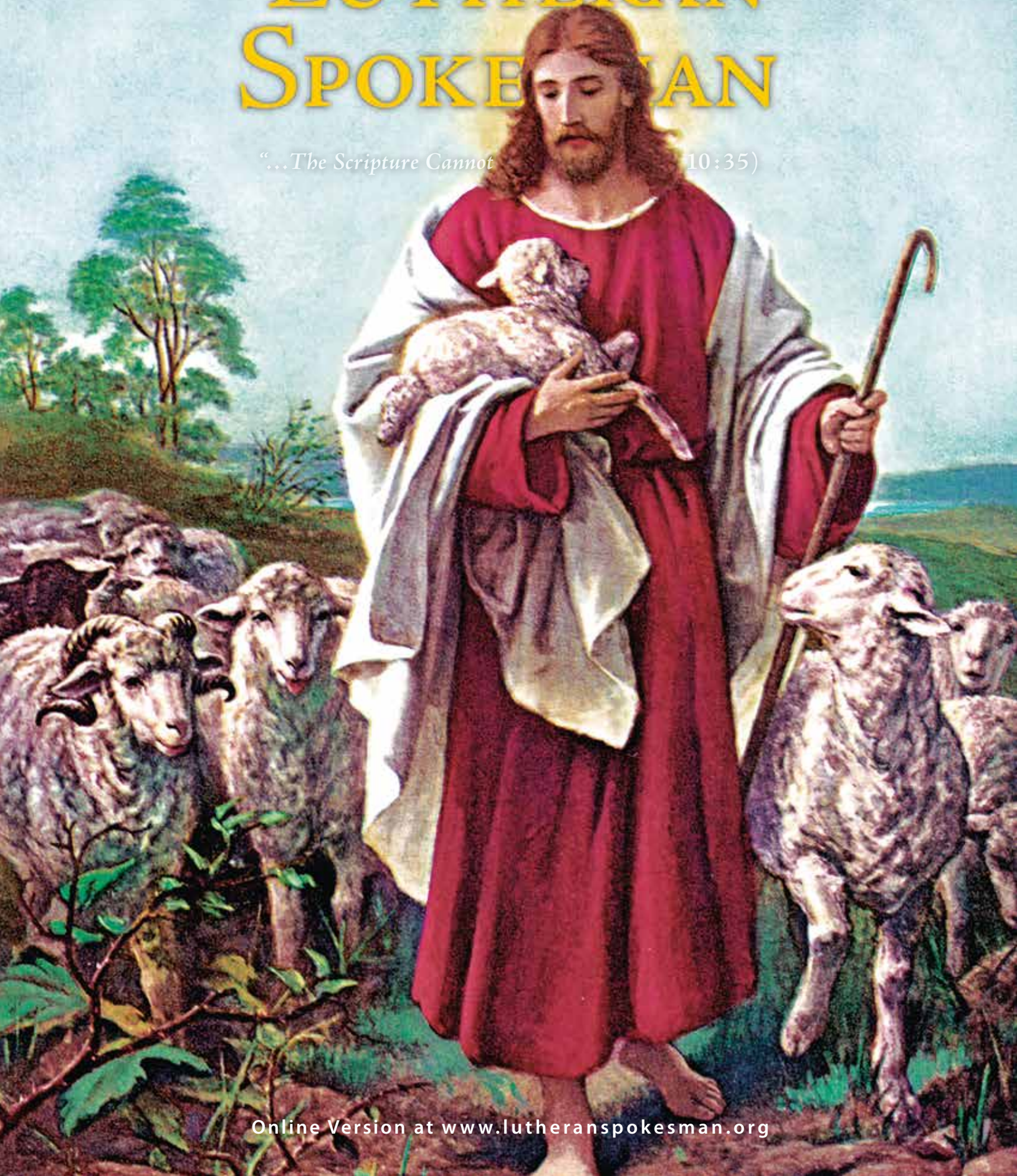


April 2016 VOL 58 NO. 10

LUTHERAN SPOKESMAN

"...The Scripture Cannot (10:35)



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Cover Painting: The Good Shepherd by Bernhard Plockhorst - public domain, originally published before 1923 in UK and USA.

Bernhard Plockhorst:

Born: Mar 02, 1825 · Braunschweig, Germany

Died: May 18, 1907 · Berlin, Germany

Plockhorst was a German painter and graphic artist. In Germany, Plockhorst is only known to experts today, whereas his pictures are still very popular in the United States and their reproductions can be found in many American homes and churches. *Wikipedia*

I Will Fear No Evil

(Psalm 23)

Violence is on the rise!

There are shootings in schools, bombings in coffee shops, heavily-armed militia marauding in the streets. Terrorism has the world gripped in fear. Nowhere is safe! **Immorality is rampant!** The world demands recognition and acceptance of all the sins of the flesh. **Churches have become corrupt!** As we look forward to celebrating the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, Catholics and the large Lutheran bodies are working toward a restoration of full fellowship between the two groups. Ironically, the issues that still separate them today are not the issues that Luther fought to reform—many of those have already been surrendered by the Lutherans. What still separates them is the moral laxity of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), which accepts homosexuality and the ordination of women.

What are we to do in this miserable world?!

But wait a minute!

Aren't we forgetting something? “*The LORD is my Shepherd, I shall not want*” (Psalm 23:1). We confess that. During this Easter Season we have a Sunday celebrating that fact. We call it Good Shepherd Sunday. We sing, “The Lord’s my Shepherd” with great gusto and joy. Do we actually trust that fact?

If so, then why are we so fixated on all the evil and corruption in the world? That seems to be a common theme of discussion among Christians. It can cause us to cower in fear and keep us from talking about our faith. The world is very evil, yes! We know that. It always has been. Danger and violence abound in society, and blasphemous false teaching has become common in the churches.

We don’t want to ignore the evil and pretend it doesn’t exist, but we don’t need to live in fear or dismay, either. Remember, our Good Shepherd has said, “*In the world you will have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the*



Let’s lift each other up with the reminder that the Good Shepherd “restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness.”

world” (John 16:33). That’s right! Our Good Shepherd has already overcome all the evil in the world, including the evil in our own hearts and lives. He has forgiven us, washed us clean of all sin, and made us His own. Now He cares for us as our Good Shepherd.

Rather than dwelling on the evil in the world, remember, “*The Lord is My Shepherd, I shall not want,*” (lack) any good thing. He provides everything we need for our bodies and souls

“*He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters.*” The mountain meadows were a dangerous place for sheep, too, but they could lie down without fear when their shepherd was near. We can do so even more because our Good Shepherd is the Almighty God. He even prepares a banquet feast of blessings “*in the presence of my enemies.*”

When “*I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; For You are with me;*

Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.” Nothing can truly harm us when we have our Good Shepherd close beside us with the rod and staff of His Word.

The world is evil.

We need to be aware of the evil and avoid it wherever possible. We need to recognize the sin and not follow the ways of the world. But let’s not drag each other down with talk about how bad things are; rather, let’s lift each other up with the reminder that the Good Shepherd “*restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness.*” We can joyfully serve our Savior and our God knowing that with our Good Shepherd, “*Goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.*”



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

“Lord, Teach Us How to Pray”

Do you need your tire jack? Of course you do! If you get a flat tire in the middle of nowhere, you are going to be glad you have that tire jack. We use our tire jacks to lift a very heavy car so we can swap out a flat tire with a spare tire. You may never need that tire jack, but if you find yourself in a bind and have to change a flat tire, you surely will be glad you have it!

Isn't that kind of the way we view prayer—as something we pull out and frantically use when we are in a bind and have a burden too heavy to lift? But that's not how God wants you to view prayer. To be sure, He does want you to pray to Him when you are in trouble. “*Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify Me,*” He tells us through the psalmist (Psalm 50:15). But that's not the only time He wants you to pray to Him. The Apostle Paul calls on us to be “*praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit*” (Ephesians 6:18).

Not only has God commanded us to pray to Him, but Jesus bolsters our confidence in prayer by promising He will hear us. “*Most assuredly, I say to you, whatever you ask the Father in My name He will give you*” (John 16:23). Because Jesus died on the cross to reconcile you to God, you can go right to God with your prayers, in boldness and confidence, knowing that He promises to hear your prayers and answer accordingly.

Sometimes, though, we wonder how we should pray. Our catechism defines prayer simply as “a heart-to-heart talk with God.” Sometimes it is as simple as, “Lord have mercy on me, a sinner.” Or “Thank you, Jesus!” for an unexpected blessing. Sometimes it may be a longer, structured prayer, such as the ones our pastors often use during the worship services.

On one occasion, the disciples of Jesus asked Him about prayer. “*Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples*” (Luke 11:1). How did Jesus answer? He gave them what we call “The Lord's Prayer.” It has been said that the Lord's Prayer is the complete prayer—it deals with everything we need that pertains to our salvation, our spiritual needs, and our daily living.



It is a good thing that Jesus did teach us how to pray. Very often our prayers revolve around our earthly, material problems and needs—health, employment, finances, security, or any number of other such matters. These are all things that are important, and our heavenly Father wants us to bring them to Him. Yet these things make up only one petition of the Lord's Prayer, namely, “*Give us this day our daily bread.*” In that petition Jesus teaches us to ask our heavenly Father for those things we need for today.

In all the other petitions of the Lord's Prayer, Jesus teaches us how to talk to our heavenly Father about our *spiritual* needs. Spiritual needs like being forgiven, and forgiving others. Deliverance from temptations and protection from the devil. Spiritual needs like glorifying our Father's name in our teaching and in our actions. Spiritual needs like spreading His Kingdom. These things we need to be taught how to pray, lest we be always praying for daily bread alone! Prayer is more than a tire jack that we keep “just in case” of emergencies. Prayer is a gift that Jesus died to give us. Through faith in Jesus, each one of us has been given direct access to the heavenly Father. May we be in constant conversation with our dear Father in heaven!

What a Friend we have in Jesus,

All our sins and griefs to bear!

What a privilege to carry

Ev'rything to God in prayer!

Oh, what peace we often forfeit,

Oh, what needless pain we bear,

All because we do not carry

Ev'rything to God in prayer! Amen.

(TLH #457:1)



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

HYMN 368

“The Lord My Pasture Shall Prepare”

GOOD SHEPHERD THEME (PSALM 23)

Have you ever read one of those newspaper stories about the death of someone living the last decades of his life in poverty-level circumstances, who was later discovered to have had tens of thousands of dollars in cash stashed in various places around the hovel in which he had eked out his pitiable subsistence? It's a sad irony, and we shake our heads when we hear it. However, sometimes our own behavior may mimic that irony more than we realize.



in the paths of death I tread,/ With gloomy horrors overspread [v.3] or “*Tho' in a bare and rugged way,/ Thro' devious lonely wilds, I stray*” [v. 4]), nonetheless “*His presence shall my wants¹ supply/ And guard me with a watchful eye*” (v. 1).

Hymn 368 rejoices that no matter our situation in life, we have no reason to fear, because the Lord of all the universe is our own, personal Shepherd. We need not worry about our temporal

We confess that Jesus is our Lord and that we trust in Him for all our needs: bodily as well as spiritual, temporal as well as eternal. We furthermore confess that He is almighty, that He cares about us and for us, and that He will cause all things “. . . to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose” (Romans 8:28). These are certainly sincere and heartfelt confessions on our part, but sometimes in the midst of troubles, we may fail to take comfort from their implication. When that happens, we become a bit like the rich man who lived as a pauper. At those times, we need to remember the riches of our confession and the comfort to be found in it. Hymn 368 is a fine reminder to us that our Lord will watch over us and supply all our needs at all times.

This hymn is based on the well-known 23rd Psalm, which is a psalm of comfort. Most psalms of comfort (for example, Psalm 91) speak words of comfort *to* believers, but Psalm 23 is different; it is the exuberant exclamation *of* a believer, joyous that he is a lamb of God, with Christ as his shepherd. These thoughts are not those of some “spiritual miser” who—despite the unlimited wealth of the Lord's promises to him—nonetheless refuses to take any comfort or assurance from that wealth, and lives instead in fear and woe. Rather, this hymn sings the exultation of a confident child of God, who knows that despite any circumstances (“*When in the sultry glebe I faint/ Or on the thirsty mountain pant*” [v. 2] and “*Tho'*

circumstances because “*The Lord my pasture shall prepare/ And feed me with a shepherd's care*” (v. 1). We have calmness of mind because “*To fertile vales and dewy meads/ My weary, wand'ring steps He leads,/ Where peaceful rivers, soft and slow,/ Amid the verdant landscape flow*” (v. 2) If we feel lonely, we can then remember that “*My noon-day walks He shall attend/ And all my midnight hours defend*” (v. 1) and “*My steadfast heart shall fear no ill,/ For Thou, O Lord, art with me still*” (v. 3). Do we feel uncertain about the future? We are reminded that “*Thy friendly crook shall give me aid/ And guide me thro' the dreadful shade*” (v. 3).

The Bible often likens God's care of His people to that of a shepherd caring for his sheep. What Christian can sing this hymn, or read the psalm upon which it is based, without being reminded of what Jesus tells us in John 10:11 & 14: “*I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep. . . . I am the good shepherd; and I know My sheep, and am known by My own*”?

Let us do more than merely state the doctrinal truth that “The Lord is the shepherd of His people.” Rather, let us joyously exclaim, “The Lord is *my* shepherd!”



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

¹ The word *wants* is used here in its proper sense of what we lack, not what we desire.

“We Have Such A High Priest”

“Now this is the main point of the things we are saying: We have such a High Priest, who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, a Minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle which the Lord erected, and not man. For every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices. Therefore it is necessary that this One also have something to offer. For if He were on earth, He would not be a priest, since there are priests who offer the gifts according to the law; who serve the copy and shadow of the heavenly things, as Moses was divinely instructed when he was about to make the tabernacle. For He said, ‘See that you make all things according to the pattern shown you on the mountain.’ But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, inasmuch as He is also Mediator of a better covenant, which was established on better promises” (Hebrews 8:1-6).

“If following Christ leads to persecution, why be a Christian?”

The original readers of Hebrews were undoubtedly asking themselves this question. Having endured “a great struggle with sufferings,” along with “reproaches and tribulations” (10:32-33), these Jewish Christians were considering a return to Judaism, thinking that following Moses was perhaps “safer” than following Jesus.

To counter these dangerous assumptions, the writer of Hebrews repeatedly emphasizes the superiority of Christ. Jesus is the supreme revelation of God’s being, and the final word on God’s grace and love. He is superior to angels, Moses, the Levitical priesthood, and the demands and promises of the Old Covenant. He is a superior high priest—eternal, not temporal; appointed by oath, not law; of the order of Melchizedek, not Aaron.

Therefore, because Christ Himself is infinitely superior, the blessings He brings are infinitely better: better things (6:9), better hope (7:19), better covenant (7:22), better promises (8:6), better sacrifices (9:23), better possessions (10:34), better country (11:16), and better resurrection (11:35).

With Hebrews 8:1, the writer pauses, looks back at the previous seven chapters, and says, “Now this is the main point of the things we are saying: We have such a High Priest. . . .” A High Priest who is the Son of God (1:2) and the Son of Man (2:14), merciful and faithful (2:17), sympathetic and sinless (4:15), eternal and unchanging (7:24), and therefore a High Priest who is “fitting for us”

(7:26)—or, as the NIV translates, “Such a high priest meets our need.”

After glancing back, the writer moves forward with the grand theme of Christ’s superiority. In 8:2-6 he offers three additional contrasts between the ministry of Christ and that of the Levitical priests.

First, Jesus is a “High Priest, who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens” (8:1). Seated, right hand, throne, and even the phrase “in the heavens” are all descriptions of Christ’s position, power, and sovereignty. In this context, “seated” also has the sense of completion. Jesus is now seated (reigning, not resting) on His heavenly throne, because He completed His work of redemption on earth.

However, contrast the completed work of Christ, the supreme High Priest, with that of the Levitical priests who, even at the time Hebrews was written (64-68 A.D.), were still offering incomplete sacrifices in the Temple of Jerusalem.

Second, Jesus is a “Minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle which the Lord erected, and not man” (8:2). Despite all its importance, the tabernacle in which the Levitical priests ministered was merely a copy of the true tabernacle “erected” (literally, tent-peged) by God.

This does not mean that God built a physical temple in heaven; rather, that the heavenly realities He established were symbolized by the tabernacle on earth. The tabernacle’s design, layout, dimensions, furnishings, sacrifices, purifications, priests, and very presence among the people—John 1:14 is literally, “The Word became flesh and tabernacled among us”—all pointed to the once-for-all sacrifice of Jesus Christ. In other words, the Levitical priesthood served as a copy. Christ brought the reality.

Third, like every other high priest, Jesus, too, was required “to have something to offer” (8:4). But how different His sacrifice was from theirs! They offered the blood of bulls and goats that could never take away sins (10:4). But Christ, the true High Priest, came “not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most



Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption” (9:12).

Such a High Priest meets our need.

Mark Weis is pastor of the Church of the Lutheran Confession in North Port, Florida.

Beware the Suicide Brothers

Students of the Bible, and even many who are not, have heard of Judas Iscariot. What they may not understand is that his greatest sin was not his thievery or betrayal, but his rejection of his Savior’s mercy and forgiveness. In his despair, Judas committed suicide by hanging.

Neither do most people know that tragic Judas had a brother—not a twin, but a suicide brother. His name was Ahithophel, and his story can be read in II Samuel 17. Ahithophel was much like Judas. While Judas was a chosen disciple of the Lord and the trusted treasurer, so Ahithophel was chosen by King David and served as a wise and trusted counselor.

But then occurred a defining moment in David’s life: temptation, adultery and murder (II Samuel, chapters 11-12). By God’s grace David repented and was forgiven by God, even though there would be temporal consequences to his sins for the rest of his life.

But this was not good enough for Ahithophel, for the sordid affair stuck in him like a porcupine quill, working itself ever deeper. Ahithophel resigned his post, and retired to his family home at Giloh. There he brooded like a hen hatching a clutch of rotten eggs. When David’s son Absalom rebelled and took up arms against his father, Ahithophel was sought out as Absalom’s counselor.

Do you smell a betrayal?

When David and his loyal supporters fled from Jerusalem, Ahithophel advised Absalom to immediately pursue, search and destroy. But Ahithophel’s prudent counsel was not followed, allowing David to escape and regroup. When Ahithophel learned of the opportunity so squandered, he went back to his home, put his affairs in order and hung himself. But why? In anger that his counsel was not taken? In despair over being a traitor to God’s anointed?

Perhaps, but there appears to be more to consider; the “rest of the story,” as it were. Scripture notes that

Ahithophel was the father of Eliam (II Samuel 23:34), and that Eliam had a daughter named Bathsheba. We can surely imagine how Ahithophel doted on his beautiful granddaughter, and was much taken by the valiant captain in David’s army whom she married—Uriah the Hittite. But then temptation raised its head and struck like a cobra.

Bathsheba mourned her dead husband. David sorrowed over his sin. But could tears bring back Uriah from his grave, or remove the stain from Bathsheba’s reputation? God forgave David, but it seems as though Ahithophel could not. Perhaps it was knowing that David would survive and overcome that prompted Ahithophel, in tragic despair, to take his own life.

We hope and pray that there are no Christians who ever follow the path of Judas, who could not believe that the Lord would forgive him. Surely, he rejected the glorious truth that his Master and Friend was delivered up and would die on the cross to earn that very forgiveness for him. In hanging himself, he committed eternal suicide.

Perhaps more common is the sin of Ahithophel—refusing to forgive. Jesus taught us to forgive our enemies, just as He did. But we sometimes have trouble forgiving even our friends. Jesus told us to forgive seventy times seven. But we can barely count to seven, or three. Because of our sinful nature we are weak and love to hold grudges. But St. Paul countered that he (and we) could do all things through Christ who gives strength (Philippians 4:13). We do not earn the Lord’s forgiveness by forgiving others, but we may forfeit it by not.

So beware of the suicide brothers. Run instead to our Brother Jesus who invites and promises, “Come unto Me all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest . . . rest for your souls” (Matthew 11:28-29). In His grace may we always seek His restful forgiveness, and in His strength willingly forgive.



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

What About Alcohol?

Is the use of alcohol a sin?

Of course we know that that cannot be the case. Christ Himself drank from "the fruit of the vine" (Matthew 26:29), and in the institution of His Supper, He attached His word of promise to the contents of the cup, which was wine. The Apostle Paul encouraged young Pastor Timothy to drink "a little wine" (I Timothy 5:23) to treat some of his physical ailments. There is no direct or implicit command anywhere in Holy Scripture, except in specific cases, which forbids the consumption of alcohol.

We do, however, find warnings concerning and prohibitions against getting drunk. Perhaps the clearest of these passages is Ephesians 5:18, which reads, "And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit." While this verse does not forbid the consumption of wine, it does forbid getting drunk on wine. We know that this prohibition applies to all alcoholic drinks (not to mention many drugs) because Paul gives the reason why drunkenness is to be avoided. He says that in drunkenness is *dissipation*.

Paul gives the reason why drunkenness is to be avoided. He says that in drunkenness is *dissipation*.

What is dissipation?

Think of the sun's effect on fog. As the sun rises in the sky and brings more warmth to the surface of the earth, that low-lying cloud slowly vanishes—it dissipates. Paul says that what the sun does to the fog is exactly what drunkenness does to man. It causes moral discernment to vanish. That, in turn, often leads to other sins of the flesh—sexual immorality, jealousy, fits of anger, marital discord, and other such things. How many marriages have been ripped apart because of a sin that came through drunkenness! How many fights and yelling matches have occurred because of drunkenness! How many foolish and hurtful words have been spoken by those who are drunk!

But it's not just moral discernment that vanishes through drunkenness. So does spiritual discernment. According to sociologists, two of the top reasons people get drunk are

to forget about unpleasant circumstances in life, and to feel more confident. But in either case, the drunkenness doesn't actually alter reality. A person who drinks to rid himself of the pain of a broken relationship will still find that pain when he awakes. A person who drinks to boost his confidence won't actually become more intelligent or more attractive when he's drunk. Drunkenness just enables him to hold a false view of himself.

By contrast, Paul encourages us to be filled with the Spirit. There is no dissipation in being filled with the Holy Spirit, primarily because the Holy Spirit doesn't give us a false view of ourselves or of our circumstances. The Holy Spirit, through the Word, reveals to us the reality of our state of affairs. He shows us plainly in the Law that our sinful nature has led to a broken relationship with our God. He then shows us plainly in the Gospel that our broken relationship has been mended through the suffering and death of Jesus Christ on the cross. This is not a false view of our lives, but the view held by God Himself. Drunkenness seeks

a false joy, a "joy" apart from a right relationship with God. The Spirit gives us true joy in knowing that we are in a right relationship with God in Christ.

Drunkenness, like any other sin, is a serious matter.

It's a serious matter because one's relationship with God is affected when one takes a false view of oneself and of sin. It is a serious sin, but not an unforgivable sin. If you are struggling with this sin, or if you have further questions on this topic, be sure to speak with your pastor. He would welcome the opportunity to help you search God's Word for answers, and he desires to announce God's forgiveness to those who have fallen into this sin, and to assist them in any way he can.



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

Franz Pieper (1852-1931)

When C.F.W. Walther died in 1881, Franz Pieper, who had been teaching dogmatics at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, Missouri since 1878, took over Walther's position as a professor of dogmatics and also president of the seminary—positions he held until his death in 1931. From 1899 until 1911 he also served as synodical president, a position which Walther had held twice. Pieper was Walther's protégée, and historian Carl S. Meyer put it well when he wrote, "After the death of C.F.W. Walther, [Pieper] was regarded as the 'Elisha' on whom Walther's mantle had fallen."

Franz August Otto Pieper was born on June 27, 1852, in Carwitz in Pomerania in Germany. He was the fourth of seven children. Following the death of his father, Pieper emigrated to America with his mother and three younger brothers. He graduated from Northwestern College in Watertown in 1872, and then from Concordia Seminary in 1875. He served Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) parishes in Wisconsin from 1875 until 1878, when he was elected to the faculty of Concordia Seminary.

Franz Pieper was a prolific author, contributing to the synodical newspaper, *Der Lutheraner*, the synodical theological journal, *Lehre und Wehre* (*Teaching and Defense*), which he also edited, as well as penning essays for district and synodical conventions. In these endeavors, he followed in the footsteps of C.F.W. Walther. This meant that virtually from the synod's founding in 1847 under C.F.W. Walther, until Pieper's death in 1931, the Missouri Synod spoke with one voice in matters of doctrine and practice.

Pieper's greatest achievement was his three-volume *Christian Dogmatics*, first published in German between 1917 and 1924, and translated into English in the early 1950's. An index in both German and English appeared as well. One cannot overestimate the impact that this



"After the death of C.F.W. Walther, [Pieper] was regarded as the 'Elisha' on whom Walther's mantle had fallen."

work had on maintaining scriptural and confessional unity in the synod. According to Prof. David Scaer of Concordia Seminary, the "chief topics [of Pieper's *Dogmatics*] were Christology and grace as they undergirded justification by faith." Furthermore, says Scaer, to date "no one has produced another comprehensive dogmatics" to challenge it. Pieper is also remembered for being the chief author of the *Brief Statement*, which was first published in 1932, and which the CLC has adopted as one of its confessional documents.

Franz's younger brother was August Pieper (1857-1946). Like Franz, August studied at Concordia in St. Louis and began as a pastor in the Wisconsin Synod. August, however, remained in the WELS and eventually was called to a professorship at their seminary in Wauwatosa, where he became a proponent of the "Wauwatosa Theology." There were strong disagreements between the two Pieper brothers on various issues relating

to church and ministry. Even though they disagreed, however, it would appear that Franz never publicly criticized his brother or the Wisconsin Synod.

He was not so reticent with everyone. One anecdote from about 1930 tells of Pieper reviewing the lecture notes of the professors at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, and then in a faculty meeting remarking that only he and P.E. Kretzmann were not "deviating from the Word of God." Theodore Graebner stormed out of the room in protest. Graebner's later writings in the *Lutheran Witness*, however, show that, among other topics, Graebner had indeed changed his position on scouting and the military chaplaincy, issues that contributed to the breakup of the Synodical Conference.



Franz Pieper died on June 3, 1931. **Steven Karp is pastor** of St. Stephen Lutheran Church in Hayward, California.

A Loud Land

A few years ago my wife Vanessa and I were in Zambia, traveling from Lusaka to Livingston. With us were Pastor Ibrahim, Pastor Yumba, and a student named Treasure.

Pastor Ibrahim grew up in Tanzania, where he studied in our Bible College near the foot of Mt. Kilimanjaro. A friend asked him to come to Lusaka, Zambia (three days journey by bus from his home), to start a Lutheran church. Ibrahim gladly went, becoming a missionary in a foreign land for the sake of the Gospel.

Pastor Yumba grew up attending a Lutheran church in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Later, when his church began to depart from the truths of Scripture, Yumba recognized the need to return to the pure Word of God, and he joined in our pastoral seminars in Lubumbashi, Congo. He is now the president of the Eglise Luthérienne de Confession du Congo (ELCC), headquartered in Lubumbashi.

After three weeks of travel, pastoral seminars, and church visitations, our party decided to take a day of relaxation and visit Victoria Falls. As we neared the city of Livingston, we ran out of gas. The full account of why we ran out of gas and the interlude between the sputtering of our

engine and the eventual resumption of our trip is a story for another time. Suffice it to say that eventually we did continue our journey. But we left behind an angry taxi driver who thought that we had cheated him. As we started our engine and pulled out onto the road again, the furious taxi driver passed us and raced down the road.

When we reached the city of Livingston, there was the taxi pulled over on the side of the road. The taxi driver was talking to a policeman and angrily waving at us. The officer pulled us over and Yumba, Ibrahim and Treasure got out of the car.

What followed next was a discussion, but it was an



Left to right: flag of Zambia, Treasure and Pastor Yumba, Victoria Falls.

African discussion. This means that there was a lot of very loud shouting. Vanessa was petrified. She was convinced that we were going to end up in jail (you can't yell at a police officer like that!) But I assured her that this is simply the way they do things in Africa. To most westerners that discussion would have sounded like it was a hair's breadth away from a full-on fist fight, but this is simply the way that Africans argue. Truth be told, it isn't much different from the way my family argues. My brothers and I can fight with a tenacity and volume that would make most people think we are on the verge of total war. Yet a few minutes later we are laughing and joking without animosity or anger.

The discussion with the taxi driver and the police officer took a little longer than that, and was probably a little louder, but eventually an amount was agreed upon and paid to the taxi driver. Very soon we found ourselves standing across the crevasse from Victoria Falls, also called *Mosi-oa-Tunya*, The Water that Thunders. There, hundreds of thousands of gallons of water pour over the edge into the canyon each second, sending up a mist like the driving rain of a thunder storm. If the people of that land like to argue loudly and passionately, who can blame them?



Matthew Ude is a CLC foreign missionary serving India and Africa. He and his wife live in Chennai, India.

Date	Biblical Events Noted	Verse	Reading	Comments
Apr 1		WS 775	Numbers 23:1-26	Balaam and Balak found themselves unable to work against the power of God's Word.
Apr 2		WS 780	Numbers 27:12-23	God sees to it that His people do not go without a shepherd. He still sees to it today.
Apr 4		TLH 337	Numbers 30:1-16	In Israel then, as among us now, vows and promises are to be taken seriously. God does not want us to break our word.
Apr 5		WS 767	Luke 6:27-36	Our mercy toward others is firmly rooted in our Father's mercy toward us in Christ.
Apr 6		TLH 420	Numbers 33:1-49	You may not recognize these places, but you should recognize that the Lord was with the Israelites at every single campsite.
Apr 7		TLH 42	Numbers 35:6-29	The punishment for murder was death, and having cities of refuge assured that justice was fairly administered.
Apr 8		TLH 431	Deuteronomy 2:7	I nothing lack if I am His, and He is mine forever.
Apr 9		WS 778	Luke 7:11-17	"God has visited His people." Can anything be more comforting than that simple sentence?
Apr 11		WS 742	Deuteronomy 4:32-40	What do we learn from the great Exodus? Nothing less than that the God of Israel (and our God) is the true God!
Apr 12		TLH 295	Deuteronomy 6:1-12	God's Word and His grace sustain us, therefore we do not forget either.
Apr 13		TLH 363	Deuteronomy 9:1-6	It's so easy for us to think that our success is our own doing. God reminds us that it's His doing—out of undeserved love.
Apr 14		WS 766	Luke 10:1-24	The word of Christ goes out, Satan is defeated, we have a place in heaven, and God's wisdom is revealed to us. Hallelujah!
Apr 15		TLH 356	Deuteronomy 13:1-11	Since only the true God can save, to turn away from Him means certain death.
Apr 16		TLH 34	Deuteronomy 16:1-8	We read of the Passover earlier too, but how many times is too many when remembering God's salvation?
Apr 18		TLH 510	Deuteronomy 18:14-22	The Prophet like Moses who would arise was none other than Jesus Christ. Compare vv. 18-19 with John 14:10, 23-24.
Apr 19		TLH 552:1-4	Luke 11:1-4	We need forgiveness even as we need daily bread.
Apr 20		TLH 547	Deuteronomy 22:1-12	We can show our love for God by caring for what He has made.
Apr 21		TLH 400	Deuteronomy 24:19-22	Remembering the hardships you have endured in the past will help you be sympathetic toward those struggling now.
Apr 22		WS 779	Deuteronomy 28:1-19	To turn away from the Lord is to invite disaster, therefore trust in Him for safety and blessing.
Apr 23		TLH 11	Luke 13:10-17	Jesus wasn't breaking Sabbath law, He was granting freedom from Satan—which was what the Sabbath was all about.
Apr 25		TLH 398	Deuteronomy 30:11-20	The people were not saved by their good works, but in keeping God's commandments they would reveal their faith in Him.
Apr 26		TLH 264	Deuteronomy 32:1-47	"These are not just idle words for you—they are your life" (v. 47). What a fitting summary of God's Law and Gospel!
Apr 27		TLH 594	Deuteronomy 34:1-12	God's faithfulness to Moses continued to his last breath. May we see God's promises in our last hours too.
Apr 28		TLH 546	Luke 17:11-19	O give thanks unto the Lord, and forget not all His benefits!
Apr 29		TLH 601	Psalms 90	As Moses was, we too are swept away in death, but the Lord is our dwelling place through all generations.

SNAPSHOTS OF CONGREGATIONS FROM AROUND THE CHURCH OF THE LUTHERAN CONFESSION

Redeemer Evangelical Lutheran Church Bowdle, South Dakota

Redeemer of Bowdle has been a member of the CLC since 1962, the year the congregation was organized. In addition to this blessing, it had the honor of being served by the first president of the synod, Pastor Paul G. Albrecht.

When these Christians broke from the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod over the doctrinal difference on church fellowship, they did not leave with the church property. Their first place of worship was the town movie theater. This did not last long, as the congregation quickly went to work on planning and constructing a church/parsonage combination. The architect was Pastor Albrecht, and the construction workers were members of the congregation. Redeemer was blessed with a number of farm families who had the necessary equipment for the project.

The men not only built a new church for their congregation, but also helped build Immanuel Lutheran College. Along with Pastor Albrecht, members of Redeemer made weekly trips to Eau Claire, Wisconsin, in 1963 to remodel the large barn on the Ingram estate into "Northwest Hall." This building housed the boys' dormitory and classrooms for Immanuel Lutheran High School and College (another little barn was remodeled to provide space for the seminary). The workers were known as "The Bowdle Boys." Though Northwest Hall was later razed and replaced by a parking lot, the teachers and students who made use of it still hold fond memories.



Bowdle is a city in Edmunds County, South Dakota, United States. The population was 502 at the 2010 census. Bowdle was platted in 1886. Motto: "The Best Little Town In South Dakota". *Wikipedia*



Pastor Paul G. Albrecht
(1898-1976)



Their first place of worship was the town movie theater.

bringing the message of life and salvation through Jesus Christ to elderly folks of various religious backgrounds. The average attendance at the nursing home rivals that of the Sunday morning services at Redeemer or Zion. What a wonderful opportunity to help those in the winter years of their lives to be prepared for an eternal retirement in

During its heyday, Bowdle was a thriving small town with numerous businesses. But as years passed by, it became smaller and smaller, dwindling to its current population of five hundred. This population decline was due mostly to young people moving away to bigger cities. This was also the case with Redeemer; what started out as a sizeable congregation has decreased to a present active membership that is comparable to one of our mission congregations.

Even though Redeemer is relatively small, it has been able to support a full time pastoral ministry by sharing a pastor with Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church, in nearby Ipswich, South Dakota. This arrangement has also made it possible for the Gospel message to be shared with others who are not members of either congregation, as well as with precious souls in other communities. Weekly chapel services are conducted in the Bowdle nursing home,



Clockwise from upper left: some current members of Redeemer, exterior of the church, one of the stained glass windows, current and former pastors of Redeemer and their wives, the sanctuary.

The average attendance at the nursing home rivals that of the Sunday morning services at Redeemer or Zion. What a wonderful opportunity to help those in the winter years of their lives to be prepared for an eternal retirement in heaven!

heaven! The Word of God is also shared on a weekly basis in the town of Aberdeen, some sixty miles away. At small group gatherings, nonmembers are invited to learn about their Savior through Bible devotions and Bible studies.

For those members who were a part of the birth of Redeemer congregation, it is not an easy thing when they remember the size of their local fellowship then,

as compared to today. However, they can take heart in knowing that God has made it possible for the pure Word of God to continue to be proclaimed in their midst, ministering to their individual needs and preparing them for an eternity in heaven, as well as to provide an opportunity to reach out to others in need of being nourished with the Bread of Life.



Mark Gullerud is pastor of Redeemer Lutheran Church in Bowdle, South Dakota, and Zion Lutheran Church in Ipswich, South Dakota.

In the second of this four-part series, seminary student Sam Rodebaugh shares his memories of trying out for the Tour Choir of Immanuel Lutheran College.

Tour Choir Tryouts

A few weeks into every fall semester, tryouts are held for the Tour Choir of Immanuel Lutheran College. For those of you who have had little exposure to these tryouts, I am here to give you the details.

Tryouts are held for four different voices, with the voices trying out on different days. Typically the sopranos and altos go on Monday and Wednesday one week, followed by the tenors and basses the next. Those so inclined may try out for multiple voices (though I prefer limiting the anxiety to a couple of hours, rather than stretching it out for a few days). Tryouts are held from oldest to youngest. All who want to participate in Tour Choir must try out, whether they are high school freshmen or seasoned college veterans.

The tryout normally consists of a few warm ups, scales, sight reading, arpeggios, and lastly, the singing of a piece picked out by Professor John Reim, the choir's director. In my experience, this piece is almost always one written by J. S. Bach, who is, in Prof. Reim's estimation, the greatest composer who ever lived. I'm quite partial to him as well, as I believe he was a bass at heart.

Tryouts for Tour Choir are a whole different animal from most other activities you might try out for. The stakes are high. You must prove your worth in a short amount of time, and when your voice inexplicably goes flat on the first note of your solo piece, there is no one else you can point the finger at. And you are auditioning by yourself—it's just you, Prof. Reim, and a tape recorder.

So, as you can imagine, tryouts can be nerve-racking; but Prof. Reim is a good sport about it. I remember that the last time I tried out for Tour Choir, I was a bit anxious beforehand. Once we got going, though, I felt that I was nailing the audition. That is, until I reached the sight-reading portion. I looked at the notes Prof. Reim had

scrawled out on the chalkboard, took a deep breath, and sang . . . something. It certainly wasn't a melody that Prof. Reim would have written; I'm sure that even I could have composed something better. I finished abruptly, glanced over at Prof. Reim's puzzled-looking face, and laughed. To my relief, he joined in with a couple of chuckles and told me I could try again.

Believe it or not, the most unenviable position during the whole ordeal does not belong to the lowly high school freshman trying out for bass after seven experienced college guys have preceded him. The most difficult job belongs to Prof. Reim. Every year, sixty to seventy students try out for thirty-two spots. After replaying hours of taped tryouts, Prof. Reim must cut down the list by over half, finally settling on the group he will take with him around the country. This narrowing-down process inevitably means that some students will be heartbroken, even as others rejoice. Thankfully, many of those who are not selected continue to try out in subsequent years. A good buddy of mine went through such an experience many times. "Tried out five times as a bass, never made it. Tried out the sixth time as a bass, finally made it—as a tenor!"

"The moral of the story is, keep trying." - Anonymous Seminarian.

Tour Choir was always the highlight of my school year. If you know a young person who has never tried out, or who has tried out but not made the choir, encourage him to keep trying. There are few opportunities greater than the chance to visit your brothers and sisters in Christ throughout the CLC while proclaiming the salvation which Jesus Christ has won for us.



Sam Rodebaugh is a second-year student at Immanuel Lutheran Seminary. His home is in Eau Claire, Wisconsin.



DOMESTIC MISSIONS:

- Appleton, WI
- Atlanta, GA
- Detroit, MI
- Mapleton, ND
- Sioux Falls, SD
- Tacoma, WA

FOREIGN MISSIONS:

- Congo
- Ghana
- India**
- Kenya
- Liberia
- Mexico
- Myanmar
- Nigeria
- Nepal
- Peru
- Sudan
- Sweden
- Tanzania
- Thailand
- Togo
- Uganda
- Zambia
- Zimbabwe



New Missionary Arrives in India

In December our newest Missionary, Pastor Peter Evensen, arrived in India to continue the work in the fertile fields of that part of the world. Missionary Koenig has also been in India, helping introduce Pastor Evensen to the leaders and walk him through the work and responsibilities he will be carrying out there.

They have visited fourteen of the twenty-two districts in the Berea Evangelical Lutheran Church (BELC), as well as Martin Luther Bible School (MLBS). They have also visited the Church of the Lutheran Confessions of India (CLCI), where they taught classes to the seminary students and such pastors who were able to attend, and preached at several churches. There are currently forty-two students at the CLCI seminary. So many pastors attended that they moved from the cramped seminary classroom to the church sanctuary so no one would have to sit out in the hallway.

The BELC now has 22 districts across northern Tamil Nadu and in Andhra Pradesh, with almost 700 pastors serving over 30,000 souls.

In addition, they visited fifty-four new BELC pastors in their homes and met their families. These are pastors that have either graduated from MLBS and have started serving a congregation or have joined our fellowship. The vast majority of these pastors preach in villages where is no other church. What an opportunity to shine the light of the Gospel to people who sit in darkness! There is so much work to be done!

Our newest missionary continues to work on learning Telugu, the native language of the majority of the pastors in the BELC and CLCI. Missionary Evensen says, "Being able to communicate with them in their own language, even a little, goes a long way to encourage the bonds we share in the Lord."

Please remember our missionaries and the pastors of our overseas fields in your prayers. May the Lord sustain them and give them strength to carry on the work of faithfully proclaiming Jesus as the one and only Savior from sin and death. To Him alone be the glory.

Nathanael Mayhew is pastor of Grace Lutheran Church in Sleepy Eye, Minnesota, and a member of the Board of Missions of the CLC.



Top: pastors' training in Nellore.

Above: house of one of the BELC pastors.

The BELC has a two-year pastor training program at the Martin Luther Bible School. The BELC also conducts monthly training meetings in each district. Our missionaries travel to these meetings, as the schedule allows, and conduct training for the pastors. In addition, the BELC has begun a two-day leadership training seminar for the chairman of each district and one pastor that the chairman selects. This seminar takes place every two months at the Martin Luther Bible School and is meant to develop additional leaders in each district who will be able to help the current chairman and take over the leadership of the district when needed.

SEEN IN PASSING

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

Legal to Sell Baby Parts, But Not to Take a

Video of It. “A Texas grand jury investigating video-recorded allegations that Planned Parenthood was illegally selling fetal organs instead indicted two of the people who made the controversial undercover videos. The grand jury in Harris County indicted David Daleiden and Sandra Merritt on a felony charge of tampering with a governmental record. Daleiden was also indicted on a misdemeanor charge of ‘prohibition of the purchase and sale of human organs,’ Harris County District Attorney Devon Anderson said in a statement. The grand jury declined to indict anyone from Planned Parenthood of the Gulf Coast—the initial target of the investigation.” Hughes, Trevor. “Grand jury indicts 2 behind Planned Parenthood videos.” *Headlines*. Religious News Service, 29 Jan. 2016. Web. 29 Jan. 2016.

What’s That Reference Again? In a January speech at an evangelical college in Virginia, presidential candidate Donald Trump quoted Scripture in an attempt to convince his listeners that he was best qualified to represent Christians in the upcoming election. But the quote went wrong. “We’re going to protect Christianity,” Trump said. “And I can say that. I don’t have to be politically correct. We’re going to protect it. . . . Two Corinthians, right? Two Corinthians 3:17, that’s the whole ball game.” The quote was a reference to the passage, “Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.” Trump seemed puzzled to hear laughter rippling through the audience, not realizing that Christians invariably refer to the book as *Second Corinthians*, not *Two Corinthians*. Ward, Jon. “At Liberty University, Donald Trump again stumbles when discussing religion.” *Yahoo! Politics*. Yahoo.com. 18 Jan. 2016. Web. 19 Jan. 2016.

Churchgoers Live Longer—a Lot Longer. In a recent statistical study, a PhD candidate at Ohio State University confirmed what earlier analysis had uncovered about the relationship between regular church attendance and health; that is, that churchgoers live longer. A large sample of adults, both religious and non-religious, was tracked over a period of eight years. Researchers found that those who never attended worship were nearly twice as likely to die during that period as those who attended religious services once a week. Over the course of a lifetime, mortality statistics

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Change in Worship Schedule Peace with God in Onalaska, Wisconsin, now worships on Saturdays at 3:00 pm. Bible Class and Sunday School follow at 4:00. —Richard Kanzenbach, Pastor.

TVBS Looking for Trips

As the Traveling Vacation Bible School (TVBS) Committee works through its summer schedule, we find that we have only three trips planned so far (Washington State, Red Wing, Minnesota, and Appleton, Wisconsin). If your congregation is not running a VBS program and you would like to get one started, this would be a good year to do so. We have begun planning the trips that have been requested and would like to add more trips. So consider whether maybe this is the year to start—or perhaps restart—VBS in your congregation. Contact our committee member Ross Roehl at ross.roehl@ilc.edu as soon as you can. Information about the program as well as contacts and registration forms are posted at www.clctvbs.org.

indicate that faithful attenders live, on average, seven years longer than non-attenders. Wright, Bradley. “Want to Live Longer? Go to Church.” *Black, White and Gray*. Patheos, 4 Nov. 2015. Web. 29 Dec. 2015.

What are You Preaching With Your Clothes?

Christian writer Janie B. Cheaney notes that our industrialized society is the first in history in which high-quality clothing is almost free; a complete, serviceable suit of clothes can be had for pennies at any garage sale or second-hand store. In today’s world, clothing “is the only consumer item, to my knowledge, whose value depends chiefly on the trendiness of the retailer.” People no longer use clothing primarily to cover, warm and protect themselves; now they use it mainly to *express* themselves.

Sunday* school children at Eternal Life Church in Kathmandu, Nepal, display their peace and joy in their Savior! They are in the new “earthquake-resistant” classroom that has been built for the Himalayan Bible Institute, the HCLCN’s new Bible school.

* Technically “Saturday School” because they have church on Saturday—the only weekend day in Nepal

Spring 2016 Pacific Coast Pastoral Conference
Ascension Lutheran Church, Tacoma, Washington — **April 26-28**

Agenda:

- Social Media And The Church—Opportunities And Pitfalls —Pastor Mark Tiefel
 - Walther’s Final Thesis (Gospel Predomination) —Pastor David Naumann
 - Translation Theory (especially “Dynamic Equivalence”)—Is It Consistent With Verbal Inspiration?—Pastor David Reim.
 - NTX series—Seven letters of Revelation 2-3: 2nd letter—Pastor Michael Gurath
 - OTX (exegete’s choice) —Pastor Terrel Kesterson
 - Chaplain—Pastor Nathan Pfeiffer
 - Communion speaker—TBD
- Submitted by Pastor Terrel Kesterson, Secretary



That, according to Cheaney, makes clothing an important consideration, especially for Christians: “The age of abundant clothing allows us the luxury of telling the world who we are by how we dress. But Christians also have the obligation—and privilege—to tell the world *Whose* we are. Most discussions about “modesty” concern what *not* to wear, but what *to* wear deserves thought as well. The heart of modesty is consideration for others (and incidentally, the male of the species should be aware that excessive sloppiness can be as inconsiderate as suggestiveness). Color, style, appropriateness, and flattering lines complement the wearer, but might they also praise our Maker?” Cheaney, Janie B. “The Gift of Garb.” *World* 9 Jan. 2016:20. Prin

