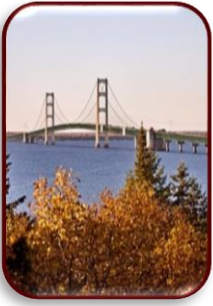


Monthly Meditation



Summer unofficially ends in Michigan with the annual Mackinac Bridge Walk on Labor Day. This year will mark the 60th Anniversary of this uniquely Michigan event.

Many of you may remember when the bridge was being built over four years, watching its slow progress almost mysteriously out of the water, and its first day of service on November 1, 1957.

Bridges are fascinating structures and even frightening for some. The concept of "building bridges" to gap the divide between sides or to mediate differences has even become part of our culture.

Yet, the word "bridge" does not occur in the Bible. There may be two reasons. One is that God doesn't build bridges, he divides seas. The Bible mentions parting the water five times. It begins with creation in Genesis 1. We know how Moses and Joshua parted the waters for the Israelites to cross over on to dry ground. In 2 Kings 2, we have both Elijah and Elisha parting the water.

The other reason is that usually his people must pass through the deadly currents of suffering and death, not simply ride over them. "When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you" (Isaiah 43:2). They may drown you. But I will be with you in life and death. This is the Theology of the Cross! "Pick up your cross and follow me."

Bridges are magnificent feats of engineering of man's subduing creation. However, God who spoke creation into existence bridges the gap created by sin with the atoning sacrifice of his son on a cross to bring us safely across the realities of this life into his home - our heavenly shore!

CLASSES BEGIN ON SEPT. 17TH!

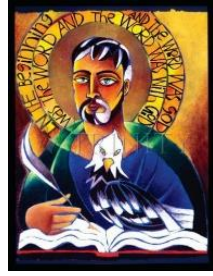


Christian Education

Sunday School classes will begin on September 17 following Fellowship. Laurel Peterson will continue to serve as the Superintendent and encourages you to invite friends, family members, and neighborhood children to attend.

Wednesday Afternoon Bible Class

returns on October 4th at 1:00 PM. We will be studying the Gospel of John. Unlike the first three Gospels that share a similar story (Synoptics), John was written almost 40 years later.



John's Gospel develops for us a better understanding of the relationship of the persons of the Triune God and the Son's presence in the Old Testament as the Preincarnate Christ. Jesus' uses of the "I AM" phrase seven times (in two formats) and John directly connects Jesus to God's answer to Moses, "I AM who I AM" or YAHWEH (YHWH).

Bring a friend or neighbor. How about bringing both!

Confirmation Classes



Second Year class will meet Tuesday afternoons at Pastor's home beginning at 4PM, beginning September 6th.

First & Second Year class, which is a hybrid, will meet Sunday morning following worship. The second year students will complete mid-year and the first year students will begin their studies with the second half of the catechism first. Classes will begin September 24th.



VOTERS MAKE CHANGES TO BEFORE & AFTER CHURCH PROCEDURES

(Effective September 3, 2017)

Announcements: All announcements are to be made by the pastor before the service begins. News items **and recurring events are to be included in the bulletin rather than announced.** **(All announcements are due in the office by the Wednesday prior to the coming Sunday.)** No verbal repeat announcements will be made as their place belongs in the bulletin. If there are new announcements that need to be made, they must be cleared in advance by the pastor and will be announced following worship.

Visitor Welcome: Because of concerns for making visitors feel uncomfortable and for security reasons, pastor will make a general announcement before the service to welcome visitors and let them know that we have a gift for them after service. **NOTE:** Please introduce yourself to visitors before or after the service and express your welcome as we want visitors to feel totally at home at BLC. The intent of the Voters was to minimize the visitors' unease.

Closing Hymn Replaced with Postlude: Unless there is a special reason for a final hymn to be sung which is to be determined by the pastor, the service will conclude after the Benediction. This will provide our organist an opportunity to play a postlude for dismissal. This change will go into effect on Sunday, December 3.

These changes were initiated by the Voters and show the strength of our Lutheran polity (church government). Unless it is theological or liturgical where the Office of the Holy Ministry makes all decisions, all other matters of the congregation are decided by the Voters. Once again, Luther's wisdom shines through and highlights that Christ created his church for his people.

Pastor & Mrs. Matro to Visit

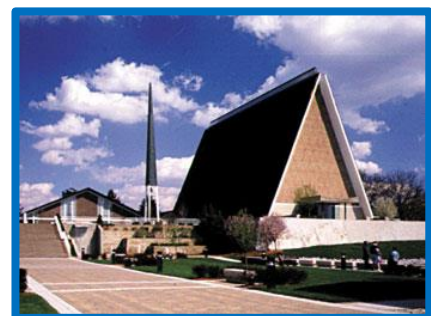
Please join us Wednesday evening, September 13, at 7 PM to meet with Pastor and Tina and learn about their work in Papua New Guinea and Oceania.

Pastor Matro has been a good friend to BLC and you are invited to come hear of their work and encourage them in their ministry.

The Slessmans will be serving as hosts in Fellowship Hall.

Seminary Coop Collection - Collections for CTS-Fort Wayne are underway (See flyer in Fellowship Hall.). Requested items include:

- Laundry soap, TP, diapers, toothpastes, etc.
- Good used clothing (no polyester suits)
- Dishes, toaster ovens, household items
- Toys
- Christmas decorations





Charitable Gift Giving Report

"Love in Christ is strong and living" at Bethlehem. Besides our tithe to District and Synod, our parish generously tithes a second time through its Charitable Gift Program. At the August Voters, the gifts were distributed to:

Third Quarter – Glen Lake Schools for Christmas Gifts for Needy Children (permanent designation). This gift will be partnered with a gift from Cherry Republic to further extend Christian charity to those in need.

We know that good works do not save us, but "faith without works is dead." Out of God's love for us, we joyfully show our love to others in response to His love for us. Jesus said, "Apart from me you can do nothing." [Jn.15:5]

DONATIONS FOR HURRICANE HARVEY RELIEF

If you would like to support the relief efforts to victims of Hurricane Harvey in Texas, please direct any financial contributions to BLC with a note on your check's memo line or in an envelope marked "Texas" and we will send the money directly to the Texas District of the LCMS for their distribution to those impacted by the hurricane and flooding.



If you are reading this on your electronic device and would like to contribute directly, the address is: <https://txlcms.org/how-can-i-help-hurricane-harvey/>

Whether you are able to donate or not, please remember the victims and emergency workers in your prayers.

"Be strong and courageous. Do not fear or be in dread of them, for it is the LORD your God who goes with you. He will not leave you or forsake you." – Deut. 31:6



To commemorate this special occasion, the Voters are going all out to make October 29th a special day of rejoicing by inviting the entire community! Although plans are still being formulated, the tentative agenda is:

Pre-Celebration to include:

- Festival Banner in Yard
- Press Release on Reformation and Community Invitation worship and the free Oktoberfest
- Adult Booklets and Christian Halloween Pamphlets ordered for distribution

Day of Celebration to include:

9:30 AM - Festival Worship Service with community invited

12 PM – 4 PM – Oktoberfest for Community and Halloween Games and Treats for Children

Chris Griffith volunteered to coordinate the food, but we will need "many hands" to make this memorable event a success! More details and information will follow as the plans unfold! What an exciting endeavor and adventure to let people know that "The Reformation is Still All About Jesus!"

Landscaping Plans

The Voters acted to begin major landscaping this fall by removal of much of the existing vegetation by members.



Jim Kraatz designed the new plantings which will occur in the spring. Fund raising for the new materials will occur throughout the fall and winter.



Strategic Planning

God has led us to this moment in time to grow his Kingdom in our community and to grow our parish into new directions to his glory and

the expansion of our mission and ministry. He has called us to bold action, to think outside of the box, and to think outside of our comfort zone to reach the unchurched and seeking.

Strategic Planning will hold its first meeting in October. Currently, Chad Kahler, Joey Kraatz, Laurel Peterson, and Pastor are serving. Will you join us in dreaming dreams, bringing dreams into reality with prayer, action, and God's blessings – so that the mission and ministry of BLC will be vibrant and alive for years to come. The time will soon be announced and don't be surprised if you get asked to join us!

Rally Day "Indoor Picnic"

Please join us on Sunday, September 10, following services for the annual Rally Day Picnic. This year, the picnic will be held inside.



The church will provide ham, breads, and beverages. You are invited to bring a dish to pass and an empty tummy to celebrate the kick off of Christian Education and the fellowship that we share as Brothers and Sisters in Christ!

Mahlburgs Missionary Musings



On July 29, the seven Mahlburgs arrived in Sri Lanka with 18 tubs (all that they own) at 2 AM in the morning. With 70% of the country being Buddhist, please pray that the Holy Spirit will bless their work

and keep them safely in God's protection and care.

Christmas Cookie Recipes Wanted

Although it's a wee bit early, BLC is going to make a day of the "Hanging of the Greens," decorating the church, and getting ready for the Leelanau Singers' Concert on December 3.



To that end, BLC is putting together **BLC's Famous Christmas Cookies Cookbook** for everyone who wants a copy at no expense. Lois Dockery has agreed to assemble the cookbook, but we need your recipes no later than November 5th. Please look for the wrapped box in Fellowship Hall to submit your favorite recipes. Lois would appreciate receiving the recipes sooner rather than later. And, please, share those favorite recipes that we have all come to love ... even some secret ones!

You Just Have to Enjoy the Humor!

The Lutheran Church started in Germany – famous for its beer - and Dr. Luther loved his beer. To help make ends meet, his wife was a certified biermeister and she really supported the family financially. With that background, please enjoy the announcement of Synod's new business manager!

Simek to serve as Synod's new chief administrative officer

Frank Simek of Keller, Texas, has been appointed by the LCMS Board of Directors as the Synod's new chief administrative officer.

Most recently, Simek was senior manager of procurement for the Pabst Brewing Company in Dallas. Prior to that he was director of procurement for FTS International LLC, Fort Worth, Texas. His previous experience includes 28 years (1982–2010) with Anheuser-Busch Inbev Inc.

You don't need to make this stuff up!