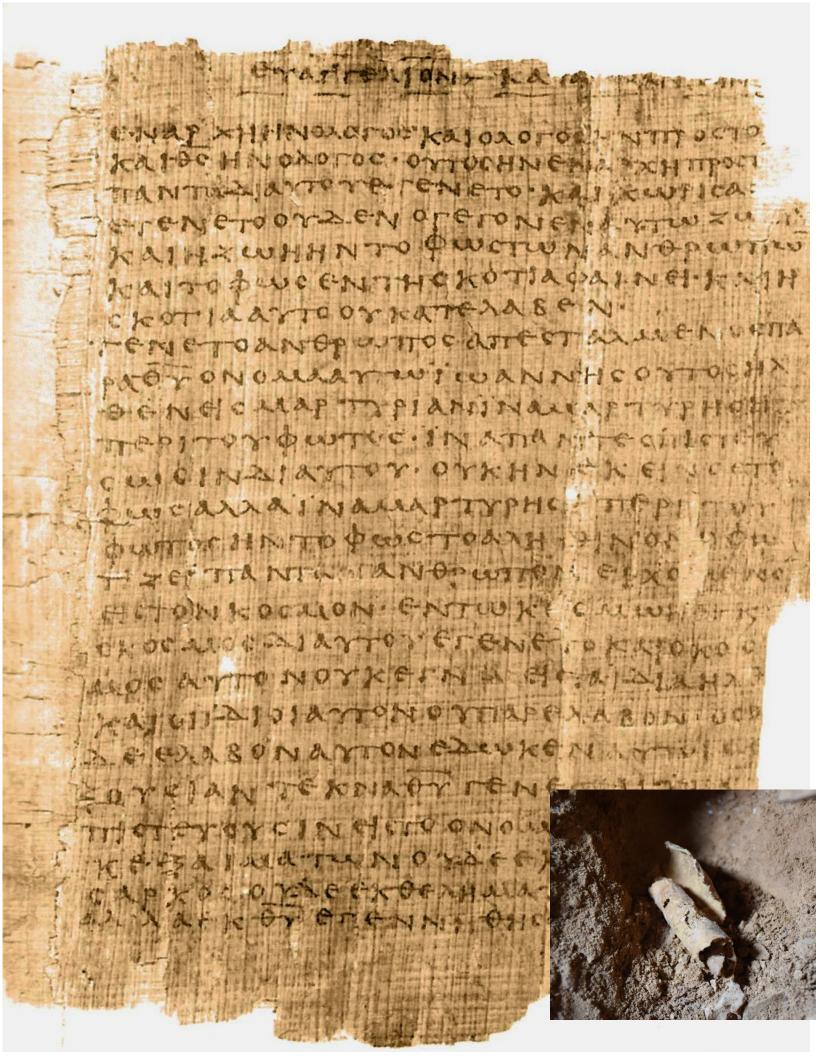
modern type face for the quote is:

## ּבְּרֵאשָׁית בָּרָא אֱלֹהֵים אֵת הַשְּׁמִיִם וְאֵת הָאֶרְץ:

Ok, so why this? Good question. To praise God! This month, Pentecost arrives. We will explain more. Hang on.

When God created the heavens and the earth, exactly as the Word says he did, all creation as he made it—wonderfully, beautifully, perfectly, and holy and without sin, was "very good." In time, tragically man chose to be like God, and sinned. The Word of God was rejected, and thus God was rejected. And their eyes were opened. They saw they were naked. Death came, to all creation. Man cut himself off from God.

God promised a New beginning. He would send his Only Begotten Son. He would crush the serpent's head. The promise went forward, and the man and the woman had to trust God after all ow. And finally, in the fulness of time, "The Word became flesh, and made his dwelling among us. Jesus.



[Previous page is a photo plate of the Gospel According to St. John, chapter 1, verse 1. It is

from Papyrus 66, dated to around 175 a.d.. It was found with a cache of ancient documents at Jabal Abu Mana, Egypt, about 300 meters from a



cliff. The first sentence line reads in modern type face: εν αρχη ην ο λογος και ο λογος ην προς τον θεον και θεος ην ο λογος, In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.]

This incredible event, of the incarnation of the Son of God Jesus Christ, was the culmination of the gracious and merciful promise of God to send his Son, Jesus Christ to save the world. The Word you see, which was rejected in the beginning, was from the Lord himself. He was rejected. Now God the Son thus became flesh, he kept his Word for us, and laid down his life to redeem us and rescue us.

With his first advent, and the cross, somet5hing powerful happened. The Launch of the Eschaton took place. The launch, was foretold by the Lord through the prophet Joel in the Old Testament when he spoke through the prophet his Word.

The Apostle Peter cites the Joel 2 prophesy of the "Last Days," and full of the Holy Spirit, Peter explains something that had just happened. That happening was:

When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place. <sup>2</sup> And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. <sup>3</sup> And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested<sup>[a]</sup> on each one of them. <sup>4</sup> And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.

<sup>5</sup> Now there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men from every nation under heaven. <sup>6</sup> And at this sound the multitude came together, and they were bewildered, because each one was hearing them speak in his own language......" 12 And all were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, "What does this mean?" <sup>13</sup> But others mocking said, "They are filled with new wine."

<sup>14</sup> But Peter, standing with the eleven, lifted up his voice and addressed them: "Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and give ear to my words. <sup>15</sup> For these people are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day.

[b] 16 But this is what was uttered through the prophet Joel:

<sup>17</sup> "'And in the last days it shall be, God declares.

that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall proph-

and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams; 18 even on my male servants and female serv-

in those days I will pour out my Spirit, and they shall prophesy.

<sup>19</sup> And I will show wonders in the heavens

and signs on the earth below.

blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke; the sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood.

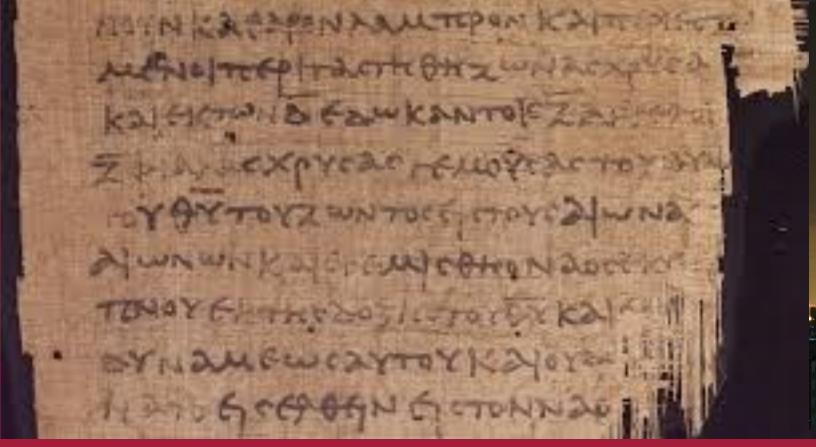
before the day of the Lord comes, the great

and magnificent day.

And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.'

[Ed note: all these ancient text finds corroborate the amazing continuity of the Bibles we have today having ancient origins, which many have attacked as being inventions of the church, but indeed are actually scientifically found to be from antiquity in origin.]

So, what does Peter say again? In these what?



Above is a fragment of P47, from the 200s a.d., and from the Book of Revelation.



U.S. Campus unrest and antisemitic protests and riots, as police clash to oretake campuses in several U.S. cities.



Above: Israel's Iron Dome reponds to Iranian Missile Attack. Below: U.S. Navy Carrier Jets repond to defend Israel



He said, "in these last days." The day of Pentecost was part of the Inauguration of the Last Days of God's glorious plan of salvation to reverse the Fall of man and creation.

Jesus' battle at the cross was a glorious Victory. In fact, having been buried, as we recite in the Creed, reflecting Scripture, he descended into hell to proclaim his victory! The crushing blow has been given to the devil, promised back at the fall. And risen the third day, our Lord Jesus before he ascended on high instructed his apostles next to wait for the Holy Spirit to come upon them.

As you read a moment ago, indeed the Holy Spirit did come. Where they were gathered, the sound of a powerful wind filled the place. And ini the wonder of wonders, the Spirit of God came upon them, tongues of fire came and rested upon their heads. They began to speak in languages not their own. The victory of the cross brought with it the new and next era of the plan of salvation. The last days era had dawned with the cross, when our judgment was laid upon Christ Jesus, God's Only Begotten Son, so that whoever believes will not perish, but have everlasting life.

The wonders displayed moved the people, and with the Word of God heralded by the Apostle and the other Apostles who preached in tongues of the visitors who were gathered that day from around the world, the salvation of thousands was begun. Everything was being changed. The Church would go global!

The Great Commission of our Lord Jesus before he ascended on high was begun. The work of making disciples of all nations began in Jerusalem, then all Judea, Samaria, and the ends of the earth.... Lives were transformed, people reborn to be children of God! The last times, before the Earth and Heavens are made Brand New wen Jesus returns and raises us,

too, are actually an exciting time to be alive. We are living it even now. And while yes, there comes suffering yet still as the devil and sinful man refuse the Lord and fight against him and his people, the victory is won. We await the glorious day of his return. And in the meantime while we wait, he equips us, nurtures us, prepares us, comforts us, strengthens us in the true faith, and leads us forth in the most important work of saving the world through the proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Today though, The world is afraid. You saw the pictures on the previous pages. The world responds in its angst and fear, out of its sinful nature. And while we are indeed correct that we are closer to the return of the Lord Jesus Christ in glory, to raise the living and the dead, for the resurrection and the last judgment, we are not alone. We are set apart and different from the world.

And we have a mission to carry out. And while we do that, event when it seems like we are losing, or defeated, or struggling with troubles and tribulations, we are more than conquerors through Jesus Christ OUR LORD. We are children of the Most High. We are the redeemed of the Lamb of God Jesus Christ. We are purchased and won, justified by grace through faith, where from our God has said "thou art Not Guilty, and thou art Righteous—clothed in the righteousness of my Son. And we are loved with an everlasting love.

We are eternals. We are a Royal Priesthood, a Holy Nation, a people belonging unto God, living stones, purchased not with gold or silver or things that perish, but with the precious blood of the Son of God. We are loved. And we being renewed in the image of God (Colossians 3), with the fruit of the Spirit, we love one another. And we alone have the Hope the world needs, the Gospel!



And we get to bring that to a world suffering its own devices, to set free people bound in darkness and who are longing for hope and help, rescue and redemption through Jesus Christ, so they can be part of the end of the last days and the beginning of the Eternity with God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, when there will be no more sin, or suffering, or death, and the devil itself cast into the lake of fire.

But we will dwell with the Lord, and our tears will have been wiped. And Pentecost which we will celebrate this month is a wonderful, miraculous, joyful moment which inaugurated the coming of joy everlasting we wait for. So the work we have ahead, it is a gift to us and

the world. God has called us, Good Shepherd, to this work. It is a joy to carry out.

Together, by his grace, and Spirit this Pentecost season to come, we will go forward yet still. It is a holy task, and calling. It is the Noble task and calling of any and every person who is a child of God. And just think of the people we will see, who through your share in this Gospel Call here whom you will see one day in the glory!

Praise God from whom all blessing flow.

In Christ, Pastor, ILYCD

# LWML LWML Meeting April 11, 2024

The meeting began at 1010am. We recited the League Pledge. Judy M. led the prayer and Devotion.

Secretary's Report: Read by Peggy. Moved and 2nd to approve.

Treasurer's Report: Read by Teresa. The Congregational Dinner made \$411 and the Bake Sale \$47. The ending balance is \$1,878.79. Moved and 2nd to approve.

Old Business: The Spring Rally was very nice. \$1,039 was given to PACE through Gifts of the Heart. Note: We will not be making the Scrubbies since these were given at this Rally.

New Business: 1. The Fall Convention will be in Orlando in September if anyone would like to attend.

- 2. The April Project is our Memorial Garden. A new bench and ground cover is needed. The Trustees are in charge of this. Sharon offered to furnish the bench and a Memorial Plaque with all the names of loved ones' remains in our Garden. New names can be added. A decorated box will be placed in back of the church for donations.
- 3. The May Project is the Blessing the Children bags. These bags will have a sticker with the LWML listed. Teresa offered to print the stickers and Judy W and Peggy will attach the stickers. The bags will be sent home at the end of the year. Any remaining money could be used in the fall for classroom needs for the children.
- 4. Our Seminarian will graduate in about 4 months. We will continue to send our checks until then.
- 5. The May Bake Sale falls on Mothers' Day, May 12. It was decided that we still have our Bake Sale.
- 6. We will not meet in June or July but will officially meet on August 10. Judy M will keep trying to set up a meeting with Trinity to discuss the Fall Rally which is to be held here. We need to agree on a Theme and Bible Verse and also need to delegate the different tasks. The unspent Thrivent money from the Congregational Meal has to be returned. A new application needs to be made for use in the Fall Rally. Food and drinks, tableware, etc. will need to be planned for up to 100 people. We need some sort of Name Tags also. The ticket price needs to raised to \$10.
- 7. Our May meeting will be at Pizza Connection at 11am on May 11. We will be electing officers. Judy M is unable to stay on as President but the other officers are willing to stay. Teresa will lead the Devotion.

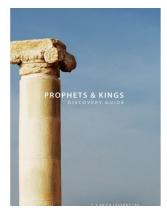
Pastor lead us in The Lord's Prayer. We adjourned at 11:40 am.

Respectfully submitted, Peggy Fjelsted

# Κατα Μαθθαιον According to Matthew



"Matthew" A study of the Holy Gospel According to Matthew, drawing from the original languages of the Holy Scriptures.



Wednesdays at 10:15 am, all are invited as we continue with a new series on the Gospel According to Matthew. This incredible Gospel account is full of the deepest and most wonderful of meaning for our faith and salvation and our lives as we follow Jesus. Join us! And on Sundays at 9:00 am, we have started a new series, "Prophets and Kings" It has some definitely thought provoking things for our times. Join us for this as well, and you will find Jesus throughout! This series is rooted with a video supplement.

#### Elder Russ' Bible Study Group is on Break for the next few months.

# Ladies of Good Shepherd - including Teachers and Staff,

You are invited to participate in our Ladies Luncheon that takes place every 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of each month, at a new location each time. Bring a dollar that will be collected, and a name will be drawn, from the group of ladies. The person's name that is drawn will receive the money that will go towards their meal and will choose the next location. A fun way to get to know each other. If interested, please sign-up on the provided sign-up sheets in the back of the church, so we know how many will be going and we can reserve a table. Hope to see you there!

### **LADIES LUNCHEON** April 20th at noon KRISTOFF'S ON McRGEGOR

10231 McGregor Blvd Fort Myers

Please remember our Food Pantry if you know of someone with an emergency need. They may contact pastor or the church office by phone at 239-995-7711, or email pastor at pastordavis@goodshepofnfm.com. Also, if you have food to donate, please let us know.

"The King will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me."

(Matthew 25:40)

## See NEWS next page!





# Welcome to GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH & SCHOOL

### **CHURCH AND SCHOOL NEWS AND MORE**



It is coming to pass! We are official. Through the vision of Ms. Shelly Homan, a new teacher with us at Good Shepherd, we are bringing on board the Drop and Shop. Beginning on May 18th at 10am, people with need (or just wanting to donate and help) will be able to come here, including our entire school, to drop off a donation, and to shop and pick up items they have need of.



This includes the agreement just signed today with Harry Chapin Food Bank!

Harry Chapin Food Bank is the largest hunger-relief nonprofit and the only Feeding America member in Southwest Florida, serving Charlotte, Collier, Glades, Hendry and Lee counties. We rescue and distribute donated food and other grocery products through our food distribution programs, feeding more than a quarter of a million people who are hungry each month!

We will be a new center for helping with the important and essential needs of the community we serve, and be able to share the love of Jesus Christ and the Gospel with a whole new group of people. If you have questions, or can help us, please see Pastor, or Ms. Homan, or Dez or our Principal and the Front Office for more info. There is need for help with this ministry in various ways. Please prayerfully consider. We can even use another freezer and fridge. The opportunities with this to serve the Lord are big. Pray for this work!



Our Savior Jesus' ministry of salvation is always wonderfully busy and bountiful here. This past month we had a great Youth Day after the Second Service. We grilled hot dogs, had snacks and drinks, played a skirmish between our basketball team and students from the community and Heritage Charter.

We also need to CONGRATULATE OUR SCOCCER TEAM WHO CAME IN SECOND PLACE! WE HOSTED THE TROURNAMENT FOR OUR AREA, AND HAD A GREAT TIME!



# **GRADUATIONS!!!!**

You are invited to our graduations this month! Our VPK Graduation will take place on the 18th, at 10 a,!

\*th Grade and High School will be on the 15th, at 6:30 pm!

God bless our graduates!

# **Lectionary Summary for MAY**

SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

(5 May 2024) Acts 10:34–48; 1 John 5:1–8; John 15:9–17

The Lord Jesus Is with His Church in the Apostolic Ministry of the GospelThe crucified and risen Lord Jesus is with His Church through the word of His apostles, who "are witnesses of all that he did." He was anointed by God "with the Holy Spirit and with power," and "he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil," and so He was with those whom He sent "to preach to the people" (Acts 10:38–42). The Holy Spirit is bestowed on those who hear that apostolic preaching, who are "baptized in the name of Jesus Christ," so that "everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name" (Acts 10:43–44, 48). For as He came by the water of His Baptism, even to the blood of His Passion, so the Spirit testifies to the truth with "the water and the blood" in the apostolic ministry of the Gospel (1 John 5:6–7). By these means, Christ Jesus speaks to us, that His joy may be in us and that our "joy may be full." For this purpose, He appointed the apostles to "go and bear fruit" in order to make known His divine friendship to us (John 15:11, 15–16).

#### THE ASCENSION OF OUR LORD

(We will observe it on Sunday, May12, 2024) Acts 1:1–11; Ephesians 1:15–23; Luke 24:44–53

The Ascended Lord Jesus Is with Us Always in His Church on Earth After He rose from the dead, the Lord Jesus presented Himself alive to the apostles, "appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God" (Acts 1:3). When He ascended to the right hand of the Father, He did not orphan His Church, but He fills all things in heaven and on earth and gives gifts to His disciples. Even now, through His Church, He continues "to do and teach" (Acts 1:1), preaching "repentance for the forgiveness of sins" (Luke 24:47), even "to the end of the earth" (Acts 1:8). Though the cloud hid Jesus from the sight of His disciples then, and He remains hidden from sight even now, He remains with His people through His Gospel and Sacraments. He comes to us by the word of His apostles, by the promise of His Father and by the power of the Holy Spirit, whom He pours out upon "the church, which is his body" (Eph. 1:22–23). In this Holy Christian Church, we bless God and worship Christ with joy, for in His Church He blesses us with forgiveness, lifts us up in His hands and seats us with Himself "in the heavenly places" (Eph. 1:20).

#### **PENTECOST**

(19 May 2024) Ezekiel 37:1–14; Acts 2:1–21; John 15:26–27; 16:4b–15

The Holy Spirit Brings the Dead to Life by the Righteousness of Christ. In returning to His Father by way of the cross and resurrection, Christ Jesus sends "the Helper" to His Church, that is, "the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father." The Spirit testifies of Christ and glorifies Him by taking what is His and declaring it to the world in the preaching of repentance for the forgiveness of sins (John 15:26; 16:7, 14). He convicts the world of sin by the word of the Law, He forgives sins and justifies sinners by the Word of the Gospel, and He bestows the faith that says "Amen" to this righteousness of God (John 16:8–11). Therefore, the Lord pours out His Spirit on the apostles, that by their preaching, the Spirit should be given to His entire Church. As the multitudes are gathered from all the nations by "this sound," that is, by the preaching of "the mighty works of God" in Christ Jesus, so does God the Father pour out the Spirit of His Son "on all flesh" (Acts 2:6, 11, 17). The Lord God breathes upon the slain, and so shall they live; for so the Lord has spoken, and He shall do it (Ezek. 37:5–14).

#### THE HOLY TRINITY

(26 May 2024) Isaiah 6:1–8; Acts 2:14a, 22–36; John 3:1–17

The Glory of the LORD of Hosts Shines in Mercy, Forgiveness and SalvationWhen Isaiah "saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up," he cried out and confessed that he was "a man of unclean lips." If even the holy angels cover their faces in the presence of "the King, the LORD of hosts," how can sinful humans stand before Him (Is. 6:1–5)? Yet, the glory of the Lord is saving grace, and with "a burning coal" from the altar the angel touched Isaiah's lips, removing his guilt (Is. 6:6–7). Likewise, from the altar of Christ's cross, by the ministry of the Gospel, "the whole earth is full of his glory" (Is. 6:3). For He was crucified, died and was buried, "according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God," and God "raised him up, loosing the pangs of death" (Acts 2:23–24). He "received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:33), and He raises up the fallen world by pouring out His life-giving Spirit upon sinners through His earthly Means of Grace. To give this saving gift, God sent His Son into the world, "that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16–17).

#### **April 2024 GOOD SHEPHERD WORSHIP STATS:**

<b>Fotal</b>	04/30/2024	60.5	26.5	87	\$7,136.81	\$1,452.01	\$8,713.82
04/28/2024	Sunday	79	0	79	\$2,770.00	\$0.00	\$2,770.00
04/21/2024	Sunday	56	61	117	\$858.00	\$850.00	\$1,708.00
04/14/2024	Sunday	53	16	69	\$854.81	\$462.00	\$1,316.81
04/07/2024	Sunday	54	29	83	\$2,654.00	\$140.01	\$2,919.01

The combined worship services' average attendance was: 87

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT: THE SPECIAL VOTERS AS-SEMBLY VOTED TO GO FORWARD WITH PURSUING THE CALL PROCESS FOR A DCE. We thank everyone for their love for the Lord and Good Shepherd, and especially thank the Lord Jesus for guiding us as we go forward, beseeching his grace and Spirit to lead us.

We will keep everyone updated every step on the way.

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

LCMS Stewardship Ministry – lcms.org/stewardship Newsletter Article – May 2024

More Than a Negative

Even if you've never had to testify in court, a thousand TV shows have made you familiar with the question, "Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth?" Why not just make people swear to tell the truth? Or make them promise not to lie?

Any parent who has ever had to interrogate a child about a broken cookie jar or a scuffle over a toy knows the answer. There are plenty of ways to try to get out of trouble without technically lying. You tell just enough of the truth to skate on by.

We often play the game of seeing how close we can get to sinning without technically going over the line.

But in our heart of hearts we know that this is not what God intended when He gave us the commandments. He's not giving us a merely negative rule and challenging us to just barely stay away from this or that. There is much more to each commandment than a prohibition. We shouldn't just avoid murdering people — we should be of service to our neighbor.

For each negative prohibition in the commandments there is a positive good that we are to cherish and protect. In the Eighth Commandment, that gift is the reputation of our neighbor and our relationship with him:

You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.

What does this mean? We should fear and love God so that we do not tell lies about our neighbor, betray him, slander him, or hurt his reputation, but defend him, speak well of him, and explain everything in the kindest way.



## **SPECIAL NEWS**

Saints in Christ.

Praise to our Lord Jesus Christ.

Thanks to the generous gifts of a couple of members, we have been gifted with a complete set of beautiful and liturgically and confessionally Lutheran worship banners for the church. The banners have arrived and are ready! They have arrived from Ad Crucem, the liturgical worship products manufacturer, and the hardware is installed, and the white ones (still easter season) are hanging on the church sanctuary. We are including pictures of the ones hanging in church, and pics of the others which will come out at there respective occasions and seasonal festivals.

They are impressive, and it is like being in the throne room of heaven where Christ I s worshipped as the Lamb of God. This Sunday we will have a special service including processional, and at the beginning a dedication/consecration of the sacred banners for use. Thank you to all who helped in the majestic, beauty enhancement of the House of God. We thank you for Blessing us, Lord Jesus. Amen.

Some sample colors are below. We have white, black, blue, purple, green, red, a type of pink, appropriate for the seasons of the church year. These are nine 9 feet in length.



## **CALENDAR: APRIL 2024**

*	<b>SUNDAYS</b>	, 5/	5, 5	/12,	5/19	, 5,	/26*	<b>WORSHIP</b>
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9:00 am	BIBLE STUDY/SUNDAY SCHOOL
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10:00 am FIRST SERVICE OF WORSHIP

11:30 PM SECOND SERVICE OF WORSHIP

\*\*SUNDAY, 5/26 WITH BIBLE STUDY AT 9:00 AM, AND ONE COMBINED WOR-SHIP AT 10:00 AM, FOLLOWED BY POTLUCK

\*WEDNESDAYS MATTHEW BIBLE STUDY at 10:15 am, on 5/1, 5/8, 5/15, 5/22, 5/29

#### \*THURSDAYS

5/2 Elders at 5:30

5/9 School Board at 5:30

5/16 Council at 5:30

#### \*SATURDAY

- 5/11 LWML 11 AM (SEE LWML NEWS INSIDE)
- 5/18 LADIES LUNCHEON AT 12:00 PM

SATURDAY, 5/18 VPK GRADUATION AT 10 AM WEDNESDAY, 5/15 AT 6:30 PM 8TH AND HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION.

# Remember, Jesus loves you