



Calendar of Events

Sunday, July 5

9:30 am Worship/Communion

Monday, July 6

6:30 pm Fellowship Committee

Tuesday, July 7

Wednesday, July 8

Thursday, July 9

7:30 pm NA

Friday, July 10

Saturday, July 11



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MESSIAH MESSENGER

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The First Commandment: I am the Lord your God, you shall have no other gods.

What does this mean? We are to fear, love, and trust God above all things.

(Martin Luther's Small Catechism)

The First Commandment is the greatest of all the Commandments; in fact Luther will begin his explanation of all the other Commandments by saying “*We are to fear and love God so that...*” so that if we fail to keep any of the other Commandments we are, by definition, also breaking the First Commandment. So, if you’re ever perplexed about “*What sin do I need to confess?*” you can always look to the First Commandment to give you an answer.

When we break the First Commandment, we are committing the grave sin of **Idolatry**. It is important to note that process of making an idol for ourselves goes well beyond simply “*making a graven image.*” Many Protestants will label the Second Commandment as “*You shall not make for yourself a graven image,*” but for us, the issue has never been about “a graven image” per se, but the making of an idol—something other than God that we worship, that we place “*our fear, love, and trust*” in. Many of our worst idols are, in fact, not “graven” at all, but are more nebulous, more ethereal. It is easy to identify a physical object that has become an idol and to destroy it. It is far harder to locate the real idol that is hiding behind the material object, and thus, remains stubbornly in place.

Let me offer an illustration: when I was in Seminary, a popular phrase was “*The \$ is the biggest idol in our world.*” Not just “money,” but the “*Dollar Sign*” itself. And, true enough we are told that “*money is the root of all evil*” (borrowed loosely from 1 Timothy 6:10) and “*You cannot serve God and wealth...*” (Matthew 6:24). But is “money” in this case the true idol? I’d argue that the true idol here is the one “money” serves—us. “*The Self*” is the deeper idol in our culture. “Money” allows “*The Self*” the means to “do what I want,” “when I want to do it,” and “how I’d like it to be.” Notice the common denominator: “**I**”. Who and what is aggrieved when “Money” is taken away? It is “*The Self*” that is pinched, that is constrained; suddenly I might not get to take the vacation that **I** wanted to, I might have “to settle” for something else. I might not get “the retirement” that **I** wanted, I might have to compromise. I might have to fly “coach” instead of “first class,” I might have to eat “with all the other people” instead of at an exclusive restaurant.

Am I accusing “you” of being an idolater? Yes...and...no. I am pointing out that our culture is prone to setting up a particular set of idols that cannot be simply identified as “*a graven image*” and taken out and burned. Obviously, if you are placing your “*fear, love, and trust*” in some graven object—your car, perhaps, or your (physical) house—then, YES, you ought to take a hard look at that. But the harder work of identifying an idol is less tangible: is it your “credit rating”

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Sunday, July 5, 2026

SERVICE ASSISTANTS

Ushers: Fred Harbaugh, Jean Nolan, Diana Rooker, Susan Christ, Greg Eckenrode
Lay Asst: Dave Bausinger; **Comm. Asst.:** Mary Schultz; **Altar Guild:** Susan Bryan, April Gardner; **Greeters/Presenters:** Al Cole, Judy Berfield; **Flower Delivery:** Jody Fullmer

Sunday, June 28: Attendance: *In Church: 90; Online: 8; Offering: \$1,937.75*

IN BLESSED MEMORY

The Altar Flowers are given to the Glory of God and in loving memory of Alfred and Edith Kaufman, by their daughter Linda Miller and family.

The Basket of Flowers is given to the Glory of God and with thanks for placing him in our lives. In loving memory of Rob Frey, beloved son, brother, nephew and cousin by Debbie Frey and family.

The Sanctuary Lamp burns in loving memory of our son David Hutchinson.

BIBLE READINGS

Sunday, July 5: *Zechariah 9:9-12; Romans 7:15-25a; Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30*

Monday, July 6: *Psalm 131; Jeremiah 27:10-17; Romans 1:18-25*

Tuesday, July 7: *Psalm 131; Jeremiah 28:10-17; Romans 3:1-8*

Wednesday, July 8: *Psalm 131; Jeremiah 13:1-11; John 13:1-17*

Thursday, July 9: *Psalm 65:1-13; Isaiah 48:1-5; Romans 2:12-16*

Friday, July 10: *Psalm 65:1-13; Isaiah 48:6-11; Romans 15:14-21*

Saturday, July 11: *Psalm 65:1-13; Isaiah 52:1-6; John 12:44-50*



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Pastoral Care Number: Please call (570) 326-9171. (Available 24 hours a day)
During work hours and the office will assist you. After hours, please press "3" for a Pastoral Emergency to be connected directly to the Pastor.

Office Hours: Monday-Thursday, 9:00 A.M – 3:00 P.M and Friday, 9:00 A.M. – 12:00 P.M.

The office hours for Monday, July 13th and Tuesday, July 14th will be 9:00am – 12:00 pm I will be on vacation. Please have any *articles for the Messenger and Bulletin* to the office by noon on Thursday, July 9th so it will be sure to get printed in the July 15th publication of the Messenger. Thank you, Pam



The Library Corner – Highlighted Books



Another Great Summer Family movie - **Spike and the Silly, Mixed - up Sleepover DVD** - Learning to listen is a very important part of growing up.

When Spike goes over to Lemon's house for a sleepover, she doesn't listen to her dad and forgets to bring some essential things-with frustrating (but very funny) results! This is #2 in the Quigley's Village DVD series in the Family

Movies section of our library.

Adult - **The Big Guy Upstairs - You, Him and How it all Works** - If there is a God, what does He want with me? God feels so far away. How am I supposed to interact with Him? Does God really care about me and my life? Isn't God just angry all the time? How does God feel about me? How do I know God is listening? Maybe you can relate to some of these (or similar) questions. The answers are here--no religious jargon, no pretense, and no nonsense. Just simple, incredible and engaging insights and true stories. Found in the Adult Non-fiction section of our library.

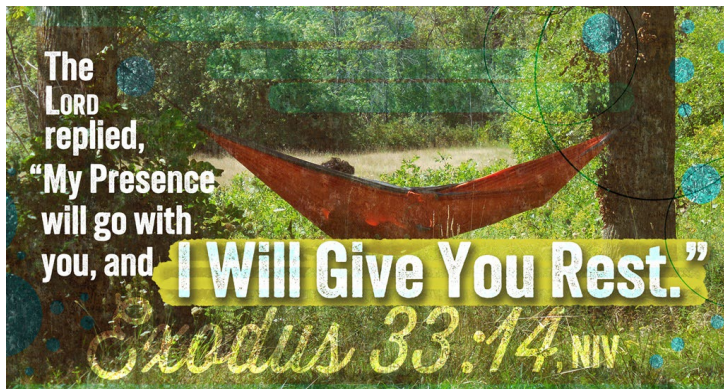


It is time that we cover more flower cans. I have the wallpaper cut; all I need are several volunteers. If you are interested, please contact the church office with days of the week and times that you would be available. Then we can set one or two days that fit the greatest number of individual's schedules. Thank you. Chuck Luppert

Eucharistic Ministers will be sent out Sunday, July 19th. Please let the office know if you are not available to take communion. If anyone is homebound, can't get to church and would like to receive Communion please notify the church office at 570-326-9171.



They are expecting extreme heat for the end of this week. Please drink plenty of fluids, stay out of the sun, and stay in air conditioned rooms. Please check on your neighbors and remember your pets (keeping inside is preferred). If your pets have to be outside, make sure they have plenty of water and shade.



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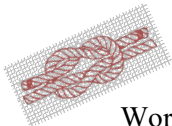
that you “*fear, love, and trust*”? Is it your investment portfolio that you “*fear, love, or trust*”? Is it your “standing in the community” that you place your “*fear, love, and trust*” in?

Ultimately our idols will be identified by, if we were to lose them, we would become the most angry, the most agitated over. If I can “take” something from you without much despair, then it is not your idol. If a tornado were to destroy your house and you can “pick up and go on,” then your house is not your idol. If however, you are “willing to kill” over something...well, then you are, perhaps, in danger of having an idol. The things we are willing to fight over to keep for ourselves bear careful scrutiny lest we fall prey to idolatry.

In the end, the First Commandment becomes the simplest and the most complicated of all the Commandments. As any confirmand will tell you, it is “the simplest” of all Luther’s explanations: *Fear, Love, and Trust*. Easy peasy. But when we stop and ask the hard question, we begin to find this Commandment deep and complicated. ***Fear, love, and trust God above all else.*** Not simple or easy at all.

Pax Christi;

Pr. Jerry Kliner, STS



Come join us for our “Knotty Party” on Wednesday, July 15, 9-11 a.m.

Knot-A-Sack Event – because it’s “not” a sack until it’s “knotted!”

One step remains to complete the backpacks that were sewn for the Lutheran World Relief School Kits before we fill them – to thread the cord through the loops and tie knots to secure the two ends together. That would be quite a task for one or two people, but working together we can accomplish so much more – ***and the fellowship we share is the icing on the cake!***

350 backpacks of the 927 sewn have been strung so far, but the children are eager to string more. We did not have as much time allotted to stringing the bags this year, so we invited the class to join us for the Knotty Party to string more sacks while we grown-ups tie knots.

Light refreshments will be offered. If you would like to help out but do not feel that you can manage the knots, please come anyway ... make friends! The children can show you how to string a bag! Or we can put you to work checking the knots, counting, and stacking the finished packs neatly on the cart ... or just enjoy the fellowship. 😊

Many hands make light work! We had such a great time last year ... we really hope to see you there!



Camp Mount Luther Day Camp will be held the week of July 13- 17, from 9am – 3 pm, at Trinity Episcopal Church, 844 West Fourth Street, Williamsport. Staff from Camp Mount Luther will lead the camp for grades K–6. Activities include morning devotions, games, arts and crafts, bible study, sports, music, special events, and local field trips. Camp is FREE! Lunch, snacks and drinks are provided. Register by calling the church at 570-322-0126.



School Supply Kits Collection for Lutheran World Relief

Goodness Gracious, Awesome God! Donations have started pouring in already, even before we officially kicked off the shopping portion of the School Kits Project! And we found some good deals online so we've already spent most of the cash that was donated by Bible School children.

Nothing about this project is a perfect science and the only predictable thing about it is that it is unpredictable! It's always a judgement call on our part on when/how to spend the money ... *What supplies will come in? How long will the current sale prices last? What might go on sale next?* So we spend the cash donations very judiciously.

Especially needed at this time: **safety scissors, 24-pack crayons, black or blue stick pens, UN-sharpened pencils, and 2½" erasers.** (Staples, Walmart, & Target have the best prices at this time.) We are actually ahead of the game this year on 70-page spiral notebooks but we can still use some more.

Monetary donations are welcome! We can shop the local deals with our tax-exempt status to save money, and we can get great deals online when we shop in bulk and buy enough to get free shipping. Make checks payable to Messiah Lutheran Church with LWR School Kits in the memo line. Cash should be placed in an envelope marked LWR School Kits.

Items may be placed in the schoolhouse in the narthex now through August 16.

Questions? Call Sally at (570) 547-6193 or call/text Kathy at (570) 651-2802

To all who have donated or volunteered, thank you for heeding the call!

✪ Blessed to Be a Blessing ✪

✂ CLIP'N'SAVE



Lutheran World Relief

SCHOOL SUPPLY KITS ITEMS WE ARE COLLECTING

and how many of each are needed per pack:

70-page <u>spiral</u> notebooks (<i>wide ruled or college ruled</i>)	x 4 per backpack
#2 pencils – must be <u>UN-sharpened!</u>	x 5 per backpack
Black or blue <u>stick</u> (<i>not click</i>) ink pens (<i>NO gel ink</i>)	x 5 per backpack
Blunt <u>safety</u> scissors	x 1 per backpack
24-pack crayons (<i>any brand – basic colors</i>)	x 1 per backpack
2 ½" erasers	x 1 per backpack

Monetary donations welcome, too!