

Lifetogether

Olsburg-Walsburg Lutheran Parish

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Reflections by Pastor Keith

In the novel *1984*, George Orwell describes a society totally controlled by the government. The world described in this book is one in which the Party keeps itself in power by complete control over everyone. The Thought Police roam about making sure that everyone thinks along party lines. People are made to believe the most absurd ideas, like the three great slogans of the Party: "War Is Peace. Freedom Is Slavery. Ignorance Is Strength." The book is about controlling the way people think.

The book is fiction. But the book frightened me when I first read it. I was frightened by the thought of living in a society where Big Brother watches your every move and monitors everything you say, where people are brainwashed to think only what Big Brother wants you to think. I wondered how people could let something like that happen.

Well, it is 2021, and I don't think anyone believes that "war is peace" or any of the other outlandish beliefs promoted by Big Brother in this book. But we do have our own mistaken beliefs. There are things we accept as true, and we don't question them, because everyone believes them. We just go along with these so-called truths.

The Bible says, *For the time is coming when people will not put up with sound doctrine, but having itching ears, they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own desires, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander away to myths.*

The word "myth" has a number of meanings. One of the meanings is "fiction or half-truth." That's the way the word is used here. Myths are those beliefs which are generally accepted as true, but which aren't fully and completely true. Tragically, people today are no different than people back in the first century. They have itching ears. They hear only what they want to hear. They believe myths, rather than the truth, just like the folks in George Orwell's book.

Let's see how this works. Take for example the myth, "my money belongs to me." That's what most people believe. Most people believe that their money, and everything their money buys, belongs to them. This notion is so embedded into our way of thinking that it seems absurd for us to even question it. Our society is built upon this belief. The right to private property is written into the laws of our country. The ability to obtain or dispose of one's money or property is central to our economic system. It is the way we function in this society.

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Let me “flesh” this out. I drive a 2015 Tacoma pickup. The state of Kansas issued a title to Carol and me saying that we own the vehicle. That makes it legally ours. We paid for it. We took our money and bought the pickup. We have a right to say, “it belongs to us.” But that is a myth. It is only part of the truth. In terms of social interaction, the Tacoma belongs to us. It doesn’t belong to you. It doesn’t belong to the bank. It belongs to us. But that is not the whole truth. The whole truth is revealed by the Word of God. In Psalm 24:1 we read, “*The earth is the Lord’s and ALL that is in it.*” Everything belongs to God. God is the owner of everything, including the 2015 Tacoma which I drive. That is the whole truth.

Think about this. Like everyone else, I have itching ears. I like to think the Tacoma belongs to me. It makes me feel good to believe that I own it. It is something I have control over. I can do with it as I please. I can’t do that with your car. I can’t drive your car to Kansas City - not unless you give me permission. But if I want to drive my pickup to Kansas City, I can do it. It is mine. That’s what I like to think, but when I do, I overlook the truth that everything I have is God’s.

Let’s take this a step further. As Christians we know of God’s claim on our lives and everything we have, but for us there is another trap which is so well hidden we hardly see it. We are tempted to think that once we give our offering to God, the rest is ours. I give 10% to God and the remaining 90% is mine to do with as I please. But that is still a myth. The whole truth is that everything I have, 100% of my money, my possessions, my time, belongs to God.

Do you see how subtle a myth can be? And when I believe the myth, I am led astray. That’s what myths do. And it happens so subtly, we hardly notice it is happening. But it happens. Ever so surely myths lead away from God. This particular myth changes the

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answer to the question, “who is in charge?” Does God call the shots? Or do I? Does God make the decisions? Or do I? Who is in charge? As long as I believe that my money and my possessions are mine, then I am in charge of them, not God. And I am heading down a road away from God.

That makes myths very dangerous. They are like land mines. It is hard to recognize them. But they are there and they can blow up in your face at any moment. There are many myths floating around today - about power and sex and love and work and money, to name a few.

Fortunately for us, there is Someone who helps us recognize myths for what they are, and that is Jesus Christ. He is like a minesweeper who detects the mines and charts a safe course around them. Jesus comes to set us free from dangerous myths. That is why the Bible encourages us to continue in “*the sacred writings that are able to instruct you for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.*” Jesus is the Truth, the Truth of God, and following him is the way of truth!

Let the Word of God shape your thoughts and form your beliefs. Don’t believe something just because everyone else believes it. Learn to be critical. Learn to be discerning. Ask the tough questions. Learn to listen to the Truth, the truth which comes through Jesus. This is the truth which will set you free!

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

The peace of Christ be with you,
Pastor Keith

October birthdays and anniversaries

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

October Birthdays

- 2 Price Oman (W)
- 4 Norma Coutermarsh (W)
Tori Brenner (O)
- 5 Lindsay Shorter (W)
- 7 Donica Nelson (O)
Matthew Hagenmaier (W)
- 9 Dennis Peterson (W)
Jamie Bohnenblust (W)
- 10 Charity Johnson (W)
David Ahlerich (W)
- 11 Mary Lou Gibbs (O)
- 12 Jamie Hageman (W)
Jason Hageman (W)
Lotta Larson (W)
- 13 Eldon Sundgren (W)
Creed Kasselmann (O)
- 14 Patty Nelson (O)
Lynn Hargrave (W)
- 16 Joseph Hubbard (O)
Norman Johnson (W)
- 18 Jan Cooper (O)
- 20 Callie Webster (O)
- 21 Cajsa Larson (W)
- 22 Stefan Hillocks (O)
- 23 Deb Lowry (O)

- 25 Pam Holt (O)
- 26 Jerry Erickson (W)
Larry Bohnenblust (W)
Sheri Storer (W)
- 27 Diana Hargrave (W)
- 28 Debbie Hagenmaier (W)

October Anniversaries:

- 1 Jeff and Tami Howland (O)
- 6 Mark and Kristi Fronce (O)
- 15 Morgan and Lindsay Shorter (W)
- 10 Larry and Sandy Glessner (W)
- 19 Lee and Joyce Cantrell (O)
- 28 Jacob and April Brenner (O)

Next newsletter items and articles will be due Oct. 28.

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OCTOBER IS PASTOR APPRECIATION MONTH

Members in service

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

Walsburg

Walsburg Greeters and Ushers: A. J. & Calley Berry; Richard & Shirley Strauss; Gary & Diana Hargrave

***Walsburg Communion Ushers:** Donise Peterson & Rita Nelson

***Walsburg Acolytes:** 10/3: Teske Nelson; 10/10 Gracie Scofield; 10/17 Brody Willimon; 10/24 William Sullivan; 10/31 Macy Berry

***Lay Readers:** 10/3: Jane Larson; 10/10 Don Nelson; 10/17 Mason Scofield; 10/24 Alicia Scofield; 10/31 Jerry Baer

Altar Committee: Alicia Scofield

Olsburg

***Ushers:** Kirby Burklund; Jon Nelson; Jacob Nelson; Lee Cantrell

***Communion Assistants:** 10/3: Kristi Fronce; 10/17 John Lowry; 10/31 Jacob Nelson

***Lay Readers:** 10/3: Joyce Cantrell; 10/10 Kraig Kasselmann; 10/17 Ashley Rice; 10/24 Patty Nelson; 10/31 Jacob Nelson

***Acolytes:** 10/3: Landry Zoeller; 10/10 Ida Kasselmann; 10/17 Brooklyn Rice; 10/24 Addison Lee; 10/31 Jarin Brenner, Emma Kasselmann, Kaden Gutsch

***Altar Committee:** Kathy Monser; Kristi Fronce

***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.**

Words of Advice

- + Jesus loves you . . . Pass it on!
- + Most people want to serve God - but only in an advisory capacity.
- + God grades on the Cross, not on the curve.
- + A family altar can alter a family.
- + Exercise daily - walk with the Lord!

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!

Walsburg is supporting the Leonardville Blessing Bins

Walsburg is collecting for the Blessing bin located in Leonardville for the month of October. You may leave donations in the box at our church. Items to include are canned goods, boxed goods and personal hygiene items. For more information, contact Vern Bulk.

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Walsburg's Annual Hayride/Weiner Roast

Walsburg's Annual Hayride/Weiner Roast, October 17, 4:00 p.m. Hot dogs/s'mores/tableware/drinks provided. Each family is asked to bring a side dish to share. Everyone is invited!

Walk to End Alzheimer's

Manhattan's Walk to End Alzheimer's, Saturday, October 23, 8:00 am at Manhattan City Park. Join us in walking and/or volunteering on Walk Day.

Rise Above Room

At the top of the stairs off of the Narthex, the 4th, 5th, and 6th Grade Sunday School kids have been meeting for Sunday School. Thank you for all of the work and redecorating that Harper and Amber Befort have done to create a warm, welcoming area for Sunday School! The kids have named the space, "Rise Above Room". Take a peek!

Pastor Appreciation Potluck scheduled for October 31

October is Pastor Appreciation Month and a potluck has been scheduled by the Council to be held immediately following worship service on October 31. Please bring a side dish to share. Table service and drinks will be provided.

Sunday School Children Learn About LWR

On Sunday, September 26, during the Sunday School hour, children viewed a Lutheran World Relief video which shared information about the quilt, personal care, and infant kit ministries. Then, the children selected items for each infant care kit (cloth diapers, socks, shirts, cap, pajamas, receiving blanket, hand towel, soap) while adults wrapped each kit based on LWR requirements. A total of 40 kits were put together!



Olsburg Women of the ELCA give quilts and school kits to Lutheran World Relief

Olsburg Women of the ELCA have 15 quilts and 25 school kits that will be taken to the LWR Ingathering in Topeka on October 8. Thank you to everyone who had a part in this by donating school supplies, fabric, and time sewing and tying quilts.

