



Shining Mountains *news*

"IT IS OUR MISSION, AS BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN CHRIST, ACCORDING TO GOD'S WORD AND COMMAND TO GROW IN HIS WORD, TO GATHER AROUND HIS WORD, AND TO GO WITH HIS WORD."

The living Christ calls us to carry

An Easy Yoke

I'm tired. Are you?

Even the wonderful days of summer can be exhausting. Work doesn't stop. Preparing for vacations takes quite a bit of effort. And as much fun as hiking and camping and fishing really are, they all have a way of leaving you wiped out. It's all supposed to be restful, but it sure doesn't feel like it!

That might remind you of the words our Savior spoke: **"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."** (Matthew 11:28-30)

It seems like a paradox, a contradiction. Jesus calls to him those who are tired, promising them rest. And how does he say he gives it to us? A yoke! Yokes are those implements of *work* and *toil* that a master places on a beast of burden to direct them where to go and put them to work. And that's what Jesus offers us for *rest*?

That seeming contradiction really forces us to think about those words, doesn't it? And that's good. Jesus wants us to think about this and strug-

gle with how we could find rest in his *yoke*.

Make no mistake about it: Jesus makes it plain that following him comes with a cost. He calls us to go out into the world and tell others about him. Sometimes that's hard. He says following him means taking up a cross. That's painful. He says that holding to his Word means daily struggling against our sinful natures. That doesn't sound—of feel—restful in the least.

So is Jesus' making a false promise? Not at all. But what Jesus is promising is something that you can only know by experiencing it. It's there in the book of Philippians, where as the Apostle Paul wrote from a jail cell—locked up for the Gospel! - he couldn't stop writing the word "joy" over every page. It's there in the eyes of a parent who feels absolutely emptied of strength after a long day, but finds complete satisfaction as her little girl sings "All Praise to Thee My God this Night" as she gets ready to fall asleep. It's there when a Christian who served and sacrificed so much for their Savior for eighty years, now racked with cancer, looks up with a weak smile and says, "I'm ready to go see Jesus now."



Let's be clear: None of those things merit Jesus' love. But as we follow him, as we keep him in first place, he shows us something: He's the one leading us on and giving us strength. He's the one who convinces us it's a far better life than serving ourselves. And the closer we draw to him, the more we understand the peace we have with God through him. And that's *rest*.

NIV 2011:

Issues, Questions and Thoughts Part II

While we don't have an "official translation" of the Bible, the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod does use the New International Version (NIV) in all our official publications. It's the translation most commonly used by our people and our congregations.

The publisher of the NIV has released a revised translation ("NIV 2011") and, beginning next year, will no longer allow us to print from the older version in our bulletins, catechisms, hymnals or Sunday School materials. Our Synod is discussing whether to adopt the NIV 2011 for our publications or recommend another translation. Over the next few months, this article will be used to share some of the issues and concerns involved in that decision.

The Philosophy of translation: What are you looking for?

It seems like picking a Bible translation should be a simple issue, doesn't it? Just choose the one that says what God's saying in the original Hebrew or Greek!

It's not nearly that simple, however. When you're translating from one language to another, there are always difficult questions about how best to carry over the thoughts of the original language. Every language has its own nuances and idioms that don't have a "one-for-one" equivalent in another language. That means a translator has to make some decisions about how to make his audience understand what the original text says.

An example can be found in Christ's words from the cross. The Apostle John records Jesus' wonderful statement, "It is finished" (John 19:30). John originally expressed that thought with one Greek word: τετέλεσται. That word means quite a bit in Greek! It's a special Greek construction that carries the sense, "This is something that has taken place, and now will continue to have ongoing impacts." That means Jesus' completion of his work on the cross has ongoing benefit for us all. The word was also a common one in the marketplaces of Jesus' day. An abbreviated form of it was often written at the bottom of receipts. The meaning and sense of the word? *Paid in full!* How does a translator bring all of that out in English?

The two main approaches to translating are often called "formal equivalence" and "dynamic equivalence." A translation that emphasizes "formal equivalence" seeks to carry over the form and structure of the original text as faithfully as possible into the translation. A "dynamic equivalence" approach is more concerned with bringing across the intended meaning and flow of thought. The *New American Standard Bible* is an example of a translation that focuses more heavily on formal equivalence. Bibles like that are very faithful to the original text, but tend to read a little more "wooden" or awkwardly. Bibles like the *New Living Translation* or *God's Word to the Nations* achieve more dynamic equivalence—but sometimes end up being a paraphrasing of the original. A solid translation will seek to combine the best of both worlds.

The NIV has generally been seen as a translation that accomplished that goal well. It reads very smoothly and, in general, is quite faithful to the original text. The NIV2011 accomplishes much of that, too. So why is there a great deal of discussion in our church body about whether or not to adopt this new translation?

The Two Main Issues

One of the causes of concern for us is the issue of *gender neutrality*. Our society has been pursuing those changes for a while—it's very common to speak of a "police officer" or "fireperson" instead of "policeman" or "fireman." The NIV2011 has sought to have the Bible speak the same way. The great majority of that is good. In 1 Timothy 2:4, the NIV1984 says that God wants "all men to be saved." Changing that to say that God wants "all *people* to be saved" more faithfully reflects the original language and what God was really saying through Paul.

There are a few places, however, where the NIV2011 uses gender neutral language when the original text clearly indicates gender specificity. In Acts 6 the Apostle Peter calls an early "voters' meeting" to elect a number of deacons to serve in the early church. He calls the "brothers" together to do so, but the NIV2011 changes this to "brothers *and sisters*." In some cases, the NIV2011 makes it more difficult to teach what the Bible says about God's differing roles for men and women in his church.

The other issue has to do with Old Testament prophecies about Jesus. We know—both from the words of the Old Testament itself and from the explanations in the New Testament—that certain passages were clear prophecies about Jesus. The NIV2011 doesn't bring that out as clearly as the NIV1984 does. One striking example is the prophecy of Christ's virgin birth in Isaiah 7:14. While the NIV2011 does still use the word "virgin", it includes the footnote "or *young woman*." While it's true that the Hebrew word used could also indicate young woman, we know that's not the case here for a number of reasons: this was a *miraculous* sign for the king (there's nothing miraculous about a "young woman" giving birth, the early Jewish commentators *clearly* understood it to mean virgin (Greek translations of this passage made 200 years before Christ use a Greek word for *virgin*), and in Matthew 1:23 the Apostle quotes this passage and makes it clear it's referring to a virgin.

No translation is perfect, and there are many things to consider as we look for "the best one." May the Lord bless us with faithfulness to all his Word as we do so.

Next Month: *An update from Synod Convention on the WELS' approach to the NIV2011*



Building project update

“It is our mission, as brothers and sisters in Christ, according to God’s Word and command to grow in his Word, to gather around his Word, and to go with his Word.”

Our congregation’s work towards a new church home continues to take encouraging steps forward. The Council has been faithfully looking at properties, ministries and budget impacts. Some of that information has been relayed to the voters or the congregation as a whole; more is coming soon. Some of the recent highlights of that work includes:

- Focusing our attention strongly on what seem to be the two most promising properties and beginning cost negotiations
- Evaluating and giving feedback on a number of building concepts provided by Massmann Studios (over a half-dozen variations have been studied)
- Beginning discussions on a possible plan of action to set before the voters for their consideration

This project is part of the work that Christ has given into the hands of our congregation. If you’d like to learn more, please do come to the meetings or speak to your council members (Lance Baker [chair], Dan Gustafson [secretary], Michael Joecks [financial secretary], Aaron Pruitt [treasurer], Paul Agenten [evangelism], and Jim Lauersdorf [elder]) or to Pastor Seifert.



National Conference on Worship, Music and the Arts

Shining Mountains owes a debt of thanks to Joe and Nicki Becker, Sarah Newton and Veronica Baker. On behalf of our congregation they gave up the better part of a week and the comfort of their homes to travel to St. Peter and New Ulm, MN, where they attended our church body’s *National Conference on Worship, Music and the Arts*. The worship and workshops they attended there will serve as an invaluable blessing to our church as we talk through what we’d like in a new church building and in our worship programs.

Watch the bulletin and newsletter for information about how the four of them will be able to share their experiences and what they learned with the congregation as a whole.

The trip was made possible by a travel grant given to SMLC through the *Commission on Worship*. The \$1600 grant covered registration and *most* of the travel costs. However, about \$300 of travel costs remain outstanding. If you would like to give a gift to help cover those costs, please put it in an envelope marked “Worship Conference.”



Vacation Bible School: August 9-11th!

Shining Mountains’ Vacation Bible School will be held August 9-11th, from 6:00-7:30 pm. If you know someone who wants to register, either give them a registration form from church, or direct them to www.shiningmountains.org

Growing in Christ

Sunday School and Confirmation Class at SMLC

One of the tasks that we have is to raise our children in the knowledge of the Lord. God gives that awesome responsibility first and foremost to Christian parents, but we also partner together as a congregation to carry out this high task. Two of the ways that we accomplish this are about to begin again in earnest:

Sunday School at Shining Mountains.

Starting the Sunday after Labor Day (September 11) and continuing through the academic year, we offer Sunday School for our youth. It's a chance to learn age-appropriate Bible lessons and memory work together with their peers. We offer three different classes, for children aged 3—6th grade.

This year's Sunday School will have a greater focus on memory work and music, as we seek to impress God's Word on the hearts of our children and keep it on their lips.

Confirmation Class

Confirmation Class (also known as *catechism* class) is the process by which our youth not only learn the core doctrines of the Bible, but also learn *how* and *where* the Bible teaches these things. The goal is for them to both know *what* they believe and *why* they believe it, as well as work through what it means for their daily lives.

Confirmation class also prepares our students for communicant membership in our church. After 2-3 years of study, they have the chance to publicly profess their unity of faith with what the Bible teaches and begin receiving the Lord's Supper together with us.

Pastor Seifert leads our catechism instruction. Students generally begin in 6th or 7th grade. (While there's no "set age" that the Bible gives for this level of instruction, experience shows that by this age the great majority of students are able to handle the more difficult and abstract thoughts they're asked to wrestle with.)

If your child is in Sunday School or catechism age, please watch for registration forms and information!

Montana Divine Call News

At Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary's Call Day this spring, Mr. Jacob Hanneman was assigned to serve our congregations in Terry and Circle (churches formerly served by Pastor Dave Ruddat).

Pastor-elect Hanneman will be ordained into the Holy Ministry and installed in a special service on August 21st at Salem Lutheran Church in Circle. All are invited to attend the service, as well as a meal that precedes the service at 5:30 pm.



Praise be to God for his goodness, and may the Lord continue to bless and care for his Church.

Serving Us in August *Thank you to those who served in July!*

	<u>Ushers</u>	<u>Refreshments</u>	<u>Flowers</u>	<u>Cleaners</u>
8/7	D Gustafson / D Gentry	Lauersdorf	E Baker	McGough (8/8-8/13)
8/14	J Hammer / B Thiede	<i>open</i>	<i>open</i>	Newton (8/15-8/20)
8/21	J Newton / L Hunziker	<i>open</i>	L & V Baker	Pruitt, D & P (8/22-8/27)
8/28	J Thiede / D Thiede	<i>open</i>	<i>open</i>	Pruitt, A & R (8/29-9/3)

Better is one day in your courts than a thousand elsewhere; I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of the wicked. **Psalm 84:10**

August 2011

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		2	3	4	5	6
Pastor Seifert on Vacation / Please reach Pastor Berger (St. Paul's, Livingston) in case of emergencies						
	7:00pm Mon. Eve. Worship					
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
9:00 Bible class 10:00 Worship w/ H.C.	Vacation Bible School: 6:00—7:30 pm					
	 7:00pm Mon. Eve. Worship					
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
9:00 Bible class 10:00 Worship						
Church picnic (following worship)	7:00pm Mon. Eve. Worship			6:15pm Church Council		
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
9:00 Bible class 10:00 Worship w/ H.C.						
7:00 pm Installation of Pastor-elect Hanneman (Circle MT)	 7:00pm Mon. Eve. Worship					
28	29	30	31			
9:00 Bible class 10:00 Worship	7:00pm Mon. Eve. Worship					

Upcoming Messages

As we continue the *Half Year of the Church* in August, the focus of our readings describes the very nature of Christians. Below is a list of our Sunday worship focuses.

May the following schedule help you as you prepare for worship or look for opportunities to invite a friend!

Worship in July

Aug 7 *The Christian is Planted by the Word*

Aug 14 *The Christian Lives as Wheat among Weeds*

Aug 21 *The Christian Seeks Spiritual Wealth*

Aug 28 *The Christian Trusts God to Provide*

