which Luther rightly saw as a violation of the scriptures and the gospel.

The Reformation emphasized three “*solas,” Sola Gratia, Sola Fide, and Sola Scriptura*. In English, those are, Grace Alone, Faith Alone, and Word (Scripture) Alone. These “solas,” sum up the way God relates to humanity. Forgiveness of sins comes not through a priest, the church, the merits of the saints, holy relics, the pope, the bishops, or even the good works of the people. The forgiveness of sins comes through the word of God, by grace, through faith. Without the Word there is no forgiveness of sins. Without the Word there are no sacraments, there is no church, there is no interaction between God and humanity.

In the challenges of doing church in the last few years, I have been led to think about the essentials of the faith, the essentials of church. What I have come to is that what is essential is the Word of God and someone to hear it. What is not essential is pretty much everything else. Buildings, committees, pews, stained glass, beautiful music, rituals, ceremonies, and even pastors, are useless without the Word. All of those are helpful, but none are essential. The Word of God enlivens all of those things, and without those things, the Word of God still stands.

Thanks be to God for the gift of God’s Word.

Pastor Allen

# Cares and Concerns and Activities

***OCTOBER SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICES WILL BE HELD AT 9:00 AM AT BUFFFALO LUTHERAN CHURCH. PASTOR ALLEN CAMPBELL CAN BE CONTACTED BY PHONE AT 507-828-0272. HE WILL APPRECIATE BEING CONTACTED BY PHONE REGARDING ANY SPECIAL EVENTS SUCH AS BAPTISMS OR FUNERALS! IF YOU CAN’T REACH HIM CONTACT CAROL HINTZ, OUR SECRETARY, BY LEAVING A MESSAGE ON ST. PAUL’S LUTHERAN CHURCH’S PHONE AT 749-2309 OR CALLING CAROL AT HER HOME AT 701-429-0030 AND THOSE IMPORTANT MESSAGES WILL BE FORWARDED TO PASTOR ALLEN AS SOON AS POSSIBLE***

The Church Office should be open on Fridays from 1 PM-3 PM. If you find you need something at a different time don’t hesitate to call Carol at her home at 701-429-0030.

Our Saviors Lutheran Church, Page will be having services beginning Wednesdays – Wednesday School 5:45 – 6:20 p.m. and Wednesday Worship – 6:30 p.m.

**Pork dinner at Buffalo Community Center, Sunday October 22, 11am – 1pm. Sponsored by Buffalo food market, free will offering.**

**Women of the ELCA held their Convention on September 30 at Messiah Lutheran Church in Fargo and Karen Tabor was elected Vice President.**

St Paul’s Lutheran Church WELCA will be having their Annual Pancake and Sausage Breakfast, Quilt Raffle and Bake Sale, Sunday November 5, 2023 from 8:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the Tower City Community Hall. Volunteers are needed please contact Colleen Clancy for more information.

Lennon Skye Smith was baptized at St Paul’s Lutheran on September 24. Her sponsors are Daren Kasowski and Alysa Anderson. She is the daughter of Tyler Smith and Tristen Prosser.

October 2023 Suicide Prevention in Older Adults

Dear Family and Friends,

Guest writer here,

Many of us were and continue to be affected by the Covid-19 pandemic in many ways, but one common problem we all suffered from was loneliness. Loneliness can lead to other problems like depression and even, suicide.

Suicide is a leading cause of death for men and women of any age in the United States. Older adults are at a higher risk of committing suicide. As we get older, it can become harder for us to get around and see other people. That can lead to loneliness as most of us are well aware. Suicide is preventable if you know what to look for and how to be support for those who might be suffering from suicidal thoughts.

Common causes or situations that increase the risk of suicide can be grief from losing a loved one, chronic illness, chronic pain, loss of independence, financial troubles, and cognitive impairment. Recognizing signs such as loss of interest in activities that once brought someone job, giving away beloved items, changing of a will, avoiding social activities, neglecting self-care, lack of concern for personal safety, and being preoccupied with death can make a big difference in preventing suicide.

There are ways to support someone who you think might be suffering from suicidal thoughts:

1. Don’t be afraid to ask if they are thinking about suicide. Asking how to help works too. Listening carefully and keeping the conversation focused on reasons to keep living is very important.
2. Providing physical presence is huge. Just being there for someone can help ease their pain a little in a way that cannot be imagined. They will not feel so isolated.
3. Make sure they are safe. Ask about past attempts and any plans they might have to carry out suicide. Find out if they have access to their planned method. You will be able to understand the current risk they are at.
4. Helping them connect with others who may be able to help them is probably one of the best things that you can do for them. Helping them set up support systems to decrease their risk of suicide can be done by finding out if they have a mental health counselor or speaking with suicide prevention hotlines such as Lifeline.
5. Make sure to check in on them after the initial conversation to understand how they are currently doing. Reaching out and showing that you care can mean the difference between life and death.

If you believe that you or a loved one are suffering from suicidal thoughts, don’t hesitate to call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (1-800-273-8255). Another way to easily access this hotline is to dial 988, just like dialing 911 for emergency services.

I hope this gives you a little information that can be helpful after such a hard period of time.

Peace be with you,

Jackie White, (RN to BSN student at Mayville State)

oCTOBER 2023 newsletter

*St. Paul’’s & Buffalo Lutheran Churches*

A Note from the Pastor

*God’s Word forever shall abide, No thanks to foes, who fear it; For God himself fights by our side with weapons of the Spirit…(A Mighty Fortress is our God, LBW 229*

*Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. (Psalm 119:105)*

*The sum of your word is truth;
   and every one of your righteous ordinances endures forever. (Psalm 119:160)*

*[Jesus said,] ‘It is written,
“One does not live by bread alone,
   but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.” ’ (Matthew 4:4; quoting Deuteronomy 8:3)*

*The grass withers, the flower fades;
   but the word of our God will stand for ever. (Isaiah 40:8)*

*Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away. (Matthew 24:35)*

*So faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes through the word of Christ. (Romans 10:17)*

*Unless I am convicted by Scripture and plain reason—I do not accept the authority of popes and councils, for they have contradicted each other—****my conscience is captive to the Word of God****. I cannot and I will not recant anything, for to go against conscience is neither right nor safe. Here I stand, I cannot do otherwise. God help me. Amen. (Martin Luther’s reply to the Holy Roman Emperor, when called to recant his writings, 1521)*

On October 31st we celebrate the beginning of the Protestant Reformation. It was on this day in 1517 when Martin Luther nailed his “95 Theses” on the church door at Wittenburg, Germany, where he was a monk and Professor of Biblical studies. The posting of this document, which dealt primarily with his objection to the sale of indulgences, drew the attention of the Pope and eventually led to Luther’s excommunication from the Roman Catholic church. The sale of indulgences basically allowed people to buy forgiveness of sins,