

For All The Saints



*The Epistle of St. Paul Lutheran Church, The Grove, Texas
July 2021*

Dear Fellow Redeemed:

In this month in which we celebrate again our God given freedoms as one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all, I would like to share the following thoughts with you from our Bible Study of a few days ago.

The beautiful women in my life and I had to agree that the world in which we live seems to be changing faster than ever before. In the past twenty-five years, there has been huge change – politically, economically and technologically – compounded by this Covid 19 pandemic that is still having quite the impact on our lives as it seems to be the excuse for much of what is taking place. As I often say, I am glad I am a short timer. As you have read these past couple of sentences, you may have noticed that I left out one very important aspect of our life as a child of God – the spiritual. The spiritual climate in our great land, and in our world is nothing to write home about right now. So the question needs to be asked, as least I think it needs to be asked, how can we change the spiritual climate of our family, our church family, our community, our state, our nation, and ultimately our world?

May I suggest that we read Proverbs 14:25-35, especially verse 34 which says:

*³⁴ Righteousness exalts a nation,
but sin is a reproach to any people.*

In other words, Sin destroys a nation. Righteousness exalts a nation.

What does this righteousness look like?

1. Peace with God

Righteousness is ours as we are at peace with God. St. Paul says in Romans 5:1, *Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.* This peace with God makes us confident as we go about His work in the places He places us and the opportunities He gives to us to serve Him as we serve others.

2. Peace with others

If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. (Romans 12:18) Right(eous) relationships with others are characterized by righteous words and actions. First, our words are to be truthful rather than deceitful for *A truthful witness saves lives, but one who breathes out lies is deceitful.* (Proverbs 14:25).

Second, our actions are to display a desire for the well-being of others. Be patient rather than quick-tempered. We read in Proverbs 14:29, *Whoever is slow to anger has great understanding, but he who has a hasty temper exalts folly.* Be kind to those in need. We read in Proverbs 14:31, *Whoever oppresses a poor man insults his Maker, but he who is generous to the needy honors him.*

3. Peace with ourselves

Righteousness involves a right relationship with ourselves. You can know *peace*. We read in Proverbs 14:30, *A tranquil heart gives life to the flesh, but envy makes the bones rot.* Anger, lack of forgiveness, envy and jealousy can damage your physical body. Getting rid of the bad stuff in your life and having a *tranquil heart*, a heart at peace, is good for your health.

Ultimately, this *peace* comes from being content about both the present and the future. Proverbs 4:32 reminds us that *the righteous finds refuge even in his death.* As this portion of Scripture makes very clear, for those who fear the Lord (have a proper respect for the Lord), He is our refuge in the present (v.26) and the future (v.32b).

In the fear of the Lord one has strong confidence, and his children will have a refuge.

(Proverbs 4:26)

. . . the righteous finds refuge in his death. (Proverbs 4:32b)

Prayer:

Lord, I pray that on all levels that this great land, whose independence we celebrate this month, will turn back to You, and that Your name will be respected and confessed. In the powerful name of Jesus I pray. Amen!

In HIS service and yours,

Pastor Heckmann
Hebrews 13:20-21

BIBLE STUDY REMINDERS, Just one more time!

A re-energized small group Bible Study meets on the second Sunday of the month. They are studying a book dealing with **Spiritual Warfare** as it plays out in our lives, in our homes, in our church, and in the lives of those we love. The book is entitled "**I Am Not Afraid: Demon Possession and Spiritual Warfare.**" You are all invited to join us on July 11th at 5:00 p.m. in the Multipurpose Room in the Family Activity Center. Let me know you are coming and I'll get you a book.

Another new study group has a desire to dive more deeply into the Word of God. They ventured out to start a new group. (Might I add that this has been the idea behind this whole Cell Group ministry since we came, namely to start more and more study groups along the way.) Anyway, this new group is studying "**How to Read the Bible with Understanding**". Reading the Bible with understanding is not about merely learning the history of God's people or the storyline of great literature. Instead, God desires readers to understand the facts in light of His salvation plan for the whole world. This group will gather next on the 15th of August beginning at 5:00 p.m. (Their usual meeting date in July was taken by the Picnic, thus the change.) The promise is to have a very meaningful study of how to study the Word of God, to have time building relationships with others, and to have you on your way by 7:30 p.m. so that your family can get ready for the events of the new work and school week.

The third new study group that has started in the past few weeks is made up of some of our newer members who just finished Adult Confirmation Class and wanted to keep studying in a planned and systematic way. They chose a study entitled, "**Clearly Christian: Following Jesus in this Age of Confusion**". As I write this I have just finished reading the first chapter and it hits the nail on the head of what we are living right now. The bottom line is that in this age of counterfeits and fakes, the world desperately needs clear Christianity: the real love and forgiveness of God, who is the Savior for real sinners. This book would be a good study for anyone, especially those who have children, who live in this confusing world where truth and lies are all mixed into one deadly soup. This study group is going to meet once a month on the fourth Tuesday of each month, beginning at 6:00 p.m. to study together. They will meet next on June 22nd at James and Faye Morrow's home.

Add to that yet another new study that meets each Wednesday evening beginning at 6:30 p.m. They have chosen to study a book entitled “**Creedal Apologetics: Learning to Use the Apostles’ Creed to Defend and Proclaim the Christian Faith.**” It is a fancy sounding name, but bottom line, this book leads us to consider how we can use the much loved, and well-known Apostles’ Creed to stay on topic and bring out the essentials of the faith in a concise and graceful manner as we share our faith with others. In this study, the Apostles’ Creed, is dusted off, polished up, and sharpened so that today’s Christians can defend and proclaim the great gospel of Jesus Christ to a world in desperate need of the forgiveness of sins and new life in his name. The forward was even written by one of our newer family members, Dr. Eric Rachut. What a small world.

Add to that another group of folks who are going to begin reading the book “**The Pursuit of God**” by A.W. Tozer. To give you a thumbnail of this book, “As the deer panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God.” This thirst for an intimate relationship with God, claims A.W. Tozer, is not for a select few, but should be the experience of every follower of Christ. Here is a wonderful study of the inner life by a heart thirsting after God. Here is a book for every child of God, pastor, missionary, and Christian. It deals with the deep things of God and the riches of His grace. In “**The Pursuit of God**”, Tozer sheds light on the path to a closer walk with God.

Add to that the fact that it is time to begin meeting together as a CLASSICS group and I can say this is an exciting time in the devotional and Bible study life of St. Paul Lutheran Church, The Grove.

And finally, because this is already way too long, we share with you some initial plans for this Fall and Wednesday evening Bible studies for the ladies. It has been discovered that one study option is not meeting the needs and the learning styles of many of our ladies. With that in mind we are pondering offering two Ladies Evening Bible Studies each Wednesday evening once school begins again. Like I said, I don’t know what that looks like yet, but the gears are turning.

So, even though it had seemed, to me anyway, as if this part of the ministry had come to a standstill in regard to what we could do together, the Holy Spirit has opened some incredible doors for us to continue leading down this path of wanting more Bible Study opportunities and more participation in group Bible Study in this family of faith we call St. Paul Lutheran Church, The Grove.

Thanks for hanging in there with me during this long article. I look forward to seeing each of you in one of these studies, or in another one you would like to suggest.

FELLOWSHIP OPPORTUNITY – FRIDAY FUN

Each Friday night the members of our congregation and community have the opportunity to spend time in fellowship and relationship building in this world that is separating us further and further from each other. We gather at the church every Friday evening from 5:30-7:30 p.m. for a devotion and for a time of eating (bring your own supper) hanging out, talking, and playing games. We would love for you to join us on the days that work for you and/or your family. Come when you want and leave when you want. This is open to ANYONE. We look forward to seeing you whenever you are able to come. Bring snacks or dinner for your family if you would like, or just come for this time of getting to know each other better. **Everyone is invited.**

CLASSICS

It is time to begin meeting again as a CLASSICS group. People are asking when we are going to get back together and we have decided it is time. Since our custom has always been to not meet in June and July, we will take the month of July off still and meet again on August 19th beginning at 10:00 a.m. To answer an important question, you don't have to be a certain age to get in. Right now our age range is from the 60's to 90 plus. If you fit anywhere in between there, or if you are younger or older, you are invited. As part of this time together we always enjoy the Noon meal. Since Covid 19 shut us down before we could finish the study of the Catechism, I propose that we just start up where we left off. That would mean we would begin with the third section of our study of Holy Communion, dealing with the Power of the Sacrament. That would then be the end of the Catechism and we would need to pick what to study next, so begin thinking and bring your ideas.

PERMANENT LOGIN INFORMATION FOR LIVE STREAMED SERVICES ON VARIOUS PLATFORMS

FaceBook Live at <https://www.facebook.com/St-Paul-Lutheran-Church-The-Grove-109288640704387/> This is an updated address to get you there in case you are not already on FaceBook and want to watch the service without having to sign up for FaceBook.

YouTube permanent address <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCCXYIcwW-U5ZaF5m2vYn8vw>

Vimeo on our Website address <http://www.stpaulthegrove.org> Then click on the Vimeo button, the little "V" at the top right hand corner of the page and you will be hooked up for the live stream of the service. You can also go there to watch archived services from the past as well.

SAVE THE DATE:
Church Picnic
Third Sunday of July
July 18, 2021 – All Day Long
It will be an in-person event

ARCHIVED SERMONS ON THE WEB

Just to remind you, our services and sermons are posted on the web each week. Go to www.stpaulthegrove.org, click "Connect", click "Vimeo", and then click on the sermon you would like to see. If you have questions, please ask.

Rebekah's Christian Preschool

is now enrolling for Fall!

Small, Christian learning environment in Temple. The first day of class will be August 9, 2021. There are only 4 openings currently available for children ages 2-5*.

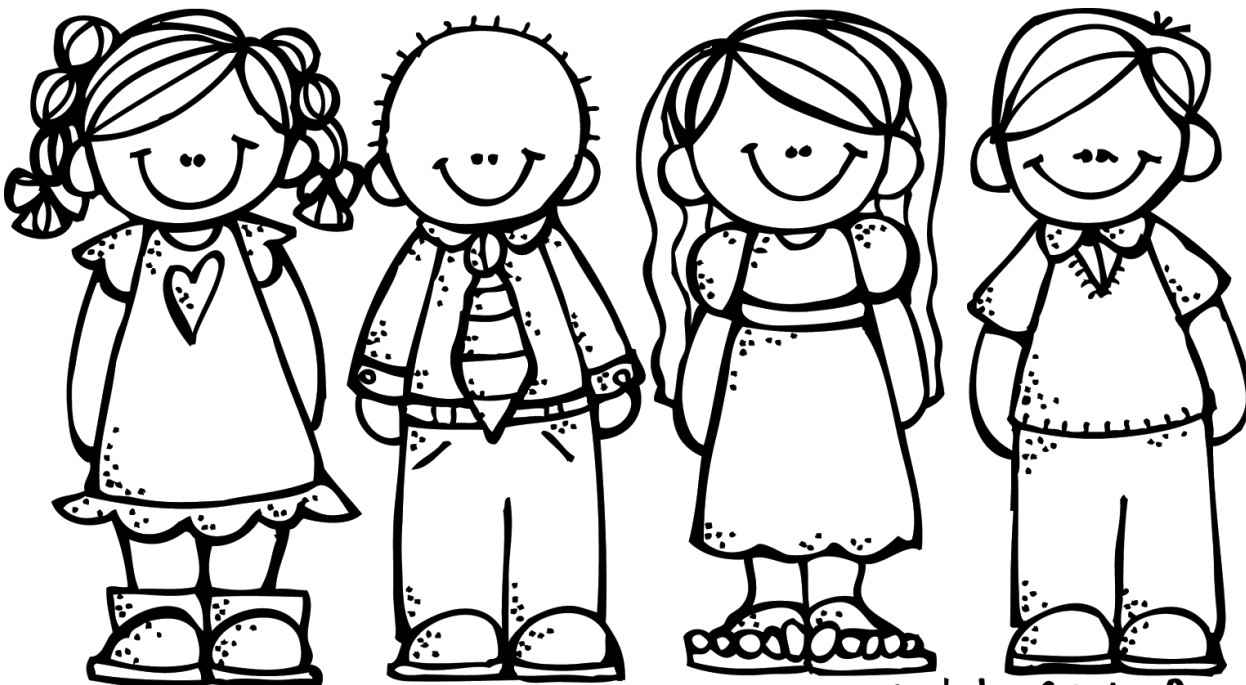
If you're interested, please give me a call to get more information and schedule a tour.

Rebekah Munz, MEd, LPC

254-913-8047

Rebekahscps2408@gmail.com

*Child must be potty-trained



♥ teach me to walk in the light of His love ©nim



LWML

Lutheran Women *in Mission*

by: Amy Velasquez

Next LWML Bible Study/Social:

Our next Bible Study/Social is on July 20th at 6:30 p.m. in the multi-purpose room. Bible study will be "Therefore..." by Sharon Rapp from the Summer Quarterly page 18. All our meetings are back to being in person and we continue to practice social distancing. These socials are a wonderful way for us ladies to study the Lord's Word, share a meal and have fellowship time with each other. If it has been a while since you have attended, please consider joining us, we miss you! If you have never attended and are interested, know that you are welcome and feel free to attend!

Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain. (1 Corinthians 15:58)

July Mission Project:

The mission project for July is school supply kits for Orphan Grain Train. We lovingly request donations of the following items:

Backpacks (drawstring athletic bags or homemade bags are acceptable),
Spiral Notebooks,
Pencils,
Pens,
Construction Paper,
Crayons (24 count),
Rulers,
Glue Sticks,
Scissors,
Erasers,
Colored Pencils (12 count) and
Pencil Sharpeners.

If you feel led to donate, there will be a box available in the Parish Hall where you can place the items.



Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God (Hebrews 12:1-2)



Church Picnic

Sunday, July 18th

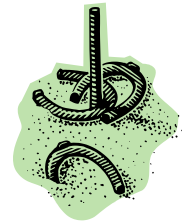


Our Annual Church Picnic will be held Sunday, July 18th. The event will last all day, beginning with Bible Class (9:00 a.m.) and Worship (10:15 a.m.) and concluding late into the evening when everything is picked up and put back where it belongs.

You are invited to wear your play clothes to church.

There will be activities for everyone, so be sure to invite your family and friends to join you and us on that day.

We need your help to make the day fun for everyone. There are sign-up sheets in the Narthex for the children's area, setting up, kitchen help, clean-up and the concession stand to help make the picnic run smoothly. Prayerfully consider where you may want to serve. If everyone helps a little during the day that would be awesome!!!!



*Noon Meal – Bar-B-Q brisket and sausage and all the trimmings. A free will donation jar will be on the table for you to contribute to cover the expenses.

An Afternoon filled with activities

Concession Stand – selling ice cream, sodas, water, snowcones

Children's Area - fish pond, train ride, waterslide (adults may participate also), kiddie pools, and more

(We would love to have help about 4:00 p.m. in picking up the tarps and pools, etc.)

If you have any questions please contact
Alton or Darlene Riske at 254-487-2917

Bingo Corn Hole "84" Dominoes Tournament
Door Prizes Guessing Games Talent Show

Evening Meal – Bar-b-que on a bun and chips (5:00 p.m.)