

Trinity Tribune: November

Trinity Ev. Lutheran Church
Paola, Kansas

“The End Times: A Source of Joy”

With the terrorist attacks on Israel in recent weeks, I have seen a few headlines from Christian pastors predicting that the End Times are among us, suggesting that a war in Israel will bring about the rapture or some other major eschatological event. (“Eschatology” is the study of the Last Things.) This is plainly wrong. Jesus predicts that there will always be wars on this earth:

“You will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not alarmed, for this must take place, but the end is not yet. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be famines and earthquakes in various places. All these are but the beginning of the birth pains” (Matt 24:6–8).

These pastors especially point to the land of Israel (and Palestine?) as being the center of God’s attention on earth, so war there must mean for them that God is active or getting ready for something. This could not be further from the truth. God certainly used the land and people of Israel at one time for His ends. But now that Christ has died and risen again, the land no longer matters. That is what the tearing of the veil in the temple at Jesus’s death means.

Jesus also predicts this when he speaks to the Samaritan woman: “But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him” (John 4:23). He is pointing the Samaritan woman, the Jews of His day, and even us to worshipping anywhere in the Holy Spirit and in truth. We do not need to be baptized in the Jordan River or reestablish a Jewish homeland or rebuild the temple before He comes back.

On the contrary, we do not know when Jesus will return. He even says this about himself: “But concerning that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only” (Matt 24:36).

So where do these ideas about wars and raptures and chaos come from? Many of them come from the “Scofield Reference Bible” published by Cyrus Scofield in 1909. Although prior to this Bible there had been discussions and theories about how the End Times would come about, Scofield used this study Bible to publish his ideas to a wide

audience, and they took off. He introduced the idea of “dispensations,” which divides biblical history into seven eras wherein God acts with his chosen people in different ways. His form of dispensationalism is known as “premillennialism,” which teaches that there will be a rapture of believers before the “Great Tribulation” where Satan is loosed upon the earth. After that time is over, Jesus will return and reign for 1000 years.

An opposite form of “premillennialism” is “postmillennialism,” which holds that Man must create the perfect Christian society, after which Christ will come and reign for 1000 years.

There are many problems with both. We as Lutherans, along with Catholics, the Orthodox, Anglicans, and Presbyterians, hold to “amillennialism,” which interprets Revelation 20 as pertaining to the present time. There is a constant spiritual conflict that we are engaged in now. We believe that Jesus will return with glory on a day unknown to us and unable to be predicted by any means. Then will come the Final Judgement and God’s renewing the whole creation by fire to bring about a sinless New Creation.

A lot of this talk about the End Times and various theories can become confusing to Christians. There will always be *some* of this because it deals with the future, and the Scriptures do not tell us everything about what is to come.

But the Scriptures tell us enough to comfort us and give us joy rather than fear. It will be a joyous day when our Lord comes back. The faithful will dwell with Him forever. I am disappointed when I see pastors talking about the End Times with the goal of scaring members into believing in Jesus. We believe in Him because we love Him, not because we’re scared of the alternative.

If it helps you, I encourage you to start reading on the End Times from Matthew, chapters 24–25. We should always start with the words of Our Lord before looking at other passages. We then interpret 1 Thessalonians 4–5, 2 Thessalonians 1–2, and Revelation through what Jesus says.

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Woelmer

Birthdays & Anniversaries

Birthdays

November 1	Christopher England
November 2	Steve Debrick
November 4	Peyton Mitchell
November 6	Jill Druse
November 7	Fritz Meyer
November 8	Erin England
November 9	Greg Windler
November 9	Brad Ashley
November 11	Lana Kettler
November 11	Chylar Jones
November 13	Dennis Ohlmeier
November 13	Doris Rodewald
November 14	Elena Smithhisler
November 15	JoAnn Vaughn
November 16	Sacred Davis
November 17	Devin Canada
November 19	Elaine Brocker
November 19	Kreston Debrick
November 19	Kathy Peckman
November 20	Alexis Belsanti
November 20	Luke Elkinton
November 20	Randy Maisch
November 21	Jim Prothe
November 21	Megan Tesar
November 22	Whitney Shoemaker
November 22	Burl Peckman
November 22	Jason Peterson
November 22	Martin Carter
November 23	Lisa Shannon
November 24	Lindsey Lester
November 25	Carolyn Isenhower
November 25	Courtney Belsanti
November 25	Dana Hall
November 26	Liliana Peckman
November 29	Rick Druse
November 30	Alan Hutchison

Anniversaries

November 3	Ken and Karla Debrick (41)
November 18	Darrell and Barb Brandt (51)
November 20	Harry and Gay Stubbs (47)
November 21	Fritz & Miciah Carter (8)
November 22	Brad and Susan Ashley (18)
November 23	Vernon and Donna Prothe (68)
November 29	Webb and Virginia Oberheide (37)
November 29	Brett and Becky Stutzman (54)

BIBLE STUDY ON ESTHER: “For Such a Time As This”

God raised up Esther to save her people in a time of great danger. She is an example for both men and women of how God uses us in our various vocations to protect the ones around us.

Join the Adult Bible Class at 9:00 a.m. on Sundays in the Heritage Room to learn more!

COFFEE HOUR

Everyone is invited to stay for Coffee Hour in the Gathering Room following worship. Our thanks to those that provide snacks each Sunday. The signup sheet to provide snacks for Coffee Hour in 2023 is on the counter in the Gathering Room. Consider signing up to honor birthdays, wedding anniversaries, etc.

THANKSGIVING DAY SERVICE

Our Thanksgiving service this year will be at 10:00 a.m. on Thursday, November 23rd. Come give thanks to God for another year of His grace and mercy and blessings. Without His providence for us, we would have nothing, but in Christ, we have all that we need.



LUTHERAN RESOURCES

After suggesting a few resources that cost some money, our next one is completely free. Issues, Etc. is a Lutheran radio program that can also be streamed on most devices (Apple Podcasts or Podbean for Android or by going to issuesetc.org). They cover all sorts of topics, from Bible studies to theological doctrines to applying the Christian worldview to current-day issues. The host is Rev. Todd Wilken, and his interviews let the guests expound on their topic. Some interviews are “bite-sized” (15 minutes), but some are longer (an hour). Give it a listen!

Issues, Etc.



Christ-Centered Cross-Focused Talk Radio
www.issuesetc.org

NURSING HOME SERVICES

You are invited to help Trinity provide brief worship services for nursing home residents this month. The simple services are approximately 20 minutes in length at each home. This month, we are scheduled for Sunday, **November 26th**. We will begin at 1:30 pm at North Pointe, and then go to Medicalodge around 2:15 for the second service. The residents really enjoy these services, especially singing their favorite hymns. It's great to have church members there to greet the residents and sing along. We have a few members who help but we could use your help too!

ADULT INSTRUCTION CLASS

When: 7:00 p.m. on **Tuesdays**

Where: Heritage Room

Bring: Your Bible and Catechism

How long: 1 hour for 10 weeks (ending Dec 19th)

Upcoming Sessions:

Oct 31: Sin and Confession and Absolution

Nov 7: 2nd Article of the Apostles' Creed (The Son)

Nov 14: 3rd Article of the Apostles' Creed (The Holy Spirit)

Nov 21: The Church and Office of the Holy Ministry

Nov 28: The Lord's Prayer

Dec 5: Baptism

Dec 12: The Lord's Supper

Dec 19: Miscellaneous Topics

rites of the Church Class

When: 7:00 p.m. on **Mondays**

Where: Basement

Bring: Yourself!

How long: 1 hour for six weeks (ending Nov 20th)

Upcoming Sessions:

October 30: Holy Matrimony

November 6: not meeting (locked for voting day)

November 13: Funeral, part 1

November 20: Funeral, part 2

YOUTH GROUP

Our Branson Sight and Sound Theatre trip is coming up soon, November 3–5th! We're looking forward to seeing the book of Esther come alive on the stage. Our next youth night is tentatively scheduled for November 26th. We have a few things to plan for in the year ahead, so stay tuned as we make those plans!

VOTERS MEETING SUMMARY 10/22/23

Meeting was called to order by Chairman Windler, followed with devotions and prayer by Pastor Woelmer. Roll call was answered by 18 members; there were no new member requests. Financial reports by the home treasurer and missions treasurer were given. Trustees reported the east stair carpet needs repaired, the master bath at the parsonage has been approved for remodeling (work to be by Excalibur LLC), the lightning damage list continues to grow, Brandy Kalinka has been hired to clean the church, and Shane Stout will continue with cemetery repairs. Reports were heard from Pastor Woelmer, as well as the Endowment, Board of Education, and Blocktoberfest committees, and Youth group. Chairman Windler thanked all for their continued support and efforts. Old business items reviewed included sign work, and the new cemetery message board is up.

New business items were officer elections. Results are Chairman – Greg Windler, Elder – Mark Minden, Home Treasurer – Paul Brack, Trustee – Clint Haley, Board of Education – Erin Meyer, Finance Committee – Pete Kaiser, Endowment Committee – Jeff Menefee and Dena Kaiser, Ushers – Mike England and Barrett Young, Secretary – Jim Prothe.

Voters approved next year's Mission budget to be set at \$7500. Voters were also reminded of the church being locked in conjunction with the upcoming November elections. Organists' salary was also discussed and will be addressed at future meetings. The meeting was adjourned with the singing of the Doxology.

UPCOMING SERMON SERIES

The last three Sundays of the Church year (Nov 12, 19, & 26) always focus on Christ's Second Coming. This will be a source of great joy! Come learn why during these Sundays in November.

November 5: All Saints' Day

Text: Revelation 7:9–17

Theme: "Sing with All the Saints"

November 12

Texts: 1 Thess. 4:13–18 & Matthew 25:1–13

Theme: "The Resurrection of All Flesh"

November 19

Texts: 1 Thess. 5:1–11 & Matthew 25:14–30

Theme: "The Sudden Coming of Christ"

November 26

Texts: 1 Cor. 15:20–28 & Matthew 25:31–46

Theme: "The Final Judgment"