

Beautiful Savior February Newsletter

From the pen of the Pastor..... We use creeds in our worship service as a confession of our faith; a confession of what we believe, but have you ever given thought to what you are confessing? Over the next few months I hope to present to you some of the specifics we confess about our faith as we say one of the creeds together, whether it be the Apostle's, Nicene or Athanasian Creed.

Let's begin with the Apostle's Creed. We start out by saying, "**I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.**" Right away we are confessing that we believe in the triune God by proclaiming we believe in God, the Father, part of the trinity. There are many religions that would stop with, "I believe in God," and while that sounds good it would not be the same God we believe in, because it would be indicating a monotheistic God rather than a triune God. But what about the rest of this first sentence? We note that the God we believe in is almighty; having the power to do anything and everything that he wishes to do. We confess this important attribute of our God because we want to remind ourselves as we pray, that there is nothing in our lives that God cannot do for us if that is his will and plan for us.

Then we confess that God, the Father, is the creator of the heavens and the earth. What a rich statement of faith we make as we acknowledge that we believe the creation account in the first two chapters of Genesis. This statement of faith also rejects evolution. As we acknowledge creation we are confessing that the world's theory of evolution is wrong.

As the early church fathers recorded the Apostle's Creed they didn't know about the theory of evolution but they did know that there would be attacks on God and His Church. The Apostle's Creed helps us to remember the power and glory of our God and to state very clearly what we believe as a Christian and as a child of God. May we all take some time to reflect on this confession we make with these wonderful words. Next month we will look at the second part of the creeds which is the very heart of our faith as it explains the work of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

Worship Numbers and Figures. In case you are wondering, our average attendance at worship for January was 71 compared to 45 in January of 2016. We are thankful that some of the January storms came during the week so that more of us could gather around the Word on the weekends.

Our offerings for January were \$10,224 against a budget of \$10,770 (5 week month). May the Lord move us to be faithful and generous with the opportunities and blessings he has given us as we begin a new year!

New Bible Study Opportunities. In January we started two new Bible Studies. There is a Women's Bible Study that is looking at the Book of Matthew. It meets the third Monday of the month at 9:00 am. The Men's Bible Study meets on the third Tuesday of the month at 7:00 pm and is studying 1st Corinthians. We also have the Sunday Morning Bible Study. Consider attending one of these opportunities to gather around God's Word.

Women's Society. All the women of the congregation are invited to be a member of this group. The different duties and activities of this group are included in the Annual Report. There is a monthly meeting on the third Thursday of the month and we open our meeting with a Bible Study. We are currently looking at the book of Ruth. If you have questions, talk to Pastor or to Karen Heins.

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Voters' Meeting Recap. The annual voters' meeting took place on Sunday, January 22nd. The new budget of \$112,000 was approved. This included a 10% increase of our offerings to Synod Missions. A \$10,000 bequest was received from the estate of Georgia Larkin. The voters decided to use not more than \$2600 to upgrade the projector in church and also to purchase a new screen to be used in the fellowship hall. The newer projector should provide a clearer and crisper picture making the screen easier to read. The old projector will be used in the fellowship hall. The balance of the bequest will be put into a savings type account so as to be available for future use. It was also reported at the meeting that 2016 was a good year with increased attendance at worship services and sufficient offerings to meet our needs even with the furnace replacement project and the street assessment. A motion was made and passed to accept a member gift of a handrail to be installed from the parking lot to the church door. The next voters meeting will be on April 23 because Easter falls on April 16th this year.

Choir Practice. The choir will meet after the soup cook off on Sunday, 2/12 to practice for Lent and to discuss when to practice and which Wed service to sing at. Please plan on attending this practice as we get ready for Lent and Easter.

Soup Cook Off. On Sunday, 2/12, we will have a soup competition at church at 5:00 PM. If you want to compete, bring your favorite soup or chili. They will be put out and numbered so you don't know who made what and then everyone gets to vote for their favorite. **Everyone is invited** to join in even if you don't bring any soup – there is always plenty to go around. Rachel Uthke was last year's winner. Come and join in the fun and fellowship!