

Our Redeemer's Voice

May 2024



God Finds You Even When You are Not in a Lion's Den



Rev. Jeremy Loesch

I recently attended our Southeastern District Church Worker Conference. It was April 8-10 in Asheville NC. I thought I would share with you some reflections on that conference to help me bring my thoughts together and to inform you of it.

First, the location was down in Asheville NC, which is a long way from Newark. Our Southeastern District, as you likely know, is a big geographic district- basically South Carolina up to Delaware. District conferences will usually mean long trips for some people. For this trip I rode with Pr. Dave Kummer who serves Concordia, Wilmington. He and his family joined us for worship in the morning and then he and I drove to western North Carolina.

The drive was excellent and lovely, driving through the Shenandoah Valley on Interstate 81. But the main reason it was excellent was because Dave and I got to talk the whole time. It was a good opportunity to catch up and share some of the events that have transpired since I left here back in 2014. Pr. Kummer (and Pr. Mike Thress) and I were all at the seminary together in the late 1990s. Pr. Thress graduated first, then me, and then Pr. Kummer. We sang in the choir together, had a few classes together, and have remained friends over the decades. Lots of life has gone over the dam and being able to visit with Dave in the car was emotional, good, and fulfilling.

It was nice going to conference on the early side. Registration didn't start until 2pm on Monday, so Monday morning we explored a bit in a place called Black Mountain, which is a suburb of Asheville. We had breakfast then walked through the town.

The Conference began with a nice devotional service then the main speaker began his presentations. The conference theme was "Abide in me and I in you" from John 15

and focused on mental wellness in church workers and in congregations. The main speaker was Pres. Mike Newman of the Texas District. His presentation was on the shelter that the Lord provides as evidenced in the Book of Daniel- the fiery furnace and the lion's den being the obvious ones, but also seen in Belshazzar's feast, the rest, the diet, the prayer life. Pres. Newman had a relatable manner about him and his presentations were very good.

Conferences have a pattern of plenary sessions followed by breakout sessions, which are optional because the conference planners know that part of the function of a conference is to re-connect with others that you may only see (Continued on 2)



Pastor Kummer, Pastor Thress & Pastor Loesch at Southeastern District Conference in April.

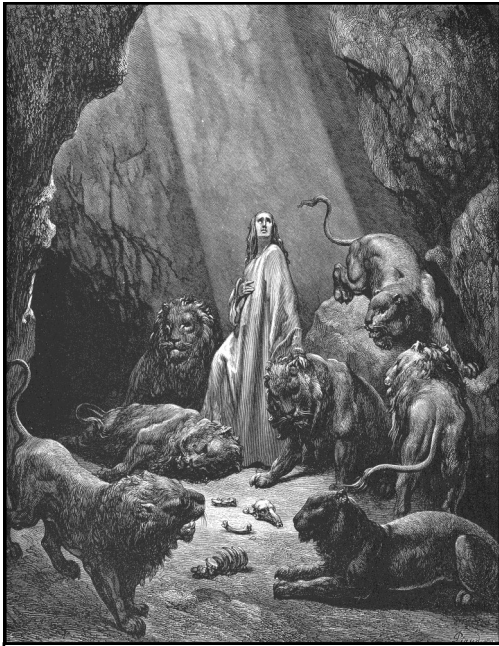
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God doesn't just find you when you ... Continued

once a year. Prs. Thress, Kummer, and I went to Wicked Weed Brewery in Asheville and spent a delightful evening talking together, making jokes, and enjoying a few pints. Later Pr. Mark Tooley and his wife joined us. He serves at Emmanuel in Easton MD and he is new to the district so it was good to get to know him. (The picture on page 1 is from our evening together at the Brewery: Kummer, Thress, and me L-R.)

I did go to an outstanding plenary session Tuesday morning that continued to deal with mental wellness in the parish. The speaker was Megan Meissler, who is a Dir. of Christian Education and a Licensed Clinical Social Worker who runs Lutheran Counseling Services in Oviedo FL. She pointed out things to look for in the congregation, warning signs in individuals, and what things congregations can do to be a positive influence. In her session we learned about ACEs and PCEs. These are 'tests' that individuals can take that are evaluative. ACEs= Adverse Childhood Experiences (Did you see your parents abuse substances, display violence? Was there sexual abuse, etc?) PCEs= Positive Childhood Experiences (Stable family life, Expressions of love and affection, Ability to express emotions, Other positive adult presence?) The higher a person's ACEs score, the higher their need for positive experiences as a counterbalance.



Art depicting the Old Testament by Gustave Doré
"Daniel in the Lions' Den"

Tuesday evening was the worship service and the 85th anniversary banquet. The worship was outstanding and was hosted by Emmanuel Lutheran Church and School in Asheville. Over 200 church workers and spouses were present at worship, which made the singing outstanding. If you've ever been to a large national church gathering, the singing is out of this world! It was so good to sit and sing with Mike and Dave again. Pres. Bill Harmon preached a nice, encouraging sermon that did look back a little bit, looked forward a little bit, but encouraged us to always look for, and at, the Lord.

The banquet was also nice, and the congregation did a nice job of making their gym a suitable place for us all. All of the previous presidents of our district were in attendance and it was good to see them-pastors who never aspired to that level of service but were in position to do it. And during this time I thought of my parents quite a bit. Some of you may remember that they visited our congregation several times. Dad was a pastor and served his entire active ministry in our district (1967-2007) and continued to serve in his retirement. He loved our SED. He had a few calls to other places (Pittsburgh, Worthington MN, St. Louis) but could never bring himself to leave the district. I talk with them every other day, and with their dementia they don't always remember where I am or what I am doing, but when I mention that I am serving a church in Delaware Dad gets pretty excited and says, "The SED is one of the best districts we have! You'll like it there!"

The church worker conference was a positive experience. At times it hit very close to home with some of the experiences I've had since 2018. It's okay when nerves get touched. It was amazing to reflect on how the conference seemed to be planned just for me and the experiences I've had the last few years. But the Lord's grace is always present.

In the book of Daniel, all the 'cool' stuff happens in the first portion- the fiery furnace and the lion's den. But in the last half of the book it is mostly narrative. But what we find is the Lord seeking out Daniel, speaking to him, ministering to him. God doesn't just find you when you are in the lion's den. He continually speaks to you and ministers to you. The Lord is gracious; His steadfast love endures forever and for today.

May Blessings, Pastor

GRAPEVINES



This Daily Devotion was written by Dr. Kari Vo.—*John 15:1-8*

[Jesus said] "I am the true Vine, and My Father is the Vinedresser. Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. Already you are clean because of the word that I

have spoken to you. Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. I am the Vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in Me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in Me is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be My disciples."



We have several grapevines in the backyard. My husband built an arbor for them to grow on, and every year they produce fruit. Unfortunately, they aren't as productive as they should be—neither of us knows the right way to take care of them. Some years they go completely unpruned, and we get a million leaves and not much fruit. Other years my husband gets frustrated with the jungle and cuts them to the ground before I can stop him. Still, the vines keep coming back—but they'd do much better if they had gardeners who knew what they were doing!

Fortunately, God is a much better vinedresser than we are. He takes good care of the vine that He loves—Jesus our Savior. We are Jesus' branches, and His blood runs through us and gives us life. Because He loves us, Jesus died and rose again to make us His own; and as long as we are connected to Him in faith, we know that we will never die. And God will do whatever it takes to keep this vine healthy and fruitful.

That can be kind of scary—I doubt any grapevine looks forward to pruning season, and I certainly don't like it when God allows pain or suffering to come into my life! And yet I do see the fruit that results when I listen to His Word and allow Him to teach me and guide me. I don't want to be a "jungly" mess, all leaves and no fruit for Jesus. I love Him! I want Him to look at me and be happy and joyful. He paid too high a price on the cross for me to be willing to give Him less than my best.

So what can I do? Nothing on my own. But I can allow God to do His work in my life, strengthening me through His Word and through Baptism and the Lord's Supper. I can put up with the pruning and turn to Him for help when it hurts. And I can be happy that Jesus' blood runs through me and makes me alive in Him. My fruit comes from Him, and I am glad. **WE PRAY:** Dear Lord Jesus, make me fruitful for You! *Amen.*

LEADING ORLC FORWARD, WITH YOUR HELP

A Message from Our Redeemer Lay Leaders ahead of our May 19th Congregational Meeting:

Our Leadership positions—President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Financial Secretary, Recording Secretary, Boards of Property, Evangelism, Stewardship, Mutual Ministry, Education, Worship, Congregational Life, Social Ministry—are the church's way of guiding the Church (*all of us*) as it brings the love of God in Christ Jesus to our members, friends, neighbors & the world. These officers serve faithfully, year after year, but need a refreshing respite to rejuvenate and perhaps find a new area in which to serve Jesus in this place.

In order to provide that much needed rest, others need to step up and serve in their place. Each leadership position is for two years. Ideally, these roles will rotate every two years amongst a big portion of our congregation giving everyone a chance to serve.

Descriptions follow so you may know where the talents God has given you can best be utilized in His body, the Church. You will not be alone as you start this role and will get help from your current Lay Leaders.

Right now we need help filling positions on the three boards below listed on the next page.



The Board of Education shall supervise all educational agencies of the congregation as may be delegated to it by the Voters' Assembly. This role will manage the week-to-week lessons that are taught to our church's children and manage the two other teachers who volunteer for Sunday school. Our current board member Robin, welcomes a new board-member to this role.

The Board of Evangelism shall concern itself with the community missionary work of the congregation. This role has been vacant for some time, and as a result, our church has struggled to reach new members. We are desperately looking for someone who does not mind going out into the community, whether it be Chestnut Hill Estates or around UD campus, to host conversations that could potentially help lead men and women to God.



The Board of Social Ministry shall concern itself with the expressions of Christian charity and social welfare in the community. Our current board member, Ruth, has volunteered to run for this role and welcomes others who are also interested.

"Unless someone like you cares an awful lot, nothing is going to get better. It's not."

Dr. Seuss

"Volunteers do not necessarily have the time, but they have the heart."

Anonymous

LUTHERAN WOMEN IN MISSION RALLY, A SUCCESS!

Over 50 women from the Southeastern District gathered at Our Redeemer on April 20th for its annual spring rally, Bloom Where You are Planted. The day began with welcome and breakfast followed by breakout sessions for devotions (Pastor Thress) Bible Study, (Pastor Loesch) and guest speaker (Rob Gurnee), Director of Lutheran Community Services. LCS helps individuals and families address food, housing, and other essential needs with dignity and respect. One hundred and ninety five pairs of socks, 109 cans of food and various boxed items such as dry milk, pastas and cereals were brought to the rally to donate to Lutheran Community Services.



NEWS & NOTES ...

MONTHLY FELLOWSHIP/SOCIAL HOUR— Social & fellowship hour is held on the 3rd Sunday each month. We ask that 2 to 3 people bring items such as simple snacks, desserts, finger foods, etc. Next fellowship is May 19th.—*Lina*

CONGREGATION MEETING— May 19th following service. Fellowship after.

SUNDAY SCHOOL— Last Sunday is May 12th. Classes will resume in the fall.

BIBLE STUDY—Each Sunday at 8:45 a.m. You can also participate online as we explore the book of Isaiah. (No class on May 12)

DEADLINE—For information to be included in Sunday's bulletin is Tue. morning each week; newsletter deadline is 20th of each month.

COUNCIL — Council meets the third Tuesday via Zoom

BUILD A BAG —Vacation time! After a successful season of making sleeping bags, the Build A Bag sessions have ended for the season. Look for us to restart in the fall. Thank you very much.

AC/HEATING PROTOCOLS—Please shut all doors to rooms not being used to help with cooling efficiency during the summer and winter months.—*Bob*

MITE BOXES — Please pick up a Mite Box on the table in the overflow room. Keep it in a visible place in your home, drop in your change or a gratitude donation. Boxes will be collected in June.

HE IS RISEN, ALLELUIA HE IS RISEN INDEED, ALLELUIA

Thank You!

Thanks be to God for this Joyous Holy Season. The season started with our annual Ash Wednesday Soup Supper before the service at 7:00 p.m.

Mid week Wednesday Lenten services were followed with a coffee and cookie fellowship. This was our first social gathering of the year.

Thank you, Pastor Loesch for your teaching and ministry of the scriptures during this Holiest of Holy times. We give thanks and praise for all that you do.

Easter morning breakfast was served at 9:00AM. It was well attended with members, their families and friends. The service was beautiful. Thanks to all who contributed the variety food items. (WOW!)

The 3rd Sunday of each month a Social hour is held after the service at 10:00AM. Lite refreshments are available. Thanks to the ladies of our church who make and provide the delicious desserts and other goodies.

Thank you to everyone who make these social and fellowship events possible. Our church is truly blessed and grateful for your calling in worship and service to the Lord our Savior Jesus Christ.

Please check our website, bulletins, and news letter for future upcoming events. There is always room in the Lord's house. All are Welcome.

God's blessings, *Congregational Life* — *Lina*



ORCHARD GARDEN— ORCHARD sends out a BIG thank you to all who came out to help construct the new raised beds, shovel mulch, and fill the beds with soil. We could not have done it without all of you! Thanks to everyone who came out to help and show their support the last week-end of April for the ORCHARD garden project. It's amazing all that accomplished in less than 48 hours!

Special thanks to church members Loren Kline and Kirk Tackitt who helped with the project. They shared their carpentry expertise with our gardeners. Also, thanks to Jessica Billy who collected the cardboard over the past couple months for the garden paths. We used it all!

Friday evening we had 4 volunteers focused on sawing the cedar. Saturday, 12 volunteers built 10 raised beds,

filled them with soil, and spread mulch around them. We still have a huge pile of mulch that needs to be spread. We also need cardboard to place on the ground to help block the weeds. Mulch goes on top. *Garden Coordinator*—*Robin*

THANK YOU



LUTHERANS AROUND US

Another school year has flown by for LCM!

Thank you for your continued prayers and support for Lutheran Campus Ministry at UD, as we've journeyed through another academic year filled with happy Tuesdays, deep conversations and coffee runs, fun activities and volunteering for FISH. It's been a great season, and we're especially thankful for meaningful times of worship, fellowship, and service, as well as our successful fall fundraiser.

With our wonderful spring retreat behind us, May is a bittersweet month, as we celebrate and honor some amazing outgoing **seniors**. This year, we're wishing farewell and Godspeed at Senior Honor Night to Gabby, who will pursue a career in nursing; Julie, who hopes to attend vet school in a year; and Lucca, who is seeking employment in human resources. We're also celebrating Elizabeth, who will stay at UD one more year to complete a master's degree in education.

We continue to look for new members for LCM's **Directing Committee** (governing board), as well as members for sub-committees, such as property care and Mutual Ministry. If you have a heart for this ministry, and you'd like to get more involved in LCM at UD, please reach out. Thank you. We're especially thankful to all those who've shared delicious, home-cooked meals with us since September—bless you!

Please keep our students in **prayer** as their final projects and exams approach, for good time management, careful retention of content, and successful outcomes. Please also pray that they will continue to know how precious and beloved they are in God's sight! Thank you for your heart and care for LCM.

*In Christ, Mindy Holland, Minister of Word and Service +
Chaplain, Lutheran Campus Ministry at UD
302-368-3078; chaplain@lcmde.org*



We shared a great Easter meal together at Home Grown.



MAY BIRTHDAYS Happy Birthday!

If your birthday or anniversary does not appear here it is because we do not have it in the church database, please call the office to add.

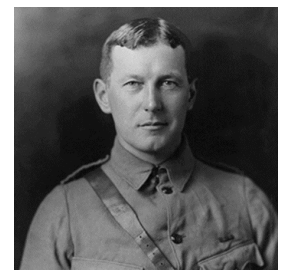


- 2 Jason Cooley
- 9 Dale Allen Streets, Jr.
- 12 Mike Cannatelli
- 13 AK Kissel
- 21 Arlen Besel



In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.
We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie
In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.





John McCrae was born on November 30, 1872. A Canadian doctor and teacher who served in World War I, he is best known for his memorial poem "In Flanders Fields" He died on January 28, 1918.



MAY 2024



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
SERVING — Pastor Jeremy Loesch ORGANIST — J. Hockersmith USHERS Arlen Besel Dennis Boon Jim Rose	STREAMING 5/5 5/12 5/19 5/26	LECTORS 5/5 Robin 5/12 Mike 5/19 Julie 5/26 Sarah	1	2 Pastor Circuit Meet	3	4
5 Bible Study 8:45 a.m. Communion DS24 10 a.m. Sunday School 	6	Announcements Due 7	8	9 Pastor Vacation	10 Pastor Vacation	11 Pastor Vacation
12 Pastor Vacation Worship DS4 10 a.m. Lat Day of Sunday School	13 Pastor Vacation	14 Pastor Vacation Announcement Deadline	15 Pastor Vacation	16 Pastor Vacation	17	18
19 Bible Study 8:45 a.m. Communion DS4 10 a.m. Sunday School Fellowship after service Congregational Meeting 	20	21 Announcement Deadline. Council Meeting	22	23	24	25 Men's Breakfast
26 Bible Study 8:45 a.m. Worship DS4 10 a.m.	27	28 Announcement Deadline	29	30	31 Memorial Day	

MAY BIBLE READINGS

- 1 Samuel 2:1-10
Titus, Philemon
- 2 Psalm 121
Hebrews 1-4
- 3 Psalm 122
Hebrews 5-7
- 4 Psalm 123
Hebrews 8-10
- 5 Psalm 124
Hebrews 11-13
- 6 Psalm 125
James 1-3
- 7 Psalm 126
James 4-5
- 8 Psalm 127
1 Peter 1-2
- 9 Psalm 128
1 Peter 3-5
- 10 Psalm 129
2 Peter
- 11 Psalm 130
1 John 1-3
- 12 Psalm 131
1 John 4-5
- 13 Psalm 132
2 John, 3 John
- 14 Psalm 133
John 1-2
- 15 Psalm 134
John 3-4
- 16 Psalm 135
John 5-6



*Read a little
each day and
you will get
through the
entire Bible in
one year*

- 17 Psalm 136
John 7-8
- 18 Psalm 137
John 9-10
- 19 Psalm 138
John 11-12
- 20 Psalm 139
John 13-14
- 21 Psalm 140
John 15-16
- 22 Psalm 141
John 17-18
- 23 Psalm 142
John 19
- 24 Psalm 143
John 20-21
- 25 Psalm 144
Acts 1-2
- 26 Psalm 145
Acts 3-4
- 27 Psalm 146
Acts 5-6
- 28 Psalm 147
Acts 7-8
- 29 Psalm 148
Acts 9-10
- 30 Psalm 149
Acts 11-12
- 31 1 Samuel 2:1-10
Acts 13-14