

# LUTHERAN SPOKESMAN

“Hier stehe Ich.  
Ich kann nicht  
anders.  
Gott helfe mir!  
Amen!”

Plaque on Luther statue  
in Worms, Germany.

Translation: “Here I stand.  
I cannot do otherwise.  
God help me! Amen!”

# LESSONS FROM PAST REFORMATIONS

Annually, when Oct. 31 rolls around, Lutherans who are mindful of their religious heritage give thought to the reformation movement which took place in Germany during the 1500's. Their remembrance of this significant event is that of a thankful appreciation for the Lord causing the glorious light of the gospel message to once again shine forth in all its splendor.

That gospel message is clearly revealed in Holy Scripture, such as in Romans 3:24,28: "Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus... Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law." Quite simply put, we sinful humans have been forgiven of all our sins and eternally saved ALONE by reason of God's unmerited love, through the redemptive work of Jesus

Christ ALONE, and received ALONE by trusting in Jesus as our Lord and Savior.

In spite of the wonderful clarity of Holy Scripture, during the years leading up to the Reformation period the gospel message was largely obscured in the external church by false teachings. Instead of looking ALONE to the Bible for divine instruction, the church also looked outside of Scripture to human traditions, and to the pronouncements and decrees of church councils and popes.

As a result of this, flawed human reasoning developed all manner of work-righteous teachings which rely upon man's feeble efforts to merit forgiveness and salvation, as if Jesus' redemptive work was not all-sufficient. Such teachings are soul destroying, for Jesus declared that anyone who does not believe—that is, believe in Him

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alone for salvation—will be condemned eternally (Mk.16:16).

But since God is not desirous that any should perish, but that all should come to a heartfelt knowledge of His gospel truths and be saved, the Lord God raised up men like Dr. Martin Luther to bring about a reformation in the church. The term 'reformation' has been defined as restoring to original form that which was lost.

### Other Reformations

While authentic Lutherans have good cause to commemorate the reformation of the 16th century since they continue to be spiritual beneficiaries of it, yet it is not the only religious reformation that has taken place in the external church.

In the Old Testament period of the Judges, a major reformation in Israel took place under the able leadership of Samuel (1 Sam. 7). Also in the days of the kings, the Lord raised up King Josiah to restore in Israel the religious teachings, practices, and ways of God which had been lost (2 Ki. 22:23; 2 Chr. 34:35). We might also include in this list the reformation that the apostle Paul sought to carry out among the churches in Galatia through the writing of his epistle to them.

What is it that brought about the need for these reformations? In the Old Testament examples we find that the people of God had shelved the Holy Scriptures to gather dust and made friends with the world to the extent that they adopted their idolatrous worship and their wicked manner of living. In the New Testament example, we see that Christians were soon led astray by false prophets who cunningly introduced a religion of work-righteous-



The tower at the Wartburg with the cross on top.

ness.

Why call to remembrance other reformations besides the one that gave birth to the Lutheran Church? The answer is this, that we might learn from them and guard against the many different pitfalls and traps which can cause us to lose the precious teachings which alone can save eternally. The spiritual blessings of past reformations have not always been long retained because people failed to be vigilant and were neglectful in making regular and faithful use of the Word of God in their personal lives and in their church life.

In regard to this last thought, one of the great blessings that came out of the Lutheran Reformation is that of Martin Luther putting the Scriptures into the hands of the laypeople. Making use of his language gifts, Luther translated the Bible into the common language of the people so that they could read it for themselves. He also wrote a catechism of Christian doctrine which he intended to be used in the following way: "As the head of the family should teach them in a simple way to those of his household."

God be praised and thanked for the many spiritual blessings that He has lovingly bestowed upon the church

through past reformations. May He grant us the grace to learn the important lessons from them and to be ever vigi-

lant so that we do not lose that which was restored.

—Pastor Mark Gullerud

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## Why Lutherans Fight Over Doctrine

One of the complaints that is often leveled against conservative Lutherans is that we are much too polemical. “Polemic” comes from the Greek word “polemos” which means “war.” In plain English the contention is that we Lutherans spend too much time and effort fighting over doctrine when we should be doing other things.

Perhaps you’ve heard that complaint before. Maybe you’ve felt a little that way yourself. Every few years, it seems, a new doctrinal conflict surfaces within the body, one that causes a lot of anguish and has to be battled out. Is this a waste of precious time? Is it a misuse of resources to haggle over points of doctrine until they are settled? It may seem that way — until you remember the real treasure of Lutheranism, the Gospel of free grace.

Free grace means that we are saved, not because of what we have or have not done, but because of what Christ has accomplished for us. In some way, shape, or form every Christian Church claims to teach this. But do they? The Roman Catholic version of “free grace” is actually “infused grace,” which means that God infuses a person with the ability to work his or her way to heaven. Reformed churches teach that God does His part in salvation, but you must also do your part. That part may include making a decision for Christ, fulfilling His commands, or leading a holy life. Only the Lutheran

Church teaches that salvation is yours simply as a free gift of God’s grace.

How can these churches use the same Bible that we do, and yet miss this most important teaching of Scripture? In Catholicism, the answer is obvious. Once the word of popes and church councils was elevated to the same level as Scripture, anything went, including the Gospel of free grace. With Reformed churches, the answer is a bit more subtle.

You’ve heard of John Calvin. A contemporary of Luther, Calvin is considered the father of Reformed churches today. Calvin signed the Augsburg Confession (1530), the Lutheran document of free grace. But Calvin also taught false doctrine, for he denied the Real Presence in the Lord’s Supper. He doubted that Jesus could be present in the Sacrament, so he taught that Communion was merely a sign and an ordinance, something Christians did to remember Jesus’ death. That may seem like a small error, a mere technicality, but our Lutheran forefathers thought otherwise. A bitter doctrinal battle ensued and when the dust settled, Calvin was refuted. By 1580, when the Formula of Concord was drafted, the followers of Calvin had lost more than the doctrine of the Real Presence — they had lost the clear Gospel of free grace as well.

This is why Lutherans fight over doctrine. It isn’t that we think we are

better than others or are the only people who will be saved. It IS because we see the Gospel of free grace as our greatest Treasure. If we lose one point of doctrine, eventually the Gospel itself becomes clouded with human conditions. "A little leaven," the Bible warns, "leaveneth the whole lump." False doctrine, no matter how insignificant it seems at the time, will ultimately undermine the Gospel of God's grace.

Nobody likes to fight over doctrine. Everyone would prefer to have peace within the church. It's tempting to ignore differences as though they don't

matter. But they do matter. Without a battle over doctrine the devil will have his way and the treasure of the Reformation will be lost, which is precisely why Lutherans must continue to fight over doctrine.

—Pastor James Albrecht

*Footnote: The Douay Version (Roman Catholic Bible) is very similar to the KJV. Ephesians 2:8-9 — "For by grace you are saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, for it is the gift of God; Not of works, that no man may glory." The Roman Catholic Council of Trent (1545-1563 with interruptions of 3 and 10 years) overruled the doctrine of free grace, stating: "If anyone says that justifying faith is nothing else but confidence in the divine mercy which remits sins for Christ's sake; or that this faith alone is that whereby we are justified; let him be damned."*

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## A Reformation message from our CLC President —

# 'LUTHERAN'? WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

Occasionally one is asked, "What religion are you?" Your immediate response might be, "Lutheran." Sadly, in our day that is less and less a meaningful confession or witness because Lutheranism has been loaded with so much baggage.

Theologically, as well as in application of the moral imperatives of Scripture, what passes for Lutheranism in some Lutheran churches is no longer the clear voice of Truth! Today to say simply "I am a Lutheran" may identify one with things with which one does not want to be identified.

The heart and core of the Gospel message itself with Christ Jesus as the focal point, though given lip service, is distorted by Lutheranism's flirtations with Rome and others for whom Scripture is not the absolute Truth, much less the foundational Word unto

salvation!

Yet we are not going to give up the name Lutheran because the name is being abused. Rather we should clearly state what kind of Lutheran we are and to what Lutheran Church or church



Augustinian monastery in Wittenberg where Luther lived as a monk. From 1536 till his death he lived here with his family.

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**“ . . . We too will lose the right to the name and the reason for our being if we should ever bow to anything that is contrary to Scripture.”**

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body we belong. We are members of the CHURCH OF THE LUTHERAN CONFESSION (CLC). Most people will not be acquainted with the CLC. By naming the church to which you belong, you have opportunity to explain your church and to acquaint people with it.

The CLC is a church body in which all its member churches confess that the Bible is the inspired and unerring Word of God. It confesses the creeds of the Lutheran Church, without qualification, as they are found in the Book of Concord of 1580.

Scripture itself is the source and foundation of Christian teaching and faith. The Lutheran confessions are a faithful setting forth of what Scripture teaches. The name of our church body is a witness to what we believe. It is a continual reminder of our responsibility to be truly Lutheran, and therefore Scriptural, in our teaching and in our practice: This principle holds true: “if it is not Scripture, it is not Lutheran!”

Charles Porterfield Krauth wrote over a century ago: “We do not say that any man shall believe that the confession of our Church is Scriptural. We only contend that he should neither say nor seem to say so, if he does not believe it. . . . To sign a confession as to imply that we are what we are not, or to leave it an open question what we are, is not the just result of the right of private judgment, or of any right whatever, but is utterly wrong” (*The Conservative Reformation and Its*

*Theology, 1871, p. 171).*

What a powerful indictment of the pseudo-Lutherans of our day!

At the same time we dare not think for one moment that we are above or beyond the reach of Satan, the destructive peer pressure of society, the temptations of our own flesh, or the accursed tendency to compromise. We too will lose the right to the name and the reason for our being if we should ever bow to anything that is contrary to Scripture.

The name ‘Lutheran’ was not coined by Luther, but by his enemies. Luther did not want the church named after him. But they who stood on the Reformation principles SCRIPTURE ALONE, FAITH ALONE, GRACE ALONE adopted the name for themselves in spite of Luther’s plea: “I ask that men make no reference to my name and call themselves, not Lutherans, but Christians.”

But as the use of the name persisted Luther said: “If you believe that Luther’s doctrine is evangelical, . . . you must not flatly disown Luther; otherwise you disown his doctrine which you admittedly recognize as the doctrine of Christ.”

And in spite of some recent public press, and even apologies that pseudo Lutherans are making for some of Luther’s counsel and advice, we appreciate the counsel of the Reformer who said: “Whether Luther is a scoundrel or a saint means nothing to me. His doctrine, however, is not his but Christ’s

own. . . . Let the person go. But the doctrine you must confess" (*What Luther Says, Vol. II, p. 857, #2677*).

Luther further said, "Luther himself has no desire to be Lutheran except insofar as he teaches the Holy Scripture in purity" (*Ibid, p. 856, #2679*). And so we confess with Luther: "The perfectly pure, the only, and certain Word of God must be the foundation of our faith" (*ibid, p. 862, #2693*).

The Lord keep us in the confession of His Word, and in the Truth so miraculously and wonderfully rediscovered at the time of the Reformation. May we follow the Truth in a contrite and humble

spirit, "looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith" (Heb. 12:2).

At the same time God help us lest we disown the doctrine we have confessed as children of the Reformation.

"Lutheran"? What do you mean? Krauth again: "The only churches, therefore, of any land which are properly in the unity of that communion, and by consequence entitled to its name, Evangelical Lutheran, are those which sincerely and truthfully confess the doctrines of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession."

—*Pastor Daniel Fleischer*

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## 'CHURCH UNITY IS AN ISSUE OF INTEGRITY'

(Note: The following letter was written to the editor of the *Austin* (Minn.) *Daily Herald*, July 15, 1998 by the Rev. Stephen Kurtzahn; it was a response to an article by a Roman Catholic priest titled "Christianity must be a force for unity and forgiveness," which had previously appeared in the *Austin* paper. — Ed.)

There are Christians who honestly disagree with Father N. when it comes to the subject of ecumenical organizational unity. Such people sincerely believe that before there is organizational unity and fellowship among churches, there must be agreement in what is taught and confessed. Without "pride" and "arrogance," without "the power hungry search to be right" (terms Father N. used in his article), they take at face value the words of the apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 1:10, "Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment."

There exist between churches and denominations real differences of belief that are not just "position statements" or "creedal interpretations," as Father N. refers to them. These differences are more than just denominational emphasis. For example:

\* Is the Bible the very Word of God in all its parts, inspired by the Holy Spirit and without mistake or error, or is the Bible simply the compiled words of mere men that describe for us what the ancients believed?

\* Is the Bible the only source and norm for Christian faith and life, or are the decrees of church councils and popes to be placed on an equal level with Holy Scripture?

\* Does God infuse us with grace so we can perform the good works that are

necessary to be saved, or did Christ Jesus do everything for our salvation by His perfect life and sacrificial death as the Lamb of God?

\* Is Holy Communion a sacrifice by which the priest offers the Body of Christ over and over again to atone for the sins of the people, or is it the means by which Christ gives us the forgiveness He earned once and for all upon the cross of Calvary?

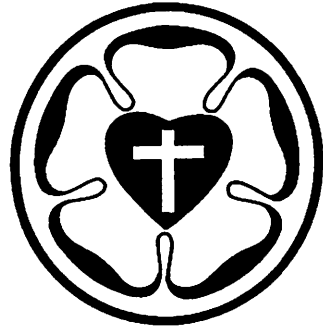
\* When a person dies, does his soul go to heaven or hell, or does he spend time in purgatory to pay for the sins he couldn't pay for on earth?

\* Does Mary hear our prayers and intercede with Christ on our behalf, or do we have direct access to the heavenly Father through Jesus Christ Himself?

\* Is the pope the vicar of Christ on earth, or does Jesus Christ shepherd His Church directly through His Word?

The point I want to make — without judging motives, or using strong negative adjectives — is that these foundational differences between churches are more than just “position statements,” “creedal interpretations,” or “denominational emphasis.” These differences define the very essence of our respective confessions of faith.

It must also be mentioned that the 16th Century Reformation, especially the Lutheran Reformation in Germany, involved much more than a mere reaction to “the corruption and greed of the structural church,” as Father N. puts it. The Roman Catholic Martin Luther was indeed distressed over the sale of indulgences for the financing of St. Peter's in Rome, which was under construction at the time. But the very heart of the Reformation centered around the question of how a person is saved. On the basis of the clear Word of Holy



Scripture, Luther brought to light once again the Gospel-truth that we are reconciled to our heavenly Father and declared righteous in His sight solely because of the life, sufferings, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The blessed results of His work are then made our own personally through faith. To ignore the question, “How can I be at peace with God?” is to ignore the primary motivating force behind the Reformation. “Corruption and greed” were side issues.

Father N. properly laments the fact that “structural Christianity is losing its clout,” and that this is why many people are not inspired by our structural churches.” The reason for such a lack of inspiration is not denominational division, however, but the fact that the Bible is no longer viewed by most mainline churches as the very Word of God. The Gospel then changes from the proclamation of “Jesus Christ and him crucified,” as the apostle Paul puts it in 1 Corinthians 2:2, to a vague and indefinable “gospel.” Without the absolute truth of God's Word, the church simply becomes another social club in a world filled with all sorts of other social organizations.

Jesus of Nazareth — who not only “claimed to be God's Son,” but who



actually is God and man in one Person — said this: “If you abide in My Word, you are My disciples indeed,” John 8:31. There are many sincere and humble Christians who take their Lord’s words seriously. They are not about to compromise the eternal truths of Holy Scripture for ecumenical unity. They are not about to sweep foundational doctrinal differences under the carpet

for the sake of organizational oneness. This is not “pride” or “arrogance” or the “power hungry search to be right.” It is the sincere and humble desire to be faithful to the Savior, who has been so faithful to us. If there is to be God-pleasing unity among churches and denominations, it must be based on honest agreement in all the teachings of Holy Scripture.

## Parables Of The Master

Matthew 13:47-52

### The Dragnet

Jesus used the picture of a dragnet in a parable explaining the mystery of the kingdom of God.

To a Midwestern boy raised in the fifties, *Dragnet* was a TV show recounting the day-to-day work of a dead-pan cop named Joe Friday. In police language, a dragnet is a sweep of a neighborhood or an area in which a group of people is brought in for questioning. The picture of the dragnet comes from the fishing industry. In Jesus’ day the dragnet was a large fishing net, the lower part, when sunk, touched the bottom while the upper part floated on top of the water. This net was dragged toward the shore or the boat. Of course, the net would catch all kinds of fish — some to be kept and some to be thrown back.

The Dragnet, like the other parables, was a picture out of the daily life of the people of Jesus’ day. Some of Jesus’ own disciples were fishermen on the Sea of Galilee who used this kind

of net in their work (Luke 5). Jesus told His disciples that the kingdom of heaven is like a large dragnet that is lowered into the sea. When it was drawn to shore, the net was full of all kinds of fish. The fishermen sorted the good, marketable fish into containers and threw the bad away.

Jesus used parables (earthly stories with heavenly meanings) to reveal to His people the mysteries of the kingdom and God’s gracious rule through the Gospel. When the disciples asked Jesus why He spoke to them in parables, He answered and said to them, “Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given” (Mt. 13:11).

Jesus, through these parables, gives the believers an eye for the hidden — and an understanding of the paradoxical—greatness of the kingdom of God or kingdom of heaven. The Jews were looking for an earthly kingdom and a

## **THE DEVIL YOU SAY!**

*Men don't believe in a Devil now, as their fathers used to do.  
They've forced the door of the broadest creed,*

*To let "His Majesty" through.*

*There isn't a print of his cloven hoof, or a fiery dart from his bow  
To be found in earth or air today, for the "wise" have voted so.  
But who is mixing the fatal draught that palsies heart and brain?  
And who loads the coffins every year*

*With ten hundred thousand slain?*

*Who blights the bloom of our youth today*

*With the fiery breath of hell?*

*If the Devil isn't and never was, won't some of these people tell?  
Who dogs the steps of the toiling saint and digs a pit for his feet?  
Who plants the weeds in the field of time,*

*Wherever God sows His wheat?*

*The Devil is voted not to be and "Of course," they say, "'tis true!"  
But who is doing the kind of work the Devil alone can do?  
Won't somebody step right up to the front,*

*And make his bow and show*

*How the frauds and crimes of a single day spring up?*

*We want to know!*

*The Devil was fairly voted out and of course "The Devil's gone!"  
But simple people would like to know:*

**WHO CARRIES HIS BUSINESS ON?**

(Anon)

Messiah who would restore the political kingdom to the nation of Israel. The disciples had to learn that God's great beginnings involve humble and unspectacular events.

The previous parables of the mustard seed and the leaven (Mt. 13:31-34) reveal the small beginnings and hidden nature of God's rule in the hearts of men. The parables of the hidden treasure and the pearl of great price reveal the value of this hidden treasure of the Gospel.

The paradox of the Gospel and the mystery of the kingdom of heaven are summed up at the cross where God's Son and Israel's promised Messiah was revealed in lowliness and weakness. The parables reveal, as Franzmann

remarks, that "the lowly Messiah and the unspectacular Kingdom are no more 'unnatural' than the nature of God's creation" (*Follow Me*, p. 124).

### **God's Gracious Rule**

The parable of the dragnet reveals the climax of God's rule. A series of articles by Prof. John Schaller in the *Journal of Theology* (Vol. I, 1961, Prof. Egbert Schaller, translator) brought out the fact that the kingdom of God or heaven is the gracious rule of God in the hearts of men in connection with the Gospel.

This parable centers on the results of God's Gospel and the preaching of the cross viewed from the cosmic point of God's saving activity.

The Gospel will be preached to the ends of the earth. God will fill His banquet hall with unworthy guests even after the invited guests refuse to come. As Luther said in his explanation of the second petition: "God's kingdom certainly comes all by itself, even without our prayers, but we pray in this petition that it also come to us."

This parable gives us a picture of the mystery of the result of God's kingdom activity. It should be noted that this parable (consistent with all Scripture) does NOT speak of judgment day and Jesus' second coming in terms of a millennium, (an earthly kingdom) or a rapture, or any such thing.

We are assured that the angels will be sent forth to gather all nations before Jesus' judgment throne (Mt. 25:31). Then in the familiar terms of Matthew 25, Jesus will separate the sheep from the goats—the believers from the unbelievers. So in our parable, the climax of God's kingdom activity will be separation. "So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come forth, separate the wicked from among the just, and cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing

and gnashing of teeth" (Mt. 13:49-50).

Finally, in that day, all the mysteries and paradoxes of the kingdom of God will be revealed. You, by the grace of God, will hear Jesus say "to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world'" (Mt. 25:34).

When Jesus asked His disciples whether they now understood these things, they could reply, "Yes." The parables would be a continuing revelation to them of the mystery of the cross and the kingdom of God.

Jesus comments on the blessedness of the disciples who have been trained for the kingdom of heaven. This parable, as well as the other parables, gives the disciple a treasure to draw from in telling others about the kingdom of heaven.

In these parables you will find treasures both new and old to share with others (Mt. 13:51-52). At the cross Jesus has revealed to you the key to the mysteries of God hidden from the ages. Blessed are you that these things have been revealed to you.

—Pastor John Schierenbeck



The "Canadian delegation" at last summer's Convention: (l-r) Michael Wagnitz, Herb Steffl, Pastor David Reim, John Cobb.

## SMORGASBORD

### ● RE: MONUMENTS TO LUTHER

For the picture on this month's cover, as well as for others appearing in this issue direct from "Lutherland," thanks goes to CLC President Daniel Fleischer. These photographs were taken last spring when CLC representatives made a synodically-sponsored visitation trip to Germany and France.

Those who have been there know that Luther's homeland makes much of its heritage stemming from the Reformer's work. For example, you won't be disappointed if you go looking for monuments erected to and of Dr. Martin Luther, Philip Melancthon, and others associated with the 16th century Lutheran Reformation. In cities famous as sites in the life of Luther are found, on many street corners, statues and plaques noting Reformation people and events.

Touch these monuments today, however, and feel the coldness, the deadness. The true spirit of Luther and what he stood for by the grace of God are practically gone. *The Religion & Society Report*, Jan. 1996, had this to say in connection with the 450th anniversary of the Reformer's death (in 1546 at the age of 63 years):

*"The rich heritage of Lutheranism in 'the land of the Reformation' seems hardly to inspire many Germans today, for the state-related, largely Lutheran churches often remain virtually empty on most Sundays. And in Luther's own native region of Saxony (formerly East Germany), the churches are on the verge of financial catastrophe, surviving only thanks to contributions from the better-funded Protestant churches*

*of the West."*

Of all the monuments in the land of the Reformation, the saddest of all are the empty churches—which sad fact leads also to the following comments.

In his memorial address at the death of Luther, his dear friend Philip Melancthon said: "Use Luther's books diligently, for we shall have need of his testimonies very often in the future."

All others aside, one of the best monuments to Luther would be to faithfully read and use his books — starting with the Small Catechism.

And there is yet another. A century ago, in a sermon on Reformation Day, 1896, a concerned Lutheran professor said: *"One certainly cannot say of Lutherans who are indifferent and lazy about hearing preaching: Behold these are people who honor the memory of Luther in their hearts! In our former fatherland there are many splendid monuments to Luther; but the churches*



Market Square in Wittenberg with statue of Melancthon (bot. left) and the towers of the church of St. Mary. This was Luther's favorite church in which to preach.

*are sadly empty* (This observation was made over 100 years ago already!! — Ed.). *The statues of marble and bronze say: There once lived a man named Luther — and the empty churches say: They know nothing of a man like Luther. Brothers and sisters, let everyone of us, by faithful hearing of preaching, prove himself a walking, living memorial in honor of Luther. Let us fill our dear church to the last seat.* Full Lutheran churches are the finest monuments to the memory of Luther.” (emphasis ours)

To which words we can only add “Amen!”

● **FORGIVENESS AND CONSEQUENCE** (Little or nothing has been said on these pages as far as what has been happening in our nation’s capital recently. We think the following, written last August by Pastor Daniel Fleischer for his congregation in Corpus Christi, Tex., states well some Christian perspectives on the matter.)

We have been hearing much about the subject of forgiveness and consequence with the sordid and sorry carryings on in the capital. Frankly, your pastor has had a difficult time in coming to terms with what has happened and is still unfolding. Not because he doesn’t understand human frailty, including his own, but because of the sordidness, the lack of candor, the defense of what happened compounded by the lying that has sought to cover it up. This in turn is compounded by the fact that many citizens are apparently willing to brush it off as inconsequential.

Shall we forgive? . . . Surely the Christian is ready to forgive. Seven times seventy times. But what shall we forgive? We have not yet heard an hon-

est, forthright, and unvarnished admission of sorrow. We have heard no admission of the lying. What we have heard are weasel words, trial balloons, and political skills covering tracks. Where is the repentance which we could and would gladly follow up with the assurance of forgiveness? The Bible distinguishes between a “godly sorrow” and the “sorrow of the world.” “Godly sorrow works repentance to salvation not to be repented of; but the sorrow of the world works death” (2 Cor. 7:10), even if it saves a political career. The sorrow of the world is of the Law and is practiced to save one’s hide, or out of fear of the consequence. Godly sorrow is that which expresses sorrow for having offended God. It is a recognition that one has grieved the Savior God. To such a sorrowing and repentant sinner we will be ready to pronounce not only personal forgiveness but assurance of God the Father’s forgiveness in Christ.

But even in the latter case, while God forgives unconditionally and the soul is saved, there are consequences in this life. They serve as chastisements (cf. Heb. 12:6). Moses was forgiven, but did not enter the promised land because he had disobeyed. David’s son by Bathsheba died. The forgiven alcoholic still suffers physical consequences. The most remorseful and penitent thief still has a debt to pay to society. There are consequences for evil deeds—which do not diminish the truth of divine forgiveness or our personal forgiveness.

Instead, morals and truth have been set on their ear. An honorable and necessary occupation has been demeaned. The confusion being spun—unfortunately even by some clergy, that the nation should simply forgive and forget

and get on with life—also sends a wrong message theologically. On the other hand, the Christian who believes the Bible and for whom the Bible is more than a prop, knows that sin is sin, confession is confession, forgiveness is forgiveness, and that the gracious God who forgives the penitent also helps the sorrowful and trusting soul to bear the consequence. But where there is no confession there is no understanding of grace.

We have seen no understanding of the gravity of the situation nationally or spiritually. That is most troubling and unhealthy for our nation, most of all for those who look at sin as a mere inconvenience while looking for a rug under which to sweep the dirt.

• **IN MEMORIAM: MRS. LOLA LYNDGAARD BODE** (MAY 6, 1926 - AUGUST 17, 1998)



The *Spokesman* has a periodic feature intended to introduce our readers to teachers of Jesus' little lambs in CLC Christian Day Schools. Mrs. Lola Lyndgaard Bode had retired from the teaching ministry before we began this feature. Some of our readers may have known her from her faithful ministry in their midst.

Mrs. Lyndgaard Bode (nee Lola May Greve) died in a Mankato, Minn. hospital at the age of 72 years. She had taught in schools in Hader, Nebr., Elkton, White, and Columbia, S.Dak.

before accepting a divine call to teach at Immanuel Lutheran School in Mankato (1969-81). Later she served Jesus in classrooms at St. Luke's of Lemmon, S.Dak. (1981-1984) and Gethsemane of Spokane, Wash. (1985-1986).

She was married to James H. Lyndgaard in 1948 in Aurora, S.Dak. This union was blessed with three children. Her first husband preceded her in death in 1963. In 1990 she was married to Eugene F. Bode in Mankato. At the time of her death, following a period of extended illness, Mrs. Bode and her husband had been members of Faith Lutheran Church, New Ulm, Minn. The Christian Gospel which she had taught others graciously sustained God's servant through this vale of tears until He took her to Himself.

The funeral was held at Immanuel Lutheran Church, Mankato, Minn. on Friday, August 21, 1998, with Pastor Paul Fleischer officiating. Christian friends and family celebrated together the victory of Jesus Christ over sin and death for all His believers. Interment was in Lake Benton, Minn.

• **'WWJD'**

We've meant to make comment a couple of times. We held off since we expected this fad would do what fads usually do—soon disappear from the scene.

This one doesn't appear to be dying so easily. According to a July 1998 article in the *St. Paul (Minn.) Pioneer Press*, the fad which began in 1996 as one man's idea for his Christian youth group keeps on spreading. Last year 15 million WWJD buttons, wrist bands, and bracelets were sold. As the Associated Press article says, it's "not

just for church kids anymore.” Some kids, we read, have changed the meaning to “We Want Jack Daniels.” And, we’re told, many now buy the brightly-colored items, originally sold only at religious stores, at places like Wal-Mart or the corner gas station. In many cases it seems they are worn more for fashion than for the originally intended good meaning.

That intended meaning, of course, was “What Would Jesus Do?” The idea was to inspire and/or motivate the wearer to live a Christ-like life.

The very first time we saw a WWJD bracelet, we raised our spiritually-sensitive eyebrows. What message, we thought, was being conveyed here? Was it a message we could whole-heartedly endorse?

In a sermon last Lenten season we had occasion to give expression to our concern. Here is part of what was said:

*“A caution is in place, I believe, if those fad bracelets are looked upon as some kind of good luck piece or spiritually-empowering mechanism. The impression should not be left that just the wearing of one will give the person*

*strength to live in accord with God’s will, to prioritize one’s life aright, to make the right choices in keeping with God’s holy and sacred will. In fact, I recently read where a Lutheran Christian critical of the fad made a suggestion. Efface the second ‘W,’ he said, and replace it with an ‘H’ (WHJD), which would stand for “What HAS Jesus Done?” The good point he wished to make is that WWJD is Law. You see, the danger is that WWJD makes Jesus more a model than a Savior. We grant that Jesus was and is perfect. He lived a holy life. None of us can live up to His holy standard. By contrast, WHJD would be pure Gospel—it would be a reminder of what Jesus has done for me by dying on the cross for all of my sins. And it is only our appreciation of our Savior; isn’t it, which can strengthen and help us to begin to make right choices in life and to begin to live our lives in keeping with God’s holy will?”*

Something like that is what we should talk with our children about if they have and/or wear this twentieth century phylactery.

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## STUDIES ON THE BIBLICAL WORD “FELLOWSHIP” —

### **Part Four: Our Fellowship Should Be A Very Personal Relationship**

Remember the sharing, the communion, the oneness in Christ? Who is in the hospital, and we do not remember to pray for him? Who does not have joy in his heart over a brother who undergoes successful surgery? Who does not sin and we feel the hurt? Remember Matthew chapter eighteen. We are not islands unto ourselves in

this sea of humanity.

We are partners one with another in the Gospel. Fellowship is partnership. *“I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, thankful for your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now” (Php. 1:3-5).*

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**. . . We are members in the fellowship of our congregation and synod by the power of the Spirit converting us.**

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### **Sent By The Spirit**

We do not know if every congregation sent offerings to Paul to help him in his travels for the Lord through Asia Minor and Greece. It is unlikely that they all did. But there was one in particular that kept him in their prayers and supported him with their offerings as partners with Paul. This was the congregation of Antioch in Syria. It was from Antioch that Paul and Barnabas went forth on the first trip, sent out by the Holy Spirit.

The other congregation which took very seriously its fellowship with Paul was the church at Philippi. The church began there with the wealthy woman and her family, and with the jailer and his family. Paul first came to Philippi on his second journey, drawn there by the vision of the man in Macedonia beckoning him to come over.

It was a compelling vision for Paul. And the congregation which became the first fruit in Macedonia was compelled, too. They supported Paul whether he was in the midst or not. They supported him time and again in the partnership they had with him in the Gospel (Php. 4:14-18). What joy to be one with God by the blood of the Christ, and to be united in fellowship in the church under His gracious hand!

Today we also are partners. We are brethren to those so many miles away in the NCLC, the CLCI, the BELC, and the JCLC. Like the brethren at

Philippi we have sent support and we are sending support for the preaching of the Word. In our congregation we show our partnership when we gather as a voters' assembly to decide on the business of the church and the best way to carry on the work of the Kingdom. We all as partners work together to keep God's house in good repair and clean. We all have within our heart and hands His Word to use to convince, reprove, rebuke, comfort, and counsel. We should each be asking ourselves if we are full partners, half partners, or maybe silent partners in the fellowship of our church.

### **The Miracle Of Fellowship**

To be members of the congregation, partners in His work, we do not buy stock as in a company. We are members in the fellowship of our congregation and synod by the power of the Spirit converting us. *"So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any incentive of love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind"* (Php. 2:1-2).

It is only the Spirit who could work the miracle of fellowship in our midst. He converts us, and by the Word makes us of one mind. In many churches discord instead of harmony is the order of the day. In so many churches a variety of teaching and a latitude in doctrine are allowed contrary to the pure standard as set forth in the Word. To so many fellowship is over the coffee cup instead of at the communion table, where it is primarily social instead of religious.

How blessed we are not to be torn apart by jealousy, strife, backbiting!





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**... While it is the Spirit who unites, it is the devil who divides. . . . He it is who drives the wedge in to separate us from one another and from the Lord.**

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How blessed we are that those who study the Word in our midst and quote it are not called fanatics and too strict, or liberals and too loose. Only the Spirit could work what we have.

He is working within us and our congregation. Our fellowship is of the Spirit. It is that unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. *"I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all lowliness and meekness, with patience, forbearing one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all, who is above all and through all and in all. But grace was given to each of us according to the measure of Christ's gift" (Eph. 4:1-7).*

### **The Common Good**

Are we eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit that we have? Our *koinonia* means that we work together. We work to build up and not to tear down. The variety of gifts and abilities that the Lord has given each of us is to be used for the common good in our midst.

Paul uses the example of the human body in describing to the Ephesians

how the church is to be. Our body works with all of its parts coordinated in their activities for the common good of the body. "Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, even Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every joint with which it is supplied, when each part is working properly, makes bodily growth and upbuilds itself in love" (Eph. 4:15-16).

When we survey the religious scene around us, it is truly amazing grace that we continue in the unity of the Word as partners.

There is one thing we have neglected though in our study. We have in one area not given proper credit where credit is due. While it is the Spirit who unites, it is the devil who divides. The devil must be given his discredit. He it is who drives the wedge to separate us from one another and from the Lord. He sows the seed of error and discord. He is the reason why visible Christendom is divided. His techniques may vary, but are always dangerous. He may rant and rave, howl and cajole, whisper and entice to have you defect from our *koinonia*. He may try to have you be just a silent partner. That, of course, is no partner at all. He who confesses Christ before men will be confessed before the Father in heaven. It is only by clutching the Word, by

poring over it in study, that we can maintain our faith and fellowship with God and His saints. Then we are able to blunt and repel the devil's vicious attacks.

### Conclusion

We have seen in our study how *koinonia*/fellowship is an activity. It is first of all, a union between God and sinful man, worked by God Himself through faith in the Son of God.

This vertical relationship has joined to it the horizontal. Our common faith means that we are also united with those who believe as we do. We have that special intimacy in the sacrament of the altar with our God, as we forsake idols to approach and partake at the Lord's Supper.

Being one in Christ, we share our

faith with each other by speaking the Word to help each other. Our help in the fellowship is not limited to words though. We also take part in assisting each other materially. We contribute toward the needs of the saints.

Working together as partners in the gospel, we live and speak and act, knowing of course that the Spirit calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies.

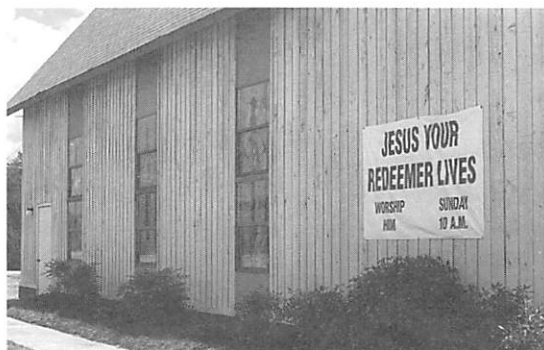
"May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all" (2 Cor. 13:14).

From sorrow, toil, and pain,  
And sin we shall be free;  
And perfect love and friendship reign  
Through all eternity.  
Blest be the tie that binds. Amen.

—Missionary David Koenig



As an outreach effort, St. Matthew Lutheran Church, Dallas, Tex. has made up banners for various seasons of the church year. Pastor Thomas Schuetze remarks: "Thousands of folks drive by and notice the banner each day on their way to work."



## Meet: Ann Libby



Ann Libby is presently the 5th and 6th grade teacher at Messiah Lutheran School in Eau Claire, Wisconsin. Ann graduated from Immanuel Lutheran High School in 1978 and from the University of Washington in 1983. Prior to teaching at Messiah, Ann taught for two years at Gethsemane Lutheran in Spokane, and worked as a teacher's aide for exceptional educational needs students in public schools in Wisconsin.

Ann had wanted to be a teacher from as far back as she can remember, partly due to several excellent grade school teachers she had who enjoyed their jobs and were good role models.

She feels the most rewarding part about teaching is being able to apply God's Word to every part of the school day. Outside the classroom Ann enjoys sewing, reading, surfing the Internet, e-mailing relatives, and recently running.

Ann married Scott Libby in 1984 and the couple have three children: Nathan (12), Rachel (11), and Ben (10). Ann is the daughter of Pastor Bertram and Alice Naumann of Seattle, Washington.

May the Lord continue to bless the work of our teachers during another school.

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## Announcements

### CLC YOUTH CONFERENCE

A CLC Youth Conference for youth ages 14-18 will be hosted by St. Paul's of Golden, Colo. and Immanuel of Mankato, Minn. at Shadowcliff Life Center at Grand Lake, Colo. from June 24-27, 1999. The cost will be \$150.00 per participant. An article outlining the conference program and providing further details will appear in the November issue of the *Lutheran Spokesman*.

### Installations

In accord with our usage and order, Philip Matzke, who was called by St. Peter Lutheran Church of Stambaugh, Mich. to be its pastor, was ordained and installed on July 19, 1998. Pastor Joel Fleischer, Professor Clifford Kuehne, and congregational President Martin Heisel assisted.

—Prof. Paul Schaller

In accord with our usage and order, Norman Greve, who was called by Salem Lutheran

Church, Eagle Lake, Minnesota to be its pastor was installed on August 30, 1998.

—Pastor L. D. Redlin

In accord with our usage and order, Frank Gannt, who was called by Redeemer Lutheran Church of Cheyenne, Wyo., to be its pastor, was installed on August 30, 1998. Pastor James Naumann and Vicar David Schaller assisted.

—Pastor Peter E. Reim

In accord with our usage and order, Judith Hensel, who was called by Redeemer congregation of Cheyenne, Wyo. to be teacher and principal in its school, was installed on August 9, 1998.

—Pastor Norman Greve

In accord with our usage and order, Mrs. Karen Strike, who was called by St. Paul's congregation of Austin, Minn. to be teacher in its school, was installed on August 30, 1998.

—Pastor Stephen Kurtzahn

**Pacific Coast Pastoral Conference  
Holy Truth Lutheran Church  
Ketchikan, Alaska  
September 25-27, 1998**

*Agenda:*

- \* Is the 'Chastisement' of the Lord a MEANS of Strengthening Faith? — Pastor Rollin Reim
- \* Does the Gospel Require Delineation of the Age of the Universe? — Pastor Robert List
- \* Overview of Church Discipline—Practices, Procedures, Pitfalls — Pastor David Naumann
- \* Book Review/Study—'The Structure Of Lutheranism' — Pastor Horst Gutsche
- \* Survey Of Hamartiology — Pastor Terrel Kesterson
- \* New Testament Exegesis: 2 Thessalonians 2:13ff — Pastor David Reim
- \* Old Testament Exegesis: exegete's choice — Pastor Paul Krause
- Chaplain* — Pastor Paul Naumann
- Speaker* — Pastor Warren Fanning
- Pastor Michael Sprengeler, Secretary*

**Minnesota Pastoral Conference**

- Date:* October 27-28, 1998, beginning at 10:00 a.m.
- Host:* Berea Ev. Lutheran Church, Inver Grove Heights, Minnesota
- Chaplain:* Pastor Paul Fleischer
- Agenda:*
- \* Old Testament Exegesis: Ezekiel 37:1-14 — Pastor Roland H. Gurgel
  - \* New Testament Exegesis: 2 Thessalonians 1:1ff — Pastor Stephen Kurtzahn
  - \* Studies in Luther - Pastor Paul D. Nolting
  - \* Discussion of Pastoral Marriage Counseling Programs — Pastor David Schierenbeck
  - \* Determining the Will of God in Our Lives — Pastor Rick Grams
  - \* 'Is it Permissible for a Called Worker to Make Use of Government Aid Programs?' by Pastor Thomas Schuetze — Pastor Stephen Kurtzahn
  - Pastor Rick Grams, Secretary*

**CLC Teachers' Conference  
October 14-16, 1998,  
Hales Corners, Wisconsin**

- (Essays only)
- \* Preparing for Retirement, A Christian's Viewpoint — Gerhardt Mueller
  - \* Practical Suggestions for Teaching General Good Behavior and Mutual Respect — Kevin Hulke

Mr. & Mrs. Albert Gebhardt  
811 S. Union Road  
Spokane, WA 99206

**Reformation Service**

A joint Reformation service will be held at Immanuel Lutheran Church, Mankato, Minn. at 4:00 p.m. on November 1, 1998. Area choirs will participate in a "choir sing" beginning at 2:00 p.m. Theme for the worship service is: "The Lutheran Reformation: Our Cherished Heritage."

—*Pastor Rick Grams, Conference Secretary*

- \* Reaching the Day Dreamer (Keeping Students on Task) — Ann Libby
- \* Textbook Review — Ann Sprengeler
- Thursday:
- \* Learning Styles — Prof. Michael Buck
- \* Visual Phonics — Carolyn Reim
- \* Textbook Review — Grace, Fridley faculty; Mark & Beth Kranz
- \* Dealing with the Children of Today's Society (broken homes, unbaptized, living with unmarried couples) in the Light of the Gospel — Prof. Michael Sydow
- \* Communication: Teacher to Teacher, Principal, Pastor, Parent, Congregation — TBA
- \* Title Five's (as time allows) — Lane Fischer, Quinn Sprengeler, Leif Olmanson, Sara Lau

**On the cover:** Behind this statue of Luther is seen the tower of the Castle Church in Wittenberg, Germany on whose doors Luther posted the 95 theses and where he is buried (see p. 12).