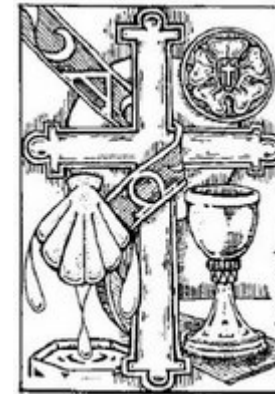


Saint Athanasius Lutheran Church



St. Athanasius Lutheran Church

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Pentecost Newsletter
(August/September 2024)

Rev. James A. Douthwaite

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From the Pastor . . .

Homeschool Chapel, Year 2

Last year, we started something new that we dubbed *Homeschool Chapel*. Because of the increasing number of families opting to homeschool their children (both in our congregation and throughout the nation), we wanted to provide an option to incorporate the Word of God and the Catechism into their curriculum. Much education in our country has become simply training for a job - and while our earthly education is important, far more critical is the education of our children for eternity! For them to know their Saviour and the eternal truths of His Word.

So, every Tuesday and Thursday morning at 8:30 (from Labor Day until Memorial Day) we offer a Matins service (slightly simplified) live on our YouTube channel. Each Tuesday the focus is on part of the Catechism, and each Thursday the Gospel for the coming Sunday is read. A short 3-4 minute meditation, geared toward youth, is included. While only a handful of folks are able to join us live, more watch the recording later in the day.

But while we have dubbed this time *Homeschool Chapel*, it is not just for homeschool families or youth - it is for ALL people! So we invite YOU to join us and make this a regular part of your liturgical life at home. We also encourage you to spread the word to anyone you know who is homeschooling their children. We would love to have them join us. *Don't have a hymnal?* Thanks okay! All materials are on our website. *Don't know Matins?* That's okay! They'll learn it by repetition. Children are especially good at that. *Not Lutheran?* That's okay, too! We preach Christ crucified and the eternal truths of God's Word.

We want to be of service to you, your friends and neighbors, other homeschool families, everyone! Join us. Tell others. Send out the link to the Homeschool Chapel page on our website. Help us get the word out about our church and help others grow in God and His Word.

His servant and yours,

Pastor Douthwaite

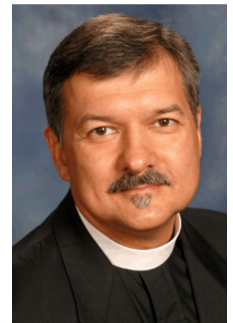


Meet Another of Your Missionaries!

In July, we were privileged to have John Wolf Zoom in and present to us on his work in Africa. On August 4th, another one of the missionaries we support with your offerings, Charles St-Onge, will be with us to tell us about his work in Montreal, Quebec - the challenges he faces and the opportunities he has in this city which is one of the least churched in the world! Learn about how they are reaching people of all nationalities and faiths with the good news of Jesus. Please plan to stay after church that Sunday and welcome him! We'll provide lunch for you, too!

District President Visitation

On Sunday, September 15th, Rev. Waldemar Vinovskis, President of our SELC District of the LCMS will be with us to visit our congregation, learn about us and what we are doing, and to answer any questions you may have about our District or Synod. We'll have a potluck after church and meet with him. Take advantage of this special opportunity! Plan to stay a bit. Thanks!



Don't forget!

**Start each day
in the Word of God and prayer.
Morning Prayer on the Web
Every Monday-Friday, 7:00 am
In our WebEx room**

August Is Seminarian Offering Month



The month of August is one of our three special "Seminarian Offering Months." These offerings will help our adopted seminary students **Caleb Hoverson** (former Patrick Henry College student who attended our Hope Lutheran Mission in Purcellville) and **Nathaniel Hall** (son-in-law of the Keisers) pay their fall quarter expenses. If you would like to contribute, please put your donation into the offering (or give online!) *specially marked* for seminarian support.

And please remember - this is a *special* offering above and beyond your regular giving to the church. Don't reduce your regular giving! We need that for our regular expenses and as we look to the future. Thanks for your generosity and love, both for the students and for the congregations they will one day be called to serve.

+ + + + + + + + +

Adopt-a-Student is Back!



We are inviting all of you to again support our college and seminary students. This is an important time in their lives and they need our love and support. Can you pray for one of our students? Can you send a card or offer a word of encouragement?

Maybe you'd even like to send them a care package! Whatever you are able to do, we'd love to have you help! Individuals, couples, families - this is for everyone! And if we have more volunteers than students, that's okay, too! Our students will feel very loved!

Interested? Take a brochure available for you in the entrance of the church, or speak with Grace Killian or Nancy Nelson. **And thanks!**

Commission on Mercy Food Drive



Yes, we've rescheduled! Sorry for the delay and confusion before. Here's the new plan:

Sundays, August 11 and 18 - Hang flyers and door hangers in the neighborhoods around the church.

Sunday August 25 - Receive food donations from our neighbors at the church from 12 Noon until 2 pm.

Can you help us? We need folks to distribute the door hangers and hang flyers on the first two Sundays, and then some folks to be at church on the 25th for those folks who (hopefully!) will bring food to the church. We'll give them a little goody bag in exchange to thank them for their generosity.

Please mark these days on your calendar and help us both reach out into our community *and* help those families in our area in need. **THANKS!**



Like to eat?

Want to hang out a little?

Relax and get to know your fellow

Athasians a little better?



The Royster Family has generously offered to open their home for a monthly potluck lunch after church. On **the first Sunday each month** (starting in September), those who are interested can bring a dish to share and hang out for a while. And if you'd like, bring a friend, too! Everyone is welcome. Talk to Tim or Yee-Peng for more information.

NARRATIVE DIVINE SERVICE



We will have our annual "Narrative Divine Service" on **Sunday, September 15th**. This is the service with the explanations of *what we do* and *why we do it* embedded into the service. Bring a friend and learn again about our liturgy and how it reflects our theology and how our theology is embedded in all that we say and do.



SELC District Convention Special Congregational Meeting September 1st

Our congregation will have a special meeting after church on Sunday, September 1st to take up matters pertaining to the SELC District Convention that will meet January 16-19, 2025. We will need to elect a delegate and alternate from our congregation to represent us, consider nominations for district offices, and propose overtures about matters we would like addressed by our district and/or synod. This will be an important meeting, so please plan to attend. Your participation is important. Thanks!



Directory Update

We do not publish these online. If you need these updates for your directory, please contact Pastor. Thanks!

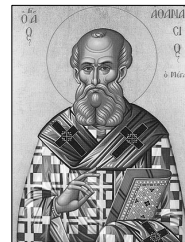


From Luther . . .

(Luther speaks of the Christian desiring absolution.)

When I urge you to go to Confession, I am doing nothing else than urging you to be a Christian. . . . "As a deer pants for flowing streams, so pants my soul for you, O God" (Psalm 42:1). In other words, as a deer with anxious and trembling eagerness strains toward a fresh, flowing stream, so I yearn anxiously and tremblingly for God's Word, Absolution, the Sacrament, and so forth.

[from "Exhortation to Confession" in the Large Catechism, in *Concordia: The Lutheran Confessions* (first ed.), © 2005 CPH, p.470]



From Athanasius . . .

(Athanasius speaks of the incomparable value of the kingdom of God.)

Wherefore, children, let us not faint nor deem that the time is long, or that we are doing something great, "for the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed to us-ward " Nor let us think, as we look at the world, that we have renounced anything of much consequence, for the whole earth is very small compared with all the heaven. Wherefore if it even chanced that we were lords of all the earth and gave it all up, it would be nought worthy of comparison with the kingdom of heaven. For as if a man should despise a copper drachma to gain a hundred drachmas of gold; so if a man were Lord of all the earth and were to renounce it, that which he gives up is little, and he receives a hundredfold. But if not even the whole earth is equal in value to the heavens, then he who has given up a few acres leaves as it were nothing; and even if he have given up a house or much gold he ought not to boast nor be low-spirited. . . . Why then should we not give them up . . . that we may inherit even a kingdom?

[from "Life of Antony", §17
in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Second Series, Vol. 4*, p. 200-01]



On the Catechism . . .

As we continue in the Pentecost season and its emphasis on growth in the Christian life and faith, our Catechism focus is on Confession and Absolution, for as Martin Luther wrote in the very first of his 95 theses, "When our Lord and Master

Jesus Christ said, 'Repent,' He willed the entire life of believers to be one of repentance."

What is Confession?

Confession has two parts. First, that we confess our sins, and second, that we receive absolution, that is, forgiveness, from the pastor as from God Himself, not doubting, but firmly believing that by it our sins are forgiven before God in heaven.

There is no doubt that confession of sins is necessary and commanded of God, in Matt. 3[:6]: "They were baptized by John in the river Jordan, confessing their sins," and in 1 John 1[:9–10]: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just, and will forgive our sins. If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us." If the saints may not deny their sin, how much more ought those who are guilty of great and public sins to make confession! But the institution of confession is proved most effectively of all by Matt. 18[:15–17], where Christ teaches that a sinning brother should be told of his fault, brought before the church, accused, and if he will not hear, be excommunicated. He "hears" if he heeds the rebuke and acknowledges and confesses his sin.

As to the current practice of private confession, I am heartily in favor of it, even though it cannot be proved from the Scriptures. It is useful, even necessary, and I would not have it abolished. Indeed, I rejoice that it exists in the church of Christ, for it is a cure without equal for distressed consciences. For when we have laid bare our conscience to our brother and privately made known to him the evil that lurked within, we receive from our brother's lips the word of comfort spoken by God himself. And, if we accept this in faith, we find peace in the mercy of God speaking to us through our brother.

[from "The Babylonian Captivity of the Church" (1520) in
Luther's Works, Vol. 36: Word and Sacrament II © 1959 Fortress Press, p.85-86]

Preparing for the Divine Service

To give you the opportunity to look ahead and prepare for our Divine Service each Sunday, the Office Hymn, Holy Gospel, and Theme of each week for August and September are listed below.

Pentecost 11 (August 4):

Holy Gospel: John 6:22–35 (Jesus is the bread of life.)

Office Hymn: LSB #918 "Guide me, O Thou Great Redeemer"

Pentecost 12 (August 11):

Holy Gospel: John 6:35–51 (Jesus has come to give life.)

Office Hymn: LSB #534 "Lord, Enthroned in Heav'nly Splendor"

Pentecost 13 (August 18):

Holy Gospel: John 6:51–69 (Jesus has the words of eternal life.)

Office Hymn: LSB #696 "O God, My Faithful God"

Pentecost 14 (August 25):

Holy Gospel: Mark 7:1–13 (Commandments or traditions?)

Office Hymn: LSB #865 "Lord, Help Us Ever to Retain"

Pentecost 15 (September 1)

Holy Gospel: Mark 7:14–23 (What lives inside you?)

Office Hymn: LSB #566 "By Grace I'm Saved"

Pentecost 16 (September 8):

Holy Gospel: Mark 7:31–37 (Jesus heals a deaf man.)

Office Hymn: LSB #797 "Praise the Almighty"

Pentecost 17 (September 15):

Holy Gospel: Mark 9:14–29 (Jesus rebukes an unclean spirit.)

Office Hymn: LSB #849 "Praise the One Who Breaks the Darkness"

Pentecost 18 (September 22):

Holy Gospel: Mark 9:30–37 (Jesus speaks of His cross and greatness.)

Office Hymn: LSB #851 "Lord of Glory, You Have Bought Us"

Saint Michael and All Angels (September 29)

Holy Gospel: Matthew 18:1–11 (Angels of the little ones.)

Office Hymn: LSB #522 "Lord God, to Thee We Give All Praise"

Note: The Liturgy through Pentecost 16 (September 8) is **Divine Service 4** (p. 203). The Liturgy beginning on Pentecost 17 (September 15) is **Divine Service 2** (p. 167).