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LUTHERAN SPOKESMAN

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



*"And the LORD God said,
'It is not good that man should be alone;
I will make him a helper comparable to him' "*
(Genesis 2:18).

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God's Institution of Marriage

It's the "Same Old Same Old"

"Then the Lord God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man. The man said, 'This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called "woman," for she was taken out of man.' For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh"

(Genesis 2:22-24 NIV 84).

"Same old same old."

This is the answer I received from a friend when I asked how things were going for him at work. He went on to share that he was feeling a bit burned out and yearning for something new and different from his daily work routine.

People generally use the phrase *same old same old* in a negative sense to describe situations that are boring or annoying (and which they might like to have changed). Yet there's a sense in which it may be understood positively. Take God's institution of marriage, for example. Though large segments of our society are attempting to morph it into something new (the thinking goes something like "Why should we stay mired in

the same old tired ideas of yesteryear? We need to change marriage's definition so that it includes couples of the same sex"), yet for us Christians, marriage remains the "same old" lovely institution God ordained at the dawn of time when He created Eve for Adam (Genesis 2:19-22). We hold fast to what God teaches about marriage and His "same old" definition: marriage is the lifelong union of one man and one woman living together as husband and wife.

There are a few more examples of ways that the phrase *same old* may be thought of in a good and positive way.

"Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you"

(Colossians 3:13 NIV 84).

Husbands and wives may find joy in knowing that the blessings God designs for them in their marriage are the same as those which He promised to Adam and Eve, the original bridal couple: loving companionship (Genesis 2:18), sexual happiness (1 Corinthians 7:2-5), and the precious gift of children (Psalm 127:3). Husbands

and wives may find comfort in knowing that as they seek, in God's strength, to follow the "same old" blueprint for a happy marriage outlined by Paul (Ephesians 5:22-33), God will richly bless them in their marriage.

Does this mean married couples will enjoy perpetual smooth sailing while traversing life's sea together? No. Marriages are made in heaven (in the sense that God joins couples together, Matthew 19:6) but they are lived out by humans on a sinful earth. So it's bound to happen: husbands in their sinful weakness will sometimes fail to love their wives as Christ loved the Church; wives will sometimes fail to submit to their husbands as to the Lord. Hurt feelings may well result and stretches of rough sailing be encountered. When this happens, husbands and wives may rejoice in the "same old" counsel God has given to His Christians of all times, by which He promises to bring

comfort and healing to their hurting hearts: *"Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you"* (Colossians 3:13 NIV 84).

Husbands and wives may also look with confidence to the "same old" Bible passages as a source of spiritual strength. Through faithful hearing and learning of His Word at home and at church, Jesus will draw them closer to each other in the bonds of marital love. He'll sustain them—for as long as they both shall live—by His "same old" Gospel promise: *"Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge*

him, and he will make your paths straight" (Proverbs 3:5-6 NIV84).



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

PRAYER FOR THE MARRIED

Hear us, now, our God and Father; Send Your Spirit from above
On each Christian man and woman Who have made their vows of love.
Bind their hearts in true devotion Endless as the seashore's sands,
Boundless as the deepest ocean, Blessed and sealed by Your own hands.
Give them joy to lighten sorrow; Give them hope to brighten life.
Go with them to face the morrow; Stay with them in every strife.
As Your Word has promised, ever Fill them with Your strength and grace
So that each may serve the other Till they see You face to face.

(Christian Worship #603)



HYMN 620

“Lord, Who at Cana’s Wedding-Feast”

Hymn 620 is actually a prayer to Christ, offered in the context of a wedding ceremony. When at that wedding we sing **“Thou dearer far than earthly guest,/ Vouchsafe Thy presence here”** (verse 1), we are actually praying that Christ will be present at this wedding, even as He was present at the wedding in Cana, where He performed the first miracle in His public ministry.

The presence of Christ at a wedding sanctifies the promise of faithfulness that the bride and groom make to one another in that ceremony (**“For holy Thou indeed dost prove/ The marriage vow to be”**). This vow is sacred—it is made in the presence of God—and the substance of the vow is faithfulness unto death. Underscoring the importance of the marriage covenant is the fact that marriage is a *type* (that is, an element that prefigures something else that will have the same or similar characteristics) of the relationship between Christ and the Church: **“Proclaiming it [marriage] a type of love/ Between the Church and Thee.”** As taught in Ephesians 5:22-33, the relationship of husband and wife to one another is to be, at least in some regards, a microcosm of the relationship between Christ and His Church. Those who are members of Christ’s Church, the bride of Christ, who nonetheless lightly regard their marriage relationship are—at best—inconsistent.

Verse 2 of this hymn adds the corresponding element that a marriage is to be permanent. It characterizes the wedding vow as **“This holy vow that man can make,/ the golden thread in life,/ The bond that none may dare to break.”** It is important for us to maintain this truth, especially as the culture in which we are immersed increasingly rejects it. In the book *Mere Christianity*, C.S. Lewis aptly characterized our society’s easy acceptance of divorce as “. . . the modern view that it [divorce] is a simple readjustment of partners, to be made whenever people feel they are no longer in love with one

another, or when either of them falls in love with someone else.” However, consider what that view of marriage and divorce would mean if we were to apply it to the relationship of Christ and the Church. It would mean that Christ has no permanent commitment or devotion to the Church, nor we to Him. Certainly, the exact opposite is true of the Church as the bride of Christ, and therefore should also be true of all Christians in their marriages.

Verse 2 also points out that when bride and groom both recognize their marriage for what it truly is, a blessing from God, then the “ups and downs” of life will not break their relationship: **“Which, blest by Thee, what-e’er betides,/ No evil shall destroy.”** Indeed, their relationship to one another and in submission to Christ is exactly what helps them through the “tough times” of sorrows, disappointment, and even grief. The Christian marriage relationship can be thought of as dividing the bad parts in half and doubling the good parts: **“Thro’ care-worn days each care divides,/ And doubles ev’ry joy.”**

When we sing this hymn, we are praying that the Lord would bless a wedding couple. But what blessings, specifically, are we praying for? We are asking that they may stir one another to greater Christian ardor (**“That each may wake the other’s zeal/ To love Thee more and more”**), that they may live in peace (**“Oh, grant them here in peace to live”**), that their lives may be pure and filled with love (**“In purity and love”**), and that when their lives in this world are finished, they may enter into that everlasting life which God’s grace to us in Christ has won (**“And, this world leaving, to receive/ A crown of life above”**).

We pray this hymn for the wedding couple, and also for our own marriages.



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

Hymn #620 Notes:

Text: John 2: 1-11, Author: St. 1, 3, Adelaide Thrupp, 1853, St. 2 Gogfrey Thring, 1882, Composer: Gottfried W. Fink, 1842, Tune: “Bethlehem”

“What a Contrast!”

“Now when these things had been thus prepared, the priests always went into the first part of the tabernacle, performing the services. But into the second part the high priest went alone once a year, not without blood, which he offered for himself and for the people’s sins committed in ignorance; the Holy Spirit indicating this, that the way into the Holiest of All was not yet made manifest while the first tabernacle was still standing. It was symbolic for the present time in which both gifts and sacrifices are offered which cannot make him who performed the service perfect in regard to the conscience—concerned only with foods and drinks, various washings, and fleshly ordinances imposed until the time of reformation” (Hebrews 9:6-10).

For the Israelites, no place was more revered than the sanctuary. Here God placed His great name. Here God met with His people. Here God accepted sacrifices for sins. This is why the Jews viewed the destruction of the sanctuary in 586 B.C. and again in 70 A.D. as immeasurable catastrophes.

Yet, as glorious and important as the sanctuary was, its ordinances, furnishings, and services were made obsolete by the coming of Christ. As stated in Hebrews 8:13, “Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away.”

From Shadow to Substance

The sanctuary was merely a picture of “the good things to come, with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation” (9:11). Virtually everything about the sanctuary pointed to Christ and the New Covenant—a covenant based on grace, not works.

Many of the sanctuary furnishings foreshadowed Christ. The lampstand was a symbol of Christ, the Light of the world. The table of showbread, Christ the Bread of life. The altar of incense, prayers acceptable to God through Christ. Blood sprinkled on the mercy seat of the ark of the covenant, the atoning blood of Christ. In fact, in Romans 3:25 Jesus Himself is called a *propitiation*—literally, a mercy seat.

When Christ established the New Covenant in His blood, the Old Covenant became obsolete. Therefore, for the Hebrew Christians to return to the Old Covenant would mean settling for a picture of Christ instead of

embracing the Person of Christ. What a contrast!

From Barriers to Full and Free Access

The sanctuary was a place of barriers. No Israelite was able to approach God directly. Only priests were allowed into the Holy Place. Only the high priest was permitted to enter the Most Holy Place—and this but once each year on the Day of Atonement. On that solemn day, the high priest’s dress, words, washings, and sacrifices were strictly regulated. His failure to comply with God’s instructions would result in instant death.

By these barriers, the Holy Spirit was indicating “that the way into the Holiest of All was not yet made manifest while the first tabernacle was still standing” (9:8). But the way to God was made gloriously manifest through the death of Jesus Christ.

When Jesus cried out “It is finished” on the cross, the thick veil in the sanctuary was torn from top to bottom, from heaven to earth; signifying that the way was open for us to approach God freely, fully, and personally. As Paul wrote in Romans 5:1-2,

“Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also WE HAVE ACCESS by faith into this grace in which we stand.” For the Hebrew Christians, forsaking Christ would mean exchanging the full freedom of the Gospel for the full condemnation of the Law. What a contrast!

From Incomplete Sacrifices to Full Atonement

The sanctuary was a bloody place. Though animal sacrifices were made daily and annually, they could not “make him who performed the service perfect in regard to the conscience” (9:9). For it was not possible “that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins” (10:4). These sacrifices merely pointed to the once-for-all sacrifice of Christ. As stated in Hebrews 9:28, “Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many.” What a contrast!

Through that once-for-all sacrifice, we confidently proclaim with the apostle Paul, “There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus” (Romans 8:1).



Mark Weis is pastor of Grace Lutheran Church, with locations in North Port and Fort Myers, Florida.

A Glory-Winning Performance

Many people follow the Academy Awards show to see which nominees did the best at playing their respective roles. The winners are much applauded for their craft and professionalism. But at the end of the evening, what they gave us was just a movie, a work of fiction.

There once lived in Israel a wise woman who also turned out to be an amazing actress in her own right. She is identified only as “*the woman of Tekoa*,” and we read of her award-winning performance in 2 Samuel 14. The plot in this story is downright depressing, but is a reflection of real life. King David’s son Amnon had raped his half-sister Tamar, whose brother was Absalom—another of David’s sons. This evil deed filled Absalom’s heart with murderous hatred, and after two years he finally found an opportunity to exact revenge. He killed Amnon, but then had to flee the country.

Three years later, Joab, David’s army commander, entered stage right. It was obvious to him that his king was suffering deeply over his prodigal son. So Joab employed the woman from Tekoa to play a part before the king. The script they wrote called for her to act the part of a mourner, in which one of her two sons had killed the other. The hand of the law was seeking capital justice, but she pleaded that such a sentence “*would extinguish my ember that is left, and leave to my husband neither name nor remnant on the earth.*” No doubt there were many tears mixed with her emotional plea. David was so convinced by her performance that he gave multiple assurances that no harm would come to her son.

The actress then accused David of acting hypocritically, for his real son was still in danger, with no protective order from the king. David was caught in the web and gave the word that Absalom safely be brought back to Jerusalem.

What a winning performance by this woman. But as for a happy ending—not quite. There were several things amiss in the account. On the one hand, the actress obviously implied that the God she knew would never punish evil-doers, even murderers. Coinciding with this was the fact

that Absalom never repented of his wicked deed. And so, while Absalom gained a measure of reinstatement (but still was banished from his father’s presence), he remained a wicked, unrepentant son and very shortly thereafter proved it again by committing rebellion against his father.

How different was the prodigal son in Jesus’ parable. He also behaved wickedly, but was received back with forgiving joy by his father after he was humbled and led to repentance. David himself had committed murder, but confessed it and was forgiven by God. Which raises the question, how can true reconciliation be obtained without repentance?

Jesus was not a Hollywood actor, but He was sent from heaven to take on the part of this world’s Redeemer and

Reconciler—for real! Satan with his devious scripts would have us believe that sin is a myth, that God does not punish evil and that He will bring all sinners into His kingdom no matter what they believe and do. But that is the purest fiction. Our sins are so real and weighty that to atone for them, to reconcile us back to our Creator, cost Jesus His life and

hellish agony. Yet His death and resurrection declared Him victorious over all that separates us from God; He is indeed the winner, with great glory and heavenly acclaim.

And while it is certainly true that the whole world is reconciled to God through Jesus’ blood and merit, yet the blessings of His saving performance cannot be had without repentance and faith. “*The kingdom of God is at hand. Repent and believe the gospel*” (Mark 1:15), said the Savior. “. . . *On Christ’s behalf, be reconciled to God*” (2 Cor. 5:20). The actress of Tekoa got Absalom only within the vicinity of the king. May the Reconciler’s Spirit graciously and continuously work in us true humility and repentance, and so bring and keep us in the very kingdom of God to enjoy His Fatherly presence forevermore.

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



Satan with his devious scripts would have us believe that sin is a myth, that God does not punish evil and that He will bring all sinners into His kingdom no matter what they believe and do. But that is the purest fiction.

"Does the Bible Contain Mistakes?"

No, the Bible doesn't contain any mistakes. Everything it says is reliable and true, since it is given by inspiration of God. This is what makes it "profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness" (2 Timothy 3:16 ESV).

Yet, skeptics are challenging the reliability of the Bible all the time, usually for one of three reasons: a failure to read the text of Scripture from the perspective of those who wrote it, an inability to understand the difference between Law and Gospel, or a refusal to submit to the teaching, reproof, correction, and training in righteousness which God's Word provides.

With regard to the first reason, a simple example will suffice. Jesus told the Jews who asked for a sign from Him, "Just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth" (Matthew 12:40 ESV). Jesus died in the afternoon on Good Friday and was placed in the tomb shortly before sundown. He was raised already early Sunday morning. So, by our calculations, Jesus was "in the heart of the earth" a small portion of Friday, all of Saturday, and then only a small portion of Sunday. That would be two nights and less than two days. But when one takes into account that the Jews counted any portion of a day as a whole day, the supposed mistake goes away. He was in the tomb Friday, Saturday, and Sunday; and, from their perspective, that would be counted as three days and three nights. Many of the challenges to the Bible's reliability are over just such matters.

Secondly, challenges to Biblical reliability often arise simply because of a failure to understand the difference between the Law and the Gospel. In giving us His Law, God did not intend for mankind to think that we could ever earn heaven by obeying it. Indeed, "the law is not laid down for the just but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane, for those who

strike their fathers and mothers, for murderers" (1 Timothy 1:9 ESV). In short, the Law shows our sin and our need for a Savior. The Gospel, on the other hand, does give sinners a way to heaven in that it teaches us about Jesus, Who fulfilled the Law for us and also took away our sins against God's Law. Confusing these two great teachings will often cause one to see an apparent contradiction where no true contradiction exists.

Finally, some simply refuse to submit to the authority of God's Word because they don't like what it says. Consequently, they will "find" errors in order to justify their rebellion against God's Word. This is common in our day, as people attempt to justify their idolatrous,

adulterous, and blasphemous living. They pit Moses against Paul, and Matthew against John, and Jesus against all of them. "Jesus never condemned homosexuality the way Paul did," they say. "Matthew says this, but John says that," they opine. Yet, in their rejection of the authority of God's Word, this truth is demonstrated: "The natural man receives not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Corinthians 2:14 ESV). Unbelievers think that they find contradictions and mistakes in God's Word only because the Holy Spirit alone can teach one to see the reliability and the authority of God's Word. But to those in

whom the Holy Spirit works understanding, God's Word is revealed to be a true lamp to their feet and a light to their path (Psalm 119:105). It alone lights the way to eternal life through Jesus Christ, our Savior.

This is a very brief answer to the question. There certainly is more to consider, and your pastor will be happy to help you delve more deeply into the matter, since

it is his calling to use God's reliable Word to teach, reprove, correct, and instruct in righteousness.

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

Your Word
is a lamp
to my feet
And a light
to my path.

Psalm 119:105



As we approach the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, we take a brief look at the lives of influential and important Lutheran leaders and theologians.

J.P. Koehler, 1859-1951

For forty-nine years, John Phillip Koehler had faithfully served the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) as a parish pastor, a professor at Northwestern College, and a professor and president of the Wauwatosa Seminary. Then, in 1929, the seminary board suspended him from teaching and administrative duties, and in 1930 fired him. He then had to leave seminary housing, so he moved to Neillsville, Wisconsin, to a house which his son had built for him. In 1933, the WELS met in convention and formally severed its relationship with Koehler because Koehler was in fellowship with those with whom WELS was not; namely, the members of the Protestant Conference.

J.P. Koehler was born on January 17, 1859 in Manitowoc, Wisconsin, to Pastor Christian Phillip Koehler and his wife, Apollonia (née Schick). Five years previously, Koehler's father, who was a confessional Lutheran, had been sent by the Langenberger Mission Society in Germany to North America.

Koehler, along with John Schaller and August Pieper, attended Northwestern College in Watertown, Wisconsin; and then Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, Missouri, where all three studied under C.F.W. Walther, Franz Pieper, and George Stoeckhardt. Their years overlapped at both institutions, and all were appreciative of Walther. However, after the three had joined the WELS seminary in Wauwatosa, they developed what became known as the Wauwatosa Theology, partly in reaction to Walther's heavy emphasis on dogmatics and citation theology. By contrast, they emphasized the importance of careful, original exegesis of God's Word.

Koehler graduated from St. Louis in 1880 and then served with his father for two years. From 1882-88 he served St. John Lutheran in Two Rivers, Wisconsin, and then accepted a call from Northwestern College. In 1900 he joined the seminary at Wauwatosa, where he taught New Testament exegesis, church history, hermeneutics, liturgy, and church music—he was talented in many fields!



President John Schaller died in the influenza epidemic of 1918-1920, and Koehler became college president.

In 1924, Koehler was granted a year's sabbatical. During his absence, the faculty of Northwestern College expelled some students who had been stealing from town businesses. The board reinstated them over the faculty's objections, and Koehler's son was among those who resigned in protest of the reinstatement. There were also other problems

elsewhere in the synod. In 1926 a certain Pastor Beitz penned a conference paper that called on the synod to repent of legalism. Synodical officials strongly disagreed and asked the seminary to prepare an opinion. August Pieper wrote a response that accused Beitz of slander, mixing justification and sanctification, and false doctrine. Koehler had signed the opinion with the understanding that the opinion would not be made public, and that Koehler would speak with Beitz. The opinion, however, was made public. Koehler revoked his signature, and then issued an opinion that Beitz was careless in his use of language but was not guilty of false doctrine. Pieper and J.P. Meyer wrote a response condemning Koehler's "historical viewpoint." Koehler wrote a clarification in 1929, whereupon the seminary board suspended him. He subsequently left Wauwatosa, and eventually aligned himself with the Protestant Conference.

Koehler's two most notable publications are his *Lehrbuch der Kirchengeschichte* (Textbook of Church History, 1917) and *The History of the Wisconsin Synod* (published in 1970). Historian Jaroslav Pelikan rated the *Kirchengeschichte* as "the outstanding work of its kind to come out of American Lutheranism, regardless of synod."

Koehler died in Neillsville on September 30, 1951; he was preceded in death by his wife in 1938 and his eldest son Karl in 1948.



Steven Karp is pastor of St. Stephen Lutheran Church in Hayward, California.

Makanya, Tanzania

I still remember that day. I was with three other mission helpers wrapping up our three-week visit to India. We were in our hotel room when one of the other mission helpers called us to the balcony overlooking the busy road below. “Come here, quick!” We rushed to the balcony and we knew immediately why we had been summoned. In the busily-moving crowd of passersby, our eyes quickly settled on two white faces moving among the Indians. They were the first light-colored faces we had seen since we parted from the rest of the mission helpers in Nellore over two weeks earlier.

Years later, as I planned my annual visitation to Tanzania, I was somewhat dismayed when I realized I would be flying solo for the first time. It’s a blessing to have someone with you to share the work, share thoughts, and reflect on the activities of the day. But on this trip, I wasn’t going to have that. For the most part, things went well on the trip. It was more work, and a little more lonely, but a wonderful thing happened.

I was spending a few days in Makanya, Tanzania, where the General Pastoral Conference for Tanzanian churches was being hosted. Makanya is a very dry and desolate area in the northeastern part of Tanzania. Never-ending crops of sisal (a plant from which rope is made) are about the only things to be seen on the barren landscape, and the town of Makanya boasts no tourist attractions or recreational activities. Yet I wasn’t there for tourism or recreation. I was there to work with the pastors of the Tanzanian Church of the Lutheran Confession (TCLC). We studied the Augsburg Confession, focusing on Article III (The Person and Work of Christ) and Article IV (Justification). It was a very rewarding conference and many of the men expressed their joy and their appreciation to the CLC for hosting and leading the conference.

As the conference concluded, we gathered in the evening



Attendees at the pastoral conference in Makanya, Tanzania.

for our final meal, the “goat feast.” A goat was roasted over a freshly-dug hole just outside the door where we had held our two-day conference. It was there that one of the pastors made this statement: “We like it when you come alone. We feel closer to you when you are here alone.”

**“We like it when
you come alone.
We feel closer to
you when you are
here alone.”**

I had never really thought about that before. When I had come with others, had I inadvertently given the impression that I didn’t want to be around my African brethren, or that I would rather spend time with my American friends? Upon reflection, I realized that I had become closer to several of the men with whom I spent extra time on this trip. I didn’t want to believe it, but there probably was some truth to what that pastor had said. I began to notice that when I was on the bus or walking down the street in Africa, I felt more of a connection with those with light skin. I was more inclined to start a conversation with a person who looked like me, over someone with dark skin. But just because a person has light skin, that doesn’t make him any more like me than someone with dark skin. There are light-skinned people with whom I can’t even communicate, because they speak a different language (Italian, French and Dutch are examples of nationalities I have met). Even

if I can communicate with them, I usually find out that their ideologies are completely different from mine. This may also be true of many Africans, but the point is that it is not the color of our skin that makes us similar or different. On that trip to Africa I came to realize (again) that I have much more in common with my African brethren than I do with the average “mzungu” (Swahili for “white person”). And that is just as true here in the United States as it is in Africa. It just goes to show, “You can’t judge a book by its cover.”

We all need this reminder from time to time, because we tend to look at the outside for commonalities first. But this is really the least important of all. What valuable relationships have you missed out on because you judged the book by its cover?

I found that I have a great deal in common with these

“just because a person has light skin, that doesn’t make him any more like me than someone with dark skin”

Tanzanian pastors, even if our skin color is different. And I did enjoy getting to know them better on that trip. What a wonderful reminder of what the Apostle Paul wrote to the Galatians about the fellowship that we Christians share through faith, no matter what the color of our skin or ethnic heritage: *“For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise”* (Galatians 3:27-29).



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



Graduates

May 21, 2016, saw commencement exercises held at CLC secondary schools in Mankato, Minnesota, and Eau Claire, Wisconsin.

Four students graduated from Immanuel Lutheran High School in Mankato (left).

In Eau Claire, there were two seminary, six college, and thirty-one high school graduates (right).



Resurrection Lutheran Church

Corpus Christi, Texas

Names are important, for they have much to tell. When the members of Resurrection Lutheran Church in Corpus Christi, Texas, chose their new name, they arrived at more than just a name. The name *RESURRECTION* was and continues to be a confession of the fact that our Savior Jesus Christ is risen.

The Church of the Lutheran Confession had a presence in the Coastal Bend area of Corpus Christi as early as 1969 with Zion Lutheran Church. When the members of Zion closed the church and sold the property in 1986, they tested the spirits with other Lutheran teaching. When they found it wanting, they were led to start again with the establishment of another CLC congregation in 1991. A new beginning was another reason for the name *Resurrection Lutheran Church*.

Over the years, Pastors Daniel Fleischer, Arvid Gullerud, Jay Hartmann, Paul Larsen, Dale Redlin, Norbert Reim, and Andrew Schaller have served Resurrection. The current pastor, Edward Starkey, was installed on Resurrection Sunday, April 5, 2015 by vacancy pastor Paul Fleischer. Pastor emeritus Daniel Fleischer served both Zion and Resurrection for a total of over twenty years. Resurrection has also made their pastors available to the vacancies at Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church in Weslaco, Texas.

Located at 201 Princess Drive in the Annaville area of Corpus Christi, the church property includes about



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an acre of land. The church building was originally a home. The parsonage sits next door. Cardinals and hummingbirds are the most regular outdoor visitors. The neighborhood is directly behind a 400-acre agricultural field that is rotated in cotton and sorghum. There are seven oil refineries fairly close by.

Most of the twenty-eight members live in a radius of about forty miles in different directions from the church, and five younger members are studying or working away from home. There are currently few non-communicant members, though Sunday School teachers, led by Marian Burkhardt's forty years of experience, are always prepared for visiting children.

Almost sixty percent of Corpus Christi is Hispanic; therefore Spanish is frequently heard. Two Resurrection members are first-language Spanish speakers. Three members, including our oldest members, Stella Cothran and Anita Villarreal, live in assisted-living communities where Resurrection holds services each week.

Like all CLC congregations, Resurrection Lutheran Church in Corpus Christi has the primary purpose of proclaiming the saving Gospel of Jesus Christ. Our presence and outreach is to a city whose name is Latin for "Body of Christ." Locally there are many confessions. Roman Catholics, Baptists and other reformed denominations, along with indifferent unbelievers, make up the majority of the population.

The Coastal Bend region of Texas is on the Gulf of



Exterior of Resurrection Lutheran Church.

local fishermen still provide an ample catch, and sport fishing is also very popular both from the shoreline and by boat.

Plants, flowers, and numerous kinds of birds give a particularly pretty finish to this part of Texas. The lights of the city coastline, especially the changing colors of the Harbor Bridge, also make for an attractive evening scene. Nearby are the award-winning Texas State Aquarium and the Essex-class aircraft carrier USS Lexington, now a permanent museum. There is also an active military presence in the area with the Naval Air Station for training pilots. The

Army Depot is the major helicopter repair station in the US, and the Department of Homeland Security Customs and Border Patrol has a large presence that includes Resurrection member Alan Durham.

Padre and Mustang Islands are just off the coast, and offer fine beaches and ample opportunities for enjoyment and relaxation. Longtime members John and Jackie Fisher have operated Fortuna Bay Bed and Breakfast on North Padre Island for years. The whole Coastal Bend and South Texas offers a large variety of short-term and long-term lodging.

The name *Texas* is from the Caddo Indian word *teyshas*, which means “friends.” Your friends in Texas at Resurrection Lutheran Church welcome you. Services are at 10:30 A.M., Bible Class and Sunday School at 9:30 A.M. At Resurrection Lutheran Church in Corpus Christi, Bibles are free—one verse at time. Forgiveness of all sin at the cross of Calvary, through the risen and resurrected Savior Jesus Christ, is our sure hope and the basis of our outreach!



Edward Starkey is pastor of Resurrection Lutheran Church in Corpus Christi, Texas.



Some of the members of Resurrection.

Mexico, literally at the bend. Heading north, the coastline turns to the east at Corpus Christi. The population of Corpus Christi is over 320,000, and continues to grow. A good number of “winter Texans” are in the area from October through April.

Along with ranching and farming, there is much industry. Oil and gas refineries are obvious reminders to visitors that this is an area that supplies much fuel for our nation. There is also a great amount of support industry providing needed supplies for the energy sector. Gulf water commercial fishing is not what it once was, but

“BREAD OF LIFE” READINGS JULY 2016

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

Date	Verse	Reading	Comments
Jul 1	TLH 322	Psalm 143	Confessing our failure to do God’s will, we trust both in His mercy and in His future guidance.
Jul 2	TLH 526	Psalm 3	Protection and deliverance come from the Lord.
Jul 4	TLH 577	2 Samuel 18:28-19:4	David’s love would have given his life for sinful Absalom. Jesus’ love gave His life for all poor sinners.
Jul 5	TLH 234	1 Corinthians 2:6-14	God’s “secret wisdom” is the Gospel, revealed by the Spirit, which no human mind could have figured out for itself.
Jul 6	TLH 249	Psalm 65	[The Call of Isaiah] Blessed are those the Lord chooses to bring near to Him—those like Isaiah, and us.
Jul 7	WS 744	Psalm 138-139	The works of God’s hands are precious.
Jul 8	TLH 378	2 Samuel 23:1-7	We say “get your house in order” before you die, but it is God who really gets our house in order through His Son (v. 5).
Jul 9	TLH 331	1 Corinthians 5:1-8	The impenitent sinner is removed for his own good and for the good of others—because Christ has been sacrificed for us!
Jul 11	TLH 225	1 Kings 3:1-15	It’s not enough to have knowledge or power, you have to know how to use it. God can enlighten us with His wisdom.
Jul 12	TLH 540	Proverbs 8:1-36	“Wisdom” is speaking, but you can hear the voice of Jesus too, can’t you?
Jul 13	TLH 555	Proverbs 15:1-9	Keep watch on your tongue by remembering Christ’s loving words of forgiveness to you.
Jul 14	TLH 416	1 Corinthians 10:23-11:1	Let this mind be in you: Seek the good of others.
Jul 15	TLH 621	Proverbs 18:22-24	Choosing good companions in life is vital to our Christian walk. Pray for God’s help.
Jul 16	WS 791	Songs 3:1-11	[Ruth gleanes in the field of Boaz] The companionship of marriage is one of God’s richest blessings. It rejoices the heart (v. 11).
Jul 18	TLH 403	Proverbs 22:1-12	These are more than just “wise sayings.” In doing them we can show our respect and love for the Lord.
Jul 19	TLH 401	1 Corinthians 13:1-13	Love is the fulfillment of the Law. We love because Christ loved us.
Jul 20	TLH 48	Proverbs 30:5-9	[Elijah Taken in the Whirlwind] A prayer for faithfulness from one who takes refuge in God’s word.
Jul 21	TLH 626	Proverbs 31:10-31	There is nothing finer than a virtuous woman. She is a gift from the Lord.
Jul 22	WS 741	1 Kings 5:1-12	God gave Solomon the wisdom and the rest from his enemies that was necessary to build the temple.
Jul 23	WS 733	1 Corinthians 15:1-58	If you were to memorize one chapter in the Bible, maybe this should be it. It is a concentrated dose of the great Good News!
Jul 25	WS 760	1 Kings 6:1-38	Seven years to build a church, and at what cost! The Lord God whom they worshiped was worth the effort.
Jul 26	TLH 639	1 Kings 8:3-13	The people came to the temple, but the amazing thing was that God came to dwell with His people.
Jul 27	TLH 632	Psalm 127	All our work, grand as it may be, is nothing unless God puts His hand to it too.
Jul 28	TLH 276	2 Corinthians 2:5-11	The man who was put out of the fellowship (See Jul 9) repented and was restored by the grace of God!
Jul 29	TLH 201	2 Corinthians 5:1-10	[The Raising of Lazarus] We look ahead to our life in heaven with Jesus, and what we see gives us confidence and hope.
Jul 30	TLH 430	Ecclesiastes 2:1-12	Nothing really matters in the end except Christ crucified and risen for our salvation.

Living Hope Lutheran Church Appleton, Wisconsin

The congregation of Living Hope in the Appleton, Wisconsin, area has seen a lot of changes in the past few years. In 2014 the congregation applied for and began receiving full mission subsidy through the CLC Board of Missions. The members of Living Hope rented an office space in Kimberly to use as a worship facility. They called David Ude to be their first full-time resident pastor. Everyone was excited to have a space which they could set up and leave up (previously they had rented space in another local church for twice-monthly meetings.)

It wasn't long before the congregation started to look into options for a building of their own. They looked all over the Appleton area for a building that might serve them as a church. When nothing seemed to fit their needs and budget, the congregation investigated buying land and building a church. They found what seemed to be a great piece of land, found a building contractor, and developed a design at a price they could afford. But it was not to be. They went back to the drawing board and started looking, again, for existing buildings they could move into. In the

following months, several buildings drew their attention. They were about to make an offer on one of these when the seller dramatically increased the asking price, putting it out of their reach.

Then they found an existing church building in Appleton that seemed perfect for the congregation. In April they closed



Members and friends of Living Hope Lutheran Church at the dedication of their new facility.

on the purchase of the new church building. On April 15th 2016—Good Shepherd Sunday—they met for the first time in their new location to receive the gifts God gives through Word and Sacrament.

Pastor Ude writes: "How fitting! After all, if He guided us to such pleasant earthly pastures in His own good time, then truly through the Word preached and sacraments given under these humble rafters, our Good Shepherd, our Living Hope, will surely guide us to the eternal pastures of those blessed and hallowed halls above! We trust that the Good Shepherd will bless the preaching of His Word in this building and grant ears to hear it!"

Among other current outreach endeavors, the congregation is planning their first VBS this summer. A TVBS team will travel to Appleton to help distribute flyers. May the Lord bless their efforts in His kingdom to the glory of His name and the salvation of souls!



Lutheran Spokesman

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

SEEN IN PASSING

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

New Software May Break Bible Translation Barriers. New Bible software called *Render* may solve the problem of 1,800 current living languages for which there is no Bible translation. Many of these are difficult languages spoken only in a small geographical area; some are purely oral and have no alphabet or written form. *Render*, developed by Robin Green for the company Faith Comes by Hearing, allows a local translator to listen to the Bible in a major language spoken nearby and record a new spoken translation. This saves a translator from having to first create an alphabet, teach the community literacy, and write down the translated Bible. Eekhoff Zylstra, Sarah. “Mouth to Mouth: New oral Bible translation software eliminates the middleman.” *Christianity Today* May 2016:19. Print.

Stop Saying “I Feel Like.” In a May 1 article for the *New York Times*, history professor Molly Worthen cites statistics indicating that the expression “I feel like” has exploded in American usage in recent years. People no longer “think,” “believe” or “are convinced of” anything, she says; instead, they merely *feel*. “My students begin almost every statement with ‘I feel like.’” An expression that at first seems humble and self-deprecating, Worthen explains, may actually conceal an unwillingness (or inability) to reasonably defend one’s views; for when people cite feelings or personal experience, “you can’t really refute them with logic, because that would imply they didn’t have that experience.” It also underlines society’s drift toward value relativism: “For decades, Americans have been in the process of abandoning both the moral strictures of religion and the Enlightenment quest for universal truth in favor of obsessing over their own internal states and well-being.” Worthen, Molly. “Stop Saying ‘I Feel Like.’” *New York Times* 1 May, 2016:SR4.

Eighty-one Percent Favor a Ban on Abortions after Three Months. In an article for *Commentary* magazine, columnist Jonathan Tobin noted that recent political statements by both Democratic and Republican presidential candidates have ignored a critical fact—that four out of five

Americans are in favor of banning abortion at a *much* earlier date than is currently being discussed. Democrats will brook no proposal whatever that might infringe on “a woman’s right to choose” abortion at any stage of the pregnancy, while Republicans are hedging even on late-term abortion restrictions. That is at odds with a recent Marist poll showing eighty-one percent of respondents supporting a ban on abortions after three months. Tobin, Jonathan S. “The Abortion Debate Democrats Fear.” *American Society*. Commentary, 4 Apr. 2016. Web. 6 May 2016.

Science Will Make Religion Obsolete (Stop Me If You’ve Heard This One Before). Writing for *RealClearScience.com*, biologist and author Ross Pomeroy predicts that advances in scientific knowledge will increasingly marginalize religion, possibly to the point of rendering it extinct. This, of course, has been predicted many times in the past (see *Time* magazine’s 1966 cover story, “Is God Dead?”). But Pomeroy insists that this time is different—today we know the *real* scientific facts. “We are perhaps the first generation of humans to truly possess a factually accurate understanding of our world

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church of West Columbia, South Carolina, will mark the retirement from the public ministry of Pastor Vance Fossum with a special service on July 3rd, 2016. Morning worship is at 11:00 A.M., followed by a dinner and special program. All are welcome to attend.
-- Jay Sydow, Congregational President.

and ourselves,” the author claims. Not only will this modern scientific certainty serve to snuff out the archaic superstitions of the past, says Pomeroy, but it will provide true meaning and purpose to people’s lives. “Mastery of nature imbues individuals with the belief that they are in control of their lives Not only does science dispel religious belief, it also serves as an effective substitute for it.” Among those expressing dissent from Pomeroy’s view was a certain Jewish carpenter, Who said, “*Without Me, you can do nothing*” (John 15:5). Pomeroy, Ross. “Will Science Drive Religion Extinct?” *Newton Blog*. *RealClearScience.org* Mar. 2016. Web. 6 Apr. 2016.



New pastors and their families: (left) Immanuel Lutheran Seminary graduate Joe Naumann, wife Rachel and daughter Eleanor; (right) graduate Ben Libby and wife Krissy. Pastor Naumann has been called to Immanuel, Mankato, Minnesota, and Pastor Libby to Ascension, Tacoma, Washington