

*From the
Pastor*



Archaeology and the Story of Samson

Last month, 15 members of Trinity enjoyed a group trip to the excellent show “Samson” at the Sight & Sound Theater in Branson. Is there any evidence that the events portrayed in this musical really happened historically, or is this story just an entertaining fable?

Samson, you may recall, was a “judge” or ruler over Israel, a great hero whose strength was legendary among both the Israelites and their enemies the Philistines and made him invincible (Judges 13:1-15:20). However, with the help of the seductive Delilah, he was tricked, captured, and blinded by the Philistines, put to work grinding grain like a lowly beast (Judges 16:1-22). The story of Samson concludes:

“Now the rulers of the Philistines assembled to offer a great sacrifice to Dagon their god and to celebrate, saying, ‘Our god has delivered Samson, our enemy, into our hands.’ . . . While they were in high spirits, they shouted, ‘Bring out Samson to entertain us.’ So they called Samson out of the prison . . . and stationed him between the pillars . . . Then Samson took hold of the two central pillars which supported the temple, and he braced himself against them, one on his right and the other on his left. Then Samson called to the LORD and said, ‘O Lord God, please remember me and please strengthen me just once more, and let me with one blow take vengeance on the Philistines.’ . . . Then Samson cried, ‘Let me die with the Philistines!’ And he pushed with all his might, and the temple fell on the rulers and all the people in it. So he slay many more enemies in his death than he had in his life.” (Judges 16:23-30)

Skeptics of the Bible once doubted this story and called it a myth. They assumed that a Philistine temple would not have two central pillars supporting the roof, since that wasn’t a typical design

for pagan temples in the ancient Middle East. However, when the ruins of two Philistine temples were excavated, what did they reveal? Both had two central pillars supporting the roof!



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This picture from excavations of the ancient Philistine temple at Tell Qasile, part of modern Tel Aviv, clearly shows the substantial stone footings for two massive wooden pillars that once held up the roof, exactly as described in the story of Samson: ***“They stationed him between the . . . two central pillars which supported the temple.”*** (Judges 16:25-29)

One of the Philistine temples is at Tell Qasile, now part of the modern Israeli city of Tel Aviv. Israeli archaeologist Amihai Mazar excavated the remains of a Philistine temple there in the 1970’s—and sure enough he discovered two column bases for a pair of central pillars supporting the roof! And, they were close enough together that a large man could reach both of them at once.

About 20 miles from Tell Qasile, at the site of the ancient Philistine city of Ekron, archaeologist Trude Dothan discovered another temple in the 1990’s with the same characteristic: two central pillars supporting the roof.

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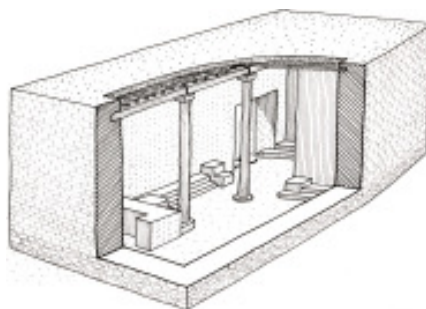
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The city of Gath, where Samson’s death took place, has not been excavated, because a modern city has been built on top of the ancient ruins. However, since it was one of the main Philistine cities it is reasonable to assume it would have had a large temple of similar design, capable of holding a large crowd—just as described in the Bible.

Archaeologist Bryant Wood explains the significance of these discoveries:

“Two Philistine temples have been uncovered by archaeologists. . . Both temples share a unique design—the roof was supported by two central pillars! The pillars were made of wood and rested on stone support bases. With the pillars being about six feet apart, a strong man could dislodge them from their stone bases and bring the entire roof crashing down. The archaeological findings match the Biblical story perfectly and attest to the plausibility of the account . . . The Bible writer knew his facts. He knew that Philistine temples were supported by two pillars and that this was how Samson pulled the temple down. The report is that of an eyewitness, again demonstrating that indeed the Bible is the world’s most accurate textbook.” (“Samson and the Temple of Dagon,” Bible and Spade, 1974, pp. 53-54)



This reconstruction of the ancient Philistine temple at Tell Qasile shows the two central pillars supporting the roof—and also supporting the Bible’s account of Samson’s final feat!

So, the story of Samson is not just a myth, but historical fact. As the Apostle Paul says: *“These things were written down to instruct us, on whom the fulfillment of the ages has come . . . For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.”* (1 Corinthians 10:11; Romans 15:4)

Jesus said, *“The very stones will cry out!”* (Luke 19:40), and that is exactly what is happening again and again, as archaeological discoveries such as this confirm the authenticity of the Bible.

Pastor Kevin Vogts



Sermons for July

Sermons by Pastor Vogts are available in both printed and audio form on our website at www.trinitylcms.org/sermons; as podcasts in the iTunes store by searching for “Rev. Kevin Vogts”; and printed copies of that day’s sermon and several of the most recent sermons are available in the Gathering Room.

July 7

*“Thy Will Be Done on Earth
as It Is in Heaven”*
Matthew 6:10

July 14

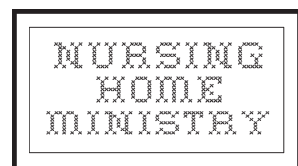
“Give Us This Day Our Daily Bread”
Luke 11:3

July 21

*“And Forgive Us Our Trespasses
As We Forgive Those Who
Trespass Against Us”*
Colossians 3:12-13

July 28

*“And Lead Us Not Into Temptation,
But Deliver Us from Evil”*
Matthew 6:13



You are invited to help Trinity provide brief worship services for nursing home residents at Country Club Estates & Vintage Park on Sunday, July 14. The simple services are about 20 minutes long at each home. We begin at 1:30pm at Country Club Estates and then go to Vintage Park for the second service. It’s great to have church members there to greet the residents and sing along!



Outdoor Worship & Picnic Potluck July 7

We will celebrate Independence Day at an outdoor Service in the Shelter House on Sunday, July 7, at the regular time of 10:00am. The special order of worship will include favorite patriotic songs, a children's sermon, and lots of special musical performances!

Following the service there will be a potluck picnic lunch for those who wish to stay. Please bring a main dish, side dish or dessert. Drinks and table service will be provided. This is a great opportunity to invite family, neighbors, friends, and holiday visitors for worship! All invited—everyone welcome!

JOY:FULLY LUTHERAN

1 THESS 5:16-18

REJOICE / PRAY / GIVE THANKS
LCMS National Convention • July 20-25, 2019 • Tampa

Synod President Reelected



**Rev. Matthew
Harrison
LCMS President**

During the last week of June online balloting took place to elect the President of our church body, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, for a three-year term beginning in September. There were two electors voting from each of the 6,000 LCMS congregations nationwide, lay and pastoral. Our electors were Paul Brack and Pastor Vogts. The incumbent, Rev. Matthew Harrison, who was nominated by our congregation, was reelected on the first ballot to a fourth three-year term.



Thank you Block Walkers for another great showing at Relay for Life! We had a great group of people walking and raised \$4,796! Incredible! Our silent auction baskets brought \$1,025! The overall total for Relay for Life this year is over \$21,000. That's a lot of money that to help researchers find new treatments and ways to detect cancer earlier. Block Walkers was a huge part of that number. Thank you for supporting this cause every year — 18 years strong!

Other elections and business will be conducted at the triennial national convention of the Synod in Tampa, Florida, July 20-25. The entire convention will be broadcast over the internet at www.lcms.org/convention/livestream. Of special interest will be the always inspiring opening service with thousands of participants, on Saturday, July 20, at 6:30pm, with pre service music at 6:00pm. A complete listing of events is at www.lcms.org/convention/schedule.

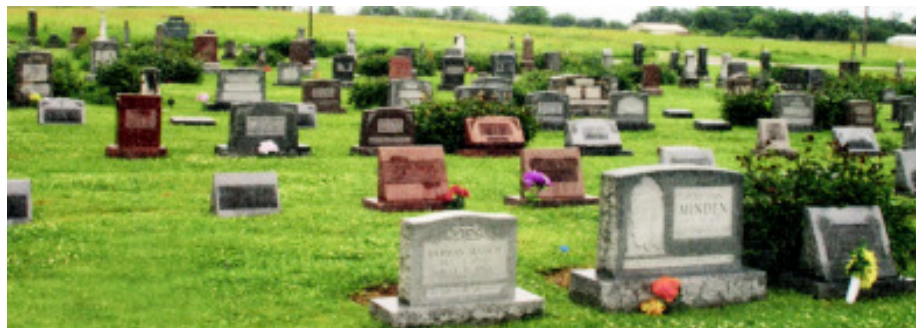
At the national convention each circuit nationwide is represented by a lay and pastoral delegate, resulting in over 1,000 delegates. Our delegates from the LCMS congregations in Johnson and Miami counties are Rev. Andy Keltner of Christ Our Savior, Louisburg, and Louis Bruns of King of Kings, Gardner.

JULY BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

Our records of birthdays and anniversaries may not complete. If your information is missing or inaccurate, please accept our apologies and notify the Church Office at 913-849-3344 or email Church Secretary Stacey Elkinton at trinitylutheranblock@gmail.com.

- July 1 Emily Wolf
- July 3 Brandy Allen
- July 3 Molly Hermann
- July 3 Karen Windler
- July 5 Joshua Bunch
- July 5 Samantha Prothe
- July 6 Ryan Morton
- July 7 Regan Boyer
- July 7 Shelly D'Amato
- July 7 Kennedy McMullin
- July 7 Tamara Mitchell
- July 10 Wanda Stagg
- July 11 Ken Debrick
- July 11 Darlene Heater
- July 11 Dennis Prothe
- July 12 Joshua Sombke
- July 12 Steve Warner
- July 13 Steve Grother
- July 13 Duane Prothe
- July 13 Don Warring
- July 14 Sheryl Holtz
- July 14 Rayden Berry
- July 15 Karen Kaiser
- July 16 David Johns
- July 16 Debbie Oberheide
- July 16 Brittannie Ritch
- July 17 Ann Davis
- July 18 Keith Prothe
- July 18 Madison Snider
- July 19 Clint Kettler
- July 19 Cathy Tesar
- July 19 Janet England
- July 19 Annabelle Ducey
- July 20 Mallory Tharp
- July 20 Norma Peckman
- July 21 Dan Hieber
- July 21 Chance Mueller
- July 23 Lillian Kettler
- July 23 Taryn Jones
- July 24 Zachary Davis
- July 24 Margo Rodewald

- July 24 Marcie Reyelts
- July 25 Shannon Fanning
- July 26 Stephanie Bivins
- July 27 Matthew Barnett
- July 27 Denna Jones
- July 27 Curtis Kettler
- July 27 Marla Prothe
- July 29 Lonnie England
- July 29 Barbara Herra
- July 29 Cody Weaver
- July 31 Barbie Dillenbeck
- July 31 Colleen Richardson
- July 1 Dannie & Elaine Stewart (47)
- July 7 ... Andrew & Brianna Chapman (7)
- July 8 Earl & Darleen Medlin (44)
- July 15 Adam & Lorri Jenson (24)
- July 18 Paul & Karen Brack (38)
- July 22 Charles & Kathy Hall (41)
- July 26 John & Kathy Gerken (50)
- July 26 David & Carol Wray (39)
- July 27 .. Phillip & Morgan Richards (17)
- July 29 Chris & Sherri Webb (30)



As seen in these dramatic before and after photos, work has now been completed restoring our cemetery following severe damage to over three dozen monuments by a tornado on April 29. A book in the Gathering Room details all the work done. Our thanks to Four County Monuments for their excellent work, and giving us a generous discount of over 50% as a donation due to the tornado. The remaining expense has been submitted to insurance or will be paid from the Cemetery Fund. Covering the expense of repairing family stones is not required, but gifts to the Cemetery Fund are always welcome and help provide for ongoing maintenance and special repairs such as this. Simply place in the offering marked "Cemetery Fund."



Why do Roman Catholics have more books in their Bibles than Protestants? What about the "lost" books of the Bible we hear about in the news? We're looking at these questions and more with our current study in Adult Bible Class, *Bible 101: An Introduction to Understanding the Bible*. Join in Sundays at 9:00am in the Heritage Room!



The quarterly meeting of the Voters Assembly will be held following worship on Sunday, July 14. In order to prepare for this meeting the Church Council will meet Tuesday, July 9 at 7:00pm.

Missionaries of the Month



Each month we remember in prayer in our worship services—and you are encouraged to remember in your personal prayers—specific missionaries around the world who are supported by our congregation through our mission offerings to our Synod.

July 7
Rev. Matthew & Kali Wood
 Indonesia

July 14
Rev. Gary & Stephanie Schulte
 Burkina Faso

July 21
Rev. Roger & Amy James
 Philippines

July 28
Rev. Joel & Clarion Fritsche
 Dominican Republic



Could you—individual, family, or group—serve snacks sometime after worship? The last Sunday of July and most of the summer remains open!

There is a sign-up sheet on the table with the snacks. Our Generations group has generously agreed to provide and prepare the coffee and juice each week! So those signing up are only asked to provide some treat. Thanks to all those providing snacks for Coffee Hour!

July 7
Outdoor Service & Picnic

July 14
Sunday School & Youth

July 21
Ray & Janet England

July 28
Need Volunteers