Pentecost petals

The Pantheon, dedicated in 126 A.D. as the home of ancient Roman gods, is now a Catholic basilica. In a tradition dating back to the seventh century, on Pentecost Sunday thousands of rose petals are dropped through the roof’s opening onto worshipers below. The red petals symbolize the Holy Spirit descending on Jesus’ disciples, as well as the blood Jesus shed on the cross.

To accomplish this “rose rain,” five firefighters climb to the roof after mass. While the choir sings the ancient hymn *Veni Creator Spiritus* (“Come Creator Spirit”), firefighters empty seven bags of petals through the building’s 27-foot-wide oculus, or eye in the sky.

Only a fortunate few can witness this spectacular event in person each year, but videos are available online.

Our Lord left us in good hands

As Jesus prepared his disciples for his departure, they were full of questions — “Where are you going? How will we know the way there? Would you please just show us the Father?” — and not very satisfied with his answers. So Jesus promised to send them “another Helper” (John 14:16, ESV). And we can almost hear them protesting, like kids bemoaning a favorite coach’s retirement or church members grieving a beloved pastor’s call to serve elsewhere: “Oh, great. Someone new for us to get to know. It won’t be the same. It won’t be you.”

Except … the word *another* has two forms in Greek: “another just like this one” and “another, different version.” And when the author of John translated Jesus’ Aramaic into Greek, the first definition was the accurate one. Jesus was assuring his disciples they’d be in good hands, at peace and secure because the new Helper — the Holy Spirit — would be another just like him.

— Based on *Fearless*, by Max Lucado

Expect to be surprised!

“Each day holds a surprise,” wrote Henri Nouwen. “But only if we expect it can we see, hear, or feel it when it comes to us. Let’s not be afraid to receive each day’s surprise, whether it comes to us as sorrow or as joy.”

Wait — sorrow as a surprise? And I’m not to fear it? Aren’t surprises supposed to be happy things? What does Nouwen mean?

He continues: “It will open a new place in our hearts, a place where we can welcome new friends and celebrate more fully our shared humanity.” And I remember, too, the psalmist’s words: “The Lord is near to the brokenhearted” (Psalm 34:18). Maybe that’s the surprise in our sorrow: that when we ache, as when we celebrate, God is there — in new friends, in shared humanity. Surprise!

— Heidi Mann
First Edition Book Club will meet at 12:15 p.m. on Saturday, May 5, at the home of Naida Kesner in Toston. Club members will meet at the church parking lot at 10:30 a.m. that day, and car pool to Naida’s home. Please RSVP to Naida by Wednesday, May 2, by calling (406)439-7698.

The group is currently reading Twilight at Blueberry Barrens, by Colleen Coble.

Calling all parents of graduating seniors!

If your family includes a high school or alternative school senior scheduled to graduate this year, First Word Editor Linda Fromm needs your help.

She would like to publish a list of 2018 graduates, their parents’ names and the high school from which they will graduate.

If your student wishes to do so, it would also be great to list his or her plans for life after high school (work, college, travel, etc.).

Please email your information to Linda at: lindafromm@mac.com OR put a copy in the First Word box in the church office or in Linda’s mailbox in Ziegler Hall by Thursday, May 17.

Congratulations to all First Lutheran graduates. May our gracious God be with you as you begin your next big adventure!
Pastor’s Potpourri...
a mixture of comments concerning our life together in Christ!

... to our Lenten Actors for our Midweek and Holy Week Services

Isaac - Arthur Worthy,
Nathan - Brian Buhr,
Moses - Pastor Miller, Paul - Philip Tullis,
Matt Elvbakken - Sol, keeper of The Upper Room,
Lydia - Shari Miller, Jesus - John Onstad

Your service was a blessing to us all
as we considered our Lord’s Lenten prayer:
“Thy Will be Done!”

LWML - Montana District Convention

The 2018 Lutheran Women’s Missionary League (LWML) Montana District Convention was held April 20-22, 2018, at First Lutheran Church in Missoula, Montana with Shari Miller presiding and 122 people attending.

The three-day convention drew participants from all over the state of Montana, with twelve women attending from Helena.

The theme was “Every Tongue Confess” and past LWML Counselor Rev. Miller led an excellent Bible study on that theme.

Rev. Dr. Robert and Kristi Roegner, mission speakers from St. Louis, were keynote speakers.

The Warners and Thompsons joined the convention as Mites in Action Speakers via PowerPoint from Spain and Sierra Leone.

Young Woman Representatives Stephanie Edgar and Emy Stueve presented sketches highlighting mission projects and the popular culture from the 1940s to the present.

The Saturday evening banquet was a gala celebration for the 75 years of God’s grace to the Lutheran women serving in LWML throughout Montana and the nation.

The Old Testament Joseph, the TRUE God and YOU are the chief characters in our current Bible Study!

Please join us Sundays at 9:45 a.m. in the Fellowship Centre!

Older Wiser Loving Seniors (55ish+ older) are invited to our next gathering Thursday, May 17, 11 a.m.
Watch for ALL the details!

Confirmation of Faith of three of our congregation’s youth will be celebrated on Sunday, May 20, (Pentecost)

Please join us for the EARLIER worship service and a reception (beginning at 9:15) to support Megan, Thomas, and Zach as they confirm their baptismal faith in Jesus, their Savior.

The celebration Christ is Risen, He is Risen, Indeed, Alleluia! continues!

Blessings as we, rejoice together, in the Resurrection of our Lord!

Pastor Miller
F.L.Y. (First Lutheran Youth) wishes to thank the congregation for its generous support and attendance while joining us for Easter Sunday breakfast.

Kids interested in going to the LCMS National Youth Gathering in Minneapolis, Minnesota, in July of 2019 have until June 1, 2018, to register! Registration cost is $250 per youth, with the additional $125 being paid by F.L.Y. fundraising ($375 total registration). Please contact Youth Board members Chantel Duty, Kim Hoxie or Jason Mercer if you need more information.

With your help, F.L.Y. has raised over $2,200 in funds for the 2019 National Youth Gathering, and is looking to raise approximately $10,000, depending on the number of participants. Anyone can sponsor our youth or make a free will donation, and envelopes are available in a rack, near the door, at the back of the sanctuary. Thank you for your support!

Located on Flathead Lake two miles south of Bigfork, on 40 acres of beautiful forest land, Trinity Lutheran Camp is a nonprofit ministry of Trinity Lutheran Church in Kalispell, and serves to strengthen campers and families through their relationship with God. Each summer, campers of all ages attend our youth or sports camps, adult or family retreats, pastoral conferences and/or family reunions.

You are welcome to join us for Sunday worship services in the chapel from Memorial Day through Labor Day. The service begins at 11:15 a.m.

Registration Deadline: May 31 (Fees increase after that date!)

Prices vary according to camp.

For complete information and registration forms, go to: www.trinitylutherancamp.org

Mother’s Day first celebrated in 1908

The modern holiday of Mother’s Day was first celebrated in 1908, when Anna Jarvis held a memorial for her mother at St. Andrew’s Methodist Church in Grafton, WV. Her campaign to make Mother’s Day a recognized holiday in the United States began in 1905, the year her mother, Ann Reeves Jarvis, died. Ann Jarvis had been a peace activist who cared for wounded soldiers on both sides of the American Civil War, and created Mother’s Day Work Clubs to address public health issues. Anna Jarvis wanted to honor her mother by continuing the work she started, and to set aside a day to honor all mothers because she believed a mother is “the person who has done more for you than anyone in the world.” By 1911, all U.S. states observed the holiday, with some of them officially recognizing Mother’s Day as a local holiday. In 1914, Woodrow Wilson signed a proclamation designating Mother’s Day, held on the second Sunday in May, as a national holiday.
St. Paul teaches, “Let the one who is taught the word share all good things with the one who teaches” (Galatians 6:6).

And again, he says, “Do you not know that those who are employed in the temple service get their food from the temple, and those who serve at the altar share in the sacrificial offerings? In the same way, the Lord commanded that those who proclaim the gospel should get their living by the gospel” (1 Corinthians 9:13–14).

In other words, ministers of the gospel are supported by the offerings of those who are served by them. And this is how the Church lives even now. It is standard practice.

But this deserves closer examination. For it instructs us not just that we are to give but also what we are to give. And it does so with four little words: “In the same way …”

St. Paul is building his case for supporting the preachers of the Gospel with the sacrificial giving of individual members on the example of the Old Testament people who supported the Levites with their offerings and sacrifices.

We’re to support the Gospel ministry “in the same way.” But how did the Old Testament people support the Levites?

Moses records this: “You shall tithe all the yield of your seed that comes from the field year by year. And before the Lord your God, in the place that he will choose, to make his name dwell there, you shall eat the tithe of your grain, of your wine, and of your oil, and the firstborn of your herd and flock, that you may learn to fear the Lord your God always” (Deuteronomy 14:22–23).

The Levites were supported by the tithe, 10 percent of all the yearly yield of that which was harvested.

Does that seem like a lot? Does it surprise you that St. Paul instructs us that we are to support the New Testament Gospel ministry “in the same way?”

If it does, ask yourself: is the Church’s job in the New Testament bigger or smaller than the Levites’ job in the Old Testament? Back then there was one Temple, and the ministry was almost exclusively located in one nation among the descendants of Abraham.

Jesus calls us to teach and baptize all nations (Matt. 28). And there are churches and ministries all around the world. How could we support this new Gospel ministry with anything less than the Israelites supported the Old Testament ministry?

Of course, we are free to give more, for we have received more than those in the Old Testament. We have received the fullness of God’s revelation, the fullness of His salvation, the fulfillment of everything that God promised to do.

For we have received Christ, God’s own Son, in the flesh, who took upon himself our sins and in exchange gave us his righteousness. The Father claimed us as his own in Holy Baptism.

See SAME WAY, Pg. 6

“Supporting the Gospel ministry — from your Board of Stewardship”

May 27th is the last day of Sunday School for the school year. Please come and say Thank You! to our teachers:

Tara Mercer—Pre-school and Kindergarten
Lisa Olson — 1st and 2nd Grades
Brian Buhr — 3rd through 5th Grades

Jason Mercer — Middle School
Rick Northrup — High School

Summer Sunday School begins on June 3rd and ends August 26th. We are looking for teachers to help out while the regular Sunday School teachers have the summer off. Grades Kindergarten to 5th will be learning about God’s promises in H2Oh! God Keeps His Promises, while the middle and high schoolers will be doing a Bible study titled Gory Deaths. Please see Sunday School Superintendent Marjorie O’Rourke if you are interested in teaching this summer.
Same way
Continued from Pg. 5

He gathers us together in the place where his name dwells to feast on the first fruits of the resurrection, the risen and living body and blood of his Son, our Lord, Jesus. He reminds us that we are His, that all things are ours because we belong to Him. He blesses us here in time with physical and spiritual gifts.

In the same way, and in response to his fatherly divine goodness and mercy, we gladly give to those who proclaim to us “the excellencies of him who called us out of darkness and into his marvelous light.”

For once we were not a people, but now we are God’s people; once we had not received mercy, but now we have indeed (1 Peter 2:9-10).

And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding.

Jeremiah 3:15

Bible Quiz

While in Jerusalem for Pentecost, people from many faraway lands miraculously heard the disciples preaching in their own native languages. Which of the following modern-day places was/were represented?

A. Egypt  
B. Libya  
C. Crete  
D. Rome  
E. All of the above  
F. A, B and D

Answer: B (See Acts 2:9-11)

MAY BIRTHDAYS

May 1  
Shaimera Best  
Chelsey Gochis  
Julie Johnson  
Zachariah LaForge

May 2  
Dennis Brown  
William McIntosh IV

May 4  
Ermel Campbell  
Martha Janes  
Richard Morgan

May 5  
Mel Kuehne  
Lynn Wagner

May 6  
Marvin Dye  
Tom Mayer

May 7  
Marylin Smith

May 8  
Wylie Rucker

May 9  
Skyler McIntosh  
Derick Mohs

May 10  
Kelly Koenig

May 11  
Linda Fromm  
Zyrus Hartford  
Trenton Sobeck

May 12  
Lorraine Bauer  
Kelly Blackford

May 13  
Thea McCarthy  
Ellie Mercer  
Cheryl Sobeck

May 14  
Irv Blessinger

May 15  
Randy Sobeck

May 16  
Travis Hyyppa

May 17  
Thom Warsinski

May 18  
Jennifer Woehl

May 19  
Robert Fox  
Robert Janes

May 20  
Jeanette Talley

May 21  
Kolton Hyyppa

May 22  
Thelma Gossett

May 23  
Melissa Miner

May 24  
Todd Boucher  
Robert Fox  
Robert Janes

May 25  
Bruce Duenkler

May 26  
Jeanette Talley
Happenings at First Lutheran School

Ah, the last month of the school year is already here! It feels like this year just rushed by, yet, looking back, it is amazing to see how far each of our students has come, both academically and spiritually. Below are the events for the remainder of the school year:

⇒ The Spring Program will be on Thursday, May 10th, at 6:00 p.m. Our theme this year is "Spirit of America." You are invited to join us as we celebrate our great nation. Refreshments will be served following the program.

⇒ The annual Small School Track Meet is set for Friday, May 11th. Kindergarten through 5th grades will spend the day at Vigilante Stadium competing in track and field events with other small, private, and home schools.

⇒ The 3rd through 5th grades will once again put in an appearance at the Vigilante Parade on May 4th. We will be getting the word out about our great school by handing out water and coffee to parade attendees.

⇒ On May 17th, the entire school will participate in the Spirit Sprint. This is our last fundraiser of the school year, and is one YOU can be part of. You may remember the flowers last year attached to sponsorship envelopes. They were such a success that we will be doing them again this year. Flowers will be available for you to take beginning on April 29th. Please drop your completed sponsorship forms off in the school office mailbox.

⇒ Our LAST DAY OF SCHOOL is FRIDAY, June 1st. We will celebrate the conclusion of our year with an awards ceremony in the morning, with a BBQ lunch to follow.

THANK YOU, THANK YOU ... to everyone who came out to MacKenzie River Pizza on April 17th in support of our school!

Mrs. Smith’s Pre-K class: The entire preschool and pre-K classes visited the Sieben Ranch on April 23rd. We toured the grounds, held the bum lambs, and got a little muddy before heading back to school. Letters Q and U were officially “married” by Pastor Miller on April 9th. Thus concludes our study of all 26 letters of the alphabet! We will work on strengthening our reading skills with the time we have left in the year. May activities include hatching baby chicks and learning to tie our shoes. We will also finish up some math lessons on shapes, colors, patterns, and basic addition and subtraction skills. These kids are ready for Kindergarten!

Mrs. Hultin’s class: May is a busy month in Kindergarten. We will be starting our first grade reading curriculum, as well as finishing up a unit on recycling. In Math, we will be working on addition and subtraction skills. We get to go swimming at Capital City Health Club for the last time this year. The annual Small Schools Track Meet is a fun event that the students always enjoy.

Mrs. Kimmet’s 3- and 4-year-old class: Our preschoolers continue learning to recognize letters and letter sounds this month, and are up to the letter “s.”

The nicer weather will mean getting outside for some nature walks, and we’ll kick off a week of Earth Day learning with a recycling project, and with some seed planting. Preschoolers learned about the United States of America in March, and in May we will begin a week of learning all about Montana. We monitored hibernating bears waking up on the Glacier Park webcam, and coordinated our own hibernating bears waking up with the awakenings of bears in the Park!

In between working on projects and learning our letters, we are working on new songs for our spring program, and continue with our weekly yoga and Spanish lessons. The preschoolers love their yoga sessions, and now, instead of Mrs. Kimmet doing so, they are taking turns leading the yoga exercises.

The 3rd through 5th grades participated in a week-long ITBS test of basic skills. This rigorous test is given yearly and is a great indicator of where our kids place academically compared to kids in Helena, the state of Montana, and nationally.

The 1st through 5th grades also visited Son Heaven Assisted Living to partner with the residents there for a spring art project. This was a first for us, and both parties seemed to really enjoy the event.

Registration for the 2018-2019 school year continues. Packets are available in the school office.

We still have ACE scholarships available for the 2018-2019 school year. These scholarships cover 50% of tuition for grades Kindergarten through 6th.

Happy Mother’s Day to our moms!
FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH is a Congregation of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod

THE MISSION of First Lutheran Church is “Sharing God’s Word with Everyone, Everywhere!”

Tune in to “The Lutheran Hour”—Sundays at 8 a.m. on the Christian Satellite Network 91.1-FM
“Woman to Woman”—Sundays at 9:30 p.m. on KMTX 105.3-FM

MONTANA DISTRICT
RED LODGE CAMP

2018 CAMP DATES
High School Camp…June 17-22
Middle School (6th-8th Grades) Camp…June 24-29
Enroll in the camp that corresponds with the grade you will enter in the fall of 2018.

EARLY BIRD REGISTRATION (PRIOR TO MAY 26): $125
(After May 26, registration fee will increase to $150.)

For complete information and registration forms, go to:
www.mtdistlcms.org/district-committees/district-youth/