



The Messenger

St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church

FROM YOUR PASTOR...

In August you may recall you heard the first of Jesus seven "I am." statements. Here we explore the other six. Before I give them to you though. Test yourself and write down as many as you can remember without looking them up and see how well you do.

In all seven occurrences the "I am" is a verb in the present form, in the first-person singular form and indicative mood. The indicative mood is a grammatical mood that represents the denoted or state as an objective fact. That makes each one of seven "I am" statements actual facts.

Recently, I shared with you that I was starting a clinical chaplaincy program for the purpose of helping to sustain the longevity of ministry here at St. John's. The clinical chaplaincy program proclaims multiple truths and limits the ability of chaplains to preach Christ crucified. It restricted me from proclaiming that "Jesus is the way the truth and the life." Therefore, I have resigned from the program as it is in direct conflict with my personal, and professional beliefs. It's also in direct conflict with the vows I took as a Lutheran Pastor, more specifically your Pastor. I will not knowingly or willingly compromise those vows or that faith. These facts were not made clear at the time of the interview. They became clear during the second week of class, at which point I resigned from the program.

Here are the seven I am statements.

John 6:35	I am the Bread of Life.
John 8:12	I am the Light of the world.
John 9:5	I am the Light of the world.
John 10:7	I am the Gate.
John 10:9	I am the Gate.
John 10:11	I am the Good Shepherd
John 10:14	I am the Good Shepherd
John 11:25	I am the Resurrection and the Life.
John 14:6	I am the Way, the Truth and

the Life.

John 15:1 I am the True Vine.

John 15:5 I am the Vine.

Cling to these facts and let them be your guide as you navigate the plurality of our society. Hold on to these facts and your faith that Jesus is THE ONLY WAY, THE ONLY TRUTH, AND THE ONLY AND THE ONLY LIFE. NO ONE Comes to the Father except through JESUS!! Amen.

Also if you were here the Last Sunday of August you witnessed that truth come to light in the lives of a young father and his young son who have not been raised in the church or the faith. The devil lost two more souls and the kingdom of heaven has gained two more children who received their salvation through the baptismal waters and the gift of faith. This stuff still matters. Look at those seven I am statements again. Those statements have become real and meaningful to a troubled young father and his son who now know the peace and love of Christ that they never had before.

We resume our Sunday School program the week after Labor Day.

In Christ's service to you his beloved Children,

Pastor Joe

OFFICE HOURS

Monday-Off

Tuesday-8:30-5:00

Wednesday-8:30-5:00

Thursday-8:30-5:00

Friday-By Appointment

Saturday-9:00-3:00

Sunday-8:00-12:00

Pastor will be available for emergencies

ORPHAN GRAIN TRAIN

As part of my responsibilities as Orphan Grain Train Disaster Coordinator, I coordinated some relief efforts to Benton, PA. At the present time, they're cleaning up after the recent flooding. As they need additional help, I will be in touch to see how we can assist them. A big "Thank You" to Through These Hands, a not for profit organization that I have worked with over the years, for supplying 1200 N-95 masks to help with the clean up.

In the next few weeks, we will be staging containers that will be going to Southern Sudan, India and Liberia.

Please pray for the volunteers as well as those who are receiving the containers that everything goes well for the containers as they travel to their destination.

Blessed to be a Blessing,
Karen Ann Kowalczyk
MD Branch Orphan Grain Train
Disaster Coordinator

WANTED



Our lawn and garden volunteers are in need of a weed trimmer. The trimmer that we found in the shed clutter was not operable and because of its age and condition, it isn't practical to get it repaired. If you have a weed whacker that you no longer want to use or need, please let John or Kevin know. They will come and pick it up. Also, our parsonage tenant purchased a 100 ft garden hose. If it doesn't get rolled up after use, it can kill the grass. We would like to replace our old and leaky hose reel. We have a work weekend coming up soon to spruce up the yards and replace or eliminate the landscape logs in front of our church. We need your help to keep our properties looking

YOUTH NEWS—Jolene Evancho & Carrie Drasher

The youth will be having two fundraisers in October:

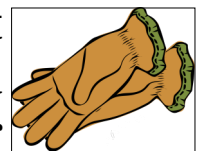
*The first which will run the entire month of October is a Chubby Chico Jewelry fundraiser. Please see any youth member to view a book or you can order online. See Carrie to have an email link sent to you or anyone you think could be interested. Think Christmas!

*The second fundraiser is the Fall Craft and Vendor Sale on Saturday, October 13, at Holy Family. We still have spots available if you know anyone interested. See Carrie or have them email drashers@ptd.net. Come out and support local crafters and vendors, as well as St. John's youth. We will be selling food and tricky trays.

The holidays are coming and you might just find the perfect gift!

WORK DAY

The Trustees are planning a work day for Saturday September 15. Starting at 9 am and concluding at noon with a pizza luncheon. Bring your favorite pair of work gloves and tools.



MITES—SEPTEMBER 2018—Karen Ann Kowalczyk



The Lutheran Women's Missionary League (LWML) is the official women's auxiliary of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod. For

over 75 years LWML has focused on affirming each woman's relationship with Christ, encouraging and equipping women to live out their Christian lives in active mission ministries and to support global missions. LWML has played an important part of funding of mission projects at home and abroad.

How were the projects funded? The funding came from "The Mite Box". Based on the Biblical account of the widow's mite (Luke 21:1-4), the Mite Box is intended for regular contributions of "mites"--offerings above and beyond the support given to congregations and the LCMS. Mite Box contributions amount to millions of dollars that fund district and national mission grants and implement the LWML program. For more information go

to www.lwml.org. Over the past few years, St. John's has received some SELC District LWML grant funding for most recently upgrading the sanctuary lights and will be receiving funding, when the mites are received, for the Spanish Bibles that Pastor has been giving out.

After several ballots St. John's grant request for \$2,000. for Spanish Bibles was the second one approved at the recent SELC District LWML convention I attended in Chicago.

Let us help those organizations that have helped St. John's in the past and that are helping us now. Please consider some extra money in your mite box or dropping some change or dollars in the big mite box in the back of the church. There is someone who is willing to match up to \$500 for our third quarter mission project which is LWML.

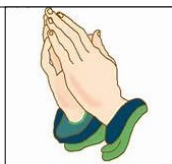
Serving the Lord with Gladness,
Karen Ann Kowalczyk

Beginning in September the Lydia Society meeting will still be on the first Wednesday of the month, but there will be a time change, September 5 at 3:00pm. Each monthly meeting will begin at 3:00pm before the Bible Study. President Sylvia Wargo invites all women to join and attend. The following meetings will be held on October 3, November 7, and December 5 at 3:00pm.

Caring and Sharing Bible Study will continue to meet on Wednesdays but at 4:00pm. Join us!

Pew Sisters will be meeting on the first Tuesday of the month at church, September 3 at 5:00pm. Gertie Ann Mandak will be leading. We will be doing a study of the Ten Commandments, with a book Love Rules by Christina Hergenrader. We always have extra seats if you would like to come. We will have fellowship at a restaurant after the class if desired. The following meetings will be held on October 2, November 6, and December 4 at 5:00pm.

PRAYERS FOR MEMBERS AND FRIENDS



We pray Jesus' hand would rest on **Peter Panco, Anna Belko, Bob Gould, Jack Ross, MaryAnne and Frank Gilham, Alma Yale, Anne Goranitis, Gertie and Bob Mandak, Bob Onder, Pauline Onder, Meralca Oberto** and all in need of His physical, emotional and spiritual care. If you have a prayer chain request, please call Gertie Ann

Mandak, (570) 497-9361.

If Pastoral Care is required, please call Pastor Joe (570-459-6423) and the necessary arrangements will be

CUSTODIAN NEEDED

At the August Council meeting, a decision was made to hire a new Custodian. This position will pay \$9.00 per hour with the number of hours per month to be determined. Some of the duties are: vacuuming the fellowship hall, steps, quiet room and sanctuary; dusting windows and under pews; washing kitchen floor; cleaning bathrooms. Other duties will be assigned on an as needed basis.

If you are interested in applying for this position, please contact Head Trustee Kevin Kowalczyk or Council President Paul Kowalczyk by Sunday, September 9, 2018.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

*We are looking for volunteers to be on **Altar Guild**.

There are several options available:

1. One month at a time, three times a year—you would set up the altar before church and remove communion ware after service.
2. You can **EITHER** set up the altar before church **OR** remove the communion ware after church.
3. You can be on a substitution list where you would fill in on an as-need basis if one of the regular Altar Guild members cannot be here on a day they are scheduled.

*We are looking for volunteers to be **Counters**.

This commitment is one Sunday after Church every fourth or fifth Sunday. Again, if you would only want to be on the substitution list where you would fill in on an as-need basis if one of the regular Counters cannot be here on a day they are scheduled.

*If you would like to become a member of **Council**, please see Vice President Daniel Starry or any member of Council. We have several positions open for 2019.

Remember—Many hands make light work!!! If we all do our part, no one person will be overwhelmed.

The old apple tree stood in the orchard with the other trees, and all summer long it had stretched out its branches wide to catch the rain and the sun to make its apples grow round and ripe. Now it was fall, and on the old apple tree were three great apples as yellow as gold and larger than any other apples in the whole orchard. The apple tree stretched and reached as far as it could, until the branch on which the three gold apples grew hung over the orchard wall. There were the three great apples, waiting for some one to pick them, and as the wind blew through the leaves of the apple tree it seemed to sing:

"Here in the orchard are apples three,
Who uses one well shall a treasure see."

And one morning Gerald came down the lane that passed by the orchard wall. He looked longingly at the three gold apples, wishing, wishing that he might have one. Just then the wind sang its song again in the leaves of the apple tree and, plump, down to the ground, right at Gerald's feet, fell one of the three gold apples.

He picked it up and turned it round and round in his hands. How sweet it smelled, and how mellow and juicy it was! Gerald could think of nothing so good to do with such a beautiful ripe apple as to eat it. He put it to his mouth and took a great bite of it, then another bite, and another. Soon there was nothing left of the apple but the core, which Gerald threw away. He smacked his lips and went on his way, but the wind in the apple trees sang, sorrowfully, after him:

"Here in the orchard are apples two,
But gone is the treasure that fell for you."

And after a while Hilda came down the lane that passed by the orchard wall. She looked up at the two beautiful gold apples that hung on the branch of the old apple tree, and she listened to the wind as it sang in the branches to her:

"Here in the orchard are apples two,
A treasure they hold for a child like you."

Then the wind blew harder and, plump, an apple fell in the lane right in front of Hilda.

She picked it up joyfully. She had never seen so large and so golden an apple. She held it carefully in her clasped hands and thought what a pity it would be to eat it, because then it would be gone.

"I will keep this gold apple always," Hilda said, and she wrapped it up in the clean handkerchief that was in her pocket. Then Hilda went home, and there she laid away in a drawer the gold apple that the old apple tree had given her, closing the drawer tightly. The apple lay inside, in the dark, and all wrapped up, for many days, until it spoiled. And when Hilda next went down the lane and past the orchard, the wind in the apple tree sang to her:

"Only one apple where once there were two,
Gone is the treasure I gave to you."

Last of all, Rudolph went down the lane one fine fall morning when the sun was shining warm and the wind was out. There, hanging over the orchard wall, he saw just one great gold apple that seemed to him the most beautiful apple that he had ever seen. As he stood looking up at it, the wind in the apple tree sang to him, and it said:

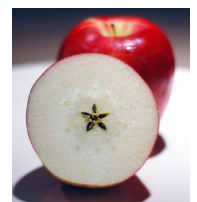
"Round and gold on the apple tree,
A wonderful treasure, hanging, see!"

Then the wind blew harder, and down fell the last gold apple of the three into Rudolph's waiting hands.

He held it a long time and looked at it as Gerald and Hilda had, thinking how good it would be to eat, and how pretty it would be to look at if he were to save it. Then he decided not to do either of these things. He took his jack-knife out of his pocket and cut the gold apple in half, straight across, and exactly in the middle between the blossom and the stem.

Oh, the surprise that waited for Rudolph inside the apple! There was a star, and in each point of the star lay a small black seed. Rudolph carefully took out all the seeds and climbed over the orchard wall, holding them in his hand. The earth in the orchard was still soft, for the frost had not yet come. Rudolph made holes in the earth and in each hole he dropped an apple seed. Then he covered up the seeds and climbed back over the wall to eat his apple, and then go on his way.

But as Rudolph walked down the lane, the orchard wind followed him, singing to him from every tree and bush,
"A planted seed is a treasure won."



St. John's Evangelical
Lutheran Church

621 N Vine St
Hazleton PA 18201
Rev Joseph L Leech, pastor
Phone: 570-459-6423
Email: stjohshazleton@gmail.com
Website: stjohshazleton.org



Our Mission and Vision Statement:

"We are to be growing people in our faith and helping others to come to faith and grow in it."

CHURCH SECRETARY

All information to be put in the bulletin must be given to the Church Secretary by Wednesday.

Email to:

Chuck.zschunke@gmail.com,
stjohshazleton@gmail.com or

COMMUNITY
LUNCHEONS



The next luncheon will be held on Saturday,

September 22 from 11am to 12 noon. Sponsors are the Thrivent Action Teams. Thank you to all

PRESIDENT'S CORNER—Paul Kowalczyk

Summer is winding down and we are approaching fall with beauty all its own. While each season has its own unique features the whole sequence is the same each year. The same can be said for our Lord. While things around us change, the Lord and His wonderful gifts and love for us remain changeless.

Speaking of changeless, it is time for council to work on its year end activities. Along with our monthly meetings, we have the church's 2019 budget to prepare, a salary review meeting, prepare the slate of church officers for 2019 and the annual voters meeting to plan.

One thing that will change with the Voters meeting will be the need to fill the position of President. Since I will be completing my 4th year as President the church constitution requires me to step down. Daniel Starry has been the Vice President for the past two years and is eligible to be President. Should Daniel become President that would leave the position of Vice President open for nominations. We may also need to fill a Trustee position. If you are interested in serving on Council, please contact Daniel or myself to have your name placed in nomination.

We are still accepting offers from members, to fill the position of Custodian, until September 9th. While the principle duties of the position involve the cleaning of the church interior, council is looking to expand the duties to snow clearing and lawn mowing. If you are interested, please contact Kevin or myself by the 9th.

On a personal matter Karen Ann and I want to say Thank You to everyone who prayed for my mother Lorraine while she was hospitalized and expressed their condolences to us when she died. Your prayers and caring support were very much appreciated by

