

October 2020 VOL 63 NO. 4

LUTHERAN SPOKESMAN

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



The Church of the Lutheran Confession
Sixtieth Anniversary, 1960-2020



CLC Convention in Sleepy Eye, Minnesota, January 24-26, 1961. For more information on the formation of the CLC, see the Bible class material offered below.

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A 60th anniversary retrospective video on the CLC and Immanuel Lutheran College is now available online. Over the course of three Sunday Bible class sessions, Pastor Bruce Naumann presents an overview of CLC history, based on David Lau’s “Out of Necessity - a History of the Church of the Lutheran Confession.” It is a single video, including three portions of about 45 minutes in length, with historical photos presented in hi-resolution format. You may see this online at www.tinyurl.com/60th-CLC. A set of three DVDs is also available at a modest cost by contacting Pastor Naumann at (715) 834-2865, or brucenaumann@gmail.com.

Luther's Catechism

“From childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.”

(2 Timothy 3:15)

There is nothing in all the world more important than knowing the Holy Scriptures, for there is nothing else in all the world that can make you wise for salvation. Nothing! Jesus said, “No one comes to the Father except through Me.” (John 14:6) That’s why Jesus says that listening to Him is the “one thing needed” (Luke 10:42). However, knowing the Holy Scriptures does not just happen automatically; it must be taught. Therefore, there is nothing more important than for parents to teach their children to know the Bible.

Timothy’s mother, Lois, and his grandmother Eunice understood that. They taught Timothy to know the Holy Scriptures. As a result, he had known them from his childhood.

Martin Luther also understood that important fact. He also understood another fact: it can be a daunting task for parents to teach the Holy Scriptures to their children. Not only that, but he understood that it is possible to “know” the Holy Scriptures and yet not become wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. It is possible to know many facts from the Bible and even have many passages memorized, yet miss the whole point of the Bible. That happens all too often when people do not understand the distinction between the Law and the Gospel, and the proper relation of one to the other.

Many have wrongly concluded that the Law is a way to gain salvation, or at least to gain God’s favor and make Him willing to save us. What a tragedy to “know” the Holy Scriptures, yet not become wise for salvation through faith!

Martin Luther wanted to help parents truly teach their children to know the Holy Scriptures and understand the way of salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. Therefore, he wrote both the *Small Catechism* and the *Large Catechism*,

which present God’s plan of salvation in a way that is simple to understand.

Continue in them!

In the verses just before our text, Paul reminds Timothy, “Evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them.” (2 Timothy 3:13-14) God warns us that there will be many who will try to corrupt that knowledge of salvation, therefore Paul says, “You must continue in the things which you have learned.”

The Catechism can be an invaluable resource for continuing in the Scriptures and not being deceived by false teachers. Luther often spoke of the value and importance of studying the catechism on an ongoing basis because of its simple summary of Christian doctrine. Luther even said that he himself regularly reviewed the catechism. He wrote, “I, too, am a theologian who has attained a fairly good practical knowledge and experience of Holy Scriptures through various dangers. But I do not so glory in this gift as not to join my children daily in prayerfully reciting the Catechism, that is, the Ten Commandments, the Creed, and the Lord’s Prayer and meditating on them with an attentive heart. I do not merely pass over the words hurriedly, but I carefully observe what the individual word means. And really, if I do not do this but am preoccupied with other business, I feel a definite loss because of the neglect.”

When is the last time you reviewed your Catechism? Why not make this the year to do so? You will be richly blessed for it!

David Reim is pastor of St. Paul Lutheran Church in Vernon, British Columbia.



The Flesh and Bones of a Confessional Church

“If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”

(John 8:31-32)

What is more important to the human body, the flesh or the bones? It’s an absurd question, really. Take away either and life would be impossible. The bones provide the necessary framework for whatever the body does; they support everything else so that the body can function as intended. The flesh, of course, is the living, breathing part of the body that makes us who we are. Organs, muscles, circulation and nerves make perception, motion, emotion, and interaction possible.

The same is true when it comes to the body of Christ, namely His Church. The “bones” of a true-teaching church or church body constitute its confessional nature. The content of what we confess to the world—the entire message we proclaim—must always be anchored on Jesus’ teaching as found in the word-for-word inspired Holy Scriptures. That’s why Jesus said in John 8, “*If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed.*” For a confessional church, to “abide” means that everything we teach reflects true Bible doctrine without compromise; that is, with nothing added and nothing taken away. This is the necessary framework on which our lives as individuals and congregations must be built. Here is just a sample of God’s direction on the subject of our doctrinal “bones”:

“If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God.”
(1 Peter 4:11)

“Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you.” (1 Timothy 4:16)

However, just as a skeleton by itself is dead, doctrinal purity without the joy of Gospel freedom is also a lifeless proposition. That’s why Jesus added this promise when He directed us to abide in His word: “*and you shall know*

the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”

Do you revel in that freedom? Does your congregation and your church body? The more we truly see our pitiful and helpless state in sin *apart from* Jesus and His cross, the more we’ll know our great need for Him. The more we truly see our glorious redemption and newfound status as beloved children of God *because of* Jesus and His cross, the more holy freedom we’ll enjoy, and the more we will want to confess Him as Savior of all. Our perception, motion, emotion, and interaction as a church should all be animated by joyful love toward Him who loved us first. The Bible speaks frequently about this joy. For instance:

“The LORD has done great things for us, and we are glad.”
(Psalm 126:3)

“Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God!” (1 John 3:1)

“But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.” (1 Peter 2:9)

So, what’s more important? True Bible doctrine, or the joy of Gospel freedom which we share? Just like the flesh and bones, we need both. One cannot exist in a living body without the other. We pray that our families, our congregations, and the Church of the Lutheran Confession will continue to have both, in ever greater measure. May

we always abide in Jesus’ true Word, revel in the freedom of His grace, and confess Him joyfully to the world!

Bruce Naumman is senior pastor of Messiah Lutheran Church in Eau Claire, Wisconsin.



“Our Lord and God, Oh, Bless This Day”

Historically, Lutheran churches have placed great emphasis on the study of the Bible, God’s Word, because that Word is the only true source and norm of theology. Apart from God’s self-revelation, man cannot know truth about God. Apart from God’s self-revelation, all religions would be merely the products of human speculation; and as such, all would be equally valid (or, perhaps more accurately, equally invalid).

But God *has* revealed Himself to man. That revelation consists not only in the “natural knowledge” of God that can be attained through consideration of His creation (Psalm 19:1); but especially in the revelation that is found in the Bible. It is through God’s Word—both Law and Gospel—that the Holy Spirit works to show us our sin, lead us to contrition and repentance, create and sustain saving faith in our hearts, and give us growth in sanctification.

How can one learn what the Bible teaches? For almost five hundred years, Lutherans have used Dr. Martin Luther’s *Small Catechism* to educate their children in the basic doctrines of the Bible. Many Christian churches today shy away from such formal teaching, claiming that the study of doctrinal truth is stodgy and dull, and that it should be replaced with an emphasis on simply living a Christian life. However, as C.F.W. Walther noted, that’s like telling a farmer not to worry about the seed he plants, but simply concentrate on growing a good crop. Moreover, it ignores and contradicts what the Bible itself says about living a Christian life: “*How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your word.*” (Psalm 119:9)

In our churches, the study of Luther’s *Small Catechism* is usually seen as the core element of instruction leading to the confirmation of young people as communicant members. Hymn 337, “Our Lord and God, Oh, Bless This Day” is a confirmation hymn. It is a musical prayer for God’s blessing on those who have learned the truth of

God’s Word from their study of the *Small Catechism*, who now make public profession of their faith.

In singing this hymn, we are praying that God would “*Let them, Thy truth possessing, / Bear witness true with heart and tongue, / Their faith and ours confessing.*” (Verse 2) This is a prayer that the possession of faith will lead also to the profession (declaration) of the truths of that faith. “*For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.*” (Romans 10:10)

Formal instruction in the catechism conducted by the pastor is important, but perhaps even more important is the consistent parental inculcation of Biblical truth and its application that trains up a child in the way he should go (Proverbs 22:6). “*From mother’s arms Thy grace / With love did them embrace.*” (Verse 2) The composer of this hymn, Johan Nordahl Brun, was taught arithmetic and writing by his father; his mother taught him to read the Bible. The *Small Catechism* and confirmation class should be adjuncts to home training, not substitutes for it.

The biblical truth taught in the *Small Catechism* not only leads us to right knowledge of God and to salvation, it also arms and strengthens us to resist all evil. Verse 3 says, “*When Satan’s hosts assail; / Oh, arm them with Thy might / And grant that in the fight / They unto death be faithful!*” God’s Word provides both the defensive armor and the offensive weapons that Christians in the Church Militant need in order to resist and finally overcome the devil, the unbelieving world, and our own sinful flesh (Ephesians 6:11-17). Until by God’s grace we join the Church Triumphant, we shall have battles to fight. In our own strength, we cannot be victorious; but armed with God’s Word, we cannot fail. “*He ne’er shall be undone /*

Who trusts in God alone / God is his mighty Father!” (Verse 4)



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

Our Lord and God, Oh, Bless This Day

Author: Johan Nordahl Brun

Listen at: <http://lutherantacoma.com/hymns/337.mp3>

Elisha's Bears vs. Judah's Lion

Most people seem fascinated by contests, whether they be athletic games, car races, or spelling bees.

TV programming has brought us fight-to-the-death encounters between mongooses and cobras, alligators and Burmese pythons. They once even showed a fight between a bear and bull. The poor bull didn't last long. Holy Scripture also references many animals, including bears and lions. Who would win in a contest between these two opponents?

In one corner are Elisha's bears. As the prophet was traveling up from Jericho to Bethel (2 Kings 2:23-25), he was met by a gang of young men. They mocked Elisha saying, "Go on up, baldy!" Their mockery was not based on Elisha's uphill walk, but rather was a reference to Elijah's recent ascension. Thus, they were challenging God's prophet to follow suit, as if the ascension were a joke.

Such scoffing is not unusual; even Jesus was mocked. But this time something dramatic happened. Elisha "pronounced a curse on them in the name of the LORD" (v. 24), after which two female bears appeared out of the woods and mauled forty-two of the mockers.

Some today might say this was overkill, but surely the gang of young men had sinned against God and His Law. And the wages of sin brings the curse of the Law, which is death. In this case, the bears were instruments of God's judgment. Elisha's bears: formidable foes indeed—representing God's Law-curse on sinful mankind.

In the other corner we find Judah's lion. In Genesis 49:9, we read of Jacob blessing his son Judah and calling him a "lion's cub." God's covenant blessing would be carried forward by Judah and his tribe. As a lion, the tribe would be strong and not to be messed with. From this tribe the great King David would be born, and later David's much greater Son—Jesus of Nazareth.

Fast-forward to the Book of Revelation. In his second vision of heaven, St. John saw God on His throne with a rolled-up scroll in His hand. John wept because he thought there was no one in all creation who could open this scroll representing the future. But then John was comforted, "Do not weep. Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David has prevailed." (Revelation 5:5) And then John saw One as a Lamb open the seals. The very One promised, mocked, crucified, and arisen is now reigning triumphantly with all authority and control over the future. Elisha's bears vs. Judah's Lion: this promises to be quite a contest.

But it turns out to be no contest at all—quite literally. For the Gospel-Lion testified, "Do not think that I came to destroy the Law. . . . I did not come to destroy but to fulfill." (Matthew. 5:17) The Lion Who is the Root perfectly kept God's Law for us, and now offers the world His righteousness. The Lion Who is the Lamb atoned for all sin and now offers His forgiveness to all. Elisha's bears and Judah's Lion were never in competition, but are always complementary. The Law-bears show us our sin and need of a Savior; the Gospel-Lion is that redeeming, triumphant Savior.

Speaking of contests, there was one that was to the death. St. John explained, "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil." (1 John 3:8) So it was Judah's Lion against the roaring lion, with both opponents using the same weapon: the cross. When Jesus died there, the devil thought he had won. But with His death, the Redeemer crushed Satan's power, delivering us from the curse of sin, death, and the Law. How can we not roar with the thousands in heaven: "Blessing and honor and glory and power Be to Him who sits on the throne, And to the Lamb,—the great Lion of Judah—forever and ever!" (Revelation 5:13)



David Fuerstenau is pastor of Holy Truth Lutheran Church in Ketchikan, Alaska.

Mercy Triumphs Over Judgment

“For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become guilty of all of it. For he who said, ‘Do not commit adultery,’ also said, ‘Do not murder.’ If you do not commit adultery but do murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. So speak and so act as those who are to be judged under the law of liberty. For judgment is without mercy to one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.”

(James 2:10-13, ESV)

Suppose your church put up a sign saying, “Sinners Welcome!” I hope each of you would recognize yourself as a sinner, and also that in Christ, God welcomes you. But what if the sign were more specific? Let us try a few individual sins:

“Liars Welcome!”

“Lazy People Welcome!”

“Murderers Welcome!”

“Terrorists Welcome!”

If your church had signs like those, how many people would be willing to walk through the door? If you recognize your sins on the list, it is good news to know that Jesus Christ died to pay for your sin, and God welcomes you to worship.

But many people would object to having the “worst” sins (especially the ones they have never done) on the list right next to the “milder” sins (especially the ones they have done). Some might say that a person who has done one of the worst sins could never be forgiven. In case that is our thought, perhaps we should add two more categories to our list of welcome sinners:

“Self-Righteous People Welcome!”

“Hypocrites Welcome!”

One of the greatest problems with sin is that by nature, we not only sin, we also have a wrong understanding of sin. Our “sin meter” often fails to register accurately—particularly when we measure our own lives.

When we speak of evil, we prefer to talk about “sins”

rather than “sin.” “Sins” gives us a multiple choice of things that are wrong. When we speak of sins, we can direct our attention to the evil that others do and ignore our own. We do this because we desire to be good in our own eyes. The problem is, doing this does not make us good before God.

God does not grade on a curve; so whether you count fewer sins for yourself than for others, or whether you think your own sins are not as bad, that does not make you innocent before God. Instead of a curve, God grades on a pass/fail system, and the only passing grade is 100%. Anything less is failure, and without Christ, we fail.

The issue before the judgment of God is not just which sins we have done, or how often. The issue is that we are sinful. Our natural self is an offense against God. There is only one source of good: God. Any violation of God’s goodness is sin.

God has made His judgment about sin. But He has also been merciful. Look at the last clause of our text: “*Mercy triumphs over judgment.*” Think of a card game. We lead in sin and are judged guilty. But Christ “trumps” sin by covering it with His mercy. We are forgiven! We are righteous, not because we have stopped doing all evil and do only good, but because we have been forgiven for our evil and have been given Christ’s good.

God does not judge us based on our outward appearance, or wealth, or even on our ability to keep His Law perfectly.

Instead, we receive mercy and forgiveness at the cross of Christ. We have been counted righteous for Christ’s sake!

Robert Sauers is pastor of Luther Memorial Church in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, and a member of the CLC



BEST. JOB. EVER!

Are you a young person pondering a career? Have you considered becoming a pastor or a Christian day school teacher? This twelve-part series is meant to coincide with the work of the President's Committee on Partners in the Public Ministry (CPPM). Its aim is to help you think more deeply about the great importance—and many blessings—of the public teaching and preaching ministry.

The Best Job Security

Within a month of moving to Hecla, South Dakota, I received three job offers upon walking into local businesses simply because I looked like the kind of person who would show up and work. Amid virus hysteria, I continue to see help-wanted signs across the Dakotas.

There is no lack of work. But it might not be the job you want or expect.

Some know their aspirations early in life. For others, that knowledge comes by surprise. Everyone has had some job he didn't like. Regardless, the Apostle says, *"whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men."* (Colossians 3:23)

Only one Man knew exactly how His life would unfold, and it was to give His life for ours. Jesus openly said that it was a job not to be desired (Mark 14:36). His boundless, perfect love compelled Him to be our Savior anyway.

His saving work carries on today as our ascended Lord commissions believers of various gifts and callings to *"go . . . tell."* (Mark 16:7)

When it comes to this Gospel, then, there is also no lack of work: *"The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few."* (Matthew 9:37) You might not foresee the job of preacher or teacher in your future. Hardly anyone does. Only through the Word of God do you get to find out.

As with poor little Samuel, who ran about in confusion until he finally sat down to listen, our listening to God's Word dispels our anxiety also: *"Speak, for Your servant hears."* (I Samuel 3:10) Such study equips you with just what He needs, right where you are: *"God gave them knowledge and skill in all literature and wisdom."* (Daniel 1:17) Your path unfolds before you as you grow in the skills and abilities He provides: *"A man's gift makes room for him."* (Proverbs 18:16)

To this end, no better advice can be given than to attend



BEST. JOB. EVER!

our Immanuel Lutheran High School, College, and Seminary in Eau Claire, Wisconsin. ILC has proven to be the reliable institution where such gifts are developed and fostered through faithful Scripture teaching.

ILC is not only about becoming a pastor or teacher. Everyone gains from his time there exactly what God intends. Many students have gone on to become outstanding farmers, engineers, nurses, full-time mothers . . . all while serving in essential church roles like elder or Sunday school teacher.

Don't think you're too old for school. Men these days rarely have just one vocation for life. Many with "early retirement" explore second or third careers. Peter certainly didn't expect his abrupt job change: *"From now on you will catch men."* (Luke 5:10) Ask your pastor to lend you a book or two from his seminary days. Both of you may be surprised where it leads.

You may not want to be a pastor or teacher right now. That's actually a good sign. The overly eager are the last people we should hastily lay hands on (I Timothy 5:22). But like the reluctant prophets of old, the Lord might have a different plan in store for you in order to put your unique gifts to work in the service of His kingdom.

You find out—one way or the other—only as you grow in His Word.

You don't have to be a pastor or teacher. But in the Lord's will, I haven't always been one, either, so don't rule out the office of the public ministry as a possibility! If you trust Him alone to reveal your path, that's a noble desire indeed.

Such curiosity is from God.

Pursue it. Learn more. He promises to direct your steps.

Timothy Daub is pastor of Prince of Peace Lutheran Church in Hecla, South Dakota.



ERROR'S ECHO

In this series we take a look back at some of the most notorious errors and heresies that have threatened the church over the centuries, as well as the subtle (and not so subtle) ways in which those false teachings continue to haunt 21st century thought and theology.

Montanism

You may not recognize the name, but Montanism is alive and well in 21st century America. It's been tweaked and repackaged, but its core DNA is easy to trace.

Montanus was a 2nd century heretic who claimed that God had spoken to him directly, apart from Scripture. By spinning the words of John 14:16, "I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever," he identified himself as the helper God had promised.

Of course, the sky's the limit for those who claim direct, divine revelation. This opens the floodgates for anything to be taught in the name of Christ. Most false teachers misinterpret or misapply God's Word. Some overrule it. Consider Joseph Smith (Mormonism), Ellen G. White (Seventh Day Adventism), Charles Taze Russell (Jehovah's Witnesses), or David Koresh (Branch Davidians), among others. Each claimed authority to overturn clear passages of God's Word. Where the serpent asked, "Did God really say . . . ?" the Montanist answers, "THIS is what God says," even when it contradicts Scripture.

According to the historian Eusebius, Montanus "was filled with spiritual excitement and suddenly fell into a kind of trance and unnatural ecstasy. He raved, and began to chatter and talk nonsense. . . . Of those who listened at that time to his sham utterances, some were annoyed, regarding him as possessed, a demoniac in the grip of a spirit of error, a disturber of the masses."

There is no pathology report that tells how Montanus ended up believing what he did. Technically, here is everything we need to know: "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, who can know it?" (Jeremiah 17:9) God also warns that, left unchecked, false teaching is like a cancer that grows and metastasizes and will not stop on its own. The endgame for Satan is

always the same: use whatever lies it takes to turn people from trusting in Christ alone to trusting in themselves.

It is no surprise, then, that Montanism emphasized personal holiness. Its strict moral code taught that any major sin (like murder or adultery) committed after Baptism was "unforgivable." Fasting and prayer were required for any who hoped to receive a direct revelation from God. Like charismatics today, any Christian who wanted the special gifts of the Holy Spirit had to cross a certain threshold of piety.

The early church responded to Montanism at the Synod of Iconium in A.D. 230. Not only was Montanus branded a false teacher, he was also labeled an unbeliever and was excommunicated. Those baptized into Montanism were not considered to be Christians.

In His grace the Lord warned the people of Judah, "I have heard what the prophets have said who prophesy lies in My name, saying, 'I have dreamed, I have dreamed!' How long will this be in the heart of the prophets who prophesy lies? Indeed, they are prophets of the deceit of their own heart, who try to make My people forget My name by their dreams which everyone tells his neighbor, as their fathers forgot My name for Baal." (Jeremiah 23:25-27) Every error has the same potential.

Today, Montanism continues—not as a church, but as a movement that crosses denominational lines and often flies under the doctrinal radar. It is found among Charismatics who claim to have the gifts once given to the apostles. It is present in popular books such as *Jesus Calling* (30 million copies sold) that claim direct revelation. Thankfully, it can be overcome by "the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." (2 Timothy 3:15)



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

Living Savior Lutheran Church— Eden Prairie, Minnesota

Living Savior of Eden Prairie is a relatively young church, but its mission is one as old as the world itself. Before there was sin in Eden Prairie, there was sin in the Garden of Eden. It was there that the Living Savior was promised, the “Seed of the woman” (Genesis 3:15). Our goal here is to preach the name of our living Savior Jesus and tell the souls of the southwest Minneapolis-St. Paul area what He has done for them.

Living Savior Lutheran Church was born out of need and opportunity. The CLC has had a presence in the Twin Cities for a long time, but there arose a greater need for the spread of the Word in the Southwest Metro area. This area of the Twin Cities is unique. The southwest corridor is a key area where many of the city’s top corporations are located. Eden Prairie (population 63,000) has consistently been rated a top city to live in, listed on more than a dozen surveys of the top one hundred cities in the U.S., and often scoring in the top ten. The Twin Cities is an area that seems to always be growing, and with that growth more opportunities arise to spread the Gospel.

The Holy Spirit made these opportunities evident to us. In 2003, monthly Sunday evening services began in homes of Berea members in the Southwest Metro area. This opportunity to become an individual congregation was largely provided by \$15,000 of initial seed money from Faith of Nicollet, Minnesota, as that congregation had recently closed. In 2004, the group requested more frequent services, and Pastor David Schierenbeck started to conduct services twice a month in Chaska. In 2009 a Southwest Metro



Board was appointed. This board was made up of pastors and elders from both the Berea and Fridley congregations. The Southwest Metro group contact at that time was Alan Johnson. This board was appointed to provide oversight for the group. It was during this time that the group chose a temporary name: “The Church of the Lutheran Confession of Eden Prairie.” Weekly morning services began at the Albin Chapel facility on May 31, 2009. The services were conducted by ten to twelve active and retired area pastors, as well as by ILC professors and seminarians. In 2013, Stephen Sydow of Eau Claire accepted the part-time call to provide more on-site pastoral assistance and continuity. He served as the ministry coordinator as well as preaching for services himself. During this time the worship site moved from Albin Chapel to the Eden Prairie Senior Center and then to Lincoln Parc Suites Community Center in Eden



Prairie. The worship site was most recently moved to Huber Funeral Chapel on Glory Lane in Eden Prairie. With this new location, the congregation had a dedicated location that allowed them to store all the necessary equipment, as well as having a kitchenette, fellowship hall, and ample parking.

In 2016, the southwest metro group formally organized as an independent congregation. It took on the name “Living Savior Lutheran Church,” with Jeff Radichel as the first president of the congregation. That same year, Living Savior submitted its constitution and its request for membership to the CLC. The



congregation was received into membership by the CLC during its convention in June of 2016. On January 1, 2017, retired Pastor Doug Libby of Mankato accepted the call as a part-time pastor. This allowed for more consistent soul care of the growing congregation. The average attendance was around thirty. In 2019, regular attendance was at forty, with a membership of fifty.

The Lord has blessed the small group to allow us to financially support His work independently. As weekly attendance grew, it became clear to the voters that a full-time pastor was necessary. The combination of increased membership and the opportunity for mission work prompted the congregation to issue this call.

While the composition of Living Savior congregation has changed significantly over the years, the congregation still

has several of the original families involved as well as several new faces and families, with some attending both Eden Prairie and their home church. The Lord continues to sustain the congregation. In mid-July we began meeting in person again for the first time since the COVID outbreak.

Pastor Libby resigned his part-time call in July due to health issues, and the congregation is in the process of calling a full-time pastor again.

The congregation has several items it is looking at for the future. Our desire is to continue to pursue outreach opportunities in the area. We desire to finally have a full-

time pastor, to find a permanent location, and eventually our own dedicated church building. But we also know that the Lord has plans for us too. *“For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD plans to give you peace, not disaster, plans to give you hope and a future.”* (Jeremiah 29:11 EHV) This Eden Prairie “field” is one that holds significant potential for growth in the Lord’s kingdom. It is our prayer that Jesus would guide and bless our efforts to proclaim His Word in the Southwest Metro area and help us to do what the Psalmist says: *“I will exalt you, my God, the King, and I will bless your name forever and ever. Every day I will bless you,*

and I will praise your name forever and ever.” (Psalm 145:1-2 EHV)



Jeff Radichel is a member of Living Savior Lutheran Church of Eden Prairie, Minnesota.

Luther's *Small Catechism*: Essential to Foreign Missions

I have a confession to make. I never held Luther's *Small Catechism* in high regard. That is, not until I began serving as a missionary overseas. Since working overseas to help train existing and new pastors, my appreciation for the *Small Catechism* has grown tremendously.

The *Small Catechisms* we use today are usually made up of two parts. The first (shorter) part is the "Small Catechism" that Luther wrote. Following this is an explanation of Luther's "Small Catechism". This is the much longer section, with questions, Bible verses, and answers that expand upon the explanations Luther gave in his "Small Catechism". These were added to Luther's "Small Catechism" very early on with the work of Johann Konrad Dietrich (1575-1639) and others. These explanations, in turn, have been edited and expanded upon by modern pastors. That is why we refer to "the Sydow catechism," "the Kuske," "the Gausewitz," and so on, as these men gave these explanations their final form in the respective catechisms they edited.

These more detailed explanations are useful, not only for the Bible references, but also because they deal with topics that Luther did not directly address. For example, when Luther explained the First Commandment, he did not talk about Who God is. The added explanations deal with this fundamental topic, as today we need to explain Who exactly the God is that we are to fear, love and trust above all else; especially in a country like India that is filled with many "gods."

There are often very few doctrinal materials available in the native languages of the pastors we train overseas, but because of the high regard the Lutheran church has for the *Small Catechism*, it has been translated into many languages. We can then use the catechism as a text to ensure that the pastors know the basic doctrines of the Bible and can teach them to others.

The *Small Catechism* is designed to be simple and easy to understand. This also makes it easy to translate, and easy for the pastors themselves to understand and to teach to others. Many of the men who want to preach the Gospel have not had extensive schooling, but are "uneducated,



Above: Missionary Peter Evensen instructs pastoral candidates using Luther's *Small Catechism*.]

common men" (Acts 4:13 ESV) as were Peter, John and many of Jesus' other disciples.

While the catechism has been translated into many languages, that doesn't mean it is readily available. We have not yet been able to get the more than five hundred Telugu catechisms we need for our pastors in India. And transporting a large number of copies in India can lead to problems. For example, the third printing of Tamil catechisms has the phrase "For church's internal use only" printed on them to try to avoid having copies seized by government authorities who think they will be used to convert people. And the *Small Catechism* isn't always available in the native language of the people. For example, Togo is a French-speaking country, but the native language of the pastors in this area is Éwé. They have the catechism in French, but it isn't always easy for them to understand or memorize. A group in Ghana has just finished translating the *Small Catechism* into Éwé and they are working on translating the additional explanations this year. This will be a great aid to the pastors here who can then read and share it in the language they and the people they serve speak.

I pray that my account has given you a new appreciation for the catechism you have sitting on your shelf, and that you will open it and review the Biblical treasure it contains.



Peter Evensen is a full-time foreign missionary for the CLC who currently lives in Togo.

The Lord Provides

It's worth reminding ourselves that God works in marvelous ways—ways that are mysterious at the time, but later prove to have been in our best interests. Let me illustrate.

Back in 1965 the Lord put the CLC through its first austerity program because contributions from our CLC friends fell short of synodical needs. So the salaries of missionaries and ILC professors were cut. After all, you can't spend money you don't have.

So the professors at ILC were given permission to seek other means of income for the summer. Some of us younger men went out to find jobs in Eau Claire; any job would do; beggars can't be choosers. After days of interviews, I discovered that the only business willing to hire me for three months was Hehl-Grohn Construction Company, a non-union family enterprise content to graze on the fringes of prosperity. The wages were nothing to brag about, but that's how the Lord would put bread and butter on our table. We would survive under the care of our loving Father in heaven.

However, a much larger and more wonderful "payoff" came to our doorstep during the following school year, when synod aspired to build four professor homes on our spacious campus—rather than pay out rent monies for the four teachers who were renting. (Three professors had already built homes nearby, and C. M. Gullerud was housed in Birch Hall).

Stymied because of low cash, the Board of Trustees was about to abandon ambitious plans for doing any construction. However, late one afternoon I happened to meet Bert Naumann, chairman of the Trustees, coming out of a fiscal meeting. He seemed dejected that there was "no way" synod could get financing and afford the building of any professor homes.

"How far off were the bids?" I asked.

"We didn't get bids," Bert answered, "No point to it."

That set me back on my heels, but I suggested that there just might be a way—if he could provide me with the "specs," and I could take them to local Eau Claire builders for competitive bids.

So Bert perked up, gave me copies of the specs, and I went around to various builders and lumber yards in Eau Claire. At each office I handed out the list of the specs for four ranch

homes, each complete with septic system, furnace, hardwood flooring, three bedrooms, one-car attached garage, Anderson windows, et cetera, with a top projected cost of \$60,000 for the total of four new homes.

How far would \$60,000 go nowadays?!

Most contractors listened, but only at Hehl-Grohn was I taken seriously, and with them we worked out agreeable floor plans, with detailed specs to match the target price of the Trustees.

How about that! The Lord was moving us past a stalemate; He works in mysterious ways!

So in 1966 my friends at Hehl-Grohn platted, graded, excavated, and constructed four homes, for the families of Adelgunde Schaller, P. R. Koch, E. Schaller, and R. Roehl. The homes were built in a row along the ridge overlooking the valley of Lowes Creek.

Bert was pleased, and so were we, for the Lord had proved that He has His own ways of turning adversity into blessing.

Permit a few more details.

During those fall months when construction had not yet begun, I was anxious to see how things were going on site for the four houses. So I sometimes wandered over there just to see if anything was happening. After a few weeks the lots got staked out—and I noticed that Gunde Schaller's home was situated very close to ours—entirely out of proportion to the spacing between the other homes.

So I asked Herb Mueller (my former office manager) to explain. He listened and then approved of my suggestion to move the stakes for Gunde's house twenty feet farther to the east. In fact, he surprised me by saying that I could go ahead and move the stakes before the bulldozer arrived!

So I took my tape-measure and hatchet, went out there and moved the stakes to create a better balance of space for both our yards. It was a good decision.

That's the way things went back in the good old days; when despite (or because of) the austerity program, our limitations became God's opportunities. Thank You, dear Lord Jesus!



Paul Koch is retired from the pastoral and teaching ministry. He was a long-time faculty member at Immanuel Lutheran College.

“BREAD OF LIFE” READINGS OCTOBER 2020

TLH = The Lutheran Hymnal, 1941; WS = Worship Supplement 2000; LSB = Lutheran Service Book, 2006

Date	Hymns	Reading	Comments
Oct 1	TLH 450	1 Kings 9:1-9	The Lord answered Solomon's prayer at the temple dedication, reaffirming His faithfulness toward those who put their trust in Him.
Oct 2	TLH 567	1 Kings 10:1-13	The Lord had promised wisdom and wealth to Solomon, and He delivered on both. Even the Queen of Sheba was astonished to see all that Solomon had.
Oct 3	TLH 446 (LSB 663)	1 Kings 11:1-13	The foreign women Solomon married were a bad spiritual influence on him and he began to build shrines to their false gods. The decline and loss of His kingdom was now coming.
Oct 5	TLH 448	Revelation 3:14-22	The congregation here was wealthy and comfortable and it had led to an attitude of indifference toward Christ. They were "neither cold nor hot" but only lukewarm.
Oct 6	TLH 581	1 Kings 11:26-40	Solomon's rule began to crumble and Ahijah the prophet told Jeroboam that he would become the next great king—if he relied on the Lord for his strength and followed the Lord's guidance.
Oct 7	TLH 576	1 Kings 11:41-12:15	Rehoboam tried to ascend the throne of his father Solomon, but quickly showed that he had no love for the people he wanted to rule. God preserve us from heartless leaders!
Oct 8	TLH 243	Revelation 4:1-11	John's visions of "what must take place after this" began with a scene where all creatures bowed down in worship and gave honor to God. God is worthy of such honor for He created all things.
Oct 9	TLH 335	1 Kings 12:16-25	Solomon's kingdom is divided with Rehoboam ruling in the south (Judah) and Jeroboam ruling in the north (Israel). There would be trouble now for years to come.
Oct 10	TLH 334 (LSB 689)	1 Kings 12:26-33	Jeroboam, the Lord's choice to lead the ten northern tribes, committed terrible sin by leading Israel into idolatry. This was the "sin of Jeroboam" that would be repeated over and over by subsequent rulers.
Oct 12	TLH 261 (LSB 655)	1 Kings 13:1-34	We are reminded of how critical it is for us to follow the word of the Lord and not to be misled by false teachers. The way of God is always best.
Oct 13	WS 799	Revelation 5:1-14	At the Father's right hand John saw God the Son, Jesus Christ. Christ, the Lamb Who was slain, was worthy to "open the scrolls" and reveal what was yet to come.
Oct 14	TLH 583	Joel 1:1-20	Sometimes the Lord sends trouble to let us see the dangers of life apart from Him and to bring us once again to repentance. In this case, an invasion of locusts was the trouble.
Oct 15	TLH 515	Joel 2:1-11	The locusts would do tremendous damage and devour the people's food. The invasion would be a dreadful "day of the Lord." It would probably seem to them like the end of the world.
Oct 16	WS 724	Revelation 6:1-17	Death, destruction, war, bloodshed, and persecution will trouble the people of God until the Last Day when all that is evil will be swept away. Our hope is in Christ, our Redeemer!
Oct 17	TLH 322	Joel 2:12-27	When the Lord chastens us on account of our sins, let us bend the knee to Him in humility and godly sorrow, turning to Him and to His compassionate love.
Oct 19	TLH 226; LSB 503	Joel 2:28-32	The locusts would be taken away. God would bless His people with a special outpouring of the Holy Spirit (see Acts 2) and give them the ultimate deliverance at the Last Day.
Oct 20	WS 761	Revelation 7:1-8	Satan and his evil angels try to do away with God's people, but He protects His believing children and "seals" them from danger and destruction so they can reach their heavenly goal.
Oct 21	TLH 601	Joel 3:1-16	The unbelieving wicked will enter punishment on the Day of Judgment, but "the Lord will be a refuge for his people." Take refuge in God and in the forgiveness of sins you have through His Son.
Oct 22	TLH 613 (LSB 672)	Joel 3:17-21	Following the great Judgment Day, the believers in Christ will be safe and happy forever!
Oct 23	WS 783	Revelation 7:9-17	Salvation belongs to our God and to the Lamb who offered His life in our place, giving us the white robes of His own righteousness so we can enjoy an eternal inheritance in heaven.
Oct 24	TLH 302	1 Kings 14:1-18	Jeroboam and his family came to a bad end because of his idolatry, but notice how the young believing son was saved (in this case through death). Mark 10:15-16 comes to mind.
Oct 26	TLH 350	1 Kings 15:1-8	Meanwhile, down south in Judah, King Rehoboam had been replaced by Abijah. Abijah was terrible, but the Lord gave him a son for the sake of maintaining Judah until Christ came. God's mercy, yet again.
Oct 27	TLH 582	1 Kings 15:9-15	Abijah's son Asa was one of the few godly kings, a blessing from the Lord to Judah. Praise the Lord whenever we are blessed with God-fearing rulers!
Oct 28	TLH 456	Revelation 8:1-5	Back to opening the seals: the seventh one pictured tremendous hardship to come before the Last Day. (We experience such hardship now.) Prayers rise up to heaven for the preservation of the believers.
Oct 29	TLH 258 (LSB 659)	Revelation 8:6-13	The world is not on an upward course but a downward one. It will not get better but will only become worse as the end approaches. Our own daily observations support this too.
Oct 30	TLH 321	1 Kings 15:25-34	Meanwhile, back up north in Israel, King Nadab had followed Jeroboam. An evil king, Nadab was assassinated by Baasha. Can you guess how good a king Baasha was? What a wreck people make of things without the Lord!
Oct 31	TLH 260	Revelation 9:1-11	The picture here is of evil people and forces rising up against Christians (as we still see today). But the Lord is faithful to His dear children and keeps the evil ones from ruining them (vv. 4-5).

Time to Retire Our Name?

This past June a statue of Col. Hans Christian Heq, which had stood in front of the Wisconsin state capitol since 1925, was torn down by protestors and tossed into a nearby lake. It was just one flashpoint in a nationwide wave of protests in which countless statues were removed and put into storage or simply destroyed. In recent months sports teams have “retired” familiar names, mascots, and logos which were deemed offensive. Multi-national corporations have changed the names and packaging of familiar household products for the same reason. At the root of the unrest is disappointment, hurt, and anger toward others for real or perceived failings.

With that in mind, is it time to tear down statues of Martin Luther and “retire” the name *Lutheran* from our churches and synod? After all, there are few people in history more controversial. Luther himself didn’t hesitate to acknowledge that he was sinful through and through and that there was nothing he could do to change that and make himself righteous before God. His familiar hymn stanza sums it up well: “Fast bound in Satan’s chains I lay, Death brooded darkly o’er me, Sin was my torment night and day, In sin my mother bore me; Yea, deep and deeper still I fell, Life had become a living hell, So firmly sin possessed me.” (TLH 387:2).

In fact, if justice and perfection in one’s words and actions were a prerequisite for being statue-worthy, every monument dedicated to human beings and their achievements would have to be demolished. “*There is none who does good. No, not one.*” (Psalm 14:3)

Yet, we are not about to expunge the Lutheran name from all our records or forbid its use in the future. Identifying as a Lutheran has never been about trust in a man who had sinful flaws and missteps which he later regretted, just as we all do. Rather, calling ourselves *Lutheran* is stating that

we stand where Martin Luther stood, solidly on the Word of God as the only source of absolute, eternal truth. That Word alone reveals Jesus Christ as the Savior from sin. He fulfilled all righteousness in the place of sinners. On the bloody cross He suffered the punishment you and I deserve.



Critics at times revel in pointing out expressions and actions of Martin Luther which are crude and offensive to contemporary ears. We too may cringe at some of them. Still, rather than being cause to abandon his name, these incidents reinforce Luther’s steadfast trust in God’s grace alone. He would be the first to admit with St. Paul that he was “the chief of sinners.” But that confession made the Gospel of Christ all the sweeter to his soul.

Perhaps the most famous Luther statue is the Luther Monument unveiled in 1868 in Worms, Germany. It depicts the Reformer with his right foot forward, as though in mid-stride, eyes slightly upturned, and both hands firmly holding a large Bible. That mighty Word of God led Luther to the truth of salvation by grace alone, gave him incredible courage, protected him from the most powerful earthly forces and the demonic schemes of Satan, and was his sure comfort when the Lord called him home.

Instead of retiring the name, may *Lutheran* recall for us our blessed heritage by which we have received the pure Gospel, and move us to praise the Lord for His grace shown to us. May we search and study the Scriptures with renewed appreciation for the peace and comfort they provide in these turbulent times. Rather than hiding or being ashamed of the name, let’s use it as a way to always be ready to give to everyone who asks us a reason for the hope that is in us.



Michael Eichstadt is pastor of Messiah Lutheran Church in Hales Corners, Wisconsin, and president of the Church of the Lutheran Confession.

Lutheran Spokesman

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ANNOUNCEMENTS



Four Generations. Blake Smith (left) was confirmed in the Lutheran Faith on Sunday, June 21, 2020 at St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church in Clarkston, Washington. To his right are Blake's father, Joseph Smith, his grandfather Ted Smith, and his great-grandfather Ed Smith—all members of the congregation. Blake is also the first eighth-grade graduate of Valley Bible Academy--St. John's Lutheran, and a ceremony celebrating the event was held during the same service.

Valley Bible Academy began its sixth year of operation August 26, 2020.



Left to right, Mrs. Sheila Naumann, Pastor James Naumann, Pastor Delwyn Maas, Mrs. Jody Maas.



Left to right, Professor Mark Weis, Pastor John Hein, Professor Daniel Schierenbeck.

Installation. In accord with our usage and order, **Delwyn Maas**, who was called by St. Paul Lutheran Church of Ponsford, Minnesota, to be its pastor, was installed on August 30, 2020.

—Pastor James Naumann.

Installation. In accord with our usage and order, **Mark Weis**, who was called to Immanuel Lutheran College to be a professor, was installed on August 23, 2020, in conjunction with ILC's opening service. At the same service **Daniel Schierenbeck** was installed as president of the institution.

—Pastor John Hein, Chairman, CLC Board of Regents.