

75TH ANNIVERSARY OF
THE BRIEF STATEMENT 1932 - 2007

LUTHERAN SPOKESMAN

WE HOLD WITH SCRIPTURE that God offers and communicates to men the *spiritual* blessings purchased by Christ, namely, the forgiveness of sins and the treasures and gifts connected therewith, only through the external means of grace ordained by Him. These means of grace are the Word of the Gospel, in every form in which it is brought to man, and the Sacraments of Holy Baptism and of the Lord's Supper.

WE REJECT AS A DANGEROUS ERROR the doctrine, which disrupted the Church of the Reformation, that the grace and the Spirit of God are communicated not through the external means ordained by Him, but by an *immediate* operation of grace. This erroneous doctrine bases the forgiveness of sins, or justification, upon a fictitious "infused grace," that is, upon a quality of man, and thus again establishes the work-doctrine of the papists.

Of the Means of Grace

THE BRIEF STATEMENT OF 1932
(selected portions of paragraphs 21 & 23)



THE LUTHERAN REFORMATION:
SCRIPTURE ALONE, GRACE ALONE, FAITH ALONE.

october 2007, VOL. 50 NO. 4

CELEBRATING FIFTY YEARS OF SPEAKING GOD'S WORD OF TRUTH

“A wise man will hear and increase learning, and a man of understanding will attain wise counsel” (Proverbs 1:5).

Luther’s Influence on Education

During this Reformation season of the church year, it is fitting to reflect upon the work our God did through His servant Martin Luther. Luther’s long-term impact can be seen in many different areas, both in the spiritual realm as well as in the secular.

What is sometimes overlooked is Luther’s influence in the area of education.

Along with his intellectual friend Philip Melancthon, Luther had a profound impact on the direction of education not only in Germany but worldwide. His views on education are expounded in two documents: “To the Councilmen of all Cities in Germany That They Establish and Maintain Christian Schools” (1524) and “A Sermon on Keeping Children in School” (1530).

There were several reasons why Luther was concerned about the direc-

tion education was heading in his day. Because of the influence of materialism—the desire to accumulate wealth and “things” brought on, in part, by Renaissance ideas and the age of discovery—many people viewed education as being a waste of time. What good did a classical knowledge of history and languages have if it could not contribute to a temporal livelihood? (Such an attitude was expressed in a saying of the day, “Gelehrte sind verkehrte,” or “The learned are daft.”)

In its early years, the Reformation itself even had a negative impact on school attendance. Those who agreed

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with Luther that the Catholic church was heretical in its teachings were reluctant to send their children to schools supported by that church. Luther referred to such schools of monasticism as the “devil’s training centers.”

Still others confused the Scriptural teaching of the universal priesthood of believers enunciated by Luther as meaning that no formal education was necessary in preparation for the ministry.

Since Luther was aware of these misunderstandings, he felt compelled to write about the proper role of Christian education.

Cultivating the Spiritual

Foremost in Luther’s thinking was the fact that schools should “provide not only for our children’s bellies, but for their souls as well.” Just because Roman Catholic church schools had abandoned the truth did not mean that all schools were of no value. It is up to Christians to establish schools that cultivate the true knowledge of God and inspire in students a desire to spread that Word to others.

Luther argued that the government spends much on weapons to protect a city from outward foes but needs to spend more on education to combat foes that are much more deadly—spiritual ones. Learned men who would make excellent teachers must be put to work while they are available.

Luther also highlighted the importance of retaining instruction in the classical languages—namely, Latin, Greek, and Hebrew. He felt it was vital to be able to study God’s Word in the languages in which God caused it to be written. “The languages are the sheath



in which this sword of the Spirit is contained.”

Yet another aspect of education which Luther supported was the educating of both boys and girls. Prior to Luther’s day support for girls’ education was lacking. Luther believed that society as a whole would benefit from girls also being given a well-rounded liberal arts education. They too would use such training in their various roles in society.

Young men blessed with exceptional gifts should be encouraged towards educational advancement in the church. “We must certainly have men to administer God’s Word and sacraments and to be shepherds of souls. But where shall we get them if we let our schools go by the board...?”

Therefore, as we reflect on the Reformation, remember Luther’s role in education. Many of us reading this today, both men and women, have benefited tremendously from an education received from those faithful to the Word of God. (Consider it a blessing that our Immanuel Lutheran Seminary still teaches its students the Biblical languages!)

And finally, be thankful if your education has emphasized something

beyond achieving “things” for the here and now.

(Christ speaking)

“What I have done and taught, teach thou,

My ways forsake thou never;

So shall My kingdom flourish now

And God be praised forever.

Take heed lest men with base alloy

The heavenly treasure should destroy;

This counsel I bequeath thee.”

(A hymn of Martin Luther, TLH #387:10)

—Prof. Joseph Lau



Sell The Inheritance!?!

If given the opportunity to expand the list of faith-heroes given in Hebrews 11, the name of Naboth comes to mind as a worthy nomination. “For by faith Naboth did not sell his vineyard...” (see 1 Kings 21).

King Ahab lived adjacent to Naboth’s vineyard and he wanted it for a vegetable garden. The king was willing to pay good money or exchange another vineyard for Naboth’s. It seemed reasonable. But by faith Naboth refused to sell. He understood that the land was the Lord’s, and he was only a sojourner with Him on it (Lev. 25:23).

By faith Naboth surely understood also the Messiah-connection—that God had promised His Anointed One through the Jewish people. Thus it was important that there be a visible, land-possessing nation perpetually; or at least until the Messiah was born.

Hence Naboth’s family inheritance was precious and not for sale at any price. The power of the king did not frighten him; the thought of making a killing in real estate held no attraction. “The LORD forbid that I should give [sell] the inheritance of my father to you!” (1 Kgs. 21:3)

The same cannot be said, sadly, for many who profess membership in the

Lord’s kingdom. A person’s inheritance to His earthly church is very often treated like baubles, real estate, and Wall Street stocks. Everything is for sale, if the price is right.

To His Church God has given precious gifts, not only Jesus—“the Word made flesh” to die for sin—but also His words which are holy, true, and saving. The Savior has commanded His Church to believe, keep, and teach those words—every one of them—with nothing added, subtracted, or changed.

Church Bartering?!?

Yet by the late Middle Ages, so much of the ‘inheritance’ had been sold off that ‘the vineyard of the holy gospel’ was largely unrecognizable and unknown. Churchmen had bartered off large tracts in exchange for position and power. Satan had advertised a ‘better vineyard’—salvation by man’s works—in exchange for the precious ‘inheritance’ of salvation by God’s grace through Jesus Christ received by faith alone.

Also, ‘Christian liberty’ and ‘the priesthood of all believers’ were outbid by rules and regulations, some of which God in His Word specifically calls “the doctrines of demons” (1 Tim.

4:1). By the time of Martin Luther, almost every precious Word of God was on the auction block—for sale to earthly kings, to arrogant churchmen, to human reason, and to other spiritual real estate moguls (who were not interested in growing faith and its fruits, but other plants such as deadly nightshade, thistles, and decorative gourds).

By faith Naboth said, ‘I will not sell!’ By faith Luther replied to emperor and pope: “...My conscience is captive to the Word of God...I cannot and will not recant anything...God help me. Amen.” And so by God’s great grace and mercy the precious ‘inheritance’ of God’s Word was restored. The ‘vineyard of our fathers’—the Church of the pure Word—has become ours.

But once again—and sadly—the vineyard of the gospel seems to be for sale, even among Lutherans.

Consider: The news is gleefully trumpeted: Lutherans negotiate with Rome over fair price of justification by faith; Lutherans willing to sell ‘Jesus, the only Way of salvation’ for the pot-

tage of world approval; Lutherans trading off the dependable Scripture-is-the-inspired-and-infallible model of interpretation for the it’s-a-lemon model; Lutherans exchanging the old morality (God’s) for the new morality (man’s); Lutherans declaring the fellowship doctrine ‘too expensive for our ears.’

Are the precious sacraments of Holy Baptism and the Lord’s Supper next? When will the sell-off stop? Only when there is nothing left, and the Reformation is totally dead? God forbid that this happen among us!

Our Lord said, “If you continue in My Word, then you are My disciples indeed” (Jn. 8:32). To all those faithful disciples He will say: “Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you...” (Mt. 25:34).

The message should be clear enough: If you want the inheritance of your Father, beware of selling out the inheritance of the fathers!

—Pastor David Fuerstenau
Ketchikan, Alaska



A Reformation Article from our CLC President—

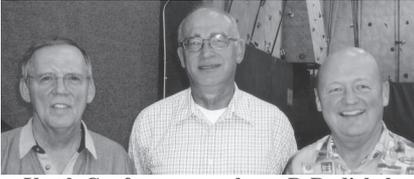
OUR GREAT HERITAGE

At the recent Youth Conference in Como, Colorado, Pastor James Sandeen, Mr. Philip Radichel, and yours truly were privileged to speak to the young people about our heritage in the Church of the Lutheran Confession (CLC). We defined “heritage” as what we inherited from the past that makes us what we are today and what we

hope to pass on to the next generation.

Many of these young people and their parents are not aware of what happened fifty years ago when the CLC was formed. Therefore, they do not know why their grandparents did what they did in forming the new synod.

The early nucleus of the CLC was



Youth Conference speakers: P. Radichel,
J. Schierenbeck, J. Sandeen

made up of individual pastors and members who felt compelled to come out of former fellowships in obedience to God's command to "avoid" those teaching contrary to the doctrine which they had learned (cf. Romans 16:17ff). Our heritage includes a love for the truths of God's Word and a concern for faithfulness to the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Our early heritage also includes a driving desire for Christian education. Before the CLC was formed, a group of laymen in Mankato, Minnesota, purchased property on the "prairie" and moved a two-room school onto the property. There was no faculty. There were no students. God provided both, as well as the means to open Immanuel Lutheran High School, College, and Seminary.

Part of our heritage is the conviction that one of the best ways we can remain faithful to God's Word and accomplish Christ's commission to disciple the nations is to provide a school which trains teachers and pastors for the public ministry. An important result would be the Christian education and preparation of a solid core of laypeople.

It is important to understand where we came from in order to know where we are going.

Stretching back to... the sixteenth century!

The CLC is an insignificant and tiny

part of God's grand plan of salvation. I believe that we are insignificant, and yet God uses the common and insignificant things of this world to accomplish His purposes. Our heritage stretches back to Martin Luther and God's sixteenth century Reformation.

Our Lutheran heritage includes the three great principles: *Sola Gratia*, *Sola Fidei*, *Sola Scriptura*. Luther emphasized the Bible's teaching of salvation by grace without any works or merit on man's part. The reformer's personal quest for peace with God brought him to the cross, where he found the peace that God provides in Christ crucified; we share in that discovery and cherish that heritage.

We also enjoy the heritage of a love for the Bible as the only source of truth and teaching for God's people. Luther translated the Bible from its original languages (Hebrew [Old Testament], Greek [New Testament]) into the language of his people (German).

Uniting us with the early church, we also have a rich heritage of worship, liturgy, and hymns.



Finally, we reap the fruits of a heritage which emphasizes the importance of Christian education and individual Bible study. May we never underestimate the powerful truths of *Luther's Small Catechism* in making us what we are!

All of these are gifts of God that reverberate through the ages from generation to generation. What we have is a result of what believers through the ages have sacrificed for the treasure of the gospel. Who could forget the importance of Christian parents and grandparents stretching back into history?

This is our heritage as Lutheran Christians!

God's Grander Purpose!

But even our Lutheran heritage is a small part of God's grand purposes in history.

Our heritage includes everything God has done for us. When sin intruded into God's perfect creation, God promised to send a Savior to rescue mankind from Satan and deliver them from the bondage of sin.

The promise was fulfilled in Jesus. God's Son became man in order to fulfill God's Law perfectly in our place and then pay the punishment demanded by suffering and dying on the cross

for our sins. Then Jesus rose from the grave in order to demonstrate His victory over death.

Our heritage includes the wondrous fact of God's amazing grace. God declares us righteous not because of anything we have done, but by grace alone for Christ's sake through faith (This is a heritage which is easily lost by replacing Jesus with something that we have done!).

Finally, our heritage includes the wonder of God's Word, "our great heritage" (TLH #283). God has preserved His Word throughout the generations in spite of all of the attacks upon the Scriptures. We still have the saving power of God's Word. Let us treasure this heritage and seek to spread its light from age to age. "Lord, grant while worlds endure, we keep its teachings pure throughout all generations."

The Word they still shall let remain,
Nor any thanks have for it;
He's by our side upon the plain
With His good gifts and Spirit.
And do what they will—
Hate, steal, hurt, or kill—
Though all may be gone,
Our victory is won;
The kingdom's ours forever.
(WS2000 #774:4)

—*Pastor John Schierenbeck*
Winter Haven, Florida



CLC Pastoral Conference, June 19-21, 2007, ILC, Eau Claire, Wis. Front Row:
**T. Kesterson,
D. Maas,
P. Krause,
A. Mayhew,
M. Hanel.**
(more pictures follow)

Volume 50 Revisits Earlier Volumes

Volume 10, Number 5 (October, 1967)

(This is a portion of an article under the broader title 450TH ANNIVERSARY REFLECTIONS. 1967 marked that many years from Luther's posting of the 95 theses in 1517. The writer was CLC Pastor Otto J. Eckert [1901-1974])

...**"ROME IS STILL ROME"**
...The liturgical action of the Mass proclaims Rome's identity as nothing else does. Of it Luther said that, if it falls, then the Papacy falls.

What is the Sacrifice of the Mass? According to Roman Catholic teaching, the bread and wine in the Lord's Supper are changed into Christ's body and blood. The body and blood are then re-sacrificed in an unbloody offering as "a sacrifice of propitiation to atone for our sins." Hearing a mass and taking part in it is considered a meritorious work on the part of the worshiper.

A leaflet on the Mass asks the question: "Why should we hear the Holy Mass?" Two of the answers given are: "To make reparation for all our sins. To release souls from purgatory and to shorten our own time there." It further says: "One Mass gives God more praise and thanksgiving, makes more atonement for sin and pleads more eloquently than does the combined and eternal worship of all the souls in heaven, on earth, and in purgatory."

To this we answer: "All the masses that have been held or ever will be held, though their numbers run into the billions, and the combined and eternal worship of all the souls in heaven and on earth, do not make any atonement for sin whatsoever; and there is no pur-

gatory." The one great sacrifice of Christ on Calvary made all the atonement for sin that ever could be made. "For by one offering He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. Now where remission of sins is there is no more offering for sin" (Hebr. 10:14&18).

THE GREAT DELUSION REMAINS – The so-called Sacrifice of the Mass has no foundation in Scriptures. It is a great delusion, a mighty superstition, a deception of poor souls, and a grotesque caricature and monstrous perversion of the Lord's Supper. In the Lord's Supper the bread and wine are not changed into the body and blood of Christ. The body and blood are there in, with, and under the bread and wine, and are given to us as an assurance of the full and complete forgiveness of all our sins through Christ's one great sacrifice on Calvary. As Scriptures plainly state, it is a remembrance of Christ's death. Never, anywhere, is it ever called a sacrifice.

Nothing aroused Luther more than the error of the Sacrifice of the Mass. He writes: "The Mass with its being sold and offered up for souls is such an abuse that it would not be sufficiently deplored and mourned if all the world would day and night continually weep tears of blood because of

it. We should earnestly flee from and condemn all idolatrous masses, because we recognize and know that there is only one sacrifice through which everything has been finished, namely, that of our Lord Jesus Christ, who was nailed to the cross for our sins. My greatest sins have been that I have for fifteen long years as holy monk deeply grieved and tormented and plagued my dear Lord with so many masses. That one wants to sacrifice Christ in the Mass is a mockery of God and an abomination and the most grievous sin that can be committed. The offering that Christ brought once is valid and for all eternity and we are saved by believing in it. Putting anything else beside it is blasphemy. How can those two things stand together, that I believe that I have obtained an eternal forgiveness of sins through Christ who was offered once for me

and that I at the same time again and again seek another and yet another forgiveness through a daily repeated sacrifice of the first offering?"

Luther expresses the hope and even the conviction that there may be simple Christians in Rome who in simple childlike faith cling alone to the pure mercy of God and do not rely on the Sacrifice of the Mass as a meritorious work and so are saved in spite of Rome's great delusion.

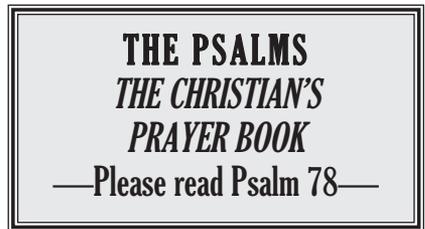
Be that it may, it is for us to see clearly and to recognize that with all outward liturgical changes the great delusion of the Sacrifice of the Mass remains with all its accompanying errors such as purgatory, works of satisfaction for sin, the doctrine of transubstantiation, and others. They strike at the very foundation of the truths of the Reformation: by Scripture alone, by grace alone, by faith alone.



“...Telling to the generation to come the praises of the LORD.”

The history of the children of Israel is far from pretty. It is a series of failures and sins, rebellions and stubbornness.

Immediately after the Israelites had been delivered from Egypt, “they sinned by rebelling against the Most High” (v. 17). They “tested God in their heart” (v. 17) with their murmurings: “Can God prepare a table in the wilderness? Can He give bread also? Can He provide meat for His people?” (vv. 19-20) And when God provided them with manna and quail, still “they sinned, and did not believe in His won-



drous works” (v. 32).

“They did not remember His power” (v. 42), such as when the Lord God “worked His signs in Egypt” (v. 43)—when the river turned to blood, the swarms of flies, the frogs, the cattle disease, the hail, the death of the

firstborn, the destruction of the Egyptians in the Red Sea (see vv. 42-53); they did not remember how God had led His people out “safely so that they did not fear” (v. 53)—all was forgotten!

Things didn’t change even when they arrived at the Promised Land. God “drove out the nations before them,...and made the tribes of Israel dwell in their tents” (v. 55). The response of His children? “They tested and provoked the Most High God, ...but turned back and acted unfaithfully like their fathers....They moved Him to jealousy with their carved images” (vv. 56-58).

The whole sordid affair—from the time of the Egyptian slavery to the time of King David—is cataloged in all its grim reality here in our Psalm.

And why? The psalmist tells us: “Give ear, O my people...to the words of my mouth. I will utter dark sayings of old which...our fathers have told us. We will not hide them from their children, telling to the generation to come the praises of the Lord” (vv. 1-4). The psalmist’s goal was not simply to shine light on the sinfulness of the people; it was to let the light of God’s grace shine!

Our Compassionate God!

And what grace that is! Time after time when His people rebelled and turned their backs on Him, God “being full of compassion, forgave their iniquity.... For He remembered that they were but flesh, a breath that passes away and does not come again” (vv. 38-39).

Not once did the Israelites do something to deserve God’s kindness! “How often they provoked Him in the wilderness,... Yes, again and again they tempt-

ed God, and limited the Holy One of Israel” (vv. 40-41). And yet, God responded with care and compassion, finally selecting David “to shepherd Jacob His people” (v. 70).

Human nature has not changed since the days of the ancient Israelites. If we were to catalog our history as God’s people in these New Testament days, would we not find everything to be the same? Our individual lives are still a series of failures and sins and rebellions against God. Every day we can echo the cry of the apostle Paul: “The good that I will to do, I do not do; but the evil I will not to do, that I practice” (Rom. 7:19).

And yet our God does not turn His back on us, but in love He forgives us for Jesus’ sake. And for that reason “there is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus” (Rom. 8:1)!

What a wonder is God’s merciful grace upon each generation! For God’s people of all times to have their countless sins taken away, to have their iniquity covered—is not this a wonder?

But it is not just for past generations and for our own—it is good news that God intends our children and children’s children to hear!

As the psalmist wrote, so let us today be “...telling to the generation to come the praises of the Lord...that they may arise and declare them to their children, that they may set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God...” (v. 4,6-7).

—Pastor Paul Krause
Clarkston, Washington



**Noting the 75th Anniversary of the
"Brief Statement of the Doctrinal
Position of the MISSOURI SYNOD"
(1932-2007)**

**A Trumpet Which Gave—and Gives!—a Clear Sound
(See 1 Corinthians 14:8)**

Brief Statement
Of the Means of Grace

Introductory Thoughts:

Perusing the non-prescription drug aisle of our local store, we might find two products that advertise relief from the same condition but have differing active ingredients. Depending on the active ingredient, these drugs may not be equally effective or safe.

If a manufacturer of the drugs failed to include the active ingredient, the medicine might look the same, but it would be worthless. A wise consumer pays close attention to type and amount of active ingredients in a product.

When seeking relief from the spiritual sickness of sin—God’s just condemnation, a guilty conscience, the sorrows produced by sin in this life, etc.—there are as many suggested remedies as there are products on a drug store’s shelf.

But only one active ingredient can give relief from spiritual sickness and bring true healing. That one active ingredient is the gospel of Jesus Christ!

Churches may proclaim many things and address many social ills, but if they are missing the active ingredient, souls will not be saved. A spiritual message that does not contain the

gospel is no better than a placebo. It can cure nothing.

The gospel alone is the means God has given to bring His grace and the salvation of Christ to sinners. It is medicine for us in our need, and it is medicine for us to share with others as near as our family and as far away as across the world.

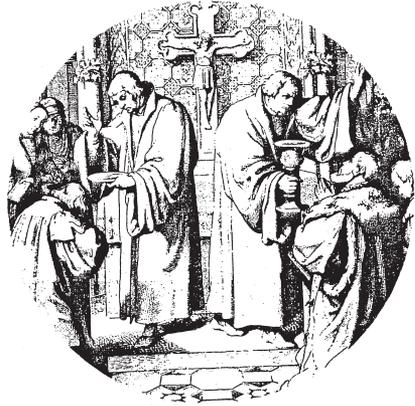
Brief Statement text [with comment]

Of the Means of Grace

21. Although God is present and operates everywhere throughout all creation, and the whole earth is therefore full of the *temporal* bounties and blessings of God, Colossians 1:17; Acts 17:28; 14:17, still we hold with Scripture that God offers and communicates to men [all people] the *spiritual* blessings purchased by Christ, namely, the forgiveness of sins and the treasures and gifts connected therewith [a conscience at ease and at peace with God, the promise of eternal life, boldness to approach God in prayer, etc.], only through the external means of grace ordained by Him. These means of

grace are the Word of the Gospel, in every form in which it is brought to man, and the Sacraments of Holy Baptism and of the Lord's Supper [essentially there is one means because it is the Gospel in all three—Word, Baptism, and Lord's Supper—that accomplishes conversion, strengthening of faith, etc.]. The Word of the Gospel promises and applies the grace of God, works faith and thus regenerates man, and gives the Holy Ghost, Acts 20:24; Romans 10:17; 1 Peter 1:23; Galatians 3:2. Baptism, too, is applied for the remission of sins and is therefore a washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost [without the Gospel the water of Baptism is just plain water], Acts 2:38; 22:16; Titus 3:5. Likewise the object of the Lord's Supper, that is, of the ministration of the body and blood of Christ, is none other than the communication and sealing of the forgiveness of sins, as the words declare [without the Gospel it would simply be bread and wine]: "Given for you," and: "Shed for you for the remission of sins," Luke 22:19, 20; Matt. 26:28, and "This cup is the New Testament in My blood," 1 Corinthians 11:23; Jeremiah 31:31-34 ("New Covenant").

22. Since it is only through the external means ordained by Him that God has promised to communicate the grace and salvation purchased by Christ, the Christian Church must not remain at home with the Means of Grace entrusted to it, but go into the whole world with the preaching of the Gospel and the administration of the Sacraments, Matthew 28:19, 20; Mark 16:15, 16. For the same reason also the church-



es at home should never forget that there is no other way of winning souls for the Church and keeping them with it than the faithful and diligent use of the divinely ordained Means of Grace. Whatever activities do not either directly apply the Word of God or subserve such application [Church programs may not all use God's Word in the same way as a worship service, but these activities provide Christian fellowship and other related blessings. In this way these activities subserve the Gospel and its application.] we condemn as "new methods," unchurchly activities [such as pursuing a "social gospel" and a ministry which focuses on the ills of this earth rather than on spiritual needs], which do not build, but harm the Church [only the Gospel in Word and Sacrament can create and sustain faith and thereby build the Church].

23. We reject as a dangerous error the doctrine, which disrupted the Church of the Reformation, that the grace and the Spirit of God are communicated not through the external means ordained by Him [the Gospel], but by an immediate operation of grace [namely that grace

is given apart from God's Word and the work of the Holy Spirit]. **This erroneous doctrine bases the forgiveness of sins, or justification** [being declared righteous in God's sight], **upon a fictitious "infused grace,"** [grace found within a sinner which is then also up to the sinner to maintain, rather than grace that is a gift of God and righteousness from Christ that is freely credited to the sinner] **that is,**

upon a quality of man, and thus again establishes the work-doctrine of the papists [strictly speaking, those who follow the leadership and teachings of the Pope, but in reality all who follow the teaching that we are able to earn forgiveness from God, and indeed must earn forgiveness by what we do].

—Pastor Wayne Eichstadt
Mankato, Minnesota



The Discourses of Christ

A House Divided Cannot Stand—Luke 11:14-26

Jesus—Our Champion Over the Devil

Please read Luke 11:14-26.

You have powerful enemies out there, but an even more powerful Friend!

Or do you? Jesus' enemies challenged the obvious truth that Jesus had power over the devil and all his evil angels. They wanted people to believe that Jesus was in league with the devil, that it was all part of the devil's show to mislead people and steal them away from God. And so the charge was made: "He casts out demons by Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons" (Lk. 11:15).

Without doubt the devil was using his power as a terror tactic. In this instance, the demon that possessed this individual had stolen the individual's ability to speak (at other times demon-possessed people were thrown into terrifying rages or fits, even casting themselves into water or fire in attempts to

destroy them).

The devil wanted all to know and fear the greatness of his power. He wanted people fearing him rather than finding peace in Jesus. And so while everyone marveled at Jesus' healing power as well as at the wondrous message He proclaimed, the devil was quick to present demonstrations of his power to hurt, to destroy, and to terrify.

Jesus declared that His acts demonstrated the impossibility of His enemy's charges. Jesus had nothing to do with this deception. He was bringing real damage to the devil's work, real victories for those afflicted by the devil, and real confidence in God for those who were disturbed. If this were being done by the devil's direction, then the devil's house was divided and it would fall. Jesus continued, "But if I cast out

demons with the finger of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you” (Lk. 11:20).

Yes, the rule of God’s grace was there before them all in the person of Christ Jesus! Jesus made the point that the devil very much desires to hold on to what he possesses, but Jesus is the Stronger One who overcomes and delivers from the devil.

This is still true today! At times we may wonder at demonstrations of the devil’s power in physical possession—and certainly we would agree that it is a terrifying thought that anyone would be subjected to such horrors.

However, these terrorist acts of the devil are not the worst thing he can do. He uses his power to deceive men’s souls. If it serves his ends, he may even appear as an angel of light (see 2 Cor. 11:14). He is out to destroy our faith and to steal our souls.

If incidents of physical possession teach anything about the devil, they teach above all the reality of his supernatural power and the destructive nature

of the power which he and his minions possess. Note also the demons’ willingness to do anything, absolutely anything, to attain their evil goals. The devil seeks to possess your soul—and to do that forever!

Yes, we have powerful enemies out there!

No Room for Carelessness

But we have an even more powerful Friend in Jesus!

While many in this world would detract from Jesus and attempt to explain away His miraculous acts of kindness and deliverance, Jesus’ power remains very real. He is the Stronger One who came to liberate us from the power of the devil.

Jesus did exercise real power over the devil. Jesus did cast the demons out of stricken individuals. The evil angels could not deny or refuse the authority and power of the Son of God. If the physical possession of people was only a hint of the real horror the devil can bring, then the casting out of demons

**Essayists at the June Pastoral Conference.
Pastor Paul Naumann used
Hebrew powerpoint!
Middle: Profs. Paul Schaller, John Reim;
Bottom: Pastors Karl Stewart, John Klatt**



was only a small taste of the wonder of grace and deliverance that Jesus brings!

For all who are under the devil's dominion, Jesus provides righteousness and life great enough to save. The devil rules people's hearts with his corrupting power; he seeks to instill the guilt and condemnation resulting from their sins. Only Jesus can dispel the devil's power; Jesus destroyed the works of the devil by living a holy, righteous life that God credits to sinful mankind; Jesus endured the curse of sin's guilt and condemnation for us all in His innocent sufferings and death on the cross.

This is the greater power of Christ that is brought to us in the gospel. Jesus has destroyed the devil, and the kingdom of God has come upon us. Through faith in Jesus this deliverance from the devil is ours in time and for all eternity.

Note, however, that this is not the end of Jesus' words on this subject. He warns against spiritual carelessness. "The devil (still) walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour" (1 Pet. 5:8). His demons are out there looking for that spiritual house that they can once again call home. A nice, clean, regenerated Christian heart is just what they are looking for!

Let us watch and be on guard. Let us stay in the Word and not become spiritually lax and careless. Every day we still need Jesus as our powerful Friend and Protector. Stay close to Him, and then it shall not be (and can never be!) that our last state will be worse than the first.

—Pastor Theodore Barthels
Austin, Minnesota



CROSS PURPOSES



The Beauty and Blessing of Fellowship

When we speak of fellowship, we generally think of what is known as "Church Fellowship." Such fellowship involves worship, prayer, and joint church work. We also speak of pulpit, prayer, and altar fellowship.

According to Scripture such fellowship is appropriately practiced only with such, and among such, as are united in the teachings of Holy Scripture. Paul spoke of it in Romans 15, "Now the God of patience and consolation

grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus: That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." Hardly can that occur where there is disagreement in what Scripture teaches!

For that reason, the confessional Lutheran church faithful to the Scripture does not enter into fellowship relations with heterodox (false teaching) churches. To enter into such

a fellowship under those conditions is called “religious unionism.” Religious unionism is forbidden by such passages as Romans 16:17,18; 1 Corinthians 1:10; Ephesians 5:6,7. Because of the danger to faith and ultimately to one’s salvation, our Heavenly Father instructs us not to sit at the feet of false teachers, or not to enter into any religious activity with them, for doing so would encourage them to continue in their error.

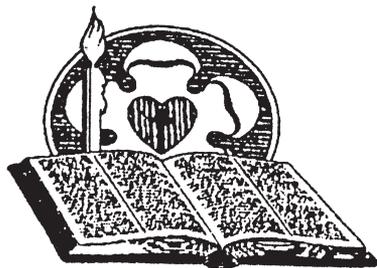
The Beauty of Fellowship

Today, however, we will address the subject from another perspective. We speak first of the beauty of fellowship.

The fellowship of which we speak here is the fellowship—the togetherness—that people of one confession, one faith, and one commitment enjoy with one another in the church of which they are members. This fellowship extends to the togetherness that we enjoy in the church body—in our case the Church of the Lutheran Confession. To their great loss, this is an aspect of fellowship that church members frequently forget.

We live in a selfish, self-serving world. Frequently in society people are confronted with danger from the criminal element. There are people who will quickly take economic advantage of us. If we do not fit the social mores of society, we are in danger of being ostracized. In the workplace we may be assaulted by foul language and abuse of our Savior’s name.

In such settings a sensitive Christian is uncomfortable. It is quite possible that as confessional Lutherans who believe the Bible and confess the Lord Jesus we will be made to feel quite



alone. The one place we can find refuge is in the assembly of fellow believers in the church family.

Fellow believers in Christ are members of the Body of Christ. The beauty of a fellowship and interaction within a Christian congregation of people of one mind and one faith is described in Acts 1:14: “These all continued with one accord [in harmony with one another] in prayer and supplication...” Then we read of the early church in Acts 2:44-46, “And all that believed were together, and had all things common; And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need. And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart...”

In view of the approaching Day (Hebrews 10:25), our Lord exhorts us to not forsake the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is. It is His will that we gather in worship around the means of grace (gospel in word and sacrament), so that we can be nourished, strengthened, and comforted by the Word from our Father.

Another factor that speaks to the purpose of our assembling faithfully together is that “we can stimulate one another to love and good works” (Heb. 10:24-AAT, Beck). We need one another. We need the fellowship of one

another in the trusting, safe, and encouraging environment which a Christian congregation affords.

The Blessing of Fellowship

The blessing of fellowship is enjoyed as penitent sinners sit at the foot of the cross together to hear the benediction of our Lord, “Thy sins be forgiven thee.”

We have heard it said that “one does not have to go to church to be a Christian.” Given the fact that we crave companionship—as well as the fact that within a Christian assembly we can mutually strengthen, encourage, offer a shoulder, support, and share with one another—we counter with the question: “If one is a Christian, why would one not want to gather with fellow believers in the presence of God the Father, who in Christ has made us one with Him and with one another?”

There is no greater joy or blessing than to worship, pray, and work together as “fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God” (Eph. 2:19).

The apostle John wrote, “Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knows us not, because it knew Him not” (1 Jn. 3:1).

The world may forget us. We can expect to suffer the same fate as our Savior. All the more do we want to appreciate and promote a united and practiced fellowship in all its manifestations, so that with one heart and mind we might encourage one another in this miserable world! We need the mutual reminder that our Father will not forget us!

We pray earnestly, therefore, that we will appreciate the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and practice fellowship with one another, as we wait for the fulfillment of our mutual hope. The fulfillment of that hope is the ultimate blessing we will enjoy together when our Lord shall invite us into the assembly and fellowship of the saints in heaven—forever!

—*Pastor Daniel Fleischer
Corpus Christi, Texas*



**Pastor Gordon Radtke at the mike;
Front row: Pastors Thomas Schuetze,
Michael Eichstadt, John Hein;
Top right: Pastors Daniel Fleischer,
Paul Larsen, David Lau,
Steven Karp, David Schierenbeck;
Opposite: Chaplain Andrew Mayhew,
Organist Paul Krause, Liturgist Matthew
Hanel, Speaker David Schaller**



The Word From Immanuel

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

To our young readers - This is for you!

Coming Down from the Mountain

*Lord, lead the way the Savior went.
Amen.*

During recent summers a number of our young people have been attending youth conferences in the Rocky Mountains. They spend a week immersing themselves in the study of God's Word. It is an exhilarating experience...a spiritual high.

In some ways it must have been similar to the "high" that the disciples experienced on the mount of transfiguration. They wanted to stay and build tabernacles for Jesus, Moses, and Elijah. However, it was not what Christ wanted. They had to come down from the mountain and continue their training. Some time after Christ's ascension, Peter wrote that the objective Word of God is more certain than the memory of a vision.

Speaking of the ascension, that too was an exhilarating experience. However, the angel said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven?" They, too, had to go down from the mountain. There was work to be done.

These are moments to be treasured and enjoyed. Sooner or later, however, we have to come down from the mountain. What then? Is the high going to

last? It's hard to sustain a high with only memories. Can it be perpetuated or repeated on a regular basis?

There are churches that try to do this. Sunday after Sunday they try to excite the emotions of the people in the pew. But what's the matter with conservative Lutherans? Why don't we try to do this? Compared to other churches, ours seems to be a sad religion.

Listen to the words of the Apostle Paul in Philippians chapter four: "...I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content: I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."

Paul recognized that life is filled with high points and low points. Life is not a continual high nor is it a continual low. I doubt if any of us could function if it were that way.

In every generation, it seems as though there have been church people on both sides of the issue. At times there have been pietists, who believe it is a sin to laugh. At other times there have been "charismatics," who want to be floating in the emotional strato-



Pastor James & Mrs. Carol Sandeen (back) lead a circle discussion at the Colorado Como Park Youth Conference in August

sphere all the time.

If we make it our objective to seek a religious high all the time, we are probably going to go astray. Likewise we will stray if we insist that Christianity is always a somber religion.

“It’s Good to be Lutheran!”

The apostle Paul chose the middle ground. “I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content.” He learned the secret of contentment in every condition of life. “Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.”

If and when the circumstances of life are widely vacillating—first up, then down—the best thing to do is remain “in the middle” with the spirit of contentment. Rather than riding up and down on the waves of life, you can be stable...like a hovercraft that floats on a cushion of air along a level plain, while the waters beneath are rising and falling.

Maybe this is the reason why Lutherans seem rather unemotional when compared with so-called “feel good” religions. We teach one another to be content in every circumstance of life.

If we are constantly riding the waves, we can easily become depressed when things go wrong. We may mistak-

only think that the only evidence that God is with us is when we have peace, prosperity, and good health. Therefore, when we are suffering, we may conclude that God has abandoned us.

Either way, a person ends up interpreting the magnitude of God’s love or the condition of one’s faith on the basis of emotional feelings. Thus, faith is based on outward, temporal things, rather than on the Word of God.

What is it that made Paul content? What is the secret he learned? He says, “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.” In Christ he found the secret of life.

When a person learns that the Son of God set aside the glories of heaven in order to live and die on Earth...that Jesus Christ gave His body and soul into death in order to redeem us from eternal punishment...When a person knows and believes that, it is all that matters to him. Riches, honor, academ-



What a meaningful sunset at the Youth Conference

ic degrees, power, pleasure all become unimportant. If one has them, okay. If one doesn't have them, that's okay too. His sins are forgiven; that's all that matters. The person is at peace with God; there is a place in heaven prepared for him; that's all that matters. He has Jesus....

As someone said: "If you have Christ, you have everything, even if you have nothing else; if you don't have Christ, you have nothing, even if you have everything else."

You know Jesus. This means that also you and I can do all things through Him. When the crest of the wave is high, we won't get carried away with the idea that this is what Christianity is all about. When the trough of the wave is low, we won't think that this is a sign that God has turned against us. Rather, we will praise God on the crest and praise Him in the trough—it won't

make any difference. We will enjoy the high and endure the low, because we can do all things through Christ who strengthens us.

This is what makes these Youth Conferences so valuable. The young people went to Jesus and His Word for strength. Their high was based on the objective Word, which remains the same forever. Thus, though the exhilaration may have waned, the basis for it has not.

You know something? It's good to be Lutheran!

PRAYER: Father in heaven, we thank You for times when You lift us up to the heights, and also for those times when You comfort us in the depths. At all times and in all things, teach us to be content by finding our strength in Jesus and His Word. In His name we pray. Amen.

—Prof. John Pfeiffer



Postmodernism, Luther, and Bible Truth

This is being written 1) to accompany the "grade school exercise" (opposite page), and 2) to give some perspective in our postmodern day when the word *doctrine* (not only the word but also the concept) has fallen on such evil times.

"Postmodernism" has been mentioned in previous editorials on these pages. Allow us to refer to it again in this our Reformation issue, and then a bit later to allow the Reformer to speak to our bold and brash, truth-denying, twenty-first century on the subject!

From a recent article we read—called "Reaching the Postmodern Mind"—listen to a few quotes. A certain

professor of philosophy seeks to help us understand the broad implications of the phenomenon, when he writes:

"...What is most important for us Christians, belief in objective truth per se, (is) all passé to the postmodernist."

"...Postmodernism denies the existence of God in a biblical sense. Objective reality and objective criteria of truth and morals are rejected."

"...Even 'love' is understood differently. In postmodern culture, love is always tolerance. However, this tolerance is a theory that basically says that no one has a right to maintain belief in objective truth."

GALATIANS LESSON NINE*

Since in your Christian life you will often be exposed to false doctrines, a search of God's Word to learn what He says about false doctrines will be beneficial for you. The Scripture passages you will read have been divided into three different categories. Read each passage, and on the basis of the information given, fill in the blanks with the proper word or words. In one instance you will underline.

A. What False Doctrines ARE

1. 1 Timothy 4:1—They are teachings of _____.
2. Deuteronomy 13:5—They are _____.
3. Jeremiah 5:30,31—They are _____.
4. Matthew 7:15—They appear to be (clever, harmless, vicious). Underline one.
5. Colossians 2:8—They are _____.
6. 2 Timothy 4:3—They are based on _____ (two words).

B. What False Doctrines DO

1. Deuteronomy 13:4,5—They cause people to _____ against God.
2. Job 27:8—They give no _____.
3. Isaiah 32:6—They spread _____ about the _____.
4. Jeremiah 23:16—They give _____ hope.
5. Jeremiah 50:6—They cause people to become spiritually _____.
6. Matthew 15:8-9—They cause people to _____ God in _____.
7. Acts 15:24—They _____ and _____ believers.
8. 1 Timothy 4:1—They cause believers to _____ the _____.
9. Titus 1:11—They can _____ whole _____.
10. 2 Peter 2:1—They can _____ spiritually.
11. 2 Peter 3:17—They can cause believers to _____ into _____.
12. Isaiah 32:6—They leave people spiritually _____ and _____.

C. Additional Concerns

1. 2 Peter 2:1—False doctrines are often introduced _____.
2. Matthew 24:3,11—The closer we come to the _____ (four words), the greater the number of people who will be _____ by false doctrines.
3. Matthew 16:12—We must _____ against false doctrines.

(*Student lesson 9, from **Getting Into God's Word: Galatians, You Are Free Indeed**, c. 1993, Northwestern Publishing House. Used by permission. All rights reserved.)

You get the idea. Postmodernism is the philosophical term used for the frequently heard insinuation and/or assertion that all truth is relative, that no such thing as truth actually exists. Actually, it is objective truth which is being rejected. What is true or truth for

one individual or group, you see, is not necessarily true or truth for another individual or group. Put another way, to the postmodernist mind, truth is a merely subjective thing.

Undoubtedly, dear reader, you and your fellow confessors of Christ and

the Bible have encountered reactions along postmodern lines in your attempts to witness to the gospel of the Savior, and to Bible doctrines which are objectively true!

The article referred to above is but one of a number of good Christian and biblically-based responses and rebuttals this writer has seen to the theologically heretical ideas of postmodernism. No doubt your good orthodox Lutheran pastor—as a spokesman for Jesus who Himself is the Truth and who attests to the truthfulness of God’s Word in the Bible (see John 10:35, 17:17 etc.)—has been warning against this heresy, even as he gives sound, Bible-based perspectives over against it.

A Homework Assignment!

In our Christian school last year, we were studying the epistle to the Galatians. This epistle was a favorite of the Reformer among all the biblical books. In his table talks the saying is recorded: “The Epistle to the Galatians is my epistle. To it I am as it were in wedlock. It is my Katherine.” Some time later, Luther is quoted as saying: “If I had my way about it, they would republish only those of my books which have doctrine. My Galatians, for instance.” Luther loved this book so much, for it sets forth in glorious fashion the objective (!) holy truth that “no one is justified by the law in the sight of God is evident, for the just shall live by faith” (Gal. 3:11).

In the course of our junior high religion class studies, we came upon the “GALATIANS-LESSON NINE” page. How fitting the exercise, we thought, as it helped the students discover the importance of holding to true doctrine while at the same time exposing the subtleties and dangers of false doctrine. (If you choose to do your homework, dear reader, we trust it will do the same for you.)

What might Luther have to say about the postmodernist spin on/against objective truth in our day? Hear him out carefully, Christian friends, in connection with his commentary on Galatians 5:19, “A little leaven leavens the whole lump”:

“Our opponents...put us down as contentious, ill-tempered fault-finders. But these are the crafty passes of the devil, with which he seeks to overthrow our faith. We answer with Paul: ‘A little leaven leavens the whole lump.’ Small faults grow into big faults. To tolerate a trifling error inevitably leads to crass heresy. The doctrine of the Bible is not ours to take or to allow liberties with. We have no right to change even a tittle of it. When it comes to life we are ready to do, to suffer, to forgive anything our opponents demand as long as faith and doctrine remain pure and uncorrupt.

“...Let others praise love and concord to the skies; we magnify the authority of the Word and faith. Love may be neglected at times without peril,

ANSWERS to quiz, p. 21: First listing is from the New International Version (NIV) Bible, which was used in the copyrighted exercise; bracketed answers [] taken from the New King James Version (NKJV) have been added.

A. 1. demons; 2. evil (or rebellion); 3. lies [astounding and horrible]; 4. harmless; 5. deceptive [cheat you]; 6. human desires [one’s own desires];

B. 1. rebel [turn away]; 2. hope; 3. error-Lord; 4. false [make you worthless]; 5. lost (or led astray); 6. worship-vain; 7. disturb-trouble [trouble-unsettle]; 8. abandon-faith [depart from]; 9. ruin [subvert]-households (or families); 10. destroy; 11. fall-unbelief [fall from your steadfastness]; 12. hungry-thirsty

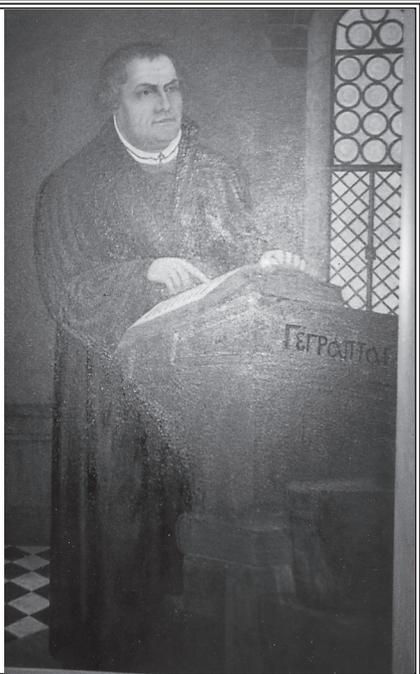
C. 1. secretly; 2. end of the world—deceived; 3. guard

GEGRAPTAI

This photograph is of a life-size painting of Dr. Martin Luther by Professor Herman A. Fleischer (1876-1954), who served on the faculty at Northwestern College, Watertown, Wis. from 1926-1953. Prof. Fleischer once told his class that he had prepared the inscription so that one could rub and rub on it and the words would become brighter and more shiningly visible.

The painting shows the reformer at the age of about fifty, lecturing to his students at Wittenberg University. "The man looking at his students has tasted the bitterness of sin, but also the sweetness of the gospel....He is determined to hold his ground against all enemies, and confident of success. What is it that gives him this unyielding firmness coupled with serene happiness and loving kindness? It is indicated in one Greek word, written, as a motto, across the front of the lecturer's desk: gegraptoi: IT IS WRITTEN...." (The *Black and Red* magazine)

The painting hangs yet today in the library of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Mequon, Wisconsin. The picture was taken by your editor, the painter's grandson, who was pleasantly surprised at how the flashbulb highlighted the Greek lettering.



but not the Word and faith. Love suffers all things, it gives in. Faith suffers nothing; it never yields...Let us not be influenced by the popular cry for love and unity. If we do not love God and His Word, what difference does it make if we love anything at all?" (A Commentary on St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians by Martin Luther, Zondervan, date not given, p. 232)

And one more classic quote from Luther's Galatians' commentary:

"I cannot say it often enough, that we must carefully differentiate between doctrine and life. Doctrine is a piece of heaven, life is a piece of earth. Life is sin, error, uncleanness, misery, and charity must forbear, believe, hope, and suffer all things. Forgiveness of sins must be continuous so that sin and error may not be defended and sustained. But with doctrine there must be no error, no need of pardon. There can be no com-

parison between doctrine and life. The least little point of doctrine is of greater importance than heaven and earth. Therefore we cannot allow the least jot of doctrine to be corrupted. We may overlook the offenses and errors of life, for we daily sin much. Even the saints sin, as they themselves confess in the Lord's Prayer and in the Creed. But our doctrine, God be praised, is pure, because all the articles of our faith are grounded on the Holy Scriptures." (same source, p. 234)

Lord Jesus, help, Thy Church uphold,
For we are sluggish, thoughtless, cold.
Oh, prosper well Thy Word of grace
And spread **ITS TRUTH** in ev'ry place!

The haughty spirits, Lord, restrain
Who o'er Thy Church with might would reign
And always set forth something new,
Devised to change **THY DOCTRINE TRUE**.
(TLH #292:3&6—our emphases!)

—Pastor Paul Fleischer

Announcements

CLC TEACHERS CONFERENCE
Messiah Lutheran Church
Hales Corners, Wisconsin
October 24-26, 2007

Partial agenda:

Wednesday sessions:

“Growing in Love—Personally”—Pastor Gordon Radtke

- Giving and Getting Constructive Criticism
- Moving Forward/Building the Ministry Book Discussions

by Gwen Koch: *Pressed Down but Not Forgotten*

by Bea Gerbitz: *The Essential 55*

Thursday sessions:

“Growing in Love—Professionally”—Pastor John Schierenbeck

- Encouraging Your Fellow Teachers
- Brain Development in Pre-Adolescents—Laurie Marzofka
- Brain Development in Adolescents—Dean Marzofka

Friday sessions:

“Growing in Love—Outwardly by Serving”—Prof. Mark Kranz

- Being a Personal Example to Children, Congregation, Staff, Community

Daily Devotions by Ryan Libby; Worship service, 7:00 p.m. Wednesday; Curriculum Review; Title Five’s; Ideas Exchange; Business Meeting; Tours

Installations

In accord with our usage and order, Chad Seybt, who was called by St. John’s Lutheran Church, Okabena, Minnesota, as upper grade



teacher and principal in their Christian Day School was installed on Sunday, August 12, 2007.

—Pastor James Albrecht

In accord with our usage and order, Kyle Ochsner, who was called as math and science teacher to Immanuel Lutheran High School, Mankato, Minnesota, was installed on Sunday, August 26, 2007.

—Pastor Wayne Eichstadt

Pacific Coast Pastoral Conference Trinity Lutheran Church Spokane, Washington October 23-25, 2007

Agenda

- Old Testament Exegesis: Psalm 46—Pastor Terrel Kesterson
- New Testament Exegesis: Romans 13:1-6—Pastor Steven Karp
- Walther, Law and Gospel, Thesis XIII—Pastor Caleb Schaller
- Rewards—Pastor David Reim
- Review and Revision suggestions of Agenda forms (beginning with baptism)—Pastor Robert List
- Gospel Motivation—Pastor Paul Krause

Conference Chaplain: Pastor Neal Radichel

Communion Service Speaker: Pastor Paul Naumann

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