

St. Paul's Epistle

September 2019



September Hymn of the Month

546: O Jesus So Sweet, O Jesus So Mild

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Our hymn for the month of September is a summary of the life and work of our Savior. The simple melody we sing is carried along by an organ setting composed by Johann Sebastian Bach. In the first verse, we sing of the miracle of Jesus' incarnation. The Second Person of the Trinity took on human flesh and lay, sweet and mild in a manger. **"But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law"**. (Galatians 4:4) In verse two we sing of Christ's death on the cross which pays our ransom. By faith in Christ, we are reconciled to the Father. We do not live in fear of God's righteous wrath. By God's grace we behold him as sweet and mild in the person of Christ. **"God sent forth his Son...to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons."** (Galatians 4:4-5) In the third verse, bringing the hymn to a close, we sing of the overwhelming joy which fills the earth as a result of Christ's saving work for us. **"We rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation."** (Romans 5:11) O Jesus so sweet, O Jesus so mild, keep us faithful, strong, and true unto life everlasting. Amen.

Yours in Christ Jesus,
Vicar Anthony

1. O Jesus so sweet, O Jesus so mild!
For sinners You became a child.
You came from heaven down to earth
In human flesh through human birth
O Jesus so sweet, O Jesus so mild!

2. O Jesus so sweet, O Jesus so mild!
With God we now are reconciled.
You have for all the ransom paid,
Your Father's righteous anger stayed.
O Jesus so sweet, O Jesus so mild!

3. O Jesus so sweet, O Jesus so mild!
Joy fills the world which sin defiled
What e'er we have belongs to You;
O keep us faithful, strong, and true.
O Jesus so sweet, O Jesus so mild!



Don't forget! Sunday, September 1, our worship time changes back to 10:45 a.m. Sunday School begins on September 8 at 9:30 a.m.

Those Serving Our Church: September, October, November 2019

September: Elder ~ Steve Rutkowski Altar: Lori Boquist and Heidi Swenson

Greeters: 1st: Dave & Rebecca Wright 8th: Bud and Norma Blake 15th: Leonard and Stephanie Morrison 22nd: Steve & Mary Bacon 29th: George and Jeanette Aitchison

October: Elder ~ Richard Christie Altar: Kristen Wold and Catherine Crawford

Greeters: 6th: Rick and Robbie Leerssen 13th: Ken and Amber Leerssen 20th: Randy and Janice Leerssen 27th: Tony and Sue Lucek

November: Elder~ Ken Leerssen Altar: Susan Lucek and Michelle Hopkins

Greeters: 3rd: John and Michelle Hopkins 10th: Deb Larson 17th: RaNae Whitbeck and Cindy Story 24th: Bruce and Shirley Schmidt



All ladies of the congregation are welcome for Bible Study each Thursday morning at 9:00 a.m. We're starting a new study titled, "Bless These Lips", by Sharla Fritz..

September 29—Mission Sunday

Pastor Bernie Lutz will be here to inform us of his work with the Lutheran Heritage Foundation in South Sudan and leading an informational Bible Study following worship that morning.



**MISSION
SUNDAY**

September Birthdays

A very happy birthday to these members celebrating their special day!

September 2: Wren Swenson

16th: Rick Leerssen

3rd: Karen Hedtke

20th: Linda Bacon

6th: John Hopkins

21st: Garrett Koenig

8th: Kristen Wold

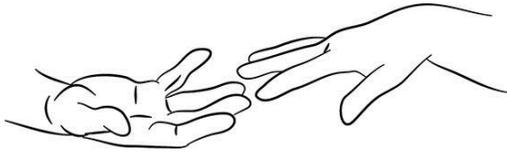
9th: Sue Hewitt and Kyle Morrison

13th: Cortney Christie

14th: Wendy Johnson

15th: Dolores Boquist and Iverne Kuryla





SOMEONE *You Know*

Someone you know doesn't go to church anymore.

Someone you know just found out they have cancer.

Someone you know is going through tough times and is feeling depressed.

Someone you know just moved into your neighborhood.

Someone you know claims they are "spiritual, but not religious" and aren't really into churches.

Someone you know isn't a Christian.

We all know someone who either isn't connected to church or doesn't believe in Jesus as their Savior at all. Someone you know needs peace and forgiveness in their life - the peace that we have, right now, through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. So how do we approach them? It seems a little scary! What if they say "no" - what if they chase me off - what if I mess up?

It has been said that only 25% of LCMS congregations intentionally focus their ministry beyond the current membership. Well, starting in October, this is about to change - at least in the Minnesota North District.

Matthew 7:7-8 says "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened."

At the beginning of each month, all the churches in the MN North District are going to pray for "Someone You Know" who doesn't go to church or isn't a Christian. We are going to pray for an opportunity to talk with them about Jesus, or invite them to church with us. Not only that, we are going to give you some tips on how to reach out to them. In addition, we are going to give your church a link to a 3 minute video, featuring church leaders within our MN North District, teaching us how to reach out with the Gospel.

After we pray - we are going to look for the opportunity. God will give it to us! Someone you know needs to hear about Jesus - and God is going to give us the opportunity to tell them the best news of all - that God loves and forgives them! Let's do this MN North District! Let's see how the Holy Spirit will work as you reach out to "Someone You Know."

In the strong name of Jesus! *Rev. Monte Meyer*

Sunday School Classes start Sunday, **September 8 at 9:30 a.m.** All kids ages 4 through 6th grade are encouraged to join us each Sunday morning for an hour of Bible stories, crafts and games!





A Deep Wound

For this month's newsletter I wanted to share a recent blog post by LCMS Pastor Bill Cwirla regarding the recent mass shootings in our country. He has some very wise words to share, along with the hope that we have in Christ Jesus. It is my hope and prayer that this article will help to bring some clarity and comfort to you in light of these recent tragedies. God's peace be with you. PQ

Posted on [August 5, 2019](#)

Early Sunday morning, after my morning prayers, I always look at the intercessions of the church for the divine service for that day to add any last minute petitions. As I was doing so yesterday, I saw a news notification for yet another mass shooting, this time in Dayton, Ohio. The day before had been El Paso, Texas. The week before was Gilroy, California.

I'm sad. I'm weary. I'm angry. I'm sickened. How long, O Lord? How long?

The first mass shooting during my tenure as a pastor was Columbine High School, April 20, 1999. Fifteen souls, twenty-four injured. The previous large-scale mass shooting was before my ordination, at a Luby's diner in Killeen, Texas – twenty-four souls, twenty-seven injured in 1991. There were other incidents in-between those two. Every life is sacred, precious to the Lord, and I don't wish to discount any of them. Since Columbine, there have been sixteen large-scale mass shootings, including Las Vegas, Nevada, October 1, 2017 that resulted in fifty-nine deaths.

How long, O Lord? How long?

We call these events "tragedies," and they are tragedies, but that only scratches the surface. The wound goes much deeper. These are tragedies of our community, our humanity, our soul. They are an outrage against our humanity, manifestations of great, dark evil, a glimpse into the hellish Abyss of godless nothingness. The wound runs deep.

I'm neither a sociologist or a psychologist. I have nothing to add about the social or psychological causes of mass violence. We want to know why, to understand at some level why someone would pick up a gun and randomly kill people in a school, a mall, a concert, a synogogue or church. Various factors are raised: gun laws and the easy access to powerful weapons, mental illness, isolation, the breakdown of family, the absence of fathers, the callous disregard for human life, the marginalizing of religion in American life, the hate-filled and divisive rhetoric of our public discourse, our bigotry, hatred, and prejudice, the anonymity of social media that inflames our insecurities and insanities.

All of these are certainly part of the puzzle. There is the deep darkness, the despair and death, that threatens to draw our being into a black hole of darkness and death. Some wander too close to the abyss and the dark forces of evil – the powers, the principalities, the spiritual forces of darkness – suck them into the depths of despair ending in homicide and suicide. This isn't to shift the blame, but to say that blame is never the solution. We all contend with this darkness within, this condition we call "Sin," the origin of our hatred, our pride, our arrogance, our lust, our murders, adulteries, greed, anger. We all contend with it, and if we say we don't, we are kidding ourselves and the truth is not in us.

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There is One who came as Light in the darkness, as Life in death – the carpenter, the rabbi, the Lamb, the Shepherd, the Savior. Jesus came to bring shalom – peace – to our warring madness. He came to walk the dark valley of Death, to shepherd our humanity through death to life, to seek and save us in our lostness. He came to be our Sin, and to absorb our sins. He came as humanity to absorb our inhumanity. In return, we beat Him, spit on Him, killed Him. Humanity, we all together, did that. And He took it all, every last blow of the hammer to the nail. He took into His perfect Life, He forgave it and buried it all deep in His grave in order to lift us up out of this present darkness and death to a new way, a new life, a new hope. He raised up our humanity from the depths of Death and He glorified it in the heights of heaven where He reigns over all things and fills all in all.

Where is God? we ask. Where is He when the bullets fly and children cower in fear and people are gunned down where they thought they were safe. Where is He? Why doesn't He do something? He is there, right here, with us, in our midst, filling all in all with His reconciling, redeeming, raising-up-from-the-dead presence. He doesn't deflect bullets. He doesn't supply an invisible shield around the innocent. He doesn't strike the shooter dead. He covers it all with grace and reconciles all things in His death. Those bullets that pierced so many didn't stop with their victims. They found their final resting place in the wounds of Jesus and were buried in His hands and feet and side.

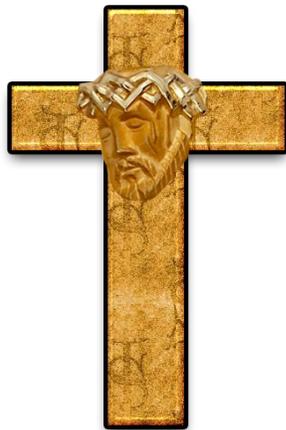
The wound is deep, but the wounds of Christ are deeper. Deeper than the darkness and the death. Deeper than our warring madness. Deeper than our Sin. "By His wounds, we are healed."

Dearly beloved, you may hear people say at times like this, "Cease with your praying! Your prayers don't amount to anything. We need action." Please don't ever stop praying. Pray without ceasing, now more than ever. Pray before you do anything and as you're doing something. The prayer of a righteous person is precious to God and heard by Him. It is your priestly duty to pray.

Remember that our struggle is not against flesh and blood – our fellow humanity – but against the rulers, authorities, and powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realm. Our battle is a spiritual one. Yes, there are politics and laws to consider. Yes, there are sociology and psychology to explain. But the deep battle is spiritual, and the only weapon you have, and need, is the Word of God wielded in prayer (Ephesians 6:10-18). Pray in words and in silence.

May the peace of God that surpasses our understanding keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus, our Lord. Amen.

Rev. Bill Cwirla, Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Hacienda Heights, California



*if God is for us,
who can be
against us?*
ROMANS 8:31