

Life Together

Olsburg-Walsburg Lutheran Parish

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articles will be due 9/23.*

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Reflections by Pastor Keith

Where does *faith energy* come from? Where does the energy for faith, the energy to live for God, the energy to boldly stand up for what you believe, the energy to hang in there even when the going gets tough, where does it come from? When I look at my own life I see that *faith energy* often comes through teachers. The source of that energy, of course, is the Holy Spirit, but the Holy Spirit often transmits that energy through teachers.

Let me tell you about some of my teachers. My parents were Christians. Knowing them, they probably spoke the Word of God to me as soon as I was born. Three weeks later I was baptized. Just as parents today promise to bring their children to the services of God's house and teach them the Word of God, so my parents made their promise to God. And they kept that promise. I don't remember too many Sundays when my father sat with me in church because he ushered every Sunday. My mother taught Sunday school. They lived their faith! What an impression their example made on my life! They were my first teachers.

When I was about 5 or 6 a Sunday school teacher suggested that I become a pastor in the church. I don't know the teacher's name. I cannot even picture her in my

mind. But her words shaped my life. It was through her that God first called me to the pastoral office. Teachers, never underestimate the power of what you say! What you say can literally shape a person's life!

I remember George Soeken. He was a farmer, tall, strong, not highly educated. He taught the high school class on Sunday morning. We met in the church basement around two 8 foot tables. There was usually about 10 to 12 of us. We should have called him St. George. We were more interested in discussing Friday night's football game than we were in discussing the lesson for the day. We were more intent on making fun of each other than we were in listening to George. But George hung in there with us, he joked with us, he prodded us on, and he made sure we got to the lesson. We always knew that George would be there for us. His faith was contagious.

Another teacher in my life was John Tietjen. He was president of the seminary I attended. President Tietjen did not teach me in the classroom, but he shaped my faith. He taught me that there is nothing more important than what Jesus Christ has done for us. He taught me that we are called to confess faith in Christ. He taught me that there are

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times when we must stand up for the truth of Christ, even if it is unpopular or costly. He taught me by what he said and by what he did. Most of all, he taught me by putting his own life on the line for the sake of Christ.

These are just some of the teachers who have fueled my faith. There are others, many others, and I am grateful for all of them.

The Bible says, *“Remember your leaders, those who spoke the word of God to you; consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith.”* (Hebrews 13:7) That’s where the energy for faith comes from - from their faith! *Faith energy* is transmitted from one person’s faith to another’s. That’s how God works. God is a “down-to-earth” kind of God. God works through flesh and blood. People. Ordinary people. Flawed people. God works through them, through their faith. As they speak the Word of God. As they live according to that Word. That is how God teaches. It happens in a classroom. It happens in worship. It happens in our homes. It happens on the street. It happens. You can be sure of it. God has promised.

Who are the teachers in your life? Who are the people who have spoken the Word of God to you? Who are the people who have energized your faith, who have given you the energy to live for God? Remember them. More importantly, imitate their faith. Let the faith you see in them come alive in you.

The writer to the Hebrews goes on to say, *“Do not be carried away by all kinds of strange teachings; for it is well for the heart to be strengthened by grace.”* (Hebrews 13:9) The world is full of all kinds of teachings, some quite strange. It is good to be knowledgeable about the world, but what our hearts really need is grace!

As I think about the teachers in my life, what stands out is grace. They were *grace-givers*. Whether it was George Soeken putting up with us crazy teenagers or that nameless teacher who saw gifts in me long before I could see them, these teachers were *grace-givers*. These teachers brought the grace of God to me. Through them I was embraced by God, I experienced the love of God, I was accepted and absolved and affirmed. That is how faith is born and grows and is energized.

Our God is a God of grace. *Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.* (Hebrews 13:8) That is to say, just as Jesus Christ brought the grace of God to people 2,000 years ago, so he brings the grace of God to people today. Jesus Christ went to the cross for you. And he rose from the dead for you. You belong to God. You are precious to God. You are loved by God. God’s grace is for you and it is that grace which you really need!

So this fall, let’s go to work, sharing our faith with one another, teaching one another, energizing one another to live for God. Let’s make Sunday school, First Communion classes, Confirmation classes a priority for our kids. Let’s support our teachers with our prayers, our words of encouragement, our helping hands. Let’s be in worship every week - either in person or online.

Isn’t it amazing how God works? Isn’t it amazing how God works through people to embrace you with grace and to energize your faith? Isn’t it amazing? And it is absolutely wonderful!

Keep the faith. Love God. Love others. Be the people of God!

The peace of Christ be with you,
Pastor Keith

September birthdays and anniversaries, joys and sorrows

If you know of a member whose birthday is not listed, please contact the church office.

September Birthdays

- 4 Shirley Strauss (W)
- 5 Jeff Howland (O)
- 7 Codie Webster (O)
- 9 Amber Befort (O)
- 10 Shelly Burklund (O)
Richard Strauss (W)
- 15 Monica Hargrave Schultz (W)
Sarah Diamond (W)
- 17 Cole Schultz (W)
- 18 Noah Plummer (O)
- 19 Brian Clifton (O)
- 20 Joshua Hagenmaier (W)
Morgan Vargo (O)
- 22 Steven Johnson (O)
Jared Fronce (O)
- 25 Mylene Davis (O)
Chris Deetjen (W)
- 28 Ray Miller (W)
Donald Cobler (O)
- 30 Kraig Kasselmann (O)

September Anniversaries

- 1 Dallas and Mylene Davis (O)
- 4 Alan and Kristin Bohnenblust (W)
- 5 David and Jeannette Pultz (W)
- 12 Gregg and Alice Marie Gibson (O)
Rick and Irene Johnson (O)
- 16 Bart and Norma Coutermarsh (W)
- 19 Carl and Jane Larson (W)
- 20 OJ and Monica Schultz (W)
- 26 Ernest and Marjorie Grater (W)
- 27 David and Rosie Ahlerich (W)
- 30 Kent and Mary Nelson (O)

+ We rejoice with Hadley Rae Cooper who was baptized at Olsburg on August 8. Hadley's parents are Nick and Mary Alice Cooper.

+ We rejoice with McAllister Deves who was baptized at Olsburg on August 15. McAllister's parents are Jordan and Catherine Deves.

+ We rejoice with Kinsey Pearl Hargrave and Trevor Lucas Hargrave who were baptized at Walsburg on

August 15. The parents of Kinsey and Trevor are Trenton and Lynn Hargrave and they have an older brother, Tyler.

+ We rejoice with Veronica Hillocks and her children who were baptized at Olsburg on August 15. The children of Veronica and her husband, Schalk, are Tanya Marceleigh Hillocks, Lelanie Joey Hillocks, and Stefan Joshua Hillocks. The family moved to the Olsburg area from South Africa. Schalk was baptized in South Africa and was delighted that now his whole family was baptized.

Members in service

Thank you to these members for their service to the parish during September.

Walsburg

***Greeters and Ushers:** Rob & Alicia Scofield; Carol Wiens; Nathan Wiens; Amanda Campbell; Linda Toomire

***Communion Ushers:** Ruth Stone; Lee Hartford

***Acolytes:** 9/5 Macy Berry; 9/12 Izabel Nelson; 9/19 Harper Befort; 9/26 Mason Scofield

Altar Committee: Dena Haller

***Lay Readers:** 9/5 Mary Kay Henry; 9/12 Becky Nelson; 9/19 Amber Befort; 9/26 Jan Neilson

**** Walsburg volunteers at the Food Pantry during September**

***If you are unable to be present for your assignment, please find a replacement and contact the church office so the correct name will appear in the bulletin.**

Olsburg

***Ushers:** Dan Holt; Kraig Kasselmann; Casey Nelson; Curtis Gutsch

***Communion Assistants:** 9/5 Sandy Zoeller; 9/19 Kirby Burklund

***Lay Readers:** 9/5 Kathy Monser; 9/12 April Brenner; 9/19 Gregg Gibson; 9/26 Karl Kasselmann

***Altar Committee:** Coleen Esping

***Acolytes:** 9/5 Skyler Zoeller; 9/12 Tori Brenner; 9/19 Witten Ricketts; 9/26 Creed Kasselmann

What about that pesky COVID virus?

We are not the first to deal with a pandemic. Here's what Martin Luther wrote about the Bubonic Plague of the 1500's.

"I shall ask God mercifully to protect us. Then I will fumigate, purify the air, administer medicine, and take medicine. I shall avoid places and persons where my presence is not needed in order to not become contaminated, and thus perchance inflict and pollute others, and so cause their death as a result of my negligence. If God should wish to take me, He will surely find me. But, I have done what he has expected of me, and so I am not responsible for my own death or the death of others. If my neighbor needs me, however, I shall not avoid place or person, but will go freely. This is a God-fearing faith because it is neither brash nor foolhardy, and does not tempt God."

Words of Wisdom

George Lindbeck writes in *The Christian Century*: "Pagan converts to the early church did not absorb Christian teaching intellectually and then decide to become Christians. They were attracted to what they saw of the faith and practices of the early Christian communities."

It is good for us to ask, what do people see when they look at us? Are they attracted by our faith and how we live?

Stay Connected

If you use email, we would greatly like to add you to our church's email list. In this way you would receive the weekly bulletin, "Pastor Keith's Reflections," the monthly newsletter, and other congregational announcements.

If you are not currently on this list and would like to be added, give you email

address to our parish coordinator, Shelly Burklund. Her email address is sburklun@ksu.edu.

A Reminder

If you are not able to make it to our worship gatherings on Sunday morning, you may mail your offering to your respective congregation.

Olsburg people may send their offerings to the financial secretary at:

Alice Gibson, 113 S. 1st St, Olsburg, KS 66520

Walsburg people may send their offerings to the financial secretary at:

Lynne Berry, 14180 Crooked Creek Rd., Leonardville, KS 66449.

We are very grateful for your support which enables us to do the work of Christ in many ways!

A New Sunday School Year Begins!

On Sunday, August 22, Walsburg's Sunday School children returned again to hear Bible stories, sing songs, and join in other activities to share and grow their faith. The Sparkhouse Digital curriculum from Augsburg Publishing provides resources for children of all ages.

It is a joy to have the following children in our Sunday School Program for the 2021-2022 Sunday School year:

Preschool/Kindergarten: Abigail H., Adelaide H., Tyler H., Joshua H., Jackson H., Braden H.

1st/2nd/3rd Grade: Rowdy B., Hudson H., Trenton M., Rhett N., Waverly S., Jacob H., Koy N., Ryker B., Kade C., Trinity M.

4th/5th/6th Grade: Macy B., Teske N., Brody W., Izabel N., William S., Harper B., Mason S.

Walsburg is also blessed to have

teachers/helpers who are willing to share their time, talents, and faith with the children of our congregation:
Preschool/Kindergarten: Mary Kay H., Becca M., Gracie S., Ruthie S.
1st/2nd/3rd: Calley B., Anita H., Heather J., Dennis P., Donise P.
4th/5th/6th: Amber B., Becky N., Alicia S.
Opening/Music: Ruthie S., Sheri S.

Walsburg Junior Quilters

What are Lutheran World Relief (LWR) quilts and kits all about? On Saturday, August 7, six children, parents, and Walsburg Quilters gathered together to hear about what LWR's Quilts, Infant Kits, and Personal Care Kits are all about. A LWR video was shown and quilters shared about how the quilts are put together and the packing involved in getting the donations ready for distribution. Each child participated in designing a personal framed quilt square. A fun time was had by all who attended!



Walk to End Alzheimer's - Manhattan

If you are interested in joining others in supporting the Alzheimer's Association's vision of "A World Without Alzheimer's and All Other Dementias," please register at alzwalkmanhattan.org, and join the Walsburg Walkers team. The Walk is Saturday, October 23, at the Manhattan City Park starting at 8:00 a.m. For questions, contact Linda Toomire, Team Captain, or Sheri Storer.

Landscaping Work to be done this fall at Olsburg Lutheran Church

This fall there will be new shrubs and landscape rock laid down on the south side of the church between the building and the sidewalk. Plants that are currently in this space will likely be dug up as the work is being done by landscapers. If anyone has something they had previously planted and they wish for it to remain in this space, please contact a council member. If instead you wish to take something home that you had planted, you are welcome to do that also. We are looking forward to this work being accomplished and are thankful for the memorial funds that will pay for these improvements! We are also thankful for past contributions that were given to beautify our church.