



St. Luke's Lutheran Church
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NEWS AND VIEWS

Pastoral Perspective



Two days before he died, Martin Luther wrote, "We are beggars, it is true." What an odd way to sum up a life—especially his life! This is a man who stood up to kings and councils, burned Papal Bulls, challenged sixteen centuries of church tradition and more than survived. This is a man

whose written work fills 55 volumes, whose scholarly translation of the scriptures shaped the modern German language and whose courage reshaped the geography of Europe. Surely at the end of such a life there must be time for something more impressive than calling oneself a beggar. Yet, like his soul mate, Paul, any boasting was in his weakness, and the power of the cross.

The New Testament is filled with stories of folks who, like Luther and Paul, realized that they were but beggars before a gracious God.

There was the Canaanite mother who came begging Jesus to heal her little daughter. Jesus responded, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. It is not right to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs." She replied, "Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their master's table." Then Jesus answered her, "O woman, great is your faith! Be it done for you as

you desire." And her daughter was healed instantly. (see Matthew 15:21-28)

There was the Roman centurion who approached Jesus on behalf of his Jewish servant who lay paralyzed in the centurion's home. Jesus said he would come and heal him. But the centurion replied, "Lord, I am not worthy to have you come under my roof, but only say the word, and my servant will be healed. For I too am a man under authority, with soldiers under me. And I say to one, 'Go' and he goes, and another 'Come' and he comes, and to my servant, 'Do this' and he does it." When Jesus heard this, he marveled and said to those who followed him, "truly, I tell you, with no one in Israel have I found such faith" ...And to the centurion Jesus said, "go; let it be done for you as you have believed." And the servant was healed at that very moment. (see Matthew 8:5-13)

Not worthy. These words are a refrain on the lips of beggars who populate the pages of the New Testament. Zacchaeus, the short man who sat in a sycamore tree, hoping to just get a glimpse of Jesus as he passed by. The woman who suffered from a blood flow for twelve years and did not dare face Jesus. "If only I can touch the hem of his garment I will be healed," she thought. Bartimaeus, the blind beggar who boldly cried for mercy. At his death, the thief on the cross who simply asked Jesus to remember him when he came into his kingdom. Beggars all.

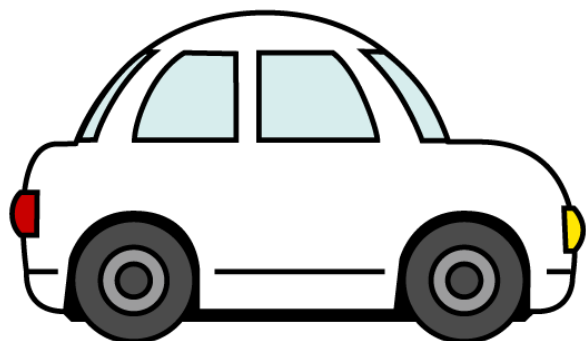
Yet each of these humble supplicants ends up more blessed than they could ever dare dream. They receive grace upon grace. As surely as the exalted are humbled, the unworthy who come to Jesus are exalted.

We come to God with nothing, realizing that our morality, our good works are never adequate before the perfect God. We come vulnerable and poor or we don't come at all. In the third verse of Rock of Ages we sing, "Nothing in my hand I bring; simply to thy cross I cling. Naked, come to thee for dress; helpless, look to thee for grace; foul, I to the fountain fly; wash me, Savior, or I die."

Actually, we should want it no other way. If our being children of God depended on what we do, how much we have accomplished in the moral realm, how well we have performed, or even how sincere our faith is, we could never be certain we belong. We would always agonize over whether we had done enough and believed hard enough. And worse yet, we would tend to judge others harshly so that we would feel better about ourselves and what we have accomplished.

But when we realize, "We are beggars, it is true," we give up all pretenses and simply cling to Jesus for dear life. If our lives are filled with anything worthwhile we know it is because the Lord has been gracious to us, not because of anything we have done to earn it. We are always but beggars before a gracious God. We don't count ourselves better than anyone, but simply, as evangelist D.T. Niles reminds us, see ourselves as "beggars telling other beggars where to find food".

Spreading, Serving and Sharing with You,
Pastor Carl



Thank you for your continued support of St Luke's on going school supply and food collection.

We will continue to collect school supplies until the end of September.

As a gentle reminder, please check the expiration dates on all donated food items.

If you prefer, you can donate gift cards from the local grocery stores. You can give them to Pastor at the drive through prayer on Sunday morning. You can put them through the mail slot in the door at the church or mail them to the church.



We are planning on having a service work day on Sunday Sept 13. It is God's work our hands project. We will be passing out lunches to the homeless. We plan to distribute bag lunches with a sandwich, bottled water and a piece of fruit.

If anyone is interested in helping us distribute the lunches, please contact Linda by e-mail: lmrduffek@gmail.com

Thank you,
Linda Duffek and Cathy Davis
Community Concerns

**Join us for Drive through Prayer!
We are in the church parking lot
from 9:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. every
Sunday.**

FINANCIAL SECRETARY REPORT

July 2020

(Note: Normal church worship services and other activities were suspended beginning March 18, which significantly affected the data in this report.)

- This year's July contributions compared to July 2019 were exceptional, as the data shows.
- Despite the excellent July offerings, the YTD figures lag the Budget (10%) and the 2019 figures (15%).
- Although the number of unique monthly contributors increased from last month, the YTD, average number of contributors remain considerably less than 2019.
- The entire month of July was affected by the coronavirus "stay-at-home" orders.
- You can now make contributions electronically (online), in addition to the conventional means. For details, go to St. Luke's website www.slelca.org and click on the "Giving" heading for details.
- In July, a mid-year contribution statement was distributed to each contributing member. If you did not receive a statement, contact me.
- If you have any questions or suggestions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Jack Fenske
 St. Luke's Financial Secretary
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General Fund (Only) Contributions			
Data	This Month	Year to Date	
Total Contributions	\$17,529	\$111,507	
Compared to Budget	\$1,624	-\$12,267	
	10.2%	-9.9%	
Compared to 2019	\$2,857	-\$20,107	
	19.5%	-15.3%	
No. of Contributors			
2020 (Current Year)	58	63	avg.
2019 (Last Year)	67	78	avg.
Other Special Gifts			
Fireworks		\$20	

Note: Plus values are above Budget/Last Year; minus values are below.

September Birthdays

Marlene Kiser	September 02
Cathy Davis	September 03
Pauline Arndt	September 07
J.D. Cox	September 07
Barbara Manlapig	September 07
Iva Bates	September 13
Noella Sondrini	September 21
Anthony Diaz	September 24
Ken Light	September 26
Tom Harper	September 28
Jack Fenske	September 29
Lynn Gavia	September 30



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