

AUGUST 2026 VOL. 69 NO. 2

LUTHERAN SPOKESMAN

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

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION





Pages 12-13

IN THIS ISSUE AUGUST 2026

COVER STORY - CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Sitting at the Feet of Jesus 3

BUILDING LUTHERAN SCHOOLS

A Giant Step Forward for Holy Trinity Lutheran School 4-5

HEARTS IN HARMONY - PROFILES OF THE HYMNWRITERS WHO SHAPE OUR WORSHIP

Michael Weisse 6

STUDIES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

Confession and Absolution..... 7

GEMS FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT

Praise Outweighs the Good Ol' Days 8

KNOW YOUR BIBLE BOOKS

Jude - *A Humble Brother of Our Lord, Jesus Christ*..... 9

VOICES FROM THE PAST - MAYNARD J. WITT

Sunday School Teachers, Rejoice! 10

NOTES FROM THE FIELD

"Growing in Grace and Knowledge"
at Wittenberg Seminary, Tanzania 11

WHAT'S NEW WITH YOU?

Peace Lutheran Church – Orofino, Idaho 12-13

BREAD OF LIFE READINGS, AUGUST 2026..... 14

MISSION NEWSLETTER

CLC Missionaries Visit the Democratic Republic of the Congo ...15

SEEN IN PASSING 16

The Lutheran Spokesman (USPS 825580) (ISSN 00247537) is published monthly by the Church of the Lutheran Confession, 501 Grover Road, Eau Claire, WI 54701, and is an official organ of the Church of the Lutheran Confession (CLC). Website address: www.clclutheran.org

Periodicals postage paid at Eau Claire, WI and additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes (Form 3579) to Lutheran Spokesman, 501 Grover Road, Eau Claire, WI 54701-7134

Editor: Paul Naumann, 3732 Claymore Lane, Eau Claire, WI 54701, E-mail to paul.naumann@ilc.edu; Assistant Editor: Craig Owings; Art Director, art direction & graphic design by Pipestone Publishing Co.; Proofreaders: Vance Fossum and Paula Naumann; Staff: James Albrecht, David Bernthal, Timothy Daub, Michael Eichstadt, Wayne Eichstadt, David Fuerstenau, Mark Gullerud, Richard Kanzenbach, John Klatt, Joseph Lau, Delwyn Maas, Nathanael Mayhew, Drew Naumann, Karl Olmanson, John Pfeiffer, Nathan Pfeiffer, David Reim, Peter Reim, Michael Roehl, Robert Sauers, David Schierenbeck, Chad Seybt, Mark Weis.

Material submitted for publication should be sent to Editor Paul Naumann three months before date of publication. Announcements and other short notices should also be sent to Editor Naumann.

Business Manager: Steve Lentz, 501 Grover Road, Eau Claire, WI, 54701. E-mail to lutheranspokesman@ilc.edu. Subscription Manager: Jessica Lau. Individual subscriptions \$23 for one year, \$44 for two years, and \$60 for three years. Group subscriptions through congregations: \$20.

Send address or payment question requests to: lutheranspokesman@ilc.edu

Spokesman Online Version at: www.lutheranspokesman.org
Printed in U.S.A.

Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture quotations in this publication are from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Sitting at the Feet of Jesus

August is here, and with it comes the familiar rush of the “back to school” season. All across the country, pencils are being sharpened and backpacks are being stuffed. Within our own fellowship, our Christian day schools, Sunday schools, and Immanuel Lutheran High School, College, and Seminary are preparing for a new academic year of Christian education.

When we hear the phrase *Christian Education*, our minds naturally jump to children. We picture little ones coloring a picture of Noah’s ark or teenagers memorizing the catechism. But Christian education is not just for the young. No adult in the pew ever “graduates” from the need to grow in the Word.

In the Gospel of Luke, we’re given a profound picture of what lifelong Christian education looks like. We’re brought into the home of two sisters, Martha and Mary. We’re told that Mary “*sat at Jesus’ feet and heard His word.*” (Luke 10:39 NKJV)

Mary was not a child; she was a grown woman. Yet, when the Master Teacher entered her home, her immediate posture was that of a student. She recognized that no matter her age or life experience, the words of Jesus were the most important thing she could absorb.

Are we always so eager to take that seat? If we’re honest, we often look a lot more like Mary’s sister. The Lord gently tells her, “*Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things.*” (Luke 10:41 NKJV) Those words often describe us perfectly. We’re distracted by the constant pressure of adult life: careers, finances, running households, and maintaining schedules.

How often do we let the urgent crowd out the eternal? We skip adult Bible class because after a week of managing aging parents, negotiating with toddlers, or staring at spreadsheets, finding the mental focus for an hour of instruction feels impossible. We intend to open our Bibles at home, but the sheer exhaustion of just keeping our heads above water leaves us reaching for sleep or mindless entertainment instead. We become spiritually

malnourished, starving our souls while desperately trying to keep up with the demands of daily life.

But listen to the gentle voice of our Savior. He doesn’t cast Martha out. Instead, He lovingly corrects her misplaced priorities to rescue her from her own exhaustion. He points her, and us, away from our exhausting efforts and back to the quiet classroom of His grace. He says, “*But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her.*” (Luke 10:42 NKJV)

That “one thing needed” is the Word of God. It is in this unchanging Word that we find the sweet Gospel: the truth that your sins—even your sins of misplaced priorities—are completely washed away by the blood of Christ. This Gospel brings the peace of knowing that your salvation is a finished work, completely independent of how busy, frazzled, or unsuccessful your week might be. This is not a lesson we learn once in confirmation class and then move on from. It is the Bread of Life our Savior freely gives to nourish us every single day until we safely reach heaven.

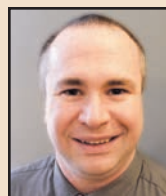
Christian education is not a burdensome duty. It is a place of true rest. We never outgrow our need to

hear our Savior’s voice. As this new school year begins, let us certainly pray for our students, teachers, and professors. But let us also hear the Savior’s invitation for ourselves.

The Master Teacher is calling you out of the weary world and into His classroom. Through the Sunday sermon, Bible class, and your personal and family devotions in the home, He invites you to rest. Come, lay your burdens down, and join Mary. Let us sit together at the feet of Jesus.



Mary and Martha by Harold Copping 1927



Robert Sauers is pastor of Immanuel Lutheran Church in Winter Haven, Florida, and a member of the CLC Board of Missions.

A GIANT STEP FORWARD FOR HOLY TRINITY LUTHERAN SCHOOL

Holy Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church of West Columbia, South Carolina was formed in 1965 by twenty-five families that left the LCA for doctrinal reasons. During the congregational meeting of 1969, it was recommended by the church council to form a study committee for the following purpose: "To investigate the feasibility of establishing a Christian day school." Work on a free-standing school building started in June of 1974 with site work completed and the laying of the foundation. The single-story, 5,000-square-foot school was completed in 1975 at an actual cost of \$58,005. This was due mostly to the use of volunteer labor. In 1984 the second story was added to correct a roof issue on the original building. In 1985 it was determined that some of the building materials contained asbestos. Because of this, no work that would disturb the asbestos could be performed inside the school. Thus, the inside of the building remained unchanged except for painting.

In 2023 we celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of educating our children. In February of that year the Property Committee considered the question, "What would it take to remove the asbestos in the school?" This simple question started a chain reaction that culminated in a plan to completely renovate the school building



and bring it up to code, while also making the second story accessible for potential expansion. The project was completed and dedicated on February 20, 2026, making it ready to serve the next fifty years of education for our children.

Our school mission at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church has been to assist our parents in educating their children



and bringing them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Over the previous fifty-plus years, Holy Trinity has predominantly focused on member children's schooling. Now that the Lord has blessed us with a beautifully renovated school, the voters of the congregation were moved to look at using



our school as more of a mission tool and sharing this gift on a larger scale with the community and world at large.

This past year we had an enrollment of twenty-two students: fourteen members and eight non-members. Moving into the 2026-27 school year we will have ten member students, six non-members, and potentially six more non-members.

The Lord has also blessed us here in South Carolina in the last two years through the Department of Education with a new program: School Choice. This program helps alleviate tuition costs for non-member families who are looking at sending their child to Holy Trinity Lutheran School. The program works through a fund known as the Educational Scholarship Trust Fund (ESTF). For each child who qualifies, the ESTF puts \$7,600 per year in a holding account which the parents can use toward their tuition payments.

While we have worked to develop a web presence, and also do outreach, nothing brings in more students than our own members witnessing. Members sharing and talking about our school and its benefits with people in their daily lives has led to the greatest growth in attendance. Our non-member parents have also become witnesses, talking with people they know or meet about what a difference Holy Trinity Lutheran School has made in their children's education and their overall life.



Our school is built—and continues to serve the Church and community—on a foundation that was laid in 1969. Lord willing and by His grace, we will see student enrollment continue to rise as we use the gift of our school to its fullest!



David Pfeiffer is pastor of Holy Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church in West Columbia, South Carolina. Jim Shealy and Mark Wales contributed to this article.

HEARTS IN HARMONY— PROFILES OF THE HYMNWRITERS WHO SHAPE OUR WORSHIP

Each month we highlight a hymnwriter who authored one or more of the well-loved hymns that we sing today.

Michael Weisse

"Christ the Lord is Risen Again"

For many reasons, the term *Reformation* is often synonymous with the name of Martin Luther. The Lutheran Reformation impacted both the sacred and the secular worlds. The Reformation had far-reaching effects on theology and worship, as well as culture and even language. But Luther was not alone in the Reformation movement. John Wycliffe and John Hus preceded Luther, and Chemnitz and Walther would follow him. There were also those who were contemporaries of Luther in these labors. One such man was Michael Weisse, who was born three years before Luther in what is today Poland.

Like Luther, Weisse's concern for the truth of God's Word led him out of the Roman Catholic Church. Weisse became associated with the Bohemian Brethren, a reformation movement which had its roots with John Hus in Bohemia. In 1522, Weisse was part of a delegation which was sent by the Brethren to Wittenberg, to compare their teaching with that of Luther's. Though the Brethren were more doctrinally aligned with Ulrich Zwingli than they were with Luther, they still shared much in common with Luther.

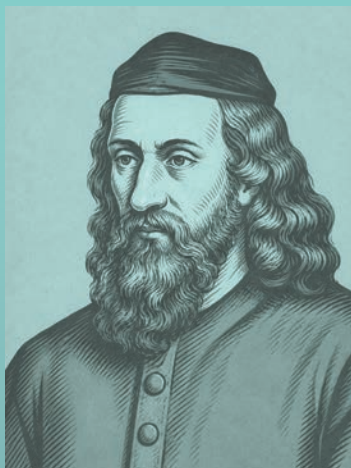
One of those areas of commonality was in worship. Like Luther, who published the first Lutheran hymnal in 1524 with only eight hymns, Weisse also worked to publish a hymnal. In 1531 Weisse published the first Brethren hymnal, which contained over 150 hymns. It was the largest Protestant hymnal up to that point. It was also the first hymnal to organize hymns by topic, an organizational style that is used still today.

Weisse either wrote or adapted almost all the hymns in that hymnal, but possibly his most enduring hymn is the Easter hymn "Christ the Lord Is Risen Again" (TLH 190; OSOC 360), which featured an ancient Latin melody and was based on the twelfth century German hymn *Christ ist erstanden*.

This hymn is unique in several ways. First, it is one of the few hymns to directly mention Christ's descent into hell. Christ's descent into hell is often misunderstood as part of the Savior's suffering. But the Scriptures teach that His descent into hell was a declaration of the

victory that Jesus had won through His perfect life and sacrificial death. Weisse's hymn makes this clear:

*He whose path no records tell
hath descended into hell;
He the strong man armed hath bound
and in highest heav'n is crowned. Hallelujah! (verse 4)*



Michael Weisse

Another unique feature of Weisse's Easter hymn is the emphasis on the Christian's role as a witness of the risen Savior. While Easter hymns often point to the joy, hope, and peace that Christ's resurrection offers sinners, few recall the Savior's commission to His people to serve as witnesses of His resurrection. Weisse's sixth verse is reminiscent of Jesus' words: "Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And you are witnesses of these things. Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high." (Luke 24:46-49 NKJV) We sing:

*Now He bids us tell abroad
How the lost may be restored,
How the penitent forgiven,
How we, too, may enter heaven. Hallelujah!*

Like the Reformers of old, we are heirs of Christ's victory over death and Satan and are witnesses of that victory to the world in which we live. The first disciples, and the Reformers who followed them, gave their lives as witnesses of the risen Christ. The truth of Jesus impacts us and our world still today. Rejoice in and proclaim that truth!



Nathanael Mayhew is a pastor at Immanuel Lutheran Church in Mankato, Minnesota.

Confession and Absolution

“If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.” (1 John 1:8-10)

In the Christian church, the Lord has blessed us with the practice of Confession and Absolution. When we are gathered together with fellow believers in the house of the Lord, we jointly make confession of our sins, which we have been guilty of in thought, word, and deed.

The pastor in turn declares these words of absolution: “I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.” We have come to understand that when the pastor uses the first person pronoun here, he is speaking on behalf of Christ and according to His command (John 20:22-23; 2 Corinthians 2:10). So then, it is as if Christ Himself is saying to us, “I forgive you.”

In verse 8 of our study, the Apostle John is addressing a problem of those who don’t think they are guilty of sin, and therefore have no need to confess. This is found today among those who are a part of the “holiness” bodies in Christendom. They believe that they can go for a period of time without sinning. When you ask them about the evil thoughts and emotions in them, they say that the devil planted those sins in them and is responsible for them.

However, if any claim they are without sin, not only are they deceiving themselves, but they are also calling God a liar, for Jesus declares, “Out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, slander.” (Matthew 15:19) Also, the Word of God reveals that “all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” (Romans 3:23) Again we read in God’s Word, “There is none who does good, not even one.” (Psalm 14:3)

For those who humbly and sorrowfully acknowledge their sin,

John declares to them “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” By heading this statement with the word *if*, John is not thereby saying that God’s forgiveness is conditional. Neither is he indicating that confession is a meritorious deed by which we deserve to be forgiven. No, not at all! God’s forgiveness is unconditional and is pure grace.



Each time God forgives us in the words of absolution, this doesn’t mean that the Lord dishes out forgiveness little by little. When Jesus died and rose again, God declared us forgiven of all our sins: past, present, and future (Romans 4:25; 2 Corinthians 5:19; Hebrews 10:10). The Lord’s forgiveness in the words of absolution comforts and reassures

us that He continues to pour out upon us His pardon for all our transgressions.

The comforting words of God’s absolution are not only to be pronounced by pastors, but also by all Christians. Since all believers possess the keys of the kingdom (Matthew 16:19; John 20:21-23), they can comfort fellow penitent sinners by declaring God’s forgiveness in Christ’s stead.

The practice of confession and absolution is not only very necessary, but it is also most comforting! Praise be to God for blessing us in this way!



Mark Gullerud is retired from the pastoral ministry. He lives in Sunnyvale, California.

Praise Outweighs the Good Ol' Days

“Then the Israelite overseers came and cried out to Pharaoh, ‘Why are you doing this to your servants? No straw is given to your servants, yet they tell us, ‘Make bricks!’ Look, your servants are being beaten, but the fault is with your own people.’” (Exodus 5:15-16 EHV)

Nostalgia is a very powerful influence these days. You can tell it is from trends like live-action remakes of childhood cartoons. Fashion trends like the iconic mullet hairstyle have come full circle again. Even vinyl records are in vogue once more. It would seem that current economic conditions, political unrest, and world events have most people longing for the “good ol’ days.”

Do you know what is described for us in the Scripture text you just read? The “good ol’ days”! At least, this was the life that Israel looked back on yearningly in Numbers 11:5-6. The people said, *“We remember the fish we ate in Egypt free of charge, the cucumbers, the melons, the leeks, the onions, and the garlic. But now our lives are wasting away. We have nothing at all to look at except this manna.”* (EHV) This is how Israel remembered what we have recorded in Exodus 5. They couldn’t remember the back-breaking labor, the spirit-breaking expectations, and the heartbreaking beatings they endured in response to Moses’ demand that Pharaoh release Israel. Only two years after the Exodus with baskets full of manna and heads full of nostalgia, the name “Egypt” made them salivate for melons and garlic.

You see, it wasn’t that Egypt really was a land of milk and honey as they remembered. Israel was simply discontented with their current circumstances. And we all too often fall into the same tendency. For all the problems and worries of today, we will in all likelihood peer back at 2026 with fondness one day. But the reality is that the days of yore were not nearly as dandy as we recall them through our rose-tinted glasses.

Our grim perception of the current state of things isn’t evidence that God has withdrawn His favor—it is evidence of our lack

of contentment. But not only that, it’s an opportunity to praise our gracious God who provides for us in every circumstance just as he did for Paul, who wrote in Philippians 4 while under

house arrest, *“I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, while being full or hungry, while having plenty or not enough. I can do all things through Christ, who strengthens me.”* (4:12-13 EHV)

The Apostle says that he learned this ability by enduring hardship by the grace and help of God. He learned to trust in the providence of the Almighty by remembering how He provided His only-begotten Son as the sacrifice for the

sins of the world. The strength granted the believing Christian through Christ’s redemption led Paul to ask a very important question in Romans 8:32: *“Indeed, he who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also graciously give us all things along with him?”* (EHV)

The path to contentment isn’t found by longing for the melons and garlic of yesterday. It’s found by praising God in whatever circumstances you find yourself, confident that His redeeming love has led you to bear the cross of today for the strengthening of your faith and the glory of His Name as you look ahead to a heavenly forever in Christ Jesus. *“This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.”* (Psalm 118:24)



Bricks Without Straw



Drew Naumann is a pastor at Messiah Lutheran Church of Eau Claire, Wisconsin.

KNOW YOUR BIBLE BOOKS

In this series we offer brief introductions to the books of the Bible, including background, authorship, content, and application to the lives of today's Christians.

Jude

A Humble Brother of our Lord, Jesus Christ

Anyone who is related to someone famous usually likes to point that out as their claim to fame! Jude was closely related to the most important person of all history. He was a close relative of Jesus Christ Himself. Yet he doesn't claim any special authority or importance. He doesn't even mention it. He introduces himself as "Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ and brother of James." He is a humble bond servant, or slave, of Jesus Christ, just like the apostles and every other believer.

Matthew 13:55 lists the brothers of Jesus as "James and Joseph and Simon and Judas," though the word "brother" was sometimes used of close relatives like cousins, rather than of siblings. But not even these close relations believed that Jesus was the Son of God until after He rose from the dead (John 7:5). After the resurrection, however, tradition suggests that all of Jesus' brothers became very active workers in the church. James became the leader of the church in Jerusalem and wrote the Epistle of James. Jude is said to have become a missionary. The Apostle Paul confirmed that when he wrote, "Do we not have a right to take along a believing wife, even as the rest of the apostles and the brothers of the Lord and Cephas?" (1 Corinthians 9:5)

According to tradition, Jude was a missionary who traveled together with Simon—either Simon the Zealot, one of the twelve—or Jude's own brother Simon. He traveled as far as Persia (present day Iran) where he apparently was martyred. Jude shows he is familiar with the Epistles of Peter and Paul, therefore he must have written sometime after AD 67.

There were many Jews still living in Persia from the Babylonian and Assyrian captivities. His audience seems to have been very familiar with Old Testament events and Jewish tradition. Jude makes mention of some things not found in other books of the Bible, such as the Archangel Michael contending with the devil over the body of Moses, and a pre-flood prophecy of Enoch, the seventh from Adam.

Jude brings a message that is very relevant and necessary in our day, namely, "To contend for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints. For certain people have crept in unnoticed who long ago were designated for this condemnation, ungodly people, who pervert the grace of our God into sensuality and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ." (verses 3-4)



Saint Jude by El Greco

Satan raised up false teachers who twisted and corrupted God's Word and turned the grace of God into a license to sin. He has a multitude of such teachers today who lead millions astray from the faith. Jude reminds us with many examples from the Old Testament that such actions bring God's fearful judgment.

Jude closes with a wonderful word of encouragement: "But you, beloved, building yourselves up in your most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that leads to eternal

life." (verses 20-21) While the false teachers are dangerous and to be avoided, Jude urges us to rescue those who have been deceived. "Have mercy on those who doubt; save others by snatching them out of the fire; to others show mercy with fear, hating even the garment stained by the flesh." (verses 22-23)

Finally, he closes with a very comforting doxology, giving all praise and glory "to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy." (verse 24)

Read this short, one-chapter book for yourself. It is truly vital for continuing in the faith in our day.



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



Maynard J. Witt
1913-1992

In this series we are reprinting Spokesman articles by early leaders in the CLC. Pastor Emeritus James Albrecht is the curator of the series. Pastor Maynard J. Witt (1913-1992) was a leader in the formation of the CLC. He served parishes in Palouse and Spokane, Washington. He was synodical vice president for a time, and a longtime member of the Board of Doctrine. He also served on the committee that oversaw the purchase of the current ILC campus in Eau Claire, and the “transplant” of that institution from its original home in Mankato, Minnesota. This article appeared in the Lutheran Spokesman of July 1960. Scripture quotations are from the King James Version.

Sunday School Teachers, Rejoice!

The Apostle Paul writes in Philippians 4:4, “Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, rejoice.”

At first blush it would seem superfluous to encourage anyone to rejoice who is an heir of eternal salvation. A pleasant or successful truth and experience generally produces the spontaneous result that one rejoices. And yet the Lord’s exhortation to rejoice is not only in order but also necessary. While our rejoicing in the Lord becomes evident in our prayers, hymns, and diligence in hearing God’s Word, yet it is expressed in its completed form by an earnest, willing, and happy activity in which the God-given gifts are put to use for the glory of God’s Name and the general good and the edification of His Church. This activity, as far as the laymen are concerned, is revealed in the various opportunities that the Lord prepares and offers, and of which they avail themselves.

One of the many opportunities to rejoice in the Lord is given to such as are chosen by the congregation to teach in the Sunday School. It is indeed a wonderful privilege to be able to rejoice in the Lord by becoming a Sunday School teacher because such workers are reckoned as fellow servants of the apostles even as Paul mentions in Colossians 1:7, where Epaphras is cited as “our dear fellow servant.” But this privilege is emphasized when it is remembered that the teacher in the Sunday

School becomes directly involved in the joy of bringing the Word of Life to children so that they might be wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. No man can be occupied with a more blessed activity than to tell others of their free salvation in Jesus, and when the Gospel is faithfully taught as it comes forth out of God’s mouth, the Lord assures us that the Word shall accomplish that which is His pleasure, namely, the salvation of souls.

Why then do we often experience a reluctance on the part of some of our lay-people to rejoice in the Lord by becoming Sunday School teachers? It is because of the sinful flesh. With Paul the Christian says, “For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.” (Romans 7:22-23) In order to overcome this interference of our sinful flesh more and more, and in order to bring into fuller execution that which we actually delight in after the inward man, the Word encourages us to rejoice in the Lord. When the Apostle says, “in the Lord” he means that we are to grow in a fuller appreciation of and gratitude for the salvation the Lord won by His suffering and death. As a person’s gratitude increases, the willingness to rejoice in the Lord by serving as Sunday School teachers will also increase.

In this series, those involved with CLC foreign missions profile one aspect of our overseas endeavors.

“Growing in Grace and Knowledge” at Wittenberg Seminary, Tanzania

“But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.” (2 Peter 3:18)

There are many challenges to living and working in East Africa, and at times there are disappointments. Yet our Lord often allows us to see the fruits of our labor. One of the most encouraging blessings is witnessing how the students at Wittenberg Seminary are growing in *grace*.

Take, for example, a student we will call “Christian.” When I first arrived, Christian was surly and not well liked by the other students. He had grown up in a Pentecostal church, where he was constantly taught that his confidence in gaining heaven depended on his own efforts to live a pure life. Christian knew that he was anything but pure, and it was plain that this weighed heavily on him.

During the course of his studies, it became plain that he had finally come to understand the Gospel of God’s free grace in Christ. His demeanor changed, as did his relationships with the other students. Having found the “peace that passes all understanding,” he now eagerly looks forward to sharing this true Gospel as a Lutheran pastor.

And he is not alone. Other students have undergone similar transformations, and it is evident in their preaching. Where their sermons once focused almost entirely on what God requires of us, they now emphasize what God has done for us in Christ.

Our students are not only growing in the *grace* of our Lord Jesus Christ; they are also growing in *knowledge*. Many come to us with only a confirmation-class level of understanding God’s Word. During their four years at the seminary, they engage in extensive study of Bible History, Catechetics, Preaching,

Practical Theology, and other subjects.

It takes time for them to adjust to interactive classroom lessons and regular homework. This adjustment is not without some groaning, but by the time they graduate, they are prepared to use the Biblical knowledge they have gained to serve God’s people faithfully as pastors.

The people of our CLC

are to be commended for their faithful support of this work. At the same time, we keep in mind the important concluding words of the passage quoted above concerning our Lord Jesus Christ: “*To Him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.*”



Pastor Mbise teaching in the main classroom



Bruce Naumann is a CLC Missionary to East Africa. His home is in Arusha, Tanzania.

WHAT'S NEW WITH YOU?

Updates from congregations around the Church of the Lutheran Confession

Peace Lutheran Church Orofino, Idaho



"But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near. For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father." (Ephesians 2:13-18 NKJV)

Once far off, we are brought near by the blood of Christ. Ephesians declares, "For He Himself is our peace." This is not a peace we manufacture, but one Christ achieved by breaking down the dividing wall of Law-based hostility. He silenced the accuser by becoming our sacrifice, reconciling both Jew and Gentile to God in one body through the cross. As Lutherans, we cling by faith to this objective reality: Your sins are forgiven. Jesus is your peace. Now, through one Spirit, we have access to the Father. With the gift of life from our loving Savior, we live today in that peace, secure in the finished work of Jesus Christ.

The members of Peace Lutheran Church in Orofino, Idaho, have been blessed both to receive and continue teaching Jesus, the Prince of Peace, since becoming a congregation in 1950. Over the years, the work of God's Kingdom has



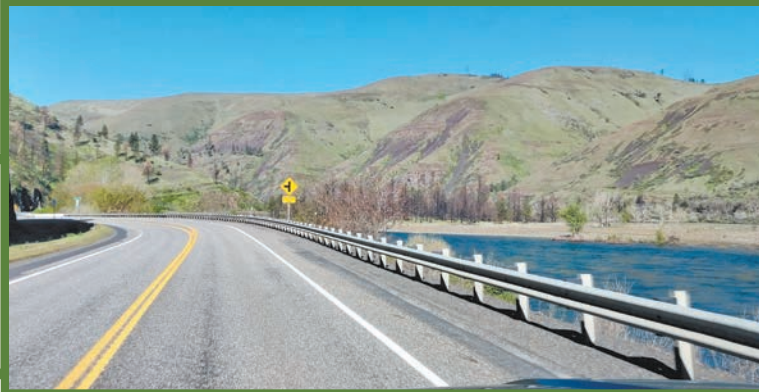
Pastor David Naumann



Deena, Peace Lutheran Church Organist



Steep Basalt Hills



Hwy 12 along the Clearwater River



Where two or three are gathered

been carried out by many faithful men and women of the congregation. Much has happened since our first article was published in the October 2015 issue of the *Lutheran Spokesman* in the “Slice of Life” series. Most importantly, and by God’s good grace, the congregation has continued the faithful preaching, teaching, and hearing of the Gospel administered through the Word and Sacraments.

Peace Lutheran Church in Orofino, Idaho, remains a steadfast smaller congregation, focusing on the faithful administration of the Gospel in Word and Sacraments. Despite challenges in numbers, the fellowship maintains a deep commitment to in-person worship and a renewed dedication to be a steadfast presence for outreach in our community, holding firm to the belief that the Lord brings the increase. In the last few months, a new family has been attending regularly.

Peace Lutheran Church has continued to grow spiritually and in community outreach. The congregation has embraced new opportunities for ministry, including devotional articles written by the pastor for the local paper. Two years ago we were blessed to have the ILC Tour Choir make a trip to the Pacific Northwest. In Orofino, the choir sang God’s praises in an assisted living facility in town. Many people attended, both from town as well as the facility, and expressed their appreciation for these young people using their talents to the praise and glory of God. In the last year, the older school children of Valley Bible Academy—St. John’s Lutheran Church in Clarkston, have made the drive to sing hymns to the congregation during Advent and Lent.

As a dual parish with St. John’s Evangelical Lutheran Church in Clarkston, Washington, where the shared parsonage is located, the forty-five-minute Sunday morning drive up the Clearwater River is both beautifully scenic and, at times, dangerously challenging. Forested agricultural land, as well as steep basalt canyon walls line both sides of the river. Last year services were held up for a particularly fierce wildfire. This spring with heavy rains in our area, services were canceled due to a multitude of landslides that closed the main highway for days.

Through challenges and celebrations alike, Peace Lutheran Church continues to be a steadfast beacon of hope and faith in Orofino, teaching Jesus, the Prince of Peace, and living out His love in everyday life. The church looks forward with hope and trust in God’s grace to guide its mission in the years ahead.

“And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 4:7 NKJV)



David Naumann is pastor of Saint John’s Lutheran Church in Clarkston, Washington, and Peace Lutheran Church in Orofino, Idaho.

“BREAD OF LIFE” READINGS AUGUST 2026

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

Date	Hymns	Reading	Comments
August 1	WS 742 / LSB 793	Psalm 103	When even his own son rebels against him, David continues to trust in the Lord for deliverance.
August 3	WS 764 / LSB 850	2 Chronicles 1	The Lord blesses King Solomon greatly. Pleased when Solomon requests wisdom, the Lord grants Solomon not only wisdom but also riches, possessions, and honor.
August 4	TLH 133 / LSB 410	2 Chronicles 2	Solomon uses the wisdom that he has received from the Lord for the general strengthening of Israel. Specifically, he applies his wisdom to the preparations for the construction of the temple.
August 5	TLH 640	2 Chronicles 3	Solomon builds the temple of the Lord on Mount Moriah, where both Abraham and David had offered sacrifices to the Lord in the past.
August 6	TLH 1 / LSB 901	2 Chronicles 4	Solomon furnishes the temple beautifully with a bronze altar, gold lamp stands with gold lamps, tables, gold basins, doors overlaid with bronze, and other vessels and utensils.
August 7	TLH 36 / LSB 895	2 Chronicles 5	The priests bring the ark of the covenant into the temple and place it in the Most Holy Place. The glory of the Lord fills the temple.
August 8	TLH 635	2 Chronicles 6	Solomon blesses the people of Israel and dedicates the temple with prayer.
August 10	TLH 334 / LSB 689	2 Chronicles 7	The Lord accepts the sacrifices associated with the dedication of the temple, sending fire from heaven. The Lord is with His faithful people to deliver them and to bless them. Those who reject the Lord will experience disaster.
August 11	TLH 395 / LSB 696	2 Chronicles 8	The Lord blesses Solomon with great success.
August 12	LSB 362	2 Chronicles 9	The Queen of Sheba travels to Jerusalem to witness the wisdom of Solomon. The Lord blesses Solomon with great wealth. Solomon dies.
August 13	TLH 2	Psalm 105	By birth, the Israelites were beneficiaries of the promises of the Lord to Abraham. By faith in Christ, the seed of Abraham, we too are beneficiaries of the same promises.
August 14	TLH 401 / LSB 692	Psalm 106	We confess our disobedience to the Lord, and we thank and praise Him for His mercy toward us in Christ.
August 15	TLH 124	Psalm 107	Throughout history and throughout our own lives, we see the steadfast love of the Lord in action. Thank the Lord for His goodness and for His steadfast love!
August 17	TLH 517 / LSB 758	2 Chronicles 10	King Rehoboam ignores the wise counsel of old men and instead follows the advice of his peers. As a result, the Northern Kingdom rebels against Rehoboam, and the kingdom is divided.
August 18	TLH 521 / LSB 760	2 Chronicles 11	The Lord prevents Rehoboam from attacking the Northern Kingdom. Rehoboam fortifies both the Southern Kingdom and the royal family.
August 19	TLH 514 / LSB 765	2 Chronicles 12	As a result of the unfaithfulness of Rehoboam, Shishak, the King of Egypt, attacks and plunders Jerusalem. Rehoboam endures constant conflict with Jeroboam and the Northern Kingdom until his death.
August 20	TLH 568 / LSB 785	2 Chronicles 13	Abijah becomes King of Judah. Abijah is successful in battle against Jeroboam. Jeroboam dies.
August 21	LSB 854	2 Chronicles 14	Abijah dies and Asa becomes King of Judah. Asa is faithful to the Lord. When the massive army of Ethiopia attacks Judah, the Lord gives Judah victory.
August 22	TLH 288 / LSB 865	2 Chronicles 15	Asa restores faithful worship of the Lord in Judah.
August 24	TLH 26 / LSB 797	2 Chronicles 16	Rather than trust in the Lord, Asa relies on Ben-hadad, King of Syria, to assist him in repelling the attack of Baasha, King of Israel. Asa dies.
August 25	TLH 293 / LSB 693	2 Chronicles 17	Jehoshaphat becomes King of Judah. Jehoshaphat is faithful to the Lord, opposing the worship of idols in Judah. The Lord blesses Jehoshaphat with wealth and honor.
August 26	TLH 292 / LSB 585	2 Chronicles 18	Jehoshaphat and Ahab, King of Israel, follow the advice of lying prophets and attack Syria in order to capture Ramoth-gilead. Syria defeats Israel and Judah. Ahab dies.
August 27	TLH 266	2 Chronicles 19	Jehoshaphat carries out religious and legal reforms.
August 28	TLH 522 / LSB 615	2 Chronicles 20	Faithful Jehoshaphat prays and praises the Lord. The Lord blesses Judah with peace. Jehoshaphat and wicked Ahaziah attempt to send ships to Tarshish, but fail.
August 29	TLH 264 / LSB 658	2 Chronicles 21	Jehoshaphat dies and Jehoram becomes King of Judah. He murders his brothers. Jehoram is unfaithful to the Lord; the results for Judah and for him personally are highly unpleasant.
August 31	TLH 27 / LSB 814	Psalm 108	The Lord is our help in every trouble. He gives us the victory over our enemies.

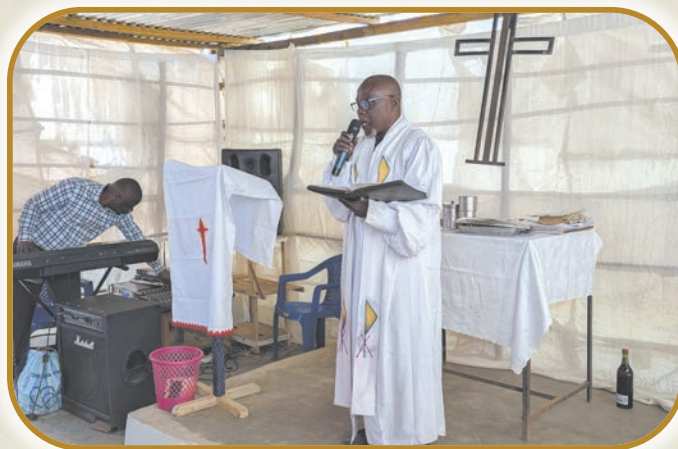


CLC Missionaries Visit the Democratic Republic of the Congo

In April and May of 2026, Missionary Peter Evensen and CLC Foreign Missions Coordinator Todd Ohlmann met in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). Evensen traveled from Togo, and Ohlmann from Nigeria after a brief visit to help celebrate the Nigeria-CLC's fiftieth anniversary.

The visit began in the capital city of Kinshasa with Pastor Jacques Pondi Lumiangu. Although the congregation he serves has struggled to find an affordable permanent place to worship, they hosted a two-day Bible seminar on the importance of distinguishing God's Law and Gospel in Scripture, and the doctrine of justification.

The missionaries then traveled south to Lubumbashi to meet with Pastor Yumba Lumbala and the Congrégation Luthérienne Confessionnelle du Congo (CCLC). There they led a two-day pastor training seminar at a CCLC congregation in Kasumbalesa, rather than at the seminary in Ntongo, because of militia hostilities in the area. They also met with the three recent seminary graduates, who presented and defended their theological dissertations. The visit concluded with a Sunday worship service that



Pastor Yumba Lumbala Leading Worship

included several baptisms, two weddings, seminary graduation, and the ordination of three new pastors.

An exciting result of this visit was a recommendation to the Board of Missions to relocate Missionary Peter Evensen from Lomé, Togo to Lubumbashi, DRC in early 2027. He has served in Togo for seven years, training pastors and translating Online Theological Studies lessons written by the late Professor David Lau into French. Because the DRC is a French-speaking nation, the Board has long planned for this, and they approved the recommendation.

Praise and thank our Savior for His abundant blessings on the Gospel ministry in the DRC, and for the privilege of playing a small part in His great harvest of souls in Central Africa!

You can find more details and pictures from this visit and others at: www.missionaryohlmann.blogspot.com



Missionary Ohlmann, Pastor Lumiangu,
Missionary Evensen, Elder Raphael



Todd Ohlmann is a full-time visiting missionary for the Church of the Lutheran Confession.



Some members of the Minnesota Pastoral Conference and their families

SEEN IN PASSING

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

Engineered Babies? Scientists in the UK and Japan claim to be nearing a breakthrough that would allow human reproduction using lab-grown sperm and eggs. *The Guardian* reports that researchers have already created viable mouse offspring from stem-cell-derived gametes, and human trials may be only a few years behind. Advocates say the technology could help infertile couples and others. Critics warn of profound ethical risks, including designer embryos, biological parenthood without consent, and the possibility of reproduction untethered from natural limits. One researcher admitted the field is moving so quickly that “society hasn’t caught up.” The article urges lawmakers to begin serious debate before science outpaces regulation. Devlin, Hannah. “Lab-Grown Sperm and Eggs Could Revolutionize Reproduction—If Society Allows It.” *Reproduction*. TheGuardian.com, 5 July 2025. Web. 29 June 2026.

The Two-Parent Edge. A recent analysis in *The Liberal Patriot* argues that children raised by two married parents enjoy measurable advantages across education, income, and long-term stability. The author calls this the “two-parent privilege,” noting that it persists across race, class, and geography. While acknowledging that single parents often work heroically, the piece stresses that family structure

remains one of the strongest predictors of child well-being. Despite the data’s clarity, political leaders typically avoid the topic, considering it “politically radioactive,” leaving families to struggle without honest guidance or policy support. The author urges a renewed cultural and political commitment to strengthening marriage and reducing family fragmentation. Vassallo, Justin. “The Two-Parent Privilege Is Real.”

Book Review. LiberalPatriot.com, 2 Feb. 2024. Web. 29 June 2026.

Common NFL Moment that Broadcasters Don’t Want You to See. A *Daily Caller* feature highlights a striking trend: postgame prayer circles at midfield have become one of the most consistent rituals in the NFL, yet major networks rarely show them. Players from opposing teams routinely kneel together, thank God, and publicly invoke Jesus Christ. Though a feature of nearly every NFL game, broadcast networks routinely cut away from these moments in an effort to scrub overt religious expression from the televised narrative. Despite media avoidance, however, the practice appears to be growing. One observer called it “the loudest silence in the stadium.” Powell, Andrew. “Jesus First: The Trend in the NFL That Networks Keep Ignoring.” *Editorial*. DailyCaller.com, 19 Jan. 2026. Web. 29 June 2026.