

August 2025

The Good News

**Monthly Newsletter for
St. John's Lutheran and Faith Lutheran Churches**

Marks of the True Biblical Church

In 1539, Father Martin Luther wrote, "On the Councils and Church". The most noted section in it is the Seven Marks of the Church. Luther asked a good question.

The Creed teaches us that a people of God must be on earth and remain until the end of the world. This is an article of faith, which cannot cease until that comes which it believes, as Christ promises, "*I am with you even unto the end of the world.*" But how can a poor, erring man know where this Christian, holy people in the world is?

Luther's answer to his own question is the 7 marks of the Church. By these 7 marks a "poor, erring man" can publicly see the Church and know where the Church is true to the Word. These are quotes from his treatise:

First, this Christian, holy people is to be known by this, that it has God's Word,

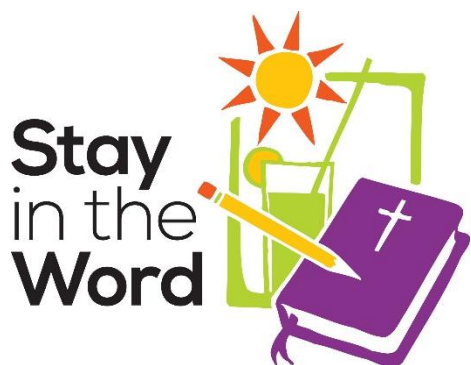
Second, God's people, or the Christian holy people, is known by the holy Sacrament of Baptism, when it is rightly taught and believed and used according to Christ's ordinance.

Third, God's people, or a Christian, holy Church is known by the holy Sacrament of the Altar, when it is rightly administered according to Christ's institution and is believed and received.

Fourth, the people of God, or holy Christians, are known by the Keys, which they publicly use. Christ decrees, in Matthew 18:15 that if a Christian sins, he shall be rebuked, and if he does not amend his ways, he shall be bound and cast out; but if he amends, he shall be set free. This is the power of the Keys.

Fifth, the Church is known outwardly by the fact that it consecrates or calls ministers, or has offices which they occupy.

Sixth, the holy, Christian people is known by prayer and public thanksgiving and praise to God.



Seventh, the holy, Christian Church is outwardly known by the holy possession of the Holy Cross. (Note: Because of 1 Corinthians 1:23 “*We preach Christ Crucified.*”)

These 7 Marks are simple and powerful realities for a truly Biblical Church.

Another Simple way of putting it is:

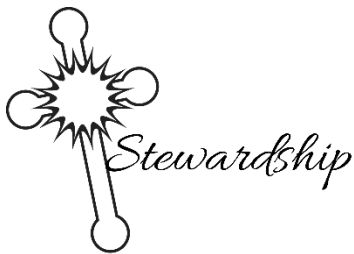
- ♥ Being in the Word.
- ♥ Gets the Word Out.
- ♥ Keeps The Word Straight.
- ♥ Prays for One Another.
- ♥ Loves One Another.
- ♥ It is Christ Centered.
- ♥ It is Gospel Centered.
- ♥ People can say “They love me there. Even if we don’t always agree.”

If you honestly study the Word of God and are sincerely open minded and open hearted to God you will see these truths taught again and again throughout God’s Holy Word.

Take time, especially as you study your way through the New Testament, and You will see God loves all, calls us to repentance, forgives all who rely on His Son’s Sacrifice for all their sins, and thus strive to do better in their daily lives.

In the Name of the One who forgives, Jesus Christ, Our Lord and Savior.

Pastor Love



From LCMS – Stewardship Ministry

Jesus’ transforming presence

“But Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, ‘Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost’” (Luke 19:8-10 NIV).

Who knew, all those kids sitting in Sunday school were getting a lesson in stewardship! Generations of children have very often heard lessons based on the familiar account of Zacchaeus. The diminutive tax collector’s curiosity surrounding the person and ministry of Jesus is what the Holy Spirit used to set him on a collision course for a total stewardship transformation. This transformation, according to the text of Luke 19, is not just about this life. This stewardship transformation is about eternity as well!

Remember the story: Zacchaeus was a tax collector. Do not think of friendly neighborhood IRS agents. This was more like a toll booth operator, but the governing authorities did not set the toll. They would contract men to staff roadside booths and tax the commerce that was passing along the road. This was an enterprise full of greed and graft. The tax collectors would take as much as they could and only pass on a portion to the government. The rest did not go into the community chest either! It went into the pocket of the tax collector.

This is why the people had such disdain for *Jewish* tax collectors. They were seen as both crooks and traitors. They were crooks in that they extorted their compatriots and others in the toll process. But worse, they were seen as traitors because their efforts supported the occupying Roman authorities. That is the real reason that the people would not make way so that short Zacchaeus could see Jesus. For this reason, he runs ahead and climbs a tree. He had heard all the stories. He wanted to see this Jesus with his own eyes. Mercy is on display. This hated crook and traitor gets a direct audience with

Jesus — at Jesus' own request! Jesus invites Himself to Zacchaeus' house. This is where the transformation is about to take place!

Notice how Jesus does it. He does not preach a three-week sermon series, nor does He ask Zacchaeus to make a pledge. There is nothing programmatic about Jesus' approach. But Zacchaeus is completely transformed! The transforming force is the very presence of Jesus! Direct time with Jesus takes a crooked, selfish, criminal and makes him the most faithful steward.

This new life of stewardship is marked by the promises made. First, he gives half of his ill-gotten gains to the poor. These are people whom he would not have defrauded at all! Yet, after spending time with Jesus, they are His first concern. Only after this does he double the requirement of the Levitical law on fraud. And what does Jesus say is the result? Salvation!

Doing the acts of stewardship does not save. Rather, the faith in Jesus that is created by the Holy Spirit is what saves! This is critical for us to confess. Failed stewardship can and will cut you off from God. The only antidote for failed stewardship is the presence of Jesus.

We do not need to run ahead and climb a tree for this presence of Jesus. He makes Himself available to us every week in the Divine Service. He speaks His Word of invitation to us in the pages of Holy Scripture. This, and this alone, transforms us from sinner to saint, from owner to steward of all that belongs to the Lord.

Do you want to become a more faithful steward? Spend more time with Jesus. Make the Divine Service a weekly priority. Feast on Christ's body and blood weekly! This is the great gift that brings salvation from God's House to yours!



**SAVE THE DATE –
Saturday, September 27, 2025**

memorials & gifts

THRIVENT CHOICE

Thrivent Choice gift from **BRUCE LAATSCH** to support the work of Faith Lutheran Church.

MEMORIALS

In memory of **MABEL MARQUARDT**, a gift for the Parking Lot Fund from Marlene Krenz

In memory of **MABEL MARQUARDT**, a gift for Special Purposes from Gerhard and Sally Hannemann

In memory of **DAVID KNOSPE**, a gift for Special Purposes from Phyllis Buch

Mark your calendars!

Join the North Wisconsin and South Wisconsin LLL District at their annual joint convention hosted at Peace Lutheran Church, Neenah, Wisconsin.

All are welcome to attend. Our guest speaker is Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler, Speaker of The Lutheran Hour®.

Join us for a day of spiritual growth with inspirational presentations to encourage and equip you as partners in His mission.

More convention details will be shared later this summer.

Faith Lutheran Church

15425 South County Road K

Merrill, WI 54452

Church e-mail: faithmerrillwi@gmail.com

Church website: faithlutheranmerrill.com

Pastor Donald Love

Office Phone 715-536-5443

Home Phone 715-722-0540

Cell Phone 1-815-922-0397

Pastor's Office Hours

Mon. and Tues: Home

Wednesday: Faith

Thursday: St. John's

Church Office Hours

Tues. and Thurs. 9 a.m.-12 noon

Mon., Wed., and Fri. varies

Emergency Contacts

Terry Seidler 715-536-9742 (home)

715-203-5736 (cell)

ALTAR GUILD AUGUST SCHEDULE

August 1 - 11 Jeri Raddatz and Sandy Laabs

August 12 - 25 Phyllis Buch and Deb Stogbauer

August 26 – September 8 Gene and Karen Pagel

August 2025

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|---|---|---|---------------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|
| | | | | | 1 | 2 |
| 3 10:15 a.m. Worship with Holy Communion 11:15 a.m. Bible Study | 4 6:30 p.m. Worship with Holy Communion | 5 4:30 p.m. Women of Faith Summer Outing at Casa Amigos, Merrill. Spouses invited | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| 10 10:00 a.m. Dual Parish Outdoor Worship at St. John's | 11 6:30 p.m. Worship 7:30 p.m. Church Council Meeting | 12 6:30 p.m. Dual Parish Congregational Meeting at St. John's | 13 10:00 a.m. Ablelight Volunteers | 14 | 15 | 16 |
| 17 10:15 a.m. Worship with Holy Communion 11:15 a.m. Bible Study 12:15 a.m. Stewardship and Evangelism Meeting | 18 6:30 p.m. Worship with Holy Communion | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 |
| 24 10:15 a.m. Worship 11:15 a.m. Bible Study | 25 6:30 p.m. Worship | 26 | 27 10:00 a.m. Ablelight Volunteers | 28 | 29 | 30 |
| 31 10:15 a.m. Worship 11:15 a.m. Bible Study | | | | | | |

August 2025 Elder, Usher, Greeter, Scrip Schedule

Sunday, August 3 10:15 a.m.

Elders Lee Pfaff, Joe Heisinger
 Ushers Amanda Heisinger, Bernice Porath
 Greeter Duane Grunewald
 Scrip Becky Rajek
 Audio Bonnie Grueneberg

Sunday, August 10 10:00 a.m.

DUAL PARISH OUTDOOR SERVICE
 at ST. JOHN'S

Sunday, August 17 10:15 a.m.

Elders Jeff Laabs, Mark Porath
 Ushers Beth Bartelt, Carol Hein
 Greeter Duane Grunewald
 Scrip Cindy Krenz
 Audio Bonnie Grueneberg

Sunday, August 24 10:15 a.m.

Elders Rodney Dahlke, Joe Heisinger
 Ushers Amanda Heisinger, Leroy Laabs
 Greeter Amanda Heisinger
 Scrip Becky Rajek
 Audio Bonnie Grueneberg

Sunday, August 31 10:15 a.m.

Elders Kyle Young, Mike Beilke
 Ushers Brian and Lynn Klug
 Greeter Duane Grunewald
 Scrip Lynn Klug
 Audio Bonnie Grueneberg

Sunday, September 7 10:15 a.m.

Elders Lee Pfaff, Joe Heisinger
 Ushers Amanda Heisinger, Bernice Porath
 Greeter Amanda Heisinger
 Scrip Bernice Porath
 Audio Bonnie Grueneberg

Monday, August 4 6:30 p.m.

Elders Jason Westfall, Keith Wendt
 Ushers Ed Stiver
 Greeter Ed Stiver
 Scrip Deb Stogbauer
 Audio Rodney Dahlke

Monday, August 11 6:30 p.m.

Elders Kyle Young, Mike Beilke
 Usher Chris Stogbauer
 Greeter Chris Stogbauer
 Scrip Debbie Stogbauer
 Audio Bonnie Grueneberg

Monday, August 18 6:30 p.m.

Elders Jason Westfall, Lee Pfaff
 Usher Ed Stiver
 Greeter Ed Stiver
 Scrip Debbie Stogbauer
 Audio Gene Mootz

Monday, August 25 6:30 p.m.

Elders Jeff Laabs, Mark Porath
 Usher Chris Stogbauer
 Greeter Chris Stogbauer
 Scrip Deb Stogbauer
 Audio Lee Pfaff

Monday, September 1

NO SERVICE
 Labor Day

Monday, September 8 6:30 p.m.

Elders Jason Westfall, Keith Wendt
 Ushers Ed Stiver
 Greeter Ed Stiver
 Scrip Deb Stogbauer
 Audio Rodney Dahlke

HOLY COMMUNION

Sunday, August 3 10:15 a.m.
 Monday, August 4 6:30 p.m.
 Sunday, August 17 10:15 a.m.
 Monday, August 18 6:30 p.m.
 Sunday, September 7 10:15 a.m.
 Monday, September 8 6:30 p.m.

ELDERS

Rodney Dahlke, chairman
 Mike Beilke, secretary
 Joe Heisinger, Jeff Laabs, Lee Pfaff,
 Mark Porath, Jason Westfall,
 Keith Wendt, Kyle Young

St. John's Lutheran Church

134058 County Road L

Athens, WI 54411

715-536-1810

Pastor Donald Love

Office Phone 715-536-5443

Home Phone 715-722-0540

Cell Phone 1-815-922-0397

Pastor's Office Hours

Mon. & Tues. Home

Wednesday Faith

Thursday St. John's

Friday Off (Family Day)

Elders

Bob Burish 715-573-7078

Mark Czech 715-409-9174

Jeremy Fromm 715-574-2003

Don Gille 715-573-8197

Elder of the Month

Mike Schultz 715-539-0995

Setting the Lord's Table

Joy Free

| August 2025 | | | | | | |
|--|-----|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
| | | | | | 1 | 2 |
| 3 8:30 a.m. Worship with Holy Communion | 4 | 5 6:00 p.m. Church Council Meeting 7:15 p.m. Elders' Meeting | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| 10 10:00 a.m. Dual Parish Outdoor Worship | 11 | 12 6:30 p.m. Dual Parish Congregational Meeting at St. John's | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 |
| 17 8:30 a.m. Worship with Holy Communion | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 |
| 24 8:30 a.m. Worship | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |
| 31 8:30 a.m. Worship | | | | | | |



ST. JOHN'S BIRTHDAYS

| | |
|-----------|----------------|
| August 5 | Amalia Bloch |
| August 6 | Bonnie Lang |
| August 8 | LeeAnn Arneson |
| August 12 | Jerry Berenz |
| August 14 | Noreen Schulz |
| | Misty Vogel |
| August 15 | Lynne Harder |
| August 17 | Todd Henrichs |
| August 24 | Shawn Henrichs |

FAITH BIRTHDAYS

| | |
|-----------|--------------------|
| August 1 | Christine Pfaff |
| August 2 | Brenda Baratka |
| | Sharon Jaeger |
| | Ronald Schult |
| August 3 | Cindy Krenz |
| | Hazley Bonnell |
| August 4 | Jean Wayda |
| | Walter Leuenberger |
| August 5 | Jace Olson |
| August 8 | Lucas Kleinschmidt |
| August 12 | Lucas Young-Schade |
| August 13 | Harold Woller |
| August 15 | Kendel Semling |
| | Todd Zunker |
| August 16 | Marci Borchardt |
| August 17 | Thomas Porath |
| | Amanda Heisinger |
| August 18 | Michaela Sturm |
| August 20 | Karen Rajek |
| | Phyllis Buch |
| August 24 | Randy Baguhn |
| | Cheryl Dahlke |
| August 25 | Phyllis Zocher |
| August 29 | Kyle Zulliger |

ST. JOHN'S WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

| | |
|--------------------------|----------|
| August 26 | |
| Steve & Nancee Emmerich. | 30 years |

FAITH WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

| | |
|-----------------------------|----------|
| August 2 | |
| Donald and Kathy Schult | 55 years |
| August 7 | |
| William and Jean Wayda | 43 years |
| August 14 | |
| Josh and Sarah Klug | 4 years |
| August 22 | |
| Mark and Melissa Porath | 38 years |
| August 25 | |
| Bob and Bernice Porath | 63 years |
| August 26 | |
| Todd and Cherie Zunker | 30 years |
| August 28 | |
| Gerhard and Sally Hannemann | 60 years |
| Terry and Linda Seidler | 43 years |
| John and Carol Wegner | 54 years |
| August 30 | |
| Travis and Natalie Klug | 11 years |

Memory Verse.....

Week of August 3 - Colossians 1:15. He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.

Week of August 10 - 1 Corinthians 15:57. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Week of August 17 - Mark 12:30-31. "And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength."

The second is this: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." There is no other commandment greater than these.

Week of August 24 - James 5:16. Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working.

Week of August 31 - Isaiah 41:10. Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.



THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD

Pray For Us Calendar

CHURCH WORKERS — AUGUST 1-15

Pastors; deaconesses; Lutheran school teachers; directors of Christian education, Christian outreach and family life ministry; parish musicians. The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) is blessed with many faithful church workers who assist and lead people in participating in the fulfillment of the Great Commission, while building up the Body of Christ.

Remember God's work through the Synod's church workers as you pray:

1. with thanksgiving for the many dedicated church workers in the LCMS, who share in our joys and sorrows. Ask the Lord to comfort and defend them from every assault of the devil.

2. for the Synod's pastors, that they would hold fast to the Word of God and find strength to continue preaching God's truth in an increasingly anti-Christian culture.

3. for the Synod's deaconesses. Pray that they would be equipped with all things needful to love and serve people in every situation.

4. that God would bless the work of directors of Christian education, as they develop educational ministries for children, youth, adults and families.

5. for the Synod's directors of Christian outreach, that God would guide their efforts to support a congregation's or organization's outreach and evangelism work.

6. for directors of family life ministry. Ask that God would guide their vital work to strengthen the families in our congregations.

7. for teachers and administrators in Lutheran schools, that they would model Christ-like behavior

for students and incorporate the Gospel message into each and every day.

8. for directors of parish music, that they would find joy and satisfaction in their work of enhancing the worship life of the church.

9. for the Synod's commissioned lay ministers, who work under a pastor's guidance to support a church's efforts in evangelism, Christian education, parish administration and other areas that are God-pleasing.

10. for missionaries, who leave home and family to work in faraway lands. Ask God to give them strength, wisdom and protection as they do His work.

11. for those involved in Specialized Pastoral Ministry, who serve the ill, imprisoned, aging, troubled and isolated. Give thanks for their service to people in the midst of tragedy or crisis.

12. for military chaplains, who put themselves in harm's way to minister to members of our armed forces. Ask God to keep them safe as they share Christ's love with our servicemen and women.

13. for the health and well-being of all church workers, that they would utilize opportunities for rest and renewal.

14. with thanksgiving for every person who volunteers in a congregation as an elder, an usher, a Sunday school teacher or in another capacity. Praise God that He calls His people to support full-time church workers in a variety of ways.

15. with thankful hearts for the blessings God gives to His people through full-time church workers. These faithful men and women care for us, pray for us and teach us the Word of God.

THE CHURCH — AUGUST 16-31

"The Church is the congregation of saints [Psalm 149:1] in which the Gospel is purely taught and the Sacraments are correctly administered. For the true unity of the Church it is enough to agree about the doctrine of the Gospel and the administration of the Sacraments" (Augsburg Confession VII).

Remember God's work through the Church as you pray:

16. with thanksgiving to God for raising up voices in every age and generation as He continues to call people to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

17. that God would raise up in our own time faithful pastors and church workers who will preach Jesus Christ crucified and risen, for the edification of His people and for the sake of those not yet of the faith.

18. with thanksgiving that God does His bidding through unworthy and unlikely people. Pray that He would keep us from thinking more highly of ourselves than we ought and keep us focused on the proclamation of the Gospel.

19. that God would give us faith so that we may not fear in times of trouble nor fall away in times of prosperity.

20. for the Holy Spirit and the wisdom that comes down from above to be given to us, so that

God's Word may not be bound but have free course and be preached to the joy and edification of Christ's holy people.

21. that the Church would work together in God-pleasing unity and that their joint efforts would further God's kingdom.

22. for Concordia Seminary, St. Louis; Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Ind.; and other institutions that prepare servants for the Church, that they would properly prepare men and women to serve God and His Church.

23. with thanksgiving for every person and organization that supports the work of the Church. The prayers and financial support of God's people enable the Gospel to be shared at home and around the world.

24. for young people, that the Lord would lead them to serve Him and bless His people.

25. for us, that when we are tempted to focus on the things



of the world or on ourselves, God would direct our attention to His Word and will.

26. with thanksgiving that God continues to strengthen us through His Word and Sacraments.

27. with thankful hearts to God for sending His Son, Jesus Christ, to die on the cross and rise again so that we might have the forgiveness of sins and the promise of eternal life.

28. that we would joyfully study the Sacred Scriptures as a light to our path and gratefully make



use of the Lutheran Confessions to help us understand and apply the Scriptures.

29. with thanksgiving for shepherds in the Church's history and pastors today, whom God uses to guide His flock.

30. that God would keep all Christians from being led astray by false teachings, and instead bring them to a deeper knowledge of Him.

31. that we all would be given a trust in the saving Gospel and a great passion to spread its joy with others in our lives.



Made to Worship

August

Daily Reading Plan

- Day 1: Psalm 96:1-2
- Day 2: 1 Chronicles 16:23-31
- Day 3: Deuteronomy 8
- Day 4: Deuteronomy 10:21
- Day 5: Jeremiah 20:13
- Day 6: Psalm 75:1
- Day 7: Psalm 71:8
- Day 8: Psalm 99:1-9
- Day 9: Deuteronomy 29:18
- Day 10: 1 Samuel 15: 22
- Day 11: Isaiah 29:13
- Day 12: Psalm 29:1-11
- Day 13: Nehemiah 9:5-6
- Day 14: Psalm 86:9-10
- Day 15: 2 Kings 17:38-39
- Day 16: Psalm 100:1-5
- Day 17: Daniel 3:8-18
- Day 18: Psalm 66:4
- Day 19: Psalm 96:9
- Day 20: Isaiah 12:5
- Day 21: Psalm 71:8
- Day 22: Daniel 2:20
- Day 23: Psalm 150:6
- Day 24: Matthew 6:24
- Day 25: John 4:21-24
- Day 26: Romans 12:1-2
- Day 27: Hebrews 12:28-29
- Day 28: Revelation 14:7
- Day 29: Colossians 3:16-17
- Day 30: Hebrews 13:15
- Day 31: Revelation 4:8-11

*Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name;
worship the LORD in the splendor of holiness.
Psalm 29:2*

FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH
15425 South County Road K
Merrill, WI 54452

NON-PROFIT ORG
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
PERMIT 44
MERRILL, WI 54452



IN HIM
our hearts rejoice.
Psalm 33:21, NIV