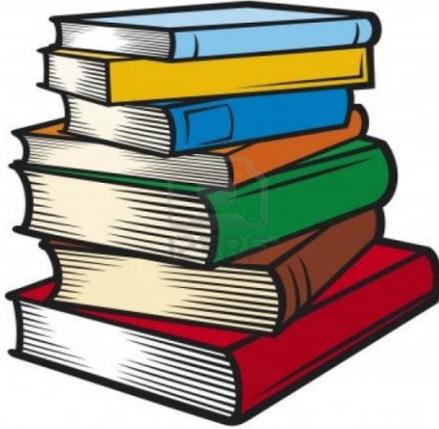


**St. Paul Ev. Lutheran Church**  
**800 South Division Street**  
**Chenoa, IL 61726**

November 29, 2018



I admit, I sometimes struggled with getting through all of my assigned reading while I was in seminary. The thoughts and discussions in classes were usually quite interesting, but academic theological writing, or things written in other languages hundreds of years ago...well, it isn't always the most captivating stuff. Important? Of course. Writing you can't put down because you just have to know what comes next? Not so much.

While there were many things that felt like chores to force your way through, there were times that the reading became a joy. One book, in particular, grabbed my attention in a way nothing else had. The assignment was to read and comment about one particular image in the first chapter of a novel. I ended up reading through the entire book in a little over a day. The book, first written in Swedish in 1941, was *The Hammer of God*. The author was a pastor, author, and bishop named Bo Giertz.

Giertz' novel, almost more a series of 3 novellas, captivated me. Following the stories of 3 pastors of one Swedish congregation spread different points in history, the book's various sections focused on different, central truths about our Christian faith and the source of our salvation. I'm not sure I've ever been as excited or proud to be Lutheran than I was as I inhaled Giertz' words.

Why do I tell you this? Because this Advent our sermons on Sunday are going to be based off sermons preached by Giertz from the 1950's through the early 1990's. Throughout his ministry, though little-known in America, he was something of a giant of the church in Sweden. Not only was *The Hammer of God* a best-seller, but he was also a popular author of other books and devotionals. So often our focus and image of the church is rooted either in its German roots or our American existence. I think it's a valuable, worthwhile thing to remember that the

church, even the Lutheran church, has not only existed but been deeply enriched by faithful believers and pastors all over the world.

On Wednesday evenings, we're going to look at Jesus' genealogy. I know, it really grabs your attention, right? Well, you know the old saying: Don't judge a book by its cover. Or, in this case, don't judge something's interest based on it being "just" a list of names. There are some amazing names found there, both good and bad. And those names tell quite a story. More than being a family tree, that list of Jesus' ancestors actually reveals quite a lot about who our God is when you look at it. So, that's what we're going to do. I really hope that you'll join us as we do.



May God's peace be with you this Advent season as you prepare to receive and celebrate the coming of Christ.

In Christ,

Pastor Jeremy

### **St. Paul's Discipleship**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Attendance</b>	<b>Offering</b>	<b>Missions</b>
11-04	92	4554.00	45.00
11-11	94	1808.00	35.00
11-18	106	2119.88	28.00
11-25	95	2044.00	25.00
Ladies Restroom		53.00	
Youth Convention		50.00	
Advent		5.00	

### **Holy Acts and Rites of the Church**

The Scott Hardman Family have transferred their membership to Christ Lutheran Church in Clinton. We ask God to bless them in their new fellowship.

## From Our Parish Nurse

Pam Norris

Are you overbooked for this month? Do you look at your schedule and start to panic? How can you possibly do everything? There are meetings, birthdays, gifts, decorating, parties and too many other things, not including work, family and church.

It's time to trim your list instead of the tree. Consider fewer gifts, fewer decorations and not so many parties. Find quiet time to spend with devotional materials and in prayer. The only way to get to the heart of Christmas is with Jesus. All of the other things are fine, but they aren't necessary.

Practice some stress busting techniques. Here are some ideas:

- **Leave.** if the noise is too much or the crowds are closing in, just leave. you don't have to stay in the toy store with all of the screaming youngsters, and you don't have to converse with the know-it-all at the party. You can walk away
- **Close the eyes.** take a break from the lights and activities. Closing the eyes is a great way to get re-centered.
- **Try some solitude.** In the middle of so much activity it helps to have time alone. Use the quiet time to set priorities, to pray, or to count your blessings.
- **Go outside.** **Fresh air and sunshine can make a difference in how you feel. Being in God's creation and going for a walk can help find extra energy.**
- **Locate some water.** Listen to it, watch it, drink it or sit in it. Water refreshes in so many ways. He knows what we need; maybe that is why God put so much on earth.
- **Breathe!** Remember to exhale occasionally. When the shoulders are up to the ears, it's time to take some deep breaths. Fill the lungs completely from the bottom to the top. Pause for a couple of seconds. Exhale letting all of the air out of the lungs from the top to the bottom. Repeat 3 or 4 times. Your shoulders have relaxed with the rest of the body. Stress causes shallow breathing. Deep breathing releases it.
- **Listen to music.** Choose whatever type makes you happy. Sing along. It's amazing how good this can make us feel.

Give yourself the gift of peace in the midst of a world in chaos. Have a great holiday and share your peace with those around you.

We have received two Thank You's from our adopted seminary student, they follow:

Ladies of St. Paul,

Greetings in the Name of the LORD! Thank you for helping me in my education to be a Pastor! A little about us....

My name is Dan Golden, married to Julie and we have 5 kids ages 24, 21, 20 11 & 8. Yes, this is a second career for me! I have just started my 2<sup>nd</sup> year a couple of weeks ago. It is quite amazing how much I have learned already. At the end of this year I will be called to a vicarage to somewhere in the U.S.! I am sure that I will be placed exactly where God needs me. I will certainly keep Chenoa in mind for a future visit.

In Christ,  
Dan, Julie & kids

St. Paul Ladies Group and Judy Bertsche,

Hello again! Thank you for the kind gift. Every time I meet someone from Central IL I always ask about Chenoa! I have yet to meet someone. I hope we can make it out there one day.

Your most recent gift went towards books for my study. Every ten weeks brings a new book list and your contribution helps so much!

I thank God for all the supporters out there like you.

Thank you for all the ways you make this world a brighter one.

Daniel & Julie Golden



**In 2010** our adopted Seminary Student was Michael Kearney. This excerpt follows from the Wittenberg Newsletter:

Rev. Michael and Erica Kearney are both ISU and Wittenberg alumni. A native of El Paso, Michael is currently serving the LORD at dual parishes in Alden [St. Paul] and Buckeye [St. Paul], Iowa. While attending ISU, he was active in the Big Red Marching Machine and ROTC. His high school sweetheart, Erica [Duffy] introduced Michael to her campus Pastor, Rev. Damon Jirovek at Wittenberg. Michael had been a devout Roman Catholic, but in 2007 he was confirmed into the Lutheran Church. After graduating from ISU, he married Erica, a product of St. John Lutheran, Secor. Michael then attended Concordia Theological Seminary in

Ft. Wayne, IN, where they began a family that currently consists of 5 children [Anderson, Simeon, Beatrice, Margaret and Oliver]. He was ordained in 2014.



**Bake-less Bake Sale**—It is time once again for the Ladies of the Church’ Bake-less Bake Sale. The Ladies sponsor a seminary student throughout the year by sending monthly checks. The Ladies also provide meals for the families at a funeral and send monies for the community Thanksgiving baskets. You can place your donation in the Sunday offering marked—Ladies or give it to

Judy Bertsche or mail it to Judy Bertsche, 27651 East 2700 North Road, Chenoa IL 61726.

### **Christmas Program Rehearsal**

December is here and that means Preschool-Seventh grade students will rehearse for the Christmas program. Students will practice during Sunday School on December 2, 9, 16 and 23. There will be an evening practice from 6-7:30pm on Sunday, December 16. The Christmas program will take place during service on Sunday, December 23.

### **November Perfect Attendance**

#### PreK-Kindergarten

Jarret Gooding  
Joshua Gooding  
Elaine Schmidgall

#### First-Third Grade

Jacsen Gooding  
Carolyn Schmidgall  
Henry Schmidgall

#### Fourth-Fifth Grade

Alexis Gooding  
Isaac Latzke  
Dylan Verdun

#### Sixth-Seventh Grade

Cole Weber

#### Eighth Grade-High School

Chase Beitz  
Clayton Beitz  
Elijah Beitz  
Hannah Norris  
Nathan Reed  
Aaron Shrewsbury  
Nolan Verdun

## **Offering**

Preschool – High School has collected \$115 of our \$300 goal this year. Offering is designated for LCMS World Relief and Human Care, Disaster Response. To learn more about LCMS Disaster Response go to: <https://www.lcms.org/disaster-response>

## **Growing in Christ for Preschool – Kindergarten**

In the month of November, Preschool-Kindergarten students learned about baptism (Romans 6:4) and God’s creation (Genesis 1). *Something to consider, “What does your baptism mean to you?”*

## **Growing in Christ for First – Seventh Grade**

11/4: This week the Sunday School lesson was “The Visit of the Wise Men.” This Bible story teaches us that the Savior came into the world for the salvation of all people. Just as the Wise Men came to Bethlehem to see the Savior and honor Him, so we come to church to see the Savior in His Word and Sacraments. With these gifts, He both honors and blesses us. *Something to consider, “How are you sometimes like Herod? How are you like the Wise Men?”*

11/11: The children heard the message “The Boy Jesus in the Temple.” As a boy, Jesus was found in His Father’s house. In God’s house I hear His Word, see that Jesus is my Savior, and receive His gifts of forgiveness and salvation. Because of sin, we are like Jesus’ parents and do not understand what God says to us. We don’t recognize who Jesus truly is—our Savior. *Something to consider, “How did God show Mary, and you, His unmerited grace and favor?”*

11/18: The children learned the account “John Prepares the Way.” As John pointed to Jesus as the Lamb of God, so our pastor point us to this same Jesus, who grants us forgiveness, life, and salvation. *Something to consider, “What did you learn about John, what he ate, and how he dressed?”*

## **Growing in Christ for Eighth Grade – High School**

This month the students learned about reviewed Bible stories and current events. *Something to consider, “What is your favorite Bible story and why?”*

## Baptismal Birthdays

The following students celebrated baptismal birthdays in December: Ty Freed (12/16) and Peter Schuler (12/28).

## In Prayer

Please keep the Fourth – Seventh grade teachers and students in your prayers during the month of December. For our teachers: Mrs. Krista Verdun and Mr. Leon Beitz, pray that God may grant them wisdom, strength and knowledge to share His Word with the children and to help them grow spiritually. For our students: Alexis Gooding, Isaac Latzke, Brooklyn McBride, Peter Schuler, Chase Simpkins, Aaron & Dylan Verdun, and Cole Weber, that they may understand the depth of God’s love for them as they grow to become strong men and women who live for God’s Glory.



**Our sincere thanks and appreciation** to Jeff Beckman and Greg Pulaski for their work on the ladies’ restroom doors.



**You are invited** to attend a special walk-through Christmas event titled “Journey to the Manger” at Christ Lutheran Church, Normal on December 9<sup>th</sup>, 5-7 PM. Meals can be purchased from 4:30 – 6:30 PM.

You might want to include these members on your Christmas Card list:

Marge Wahls  
215 E Washington – Evenglow  
Pontiac IL 61764

Caroline Carley Casley  
301 Lauren Circle  
Chenoa IL 61726

Dorothy Erdman  
Good Samaritan Home  
1225 Ewing DR  
Pontiac IL 61764

Ron Erdman  
Veteran’s Hospital  
1 Veteran’s Dr.  
Manteno IL 60950

Viale Field  
120 N Deerfield Rd  
Pontiac IL 61764

Mary Rhoda  
25408 Church Street  
Chenoa IL 61726

Lee Wahls  
215 E Washington - Evenglow  
Pontiac IL 61764

Elaine Rhoda  
25408 Church Street  
Chenoa IL 61726

