

Ripples

Stillwater Free Lutheran Church

“Sharing Jesus Christ with Our Neighbors”

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“Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the LORD, because you know that your labor in the LORD is not in vain.” – 1 Corinthians 15:58

From the Pastor's Desk

Are we in a Spiritual War?

With all the issues facing us today (COVID, Vaccines, Defunding the Police, Violence in cities etc.) many people have asked me - "Are we in the end times?"

I usually answer with an affirmative answer. Yes, we are in the end times, and Jesus will return soon!

I think that is the same thoughts that the Apostles had. And as we look at all the troubles around us, I am reminded what Jesus tells us in Luke (21:34) **But watch yourselves lest your hearts be weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and cares of this life, and that day come upon you suddenly like a trap.**

We need to be alert and doing the work our Father has set before us - specifically building the Kingdom, and know that bad stuff does indeed happen in the world around us.

With that in mind - we also need to be aware that we are indeed in a war. A spiritual war!

Sometimes it is hard to truly comprehend a threat that comes from things that are unseen. But God warns us that spiritual warfare is very real and to arm ourselves with what He has given us. He tells us:

For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. (Ephesians 6:12)

For though we walk in the flesh, we are not waging war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds. We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ (2 Corinthians 10:3-5)

Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. (1 Peter 5:8)

Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.
(James 4:7)

There are two primary errors when it comes to spiritual warfare. Over-emphasis and under-emphasis. Some blame every sin, every conflict, and every problem on demons that need to be cast out.

Others completely ignore the spiritual realm and the fact that the Bible tells us our battle is against spiritual powers.

The key to successful spiritual warfare is finding the biblical balance. Jesus sometimes cast demons out of people; other times He healed people with no mention of the demonic. Paul instructs Christians to wage war against the sin in themselves (Romans 6) and warns us to oppose the schemes of the devil (Ephesians 6:10-18).

So - how do we fight in this war that is waging all around us? We put on the Whole Armor of God as found in Ephesians 6:13-18.

We are to stand firm with the belt of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, the gospel of peace, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, the sword of the Spirit, and by praying in the Spirit.

Think of putting on the armor as a checklist or a reminder. Putting on the armor accomplishes two things:

It reminds you of what you need to do to be successful.

It reminds you of Scriptures that you can recite, during the day, as needed.

Reciting, believing and obeying Scripture results in the supernatural power you need to be successful.

Putting on the armor doesn't magically protect you. And the name of Jesus is not a magic incantation that causes demons to flee from before us. The seven sons of Sceva are an example of what can happen when people presume an authority they have not been given (Acts 19:13-16). Even Michael the archangel did not rebuke Satan in his own power but said, "The Lord rebuke you!" (Jude 1:9). When we start talking to the devil, we run the risk of

being led astray as Eve was (Genesis 3:1-7). Our focus should be on God, not demons; we speak to Him, not them.

So, here are some suggestions when putting on the Armor of God.

First, Buckling the belt of truth about you. Here are some truths: God loves me {Romans 8:38}, I have a sound mind {2 Timothy 1:7}, No weapon that is formed against you will succeed {Isaiah 54:17}, I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. {Philippians 4:13}, greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world. {1 John 4:4}.

Second, the breastplate of righteousness. Here are some things to help with this: I will set nothing wicked before my eyes {Psalm 101:3}, Love your enemies and pray for them. {Matthew 5:44}, Take every thought captive {2 Corinthians 10:5}.

Third, fit your feet with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. This Scripture "refers to a believer's stability or surefootedness from the gospel which gives him peace so he can stand in the battle. Some Scripture to build on: God has given me everything I need to live a godly life {2 Peter 1:3}, God has given me peace {John 14:27}, Trust and obey, pray without ceasing. {1 Thessalonians 5:17}, Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid {John 14:27}, Fix your thoughts on Jesus {Hebrews 12:2}.

Fourth, the shield of faith with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one: Be anxious for nothing {Philippians 4:6}, Trust in Him at all times {Psalm 62:8}, Be strong and courageous {Joshua 1:9}, Whenever I am afraid, I will trust in You {Psalm 56:3}, For we live by faith, not by sight {2 Corinthians 5:7}, The Lord is for me; I will not fear {Psalm 118:6}.

Fifth, the helmet of salvation: put on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet, the hope of salvation. {1 Thessalonians 5:8}, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right . . . dwell on these things {Philippians 4:8}, I will praise You, O Lord, with my whole heart . . . I will be glad and rejoice in You {Psalm 9:1}.

Sixth, the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God: Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. {1 Thessalonians 5:16-18}, Be on the alert, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong {1 Corinthians 16:13}, Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray {James 5:13}.

Finally, pray. Prayer is essential. Pray, in faith, without doubting when you come under spiritual attacks. Get into the habit of bringing all your problems to God. Get into the habit of coming back to prayer, from time to time, during the day. And remember, prayer is always a two-way conversation – be sure to listen when you pray.

So that's it. The battleground is primarily in our minds. The idea is to base our thoughts and behavior on Scripture—not on how we're feeling. If we go by our feelings, we will be defeated.

Ephesians 6 makes it possible for us to understand the spiritual battle we are in—and win. It makes it possible for us to experience the blessings of God—rather than the torment of the devil.

Remember – One of the Devils favorite tactics is to tell us lies and to speak them so convincingly that we hold them for the truth. One of Satan's strategies is to present us with a worst-case scenario of our future in order to arouse fear in us. He can take advantage of our vulnerabilities and circumstances, and even use people to make us worry, instill hopelessness, and rob us of joy.

The enemy will use anything and anyone to steal, kill, and destroy you (John 10:10). The enemy will even use the people closest to you. But God has given you armor to help defend yourself. We, as children of God, cannot go into war alone, just as an army does not go to the front lines alone. So, we need to make use of what God has given us in battle. After all, God is our strength and shield of protection (Psalm 28:7). He will never leave nor forsake us (Deuteronomy 31:6).

In summary, what are the keys to success in spiritual warfare?

We rely on God's power, not our own. We put on the whole armor of God. We draw on the power of Scripture—the Word of God is the Spirit's sword. We pray in perseverance and holiness, making our appeal to God. We stand firm (Ephesians 6:13-14); we submit to God; we resist the devil's work (James 4:7), knowing that the Lord of hosts is our protector. "Truly he is my rock and my salvation; he is my fortress; I will never be shaken" (Psalm 62:2).

Feeding the Flathead

We served 58 to-go bags with turkey sandwiches, fruit, cheese sticks, sweets and chips. As always, they are very thankful for these free meals our church provides! With the warm temps yesterday, we also had cold bottled water.

Hats off to Hattie S. as she provided homemade baked cookies and fig bars! Thank you also to Shelby for filling the bags and getting the ice and water together and helping serve.

As I had prepared for 65 this month, we took the extras to the police station again for the night staff. The attendant smiled and was grateful as he remembered we did the same last month!

Our next date is September 27th. We hope to serve a hot meal this time.

Please let Susan or I know if you would be interested in cooking or baking!

From Lori and Sue

Heritage Committee

A few congregation members and others that have connections to Stillwater Lutheran Church from its beginning (circa 1911) have been discussing forming this committee. These members are Mike Horn and his sister Karen Beresok, Elaine Lessor, Neila Elgin, Rick Prestbye, Art Hanson and Julie Hanson. The purpose of this committee would be to share stories, pictures and information related to their families' experiences of church, school, and social activities in the surrounding community. Activities such as the local Grange dances and Bissel school functions. The focus would be on how these families found their social life and church involvement the main part of life. It is no doubt there were a lot less distractions in the early days of this rural community. Look for more information on this subject as this committee evolves!

Cookbooks are still available!
See Rachel T to get yours
\$10.00 each and all proceeds go to the
Activity Center

September Featured Recipe:

OLD FASHIONED RICE PUDDING

<i>1 Cup Long Grain White Rice</i>	<i>3 TBSP Sugar</i>
<i>1 Cup Chopped Walnuts</i>	<i>3½ Cup Water</i>
<i>2¼ Cup Milk</i>	<i>1½ tsp Cinnamon</i>
<i>3½ or 3¾ oz. Package Regular Cook Vanilla Pudding</i>	<i>½ Cup Raisins</i>
	<i>¾ tsp Vanilla</i>

In large saucepan, combine rice, water, walnuts and cinnamon. Bring to a boil. Cover; reduce heat and simmer 20 minutes or until rice is tender. Sprinkle pudding mix and raisins over rice. Gradually add milk, cook until mixture just comes to a boil, stirring constantly. Remove from heat and stir in sugar and vanilla. Serve warm or chilled.

Elaine Lessor

Free Flyers Youth Group

The Free Flyers are committed to serve the community through our strength in Jesus Christ.

Now that I just sent my August newsletter in, I guess here's the September one.

If this one sound exactly like the last one, just with a different month written down, that's just a coincidence *wink wink*. Just kidding of course (I know I never joke around, sorry to throw you off), but I haven't been here quite long enough to start recycling newsletters yet, so here's a new topic to consider. Our Christian walks sometimes feel like vehicles, this is not a spot-on analogy, but doesn't it seem like once we get one thing fixed, boom, something else needs to be worked on (don't let your relationship turn into a Ford). They require constant care and if you don't prioritize them, they will sit there and rust and become useless. One thing I feel that my "check-engine light" has come on recently for is selflessness. Yes, I just confirmed I'm human, even being in a role of servanthood, I struggle with thinking about others before myself. We do not have trials just to keep to ourselves though, in James 5:16 the Spirit breathes the words, "Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working." So first, I ask for prayer, in my ministry and personal life, and two, when we think about others and have compassion, we will feel renewed! Mark 12:30 reminds us of the greatest commandment, to love the Lord with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength, and he goes on later to write about the second greatest commandment, love your neighbor as you would love yourself. When we are loving others and putting them above ourselves, we are loving God, if we don't do the second greatest commandment, are we really succeeding at doing the first? I encourage all of you to show somebody Christ's love, and treat them how you would like to be treated, it only takes one spark to start a fire. Speaking of fires, another great bridge into our awesome youth group activities.

We officially wrapped up summer group on the first day of school for West Valley, September 1st, someone might have to explain the definition of summer to me, but it was a great time had by all if you ask me. We went bowling at the Pin & Cue in Whitefish to finish the summer festivities off, and it was definitely much less painful than the previous event we participated in: redneck finger painting, or paintball as some call it. On August 28th, Tim and Marla Bartholomew graciously let us redecorate their backyard in the form of some awesome paintball matches. There were 15 kids and 4 adult "chaperones" in total, and praise the Lord for a safe, but very enjoyable outing for everyone, and again, a huge thank you to the Bartholomew's! As I mentioned in the previous newsletter, our camp at the Spear O' Wigwam resort in Buffalo, WY has been postponed to next summer, but for the few kids whose schedules

had permitted them to attend (3), we went to the Amazing Fun Center in Coram, as a temporary substitute, where I was humbled in the delicate, artful sport of mini-golf. Whenever I write these, I look back at my most recent newsletter to make sure I'm not double-dipping, and I saw on the August one, that I said youth group starts September 12th. I'm really good at telling people when they're wrong, so I had a talk with myself, and am here to tell you that school-year youth group starts up on Wednesday the 15th. As a refresher for everyone, our youth group goes from 6th-12th grade, and is 6-7:30 pm every Wednesday night, so if you or anyone you know has a student this age, or you would like to learn more about the program, please reach out to me and I would love to work with you and get them involved! We are diving into a new Bible study at youth group this year, hooray! *Journey Through the New Testament* has been an excellent curriculum, and I would definitely recommend it to anyone looking for a simple, yet profound and theologically sound lesson book, but I feel our students have spiritually matured enough for something new, another great blessing! I have narrowed it down to two Bible studies and am still praying for the right fit, I would appreciate all of your prayers as well. Confirmation, along with all Sunday schools, is beginning again on Sunday the 12th, that's probably why I got the youth group date mixed up, but if you are in 7th or 8th grade, same thing applies here as it does with youth group!

So many things have started back up again, which means with more added chaos (the good kind), more added prayer is always appreciated. In a world and nation that seems to be so negative and definitely on a spiritual decline, Christ is still so alive and will continue to work through this church if we continue to let Him! We of course do not control God, but we do have the choice to listen to His calls or ignore them. As we pray for the overall ministry, let's also pray that we would continue to say, "Yes Jesus!" Happy September to all, Jesus loves you!

God Bless,

Bryce Timmerman

Christian Ed Report



We are now getting back into the school year, and with it comes the start of Sunday School on the 12th and Kids Club on the 15th. Our curriculum this year will be teaching the children about the ten commandments and is geared towards them memorizing and storing the Word of God in their heart. We hope you can all join us on Sundays at 10:45 and Wednesdays at 6:00.

After-School Program

The afterschool program here at Stillwater Lutheran is getting off to a great start with 15 children registered to attend with perhaps more registering due to the growth in our community. As some of you know the church purchased a 26 passenger bus to transport the kids from West Valley School to the church. Due to Covid restrictions at this time along with federal Guidelines the children are only allowed one student per seat unless sitting with a sibling and that bus is full. We are looking for volunteers to drive the newly purchased bus. Please talk to Pastor Craig for more information. As you know this is one of Stillwater Lutheran's ministries, so we ask for continued prayer as the program kicks off it's 5th year. Praying for God's blessings on the kids, me, and the volunteers who donate their time and energy to this ministry. Prayers all around for health, safety, and drivers. We are always in need of snacks so can we ask for your donations please?

Apples, Oranges, Granola Bars and Cheese Sticks

Sincerely Karla



Women's Missionary Federation

Fifteen people were present at Sherri's home on August 19th. Hattie led us in a devotion on John 12:24. Early then led us in our Bible Study titled, "Instructions for the church, Part 1" based on 1st Timothy 5:1-16. Gayle gave a report on the Abel family, who are missionaries in Uganda. Linda gave our treasurer's report. We have \$252.13 in the bank. Our offering this month will go to World Missions. We will be taking another offering for World Missions when Earl Korhonen visits in September.

We went over upcoming events. We will be having our women's retreat on September 17th and 18th. Please try to attend and invite a friend. Sharon Wilhelm will be our guest speaker, and Neila will do a craft. Thank you ladies for your contribution. We had a baby shower for Rachel and JayCee at Sherri's house on the 28th. We had a very good turnout, and they received many nice gifts. Susan Shea baked a 2 layer cake for the shower which was amazing. Thank you, Sue.

A very delicious lunch was served by Sherri and Karen Van Scoten. Thank you so much, ladies, and thank you, Sherri, for opening your home to us.

Submitted by,
Elaine Lessor: Secretary

Building Committee Report

Our (3 year) Certificate of Subdivision Approval (COSA) expires September 24, 2021. This means all site development work (grading, drywells and surface stormwater catch management ponds) must be completed by that date or we will be required to submit a request to DEQ for a new COSA, which would be a costly and time consuming process. There are no extensions allowed! It does not require us to have paving done by that date! Our contractors are aware of this deadline and have agreed it should not be a problem completing required work by September 24.

In the meantime, our civil engineer Stephanie Reynolds (WGM Group) is modifying the site plan to include grading and paving around the church to the East side. DEQ said this is acceptable although it would require a COSA rewrite to change the gravel surfacing in the original approved COSA to paved surfacing and add in some stormwater features like drywells to manage the runoff from the 2-year storm event. The DEQ re-write process will take approximately 2 months for review and approval before the parking lot could be paved.

Carpet tile for the classrooms and wall carpet for the activity center has been ordered. The cabinet sinks in the classrooms are now operational and additional soundboards are under construction and hopefully will be installed before the Harvest Fest on October 10. There is also a plan to install white boards in the classrooms.

The kitchen drywall installation has been completed and the tape, texture, and painting should be done next week. There is a plan to install FRP panels on the walls and Ken West will be laying the floor. The roll-up door for the serving counter has been ordered. The worktables are being constructed and the cabinets will be purchased or constructed as well. Gayle Lantto and the WMF ladies have identified needed appliances for the kitchen. They have put much thought into cost, efficiency, and quality of these items. Josh Haynes a member of the congregation and cabinet maker is building the worktables and some of the cabinetry. Gayle, Josh, Matt, and others have met numerous times to go over the details for the kitchen. Thanks to Gayle for taking the lead on this matter!

Blinds will be ordered for all windows except the kitchen and the two in the activity center. The hot water heater and water softener has been installed and is operational. Work has begun on the North columns for the portico drive-thru. Many thanks to Rick Martinez for installing snow breaks on the upper roof. Pastor Craig is developing an AV plan for the activity center. Although it is not always obvious much work continues toward completion of the building project. As of this writing the building fund balance is \$224,559.90.

Respectfully submitted, Ed Van Scoten

Prayers for September

Please take this home and use it all week long.

"Whatever you ask in prayer with faith, you will receive." Matt 21:22

Church Work & Ministry

Sharing Jesus Christ with our Neighbors
Building Project
Church Leaders, Staff & Worship Team
Stillwater Youth Group
Stillwater & National WMF
Feeding the Flathead
After School Program
Intersivity Christian Fellowship
Child Bridge Ministry & Foster Families



General Prayers

Marriages and Families
Our Country and Leaders
Workers in the Harvest Field
Military and First Responders

Health Concerns

Sylvan Herset
Joyce Banzet
Jeremy Hartle
Deb & Jonny (Timmerman)
Leo Gallis
Bonnie Upton
Mike Horn