

# LUTHERAN SPOKESMAN

## CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Therefore you shall  
lay up these words of mine  
in your heart and in your soul,  
and bind them as a sign on your hand,  
and they shall be as frontlets  
between your eyes.

You shall teach them to your children,  
speaking of them when you sit in your house,  
when you walk by the way, when you lie down,  
and when you rise up.

And you shall write them on the doorposts  
of your house and on your gates.

DEUTERONOMY 11:18-20

NEW KING JAMES VERSION



AUGUST 2009, VOL. 52 NO. 2



## ***The Element of Obedience in Christian Education***

Can it not be said that Isaac was a well-educated man? This writer dares to say so, especially in view of his obedience. We further posit that Christian education without the necessary and godly element of obedience is mostly an education that is deficient.

Two incidents in Isaac's life reveal this Christian element. When it was time—even past time—for him to take a wife, Isaac submitted to Abraham's plan to find for him a God-fearing wife. The servant Eliezer found Rebekah for him and, at barely his first glance at her, Isaac fell in love!

Indeed, obedience paid off.

When Isaac was yet a lad, God had commanded Abraham to offer him up as a sacrifice. Not only was Abraham obedient, but Isaac also. What disobedient son would travel days to the site, lug the wood for the fire, and bravely ask about the 'missing' sacrifice?

Neither is there any mention of a struggle as Abraham bound his son; nor is there any report of terrible screams as the kill-knife was raised.

Isaac truly had learned obedience to his father.

Even so Christ was obedient to His heavenly Father. A passage from Hebrews

(5:8) states that though Christ "was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered."

As true God, Christ was perfect in every way, yet He also learned obedience in the days of His flesh. As a young boy He was subject to Joseph and Mary. In His public ministry Jesus practiced obedience to His Father's Word and so overcame the temptations of Satan. When He faced His passion with tears and prayers, when He recoiled from the terrible death on the cross, when He suffered the torture of hell to pay for the sins and guilt of the world with His substitutionary sacrifice, in all such cases Jesus learned the ultimate obedience by actually suffering in that obedience.

### **Our Complete Savior**

Once having passed this test of obedience unto death and "having been perfected [in His assigned goal], He became the Author of salvation for all those who obey Him" (5:9).

Jesus is more than an example of obedience. Without His obedient suffering He would not be our complete Savior.

At times young people assume their school hours are a form of suffering. When

**Postmaster: Periodicals postage paid at St. Paul, MN 55113 and additional offices (825-580). ISSN#0024-7537. Send address corrections (Form 3579) to Lutheran Spokesman, 2750 Oxford Street North, Roseville MN 55113**

The Lutheran Spokesman is published monthly by the Church of the Lutheran Confession, 2750 Oxford St. N., Roseville, MN 55113, and is an official organ of the Church of the Lutheran Confession (CLC). Website address: [www.CLClutheran.org](http://www.CLClutheran.org). Editor: Paul Fleischer, 1741 E. 22nd Street, Cheyenne, WY 82001-4138, E-Mail to [paulgf@qwestoffice.net](mailto:paulgf@qwestoffice.net); Assistant Editor: Paul R. Koch; Artists: John Fox, Matthew Schaser; Staff: Theodore Barthels, David Bernthal, Wayne Eichstadt, Warren Fanning, Daniel Fleischer, Joel Fleischer, David Fuerstenau, Mark Gullerud, John Klatt, Paul Krause, Joseph Lau, Nathanael Mayhew, Paul D. Nolting, Nathan Pfeiffer, David Reim, Peter Reim, Andrew Schaller, Thomas Schuetze.

Material submitted for publication should be sent to Editor Paul Fleischer six weeks before date of publication. Announcements and other short notices should also be sent to Editor Fleischer.

Business Manager: Benno Sydow, 2750 Oxford St. N., Roseville, MN 55113. E-Mail to [BennoSydow@yahoo.com](mailto:BennoSydow@yahoo.com). Individual subscriptions {foreign-U.S. currency only}: \$13.00 {\$17.00} for one year; \$24.00 {\$32.00} for two years; \$35.00 {\$47.00} for three years sent in bulk to congregations: \$11.00.

Spokesman Internet access: <http://www.lutheranspokesman.org>

Printed in U.S.A..

I was a lad, I once complained about the unfairness of a certain teacher—she was unfair and I did suffer!—yet my parents quickly responded, telling me to quit whining and study harder. “She is your teacher! Listen to her,” they said.

If we are well-schooled in the Christian arts, then we will listen to our Lord and do what pleases Him. We will strive to honor father and mother, as did Isaac and Jesus. We will strive to obey them that have the rule over us, for this is good in God’s eyes.

But the greatest “command” of all is to believe in God’s Son. Spirit-given faith—which itself is obedience to God—is worked in our hearts by God’s Means of Grace, the gospel in Word and Sacrament. One time the people said to Jesus, “What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?” Jesus answered and said to them, “This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent” (Jn. 6:28f).

Through faith’s obedience Christians live with God and for Him. What higher

education is there?

Of course, no act of obedience which our Lord teaches and urges upon us can ever be meritorious; nor will any act of obedience be as difficult as the things which the Lord Himself was willing to suffer to provide forgiveness and salvation for sinners.

Hence, by grace we follow the Teacher and learn from Him. Our Master challenges His own, “If you love Me, keep My commandments” (Jn. 14:15).

St. John, who himself learned directly from Jesus, writes: “For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments, and His commandments are not grievous” (1 Jn. 5:3).

What a privilege to learn from the Master in whom are “hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.” What great truths we learn, and what hope is being perfected in us through true Christian education!

—*Pastor David Fuerstenau  
Ketchikan, Alaska*



The book of Deuteronomy is the address Moses delivered to the children of Israel prior to his death and the entry of the people into the Promised Land.

God had promised to bring the Israelites safely into that land, giving it to them for their possession. If the people expected the LORD to keep that land in their possession, however, they were expected to follow the LORD and not turn from Him.

To ensure that this happened, Moses told the people that they should “...lay up these words of mine in your heart and in your soul, and bind them as a sign between your eyes. You shall teach them to your children, speaking of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way,

when you lie down, and when you rise up” (Deut. 11:18f). The people were obligated to keep the Lord’s words always in their minds and before their eyes.

Throughout history, some of the more zealous Jews have taken these words literally, fashioning small leather boxes in which are placed small scrolls with the law written upon them. When these small boxes were tied between their eyes, the wearers felt they had found a fail-safe way to observe this stipulation.

If God’s Word was to be preserved among them, they were also to make that Word a part of their children’s lives. Proverbs 22:6 states, “Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old

he will not depart from it.” St. Paul tells us what this training will involve: “And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord” (Eph. 6:4). This principle was carried out in the life of Timothy to whom Paul wrote, “From childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus” (2 Tim. 3:15).

The Lord wants us to bring up our children to believe in Him. The means by which this is accomplished is through the gospel in Word and Sacrament. Moses gives all parents and grandparents, aunts and uncles and baptismal sponsors an important step in accomplishing this, when he says, “You shall teach them to your children, speaking of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up.”

### **Educating the Soul!**

Let us be talking to our children or grandchildren about Jesus. Let us teach them the Word, making it a topic of regular conversation in our homes. This will ensure that our children have the

background necessary to pay attention in Sunday School, Church, and confirmation class where they will be taught the same things they hear at home.

How important is Christian education! Our Lord brings it up frequently in His Word. A solid Christian education in home and church encourages children to continue to attend church and Bible Class after confirmation, and when they are on their own. With such a background they will be more likely to bring their own children up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

Christian education is so important because it involves the education of the soul. Its goal is that children might be made “wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.” We wish to teach our children of their Savior that they may join us when we take possession of the eternal Promised Land of heaven.

Public schools can educate, but they cannot give children what God gives our children through the Holy Scriptures—namely, faith in Jesus Christ as their Savior from sin. Only through faith in Jesus will our children have everlasting life.

When the children of Israel turned away from the LORD and His Word, their children paid a disastrous price, for they were carried out of the Promised Land



*Great grandchildren of Pastor Gordon & Mrs. Claudine Radtke at the "Double Anniversary" celebration (story. p 17)*

by conquerors. If our children are not taught the Word, the cost may be equally disastrous, for “how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard, and how shall they hear without a preacher?” (Rom 10:14)

In Deuteronomy Moses speaks of a blessing for the faithful Israelites and a curse for the unfaithful. We know the blessings promised to us in connection with faith in Christ Jesus. We know the curse of everlasting punishment connected with unbelief.

Our merciful God who has forgiven

our sins does not want us to live in fear of punishment; He wants us to live lives of faith and joyful confidence that He will keep us in the faith unto everlasting life, and joyful in that—at death or on the Last Day—we SHALL BE received into everlasting life.

That is the ultimate blessing of having been brought up with God’s Word! Truly, blessed are they that hear the Word of God and treasure it!

—*Pastor Joel Fleischer  
Marquette, Michigan*



## **The Discourses of Christ**

Faith and Duty—Luke 17:5-10

# **Lord Increase our Faith!**

The instruction of our Lord to His disciples concerning faith and duty is part of a long series of discourses and parables recorded in Luke.



Leading up to our verses of interest, Jesus had warned about giving offense—about “offending one of these little ones” (that is, those new and as yet inexperienced in the faith). He had spoken to them concerning their relationship to a brother. In love and out of concern for the brother, Jesus’ disciples were to be ready to rebuke him and, as he repents, to be just as ready to forgive him many times over.

Thereupon the apostles—as distinct from the larger gathering of disciples—said to the Lord, “Increase our faith.”

## **The Nature of Faith**

As disciples of the Lord Jesus under the influence of the Holy Spirit, we know what is good and pleasing to the Lord and what reflects His love. Nevertheless, we still have our sinful flesh influencing us to not always do what we ought or desire; therefore, even as we pray “Lord, I believe; help thou my unbelief” (Mk. 9:24), in the context of the Christian life and witness we will join the apostles in saying, “Lord, increase our faith.”

Jesus proceeded to tell them that if they had faith “as a mustard seed,” they would have the power by verbal command to transplant a rooted tree from the earth into the sea and it would obey.

The Lord was not telling them to attempt what is otherwise humanly impossible in the natural world. However, such an attitude of faith as that of which He spoke would be necessary as they went about preaching in places where humanly speaking it was not thought possible that the kingdom of God

should grow and flourish.

With such an attitude the man of faith is willing to undertake things which seem beyond the scope of human reason and ability if thereby God's will is accomplished and His name glorified. He is willing to undertake things for the Lord even though the odds speak against it. Think of Luther and the Reformation; think even of the beginning of the Church of the Lutheran Confession almost fifty years ago. By any rational assessment neither should have succeeded, but at the Lord's bidding the Spirit emboldened men of faith to act. We of our generation pray, "Lord, increase our faith" for the time in which we live.

Our age is rewards oriented. It is also an age in which rights and expectations frequently trump a sense of responsibility. The world has a difficult time understanding such instruction as the Lord gives to the children of the kingdom. The words of the Savior—Himself the Servant who went uncomplainingly forth to Calvary bearing our sins—sound a bit harsh to our ears, and even more so to unregenerate ears.

"And which of you, having a servant plowing or tending sheep, will say to him [the slave holder] when he has come in from the field, 'Come at once and sit down to eat'? But will he not rather say to him, 'Prepare something for my supper, and gird yourself and serve me till I have eaten and drunk, and afterward you will eat and drink'?"

Working in the field was hard work, but the servant's job was not complete until all his tasks had been finished. Under such circumstances, could the master be expected to say "thank you" to the servant who was simply fulfilling his responsibility? "I think not." Relaxation as well as dining, you see, was the servant's privilege only after he had completed his tasks!

"So likewise you, when you have done all those things which you are commanded, say, 'We are unprofitable servants. We have done what was our duty to do.'"

### **A Proper Attitude in His Service**

Jesus' words, addressed to the apostles,

served to prepare them and to establish in them the right attitude toward their apostolic ministry. In that sense these words are addressed also to us in our service and witness to the Lord. The Lord Jesus called the first disciples—and He has called us—to service in His kingdom.

What is done unto the Lord in exercise of our call is not worthy of special merit or commendation. Martin Franzmann has put it like this: "He asks of them a servant's [slave's] total devotion which works with no thought of reward, a love which considers a duty done the least that love can do" (*CONCORDIA BIBLE WITH NOTES*, p. 145).

Luther wrote, "Through our union with God by faith we receive everything from God for nothing (*gratis*); through love we give God everything for nothing" (*What Luther Says*, Vol. 1, p. 503).

Must we not confess that in Christ Jesus we have received overflowing much from our Father—forgiveness, peace with God, hope of heaven?! Scripture says that of those who have received much, much is required (see Luke 12:48).

In a practical sense, followers of Jesus have the right attitude when, having done what they were called to do, they see themselves as "unprofitable." That does not mean that they are useless; it does mean that they have no claims on God for simply doing what is required.

Fellow disciples, we should expect no special thanks—indeed, it is a privilege even to have been called by grace into the service of the Lord.

Jesus spoke to establish a point. The not-so-hidden secret is that our gracious



*Colleague Elton Hallauer greets Pastor Radtke at the reception*

God Himself gives to His kingdom workers—without reference to any specific responsibility—the strength to do what He asks of them.

Saddled as we are with our sinful nature, at times the task or tasks will seem beyond us, our wills may begin to flag, and we may grow weary of giving ourselves wholly to Him and His service. Yet He is there to answer our frequent plea, “Lord, increase *our* faith.”

Let us listen once more to Franzmann: “And Jesus does increase [our faith] when

He assures them [and us] that it is not the power of their believing but the power of the God in whom they believe that achieves the impossible....”

Yes, Jesus will even increase in us the joy of spending ourselves completely for Him “in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness”!

To such service God help us. Amen!

—*Pastor Daniel Fleischer*  
*Corpus Christi, Texas*



## **The Psalms** **The Christian's Prayer Book**

### **A Departing Prayer**

Envision the scene: Groups of pilgrim worshippers reverently leaving the temple in Jerusalem after the evening sacrifice and entering the streets of Jerusalem to begin their separate journeys home...perhaps among them Zacharias and Elizabeth with tiny son John, or Joseph and Mary together

#### **Psalm 134**

**BEHOLD, bless the LORD, all you servants of the LORD, who by night stand in the house of the LORD! Lift up your hands in the sanctuary, and bless the LORD. The LORD who made heaven and earth bless you from Zion!**

with the twelve-year-old Jesus. The smoke from the altar of burnt offering where the unblemished lamb was laid in anticipatory sacrifice has dissipated in the darkening sky, and the last notes of the temple choir have faded from all ears. The twenty-four Levites, three priests, and the captain of the temple guard have taken up their positions to watch and guard with care the sacred premises from sunset to sunrise.

The pilgrims turn back for a final look

at the temple of their God, observing some of these men upon the temple walls; with pious hearts they address those servants of the LORD in song:

*“Behold, bless the LORD,  
All you servants of the LORD,  
Who by night stand in the house of the LORD!*

*Lift up your hands in the sanctuary,  
And bless the LORD!”*

What a privilege those Levites and priests enjoyed—being able to remain in God’s presence, to serve in God’s house, to instruct with God’s Word, and to lead God’s people in worship!

They needed the prayers of their brethren to remain strong and vigilant, faithful and true to their calling. Like Aaron and Hur of old holding up Moses’ hands (cf. Exodus 17:12), so the departing pilgrims held up the hands of the LORD’s servants as they blessed His holy name within His appointed sanctuary!

In response, those servants of the LORD sang out their benediction upon the departing pilgrims:

*“The LORD who made heaven and*

earth

*Bless you from Zion!"*

Whom did the pilgrims come to worship and whom did the Levites and priests seek with faithfulness to serve? None other than the LORD Himself—the Creator of heaven and Earth—who in love had determined to bless His fallen creation with redemption.

With joy this final “Song of Ascent” was sung as both pilgrims and servants exchanged their closing blessings!

Oh, that today as well both parishioner and pastor would remember to pray for each other!

Pastors need the prayer-support of their members. They need the strength rightly to divide law and gospel; they need the courage to preach the truths of God’s Word—even when such truths run contrary

to the politically correct norms of our day; they need the wisdom to counsel sheep that may be straying from the Master’s pastures; they need the necessary compassion to guide the lambs that lack understanding.

Likewise, parishioners need the prayers of their pastors; they need the strength to live their lives in accordance with their LORD’s word; they need the insight to recognize opportunities for witness; they need the faith to resist the temptations of Satan and to overcome his roadblocks to their faith.

Therefore, let pastor and parishioner encourage one another to “bless the LORD” even as we mutually pray that the LORD, our Creator and Redeemer, might “bless” us!

*—Pastor Paul D. Nolting  
Mankato, Minnesota*



*ILC graduate Erik Nelson with Prof. John Ude*



*Graduate Ben Meyer with mother Cheryl and grandmother Ruth*



*Grad Christa Lentz with parents, Sue & Steve Lentz*



*Grad Kathryn Barthels with parents, Pastor Theodore & Denise*

**"When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts to men" (Ephesians 4:8).**



## **Divine Love—The Greatest Gift**

*Devotional Studies on 1 Corinthians Chapter 13*

*"And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love"  
(1 Corinthians 13:13)*

### ***A Love That Will Always be There***

*Seventh in a Series*

“...Love never fails. But whether there are prophecies, they will fail; whether there are tongues, they will cease; whether there is knowledge, it will vanish away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part will be done away” (1 Cor. 13:8-10).

A song from the '80s laments “Love Stinks!” It’s true that there are many disappointments in life, often simply because we place our hopes in other flawed, sinful human beings. Then we are bound to be disappointed. Even the emotional attraction that human beings have for each other (sometimes referred to as “love”) wanes and fails. When dating couples “break up,” they may conclude that “love stinks.”

While the feelings human beings harbor for one another do change, the love that Jesus Christ has for us never fails. It’s a good thing too, because we desperately need His love to remain constant.

Christ’s love (and our need for it) will never cease, fail, or fall away and be lost. No matter how much this world changes, grows, and fades, true love as exhibited in our Lord Jesus Christ—and to some degree reflected in our lives—never fails.

In writing to the Corinthian Christians the Spirit of God revealed through the Apostle Paul that some things would fail, cease, and vanish in the days that followed.

“...Prophecies, they will fail...” When these words were written, the Holy Spirit was still communicating with the men chosen to put down His Word in print (2 Peter 1:21). These “holy men of God” were being given the very words and thoughts to write so that we may know the will and promises of our God.

In some cases the Holy Spirit gave the ability to foretell future events. While the facts (the truths!) endure, eventually the gift of prophecy was no longer needed. We may still prophesy in the sense that we speak words from God, yet the words spoken are not new, but a communication of what is written.

“...Tongues, they will cease...” when these words were written, the Holy Spirit gave some disciples the special ability to speak in another language they had not been taught. This ability was given on Pentecost so that people from different nations could hear the gospel of salvation in Jesus Christ—and then carry that powerful message with them.

The gift of tongues bore witness to the Spirit’s presence, and when the message was interpreted, Christ was glorified. When the Scriptures were complete and available, there was no longer a need for this gift.

“...Knowledge, it will vanish away...” Knowledge is “the intellectual gift of formulating, coordinating, and setting forth divine truth,” (Lenski, *Interpretation of First Corinthians*, p. 563). While we know what Christ has done, our depth of knowledge differs one person to another. Thus each of us needs to grow in knowledge and faith.

In this life we will never know all things with complete comprehension and complete mastery (cf. Romans 11:33). Many things we now do not fully grasp (for example: the Trinity, the Incarnation of Christ, Divine Providence, etc.), but at the second coming of Christ, we will no longer have need of prophecy, tongues, or knowledge.

The need of love, however, will always be there—especially of Christ’s love for us.

By faith we know Christ and possess

His love. We have been justified by faith and will finally enjoy eternal life apart from sin and death—all because Christ’s love never fails. He is constant in His grace, His

mercy, and His love.

—*Pastor Andrew Schaller*  
*Watertown, South Dakota*



## *Surveying CLC History*

### **From the 25th Anniversary Booklet (1985) "Reflections...Projections"**

#### Number Eight: Our Publications

The *LUTHERAN SPOKESMAN* is older than the Church of the Lutheran Confession. It was launched by a conference in Cheyenne, Wyoming, in May of 1958. The first editor, reporting the conference’s action, commented: “Hereby pastors and congregations will find opportunity to exhort one another in the Word.” Because they were so isolated geographically, they recognized the need to support and encourage one another by some means of communication.

The first issue was dated June 1958; the first press run was 200 copies in mimeographed form. After only one year, the number of subscriptions increased to 1000; today [1985] the number is near 2700 [\*2114 in 2009—Ed.]. The *LUTHERAN SPOKESMAN* is now an official organ of the CLC.

One would expect those early issues to contain much news about congregations, pastors, and teachers rallying about the Truth. But there was also an abundance of spiritual meat for hungry souls. Over the years this periodical has addressed the concerns of Christians in practical matters pertaining to their individual, congregational, and synodical lives. Doctrinally oriented articles have also enriched and bolstered the readers’ faith-lives.

A publication of a slightly different nature is the *JOURNAL OF THEOLOGY*,

intended especially, but not exclusively, for those who are engaged in the teaching and preaching ministries. Indeed, many of the original 80 subscribers were laymen. Readers now [1985] number about 300 [\*239 in 2009—Ed.], among whom are also those outside our fellowship.

Although the *JOURNAL OF THEOLOGY* did not appear on the scene until it was launched as an official organ of the CLC in January 1961, the need for a theological journal was recognized already in the early years of the Interim Conference. The first editor stated the need by listing the aims of this journal: To explain to interested parties the reason for the existence of the CLC and to touch on the questions in controversy from time to time; also “through the positive study of Scripture and its saving doctrines,” to widen the range of interest, deepen the measure of understanding, enrich the store of knowledge, and cultivate the practical skills of its readers.

It would be difficult to measure the blessings our Lord has granted the CLC through our *LUTHERAN SPOKESMAN* and *JOURNAL OF THEOLOGY*. May it ever be so!

—*Pastor Elton Hallauer (Morris,*  
*Minnesota)*

*See picture of Pastor Hallauer, p. 11.*



*Vernon Sprengeler and (editor) Pastor Fleischer of Redeemer, Cheyenne. Vernon was the first Business Manager of the Lutheran Spokesman!*

\*NOTE: Current subscription numbers for the *Lutheran Spokesman* and the *Journal of Theology* have been included. The *Spokesman* editor, together with the synod Board of Education and Publications, has been seeking reasons which may account for the decreasing numbers. As far as the *Spokesman* is concerned, in our considered opinion the decrease in recent years is due largely to 1) natural attrition and 2) the fact that the magazine is now available free on the internet.

Regarding the *Spokesman* as a monthly visitor in our subscribers' homes, the feedback received is overwhelmingly positive. After fifty-plus years of publication, the magazine continues to be welcomed and appreciated for its solid biblical, devotional, and confessional Lutheran content—as well as for reports it contains regarding the work of the Lord as carried on by the CLC.

We implore our faithful readers to pray for the “ministry in print” in which the *Spokesman* continues to be engaged. As with most newspapers and magazines, subscribers are our “life blood.” We would like to hear from you, if you will, some unique ways you may have found or used to get the magazine into the hands of others—service personnel, boarding students, relatives and friends, etc.— for their spiritual benefit.

Let us together pray that the magazine may continue to be a faithful “spokesman” of and for the gospel of Jesus Christ and Him crucified, as well as of and for His Word of Truth in the divinely inspired, sacred Holy Scriptures!

—Editor



## ***Chapel Talk on Chapter One of the book: The Church of the Lutheran Confession-Fifty Years***

Dear Friends in Christ, In another year or so the Church of the Lutheran Confession, the CLC, will be fifty years old. I am no longer a teacher here at this school, but I still have an office in Northwest Hall. My room is called the Archives, and I am the archivist.

This means I am trying to keep track of the historical records of our church. Since I am the archivist, I have been asked to help compile a history of the last fifty years, and I'm working on this almost every day. At present I'm thinking the history will have 22 chapters, some short and some long.

What I would like to do this morning is introduce you to Chapter One of this history, entitled “The Grace of God.” My text is First Corinthians 15:10: “But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but

more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but



the grace of God which was with me.”

These words were first written by the Apostle Paul, who looked back at his own life with amazement. He had been a strict Pharisee who hated Jesus just as much as any Pharisee. He had thought Jesus was a fraud and altogether worthy of being nailed to a cross as a criminal. When Jesus’ disciples started telling people that He had risen from the dead, Paul really got angry and tried to do everything he could to put a stop to all this talk about Jesus as the Messiah who had risen from the dead. He tried to hurt Christians in any way that he could. He was most certainly heading to hell as an enemy of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

But then there was that day when the risen Jesus Himself appeared to Paul and convinced him that He was truly alive, and that whenever Paul was hurting followers of Jesus, he was actually persecuting Jesus, the very Son of God. From that moment on, Paul became a follower of Jesus and told everyone he could that Jesus was the Son of God and the Savior of the world.

The word “grace” means undeserved love, and that is the word Paul used to explain his life. By the grace of God Paul was what he was. Without the grace of God Paul would have remained a proud, unrepentant Pharisee, fighting against God with his whole being. He would have ended up in hell. But in undeserved love God brought him to understand who Jesus was and is. Then God in His undeserved love for Paul chose him to be a missionary, to bring the good news of Jesus crucified and risen to the Gentiles, to people who had never heard of Jesus. What is more, God in His undeserved love worked through the preaching of Paul to bring many others to faith in Jesus.

Paul knew that he did not deserve any of this love. He did not deserve to be called out of the darkness of unbelief into the light of faith. He did not deserve to be chosen as a missionary of the gospel; he did not deserve to be the person God used to bring others to faith in Jesus. It was all grace, grace, grace! “By the grace of God I am what I am,” he said. “And His grace toward me was not in vain; but I labored

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**By the grace of God our church body came into existence. By the grace of God it continues to this day. By the grace of God it will continue as long as God wills.**

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more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.”

What does all this have to do with the history of our church body? Just think of it this way. None of the members of our church deserve to be Christians. None of our pastors deserve to be pastors. None of you teachers deserve to be teachers. None of you students deserve to be students. It is God in His grace who has chosen us to be His, who has worked in our hearts through the gospel to get us to believe in Jesus and confess our faith in Him. It is God in His grace who has called pastors to be pastors and teachers to be teachers and missionaries to be missionaries. It is God in His grace who has enabled you to be enrolled in this Christian school. And when we do our work in a Christian way and teach the Word of God in truth and purity and live Christian lives and witness to others, it is not really we who are doing it but, as Paul said, it is the grace of God that is with us and is working through us. And God’s grace toward us has not been in vain.

I do not suppose that we can honestly say that we have labored more abundantly than others, but we can say that we have labored for almost fifty years, and the Lord has blessed our labors. By the grace of God our church body came into existence. By the grace of God it continues to this day. By the grace of God it will continue as long as God wills. In the history of our church body we are going to mention many names, names of pastors and teachers and other leaders. But as we name these names, we want everybody to know right from the start that whatever good is done by any of these persons, it is the grace of God that has done it, as Paul says. (Let us sing Hymn #374.)

—*Pastor David Lau  
Eau Claire, Wisconsin*

# "OUR JUBILEE IN CHRIST"

REDEMPTION FOR THE PAST. HOPE FOR THE FUTURE.



CLC "CHARTER MEMBERS" HAVE BEEN INVITED to submit their personal jubilee memories and reflections for our readers; happily, we have received a number of shorter anecdotes and longer stories to share beginning with this issue and continuing into 2010.

We "kick off" these memories and journeys with one of the longest of these stories as submitted by Richard C. Kuehne, who wrote: "...I've been pondering your invitation to submit an article for the *Spokesman* on the history of the CLC. Since I was privileged to attend most of the meetings before the CLC's formation, I felt almost a duty to share some of it with you and the *Spokesman's* readers...."

We thank him for sharing! We feel Mr. Kuehne lays out the historical dates and other detail in a most helpful fashion, both as a review for old-timers as well as for an introduction to the synod—its history and beginnings—for the younger generation.

—*Editor*



## Richard Kuehne's Jubilee Memories

*"Remember those who...have spoken the word of God to you, whose faith follow..."*  
(Hebrews 13:7)

From its beginning and during the past fifty years, the CLC has been blessed by God with good leaders, faithful to God's Word and wise. I was baptized as an infant and confirmed at Immanuel Lutheran Church, Mankato, Minnesota. One of our faithful leaders was Pastor Gervasius W. Fischer, who was called to Immanuel as co-pastor in 1949.

As a conservative pastor it was difficult for him since he was serving with an older pastor who had been at Immanuel for many years and who was involved in unionistic practices contrary to the Bible teaching on church fellowship. Nevertheless, Pastor Fischer taught us the scriptural teaching on church fellowship and the points of controversy with the Missouri Synod. This led to a division in the congregation, with a large number of members leaving to form Our Savior's Missouri Synod church.

During this time I was completing junior college at Bethany (ELS, Mankato, Minn.), senior college at Northwestern (WELS,

Watertown, Wis.), and then attending Bethany Seminary (ELS, Mankato), under the faithful guidance of Dean Norman A. Madson. During one summer while in seminary I had the privilege of conducting services for Pastor Lester Schierenbeck who was then serving a church in Austin, Minnesota. Another opportunity was to translate two of my sermons into German (with help) and to conduct two German services at Immanuel, Mankato.

After graduating from Bethany Seminary in 1956, I was happy to serve my vicar year as 7th and 8th grade teacher at Immanuel Lutheran School (Mankato), where my brother, sister, and I had been students, as had my father, his two brothers, my grandfather, and several of his siblings.

At the annual meeting of Immanuel in January, 1957 (while I was serving as secretary of the congregation), it was resolved to declare the congregation *in statu confessionis* ("in a state of confession") over against the Wisconsin Synod and to begin withholding mission funds.

This action was taken because the

Wisconsin Synod erred when it failed to sever fellowship in 1955 or 1956 in accordance with Romans 16:17—which passage it had applied to the Missouri Synod at its 1955 Saginaw Convention.

In May, 1957, I was called to serve Immanuel, Winter Haven, Florida, a new mission congregation supported by Immanuel, Mankato. I accepted the call and had my first service there June 9, 1957. Fortunately, I was still able to attend most of the meetings leading up to the formation of the CLC.

On October 20, 1957, I was privileged to return to Immanuel, Mankato, for their 90th anniversary services. Prof. Edmund Reim had the sermon for the Sunday morning German service. I was privileged to preach for the English service, and Pastor Gordon Radtke had the afternoon message entitled “An Historical Resume of Christian Education at Immanuel these 90 years” (Zechariah 8:3b-8). In the evening service Prof. Reim had the message with the theme, “Standing Before the Throne of the Holy God” (Isaiah 6:1-8). At the end of the service I was ordained by Pastors

Fischer and Radtke, with Dr. Norman A. Madson assisting.

In early May, 1958, I have the fond memory of car-pooling with Pastors Arvid and C.M. Gullerud from Mankato to the conference at Cheyenne, Wyoming. Highlights of the conference were papers by Rev. Winfred Schaller on Church Fellowship and by Prof. E. Reim on “Things to Guard Against In Our Approach Toward Realignment.” Prof. Reim stressed the spirit of humility and faithfulness toward God’s Word “which is always most critical of oneself.” Other items were the report on missions, authorization of a church paper, and the Vesper service with Holy Communion.

From January 13-15, 1959, the Interim Pastoral Conference met at Immanuel, Mankato. The highlight was the thorough discussion and completion of the confession on *Concerning Church Fellowship*, with the conference agreeing on its doctrinal content. Prof. E. Reim and Rev. George Barthels served as editing committee for the final draft. Another paper discussed was the subject of *Concerning Church and*



*Richard Kuehne's ordination at Immanuel Lutheran Church, Mankato, Minnesota, October 20, 1957: a young (!) Pastor Gordon Radtke, Dean Madson, Prof. E. Reim, R. Kuehne, Pastor Fischer*

*Ministry.* A third paper was on Christian Education and the need for a school for training pastors and teachers. Rev. Maynard Witt, Spokane, Wash., served as chairman for this conference, with Prof. Reim elected as Interim chairman, and Rev. G. Radtke as Interim Secretary-Treasurer.

While missing the Interim Conference at Mankato in January, 1960, I had the privilege of attending the Interim Conference at Red Wing, Minn., Rev. G. Barthels, host pastor, in August, 1959; the “organizing” conference at Watertown, S. Dak. in August, 1960, Rev. Chris Albrecht, host pastor; and the recessed organizing conference at Sleepy Eye, Minn., January 24-26, 1961, Rev. Paul F. Nolting, host pastor. It was in Sleepy Eye that we signed the register as charter members of the CLC. Rev. Paul Albrecht of Bowdle, S.Dak. was elected synod president, Rev. M. J. Witt, vice-president, Rev. C. M. Gullerud, Moderator, and Rev. Paul F. Nolting, Secretary. Other leaders during these early years were Rev. Egbert Schaller and Prof.

Reim’s three sons, Pastors Robert, Norbert, and Rollin Reim. (I will mention again our CLC’s long-time Secretary, Paul F. Nolting, and his scripturally-correct booklet, “Hard Sayings.”)

For those faithful leaders already mentioned and many others down to the present day, we thank the LORD of the Church who has blessed us so richly. We also thank Him for the blessing of Immanuel Lutheran College and the many faithful servants who have faithfully served the Lord and the CLC down to the present day.

On the topic of schools, it would be an added blessing if all of our congregations, both self-supporting and mission congregations, could have a Christian Day School in this increasingly worldly and unbelieving age. May the Lord continue to bless our CLC and keep us all faithful to Him and His Word!

—Richard C. Kuehne  
(Winter Haven, Florida — Spring 2009)



## ***A 50th Anniversary Reflection***

### **...Leading to the Formation of the Church of the Lutheran Confession (CLC)...**

What follows are a few excerpts from Chapter Five—The Interim Conference as they appear in “The Church of the Lutheran Confession—Fifty Years.” The latter book is being written and prepared by synod Archivist and Pastor, David Lau, under the auspices of the synod’s Board of Education and Publications.

The excerpt printed here fills in a few more details regarding the Interim Conference Meeting held in Cheyenne, Wyoming in 1958—one of the meetings which predated the official establishment of the CLC at Trinity Lutheran Church, Watertown, South Dakota, in 1960. The excerpt includes a

listing of names of those in attendance at that meeting.

Notice that Richard Kuehne (author of the accompanying article) speaks of that Cheyenne meeting from first-hand experience.

In his book, Pastor Lau writes:

*One of the most productive conferences during the interim was held at Redeemer Lutheran Church in Cheyenne, Wyoming from May 6-8, 1958. Twenty persons are recorded as being present, and there was correspondence from nineteen others. The names of those present: pastors Edmund Reim, Richard Kuehne, Arvid Gullerud, C.*

*M. Gullerud, Daniel DeRose, Otto Eckert of Winner, Herbert Witt, Robert Dommer, T. Pederson, Arthur Schulz, M. J. Witt, Norton Carlson, Leonard Bernthal, Gordon Radtke, Winfred Schaller, Jr., teachers Leroy Greening and Ed Baer, and lay delegates F. Mathison, A. Tietz, and G. Schreyer. Correspondence was received from sixteen pastors who later became members of the Church of the Lutheran Confession and also from A. T. Kretzman, Wilbert Gawrisch, and J. C. Dahlke.*

*In its first issue of June 1958 the Lutheran Spokesman reported: "What brought these men together? They came from varied and far-flung sections of the country: the Northwest, and the Southwest; from Wisconsin to Colorado. It was not geographical factors which brought them together. They came from different synods, from different ethnic groups, nor did they all share the same status: some had severed their relations with their former synods and some had membership in synods of the Synodical Conference. But each one had been alone, solitary in the deepest sense of that word, out of harmony with the position and practice of the various bodies of the Synodical Conference. They knew that this meeting was*

*of God, for it was dedicated to the task of keeping God's Word in its purity. Yes, love for God's truth drew all to Cheyenne and was the common denominator of this group. By the Word the Father was setting the solitary into families (p. 4)."*

*Because of the mention of the birth of this magazine (!), we reprint yet another paragraph from Chapter Five of "The Church of the Lutheran Confession—Fifty years":*

*One major decision of the conference was to begin publication of The Lutheran Spokesman and to have it come out six times a year. Several persons were nominated for editor, including Edmund Reim, Robert Dommer, Leonard Bernthal, and Leroy Greening. The man chosen as editor was Winfred Schaller Jr. [pastor at Redeemer, Cheyenne, Wyo.-ed.] with Norton Carlson as co-editor. The March 1959 Lutheran Spokesman reported that the first two issues were mimeographed (first issue: 200 copies; second issue: 700 copies), and that after that they were printed by a company in Cheyenne, Wyoming, the home of the editor. By March 1959 there were about 1,000 subscriptions. Very soon Daniel DeRose was added to the staff as Church News Editor, and Vernon Sprengeler became the business manager. As*



*Attendees at Interim Conference, Redeemer Lutheran, Cheyenne, May, 1958. Left to Right: R. Dommer, N. Carlson, L. Bernthal, a young (!) G. Radtke, A. Schulz, ?, E. Reim, D. DeRose, ?, G. Schreyer, ?, R. Kuehne, ?, C.M. Gullerud, A. Gullerud, W. Schaller, H. Witt. (Please help us identify any of the unknowns!)*



*Vernon Sprengeler and Pastor Fleischer in front of the same church in Cheyenne 51 years later! Besides the larger greenery, the church siding and door have been replaced.*

*Michael Buck wrote in his history of the CLC, “this instrument of circulating God’s Word would provide needed direction to those who were conscience-bound” (Michael Buck: “A History of the CLC,” p. 4)*

Looking forward to its hard-copy availability (goal for publication is Christmas 2009), we heartily recommend to our readers “The Church of the Lutheran Confession—Fifty Years.” We have been privileged to

preview some fifteen of the planned 20-22 chapters. Including thorough coverage of the doctrinal controversies which led to the synod’s formation, the book will surely be the most exhaustive historical review of the synod which this magazine, by the grace and mercy of God, continues to represent.

*—Editor (again pastor at Redeemer, Cheyenne!)*



## ***Double Anniversary of Gordon Radtke***

Here’s a man who wears his years easily; he gives the impression of being younger than ninety years. Perhaps it’s his quick smile and ready wit, marks of a person young at heart. That’s it: a person who wears his years so well must be young at heart.

The Lord Jesus has kept Gordon Radtke young at heart through sixty-five years in the public ministry—from seminary graduation in 1944 through pastorates in

Wabasha, Red Wing, and Belle Plaine, Minnesota, then at Monroe, Michigan and at Mankato, Minnesota.

The Lord has put his talents and interest in Christian education to good use all along the way, especially at Immanuel congregation of Mankato—and when the Lord called Gordon to the faculty of Immanuel Lutheran College of Eau Claire, Wisconsin (1966), he helped educate many CLC young people and future clergymen.



*Luther Sieg making a presentation to his pastor. The nifty clock had a plaque which reads as follows:*

“Presented to Gordon Rattke in recognition of your sixty-five years of service in the preaching ministry and in gratitude to the Lord.

We continually remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Thessalonians 1:3).

May the Lord graciously bless and guide your future with His marvelous light!”

[signed] Morning Star congregation, Fairchild, Wisconsin; June 17, 2009.

Probably three-quarters of our CLC clergy have been students of Professor Rattke in high school, college, and Seminary classrooms.

Upon his 1995 retirement (at the age of seventy-five!) from Immanuel Lutheran College of Eau Claire, Morning Star Lutheran congregation of Fairchild, Wisconsin, called Gordon back into the parish ministry.

So after a forty-five minute trip from Eau Claire, he arrives at church to conduct the Sunday service and the Bible class. During the week he has instruction classes, contacts members and prospects, is available for pastoral counseling, and an occasional wedding or funeral is handled as one would expect of any full-time pastor.

Gordon credits his Lord and Savior for supporting him during these sixty-five years in the public ministry as well as for the ninety years of his time of grace. In his own words:

“ALONE TO GOD THE GLORY for His guidance, care, encouragement, and corrections as He, with divine patience, used the witness-services of His called



*CLC President John Schierenbeck with the Radikes*

servant Gordon Rattke for 65 years. To that end our Lord also provided for His servant a very special ‘help-meet’ (Claudine) to assist and facilitate in his daily ministrations. We, Gordon and Claudine, hereby express our thanks and appreciation to all of you for your faith-designed anniversary greetings, prayers, and gifts. Oh, behold how the goodness of our Lord causes our cups to ‘overflow’ (Psalm 23:5b)!”

We heartily add our voices in thanks that our God has so demonstrated His on-going

mercy to one of His special children.

Family members (wife Claudine, children John and Johannah, six grandchildren, and nine great-grandchildren) chose an opportune venue for honoring Gordon by hosting a reception for friends and associates at a time when his CLC clergy associates were available—namely, after the communion service of the biennial CLC General Pastoral Conference, in the evening of June 17th at Messiah Church of Eau Claire.

While pictures were being taken, we shared fine camaraderie and gorgeous servings of pie; the anniversary cake with ninety candles was a fire hazard, no doubt, but it all went smoothly enough, and the proverbial good time was had by all.

Congratulations and blessings to both of you, Pastor Gordon and Mrs. Radtke!

—Reporter/Photographer Paul R. Koch



*Caught on graduation day at ILC:  
Top left, Joshua Sieg (parents, Luther, Gwenda, & siblings); left, Thomas Naumann (parents, Pastor David & Desirae, grandparents Don & Joyce Ohlmann); top, Thomas Albrecht (parents, Pastor James & Jolene); bottom left Kelsey Albrecht (with parents, Chris & David); bottom Luke Wilke (with parents, Pastor Mike & Gloria)*





## *The Word from Immanuel*

*Chapel talks to the student body of Immanuel  
Lutheran College, Eau Claire, Wisconsin*

### *Joined to Christ*

**(Please read Romans 6:3-11)**

One week ago a child was born to my daughter and her husband. On the same day my father-in-law passed away. The Lord gave and the Lord took away. Blessed be the name of the Lord.

The next day this child was embraced by God in the sacrament of baptism and adopted as His own child, redeemed, restored, forgiven through Jesus' priceless blood.

Yesterday morning my sister-in-law informed us that her brother had died from drowning.

Yesterday at the victory service in memory of my father-in-law [Pastor L. W. Schierenbeck—ed.] the pastor announced that Lowell Moen had passed away. Lowell One week ago a child was born to my daughter and her husband. On the same day my father-in-law passed away. The Lord gave and the Lord took away. Blessed be the name of the Lord.

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Yesterday at the victory service in memory of my father-in-law [Pastor L. W. Schierenbeck—ed.] the pastor announced that Lowell Moen had passed away. Lowell served as the ILC business manager for many years.

This morning I heard over the radio that a former Congressman, Jack Kemp, had died.

Birth and death have been meeting together this past week. Of course, there have been thousands more births and

deaths in the past few days.

At some time in the past those who died had been born. At some time in the future those who have been born will die. However, there is a very real difference between one group of dying persons and another—there are only two groups.

“...Do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection, knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. For he who has died has been freed from sin. Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him. For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Romans 6)

The difference between the two groups of people is Christ—being united with Christ. Those who are united with Him share in His resurrection. The rest do not.

#### **Linked FOREVER With Christ!**

The Apostle Paul presents baptism as the sacred act that links us to Christ. The

“The difference between the two groups of people is Christ—being united with Christ. Those who are united with Him share in His resurrection. The rest do not.”

baptism of my granddaughter joined her to Christ. The baptisms of my father-in-law and of Lowell Moen joined them to Christ. These two are now sharing in the full benefits of Christ’s resurrection. As for the baby, as each of us who has been baptized into Christ, she has put on Christ and now shares in the benefits of Christ’s resurrection which we have here on Earth: forgiveness, life, and salvation.

Baptism is like a spiritual time machine. Because of the Word of God, which is in and with the water, baptism transports the sinner back 2000 years. It joins us to Jesus on the cross, in the grave, and in the resurrection. As surely as Jesus died, so did we.

What a miracle of God’s grace this is! We don’t see it. We don’t feel it. We believe it, because God says that it is so. “...We were buried with Him through baptism into death...and if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection....”

How old are you? How long ago were you baptized? How far away is your death? When is the last time you thought of your

baptism? When is the last time you thought of your death?

Yet, both of these are very real...right now! Right now your baptism is a very real assurance and comfort for you. Right now the seeds of death are lurking within your bodies.

Right now you can say, “I died with Christ. I rose with Christ. I live with Christ. I will live with Him forever.” That’s what your baptism tells you right now.

It tells you also that when you die, you will go to be with Christ. “Otherwise, what will they do who are baptized for the dead, if the dead do not rise at all? Why then are they baptized for the dead?” (1 Cor. 15:23) We were baptized for life and for death.

Joined to Christ in baptism, we are joined forever. No one can take away our baptism from us. Think about your baptism. Treasure your baptism. And in the hour of your death, comfort yourself with the knowledge that God joined you to Christ on the cross, in the grave, and in His resurrection.

“Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him. For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God.”

Even so, Lord Jesus, comfort our hearts. Amen.

—Prof. John Pfeiffer



*ILC's New Academic Center blends in wonderfully with its campus surroundings.*



## *Closing Concert and Graduation*

Immanuel Lutheran High School, College, and Seminary  
Eau Claire, Wisconsin  
May 22-23, 2009

Immanuel Lutheran College (ILC) presented its 2009 Spring Concert at Messiah Lutheran Church, Eau Claire, on Friday evening, May 22, to a full church of close to 500 pleased auditors.

The program of sacred song followed the theme “When He ascended up on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts to men” (Ephesians 4:8). With flute, trumpet, and organ accompaniment, the two choirs led Immanuel Lutheran College (ILC) presented its 2009 Spring Concert at Messiah Lutheran Church, Eau Claire, on Friday evening, May 22, to a full church of close to 500 pleased auditors.

The style of songs ranged from wake-up-call and soaring praises to plaintive prayers, spirituals, and “Amazing Grace” in swing tempo. (You will be able to hear/view it on the Messiah Website or from a CD that’s in the works. It was uplifting!!)

Next morning, back in the Fieldhouse on the campus of ILC, the school year came to a close with the Commencement Service as faculty and graduates entered the hall to the resounding strains of the Processional Hymn,

“Through the Night of Doubt and Sorrow” (TLH #481).

Pastor Vance Fossum, Chairman of the ILC Board of Regents, assured the graduates that “We want you to really amount to something”—and it’s out of this world (1 John 3:2)! Pastor Fossum pointed out that the new Academic Center Building (already in service) is not the central point of our attention, but rather the graduates as God’s spiritual building of living/lively stones, created in Christ Jesus for His glory and dedicated to serving souls with the saving Word of God.

College Dean John Ude presented Erik Nelson with the Bachelor of Arts degree, preparing him to enter the Seminary department (with Mark Tiefel) next fall; two-year Associate of Arts degrees were presented to Sara L. Haensgen, Benjamin A. Meyer, and Frank C. Wittorp.

Thirty-one high school graduates received their diplomas from Principal Jeffrey A. Schierenbeck, preparing them for college careers or employment opportunities.

This observer noted that at least two-



*'09 ILC High School  
Grads in front of  
Ingram Hall*





*Below: Hannah Gerbitz (parents, John & Chris); right Stephanie Lau (parents, Prof. Joseph & Julie); Kaiser Starkey (parents, Pastor Edward & Janice)*



thirds of the graduates are children of former ILC students—and a high percentage of those parents are active in the preaching or teaching ministries of the CLC. That’s wonderful! We thank the Lord for them, and we beseech Him to bring more young people from Christian homes to prepare themselves at Immanuel Lutheran College for privileged opportunities to serve Jesus in His Kingdom.

It’s always uplifting to hear the “Alma Mater” sung so lustily by the assembly\*. Here ‘tis:

*Nestled in the quiet beauty  
of the tall green pines,*

*God has set our Alma Mater,  
guiding hearts and minds.  
Built on Jesus’ words of promise  
- - - O Lord, guide her well!  
Thus may e’er our Alma Mater  
be Immanuel! Amen!*

—Paul R. Koch, Reporter/Photographer

\* We have discovered that the tune is “Far Above Cayuga’s Waters,” which is the same as Cornell University’s alma mater. Its lyrics were composed in the 1870s and set to the tune of a popular 1857 ballad by H. S. Thompson about a heroine dying of tuberculosis.



## **ILHS Mankato Graduation**

On June 7, 2009, Immanuel Lutheran High School-Mankato, Minnesota, graduated seven seniors and sent them on their way into future endeavors.

During the years of learning in their homes and at Immanuel, the graduates were equipped with the necessary education to receive a high school diploma; still greater is

the instruction they received in the unmatched truth of God’s Word.

Through their Christian education a foundation was laid for the graduates’ lifetime study of God’s Word and growth in faith in their Savior. The senior class verse reflected the importance and essence of their Christian education: “The fear of the Lord



2009 graduates: Meredith Friedrichs, Ethan Gibson, Benjamin Grabow, Sierra Kellogg, Shelby Meyer, Jarrod Schreyer, Ryan Stearns

is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding” (Prov. 9:10).

Class valedictorian Ryan Stearns addressed the assembly, reflecting on the high school journey now complete and the departure now at hand. The class goes forward with thanksgiving for blessings received and with trust in the Lord’s guidance in the future.

The graduates’ past and future was the focus of the service theme. As a Scripture reading, Psalm 1 contrasted the way of the godly and ungodly. “Oh, that the Lord Would Guide My Ways” became a hymn-prayer that all future paths would be guided by the Lord’s Word and blessed by His grace.

The class hymn, “On Eagles’ Wings,” proclaimed the Lord’s promise of renewed strength along the way for those who “wait on the LORD” (cf. Isaiah 40:30-31). The High School Choir added its praise through several anthems; the Benediction and final hymn (“Go, My Children with My Blessing”) sent the graduates forth with the LORD’s blessing.

Pastor Wayne Eichstadt addressed the class on the basis of Proverbs 30:18-19 and encouraged each graduate to “Go on Your Amazing Way.” The writer of the proverb, Agur, remarked that four things were too wonderful for him to understand: the way of an eagle in the air, the way of a serpent on the rock, the way of the ship in the midst of the sea, and the way of a man with a virgin. In comparable ways the path of a believer is also beyond human comprehension.

The graduates’ past is amazing, for like all sinners they were redeemed by Jesus, their Savior. They were brought to faith to receive the blessings of Jesus’ work and have been blessed

in countless ways throughout their lives. The graduates’ future path, though unknown, promises to be just as amazing because the Lord will continue to lead them in His way, lift them up, enabling them to safely navigate through the stormy seas of life and keeping them securely in His mercy and grace.

Such is God’s promise to each of His children so that we all can go on our amazing way, led by our Lord and Savior!

*Christ be my Leader by night as by day;  
Safe through the darkness, for He is the way.*

*Gladly I follow, my future His care,  
Darkness is daylight when Jesus is there.*

[Lutheran Service Book, 861:1]

—Pastor Wayne Eichstadt

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