

WEEKLY DEVOTION – Tuesday, August 30, 2022
Pastor Bruce Kischnick, Grace Lutheran Church, New Albany, IN

“And the Winds Blew”

READING: Matthew 7:24-27 – “Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like the wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like the foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash.”

On Saturday the 20th we had a violent rainstorm as most of you know. It came straight out of the south, and other than some advance lightning and thunder, it gave no indication of what we were going to experience. I was in the kitchen when I heard the wind begin to rise. Then the rain began to hammer down, and then came the hail. It was actually frightening how hard that storm pounded on our house. Becky was in the bathroom taking a shower, and she couldn't see out the windows. Good thing! She would have been running for the basement, I am sure!

I watched from the windows as the wind rose in velocity and moved all our patio furniture against the deck railing. For a moment I thought it was going to do the same to my grill. The hail came down hard and shredded leaves on every tree, shrub, and plant that could be seen. Leaves rained down into the yard and eventually filled the top of our pool in a solid mat. Later I discovered that nearly all of my cherry tomatoes had been knocked off the vines to the ground. The leaves on the sunflowers looked like they'd been assaulted by double-aught buckshot. Our neighbors on either side of us lost large limbs from their trees. Turns out our roof and siding also took vicious hits. I feared the one window that faces in that direction was going to be cracked, so hard did the wind drive the hail against it. The whole house shuddered and creaked, but it did not fall.

In our reading Jesus tells us that the wise man builds his house on a solid foundation, one that can withstand whatever wind and rain can throw at it. We never know what storms are going to crisscross our lives. Heartaches, losses, grief, health issues, broken relationships, and more can suddenly sweep through and toss things into a mess. We can find ourselves confronted with things that shake us and often these are things we cannot control and may not have seen coming. Jesus says that the wise found their lives not on the flighty things the world seeks as shelter, but on the sure promises and presence of the God who loves us and his Son who teaches us about him.

Jesus says that those who listen to him and put his teachings into practice will find the strength and the assurance to face whatever the storms of life may bring their way. They will know that God is with them and that he will help them through whatever the winds may bring. Jesus also adds that those who do not listen and put into practice what he teaches will be the foolish builders who base their lives on stuff and experience, pleasures and foolishness. When the storms of life come to them, they are crushed and undone, with no real idea where to go for truth or hope. Jesus calls us to faith, as always – a faith in him and a trust in the things he has done and the things he has taught us.

That storm Saturday caused a lot of headaches for a lot of people. Many lost limbs and even large trees. Everyone who has a garden has had it shredded. Flowers, shrubs, and potted plants left out in the storm all suffered damage. But no one's house came tumbling down. No one lost a garage. All of these were strong enough and had foundations deep enough to withstand the storm. Jesus tells us by his parable that we can

also stand firm if we place our trust and our lives in his word, promises, and actions. Having Jesus, the Rock, to build our lives upon, we will be the wise ones who have found in him a safe place indeed. Amen.

PRAYER:

ANNOUNCEMENT(S):

- 1) There will be **NO SATURDAY SERVICE** on Saturday, September 3. There is a wedding that will involve both pastors, our Music Director, and 3 of our keyboardists. This happens now and again, but we want to encourage our young people to have their weddings at church when the trend for years has been to have the wedding at some other venue. Regular services on Sunday at 8:00 and 10:30. See you then.
- 2) **PASTORS CLASS:** will commence on Sunday, September 4, from 1-3:00 P.M. It will meet 8 times with the last class in November. This class is a great review of the Six Chief Parts of the Christian faith. It is also the class by which a person can become a member of Grace if they have never been confirmed in a Lutheran church. Join us!