



Ascension Lutheran Church

ANNOUNCER

Dear beloved,

Yesterday, June 3, a man was shot multiple times in our parking lot. I await the release of the police report in hopes to visit this man and ask if we might host a prayer vigil. Violence seems so distant until it takes place in your sphere of activity. On a typical day, I would've been at the church at the time he was shot; instead, I was driving my family home from vacation. Could I have helped him? Would I have been injured? Hypotheticals are unfruitful as he lies in critical condition. Let us pray for this man and his attacker, that life be lengthened, justice be rendered, and repentance be wrought. Solomon writes, "Hear, my son, your father's instruction, and forsake not your mother's teaching, for they are a graceful garland for your head and pendants for your neck. My son, if sinners entice you, do not consent. If they say, 'Come with us, let us lie in wait for blood; let us ambush the innocent without reason'—my son, do not walk in the way with them; hold back your foot from their paths, for their feet run to evil, and they make haste to shed blood" (Prv 1:8-11, 15-16). I don't know the circumstances or the motive for the shooting, but if it's anything less than desperate self-defense, then the attacker has hurt himself more than the victim, for "these men lie in wait for their own blood; they set an ambush for their own lives. Such are the ways of everyone who is greedy for unjust gain; it takes away the life of its possessors" (Prv 1:18-19; cf. 11:17; Ps 7:14-16).

The devil incites violence and uses evil men to accomplish his goal: to destroy the image of God. Whether it's the physical or the spiritual, the adversary wants to end life. He wants to kill. And he wants the world conformed to his image: defiant, hateful, and savage. The word "violent" derives from the word "violate." Every act of violence is an act that violates God's good creation. God didn't create male and female in His image so that they might be violated. The image of God demands every person remain unviolated. But the devil incites and uses. For him and his minions, "pride is their necklace; violence covers them as a garment" (Ps 73:6). The violator asserts dominance over those created in the image of God and even God Himself, because he wants to determine the value of one's life. But every person has the same, inherent,

unfading value given by the Creator. That's why God has given the greatest protection to every human life: "Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed, for God made man in his own image" (Ge 9:6). Regarding the tragedy on our own property, we pray that life be lengthened, justice be rendered, and repentance be wrought.

Justice and repentance are not mutually exclusive. Justice should be rendered even amid repentance. We should forgive murderers, and murderers should face consequences. Forgiveness is a divine gift offered freely by the cross of Christ for the eternal welfare of all—it is not an excuse to undermine the responsibility of punishing evil. To forsake justice is to not love your neighbor, because every victim was created in the image of God that demands protection. For this protection, God has appointed governing authorities (Rom 13:1-4). And we, the church, pray for justice and repentance in the truth that both victim and violator are made in the image of God. The devil hates this. He hates a true confession of the image of God. He'd rather we pray for neither justice nor repentance... or pray for one, but not the other. But to pray for both justice and repentance is the way of God, the way to love both victim and violator as your neighbor, the way to "Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you" (Mt 5:44).

I drove to church today with a bit more uncertainty than days before. Might something violent happen today? But that uncertainty was engulfed by the One who has all things in His hands, who in His "book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them" (Ps 139:16). How comforting it is to know that God knows, and that from eternity—from "when as yet there was none of [our days]"—He had planned for our most desperate need through Jesus Christ, our Lord! "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand" (Jn 10:27-28).

In His name,
Pastor Greg



"Get out your change ever'body. I've got my mission bank."

Announcements

❧ *From the Library* ❧

A book review by Linda Kubitz of *Having a Mary Heart in a Martha World* by Joanna Weaver, located in the “Personal Growth/Wellness” section



Joanna Weaver takes what the Bible tells us of Mary, Martha, and their brother Lazarus to teach us how God works in our life. How we grow and change when we are willing to spend time with Jesus. It is impossible to spend time with Jesus and not be changed. Joanna points us to the changes that occur in both Mary and Martha as we compare our first encounter with them to their words and actions in the other stories that follow. We see how God was personally involved in their lives and interacted with them, the lessons he had to teach them and what that means for us today. How to develop a personal relationship with God in spite of our busyness.

The story of Mary and Martha gives us two biblical portraits of women. In our first introduction to these sisters and their brother, Lazarus, we see Martha, busy serving. She has invited Jesus and his disciples into her home. So many guests, so much to do! She becomes frustrated that Mary is not helping and complains to Jesus. (We are notice to a change in Martha when we see her later, again with a house full of people to care for when Lazarus dies) Sometimes, when we think about these sisters, we are quick to be critical of Martha. But life is similar for women today. Throughout the ages, women have often been busy from morning until night. Today it seems there are even more challenges and opportunities before us. It is easy to become worried, distracted, and off balanced.

In our eagerness to serve God and others, we take on responsibilities that God is not calling us to do. Joanna says we need to listen to what God is saying to us. “Having a burden or seeing a need for a project may not mean God is telling you to take it on. He may only be calling on you to pray for the right person to come along to meet the need.” We don’t understand God’s timing. We “put a ‘period’ where God has only placed a ‘comma’”... “Lord, if you had been here”.... We have no peace. Like Martha - and even Elijah - we cry out, “Don’t you care?” We can become negative, like Eeyore, the donkey in Winnie the Pooh. The bible tells all of us, women and men, to be anxious for nothing, be prayerful about everything, and be thankful in all things. Jesus even tells Martha she is distracted and worried. But he does not tell Martha that she needs to become more like Mary. He invites her to choose the “better part”. God does care! He is Emmanuel – God with us. He invites us to come to him. Like Martha (and Mary), we must be willing to be teachable. In the book there is an interesting illustration comparing how to balance hula hoops and the mystery of a gyroscope. Joanna suggests that managing all we have to do can feel like trying to keep several hula hoops spinning. Your home, work, family, service, worship life, and free time. She says, that it is only when Christ is at your center, and you keep that rhythm, then everything else will be in balance. Instead of wobbling hula hoops, your life can be in balance - like a gyroscope. She then cites Howard E. Butt Jr., writer of “Renewing America’s Soul”, and his fascination with the gyroscope. The dictionary definition of a gyroscope is “a wheel or disc, mounted to spin rapidly on an axis and also free to rotate about one or both of two axes.” Howard said it looks “as if held upright by some mysterious inner power.” More than just a scientific spin toy, gyroscopes “stabilize our planes in turbulent weather, steady ships as they sail through raging seas, and guide them automatically by their compasses.” This is like the picture of life we are to have in Christ. My friend Kris, shared some thoughts with me earlier this year, after she read a devotion on Mary and Martha. “What causes me to lose sight of Jesus, my “one thing”? Being anxious over completing my long to-do list, lack of resources to get it all done, and being overwhelmed thinking I have to do it all. I don’t rely on Jesus to supply all my needs. Lest we hold Mary up on a pedestal, let’s look at her. Yes, she knows the One and what needs to be done first and foremost. Yet it is Mary who accuses Jesus of not caring when her brother dies. She did not exhibit the same faith here that Martha did. For her, death and grief was the point of struggle in faith. For some, grief causes a path away from Jesus. But she also knows how to worship Jesus intensely, weeping and washing Jesus’ feet with her tears, then pouring rich perfume over them. She is extravagant in her love for Jesus.”

I thought those were great insights that I had never considered. A few weeks later, I checked this book out of our library. I had always wanted to read it, but never did. It is different than what you might think it would be about, based on the story of Mary and Martha that we know so well. God has made himself known to us. Jesus invites us to come to him and promises to be with us always. The Holy Spirit teaches and guides us. Our relationship with God is not just knowing the facts about God, but then restricting interaction to a short daily quiet time and a worship service on Sunday morning. Only praying in an emergency. We must make time to meet with God and hear him speak to us through the Bible, his love letter to us. Learn to apply his truths to the details of our individual life. Serve with whatever gifts we have. Come to God honestly and earnestly in prayer. Give God our praise and bring him our questions, but then be willing to leave the outcome in his hands.

The book shows us how easily our well-intended and necessary service can get us off track from realizing and even forgetting about the “better part”. Jesus must be our focal point. Jesus was in constant communion with his Father. His cross purchased us the same privilege and now connects us with God. His example is recorded for us and teaches us how we can deepen an intimacy with him that will see us through whatever this life brings.

Missions & Ministry

Organizations and people we support:

 <p>http://rescue1global.org/</p>
 <p>https://www.trinityhope.org/</p>
 <p>http://helpmadison.org/</p>
 <p>https://nashvillerescuemission.org/</p>
 <p>https://www.hopeclinicforwomen.org/</p>
 <p>Caring Closet and other programs http://www.lstn.org/</p>
 <p>International Health Partners http://ihptz.org/</p>
 <p>Seminarian Corey Shaffer and family https://www.csl.edu/</p>
 <p>Missionary photographer: Johanna Heidorn https://www.lcms.org/heidorn</p>
 <p>Missionaries in Germany: Carl and Karen Cecil https://www.lcms.org/cecil</p>



May 5, 2019

Greetings from Dresden and the Mission Field!

Last month on Osternacht (Easter eve), we had 12 Baptisms of Iranian refugees in one of the most incredible church ceremonies that we have ever witnessed. The historical Christian Church has long used this time to bring Christians into the Faith. SELK St. Petri's Pfarrar Dittmer prepared a Gottesdienst (church service) that included all the Easter traditions. Our Persians (Iranians) know how special it is to be among the Faithful. Next weekend, we will welcome another 14 new Christians into the Faith. Most of these new Christians have been preparing for the past 6 to 9 months with Taufunterricht (Baptism instruction).

May God's grace keep you as you read and share the latest news of mission life in Saxony.

Your brother and sister in Christ!
Vielen Grüße,
Carl & Karen Cecil

Serving Ascension in June

	June 2	June 9	June 16	June 23	June 30
Lector	Cherri Walkker	Pastor Greg	Pastor Greg	Dennis Anderson	Dennis Fritz
Acolyte	Michael Patterson	TBD	Michael Patterson	TBD	TBD
Elder	Dennis Fritz	Tim Hanusa	Tim Hanusa	Tim Hanusa	Tim Hanusa
Ushers	John Kubitz & Nathaniel Oehlkers				
Cantor	Mark LaLumondier	Mark LaLumondier	Tim Hanusa	N/A	Tim Hanusa
Altar Guild	Pam Oehlkers & Trisha LaLumondier				

If you're unable to serve, please find a replacement.



Coffee Half-hour

June 2: Trisha LaLumondier
 June 9: Carolyne Willis
 June 16: Cherri Walker
 June 23: Cindy Dougherty
 June 30: Jane Chitren

The Organist

June 2: Minae Hayashi
 June 9: Cindy Dougherty
 June 16: Minae Hayashi
 June 23: Cindy Dougherty
 June 30: Dennis Anderson



Celebrations

Birthdays

June 2: Alicia Houston
June 4: Dave Brown
June 6: Derek Wiebbecke
June 13: Jocelyn Sutton
June 16: Ashley Smith
June 22: Lily Bergeron
June 22: Cherri Walker
June 23: Dawn Craik
June 24: Athena Graham
June 26: Erin Fritz
June 28: Brad Langston
June 29: Emery Fritz
June 29: Joan Johnson



ANNIVERSARIES



June 14: John & Frances Boggs
June 15: Paul & Sandra Ohme
June 16: Yuji & Minae Hayashi
June 22: Steve & Laurie Boggs
June 25: Mark & Trisha LaLumondier

Baptismal Birthdays

June 3: Silas Johnson
June 4: Adalyn Spann
June 5: Brittaney Summers
June 5: Randy Summers
June 10: Angel Foster
June 10: Jane Gullett
June 13: Diane Kelly
June 24: Dawn Craik
June 28: Ann Fuller
June 29: Ben Conner



If a celebration is incorrect or missing, please call (615-868-2346) or email (office@ascensionmadison.com) the church office so our records can be updated. Thanks!

Church Calendar

June						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
2 10:30 Worship w/ the Lord's Supper	3	4	5	6 10:30 Bible study	7	8
9 9:00 Sunday school 10:30 Worship w/ the Lord's supper	10	11 6:30 Women's Bible study	12	13 10:30 Bible study 7:00 Narcotics Anonymous	14	15
16 9:00 Sunday school 10:30 Worship w/ the Lord's Supper	17	18 6:30 Women's Bible study	19	20 10:30 Bible study 7:00 Narcotics Anonymous	21	22
23 9:00 Sunday School 10:30 Worship	24	25 6:30 Women's Bible study	26	27 9:00 ROMEO breakfast 10:30 Bible study 7:00 Narcotics Anonymous	28	29
30 9:00 Sunday school 10:30 Worship w/ the Lord's Supper 12:00 Potluck						



The mission of Ascension Evangelical Lutheran Church is to connect people to the one true God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—so that they may come to know and believe they are saved for eternal life by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone.



Rev. Greg Bauch, Pastor
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Pastor's email: pastorgregbauch@gmail.com
website: www.ascensionmadison.com

Sunday School & Bible Study at 9:00am
Coffee Half-hour at 10:00am
Worship at 10:30am

Please email newsletter submissions to office@ascensionmadison.com one week before the 1st of the month.

Please email all weekly bulletin announcements for the upcoming Sunday to office@ascensionmadison.com by Wednesday.