

Announcements

- ◆ A warm welcome to all our visitors and guests, friends both old and new. We pray that God has blessed your time among us with His Word and Holy Spirit. We cordially invite you to join us this morning for coffee and other refreshments downstairs following the Divine Service; and we ask that you please sign the guest book at the back of the church.
- ◆ “THANK YOU” to those who participated in yesterday’s Emmaus work day. Many hands make light work.
- ◆ The Emmaus Youth have baked goods to sell downstairs. Proceeds from this Thanksgiving Bake Sale will go towards the cost of the 2017 Higher Things Conference. Thank you for your support.
- ◆ Following coffee & refreshments this morning, our Family Bible Class will continue our study of Genesis, making special use of Dr. Luther’s lectures. Catechesis class for younger and beginning catechumens meets at the same time. Older children, especially between the ages of eight and twelve, will meet with Mike Jindra and Ian Walsh. And Dave Smith is also teaching a catechesis class for teenagers and others who are interested.
- ◆ Emmaus will be gathered for the Divine Service on the Eve of Thanksgiving (this Wednesday, November the 23rd), beginning at 6:00 p.m.
- ◆ Pastor Stuckwisch will be vested and available in the Emmaus sanctuary for Individual Confession and Absolution this Saturday (26 November) from 5:00 until 7:00 p.m. This means of grace and forgiveness, by the authority of Christ our Lord, is freely offered to be freely received in repentant faith. Those with questions concerning this practice are encouraged to review the Small Catechism, and are welcome to visit with Pastor about it.
- ◆ The 32nd Annual “Weihnachts Vespers” {Christmas Service in the German Language} will be held at 4:00 PM on Sunday, November the 27th, at St. Paul Lutheran Church, 51490 Laurel Road in South Bend. {Corner of Auten & Laurel} Rev. Dr. Roland Ziegler from Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne will share the message. A time of fellowship will follow the Service. Contact the church office at (574) 271-1050 for more information.
- ◆ The Altar flowers this morning have been provided by Sharon Makowski to the glory of God, in loving memory of her sister Linda.

◆ COLLECTIONS FOR 13 NOVEMBER 2016: \$ 1,991.00

In order to meet our financial obligations and commitments, an average of \$2360 is needed each week.

◆ IN THE LORD'S SERVICE THIS LORD'S DAY:

(ELDER) Eldon Knepp; (USHERS) Caleb Smith & Rick Saenz;
(ACOLYTE) Timmy Jindra; (ORGANIST) Deaconess Sandra Rhein;
(GREETERS) Lois Veen & Marilyn Dulmatch.

◆ Rev. D. Richard Stuckwisch, Pastor Home Phone: (574) 233 – 0574

On the Church Year

“The mood of the Pentecost season — of the new life in the Spirit — does not end with Pentecost or Trinity. It lingers on until the last Sunday or two before Advent. In fact the church year is a little like the epistles of Paul — which first tell us what God has done for us and then what we should do in response.

“Once there were frequent minor festivals of the Lord also during the Trinity season. Perhaps unfortunately, these have almost gone by the board. Hardly any of the churches celebrate them any more, not even the Orthodox. Among Roman Catholics, Lutherans, Anglicans, and Protestants generally, they are little more than interesting antiquities.

“From the English custom of marking important dates on the calendar in red and lesser ones in black, these festivals are sometimes known as black-letter commemorations of our Lord. They include: The Finding of the Cross, The Transfiguration, The Name of Jesus, and Holy Cross Day. The Finding of the Cross, along with Holy Cross Day, are really so close in mood that they were often celebrated together. They recalled the legendary finding of the cross by St. Helena and the building of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher.

“Most Protestants, especially the American Protestants, know very little about the saints. Perhaps this is the influence of the Reformation. Calvin, Knox, Luther, Cranmer, and Zwingli all discouraged prayers to the saints. Martin Luther was as well aware as anyone that the veneration of saints, especially by those who understood their faith but little, sometimes crowded Christ out of the picture. And yet, Luther kept in his study a statue of the Virgin Mary, explaining that it helped remind him how Christ became flesh of our flesh.

“One cannot deny, however, that the reverencing of martyrs was one of the oldest elements of the church’s calendar. To worship Christ in ancient Rome often as not meant a sentence of death. Many of the Roman emperors were quick to make examples of those who refused to pour out a cup of wine or light a cone of incense before the statue of the Caesar. This religious act was looked on as an oath of loyalty in an age when the emperor was worshiped as God.

“The more common modes of execution were by wild animals, by gladiators, by beheading, or by burning. Once a Christian had died, however, his debt was paid. The state respected his body and yielded it to his family or friends.

“Though every Christian was constantly under threat of death, the persecutions were sporadic. For long periods the church could worship freely, and those who gathered in homes or caves quietly were not bothered.

“As early as three or four decades after the death of Jesus the tombs and sarcophagi of the martyrs apparently began to be used as Christian altars. Psalms, Scriptures, Creeds, and even the Eucharist were read over their coffins. Christians gathered annually at the tombs, usually on the anniversary of the martyr’s death. With the single exception of Easter, these days of the martyrs are the oldest festivals of the Christian year.

“Some of the saints and martyrs are mentioned in the Scriptures, for example, James, Stephen, and the Holy Innocents. As the numbers of martyrs grew, the early church began to keep lists, and we still have such lists dating from the time of Emperor Constantine.

“Though the early church gave distinct honor to all who gave good testimony to their faith, it had a special place of honor for those who gave up their lives — the martyrs. Others who kept the faith under imprisonment or torture were known as confessors. Another category, as the listing of the saints developed, was that of the apostles. And after the period of the persecutions, any good Christian of remarkable life and faith could be declared a saint.

“Except for festivals of major saints like John the Baptist and the Virgin Mary, saints’ days normally recall the day of death, not the day of birth. This was called the saint’s ‘natalitia,’ or heavenly birthday.

“At first the reverence for saints may have been nothing more than a pious recollection, not unlike what a mother does when she visits the grave of her son and places flowers there, though it eventually consisted of a service over the tomb. Generally the recollection of martyrs was local. St. Martin, for example, was highly thought of in France, and St. Nicholas, in Asia Minor. . . .”

(From THE YEAR OF THE LORD, by Theodore J. Kleinhaus, CPH 1967)

Walking with Our Savior this Week

TODAY **Divine Service of Communion** **9:00 a.m.**

Coffee & Refreshments Downstairs 10:30 a.m.

Catechesis / Family Bible Class 10:45 a.m.

MONDAY **Vespers** **6:00 p.m.**

TUESDAY *Pastor's Writing Day (but do call in cases of emergency)*

WEDNESDAY Children's Choir Rehearsal 5:10 p.m.

Divine Service of Communion **6:00 p.m.**

THURSDAY NATIONAL THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY

SATURDAY Individual Confession & Absolution 5:00—7:00

NEXT SUNDAY **Divine Service of Communion** **9:00 a.m.**

Coffee & Refreshments Downstairs 10:30 a.m.

Catechesis / Family Bible Class 10:45 a.m.

You may also want to keep in mind, in your observance of daily prayer at home:

*The Appointed Readings for next Sunday, the First Sunday in Advent:
Isaiah 2:1–5; Romans 13:8–14; and Saint Matthew 21:1–11*