

# Lutheran Spokesman

“...God... promised before  
through His prophets  
in the Holy Scriptures,  
concerning His Son  
Jesus Christ our Lord,  
who was born of the seed  
of David according to  
the flesh, and declared  
to be the Son of God with  
power according to the  
Spirit of holiness, by the  
resurrection from  
the dead.”

ROMANS 1:1-4



April 2004 vol. 46 no. 10

# The Greatest of All Time

I'm not old enough to remember hearing the words firsthand, but various sports reporters and persons in the media seem to like reminding us of the man who said of himself, "I am the greatest of all time." You might recognize that the man I am referring to went by the name "Ali."

That's quite a bold and extremely arrogant thing to say about oneself, even if he limited it to the boxing ring. Whether the arena is sports, education, politics, gardening, or debate, to claim for yourself the title of "the greatest of all time" goes literally too far.

On Easter Sunday morning, there was a claim made by a man that did not go too far. As we hear this Man speaking the phrase, we should notice He is not shouting it at the top of His lungs nor is He pounding His own chest in triumph. His simple words convey the amazing strength of the Truth spoken at the raising of Lazarus from the dead: "Jesus said to her, I am the resurrection

and the life" (Jn. 11:25).

In order to make the claim that you are the one and only—the greatest of all time!—you must have supreme confidence. Yes, there have been people throughout history who truly believed and felt such confidence.

## The Father's Stamp of Approval!

But there is only One who had the right to declare that there truly was no one better. Jesus is THE resurrection and THE life. There was and is no other. He was and is the greatest of all time. God the Father announced that He was and is the greatest with His own powerful statement "concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord . . . declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead" (Rom. 1:3-4).

The Father put His stamp of approval on His Son and His work by

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raising Him from the dead! Jesus is the greatest! No contest!

There are many things to which we might look in this life for comfort and hope, among which are our own abilities and talents. We might even become so full of ourselves that we rank ourselves "up there" with the great ones. How foolish we are to think that there is comfort or hope in anything that we can do or accomplish. There is no hope apart from Jesus, THE resurrection and THE life.

Jesus' bodily resurrection gives us real hope that one day we too will rise from the dead. This isn't just a wishful statement (as one might say, "I hope we win the game today."). It is a certain fact—because Christ rose from the dead, we too will rise!

The good news does not end there. Not only will we rise, but we will LIVE again. It's going to be real life, which won't be bothered by foolish ideas full of pride and self absorption. After we rise from our graves, we will live with Jesus, the greatest of all time,



in a heavenly home free of sin and the pride of life on Earth.

"I am the resurrection and the life." As a result of those simple words spoken in a calm yet confident manner, we believers have real confidence, comfort, and hope.

Jesus is the greatest of all time. Thank our Lord that He is, and that He is the Greatest of all time (and eternity). Hallelujah!

—Pastor Mark Gurath



*"But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the first-fruits of those who have fallen asleep. For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive" (1 Corinthians 15:20-22).*

## You Can't Stop the SON Rise!

**D**id you have any doubt or question whether or not the sun would rise this morning? Of course not! It rises faithfully every morning, whether we think about it or not. There may be mornings we don't see it, but it comes up all the same. In fact, there is nothing

we can do to stop it from rising. It rises every day by the power of our faithful God.

In the same way, no one could stop the SON of God from rising. Satan would have loved to stop Him from rising, but he couldn't. Death and the

grave were powerless to hold Him. The Jews tried to prevent the disciples from faking Jesus' resurrection. They sealed the tomb and set a guard, but they were powerless to stop Jesus' resurrection. Even the guards fell and became like dead men before the Son of God. Nothing could stop Jesus from rising from the dead.

Jesus' resurrection is an accomplished fact of history. Over 500 disciples were eyewitnesses of the fact. God Himself is the most faithful of all witnesses. He testifies many times to this inescapable truth.

No one could stop Jesus from rising, and no one can change the fact that He did. Many try to deny it. Many try to convince others that it did not happen. The Jews—even after the testimony of the soldiers—tried to cover it up and spread lies about Jesus' resurrection.

Still today many want to deny the resurrection. Sadly, even many churches try to deny Jesus' bodily resurrection from the dead. But no matter what anyone believes or says, they can't change the fact that Jesus did come alive out of the grave. The only thing they have accomplished is to deprive themselves of the blessings of Jesus' resurrection. You Can't Stop the SON Rise!

### **Enjoying the warmth of the Rising SON**

Like a beautiful spring day, where the sun rises to melt away the last bits of snow and ice, the SON of God has risen to shine with His warmth and blessing in our lives. Since nothing could stop Jesus from rising, we can be sure that nothing can rob us of the blessings of Jesus' resurrection.

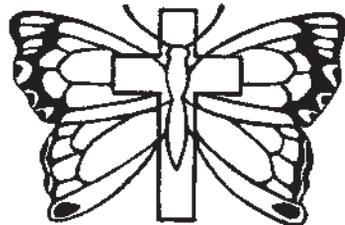
Jesus' resurrection is positive proof that He is the Son of God and that the payment for our sins is complete and perfect. We live under the grace of God; our sins are forgiven; we are reconciled to God; His love and mercy shine upon us day by day.

What a beautiful thing it is to live under the warmth and light that shines forth brightly from the SON, who died for us and rose again. He fills each day with His goodness and grace. Even in the midst of trials and troubles, the warmth of His grace encourages us and gives us joy. He promises that NOTHING can "separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (cf. Rom. 8:31-39).

In our passage from 1 Corinthians 15, Paul also assures us that Jesus "has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep." Then He adds, "For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive."

Since nothing could stop Jesus from rising, we can be sure that nothing can stop Jesus from keeping His promise to raise us up from the dead. Death will be powerless to hold us as well.

Because Jesus did rise from the dead, we can get up every morning and be sure that Jesus will be with us to bring us through the day with His blessings. He truly lives to watch over us and take care of us as our Good



Shepherd. He feeds and nourishes our soul with His Word and sacraments.

May we rejoice in Christ's resurrection every day and walk in the light of His grace by continuing daily in His Word. May we live with the absolute

confidence that we too will rise to live in the eternal day of heaven. We can count on it, because You Can't Stop the SON Rise.

—Pastor David Reim



## ALARMED NŌ MŌRE

Do you hear any alarm bells?

Did anyone hear them in Noah's day? The Earth was full of filth and malice day after day (Gen. 6:5), imaginations gone amok (much like today?). Maybe some people were upset, but many more thought: "Oh, don't be alarmed."

Don't be alarmed? Did they have no sense of the situation? Noah, the "preacher of righteousness" (2 Pet. 2:5), had given them fair warning.

Many Christians are alarmed today, and should be. Disturbing things have broken out into the open these last few decades. (There is no connection between the words "decade" and "decadent," but one would be apt.) Some alarming things are happening, compared to earlier years in our lives.

My wife and I live in Sun City, Arizona. There are about 45,000 people in this resort-type retirement community, mostly sixty-five to eighty-five years old. Weekly attendance at various local Christian churches is reportedly above 80 percent, as people try to hold on to the religion of their younger years. Some here mistakenly think that this 80 percent is the way things are in the rest of the country!

They are alarmed to find out otherwise, horrified at things going on in various denominations—doctrinal

deviations, sexual abuses, low attendances, sheer and utter blasphemies by some leaders who feel compelled to deny Creation, the Ten Commandments, Christmas, Good Friday, Easter, Judgment—basically Scripture itself—in order to promote very strange agendas.

Don't be alarmed? People of all ages are scared. There's terrorism; a war that is wearying and worrisome; massive corporate corruption; further breakdown in marriage and the home; demand for same-sex marriages; abductions, molestations, murders everywhere; lewd TV programs; the insidious consequences of the theory of evolution; internet evils; cloning; the huge relentless invasion into northern hemisphere countries by world religions which have false gods and false hopes; men's hearts growing cold. You could easily add to the list.

### "Fear not . . ."

But slow down—don't be too alarmed!

How can you say that? Well, it's all been going on, in one form or another, ever since before the Flood, and ever since those waters subsided. We have really been quite insulated here in North America, having had a blessed

existence in many ways. But the evil imaginations and the filth and malice have always been with us. And we knew it all along, for we do happen to teach and preach the doctrine of universal sin.

But today the sins of mankind seem so open and uncontrolled—and then reported to us over and over, every hour of the day, as media people and advertisers rake in millions through the telling. We feel so surrounded by it all. It is hard to feel secure anywhere anymore.

But don't be too alarmed.

Or even better yet, don't be alarmed at all!

Yes—this is just another way of sounding forth the strong Biblical encouragement: "Fear not!" There it is at the incarnation and the nativity (Lk. 1:30; 2:10), words from the angel to Mary, then to the shepherds. And there it is on Good Friday (Lk. 23:40-43) when the penitent malefactor said, in effect, to the other: "Aren't you alarmed at the disaster facing us, and that for good reason . . . ?" But he could not quite include Christ in the same category, but only painfully turn to beg Him: "Lord, remember me

when You come into Your Kingdom." And to this Jesus said, in effect: "Don't be alarmed, for today you shall be with Me in paradise."

There it is again on Easter Sunday morning, where (Mt. 28:5-6) the angel announces: "Don't be alarmed! I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here. He is risen, as He said." And there it is yet again (John 20) on Easter Sunday evening—and again a week later! "Peace be unto you . . ." Don't be alarmed!

Every time we hear the gospel proclaimed and the absolution recited, we are hearing: "Don't be alarmed!" Every time the blessings of our baptism are applied, and every time we receive the body and blood of Christ, we hear it again and again: "Don't be alarmed!" Through Word and sacrament come words of incarnation, nativity, crucifixion, atonement, grace, forgiveness, justification, and now resurrection. Jesus' Resurrection. And our own, as well—your own, dear friend!

We are alarmed no more.

Oh yes, we hear bells. But it's not doom. It's victory!

—Pastor Em. Warren Fanning



*An Easter message from our CLC President—*

## Easter is all about priorities

**"But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ" (Philippians 3:7).**

The Christian life does not consist in the renouncing of all the things of this world in the way the Amish do and

the monks in Luther's day did. The Christian life is a matter of setting priorities and then being able to enjoy all God's gifts in this earthly life. Paul's letter to the Philippians encourages us to "Rejoice in the Lord always!" Easter

sets the proper priorities for us in our Christian walk as we celebrate Jesus who lived for us, died for us, and rose for us. This love of Christ (in the words of 2 Corinthians 5) compels us to no longer live for ourselves, but for Him who died for us and rose again.

I usually can't remember stories or illustrations. But I received this one by e-mail one Friday morning just before beginning work on my sermon. A philosophy teacher had a pint jar. He filled it with large 2- inch diameter rocks. He then asked the class if the jar was full. When they said it was, he proceeded to put in smaller pebbles which filled the openings between the rocks. He again asked if the jar was now full. When the class again said yes, he filled the jar with sand. "Now," said the professor, "I want you to imagine that this is your life. The rocks are the important things—God, the people you love, your health, your children, anything that is so important to you that if it were lost, you would be destroyed. The pebbles are the other things that matter—like your job, your house, or your car. The sand is everything else—the small stuff. If you put the sand into the jar first, there is no room for the pebbles or rocks. The same goes for your life. If you spend all your energy and time on the small stuff, you will never have room for the things that are important. Pay attention to the things that are important to your life. Take care of the rocks first—the things that really matter. Set your priorities. The rest is just sand."

What things used to be important to Paul as the Pharisee Saul? Paul answers in Philippians 3: his circumcision which marked him as "Hebrew of the Hebrews"; his status as a Pharisee;



his zeal in persecuting this new sect of Christians; his own righteousness under the law. On the way to Damascus all these things were revealed as being sand. These things Paul now counted as rubbish or garbage. Paul was willing to lose everything "for Christ." All of these "things" were sand.

The Holy Spirit filled the jar of Paul's life with rocks that mattered. Everything that was now important to Paul as a believer was found in connection with Christ and His death and resurrection.

- Paul had been given the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus as His Lord and Savior. Paul now knew Jesus as his personal Lord. This was now a priority which filled his life.
- Paul was now found in Christ. Instead of the filthy rags of his own righteousness, Paul was covered with the righteousness of Jesus. This righteousness was from God by faith. By faith in Jesus Paul was given the perfect righteousness of Christ. This was a priority which now filled his life.
- Paul knew the fellowship of Jesus' suffering, thus being conformed to Jesus' death. Paul suffered with Christ on his missionary journeys. Even these sufferings were a part of Paul's union with Christ. The sufferings of this present age also high-

lighted the priorities of his life.

- Paul knew the power of Jesus' resurrection victory over death. Not even death could separate Paul from the love of God. Paul's hope in this world was that he would be physically raised from the dead and receive everlasting life. The resurrection is the priority with which God fills the jar of our lives.

Do not be like so many whose end is destruction and whose god is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame (cf. Php. 3:19)—who fill the jar of their lives with sand which crowds out God and His love.

Instead, look forward to the coming of our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. For Jesus "will transform our lowly

body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself" (Php. 3:21). The resurrection gives meaning to our lives. We have been transformed by the love of Christ which changes our priorities and gives us hope in a dying world caring about a dying body.

Because God has first filled your life with these "rocks" in connection with Jesus, there is room for the "sand" of all these other things of life. Easter is all about priorities. May this Easter joy fill the jar of your life so that you also will be able to rejoice in the pebbles and sand of human existence.

—Pastor John Schierenbeck



# The Discourses of Christ

Christ, the Bread of Life

Part One

John 6:22-29

## Doing the Works of God

Several clergymen were being interviewed on a radio program. After one of them made a statement about the importance of faith, another replied, "Oh, I agree that everybody should believe in God, but what really matters is what kind of person you are."

That statement represents the highest to which man on his own can rise in

his thinking about spiritual things: strive to be a good person and live a good life, and God will accept you.

We recognize this same thinking in the question addressed to Jesus in connection with His discourse on the Bread from heaven: "What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?"

The people who asked Jesus this

question were among those who had seen Him feed the five thousand with five barley loaves and two small fish. They were among those who wanted to take Jesus by force and make him king. When He eluded them, they pursued Him until they found Him again in Capernaum.

Jesus told them that they were interested in Him for the wrong reason. "Most assuredly, I say to you, you seek Me, not because you saw the signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were filled." They had seen a great sign and were truly excited about it, but they missed the meaning of it. They thought, "Here is a man who can provide us with unlimited food without our having to work or pay for it. He's the one we want for our king." The miracle of the loaves and fish was a demonstration of Jesus' power and of His love for them as the Son of God, the Savior sent from heaven.

Jesus had bread to give them, but it was a bread far more nourishing and sustaining than the kind they wanted. They had been willing to expend a lot of energy to pursue Jesus. They followed Him and searched for Him until they found Him, all for the sake of food that sustains life only for a day. Jesus told them to use their time and energy to pursue food that gives life, not just for a day, but forever.

### **Gospel Blessings are Free!**

Jesus Himself is the source of that heavenly food. Whoever believes in Him partakes of that food and will live forever, for in Jesus is forgiveness of sins and deliverance from death. We ought to desire this food and go after it with every ounce of energy that we have, but we cannot earn it or buy it.

Jesus says that "the food which endures to everlasting life" is something that "the Son of Man will give you."

The gospel with its eternal blessings is free, as Isaiah foretold when he wrote, "Ho! Everyone who thirsts, Come to the waters; And you who have no money, Come, buy and eat. Yes, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price" (Isa. 55:1).

We know that Jesus is the source of eternal life because "God the Father has set His seal on Him." This seal of the Father is the miracles that Jesus did, including the feeding of the five thousand that these people had witnessed. Those miracles were signs which testified that Jesus is the Son of God.

In his Pentecost address to the people of Jerusalem, Peter said that Jesus was "a man attested by God" to them "by miracles, wonders, and signs, which God did through Him" (Acts 2:22). The miracles of Christ—as reported to us by the apostles who saw them with their own eyes—are still today the seal of God, the assurance that Jesus Christ is the Source of life.

Even after Jesus offered to give them the food that endures to everlasting life, the people were still thinking in terms of works, as though they could earn it. "What shall we do," they asked Him, "that we may work the works of God?"

They heard the word "work" in connection with eternal food and wondered what they had to do to get it. But Jesus answered, "This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent." The Father has sent into the world His own beloved Son to offer Him as sacrifice for the world's sin.

What He wants is that people should believe in Jesus as the One He has sent and trust in Him for salvation.

We know this. Yet do we not find ourselves wondering at times how we who have sinned so much and done so little good can possibly stand before God on Judgment Day?

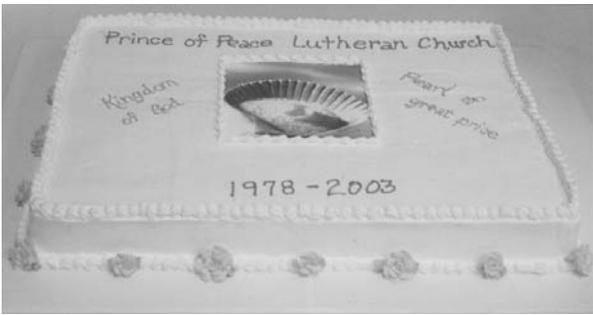
Then let us remember these words of Jesus—that the work of God is above all that we believe in Jesus. The heavenly food which the Son of Man gives us in the gospel gives us eternal life.

—Pastor John Klatt



November 3, 2003 anniversary worshippers in the Loveland chapel (one side).

Other side of the aisle (full story, p.18)



Anniversary cake, made by Prince of Peace member Mrs. Gloria Hanson.



# CROSS PURPOSES



## PASSION REVISIONISM

"Then answered all the people, and said, "His blood be on us, and on our children" (Mt. 27:25). This word spoken by the Jews before the tribunal of Pilate at the trial of Jesus has been moderated in the film "The Passion of The Christ" which was released on Ash Wednesday. It does not appear in English subtitle on the screen. The film, which is said to be the most faithful depiction of the passion of Christ, has with respect to this historical fact fallen victim to the charges of anti-Semitism and political correctness.

The reality is that people can deny truth, but they cannot change it. It cannot be struck from Scripture! The truth is that the people cried, "Away with this man" (Lk. 23:18). When Pilate hesitated, they spoke the words which essentially said, "If this man is innocent, let God be our judge." On Pentecost, to the gathered "men of Israel," the apostle Peter said concerning Christ, "Him . . . ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain" (Acts 2:23).

It is not mean-spirited to point out truth! It is mean-spirited if self-righteous judges in society believe it is their responsibility to stand as judge in the place of God, or if they use the Jews' words of self condemnation as a justification for mistreatment of them. People are not to sit and calculate how they can make sure judgment comes to pass. Judgment belongs to God.

However, there is a way to escape

divine judgment. It is the way of repentance. The Lord Jesus Christ died for the sins of the world, even those who crucified Him! God has no pleasure in the death of the wicked. That is why Jesus died for you and me. Honesty compels us to admit that it is our sin that brought Jesus to the cross. Unless we are willing to be honest, the blessings of the passion of Christ will pass us by, and we too have the blood of Christ on our hands. The penitent sinner—Jew or Gentile—will acknowledge:

Whence come these sorrows, whence this mortal anguish?

It is my sins for which Thou, Lord, must languish;

Yea all the wrath, the woe, Thou dost inherit,  
This I do merit. (TLH 143:3)

As it is, Christ's blood is upon us, not in judgment, but in blessing. For the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin, and where there is forgiveness of sins there is also life and salvation. The grace of Christ is magnificent to all those who believe Christ's person, work, and word!

The great tragedy is that as Passion revisionism, or denial, is perpetuated, the grace of God that brings salvation from judgment passes by the perpetrators and deniers. To Jew and Gentile alike it is addressed: "Repent ye, and believe the gospel" (Mk. 1:15).

—*Pastor Daniel Fleischer*

# CONVENTION(S) 2004

In annual meetings of the congregations of the CLC, thoughts are turning to the summer Convention. Cooperative budget estimates are being prepared in preparation for Convention budget discussions. Congregations are also electing delegates to represent them at Convention. In the CLC each congregation is entitled to two lay delegates as well as the pastor and male teachers. Elections are held at each Convention.

The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (LC-MS) is also holding a Convention this summer. In many ways there are obvious contrasts between the LC-MS and the CLC Conventions. One is in the elections.

In elections of the CLC, nominations for offices are made from the floor. There is no preconvention electioneering, no slates, no stump speeches, no recruitment, and no publicity campaigns. If this seems archaic, it is. But it still works. In the CLC the office seeks the man, not the man the office. It reflects our confidence that the Lord will lead us to the right man.

The LC-MS is electing a president, as is the CLC. A conservative organization within the LC-MS has assessed the situation (*Affirm*, Vol. 27, No.4, Dec. 2003). According to *Affirm*, "four groups have encouraged congregations to nominate names." Of the four groups one "clearly" represents "the liberal wing of the LCMS." One candidate will probably have more nominations than other conservatives "because of the fraud perpetrated" by another of the four groups. The fraudulent group is said to be "an online computer chat room—run by a pastor in Arkansas." Still another group is called a "left-wing group." Finally, besides the four groups listed by *Affirm*, it reports that the list does not include three more groups. Each of

these groups has its particular favorites. In addition, some try to balance the election of a president with that of vice-president—a kind of "keep your eye on the other guy." Others try to promote a president and vice-president who are compatible.

Hardly can there be a dirtier political campaign than when it is conducted in the church! It almost makes the present U.S. presidential primary season look like a respectful love feast.

This is where one arrives when the Word of God is no longer the sole and absolute authority within the church.

## "Worth Fighting For"??

One of the conservatives being promoted is Kurt Marquart. *Christian News* supports him. There is no question but that he is more conservative than some others being promoted. Yet here is what he has said (as reported in *CN*, May 19, 2003) and reported by *Steadfast*. "But now is not the time to abandon our Synod. It is not a false, heterodox church, but an orthodox church with serious troubles. For confessionally sound pastors and people to leave the synod now is simply to hand it over to those who hate its strict, confessional stand. Besides we didn't get into this mess in a hurry, and we're not going to get out of it quickly either. But, to put it colloquially, 'the old girl is worth fighting for'! Think of all the generations of devout souls

who prayed and sacrificed for this synod—and of those many who still do." [*Steadfast* is published by the Evangelical Lutheran Congregations of the Reformation, Inc. in Australia. They entitle their article "Unionism Wins the Day in the Missouri Synod." We do not know if they just arrived at that conclusion, but they have recognized what has not been a secret for a long while.]

Does Scripture mean anything at all? "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves" (Mt. 7:15) comes to this observer. How about the "avoid them" of Romans 16:17? The deterioration in the LC-MS has been going on for at least sixty years. The synod of such stalwart confessors as Walther, Stoeckhardt, and Pieper is but a shadow of that which they passed on to their heirs. Patience in dealing with open error and errorists is not going to restore the LC-MS to orthodoxy. The condition of the LC-MS today is a sad but unmistakable commentary on "A little leaven leavens the whole lump"

(1 Cor. 5:6).

We of the CLC certainly do not minimize the challenge of being a confessional church in this very non-confessional world. In our almost 45 years, we have been confronted with numerous challenges to our steadfastness. Some challenges have come from the outside; some have arisen within. We make no claims to superiority, and certainly not to perfection. Honesty compels us to say that we are here in spite of ourselves. The Lord has been good to us.

This we can say, in every doctrinal issue before us the question has been, "What does the Lord say?" We have strenuously resisted the devil's attempts to make of any particular issue a "we against them" scenario. We are not the one to say whether we have succeeded. There may be those who say we haven't. Be that as it may, the CLC is still united in its conclusion that "if it is not Scripture it is not Lutheran." If a teaching or practice is not scriptural, it has no place in the church, and neither do those who teach contrary to Scripture. With Scripture



Ground-breaking for a new facility at Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, Loveland, Colorado was August 3, 2003. Pastor Peter Reim leads the service.

in hand let each make his case, and then follow his conscience.

And let no politics, evasion of issues, or parsing of words have place among us. Let nothing deter us from holding fast the faithful Word as we have been taught. "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions

among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment" (1 Cor. 1:10).

Missouri's Convention will make the public press and make waves in the church world. That of the CLC will not. Given the contrast of the two Conventions, we like it that way!

—Pastor Daniel Fleischer

## The Fourth Commandment

*Dear Mom & Dad,*

Man, has a lot happened since the last time we talked!

School is still going OK. Most of my classes are pretty tough, but I'm sticking with the work and asking for help when I need it, just like you told me. Things are going better with Prof. Jacobs. I've been thinking about what you told me, Dad, that his classroom is his realm and I owe him respect for his position. I remember what you said about Jesus, the Son of God, having to submit to His human teachers and parents. And He did that for me, in my

*475th Anniversary of Luther's Small  
and Large Catechisms  
(1529-2004)*

**What Luther said:**  
"Ah, doctrinal sermons in the church do not edify young people. But quizzes at home, definitions of the Catechism, and questions concerning the confession of the faith are of much greater benefit. They are, of course, troublesome, but they are very necessary."

place! I finally went up to Jacobs' office to apologize for that 'outburst' I

### The Fourth Commandment

You shall honor your father and mother that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth.

*What does this mean?*

We should fear and love God that we do not despise nor anger our parents or superiors; but we should honor, serve, and obey them, and give them love and respect.

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#### Large Catechism Comment:

*"The reason He has given children into our charge is that we might train and govern them according to His will, as He has commanded us to do; otherwise God would have had no need of father or mother. Therefore let everyone know that he is required, as a matter of the highest duty and on pain of losing the favor of God, to bring up his children in reverent fear and knowledge of God."*

had in his class. I think we're going to get along O.K. now.

But, I've got some other things I wanted to talk to you guys about.

Do you remember when I was in like seventh grade and you wouldn't let me go to that party at Brandon's? I cried and pouted all week, but you wouldn't give in. At that party that weekend all of those guys got in trouble for underage drinking. Then you wouldn't let me hang out with Brandon at all any more. At the time I thought your decision was really lame, and you were just butting into my life, and I held it against you for a long time. Now that I'm up here and I see some of these people making poor choices in their friendships, I can see what your side of the story was all about. So many people are ready to lead others astray or simply use them for their own purposes. You taught me to stand with the Lord and trust Jesus, even if it costs me a friendship because He's my first and truest friend. After all, how many of our friends would actually die for us! Your training and Jesus' guiding has kept me from making some really bad relationship decisions.

Speaking of relationships—I'm seeing a girl now. We're not real serious or anything, just enjoying each other's company. But it does bring some questions to mind. How do you know if a girl is the right one for you? Most of the guys up here don't care if she's the "right one." They just want to get what they can from them and toss them away. I want more than that. I want what you guys have. I know your marriage hasn't been perfect—you've had your arguments and struggles (probably more than I'll ever know!) but you two always pulled together around

God's Word. Whenever a family crisis came up, I remember you, Dad, pulling out that old beat-up Bible of yours and saying, "Let's see what the Holy Spirit has to say about it." I admit I haven't turned to my Bible as often as I should but I do remember the passages I learned at home and in catechism, and I remember your example.

I was sad to hear the news about Grandma. You know, ever since we had Grandma come and live with us, she has been such a blessing to all of us. But, Mom, you've been a blessing to her too. I'm sure that putting her in the nursing home was not an easy decision, but she will be getting the daily care she needs. I think it's great you're volunteering at the home on your days off. I'm sure she appreciates seeing you so often. On my next vacation home we'll have to visit Grandma and take her out for a fish fry like old times, O.K.?

In answer to your question, yes, I am getting to church every week. The third Sunday of each month I hitch a ride with Aunt Flo and Uncle Henry. We usually go out for lunch afterwards. I even got one of my classmates to come along a couple of times—it's just like you said, Dad, it never hurts to ask!

I got to get going. I've got a study group to go to tonight.

Say "Hi" to Bill and Mary for me. Tell the rest of the gang I'm sending them their own letter.

See you next vacation; until then I will remain—

*Your Loving Son*

P.S. Mom & Dad, thanks for everything!

—Teacher David Bernthal

## Total Redemption Through Christ Jesus

Redemption—the work of Christ Jesus, our Lord—was very personal to the author of the Catechism, Martin Luther.

Luther had lived for many years under a shroud of uncertainty, guilt, and fear. In those early years of his life, even when he had entered the monastery, he did not feel the peace of God in his heart, but rather the wrath of God.

When the Spirit opened Luther's heart to comprehend the forgiving grace of God in Christ Jesus, it all became very personal to Martin Luther. And so Luther wrote his explanation of the redeeming work of Christ—so that we also might comprehend in a very personal way this wonder of God's forgiving grace.

No matter who you might be, no matter where in the world you happen to live, where you have gone or what you have done in your life, this truth remains: "He has redeemed ME, a lost and condemned creature."

Yes, by nature each of us shares in that characterization. By nature I am lost and condemned, without hope, without God in the world. Yet Jesus has redeemed me, He has "purchased and won ME from all sin, from death, and from the power of the devil." He saw ME in the dreadful plight which MY sin brought upon me, all my sins, yes, even those which very privately haunt my conscience in the dark hours of the night. Jesus has redeemed me

*475th Anniversary of Luther's Small  
and Large Catechisms  
(1529-2004)*

**What Luther said:**

*"The Catechism is doctrine at its best. Therefore it ought to be constantly preached. My personal wish is that it be preached daily and simply read from the book."*

from that sin also, and He has delivered me from the death and condemnation which that sin so rightfully demands.

Freeing me from the guilt and condemnation of sin also frees me from the power of the devil. The devil is very personal in his attacks and builds on a sense of personal guilt, shame, and despair. The fact of total redemption through Christ Jesus dismisses the accusations of the devil; the love of Christ for each of us redeemed sinners disarms the devil's temptations.

Yes, this redeeming work of Christ is a very personal, life saving and liberating wonder of grace!

### **Personal Also For Jesus**

It is also very personal for Jesus. "He has redeemed me . . . not with gold or silver, but with His holy precious blood and His innocent suffering and death."

During the Lenten season, as we review the passion of our Lord, we are vividly reminded that our redemption was not just a cold and impersonal

transaction that took place. Jesus couldn't just plop down before God a ransom in gold to redeem our souls. No, it took something much more precious—more precious than we could ever pay, much more than a king's ransom, for "Those who trust in their wealth, and boast in the multitude of their riches, none of them can by any means redeem his brother or give to God a ransom for him, for the redemption of their souls is costly" (Ps. 49:6-8).

The price necessary to redeem mankind from sin and death was a very high and personal price. It required the life-blood of the Son of God. It was His holy precious blood that alone could redeem us to God. It was His INNOCENT sufferings and death that He paid out to God in His passion, even as He endured in His own body the agony of the cross, and in His own soul the curse of God for OUR sin. This work of securing our redemption was very personal indeed for Jesus, our beloved Savior.

The purpose of this redeeming work of Christ is also very personal. He did

this "that I should be His very own, and live under Him in His kingdom and serve Him in eternal righteousness, innocence, and joy, just as He is risen from death, lives and reigns to all eternity." Yes, it was with a very personal intent that Jesus redeemed us to God. He was establishing the basis of a personal relationship with Him and His Father in heaven. He brought us to God that we might belong to Him. We are gloriously bound to Him in this life so that, freed from slavery to sin, we might serve Him in eternal righteousness.

The righteousness which He has won for us is credited to us already now, in this life. This imputed righteousness of Christ makes the flawed deeds of love done for Him right and acceptable before God. This personal relationship of service to our Lord brings a meaningful purpose to our otherwise vain lives. And so it is our personal joy to serve our Savior and our God. THIS IS MOST CERTAINLY TRUE!

—Pastor Theodore Barthels



## 2003 Immanuel College Maintenance Volunteers

From May to December 2003, ILC had 150 volunteers converge on the maintenance department looking for work.

Members from fourteen congregations volunteered a total of 2038 hours. They worked on 235 of the 314 projects on our volunteer list. Some came by themselves, while others came as part of a group. Some worked for a few

hours, while others stayed for weeks. Again this year one congregation brought a busload of workers.

The tasks involved maintenance on eleven of our 32 buildings, janitorial tasks, furnishing repair, many grounds-



related jobs, and on-call duty during winter nights and weekends. Projects completed ranged from tasks that took five minutes to one which required 400 hours. They also ranged from "non-critical" to "must be done today."

The 2038 hours volunteered are equivalent to four 40-hour workers during the thirteen weeks of summer, or one 40-hour worker all year long. Were we to hire these jobs out, we would have spent approximately \$20,000 in labor costs!

Volunteers ranged in approximate age from seven to eighty. Skills available were across the board. We had volunteers from those we showed how to use a broom to those who do roofing for a living. No one was turned away. Many brought their own equipment to use, either to save on ours or because we did not have them. Some even donated materials and equipment.

We thank the Lord for sending His representatives to help us at ILC.

The 2004 volunteer season will be in full swing again starting Monday, May 24, 2004. If you wish to participate in this effort, now is the time to start

planning by marking your calendar or by getting your church group organized, so several can come. Housing is available.

Many offerings also have come in through the ILC Improvement Fund (IIF), which can be given right at your local congregation. This fund has helped complete a good number of larger necessary projects, which are unobtainable through the general budget. This is also a great option for those who find they cannot assist in person because of distance, time, or other factors. This IIF has become a necessary means for the maintenance of an aging campus.

The new volunteer work list will be developing over the remainder of this school year. If you would like a copy when it is completed—or would like to make your interest known—please call, write, or e-mail.

—Luther Sieg, Immanuel College  
Facilities Manager

Phone (715) 836-6637

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## Observing 25 Years in Loveland

In an afternoon service Sunday, November 9, 2003, Prince of Peace congregation, Loveland, Colorado, observed its 25th anniversary.

A folder inviting people to the anniversary doings contained the Scripture verse Matthew 13:45-46, with a striking picture of a shell and pearl. The invitation read:

*We have so much to celebrate—because we have shared twenty-five years, creating lasting memories between fellow Christians.*

*We have so much to celebrate—because*

*in a world where so much is unpredictable we have found ONE pearl right here, right now.*

*We have so much to celebrate—because there's a bright future ahead of us, just waiting to be filled with everlasting joy.*

For the worship service, Pastor Peter Reim had put together audio recordings of sermon portions by the congregation's former shepherds. Inspiring! One of those former pastors, Michael Sprengeler, then delivered an anniversary message on Revelation

7:9ff. Instrumentalists from the congregation accompanied one hymn. Children of the church sang special music in another.

A fellowship meal (catered by member Mrs. Marilyn Kolb!) was held at a designated location, the hall being adorned with wall hangings, VBS banners, and photo albums depicting a quarter century of God's grace.

The souls in attendance, including CLC friends from area sister churches, showed themselves anxious to praise the Lord God for their discovery of that pearl of great price—the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace.

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*"A History of Prince of Peace"—*  
(adapted from the Anniversary folder)

*"And His Name shall be . . . the Prince of Peace" (Isaiah 9:6). Into this tumultuous world, God has given the Savior, whose unworldly peace comes to all who hear the Word of God and keep it. Aware of the precious gift they possessed in the pure word of God, a fledgling group of Lutheran Christians in Loveland, Colorado, chose to focus attention on the Lord of Life and Prince of Peace by taking that same name for their congregation.*

*Supported by the efforts of Redeemer Lutheran Church of Cheyenne, Wyoming, Prince of Peace*

*congregation was incorporated on November 2, 1978, being served by Pastor Mike Sydow out of Cheyenne, sixty miles to the north. At the end of 1979, the congregation consisted of ten communicant members and one unconfirmed soul. The congregation joined the Church of the Lutheran Confession (CLC) in 1980. Membership began to grow, largely by relocation of CLC members to the Northern Colorado area. In 1981 the congregation obtained a MEF (now CEF) loan from the CLC and built a modest but comfortable church-parsonage building on a 1/3 acre lot in a developing area of northeast Loveland.*

*When it became evident that the needs of both Redeemer congregation and Prince of Peace were more than could be supplied from Cheyenne, the congregation called Pastor Robert Reim, who at the time was serving Trinity Lutheran Church of Broomfield. In June of 1980, Pastor and Mrs. Reim were relocated to Loveland, and Prince of Peace gained its first resident pastor (Trinity was eventually closed, with many of its members becoming members of Prince of Peace). Pastor Reim retired in April of 1985. Pastor Paul F. Nolting accepted the call of Prince of Peace, serving from 1985-1988. Pastor Michael*



Women of Prince of Peace (WOPOP) in meeting, with their Pastor.



Pastor Reim turning ground (8-30-03).  
Front: David Noeldner and son Marcus.

*Sprengeler accepted the call. He was installed on Reformation Day 1988 and served until October, 1995. In January, 1996, the congregation called Pastor Peter Reim, who has served to the present time.*

*Prince of Peace congregation has experienced moderate numerical growth, but the real story is told in the fact that the gospel of our Savior, and the spiritual, enduring peace He bestows, has been faithfully and regularly proclaimed here to many, many individuals. . . . We are seeing children once baptized now confirming those vows as young adults. The future belongs to the Lord, but our congregation stands ready to continue her gospel witness, and has recently purchased nearby land for relocation and expansion. We humbly thank God for all His lovingkindnesses.*

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**CORRECTION:** The writer of "The Greatest Week" in last month's issue suggests the following replacement sentence: "On the fifth day of His creation, God started to bring forth the abundance of creatures living in the water, air, and later on land." Land animals, of course, were created on day six.—*Editor*

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## Announcements

**Pacific Coast Pastoral Conference  
Ascension Lutheran Church  
Du Pont, Washington  
April 27-29, 2004**

**Agenda:**

- + Old Testament Exegesis—Pastor Terrel Kesterson
- + New Testament Exegesis—Pastor Delwyn Maas
- + Book Review of Walther's *Law And Gospel*, Theses IX (on-going study)—Pastor Robert List.
- + Perspicuity—Background of Christian Doctrine, Abandoned by the Modern Church—Pastor Jay Hartmann.
- + Overview of and Allowed Activities of Satan—Pastor David Reim.
- + A Study of "Living God" and Other Related Phrases (both Hebrew and Greek)—Pastor David Povolny.
- + A Study of Post-Conversion Cooperation With the Holy Spirit—Pastor John Hein.

**Conference Chaplain:** Pastor Nathan Pfeiffer  
**Communion Service Speaker:** Pastor Steven Karp

—*Pastor Terrel Kesterson, Secretary*

### Minnesota Delegate Conference

**Date:** Sunday, June 13, 2004

**Time:** 3:00 p.m.

**Site:** Faith Lutheran Church, New Ulm

**Agenda:**

- \* CLC Convention Prospectus and Board Reports
- \* Business Meeting

**Chaplain:** Pastor Bruce Naumann

Please announce attendance to the host congregation.

—*Pastor Wayne Eichstadt, Secretary*