

September 2015 VOL 58 NO. 3

LUTHERAN SPOKESMAN

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



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Postmaster: Periodicals postage paid at St. Paul, MN 55113 and additional offices (825-580). ISSN#0024-7537. Send address corrections (Form 3579) to Lutheran Spokesman, 2750 Oxford Street North, Roseville MN 55113

The Lutheran Spokesman is published monthly by the Church of the Lutheran Confession, 2750 Oxford St. N., Roseville, MN 55113, and is an official organ of the Church of the Lutheran Confession (CLC). Website address: www.clclutheran.org. Editor: Paul Naumann, 3315 46th St E, Tacoma, WA 98443, E-Mail to pgnaum@aol.com; Assistant Editor: Craig Owings; Art Director/Designer: Matthew Schaser, Staff: James Albrecht, Theodore Barthels, David Bernthal, Wayne Eichstadt, Daniel Fleischer, David Fuerstenau, Frank Gantt, Norman Greve, Mark Gullerud, Jay Hartmann, Richard Kanzenbach, John Klatt, Paul Krause, David Lau, Joseph Lau, Delwyn Maas, James Naumann, Nathan Pfeiffer, David Reim, Andrew Schaller, Thomas Schuetze, 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: Benno Sydow, 2750 Oxford St. N., Roseville, MN 55113. E-Mail to Bennosydow@yahoo.com. Individual subscriptions {foreign-U.S. currency only}: \$18.00 {\$22.00} for one year; \$34.00 {\$42.00} for two years; \$50.00 {\$62.00} for three years; sent in bulk to congregations: \$15.00. • Spokesman Online Version at: www.lutheranspokesman.org Printed in U.S.A.



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The One Thing Needed

“And Jesus answered and said to her, ‘Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things. But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her’” Luke 10:41-42.

Parents find plenty to worry about. We worry about what our kids are eating, who they are playing with, where they are, and where they have been. Having seen so many changes in society in our lifetime, we worry what the future of our community, our nation, and our world will look like for our children and grandchildren.

In Luke 10, Martha was also worried and troubled. She was trying to be a good hostess for Jesus, while her sister Mary just sat at His feet listening to Him. But Jesus commends Mary’s choice: *“One thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her.”* While Martha was busying herself with things that would come and go with time, Mary had eternity on her mind. She chose to sit at the feet of Jesus, and hear the words of eternal life from the Lord of Life. Nothing, not even death itself, could rob her of this “good part” which she had chosen

When it comes to raising children, let us listen to Jesus and remind ourselves of the ONE THING that is truly important. We bring our children and set them at the feet of Jesus to hear His Word in our daily family devotions. We set our children at the feet of Jesus when we bring them to church for Sunday school, vacation Bible school, catechism class, and worship services.

Sitting at Jesus’ feet, our children hear of a God Who loved them so much that He punished His own beloved Son in order to rescue them from their sin. Sitting at Jesus’ feet, they learn that they didn’t come into being by accident, but were fearfully and wonderfully created by Almighty God. Sitting at Jesus’ feet, they learn that there is an absolute right and wrong, as their Creator tells them what pleases Him and what transgresses His holy will.

Athletic, scholastic, and financial achievements will all fade over time. But Jesus promises that no one and nothing, not even death, can rob from our children what they hear at His feet!

This year it is especially heartening to note that there are three schools in the Church of the Lutheran Confession that are either starting up fresh, or have plans to reopen.

In order to further help Christian parents bring their children to the feet of Jesus to hear His Word, a number of congregations in our church body offer a Christ-centered education in their Christian day schools. This year it is especially heartening to note that there are three schools in the Church of the Lutheran Confession that are either starting up fresh, or have plans to reopen after a hiatus.

**REOPENING—
GETHSEMANE
LUTHERAN SCHOOL,
SPOKANE VALLEY,
WASHINGTON—
ESTABLISHED 1976**



Gethsemane Lutheran School was closed in 2008 due to low enrollment. However, the members of Gethsemane continued to have a strong desire to offer Christian education in the form of a Christian day school. They kept their board of education intact and, as they were blessed with a number of young families, they began calling for a teacher and principal for their school in January of 2015.

“A man’s heart plans his way, But the LORD directs his steps” (Proverbs 16:9). Because all the divine calls they extended for a teacher for the fall of 2015 were declined, the members of Gethsemane now pray that it is the Lord’s will that their school reopen in the fall of 2016, and they plan to resume calling this winter. Pastor Robert List of Gethsemane estimates an initial enrollment of four to six pupils in K-8.

**REOPENING—
GRACE LUTHERAN SCHOOL,
VALENTINE, NEBRASKA—
ESTABLISHED 1976**

Another Christian day school that has been prayerfully working to reopen is Grace Lutheran School in Valentine, Nebraska. Like Gethsemane, Grace closed in 2009 due to low enrollment. Their path to reopening was a little different, though. It began in 2012 by establishing Small Wonders, a Christian preschool open to members of Grace and the community, taught and directed by Mrs. Danielle Ohlmann.

Encouraged by enrollment growth in Small Wonders (from seven to twenty-four in three years), and also by the addition of several young families in the congregation, the members of Grace prayerfully moved forward in faith to reopen their school this fall. Work was done to remodel and expand their school building. Grace Lutheran School will be served by Teacher Candice Ohlmann. Pastor Luke Bernthal anticipates an enrollment of three to four kindergartners this Fall. The school will be offering an open house in July, as well as advertising their Christ-centered school through radio and print.

Grace's called workers (left to right): Candice Ohlmann, Principal; Luke Bernthal, Pastor; Danielle Ohlmann, Preschool Director



**A NEW SCHOOL—
VALLEY BIBLE ACADEMY,
CLARKSTON, WASHINGTON
—ESTABLISHED 2015**

The members of St. John’s Evangelical Lutheran Church of Clarkston sought to offer an opportunity for the children of their congregation and community to sit at the feet of Jesus for that one thing needful. After many prayers, much planning, and many hours of manual labor to get their facilities up to



code, Valley Bible Academy in Clarkston will be opening this fall, with Mrs. Desirae Naumann serving as its first teacher. Pastor Dave Naumann believes enrollment will be three to four students in K-8.

As the pastor of a congregation opening a new Christian day school (the first new school in the CLC in the last twenty years), Pastor Naumann offers the following encouragement:

Don’t underestimate the power of God’s Word. He has wrought great changes in our hearts and lives. Even if you can’t start a school at this time, The Lord may have it planned in your future. Why not? Christian education is really what we’re here for, isn’t it? As parents, we are to raise up our children in the Lord. As members of a congregation, let us do the same thing for all our young people. Why not let witnessing Christ to all the world begin in the little classrooms of our church buildings? It doesn’t have to start big and it doesn’t have to happen overnight. Plant the seed. Plan ahead. Start a fund. Use the talents of your congregation. Draw up a plan. Get everyone involved. Let everyone “own” the project. God will bless it. God knows our future, and He has a plan for us to give us hope. Remember where our future pastors and teachers and faithful laymen/women will come from—they come from His faithful Word, the same Word that is taught at the Christian schools you can be a blessed part of starting!

(The full interviews with Pastors Bernthal and Naumann can be found online at www.LutheranSpokesman.org.)



When it comes to their children, parents tend to be worried and troubled about many things—even things that are out of their control. But Jesus would remind us that only one thing is truly needful. The one thing needed—the good part, that which no one can ever take away from our children—is the time they spend at Jesus’ feet hearing His word. May God bless our Christian parents and our Christian schools as they seek to bring their children up in the Lord!

Wilt thou find this one thing needful,
Turn from all created things
Unto Jesus and be heedful
Of the blessed joy He brings.
For where God and Man both in one are united,
With God’s perfect fullness the heart is delighted;
There, there is the worthiest lot and the best,
My One and my All and my Joy and my Rest.

(TLH #366:2)



Nathan Pfeiffer is pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church in Spokane, Washington.

He Seeks Godly Offspring!

“But did He not make them one, having a remnant of the Spirit? And why one? He seeks godly offspring”

(Malachi 2:15).

One reason God unites husbands and wives in marriage is that *“He seeks godly offspring.”* He desires Christian couples to raise Christian children. The responsibility for Christian education falls squarely in the lap of parents. God tells fathers to bring up their children *“. . . in the training and admonition of the Lord”* (Ephesians 6:4), and He says through Moses, *“Therefore you shall lay up these words of mine in your heart and in your soul You shall teach them to your children, speaking of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up”* (Deuteronomy 11:18-19).

Christian day schools do not relieve parents of that responsibility; rather, they support them in it. What a tremendous blessing to have a school that supports and augments what Christian parents teach their children, instead of challenging and subverting it, as the public schools often do!

Christian day schools and catechism class provide a structured time in which the truths of Scripture can be taught systematically so that children understand these truths. However, Christian education is about much more than teaching the facts of the Bible. Our passage from Malachi 2:15, *“He seeks godly offspring,”* suggests something more about the purpose of Christian education. God desires more than parents teaching their offspring to live a “godly” or obedient life. He wants those children also to be His own children. Christian education is not just a way to raise obedient children; it is about developing a relationship with God.

Everyday life provides opportunities to show that faith is not just something learned, it is also something lived. Parents can use these life experiences to lead their children to build on the relationship that God established in Baptism. As Moses says, you can talk about God’s Word

“. . . when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up.”

When children are trying your patience to the extreme, it is tempting to use God’s commands merely as a form of coercion, saying, “Don’t do that because **God says . . .**” God’s commands can then seem like restrictive rules that children may grow to resent.

Instead, show how God’s commands relate to our **relationship** with God. Why is stealing (for one example) wrong? Is it just because God said so? Is it because it harms other people? Yes, but more than that, God’s commands reveal His perfect nature. Stealing is wrong because God

is not a thief. God is love (1 John 4:8); He always gives every good thing (James 1:17). God wants us to be like Him, to imitate Him (Ephesians 5:1), and stealing diminishes our likeness to and relationship with Him. Or again, why does God say we shouldn’t lie or commit adultery? These are more than just rules to follow. They are not only to prevent the harm done to others, but also because God Himself is perfectly faithful in all things. To have a living relationship with God as His children involves

being like our faithful God, and lying or committing adultery are breaches of faithfulness. *“You shall be holy for I the Lord your God am holy”* (Leviticus 19:2).

Our children then can understand and appreciate how they fall short of the glory of God and how that affects their relationship with Him. Genuine contrition and repentance is the result of that understanding, and we as parents can share with children the joy of God’s amazing grace and forgiveness. Along with knowing right from wrong, they will love their Savior and truly treasure their restored relationship with the Father.

Christian education truly begins at home, and with the Spirit’s blessing and guidance, our children will grow to be the godly offspring that God seeks.



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

What a tremendous blessing to have a school that supports and augments what Christian parents teach their children instead of challenging and subverting it!

Sharing the Good News of Jesus In A Bad News World

“How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news” (Isaiah 52:7 NIV).

“I sure could use a little good news for a change!” Do you ever have such thoughts? You encounter the plethora of tragic news stories broadcast on TV and the internet: natural disasters like earthquakes and floods causing widespread destruction; nations at each other’s throats, firing missiles at one another; people exhibiting cruel behavior toward their fellowman, inflicting pain and heartache even on their own family members. Does this perhaps make you want to throw your hands up and say, “Enough already! Isn’t there any good news to report?”

Though we may be tempted at times to feel this way (living as we do in a sin-corrupted world, there will unfortunately never be a shortage of news stories reporting trouble and tragedy), as Christians we may take heart in the knowledge that our God has given us some very good news to share—in fact, the best news ever! He has committed to us the privilege of broadcasting the soul-comforting Gospel of Christ, the tidings of great joy intended for all people, that God’s eternal Son descended from heaven to neutralize the power of sin and Satan, and to bring us fullness of life. He did this in sheer love—though we are unworthy of the least of His mercies—by living a holy life in our place, by offering on the cross His spotless life as a ransom to His Father, and by restoring Himself to life again on the third day. Now, thanks to His successfully-completed Savior mission, the loving relationship which our first parents enjoyed with God at the dawn of time, but which was fractured through the fall into sin, has been perfectly and permanently repaired. Now, all who hear this good news and accept it with a heart of faith have God’s gift of life everlasting. They are blessed to enjoy a loving relationship with Him throughout the days of their life on earth. They will experience the indescribable happiness of living with Him perpetually in the life of the world to come.

Watch for opportunities the Savior gives you for sharing

this simple but astonishingly good message with people you know and meet along life’s path (family, friends, neighbors, co-workers). Bear in mind, too, that the work of evangelism need not be thought of as a hard or complicated thing. It simply means being ready to tell the good news about Jesus. It means talking with those who ask you about your hope in Christ. What Jesus means to you. Why you love Him. The joy He has given you in His forgiveness. The peace He has given you through His victory over death. The comfort He has given you of knowing He is with you, guiding your footsteps day by day and controlling every event (including the “bad news” things that happen) so that they work for

The loving relationship which our first parents enjoyed with God at the dawn of time, but which was fractured through the fall into sin, has been perfectly and permanently repaired.

your ultimate good. The special privilege He has given you, His blood-bought child, to serve Him in love during this present life. The confidence He has planted in your heart of seeing Him in glory and living with Him in heaven. In other words, you can simply share your own experience as a Christian with others.

As you go about your evangelism work, may you also draw confidence from the Bible teaching that it is the Gospel that is the power to salvation, not your own eloquence of speech or ability to convince. Count on the Spirit of God to perform His blessed work of winning souls for Christ and leading them into His kingdom in His own time and way, through the good news of Jesus that you share.

Preach you the Word and plant it home

And never faint, the Harvest-Lord

Who gave the sower seed to sow

Will watch and tend His planted Word.

(Worship Supplement 2000, #781, stanza 5)



Thomas Schuetze is pastor of St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church in Lakewood, Colorado.

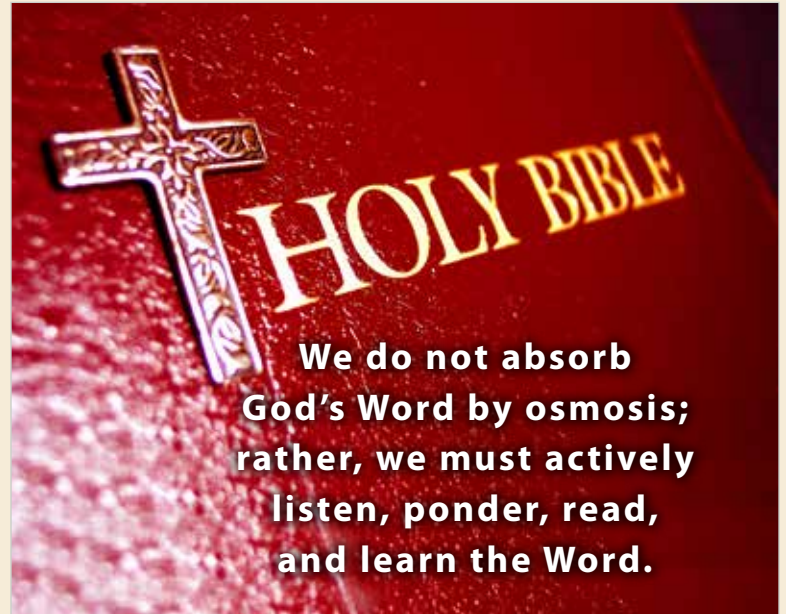
Moving On to Solid Food

“For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food. For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil” (Hebrews 5:12-14).

In catechism class, we teach our young the six chief parts of Christian doctrine. It is not an end to learning, but a beginning. We expect them to continue in the Word, and grow in the grace and knowledge of our Savior. Christian faith is a lifelong process of learning and growing. However, the danger exists of becoming sluggish and cold—apathetic—in our approach to God’s Word. As a result, we no longer grow in our understanding. As a matter of fact, the opposite happens, and we begin to lose what we had. We do not absorb God’s Word by osmosis; rather, we must actively listen, ponder, read, and learn the Word in order to grow. Apathy is a killer of Christian faith.

That was the situation the Jewish Christians were facing. The Gospel had been preached to them for more than a generation. By then they should have had no problem teaching to others the doctrines of the Christian faith. But instead of becoming teachers, many of them had stopped learning and had even allowed what they once knew to slip away. Now they themselves were in need of being taught again the basic doctrines of Christianity. They were only capable of receiving “milk,” and not “solid food.” Instead of growing to spiritual maturity, they were reverting to a “second childhood.” In so doing, they were allowing themselves to be robbed of great spiritual blessings. *“For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope” (Romans 15:4).*

There is a terrible danger here for us, as well. Spiritual apathy and immaturity could make easy pickings for our adversary the devil, who “. . . walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour” (1 Peter 5:8). Without the solid food of God’s Word, we could find ourselves unable to defend or teach the faith we hold so dear.



We see the effects of this problem in every church body. Many church members allow themselves to be spoon fed whatever is told them by their leaders, rather than being like the Bereans, who “. . . received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so” (Acts 17:11). No wonder we see such a lack of faith and understanding in the world.

Christians realize that going to church is a precious blessing. It is a time for spiritual strengthening for what lies ahead. Christians feel the need to be in church with like-minded believers, but we also understand that we need more than mere church attendance. We need to immerse ourselves in the Word in order to grow, in order that we may be “. . . complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work” (2 Timothy 3:17).

There is a saying: “Use it or lose it.” In our day, we see all too many losing it! We ourselves are not immune to this danger. It is one thing to say that we have the truth, but we must also know that truth. We want to gain spiritual maturity, to grow in grace and understanding, and to be able to put what we know to use in our day-to-day lives.

Our Savior reminds us, *“If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free”* (John 8:31-32).



Jay Hartmann is pastor of Faith Lutheran Church in Coloma, Michigan.

What Works Even Better than a Jawbone?

“When he [Samson] came to Lehi, the Philistines came shouting against him. Then the Spirit of the LORD came mightily upon him; and the ropes that were on his arms became like flax that is burned with fire, and his bonds broke loose from his hands. He found a fresh jawbone of a donkey, reached out his hand and took it, and killed a thousand men with it” (Judges 15:14-15, suggested reading: all of chapter 15).

Discipline and deliverance are thematic in the book of Judges. By allowing godless nations to oppress them, God repeatedly disciplined His people and then repeatedly delivered them through the judges He called.

During that era, the nation of Israel was in danger of being assimilated by other nations. Israel, however, needed to be preserved from assimilation for the promise of the Messiah to be fulfilled. Samson was God’s champion, chosen to serve as a one-man army to deliver Israel and preserve its distinctiveness.

Evidently, the Israelites didn’t always appreciate Samson’s God-given role. In Judges 15, the Israelites were the very ones who tied the ropes that bound Samson when the Philistines went against him! Nevertheless, the Spirit of the Lord enabled him to break his bonds and kill a thousand of Israel’s enemies. God’s champion saved them even though they were uncooperative, short-sighted, and seemingly comfortable in their slavery.

Centuries later, God sent another Champion—the promised Messiah—to save His people from the curse of sin and the bondage of death. His people, however, were uncooperative and even complicit in Jesus’ crucifixion by the Romans. Yet, Jesus remained steadfast in His task to deliver them, notwithstanding their efforts to destroy Him. In fact, He saved them *through* being arrested, condemned, scourged, and crucified. He could have demonstrated great strength in Gethsemane by heaping up bodies as Samson did, but He showed far greater



strength by praying from the cross, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do” (Luke 23:34). The Champion went on to win the battle for people who didn’t realize or appreciate what He was doing for them. Fifty days later, many who had cried “Crucify Him!” were baptized for the remission of their sins. The prayer of their Champion was answered.

Old Testament champions, like Samson and David, often won victories by leaving dead bodies in their wake. That was fitting then, but our Champion, Jesus Christ, has a different strategy for us today. His kingdom is not of this world. Christians do not win victories by destroying their enemies; they win by saving them. Through living and preaching the Gospel of Christ, His people seek not to kill but to bring life.

God still uses flawed people... in the ongoing work to deliver sinners.

By the grace of God the Holy Spirit works in and through the Gospel to make allies of those who were once enemies. Saul became the Apostle Paul and “. . . a great many of the priests were obedient to the faith” (Acts 6:7).

Isn’t it amazing that many who were once enemies of Christ became His Church—and that this list includes you and me?

Despite Samson’s moral weakness and lack of spiritual maturity, God chose him to judge Israel. In time, Samson grew increasingly humble, and that made him even stronger before the Lord. In Hebrews 11:32-33, Samson’s name is included among those “. . . who through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises . . .”

God still uses flawed people—people who confess they have no virtue or strength of their own but confess their sins and trust in Jesus—in the ongoing work to deliver sinners today. When the enemies of Christ are converted and become His friends, it is through the Gospel of love and forgiveness shared by His people. These victories are far greater than those ever won with a jawbone.



Delwyn Maas is pastor of Gift of God Lutheran Church in Mapleton, North Dakota.

IN THIS SERIES, THOSE INVOLVED WITH CLC FOREIGN MISSIONS PROFILE ONE ASPECT OF OUR OVERSEAS ENDEAVORS.

Bhitrakoti Family—Nepal

Many have had the privilege of meeting and getting to know Raju Bhitrakoti over the past few years as he attended Immanuel Lutheran Seminary and visited many CLC congregations. The Himalayan Church of the Lutheran Confession of Nepal (HCLCN) has also become rather well known in our circles due to the earthquake that rocked Nepal back in April and the relief efforts that have been carried out by Raju and several others.

But many may not be as familiar with Raju's family. I would like to introduce to you three individuals with whom Raju works closely in carrying out our Savior's Great Commission (Matthew 28:16-20).

Raju's closest friend and partner in spreading the Gospel is his twenty-seven year old brother, Rajan. Having attended public schools and universities, Rajan can tell many stories about the challenges of growing up as a Christian in a nation that is predominately Hindu in culture and religion. And yet the love of his Savior sustained him through his younger years as he was taught the Word of God from his parents. Rajan recently completed his master's degree in rural development. He now uses his education, experience, and network of contacts to do humanitarian work as chairman of a government-recognized charitable organization that his father established several years ago. He works closely with the pastors and congregations of the HCLCN in providing the basic needs of food and clean water to those who are struggling in the rural areas of Nepal. Rajan spends most of his time conducting youth Bible studies and visiting church members. He also leads treks to tribal villages where the Gospel has yet to be proclaimed. As if this weren't enough to keep Rajan busy, he also does translation work for a publishing company to help support his family, those in need, and the orphans his mother cares for in their home.



(Clockwise, from top) J.B. and Rama Bhitrakoti with some of the orphans they care for, J.B., Rama, Rajan and Raju, Rajan at his graduation



Raju (center) with his classmates at Immanuel Lutheran Seminary in Eau Claire, Wisconsin.

Raju and Rajan's mother, Rama, is forty-nine years old. As with most Christian mothers, she dedicated most of her younger years to bringing up her children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. She herself had been raised in a very impoverished Hindu family. While most of us have spent our youth going to school and playing with friends, those are not the memories that Rama has of her childhood. Rama received very little formal schooling, because most of her time was filled with work. Although her formal education was not extensive, her wisdom, and her love for the Lord and her family, have been a blessing to many.

Rama married at the age of seventeen. Her conversion to Christianity led to additional hardships in her life. Her father, a Hindu priest, rejected her and her family when she became a Christian. Through all the trials of life, the Savior's love for Rama has led her to give much in service to the Lord. It was Rama's idea to take seven orphans into their home in 2010. She didn't know how they would find the resources to feed and care for these children, but she trusted that the Lord would provide. And, as always, the Lord was faithful. Through the generous support of sponsors in the CLC's Project KINSHIP, Rama currently provides care for nine orphaned children in her home. She gladly undertakes this task in addition to traveling with her husband to visit church members.

Raju and Rajan have been blessed with a loving and caring mother. They have also had the privilege of growing and maturing under the guidance, example, and tutelage of their dedicated and faithful father, Jeet Bahadur (everyone knows him as J.B.) Bhitrakoti is fifty-one years old. Like many in Nepal, he wasn't always a Christian. In 1980, while J.B. was still in secondary school (high school), he found a Gospel tract lying in the gutter. He wasn't sure what it was all about, but he decided to tuck it away in a text book he was carrying. The simple Gospel tract was titled "Jesus Loves You." He read and re-read the little tract over the next few months. At some point, the Holy Spirit worked faith in his heart. J.B. would later explain that the word of God in the tract ". . . gave peace to my heart." In the small village where he lived, there was no Christian church and no other Christians that he knew of.

A few years later J.B. moved with his new wife to Kathmandu to look for work. When he arrived, he set out to find a Christian church where he could learn more



Kathmandu, Nepal. Example of damage caused by the 7.8 magnitude earthquake that occurred on April 25, 2015..

about the Bible and his Savior. He attended his first church service in 1985. He dedicated his life to serving the Lord and telling others about the Gospel. He was given the opportunity to attend Foursquare Bible College, and he graduated with a Bachelor's Degree in Biblical Studies in 1990. He then set out to the very rugged and undeveloped western regions of Nepal to spread the Gospel. J.B. faced many difficulties as he went from village to village proclaiming the Good News. But the Lord was faithful to His new

servant and sustained him through much persecution and threats against his life from those who were opposed to the Gospel.

As time went on and J.B. became more familiar with the Scriptures, he began to see discrepancies between what was being taught in the Foursquare Church and what was actually taught in the clear words of Scripture. He was led to separate from that fellowship, and he began an independent congregation in Kathmandu. Over the years, he has spent much of his time and family resources in starting congregations and in training men for the pastoral ministry. In 2007 he decided that it would be good to seek out fellowship and assistance in training pastors. Reading a copy of Luther's *Small Catechism*, Pastor J.B. became convinced that confessional Lutheran theology was faithful to the Scriptures. He asked his son Raju to search the internet for a Lutheran group that would be willing to help them train pastors. It was through the guiding hand of the Lord that Raju "stumbled" upon a Mission Helper Trip blog that mentioned Lutheran pastoral training seminars in India. An email was sent with one simple request: "Would you be willing to come to Nepal to help train pastors?" The rest, as they say, is history.

Pastor Raju Bhitrakoti recently graduated from the three-year seminary program at ILC and returned to Nepal. He has been very busy organizing and carrying out earthquake relief efforts since arriving home in early May. Only the Lord knows for sure what the future holds for the HCLCN, but plans are well underway to begin a Bible Training School in the not-too-distant future. Please continue to pray for the Bhitrakoti family, along with all the pastors and members of the HCLCN with whom we have been given the privilege to work, as they

proclaim the forgiveness of sins through our Savior Jesus Christ.

Todd Ohlmann is pastor of Faith Lutheran Church in Manchester, Missouri, and chairman of the CLC Board of Missions.



Our Saviour Evangelical Lutheran Church— Cadillac, Michigan



Our Saviour Evangelical Lutheran Church of Cadillac, Michigan, originally began holding services in a town twenty-five miles south of Cadillac. In 1994 Pastor Mark Bernthal of Gethsemane Lutheran Church (Saginaw, Michigan) started holding services every other week, first at Lincoln Township Hall outside of Reed City. The original families were CLC members in the area, as well as former members of the LC-MS and WELS who had left their churches for reasons of doctrine and practice. CLC video services were used on the Sundays when Pastor Bernthal was not present. Eventually services were moved to an elementary school in Reed City. However, the members felt the need to relocate services to an area with a greater population and potential for outreach.

In 1966, therefore, services were moved to Cadillac. This afforded greater outreach potential, and it was also more centrally located for members north of Cadillac. The first Cadillac services were held in a conference room at a local hotel and resort called The Sands. Then, when this facility was no longer available, worship services were moved to a trailer which had been used as an office building on a former used car lot. Next, services were

Cadillac is the county seat of Wexford County. The population 10,281 (2013). The city is situated at the junction of US 131, M-55 and M-115.

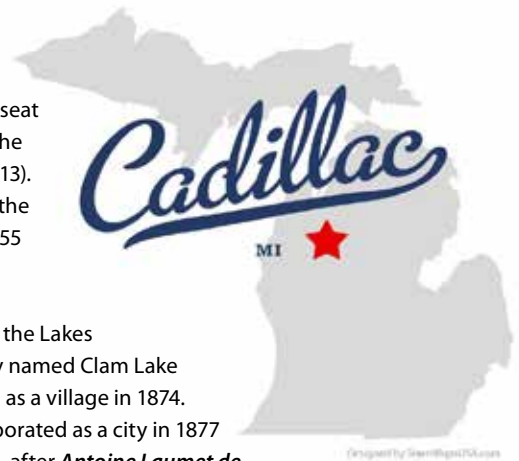
Nickname(s):

Tree City USA, City on the Lakes

Cadillac was originally named Clam Lake and was incorporated as a village in 1874.

The village was incorporated as a city in 1877

and renamed Cadillac, after **Antoine Laumet de La Mothe, sieur de Cadillac**, a Frenchman who made the first permanent settlement at Detroit in 1701. *Wikipedia*



moved to a meeting room at a senior citizen apartment building called Kirtland Terrace.

In 1997 Pastor Walter Schaller, while acting as CLC exploratory missionary in the Grand Rapids area, started holding weekly afternoon services for Our Saviour. In 1999 he relocated to Cadillac to do further outreach. When Pastor Schaller was called to serve the greater Detroit area in 2000, Pastor Bernthal once again served Our Saviour.

At this time Pastor David Schaller of Sister Lakes, Pastor Timothy Holland of Grand Rapids, and eventually Pastor Matthew Gurath of Coloma also assisted in the work, allowing Our Saviour to continue having weekly services. In 2004 Pastor Bernthal was called to serve in Middleton, Wisconsin. At this time, Our Saviour called Pastor Holland to hold weekly afternoon services and instruction classes as needed.

In 2005, with the help of a loan from the CLC, the congregation was able to purchase a dedicated church building which is being used to this day. The building is not modern (built in the early 1900's), and originally was in need of some updating and repairs. Since that time, many of these repairs and upgrades have been completed, and the building has been more than adequate for the work the Lord has given us to do. The first service held in this new church was a baptism, a fitting blessing for the new location.

In 2011, Pastor Holland's part-time secular job with FedEx in Grand Rapids became a full-time position in Cadillac. This brought about a move of the Holland family to Cadillac and the beginning of Sunday morning services for Our Saviour. Weekly, as the gospel calls us out of our work-a-day world to assemble in His name, we are strengthened in and cheered by that Gospel. Weekly, as we gather together with like-minded believers, we have opportunity to discuss our concerns and problems, to encourage and to be encouraged, to edify and to be edified by that all-sufficient Word. When death reaches out its hand and, one by one, begins to take the leaders and pillars of the church, the Gospel shines forth revealing that, once

Below: worshipers at the Kirtland Terrace location. Right: Some of the current members of Our Saviour.

Life at Our Saviour is to experience, in a small sliver of time, at a little known city, God building His Church brick by brick.

again, our Lord has been faithful to His promises and brought another blood-bought soul to heaven.

Clearly, it was not merely the people involved, nor the much-appreciated church building that made all this possible. Least of all was it time and chance. Rather, it is the gracious Word of our Savior that accomplishes all things. That Word moved the hearts of the Mission Board to send a man to do exploratory work. That same Word moved the hearts of local congregations to allow their pastors to hold Sunday services and instruction when Our Saviour had no pastor of its own. That same Word moved the hearts of members in the CLC to support Our Saviour in many ways, including prayers, offerings, and labor. That same Word moved our synod's Traveling VBS to travel, pass out fliers, and bring the Gospel to the young. That same Word moved the hearts of pastors to write and provide sermons for Ministry By Mail. It is that same Word which creates what does not exist, and graciously gives what it demands.

Life at Our Saviour is to experience, in a small sliver of time, at a little known city, God building His Church brick by brick. He builds this upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Jesus Christ Himself being the chief Cornerstone. His plan for our future is yet to be revealed. Yet we daily experience the promise that He will create, preserve, and extend His flock until He brings them to their heavenly home.

Timothy Holland is pastor of Our Saviour Evangelical Lutheran Church in Cadillac, Michigan



Why Do We Baptize Infants?

The short answer to this question is that infants are in need of the same forgiveness that adults need, because they have inherited the sinful nature of their parents. Jesus said to Nicodemus, *"That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit"* (John 3:6). Human nature has been corrupted by the sin of Adam, and that sinful nature is passed on from generation to generation. King David acknowledged this corruption in Psalm 51:5: *"Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me."*

Infants are not innocent, as many imagine, but are sinful even at conception. Like the prophet Samuel (1 Samuel 16:7), we tend to look at the outward appearance of things and then make a judgment from that about what a person is like inside. What that means in connection with this topic is that, since we don't see little babies committing gross sins like adultery or murder or theft, it appears to us that they must be innocent. That's a backward approach, however. When God looks at the inner being of an infant, what He sees is the sinful nature that has been passed on to him from his parents. From God's perspective, everything the baby does is sin. That sin, apart from God's forgiveness, merits for him eternal condemnation. That's how our natural birth leaves us all.

Entrance into the kingdom of God requires a new birth, one which only the Holy Spirit can accomplish. How does the Holy Spirit accomplish this new birth? Ultimately, this is the question that needs to be answered. But we don't get to decide the answer to this question. God decides the answer. It is, after all, His kingdom, not our own. He alone determines how to grant sinners access to His kingdom. Again, in John 3, Jesus gives us the answer: *"Most assuredly I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God"* (verse 5).

Notice how Jesus states this. He doesn't say, "Unless an adult is born of water and the Spirit," but, *"Unless one is born of water and the Spirit."* The implication is that this is true for everyone, not just those who are older. The



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more important issue, however, is how this new birth is accomplished. It is accomplished only by the Holy Spirit working through the Word of God, which God has attached to water in the Sacrament of Holy Baptism. If God said it, it must be true.

The Apostle Peter certainly understood this truth. On Pentecost, the people were "cut to the heart" by his preaching and asked him, *"What shall we do?"* He responded, *"Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call"* (Acts 2:38-39).

The Bible teaches us that Baptism is God's appointed means to bring the gift of forgiveness to sinners, that they might enter into His kingdom and be saved. Since all people are, from conception, sinful and in need of forgiveness, Baptism is meant for all for the forgiveness of sins. Therefore, we baptize even infants, because Baptism saves even them (cf. 1 Peter 3:21).



Frank Gantt is pastor of St. Luke's Evangelical Lutheran Church in Lemmon, South Dakota.

October 2015

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

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

Date	Reading	Verse
Oct 1	James 5:13-20	TLH 457
	God invites us to call upon His name in prayer. What a privilege!	
Oct 2	Mark 9:38-50	PS 104
	Be at peace with each other and do not turn from faith in Christ, for sin and hell are to be avoided at all costs.	
Oct 3	Matthew 5:1-12	PS 119:49-56
	There is comfort here for the Christian who feels despised and persecuted for walking with the Savior.	
Oct 5	2 Thessalonians 3:1-5	PS 64
	The Lord Jesus is in control—strengthening, protecting, and directing, especially as we take His Word to the nations.	
Oct 6	Hebrews 2:1-13	WS 785
	Since Jesus has covered our sins through His suffering, He declares us His brothers, members of His own family.	
Oct 7	Colossians 3:1-10	TLH 398
	We have been raised with Christ, so let’s be high-minded in our thinking, focusing on heavenly things.	
Oct 8	Mark 10:2-12	WS 791
	When a couple is joined in marriage, it’s God’s doing, so it’s the right match. That’s why Jesus says, “. . . <i>what God has joined together, let not man separate.</i> ”	
Oct 9	Acts 7:1-8	WS 797
	[Commemoration of Abraham] God’s promises are so certain that we can walk according to them even if we can’t see the end of the road.	
Oct 10	Matthew 6:19-23	WS 789
	The treasures Jesus has waiting for us in heaven are infinitely greater than our earthly ones, which fade.	
Oct 12	Amos 5:1-15	PS 112
	Where is life to be found? In the LORD! Seek Him and live!	
Oct 13	Hebrews 3:12-19	SC Lord’s Prayer V
	Sin finds us daily, so daily we remind one another of Jesus who overcomes sin for us by His death and resurrection.	
Oct 14	Luke 6:43-49	PS 141
	What we say and do reveals what is in our hearts, so let your actions match the new-created hearts the Spirit gave you.	
Oct 15	2 Kings 2:6-18	WS 780
	Elisha wasn’t asking to be greater than Elijah (v. 9), but rather to inherit his ministry—which he did (v. 15).	
Oct 16	Matthew 10:40-42	TLH 224
	The Spirit often whispers like a gentle wind. Here, a simple cup of cold water gives evidence of faith in Jesus.	

Date	Reading	Verse
Oct 17	Daniel 3:19-30	PS 90
	Nebuchadnezzar praised God for rescuing three from a furnace, but the three praised Him for rescuing them from hell.	
Oct 19	Mark 10:17-22	TLH 380
	Jesus showed love to the man not by agreeing with him, but by revealing that he was more sinful than he thought he was.	
Oct 20	Ecclesiastes 5:10-20	PS 138
	It is difficult to be satisfied with our lot in life. When we are, it is truly God’s doing, God’s gift, and it is no small thing.	
Oct 21	Romans 14:4-12	TLH 540
	In matters where God does not say yes or no, Christians are free to glorify God in whatever they do.	
Oct 22	Mark 10:23-31	WS 777
	Only God can move the heart to trust in Christ for salvation, and those who believe will surely be blessed.	
Oct 23	Galatians 1:11-24	PS 33
	[James, Brother of Jesus] The Gospel Paul preached had been given to Him by God. It was not from men; not even from any of the apostles.	
Oct 24	John 5:1-9	TLH 292
	This Doctor gives the invalid a different prescription: His Word. Who needs the pool when you have that!	
Oct 26	Revelation 19:4-9	TLH 609
	[Philip Nicolai, Hymnist] Oh, what bliss when the Bridegroom comes for us and we reach the wedding supper of the Lamb! Give Him glory!	
Oct 27	Luke 8:27-39	TLH 263
	Does it ever seem to you as if Satan has the upper hand against Jesus? Think again. These demons have to run for the pigs.	
Oct 28	Jude 1-25	TLH 262
	[Simon Zealot and Jude, Apostles] Contend for the faith: stand up for the Gospel of Christ crucified for sinners and rebuke all that stands against it.	
Oct 29	Luke 14:25-35	PS 60
	Of course it “costs” to follow Jesus, but what we suffer is nothing alongside the riches He gives us when we are with Him.	
Oct 30	Revelation 14:6-7	TLH 505
	The angel in midair reminds us of Martin Luther and every faithful witness who has proclaimed salvation in Christ.	
Oct 31	John 8:31-36	SC Lord’s Supper I-II
	[Festival of the Reformation] What sets us free from sin, death, and the devil? The Word of truth itself: You are forgiven.	

SEEN IN PASSING

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

Polygamy Next?

With its stunning redefinition of marriage in *Obergefell v. Hodges*, the U.S. Supreme Court

may have opened the door to much more than same-sex couples. I.e., if any two consenting adults are free to marry, why not any

three (or more)? In his dissenting opinion, Chief Justice John Roberts wrote, "It is striking how much of the majority's reasoning would apply with equal force to the claim of a fundamental right to plural marriage. If 'there is dignity in the bond between two men or two women who seek to marry and in their autonomy to make such profound choices,' why would there be any less dignity in the bond between three people who, in exercising their autonomy, seek to make the profound choice to marry? . . . If not having the opportunity to marry 'serves to disrespect and subordinate' gay and lesbian couples, why wouldn't the same 'imposition of this disability,' serve to disrespect and subordinate people who find fulfillment in polyamorous relationships?" Roberts, John. "Obergefell et al. v. Hodges, Director, Ohio Department of Health, et al." *SupremeCourt.gov*. Jun 27, 2015. Web. Jul 1, 2015.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Sponsors Needed

CLC Project KINSHIP provides for orphans and seminary students in India, Nepal, and Africa through the kind sponsorship of stateside CLC members. Right now there is a need for nine new sponsors for children at our CLCI orphanage in Nidubrolu, India. The cost to sponsor is \$50 per month. If you are interested in sponsoring a needy child in India, please contact KINSHIP Committee member Rev. David Fuerstenau, 426 Buren Road, Ketchikan AK, 99901, phone (907) 225-2842, e-mail djfuerstenau@kpunet.net.

In accord with our usage and order, **Paul Krause**, who was called by Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church, Hidewood Township, South Dakota, and Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church of Watertown, South Dakota, to be their pastor, was installed on July 26, 2015. Also participating in the service were Pastors George Dummann, Joel Fleischer, Rick Grams, Delwyn Maas and Rob Sauers, as well as laymen Matthew Gurath, Ronald Boone and Tim Fuerstenau.

—Daniel Fleischer.

2015 Great Lakes Pastoral Conference

Peace Thru Christ Lutheran Church, Middleton, Wisconsin

September 29-October 1

Agenda:

- Old Testament Exegesis (essayist's choice)
—Pastor Peter Evenson
- New Testament Exegesis (essayist's choice)
—Pastor Neal Radiche
- Resources and suggestions for parents to teach, guide, and assist their children in the Sunday worship—ILC Professor
—Professor Paul Schaller, invited
- Is it misleading, wrong, or incompatible with New Testament usage to use the word *heaven* to refer to a believers' post-resurrection life?—Pastor Norman Greve
- Materials for and training in how to help this generation "flee youthful lusts."
—Pastor David Ude

• A study of 1 Corinthians 7:10-11 "unmarried" and "her husband." When does unmarried become the desertion of v.15? Difference between "depart" and "put away?"
—Pastor David Schaller

• Evangelism Topic (essayist's choice)

—Pastor Bruce Naumann

• Homiletics Topic (essayist's choice)

—Pastor Mark Bernthal

Communion Service Speaker:

Pastor Caleb Schaller

Chaplain: Pastor Michael Wilke

—Submitted by Pastor David Pfeiffer

2015 Pacific Coast Pastoral Conference

St. Paul Lutheran Church, Vernon, British Columbia

September 29-October 1

Agenda:

- New Testament Exegesis series – 7 letters of Revelation 2-3: Second Letter
—Pastor Mike Gurath
 - Old Testament Exegesis (exegete's choice)
—Pastor Paul Naumann
 - What, if any, is the role of the Gospel in contrition?—Pastor Bob List
 - A Practicum: Parish preaching in our time, a review of methodology—Pastor Dave Reim
 - Homiletical Study (essayist's choice)
—Pastor Terrel Kesterson
 - A study of words and phrases concerning eternity such as "unto the age of the ages," "from eternity to eternity," (John. 11:27 "eis ton aona": Jerome: "mortuit en aeternum," Luther "ewiglich," modern English translations, and so forth). What do these words tell us about the nature of time, timelessness, and eternity?—Pastor Doug Priestap
 - How do we distinguish between obvious application of Biblical principle which must be agreed upon and done, and applications which might vary?—Pastor Nathan Pfeiffer
- Communion Service Speaker:
Pastor Mark Tiefel
Chaplain: Pastor David Naumann
—Submitted by Pastor Terrel Kesterson,
Secretary

"Edgy" Worship Ineffective in Reaching Millennials.

"Church attendance has plummeted among young adults. In the United States, 59 percent of people ages 18 to 29 with a Christian background have, at some point, dropped out. According to the Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life, among those of us who came of age around the year 2000, a solid quarter claim no religious affiliation at all. In response, many churches have sought to lure millennials back by focusing on style points: cooler bands, hipper worship, edgier programming, impressive technology. Increasingly, churches offer sermon series on iTunes and concert-style worship services with names like 'Vine' or 'Gather.' Churches have made news in recent years for giving away tablet computers, TVs and even cars at Easter. Still, attendance among young people remains flat. Young people don't simply want a better show. And trying to be cool might be making things worse. Recent research from Barna Group and the Cornerstone Knowledge Network found that 67 percent of millennials prefer a 'classic' church over a 'trendy' one, and 77 percent would choose a 'sanctuary' over an 'auditorium.' Millennials 'are not disillusioned with tradition; they are frustrated with slick or shallow expressions of religion,' argues David Kinnaman, who interviewed hundreds of them for Barna Group." Held Evans, Rachel. "Want millennials back in the pews? Stop trying to make church 'cool.'" *Opinions* Washington Post, 30 Apr. 2015. Web. 24 Jun. 2015.