

The Theme of the Church Year – July 2018

Through this year, I have each month been talking about the **Theme** of the Liturgical Church Year. The month of July is the season Pentecost. During the Pentecost season the emphasis is to GROW in your faith and this year's theme for our growing is "**learning from God's past about our future.**" As we learn from God's past we are better prepared to stand up against the schemes of the devil and the evil of this world.

So far during this Pentecost season we have looked at the first fruits of Pentecost, which is the Holy Spirit working in our lives to make us bold confessors of our faith in Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior. We've learned that through Jesus Christ we have been given a life overflowing with God's love, grace and mercy that we can shower on all those we come in contact with. IN our weekly services, we've learned about the importance of God's rest given to us so that we can receive all that our heavenly Father is bestowing upon us through His Word and Sacraments in the fellowship of His Church. We've seen how the Devil is striving to destroy the new relationship that God has given to us through the life, death and resurrection of His Only Son, Jesus Christ. Still, God is calling out to us, "Where are you?" He is calling us back to that new relationship and offering to clothe us in the righteousness of His Only Son, Jesus Christ so that we can be in the perfect relationship with Him for eternity in our heavenly home. Yes, we have talked about how God has chosen us as tender young sprigs and has planted us in His church so that we can be watered and fed in God's Word and Sacraments to grow to become a tree of life with other believers that offers shade and shelter from the evil of this world to others. We've also learned from the book of Job that the world's view of God's love and the truth about God's love for us is quite different. God's relationship with us is not dependent upon us but on all that God has done and is doing for us in this world so that we will be prepared for His coming again to take us to our eternal home.

Job expressed his relationship with God as he confessed his faith and said, "**I know that my Redeemer lives and at the last hour He will stand upon the earth. And after my skin has been thus destroyed, yet in my flesh I shall see God.**" (Job 19: 25-26) Job also knew what his purpose in this world was, for as he confesses, "**I know that You (O God) can do all things, and that no purpose of yours can be thwarted.**" (Job 42: 2) Oh, we may have questions for God as we live in this world amongst the suffering and pain that our sins have brought into this world, but as we let God's relationship with us grow we will find those moments of love, peace and joy that only God can give to us and look forward to the perfect love, peace and joy we will enjoy for eternity.

During the month of July, I will continue to preach on the Old Testament lessons of the Pentecost season, to help us all learn from God's past about the new relationship that God has given to us through His Word and Sacraments. It is as we continue to grow in the relationship of love, peace and joy that God has given to us that we grow in our faith, hope and assurance of the future. God through the writer of Hebrew reminds us, "**Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering for He who promised is faithful, and let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.**" (Heb. 10: 23 – 25)

The heat of the summer is upon us and we all know how important it is to drink a lot of water to refresh our lives. The true living water doesn't come from your water bottle or even the stream flowing by but from the Word of God found in your Bible. Keep the Word of God close to you during the heat of the summer months so that your spiritual life can grow and shade the harshness of the sins of this world from you and others around you. Be in God's Word and the fellowship with one another so that you can get the full benefits of God's love, peace and joy now and forever. Amen.

Pastor Pete Scheele

July 2018 Scripture Readings

This year we are reading the Bible by following the assigned readings for each day found on the 2018 Christian Reflections Calendar. During the month of July, we will be reading the books of 2 Chronicles, 2 Kings, Hosea, Amos, Micah, Isaiah and Jeremiah. In these books, we will get to know about the kings of Judah and Israel. Some of these kings led their people away from God and others strived to follow the way of God in their lives. As we read through words of the prophets sent to these kings we learn more about what the people are doing that God likes and dislikes. With the people of Israel and Judah the ways of the king have a great influence on the lives of the people.

As parents know there is only so much you can do to get your children to walk the path that is best for them. If they rebel and follow the ways of the sinful world, you can encourage them and discipline them, but in the end, they have to choose to follow the ways that are good for them and not the ways of the sin filled world. Eventually after much effort to keep your children on the right path and them going the opposite direction you have to let them go and let them face the problems that their sins will lead them to. Though no parent wants their children to have difficulties and problems, in the end the children have to know their sins, repent of their sins and have the desire to follow the correct way and not the sinful ways of the world.

God our heavenly father knows all the problems we face as parents and at times has to let His children see the results of their sins so that they will hopefully turn from their sins back to His loving arms. As we read our Bible readings for this month we will see the patience of God and when in His perfect wisdom, He finally stops trying to bring His child back and lets them get what they want, the ways of the world that lead to damnation. God love for them never stops but He can't force them to believe He only gives them the ability to believe and follow His path to heaven.

Date	Reading	Date	Reading
July 1	2 Kings 14; 2 Chron. 25; Isaiah 36	July 17	2 Kings 17, 18:9 - 37
July 2	Hosea 1 - 7		2 Chronicles 32:1 - 19
July 3	Hosea 8 - 14 32:20 - 23	July 18	2 Kings 19, 2 Chron.
July 4	2 Kings 15:1-7; 2 Chron. 26; Amos 1 - 4	July 19	Isaiah 37 2 Kings 20, 2 Chron. 32:24
	- 33		
July 5	Amos 5 - 9; 1 Kings 15:8 - 18		Isaiah 38 - 39
July 6	Isaiah 1 - 4	July 20	2 Kings 21:1-18; 2 Chron. 33:1-20
July 7	2 Kings 15:19 - 38; 2 Chron. 27		Isaiah 40

	Isaiah 5 - 6	July 21 - Isaiah 41 - 43
July 8 - Micah		July 22 - Isaiah 44 - 47
July 9 - 2 Kings 16; 2 Chron. 28;	Isa. 7-8	July 23 - Isaiah 48 - 51
July 10 - Isaiah 9 - 12		July 24 - Isaiah 52 - 57
July 11 - Isaiah 13 - 16		July 25 - Isaiah 58 - 62
July 12 - Isaiah 17 - 22		July 26 - Isaiah 63 - 66
July 13 - Isaiah 23 - 27		July 27 - 2 Kings 21:19 - 26,
Zephaniah		
July 14 - Isaiah 28 - 30		2 Chron. 33:21- 34:7
July 15 - Isaiah 31 - 35		July 28 - Jeremiah 1 - 3
July 16 - 2 Kings 18:1-8; 2 Chron. 29 - 31		July 29 - Jeremiah 4 - 6
		July 30 - Jeremiah 7 - 9
		July 31 - Jeremiah 10 - 13