

# Messenger

St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church & Day School

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November 2010

In the last few issues of the Messenger we have been looking at *Christian Worship A Lutheran Hymnal* in a more in-depth way. We have especially looked at the liturgical sections in the front of the hymnal. In this issue we will look at the section entitled, **Minor Festivals**. This is found on pages 159-160 in the front of *Christian Worship*.

The term Minor Festivals stands in contrast to the Major Festivals, which are a celebration and commemoration of the major acts of Christ's life (Advent through Pentecost in the festival half of the church year). The Festivals of Christmas and Easter have a unique effect on the church's calendar. Since Christmas is a fixed date (December 25), it affects a number of the minor festivals by determining its date. For example, The Annunciation (the appearance of the angel to the Virgin Mary - Luke 1:26ff) is March 25, nine months before the celebration of Christ's birth. Another instance is the Birth of John the Baptist (June 24, sixth months before Christmas). We are told John was six months older than Jesus. Other minor festivals, for example, are the Name of Jesus (January 1, eight days after Christmas) in accordance to the Old Testament law when the newborn male was brought to be circumcised and named. These are a few of the minor festivals included in the list on pages 159-160 on *Christian Worship*.

Easter and the festivals connected to it are somewhat different. Easter is not a fixed date on the calendar (cf. August 2010 Messenger). It moves around and therefore the festivals connected to it, notably Ascension (40 days after Easter and therefore a Thursday) and Pentecost (50 days after Easter) are also moveable.

In *Christian Worship Manual*, these comments are made concerning the minor festivals and the reason for the dating of them:

Some of the most ancient festivals of the church were the commemorations of its martyrs on the traditional day of their death. Several of these died already in New Testament times (e.g. James, Stephen). As the church spread and persecutions increased, each congregation kept a record of those of its number who had met death for their faith. The names of such martyrs, and in time also the names of some persons who were not martyrs, were added to the calendar.

The Lutheran church calendars generally retained only the festivals of those saints named in the Scriptures and of noteworthy events related to our faith. *Christian Worship* includes a total of thirty-three minor festivals. Of first rank are those related to Christ and his apostles. In addition the evangelists and other early Christian men and women are recalled. Among the Minor Festivals are included also the Presentation of the Augsburg Confession, Reformation Day, All Saints' Day, and New Year's Eve. When such Minor Festivals fall on a Sunday outside the major seasons of the year, there is an opportunity to use the Propers for that day. The Propers for Minor Festivals may also be used for weekday worship and devotions on the appropriate day. (*Christian Worship Manual* (p 377))

You will notice a liturgical color is listed with the various festivals. Festivals related to the church are always red. Festivals related to Christ are always white. Saints days are usually red, but sometimes white. The reason for the choice is based on whether or not the saint died as a martyr. If a person died as a martyr, the color red symbolizes the fact that their blood was shed for their confession of faith. If it is believed that a person died a natural death, the color white symbolizes the holy and perfect existence in heaven that became theirs upon their death. Of course, that doesn't suggest that martyrs didn't also receive that blessing, but it does explain the reason behind the two colors.

If you have further questions about the minor festivals there are a number of resources available for further research. One of the best is Luther Reed's, *The Lutheran Liturgy*, which is now sadly out of print, but can be found in many older pastors' libraries. (No, I am not one of those older pastors, despite the testimony of my hairline and gray beard!). Perhaps it can also be found on used book websites.

I hope you find this information useful. It covers some of the common questions that arise concerning why we celebrate or what the minor festivals are all about. As I said before on the occasion of a minor festival a while back, it still is all about Christ and his work. The writer to the Hebrews exhorts us, **"Remember your leaders, who spoke the Word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith."** (Hebrews 13:7) We do look to the saints for our salvation, only Christ! But rather than as many churches do by turning Christ into our "Example In Chief," we do as Scripture exhorts us: viewing the saints of old as examples of faith for us today - imperfect examples, certainly, but patterns who like us find forgiveness in the redemption in the blood of Jesus Christ, Savior of all.

In Christ's service,  
Pastor Paul Schaefer

## **A Note from The Principal**

The school year is well underway! The teachers and students are busy in their regular routines and growing in their knowledge of our Savior, Jesus. We are truly blessed to have such a wonderful group of students and teachers at St. Peter's. Our Lord and Savior is truly showering His blessings of grace and mercy on us. Here are a few of the many highlights from the first quarter of the year:

1. Our enrollment currently stands at 68 students in PreK-8<sup>th</sup> grade.
2. Special thanks to all who helped with this year's teachers' conference. Your donations of food, time, and talents helped make this a successful event. Many teachers attending the conference had many positive comments. THANK YOU!
3. On September 17<sup>th</sup>, our students went to HVL and watched a retired science teacher do many demonstrations about the wonderful world of science. It was truly fun to watch.
4. Congratulations to Miss Diener and the girls volleyball team for completing another successful season. The players performed extremely hard, did a great job, and were exciting to watch.
5. CONGRATULATIONS to the 7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade Floor Hockey team. Wearing their St. Peter's pink shirts, they were able to win the championship. They played six games and prevailed against some tough competition. Way to go Eagles!
6. On October 15<sup>th</sup>, Our Home & School group sponsored a Hayride/Bonfire event. Many of our school's students and parents were in attendance. They all enjoyed hot dogs, chili, and Christian fellowship. We thank the Ribar family for hosting the event. We also thank the many volunteers who helped organize the event.
7. Our Eagles Hoops Camp finished another successful year. The campers had loads of fun and improved their basketball skills during this six week event. We congratulate Emerson Recto, Mark Christenson, Lauren Manor, and Andrew Schroeder for winning the "Hot Shots" shooting competitions. We also thank the many volunteers who helped coach the players, especially Mr. Cording for organizing the camp.
8. On November 9<sup>th</sup>, our school band, directed by Yvonne Alaniva, will perform their first concert of the year. They are planning to play some Patriotic songs in honor of Veterans Day. We hope you can come!
9. On November 20<sup>th</sup>, many of our students will participate in the annual Academic Fair at HVL. They will compete in the areas of math, art, spelling and forensics against the other WELS schools in our area. This is a wonderful opportunity for students to display their God-given talents in contests other than athletics.

God's richest blessings to all of you!  
Mr. Ryan Roth

## **Lutheran Girl Pioneers**

We want to welcome all our new girls this year. We have grown from ten to fourteen members.

This year we are working for our Drama Charm. We will be learning what types of entertainment in our lives are pleasing to God and how we can use them to teach His Word and be good examples. Last month we made puppets out of cardboard cut outs and Popsicle sticks. Then we acted out nursery rhymes on a table stage. The girls were very creative. In October we went to the cider mill and made it successfully through the corn maze. We had great weather and it was a lot of fun.

We will be visiting the nursing home to sing Christmas Carols and deliver a handmade craft.

We want to thank everyone that supports LGP. We feel it is a very worthwhile program where we can share God's love with each other and others.

November 21<sup>st</sup> is Pioneer Sunday; please join us after the service for coffee and sweets.

Loyal in Christ LGP Counselor,  
Sherry Talaga

# Music

The St. Peter's Music Department has started another season of making music to the glory of God. The Senior Choir, Handbell Choir, and the school children have helped beautify our worship services. Junior Choir has started rehearsals.

The Senior Choir and Handbell Choir are preparing special music for the Festival of the Lutheran Reformation, which is today, October 31. There is an area Reformation service at St. John's Lutheran Church, Westland, at 4:00 today. We are entering the End Times portion of the church calendar, when we look forward to Christ's return, and backward to those who are already rejoicing in heaven with our Lord.

The Music Department is also working on music for the Candlelight Service (**December 12 at 7 p.m.**). This year's theme is "The Songs of Advent and Christmas." We will focus on two songs of Isaiah plus the *Magnificat* (Song of Mary), *Gloria in Excelsis*, *Benedictus* (Song of Zechariah), and *Nunc dimittis* (Song of Simeon). . The choirs will be singing some of the many arrangements of these songs, that you are familiar with from our liturgies. There will be plenty of Christmas carols in the program, to be sung by the congregation and choirs. If you enjoy singing these joyful carols, please plan on attending our Candlelight Service.

The Senior Choir, Junior Choir, Handbell Choir, Junior Handbell Choir, soloists, and instrumentalists will be participating in this special service. We all hope that you will attend the Candlelight Service, so that your faith may be edified, and so our musicians can demonstrate the fruits of their hard work to a large number of people. Please show support to these faithful volunteers who bring extra beauty to our worship services all year round. The Candlelight offering is used to buy music so that cost does not have to come out of the regular budget. After the service, there will be a cookies and punch reception for the congregation.

Blessings on your holiday worship.