

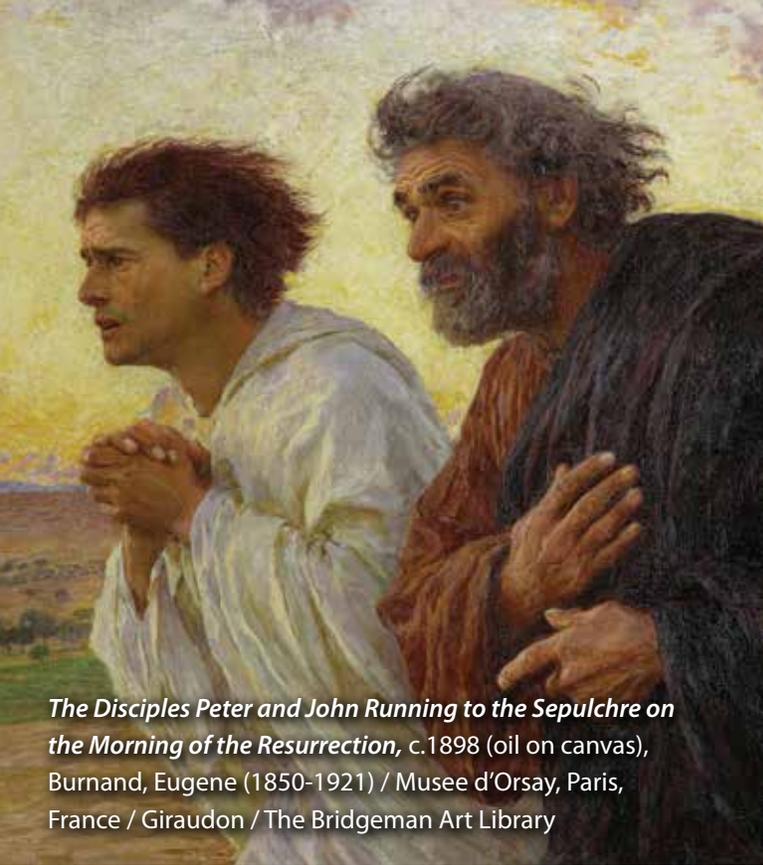
LUTHERAN SPOKESMAN

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



“Peter and the other disciple started for the tomb. Both were running. ...”

(John 20:3-4 NIV)



The Disciples Peter and John Running to the Sepulchre on the Morning of the Resurrection, c.1898 (oil on canvas), Burnand, Eugene (1850-1921) / Musee d'Orsay, Paris, France / Giraudon / The Bridgeman Art Library

Tucked away in a central Parisian museum that was once a railway station, there

hangs an Easter painting quite unlike any Gospel masterpiece created before or after it. It is not painted by a Rembrandt or a Rubens or the patron saint of artists, Fra Angelico. The painting is the work of a little-known Swiss painter. The work does not even show the risen Jesus. It merely portrays two witnesses, John and Peter, running to the empty tomb. - Elise Ehrhard

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The Last Thing You Expect to See in a Graveyard

The two emotions that are perhaps most clearly evident on the faces of the men on our cover are *astonishment* and *hope*.

That is unusual when you consider their destination—a graveyard. Surely a cemetery would be the one place in all the world where a reasonable person would expect no surprises, nothing to astonish, and nothing remaining to hope for. Self-evidently, this is the destination toward which no one need rush, for at the graveyard we are confronted with the absolute certainty of death.

But after the sorrow and suffering and death of Good Friday, a new day dawns. In the slanting rays of the morning sun, the followers of the Nazarene are, indeed, rushing to a graveyard. And theirs is not a gloomy mien, for on their faces we read excitement, even astonishment.



And suddenly—most astonishingly of all—there is also *hope*.

Paul Naumann is pastor of Ascension Lutheran Church in Tacoma, Washington, and editor of *The Lutheran Spokesman*.

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Resurrection Power

“... that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death” (Philippians 3:10).

Before his conversion, Paul was a man who knew power. He knew the power of a sharp mind and a good education, of high social standing, of friends and allies in high places. He knew the power that goes with confidence in the rightness of one’s cause. He also understood the power of intimidation by the threat and use of force and violence.

Continued on next page

It was surely with a sense of power that Paul set out for Damascus to deal with the Christians there (Acts 9), for he had the full authority of the high priest for his mission. But on that journey Paul met up with a power greater than any that he had ever known. It threw him to the ground. It made him shake with fear. It struck him blind. It was the power of the risen, living and reigning Christ.

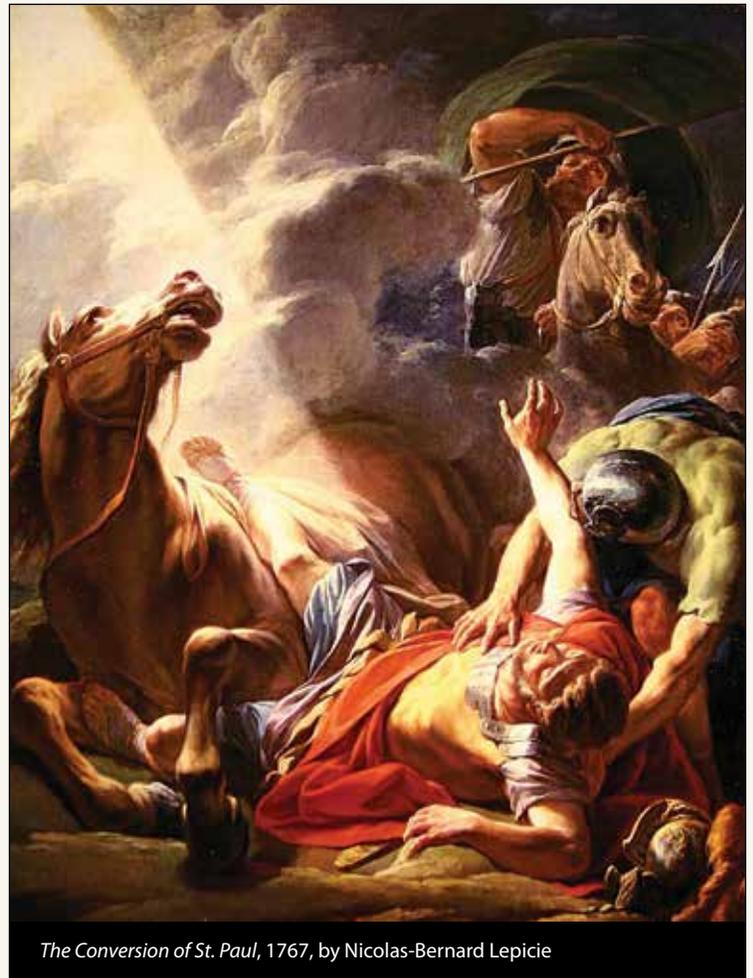
But as Paul was led by the hand into Damascus that day, he did not yet know Christ and His saving resurrection power. He came to this knowledge soon after, when the Holy Spirit opened his heart to the Scriptures and convinced Him that the Jesus whom he had been persecuting was the Christ. Then Paul learned that the power of Christ's resurrection was in His victory over sin and death for lost and condemned humanity.

In Philippians 3, Paul identifies the knowledge of the power of Christ's resurrection as his most precious possession, a possession of such surpassing value that he could sacrifice everything else for it and say that he had really lost nothing. The knowledge of Christ's resurrection was of such great value to him because by faith in the crucified and risen Christ, Paul possessed a righteousness that is not by the Law, but rather is a gift from God; that is, righteousness that makes a sinner acceptable to God. Knowing by faith the power of Christ's resurrection, Paul looked forward to his own resurrection and eternal life. With a possession like that, what difference did anything else make?

Together with the power of Christ's resurrection, Paul was glad to know "*the fellowship of His sufferings.*" That at first looks like a rather strange pairing: resurrection and sufferings. But not to Paul. He understood that Christ rose to life after laying down His life as the atoning sacrifice to save sinners from death and condemnation. Paul understood that his own life also had to take the path of sufferings and death on the way to resurrection and eternal life; not to atone for his sins—Christ's sufferings and death alone did that—but to be "conformed" to Christ's death, to be joined to Him by faith in both His sufferings and His resurrection.

Like Paul, all of us have experienced power in its various forms. We may have exercised power over others. We may have had to endure the abuse of power from those in authority over us. But earthly power in

... Paul met up with a power greater than any that he had ever known. It threw him to the ground. It made him shake with fear. It struck him blind. It was the power of the risen, living and reigning Christ.



The Conversion of St. Paul, 1767, by Nicolas-Bernard Lepicie

all its forms diminishes over time and finally passes away completely. There is only one power that continues forever: the resurrection power of Jesus Christ. We have it by faith, and it is working life in us, even when we must pass through times of humbling, weakness, and suffering.



The power of Christ's resurrection is one thing above all others that is worth knowing and having by faith.

John Klatt is pastor of Prince of Peace Lutheran Church in Loveland, Colorado.

To Rise from Sin

“... just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life” (Romans 6:4).

EASTER

is indeed a joyful time of the year as we celebrate the anniversary of our Savior’s resurrection. He who died for us rose again and lives forevermore! What greater joy for us than to know that our Redeemer lives! That joy comes from comprehending by faith the wonder of God’s love and the forgiveness that is ours in Christ Jesus. So we know a great sense of relief from guilt and we know peace and hope, but do we fully realize the power of the resurrection? Perhaps one’s first thought relating to the power of Jesus’ resurrection is that our mortal bodies too shall rise from the grave, but there is an exceptional power, a wondrous and gracious power that the Lord brings us now in His resurrection. The power of the resurrection is what we need in order to overcome sin in our lives.

We often speak of the weakness of our sinful flesh. What we really mean is that we are giving in to our fleshly desires. We all too often depend upon our strength to resist sin; or, worse, we fall prey to the popular idea that the best way to get rid of a temptation is to give in to it. That is exactly how helpless we are on our own, battling sin in our lives. Without Jesus, we were totally sinful. But then Jesus came into the world and lived the perfect, sinless life we could not live, and offered His holy precious blood for us and for our sin. On the third day He *“was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father.”* Christ’s victory over death is also His victory over sin and its power. As we are called to faith in Jesus as our crucified and risen Lord, we are granted newness of life.

Jesus’ death counts as our death for sin. Jesus’ resurrection brings us new life. By the Spirit’s working in our hearts, we are enabled to live in the power of the resurrection. The Apostle Paul expounds a few verses

Christ’s victory over death is also His victory over sin and its power.

later in this sixth chapter of Romans, *“Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him . . . Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord”* (Romans 6:8,11).

Perhaps we need to give some thought to being dead to sin, and what this means. It involves a conscious sanctified state of mind: we need to think about what we are doing. People sometimes consciously think about leaving others out of their lives—those others are “dead to them.” This is what we ought to do with sin, not people. We will not allow sin a place in our lives. This is especially important for those sins which have been a problem in our lives. The devil would tempt us, and our flesh would find these sins appealing instead of disgusting, but the Spirit of our Risen Lord would declare us free from slavery to the lusts of the flesh. By the power of the resurrection, we can say “NO!” to sin, and “YES!” to righteousness!

Sin is death, but we have died with Christ, Who also rose again and lives forevermore. We have been raised to newness of life. Let us live in the power of the resurrection, so that each and every day may be lived in true repentance, confessing our sins where we have fallen short and striving for every thought, word, and action to be driven by the love of Christ, Who died for us and rose again, Who is our life now and forever.



Theodore Barthels is pastor of St. Paul’s Ev. Lutheran Church in Austin, Minnesota.

“I AM the Good Shepherd”

Twenty-three times in the Gospel of John we find “I AM” statements (in Greek, *ego eimi*).

To seven of those are attached metaphors, including the passage in which our Lord states, “I AM the Good Shepherd” (John 10:11,14). Why did Jesus choose this word picture to describe Himself?

The land of Israel had a mostly agrarian population. Sheep herding had a long history in the region. Abraham, Jacob, Moses, and David had all spent time as shepherds. It was common for Jesus to use relatable pictures in His teaching. His parables, for example, are full of earthly elements to which He attaches a spiritual lesson. In referring to Himself as the “Good Shepherd,” He wants us to learn something spiritual about Him.

“Good” Shepherd

If I were to describe a vacation or a movie as “good,” you probably would not be overly impressed. However, the Greek word *kalos*, translated “good,” describes that which is noble, wholesome, and beautiful. It signifies both an inward and outward goodness—His inherent righteousness. As Shepherd of the sheep, He nurtures, protects, and guides His flock. He is even willing to lay down His own life to rescue His sheep.

His Flock

I am not a farmer, but from what I have heard and read, there is no better example of helplessness and ineptitude than a sheep. Dolphins and pigs are often described as

smart; not sheep. Sheep require constant attention. They get into trouble that they cannot get out of on their own. They are often stubborn, unwilling, and slow. They have few natural defense mechanisms. They are easy prey for their enemies. Sound like anyone you know? “All we like sheep have gone astray; we have

turned, every one, to his own way” (Isaiah 53:6). We, like sheep, are stubborn creatures, too dumb to know what is spiritually good for us. We daily wander off the path of righteousness, seek solace in dangerous places, and hopelessly try to fend for ourselves against mighty foes. We need a Shepherd.

The Shepherd’s Tools

The shepherd David described to King Saul his encounters with a lion and a bear (I Samuel 17:34-35). He struck those enemies of the sheep with a rod, a two-foot club used as a weapon of defense. Sometimes our Good Shepherd uses His power to crush our physical and spiritual enemies (including the head of the serpent, Genesis 3:15). David was also familiar with a staff, a straight sapling about six feet long. It was used to guide his sheep, to knock off twigs and leaves from trees for their food, and to assist in climbing up hills and down ravines. In the same way, our Good Shepherd guides us, feeds us, and cares for us as we traverse dangerous ground.

Perhaps the most important tool of the Good Shepherd is His voice. Sheep recognize the voice of their shepherd and follow his lead. So it is with our Good Shepherd. “My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me” (John 10:27). As David says in the familiar Psalm 23, “He leads me in the paths of righteousness for His name’s sake” (verse 3). Remember, it was through the “still small voice” that the Lord revealed His will to Elijah—not through the earthquake, wind, or fire (I Kings 19). So how does the Good Shepherd speak to us? The Shepherd’s voice can be heard in the faithful preaching and reading of His word, and in the godly counsel of family and friends. Let us be like the boy Samuel and respond, “Speak, for Your servant hears” (I Samuel 3:10).

“Now may the God of peace who brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you complete in every good work to do His will, working in you what is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen” (Hebrews 13: 20-21).



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ENTERING GOD'S REST

So I swore in My wrath, 'They shall not enter My rest'" (Psa 95:11).

HEBREWS 4:1-10

It was a tragic story with which every Hebrew was familiar; how, at the brink of Canaan, the Israelites refused to go in. "Our enemies are too big," they said, implying their God was too small. They wept, whimpered, and faithlessly wished, "If only we had died in this wilderness" (Numbers 14:2).

Furious at their constant rebellion, God granted their request. Instead of marching into Canaan, they spent forty years dying in the wilderness. Worse still, those of the Exodus Generation who rejected God not only forfeited the Promised Land; they also forfeited God's promised rest. "So, I swore in My wrath, 'They shall not enter My rest'" (Psalm 95:11—a psalm quoted seven times in Hebrews Chapters 3 and 4).

In Hebrews 3:7-19, the inspired writer first warned his readers, "This is what happened to the unbelieving Israelites." In Hebrews 4:1-10 he exhorted them, "Don't let this happen to you." "Therefore, since a promise remains of entering His rest, let us fear lest any of you seem to have come short of it" (Hebrews 4:1).

But what, exactly, is God's rest? Canaan was certainly a resting place for the Israelites, but the land itself was not God's rest. God's rest existed long before Canaan and Canaanites and Israelites—in fact, has existed since day seven of creation. Even after the Israelites entered Canaan, they found no true rest in their land or from their leader Joshua. "For if Joshua had given them rest, then He would not afterward have spoken of another day" (Hebrews 4:8).

God alone is the source of true rest. The word *rest* is used ten times in chapters 3 and 4 of Hebrews, but it is never associated with an earthly person, place, or thing—only God. It is called "My rest" in Hebrews 3:11; 4:3,5; and "His rest" in Hebrews 3:18; 4:1,10. Consequently, when the Israelites rejected God, they rejected His promised rest and His Promised Land. Unbelief prevented them from entering both. "So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief" (Hebrews 3:19).

God "rested" on the seventh day of creation, not because He was tired, but because He was done creating. The

To enter God's rest means that we also cease from our works, as God did from His (Hebrews 4:10); that is, that we trust God to provide everything from daily bread to eternal life.

"works were finished from the foundation of the world" (Hebrews 4:3). In His unsearchable wisdom and immeasurable power, God had created all we needed for life, fulfillment, and purpose. Nothing was missing. Everything was perfect. So God stopped creating.

To enter God's rest means that we also cease from our works, as God did from His (Hebrews 4:10); that is, that we trust God to provide everything from daily bread to eternal life. God's rest is not entered by doing, but by believing in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and relying upon his Word. "For we who have believed enter that rest" (Hebrews 4:3).

Each "today" that we hear the Gospel—the Gospel that declares how God alone has done all the work of redemption, and we do all the unmerited receiving—we are being called to God's rest. The Gospel declares how Christ is not only the once-for-all sacrifice for our sins, but also the once-and-for-all guarantee that God will withhold no good and perfect blessing from our lives. To know and believe this is to rest in God—and to rest better in bed. "I will both lie down in peace, and sleep; for You alone, O LORD, make me dwell in safety" (Psalm 4:8).

The best commentary on Hebrews 4:1-10 is found in Matthew 11:28-29, where Jesus said: "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls."



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Why Can't Non-members Serve as Sponsors at our Baby's Baptism?

Before you ask who can serve as a sponsor for your child's Baptism, there is another, more important question to consider: Should you have sponsors at all?

The use of sponsors, or "Godparents," is a church custom that is neither commanded nor forbidden by Scripture. It will not impact the effectiveness of the Baptism either way. To be a valid Baptism, Jesus tells us to apply water (baptize) "... *in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit*" (Matthew 28:19). Anything more than that is a custom that is optional. Whether it is a good custom or a bad custom depends on how it's used and what it means.

Over the years, numerous customs have been added to the baptismal service. Each was meant as a way to deepen our understanding of and appreciation for what the Lord does through the simple act of Baptism. For example, the Apostles' Creed was added because it explains what is meant when we say, "... *in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.*" The Baptism became the time and place in which a child was given his Christian name (hence the term *christening*) in testimony to the rebirth that has taken place. In our services, the pastor customarily makes the sign of the cross over the baby's forehead and chest. Though not required, the symbolism is most appropriate: the child has been redeemed by the crucified and risen Savior. We no longer put a pinch of salt in the baby's mouth to signify an "exorcism" or calling out of the devil, but we do renounce the devil and all his works and all his ways.

The use of sponsors is a custom that probably originated when the early church was suffering persecution. In order to be admitted to the church, a sponsor had to speak in behalf of the applicant, vouching for that person's sincerity and faith. The sponsor might also serve as a mentor, helping an immature Christian to grow in his Christian life.

In most cases, today's sponsors also speak in behalf of the one baptized. Their responsibility doesn't end with

How can non-members, who do not completely agree with you on all the teachings of Scripture, promise that your child will be raised in those teachings? They can't, and they shouldn't.

Baptism, but is concerned with the second part of the Great Commission, "... *teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you*" (Matthew 28:20).

This means encouraging the child in his faith, supporting him through prayer, and doing everything possible so that he is taught and raised, not in just any faith, but in the true faith. Godparents need to be more than just people who will love your child. They should be ones who love your child in the most important way: by making your child's spiritual growth their constant concern. For this reason, doctrinal agreement is also necessary. How can non-members, who do not completely agree with you on all the teachings of Scripture, promise that your child will be raised in those teachings? They can't, and they shouldn't.

The use of sponsors is a beneficial custom when properly understood and practiced. If you do not have family or friends who share your faith, you could ask members of your congregation. They already have your child's spiritual well-being at heart and will be happy to assist in this important work. If there are family members or friends you'd like to include in your child's Baptism, and they do not belong to the CLC, talk with your pastor about having them serve as witnesses. This can be done

without compromising convictions or asking someone to make a promise that he could not keep.

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When God Fell On His Face

If God has a sense of humor, I can imagine He would have been chuckling over what occurred in the temple of the Philistines during the days of Samuel (1 Samuel 5:1-5). These enemies of God's people had defeated the Israelites in battle, captured the ark of the covenant, and brought it to their temple in Ashdod. Flush with the arrogance of victory, they positioned the ark before Dagon, their half-man, half-fish idol. "Surely," they must have reasoned, "Dagon is greater than Israel's God, whose ark we have captured." Thus, in Dagon's strength they trusted and gloried while they presented to him a spoil of their victory. "Three cheers for Dagon!"

But "He who sits in the heavens shall laugh; The Lord shall hold them in derision" (Psalm 2:4). When the Philistines came into their temple the next morning, they found poor Dagon on his face in the dirt before the ark. Dutifully they set aright their chunk of carved wood or stone, but the next morning they again found Dagon on the ground, this time with his head and hands broken off. Over their own cries of anguish and fear, they could not hear the sound of God's laughter.

The Philistines must have questioned and wondered what had happened. After the Lord ravaged them with boils—perhaps the bubonic plague—they concluded that the problem was the ark. And why not? The ark represented the presence of the Holy One of Israel and contained the cause of their great discomfort. For inside the ark were found the two tables of the Law, which began: "You shall have no other gods before Me." In their spiritual blindness and rebellion, the Philistines had chosen instead to trust in an idol who could not walk, talk, or hear; who could not prevent himself from being pushed over and had no power to right himself when he was. Truly God would say, "I am the LORD . . . And My glory I will not give to another, nor My praise to graven images" (Isaiah 42:8). But instead of seeking the true God and repenting of their idolatry, the Philistines sank even deeper into their superstition, and so received the hand of God's wrath. How very foolish of people to worship a god who falls helplessly on his face! Such a Humpty-Dumpty idol is worthless and deserving of ridicule.

How ironic that we have the gracious privilege to

worship Him who voluntarily fell on His face for us. No one pushed the eternal Son of God off His throne in heaven and forced Him to come to earth. He came willingly as the Christ to bear and atone for our sins, and so redeem and reconcile us to God. The psalmist foresaw this great, dirt-eating humility, as he quoted the Messiah in Psalm 22: "But I am a worm, and no man . . . All My bones are out of joint . . . You have brought Me to the dust of death."

Then we read of the Savior in the Garden of Gethsemane "poured out like water, with a heart melted like wax." (Psalm 22:14). Artists have pictured the Lord as resting serenely against a huge rock as He prayed that the Father's will be done. But Matthew reported that Jesus, in great agony, fell on His face to the ground. He was the eternal Son of God with all power, yet He dreaded the cup of suffering that was before Him, and required the strength of His Father to proceed on His mission of salvation.

After His crucifixion and burial, His own disciples acted somewhat like the ancient Philistines. Their Lord had been pushed to the dust of death. Their anguish was great, for they supposed God's kingdom was lost and that they were without hope. Surely you know the rest of the story. This Savior-God picked Himself off the dust, arose from death, and now reigns forever on heaven's throne. Never again will dirt touch His holy face; never again will He bow and suffer before His enemies, with sacred head and hands defiled. When we stand before Him in eternal joy, we will see Him high and lifted up, basking in eternal honor which is His due.

The one true God is still laughing in derision (and can we not join Him?) at the foolishness and arrogance of His enemies, and at their gods which He brings low to the dirt and broken before Him. By God's grace we are laughing with joy and gladness over our forgiveness and the salvation won by our God who once fell on His face for us, but triumphantly arose again in great strength and wondrous glory.

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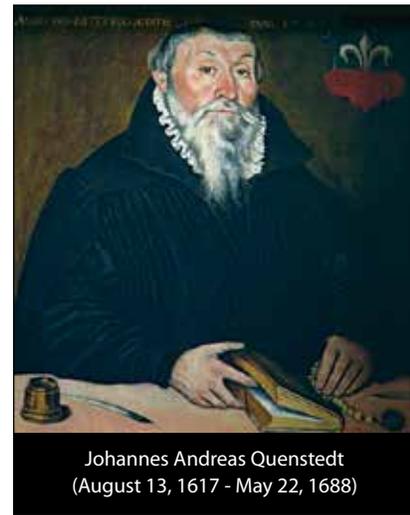
Johannes Quenstedt

The foremost person of the Reformation was, of course, Martin Luther. In a previous article we introduced a second Martin, Martin Chemnitz, who lived during the time of Luther. As important as the second Martin and others were in contributing to the Reformation begun under Luther, there were other faithful confessors who lived and worked in what is known as the post-Reformation era. Two of these confessors, both born after the death of Luther, were Johann Gerhard and his nephew, Johannes Quenstedt. Quenstedt was born at Quedlinburg, Germany, in 1617. He died in 1688, 108 years after the publication of the *Book of Concord*.

Quenstedt began his university study in 1637 at the age of twenty at the University of Helmstedt. The university had a liberal theological bent. He concluded his education at Wittenberg in 1644. Almost immediately he began to lecture on geography at Wittenberg. He received his doctorate in 1650. For three years he was professor of logic and metaphysics (a traditional branch of philosophy concerned with explaining the fundamental nature of being and the world). He was also a professor of theology until his death in 1688.

Quenstedt has been called the “bookkeeper of Lutheran orthodoxy.” At Helmstedt he was a student under Georg Calixt, a disciple of Melancthon. Calixt held that the object of theology was not so much purity of doctrine as the promotion of the Christian life. That idea is championed today by most of Protestantism, many TV evangelists, and the church growth movement. These manifestations of today’s misguided Christianity are basically unionistic (that is, advocating unity among people who are not agreed in doctrine). Calixt tended toward unionism, leaning toward the Catholic Church as well as the Reformed. Quenstedt rejected the unionistic tendencies of his teacher. He set forth an orderly form of theological study that included Christian ethics, but he rejected and countered Calixt’s crass analytical (scholastic) approach to the study of Scripture. He promoted apologetics (*defense* of the articles of faith) and polemics (strong *refutation* of doctrines contrary to

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



Johannes Andreas Quenstedt
(August 13, 1617 – May 22, 1688)

Scripture). His convictions were gathered from, and firmly grounded in, the Scriptures.

In his defense of the faith and refutation of what was contrary to God’s Word, he maintained a “quiet, mild, and irenic (tending to promote peace) disposition.” In his advocacy of Lutheran orthodoxy, he demonstrated this trait in his *Ethica Pastorum* (1673). In this work, said one reviewer, “. . . he advises to temper severity with gentleness in resisting heretics and to distinguish between the tempters and the tempted; [and] warns against pedantry [ostentatious show of learning] in the pulpit.”

In his personal life he endured sorrow. He was married three times. His first two wives each died shortly after marriage. His third marriage was blessed with twelve children.

We appreciate the steadfastness of a man who was bold but humble, fully convinced but of quiet disposition. This is a gift to be cherished and emulated by us as we testify to and defend the faith in this day. We further appreciate the simplicity of his confession: “The Holy Scriptures contain with perfect fullness and sufficiency all things necessary to be known in order to Christian faith and life, and therefore to the attainment of eternal salvation.”



Daniel Fleischer is a retired pastor and former president of the Church of the Lutheran Confession. He lives in Oakdale, Minnesota.

“Holding Up the Profs’ Hands”

The title is not a misprint; it is an adaptation from a line of a well-known mission hymn: “You can be like faithful Aaron, Holding up the prophet’s hands” (TLH 496:3). This, in turn, is a reference to the biblical event found in Exodus 17:8-13: *“Now Amalek came and fought with Israel in Rephidim. And Moses said to Joshua, ‘Choose us some men and go out, fight with Amalek. Tomorrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the rod of God in my hand.’ So Joshua did as Moses said to him, and fought with Amalek. And Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill. And so it was, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed; and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed. But Moses’ hands became heavy; so they took a stone and put it under him, and he sat on it. And Aaron and Hur supported his hands, one on one side, and the other on the other side; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun. So Joshua defeated Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword.”*

Not all are pastors, teachers, and professors in the Church of Jesus. There is an army of lay support, and thankfully so. Where would the body of Christ be if there were no lay support, but only teachers? Jesus has designed the structure of His Church wisely. The members are to support the preachers of the Word so that the Gospel may be proclaimed.

“Let him who is taught the word share in all good things with him who teaches” (Galatians 6:6).

“And how shall they preach unless they are sent?” (Romans 10:15a).

It is not too hard to see how that plays out on the local level. Members give of their time, talents, and money to provide support for their pastors and Christian day school teachers, the called servants in their midst.

It is not quite as obvious how that support is carried out on the synodical level; that is, for the workers

called by the whole church body. Such workers include our missionaries both here and overseas, as well as the professors on the campus of Immanuel Lutheran High School, College and Seminary in Eau Claire, Wisconsin. Some of the regular offerings to the local church go to the general budget of the synod (the Cooperative Budget Plan) and are used to support the salaries and benefits for these called workers.

But how can time and talents be given?

Several years ago the Convention formed a special committee called the Immanuel Professorage Committee (IPC) and charged the IPC to oversee the maintenance and improvement of the professorages on the campus of Immanuel. The IPC has been active in assessing what needs to be done and in organizing work crews for various projects. Thanks to a ground swell of volunteer help, usually available during the summer months, we have been able to re-shingle all the professorages, re-side several, put new windows in some, and upgrade a couple of the kitchens and a couple of bathrooms. Funds have also purchased some new furnaces and air conditioners and made possible various repairs, including a number of upgrades to electrical systems.

The many hours that volunteers have given to this purpose have stretched the limited funds to accomplish much more than would have been possible if the work had been hired out.

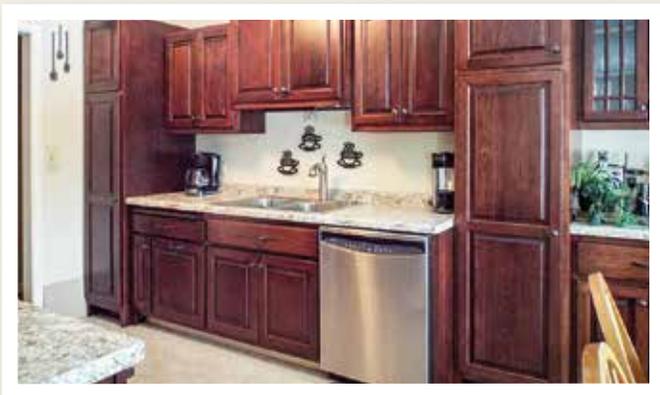
Several special offerings to the IPC have also furthered the work. Such funds enabled us this past year to rework one bathroom and one kitchen.

We want to thank all who have contributed time and talent and money for these projects. Part of the thanks goes to those families living in the professorages who have offered their patience and understanding, necessary ingredients in any such do-it-yourself projects.

Even though we are still in the cold of winter, the IPC is already planning projects for summer of 2015—and beyond. Watch your church bulletin for an insert with more details. And consider ways that you can help hold up the profs’ hands—all with the goal of proclaiming the Gospel of salvation.



Paul Tiefel, Jr. is pastor of Messiah Lutheran Church in Eau Claire, Wisconsin.



Kitchen renovation completed by Immanuel Professorage Committee volunteers

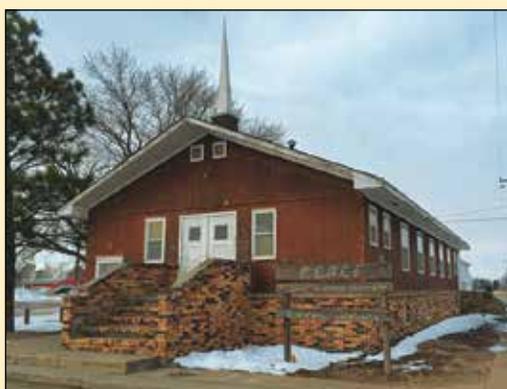
Peace Lutheran Church—Mission, South Dakota

Pease Lutheran Church of Mission, South Dakota is a unique congregation in the CLC in a number of ways.

First of all, its location is unique. Mission, South Dakota (population 1,182 at the 2010 census) is a town located in the Rosebud Indian Reservation. The town was named for one of the many missions established by religious groups in the late 19th century to assist the Sicangu (pronounced Sičhángŋu) Lakota (Rosebud Sioux) and other American Indian nations. The major industry of this area is ranching, and the region is known for producing some of the best beef in the country. Many of the members of Peace and their extended families are ranchers as well. The church's location near the center of town on U.S. Highway 18/83 makes it an ideal location for walk-in visitors, which we have on a fairly regular basis. We are thankful for the opportunities the Lord has given us to share the soul-saving Gospel with both member and visitor alike!

Secondly, its history is unique. Although it began as did many of our CLC congregations, its subsequent history proved in a number of ways to be different from that of many other churches in our fellowship. The congregation began in 1959 when several families, together with Pastor Kenneth Hallauer and Teacher LeRoy Hulke, withdrew from their previous fellowship because of doctrinal differences, and organized Peace Lutheran Church. For the first few months, Peace congregation worshiped in the L. E. Jones home until a church building was built. The first worship service held in the new church building was a wedding service on June 6th, 1959. Since its beginning, Peace has formed a joint parish with St. Paul's of White River, SD. The downstairs portion of Peace's church building served as the parsonage until 1974, when a parsonage was built in White River. That parsonage would serve until 2002 as

Although it began as did many of our CLC congregations, its subsequent history proved in a number of ways to be different.



Some current members of Peace



First confirmation class



First wedding at Peace

the home of the pastors serving the joint parish of Peace and St. Paul's. After the church basement in Mission was no longer used as a parsonage, for a number of years it was leased as a medical clinic, at which one of the congregation's members worked as a physician's assistant. Peace is also one of very few CLC congregations that owns and maintains its own graveyard (located about 2 miles south of the church building on US-83). Pastors who have served Peace congregation over the years have been Kenneth Hallauer (1957-1964), Paul Larsen (1966-1970), David Koenig (1971-1973), Harland Reed (1974-1976), Bruce Wales (1977-1979), Paul D. Nolting (1980-1986), Paul Naumann (1986-1995),



Peace member Larry Jones on branding day

Mission, population 1,182, is a city in Todd County, South Dakota. It lies within the boundaries of the Rosebud Indian Reservation. The major economical center of the county, Mission is located at the junction of US-83 and US-18 and is home to Todd County School District, Cherry-Todd Rural Electric Cooperative, and various federal and tribal agencies. Game show host Bob Barker grew up in Mission.



Ready to round up cattle



Sorting the calves



Branding a calf



First pastor at Peace, Rev. Kenneth Hallauer

Frank Gantt (1995-1998), Jay Hartmann (1998-2002), James Naumann (2002-2010), and Luke Bernthal (2010-present).

Thirdly, the present status of the congregation is unique. Since 2002, Peace Lutheran Church has been part of a "Tri-Parish" along with St. Paul's of White River, SD and Grace of Valentine, NE. They have been jointly served since that time by the pastor from Valentine. For the past five or more years, Peace has conducted joint worship services with St. Paul's. Every Sunday except the last one of each month, worship services are at Peace at 8:00 A.M., with the worship service for the last Sunday of each month being at

St. Paul's. This small but faithful and close-knit group cherishes its worship time together with their brothers and sisters in Christ from St. Paul's each Sunday. Peace also joins with St. Paul's and Grace for the "Tri-Parish Mission Festival" worship service and potluck meal each fall. Its members have also supported and participated with St. Paul's and Grace in other worship services and church activities such as summer Vacation Bible School and the Arise and Shine 20's - 30's Retreat in Pillager, MN.

If you are traveling through the great state of South Dakota, please join us for worship and share with us in the "unique" blessings we have in our fellowship and in our Savior's Gospel! *"I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me"* (John 14:6).



Luke Bernthal is pastor of Peace Lutheran Church in Mission, South Dakota, St. Paul's Ev. Lutheran Church in White River, South Dakota, and Grace Lutheran Church in Valentine, Nebraska.

May 2015

TLH = The Lutheran Hymnal, 1941; WS = Worship Supplement 2000; SC = Martin Luther’s Small Catechism;

[] = Minor Festivals or commemorations in the Christian Church Year

| Date | Reading | Verse |
|---------------|---|---------------------------------|
| May 1 | John 6:1-14 | PS 61 |
| | <i>[St. Philip and St. James, Apostles]</i> | |
| | Jesus strengthens Philip’s faith in His redeeming work using five loaves, two fish, and twelve baskets in the feeding of the five thousand. | |
| May 2 | Luke 18:1-8 | SC Lord’s Prayer Address |
| | Does God forsake His children? No, He hears each and every prayer of the faithful. | |
| May 4 | 1 John 4:1-11 | TLH 346 |
| | The great theological test question is “What do you think of Jesus?” | |
| May 5 | John 15:1-8 | PS 30 |
| | The Father prunes away at our harmful and unproductive behaviors so that we can bear fruit in Jesus. | |
| May 6 | Genesis 18:16-33 | TLH 459 |
| | Let Abraham’s intercession remind you of the way Jesus went to the Father on our behalf too—even laying down His life. | |
| May 7 | John 11:11-45 | WS 759 |
| | Martha is often remembered for being too busy with her cooking, but here we see that her heart was with Jesus all the way. | |
| May 8 | Ephesians 2:19-22 | TLH 465 |
| | You are not alone. You are part of a great household of people looking to Christ, the Cornerstone. | |
| May 9 | Job 42:10-17 | TLH 532 |
| | <i>[Commemoration of Job]</i> After Job’s troubles, God granted him great blessings—not the least of which were friends who comforted him. | |
| May 11 | Acts 10:34-48 | PS 98 |
| | God does not play favorites as people tend to do. Everyone who believes in Jesus receives forgiveness of sins. | |
| May 12 | 1 John 5:1-8 | PS 9 |
| | Does this life ever depress and sadden you? Scripture promises that the children of God truly overcome the world. | |
| May 13 | 1 John 4:12-21 | SC Commandment I |
| | God lives in us and in this world we are like Him. Thus when you see love, you are assured that God is at work. | |
| May 14 | Ephesians 4:7-16 | WS 765 |
| | <i>[The Ascension of Our Lord]</i> | |
| | After ascending into heaven, Jesus provides for His Church by giving gifts that lead us to grow stronger in the faith. | |

| Date | Reading | Verse |
|---------------|--|-------------------------------|
| May 15 | Luke 24:50-53 | TLH 218:5-6 |
| | Yes, you can worship Jesus anywhere, but in their joy the disciples raced to church and stayed there a good long while! | |
| May 16 | Ephesians 1:15-23 | PS 47 |
| | The power that brought you to faith is as great as the power that raised Jesus from the dead and seated Him in heaven. | |
| May 18 | Acts 1:12-26 | WS 796 |
| | Although the Lord is gone from our sight, He continues carrying out His kingdom-work in our midst. | |
| May 19 | Isaiah 55 | TLH 49 |
| | The Gospel word of our ascended Savior goes out into the world and accomplishes what He desires. | |
| May 20 | John 17:11-26 | PS 1 |
| | Listen in while the Son of God Himself prays for you! | |
| May 21 | 2 Corinthians 5:1-10 | TLH 619:1-4 |
| | It’s all right to long for your heavenly dwelling. God has guaranteed it to you. | |
| May 22 | John 8:12-20 | TLH 433 |
| | Jesus’ Gospel testimony (v. 12) is verified by two witnesses: the Son and His Father. | |
| May 23 | 1 John 5:9-15 | TLH 215 |
| | You have the Son and you have life, so don’t be afraid to bring your requests to God. | |
| May 25 | Acts 2:1-21 | TLH 8:3 |
| | The Holy Spirit enabled them—and enables us—to spread the word about Christ. | |
| May 26 | Ezekiel 37:1-14 | TLH 231 |
| | If the dry bones in the valley could live by the breath of the Lord, the spiritually dead can also be brought to life. | |
| May 27 | 2 Corinthians 2:6-16 | WS 740 |
| | Only forgiveness in Christ can soothe sin’s hurt, so don’t hesitate when it’s time to forgive. | |
| May 28 | John 6:60-71 | TLH 233:6 |
| | Here the Gospel (not the Law) is rejected as “hard teaching.” So Peter’s obvious trust in the Good News was Spirit-worked. | |
| May 29 | John 16:4-15 | SC Apostles’ Creed III |
| | The Holy Spirit guides us into all truth. | |
| May 30 | Ezekiel 36:22-28 | SC Baptism I-II |
| | God’s method for heart surgery: First an antiseptic cleanse, and then a transplant. | |

Three Steps to Building Relationships

1) Get to *KNOW* them.

2) Get to *LOVE* them.

3) Get to *DEAL WITH* them.

Do you bring up the subject of religion right away when you make a new acquaintance? Sometimes it works out that way, but this is the exception rather than the rule, according to Rev. Warren Fanning of Sun City, Arizona.

The effectiveness of any outreach lies in the power of God's Word; that is a given. Pastor Fanning's point is that such witness can be delivered—and received—more easily and naturally when it comes from someone whom the hearer already knows and trusts. Pastor Fanning first got the idea when he was a Lutheran missionary in Great Britain. He told of an acquaintance who was a member of Britain's MI6. This man was successful in reaching criminals and gaining information by befriending them first, building a relationship, and then sometime later (from a position of trust) finding out what they had to offer. Obviously, reaching people for Christ is different from reaching criminals to get information, but some of the same principles apply!

The first step:

Get to *KNOW* them.

Pastor Fanning says, "We kept this constantly in mind when working with new people. We would use any means necessary to just get to know people. We would play golf, have men's club evenings—just about any social activity to strike up a new acquaintance. This is all long before even bringing up any serious religious discussion. Sometimes weeks or months would go by before first raising the topic of Christianity."

The second step:

Get to *LOVE* them.

If you take the time to know people first, you will gain new friends (a wonderful side-benefit to this method of outreach!) These are people who now know you and have

These brief topics were written to help Christians think about the ways in which they share the Gospel with others. Cut this page out if you like and post it on your refrigerator. Decide for yourself whether this is a helpful addition to your "outreach repertoire."

a certain amount of trust in you. They care about you, and you obviously care a great deal about them. So much so in fact that, in your love for them, you will want to share the Good News of your Savior with them. "If you prepare the ground in this way," says Pastor Fanning, "you will find that they will be far more receptive when you finally bring up issues of eternal life and death, sin and grace, forgiveness and salvation."

The third step:

Get to *DEAL WITH* them.

Finally, you will be in a position of trust, from which it is easier to communicate the Gospel (always bearing in mind, of course, that the power to convict and convert lies in the Word, not in your communication skills!) Pastor Fanning says, "Before long some trust developed (and a certain British distrust towards clergy was softened or removed) with some warmth as well. Then people would be ready for formal instruction. For us, this sometimes happened in groups of ten or a dozen. There was a real warm social atmosphere. The instruction sessions became their 'church' sessions, and brief pointed devotions and often favorite hymns were used, the latter by their leave. They might come to worship services in the meantime, but it was not stressed or pushed. It was wise to 'keep the long view' in mind, and make liturgy and budget and constitution, and so forth, a part of the instruction, before acceptance into membership. Those sessions turned out to be priceless. Regular and sometimes lengthy home visits were part of the agenda. It was long and sometimes hard, and sometimes disappointing, but it proved the effectiveness of the method . . ."

Is this something you can use in your personal witnessing to others? Why not give it a try? Get to *know* them—get to *love* them—get to *deal with* them.

Lutheran Spokesman

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

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

Judge Rules Against Christian Florist in LGBT Lawsuit. On February 18, a judge in Washington state issued a summary judgment against a florist whose Christian faith prevented her from promoting a same-sex wedding. The florist was sued by both the state and the homosexual couple. The Alliance Defending Freedom confirmed that Benton County Superior Court Judge Alex Ekstrom granted a summary judgment in the case against Barronelle Stutzman, meaning the case will not proceed to trial. A trial had been scheduled for March 23. It was Ekstrom who said last month that Stutzman personally was liable for the claims against her, placing her business assets, her home and personal savings at risk. The judge ordered that the state and the homosexual plaintiffs, each of whom filed lawsuits, could collect damages and attorneys' fees from Stutzman. "The message of these rulings is unmistakable: The government will bring about your personal and professional ruin if you don't help celebrate same-sex marriage," said ADF Senior Counsel Kristen Waggoner. Unruh, Bob. "Judge Authorizes 'Personal Ruin' For Christian Florist". *WNDFAith*, 18 Feb. 2015. Web. 19 Feb. 2015.]

"Boy Who Came Back from Heaven" Retracts Story. Tyndale House Publishers has stopped production of the book and DVD of "The Boy Who Came Back from Heaven" after the book's coauthor and subject, Alex Malarkey, released a statement retracting the book's contents. He wrote in an open letter, "I did not die. I did not go to heaven. I said I went to heaven because I thought it would get me attention. When I made the claims that I did, I had never read the Bible. People have profited from lies, and continue to. They should read the Bible, which is enough." Malarkey's mother claims that her son was never paid any royalties from the best-selling book. Zylstra, Sarah Eekhoff. "The 'Boy Who Came Back From Heaven' Retracts Story." *Gleanings. Christianity Today*, 15 Jan. 2015. Web. 22 Jan. 2015.

Decline of U.S. Churches Generally
On an average day in the United States, nine churches close their doors for good. Mabry-Nauta, Angie. "The Last Sunday." *Cover Story. The Christian Century*, 29 Jan. 2015. Web. 22 Jan. 2015.
... But Multisite Churches on the Rise.
There are now over five thousand multisite

churches in North America, reports Outreach magazine. These are central churches that, in addition, host one or more remote "campuses" where worship is held. Six million people attend multisite churches today. The average size of a church going multisite is 850 members; remote campuses average 361 members. Most remote campuses are within a thirty-minute drive of the main church. Fifteen percent of multisites have four or more remote campuses. N.a. "Directions: Multisite." *Outreach*, January/February 2015: 68-70. Print.

Persecution Ahead for Christians in India.
India Prime Minister Narendra Modi proposed a "Good Governance Day" on December 25 to replace traditional Christmas celebrations. Parliamentary Affairs Minister Venkaiah Naidu has called for a ban on all religious conversions, and other leaders of the prime minister's BJP, a Hindu nationalist party, have said they want to see India "cleansed" of Christianity and Islam by 2021. Not surprisingly, physical assaults on Christians have risen in recent months. N.a. "Around the Globe." *World*, 24 Jan. 2015: 10. Print.

Easter Observations in the Church of the Lutheran Confession in India (CLCI)



(Left) Pastor Jyothi Benjamin preaches the Easter sermon at our CLCI church in Nidubrolu, India; (above) Easter worshipers; (far left) members share an Easter fellowship dinner; (background) on the menu: biryani, fried rice and savory egg curry.