



St. John Lutheran Church

April 2017 Newsletter

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ALL FOR THE SAKE OF THE GOSPEL

Q: How is Easter, the 500th anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation, and the 150th anniversary of St. John Lutheran Church & School related to each other?

A: They are all being celebrated for the sake of the Gospel—the good news of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ.

The promise of the Savior and its fulfillment in Jesus Christ is the fundamental truth upon which we build everything we do, and it has been that way since God first promised Adam and Eve that he would send his son, Eve's offspring, to crush the power of Satan. It is the heart and soul of the Church's mission. Without the Gospel, Jesus' perfect life and innocent suffering and death wouldn't even be a footnote in world history. Without the promise of the Gospel, Luther would have had very little reason to stand up against the power of the Medieval Roman Catholic Church. And without the hope of the Gospel stirring in their hearts, the German immigrants to Waterloo, would not have started a German Lutheran congregation to share the Gospel with German speaking immigrants here in Wisconsin—they would have built a Turner Hall or something like it—solely to preserve the German heritage. But these acts and thousands upon thousands more like them, have all been willingly offered year after year in joy and with devotion, 'all for the sake of the Gospel.'

Once again this year, we have the wonderful opportunity to join together in worship, song, food and fellowship; to be reminded of the greatest act given 'for the sake of the Gospel.' Our God himself took on human flesh, lived a perfect life according to the Law of God; then, as a substitute for all of us sinners, he gave his holy life in sacrifice to pay for those sins by his death on the cross. In Holy Week, we place special focus on that sacrifice and what it means.

Jesus willingly took on that burden of the world's sin and gave his life for it. Luther was ready to sacrifice his own life, just so that the clear message of the Gospel could be heard throughout Christendom. And our forefathers, whether here or in any other city, town or crossroads, sacrificed their wealth, time, and talents so we would have sanctuaries to be able to hear that Gospel promise: That whoever believes in Jesus Christ as their Savior will have eternal life.

In the coming weeks, what will we offer willingly, 'All for the sake of the Gospel?' Will it be our time and focus in worship, especially during Holy Week? Will it be dedicating our efforts to make our worship beautiful and meaningful? Will it be sharing that message of the Gospel with those around us, who would not normally come to hear this message, or with those who need desperately to hear the message that God loves me so much that he gave up his life in payment for my sins? Will it be our gifts to keep that work going?

By the grace of God, and the power of the Holy Spirit, we have been given all the resources to do all things, 'all for the sake of the Gospel'. There is no time like the present to re-dedicate ourselves to that task in the name of the only God who saves by grace: Father, Son, Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Pastor Adomeit