



Peace Lutheran Church

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God Identifying

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There has been a lot of talk and controversy lately over one's identity and the ability for someone to choose an identity for themselves (that is, to "self identify"). Choosing one's gender, for example, is seen by many an inalienable right which must be accepted and respected. If a person is physically a man but "self-identifies" as a woman, many in our culture would say that person should be seen as a woman, referred to as a woman, and treated as a woman.

Besides contradicting anatomy and natural law, this is also a violation of the expressed will of God. God creates identity and gives it to us. We don't choose it. This is true in the case of gender. God creates it. The Word of God says, "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them." (Genesis 1:27) We are who God created us to be, despite how we feel or how we identify ourselves. If we have a problem with our identity, the problem rests with us and not with God.

The same is true with our spiritual identities. Regardless of how we feel about the cultural debate over "self-identification" – whether we are for it or against it - we are, by nature, in favor of spiritual self-identifying. We "self-identify" as pretty good people. We've tried to do our best. We've tried to avoid any major sins like robbery or murder. We feel pretty good about ourselves and society teaches us that we *should* feel pretty good about ourselves. We expect God's love and blessing as if we have it coming to us because of how good we are.

However, we should be careful about such self-identification. Why? The Word of God warns us, "If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us." (1 John 1:9) Despite how good we might think or feel about ourselves, if we deny our sinfulness, we make God a liar. Why? God has identified us as sinners. His Word declares, "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." If we claim that doesn't include us, we are calling God a liar and are denying His Word.

The Good News is that we don't *have* to worry about denying reality and self-identifying as something other than what we are – poor, miserable sinners. Jesus came into this world to give us a new identity. In His Baptism, Jesus self-identified as one of us. He not only became human but He became sin so that we who are sinful might become saints (holy people). The Word of God says, "God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God." (2 Corinthians 5:21)

In our baptism, God identifies us with Jesus. We are joined to Him and what He has becomes ours. The Word of God says, "All of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death. We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life." (Romans 6:2-4) Jesus' death and burial becomes our death and burial. Our sin is dead and buried in God's eyes. Jesus' resurrection becomes our resurrection to new life. We are new and holy people.

Now God identifies us as something totally different. St. John writes, "See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are." (1 John 3:1) It doesn't matter how we feel or think about ourselves. Our identity is secure. We are the children of God because that's who God has identified us as. We have His love, His forgiveness, His care, and His blessing. As His children, we shall inherit His eternal kingdom.

Isn't "God identifying" you better than any "self-identifying" you could do?

In Christ Jesus,

Pastor Steven R. Schlund

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All those who participate and help with the worship service at Highgate House on the first Sunday of each month.

All of the people who have offered to serve the Lord as officers for Peace Lutheran Church.

Everyone who donated items for the rummage sale sponsored by the members of Christ for the Deaf.
Gloria Creek and Val Martin for playing the organ during our worship services.

All those who volunteer to teach Sunday school, Bible class, and midweek classes on Sundays and Wednesdays.

Idell Croskrey for changing the banners and paraments.

Everyone on the Prayer Chain for their time and prayers.

Everyone who has donated treats for our fellowship time.

All of the men who volunteer to usher.

Angelika Fisher for cleaning the church.

All of the people who stay after and clean the kitchen after Bible study.

Cheri Magnuson for cleaning the Communion linens.

This list is not inclusive. Please accept our apologies if we have missed giving you credit for serving the Lord in any fashion. We know that the Lord knows your service to Him.

LWML

- ♥ **During the month of June we will be collecting items to be given to Helping Hands down at First English Lutheran Church.** Their wish list includes **toothbrushes, tooth paste, bath soap, lotion, toilet paper, liquid dish soap, disposable razors, peanut butter, and cans of tuna fish.**

Please bring any of these items and we will be sure they are taken to Helping Hands at the end of June. Thank you, **Val and Loretta**, for organizing this project.

- ♥ **Our next meeting will be Tuesday, July 12 at 6:00 p.m. It was decided to have a potluck salad meal at 6 p.m. followed by the planning meeting at 6:30 p.m.** All ladies of Peace are invited and encouraged to come and participate in the planning of the coming year's activities and servant event projects. Many new and exciting ideas will be talked about and planned!
- ♥ **Remember to bring your new soap for Soap Sunday on the second Sunday of each month.** Soap collected will go to Lutheran World Relief. Thanks for your continued support.

VBS dates set

Vacation Bible School will be on June 20th – 24th from 8:30 to 12:30 p.m., with lunch provided. The theme is *Barnyard Roundup*. There will be worship, Bible Study, crafts, games, and much more. Call the church office at 761-7343 to sign up today!

Community Celebration



On **June 12th** in the open lot next to the east parking lot of Peace Lutheran Church a *Community Celebration* will begin at 12:30 PM. A 20 X 40 tent will be the site of great food, fellowship and games for all. For the young there will be a jumper set and for the rest a 35 foot obstacle course and more. Peace members are asked to bring a salad or dessert to share. Hamburgers, hot dogs, chips, beverages and condiments are provided. Did you know that 6 of 10 people in a survey said they would go to church with a friend or acquaintance if asked. Did you know that over 70% of people who became believers did so as a result of an action of a person they knew? **Bring a guest(s) with you and invite them to our services and Sunday School/Bible Study.**

Ladies Bible study schedule

ASSISTED LIVING MINISTRY with hymn singing and a devotion continues throughout the summer, meeting at the following locations in June. On Tuesday, June 14th join them at 11 a.m. at Bee Hive Home #2, 2816 15th Ave. So. Friday, June 24th at 11:45 a.m. ladies and gentlemen will gather for a no host lunch at The Prime Cut, 3219 10th Ave So. After lunch many will go to Highgate House, 3000 11th Ave. So. Take a break from summer gardening and lift the spirits of these residence (and yours!) singing the familiar "oldies, but goodies" hymns! God blesses it all!



June Anniversaries

June 9 Paul and Janet Rubino
 June 12 William and Ruth Rozokat
 June 14 Tom and Connie Croskrey
 June 16 Gerald and Jill Keil
 June 17 Andrew and Kelsey Schlund

Baptismal Anniversaries

June 7 Cheri Hirst
 11 Jennifer Lewis
 12 Linda Aguiar
 14 Angela Fletcher
 16 Alicia Fletcher
 16 Kris Smelser
 16 Bernie Schaaf
 18 Phyllis Schaaf
 23 Meagan Croskrey
 24 Dawn Grove
 27 Marge Johnsten
 28 Becky Schlund



INCLUDE THESE PEOPLE IN YOUR PRAYERS:

The following people are experiencing health problems:

Tami Birkholz, John's sister-in-law who is battling a rare skin tissue disorder

Jane Hering

Connie Juden

Bill Lowden, recovering from a stroke

Bill and Dorothy Neuman

We pray for the family of **John Birkholz** who died on May 10.

Our members who are away serving in the military are **Kurt Mueller and Michael Lewis**.

Ushers for June

June 5 ----- Matt Schlund
 ----- Jeff Blomgren
 June 12----- Arnie Gidlow
 ----- Pat Lewis
 June 19----- Darrell Greenwood
 ----- Bruce Clark
 June 26----- Tyler Denning
 ----- Ed Ostlund

JANUARY 1 - APRIL 30, 2016		
CHURCH INCOME	YTD ACTUAL	YTD BUDGET
Regular Offerings	\$45,351.45	\$46,773.32
Other Income	\$900.00	\$ 60.00
Total Income	\$46,251.45	\$ 46,833.32
Church Expenses		
Personnel/Benefits	\$28,045.77	\$27,578.28
Administrative	\$ 2,887.92	\$2,790.00
Buildings & Grounds	\$ 8,674.12	\$ 8,266.72
Missions	\$ 3,970.78	\$3,833.32
Christian Education	\$ 1,804.16	\$1,666.68
Total Expenses	\$45,382.75	\$ 44,135.00
Net Church Income	\$ 868.70	\$ 2,698.32



Peace Camp 2016

It is the Peace's members' turn to host camp this year! Dates have been set for **August 18 through 21, 2016** at Trinity

Lutheran Camp in Bigfork, Montana. The cost for the camp is still to be determined. Registration forms are in the church office. Plan now to come and join the fun!!

Help needed

There are many flower plots around the church building that are in need of weeding and tender loving care. Even if you don't have a green thumb, please feel free to come by whenever your schedule allows and spend some time clearing away debris and pulling a few weeds. We hear many compliments from our neighbors and the people walking in the area each year. Let's continue to beautify this neighborhood by taking care of our property keeping it looking loved!!

Applying Biblical Teachings

“A tithe of everything from the land, whether grain from the soil or fruit from the trees, belongs to the Lord; it is holy to the Lord” (Leviticus 27:30).

Tithing and good stewardship seem to be two words that usually go hand in hand. Many churches consistently coerce, compel and pressure their members to tithe. At one time or another, all of us have probably been told that tithing is the proper thing to do. Martin Luther wrote, “Since compulsion is abolished in the New Testament, it is not necessary to tithe. Yet, I say that this sort of arrangement would still be a fine one if we agreed among ourselves to observe it.” In these words, Luther reflects what the Apostle Paul had written in his letter to the Galatians: “. . . know that a man is not justified by observing the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by observing the law, because by observing the law no one will be justified” (Gal. 2:16).

The foundation of Christian stewardship cannot have even a grain of sand in it that is formed from the Law. To include any facet of the Law within this foundation would be to dilute the Gospel. One is bound to God, not by obeying the Law, but by faith in Jesus Christ, which is a gift from God.

When active legalism, such as requiring tithing, enters into the stewardship message, it is man’s voice and thoughts that are heard and not God’s Word. When a message contains, “You must . . .” or “You ought to . . .” it is giving forth words of Law and moral obligation. These appeals are to the sinful human nature. They play on guilt and on emotions; they appeal to a false sense of duty and to pride. To respond to appeals which have the Law as their basis is not pleasing in God’s sight, for these appeals have become detached from the message of the Gospel.

Ask yourself, “What is truly gained by confronting a Christian congregation with a stewardship message that is no more than a set of rules, tithing and laws?” The answer must be, “Nothing!” To do this is to deny Christian liberty and thus dilute or distract from the Gospel. To dilute or distract from the Gospel removes Christ as the center for our giving, thus obstructing God’s true stimulation for giving.

“By the power of the Gospel you will want to . . .” are words of a stewardship message of Christian liberty based in God’s grace, love and freedom. These are words of a response showing gratitude for what Christ has done for us through His life, suffering, death and resurrection. Gratitude and thankfulness are not the motivation for giving, but they are the response to the Gospel.

Hymnist Matthias Loy wrote, “The Law of God is good and wise and sets His will before our eyes.” By the power of the Gospel, in true Christian liberty, we agree that tithing is good and wise. But by this same power, we go well beyond this as the Apostle Paul writes to the Ephesians: “Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God” (Eph. 5:1-2). In response to God’s love for us, as imitators of Him, we let love and faith set the percentage.