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LUTHERAN SPOKESMAN

"...The Scripture Cannot Be Broken." (John 10:35)



The Church shall never perish! Her dear Lord, to defend,
To guide, sustain, and cherish, Is with her to the end.
Though there be those that hate her And strive to see her fail,
Against both foe and traitor She ever shall prevail.

(Christian Worship #538:3)





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When Jesus said, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature," He did not say how to get there. See story on page 10.
Above: Typical day commuting in India.



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All Saints' Day

A Minor Festival With Major Comfort

*“I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened
in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you,
the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints”*

(Ephesians 1:18, NIV).

As you read this article, there's a festival fast approaching on the church year calendar. It's a festival that doesn't receive much attention these days. It is "All Saints' Day." It falls each year on the first day of November.

How and when did the Festival of All Saints originate, and what is its significance? In the days of the early church, when Christianity was an outlawed religion, followers of Jesus were subjected to bitter persecution. Many were killed for refusing to knuckle under to the authorities and renounce their religious beliefs. It was during this period of open hostility toward Christians that the church chose a day of the year on which to remember those who had been martyred, and to praise God for His mercy in preserving them in faith amidst the fiery trials they faced. The name they ascribed to the day was *All Saints Day*. Later, all who died while anchoring their hopes in Jesus were remembered on this day, with thanksgiving to God.

What spiritual benefits did early Christians derive from remembering believers who had gone on ahead of them to heaven? They were many, and they are the same benefits that we may derive for our lives as present-day believers. Consider that just like those early Christians, we may receive strength for our walk of faith as we reflect on the goodness of God. It is God Who has used His Word to create faith in Jesus in the hearts of countless thousands born in unbelief, and Who has used that same Word to keep them in faith to the end of their lives. We may be spurred on in our Christian calling as we remember how we are part of the glorious band of blood-bought souls. We are among those whom Jesus purchased with His atoning death to be His own, and who will never be separated from His love. This, despite the raging of Satan and hatred of the world which are as bitter in their opposition toward Jesus and His people now as they ever were. In the words of a favorite hymn,

The Church shall never perish! Her dear Lord, to defend,

To guide, sustain, and cherish, Is with her to the end.
Though there be those that hate her And strive to see her
fail, Against both foe and traitor She ever shall prevail.

(*Christian Worship #538:3*)

As we recall saints of the past whom God preserved in their faith, we are encouraged to keep our eyes fixed on Jesus as they did. We're reminded of the importance of setting our hearts on things above as they did, instead of on earthly things. Our spirits are buoyed by the knowledge that the goal of our faith is identical to theirs: *"an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time"* (1 Peter 1:4-5).

All Saints' Day is not as widely observed in the church as it used to be. Yet it is a festival worth retaining on the calendar. It provides an opportunity to praise God for the redeeming love He has shown to unworthy sinners, and to be comforted by the prospect of the bright future that awaits all those who anchor their hopes in Christ.

For all Your saints, O Lord, Who strove in You to live,
Who followed You, obeyed, adored,

Our grateful hymn receive.

For all Your saints, O Lord, Who strove in You to die,
Who counted You their great Reward,

Accept our thankful cry.

They all in life and death, With You, their Lord, in view,
Learned from Your Holy Spirit's breath To suffer and to do.

For this Your name we bless And humbly pray anew
That we like them in holiness May live and die in You.

(*Christian Worship, #555*)



Thomas Schuetze is pastor of St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church in Lakewood, Colorado.

Heaven is Our Home!

Elvis Presley sang “Home is where the heart is.” Computer techies would suggest “home is where your Wi-Fi connects automatically.” Poet Robert Frost said, “Home is where, when you have to go there, they have to take you in.”

How about you? Where is your “home?”

After being gone from “home” with my wife to the Canadian Rockies recently, I know how great it is to be back “home” in the USA.

“Home” is where we live. It is where we have been, where we can get comfortable, where we are.

But how good of an idea is it to get comfortable—here?

We know God’s original idea was that this world would be “home” for humanity. His good earth was to be the place where the crown of His creation would “*be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it*” (Genesis 1:28).

But after the entrance of sin and death through man’s falling for the devil’s temptation, God didn’t want us living in this setting forever, and so blocked any access to the tree of life (Genesis 3:22).

Instead God, acting in His grace, carried out His plans that had been in place from all eternity—plans which revolved around taking us to His “home”—in heaven.

And as we are like Thomas by nature in that we do not know the way (John 14:5), our Lord has both told us the way home, and has done for us what was needed to make that way home a reality!

Through the pen of the inspired writers, we have the clear record of Jesus’ perfect life, which was offered into death on the cross—a death which was shown to be the satisfactory payment for sin by His glorious resurrection on Easter Sunday.

Yes—it is alone by Spirit-worked faith in this Jesus that you and I can claim that heaven is our home!

So, no, it is not a good idea to get comfortable here, is it?

We all know how easy it is. Since things go on day after day as they have for millennia, it is tempting to join with the

scoffers who say, “*Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation*” (2 Peter 3:4).

The temptation is to think that physical existence on earth equals the only reality there is, to think that what you have not personally experienced and become familiar with cannot be real, cannot be “home.”

But the true reality is that this earth will not last forever, while heaven will! And what a wonderful place that eternally real home will be, where there will be “*no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away*” (Revelation 21:4).

It is there that Jesus encourages us to have our treasure, “*where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal*” (Matthew 6:20).

It is there that our Savior is getting a place ready for us, as He said, “*And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also*” (John 14:3).

It is there that our citizenship is, “*from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who 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*” (Philippians 3:20-21).

So—where is “home” to you? For us, it is as the hymn writer wrote:

Therefore I murmur not
Heav’n is my home;
Whate’er my earthly lot,
Heav’n is my home;
And I shall surely stand
There at my Lord’s right hand.
Heav’n is my fatherland,
Heav’n is my home.”

(TLH 660:4)



Paul Krause is pastor of Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church in Watertown, South Dakota, and Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church in Hidewood Township, South Dakota.

HYMN 463

“For All the Saints, Who from Their Labors Rest”

If William Walsham How, the author of this hymn, saw it in *The Lutheran Hymnal*, I think he might not entirely approve. The words in our hymnal are his, but the order is not; and three of the original stanzas have been left out.

In this long hymn, How develops the theme of the Church Militant¹ looking to the Church Triumphant² as an example and encouragement to us in our daily battles, finally culminating in the glorious return of Christ on Judgment Day. That’s a multi-part theme, which How developed in a logical and chronologically progressive manner. Unfortunately, that careful development has been somewhat weakened in our version due to the omission of three verses and a change in the placement of one verse.

Consider the following as the original developmental plan of How’s theme in this hymn. I included the text of the omitted verses. Please refer to *The Lutheran Hymnal* for the words to the other verses referenced.

Verse 1 The Church Militant blesses the name of Jesus for those who faithfully confessed the name of Christ—those now in the Church Triumphant.

Verse 2 Jesus was their all as they fought the good fight. He was their foundation (**Rock**), protection (**Fortress**), strength in battle (**Might**), leader (**Captain**), and illumination (**Light**).

Omitted original Verse 3 The first New Testament element of the Church Triumphant: **For the apostles’ glorious company/ Who, bearing forth the cross o’er land and sea,/ Shook all the mighty world, we sing to Thee.**

Omitted original Verse 4 The second New Testament element of the Church Triumphant: **For the evangelists, by whose pure word/ Like fourfold stream, the garden of the Lord/ Is fair and fruitful, be Thy name adored.**

Omitted original Verse 5 The third New Testament element of the Church Triumphant: **For martyrs who with rapture-**

kindled eye/ Saw the bright crown descending from the sky/ And, dying, grasped it, Thee we glorify.

Verse 4 We (the Church Militant) are joined together with the Church Triumphant as part of the one Holy Christian Church; although we still fight the battle even as they enjoy the blessings of glory.

Verse 5 Being thus joined with the Church Triumphant (v. 4), we now can look to their example (first six verses in the original form) to encourage and strengthen us (**And hearts are brave again, and arms are strong**) as we fight the good fight of faith.

Verse 8 (*this stanza originally appeared as third from the end, which maintained the chronologically logical progression of thought*) Sunset, as the daily harbinger of rest and peace, is likened to our recognition that our struggles here will end, and (by the grace of God alone), will issue forth in the eternal blessings of heaven.

Verse 6 We now look ahead to the Day of Judgment, when Christ shall return and all the Church shall be joined together in the Church Triumphant, with the war finally won and over.

Verse 7 All believers of all times and all places will then join together in praise of the Triune God.

The biblical reference for this hymn is Hebrews 12:1, which encourages us to “run with endurance the race that is set before us.” Our running of this race is not meritorious—it is not that which “earns” heaven for us. As Pastor Mark Weis said in his August 14th sermon of this year, “In the race of faith, the objective is not to win the prize; rather, the objective is not to lose the prize which God has already won and has waiting for us—an eternal, imperishable, incorruptible prize that is far more glorious than we can even imagine.”

May God help us, as He did those now in the Church Triumphant, to fight the good fight of faith with endurance unto the end.



Craig Owings is a retired teacher and serves as assistant editor of the Lutheran Spokesman. He lives in Cape Coral, Florida.

1 Church Militant: believers who are in this world, and thus still fighting the good fight of faith

2 Church Triumphant: believers of all times who died in the faith



Thumbnail Biography of the Author:

William Walsham How (1823 -1897) was the author of fifty-four hymns, seven of which appear in *The Lutheran Hymnal* (12, 114, 294, 441, 501, and 580 as well as 463). His hymn writing, however, was slight in comparison to his publication of other sacred literature. He wrote *A Commentary on the Four Gospels* and several volumes of sermons, as well as a number of pastoral books and liturgical works.

The Real Thing

“Therefore it was necessary that the copies of the things in the heavens should be purified with these, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Christ has not entered the holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us; not that He should offer Himself often, as the high priest enters the Most Holy Place every year with blood of another—He then would have had to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now, once at the end of the ages, He has appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment, so Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many. To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation” (Hebrews 9:23-28).

For a consumer in the free market, it can be challenging to know when to buy a generic product. “Knock-off” brands promise that their product’s quality matches that of name-brand goods, but at a fraction of the cost. While generic products may indeed cost less, they sometimes tend to wear out before their name-brand counterparts. Sometimes it’s just best to spend the extra money and buy the real thing.

In our text, we are told that the “copies of the things in the heavens should be purified with these things.” This refers to all of the animal blood sacrifices of the old covenant that were used to purify “the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry” (Hebrews 9:21). Because all of these “holy places made with hands” were but “copies of the true,” they required

God’s plan of salvation was never about settling for the “knock-off” brand—things made with man’s hands. He wants us to have the real thing—heaven itself!

only the lesser price of animal blood. However, since these copies of the heavenly things were part of the old covenant, the animal blood sacrifices had to be offered repeatedly. For, “In that He says, ‘A new covenant,’ He has made the first obsolete. Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away” (Hebrews 8:13). Like the generic products that cost less but tend to wear out, Scripture reveals that the sacrifices of the old covenant were repeated because, by God’s design, the things of the old covenant were not made to last. God’s plan of salvation was never about settling for the “knock-off” brand—things made with man’s hands. He wants us to have the real thing—heaven itself!

Since God’s loving intent for mankind was not to provide some sort of temporal salvation, but rather one that would last into eternity, the cost was, of necessity, going to be much higher. Enter Jesus Christ who, as both true God and true man, would not offer “the blood of another,” but rather “He has appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.” Jesus’ blood and righteousness is the only payment that could secure for us unworthy sinners heaven itself. And since God has declared Jesus’ divine blood to be all-sufficient, He need not offer it more than once. “For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God” (1 Peter 3:18).

Don’t settle for things made with hands. Instead, eagerly wait for Jesus, Who “will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation.” Your spot in heaven has been paid in full, once and for all, by Jesus’ one sacrifice. Sound too good to be true? No, it’s the real thing!



Chad Seybt is pastor of Redeemer Lutheran Church in Cheyenne, Wyoming.

Joshua

A Minority Voice Who Served as a Leader for a Major Power

(NUMBERS 13:25-14:10; JOSHUA 1:1-11)

Should it be surprising to us that as Christians we are in the minority in this world (see Matthew 20:16b)? Is it startling that many are vehemently opposed to us when we bear witness to the truths of God out in the world (see John 15:18,19)? Is it a futile cause to speak out concerning the Christian faith? In answer to these troubling questions, the Old Testament believer Joshua supplies us with a positive view of things in the kingdom of God!

After spying out the promised land of Canaan shortly after Israel's exodus from Egypt, Joshua, together with another believer named Caleb, found themselves to be minority voices when delivering their report. While all agreed that this was a fertile land flowing with milk and honey, the ten spiritual weaklings among the spies reasoned that it would be impossible for Israel to take possession of this land. Relying only upon their own strength and resources, they regarded themselves to be like grasshoppers in comparison to the giant-like Canaanite inhabitants. In contrast, both Joshua and Caleb encouraged Israel to go forward, putting their faith and trust in God's infinite power and His faithfulness to keep His promises to them.

Faithless Israel not only accepted the majority report and rejected the minority one, but they also were ready to stone to death both Joshua and Caleb—such was their animosity toward the two for their faithful Christian witness. While the Lord spared the two from such a painful death, these believers nonetheless had to endure the forty-year wilderness journey in the Sinai Peninsula along with the disbelievers.

When we go out into the world and proclaim the Gospel message that it is only through the redemptive work of Christ that we are eternally saved and can enter the promised land of heaven, the unbelieving world frequently scoffs at this testimony and ridicules us. Christians are not only subjected

to verbal abuse, but also can suffer more severe persecution—even to the point of death.

By the grace and mercies of God, Joshua and Caleb endured the long and difficult sojourn in the wilderness, and were blessed with the high honor of passing over the Jordan River into the promised land of Canaan. On the other hand, those disbelieving Israelites who had been twenty years and older at the time that the twelve spies returned with their reports did not have a share in this blessedness. As judgment for their faithlessness, they all died in the wilderness.

Who then was it that led the remaining Israelites in battle to dispossess the Canaanites and lay claim to the land flowing with milk and honey? It was the minority voice of Joshua. And how was it that Israel was able to conquer the land of giants? With Joshua in the lead, calling upon Israel to put their trust in God's great power to deliver Canaan into their hands, they prevailed.

Although like Joshua we are a minority voice in a hostile world, nevertheless we are equipped with the Gospel of Christ which is the power of God unto salvation (Romans 1:16). According to God's promise, His Word will not return to Him empty, but will accomplish what He pleases and will prosper in the thing for which He has sent it (Isaiah 55:11). The Christians who go out with the Gospel may be a minority in numbers, but they will lead others into the promised land of heaven, as the Holy Spirit works saving faith through the Gospel.

Yes, we are in the minority, but we serve as leaders for a Major Power!



Mark Gullerud is pastor of Redeemer Lutheran Church in Bowdle, South Dakota, and Zion Lutheran Church in Ipswich, South Dakota.

"Are We So Different from Other 'Conservative' Lutheran Churches?"

No. Yes. "Conservative" means different things to different people. For some, a conservative church is one that uses a traditional liturgy or sings from the old hymnal. For others, conservative equals "strict," as in, "You mean that your church is more conservative (strict) than the Missouri Synod?"

A better word is "confessional." This means that we carefully spell out what we believe and how those beliefs apply in our modern world. For example, the Bible nowhere mentions the Masonic Lodge. But confessional Lutherans are opposed to Lodge membership because it violates key teachings of Scripture, such as the fact that we are saved by grace and not by works, and the fact that the true God alone deserves our allegiance and trust.

Being confessional is biblical. In 1 Corinthians 1:10, the Bible tells us, *"Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment."* We are to be perfectly united, not on the basis of our traditions or personal preferences, but on the basis of our teaching and practice. To be of the same mind in doctrine and of the same judgment in how the doctrine applies, we need to spell out our position clearly.

We share many things in common with other confessional Lutheran churches. From a distance we look practically alike. We hold to the verbal inspiration of Scripture—that the very words of the Bible are God-breathed—and we bow to its authority in all matters of faith and life. Confessional Lutherans stand together in our position on the Means of Grace, teaching that God creates and sustains faith through the ordinary means He has chosen, the Gospel in Word and

Sacrament. We share the same position on the separation of Church and State, the doctrine of the last things, the Real Presence, and so forth. Compared with the vast majority of churches, it may seem hard to distinguish one confessional Lutheran church from another.

But doctrine is not meant to be viewed from a distance. Unity is not determined by the number of things we agree on, but by the absence of things we disagree on. The Common Confession of 1950 was a faulty attempt to bring together two different doctrinal positions and unite them through intentionally vague and ambiguous wording. This ultimately resulted in the formation of the CLC and the breakup of the Synodical Conference.

From a distance we look practically alike.

But doctrine is not meant to be viewed from a distance.

Sometimes the differences between confessional Lutheran churches are found in their doctrine, sometimes in the application of the doctrine, and sometimes in the way in which the application is carried out. A church might be against lodge membership and agree to everything on paper, but it never puts it into practice. Or if it does practice it, it doesn't handle the issue in an evangelical way. Like an electrical circuit, if the connection is broken in any of the three—doctrine, application, practice—the unity that God desires is lost.

Being united with other confessional Lutheran churches would be a great blessing and should be our goal as long as it can be done without doctrinal compromise. This is the purpose that inter-synodical meetings can serve. They provide an opportunity to determine whether there is unity, and they do it apart from the heat of the original conflict.

Your pastor can give you additional information about how we differ from other confessional Lutheran churches.



James Albrecht is pastor of St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church in Okabena, Minnesota.

As we approach the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, we take a brief look at the lives of influential and important Lutheran leaders and theologians.

Carl Monrad “C. M.” Gullerud (1908-1995)

Carl Monrad Gullerud was born into the Norwegian Synod in 1908. His father was a pastor in that synod, serving in Tracy, Minnesota; and when the majority agreed (in 1917) to a merger based on a faulty agreement (the *Opgjoer*), he sided with the minority and became a founding member of what later was called the Evangelical Lutheran Synod (ELS). Thus Carl was schooled early in the values, and difficulties, of maintaining a confessional Lutheranism.

Carl received his higher education in the Missouri Synod, attending Concordia Lutheran High School and College in St. Paul, Minnesota. He graduated from Concordia Lutheran Seminary in St. Louis in 1932. While there, he sat in the classroom of Franz Pieper and came into contact with other orthodox pillars of the old Missouri Synod, as well as with others who, sadly, would contribute to Missouri’s decline, and with whom he would later be forced to clash.

His first call, to South Dakota, involved an interesting arrangement: the congregation in Volga was in the Norwegian Synod, whereas Mt. Calvary in Brookings was part of the Missouri Synod. At the beginning of his ministry he wed Ruth Rodning. They were married until her death in 1947, and their union was blessed with seven children.

In 1941 Gullerud had accepted a call to Mt. Olive Lutheran Church in Mankato, Minnesota. There he was pastor to many of the professors and students at Bethany Lutheran College. There he also got to know Martha Brudvig, the head cook at Bethany, whom he married in 1950. The Lord gave them two children.

Gullerud’s zeal for the gospel led him to canvass the area around Mankato to locate those interested in forming a congregation. In the mid-1940’s an unused church was purchased and moved to Eagle Lake, and Salem Lutheran Church was organized. While there, he also served as Vice President and then President of the ELS. These were days of contention within the Synodical Conference, and C.M. found it necessary to follow the example of his father and leave the synod he loved. He was active in the formation of the CLC and was a charter member. To support his large family



C.M. Gullerud was active in the formation of the CLC and was a charter member.

during those trying times, he became a salesman of World Book encyclopedias and helped gather data for the U.S. census.

In our earliest days, C.M. Gullerud was one of those called to teach in our newly-formed seminary, first in the basement of Immanuel Lutheran church in Mankato, and then later in Eau Claire. As a seminary professor, he was instrumental in influencing a new generation of confessional pastors with his sure knowledge of the Scriptures. He had a unique grasp of comparative symbolics, knowing almost as much about Catholic and Reformed theology as he did about Lutheran. While his teaching style was never flashy, it was sturdy and confident—done with authority. Questions were answered concisely and precisely.

Gullerud’s influence was not only in the classroom. He was active in administration, serving as the President of Immanuel Lutheran College for sixteen years. In addition to all that that involves, he also ran the student bank. One afternoon each week he would personally get acquainted with us wee freshmen, as we made deposits to or (more likely) withdrawals from this bank. It was one example of his conscious attempt to initiate contact with all the students at Immanuel.

On the synodical level, C.M. served as convention moderator in the synod’s early years. He was also a longtime chairman of the synod’s Board of Doctrine.

But perhaps his greatest contribution was through his writing. As assistant editor of *The Confessional Lutheran*, he sought to influence the Synodical Conference to remain true to its past. As editor of *The Lutheran Sentinel*, he sought to influence the ELS in the days of controversy with Missouri. As regular contributor and then as editor of the *Journal of Theology*, he contributed his “Panorama” column, in which he surveyed the religious scene near and far and offered his wise assessment. In retirement, he wrote a number of devotional books.



Norman Greve is pastor of St. Peter’s Evangelical Lutheran Church in Iron River, Michigan.



Good News Transportation!

When Jesus said; “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature,” He did not say how to get there. In the US we usually do all our going by car. But throughout the world, transportation for the proclaiming and hearing of His Good News may include many modes.

CLC people who travel to India often fly first to London or Frankfurt, and then connect to Chennai. Connecting flights take the better part of a twenty-four hour day. Though it seems long when making the trip, it is much faster than when the first missionaries from the West traveled to India by boats, often taking weeks.

There are numerous possibilities when it comes to transportation options in India. Walking is the most obvious. However, just crossing the street in an Indian city can be quite a challenge until one learns to walk into the traffic, becoming a part of the flow. And though many shoes are manufactured and sold in India, it seems the majority



of Indians wear only flip flops or leather sandals. People customarily take their shoes off before entering homes, churches, and some businesses. Many in India still wear no shoes at all, and their feet show the toughness that develops as a result.

Bicycles and motorcycles are everywhere, with any number of people all riding on the same bike. And though there are fewer pedal rickshaws than there once were, auto rickshaws, which are motorized, are everywhere. Recently, in the cities, regular call taxis have been joined by a new force of Uber drivers. With such a large population and a growing economy, there are increasingly more private, corporate, and government cars and vehicles on the roads. Among them are buses and trucks of all kinds, along with ox carts and tractor-driven wagons.

The CLC work in India is primarily focused on people living in villages. Usually it is possible to get to them traveling by car, first driving on highways, then on the rough back roads.

For longer trips, trains and air travel are available for the greater distance, with drivers hired for the local back roads.

The local BELC and CLCI pastors and their chairmen also use various kinds of transportation options. Very few own cars, though many have their own bicycles or motorcycles. And others still walk long distances when it is not possible to catch a ride. No matter what vehicle it is, in India it seems there is always room for one more person. Motorcycles can be seen carrying a family of four. Rickshaws intended to carry three may have as many as ten or more piled in the back. And rural school buses may have several boys hanging on the outside of the bus causing it to lean when taking corners.

Many of the automobiles driven in India have brand names that are familiar, but model names that are not. The current CLC vehicle used in India is a Chevrolet. It is a four-door SUV-style wagon made in India, called a Tavera. It is the second Tavera used by the CLC. Like most Indian cars, it is a diesel, with the driver side on the right, and a manual transmission shifted with the left hand. Until recently the CLCI men used a bright red Mahindra Scorpio. One of the cars still seen in India is the Ambassador, a leftover from the British era when English brands made up most of the cars manufactured and driven in the country. Now there are fewer and fewer of the distinct Ambassadors. Two of the current well-known manufacturers with Indian roots are Tata and Mahindra. Both companies manufacture all kinds of vehicles, along with other products. One of the other large volume automobile manufacturers in India is Maruti Suzuki, a joint Indian and Japanese company. Jaguar and Land Rover brands are now Indian-owned as a part of Tata Motors. Chennai-based Ashok Leyland is the second-largest commercial vehicle manufacturer in India, fourth-largest



manufacturer of buses in the world and sixteenth-largest manufacturer of trucks globally.

Chennai is considered the Detroit of India, being home for much of Indian auto, truck, bus, tractor, and motorcycle manufacturing. Chennai area plants include BMW, Daimler, Force, Ford, Hyundai, Mitsubishi, Nissan, Renault, BharatBenz, Hindustan, Caterpillar, Royal Enfield, TVS, and Yamaha. Also in the area are numerous tire manufacturers, including Bridgestone, Dunlop, and Michelin.

In the US we usually drive to where we are going, and take our transportation for granted. As you get into the car and fasten your seat belts on the way to worship this week, maybe you will remember those across the world in India with whom you are in fellowship. They, too, may have traveled in a car to worship. But then again they may have walked (barefoot), ridden a bike or motorcycle, or piled into a rickshaw with ten other members.

When people are traveling to proclaim or to hear the Good News, the mode of transportation they employ really doesn't matter. What does matter is that it is always the same Good News that is proclaimed and heard. May it always be God's saving Word—that which creates faith and keeps believers everywhere trusting in Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of all sin! And how shall they preach unless they are sent?

"How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, who bring glad tidings of good things!"

(Romans 10:15).



Edward Starkey has served as a foreign missionary in India. He is currently the pastor of Resurrection Lutheran Church in Corpus Christi, Texas.

Above: ox cart. Below: The CLCI's Mahindra Scorpio.

St. John's Lutheran Church

Okabena, Minnesota

St. John's Lutheran Church was founded in May of 1895 by German immigrant farmers in West Heron Lake Township, Jackson County, Minnesota. It started as a satellite congregation of St. Paul's Lutheran Church, seven miles to the southeast. In 1904 a Christian day school was formed. By 1911 the congregation had grown large enough to call their own pastor. When the congregation received a gift of land in Okabena, a parsonage was built there and the original church was moved into town. The present church was built in 1914. The original building was retained as a school house. The new building allowed for the organization of the church choir and ladies' aid society. Services and parochial school sessions were held in the German language. The first English services were funerals, ensuring that the Gospel could be heard and understood by the English-speaking friends and neighbors of the departed.

World War I caused trials for St. John's. German-speaking schools were unpopular. Lutheran teachers who spoke English were scarce, so the Christian day school was closed. Services were frequently monitored by personnel from the sheriff's office. After the war, the members decided on an outreach program to show they were glad to be Americans. They sponsored a Fourth of July parade and celebration. Okabena is still noted for this event.

Membership grew rapidly from the 1920's to the '40's, reaching a peak of 462 souls, (327 communicants). English became the primary language in 1933, although German services were held twice a month for the elderly until 1956. After World War II, the area's population declined as fewer people were required to operate farms.

In 1948 the congregation suspended fellowship with the Missouri Synod because of false teaching at Concordia



Seminary in St. Louis. The congregation left the synod in 1951 after the synod failed to respond to its memorial. Forty percent of the members then left, choosing to stay with Missouri Synod. St. John's later sponsored a conference at which the Orthodox Lutheran Synod was formed. This group was later determined

to be legalistic, and the congregation declined to join them.

The congregation began supporting the work of the CLC in 1961 during the pastorate of Rev. Ruben Ude. St. John's became a voting member of the CLC in 1976.

Further testing occurred in 1983, caused by the controversy surrounding fraternal benefit insurance companies. Membership dropped to 170 souls.

Since that time St. John's has received many blessings. Membership has remained around 200 souls for the past twenty years. The Christian day school was restarted in 1995 (the congregation's centennial year). While local area population has declined, the congregation is one of the few in the county that has a full-time pastor and teachers. Members live in a widespread area. Several faithful members regularly



Exterior of St. John's Lutheran Church.



Clockwise, from above: Vacation bible school 1999 at St. John's; the youth choir; Christian day school students and teachers.

drive over fifty miles to attend services. The closest CLC sister congregation is sixty-four miles away.

In 2015, the average attendance at worship services was 112 souls. Bible Class attendance averaged fifty-five adults, with twenty-five children attending Sunday School. Twenty young people were students at ILC or secular schools. The pipe organ in the balcony was installed in 2003.

In addition to the Christian day school, the congregation also sponsors a preschool program conducted by volunteers from among the members.

The vacation Bible school program is always popular and serves as a great influence on our children. Nineteen of the children in the 1999 photo above, for example, went on to attend Immanuel Lutheran High School in Eau Claire, Wisconsin. This year's vacation Bible school was held in late July, at a time when children are looking forward to a new school year.

St. John's church choir, in addition to regularly singing during services, also performs two concerts per year in the original church building, which is now located at Pioneer Village in Worthington, Minnesota. Approximately twenty voices present annual concerts on Christmas and the Fourth of July.

A youth choir meets weekly during the school year to prepare musical selections for worship services. The Ladies Aid supports the congregation's activities in many areas, including Sunday school artwork, building cleaning, and the provision of meals for special occasions and funerals. They also provide monthly support for an orphan in Nepal.



Pastors of St. John's, 1895 to present:

- C.F. Malkow
- Emil Ulbricht
- H.F. Soeldner
- E. Trapp
- George Schweikert
- Ruben Ude
- Clifford Kuehne
- David Lau
- Robert Wehrwein
- George Barthels
- Vance Fossum
- James Albrecht

Full-time CDS Teachers, 1904 to 1916:

- Anna Stoeckmann
- Louise Grabarkewitz
- Ida Grabarkewitz
- Rev. H.F. Soeldner

1995 to present:

- Candace Ohlmann
- Phil Strike
- Ruth Eserhut Eigenberg
- Joel Gullerud
- Valerie Bernthal Hammett
- Erin Libby
- Chad Seybt
- Lana Romberg Strike
- Ross Kok
- Jolene Beekman Albrecht



David Ahrens is a member of St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church in Okabena, Minnesota.

Gift of God Lutheran Church, Mapleton, North Dakota

If your last visit to the little town of Mapleton, North Dakota, was more than a year ago, you might not recognize it today. Mapleton, which serves as a bedroom community for Fargo, has benefitted from the recent boom and expansion of this neighboring city. Pastor Del Maas writes, "The boom (in Mapleton) is also evident with neighborhoods being platted and new houses seeming to appear overnight. The residents recently approved the building of a new elementary school, and so even more trucks and heavy equipment abound in this swiftly growing town."



This has placed the members of Gift of God in a wonderful situation, since it is the only church in town! With this opportunity, Pastor Maas says the congregation "has been ramping up its efforts to reach this town, and its many newcomers, with the Gospel."

Here are a few examples of their efforts to point their community to the Savior:

- Last December they hosted an Advent VBS series on Thursday nights. The purpose was to introduce the children to the real meaning of Christmas. Pastor Maas reports that "many of the children had little or no idea about who Jesus really was and why He came into the world. So, on the first night the pastor set up a large nativity set and introduced the children to its different characters—from the lambs to the Christ



Child Himself. Then a crucifix was erected above the manger scene and the connection was made between the One in the manger and the One on the cross. Many were shocked and amazed that the little Baby grew up to be the Jesus who was willing to die for their sins on that cross."

- This summer Gift of God hosted VBS with help from the Traveling Vacation Bible School team, and teams from Mankato and Eau Claire. Many children from around the town were blessed to hear about the "Pictures of Christ from the Old Testament." One of the visible results of this effort was an increase in their fall Sunday school attendance, which was double that of last year!
- The congregation has also prepared gift bags to welcome newcomers to the area. The bags include information about the church, sermons on CDs, and a jar of ingredients to make Roughrider Cookies. The opportunity? "As the bags are delivered, it gives us a chance to chat with the new folks and personally invite them to the only church in town."

Pastor Maas finishes with a request: "Please keep our Mapleton congregation in your prayers that these Gospel-seeds may take root and grow!"



Nathanael Mayhew is pastor of Grace Lutheran Church in Sleepy Eye, Minnesota and Faith Lutheran Church in New Ulm, Minnesota, and a member of the Board of Missions of the CLC.

“BREAD OF LIFE” READINGS NOVEMBER 2016

TLH = The Lutheran Hymnal, 1941; WS = Worship Supplement 2000; [] = Biblical Events Noted

Date	Verse	Reading	Comments [Festivals of the Church Year]
Nov 1	TLH 190	Isaiah 35:1-10	Jesus brings redemption, peace, and joy to His people. Sorrow and sighing flee away!
Nov 2	TLH 503	Isaiah 37:14-20	Hezekiah prays that the name of the Lord would be held high and known among the nations.
Nov 3	WS 749	Micah 4:1-5	Christ's kingdom would be established in the hearts of many, and they would walk in His ways and approach Him in worship.
Nov 4	WS 750	John 3:1-21	Jesus taught Nicodemus that His kingdom is a matter of the Spirit's work in the heart, of faith in God's Son.
Nov 5	TLH 75	Isaiah 40:1-5	Prepare the way for the Lord because He brings comfort and healing, and His forgiveness overbalances our sins!
Nov 7	TLH 91 v.6	Isaiah 42:1-3	The Savior approaches us with gentleness and love, establishing justice without destroying us on account of our sin.
Nov 8	TLH 19	Isaiah 44:6-11	All idols, both then and now, are nothing beside the Lord our God.
Nov 9	WS 730	John 5:24	Take this to heart and believe it: Jesus has brought you from death over to life.
Nov 10	WS 724	Isaiah 49:8-16	The Lord has also engraved you, His child by faith, on the palms of His hands. He cannot and will not forget you.
Nov 11	WS 718	Isaiah 52:7-10	The strife is o'er, the battle done—now the messengers bring good news that the victory is won.
Nov 12	TLH 328	Isaiah 58:1-9a	There are those who claim to be eager for the Lord, but are actually unwilling to repent and do His will.
Nov 14	TLH 284	John 7:14-18	Jesus' words were not His own ideas, but He spoke for the Father in Heaven. It's still true of those words today.
Nov 15	TLH 66	Isaiah 61:1-3	Jesus' words are good news for those who mourn, and He shows His splendor by uplifting the people.
Nov 16	WS 705	Isaiah 64:1-9	Do we sinners really want Christ to come down from heaven in judgment? Yes—for He will not remember our sins forever!
Nov 17	TLH 277	Jeremiah 3:6-15	The Lord called the faithless to return to Him. Why? So He could lovingly lead them with knowledge and understanding.
Nov 18	TLH 509	John 9:35-41	In their blindness, the unbelieving cannot even see that they cannot see. We pray that the Word we bring may yet open their eyes.
Nov 19	TLH 449	Jeremiah 6:13-19	Even the prophets and priests were no longer ashamed of their wrongdoing; the people were ripe for judgment.
Nov 21	TLH 364	Jeremiah 8:18-9:1	"Is there no balm in Gilead?" Jeremiah asks. There is, dear friends. It is the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.
Nov 22	TLH 317	Jeremiah 10:23-25	The prophet recognizes God's judgment against the unbelieving and prays that the Lord would correct and direct them.
Nov 23	WS 736	John 11:1-4	Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify Me.
Nov 24	TLH 36	John 11:17-44	Oh, may this bounteous God Thro' all our life be near us!
Nov 25	TLH 281	Jeremiah 14:1-10	Jeremiah again pleads for the wandering people, but sadly they will not turn back to the Lord.
Nov 26	TLH 437	Jeremiah 17:5-8	For as far as Judah had fallen, all hope was not lost. The Lord promised blessing to all whose confidence was in Him.
Nov 28	TLH 645	Jeremiah 23:1-8	Then came the greatest comfort of all for fallen Judah: The promise of the Righteous Branch. Christ would be their righteousness.
Nov 29	TLH 216	John 14:1-11	For comfort amid life's floods and tempests, remember Jesus Who, at His second advent, will come and deliver you from them all. [Noah and the Flood]
Nov 30	TLH 268	John 15:18-16:1	Do not be surprised if the world hates you on account of Christ. The Spirit will strengthen you and help you to testify of Him.

SEEN IN PASSING

Items of interest from various sources of religious news and opinion, in print and on the web.

US Olympic Medalists Acknowledge Christ More Important. U.S. Olympic team members David Boudia and Steele Johnson won silver medals in their event – the synchronized ten-meter platform. Some would consider that the defining moment of an athlete’s life and career. But Boudia and Johnson are Christians, and in a primetime interview following the event they told the world that Christ comes first. “There’s been an enormous amount of pressure. I’ve felt it,” said Boudia. “It’s just an identity crisis. When my mind is on this [diving], and I’m thinking I’m defined by this, then my mind goes crazy. But we both know that our identity is in Christ, and we’re thankful for this opportunity to be able to dive in front of Brazil and in front of the United States. It’s been an absolutely thrilling moment for us.” Johnson agreed. “The way David just described it was flawless – the fact that I was going into this event knowing that my identity is rooted in Christ and not what the result of this competition is just gave me peace . . . and it let me enjoy the contest,” Johnson told NBC. Foust, Michael. “Boudia and Johnson proclaim Christ on national TV after winning Olympic silver.” *Home/US*. ChristianExaminer.com, 8 Aug. 2016. Web. 3 Sep. 2016.

Woman Sues Catholic School that Dismissed Her After Same-Sex Marriage. A woman is suing a Roman Catholic school in New Jersey, alleging the school violated the state’s discrimination law when she was fired for marrying a woman. Former dean of guidance and head basketball coach Kate Drumgoogle alleges that Paramus Catholic High School violated anti-discrimination laws and intentionally inflicted emotional distress upon her. An attorney for the school said that Drumgoogle was dismissed for failing to abide by the tenets of the Catholic faith when she entered into a same-sex marriage. N.a. “Lesbian sues NJ Catholic high school for firing.” *Crux*. Associated Press, 19 Aug. 2016. Web. 3 Sep. 2016.

Latvian Lutheran Church Reverses Policy on Women Clergy. On June 3, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Latvia (ELCL) officially adopted a policy allowing only males to be ordained as clergy. The decision came during a meeting of the church’s synod held June 3-4 in the Cathedral of Riga, with a large majority (77.3 percent) of those present voting to amend the church’s constitution and return to the historic, scriptural practice of the Christian church.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

In accord with our usage and order, **Douglas Priestap**, who was called by Grace Lutheran Church, Live Oak, Florida, to be its pastor, was installed on August 20, 2016. — Pastor Em. Vance Fossum

In accord with our usage and order, **Benjamin Libby**, who was called by Ascension Lutheran Church, Tacoma, Washington, to be its pastor, was installed on September 11, 2016. Preaching for the service was Pastor Mark Tiefel; also participating were Pastors David Naumann and Nathan Pfeiffer.

Women had been ordained as clergy for decades before church leaders once again began questioning whether the practice was biblical. With their action, the Latvian church defied the Lutheran World Federation, which had strongly urged them not to change their constitution. Block, Matthew. “Latvian Lutherans reinstate male-only clergy.” *Periscope*. Blogs.lcms.org, 17 Jun. 2016. Web. 3 Sept. 2016.



Left: A motorcycle in India — six people, zero helmets. Right: A typical day on the road in India (see article pg. 10)