



Olive Tree Newsletter

June 2023



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Minister's Musings



June is here and my mind immediately goes to Summer. Many people will travel during the summer for graduations, weddings, family reunions, vacation, summer homes, et al. It can all get very busy.

Summer is also a time for renewal, growth, and revitalization. Many students take time off from studies, others will learn new skills. Teachers are said to get summers off, but being married to a teacher, that has not been my experience.

Here at Gethsemane, we will be taking a break from Christian Ed and may try some new things as well.

Whatever you do during your summertime, make sure to leave room for quiet time with God. If you travel, I encourage you to worship with a local congregation wherever you are. You're likely to encounter something different that you may or may not like. If so, we'd love to hear about it either way.

Be sure to take vacation pictures and send them to the church office. It will be fun to see new places with familiar smiling faces. We might be able to include some in an upcoming edition of the Olive Tree.

Blessing of the Pets



Bring your pets to GLC for a blessing on June 11 th in the parking lot. Thomas will be available from 11 AM-1 PM to bless any pets that you may wish to bring. Pets should be friendly and comfortable around people. Pet owners should be warned that if bitten, Thomas may bite back. (Just kidding, he's mostly harmless.)

More Than You Ever Wanted to Know About the Athanasian Creed

Submitted By Hank Chary

There are three “ecumenical” (accepted by “all”) or catholic (“universal”) creeds in the Western Church. These three creeds, as included in the Book of Concord, are the Apostles’ Creed, the Nicene Creed, and the Athanasian Creed. The third creed, the Athanasian Creed, is rarely used in worship, yet it is an important part of our religious culture and heritage. When used it is most often used on Trinity Sunday. Most creeds in general had their roots in baptism and the instruction of catechumens. The Athanasian Creed is more of a sermon or instructional Creed, from the Latin *credo*, means belief, hence “I/We believe ...”

The Apostles’ Creed is undoubtedly our most familiar and basically our earliest creed in that it stems from “The Old Roman Creed,” part of a Roman baptismal rite from close to the turn of the first century. Despite the name, the creed was not written by the apostles. Hippolytus mentions its use in an embryonic form, in his *Apostolic Tradition* (c.215). In its current form it probably dates to the 8th century, with portions dating from, the 3rd and 4th .

The Nicene Creed was issued in 325 by the Council of Nicaea which had been called to resolve Christological disputes between bishops such as Athanasius of Alexandria and the Arians. (The Arians held the heretical belief that there was a time when Christ did not exist.) The Nicene Creed is the earliest of today’s creeds in its current form, but was modified and amplified several times since 325 before being finally adopted at Chalcedon in 451. A key part of the creed in its present form is the inclusion of the filioque clause in the third article stating that the Spirit proceeds from the Father **and the Son**.

The Athanasian Creed was written in southern France (Gaul) around 428 or later, though the date is quite uncertain. It is a very important profession of faith in the Christian Church. Also known from its opening words in Latin as *Quicumque Vult*, it was originally believed to have been composed by St. Athanasius (ca 296-373) but later research established that it was composed in Latin, not in Greek, hence ruling out Athanasius’s authorship. Still, it expresses his theology.

The first certain known use of the creed was in a sermon by Caesarius of Arles (ca 470-542). The first manuscript dates from the 7th and 8th centuries. It was originally a private and non-liturgical form, but the creed found its way into the Western liturgy, no doubt in part because of the creed’s insistence on the worship **of**, rather than simply the belief **in**, the Holy Trinity. Scholastics of the thirteenth century put it on a plane with the Nicene and Apostles’ Creed, and this tradition was preserved in the Lutheran Book of Concord. In 1538 Luther listed “The Three Symbols or creeds of the Christian Faith:” the Apostles’ Creed, the Athanasian Creed, and the Te Deum laudamus. He added the Nicene Creed later as an afterthought.

The Athanasian Creed is a profession of the Christian faith in forty rhythmic sentences, dealing with the Holy Trinity and the Incarnation. It differs from the Nicene and the Apostles' creeds in its inclusion of anathemas of those who hold a contrary view. Because of the inclusion of the filioque clause, the Athanasian creed is not recognized as a standard of faith in the East, although with that clause removed it has been used in the Russian Church since the seventeenth century.

The Athanasian Creed differs from the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds in form as well in its inclusion of anathemas or damnatory clauses for those who hold a contrary view. The creed has two parts: one dealing with the Trinity and the other with the Incarnation. It consists of forty rhythmical sentences and concludes with the assertion of the truths necessary for salvation. Its Trinitarian emphasis is consistent with Augustine's Trinitarian theology which emphasizes the equality of the three persons of the Trinity and his statement on the Trinity: "The Father is God; The Son is God; The Spirit is God. The Father is not the Son; the Son is not the Spirit; the Spirit is not the Father. There is **ONE** God."

So, for us today, the Athanasian Creed is one of three ecumenical creeds. It is rarely used. Custom does, however, suggest the liturgical use of the Athanasian Creed on the festival of the Holy Trinity, and so we use it on that day. It is often suggested that an antiphonal reading of this creed, verse-by-verse, be used to compensate for its length. Study it though, it is beautiful in its repetitiveness and in the depth of its theology. Once a year is the least we can do to honor, read, study, and appreciate this creed.



Collaborative Pride Event

On Saturday, June 24, friends from Gethsemane and our two sister churches, Christ the King and Messiah, will be attending the Pride Festival in Nashua, held from 2-6 PM at 229 Main Street in Nashua, NH. If you would like to attend, please contact Theo for more information.

Not NBC

Submitted By Mary Franck



During the beginning days of the pandemic we were forced to close Gethsemane.

Even though the Church, was closed members were still seeking ways in which they could experience worship. The solution was to use technology to record services and upload the service to YouTube. Recording equipment was donated by Dave Kane and Karl Franck. Dave and Karl, along with Karl's son, Matthew, connected the established sound system to the recording equipment to record the weekly service. This also involved time spent editing the video and the audio for the finished product. While we saw a service that was about 45 minutes in length this team spent about two to three hours a week making sure we were able to worship.

As the pandemic progressed and COVID lessened, people became more comfortable gathering together outside. GLC decided to offer “drive-in Church” in a parking lot on Elm Street. The tech team rose to the challenge and transported sound and video equipment to the parking lot each week. They set up their video recording system and they also had to set up a sound system with a series of microphones for those leading the service. You were able to hear the service through your FM radio. Once the service was over, they would go home and spend two to three hours editing video and audio to upload the service to YouTube. For a long time, the tech crew was comprised of Dave, Karl, and Matthew.

Just having three people on this dedicated team was unsustainable. We are very fortunate that when there is a need, members offer to help. The first offer to help came from Bonnie Ramsey, to help with video recordings. Kathy and Landis Magnuson helped with set-up and clean-up of the equipment in the parking lot.

When the cold weather arrived, the team went back into Gethsemane and offered live streaming services. Karl, Dave, Matthew, and Bonnie worked together so that we were able to worship in our homes via the live services on YouTube. Matthew became a less frequent volunteer due to school activities, and Kathy and Landis joined the team.

Through the years of the pandemic GLC has upgraded equipment and continues to offer live streaming services. Diane Fortier joined the team last spring, so there are now three teams of two that are on a rotating schedule. While they sometimes experience unexpected glitches they are all working very hard to offer another worship alternative for those that are unable to join us in-person. The glitches that they experience have made them joke to one another “Well, we are not NBC.” They are “Not NBC” but we are so lucky to have yet another worship opportunity. GLC recently received a generous donation that allowed the team to purchase and upgrade equipment that has improved the quality of the live stream. The team works very hard to continue to improve the live stream worship experience.

Your tech crew is currently looking for two more volunteers to make a fourth team. No experience is needed – the crew will train you. Please speak to Dave Kane or Karl Franck if you would like to help!

Cooperative Summer Worship

Come and get to know our partners in Christ this summer.

We are planning three shared worship services during the summer.

- Christ the King (host): June 25 @ 9:30AM
- Messiah (host): July 9 @ 9:30AM
- Gethsemane (host): August 6 @ 9:30AM



We will plan to worship at CtK on June 25th and at Messiah on July 9th. Both CtK and Messiah will worship with us on August 9th. The Pastor/LLM will attend the host church and invite the congregation to join as well. Fellowship and merriment will follow. Those that choose not to travel can worship with a supply minister.

Thomas will need help organizing a fun activity for when we host on August 6th. Please reach out to Thomas directly if you'd like to help with the planning.

Juneteenth

Juneteenth commemorates June 19, 1865, the date on which enslaved people in Galveston, Texas, finally received the news they were free. Note that this was more than two years after Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation in January 1863 and about two months after Robert E. Lee surrendered to US forces in April 1865.

Juneteenth is the oldest-known celebration marking the end of slavery in the United States, first recognized by the state of Texas. It is also known as “Freedom Day,” “Juneteenth Independence Day,” or “Emancipation Day.” by U.S. President Abraham Lincoln.

Texas Rep. Albert Ely Edwards said in 1979, “Every year, we must remind successive generations that this event triggered a series of events that one by one define the challenges and responsibilities of successive generations. That’s why we need this holiday.”

This day soon became known as “Juneteenth,” a verbal shorthand for June 19.

Slavery in the United States was formally abolished with the ratification of the 13th Amendment on December 6, 1865.

The Martyrdom of the Emanuel Nine

You will notice nine candles in the sanctuary during June 11 and June 18 worship services. These candles are to commemorate the nine lives lost at Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, SC on June 17, 2015. These nine people, often called the Emanuel Nine, were attending a Bible study when a visitor came. I imagine this visitor was welcomed into the group with open arms in an effort to spread Love and share the Word of God. But instead of Love, this visitor brought death.

You might ask why we commemorate these nine specifically when there has been so much gun violence. The answer is simple yet painful. These nine candles, invoking the faithfulness of nine precious souls, were lost to a shooter who was raised and confirmed within our own denomination. These nine candles are offering an opportunity for lament, reflection, and a commitment to taking action to dismantle white supremacy.

We are making sidewalk chalk available to anyone. Feel free to use the chalk to write words or symbols of welcome on any pavement outside Gethsemane. The temporary nature of the chalk can represent to us how we must continually work for peace, justice, and Love exemplified by God the Creator, Jesus the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Please help to spread God's Love while making the area surrounding our church more beautiful at the same time.





Congratulations to Matthew Franck, who graduates from Campbell High School this month. Next fall Matthew will attend Worcester Polytechnic Institute, where he will major in robotics engineering, with a minor in electrical engineering.

ReachOut Update

The outreach committee, now known as ReachOut, continues to offer free community meals the third Sunday of each month from 3-5 PM. Our May meal of rice bowls with terriayaki chicken fed around 80 people. We continue to bring hot meals to the unsheltered around Manchester, as well as feeding those who come to the church, and delivering meals to church members. We will also begin handing out snack kits to the unsheltered on Sundays when we do not serve a hot meal. We always need more volunteers, so if you would like to help with a meal, please contact Crystal at crystalb.ann@gmail.com

We are also in need of items to support our food ministry, including granola bars, toaster pastries, meat sticks, cheese or peanut-butter crackers, Ziploc-type bags, brown paper bags, plastic utensils, and napkins. If you are able to provide any of these items, please drop them off in the basket provided in the cafe. Thank you for your continued support!

[The New England Synod's Congregational Renewal Grant in Action!](#)

Messiah Lutheran Church in Amherst, NH began exploring the possibility of sponsoring an asylum seeker family in November of 2020, which included contacting potential houses of faith to be partners in this endeavor. Being a “Welcoming Congregation,” Messiah had already committed to welcoming migrants, physically and spiritually, praying for them and considering doing advocacy for immigration reform. As part of other requirements for sponsoring an asylum seeker family through ELCA AMMPARO (Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities), Messiah, along with other congregations, participated in a racial justice series developed by Dr. Jessie Heines, Professor Emeritus, U MASS Lowell. Participants also heard two asylum seekers share about their experience in the United States.

“Messiah House,” a building on church property, provided the opportunity to house an asylum-seeking family but needed some renovation work, including installing a shower. During COVID, skilled people were hard to find, but this eventually worked out, thanks to many people in the congregation and community. Other houses of faith and community members also helped with the work and with funding. The New England Synod graciously awarded Messiah the Congregational Renewal Grant.

On November 4, 2022 Messiah received its asylum seeker family through Border Servant Corps, a border shelter that houses asylum seekers from the southern border. Started by Peace Lutheran Church in Los Cruces, NM, it partners with ELCA AMMPARO by matching congregations wanting to sponsor asylum seekers. The organization arranged an online meeting with a young mom and in a few days, we welcomed her and her two children at Boston’s Logan Airport. When we gave mom a tour of Messiah House with its great room, kitchen area, two bedrooms and shower area; she cried tears of joy.

The congregation has generously responded in accompanying the family with relationships, clothing, food, household items and funding. As the congregation has come to know our Ecuadorian family, we’ve developed greater empathy for the family who, in walking to the southern border, had to pass through Panama’s Darien Gap, known as one of the worst places in the world. Fiery ants, poisonous snakes and people who abducted, robbed and raped are among the threats to people trekking through this “jungle.”

When a preschool program was found for the four-year-old, people offered to pick up the girl and then bring her back from school. Meanwhile, our little boy had a one-year-old birthday, learned to crawl and then walk. He feels at home in the sanctuary of the church and goes freely to others. At one point, he toddled up the main aisle and held up his hands. Pastor Karl Hester, who was at the altar preparing for communion, knew what to do. He picked him up and enveloped him in his arms. The congregation, as if in a chorus, sighed together, “ahhh.”

The next week, our little one journeyed up to the altar again. Pastor David Rinas, supply preacher and Messiah member, had just relayed in his sermon a story about Messiah’s asylum sponsorship and as he says, “just on cue,” our toddler journeyed up the aisle and held out his arms. Pastor Dave lifted our 1-year-old up in his arms and finished the sermon.

The congregation has accompanied and learned much about a family experiencing a new culture and customs. Interest and involvement has grown. When Janabeth Reitter, Messiah member and former ELL teacher, offered a workshop on helping our family learn more English, about twenty people came, about half the worshipping attendance on a good Sunday morning. Now with another venture, having mom in an English class at an adult learning center thirty minutes away, Messiah members are signing up to take her three times a week at 8:15 in the morning when other members come to babysit the two children until she returns on a van.

This asylum seeker sponsorship has attracted the largest number of people participating in any recent ministry at Messiah. It is a relationship ministry, one that is transformational for this asylum-seeking family as well as for our congregation. And, thanks to the New England Synod grant funding Congregational Renewal, it is doing just that for Messiah!

Doreen Rinas
Coordinator, Asylum Project
Messiah Lutheran Church
Amherst, NH



Surprise!

Surprise July:

Thomas will be away for two Sundays (16th and 23rd) in July. That is not part of the surprise. Look forward to something new and different in July. Plans are still in progress, but I hope you will find it fun. Shoot me your ideas, thoughts, or suggestions.

What's the Situation on the Border? How Can Churches Help?

Mica de la Rosa, Director of Engagement & Education at Border Servant Corps, Las Cruces, New Mexico, will be presenting information about their current experience with the border where recently they have welcomed 125 to 185 migrant guests a day to their shelter ministry started by a member of Peace Lutheran Church. Mica will also be sharing about the many ways that congregations can help. We'll also learn about their border immersion experience for groups and individuals.



Since 1997, Border Servant Corps has served the U.S./México borderlands. They collaborate with partners – community members, schools, churches, and organizations – locally and from around the country to bring people together to make a positive impact.

As stated on the website of Border Servant Corps: **BETTER TOGETHER**
and from Micah: **DO JUSTICE/LOVE KINDNESS/WALK HUMBLY**

Mica's Schedule from June 10 to 12 will be as follows. Please come!

June 10: A 6:30 pm presentation at Concordia Lutheran Church, 211 North Main St, Concord, NH

June 11: Following a 9:45 am worship at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, an Adult Forum presentation at around 11 am. 143 Lincoln St., North Easton, MA

June 12: A 7 pm presentation at Messiah Lutheran Church, #303, Route 101, Amherst, NH

June 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
28 9:30am WORSHIP SERVICE 10:30am CHOIR	29 5:00pm AA HHE 7:00pm AA MNWS STUDY	30 7:00pm AA WB2B 12:00pm BIBLE	31 5:00pm AA HHE	1	2 12:00pm AA WNBB 5:00pm AA HHE	3 10:30am Marsha Journey Celebration of Life
4 9:30am WORSHIP SERVICE 10:30am CHOIR	5 5:00pm AA HHE 7:00pm AA MNWS STUDY 7:30pm 5:00pm AA HHE COMMUNICATIONS	6 7:00pm AA WB2B 12:00pm BIBLE	7 7:00pm BIBLE	8	9 12:00pm AA WNBB 5:00pm AA HHE	10 10:00am AA No Name
11 9:30am WORSHIP SERVICE 11:00am Blessing of the Pets	12 12:00pm MARY 7:00pm FINANCE STUDY 5:00pm AA HHE 5:00pm AA MNWS	13 7:00pm AA WB2B 12:00pm BIBLE MARTHA	14 6:30pm ReachOut	15 7:00pm COUNCIL 12:00pm WNBB	16 12:00pm AA 5:00pm AA HHE	17 10:00am AA No Name
18 9:30am WORSHIP SERVICE 3:00pm COMMUNITY MEAL	19 5:00pm AA HHE 7:00pm AA MNWS STUDY	20 7:00pm AA WB2B 12:00pm BIBLE	21 5:00pm AA HHE	22	23 12:00pm AA WNBB 5:00pm AA HHE	24 10:00am AA No Name 2:00pm Collaborative Event Nashua Pride Festival
25 9:30am Collaborative Worship at Christ the King 7:00pm AA MNWS 9:30am WORSHIP SERVICE 5:00pm AA HHE	26 5:00pm AA HHE 7:00pm AA MNWS STUDY	27 7:00pm AA WB2B 12:00pm BIBLE	28 12:00pm BIBLE	29	30 12:00pm AA WNBB 5:00pm AA HHE	1 10:00am AA No Name

The Olive Tree

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