

First Hearts

Published by First Lutheran Church

October 2018

The Pastor as One Who Feeds and One Who Must Be Fed

Much is written and said about the Pastor as the Under-Shepherd of Christ's Flock, the congregation. A good definition that I found and copied for the word "pastor" is "to lead to pasture, set to grazing, cause to eat." The pastor's main function is to feed the flock. But, of course, he has many other functions as pastor. He also "teaches the flock" to recognize the voice of its true shepherd, the Lord Jesus Christ. In addition to feeding, the pastor also protects and guides and encourages and does countless other things as He serves as pastor and as the under-shepherd to the true Shepherd, Christ Jesus. In this letter, however, I would like to discuss the pastor as "feeder."

The pastor feeds the congregation – the flock of Christ's sheep – with the Word and with the Sacraments. He gives them good solid spiritual food to strengthen them as they struggle against the forces who rule in this sinful, corrupted world. That good solid food is the Word of God. There is no other food that will sustain Christ's sheep. The pastor gives them good solid teaching and preaching. He does not give them of himself – he gives them what has been given to him by God in Christ. The pastor gives good solid spiritual food that forgives sins and strengthens faith. And he gives the sheep Christ's wonderful sacraments – Holy Baptism and the Holy Supper.

Holy Baptism is not just plain water but it is God's Word of promise and God's Holy Triune Name added to the water. It is a life-giving water, full of grace – full of undeserved pardon. The benefits of baptism are "forgiveness of sins, rescue from death and the devil, and eternal salvation to all who believe this as the words and promises of God declare." (Small Catechism) Holy Baptism is not a one-time event, but it is a lifetime event. Each time the baptized one confesses his sins and receives absolution he is returned to his original baptized state – he is cleansed of sin. Each time the baptized one makes the sign of the cross, he remembers his baptism as the day he was received into the kingdom of God. The baptized one lives the baptismal life under the

cross of His Savior. The baptized one lives a baptismal life enlivened by repentance that consists of confession of sins and faith in the absolution given by God through the Pastor.

The baptized one hungers for God in Christ. The main way that this hunger is satiated is when the baptized one receives the body and blood of his Savior at the Lord's Holy Supper where he remembers the Lord's death until He comes again. The Words of Institution are said carefully by the Pastor as he repeats the very words Christ said on the night when He was betrayed. What precious words these are! What precious food this is! For Christ comes to us – physically and spiritually – in a mysterious manner ("mysterion" in the Greek – translated as "sacrament"). Christ comes to us – in, with, and under – the bread and the wine to be our God and our Shepherd and our Savior and our Redeemer and all of the other Names and offices that He occupies.

Word and Baptism and the Holy Supper are God's life-giving food. The pastor feeds the flock he has been given by God with these God-given things – not with philosophy or man's wisdom or his legacy or anything else. And as the pastor feeds his flock he must also be fed. I remember one of my pastors used to say quite often to those of us who were his elders, "Guys, if I don't have time to feed myself, I can't feed you." What he meant by that is this: Though the Pastor is constantly studying and working in the Scriptures to feed the flock, if he doesn't have time to read the Scriptures and other devotional material based on Scriptures – if the Pastor doesn't have time to read the Lutheran Confessions – if the Pastor doesn't have time to meditate and ponder the wonders and mysteries of God – if the Pastor doesn't have time to be fed, then he becomes empty – he won't have enough spiritual strength to feed the flock given to him by God.

So, First Lutheran, as you go about calling a man to be your next pastor, leave your pastor enough time in his busy schedule to be fed – to feed himself on the Word of God. I know, we all have our ideas about what our Pastor needs to do, what his first priority should be, what his second priority should be, etc.

But, truth of the matter is that his ordination and installation vows very well define what his priorities are. To do anything else would be to ask him to break his vows. We can demand so much of him that we don't leave him time to feed himself.

In addition to that, we should leave him enough time to be a person – to have time with his family – to exercise and take care of his body and health – to have time for entertainment and refreshing. This congregation has somewhere around 450 members and many boards and a school and ECE that has about 170 or so students with a staff of about 35. There are many meetings and events. There are worship services and Bible classes. There are hospital and nursing home and home visitations to be made. There are individual sessions of confession/absolution and counseling. There are conferences and circuit meetings to be attended. Yet there is only one pastor. I remember the wife of one our most recent pastors saying of her husband, "He is never at home."

These are some things for you to think about. Pastor burnout is very common these days. Pastoral health problems related to stress are very common also. Add to that the fact that as people of faith, we are engaged - as the Militant Church - in a spiritual battle against the devil and his demonic forces. The pastors of the Militant Church are its commanders in this spiritual battle. Even more stress.

Don't load him up before he comes. Don't load him up after he comes. Leave him some room. Give him some time. I know that we all want what we want, but when he comes he will be the pastor. Don't attempt to lead him. Support him as your God-given shepherd. He has been trained and equipped well. He is to lead you. He will be your God-given pastor and your under-shepherd of Christ. He will lead you gently – he will not break a bent reed or snuff out a smoldering wick. But, your pastor is flesh and blood. He has his limits.

Ponder these things in your heart. They are worthy of your pondering.

In Service to the One who is *flesh and blood and God* forever, even Christ Jesus our Lord,

Pastor Floyd Smithey

Worship This Month

I pledge allegiance to the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the faith for which it stands, one Savior eternal with mercy and grace for all.

October 7 – 20th Sunday after Pentecost: *Genesis 2:18-25; Hebrews 2:1-13; Mark 10:2-16.*

October 14 – 21st Sunday after Pentecost: *Amos 5:6-7, 10-15; Hebrews 3:12-19; Mark 10:17-22.*

October 21 – 22nd Sunday after Pentecost: *Ecclesiastes 5:10-20; Hebrews 4:1-13; Mark 10:23-31.*

October 28 – 23rd Sunday after Pentecost (Reformation Sunday): *Revelation 14:6-7; Romans 3:19-28; John 8:31-36.*

WEDNESDAY NIGHT SERVICES are discontinued. For those for whom Wednesday is their only opportunity to worship, there is Wednesday morning chapel at 8:30. Pastor Smithey will be available on most Wednesdays to give you absolution and Lord's Supper after chapel service has ended should you desire it.

Prayer List

OUR PRAYER LIST SHOULD INCLUDE:

Serving Our Country: Brett Anthonijs, Robert Boatman, Isaac Davis, Chad Kaiser, Adam Smith, Jeff Stone, Neil Whitehead

Other Prayer Requests:

MEMBERS WITH SICKNESS OR BURDENS:

Brion Bissell (needs kidney) Pastor & Mary Schmidt
Margot Bridges (homebound) Carl Testerman (cancer)
Gene Franklin Judy Testerman (cancer)
Gladys Frankenberg (homebound) The Varner family
Pat Hinds Don & Carolyn Weaver
Karla Hood Kris Weaver
Mike & Mary Jones Harold & Katherine Whitaker (homebound)
Dan Jordan (pulmonary embolisms) Mary Ann Wheat
Don & Sandy Linde Marilyn Wing (homebound)
Sharon Mueller

NON-MEMBERS WITH SICKNESS OR BURDENS:

Jonathan Campbell (Diane Baum's co-worker's brother) fighting infection after an appendectomy to remove his ruptured appendix
Steven Dew (Carolyn Weaver's friend)
Bill Flynn (Sharon Mueller's brother), whose cancer has returned
Ken Hamilton (father of Anna Marie Hamilton, UT student from Alabama)

Judy Hamrick (Shirley Watson's neighbor) with a tumor that is growing
 JoAnn Harbaugh (Kathleen Holliday's mother)
 Cheryl Hooks (Diane Baum's friend) undergoing months of chemotherapy after removal of part of her colon and intestines due to cancer
 Clara Janes (Kirk Tower's mother)
 Helen Linderfelt (Lynda Graves' friend)
 Joyce Lipscomb (Rick Elmore's friend)
 Annette Lotivio (Marc Blais's friend) with pancreatic cancer
 Joanne Mattingly
 Joan Mincey (Shirley Watson's friend) with stage 4 COPD and breast cancer
 Karen Nall
 Tom O'Brien (Marissa Wilson's co-worker's husband) with prostate cancer
 Travis Parrott (the Wolford's son-in-law) needing a kidney transplant
 Kallee Pittenger (mother of one of our 3rd grade students), having chemotherapy for breast cancer
 Tom Roberts (Sara's grandfather) with Alzheimer's
 Daniel Rule (the Slifkas' friend) suffering from RSD
 Kristy Shirk (Lynda Graves' friend) with cancer of the sinuses
 Barbara Thornton (Janice Kaiser's relative)
 Sam and Alex Weaver

Other News and Happenings

STEWARDSHIP – Why do we give? Is it simply because God commands us to? Or is there more to it? To be sure, the instruction and Word of God in the Bible says we should give, and this is sufficient to encourage us to give (Luke 6:38; Acts 20:35; 1 Cor. 16:2; 2 Cor. 8:7; Gal 6:6).

But there's more to it than just obligation. We're not just trying to fulfill a work of the Law. We are bearing fruits of the Spirit given to us by our Father in heaven through His Son our Lord Jesus Christ. In other words, we're not just doing what our Father said, we're also doing what He did.

Children emulate their parents. When they grow up they often carry many of the same mannerisms and characteristics as their parents, but there is more to it than that. Children copy their parents even on a more mundane level. They watch how their parents cross their legs, how they fold their hands, how they stand and sit and walk, how they do and say most everything.

And children try to copy it, which can be quite humorous when parents wish they wouldn't. It can be uncomfortable and embarrassing if a child copies or repeats something less than polite that they learned from a parent. Sitcoms thrive on these situations. It only happens because children emulate their parents because they want to be like them.

We are the children of God, by grace, through faith. In Holy Baptism, God the Father declares of us what He declared of Jesus at His Baptism in the Jordan: "You are my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." God the Father claims us as His own. He takes away all our sins, and in exchange He gives us His righteousness, His purity, His holiness, and His Spirit, by which we cry out, "Abba, Father."

We are born again, born from above, born of water and the Spirit, to a new life in Christ as His children. We are sons of God in Christ, through Baptism. And since we are sons, we are heirs – heirs who share in the glory of the Son of God. The inheritance is ours because of the Father's grace and mercy, His generosity in sending His Son in time to save us for all eternity.

And this is why we give generously of our income to the work of the church. We don't do this simply because He has commanded us so to do; it is because we, as His children by grace, want to emulate His generosity in our own lives. He is our Father; we are His children. And children want to be like their parents.

BOARD OF STEWARDSHIP MEETING is scheduled for 7:00 on Tuesday, October 2.

YOUTH CONFIRMATION SUNDAY will be Sunday, November 4. A public examination will be held at a time yet to be determined on Saturday, November 3, in the Meeting Room. Lunch and celebratory cake will be served after worship on Sunday, the 4th.

BOARD OF ELDERS MEETING is scheduled for 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, October 9.

MISSION SERVE will be at 9:00 a.m. on Saturday, October 13.

LWML SUNDAY – On Sunday, October 14, we will be celebrating LWML Sunday. The Lutheran Women's Missionary League is an official auxiliary group for the LCMS. All women who are members of the Missouri Synod are automatically members! The LWML exists to support women to grow in Christ while enjoying fellowship and serving others. Please join us

during church on the 14th to learn more about this organization and how you can get involved!

DAY SCHOOL BOARD MEETING is 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, October 16.

55 ALIVE – 55 Alive will meet on **THURSDAY, OCTOBER 18TH** instead of the 11th because school has fall break the 2nd week in October. We are happy to have our new interim principal, Jessie Irwin, be our presenter. She is the daughter of a Lutheran school teacher and graduate of First Lutheran School. She is excited about God's plan for FLS and the school's potential as a mission. A luncheon will be served at 12:00 noon at \$7.00/ person. Looking forward to seeing you there!

BOARD OF TRUSTEES meeting and workday at 9:00 a.m. on Saturday, October 20.

REFORMATION SUNDAY will be observed on October 28.

BUY GROCERIES AND SUPPORT OUR SCHOOL – It's as easy as linking your shopper card online or speaking to the cashier.

Kroger: (Kroger.com/account/communityrewards) code PN664

Food City: (foodcity.com/schoolbucks) code 40424

Ingles: (ingles-markets.com/toolsforschools-link) code 11634

Amazon: (smile.amazon.com) code 62-0553429

CHOIR – We have begun a new year of singing praise to our Lord, and enjoying the fellowship and camaraderie of fellow choir members. We would love to have you join us! You do not need to be able to read music. You will learn a lot about yourself and about the gifts God has given you. We've got a great year planned. It's just about an hour a week at 7:15 on Wednesday evenings. Hope we see you then!

THE HANDBELL CHOIR is looking for two new ringers this fall. Please see Wayne for details. This is a real opportunity to use your talent in service to God and his children. We will help you learn all the details so don't worry about your musical skills. Wednesday evening and Sunday morning rehearsal times available.

Wayne Poore

YOUTH CATECHISM CLASS (Confirmation) has begun and will meet every week unless otherwise notified. The classes will begin at 12:45 pm and last until 3:00 pm. We will study Luther's Small Catechism. Our devotional materials will come from Higher Things Magazines. Parents please pick up your children at 3:00 pm at the front door which is on Wells Street (The newly graveled parking lot is on Wells Street.) That way I will know when all the youth have been picked up, so that I can leave too.

Thanks

Pastor Smithey

School News and Happenings

CALENDAR

2 – ECE closing at 5:30 p.m.

3 – Flu vaccine

5 – No UniDay: Theme - Superhero Day

8-12 – Fall Break (ECE & SS open 8-10, closed

11-12)

15-19 – Parent Teacher Conferences

19 – No UniDay: Theme - State Spirit

21 – ECE sings at FLC

31 – Reformation Parties K-8, ECE Reformation & Costume Party

31 – 8th Grade Assembly

NEWS FROM FIRST LUTHERAN SCHOOL

Dear Friends,

This month the kindness is overflowing at First Lutheran School. What is perhaps most impressive is how the First Lutheran students and their families not only speak of Christ's love, but model it as well.

Our preschool held a Trike-a-thon, which was a great success, raising over \$1,100 for St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. One afternoon, I watched our 8th Graders spend their valuable free time playing games outside and looking for bugs with their Kindergarten Buddies. Two of our varsity volleyball players used American Sign Language to introduce themselves to the volleyball team from the Tennessee School for the Deaf. This act of kindness was not prompted by coaches or teachers; instead, it simply came from a place of love. There have been plenty of other acts of kindness: holding a door, praying for the people they don't even know, or helping a classmate on a persnickety math problem. These little acts are the moments we treasure at First Lutheran. They are what make us different. They

show that Christ's love is in this place.

One of the highlights of the month was Grandparents' Day. Our school was bursting at the seams with grandparents, friends, and family coming together wanting to be a part of this special day. Students beamed up at their guests, thrilled to have them at their school. In the classrooms, students honored their elders giving gifts, reading stories, and asking questions. I watched 3rd and 4th grade students serve their guests refreshments before serving themselves. Through it all, the love and respect shown from one generation to another demonstrated the Holy Spirit working in the hearts of all who were there.

Though the source has been debated, I always loved the quote attributed to St Francis of Assisi, "Preach the gospel always, if necessary use words." Think for a moment about how much better the world would be if we took that message to heart, if we acted like Christians rather than just talked like it. Think about the example we could set not just for our family or our students, but for strangers and unbelievers. First Lutheran is a place where that can happen, where words and actions come together, and Christ's love grows.

In His Service

Jessie Irwin, Interim Principal

20 – Wayne & Carla Poore
22 – Wil & Lisa Wade
24 – Chuck & Diane Baum
28 – Carl & Julie Cloninger

DEADLINE FOR THE NOVEMBER NEWSLETTER IS FRIDAY, OCTOBER 19

Floyd P. Smithey, Associate Pastor; Ceci Steele, Editor.

Worship Services are held Sundays at 10:30 a.m.
Children's Sunday School and Adult Bible Classes are held on Sundays at 9:15 a.m.

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Birthdays and Anniversaries

BIRTHDAYS

1 – Marc Blais, Aven Flanigan
2 – Larry Hood, David Rodenbeck
4 – Stephanie Hamilton
7 – Rick Breeden, Terrie Mahs
9 – Susan Haun
16 – Pat Wrinkle
18 – Debbie Fettig, Christopher Yeatts
19 – Sydney Reed
20 – Keith Denton, Lindsey Hofman, Sherry Wheat
21 – Joe Lukens, Barry Lyke, Josie & Layla Zimmer
24 – Pat Baxmann, Harold Whitaker
30 – Lindsey Garst, Peter Garst

ANNIVERSARIES

2 – Larry & Kelly Miller
3 – Larry & Karla Hood
9 – Ron & Terrie Mahs
15 – Jerry & Marilyn Wing
18 – Scott & Jennifer Sandie

October 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 6:00 New Testament Books	2 7:00 Board of Stewardship	3 8:30 <i>School Chapel</i> 5:45 Lutheran Ring. Rehears. 7:00 Choir Rehearsal	4	5	6
7 8:45 First Bells Rehearsal 9:00 Fellowship 9:15 SS & Bible Classes 10:30 Worship Service 12:45 Confirmation Class	8 9:30 Quilting 6:00 New Testament Books	9 7:00 Board of Elders	10 8:30 <i>School Chapel</i> 5:45 Lutheran Ring. Rehears. 7:00 Choir Rehearsal	11	12	13 9:00 Mission Serve
14 LWML SUNDAY 8:45 First Bells Rehearsal 9:00 Fellowship 9:15 SS & Bible Classes 10:30 Worship Service 12:45 Confirmation Class	15 6:00 New Testament Books	16 6:00 <i>Day School Board</i>	17 8:30 <i>School Chapel</i> 5:45 Lutheran Ring. Rehears. 7:00 Choir Rehearsal	18 12:00 55 Alive	19 DEADLINE FOR NOV. NEWSLETTER	20 9:00 Workday
21 MITEBOX SUNDAY 8:45 First Bells Rehearsal 9:00 Fellowship 9:15 SS & Bible Classes 10:30 Worship: <i>ECE Choir</i> 12:45 Confirmation Class	22 9:30 Quilting 6:00 New Testament Books	23	24 <i>Reformation Day</i> 8:30 <i>School Chapel</i> 5:45 Lutheran Ring. Rehears. 7:00 Choir Rehearsal	25	26	27
28 REFORMATION SUNDAY 8:45 First Bells Rehearsal 9:00 Fellowship 9:15 SS & Bible Classes 10:30 Worship Service 12:45 Confirmation Class	29 6:00 New Testament Books	30	31 8:30 <i>School Chapel</i> 5:45 Lutheran Ring. Rehears. 7:00 Choir Rehearsal			