

## **From the Pastor: On Celebrating the Reformation**

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

*“[Jesus] said to them, ‘But who do you say that I am?’ Simon Peter replied, ‘You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.’ And Jesus answered him, ‘Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.’”*

(Matthew 16:15-18)

As we enter October, we look forward to the sights, sounds and smells of the autumn season. As Lutherans, we also look forward to our annual observance of the Reformation, as it has rightly become to us a regular and even defining feature of October. But some might wonder, “Why all the fuss? After all, don’t we seem to be a bit sectarian and divisive to celebrate an event that was so characterized by disagreement and hostility? Maybe in today’s cultural climate we’d seem a bit more appealing if we didn’t appear so exclusive and factional.”

The short answer is that Christians can’t help but thank and laud God when He fulfills His promise that His true Church will prevail even against the gates of hell. We celebrate the Reformation because God was doing great things to preserve His truth at a time when the Gospel was sorely perverted and obscured. In the above quote, St. Peter speaks rightly about who Jesus really is. Despite all the false speculation about Jesus, St. Peter declares the corrective truth, “*You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.*” The answer to Jesus’ question, “*Who do you say that I am?*” is the difference between eternal life or eternal death. In many ways, the Reformation simply served to restore the right understanding of who Jesus is and what He has come to do. He is not a semi-Savior who has taken care of part of your salvation and now you must do the rest. He is not a law-giver, but a Forgive. He has not come to coach you, but to redeem you.

The reason we celebrate the Reformation is because the pure teaching about Christ and His saving work was graciously restored. While we certainly acknowledge God’s use of Martin Luther and what a blessing he was to the cause, we do not celebrate Luther, but the Gospel. We thank God that the truth of His saving Word has been preserved among us even to this day. We thank God that we are not ignorantly caught in some damning maze of works-righteousness, but instead have taken hold of the free gift of life eternal by the merits of the Son who was willfully sacrificed. We take firm hold of the Scriptural reality that we are saved by grace alone, apart from works. We take firm hold of Jesus... in Him *only* is there life and light.

With these things in mind, it does us well to recall some of the essential teachings of the Bible that the Reformation restored. The following bullet points (in part) were formulated some years ago by Dr. Richard P. Bucher to help one review the basics of the Reformation:

- The Reformation was a rediscovery of the true Biblical Gospel: that a sinner is justified by grace through faith apart from the works of the Law (see Romans 3:21-28; Galatians 2:16-21; Ephesians 2:8-9). This served to re-establish the Gospel as the central focus and heart of Christianity. The Church exists for the sake of the Gospel.
- The Reformation stressed the change of an outward situation more than the change of our inward condition, which is to say, it stressed Christ **for** us not, Christ **in** us. Through Christ our outward relationship with God is changed; though inward renewal follows to varying degrees, this is not the main emphasis. Later theologians and denominations put the emphasis on the inward change (man's vows, rededications, promises) rather than the outward change based on God's promises and dedication in Christ. They stressed sanctification more than justification. This rightly puts the certainty of salvation on God's objective work through Christ rather than our level of holiness or piety.
- The Lutheran Reformation involved a major shift in authority – from pope and councils to Scripture. Scripture became the highest court of appeals, whereas the papacy and councils had been the highest authority. Councils, creeds, and church fathers remained important for Luther (and Lutherans), but only insofar as they agreed with Scripture. The Reformation principle ***sola scriptura*** (Scripture alone) holds the Scripture to be the sole rule and authority for all doctrine and matters of faith.
- The Biblical teaching of the sufficiency of Jesus' atonement was reasserted. Christ was once again emphasized as Savior, not Law-Giver. The right teaching of Jesus Christ's death was presented as ALL-sufficient to forgive ALL sins and ALL guilt, both original sin and actual sin. Therefore no other helpers were needed: whether Mary or saint or relic or indulgence. Neither was purgatory needed – what need is there of a place for additional cleansing if Christ's death has fully and perfectly cleansed those who believe in Him? ***"It is finished"*** means there is nothing else to be done... salvation is accomplished and complete.
- The Reformation restored the Biblical understanding of grace. Grace was no longer taught as an infused quality put into the sinner so that he was enabled to work out his salvation within the context of the Church's sacramental system. Rather, grace was accurately presented as the undeserved favor of God. The Reformation principal ***sola gratia*** (grace alone) means that we are saved solely by God's good favor through Jesus. God offers salvation, justification, forgiveness, heaven, life everlasting as a *pure and free gift* – paid for by the suffering and death of Jesus. Since this gift is free and full, there is no need for man's works or achievements. Sinners are saved by grace alone, or they aren't saved at all.

- The Reformation restored the true Biblical teaching about faith. Faith had erroneously become a justifying virtue or meritorious work, but the Lutherans rightly and simply defined faith as confidence or trust in God's Gospel promise. Faith is not a work, but the source of good works. Faith is born of the Gospel and is a gift to the sinner just as the Gospel itself is a gift. The Medieval Church had taught that faith saves *only* if it is made complete by good works. But the Scripture clearly teaches that faith saves apart from works. Yes, works must always come forth from faith, but those works don't make one right with God, faith does. Faith alone justifies. Faith is that which receives the offered gift of forgiveness through Jesus Christ. The Reformation principle ***sola fide*** (faith alone) teaches that only by faith is the sinner saved. There is no such thing as salvation apart from faith. Further, faith + something = damnation. Faith alone = life eternal. Once faith takes hold of the Gospel and believes in God's goodness through Jesus, then it is never alone... the fruits of faith follow. *But* those fruits don't justify the sinner, faith does. Such faith must always have Jesus as its object. Such faith takes hold of the promise of sins forgiven through the substitutionary atonement of Jesus.

You might say, "That's all very nice pastor, but we are now five hundred years past the Reformation... do these differences still apply?" They most certainly do! After five hundred years, little to nothing has changed with Rome's doctrinal stance. Back then, at the *Council of Trent* (1554-1563), the Roman Catholic Church declared:

If anyone says that the sinner is justified by faith alone, meaning that nothing else is required to cooperate in order to obtain the grace of justification, and that it is not in any way necessary that he be prepared and disposed by the action of his own will, let him be anathema.

*(The Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent – Canon 9)*

If anyone says that justifying faith is nothing else than confidence in divine mercy, which remits sins for Christ's sake, or that it is this confidence alone that justifies us, let him be anathema.

*(The Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent – Canon 12)*

By the modern era, the Roman Catholic Church had simply reformulated their historic position by explaining that justification has a twofold nature. The two aspects of justification are: 1) the infused grace God bestows upon the sinner apart from any merit; 2) the willful cooperation of man with the grace given him by God to merit eternal life. Hence the Catechism of the Catholic Church (1994) states:

Like conversion, justification has two aspects. Moved by grace, man turns toward God and away from sin, and so accepts forgiveness and righteousness from on high.

(paragraph 2018, page 489)

No one can merit the initial grace which is at the origin of conversion. Moved by the Holy Spirit, we can merit for ourselves and for others all the graces needed to attain eternal life, as well as necessary temporal goods. (paragraph 2027, page 490)

It is quite clear where Rome stands, even today. We both agree that God must act first by giving His unmerited grace to the sinner if he is to be saved. But... we believe **that** is salvation – God gives grace (through Jesus) and the sinner believes and trusts in God by the Holy Spirit. The sinner is thereby justified and righteous in God’s sight precisely by that grace given to him. For Rome, that grace given by God only finds its justifying end when we respond or cooperate with that grace and thereby “merit for ourselves... all the graces needed to attain eternal life.” The difference, then, between one who obtains eternal life and one who obtains eternal punishment is whether one allowed the Spirit to move him to virtuous good deeds that then merits the fullness of grace needed for life eternal. For them, *grace + cooperation = eternal life*. Faith then isn’t a gift, it’s an instigator. In essence, the converted person must sustain his new standing with God using the power of the Spirit until death or else justification will not be complete.

I contrast, the *Lutheran Confessions* state clearly that belief in the Gospel promise (in Jesus) justifies the sinner completely. Trust in God alone saves.

“Our churches teach that people cannot be justified before God by their own strength, merits, or works. People are freely justified for Christ’s sake, through faith, when they believe that they are received into favor and that they are forgiven for Christ’s sake. By His death, Christ made satisfaction for our sins. God counts this faith for righteousness in His sight (Romans 3 & 4).”  
(Article IV of *The Augsburg Confession*)

Dear friends, this is not merely a semantic difference, nor is it simply two different ways of describing the same reality. Rather, they are mutually exclusive understandings of how fallen man is made right with the Almighty God. Despite the efforts of theologians like Hans Kung (a Catholic theologian who considered the differing perspective compatible), as well as the signing of documents like “Evangelicals and Catholics Together” (1994) and “The Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification” (1999), we must realize the obvious... the differences are profound. We cannot act like it doesn’t matter and we cannot hide the issue in obfuscation. Cooperation with the grace of God, even if it is by the power of the very grace He gives, and even if such cooperation always exists with faith, never is the reason God justifies man. It is by His grace *alone*, apart from the ensuing cooperation (that will surely follow to some degree from faith) which makes man holy and righteous

in His sight. This is simply the teaching of the Holy Scriptures. God counted Abraham as righteous simply because *he believed*, not because he believed and subsequently cooperated.

Therefore, considering all of the above, I appeal to you not to receive the grace of God in vain (2 Cor 6:1). This Reformation heritage is *ours*, and it should never be taken for granted. This Reformation heritage is *yours*, and it should be lived in all joy and boldness. Yes, we ought to celebrate the Reformation. Why? Because the true Gospel demands it. God's truth remains and prevails! We must love it, cherish it and defend it. Further, we must never let our guard down. We must never succumb to the temptation to water-down the doctrine of the Scriptures, nor should we temper the right expression and application of that doctrine through flawed practice. We must not think that because the Reformation occurred 500 years ago it's not all that applicable today. IT IS. The only difference is that the devil has honed his evil skills. He also has a much more secularized culture on his side that renders truth relative and invites us to treat the Gospel as a product that must be sold on consumers. Let us celebrate in many and various ways, but chiefly let us do so by proclaiming the truth in its glorious purity... in revealing Christ to the nations as the only Way, Truth and Life... in preaching repentance and forgiveness in the name of Jesus... in proclaiming Christ crucified and risen from the dead... and especially in receiving His gifts through the means of grace.

Let us celebrate wholeheartedly on this joyous occasion of the Reformation of the Church. Let us sing in thankful praise that the true Word and Sacraments have been preserved and handed down to us through the generations. Let us implore our Lord to direct us by His Spirit to honor and revere the holy Word and to worship Jesus in truth and purity all the days of our lives. Finally, let us beseech our dear God to grant us faithfulness, that the true Gospel may be found in the hearts and on the lips of future generations in fulfillment of His promise that His Church will prevail even against the gates of hell.

O God, our Lord, Thy holy Word was long a hidden treasure  
Till to its place, it was by grace restored in fullest measure.  
For this today our thanks we say and gladly glorify Thee.  
Thy mercy show and grace bestow on all who still deny Thee.

Salvation free by faith in Thee, that is Thy Gospel's preaching,  
The heart and core of Bible lore, in all its sacred teaching.  
In Christ we must put all our trust, not in our deeds or labor;  
With conscience pure and heart secure, love Thee Lord and our neighbor.

Thou, Lord, alone this work hast done by Thy free grace and favor.  
All who believe will grace receive through Jesus Christ our Savior.  
And though the Foe would overthrow Thy Word with grim endeavor,  
All he hath wrought must come to naught – Thy Word will stand forever.

(TLH #266 stanzas1-3)

In the bond of faith,  
Pastor Menet



# Grace Alone, Faith Alone, Christ Alone, Scripture Alone, and to God Alone be the Glory!

## OUR WEEK AT A GLANCE:

*Sunday: Divine Service with Communion at 9:00 a.m.*

*Sunday School and Adult Bible Study 10:20-11:30 a.m.*

*Wednesday: Wed. School & Adult Large Catechism Class 6-7 p.m.*

*Vespers 7-7:30 p.m.*

*Thursday: Adult Bible Study 10-11:30 a.m.*

<p>Pastor Menet's email address: <a href="mailto:pdm52@mchsi.com">pdm52@mchsi.com</a> Church Office: <a href="mailto:faithluth@aol.com">faithluth@aol.com</a></p>
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**Do you have information** that you would like to share with the congregation? Please bring it or e-mail it to the office by **October 18**, [faithluth@aol.com](mailto:faithluth@aol.com), to be included in the November newsletter.

**Cancellations due to bad weather** can be found on [www.KWWL.com](http://www.KWWL.com). Click on weather, then cancellations. Wednesday night classes are cancelled if schools close.

**Pastor Menet does make hospital visits a priority.** However, the hospital will not call us to let us know when one of our members is admitted. If you know ahead of time that you are going to be hospitalized, please let Pastor know. If you are admitted suddenly, call or have a friend or relative call Pastor or the church office, 236-1771.

## **New address this month**

- **Dixie Krieger:** 307 State St., Dysart, IA 52224

Please email [faithluth@aol.com](mailto:faithluth@aol.com) or call 236-1771 with any changes in your phone or address.

## **Remember our shut-ins:**

**Steve Boyken and Kathy Boyken,**

Sunset Nursing, 235 N Mill St., P.O Box 383, Denver, IA 50622,  
Kathy: 984-5092

**Mary Jo Elbert**, 7517 University Ave #33, Cedar Falls 50613

**Flo Fitz**, 202 N. Magnolia Dr. #102, Cedar Falls 50613

**Ardie Holmes**, 2104 Parrish, Cedar Falls 50613

**Dixie Krieger**, 3415 Destin Dr., Waterloo 50702

**Mark Mohr**, Neuro Rehab Care, Rm 10, 35 Rachel St, Waterloo 50701

**Eddie Swaim**, Friendship Village Pavilion, Park Ln #3 Waterloo 50702

## Official Acts in September

- **Release:** Zach Dunnwald

**Thank you to everyone** who works behind the scenes to keep up the church! You are truly appreciated!

*We always thank God, the Father of our*

*Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for*

*you, since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love that you have for all the saints...*

*Colossians 1:3-4*

### Financial Stewardship

As of September 22

YTD

Financial Stewardship	As of September 22	YTD
Total Undesignated Received	\$8,995.90	\$87,469.80
Required to Meet Budget	\$15,813.08	\$142,317.75
Status	(\$6,817.18)	(\$54,847.95)

## October Anniversaries

- 1 Darren & Sara Brackin (3)
- 6 Brian & Becky Wagner (29)
- 7 Bobby & Sheryl Hinz (41)
- 12 Amy & Dave Brissette (6)
- 17 Don & Ann Wiechert (55)



## October Birthdays

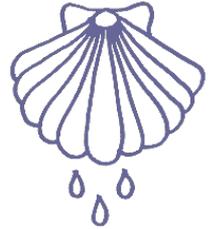
- 2 Lezlie Bowers, Hannah Hewitt, Reuben Woolery
- 4 Levi Woolery
- 7 Herman Hinz
- 10 Steve Boyken, Sandy Warmuth

- 11 Lucas Tanney
- 15 Charlee Crawford, Matthew Crawford, Deb Smith
- 16 Dencil Wireman
- 18 Pam Klima
- 19 Shane Stitchman
- 20 Henry Menet
- 22 Flo Fitz
- 24 Cindy Williams
- 25 Jonah Woolery
- 31 Sam Chilcote, Rhonda McBride



### September Baptismal Birthdays

- 1 Rachel Wagner
- 13 Reuben Woolery
- 15 Larry Dunham
- 20 Lucas Tanney, Bob Wolff
- 23 Brenda Douglass
- 28 Henry Menet, Lindsay Toenges



### News & Events



**October is Pastor Appreciation Month!** This is an opportunity to give thanks and show some love to Pastor Menet and his family. There will be a collection box in the narthex all month long for everyone to show their appreciation in a card, verse, prayer, letter, gift, dinner invite, or any way you wish

to express thanks for Pastor and his family for their faithful service and care for our Faith family.

*So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in Him, rooted and built up in Him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught and overflowing with thankfulness. Colossians 2:6*

**Save the Date of Sunday, October 27 for the next Faith Family Night!** Plans are in the works for a Reformation celebration/ German Octoberfest-type potluck meal. Let's try some of those traditional recipes! Share some recipe ideas with each other.

The meal will be at 4:30 p.m. with a campfire afterwards as



soon as it is dark. We will need the use of 3-4 portable fire pits and wood to set up on the lawn (there will be a sign-up sheet in the narthex for these items and for food). Bring your lawn chairs, blankets, and roasting sticks, marshmallows, chocolate bars, and graham crackers to make s'mores. In case of rain, bring a board or card game to share. Come join in the food, fun, and fellowship! If you have any questions, contact Vickey Smith or Pam Woolery.

**Thank you!** We continue to give thanks to you all for the love and prayers, kind words or encouragement, and so much more during our preparation for Zoe Jones' surgery on October 7, 2019. Please keep us all in your prayers as we travel, await surgery, have surgery, recover, and hope for helpful and positive results. Our trust is in God as always, especially in everything that Zoe experiences. We are assured of His goodness and love for her each day. We pray, praise, and give thanks.



As the situation progresses we will be keeping you all updated through Pastor and our family. We are in this together and continue to lean on the prayers and love of so many to see us through. Bless you!

Papa Mike & Grama Vickey Smith  
Josh, Jamie, Noah & Zoe Jones

### **Sunday School Schedule:**

**Oct. 6:** Joseph Forgives (Genesis 42-45; 50:15-21)

**Oct. 13:** The Birth of Moses (Exodus 1:1 - 2:10)

**Oct. 20:** Moses and the Burning Bush (Ex. 2:11 – 4:31)

**Oct. 27:** Reformation lesson



### **Wednesday Night Classes**

Classes are well underway each Wednesday evening from 6-7 p.m. followed by Vespers from 7-7:30 p.m.

Pastor Menet is leading a class on Luther's Large Catechism for those recently and for adults. All are welcome to attend and continue learning about the faith we share.

The younger pre-confirmation class is working on the first article of the Apostles' Creed; specifically on God as Maker of heaven and earth—creation. We are adding to a prayer book each week prayers that we can say for specific things: thanks, forgiveness, meals, those who are sick, family, etc. These can be used for family devotions or other times at home. Prayer is an important part of our faith life and useful for our students to learn and understand.

Keep one another in prayer as we learn and grow in the faith we confess and believe. Let us set examples for our young and for one another. Stay strong in His Word.

*Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might.  
Ephesians 6:10*

**Is your child starting band or orchestra**, or has your child been begging you to learn the piano or organ? Consider College Hill Music Conservatory for lessons! We are now offering music lessons on a variety of instruments. Lessons at CHMC are in a Christian environment and we encourage raising up future church musicians. Contact Deaconess Faith Swenson at [chconservatory@gmail.com](mailto:chconservatory@gmail.com) or 218-329-8515.



**Little Bach's Music Time:** College Hill Music Conservatory will host its first ever group music session for little children on Tuesday, October 15 at 10:30 a.m. at College Hill Lutheran Church. It will run for 30-45 minutes. Led by Deaconess Faith Swenson, there will be singing, music and movement, rhythm activities, and even a musical craft! All ages are welcome, but it will be geared toward 1-5 year olds. This is a FREE event!

**IDE Confirmation Retreat - Oct. 11-12:** The baptism of an infant is the perfect topic to help us understand the Gospel of Jesus Christ and how we are all saved by God's grace alone. You should love infant baptism. Every time there is a baptism of a baby in your church, you should sing for joy over what God is doing for that little one. He is making a sinner into His beloved child by His grace alone. He is granting faith. He is forgiving sin. He is rescuing from death and the devil. He is imparting His Spirit. He is covering a sinner with Christ's righteousness. He is promising eternal salvation. He is doing all this and more! In fact, infant baptism even helps us understand adult baptism. Rejoice with us in God's salvation of sinners by grace alone, through faith alone, for Christ's sake alone, by coming to the Confirmation Retreat as we explore the treasures of baptism!

Our presenter is Pastor Stephen Preus of Trinity Lutheran Church in Vinton, IA. You can register online or download a registration form at [www.lcmside.org](http://www.lcmside.org). The retreat will take place beginning on Friday, October 11 at 7 p.m. and going through 3 p.m. on Saturday the 12th. This retreat includes a pizza snack on Friday evening and breakfast and lunch on Saturday. A full schedule can be found at the link above.



**LWML News:** Women of Faith met Sept. 10 with 10 members present. Pastor Menet led us in a Bible study. The fall rally will be held Sept. 28, 8:30 a.m. at College Hill Lutheran Church. A new directory for Women of

Faith will be coming out soon. We have some great programs and activities lined up for our meetings. Our next meeting will be Oct. 8 at 6:30 p.m. at Faith. We will have Chris Schoenthe from the Cedar Falls Rec Center to do training on our AED device. This is open to anyone in the congregation interested in learning how to use the device.

**The Northeast Iowa Area Agency on Aging is hosting a Caregiver Conference** full of valuable information for caregivers. This free event will be held on Friday, October 4 from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at Nazareth Lutheran Church, 7401 University Avenue in Cedar Falls. The conference will feature helpful tips on downsizing, what legal documents you need as a caregiver, a Tai Chi and Making Meals Easy demonstration, information from local vendors, and a special luncheon with hot beef or hot turkey sandwiches honoring our local centenarians. For more information or to register, please call Anne Marie Kofta at 319-287-1166 or email [akofta@nei3a.org](mailto:akofta@nei3a.org).

### **Faith Life Team Updates**

*The Faith Lutheran Life Team exists to equip our church to be Gospel-motivated voices for every human life.*

**The next Life Team meeting** will be on **THURSDAY**, October 10 at 6:00 p.m. We will be making final plans for the Midpoint Rally.

**Please consider joining us on Saturday, October 12** at noon here at Faith to help set up the Witness of the Crosses.

**Our annual 40 Days for Life campaign is now underway!** We had a nice turnout for our kickoff rally on September 23, with around 60 people attending our showing of *Unplanned*, including some who had never heard of 40 Days for Life. We always welcome new volunteers, so if you or someone you know are interested in signing up for hours, visit [40daysforlife.com/cedarfalls](http://40daysforlife.com/cedarfalls), or talk to Kie Maas or Katie Dalluge.



**Our 40 Days for Life Midpoint Rally will be on Sunday, October 13.** We'll meet at the Planned Parenthood at 4:30 p.m. for prayer, a hymn sing, and a chance to meet and greet each other and share our experiences. After the rally, we will meet at Faith for our Memorial Service for the Victims of Abortion at 5 p.m. The Life Memorial Service is an annual remembrance of the 60 million babies that have been lost to abortion in our country and prayer for all involved in this tragedy. We pray for our nation, the Church, and those struggling with a crisis pregnancy. We pray for mothers and fathers suffering the aftermath of an abortion, and we pray for those who are deceived to see abortion as a solution to the difficult problems of life.

**Pastor Salemlink, executive director of Lutherans For Life,** preached, led Bible study, and gave a seminar on the mission of Lutherans For Life on Sunday, September 15. We had a great turnout for the seminar, and enjoyed good food and fellowship at our potluck. Thank you to everyone who attended and brought food to share!

## Our missionary families:



**Rev. David Preus and family in the Dominican Republic:** Rev. David and Jennifer Preus serve the Lord as career missionaries through The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) in the Dominican Republic. In this role, David plants new churches in this country. He forms and develops groups of believers

into mature, self-sustaining and self-replicating congregations through Word and Sacrament ministry. He also helps with theological education as needed and works with local deaconesses in their mercy care ministries throughout the country. [lcms.org/Preus](http://lcms.org/Preus)

### **Rev. Micah Wildauer and family in**

**Togo** Pastor Wildauer teaches at The Lutheran Center for Theological Studies (CLET) which serves as a regional seminary for the French-speaking countries of West and Central Africa.

***For further updates of our family and life in West Africa, check out Robin's blog at***

***[www.wildauersgototogo.blogspot.com](http://www.wildauersgototogo.blogspot.com)***



## **Valley Lutheran School**

4520 Rownd St., Cedar Falls

**[www.vlscrusaders.org](http://www.vlscrusaders.org)**

Phone: (319)266-4565 Fax (319)266-4054

By the grace of God, Valley Lutheran School strives to inspire students by strengthening faith in Christ, pursuing academic excellence and preparing hearts for service.

### **2019-20 SCHOOL THEME: SHINE LIKE STARS**

***“that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine like stars in the world”  
Philippians 2:15***

**Valley is still enrolling all grades** for the 2019-20 school year. Please contact Jamie Panning for info at [jamie.panning@vlscrusaders.org](mailto:jamie.panning@vlscrusaders.org).

**Valley is having its 12th Annual Craft Show** on November 2 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Please join us!

**We would like to invite our church members to our Athletic events!** To see the latest you can use the RSchool app on your phone, or go to [www.iowastarconference.org](http://www.iowastarconference.org) or subscribe to The Crusader to be delivered your inbox. Email [sharron.clement@vlscrusaders.org](mailto:sharron.clement@vlscrusaders.org) to start receiving the next issue!



**The new Box Tops for Education program** is now underway! If you would like help learning how to use the app, talk to Katie.

## **From Christian Citizenship by Linda Bartlett**

### **Hope for the Washed and Waiting**

From a young age, Wesley Hill has experienced the tension of same-sex attraction. But, because he chooses to trust the Word of God and cling to his Baptism, he endeavors to live as a child and heir of God's Kingdom. His book, *Washed and Waiting*, challenges us all to live a life that is radically out of step with the prevailing norms and customs of an unbelieving culture.

"On the surface," writes Wesley Hill, "the Bible and the church's demand for gay people not to act on their desires can seem old-fashioned, life taking, oppressive. But could it be that if I place that demand into the larger story, then perhaps—just perhaps—it won't seem as irrational, harsh, and unattainable as it otherwise might?" The "Christian story of what God did for the world in Christ" helps the "rules" for a life of chastity—whether single, same-sex attracted, or married—"make sense." The Christian story of what God has done for us in Christ becomes the framework of our own lives and choices.

Resisting same-sex attraction (or any other sin against God) begins to make sense for us when we look at the bigger picture of God's Story and our lives as characters in that Story whose purpose is to glorify Him. "The message of what God has done through Christ reminds me that all Christians, whatever their sexual orientation, to one degree or another experience the same frustration I do as God challenges ... and transforms all of our natural desires and affections."

Hill has made the difficult and extremely frustrating decision to say "no" to his same-sex attraction. "In the end, what keeps me on the

path I've chosen is not so much individual proof texts from Scripture or the sheer weight of the church's traditional teaching against gay sex. Instead, it is, I think, those texts and traditions and teachings *as I see them from within the true story of what God has done in Jesus Christ*—and the whole perspective on life and the world (Excerpts from *Washed and Waiting* by Wesley Hill, assistant professor of biblical studies at Trinity School for Ministry, Ambridge, PA.)

**What can we do?** Remember that “one of the most striking things about the New Testament’s teaching on homosexuality is that, right on the heels of the passages that condemn homosexual activity, there are, without exception, resounding affirmations of God’s extravagant mercy and redemption. God condemns same-sex sexual acts and amazingly, profligately, at great cost to Himself, lavishes His love on homosexual persons. Read 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; 1 Timothy 1:8-11, 15; Romans 1:18-32 and 3:23-24.

**Please pray** as people who trust God’s design and purpose for male, female, and marriage, confident that His mercies are new every morning... in Jesus’ name.

### **Death: Not a Solution to Alzheimer’s**

The latest Oregon physician-assisted suicide report shows that 79.2 percent of those people dying by assisted suicide were age 65 or older and that the most reported concerns were “loss of autonomy” and “burden on family/caregivers.” Nancy Valko, a registered nurse and spokesperson for the National Association of Pro-life Nurses, has a professional and personal interest in Alzheimer’s disease. She took care of her mother with Alzheimer’s until her natural death. As a nurse, she believes taking care of people with Alzheimer’s is very rewarding. “. . . [Such] patients can be difficult at times, but I found that there is usually a funny, sweet person inside there who must be cared for with patience and sensitivity.” ([www.nancyvalko.com/2019/08](http://www.nancyvalko.com/2019/08))

**What can we do?** Valko says we might be tempted to test for biomarkers to determine if we’ll be at risk for Alzheimer’s. But, instead of trying to predict our future, we can spend our time living the days given to us and helping others do the same.

**Please pray for faithfulness... in Jesus’ name.**

