

PILGRIM'S PROGRESS



PILGRIM LUTHERAN CHURCH
 3650 West 106th Street
 Carmel, IN 46032
www.pilgrimindy.org

SUNDAY WORSHIP
 8 a.m. and 10:45 a.m.

Sunday School
 9:30 a.m.

Wednesday Worship
 7 p.m.

OFFICE HOURS

8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
 Monday-Thursday

8 a.m.-noon
 Friday

Church Office(317) 846-2221
 Church FAX(317) 846-3590
 Preschool Office(317) 846-6132



@pilgrimindy



Evangelical Lutheran
 Church in America

VOTERS' MEETING

There will be a Voters' Meeting at 9:30 a.m. on Sunday, September 17 in the church nave. All communicant members who are 18 years of age or older and who have signed the parish record book (available in the narthex on Sunday mornings!) are eligible and encouraged to attend!

HOLY COMMUNION SUNDAYS...TIMES 2

Four of our fifth graders have completed a Holy Communion Workshop in August. In September they will, for the first time, receive the bread and wine with their Pilgrim family. On Sunday, September 17, we welcome **Caleb Elser** and **Derek Fedorcha**. Following them on Sunday, September 24, we welcome **Noah Berg** and **Charlotte Konow**.

We send you happy blessings as you make this next remarkable step in the formation of your Christian faith.



CALLING ALL SINGERS

Pilgrim's Adult Choir will reconvene this month. If you love to sing and would like to help lead worship, consider joining the choir. We welcome singers of all abilities. Being able to read music is helpful.

Our first rehearsal is Thursday, Sept. 14, from 7-8:30 p.m. in the choir room (upstairs, across from the elevator). We meet Thursdays through the school year, and sing most Sundays at 10:45 worship and on the second Sunday of every month at 8 a.m. worship. Contact Sarah Williams if you're interested.

Due to an unfortunate technological mishap that nearly caused me to drop-kick my computer off the deck, I lost three pages of completed newsletter this month. I recreated them to the best of my abilities, but if information was submitted and is missing, that's on me! On a positive note, my computer and I are slowly getting back on speaking terms! -Lee Ann

MISSION STATEMENT

We are a caring Community called together in ministry by the Holy Spirit through the Gospel and the Sacraments to: believe in Jesus Christ as Savior, worship the Triune God, and serve God by proclaiming the Gospel, joyfully celebrating our God-given gifts, and loving and serving our neighbors with Jesus as our example.

PILGRIM LUTHERAN CHURCH STAFF

Interim Pastor

Rudy Mueller

Education Director

Gloria Worth

Preschool Director

Amy Tucker

Youth Directors

Jenny Pitts

Gail Powell

Cantor to the Congregation

Sarah Gran Williams

Director of Music for

Children & Youth

Gail Powell

Handbell Director

Kevin Donley

Assistant Treasurer

Donna Drew

Office Manager

Debbie Collins

Set-up & Custodial Assistant

Matt Worth

Maintenance

Mark Wylie

Pilgrims Progress Editor

Lee Ann Roeder

leeann.roeder@me.com

FROM THE PASTOR

September is a time of transition. Heat turns to warmth and sometimes to a cool breeze. Greens begin to shade themselves toward brown. School starts have become routine schedules. September is also a busy time.

- On Sept. 6, we will dedicate the new organ at our weekly Wednesday 7 p.m. worship. Then on Friday night, we will have the Organ Dedication Concert with guest organist Todd Wilson at 7:30 p.m., with a reception to follow. If you plan to attend, RSVP the Dahoneys at richarddahoney@att.net.
- We begin Sunday School and Adult Bible Study on Sept. 10. This year Rally Day will be a 'storytelling day' for all ages.
- Confirmation begins and we will pray for the young people entering this phase of their faith journey.
- God's Work. Our Hands. Sunday will be Sept. 24 for Pilgrim Church. Please see the article in this newsletter about how we can support the Gennesaret Free Clinics.
- Sunday liturgies will begin using Setting One from the ELW on Sept. 17; and we will use Holden Evening Prayer on Wednesday nights beginning Sept. 13.
- A voters meeting is scheduled for Sept. 17, so your presence is encouraged.

A SPECIAL NOTE ABOUT VOTERS MEETINGS: *Part of an interim pastor's job is to make sure the parish record book is in order. In doing that, Debbie and I discovered that many of the members had not signed the constitution (or perhaps we could not read a signature) and therefore are not voting members according to the constitution. So, the Elders will be notifying you if you need to sign and we will have the book available in the narthex on Sunday mornings. If you are contacted by your elder, **please make a point of signing the constitution. Only those who have signed are eligible to vote at voters meetings**, including being eligible to vote on calling a pastor. We want all voting members to be eligible.*

So we get some transition and we get some business. And in all of that, we will get a lot of Jesus, who will be with us every step of the way, calming our nerves, forgiving our sins, binding up our brokenness, and showing us the way to live as his disciples day by day.

See you in September. [Feel free to sing; you know I am.]

Rudy Mueller
Interim Pastor

FROM THE ELDERS

ELDER ASSIGNMENTS

ALL-CLA

Kelly Brown
(765) 481-8950
kelly@k4brown.com

CLE-FOR

Tim Guedel
(317) 243-1819
tommyteeg@yahoo.com

FOU-HIA

Jim Williams
(317) 773-1913
jaawilli@iu.edu

HIN-KRAF

Gwen Knipstein
(317) 402-1162
gknipste@aol.com

KRAM-MAU

Steve Sullivan
(317) 508-7159
sparky69@gotown.net

McC-POW

Kathy Bloom
(317) 879-1614
sbloomindy@sbcglobal.net

PRO-SHE

Bob Schumacher
(317) 828-0217
robertschumacher@yahoo.com

SHIL-URB

Jim Durst
(317) 844-3792
jrdurst@gmail.com

VAN-ZIM

Dave Blase
(317) 253-5003
yblase@sbcglobal.net



At the school where I work I have found that we, like many other schools and organizations, are in a period of transition. We have seen many seasoned employees of the baby boomer generation retire and thus, have many new faculty and staff members coming on board. Loosing faculty and staff who have a long history at the school is certainly

challenging, yet the influx of new individuals has provided us with an opportunity to revisit how we have historically done business. Instead of responding and turning away from new ideas "because we have always done it another way" we are open to the insightful questions and ideas from new members of our school community that are helping us grow in a new and positive direction.

We adopt or develop a theme at the start of every school year. Our theme for this year is "Sharing our Similarities and Celebrating our Differences." When one thinks of this theme, the first thing that may come to mind is diversity as seen in race, religion, ethnicity, gender, and age. However, at our school, while we certainly include and value those areas, our scope is much broader to include differences of opinion, educational background, and socioeconomic status, to name a few.

We are in a season of transition at Pilgrim with the recent retirement of Pastor Al and the process of acquiring a new pastor to lead our church. One of the blessings a new pastor coming into our church home will see and feel, is what I have experienced...a church whose members demonstrate love, caring, tolerance and commitment to one another. Let us "share our similarities and celebrate our differences" at Pilgrim as Jesus accepts and embraces us. "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus." (Galatians 3:8)

Thank you for all you do for each other and sharing the love of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Jim Durst

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT PILGRIM...

BULLETIN VOLUNTEERS

Current volunteers and anyone interested in helping with the weekly bulletins should plan to meet at 9:30 a.m., Friday, Sept. 1, at church. We will complete the volunteer schedule through August 2018. If you are interested but cannot attend, please contact Marcia Runkel at (317) 306-1416.

CELEBRATE PILGRIM'S NEW PIPE ORGAN

- Join us at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, Sept. 6, for a **service of dedication** for our new pipe organ. Within our evening prayer format we will bless the organ for use in our ministry. Our liturgy and hymns (and special organ music) all will celebrate the organ. This service may be a bit longer than our usual Wednesday worship – around 45 minutes.
- Pilgrim will host a **dedication concert** and reception for our new pipe organ at 7:30 p.m. on Friday, Sept. 8. Todd Wilson, world-renowned organist and professor at the Cleveland Institute of Music, will be our guest organist. This event is open to the public. There will not be a nursery.
- The public also is invited to a second concert that will take place at 7:30 p.m. on Friday, Oct. 13. Noted church musician and improviser David Cherwien, cantor at Mount Olive Lutheran Church in Minneapolis, will perform a **hymn festival** marking the 500th anniversary of the Reformation.



SUPER SENIORS LUNCHEON SEPTEMBER 19

Please join us for our monthly luncheon at noon on Tuesday, Sept. 19. We are going to make this an “Old-Fashioned” Lutheran pitch-in. Please sign up for an entrée, salad, or dessert. Drinks will be provided. Look for the sign-up sheet on the credenza.

The program will be a Schumacher & Schumacher dialogue. That is Paul and Bob! And no, they are not related other than being brothers in Christ. The topic is **TRUTH!** Pastor Paul will speak on **God's Spiritual Truth** and Head Elder Bob (a physicist by profession) will speak on **God's Physical Truth**. Sounds intriguing – let's come together and hear where the **TRUTH** will lead us.

GOD'S WORK. OUR HANDS. SUNDAY PILGRIM SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

“God's Work. Our Hands. Sunday” will be Sept. 24 at Pilgrim, a day of service where our congregation will participate in activities that benefit our surrounding community and deepen our connection to the world around us. There are multiple ways to get involved!

HAND OUT WATER FOR A GREAT CAUSE!

We are looking for **12 volunteers** to man water stations at the Hamilton County Harvest Food Bank 2nd Annual Blackhawk Winery 10K, 5K and Family Walk event.

- **When:** Saturday, Sept. 16; race starts at 3 p.m. (volunteers should arrive early)
- **Where:** Blackhawk Winery, 28153 W. Ditch Rd., Sheridan, IN
- **How to Participate:** Sign-up using the golden sign-up sheet in the church lobby by Sunday, Sept. 3



SUPPORT GENNESARET FREE CLINICS

We are collecting items to prepare “hygiene kits” for our local Gennesaret Free Clinics. Our goal is to collect enough items to create at least 200 kits! Items needed include:

Toothpaste	Dental floss	Razors (disposable singles)
Toothbrush (singles)	Soap bars	Deodorant
	Shampoo	

All items should be travel size (i.e. small) and can be purchased at local Walmart, Target or similar stores. Donated items can be deposited in the specially marked collection bin in the church lobby located under the donuts table near the monitor screen.

All donations must be received by Sunday, Sept. 17, 2017. Then, join us on Sunday, Sept. 24 after 10:45 a.m. worship to help assemble kits in quart-sized zipper bags.

OCTOBERFEST/OLD-FASHIONED BASEBALL GAME

Plan to join the Pilgrim family on Saturday, Oct. 7, for our second annual Octoberfest celebration. It will include an old-fashioned baseball game, bounce house and games for the children, and a multi-generational BINGO game which will take place in the narthex. These events will run simultaneously, starting at 4 p.m.

The games will be followed by a Pig Roast with a German flair. Congregational Life will prepare the pork and all of you will be asked to sign up to bring a side dish. A free-will offering will be taken to offset the cost of the pork. We will be entertained during dinner by the Charlie Harriman combo. The Youth will provide us with a Sundae Bar for dessert. They also will ask for a free will offering.

Look for the sign-up sheets in the narthex both for the dinner and what you will bring. There also will be a sign-up sheet by the TV monitor if you would like to join Team Pilgrim for a baseball game played with 1864 rules. If you plan to be spectators at the baseball game, please bring lawn chairs or blankets for seating.

If anyone needs a ride, please let us know. It will be our pleasure to pick you up and bring you to this event. Please indicate your need for a ride on the sign-up sheet.



If you are able to help with getting food to the buffet tables, supervising children's games, and cleanup, please indicate your willingness on the sign-up sheet. Last year we had 140 people attend so it takes many hands to have a successful event. Thank you for your willingness.

Let's ALL come together and celebrate our love of Christ and each other.

LUTHERFEST

Lutherans are gathering for a family celebration of the 500 years since the Reformation. Lutherfest will take place on "God's Work. Our Hands." Sunday, Sept. 10. [Please note, that Pilgrim will have its "God's Work. Our Hands." Sunday on Sept. 24. However, we still are invited to this event.] The party will last from 4:30-7 p.m. at the Athenaeum, 401 East Michigan Street, Indianapolis. We will gather for food, fellowship and entertainment. It is an exciting time to celebrate the Lutheran Church and our dedication to service in our community. Register at: <http://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/event?oeidk=a07eegej2lxbfa85fba&llr=wtv4wswab> Dress is casual. Registration deadline is Tuesday Sept. 5.



CHILDREN'S CORNER

School already is weeks underway, and each of you has had to adjust to a new teacher, a new classroom, and new rules. Some of you may have switched schools and have new everything! Rules become an important part of the first weeks of school. The adults teaching and leading the school want everyone "on the same page" for the best outcome for everyone.

The bible is full of stories about people who knew the rules, that is...they knew what God expected but they did what they wanted anyway.

- Adam and Eve are first up in a long list of people who took matters into their own hands. God asked them to not eat off one tree but they couldn't resist and once they ate the fruit the world changed forever. Sin came into God's perfect plan.
- God asked Jonah to go to Ninevah and help out a very troubled town. Jonah was just too afraid to go. Do you remember what happened to Jonah's when he altered God's request? He was swallowed by a big fish. Now, that must have been quite the lesson to learn.
- And Peter only had a short walk on the water. When Jesus told Peter to come on out and meet him, to keep his eyes on Jesus, Peter decided to take a look at his feet. He believed he couldn't really walk on the water, so down he went. But if he had done as Jesus had asked he wouldn't have had gotten wet at all.

We are just like the people we read about in the bible. We don't like rules, regulations or suggestions, either. We are quite sure our way is the better way. Yet, in truth, these rules are there to:

- Create peace
- Create respect
- Create safety and well-being
- Create freedom to learn

If you find some of the rules or the newness of your school year challenging, take a moment to think about your school day. And then talk to God about your school day and any rule you aren't sure of yet. And be sure to memorize the rule Jesus gave to us: *Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and all your mind...(and) love your neighbor as yourself.* (Matthew 22: 37, 39)

Mrs. Worth

SEPTEMBER CALENDAR REMINDERS

Sunday, September 10*Sunday School Opening: All ages welcome to a Rally Day Story Program*

Sunday, September 17*Mission Project for Sunday School kids in Fellowship Hall, 9:30 a.m.*

Sunday, September 24*Sunday School for children and adults officially begins*

SEPTEMBER MINISTRY SCHEDULE

SUNDAYS

8 a.m.

10:45 a.m.

SEPTEMBER 3, 2017

Kathy Bloom	ELDER	Bob Schumacher
TBD	ACOLYTE	Nolan Elser
TBD	GREETERS	Elser/Baumgarn Family
Denny Licht	LAY ASSISTANT	John Williams
Steve Bloom	A/V COVERAGE	Mark Tisdale

SEPTEMBER 10, 2017

Jim Durst	ELDER	Bob Schumacher
TBD	ACOLYTE	Milak Dorn/Trinity Dorn
TBD	GREETERS	Dorn/Hunden Family
Karin Veatch	LAY ASSISTANT	Noel Shilling
N/A	COMMUNION ASSISTANT	Tim Guedel
N/A	COMMUNION ASSISTANT	Jim Williams
Jim Durst	A/V COVERAGE	Mark Tisdale

SEPTEMBER 17, 2017

Jim Williams	ELDER	Gwen Knipstein
TBD	ACOLYTE	Aaron Donley
TBD	GREETERS	Donley Family
Marla Murphy	LAY ASSISTANT	Gloria Worth
Dave Runkel	A/V COVERAGE	Mark Tisdale

SEPTEMBER 24, 2017

Jim Durst	ELDER	Steve Sullivan
Kyle Fedorcha	ACOLYTE	Adam Longmire
Fedorcha Family	GREETERS	Longmire Family
Mike Przybylski	LAY ASSISTANT	Gloria Worth
Jim Durst	A/V COVERAGE	Mark Tisdale

Frank Willis	ALTAR GUILD	Fran Willis
	CHANCEL VOLUNTEER	
Larry Shimer Bob Harshbarger	USHERS	Dave Blase, Rich Knipstein Jim Shockey, Greg Rexing
	COFFEE SET UP/CLEAN UP	

WEDNESDAYS

7 p.m.

SEPTEMBER 6, 2017

ELDER
Bob Schumacher
LAY ASSISTANT
Susie Pike

SEPTEMBER 13, 2017

ELDER
Kathy Bloom
LAY ASSISTANT
Maureen Jordan

SEPTEMBER 20, 2017

ELDER
Dave Blase
LAY ASSISTANT
John Shilling

SEPTEMBER 27, 2017

ELDER
Kathy Bloom
LAY ASSISTANT
Frank Bates

SEPTEMBER 2017 CALENDAR

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1 9a Preschool 4p Piano Lesson 6p Bryan Wedding Rehearsal	2 8a Jazzercise 9:30a Piano Lesson-Yon 5p Bryan Wedding
3 8a Worship & Holy Communion 10:45a Worship & Holy Communion	4 LABOR DAY (OFFICE CLOSED) 8a Jazzercise 6p Jazzercise	5 9a Preschool 1:15p Staff Meeting 4p Oboe lesson-Katrina Brown 7p Board of Elders	6 9a Preschool 12p Piano lesson-Yon 2:30p CCPL Mobile Library 6p Jazzercise 7p Evening Prayer w/Holy Communion & Organ Dedication	7 9a Preschool 9:30a Large Print 11a Piano lesson-Yon 12p Organ Dedication Rehearsal and Prep 6p Jazzercise	8 7a Organ Dedication Rehearsal and Prep 9a Preschool 7:30p Organ Dedication Concert & Reception	9 9:30a Piano Lesson-Yon
10 8a Worship & Holy Communion 9:30a Sunday School RALLY DAY 10:45a Worship & Holy Communion	11 PATRIOT DAY  9a Preschool 3:30p Piano lesson 6p Jazzercise	12 9a Preschool 9:30a Large Print 1:15p Staff meeting 4p Oboe lesson-Katrina Brown	13 9a Preschool 11:30a Piano lesson 12p Piano lesson-Yon 2:30p CCPL Mobile Library 6p Jazzercise 7p Evening Prayer w/Holy Communion	14 9a Preschool 9:30a Large Print 11a Piano lesson-Yon 12p Piano lesson 6p Handbell Rehearsal 6p Jazzercise 7p Choir Rehearsal	15 9a Preschool 4p Piano lesson	16 8:30a Jazzercise 9:30a Piano lesson-Yon 12p United Church of God 3p Volunteer @ Hamilton Co. Harvest Food Bank event
17 8a Worship & Holy Communion 9:30a Voters' Meeting 9:30a Sunday School 10:45a Worship & Holy Communion	18 9a Preschool 3:30p Piano lesson 6p Jazzercise 7p Evangelism & Communications	19 9a Preschool 9:30a Large Print 12p Super Seniors 4p Oboe lesson-Katrina Brown 6p WELCA Pitch-in & Service Project 7p Board of Directors Meeting	20 9a Preschool 11:30a Piano lesson 12p Piano lesson-Yon 2:30 CCPL Mobile Library 6p Jazzercise 7p Evening Prayer w/Holy Communion 7:30p Congregational Life Meeting	21 8:45a Indpls Conference Ministerium 9a Preschool 9:30a Large Print 11a Piano lesson-Yon 12p Piano lesson 6p Handbell Rehearsal 6p Jazzercise 7p Choir Rehearsal	22 9a Preschool 4p Piano lesson	23 8:30a Jazzercise 9:30a Piano lesson-Yon 12p United Church of God
24 8a Worship & Holy Communion 9:30a Sunday School 10:45a Worship & Holy Communion 12p God's Work. Our Hands.	25 9a Preschool 3:30p Piano lesson 6p Jazzercise	26 9a Preschool 9:30a Large Print 4p Oboe lesson-Katrina Brown	27 9a Preschool 11:30a Piano lesson 12p Piano lesson-Yon 2:30p CCPL Mobile Library 6p Jazzercise 7p Evening Prayer w/Holy Communion	28 9a Preschool 9:30a Large Print 11a Piano lesson-Yon 12 Piano lesson 6p Handbell Rehearsal 6p Jazzercise 7p Choir Rehearsal	29 9a Preschool 4p Piano Lesson	30 8:30a Jazzercise 9:30a Piano Lesson-Yon



BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

Paul Swanson	2	Daniel & Carrie Sailer (11 years)
Herta Baade	3	
Evelyn Hoffman	4	
Mike Berg	5	
Jess Denger	6	
Dick Dahoney	8	Martin & Sandy Hurford (38 years)
	9	Jim & Sally Shockey (50 years)
Katie Blake Steve Bloom Caleb Elser	10	Bill & Joni Huey Jr. (9 years)
Kelly Brown	12	
Laura Fischer	14	
Zachary Johnsey John Williams Jr.	15	
Sue Richardson	17	
Jason Jasper Carolyn Schiferl	18	Bob & Mary Harshbarger (48 years)
Caleb Fischer Melissa Hatfield Barb Lamb	19	
Maureen Jordan	20	
Jillian Lamb	22	
Erik Hanson Craig Veatch	23	
Josh Kuechler Jr. Carma Rowles	24	
Marvin Brethauer Martin Hurford Molly Watson	25	
Don Newby	27	
Nathan Koebcke	28	
Sandy Hurford Gene Van Hove	29	
Charlie Harriman	30	
		Mike & Lee Ann Roeder (28 years)

I-K Lutheran

Where God is doing new things

September 2017

*Racism – a mix of power, privilege, and prejudice – is sin, a violation of God’s intention for humanity. The resulting racial, ethnic, or cultural barriers deny the truth that all people are God’s creatures and, therefore, persons of dignity. Racism fractures and fragments both church and society. [The ELCA’s social statement, *Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity and Culture*]ⁱ*



In late July, I was honored and blessed to participate in a joint gathering of the African-Descent Lutheran Association (ELCA) and the Union of Black Episcopalians in Philadelphia. Over meals, in the hallways, and in plenary sessions I was able to listen deeply to the concerns of people of color, especially people of African descent, who are part of the church. I was honored to sit for part of an afternoon with ELCA rostered ministers of African descent and heard stories of painful experiences of marginalization, disrespect, and discrimination in our life together as the ELCA. During the opening worship service, I was invited to bring a greeting on behalf of the I-K Synod and, as its chair, the ELCA Conference of Bishops. In that greeting I thanked these dear sisters and brothers for their partnership in the gospel and for their persistent prophetic witness to the kind of beloved community Christ has made us to be and to how very far we still have to go in realizing that community.

On the flight home, I committed to three things: (1) engage the difficult process of facing and repenting of the ways in which I am complicit in, even a perpetrator of, racism; (2) do what I can in my various leadership roles in the church and as a citizen of this country to surface, challenge, and do something about systemic/institutional racism; and (3) share this with you, the good people of the I-K Synod, in this newsletter and invite you to join me on this journey.

And then Charlottesville happened. There, again, tragically, starkly, we saw the truth of what we said together in a social statement almost 25 years ago: Racism is sin and it fractures and fragments both church and society. Racism robs people of their God-given dignity. It privileges some at the expense of many. Racism kills. And, as a church and for so many of us as individuals, including me, we have done very little to challenge and change this great evil.

Did you know that the Southern Poverty Law Center – a well-respected group committed to identifying hate, combating intolerance, and dismantling racism – has identified 26 hate groups in Indiana and 23 in Kentucky? Most of them are white supremacist/nationalist groups of the ilk that were part of the troubles in Charlottesville.ⁱⁱ Somehow, we need to present a counter-witness to these groups, many of whom try to claim the name of Jesus. We need to step up our presence in the public arena – much like those from the ELCA and others who went to Charlottesville – to work toward a community that honors all, welcomes all, receives the gifts of all, and makes space for all, for every single one, to walk alongside others toward a beautiful future where we actually

embody the community Christ has made us to be.

Of course, hate groups are the obvious ones to combat. As individuals, as local congregations, as a synod, as a church, we have a great deal of perhaps less immediately obvious need for self-reflection, confession, repentance, and change to engage ourselves...even and especially for things that are just so much part of the dominant local or broader culture or way of doing things that we don't even see how they hurt, exclude, and denigrate people of races, ethnicities, and self-identities different from our own. This may be the most challenging and difficult work of all. But, for the sake of our sisters and brothers, for Jesus' sake, we just have to do it. The love of Christ compels us. "All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation" [2 Corinthians 5:18].

We will be working on these things synodically this fall. I hope that as the fall school year/program year begins, you will join me in finding ways to face and resist racism and its shadowy siblings. Together, we seek to not be conformed to this world, but transformed by the renewing of our minds, our inmost beings, in the power of the Spirit (Romans 12:1), in families, in congregations, and in our communities.

This will not be easy, sisters and brothers. But, thanks be to God, this hard and necessary work is bathed in promise, for "those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it" [Jesus, Matthew 16:25].

Peace be with you,
+Bishop Bill Gafken

ⁱDownload a PDF here: <http://ow.ly/YEEn30ep7r5>

ⁱⁱ<https://www.splcenter.org/hate-map>

A prayer written by Bishop Gafken the weekend of the events in Charlottesville can be found here:

<http://livingcommunion.blogspot.com/>



“God’s work. Our hands.” Sunday is an opportunity to celebrate who we are as the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America – one church, freed in Christ to serve and love our neighbor. The suggested date for the 2017 dedicated day of service is Sunday, Sept. 10. Mark your calendars today! If your congregation cannot participate on this date, please consider another day.

Service activities offer an opportunity for us to explore one of our most basic convictions as Lutherans: that all of life in Jesus Christ – every act of service, in every daily calling, in every corner of life – flows freely from a living, daring confidence in God’s grace.

You work every day to make your community a better place. Let us continue doing this work together in 2017!