

Spirit of the Redeemer

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF REDEEMER LUTHERAN CHURCH, NASHVILLE, TENN.

October 2024

Being Generous

When people are asked how they would like to be remembered, many will state that they want to be known as generous. To be generous is to be considered good. Generosity is seen as a societal benefit, a virtue that contributes to the humane treatment of others. The super wealthy who are generous benefactors get their names on children's hospitals and their portraits hung in the lobbies. Others get their names on bricks in the patio and are called supporters, builders, or visionaries depending on the size of the check.

Hospitals are needed and donors are needed, but why exactly are people generous? Pride may be the answer for some, to show how important they are, or that they are essential to the community, to be remembered more easily, or to leave a legacy. Guilt may be another answer, because they feel guilty for the wealth they have and want to assuage the accusations of their conscience. Pressure or leverage or justice or tradition may work into the equation. Or, they have been taught that it is simply the right thing to do.

Psychological reasons are also offered. Giving makes people feel like they are making a difference. It gives a modicum of control over the chaos and injustice in the world. It gives a more positive outlook. There are even claims of better health through generosity, a somatization of a kind act. According to one website, "Giving our time and money to others gives us an emotional boost. It triggers feel-good chemicals like endorphins, dopamine, and oxytocin. Generosity can even help extend our lives"

<https://www.healthyhabithacking.com/post/generosity-15-ways-to-be-more-generous-practice-selflessness-and-give-back>).

There are also the false claims of the false religions: that being generous earns you good karma, or it makes up for your sins, basically, works righteousness. In these systems, you must be generous to receive a spiritual benefit for yourself.

Most pitiful are those who may want to be generous but they just can't because they are imprisoned by their greed. They don't believe in daily bread. And so they have to hoard what they have and add to the pile of treasure upon which they depend. Think of the Old Testament Israelites on the first day that God showered manna upon them, and they disobeyed (Ex. 16:19-20). Also remember Jesus' Parable of the Rich Fool. He wanted to build bigger barns for his good and take life easy (Lk. 12:13-21).

Luther warns of greed in the Large Catechism, and he says that it clings to us all:

There are some who think that they have God and everything they need when they have money and property; they trust in them and boast in them so stubbornly and securely that they care for no one else. They, too, have a god – mammon by name, that is, money and property – on which they set their whole heart. This is the most common idol on earth. . . . This desire for wealth clings and sticks to our nature all the way to the grave (LC I:5-9).

The reason for generosity is that it reflects the heart of God. Generosity is his will, and it is in his nature. The Lord commands generosity, and it is his wisdom as well. Through Moses the Israelites are told,

If among you, one of your brothers should become poor, in any of your towns within your land that the Lord your God is giving you, you shall not harden your heart or shut your hand against your poor brother, but you shall open your hand to him and lend him sufficient for his need, whatever it may be. . . . You shall give to him freely, and your heart shall not be grudging when you give to him, because for this the Lord your God will bless you in all your work and in all that you undertake (Deut. 15:7-8, 10).

In Proverbs it says, “Whoever is generous to the poor lends to the Lord, and he will repay him for his deed” (Pr. 19:17). In Psalms we read, “The wicked borrows but does not pay back, but the righteous is generous and gives” (Ps. 37:21), and, “It is well with the man who deals generously and lends; who conducts his affairs with justice” (Ps. 112:5).

Notice that the Lord promises that things go better for the generous and they live lives of blessing. The same is said in the New Testament, though the reason for being generous is not primarily to gain more blessings.

The Apostle Paul instructs in Romans about the use of one’s gifts, “If prophecy, in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness” (Rom. 12:8). Paul says about the relief money going to the famine victims in Judea, “The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver” (2 Cor. 9:6-7). Paul goes on, “You will be enriched in every way to be generous in every way, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God” (2 Cor. 9:11). In 1 Timothy, Paul gives instruction for the rich: “They are to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, thus storing up treasure for themselves as a good foundation for the future, so that they take hold of that which is truly life” (1 Tim. 6:18-19). Jesus even says at the end of the Parable of the Dishonest Manager, “And I tell you, make friends for yourselves by means of unrighteous wealth, so that when it fails they may receive you into the eternal dwellings” (Lk. 16:9). Thus, generosity, or the lack of it, has spiritual and eternal consequences. It is to be offered freely as the fruit of faith, not as an onerous requirement for salvation. Remember, “Whatever does not proceed from faith is sin” (Rom. 14:23).

General Thanksgiving to God

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, we, Your unworthy servants, give You humble and hearty thanks for all the goodness and loving-kindness that You bestow on us. We praise You for our creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life. But above all, we bless You for Your boundless love in the redemption of the world by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory. We implore You to give us a right understanding of all Your mercies that our hearts may ever be deeply thankful and that we may show forth Your praise with both our lips and our lives. Direct our lives in ways of holiness and righteousness all our days that we may enjoy the testimony of a good conscience and the hope of Your favor, be sustained and comforted in every time of trouble, and finally be received into Your everlasting kingdom; through Christ Jesus, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Lutheran Service Book: Altar Book p.437

When it comes to the use of our resources, it must be understood that God is the owner and we are simply stewards who will give an account. In receiving the freewill offerings for the construction of the Temple, King David proclaimed, “But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able thus to offer willingly? For all things come from you, and of your own have we given you” (1 Chron. 29:14). In the Psalms we are told, “The earth is the Lord’s and the fulness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein” (Ps. 24:1). The Lord declares, “For every beast of the forest is mine, the cattle on a thousand hills” (Ps. 50:10). Through the Prophet Haggai we hear, “The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, declares the Lord of hosts” (Haggai 2:8). It is all the Lord’s!

The bottom line is that we are to be generous because God is generous. According to our sinful nature we are misers and skinflints, serving only self. But our God has showered upon us grace upon grace that we may know his love for us and receive the gifts of forgiveness, life, and salvation through Christ. Our Lord is never tightfisted with us. He gives in the greatest measure. “My cup overflows!” (Ps. 23:5). Recall the feeding of the five thousand and the four thousand! (Matt. 14:13-21; 15:32-39). Jesus gave such an abundance that there were baskets of pieces leftover. In fact, Jesus himself upon the cross is our provision from heaven and the abundant goodness of God for us! The Spirit also is the abundant gift unto us! In his letter to Titus, Paul writes,

But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by this grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life (Titus 3:4-7).

Our generosity, then, is a response to the grace received, and by the working of the Holy Spirit who has brought us to faith and life in Christ with new hearts!

Therefore, being generous is a matter of growing in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (2 Pet. 3:18). To remain immature with stunted growth would be a shame. To not graduate from a taker to a giver would be tragedy. It would result in rejecting the good works prepared for believers (Eph. 2:10). This does not mean one has to have great wealth to be generous. By no means! Consider the widow with her mites! (Lk. 21:1-4).

When you die, I would say that you do want to be remembered for being generous. “It is well with the man who deals generously and lends; who conducts his affairs with justice. For the righteous will never be moved; he will be remembered forever” (Ps. 112:5-6). It is good to be remembered as generous, especially in being generous with the Word of God, the very bread of life. You want to be remembered as one who was generous in Christ, who supported the preaching of the Church and the giving of the Gospel generously, without measure! What a poor life to die just with bigger barns, or with giving out of your excess only! What a blessing to know you are well supplied by your Lord and Savior in all circumstances, and everything you have is for his work! What a legacy! To be used by God as steward! To give knowing you are forgiven by the blood of the Savior!

Our Lord Jesus said to his disciples, “Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away” (Matt. 24:35). Therefore, continue to give generously in accordance with his words of eternal life (Jn. 6:68). Give not to have your name on a building or a brick. Give because your names are already written in heaven (Lk. 10:20) by our Lord’s generosity alone.

– *Pastor Young*

Ongoing Prayer Needs

*Please update Pastor and the church office
on these needs.*

Birthdays, Baptismal Birthdays, & Wedding Anniversaries

Birthdays

Baptismal Birthdays

Wedding Anniversaries

On Entering a Church

Lord, I love the habitation of Your house and the place where Your glory dwells. In the multitude of Your tender mercies prepare my heart that I may enter Your house to worship and confess Your holy name; through Jesus Christ, my God and Lord. Amen.

Lutheran Service Book (inside front cover)

Find our newsletters online at:
<http://redeemernashville.org/newsletter/>

Consecration Sunday

October 20

The focus of Consecration Sunday is the biblical teaching of the need of the giver to give, rather than on the need of the Church to receive. Continually receiving forgiveness of sins in Jesus Christ, as well as daily bread, the Christian turns to offer thanksgiving to God for all things.

2023 LCMS Synodical Convention

To Confess Authority God Gave to Fathers and Mothers

RESOLUTION 12-02A

Overtures 12-12–13 (CW, 431–33)

Preamble

Governmental, legal, and related institutional overreach has created severe challenges to divinely instituted parental authority. The following illustrations, sometimes more narrowly and sometimes more broadly, encroach upon God’s command to fathers and mothers:

- Children, without parental consent, are being permitted, encouraged, or otherwise coerced by some governments or governmental institutions to receive medical care or procedures (e.g., inoculations, COVID-19 injections, HPV vaccines, hormonal contraceptives, abortion, “gender-reassignment” treatments), even when their parents object. As an example, S.B. 5599, recently signed into law in Washington state, allows minors seeking abortion or “gender-reassignment treatments” to remain in licensed youth shelters without parental notification.
- Children in an increasing number of some government-sponsored schools are subject to evil indoctrination in divinely instituted marital issues of sexual morality and sexual identity (“sex education”; LGBTQ+ desensitization, tolerance, and promotion; transgender training and promotion; etc.), contrary to their parents’ beliefs and intentions for their children.
- Children in some government-sponsored schools are being permitted, encouraged, or otherwise coerced into adopting unwanted or evil social practices, contrary to the will and authority of parents.
- Children are increasingly indoctrinated in anti-Christian history and science contrary to the traditional norms of rigorous historical and scientific investigation, and contrary to the will and authority of their parents.

- Children in some government-sponsored schools are being subjected to the deconstruction of divinely mandated and given institutions (marriage and family, the Christian Church, government with its natural powers and limitations, natural and revealed law and justice, etc.) by the assumption of an anti-Christian worldview, by the corruption of sound and truthful language, and by the conspicuous absence of sound teaching in these matters, contrary to Scripture and the authority of parents regarding their children’s education.

WHEREAS, It is increasingly clear that educational authorities behave in ways which lead children to question the authority and competence of their parents and to reject other authority figures including grandparents and religious leaders in their life; and

WHEREAS, In the Fourth Commandment, “You shall honor your father and your mother that it may be well with you and you may live long upon the earth” (Large Catechism [LC] I [Fourth Commandment] 104, 371), God established marriage and provides moral and legal authority to husband and wife regarding their children; and

WHEREAS, We confess in the Large Catechism that “all who are called masters stand in the place of parents and must get their power and authority to govern from them ...” (LC I [Fourth Commandment] 142 [Kolb & Wengert], 406); and

WHEREAS, In the Sixth Commandment, “You shall not commit adultery,” God defends the institution of marriage and provides moral and legal protection to the lifelong integrity and well-being of marriage, thereby also protecting children born to marriage; and

WHEREAS, We affirm and confess these truths in Large Catechism I (Sixth Commandment) 206–8:

First, understand and mark well how gloriously God honors and praises this estate [marriage]. For by His commandment He both approves and guards it. He has approved it above in the Fourth Commandment, “Honor your father and your mother.” But here He has (as we said) hedged it

about and protected it. Therefore, He also wishes us to honor it and to maintain and govern it as a divine and blessed estate because, in the first place, He has instituted it before all others. He created man and woman separately [differently], as is clear. This was not for lewdness, but so that bear children, and nourish and train them to honor God.

Therefore, God has also most richly blessed this estate above all others. In addition, He has bestowed on it and wrapped up in it everything in the world, so that this estate might be well and richly provided for. Married life, therefore, is no joke or presumption. It is an excellent thing and a matter of divine seriousness. For marriage has the highest importance to God so that people are raised up who may serve the world and promote the knowledge of God, godly living, and all virtues, to fight against wickedness and the devil (*Concordia: The Lutheran Confessions, A Reader's Edition of the Book of Concord*, 382);

and

WHEREAS, God has given the direct and full authority for the education of children to their parents, with the command to fathers to bring up their own children “in the education and instruction of the Lord” (Eph. 6:4). In accordance with the truth that Christian doctrine and faith encompasses the whole person (body and soul), this scripture teaches that God has invested parents with His authority and command to educate their own children, including their spiritual, emotional, mental, and physical care and training; and

WHEREAS, Accordingly, fathers and mothers are to give and see to the education of their children in Christian doctrine and holy living. They are to be their teachers in all matters of marriage and marital intimacy. They are to provide all care and support of their children’s bodies, including such matters as food, clothing, health, etiquette, exercise, grooming, and the like. They are to educate their children for service in their own marriage, family, and workplace; in their church; and in their neighborhood or civil community. They may designate some other persons to assist them

and act in their stead in all these matters (*in loco parentis*) without relinquishing this divine authority (cf. LC I [Fourth Commandment] 141); and

WHEREAS, The Holy Spirit teaches Christians in 1 Timothy 5:8 that “... if anyone does not provide for his own people and especially those of his own household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.” Here God authorizes and obligates the members of a household (family) to make provision for the care of its own members; therefore be it

Resolved, That we confess that fathers and mothers are not mere caregivers to their children. Rather, God has appointed them to feed, clothe, house, educate, give medical care, and above all, provide the spiritual service to their children’s body and soul, mind and spirit; and be it further

Resolved, That we affirm and defend the rights and duties of fathers and mothers toward their children as divinely commanded and given (Titus 2:1–8), and therefore not severable except in the case of the abdication of their office; and be it further

Resolved, That we reject every assertion and practice of civil government—federal, state, and local—that assumes or implies right or authority over children as children, that is, as though children were wards of government. Rejected here are assertions of governmental authority which are expressly contrary to the Word of God in the realms of education, medical care, physical care, the doctrinal and spiritual training of children, and the so-called sexual or gender identity of children; and be it further

Resolved, That we affirm the divine duty of the church to teach, encourage, strengthen, and assist fathers and mothers in doing their divinely appointed duties toward their children. We likewise recognize that no church or Christian school has rights or authority over children except what is granted by baptism, membership in that church, or enrollment in said school; and be it further

Resolved, That we confess and teach that fathers and mothers are obligated by God to bring their children to the Church for Baptism and the divine services of the

church. They are to teach their children God's Word in their home, lead them in prayer, and teach and discipline them in Christian piety and virtue, in accordance with the Holy Scriptures; and be it finally

Resolved, That we teach and maintain the discipline that a man and woman are to marry each other before sexual intimacy and the conceiving of children, and that they are to remain married and faithful to each other till death parts them, in accordance with God's holy will. Parents are, by God's grace, to live in daily

contrition, repentance, and the forgiveness of sins, always teaching and holding before their children the divine institution and pattern of marriage and household as God gave it.

Action: Adopted (5)

Upon immediate closure of debate, as suggested by the chair, and with a subsequent attempt to refer ruled out of order, the resolution was adopted by voice vote.

A Note from seminarian Brian Frank

Dear Saints of Redeemer Lutheran Church,

. When Matt Young told me he would put my name forward to be supported by your congregation, I was honored and humbled. Then, when you approved his suggestion to support my family, I was even more honored and even more humbled. Thank you very much for your generosity and prayers as I partake in the pastoral formation process at CTSFW.

Over the summer, I have been serving as the chapel sacristan at the seminary, seeing friends and family, and preparing for the upcoming year. I'll have my hands full, to say the least. My wife, Amy, is pregnant and expected to deliver our first child at the end of December. I'm in second year, so I will be

preparing and interviewing for vicarage. I will also be the life team coordinator this year. Our first event will be a 5K that benefits a Hope Center, a pro-life pregnancy and childcare resource center. (It happens to be the same day CSL and CTSFW will be facing off in a soccer game, so I hope to get some extra participation from them!!) With classes and a part-time job, I expect to be very busy, but I am excited to see how the Lord guides me and my family through it.

Thanks again for your support, and please keep us in your prayers!

Blessings in Christ,
Brian Frank



Proclaiming the Praises of Christ in Prague



July 2024



Celebrating God’s Mission - Sending Service -

One blessing that comes with life on the mission field is working together with your brothers and sisters in Christ. In the eastern part of the Czech Republic, Ben and Becca Helge and Chelsea Irwin labor amongst the locals to bring the Gospel of Christ to them. In the summer months, they lead English-language Bible camps, giving the youth of the region a chance to immerse themselves not only in the English language but also in the Scriptures. In order to do this work, they reach out to Lutherans back in the U.S. to come and volunteer to teach

and serve these students. There are several days of training that end with a special sending service. Dale has been honored these last two years to lead that service. It gives us a chance to work side by side with our co-workers. But it also gives us a chance to serve these volunteers. This service is a reminder that the work we do for Christ is a Spirit-driven work. Without Him, we could do no good thing. But through His gifts, the Church is called, gathered, enlightened, and sanctified in the one true faith. We thank God for our co-laborers. And we thank God for these volunteers. May their labors bring forth the fruit of faith.

Meeting Up with Supporters on the Field

The Czech Republic is a popular destination. People come here for vacations, work, or volunteering. Some of those who come are our supporters or are from our supporting congregations. It is always a delight for us when we get to meet and connect with these people. In May, we met up with Lou and Janetann and their sons. And this summer, we met up with Fred. His congregation, Redeemer in Nashville, supports us. We also met Joe and Jenny. Their congregation, St. John, supports us as well. And there was Matt, one of our supporters whom we first met last year at the sending service in Silesia. We look forward to whoever else comes our way. Who knows, it may be one of you! So when you come, join us for worship and give us a chance to thank you.





Blessing Martin and Shirley's New Home

Martin, the Czech pastor with whom Dale works, and his wife, Shirley, were able to move into a new home for them. It is the property of our former regional director, Rev. Jim Krikava. This will give them so much more space. As is our custom in America, so it is here that a housewarming party is thrown. At this party, Dale was privileged to lead the rite of blessing of a new home. We ask for God to send His holy angels to protect and guard them from all evil. Just like our congregation, so here too, we had members and friends from many nations: U.S., France, Madagascar, Malawi, Northern Ireland, Pakistan, Indonesia, and Czech Republic.

U.S. Independence Day in Prague

Being away from home during the big national holidays is sometimes off-putting. We know it's a holiday and we may even take the day off. But everybody else seems to be oblivious here and is busy at work. This year, we gathered up our American friends and indulged in some good ol' American barbeque. Believe it or not, there actually is a restaurant here in Prague that serves it. It makes the distance seem much smaller.



Ladies' Gathering

The ladies of our congregation have very faithfully committed themselves to gathering monthly. At this gathering, there is a devotion, the singing of hymns, fellowship, and some sort of refreshment. It gives them the opportunity to share each other's burdens as well as joys. It also gives them a chance to share tips for living as expats in Prague. We thank God that the women of our congregation are so devoted to Him and caring for one another.

Home Service Spring of 2025



Our email addresses are
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Suzanne.Kaster@lcmsintl.org

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160 00 Praha 6
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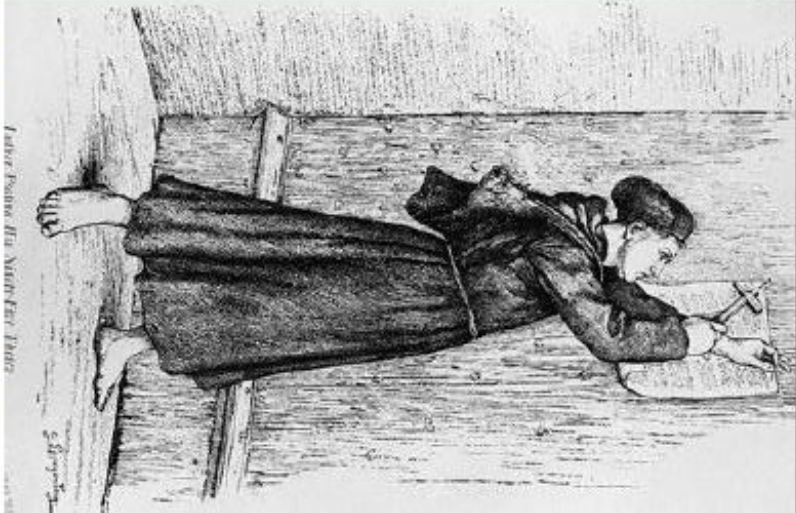
The church address in Prague:
St. Michael's Lutheran Church
V Jirchářích 14/152
110 00 Praha 1
Czech Republic

Part of our work requires us to go home every two to three years in order to reconnect with supporters and to seek new ones. Originally, we had planned to come home this fall; however, that did not work out for us. So, we are beginning to plan our home service for the spring of 2025, following Easter. We are still in the very beginning stages of our planning. If your congregation would be interested in a visit with a presentation and/or sermon, please reach out to us to let us know. We will make sure to include you in our schedule.

We ask for your prayers for our work. Please also pray for our annual regional meeting that gathers next week in Spain. We will report on it next month. God be with you all, Rev. Dale and Suzanne Kaster

To support the LCMS through the work of the Kastors, you may send a tax-deductible gift to:

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod **OR** Mission Central
 P.O. Box 66861 40718 Hwy E16
 St. Louis, MO 63166-6861 Mapleton, IA 51034
 Make checks payable to The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod or LCMS. Include "Kaster – Czech Republic," in the memo line. Gifts can also be given securely online through the LCMS website at www.lcms.org/kaster.



“...if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.”

John 8:36

Reformation Sunday

October 27, 2024
at 9:30 a.m.

You're Invited!

“Our churches teach that people cannot be justified before God by their own strength, merits, or works. People are freely justified for Christ's sake, through faith, when they believe that they are received into favor and that their sins are forgiven for Christ's sake. By His death, Christ made satisfaction for our sins. God counts this faith for righteousness in His sight (Romans 3 & 4 [3:21-26; 4:5]).”

*Augsburg Confession
Article IV: Justification*



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October 2024						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4 6:30 LWML	5 8:30 am Church Work Day (outdoor priority)
6 Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost LWML Sunday 9:30 am Divine Service Door Offering Sunday School & Adult Bible Study Choir	7 6:30 pm AA	8	9 9:45 am Matins 10 am Bible Study 5 pm Confirmation	10	11	12
13 Twenty-first Sunday after Pentecost 9:30 am Divine Service Sunday School & Adult Bible Study Choir	14 6:30 pm AA	15	16 9:45 am Matins 10 am Bible Study 5 pm Confirmation	17	18	19 8:30 am Men's Breakfast
20 Twenty-second Sunday after Pentecost Consecration Sunday 9:30 am Divine Service Sunday School & Adult Bible Study Consecration Day Luncheon Choir	21 6:30 pm AA	22 6:30 Council - Budget	23 9:45 am Matins 10 am Bible Study 5 pm Confirmation	24	25	26
27 Reformation Day (observed) 9:30 am Divine Service Sunday School & Adult Bible Study LWML Mite Collection Reformation Day Pot-luck Choir	28 6:30 pm AA	29	30 9:45 am Matins 10 am Bible Study 5 pm Confirmation	31		

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