

Pilgrim Lutheran Church

BROADWAY AT FLOREY

KILGORE, TEXAS



September 2014 “PILGRIMAGE”

Mission Statement: Pilgrim Lutheran Church is to glorify God in proclaiming the saving Gospel of Jesus Christ with Word and deed in our midst, in our community, and throughout the world.

What’s in an anniversary?

Dear Members and Friends of Pilgrim Lutheran Church,

Sixty-two years ago this month Pilgrim Lutheran chartered as a congregation, and this fall the congregation will have been in its current Sanctuary for sixty years, though the Sanctuary was not fully completed until some two years later. Seven men signed the congregation’s charter, 25 people were members after a few months, 142 people were present for the Sanctuary’s dedication, and two years ago we figured that through its first 60 years some 520 people had come to Pilgrim as members and either stayed or left in one fashion or another. (For more details, see the historical narrative at <http://www.pilgrimlc.org/our-history>.)

As with the more-famous saints in the history of the Christian Church, Pilgrim’s faithful members who have come before us are honored by us in three ways. First, we thank God for them as examples of His mercy, and we praise them for their using His gifts. Second, our faith is strengthened as we consider how God’s grace for the sake of His Son Jesus Christ abounds more than sin. Third, according to our callings we imitate their faith and other virtues. (For these honors and not invocation of the saints, see the Apology of the Augsburg Confession XXI:4-7.)

Less than one year after chartering, the congregation with the help of a loan from the Texas District Lutheran Church Extension Fund purchased for \$7,500 the land at the corner of Broadway Boulevard and Florey Street. A little more than a year later, ground was broken and construction began. What were those few chartering members believing and doing about the future as they laid the foundation for the Sanctuary still in use today?

In some sense they built for the future, although they did not build all they wanted to build: the original plans called for a large Parish Hall with Sunday School classrooms off the main room. Instead, a house originally on the property was enlarged and served for both Sunday School and the Parish Hall from 1957 until 1970, when it was sold and moved off site. At that same time, the original church building was expanded and remodeled for the Parish Hall and a then 12-year-old oil-field building was moved on site for Sunday School. Today that now 56-year-old building continues to be used for Sunday School and offices, a separate Sunday School building donated in 1983 having been destroyed in a 2008 storm.

The Church is first and foremost the assembly of believers among whom the Gospel is purely preached and the Sacraments are rightly administered (Augsburg Confession VII:1), but we call the Sanctuary—and to a lesser extent also the Parish Hall, Sunday School space, and offices—“church” because they facilitate the preaching of the Gospel and administering of the

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Sacraments. The buildings are in some sense a necessary part of who we have been as “church” in the past, who we are as “church” today, and who we will be as “church” in the future. What are we believing and doing about the future as we consider laying the foundation for new facilities?

Pilgrim ladies spent countless hours on the lovely new banners hanging in the Sanctuary for the “green” seasons of Epiphany and the Sundays after Pentecost. The banners’ message is relevant and Scriptural: God’s Word—in all its forms: Scriptural preaching of Christ crucified, Holy Baptism, Individual Absolution, and the Sacrament of the Altar—accomplishes what He desires—spiritual growth in our own hearts and lives, relational growth together as a congregation, and deeds of mercy and love that with our confession of faith spread the Gospel around the world (Isaiah 55:11). Do we believe and are we acting in accord with that truth?

In response to God’s saving them by grace through faith in Jesus Christ, God’s people proportionately give of their first fruits back to God in giving to their congregation. In so doing, they provide for the place of God’s presence among them, built in the best possible way, not in a manner that they would not even use for their own homes or offices. (For examples, see the Old Testament relevant accounts of the construction of first the Tabernacle in Exodus 25:1-9 and 35:20-29 and then the Temple in 1 Chronicles 22.) Like the Pilgrim saints before us, we want to build for the future, even if we cannot build all we want to build.

“What’s in a name?” Juliet asks Romeo in Act II, Scene ii, of William Shakespeare’s play that bears their names. My title for this article recasts her question: “What’s in an anniversary?” Is its 62nd Anniversary for the congregation’s as a name was for Juliet, an artificial and meaningless construct? Or, is the occasion or a genuine opportunity for the congregation to praise God for His presence among us and to ask for His ongoing blessing upon those who gather here? *Lutheran Service Book’s* appointed Collect for the Occasion of an Anniversary of a Congregation would have us pray, “Dwell continually among us with Your holy Word and Sacraments, strengthen our fellowship in the bonds of love and peace, and increase our faithful witness to Your salvation.” We can add to that our petitions for Him to open our hearts and minds to His vision and direction for our congregation as we build facilities to serve God’s people

*His and your servant,
Pastor Galler*



HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

Felicity Gill – September 2

Clay Ellis – September 14

Jeannette Paetznick – September 20

Leland Dean – September 21

Heavenly Father, our times our in Your hands. Look with favor on these Your children as they celebrate their birthdays. Grant that they may continue to grow in wisdom and grace. Strengthen their trust in Your goodness and bless them with Your abiding love all the days of their lives; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, Who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

(Adapted from Lutheran Service Book #306 p.318.)

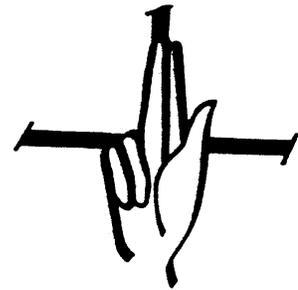
Forgiving one another highlights September's Sundays

The Gospel Readings for the first two Sundays in September largely center on brothers and sisters in Christ reconciling with and forgiving one another, although at least one of the Readings also makes reference to the pastors' exercise of the keys of the Kingdom as that exercise is affirmed by the assembled congregation. And, of course, forgiveness is only possible to begin with because of God's grace for the sake of Jesus's death for us.

Both Readings come from the so-called "Fourth Discourse" (Matthew 18:1-19:1), which one commentator says centers on "Life in the Community of the Kingdom". In the two Readings we hear Jesus teach about the greatest in the kingdom of heaven (18:1-11), tell the parable of the lost sheep (18:12-14), teach how Christians should reconcile with each other (18:15-20), and warn about what will happen if they do not (18:21-35). The humility of the little ones who are greatest in the Kingdom and are not to be looked down upon but sought out when they wander is related to the teaching about reconciliation and forgiveness that follows.

The sin in view is that which a brother or sister in Christ commits against a fellow brother or sister in Christ (although such sin is also sin against God). Such sin is ideally to be resolved privately, without involving more people than already know about the sin. If the brother or sister will not repent at first after a private confrontation, nor after a second confrontation with multiple witnesses (as required already in the Old Testament), nor after the Church has been made aware and makes a third attempt, then the person is to be treated not as a Christian but as a pagan.

Note the same language in Matthew 18:18 as in Matthew 16:19, where the authority is connected with talk of the "keys" to heaven and hell. The pastor is entrusted with the Office of the Keys (not only Peter as in Matthew 16:19 but also the other apostles and their successors addressed by the plural "you" in Matthew 18:18), and thus he exercises the keys for the congregation's benefit. The pastor bans the person from the Sacrament (also called excommunication), and the congregation says "Amen" to that exercise of the binding key. Such a ban or cutting off from the communion of the Church is always with a view towards leading the person to realize the severity of their scandalous sin or impenitence and return with repentance and faith and so be restored by the pastor's exercise of the loosing key, to which exercise the congregation also says "Amen!"



The so-called parable of the unmerciful servant drives home the point that as we are forgiven by God of an insurmountable debt through faith in Jesus Christ, Who died and rose again to save us from our sins, so we should forgive one another. That point is also made in the first discourse with its teaching about prayer (Matthew 6:12, 14-15). Truly we all are to forgive as we want to be forgiven, and, while the human spirit alone cannot forgive every act, the spirit of the redeemed person born in Holy Baptism and enabled by the Holy Spirit at least wants and strives to forgive every act.

The Sundays after Pentecost this month, their dates, and a brief description and citation of their Gospel Readings follow (according to *Lutheran Service Book* Three-year Series A):

- Thirteenth Sunday (09/07): Jesus speaks of forgiving one another (Matthew 18:1-20)
- Fourteenth Sunday (09/14): Jesus warns the unforgiving (Matthew 18:21-35)
- Fifteenth Sunday (09/21): Jesus tells a parable about grace (Matthew 20:1-16)
- Sixteenth Sunday (09/28): Jesus's authority is challenged (Matthew 21:23-27)

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Between the end of August and the beginning of September, the appointed readings skip Matthew 17:10-27 (Matthew 17:1-9 is appointed for The Transfiguration of Our Lord), and in September they skip Matthew 19:1-26 (Matthew 19:27-30 is appointed for The Conversion of St. Paul). You may want to read those omitted portions on your own.

You may remember that the green paraments (cloth hangings) on the font, lectern, pulpit, and altar, as well as the stole the pastor wears, are intended to bring to mind the life and growth evident in foliage and fruit and so reflect the growth in the Kingdom of God through Word and Sacrament, an emphasis of the season of Sundays after Pentecost.

Regardless of the season or day, everyone is always invited and welcome in person at Pilgrim Lutheran Church, and you can read and usually also hear any of the sermons preached at Pilgrim at <http://www.pilgrimlc.org/sermons>.

Pastor Jayson S. Galler

SEPTEMBER EVENTS

LWML: Meet Tuesday, September 2, at 6:00 p.m. in the Parish Hall for a Bible Study from the *Lutheran Woman's Quarterly* entitled "Be Thou My Vision" led by Pastor Galler, and then we will go to the Back Porch Restaurant in Kilgore for supper. All ladies of the congregation are invited to join us for Bible Study, food, and fun. If you need a ride, give Elaine Navaille a call, and she will arrange transportation. Serve the Lord with Gladness!

MIDWEEK BIBLE STUDY: Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m. in the Parish Hall. We are continuing our study of Salvation History as Our Story, at present making our way through Exodus. Everyone is welcome to join us at any time.

RALLY/PROMOTION DAY: Sunday, September 7th during the 10:45 a.m. Divine Service. Afterwards, all Sunday School students, parents, teachers, and substitute teachers are invited to a hot dog lunch in the Parish Hall and bowling outing at the Kilgore Bowling Center (2004 S Henderson Blvd). Join us for the day of fun to kick off the new year of Sunday School.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE MEETING: Tuesday, September 9th, at 5:30 p.m.

ELDERS Tuesday, September 9th, at 6:00 p.m. Read and come prepared to discuss AC/Ap XV, p.39 and pp.187-194.

BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING Tuesday, September 16th, at 6:00 p.m.

CIRCUIT PASTORS' CONFERENCE: Thursday, September 18th at Pilgrim, with a Special Divine Service at 9:45 a.m. open to all and LWML ladies' providing food.

NEWSLETTER ARTICLES are due September 21st.

EVANGELISM COMMITTEE MEETING Sunday, September 14th, after Divine Service (over lunch).

CLOSED COMMUNION is the topic of a special one-time afternoon study on Sunday, September 28th, after the Divine Service and a covered-dish meal.

ONCE-A-MONTH-SOCIAL GATHERING: a Rangers' football game on the 13th or 27th? Let Tifaney Sampson know your preferences.

Some Recent Snapshots



Kristen Heil prepares breakfast for her new husband U.S Navy Petty Officer George C. Heil at their new home in Goose Creek, SC. We know George C. is being fed well!



Pilgrim members Vicki and John Walker donate blood with their daughter Melissa Vineyard at the congregation's and the Kilgore Rotary Club's July 26th blood drive held in the Parish Hall.



After the July 30th Midweek Bible Study, a group from PLC enjoyed the annual balloon burn and root beer floats held this year at Driller Park in connection with a PumpJacks baseball game.



Kathy Hudson planned and, with the help of Sharon Sampson, planted this beautiful Christ-centered flower garden.

Ladies of Pilgrim's LWML Society worked with Pastor Galler to design and complete two new banners for use in Pilgrim's Sanctuary during the "green seasons" of the Church Year, most of both the Epiphany Season and the Sundays after Pentecost. As the rain and snow do not come down without watering the earth and making it bring forth and sprout, providing seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so God's Word does not return to Him empty but succeeds in the things for which he sends it (Isaiah 55:10-11).



WORDS TO LIVE BY

Kathy Hudson came up with a wonderful idea for the large bulletin board in the Parish Hall. Think of your favorite Bible passage and write it down, preferably legibly and on white paper (include your name and the book, chapter, and verse where it can be found). Kathy will use her wonderful decorating skills to arrange them on the board. You may leave them on the desk in the Office or hand them directly to Kathy. Thank you in advance for your help!

HELPING HANDS

Items desired for September are crackers, peanut butter, lunch meat, canned fruit, and dishwashing soap. A container for your donations is located in Pilgrim's Narthex. If you want to donate money above and beyond your regular church offering, you can send your check or money order to Helping Hands of Kilgore, PO Box 1576, Kilgore, TX 75662.

LUTHERAN FOUNDATION OF TEXAS



Since 1960 Lutheran Foundation of Texas has helped God's people grow in their Christian stewardship by providing information and assistance regarding Christian wills, charitable trusts, endowments, and estate and gift plans. The current low interest rate environment is difficult for those with a fixed income or retirees. The Foundation can help increase the rate of return and also provide support for the Lord's work through a ministry of an individual's choice. If the Foundation can be of service to you, visit www.lfot.org to view helpful planned giving information or call 800-880-3733.

THANK YOU TO THE FOLLOWING

Brady and Shannon Gage, for keeping the church grounds manicured.

All who donated supplies, set up and took down the display, and those who staffed the booth at the Letourneau University Church Fair.

Elaine Navaille, Kathy Hudson, and Barbara Wuthrich, for designing and completing our new pair of "green season" banners.

PILGRIM'S PLATE OFFERINGS TO DATE

Following a request from Pilgrim's Board of Elders, Pilgrim's Financial Secretary reports the following figures for 2014 as of August 24:

Plate Offerings received:	\$70,862.29
Plate Offerings projected :	\$73,236.00

Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work.

— 2 Corinthians 9:6-8 (ESV) —

Down Ampney and the Divine

Editors' Note: The following article about Down Ampney, the tune for Lutheran Service Book 501 (which we will be learning before Midweek Bible Study September 3rd and 10th and be singing as the Hymn of the Day on September 14th), was written by a former seminary classmate and fellow-fieldworker of Pastor Galler's. The article was originally published in Vol. XXVIII, No. 3 (May-July, 2013) of Weavings: A Journal of the Christian Spiritual Life, pages 43-47, and is reprinted here with the author's permission.

I heard him before I saw him. His strained and drunken voice called out “Excuse me, excuse me ...” as I walked by the threshold where he was curled up against a door. I turned to see where he was as my mind began asking the question I knew would be coming, but I couldn't have been more wrong.

“Do you have the time?” he slurred. I gave him the hour and minute, expecting more to follow, but all that came was “Thanks.” I was amazed and thought, “That was all he wanted? No plea for money? Why would he want to know the time?”

I encountered him again a month later. This time he was sitting on a chair in the Lutheran city mission, and this time I was “clerically attired.” He yelled to me as I walked in, “Hey Reverend, do you know number 123 in the red book?” I went over to where he was sitting and asked, “What's number 123?” “*Down Ampney*,” he answered. “That isn't anything I've ever heard of,” I said. Then came his ardent demand, “You must learn that hymn!” “Okay,” I assured him, “I will.”

He proceeded to ask where my parish was and how long I'd been in town. Then he lowered his voice, pulled me closer, and said in a gravelly whisper, “Now I'm not going to lie to you, but could I have a couple of dollars for booze?” Surprised at his forthrightness, I replied, “No, I can't give you any money for that ... but I will learn the hymn.” That was the last time I saw him before my summer internship ended.

A woman who worked at the mission saw our exchange and later told me his name and story. Some years ago he had been working on his doctorate in music at the nearby Peabody Institute when his wife and son were killed in a car accident. He lost it—financially, mentally, emotionally. What became of him was evident for all to see, yet his simple question and demand made him my teacher and me his pupil.

I returned to the parish study and looked up number 123 in my “red book”—the tune was not *Down Ampney*. Stymied, I put it out of my mind and moved on to other things without any further thought—until, that is, I was back at seminary. One day as I remembered his charge, it dawned on me that there was a red Lutheran hymnal other than the one I had always known. I went to the library, pulled down the 1958 *Service Book and Hymnal* published by Augsburg Publishing House, and there at number 123 (in the Pentecost / Holy Ghost section) was *Down Ampney*. I was impressed when I noticed that the tune's composer was R. Vaughan Williams, a godsend to English hymnody and twentieth century music. I began to read the words and wondered if the text had not been my broken master's constant prayer and humbling lesson:

Come down, O Love divine, / Seek thou this soul of mine,
And visit it with thine own ardor glowing ...

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Let holy charity / Mine outward vesture be,
And lowliness become mine inner clothing;
True lowliness of heart / Which takes the humbler part,
And o'er its own shortcomings weeps with loathing. (Stanzas 1 and 3)

Maybe my mentor's initial question was really "Do you have the time *for me*? Can you see me for more than my *outward condition*? Can you see me, *shortcomings and all*, as one who pleads for the Holy Spirit's descent and dwelling?"

I was compelled to learn more about this hymn. The bottom of the page told me that the text was written in the fifteenth century by Bianco da Siena and translated into English by Richard F. Littledale in the nineteenth century. The hymn had been quite popular among the flagellants of late medieval Italy, assumedly for its language of intense fiery spiritual purification:

O let it freely burn, / Till earthly passions turn
To dust and ashes in its heat consuming ... (Stanza 2)

Williams set *Come Down, O Love Divine* to *Down Ampney*—a tune he composed and named for the Cotswold village in Gloucestershire, England, where he was born (and died)—and it was that hymn that served as the "benediction" for his funeral, just as he wanted; perhaps he even gave thought to the flames that would claim his body in cremation. He also requested that his *Five Variants of 'Dives and Lazarus* (based on Luke 16:19-31) be used, and so that composition dispersed the silence of Westminster Abbey that mournful day in 1958. Those choices, which he knew so intimately, simply breathe the *corruptible* putting on *incorruption*, this *mortal* putting on *immortality* (1 Corinthians 15:53-54, KJV). From Jesus's portrait of Lazarus the beggar, to the plea of a soul stripped bare longing to be clothed by the Holy Spirit, these themes could not have been more pronounced. They embody hunger and thirst finally sated and quenched; desire finally satisfied. Through our ears, our eyes behold a sore-covered beggar (who received more comfort in this life from the dogs than from the "rich man") transformed into a comforted saint in "the bosom of Abraham." Williams' burial music evokes deep contemplation of the higher and truer things amidst life's grim realities.

As a result of this association with *Dives and Lazarus*, *Come Down, O Love Divine* has become attached in recent years to concern for "the least" in society. I will never forget the ecumenical prayer service on behalf of ministries to the poor and homeless that I attended a number of years ago. A children's choir (clothed in surplices and ruffs) sang the hymn at its most sublime, followed by a black gospel choir's song of yearning for the rain of heaven.

The hymn never fails to remind me of my teacher and of another person I met that summer—an elderly former nun who had lived on the streets for years. At some point in her life she married, only to find herself later escaping what became a prison-house of abuse. Her mind and body were a wreck, but she managed to maintain a sweet and stubborn innocence. When I knew her, she was living in a row-house with prostitutes who had shown mercy on her condition.

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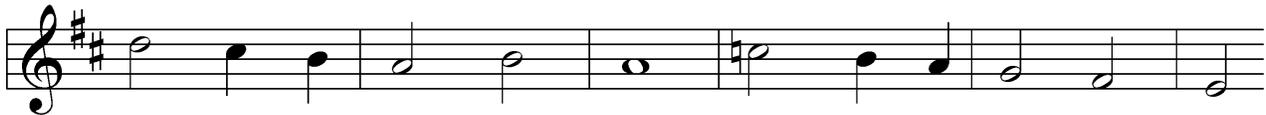
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I used to give her a ride to Sunday worship. Frozen in my memory is the time she met me at the car with a friend, leaned in and said to me with a glowing smile, “I’m bringing in the lost sheep!”

Down Ampney has taken on an existence of its own through *Come Down, O Love Divine*; it has informed my life of faith with the paradoxes of experience.

Had my teacher on the sidewalk and in the city mission known the hymn’s history and associations? I can only conclude that he did and that he identified with it more than I can ever know. It reminds me (as a corollary to Jesus’ definition through the parable of the “good” Samaritan in Luke 10:29-37), just *who* my neighbor *is*. Neighbors will appear to us in stark, unsettling, and challenging ways more often than they will as “pleasant friends” sipping lemonade on the back porch. Taking note that the word *neighbor* originated as “nigh boor”—more a term of derision than admiration—is helpful (see Joseph T. Shipley’s fascinating etymology of this word in *Dictionary of Word Origins* (New York: Philosophical Library), 241). When hearing Jesus’s reiteration of the Levitical command to “love your neighbor as yourself” (Mark 12:31), we perhaps do well to remember this: Neighbors put us off in appearance or circumstance; neighbors make demands of us, but therein is an opening for the active grace, mercy, and peace of the Holy Spirit. After all, the hymn is a holy cry—a divine plea—that our souls become the place of the Spirit’s dwelling and become subject to all that such an encounter entails.

Rev. Joel R. Kurz, Pastor
Bethlehem Lutheran Church
Warrensburg, MO



INVEST WITH TEXAS CHURCH EXTENSION FUND

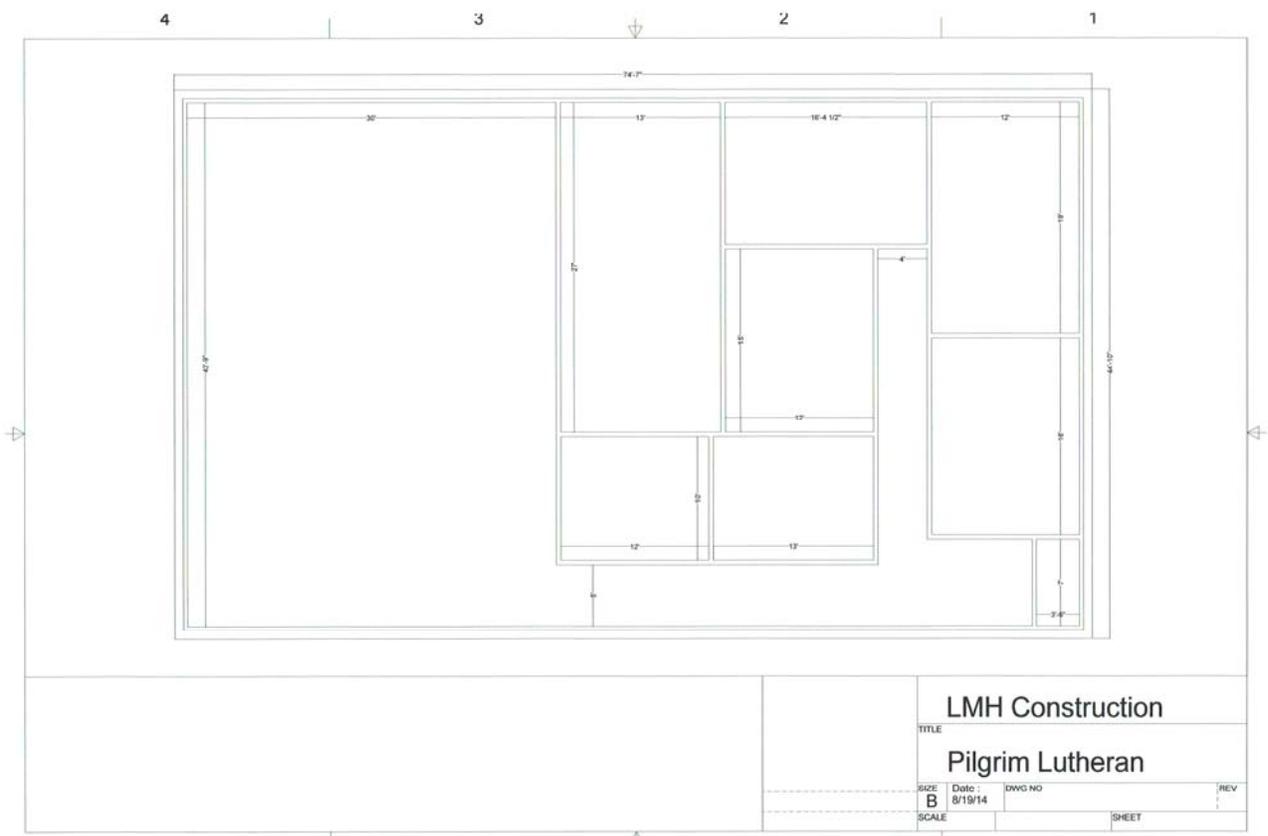
Your investment with Texas Church Extension Fund (CEF) often can earn you a higher return than you can get with other investments, and, generally speaking, the more money a congregation’s members have invested with CEF, the better the congregation does if and when it borrows money from CEF. If Pilgrim in the future borrows from the Texas District’s CEF, the congregation would benefit from its members having as many investments with CEF as possible. Investment rates as of August 2014 and CEF contact information are in the figure below.

 <p>August 2014</p> <p>Texas Church Extension Fund</p> <p>1-888-951-1233 www.TexasCEF.org www.facebook.com/texascef</p>	<u>Investment</u>	<u>Fixed Rate^Δ</u>		<u>Floating Rate^Δ</u>		
		Rate	APY	Rate	APY	
	One Year Note [✦]	.750%	.75%	0.250%	0.25%	
	Three Year Note [✦]	1.250%	1.26%	1.000%	1.00%	
	Five Year Note [✦]	1.750%	1.76%	1.750%	1.76%	
	Flex Savings			0.500%	0.50%	
	<u>Accounts For Congregations</u>					
	Congregation Savings			1.000%	1.00%	
	Building Fund Savings			1.750%	1.76%	
	<small>Δ- Rates subject to change. ✦- Subject to penalty for early withdrawal. Rates reviewed monthly. Texas District Church Extension Fund is a nonprofit religious organization; therefore, CEF investments are not SIPC- or FDIC-insured bank deposit accounts. This does not constitute an offer to sell or a request to buy. The offer is made solely by CEF's Offering Circular.</small>					

Capital Improvements Committee reworking building plan

The Capital Improvements Committee has met with a new builder about a metal building to house new Parish Hall and Sunday School rooms. His latest floorplan with approximate dimensions is below. The Committee's members are currently waiting for a more-detailed bid from him, but we are optimistic it will be closer to our price range. Also, we will be meeting with the carpenter who did the work on the Sanctuary, in order to see what he can do with the current Parish Hall; to turn it into the Church Office, Pastor's Study, and Conference Room/Library. The committee is looking into closing-in the front porch as additional Narthex space and potentially converting the Usher's Closet into a unisex ADA bathroom. We will continue to keep the congregation updated as we progress.

*Steven Sampson, Chair
Capital Improvements Committee*



*We are God's house of living stones,
Built for His own habitation.
He through baptismal grace us owns
Heirs of His wondrous salvation.
Were we but two His name to tell,
Yet He would deign with us to dwell
With all His grace and His favor.*

— Lutheran Service Book 645:3 —

1	1 Chr. 29:10-13 Job 31-33
2	Psalm 86 Job 34-36
3	Psalm 87 Job 37-39
4	Psalm 88 Job 40-42
5	Psalm 89 Proverbs 1-3
6	Psalm 90 Proverbs 4-7
7	Psalm 91 Proverbs 8-10
8	Psalm 92 Proverbs 11-13
9	Psalm 93 Proverbs 14-16
10	Psalm 94 Proverbs 17-19
11	Psalm 95 Proverbs 20-22
12	Psalm 96 Proverbs 23-25
13	Psalm 97 Proverbs 26-28
14	Psalm 98 Proverbs 29-31
15	Psalm 99 Ecclesiastes 1-3
16	Psalm 100 Ecclesiastes 4-6
17	Psalm 101 Ecclesiastes 7-9
18	Psalm 102 Ecclesiastes 10-12
19	Psalm 103 Song of Solomon 1-4
20	Psalm 104 Song of Solomon 5-8
21	Psalm 105 Jeremiah 1-3
22	Psalm 106 Jeremiah 4-6
23	Psalm 107 Jeremiah 7-9
24	Psalm 108 Jeremiah 10-12
25	Psalm 109 Jeremiah 13-15
26	Psalm 110 Jeremiah 16-18
27	Psalm 111 Jeremiah 19-22
28	Psalm 112 Jeremiah 23-25
29	Psalm 113 Jeremiah 26-28
30	1 Chr. 29:10-13 Jeremiah 29-31

Does the Bible say life is “meaningless”?

A recent email brought me a question from a member about the “meaninglessness” of life as reported in the book of Ecclesiastes, which the member was reading on the member’s own (apparently not following the Daily Bible Reading plan we are providing here, unless reading ahead). Although I replied to the email with an answer, I thought I would also say a few more words about Ecclesiastes here, since the book is due to be read September 15th through September 17th.

In the online resources for the Daily Bible Reading plan that I put together while serving Grace Lutheran Church, Elgin, Texas, the former journalist in me wanted to and did answer the so-called five W and one H questions for each book, and those answers for Ecclesiastes may be helpful.

- **Who was the author?** The Holy Spirit inspired the book of Ecclesiastes through a wisdom teacher who is usually thought to be Solomon.
- **What is the book?** The book appears to be a mature and seasoned wisdom teacher’s reflections on life and its value only through faith in God (referred to as fear of the Lord).
- **Where was it written?** If Solomon was truly the author, the book was most likely written in Jerusalem.
- **When was it written?** Again, if Solomon was the author, the book was probably written near the end of his reign, or shortly before 930 A.D.
- **Why?** Earthly wisdom has a certain lure and attraction, but in the end only taking things as they seem can leave one without the peace and contentment that comes from knowing what God reveals to us by His Holy Spirit working through the Word.
- **How?** The “teacher” first assesses things as they appear to demonstrate the limits of earthly wisdom, and then he proceeds to discuss what God reveals about His ordering all things to His purposes. There are a number of literary devices used in the book, which includes some of the finest “literature” of the Old Testament.

Reading Ecclesiastes, we are reminded that apart from God there is a void that we cannot fill and a purpose we cannot see. With God and His revelation, however, we are at least content and can trust that there is a greater purpose. While God remains hidden to unbelievers in spite of His revelation, to believers, God, Who is only partly revealed now, will ultimately be fully revealed. More than anything else, amidst all the “meaninglessness” of Ecclesiastes and its preaching of the law, remember

the Gospel and that a life centered on God does have meaning (something the book itself eventually makes clear but that is easy to forget in the short sections we read the first three days). As is at least in part the message of the book, patience in affliction pays off in the end!

Pastor Jayson S. Galler

Please pray for our members, family, friends, and coworkers

CHRISTIANS UNDER PERSECUTION, ESPECIALLY THOSE IN IRAQ
THOSE WHO HAVE STRAYED FROM THE FAITH:

Elizabeth & Ava Nicol (Don and Beth's niece and grand-niece)

OUR PILGRIM LUTHERAN CHURCH:

Hearts and minds open to God's vision and direction for our congregation

MEN IN THE SERVICE:

Garrett Caldwell (Gwen Heil's grandson)

Victor Guinn (Paul Guinn's son at Dyess Air Force Base in Abilene)

George C. Heil (Navy school in Charleston, SC)

Brian Holcombe (Carolyn and Wendell Holcombe's son stationed in Hawaii)

Ross Land (stationed in Louisiana)

THOSE IN POLICE AND FIRE DEPARTMENTS AND THE MEDICAL PROFESSION

THOSE WHO TRAVEL:

Brady Gage

Jeff Gill (flying to see his hospitalized father)

Jeanette Heil

Tim Jeffers

Jerome & Sallye Key

David Navaille

Edgar and Barbara Wuthrich

SHUT-INS:

Bob Abraham (in an Alzheimer Center in Austin)

Leland Dean (with his daughter Gina in Bartlesville, Oklahoma)

THOSE WHO NEED HEALING:

Debbie Atchinson (Betty Miller's daughter, shoulder "surgery" 9/4 and therapy after)

Mary Broyles (friend of the Wuthriches, successful surgery but 1/3 way through chemo)

Vern Buell (friend of Remo Gualtieri and Kathy Hudson, rehab until maybe 8/29)

Sabrina Davis (Connie Wilburn's friend, second round of chemotherapy for lung cancer)

Kimberly Dietz (Shannon's partner Keri Schoder's sister, 2/3 through chemo "cocktail")

Jeanne Draper (Arcele Wilburn's niece, hospitalized after what may be third stroke)

Alexandra Frericks (Sallye Key's relative, some improvement and heart rehab in Atlanta)

Tom Gill (Jeff's father, hospitalized again and not doing well)

Meredith Gregg (Cooper Sampson's former teacher, home after car accident 8/17)

Mark Harrington (Walkers' brother-in-law, worst bone cancer but no treatment yet)

Marsha Hayes (Nicols' friend, recovering from chemo and radiation for throat cancer)

Carolyn Holcombe (recent heart tests prompting medicine changes and follow-up testing)

Rev. Darrell Howanitz (former pastor of Our Redeemer, Longview, end-stage cancer)

Cathy Jennings (Australian friend of the Gualtieris, most of her cancer is gone)

Kathleen Jennings (Heil relative's pastor's wife, surgery 8/20 and chronic pain)

Olin Johnson (Nicols' friend with Parkinsons, continuing to decline in nursing home)

Laura Key (Jerome's step-mother, continuing to decline in nursing home)

Sallye Key (still experiencing continual pain in her arms from shoulder to finger)

Carl London (Connie Wilburn's coworker, colon and liver cancer, surgery in September)

Lane Meador (Wilburn's 7-year-old paralyzed friend, rehab but breathing complications)

Prayer List continues on next page

Prayer List continued from previous page

Herb Michaels (brother-in-law of Pastor Galler's friend, recently had grand mal seizure)

Wayne Miller (likely to need another endoscopy and esophageal stretching)

Sharon Sampson (adjusting to vision changes from cataract procedure 8/19)

Riley Sapp (Nicols' granddaughter, esophageal problems due to allergies, Sept. checkup)

Betty Sewing (Sallye Key's step-mother in Denver, testing and treatment for BOOP)

Sharabeth Upton (Nicols' daughter, 7/23 appointment for cancer treatment options)

Vince Vernon (Walkers' brother-in-law, serious bladder cancer surgeries set for 6/25)

Robert Wiles (Betty Miller's nephew, untreatable cancer, now on feeding tube)

ALL MARRIAGES AND FAMILIES, ESPECIALLY THOSE IN CRISIS OR NEED:

George C. Heil Family (expecting their first child)

Shala Family (neighbors of Olene Herricks, immigrants here, son in dangerous Albania)

Tyler Watts Family (expecting their third child in November)

OCTOBER EVENTS

MIDWEEK BIBLE STUDY: Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m. in the Parish Hall.

LWML RALLY Saturday, October 4th, at Redeemer Lutheran Church in Nacogdoches. (Some ladies from Pilgrim will perform a skit.)

LWML SUNDAY October 5th.

LWML BANNER PARTY Tuesday, October 7th, at 5:00 p.m.

LWML Tuesday, October 7th, at 6:00 p.m.

COMMUNITY BLOOD DRIVE Saturday, October 11th beginning at 9:00 a.m.

COVERED-DISH MEAL AND VOTERS MEETING Sunday, October 12th following the Divine Service.

MUSIC CONFERENCE: Monday and Tuesday, October 13th and 14th, "Built on the Rock: Christ, Culture, and Sacred Music" worship conference at Lord of Life Lutheran Church, Plano.

ELDERS Tuesday, October 14th, at 6:00 p.m. (or TBA due to conflict with worship conference).

PUMPKIN PATCH AND FALL MARKET Saturday, October 18th, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at St Luke's Methodist Church. We need donations of baked goods and volunteers to staff the booth. Watch for sign-up sheets in the Narthex.

NEWSLETTER ARTICLES are due October 19th.

CLUBB-STEPHENSON WEDDING: Friday, October 24th, our member Aaron Clubb weds Mary Stephenson in Niagara Falls, Ontario, Canada. You can read more about at the wedding at <http://www.aaronandmary.com> (the password is october24). Aaron's current address is 14382 E Road, Delta, CO 81416.

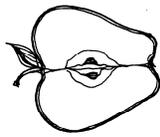
MATINS: Sunday, October 26th, in Pastor Galler's absence there will be no communion.

JOINT REFORMATION EVE VESPERS Thursday, October 30th, at 7:00 p.m. at Pilgrim.

ONCE-A-MONTH-SOCIAL GATHERING: What do you all want to do this month? Give your ideas to Tifaney Sampson.

Q. If there is only one God, why do we talk about three?

A. If you have faith in the *true* God, you believe in God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.



Here is 1 apple.

The apple has 3 parts.

16 5 5 12 6 12 5 19 8 3 15 18 5

The 3 parts of the apple have different purposes:

The peel _____
 16 18 15 20 5 3 20 19
 It keeps the apple healthy.

The flesh of the apple is good to

 5 1 20
 The core of the apple contains
 _____ from which apple trees
 19 5 5 4 19
 grow.

THE APPLE HAS 3 PARTS BUT YOU KNOW YOU DON'T HAVE 3 APPLES—JUST 1.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13

N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26

KIDS' PAGE

THERE IS ONLY 1 TRUE GOD.

The 1 true God has 3 persons:
 GOD THE FATHER,
 GOD THE SON, and
 GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT

The 3 persons of the 1 true God have different purposes.

God the Father is our _____
 3 18 5 1 20 15 18

God the Son is our _____
 19 1 22 9 15 18

God the Holy Spirit makes us _____
 8 15 12 25



The 3 main ways we can know God is _____ the
 Father, _____ the Son, and _____ the Holy Spirit.
 Find 3 of each of these symbols in the picture.



SEPTEMBER 2014

Pilgrim Lutheran Church

www.pilgrimlc.org
(903-984-4333)

Pastor's Regular Study Hours
Tuesday 5:00–8:00 PM
Wednesday–Saturday 9:00 AM–12:00 PM

Cleaning Volunteers:
Steven and Angela Sampson

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1	2 Noon Kilgore Ministerial Fellowship Lunch 6:00 PM LWML Felicity Gill (B)	3 7:00 PM Midweek Bible Study	4 Pastor goes to Plano Study Group	5	6
7 13 TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST (G) 9:15-9:30 AM Refreshments 9:30-10:30 AM SS & Bible Class 10:45 AM Divine Service with Rally Day/Promotion Lunch & Outing	8	9 2:00-5:00 PM Cleaning Ladies 5:30 PM Nominating Committee Meeting 6:00 PM Elders	10 7:00 AM Small Church Pastors' Breakfast 7:00 PM Midweek Bible Study	11	12	13
14 14 TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST (G) 9:15-9:30 AM Refreshments 9:30-10:30 AM SS & Bible Class 10:45 AM Divine Service Lunch Evangelism Committee Meeting Clay Ellis (B)	15	16 6:00 PM Budget Committee Meeting	17 7:00 PM Midweek Bible Study	18 9:15 AM Special Divine Service 10:15 AM Circuit 14 Pastors' Conference 12:30 AM Lunch	19	20 Newsletter articles due tomorrow Jeannette Paetznick (B)
21 15 TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST (G) 9:15-9:30 AM Refreshments 9:30-10:30 AM SS & Bible Class 10:45 AM Divine Service Leland Dean (B)	22	23 5:30 PM Pastor prays at City Council	24 7:00 PM Midweek Bible Study	25	26	27
28 16 TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST (G) 9:15-9:30 AM Refreshments 9:30-10:30 AM SS & Bible Class 10:45 AM Divine Service Covered dish meal Closed Communion Study	29 ST MICHAEL & ALL ANGELS	30	Communion Assistant – Dr Ron Morton Acolyte – John Morton			

Pilgrim Lutheran Church
713 Florey Street
Kilgore, Texas 75662-3503

The Pilgrimage is a monthly newsletter for the members and friends of



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Rev. Dr. Jayson S. Galler, Pastor

pastor@pilgrimlc.org

903-984-4333

Pastor Galler and Sharon Sampson are the editors of **The Pilgrimage**. Barbara Wuthrich assists with producing and distributing editions. Everyone is welcome to contribute articles at any time. All copyright holders of excerpted or reproduced materials are hereby acknowledged, and such materials are used in good faith under fair use provisions.