

Vestments: What Are They Good For?

Sometimes as I'm getting ready for worship on Sunday I think of Jesus' words in Mark 12:38 (cf. Luke 10:46), which we last heard read in November: "As he taught, he said, 'Beware of the scribes, who like to walk around in long robes . . .'" It's an ironic quotation to remember as one is putting on a long robe for the purpose of worshiping the one who said it. Granted, Jesus is railing against these scribes' hypocrisy in "devour[ing] widows' houses," but still, why risk showiness by dressing in funny clothes on Sunday? As many of you have asked me, what are these "long robes," liturgical vestments, for anyway?

Especially for us as Lutherans, such questions are important. A great gift—maybe *the* great gift—of *Lutheran* Christianity is the insight put succinctly in the sixty-second of the *Ninety-five Theses*: "The true treasure of the Church is the Most Holy Gospel of the glory and the grace of God." Luther reoriented theology around this treasurer, and ever since Lutherans have held that what is truly important for the church's life is "what promotes Christ" (in German, *was Christum treibt*). So, a Lutheran version of the question above might be, "How does each liturgical vestment promote Christ?"

First is the alb, the white robe all of our worship leaders wear. It represents baptism into Christ, and white robes and gowns have been traditional baptismal garments for centuries. In fact, everybody in the congregation can wear an alb if we want to! Remember these words we heard in worship back in April:

Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, "Who are these, robed in white, and where have they come from?" I said to him, "Sir, you are the one that knows." Then he said to me, "These are they who have come out of the great ordeal; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." (Rev. 7:13–14)

But you'll notice in worship that I'm wearing things on top of my alb. One is the pastor's stole worn over both shoulders, which (unlike the mink variety), is a sign of service, specifically of the church's ministry of Word and Sacrament. Notice I said "ministry" and not "minister": you'll only see me wearing a stole if I'll be doing something particular to Word and Sacrament ministry, like preaching, baptizing, or administering Holy Communion. For something else, like leading a prayer service, a pastor dresses the same as any other worship leader would. Sometimes seeing a stole around a pastor's shoulders reminds me of Jesus' words in Matthew, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light. (Matt. 11:29–30)

Last but not least is the chasuble, the colored poncho-looking thing you'll see pastors wear on Sundays. In essence, this vestment helps show the importance of Holy Communion, the foretaste of the feast to come, by adorning only the person who is presiding at the Lord's table (i.e., not even other pastors). Having the presider "dress for the wedding banquet," so to speak, is another way to hint at the significance of the meal, recalling Christ's parable in Matthew 22:

" . . . Go therefore into the main streets, and invite everyone you find to the wedding banquet.' Those slaves went out into the streets and gathered all whom they found, both good and bad; so the wedding hall was filled with guests. "But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing a wedding robe, and he said to him, 'Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding robe?' And he was speechless . . ." (Matt 22:9-12)

The church does not *need* symbols like albs, stoles, and chasubles to proclaim Christ crucified and risen, but that doesn't mean they can't help us in our calling to hear and share that good news. By pointing to Christ's presence in Word and Sacrament, earthly symbols like liturgical vestments have the potential to promote the source of heavenly grace.

Inside this issue:

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† IN OUR PRAYERS †

Nevagay Abel, Kelsey Dolan, Lois Johnson, Don Abel, Kevin Persaud, Mary Ann Hopper, Doris Kampfe, Roy Kloweit, Lisa Jones, Keith Talmadge, Mary Lofquist, Linda Severson, Stu Hoffman, The Lund family, Dan Webber (friend of Bruce Solko), David Johnson (nephew of Dyvone Freburg), Mildred Anderson (mother of Cheryl Erdmann), Robert Kibble (brother of Vee Kerley), Pastor Paul Garchow (friend of the Lund family), Barb Schafer (friend of Phil & Susie Smalley), Carl Every (friend of Susie Smalley), Rita Swenson (sister of Graydon Anderson), family of Donna Koster (friend of Nevagay Abel), Lyle Solko, Stephanie Harris (Daughter-in-law of Kris & Bob Tukker), Don Johnson (friend of Lyle & Phyllis Nelson), Pastor Lynn Morrow, Judi Fields, Terry Dwyer (friend of Hugh & Linda DeGroff) Len Soderblom (friend of Scott and Sue Francis), Pastor Nord Swanstrom, and our homebound church members.

(Please review this list and let either Pastor Scott or the church office know when a name can be removed.)



CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR GRADUATES

Lena Lund - from Rockford Lutheran High School

Ariel Gillam - from Western Illinois University

Rachael Fox - from the University of Illinois

Max Cortright - from Southern Illinois University

6th Grade-12th Grade Lock-In

The youth group will be having a lock-in at church on Friday, June 10 at 7:00 p.m. to Saturday morning at 8:00 a.m. If you would like to attend, please RSVP how many are coming to Amy Kellogg or Carol Bailey, or sign up on the youth bulletin board. Feel free to invite a friend or two. We will be decorating the church for VBS then enjoying activities, games and movies late into the night. We are asking each youth attending to bring either a simple snack (chips/cookies/fruit) to share or a beverage (soda/juice) to share. Direct any questions to Carol or Amy.



Library News

There will be a library work day on Tuesday, June 28 at 9:00 a.m.

MORE NEW BOOKS/DVD'S have been processed and are waiting to be checked out by YOU!

For children-

I Survived the Chicago Fire, Lauren Tarshis
I Survived the Sinking of the Titanic, Lauren Tarshis

Jesus Loves the little Children of the World, Jim Reimann

The Baptism of Jesus, Jim Reiman

John 3:16: Jesus and Nicodemus in Jerusalem, Jim Reimann

The Adventures of Beetle the Unimaginary Friend, Dan Santat

Sea Creatures, Mary Hassinger

Esther, Jason Parish

Jonah, Jason Parish

For Young Adults-

Three books in the series, ***Percy Jackson and the Olympians***, Rick Riordan

Allegiant, Veronica Roth

Adult Fiction-

Heaven Sent Rain, Lauraine Snelling

The Atonement, Beverly Lewis

Bridge to Haven, Francine Rivers

Adult Non-Fiction-

Falling Leaves: The Memoir of an Unwanted Chinese Daughter, Adeline Yen Mah

The Name of God is Mercy, Pope Francis

Glory Days: Living Your Promised Land Life Now, Max Lucado

Rich Learning, Let's Kill the Sunday School (before it kills the church), Holding Your Family Together, Rich Melheim

These items and others will be displayed on the table in the narthex and in the library

TIME & TALENT 2016

Included with this newsletter is a revised Time & Talent book and sign up form. Please fill out the form and indicate which opportunities you would like to serve. Turn the form in on Sunday morning (you can put it in the offering plate) or send it to the church office.

This revised book includes opportunities for both adults and youth.

Please return your sign up forms no later than

June 12, 2016.



Social Ministry

Social Ministry and Outreach will be collecting items in JUNE for The Northern Illinois Synod Social Ministry Committee, which will be brought to the Synod Assembly, June 16-18. Items to be collected include toothpaste, toothbrushes, soap, shampoo, deodorant and feminine hygiene products. Items collected will be distributed to food pantries through each of the conferences in the synod.

Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, ...' And the king will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to



PRESCHOOL NEWS

The school year is coming to a close and the children are looking forward to the end of the year picnic on May 24th & 25th at Bauman Park where the butterflies will be released.

Have a great summer and we will see you again in September.

Registration for the 2016-2017 school year continues.



A heartfelt thank you to Diane Kirkland.

On Sunday May 22, the Hand Bell Choir played their last performance until the fall and it was Diane's final performance as Shepherd's Hand Bell Choir Director. Thank you Diane for sharing your talent and love of music with us for the last 4 years.

THANK YOU!!

Members of Shepherd of the Valley, staff and Handbell members,

As I say farewell to your church as director of the Handbell choir, I want to say thank you for the lovely sendoff and reception on my last Sunday. I thank you for giving me the opportunity to do something that I love doing and I will miss it. All of you have welcomed me and I feel I've made many new friends and I will miss you all.

**Wishing You
A Happy
Father's Day**

Come join the Sunset Bible Study!

We meet on the 4th Thursday of the month in Shepherd Hall at 6:30 pm,

For summer 2016, Angela Shannon, a pastor at King of Glory Lutheran Church in Dallas, Texas, will share "The heart of the matter," a three-session Bible study on learning to deal with conflict through the ministry of reconciliation. "Repentance, forgiveness and reconciliation are healing words," Angela Shannon writes. "We hear these words spoken from our pulpits, in our hymns and various places throughout our churches. Yet we see conflict in our society and the ways in which we harm each other. We are about to enter an election year where the politics are as shrill and mean as ever." Although we look to the church for a safe haven from conflict, Shannon says, "life follows us through the doors, and there too we find conflict." "Conflicts are nothing new to the church," Shannon says. "What's miraculous is that God continues to create us anew. God insists on entrusting us with the ministry of reconciliation." She continues: "In working with congregations, I have found that although people are familiar with the healing words of Christ's church, we must continue to learn the practical application of these words."

Session 1 (June): Treasure in clay jars (2 Corinthians 4:7)

Session 2 (July): Seeking God (Jeremiah 29:14)

Session 3 (August): The ministry of reconciliation (2 Corinthians 5:17-19)

Please join us!



Church Directory

Our church council has determined it is time for a new pictorial church directory. Anyone inter-

ested in being part of the Church Directory Committee, please contact Pastor Scott for more information.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Financial results as of April 30, 2016 and Year to date totals

	C & B Actual	C & B Budget	C & B YTD Actual	C & B YTD Budget
Income	\$15,400.69	\$14,906.66	\$63,789.10	\$63,051.66
Expense	\$14,603.92	\$14,451.79	\$65,294.37	\$62,849.84
Inc/exp	\$796.77	\$454.87	-\$1,505.27	\$201.82
plus offsets	\$1,030.56	\$750.00	\$6,530.17	\$1,650.00
plus interest	\$0.66	\$0.67	\$2.55	\$2.67
Net income	\$1,827.99	\$1,205.54	\$5,027.45	\$1,854.49

C&B balance	4/30/16	3/31/16
	\$1,526.95	(\$301.04)

	Building Actual	Building Budget	Bld YTD Actual	Bld YTD Budget
Income	\$1,970.00	\$2,665.00	\$8,510.50	\$9,022.00
Expense	\$2,257.40	\$2,257.40	\$9,019.60	\$9,029.60
Net inc/exp	-\$287.40	\$407.60	-\$509.10	-\$7.60

Building fund balance	4/30/16	3/31/16
	\$20,051.95	\$20,339.35

Please note: Financials run one month behind in the bulletin
 Also note: The second installment cost \$4600 and we have paid \$1504 of this bill as of 4/30/2016
 Balance on our mortgage - \$303,320.29

Attendance statistics average are based on the 4 weeks

May 1 - May 22:
 Average attendance - 93

Contributions average are based on the 4 weeks

May 1 - May 22:
 Average weekly contributions:
 Current & Benevolence - \$3,525.00
 Building Fund - \$ 503.75

CHANGE IS COMING.....

Please mark your calendars for Saturday, September 24th when the new bishop of the Northern Illinois Synod will be installed at First Lutheran Church in Rockford. The service will be at 10 am, followed by a reception at Our Savior's Lutheran Church.

We expect over 1000 people to participate and/or attend the installation and we will need the help of many to make this celebration memorable. Each congregation of the North Conference will be asked to help with the service or reception in some way: providing people to help with parking and ushering; providing salads or homemade cookies or bars for the reception; helping with set up, serving or clean up. Please attend this festive occasion and to be ready to share your gifts of time and talent to help.

SAVE THE DATES**Piping Hot!**

You're invited to a fun-draising evening at
Katie's Cup
featuring
a smooth blend of coffee and other beverages,
appetizers, luscious little desserts,
and exciting musical offerings throughout the
evening.

Friday, June 3

6:30 - 9:30 pm

\$25 donation

What Makes A Dad

*God took the strength of a mountain,
The majesty of a tree,
The warmth of a summer sun,
The calm of a quiet sea,
The generous soul of nature,
The comforting arm of night,
The wisdom of the ages,
The power of the eagle's flight,
The joy of a morning in spring,
The faith of a mustard seed,
The patience of eternity,
The depth of a family need,
Then God combined these qualities,
When there was nothing more to add,
He knew His masterpiece was complete,
And so, He called it ... Dad*

Author Unknown



Outreach Fundraiser – Outreach committee is selling delicious Butter Braids Pastries. The money raised will go towards supporting the Outreach Committee's college

student (and military personnel) ministry by paying the cost of postage to mail care packages prior to the student's exams. The fundraiser will be on Sunday June 19th through Wednesday, June 29th. Tasting samples will be available on the Hospitality Table on Sunday the 19th and 26th. Butter Braid pastries are light and flaky, containing fillings like Strawberry Cream Cheese, Apple, Bavarian (Boston) Crème, Raspberry, Cinnamon, Blueberry Cream Cheese or Caramel Rolls. Great for breakfast, dessert or any special occasion. The braids come frozen and are easily baked. Individual pastries cost \$13.00 or Variety Packs cost \$37.00. Make your checks out to Shepherd of the Valley or pay by credit card (in person) at church. Orders are to be to be picked up at church between 3:00pm and 6:00pm on July 15. Please read a letter we received from one of our college student members, regarding his experience in receiving care packages from Shepherd of the Valley. This can be read on the narthex kiosk or on the college student's bulletin board also in the narthex.

VBS Kick-Off Day

On Sunday, June 19th, there will be a bouncy house for the kids to enjoy after church to celebrate Vacation Bible School starting the next day. There will be some other fun activities as well, so we hope the kids come out to bounce and play to get ready for a great week of VBS. Feel free to bring a friend and join in the fun!

Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church
proudly presents:

The Quest for Christ!

A fun, interactive way to do Vacation Bible School

Won't you join us the week of June 20-24th, 2016 for this "Game of Thrones", medieval themed frolic as we experience the Word in a safe, friendly, Christian environment through song, games, crafts and even the healthy snacks we share.

Vacation Bible School is open to children aged 4 through 12. Children aged 12 through 18 are encouraged to join us as staff helpers.

The cost is \$10.00 per child and includes a daily snack, class t-shirt and arts and craft projects to take home.

VBS will run from 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

For questions or to register, call or stop in to the church office, 2715 S. Mulford Rd., Rockford, IL 61109, (815)399-5503.

Space is limited, Registration ends June 13, 2016.



Shepherd of the Valley

Summer Concert Series 2016

June 8 - Second City Chorus

June 22 - River City Sound

July 20 - Acoustic Juice

Aug. 3 - Alleluia Quartet

Aug. 17 - Patte Lund



Concerts are free and begin at 7pm

Doors open at 6:30pm

(there will be a free will offering)

Cookies and Coffee will be served after the concert

Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church

at the s.w.corner of Harrison and Mulford

(815) 399-5503

Shep61.org



Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church (ELCA)
2715 S. Mulford Road, Rockford, IL 61109
Phone: 815-399-5503 E-mail: svlcsecretary@att.net
On The Web: www.shep61.org.
Office Hours, Monday - Thursday, 8:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

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RETURN SERVICES REQUESTED

Officers of the Congregation

President - Janette Erickson
Vice-President - Kay Brindle
Secretary - Vicki Nitz
Treasurer - Phil Smalley

Congregation Council

Carol Bailey, Christian Education
Kay Brindle, Outreach
Janette Erickson, Fellowship
Chad Farris, Property
Amy Kellogg, Youth Ministry
Robert Maness, Finance
Vicki Nitz, Preschool
Laurie Pellant, Social Ministry
Sherry Scheider, Worship/Music
Bruce Solko, Personnel
John Wolf, Stewardship

Staff

The Rev. Scott Benolkin, Pastor
Judi Fields, Secretary
Linda Longardner, Organist
Phil Smalley, Treasurer
Susie Smalley, Music Director
Patte Lund, Christian Education.
Carol Dahl, Financial Secretary
Anita Ralston, Custodian



Save the Date
June 20-24
8:30-11:30 a.m.
VBS "The Quest for Christ"
a medieval themed week of fun.
Ages 4- 11 (12 and older are helpers)
\$10.00 for each child.

