



THE FAMILY FOCUS

Family of Christ Lutheran Church

Volume 22 Issue 6

Summer 2020

Family of Christ Lutheran Church
 285 County Road E
 Houlton, Wisconsin 54082
 (715)549-6140

E-mail: focoffice@yahoo.com
www.familyofchristhudson.org

WORSHIP SCHEDULE:

Sunday~

9:30 a.m.—Worship w/Communion

10:30 a.m.—Refreshments & Fellowship

10:45 a.m.—Education Hour for All Ages;

September—May

Sunday School (age 3—Grade 5)

Youth Group (Grades 6—12)

Adult Bible Class

Wednesday~

5:30 p.m.—Confirmation Class (Grades 6-7)

6:30 p.m.—Worship w/Communion

7:15 p.m.—Choir (Sept. - May)

7:20 p.m.—Confirmation class (Grade 8)

Our Mission Statement...

We are Christ's family, joined to him and to one another (Eph. 2:19-22, 4:16; 1 Cor. 12:27; John 15:5-8). In following the direction of our Lord Jesus Christ and sharing his love with others (Matt. 28:18-20);

- 1) We are committed to learning, living and teaching the Word.
- 2) We are committed to seeking the need for God in each other.
- 3) We are committed to celebrating His presence in our lives.
- 4) We are committed to reaching out to touch the lives of others with God's love.

For I am not ashamed of the Gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes, first for the Jew, then for the Gentile." For in the Gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: "The righteous will live by faith."

What is Paul conveying? Better yet, what should we actually learn from this text. To dive in and study this text we quickly learn about the power of the Gospel. The Gospel is not just some simple thing that exists, but it is much more in depth than that. Yes, on one hand the Gospel is simply the promise God has given us through Jesus Christ, the promise of salvation, forgiveness, and life eternal. Yet, the Gospel encompasses so much more. The Gospel is a way of life.

Paul was called into this way of life while he was on his way to Damascus. There he meant Christ face to face in an encounter that would change his life forever. As Christ spoke to Paul, he realized that his current way of life was not going to be successful. He realized a massive majestic power about the God that he was seeking to destroy, and came to the understanding that no matter what, he would never overpower the strength of God. Paul had a realization, but more than that Paul had a life changing experience. Paul felt the Gospel.

At that moment Paul knew and felt something different. There on the road that day Paul was introduced to the grace and mercy of God, because in that moment God revealed the message of life, forgiveness, and hope. As Paul went through the next few days, and even the next few weeks, he was introduced to a change. The change he was introduced to is known as the Gospel!

The Gospel is a life changing experience, and you know it when you have it! Yet, maybe you are wondering how does that happen. Outside of Paul, I am not sure how many, if any others have had the same eye-opening experience. Paul was one of a kind, and God

What's inside:

- Confirmation "Professions of Faith"
- Kitchen Update
- Food Shelf Help Needed
- Cloth mask donations requested

STAFF

Chad Czischke,
 Pastor
 Connie Gove,
 Office Secretary
 Cindy Leonard,
 Instrumentalist
 Christine Scheid
 Choir Director
 Greg Gove
 Custodian

CHURCH LEADERS

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 Patty Long,
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 Bd. of Outreach
 Pam Neuendorf,
 Bd. of Stewardship

Newsletter Articles Must be Submitted by the 22nd of each Month

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Pastor's message continued from cover

used this moment for a specific purpose. God used this as an opportunity to send Paul to the Gentiles to carry out the mission of the Church on earth.

Even though Paul was called to go forth, the other disciples were still at work. As Christ declared, "you will be my witnesses to Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and the ends of earth." The disciples were at work as well, fulfilling Christ's command. Yet, at this moment, on the road, God called another individual who was knowledgeable in both the Jewish and Greek traditions and languages. God does not do anything without a purpose, and if you look at maps of Paul's missionary journeys, you will soon see God's plan at work. God sent Paul into many different areas that the other disciples probably would not have done well in. They did not have the same knowledge as Paul or the same upbringing. It did not mean they were less important, but God planned for them to go one way, and Paul the other.

This is how missions work. Paul was called to go forth and declare the truth in an area that was without the Gospel. Yet, in order to do this, the first part goes back to the verse. The first part is to not be ashamed of the Gospel. Are you ashamed of the Gospel? Let me be clear, to be ashamed of the Gospel means that you have no desire to be a part of it. Maybe that was not clear. To be a part of the Gospel, means that you are living it every day? The Gospel is a living vital aspect of life. It cannot be defeated, killed, or overcome, because the Gospel has already won the victo-

ry over sin, death, and the power of the devil or power of this world. Nothing can overpower the Gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of all.

Yet, the better question might be: What example are we of the Gospel? When we think about our daily lives do we express the Gospel in everything that we say and do? Paul talked about not being ashamed of the Gospel. What he meant is that he is not ashamed to call Christ His Lord and Savior. Sometimes it is not easy to live this way. It is not easy to express the Gospel in every aspect of life. In fact, there are those times where we want to lash out, back stab, slander, hide in a corner, etc. Those are the times that we need to live the Gospel the most, because the Gospel calls us to a life of love and strength.

Looking at the Gospel, there is nothing to be ashamed of. The Gospel is the sweet declaration of God written in John 3:16, Ephesians 2:8-9, John 11:25-26, John 14:6, and many more. It is the promise from God that our salvation is accomplished. Through Christ we have everlasting life, in Christ we have forgiveness, in Christ we have the victory. Victory means that we won, and if you win, then you can't lose! Therefore, the Gospel is our victory, and victors are never ashamed of the triumph! Christ is our triumph, and in Him we have victory over sin, death, and the power of the devil. Let's live that victory, let's live the Gospel, let's live Christ.

God bless, Pastor Czischke



The sin of the world is paid for. God's Law has been kept perfectly on our behalf. The prophecies have all been fulfilled. Jesus Christ has finished it all! And that, dear Christians, should fill us with complete confidence in our salvation. Since Jesus has finished all these things in His self-sacrifice, we can be fully certain our sins are forgiven, and we have everlasting life!

St. Paul wrote: "I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship." (Rom. 12:1)

We hear the same teaching in 1 Peter. "As you come to him, a living stone, rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, you yourselves, like living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ." (1 Peter 2:4-5)

It's the very thing Malachi foretold of the Lord, that He would come and purify His priestly people, that they may offer to Him an offering in righteousness. (Mal. 3:3)

So, what does this mean? In view of God's mercies – that

is, because Jesus sacrificed Himself to make us pure, giving His entire self into death – Paul said that we are to sacrifice ourselves entirely to God, offering Him our whole lives. For our Savior did not give Himself for us in part. So, we do not give back to Him in part.

We don't offer ourselves to God just on Sunday mornings or Wednesday evenings, for example. Rather, we give Him our whole selves, all the time. We understand that offering ourselves to God as living sacrifices involves the giving of our time. It requires us to be faithful stewards of the time He has given us. Yes, it means we devote to our Savior all our time. Otherwise we are not sacrificing our whole lives.

You see, God both teaches us, and has graciously qualified us, to present ourselves to Him as living sacrifices – to live as His holy priests, who offer Him acceptable sacrifices through Jesus Christ, all day, every day, in our various callings.

In the passages from Romans and 1 Peter, we hear several examples of Christian self-sacrifice: serving, teaching, encouraging, giving, leading, showing mercy, living peaceably with others, submitting to

governing authorities and those over us in the workplace, wives submitting to husbands, husbands honoring wives, showing compassion, and suffering patiently in doing good.

In all these things, and in all our other everyday activities, we sacrifice ourselves by using our time, not just for our own benefit, but also and especially for the well-being of others. Work time, school time, exercise time, study time, mealtime, chore time, recreation and relaxation time, even sleep time – it's all God's gift to us to use for purposes that please and honor Him.

This challenges us to think about the way we spend our time, how we utilize our talents, and the way we spend our treasures. Whatever it is I'm doing, am I doing it "for the Lord"? (Col. 3:23) Am I presenting God a living sacrifice? Am I conducting myself as a holy priest, whose sacrifice is acceptable to God?

Because our Lord sacrificed Himself wholly for us, we offer ourselves wholly to Him as living sacrifices. This is following Jesus in self-sacrifice. By His saving mercy, yes, our sacrifice is acceptable to God. For the sake of Jesus' finished work, God is pleased with us.



Cash Flow Statement

	<u>April 30</u>	<u>Year-to Date</u>
Income – donations	\$ 21,914.00	\$ 85,177.05
Building fund donations	445.00	2,955.00
Fundraiser income	0	0
Rent	0	500.00
Misc. income	42.34	104.25
Total Income	\$ 22,401.34	\$ 88,736.30
Less Expenses (includes Int. on Loan)	\$ -16,522.01	\$ -67,441.48
Net income	\$ 5,879.33	\$ 21,294.82
445.08		
Less principal loan payments	\$ -1,882.19	\$ -7,511.77
Balance	\$ 3,997.14	\$ 13,783.05
Building loan balance 12/31/19	\$394,891.43	
Total principal payments year to date	-7,511.77	
Loan balance 4/30/20	\$387,379.66	
Loan payments each month are \$ 3,514.11		
Bank balances as of 4/30/20		
General checking	19,249.47	
Unrestricted savings	27,017.01	
	46,266.48	
Restricted savings (& contingency)	103,398.50	
Total cash assets	\$149,664.98	

Full financial statements are available in the Church office and a copy is on the bulletin board. Deb Zwiefelhofer, treasurer

Special thanks!

The council is grateful for your continued financial support! We are maintaining giving through April this year on par with the budgeted need. As expected, with the church “closed” some expenses are non-existent or running lower than usual. Our largest monthly expenses are personnel related and basic utilities – which of course have not changed by much. In the end, we are staying in the black! Please continue to remember your offerings. E-giving can be started any time (contact the church office for the form). And, offering envelopes can always be dropped off at the church during open hours or mailed.



<u>June</u>	<u>July</u>		
1 ~ Ben Gasmen	1 ~ Renee Daniels	14 ~ Deb Schouten	6 ~ Ken Knefelkamp
4 ~ Bernice Lentz	3 ~ Erin Butterfield	17 ~ Gavin Palmer	7 ~ Barb Garden
5 ~ Ethan Kietlinski	4 ~ Carrie Dwuznik	17 ~ Georgia Palmer	9 ~ Bev Jacobs
6 ~ Annie Gavin	5 ~ Chad Downs	18 ~ Sarah Madlung	9 ~ Brody Swenson
7 ~ Norah Bauer	5 ~ Deb Rivard	18 ~ Pam Neuendorf	14 ~ Nancy Callender
7 ~ Tim Butterfield	5 ~ Katie Rivard	20 ~ Grace Stoeckmann	16 ~ Nevaeh Tillman
8 ~ Elysia Lindquist	5 ~ Jerry Sandahl	21 ~ Mike Long	17 ~ Connor Renn
8 ~ Mike Powers	6 ~ Jen Czischke	23 ~ Alyssa Anderson	18 ~ Chad Phillips
12 ~ Alexis Cran	6 ~ Mason Miller	25 ~ Rob Heinecke	18 ~ Brett Schouten
13 ~ Josh Robers	6 ~ Lizzie Schousek	27 ~ Glenn Gasmen	19 ~ Sam Stoeckmann
15 ~ Jeanette Amundson	7 ~ Josie Gehring	30 ~ Mackenzie Blair	21 ~ Liz Stoeckmann
16 ~ Beckett	8 ~ Hannah Kendhammer	30 ~ Chelsea Barkley	22 ~ Sara Burton
McConaughy	11 ~ Mitch Swenson	30 ~ Aaron Knefelkamp	23 ~ Jerry Daniels
17 ~ Amy Miller	12 ~ Shyann Dorseif	30 ~ Madison Miller	25 ~ Becky Volovsek
19 ~ Angie Moos	12 ~ Cindy Madlung	31 ~ Cheryl Sass	26 ~ Anna Gunderson
21 ~ Warren Long	13 ~ Jeremy Miller	August	26 ~ Jacob Heinecke
22 ~ Brian Moos	14 ~ Donna Davis	1 ~ Ron Gubrud	29 ~ Dave Lindstrom
29 ~ Lindsey Ledoux	14 ~ Logan Schachtner	3 ~ Mark Brown	30 ~ Kyle Long



<u>June</u>	<u>July</u>	<u>August</u>	
Jeremy & Kristi Rydeen 11 on the 6th	Tom & Teri Zupancich 31 on the 17th	Dale & Rita Johnson 36 on the 21st	Branden & Beth McDonald 22 on the 29th
Court & Heather McCutchen 11 on the 13th	Mark & Laurie Wotruba 38 on the 5th	Lee & Randi Erickson 49 on the 24th	Dave & Laurie Sandquist 29 on the 23rd
Randy & Liz Stoeckmann 21 on the 26th	Steve & Gayle Cyphers 41 on the 18th	August Dan & Susan Lindstrom 11 on the 15th	Mike & Tracy Renn 31 on the 12th
Mike & Kim Gunderson 22 on the 6th	Chris & Aria DeWuske 4 on the 16th	Pastor Chad & Jen Czischke 15 on the 20th	Brian & Julie Coe 33 on the 8th
Mike & Patty Long 28 on the 6th	Chad & Heather Downs 11 on the 11th	Dave & Lana Lindstrom 15 on the 20th	Ken & Michelle Knefelkamp 36 on the 11th
Brian & Theresa Schousek 28 on the 27th	Chad & Courtney Phillips 17 on the 26th	Jeff & Debbie Alms 18 on the 3rd	Les & Cheryl Sass 47 on the 18th
	Patrick & Angie Moos 17 on the 11th	Jeff & Becky Volovsek 20 on the 12th	Dean & Virginia Morrell 63 on the 17th
	Jared & Jenelle Schaaf 14 on the 15th	Jeff & Angie Brown 21 on the 7th	

If your special day is missing or incorrect, please notify the office.



The church that is responsible for the food shelf for the month of June is unable to help. Due to COVID they were unable to find enough volunteers. We are putting out a call to other churches to see if anyone would be willing to help a day or two that month. If anyone is interested in helping, please call Deb Schouten at 715-377-0107 Thank you. FYI it is contact free!!!

Kitchen Project Report ~ Back in February the Kitchen Project team asked for approval to move forward with acquiring a commercial dish machine. That seems like a long time ago already! However, we are happy to report that the project has been completed other than some detailing to finish up restoring the kitchen to order. Many thanks to Jeff Alms and his team of helpers for their work in making this happen. When the project was presented, the congregation approved a budget of no more than \$10,175. We are happy to report that the actual costs came in at \$7,583, which is \$2,592 under the projected cost. Costs were saved on shipping, factory labor, and miscellaneous expenses. The kitchen fund has a healthy balance left to cover any minor outstanding bills related to “paint and nails” meaning no money will be taken from the general fund. Thank you all for your support of this facility upgrade! Now, once we’re back together we can really wash dishes!!



Tom Elbert donated a significant number of LED bulbs to replace the florescent ones in the church. All of the Fellowship Hall, Kitchen, and Education Wing are now LED. The Sanctuary was previously replaced with LED. For the most part all of the church is switched over. This should save the church in electrical usage, and the LED bulbs last about 3 to 4 times longer, decreasing the frequency of replacement. Thank you Tom!!

Organizations that have requested cloth face mask donations:

Rev. Derek Lecakes is president of the Atlantic District, which serves the metro New York City area. He has issued a plea to the Church for cloth face masks. There are communities of hundreds of thousands who simply are too poor to afford the material to make their own face masks. Needless to say, those communities are among the hardest hit with the COVID-19 virus. If you can help by sending homemade face masks, then **please send them to:**
Pastor Derek Lecakes
40-30 219th Street
Bayside, NY 11361-2352

Lutheran World Relief urgently needs cloth face masks to send to vulnerable communities they work with. You can visit their website to make a pledge and help them reach their 75,000 face mask challenge. They also have several easy tutorials to help you learn how to make cloth face masks. **Completed masks can be sent to their warehouse:**
Lutheran World Relief
398 East Richmond Street
South St. Paul, MN 55075
651-457-9009

Thank you for any help you can provide!



LWML Update

In lieu of holding the 2020 MN South District LWML Convention in June, a 1-day celebration is now being planned for **Saturday, October 10th** at Mayer Lutheran High School, Mayer, MN. Banners, Young Women Reps, lunch, worship communion service, mission speakers, silent auction baskets and service events will all be included, as well as the collection of our “Gifts from the Heart”.

“Gifts from the Heart” Items Needed

Family of Christ LWML is collecting USED (clean/good condition) backpacks, duffle bags or soft-sided luggage, that you may have come across while cleaning out your closets and/or shelves over the past few months, along with NEW packages of men/women’s tube or crew socks (black or white) and Tide Pods for “Gifts from the Heart” at the October 10th event. These items will be donated to The Corrections Ministry which helps Christian men and women who have been recently released from prison by providing them with housing, jobs, referrals to treatment and welcoming congregations. Items may be left at the display next to our designated Pill Bottle box. Please contact Joyce Banttari with questions. Thanks in part to your support during our Lenten Soup Suppers this year, our group will also be purchasing and assembling **10 Birthday Bag kits** that will include cake mix, frosting, plates, napkins, candles, candy, gift bags and \$5 Target gift cards for Love, INC.

LWML MITE Offerings & Pill Bottle Donations

Family of Christ LWML continues to share our love for Christ through MITE offerings and collection of **Pill Bottles** for Matthew 25 Ministries. Anytime you may be at church, please feel free to leave your small MITE boxes in the large display box or your empty pill bottles in the designated box as we help to further God’s Kingdom. Our next quarterly deadline for MITE offerings is on **June 28th**. We give thanks and glory to God for all your continued support and prayers!

There are homemade masks at church for anyone who is interested. The masks are on a table right inside the main entrance. Please feel free to stop in and pick one up. Bulletin inserts are also available and please, check your mailbox. Thank you.



Profession of Faith ~ John Volovsek

What the Lord's Supper means to me

When we eat the Lord's supper, we remember the night when Jesus said to his Disciples "Take, eat; this is My body, given for you. Take drink, this is My blood poured out for you. This do in remembrance of me." Jesus' words established a promise of hope and life for His disciples, and all who would participate in this meal. The promise connected the meal to Jesus' suffering and death upon the cross, and the words poured out for the forgiveness of sins. As we celebrate this meal the words of promise bring together the body and blood of Jesus in, with, and under the bread and wine. Not that the bread and wine turn into the actual flesh and blood of Jesus, but the promise of the body and blood are present "For us" for the forgiveness of sins. This promise is based upon Jesus' crucifixion, and the declaration "It is finished." These simple words indicate that God's plan of salvation was complete for all who believe. Now as we join together to partake of this meal, we remember that plan, gift, and sacrifice for our salvation.

One of the joys of participating in this meal is that I have the chance to join with other Christians who believe that Jesus died for them, and we are able to break bread and drink from the cup of salvation together. This is an important part of the Christian life because it allows us to remember that loving night as Jesus gathered together with His disciples, but more importantly prepared them for what was about to happen.

Today, as I receive the Supper, It feels like there is a weight lifted off of my shoulders, and there is; my sins are taken care of because Jesus Christ took them all away, and His promise is for all who believe in Him and humbly repent of their sins. Through this repentance Jesus continues to release me from my continual sins, and then when I eat the bread and drink the wine in the aspect of the meal it connects me back to Christ's words and promise. Therefore, I know that I am forgiven. Again this is for me and all who believe, and eventually this will connect us with the everlasting meal with the Lamb in His kingdom. The joy of receiving this meal each week, is that I am constantly reminded of Christ's promise of forgiveness, which strengthens me for the next week. This is what the Lord's Supper means to me.

For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. ~ Romans 10:13



Profession of Faith ~ Amber Alms

What confirmation means to me? Confirmation simply means instruction . It was a time in my life to learn about God, Faith, and the Bible. Soon, I will have the chance to take what I learned and confirm my faith in God, his word, and all that he has done for me. One of God's wishes is that we spread His word. Confirmation helped prepare us for beginning and continuing this mission. Confirmation also taught me why God gave his life for us and why we should look up to him. I have learned how the bible has worked through history and is still working today. I think about all the fun times that I had in this class and I also think about how I am still only beginning my walk of faith. I wanted to share 2 verses with you that have helped me through very hard times. First is John 3:16 it says "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." This was also the first verse that I memorized and really learned about. The 2nd verse is Joshua 1:9 which says "Be strong and courageous do not be afraid do not be discouraged for the lord your god is with you wherever you go ". God has helped show me who I am. Called by His Spirit, I have learned that I will get much further in life with Him than without Him. Even when I felt that he was not answering my prayers or I did not think that he was there, he still helped me in other ways. Like when I broke my ankle I thought why are you doing this to me? Why did I have to fall down those stairs? I know that he answered my prayers because I am fully healed. I want to thank everyone who helped me get through confirmation. We have learned about so many new things in confirmation. I am very excited to see where my future goes and how I can apply everything that I have learned about him in the world. I have learned so much and had so much fun and now I am going to put this to use in the world. This is what Confirmation means to me.

For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. ~ John 3:16



Profession of Faith ~ Mason Miller

Hi, my name is Mason, and today I will be answering the following question: What faith means to me? To me, faith is a gift of God, as Ephesians 2:8-9 says, “ For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God” Along with being a gift of God, our faith in Christ is what has saved us and is still saving us today from sin and the power of the devil. In addition, for me, faith is the key to a strong relationship with God. Through our faith and this strong relationship, we learn that God has called us to spread His word, and share our faith with everyone. Faith is also what brought every single one of you here today. Everybody watching today has a connection to God through their faith. No matter how much you may sin and come upon horrible things in your life, if you have faith in God, then you will always have someone to pray to and call upon in times of need. Christ tells us about Faith in Mathew 17: 20, where He said, 'If you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you will tell this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you.' What this means to me is that no matter how small your faith, if you have faith in Christ, then that faith is still powerful. It is powerful, because our faith is backed by Christ, and His gift of salvation won for us on the cross. As the text tells us, that faith can move mountains. Finally, faithfulness or faith is one of the fruits of the spirit. What this means is that God has given faith to all through the power of His spirit and teaching of his word. The Bible tells us that faith comes through hearing. However, there are those who choose to ignore God's word and the Spirit's call. In conclusion, to me, faith is a gift of God, it leads us to Christ, helps us believe and trust in Him, is key to our relationship with God, and through God's love for us, it leads to eternal life. This is what faith means to me.

*For by grace you have been saved through faith.
And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God,
not a result of works, so that no one may boast. ~
Ephesians 2:8-9*



Profession of Faith ~ Vicki Schousek

Today, I would like to share with you what Baptism means to me? Baptism is important to me for many reasons. One of the main reasons is that it is the first thing you can do to have your sins forgiven. Psalm 51:5 states, “Surely I was sinful from birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me.” This verse tells me that I inherited sin. The inherited sin was due to Adam and Eve's disobedience of God, and unfortunately, it was a sin that was passed from generation to generation. Another reason it is important to me is that it is one of our church's 2 sacraments. Sacraments are sacred acts given and commanded by God. The Bible talks about the importance of Baptism, and Matthew 28:19 says, “Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.” This verse along with others gives us the command to Baptize. Another aspect of a sacrament is that it promises or seals the forgiveness of sins. Romans 6:3-5, discusses how through Baptism we are buried with Christ in His death. Christ's death paid the price for our sins. Therefore, if Baptism connects me in that moment, then I know that God's promise of forgiveness is present. Finally, it is a sacrament when the word of God is combined with a visible element. In this case, the visible element is water. I do not remember my Baptism, but I know the Word of God was combined with the water, and I was Baptized. As God's Word was combined with the water, I believe that it was a washing and renewal or rebirth in the Holy Spirit. This is what makes Baptism so special. God's Word combined with the water in the presence of fellow Christians, and above all being called a child of God in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. This is what makes sacraments, especially Baptism so important. Another reason that it is so important to me, is because your Godparents and parents come and have to say they will raise you in Christ. If this didn't happen then I might have not been raised in the church. This is important to me, because it goes back to my Baptism, where I received the Holy Spirit, and because of God's gift in that moment, I know I am His child, and forgiven of my sins. This is what Baptism means to me.

*For I, the Lord your God, hold your hand; it is I who
say to you, “Fear not, I am the one who helps you.”
~ Isaiah 41:13*