



PILGRIM LUTHERAN CHURCH

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[www.pilgrimkenmorelcms.org](http://www.pilgrimkenmorelcms.org)

*A Congregation in Mission, Community and Service*

# *PILGRIM'S PROGRESS*

**AUGUST 2020**

PASTOR: Rev. Ben Eder

SUNDAY SCHOOL: 9:00 AM

EDITOR: Mary Werth

TUESDAY BIBLE STUDY: 9:30 AM

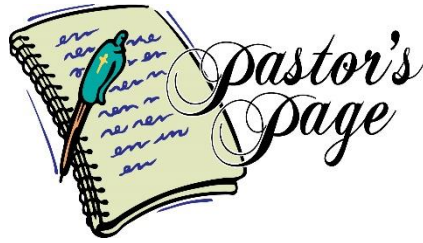
ASSOC. EDITOR:

WORSHIP: 10:00 AM



For I know  
the plans I have  
for you,  
declares the LORD,  
plans for welfare  
and not for evil,  
to give you a future  
and a hope.

Jeremiah 29:11



The old joke goes, “How many Lutherans does it take to change a light bulb?” “CHANGE?!”

It is human nature not to welcome change, or at least not too much of it. Yet, since the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic we’ve had nothing but change: change in how we live, how we work, how we shop, even how we worship.

We may not like how things have developed over the past six months or so; nor do we have a clear picture of what the next six months or even a year will bring.

Personally, I believe that living with the pandemic will take longer than we may realize. In the best case scenario, a vaccine may be developed that will solve the problem. Unless or until a vaccine or other treatments emerge, living in this new reality will be with us for some time.

One thing I have learned during this onset of the Coronavirus is that we can live with it!

Most of us have remained healthy and have been able to live our lives as normally as possible.

There are difficulties to be sure: the fear of getting infected by an unpredictable virus; unemployment; and separation from loved ones all add to the burden.

I would encourage you to live your life as normally as possible, keeping in mind the challenges of this virus and the conditions that we currently find ourselves in. “For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.” – 2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy 1:7

There are some who are reluctant to attend in-person services because they are concerned for their health or the health of others, and that is perfectly understandable. However, if you are going to other places where people are gathered, you should be able to come to church.

Yes, there are some inconveniences in attending services at the present time: every other pew is roped off; masks must be worn inside the building; we encourage worshippers to keep distance from each other if they can.

However, to let these inconveniences stop you from attending church is not a good enough reason. The services are brief, and you do hear the Word preached, receive the Sacrament of our Lord’s Holy Supper, and can still enjoy brief fellowship time with the saints.

Things have changed, but they won’t stay this way forever. Someday, perhaps in the not too distant future, we will look back at this time and marvel at all we endured.

Of this we can be certain: “*Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.*” – Hebrews 13:8

Your Servant in Christ,

Pastor Ben Eder



*Happy Birthday!*

|                 |         |
|-----------------|---------|
| Mike Eder       | Aug. 1  |
| Gary Smith      | Aug. 11 |
| Carol Obot      | Aug. 22 |
| Adaline Trimmer | Aug. 23 |
| Eric Fellner    | Aug. 26 |



Aug. 26      Tim & Sharon McGuan

(If you want your birthday or anniversary in the newsletter, please let me know so I can add it to my list. You may contact me by phone – 534-6922; email: [madragon99@yahoo.com](mailto:madragon99@yahoo.com) or just leave a note in my church mailbox. Thank you. – Mary Werth)



## **ESTHER CIRCLE**

At our July 13<sup>th</sup> meeting, we started a 2-part Bible study titled “Come and See, Go and Tell” led by Sharon McGuan. The second part was on Friday, 7/17. Thank you, Sharon.

Our mission project that we are supporting this year is “The Buffalo Burrito Project”, that feeds the homeless in Buffalo. Since we were unable to have our annual bake sale in June and the Pot Faith meals at church, we are asking for donations. Please make checks out to The Esther Circle (with notation “Burrito Project”) and mail to the church or place in the church mail slot at the side door. Also, please continue to collect cancelled stamps and old printer ink cartridges and give to Pat Watkins, Dash’s receipts to Sue Holway and loose change for “mites” to Karen Smith. Thank you for your support.

We will be having the Terri Lynn candies & nuts sale. See the flyer in this issue.

Our next meeting is Monday, August 10<sup>th</sup> at 12:30 pm via Zoom. All women of Pilgrim are welcome.

Prayers go out to you for continued good health & safety. God Bless!

Carol Obot & Sue Holway



**Shine on, friends!**

Friendship is one of the greatest gifts a human being can receive. It is a bond beyond common goals, common interests or common histories. It is a bond stronger than sexual union can create, deeper than a shared fate can solidify and even more intimate than the bonds of marriage or community.

Friendship is being with the other in joy and sorrow, even when we cannot increase the joy or decrease the sorrow. It is a unity of souls that gives nobility and sincerity to love. Friendship makes all of life shine brightly.

—Henri Nouwen





## **Esther Circle is sponsoring a Fall Fundraiser**

*Profits will benefit our  
End of the Year Charities.*

Our premium nuts, dried fruits, and candy are unlike anything you'll find at a typical grocery or convenience store. With products that range from Dark Chocolate Cranberries to Giant Pecans to Deluxe Mixed Nuts.

**We will be doing ONLINE Orders that are shipped directly to your home, it does have a \$5.00 shipping fee for any size order.**

VISIT <https://pilgrimesthercircle.terrylynn.com/>

We are also doing Order Taking with FREE shipping like last year with a person taking your order then delivering to your home in place of picking up at the church.

**PRICES ARE THE SAME AS LAST FALL**

*If you are interested in helping to sell or simply place an order, please contact Dianne Wuerch*

email

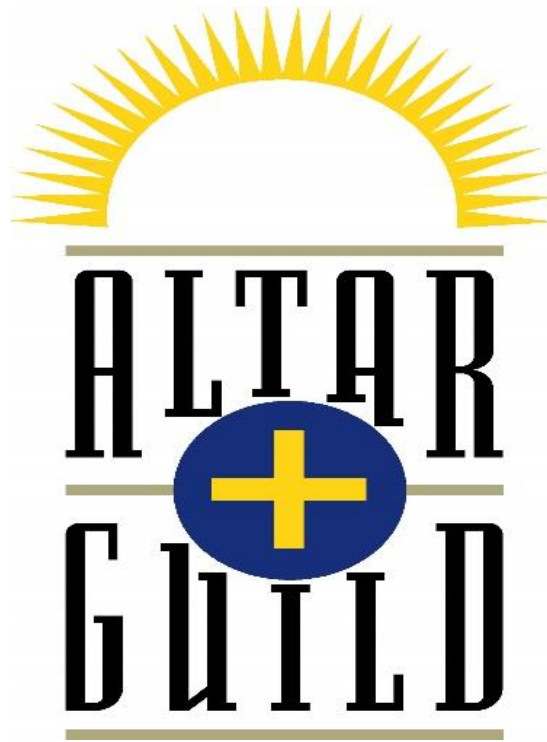
[diannefeyeswuerch@gmail.com](mailto:diannefeyeswuerch@gmail.com)

text

716-481-2599

**A great gift for Thanksgiving and Christmas!!  
Start Dates will be earlier and announced soon**

Thank You  
Esther Circle



If you would like a new way to serve your Lord, we have a suggestion. You can serve God by preparing Pilgrim's altar for worship services. We are badly in need of several more Altar Guild members.

The purpose of the Altar Guild is 3-fold: to serve, to further spiritual commitment, and to accomplish spiritual goals. First, we serve by making sure the church is maintained and set up for the times and seasons of the church year. This includes setting up the Communion service and then washing and putting away the vessels after the service. It also includes changing the altar cloths and banners, checking envelopes and pencils in the pews, dusting the windowsills and pews, and listing the hymns on the board. We can all participate—young and old, men and women.

Secondly, commitment is a requirement. We are serving God's people so we need to be reliable, devoted to the tasks, humble and reverent in this work, and joyful for the privilege.

Thirdly, this work is done for the glory of our Lord: to communicate the Gospel and glorify God, to strengthen the worshippers in faith and love, and to maintain ceremonies and practices that preserve good order in the church.

Please pray about this and consider whether you could serve in this way. You may contact Mary Werth or Sue Holway. We will show you what we do, work **WITH** you, and accommodate a flexible schedule.

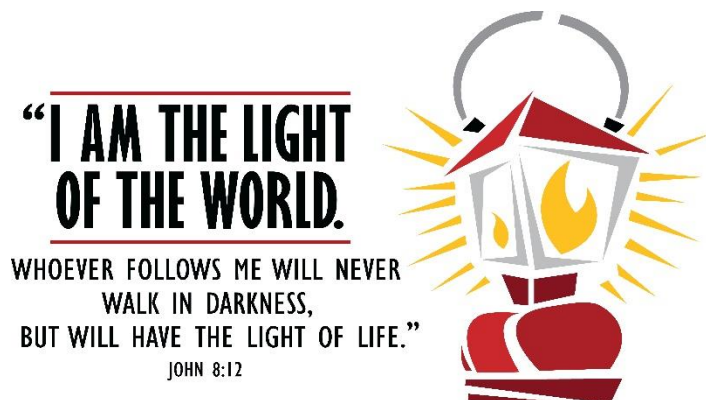
### **CHILDREN'S BOOKLETS PROVIDE GOOD NEWS DURING DIFFICULT TIMES**

Heather is a single mom who struggles to make ends meet. As quarantine restrictions began to progress due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Heather sought assistance from a local elementary school that passed out food for students who rely on school meals but were no longer attending classes. The school gave students packages with food, drinks, and even included books for the children to read. When Heather and her daughter picked up their food package, one of the ladies offered a blessing to them and Heather immediately knew she had something she could give back to include in the packages. She went back to her car to grab some LHM children's booklets and gave them to the workers. The women were so impressed that they asked where they could get more to pass out to children who need to hear the Good News of Jesus Christ during this difficult time. Heather was glad that she always keeps LHM booklets with her because you never know when, or where, you'll meet someone and have a chance to share His love.

### **RADIO PROGRAM BRINGS WOMAN BACK TO CHRISTIANITY**

Mali learned about God when she was a little girl, but she married a man who did not believe in Christ, so she stopped doing anything to grow her Christian faith. She recently heard a few of the **LHM-Thailand** radio programs and decided that now is the time to know God again. She contacted the LHM-Thailand office and signed up to start their **Bible Correspondence Courses\*** right away. She also signed her children up for the children's courses. She shared with the LHM staff that she is happy she can learn about God and get closer to Him now. The LHM-Thailand team connected her to a local church and the pastor already reached out to invite her to attend upcoming worship services. Mali continues to listen to the radio programs and grow her faith.

**\*Bible Correspondence Courses** are Bible-based studies that enable people of all ages, faiths and educational levels to explore the Bible's teachings and the Christian faith from the security and comfort of their own homes.



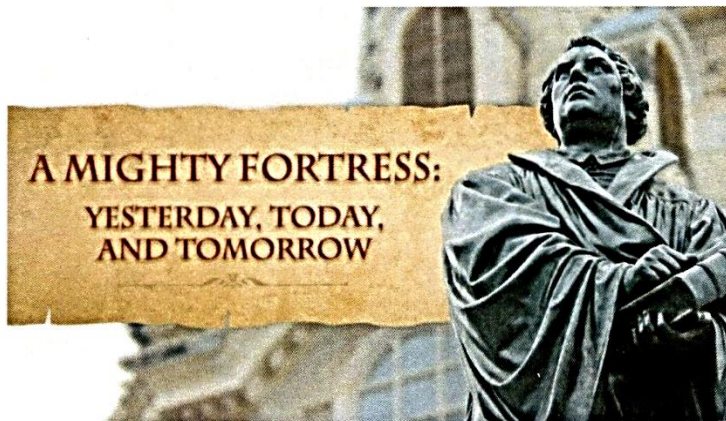


# A Mighty Fortress: Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow

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July 02, 2018

by Charles R. Swindoll



Recently, I led a tour through the ancient city of Jerusalem. Early one morning, I looked out across the skyline and read [Psalm 46](#). You may know the first verse by heart:

*God is our refuge and strength,  
always ready to help in times of trouble.*

I thought of how God had shown Himself strong in the very place I had come to visit, protecting His people through centuries of endless wars. The setting gave the psalm new meaning.

Perhaps when they penned [Psalm 46](#) the descendants of Korah had endured yet another grueling battle. To remember God's greatness, they opened by declaring Him their "refuge and strength." They closed with the climax of their praise:

*The LORD of Heaven's Armies is here among us;  
the God of Israel is our fortress. ([Psalm 46:11](#))*

What was true for Korah's descendants is true for us. God is our refuge and strength, our help. God is our fortress.

The maverick monk Martin Luther, in the village of Wittenberg, pondered those truths as he translated the original Hebrew into the German vernacular, "*Ein Feste Burg Ist Unser Gott*." In our language, Luther's translation became a hymn nearly every believer knows, "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God." The first verse of that grand theme rings with triumphant confidence:

*A mighty fortress is our God, a bulwark never failing;  
our helper he amid the flood of mortal ills prevailing.<sup>1</sup>*

What a passionate clarion call to commitment! No matter how you translate those words, they smell of blood and battle. They drip with discipline. You can almost hear the report of guns and the clashing of swords. It is indeed the *battle* hymn of the Reformation.



Luther lived over 500 years ago, back in the sixteenth century—a dark age of superstitions, immorality, and spiritual exploitation. In the twenty-first century there's just as much reason to sound that battle hymn, for despite all our advances, our times are still awfully dark. Those powerful words shine in the spiritual darkness of our lives today, just as they shone in Luther's day. God was and is and always will be the mighty fortress we need.

The benefits of embracing that truth are palpable. Psalm 46 names three:

- Because He is our fortress, we will not fear.
- Because He is our fortress, we will not be moved.
- Because He is our fortress, we will not strive or be anxious.

Because God is our refuge and strength, nothing disturbs our peace. I'm talking about the kind of peace Isaiah described:

*You will keep in perfect peace  
all who trust in you,  
all whose thoughts are fixed on you! (Isaiah 26:3)*

Literally, the prophet wrote, "He will keep him in shalom, shalom." That idiom of duplication, in the Hebrew tongue, expresses the superlative. "Shalom, shalom" amounts to "total peace," "absolute peace," "perfect peace." Such peace doesn't depend on others acknowledging God—and that's a very good thing.

This spring, the prestigious National Geographic Society put on a 10-part television series called *One Strange Rock*. It's all about our planet, how everything began, and what makes life possible here. The program and accompanying articles are well-researched, carefully written, and beautifully produced by sincere, scholarly, top-notch scientists. Yet there isn't even a throwaway hint mentioning our Creator God. Of course not. The Creator doesn't fit the reasoning of the sophisticated. They have no place for Him. But His existence and careful shaping of this marvelous rock we call home is clearly revealed in Scripture: "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth" (Genesis 1:1).

Rather than lamenting our culture's failure to acknowledge our great and powerful God, let's turn our full attention to Him who is enthroned above us, who reigns over us, because He alone is our shalom, shalom. He alone is the Creator—the God of heaven and earth who brings the snow to the ground, calls lightning from the sky, and mixes our atmosphere with the perfect elements to sustain life. He IS, whether anyone acknowledges Him or not.

That same God poured steel into Martin Luther's soul as he hammered his Ninety-Five Theses on the door of that Wittenberg church. And that same God who marched before Luther marches before us as we pursue His Great Commission. He alone can give light to the shadows of our dark age. He alone can relieve our fears and mingle His peace with our pain. He alone knows the earth and all its inhabitants and His plan for everyone.

He alone is our mighty fortress.

1. Martin Luther, "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God," (1526).

## God amid pandemic

Last spring, life changed as we became familiar with terms such as social distancing, flattening the curve and self-quarantining. We could hardly believe the closed schools, businesses and especially churches — just as Holy Week and Easter drew near! The coronavirus ran rampant in the world. Where was God?

But as the spread continued, many civic leaders stepped up, calmly informing us of the facts, of actions being taken to mitigate the crisis and of how we could help. Healthcare professionals risked their lives and endured separation from families; teachers drew on astounding stores of creativity to teach online; pastors delivered sermons and lessons to empty sanctuaries as members listened and prayed while living in lockdown. Surely God was present — through them!

Then I remembered how God assures us through Isaiah, “Fear not! When you pass through the waters, the fires, yes, even the pandemics of this world, I will be with you” (43:1-2, paraphrased). And Jesus echoes, “I am with you always” (Matthew 28:20).

—Sandy Hyland

## Patient attention, valuable discoveries

For many people, the coronavirus pandemic has been a test of patience — or worse. Medically vulnerable people face an anxious time of hypervigilance. Furloughed workers wait on hold or in lines for assistance. Special events have been canceled or rescheduled.

Those not impacted directly deal with assorted frustrations and inconveniences. Many people are learning the benefit of slowing down, being present (even virtually) to others and practicing patient attention.

Interestingly, scientist Isaac Newton did some of his best work when the plague forced Cambridge University to close. At home, the inquisitive student invented calculus and developed groundbreaking theories of gravity and optics. Later Newton called 1666 his *annus mirabilis* (“year of wonders”) and reportedly said, “If I have made any valuable discoveries, it [owes] more to patient attention than to any other talent.”

What have you discovered during the Covid-19 crisis? What appreciations have you developed for aspects of life you may have previously taken for granted? What has social distancing taught you about the value of neighbors, church, community volunteering?

During the pandemic, what have you learned about persistence and God’s presence? What empathy do you now feel for writers of words such as “I wait for the LORD, my whole being waits, and in his word I put my hope” (Psalm 130:5, NIV)?

# Puzzle!

Locate the names of all the Old Testament books, using your Bible's table of contents for reference. Numbered books, such as 1 Samuel, appear only once — without numbers.

S E T S A I S E L C C E D H T  
O E J D R I N Y G L E I N A D  
N J O S E E S T H E R G A I M  
G E S E E U B A H O S E A D U  
O R H Z S L T M I J O N I A H  
F E U E O E C E U A A E H B A  
S M A K M V H I R N H S C O N  
O I C I A I H A N O J I A A R  
L A M E N T A T I O N S L R U  
O H H L N I G H B N R O A Z T  
M I A Z E C H A R I A H M E H  
O D C G K U K K A B A H C Y O  
N K I N G S B R E V O R P R T  
K V M P S A L M S U D O X E U  
J U D G E S I S A M U E L U Z

**THE DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS FOR THE  
SEPTEMBER NEWSLETTER IS AUGUST 24<sup>TH</sup>.**