

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. **AMEN**

Every month I read the Living Lutheran, a magazine published by the ELCA. It contains articles about our mission and ministry around the world and at our doorstep. Each month our presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton writes an article found on the last page of the magazine. In the September issue she wrote what I think is her best article ever. It is called "Uncertain Times". And I would like to read it to you this morning.

"Uncertain Times" By Elizabeth Eaton.

And for one I think that we should take her advice when she says that we don't need to know how this life after Covid will turn out. It will be a new normal and all we need to do is to be ready and willing to answer God's call. And to do this we should follow the Holy Spirit.

As I was reading our Gospel text for today, I couldn't quit thinking about the last line. "So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed." And folks, we know the truth; that is Jesus, in His death on the cross and His amazing resurrection have made us free. We are forgiven and given abundant life and eternal life. That is the truth. And Luther and the other reformers got that.

Our salvation has nothing to do with what we do. We cannot earn our way to heaven. It is only through the grace of God that we are saved, set free. From Jeremiah today we hear that God is our God and we are His people. This claim is written in our hearts. It is true. It comes from our faithful God. And therefore we should not fear because as our Psalm says, "God is our refuge and strength."

On Sunday mornings for almost a year now we have been studying "Getting Down to the Basics" a DVD series from Dr Timothy Wengert. It is a great look and study on the teaching of our faith, The Book of Concord. From Luther's writings we hear over and over again that we are justified by grace through faith on account of Christ.

If you look over at the baptismal font. I have put out my banner of the Lutheran rose. It depicts Lutheran theology that with Christ in our Hearts, the

black cross in the red heart can be found in a white rose signifying the joy our faith gives us, while living into the real world, blue ring. And then the joy of heaven is complete in the gold ring, which never ends and lasts for all eternity. We only need Christ in our hearts to know what future lies ahead and that is one of peace and joy in heaven with our Lord and Savior.

We only need to know the truth, that Jesus is Lord. And we will be set free. The 5 solas of Luther help us to understand this.

SOLA GRATIA-by grace alone.

SOLA FIDE-through faith alone

SOLA CHRISTUS- in Christ alone

SOLA SCRIPTURA-according to Scripture alone

SOLI DEO GLORIA-for God's glory alone.

Yes, salvation is a free gift from God. God's grace. Do any of you remember the acronym for grace: God's Riches At Christ's Expense. We probably learned that one in Sunday school or confirmation class. GRACE. God's riches at Christ's Expense. That grace comes to us free. The Son, Jesus Christ has made us free and we are free indeed.

Think with me for a minute about that line. You will be free indeed. What a difference it might make if we put a space in between in deed. We are free to do deeds to the glory of God.

Our Bible study group last week pondered, the old question, Lutheran question; What do we do now that we don't have to do anything? I just love that question. We are set free in deed, to do something. What do you think those deeds might look like? What do you do now that your future has been secured in the truth of Jesus' saving feat on the cross and His resurrection?

According to our Presiding Bishop we should be ready and willing to answer God's call. We should listen to the Holy Spirit, that small still voice in our heads and hearts. And above all we should be a witness to Christ. Tell everyone what He has done for us and what He can do for them too.

Yes, we seem to be living in uncertain times right now, but with God as our refuge and strength we can carry out this mission of sharing the good news with those we meet. So let us all concentrate on what Christ has done for us. Tell the good news that God loves us and walks with us even in the midst of these uncertain times. Do not fear The Lord of hosts is with us forever. **AMEN**