



Lutheran
Community of Grace

What's New?

www.LutheranCommunityGrace.org September 2010

Worship Sundays 9:30 am at VOA Gathering Room

September 5 – *Holy Communion*
Joel Smeby

September 12
Joel Smeby

September 19 – *Holy Communion*
Joel Smeby

September 26
Joel Smeby

(see updated worship information at
LutheranCommunityGrace.org/worshipInfo.php)

Sunday Forums 10:45 am

September 5
A congregational update

September 12
Bible study: Acts, part xvi

September 19
Bible study: Acts, part xvii

September 26
Bible study: Acts, part xviii

Prayer Requests

Please include in your prayers these folks:

Carla and Bob and their families
Karl, Erik, Ralph and all those serving in the
Armed Forces
Violet
all those traveling
Sharon (sister of Faith)
America
Signe
Dan and Sherry
the LUKE Bible study group
Esther
Dave (Thelma's son)
Jan French
Margrete
Quantrell (Betty's son)
all those not present
Ron and Mona

Nancy Kruse
Albert and his wife
all the strangers in our midst
the church in America

(Send your prayer requests to
info@LutheranCommunityGrace.org)

Jesus, Savior, Pilot Me

*Jesus, Savior, pilot me
Over life's tempestuous sea;
Unknown waves before me roll,
Hiding rock and treacherous shoal.
Chart and compass come from Thee;
Jesus, Savior, pilot me.*

*As a mother stills her child,
Thou canst hush the ocean wild;
Boist'rous waves obey Thy will
When Thou say'st to them, "Be still;"
Wondrous Sov'reign of the sea,*

Jesus, Savior, pilot me.

*When at last I near the shore,
And the fearful breakers roar
'Twillt me and the peaceful rest,
Then, while leaning on Thy breast,
May I hear Thee say to me,
"Fear not, I will pilot thee."*

This hymn tune, "*Pilot*", was composed in 1871 for *The Baptist Praise Book* by John Gould, who was born in 1822 in Bangor, Maine. Gould was in the music store business in New York City and subsequently in Philadelphia. He published his own books of church and Sunday School psalm and hymn tunes, as well as other hymn books in association with a gentleman named Edward L. White. Gould was also a conductor and for a time was the partner in selling pianos with William Fischer, a music teacher and choral conductor.

The hymn text is written by Edward Hopper (*not* the American painter and printmaker of the same name, who died in 1967). Hopper was born in New York City circa 1818 and graduated from Union Theological Seminary. He was ordained a Presbyterian minister and served, in his last parish, at the Church of Sea and Land in the New York harbor area—about a mile east of the Ground Zero of today. Many of his parishioners were sailors. His words were first published in *The Sailor's Magazine*, before being paired with Gould's tune in 1871.

Hopper wrote in the language and terminology of his congregation's sailors: compasses, charts, waves, shoals, and "hiding" rocks. His inspiration is thought to have come from Jesus' calming of the sea in Matthew 8 as he and the disciples were crossing the sea. *"What kind of man is this? Even the winds and the waves obey him!"* the disciples say of Jesus after their fear of certain death is put to rest.

Jesus the Way and tolerance of other "ways"

Edward Hopper writes of Jesus in the image of a pilot. Is Jesus the pilot and the guarantor of safe voyages all through life? It doesn't take much life

experience to realize that all of life is full of shoals, of shipwrecks, of battered hulls, even of drownings. Hopper is writing of Jesus as the guarantor of salvation in the Kingdom of God, the ultimate destiny of the sinner who believes in the saving grace of Jesus Christ revealed through His death and resurrection.

But, what about the journey down the street and into the parking lot of the local discount store? Through the voyage into the rough seas of cancer and surgery? Through the storms of church divisions and family squabbles and personal defeats? Is Jesus the pilot through all of this, the One who will stop by and still the storms and set us all down into safe harbors? For certain, trusting in his Way unto eternal life sets one free from the anxiety and worry about worldly and transient troubles of this earthly life, but smooth sailing in this life is not the way of the Christian, even the most ardent of modern day Pharisees or the humblest of servants of mankind.

The earthly life, even in its most ecstatic or spiritually uplifting moments, is unsustainable—even finally unsatisfying. Alvin Rogness writes, *"Nothing on this earth can set all the strings of a man's heart singing. For man has been created to live in untroubled and unrestrained fellowship with God, with the angels and archangels and all the saints. This joyous company and life can be seen and known on earth only as through a veil."*

"When death comes, then the struggles of the church militant will subside and the children of God will stride into the halls of the triumphant church assembled around the throne of its Lord, there to belong to him and to one another forever."

But, is Jesus the only **way** to salvation? Thomas wonders and complains to Jesus, "Lord, we do not know where you are going, so how can we know the way?" And Jesus answers his question as well as the questions of those of our era, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." (John 14: 5-6). How does this jive with the department of Political Correctness (PC), which demands that we be **tolerant** of all sorts of pilots, all sorts of routes to salvation, in fact, all sorts of salvations

or “ways”?

Our exclusive focus on Christ as the way to the Father puts us in trouble with the PC police. Religious *intolerance* is the hallmark of Jesus’ words in John 14. A whole host of religious expressions fail to confess Jesus as the “way and the truth and the life” *all alone*: Mormonism, Unitarianism, spiritualism, Islam, Judaism, humanism, Buddhism, the many forms of secularism—just for starters. So, we “Jesus freaks” who believe in Him as the one and only Way are intolerant, uncompromising, rigid, narrow-minded, and generally not “with it” when it comes to tolerance and sensitivity to salvation through other means. The temptation, of course, is to “open up the tent” to be more inclusive in the eyes of the world. The Messiah must be powerful and compassionate enough to accomplish this, right? Which takes us back to John 14 and its exclusivity.

However, we *are* tolerant when it comes to sinners, the “lost”—which, of course, includes all of us. While “righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe...all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” (Romans 3:22-23). [*contributing jhs, ar*]

How many “lost” in Luke?

Jesus taught much through the use of parables. Parables made His “radical” teachings clear. Parables cut through people’s biases, made the point of the teaching very clear, and left little room for argument. Three of the most comforting of His parables are recorded by Luke in Chapter 15. Here we see the “lost” sheep, the “lost” coin, the “lost” younger son, and the equally “lost” bitter, reluctant elder son.

It is interesting to see how each of these became lost. Certainly that lost sheep had not intended to get lost. He just wasn’t watching where he was going as he struggled to get a daily living. The lost coin certainly did not loosen its fastening so that it dropped off. Circumstances beyond its control had loosened its mounting. The younger son had openly rebelled and by choice left his father’s house for a foreign land so he could live

it up. The elder dutiful son stayed in his father’s household but he certainly was not happy about it. By his own choice he refused to enter into the father’s joyful feast and celebration. Can we not relate these situations with our own society and our own lives?

But Jesus doesn’t leave us with just a statement about becoming lost. He shows us the great and comforting love of the Father in seeking and finding the lost, a love so great that it is His will that none should be lost. The exception is that elder son. Jesus does not finish this parable with the “joy in heaven” statement. We are not given the end to this parable. What are we to make of this? Are we being warned that just a dutiful attending at worship and doing other “churchy” things does not put us into the joy of the “feast”? Must we too not make a willing choice to enter into the great celebration over a found lost one? Something to think about.

Come join our Luke journey and hear more of the teachings of Jesus as He makes His way to Jerusalem, on His way to the cross—Mondays at 7:00 pm on Shady Oak Road at the foot of Mainstreet in Hopkins.

LCMC Annual Gathering at Calvary

The annual gathering is coming up on October 3-6, 2010 in Golden Valley. They could use some volunteers from the local area to help out—please contact Joel if you’d be willing. Keynote addresses, worship services, breakout sessions with focused topic areas, district get-togethers, food, and more are the ingredients. For more information click here:

<http://www.lcmc.net/annualgathering.html>

Known by the Lord (Psalm 139)

To be *known* by the Lord—how terrifying and wondrous and electrifying all together. When I sit down and rise up, when I go in and go out and lie down and even my thoughts you know before I get my lips in motion to spit them out. All this You know, and more. Is there anywhere that I could go where You wouldn’t know what I’m up to? Flitting across the skies as the rays of the sun

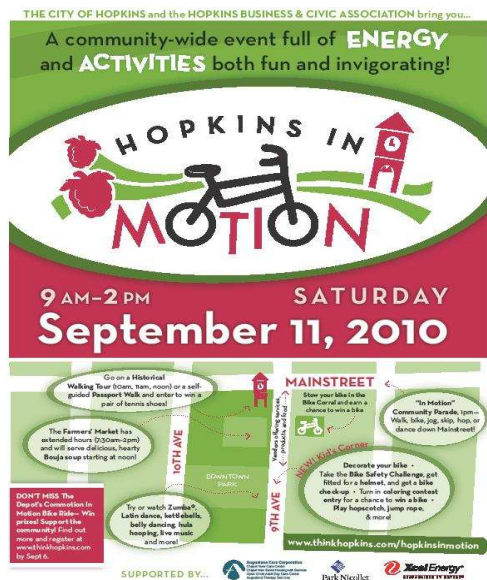
get beamed up? Or sailing off to the ends of the seas? Nowhere—there is no place You cannot just reach out and tap me on the shoulder and guide me.

Molded and shaped and refined inside the womb—you’ve done all of this, so of course You are even more intimate in knowing me than I. All of the ingredients from the innermost earthly sources You know, having created them, so I am **all** yours, even before You fashioned me together.

But, at least take care of my own anxieties. You already know all there is, but investigate me thoroughly, put me through all of your diagnostics, your probing. If you see anything, anything at all offensive to you...clean me up, wash me through and through and lead me into the straight and narrow, so that I might be pleasing to You. I am completely Yours.

inMotion in Hopkins

Saturday, September 11, 2010 is the date for this festival of movement in downtown Hopkins.



Lutheran Community of Grace will have brochures and flyers and people to explain and promote the gospel to those who **dare** to come to our booth. Please join in. More information here: <http://www.thinkhopkins.com/hopkinsinmotion>

Naves, sanctuaries, and temples

A survey is in order. What constitutes a worship space? Is the “sacred space” of a temple or sanctuary necessary to properly provide a level of dignity and awe and respect for the Holy One of Israel and to impress upon His followers the wondrous place in which they are present? Or will a warehouse do?

Contributing

trygve haug, alvin n rogness, joel smeby*

Your ideas and contributions to this newsletter are always welcome.

* “Signs of Hope in the Thunder of Spring” (Augsburg, 1971)

Locate Us



Volunteers of America (VOA) building
11400 4th Street North
 Minnetonka, MN 55343
 (Traveling west on Hwy 7, make a U-turn at Shady Oak Road and take the first right exit)

4 Shady Oak Road (SOR), Suite 6 (upper)
 Hopkins, MN 55343-8852
 (MAILING ADDRESS as of July 1, 2010)

Contact Us

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