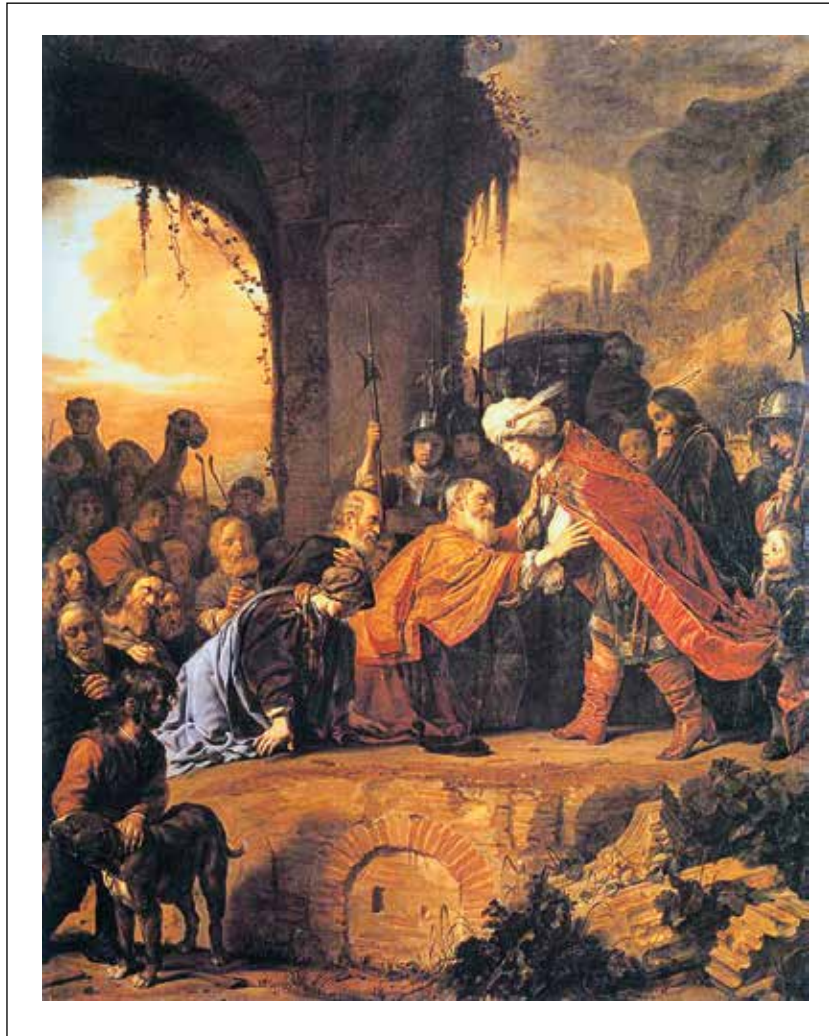


June 2016 VOL 58 NO. 12

LUTHERAN SPOKESMAN

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



*“And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving
one another, even as God in Christ forgave you”*

EPHESIANS 4:32.

Online Version at www.lutheranspokesman.org

Letting the Lord Have the Limelight..... 3
The Benefits of Belonging 4
Hymn 464, “Blest Be the Tie That Binds” 5
The Holiest of All 6
It Is of the Lord’s Mercies That We Are Not Consumed7
“Is It True That Our Church Doesn’t Believe in Evolution?”8
Nepal Earthquake Update9
Visiting the Congregations of the BELC 10
Redemption Lutheran Church, Lynnwood, Washington..... 12
June “Bread of Life” Readings 14
Recording the Tour Choir..... 15
Seen in Passing 16
Announcements 16

Give the gift of the Gospel with a subscription to the *Lutheran Spokesman*. \$18.00/year.

Send subscription to:
Mr. Benno Sydow, Business Manager
2750 Oxford Street North
Roseville, MN 55113
 or email: bennosydow@yahoo.com

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 / Graphic Designer / Print Production: Matthew Schaser; Proofreaders: David Lau and Paula Naumann; Staff: James Albrecht, Theodore Barthels, David Bernthal, Wayne Eichstadt, David Fuerstenau, Frank Gantt, Norman Greve, Mark Gullerud,



Jay Hartmann, Steven Karp, John Klatt, Paul Krause, Joseph Lau, Delwyn Maas, James Naumann, Nathan Pfeiffer, David Reim, Andrew Schaller, Thomas Schuetze, Steven Sippert, 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.

Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are from The Holy Bible, New King James Version, copyright © 1990 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Lutheran Spokesman Art Direction and Design by MschaserLLC. 2016. Any use of the images and/or graphics in part or whole without permission is prohibited. Contact Matt Schaser at: mschaser@sbcglobal.net for terms and usage.



Page 9



Page 10



Page 12



Page 15

Cover Art: Salomon de Bray (1597–1664)
 Title: Joseph Receives His Father and Brothers in Egypt
 Date: 1655 — Medium oil on canvas
 This is a photographic reproduction of a two dimensional, public domain work of art.

Letting the Lord Have the Limelight

At Immanuel Lutheran Seminary, students will often sense *inadequacy* toward their role as future ministers of Christ. Their inadequacy is more than just a perception. It's the only right response when looking at oneself with honesty and in view of what the ministry requires and deserves from those who serve. All things considered, the proper realization is this: "I, the servant, am inadequate and unworthy. We, the Lord's people united by His Word, are inadequate and unworthy. But that's OK; that is exactly the way Jesus wants it to be."

As forerunner to the Messiah, John the Baptist understood this truth and how it pertained to his role in serving Jesus. He said in John 3:28-30: "*You yourselves bear me witness, that I said, 'I am not the Christ,' but, 'I have been sent before Him.' He who has the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom's voice. Therefore this joy of mine is fulfilled. He must increase, but I must decrease.*"

John knew the key to success in the work of proclaiming the Gospel. It's not about the preacher or the missionary; it's not about the members or the prospects either. It's about Jesus. He, the Savior and Lord of the Church, must increase; but we—pastors and teachers, students and members—must decrease. Easier said than done, one might say. We all know how to make the work of God's kingdom be about us in some way: our increasing workload, our lack of time and resources, our inability to do this or that. Our flesh makes self-awareness become self-absorption. As we increase in our own eyes, that too is a part of our inadequacy.

However, if we step back and trace John's insight from God, we see the blueprint Jesus has for His ministers and servants. It includes the fact of His divine call extended to His ministers for His people. The Lord calls pastors, missionaries, and teachers to serve both Him and His Church. They did not put themselves into the positions they now have. He did that. And along with that placement comes a steadfast promise to each servant. When the Lord sends you to do something in His behalf,

He does not leave you to your own inadequate devices. He always provides what is needed for the task at hand. He especially supplies the heart-changing, mind-convincing truth of His Word. On that basis we can approach all the opportunities, challenges, and problems before us with a confidence that the solution will come from Him.

**"I, the servant,
am inadequate and
unworthy. We, the Lord's
people united by His
Word, are inadequate
and unworthy. But that's
OK; that is exactly the
way Jesus wants
it to be."**

This month, called servants and delegates from our CLC congregations and institutions will meet in our biennial General Convention in Eau Claire, Wisconsin. In our collective work as a church body, we will certainly pray, think, and discuss. Floor committees will meet, and reports will be delivered. We will plan and propose, vote and resolve. But at every point, it is the Lord Who must grant the blessing of the outcome, an outcome that He leads us to pursue. It is part of His causing it to be so that

He will increase, while we decrease.

In a short time our nation will have its presidential candidates lined up for the pending election of the next U.S. President. In the build-up to November, we expect zealous campaigns to do whatever they can to make their candidate increase and the opponent decrease in the eyes of the voters. However, despite millions of dollars spent and countless hours of work, for many it will become a losing cause when the opposing candidate wins.

We, on the other hand, as part of the greatest campaign ever, can go about His business of promoting a winning platform of Gospel benefits for all. There may be long hours, millions spent, trials and tribulations. But victory is assured for the all-triumphant Savior and His happily-inadequate team of ministers and members. As we learn to let Jesus and His Word have the limelight, we also experience the increasing joy of John as we accept our self-shrinking role of relying on the Lord, glorifying Him, and leaving to Him the matter of results in our labors for His heavenly kingdom.



Steven Sippert is president of Immanuel Lutheran College in Eau Claire, Wisconsin.

The Benefits of Belonging

There is no doubt about it, there are a lot of lonely people in this world. Whether people are missing a loved one, have lost one, or haven't found one; the ache of being alone can be overwhelming. Our God, in His infinite wisdom, knew it wasn't good for Adam to be alone, so He created a marriage covenant for him with the perfect partner, Eve.

God had a plan when He put Adam and Eve together in the Garden of Eden. He intended for family members to belong to each other, and to support, discipline, teach, and learn from each other. In our family relationships, we can feel accepted, despite our faults. Family members love each other enough to point out one another's mistakes for the purpose of correction.

There are other kinds of loneliness, however, that strike at the human condition. There is an isolation that comes with a guilty conscience and low self-esteem. We can feel like outsiders when we desire to be accepted and welcomed by others, and yet don't seem to fit in. When we see that we haven't lived up to the expectations of others, we may turn inward to the consolation of our own dark thoughts. These troubles are, of course, only compounded when we realize that sin permeates our entire condition. It is God from Whom we are separated in our natural state, and no earthly relationship can replace or fill the void of being estranged from one's Maker.

There is a very good reason why we call our fellow church members our church "family," and our place of worship the "house" of God. While our relationship with our parents and siblings is a bond of blood relation by heredity, our relationship with church members is a binding together with the blood of Christ. God has adopted us, through His Son Jesus Christ, into His family. For "a father to the

fatherless, a defender of widows, is God in His holy habitation. God sets the solitary in families" (Psalm 68:5-6).

Our church family has purposes and benefits very similar to those of our earthly families. Just as we feel welcome in our own homes, so we feel welcome and should be welcoming when it comes to members of our church

home, despite the faults and foibles we all have. There is a oneness or communion, a feeling of belonging when gathered together with like-minded Christians. We love one another, and we tolerate a variety of opinions on the external matters of the world, because we share the same internal beliefs in Jesus Christ and His infallible Word (1 Corinthians 1:10).

It is also an important function of our fellowship to help and encourage each other on our path to heaven. We counted on our siblings, when growing up, to tell us what was and wasn't acceptable. We needed an older brother to tell us to "knock it off," or a sister to tell us to "straighten out." What kind of "siblings" would our church family be if they didn't love us enough to correct our wrong behavior? Seeing a fellow Christian following after poor advice or false doctrine isn't something a brother or sister in Christ can simply overlook. This requires a loving rebuke, or correction. When done and received in love, both parties can grow spiritually from the experience.

We all need love and correction. We all enjoy acceptance and belonging. Our earthly families provide these blessings. Our church family provides these and so much more—the blessing of forgiveness in the blood of our elder Brother, Jesus, and the promise of eternal life in the house of the Lord forever.



David W. Bernthal is the principal of Lutheran Memorial School in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin.

While our relationship with our parents and siblings is a bond of blood relation by heredity, our relationship with church members is a binding together with the blood of Christ.

HYMN 464

“Blest Be the Tie That Binds”

It was just a small Baptist church, located in a poor rural area of the country and made up of parishioners who themselves possessed very little in terms of material wealth. The salary they were able to pay their pastor was barely adequate, often consisting partly of produce grown by the parishioners—which they gave him in lieu of cash.



The pastor had been newly married when he accepted the call to serve them seven years earlier. Then came children. Now that the pastor and his wife were the parents of a growing family, their financial difficulty was becoming more serious, and it may have seemed providential to him that he had recently received a call to be the pastor of a large and prosperous Baptist church in the city. If he were to accept that call, he would, after all, still be preaching the Gospel; and in the new position he would receive a much larger salary—one that would enable him to provide for his wife and children without having to scrimp and cut corners. Was it not his duty to provide for his family as well as he was able?

But what would happen to his “other family,” the church he would be leaving behind? That small rural church had been his first call, and he had faithfully served the people there for seven years. He had baptized them, married them, buried them, attended their sick, prayed for them in all circumstances, and regularly preached God’s Word to them. In those seven years, a strong bond of Christian love had developed between him and those he served in Christ. Perhaps he wondered if their new pastor would love them in the same way that he did. Would their new pastor be diligent in his work even though the pay was paltry? Would they even be able to get someone—anyone—to accept their call, given their meager circumstances?

The decision was made. The household belongings were all packed for the move to the big city. The parting sermon was preached. The day for leaving was at hand, and the parishioners showed up to bid their beloved pastor farewell. There were many tears and emotional good-byes. Finally John, the pastor, looked at his wife, Mary. Their hearts and minds were united in the same conclusion. This place was their home, and these were

their people. They would stay, and he would continue to serve this flock as their pastor so long as the Lord enabled him to do so.

John Fawcett (1740-1817) was that pastor, and the small Baptist church was at Wainsgate, in Yorkshire, England. The call to the big city Baptist church was to Carter’s Lane Baptist Church in London. Ten years after he decided to remain with his little and impoverished flock instead of becoming the preacher in the prosperous big city church, Fawcett wrote “Blest Be the Tie That Binds” (Hymn 464 in *The Lutheran Hymnal*) in commemoration of that decision. Although he received other calls, and even an offer to be the president of the Baptist Academy at Bristol, Fawcett declined them all and continued to serve his first congregation to the end of his life—a ministry of fifty-four years.

“Blest Be the Tie That Binds” describes an ideal relationship of believers in the Church and in churches: **“Blest be the tie that binds/ Our hearts in Christian love;/ The fellowship of kindred minds/ Is like to that above.”** And again, **“We share our mutual woes,/ Our mutual burdens bear,/ And often for each other flows/ The sympathizing tear.”** The passage referenced in *The Lutheran Hymnal* for this hymn is Ephesians 4:3, and verses 1-6 of the 4th chapter of Ephesians remind us of what we must always bear in mind for this ideal relationship to exist among us: *“I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to have a walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.”*

May God the Holy Spirit unite us all in this blessed bond of Christian love.



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

The Holiest of All

“Then indeed, even the first covenant had ordinances of divine service and the earthly sanctuary. For a tabernacle was prepared: the first part, in which was the lampstand, the table, and the showbread, which is called the sanctuary; and behind the second veil, the part of the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of All, which had the golden censer and the ark of the covenant overlaid on all sides with gold, in which were the golden pot that had the manna, Aaron’s rod that budded, and the tablets of the covenant; and above it were the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat. Of these things we cannot now speak in detail” (Hebrews 9:1-5).

Hebrews here says that the first covenant had “ordinances of divine service and the earthly sanctuary.” The earthly sanctuary, its furnishings, and the worship service were rich in symbolism, and it was a constant reminder that kept before the eyes of the people the coming Messiah and the need for redemption. Each furnishing of the Tabernacle held special significance. Each one, in its own way, pointed the people away from themselves and toward God, Whose grace alone could save them. These furnishings were, in essence, a proclamation of Law and Gospel.

The lampstand symbolized light from God, fulfilled in Jesus. “I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life” (John 8:12). The table was a symbol of our complete reliance on God’s mercy and grace to provide all we need for body and soul. It also held the showbread, twelve loaves of bread representing the twelve tribes. These furnishings were in the first part, “which is called the sanctuary.” The sanctuary was separated



Each furnishing of the Temple held special significance. Each one, in its own way, pointed the people away from themselves to God, Whose grace alone could save them.

from the “Holiest of All” by a veil or curtain. That veil symbolized that sinful man cannot come into the presence of Holy God.

The “Holiest of All” was off limits to everyone except the High Priest, and even he could enter it only one day a year. He would go behind the veil into the Holiest of All on Yom Kippur, the Day

of Atonement, to make atonement for his own sins and those of the people. He would sprinkle the blood of a sacrificed animal on the Mercy Seat, thus pointing ahead to Jesus’ blood which would be shed on Calvary. “The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin” (1 John 1:7). The high priest carried the golden censer—the incense burning in it symbolizing the prayers of the people coming before God—with him on the Day of Atonement. The Ark of the Covenant was a symbol of God’s Law. It was made of wood and was overlaid on all sides with gold. The Ark was also the

throne of God in the Holiest of All, where His glory rested on the Mercy Seat, a symbol of His grace and forgiveness. The sacrificed blood brought by the High Priest was sprinkled on the Ark to “cover the sins of the people.” This symbolism was fulfilled in Jesus, Who shed His blood as “the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world” (1 John 2:2). The earthly sanctuary and all it represented and taught were fulfilled in our Savior Jesus, Who was “born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons” (Galatians 4:4).



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

It Is of the Lord's Mercies That We Are Not Consumed

“Now Moses was tending the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian. And he led the flock to the back of the desert, and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. And the Angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame of fire from the midst of a bush. So he looked, and behold, the bush was burning with fire, but the bush was not consumed. Then Moses said, ‘I will now turn aside and see this great sight, why the bush does not burn.’ So when the LORD saw that he turned aside to look, God called to him from the midst of the bush and said, ‘Moses, Moses!’ And he said, ‘Here I am.’ Then He said, ‘Do not draw near this place. Take your sandals off your feet, for the place where you stand is holy ground.’ Moreover He said, ‘I am the God of your father—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.’ And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look upon God” (Exodus 3:1-6). [Reading the entire chapter is recommended.]

Has anyone ever snapped his fingers in front of your eyes to get your attention back on track? The Lord is far more creative than that when He seeks to get our attention. Have you ever noticed (in retrospect, of course) that often the best blessings come when things are *not going according to your plans*?

Moses was on a grand detour with his life when the Lord got his attention with an extraordinary fire in the desert. It turns out that God was in the fire, and whenever we read of that in Scripture, it means a serious encounter with God's holiness. In its light, all human notions shrivel. His holiness reveals our weakness and frailty.

When Moses approached the bush, God did not say, “Come over here; I want to give you a hug.” He said, “Stop!” Moses was afraid for good reason. Nothing in his life measured up to God's holiness. When told to remove his sandals, he was already on holy ground. It was amazing that he was still alive—rather like the bush that also was not consumed.

In his conversation with the Lord, Moses did not improve his status. There may be more whining per verse here than in any other chapter in the Bible; and still Moses was not consumed.

Many years later a group of religious leaders argued with a young rabbi. They were upset that he contradicted them. After all, they were children of Abraham. They asked, “Are you greater than Abraham?” He replied, “Before Abraham was, I AM.”

From the burning bush the Lord identified Himself as God, the One with no beginning and no end—the great I AM. Then in the temple, the Lord incarnate identified Himself as the same I AM. Through His redeeming work we can draw near without fear to God.

The fiery holiness of God on Sinai threatened death to any who would draw near, but on Calvary Jesus shielded us from that fire with His own body; and thereby we were reconciled to God. Thanks to Jesus, we can draw near without fear.

Aren't you glad that His name is I AM WHO I AM, and not I AM WHO YOU WANT ME TO BE? Many want a god of their own design. They think God should make it all turn out the way they want, so long as they attend church regularly. When things turn out differently, perhaps catastrophically otherwise, they conclude that God is holding out on them.

In the dialogue that followed between Moses and God, Moses was unhappy because God kept telling him things he didn't want to hear and calling him to do things he didn't want to do; but over the following years he grew in faith and wisdom and served the Lord faithfully. God's way turned out far better.

When our plans blow up and we're upset with God about it, it's an opportunity for us to take off our shoes and come before Him. Listen carefully to Him, for I AM knows what He is doing; and whatever it is, He's always got us covered with His grace.



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

"Is It True That Our Church Teaches That Evolution is False?"

M*icro-evolution*, that is, the changing of characteristics within a species, happens regularly and is biblical. God created plants and animals each "according to its kind" to reproduce each "according to its kind" (Genesis 1). We see changing characteristics within a "kind," but no transformation from one kind to another.

Macro-Evolution speaks of a change from one species to another over a tremendous time period. This is what most people mean when they speak of evolution. It is *not* biblical, and we of the CLC reject it as falsehood.

Faith is required when answering questions about the origin of the universe. By definition, faith is "the evidence of things not seen" (Hebrews 11:1). None of us were present at the origin of the universe and none of us saw it, so whatever one believes to be true about these origins is a confidence in something neither seen nor witnessed—that is faith.

In whom will I place my faith concerning the origin of the universe? Will I trust fellow sinners who were no more there than I was? Or will I place my faith in the Word of the only One Who was there?

Every time we pray the Lord's Prayer, we ask that God's name be hallowed among us. Hallowing God's name is honoring, upholding, believing, and treasuring His Word in which He reveals His name. That includes His Word concerning the origin of the universe.

God reports clearly in Genesis 1-2 how the earth and universe came into being. Step by step, day by 24-hour day, with the power of His Word, God made everything that was made. God affirmed this truth in His Law: "In six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them" (Exodus 20:11).

God's Word is abundantly clear in explaining how the universe came into existence, and it allows no room for the theory of evolution. The theory of evolution contradicts God's clear Word. The theory of evolution cannot coexist

with God's Word; it and God's Word mutually exclude one another. In evolution there is no God. In God's Word there is no evolution.

Those who question God's truthfulness on the matter would do well to read what He said to Job: "Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? . . . He who argues with God, let him answer it" (Job 38:1ff ESV).

Many Christians and Christian churches try mightily to make God's Word and evolution work together. The

result always diminishes and compromises God's Word. Such people compromise God's Word by trying to bend God's truth to conform with man's theory. Consider how foolish that truly is! Conform the Word of the holy God to fit the ideas of sinful man? There is no sense in doing so and no truth or value in the outcome.

Why is it then that so many Christians and Christian churches believe in evolution? Sadly, it means they have exchanged the truth of God for a lie (Romans 1:25), and when this is done in one area, soon other parts of God's truth will similarly be rejected.

Yes, it is true—our church teaches that evolution is false. We do not believe in evolution because we *do* believe in the truth and inerrancy of God's Word. Many in the world will call us fools. Professing to be wise, they are the ones who have become fools (Romans 1:22). May God grant us strength to build our house upon the rock (Matthew 7:24ff), even amid a torrent of worldly opinion that disparages God's truth.

There is much in *true* science that declares the glory of God (Psalm 19:1), illustrates the truths of Scripture, and highlights evolution's foolishness. Your pastor will be happy to explore this topic further with you in the light of God's Word.



Wayne Eichstadt is pastor of Gethsemane Lutheran Church of Spokane Valley, Washington.

Nepal Earthquake Update

April 25, 2015 will be a day that many of our brothers and sisters in Christ who live in Nepal will never forget. It was a day that brought much pain, suffering, and loss. That was the day, just over a year ago, when the first of two major earthquakes brought terrible death and destruction to this Himalayan nation. Hundreds of thousands were left homeless, while nearly nine thousand lives were lost.

With this tragedy also came an opportunity for God's people to love and serve those in need, especially those who are of the household of faith. With this in mind, CLC President Michael Eichstadt authorized a special fund to assist in the relief efforts among our brothers and sisters of the Himalayan Church of the Lutheran Confession of Nepal (HCLCN). Over the next several months, our Lord moved the hearts of individuals throughout the CLC to give generously to this effort. In September of 2015 it was announced that sufficient funding had been received to accomplish the three phases of relief work that had been proposed by the HCLCN and the CLC Board of Missions.

We now have the opportunity to look back over the past twelve months and reflect on the privilege of assisting those who lost so much. I was able to travel to Nepal in January, 2016. Eight days were spent traveling and trekking to several distant HCLCN congregations in villages located very near the epicenter of the first earthquake. What I found among those whom we have been able to assist was a thankful attitude that reflected the love of Christ, and a confidence in His enduring love and protection. There was no complaining or requests for additional aid, just simple reliance on God's provision and determination to get their lives back in order.

I was also able to review and see firsthand the relief efforts that have already taken place, and consult on the work yet to be done. In the first phase of relief, aid was taken to nineteen Himalayan villages where 530 families received the basics needed for survival—blankets, bandages and first aid materials, clean drinking water, tents and tarps for shelter, along with small rations of rice and cooking fuel. Once these basic needs had been met, it was nearly the time of the monsoon months in Nepal, and therefore sturdier temporary shelter was needed for those



Above: a temporary shelter in the Dhading district, near the epicenter of the earthquake; HCLCN children in Dhading.

whose homes had been destroyed. Twenty-seven families received assistance to provide corrugated steel sheeting and poles to construct shelters. The rebuilding efforts of the third phase of relief have been hampered for a variety of reasons, including blockades at the Indian border. These blockades, caused by politics and religious disputes, have created a shortage of much-needed goods, and have driven up the price of fuel and building materials. In addition to the shortage of goods and fuel, political posturing of both Indian and Nepali leaders has also hampered rebuilding efforts across the nation.

To date, and by God's grace, seven small church buildings have been repaired or rebuilt, and seven church buildings still need to be completely rebuilt from the ground up. While the necessary funding has been received, there is still much work to be done. Please keep praying for our brothers and sisters in Christ in Nepal, as they continue to persevere with strength from the Lord.



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

Visiting the Congregations of the BELC (India)

Dateline—July, 2015.

Pastor Thangavel is a member of the Berea Evangelical Lutheran Church (BELC), in southeastern India. He is also a grade school teacher. He has given over his upstairs as a monthly meeting place for the pastors of the new Ponneri District. This is the kind of generosity we want in the church. That's why the lesson I presented to this group of pastors was, *"Do good unto all men and especially to those of the household of faith."*

While out visiting the new men in their homes, one thing that struck me was that there were three younger men preaching.

- Rajan is twenty-three and the son of another BELC pastor, John. Rajan serves a new station of twenty-four souls. He had fifteen in VBS this summer.
- Partheeban is twenty-four and serves 80 souls in a village of 750.
- Ajanthan is twenty and in the large city of Minjur serves 180 souls! His VBS had seventy children.

Lesson—As Paul wrote to Timothy, let no one despise your youth.

Samuel came out of the Church of South India in Perattur with about twenty people. One who came out with him was Victor, a brother of District Chairman Sampath. Victor is also the father of another of our pastors, Michael Alexander.

Lesson—Work along family lines, like Andrew telling his brother Peter of the Christ.

Anbu in the Tamil language means "love," and that is just what Pastor Anbu is busy about, telling the love of Jesus to the people.

- At Thiruninravur where he lives and preaches, they had a VBS of fifty. Just a year and a half ago they completed their church building in this large city.
- At Sembedu (eighteen kilometers away) where he preaches, they had a VBS of seventy-five, with church membership just under fifty.
- At Karuvappukundu (twenty kilometers away), they had a VBS of thirty, from which grew the congregation of fifteen believers.

Lesson – Only one life, 'twil soon be past, only what's done for Christ will last.

Pastor Bhasker was with the Tamil Evangelical Lutheran Church, but left them over women's ordination, among other things. He learned about the BELC when he attended a function held by Chairman Sampath. He saw that Sampath was an upright man, and inquired of him about the BELC.

Lesson—Let your light so shine before men.

Pastor Vanjee is a tailor. We picked him up at his shop and accompanied him to his home for a visit. He has been preaching for seven years and serves sixty-five souls. He learned of the BELC from Thangavel. In turn, Vanjee told Idhaya Raj, who joined the studies also. Idhaya Raj is busy going through studies to complete his MA.

Lesson—"Tentmaking," as Paul, Priscilla, and Aquila did, is an example for our pastors who must earn a living beyond congregational offerings.

And there is more, but let this suffice to allow you to praise God.

Dateline—August, 2015

There are fourteen men preaching in the district of Ambur. In eight of the villages they serve, there is no other Christian church. This is important in our considerations, as we want to be like Paul, preaching where Christ is not known. Half of the men came out of another Lutheran church body in India. This gives us a leg up when instructing them. These 14 men serve 457 souls. The highest attendance in a VBS was sixty. The oldest pastor is fifty-eight. The longest a man has been preaching is thirty years, while the shortest is four years. Several of the men were Hindu converts. Arul Das, who is forty-three, became a Christian eighteen years ago and has been preaching for the last seven years. Before that he worked in a shoe factory. Ramesh Timothy serves in a village with no other Christian church, and in seven surrounding villages there is also no Christian church.

There is contact between these men and others nearby. Ambur is not far from Vellore. We held an informational meeting at Vellore for twenty-seven preachers. Subjects studied included "What is a Lutheran?" "Baptism," "Communion," and "The Position of Women in the Church." In addition to giving them Tamil-language



Students at the BELC seminary.

copies of these subjects, we handed out studies on “Close Communion” and “Being an Evangelist,” also in their language.

I love to give a handful of candies to pastors’ children, as well as to other children we meet as we walk to the pastor’s house. This is a good reminder that Christ died for all, just as candy is also given indiscriminately. It is a true joy to be out among the brothers and sisters and see and hear and learn and pray.

Dateline—January-February, 2016

In the Berea Evangelical Lutheran Church, there are new pastors and preachers who were accepted as students over two years ago. One of my greatest privileges and blessings is to be able to visit the new men in their homes and villages. We do this to know them better, and to find out things we can pray for and help with, as well as to encourage them in their ministry. Most of the time we are able to meet their wives and children. And it is very informative to go into the village and stroll down the street. What good fellowship it is to sit in the pastor’s house and discuss and pray over things! They give us biscuits and drink, and we give them some things also. This is the two-way street of fellowship under the gracious hand of our Lord. While we are with them, we pray about what we have heard, and encourage them as brothers in the faith.

Some interesting things we found out are as follows:

- Several of the men in the congregation at Nindra have now gone forth to preach at new preaching stations. Having heard the Word, they now want to reach out with

it to others, and are gathering congregations around that life-giving Word.

- Five of the new pastors live in the village of Rayapedu. One man holds services there, and the other four travel from that village to preach in other congregations that have been established. This is a true center of BELC outreach.

- The congregations served by the men in this visitation ranged in size from 22 souls served to 240!

- The oldest pastor is Isaiah, at sixty-four; and the youngest is Devan, at twenty.

- While the pastors do come from different church backgrounds ranging from independent, Pentecostal, Church of Christ, and so on; there is a healthy number who came over to us from the South Andhra Lutheran Church. These men required less instruction, already having knowledge of infant Baptism and the real presence in communion.

Of the many pastors in the BELC, the following pertains to seventy-eight of the new men whom I visited recently:

- There are fifty-four villages where our men preach where the BELC is the only Christian church in town
- There are sixteen men who serve two stations.
- There are two men who serve three or more stations.
- The 78 men serve 5,327 souls for an average size of 68 in a congregation. Although there are several congregations which are larger than the average, most are smaller, and the men have not been serving very long. This indicates the rapid spread of the Word.

I would just like to say that it is a privilege to visit these men and their families. Though they are poor in worldly goods—a material poverty the likes of which few in the USA could understand—yet they are rich with the precious treasure of God’s Word.



David Koenig has served as a foreign missionary in Africa, India, and elsewhere. Though officially retired, he continues to be active in the synod’s mission endeavors.

Redemption Lutheran Church

Lynnwood, Washington

“Give unto the LORD the glory due to His name; worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness” (Psalm 29:2).

Beauty is one thing that is often associated with the Pacific Northwest. There are few other places in the world where one can gaze upon so many displays of the Lord’s wondrous creation. Mountains, dense forests, lush rivers and waterfalls, and the vast ocean are all within easy reach of Pacific Northwest inhabitants. It might be the only place in the world where you can witness a glacial reservoir and a rainforest in the same day!

Redemption Lutheran Church, of the Seattle, Washington, area is also unique in its beauty. The church’s high-reaching wooden timbers have a certain Pacific Northwest feel. Its rows of stained-glass windows cast a palette of color across the Lord’s house. The thunder of the mighty pipe-organ fills hearts with reverence and awe, especially when its melodic creations are connected with Gospel-filled stanzas. Tall cedar trees adorn the property as a testament of the Lord’s unchanging love. Yes, the word “beauty” fits well, both with the property and with God’s creation that surrounds it.

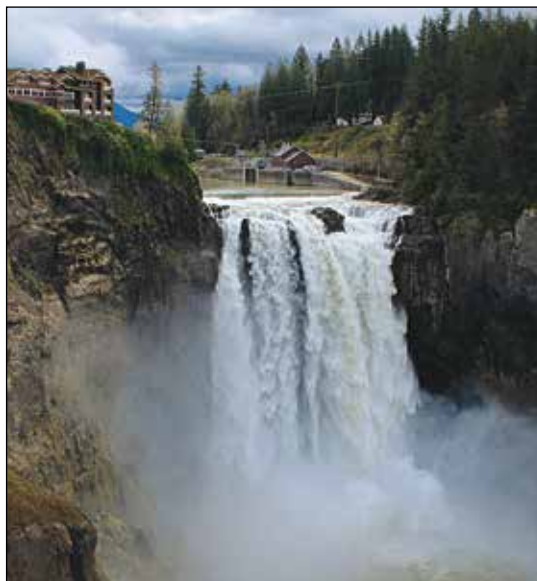
Yet beauty was around long before the walls of Redemption church were erected, and it’s about much more than sights and sounds. It began where it always does, in the forgiven heart. That’s why the members of Redemption take greater pride in the beauty of the Lord’s Word of grace, as it comes to them in spoken, written, and sacramental form. It was hearts filled with this beauty that were led to establish Redemption Lutheran Church on August 16, 1959. With no synodical attachment in the beginning, this small group called upon Pastor Gilbert Sydow of Ellensburg, Washington, to conduct services once a month.

Redemption received its first full-time pastor, Norbert Reim, on January 1, 1961. It officially became a member of the Church of the Lutheran Confession fifteen days later. This fledgling group worshiped in a rented facility for a few years until a parcel of land in Alderwood Manor (a small village within Lynnwood) was purchased in 1965. A parsonage was built immediately, and not long afterward, in 1966, they broke ground on a church building. The sanctuary was completed, largely by volunteer labor, three years later.

In the following years, Redemption was blessed with stability and growth. In 1984 the members fulfilled one of their original goals, the establishment of a Christian day school. The school has operated since; due in large part to the Lord’s continued grace, as well as support from dedicated members. The school, in particular, has been a tremendous resource for reaching out to the community. Many non-member children have attended and been trained in the beauty of their Savior and Redeemer.

During the tenure of Pastor Bertram Naumann, who served Redemption for twenty-seven years, the congregation also had a hand in helping establish other CLC churches. In the early 90’s the members of Redemption supported a small group that began meeting near Tacoma, Washington, (south of Seattle); this group eventually became Ascension Lutheran Church. Pastor Naumann was also very influential in helping establish a mission in Ketchikan, Alaska, as well as two CLC congregations in Canada: Resurrection Lutheran of Calgary, Alberta; and St. Paul Lutheran of Vernon, British Columbia.

Throughout the years, other projects at Redemption were accomplished. In 2002, long-time member and



Snoqualmie Falls, one of the many natural attractions of the Pacific Northwest.



Above: some members of Redemption Lutheran church. Left: exterior of the church; Teacher Quinn Sprengeler with students in the classroom.

What once was a quiet, rural community at the congregation's beginning has since been transformed into a major Seattle suburb. Just north of Lynnwood is the city of Everett, Washington, home of the Boeing aerospace company and the largest building in the world by volume. Fifteen minutes south of Lynnwood is downtown Seattle. The Seattle area is one of the most secular parts of our country, therefore there are plenty of opponents to the truth of God's Word. However, a blessing in disguise is that there is also no shortage of opportunities to share the peace of Christ with others. This beauty stands in stark contrast to the ugliness of sin and unbelief.

Despite many changes, both to congregation and community, two things have remained the same. First, the Lord's grace and mercy upon His children, here in the Pacific Northwest and the rest of the world. Second, and only because of the first, Redemption's desire to serve the Lord and remain faithful to His Word. We continue to work with patient optimism in the promise that God's Word "will not return to Him void, but will accomplish His purpose" (Isaiah 55:11). After all, in the Pacific Northwest one need only look to the horizon for a reminder of that very blessing, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news, who proclaims peace, who brings glad tidings of good things, who proclaims salvation, who says to Zion, 'Your God reigns!'" (Isaiah 52:7).



Mark Tiefel is pastor of Redemption Lutheran Church in Lynnwood, Washington.

organist, Tom Caulton, completed years of extensive work on the sanctuary's pipe organ. Now the organ functions brilliantly each weekend with boisterous songs dedicated to the Lord. A recent addition of chimes to the assembly is also almost complete. Under the supervision of Pastor Caleb Schaller, work was also completed a few years ago to turn the upper balcony area into a usable worship space. Bible studies, fellowship activities, and Christian day school functions continue to operate out of the church basement.

“BREAD OF LIFE” READINGS MAY 2016

TLH = The Lutheran Hymnal, 1941; WS = Worship Supplement 2000; [] = Biblical Events Noted

Date	Verse	Reading	Comments
Jun 1	TLH 128	Acts 10:30-48	Jesus Christ, His death, and His resurrection are for the benefit of all people.
Jun 2	WS 743	Psalm 8	Man is given authority over creation (Gen 1:26), and Christ is given authority over all (Mt 28:18). Lord, how great Thou art!
Jun 3	WS 783	Psalm 23	When the Lord leads, goodness and love shall follow.
Jun 4	TLH 428	1 Samuel 17:1-50	There was no sword in the hand of David, but he trusted God’s “sword” and God delivered.
Jun 6	TLH 418	James 2:1-13	Sinning against any part of God’s Law is a sin against all of it. Pointed out here are sins of partiality and of evil judgments.
Jun 7	TLH 534	1 Samuel 20:1-17	Jonathan loved the Lord and gladly helped the Lord’s servant David.
Jun 8	TLH 427	Psalm 57	In the midst of troubles, may we praise God’s steadfast love and faithfulness toward us.
Jun 9	TLH 402	1 Samuel 24:1-13	It is proper to show respect toward those in authority—out of respect for the Lord who puts them there.
Jun 10	WS 773	Acts 14:8-18	Paul and Barnabas turned the actions of the idolatrous crowd into an opportunity to speak about the true God.
Jun 11	WS 769	Acts 16:16-34	The midnight Gospel hymn festival had an effect on all the prisoners, as none tried to escape. The jailer, too, learned of Christ!
Jun 13	WS 721	Psalm 22	From the lips and harp of psalmist David, our Savior Jesus Christ sings the greatest Lenten hymn.
Jun 14	TLH 518	Psalm 142	Do you ever think, “No one cares for my life”? O Lord, You are my refuge.
Jun 15	TLH 191	Psalm 16	Our bodies will not be abandoned to the grave either, for our Holy One did not see decay, but rose from the dead.
Jun 16	TLH 231	1 Thessalonians 1:1-10	The Holy Spirit had worked a miracle among the Thessalonians, keeping them in the faith in spite of their suffering.
Jun 17	TLH 214	1 Thessalonians 4:1-18	We live for Christ because He lives to give us life forever.
Jun 18	TLH 59	2 Samuel 1:1-4; 2:1-7	The men of Judah performed the anointing, but it was by the Lord’s hand (the one that had led David to Hebron).
Jun 20	WS 701	Psalm 24	Although David was king, He recognized who the true King of Glory was.
Jun 21	WS 747	2 Samuel 6:1-5	They worshiped “with all their might” before the Lord!
Jun 22	TLH 292	2 Thessalonians 2:13-3:5	Stand firm in these evil days and be encouraged because you share in the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.
Jun 23	TLH 244	Psalm 110	Jesus is David’s descendant yet David’s Lord, for Jesus is the living and eternal God.
Jun 24	TLH 272	Psalm 103	[The Birth of John the Baptist] One cannot read this Psalm without thinking of Jesus, the great healer of body and soul.
Jun 25	WS 752	Psalm 25	We do things when we are young (and old) that we wish God would forget. In Christ our Savior, He does.
Jun 27	WS 759	Galatians 1:11-24	The Good News of Christ’s death and resurrection to atone for our sin is not a message made up by men. It’s God’s Word.
Jun 28	TLH 327	2 Samuel 11:1-12:14	Man’s great sin is mercifully overcome by God’s great forgiveness.
Jun 29	TLH 329	Psalm 6	Weeping in sorrow over his sin, David trusted in the Lord to take away his guilt.
Jun 30	WS 727	Galatians 5:1-25	Christ freed us from our sins. What could be better than using our freedom to glorify Him?

In the final installment of this series, choir member Drew Naumann describes the experience of recording a CD with the Tour Choir of Immanuel Lutheran College.

Recording the Tour Choir



Since its genesis, the ILC Tour Choir has always recorded its songs. Every few years it releases an album in order to make those songs available to a broader audience. In this way, people can enjoy the edification of their faith through the beautiful hymns and psalms. Many are unaware, however, of exactly what goes into putting together a Tour Choir CD.

In recent years, recording sessions have taken place at St. John's Lutheran Church (ELCA) in Eau Claire, Wisconsin. The linoleum floors and the hard plaster of the high ceilings make for optimal recording conditions. Each year two recording sessions, which are typically scheduled for the weekend following the return of the choir from its tour, take place.

Using two high-quality microphones and professional recording software, the choir sings the songs deemed by the director to be worthy of recording. As it would be incredibly difficult to sing through the entire concert mistake-free, each song is sung multiple times. Most songs that appear on the newer CDs are actually a synthesis of many takes, the best portions of which are spliced together to make up the final product.

To produce a good recording, many things have to go right. There is very little room for error. The choir may be singing its finest, voices coming in and out in almost perfect synchronization and everyone singing on pitch, yet the whole take can be scrapped by the intrusive sound of a

plane flying overhead or a car driving past. Most recently, the greatest trouble has come from the cathedral across the street, whose bells chime every fifteen minutes. Often, choir members are also trying to shake whatever illnesses found their way onto the tour bus during the previous week. Great patience is required.

I recently took over recording duties from Tom Caulton, who is the organist at Redemption of Lynnwood (see page 12), and who served for many years as the recording engineer for the Tour Choir. In my experience thus far, I have found the process daunting, but the results encouraging. The countless necessary details and obstacles generated by the recording process are enough to make one's head spin, and keep one awake trying to remember that one important thing that was surely forgotten. It is comforting to bear in mind Paul's words in 1 Corinthians, "Whatever you do, do all to the glory of God" (10:31).

Despite any anxious feelings, and solely by the grace of God every year the choir records, and every few years another CD is compiled. It is a great comfort and encouragement for those involved with the recording process that all the effort put into making a CD works to the glory of God and to bring His peace into the homes of many believers. The Word of the Lord grows!

Drew Naumann is a junior at Immanuel Lutheran College.



SEEN IN PASSING

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

More Churchgoers Giving Digitally. The number of church members using digital payment systems to contribute to their churches is rising steeply, according to an article in *Bloomberg Businessweek*. For years now, people of all ages have been using online billpay to transfer money from their

banks to their churches of choice. Recently, however, there has been an upsurge in phone-based apps that facilitate giving. Apps like Tythe.li, Pushpay, and EasyTithe allow you to make a contribution with just a tap or two on your IOS or Android phone. Twenty-something churchgoers especially appreciate

the convenience, since many of them don't carry cash and very few write checks. The sellers of the apps also point out that they allow for contributions at any time of any day, rather than only on Sunday. One app-maker guarantees those churches that subscribe to its service at least a five percent increase in offerings, or their money will be refunded. Tradition is hard to overcome, however. “In some churches, if you let the plate go by and you don't put something in, you feel a little guilty,” says Brad Hill, who works in platform services at EasyTithe. To combat that, some congregations print out cards that say, “I gave online.” Greenfield, Rebecca. “The Church Collection Plate Goes Digital.” *Bloomberg Businessweek*. Bloomberg.com, 8 Mar. 2016. Web. 11 Mar. 2016.

Marquette University Fires Professor for Defending Free Speech This prestigious, nominally Catholic college suspended political science professor John McAdams without pay in November of 2014. He has been banned from the Milwaukee campus ever since, and the university announced in early April that it would seek to revoke his tenure and fire him. His offense? Advocating publicly for free speech on campus. In a blog post, he was rash enough to disagree with the action of colleague Cheryl Abbate, a philosophy professor who refused to permit a student to express “homophobic” opinions supporting traditional marriage in her class. McAdams didn't even support the opinion itself, just the student's right to express it. “It is not the popular views that need protection,” McAdams objected in a letter to Marquette. No matter – he had violated academia's new orthodoxy, and soon thereafter saw his career come to an abrupt end. Sroka Rickert, Diana. “The Marquette professor who dared to speak out.” *Commentary*. ChicagoTribune.com, 11 Apr. 2016. Web. 13 Apr. 2016.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Minnesota Delegate Conference

Immanuel Lutheran Church, Mankato, Minnesota

June 5th, 3:00 p.m.

Agenda:

Brief Summary of CLC/WELS Discussion
—Pastor Paul Nolting

Statement of Purpose of MN Delegate Conference
—Mr. Loren Hansen

Breakout Sessions for discussion of CLC Convention Prospectus and CLC Boards

Conference Chaplain
—Pastor Douglas Libby

—Submitted by Kyle E. Hulke, Secretary

2016 Great Lakes Delegate Conference

Messiah Lutheran Church, Hales Corners, Wisconsin

June 6 -7

Agenda:

“Witnessing to the Reformed”
—Pastor Richard Kanzenbach

“Issues Involving Creation & Proclaiming Genesis in a Secular World”
—Mr. Don Whitenight

“Increasing Our Sharing of the Gospel”
—Pastor David Pfeiffer

Review of the Convention Prospectus

Chaplain
—Pastor Caleb Schaller

Service Speaker
—Professor John Ude

—Submitted by Teacher David W. Bernthal, Secretary



Thirty-Second Convention of the Church of the Lutheran Convention

Immanuel Lutheran College, Eau Claire, Wisconsin

June 23-26

Thursday, June 23:
Registration 8:00-10:00 a.m.,
Convention opens at 10:00 a.m.

Saturday, June 25:
Convention Service, 3:30 p.m.

Sunday, June 26:
Memorial Service, 1:00 p.m.

Theme: In the Footsteps of the Reformers!

First Essay:
“We Continue to Proclaim a Message of Salvation by Grace Alone through Faith Alone!”
—Teacher David Bernthal

Second Essay:
“We are All Priests Continuing to Base Our Faith upon Scripture Alone!”
—Pastor David Pfeiffer

Chaplain
—Pastor David Reim

Convention Service Speaker
—Pastor Wayne Eichstadt

Convention Service Liturgist
—Pastor David Schaller

Memorial Service Speaker
—Pastor John Klatt



CORRECTION:

A recent article about mission work in Congo (April, page 10) mistakenly stated that Pastor Yumba is president of the ELCC. He is actually the president of the Congregation Confessionnelle Luthérienne au Congo (CCLC).