



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."

Going forward with confidence in

The Power of the Spirit

Doesn't it seem like it would be great to be a disciple on the day of Pentecost?

Pentecost was a great day that took place fifty days after Jesus rose from the dead. He had promised his disciples the day was coming when he'd pour out his Holy Spirit on them. They were waiting for that to happen in the city of Jerusalem, just as Christ commanded them. The city itself was filled with a million or more people—some who lived there; many more who had come from all over the world to celebrate one of the great Old Testament festivals.

Then Jesus kept his promise. The disciples heard the sound of a rushing wind. Tongues of fire settled over the heads—signs of the Holy Spirit's presence. And the disciples realized they could do something they hadn't been able to do before: speak in foreign languages they'd never learned! With joy they went out and proclaimed the gospel to everyone they could, and *three thousand* people came to faith in one day! What a day to be a disciple!

Do you remember the other details? When the disciples started preaching, they were mocked. They were accused of being drunkards. And even though

the city was filled with more than a million people, "only" three thousand came to faith. It was a blessed day, but not without its challenges.

That's good for us to remember, because not much has changed. There are challenges to sharing the gospel. As a church, we can feel small or feeble compared to larger churches with more programs and nicer buildings. As we speak to our friends and family members about our faith, some may mock us or reject us; other times, we just may feel silly or intrusive for sharing what we believe with them.

But God still pours out his Spirit, and his Spirit's gifts.

Pentecost teaches us something about those gifts: God provides the ones that are needed. Some disciples were gifted to speak in the language of the Medes—so they used that gift, and Medes came to listen. Some were given the gift of speaking Asian languages—so they used that gift, and those from Asia listened.

What gifts has God given you? He hasn't given you a needless one. Is it the ability to show compassion? To give generously? To speak of your Savior? To walk neighborhoods and knock on doors or handout fliers? To



listen to others? To pray fervently? Use those gifts—the Spirit knows what he's doing in giving them to you.

As you do so, you'll notice something. Challenges are still there, as they've always been. And God blesses that work with success. And that makes it great to be a follower of Jesus.

I believe in + the Holy Christian Church +

In the Third Article of the Apostles' Creed, we confess our faith in "the Holy Christian Church." Throughout our newsletters in 2012, we'll examine what this means. What is the Church? What is the difference between "the Church" and "churches"? What does it matter what church you belong to? What's going on among "Lutheran" churches? God's Word will guide our discussion as we talk about these questions.

Have you heard the joke about the Wisconsin Synod? A Presbyterian and a Catholic die and go to heaven. An angel shows them around the heavenly mansions and points out where each of them will be staying. As they go past one door, the Presbyterian asks, "What's behind that door?" The angel says, "The WELS members. But please be quiet as you walk by: We like to let them think they're the only ones here."

It's a bad joke—and one that points out an even worse thought. To be clear: The Wisconsin Synod does not believe or teach that only WELS members will be in heaven.

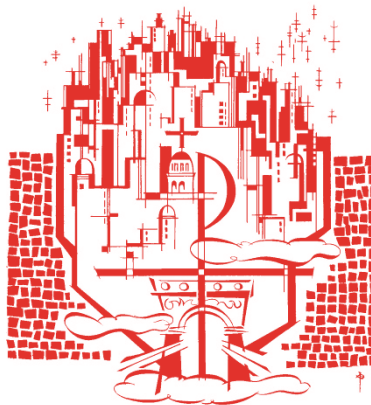
So where does that *improper* impression come from? Most likely from the *proper* emphasis we put on having true doctrine. We'll address what that emphasis means in the next few newsletters.

Orthodox Churches

When the Psalmist wrote, "*The unfolding of [God's] words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple*" (Ps. 119:130), he was making an important point: God's Word is clear and understandable. We can read it and understand what it teaches and what God wants us to believe.

We call churches that hold to all of those teachings "orthodox churches." *Orthodox* is a Greek word meaning "right teaching." (Please note: churches like the "Greek Orthodox" and "Russian Orthodox" may call themselves so, but aren't truly "orthodox"! By God's grace, a number of those church bodies *do* exist. We're joined to over two dozen of them as members of the Confessional Evangelical Lutheran Conference (CELC).

An orthodox church body is one whose statements of faith neither add to nor subtract from the Bible, which administers the sacraments as Christ commanded, and practices doctrinal discipline. Jesus himself places great emphasis on this when he commanded us to teach people *everything* he commanded (Mt 28:20) and guard the truth of his Word (Rev. 22:18,19).



Heterodox Churches

Not all churches do so, however. In fact, the *overwhelming majority* of churches change portions of God's Word. We call them "heterodox churches." *Heterodox* is a Greek word meaning "different teaching."

One of the greatest misconceptions about different teachings is that the differences are simply "different interpretations." That's absolutely false. God's Word *is* clear. When the Roman Catholic Church teaches that salvation comes from faith *and* good works, it isn't just a *different interpretation*. It's a *rejection* of the clear words of God that say our salvation is "not by works" (Eph 2:9). When an Evangelical or non-denominational church teaches that faith is something that comes from us, not the Holy Spirit, that's not a *different interpretation*. It's a *rejection* of God's Word that says we're dead in sin, powerless to create faith (Col. 2:13).

All false teaching is sin. It's all dangerous to faith. Jesus warns that it always spreads and calls us to stay away from those who teach it. But it's also important to remember: There are believers in heterodox churches. Wherever God's Word is preached, it *will* bring people to faith—God promises that (Is. 55:10-11).

Some churches reject what God says about creation, but still proclaim Jesus as the Savior. Their false belief is a dangerous sin that we're to stay away from, but we rejoice that those churches still proclaim Christ.

Some churches reject what God says about the roles of men and women or how to administer Holy Baptism. Their false belief is a dangerous sin that we're to stay away from, but we rejoice that they have faith in Jesus.

There are many more examples, but the point is clear. God tells us to hold to the whole truth of his Word—and rejoice that his Word still bears fruit even when false teachers mix it with lies. Lord, keep us steadfast in your Word!

January	<i>I believe in the <u>Holy</u> Christian Church</i>
February	<i>I believe in the Holy <u>Christian</u> Church</i>
March	<i>I believe in the Holy Christian <u>Church</u></i>
April	<i>The joy of the Church</i>
May	<i>The mission of the Church</i>
June	<i>Orthodox and Heterodox churches</i>

July	<i>Do denominations really matter?</i>
August	<i>"So what if they're not WELS?"</i>
September	<i>What's going on among the Lutherans?</i>
October	<i>WELS: The confession we share</i>
November	<i>WELS: The challenges we share</i>
December	<i>WELS: The mission we share</i>

Bible Study



God promises us every blessing as we grow in His Word. Consider taking advantage of the following opportunities to study with your fellow believers:

SUNDAY MORNING: CHRISTIAN WORSHIP

What are we doing here?

God hasn't commanded the *form* that we use for our worship, but his Word does give us guidance on the *content* and *principles* of our worship. Our study continues a look at those issues, making special application to how our principles of worship would influence a building project.

FRIDAY MORNING: WISDOM LITERATURE

Heavenly wisdom for earthly lives

Our Friday morning study (9:00 am) has been meeting since the end of January and has studied Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs and Proverbs. We'll bring our study of Proverbs to a close, most likely on June 1st. After that, we'll take a short summer break before digging into the last remaining book of "wisdom literature" - the book of Job.

MONTHLY: LET THERE BE LIGHT!

An overview of the first five books of the Bible

Our once-a-month look at the books of the Pentateuch (the first five books of the Bible) will be going on summer hiatus after a last class on Thursday, May 31st.

Building project update

Proposed new location:

The congregation gave great support to making an offer on the corner of Baxter and Davis. That work is still going forward. The development group that owns the property is researching what site-improvements they would need to make before the city would allow them to subdivide the land. The amount of work they need to do yet has obvious implications for our purchase of the land. In the meantime, developers are bringing us proposals for a location in the Norton Ranch area (north of Huffine, west of Jackrabbit) and possibly near the corner of Ferguson and Babcock.

Valley Center land

The land we own on Valley Center Rd is divided into two lots. The church has accepted offers on both lots. The sale of the larger lot should close sometime in June. The smaller lot with the house will be leased to a buyer for about a year before the sale closes. More information is available from the Council or Pastor.

Grants and other financial news:

God blessed Shining Mountains with an incredible Christmas gift—a \$45,000 grant towards the design of a new church from the Antioch Foundation. (For more information on the Antioch Foundation, see bulletin announcements or visit www.theantiochfoundation.org.)

2011 also saw a clarification of our status with the WELS Church Extension Fund (CEF). Because of the size and nature of our worship space, Shining Mountains should now be eligible for both a low interest rate (4%) on a new loan as well as a significant grant towards construction costs of a new church home.



Learn about Jesus at Vacation Bible School

This year's Vacation Bible School will be held from Tuesday through Thursday, June 19-21st. Our lessons will take us "back to Jerusalem" as we study the Bible, work on crafts, play games and sing songs that help teach us about God's love in Christ.

Registration forms are available in the back of church or on our website at www.shiningmountains.org.

If you have any questions, don't hesitate to call Pastor Seifert at 586.7979, or email him at: pastor@shiningmountains.org.

What can you do to help with this year's VBS?

Our Vacation Bible school is one of the biggest ways we seek to invite people to learn about Jesus and connect with our church. We need as much help as we can get! Here are a few ways you can serve:

- Invite your friends or coworkers to send their children. You can bring a registration form from church or point them to our website (or even just email them a link to it) - they'll find information or a registration form there.
- Walk the neighborhoods with us to hand out materials.
- Pray for those who will be teaching.
- Sign-up to bring snacks for one of the days. A little fresh fruit or cheese would be great!
- We could always use an extra hand decorating the room or preparing crafts. If that's up your alley, just speak to Pastor Seifert.

Thank you for your help!

Serving Us in June *Thank you to those who served in May!*

	<u>Ushers</u>	<u>Refreshments</u>	<u>Flowers</u>	<u>Cleaners</u>
6/3	J Becker / S McGough	<i>open</i>	Gustafson	Newton (6/4-6/9)
6/10	L Baker / B Ballard	Newton	E Baker	Pruitt, D&P (6/11-6/16)
6/17	A Pruitt / T Franck	Thiede	Joecks	Pruitt, A&R (6/18-6/23)
6/24	Agenten	<i>open</i>	<i>open</i>	Marozick (6/25-6/30)

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.

Psalms 84:10

June 2012

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 9:00 am Wisdom Literature Bible study	2 9:00 am Wisdom Literature Bible study
3 9:15 Bible class 10:30 Worship w/ H.C	4 7:00 pm Mon. eve. worship	5	6 6:00 pm Church Council	7	8 9:00 am Wisdom Literature Bible study	9 9:00 am Wisdom Literature Bible study
10 9:15 Bible class 10:30 Worship	11	12	13	14	15	16
	7:00 pm Mon. eve. worship		Dakota-Montana District Convention in Watertown, SD			
17 9:15 Bible class 10:30 Worship w/ H.C	18	19	20	21	22	23
	7:00 pm Mon. eve. worship		Vacation Bible School + 6:00—7:30 pm Tues, Wed, Thurs.			
24 9:15 Bible class 10:30 Worship 12:00 pm Church Picnic	25 7:00 pm Mon. eve. worship	26	27	28	29	30

Upcoming Messages

June brings us into the “non-Festival half of the Church Year,” also known as “The half-year of the Church.” May the following schedule help you as you prepare for worship or look for opportunities to invite a friend!

Worship in June

June 3: *Holy Trinity Sunday—The Word works to create faith in the Triune God*

June 10: *The Second Sunday after Pentecost—The law doesn't benefit God; it benefits us*

June 17: *The Third Sunday after Pentecost—God is serious about both law and gospel*

June 24: *The Fourth Sunday after Pentecost—The Work of the Gospel is real, but invisible*

