

# LUTHERAN SPOKESMAN

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

“And the Lord, whom you seek,  
Will suddenly come to His temple,  
Even the Messenger of the covenant,  
In whom you delight.  
Behold, He is coming,”  
Says the LORD of hosts.

MALACHI 3:1





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# Unto Us a Child Is Born



**A** birth announcement can be one of the more joyful tasks a married couple may complete. Whether the news is published online, with an old-fashioned picture, or with a card in the mail, everyone wants to hear the details—boy or girl? How much did he weigh? How long was he? What’s the name? Who does the baby look like?

When Jesus was presented at the Temple forty days after His birth, it was no mere birth announcement for the delight of relatives and the curiosity of strangers. Rather, it was a fulfillment of God’s Law and a pronouncement of Who Jesus truly is.

The period of Jesus’ life that we refer to as the “state of humiliation”

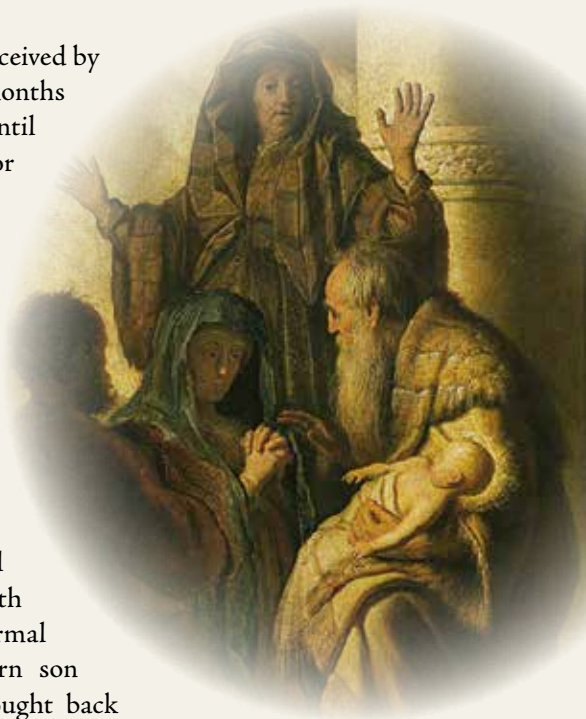
was continuing. He had been conceived by the Holy Spirit. He spent nine months growing inside of His mother until the proper time had come for His arrival. At eight days old, Jesus had already begun to shed His innocent blood, in the rite of circumcision. Now His mother and step-father brought Him to the Temple for His mother's purification and His own ritual redemption.

According to Moses' Law (Leviticus 12:4, 6-8), a woman needed to go through a ritual purification following childbirth before she could return to normal activities in society. A first-born son also had to be redeemed or bought back from God. This alluded to the Passover which God performed for His people in the land of Egypt. If the blood of the lamb was upon the doorposts of the people, their firstborn was spared. God now owned the firstborn. The firstborn was to be bought back at a price by the parents.

How ironic that Jesus Christ, *the Passover Lamb* Who shed His blood for the redemption of all mankind, would need to be redeemed! Perhaps this was a foreshadowing of Christ's sacrifice on the cross as He not only paid for our sins, but became sin for us (2 Corinthians 5:21).

Nevertheless, Mary and Joseph fulfilled the Law and paid the tax, using the provision allowed for the poor. Two turtle doves or two pigeons could be paid by those who could not afford the heftier price of a lamb and a fowl. This once again showed the deep humility of Jesus in His willingness to be born into a family of such a lowly station.

We're not sure what Mary and Joseph expected as they presented Jesus in the Temple, but what happened next was definitely a surprise. A random stranger came forward



Presentation in the Temple - Rembrandt van Rijn

Simeon had been told by the Spirit to go to the Temple on that precise day where he was able to hold his very Lord and Savior in his arms!

and took their child into his arms and began to proclaim his own birth announcement. The meeting, of course, was not random at all from God's perspective. Simeon was a devout man awaiting the Lord's Anointed. He had been assured by the Holy Spirit that he would not face death until he had seen the Christ with his own eyes. Simeon had been told by the Spirit to go to the Temple on that precise day where he was able to hold his very Lord and Savior in his arms! Simeon couldn't help but announce to the world the true identity of this tiny babe.

*"Lord, now You are letting Your servant depart in peace, According to Your word; For my eyes have seen Your salvation Which You have prepared before the face of all peoples, A light to bring revelation to the Gentiles, And the glory of Your people Israel"* (Luke 2:29-32).

We are told in the Scriptures that Mary and Joseph marveled at the things that were spoken about Jesus, and isn't that a marvel in itself? Mary and Joseph had each been visited by angels telling them about their holy Offspring. They knew of His miraculous conception. Shepherds had come to worship the Baby and no doubt told of the heavenly messengers which had proclaimed His birth. Now they hear yet another proclamation about the tiny Child, and still they marvel!

May we never lose the ability to marvel at the birth of our Savior, Who came in human garb, in humble state, to enlighten our hearts, and to reconcile us with our heavenly Father!



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

## HYMN 129

# Once Far Off But Now Invited

Sometimes it helps to see a sequence of letters in print to understand what is being said. Consider a-p-a-r-t. When those letters are placed next to each other it means, ironically, that items are separated. They are “apart.” When the first two letters are separated, however, it conveys that items are connected. They are “a part.”

Which of those options applies to our relationship with the people of God?

As a group, we Gentiles—those who cannot trace blood lines back to Abraham—were separate from the covenant people of Old Testament times. Gentiles were *apart* from God’s chosen people of Israel, *apart* from those to whom the prophets were sent and the promises given.

But then something happened. Then Someone came.

“But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ” (Ephesians 2:13). When Jesus shed the blood to which the old ceremonial laws pointed, He rendered those rituals obsolete and thereby removed the barriers which God had designed to keep Jews and Gentiles apart.

The Apostle Paul declared that Jesus is “our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace” (verses 14-15).

When Jesus fulfilled all prophecy and lived in complete compliance with the law, that which separated Jews and Gentiles was removed. The door was opened for Gentiles to have equal access to God, to become a *part* of His people. A *part* of the people of God, that is, as long as one is not *apart* from Christ.

Since He alone succeeded in doing all that was necessary to justify the world before God, He stands as the only Door through which the lost and condemned can come into the presence of the Almighty and be welcomed as heirs of glory. Being a Jew or Gentile no longer has anything to do with it. It is only a matter of being in Christ.

Regardless of race or ancestry, all who put their confidence in Jesus as the One Who reconciled us to the Father are a *part* of His people.

How gracious of God to extend His salvation also to Gentiles! And how clearly this theme of the Epiphany season is expressed in a number of hymns, such as “Hail, Thou Source of Ev’ry Blessing” (#129 in TLH and #409 in LSB). Its author, Basil Woodd (1760-1831), was a prolific writer who used his skills also to compose a handful of Christian hymns. His familiar contribution to the collection of Epiphany hymns highlights the access which has been given to all who join the Magi in recognizing Jesus as the Son of God and Savior of the world.

*Hail, Thou Source of ev’ry blessing, Sov’reign Father of mankind! Gentiles now, Thy grace possessing, In Thy courts admission find. Grateful now we fall before Thee, In Thy Church obtain a place, Now by faith behold Thy glory, Praise Thy truth, adore Thy grace.*

Mr. Woodd, an Oxford-educated minister who served many years in England, expressed grateful recognition of the grace which had reached also him, even though he was far removed geographically from the lands given to the children of Israel and even farther from the sands traversed by the Magi. Enlightened by the Spirit through the Gospel, he gave voice to the joy of being included in Christ’s Kingdom by faith.

*Once far off, but now invited, We approach Thy sacred throne; In Thy covenant united, Reconciled, redeemed, made one.*

Through faith in Jesus, Gentiles, who were once *apart* are now a *part* of the people of God. That is the great assurance of Epiphany, derived from Ephesian print and reflected in Christian verse. A marvel to see, to believe and to treasure!

**John Reim** is a professor at Immanuel Lutheran College in Eau Claire, Wisconsin.



### BASIL WOODD

Born: August 5, 1760 - Pankratz, Bohemia, Germany  
Died: April 12, 1831 -Paddington Green, near London

He was educated by Thomas Clarke, rector of Chesham Bois in Buckinghamshire, and matriculated at Trinity College, Oxford, on 7 May 1778, graduating B.A. in February 1782 and M.A. in 1785. On 16 March 1783 he was ordained deacon, and in 1784 priest.

He was twice married: first, on 8 Feb. 1785, to Ann (d. 23 April 1791), daughter of Colonel Wood (d. 1775); and, secondly, on 3 July 1792, to Sophia Sarah (d. 15 Aug. 1829), daughter of William Jupp of Wandsworth, an architect.

Source: Dictionary of National Biography, 1885-1900, Volume 62 by Edward Irving Carlyle

# Completed Actions, Abiding Results

*“Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh, and having a High Priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful. And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.” Hebrews 10:19-25*

For thousands of years, God’s people had been accustomed to following His prescribed ways of worship and ministry. The animal blood sacrifices, the special Sabbath laws, the many feasts of worship, and the dependency on the priests; all of these things were so ingrained in the minds and habits of the recipients of this epistle that, although they did believe in Jesus as the Messiah, they apparently often questioned whether or not it was sinful to discontinue these practices. It didn’t help that there were many false teachers who insisted that these old covenant laws must be kept for one’s salvation. This letter was written to these Jewish converts to Christianity to assure them that they have not given up the “truth” (Judaism) for a “lie” (Christianity), but rather a truth (old covenant) for a better truth (new covenant). How was this so?

Under the old covenant, no one was allowed to draw near to God in the Most Holy Place except for the high priest, and he only once a year. The conditions for his entrance into the Most Holy Place were three-fold (see Leviticus 16): he was to enter with the blood of the sacrifices, wearing the holy garments, and having washed his body in water. These detailed worship prescriptions were never meant to serve as a means by which sinful mankind could climb its way up to God. This is attested to by what the apostle wrote earlier in chapter 10: “For then would they not have ceased to be offered?” (see Hebrews 10:1-4) The animal sacrifices, putting on the holy garments, the washing with water – every year the high priest had to repeat these actions on behalf of the people and himself.

The payment for the world’s sins on the cross was a completed action with the abiding results of free forgiveness for all.

Now compare all of this with what we read in our text. We are given boldness to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus. We were washed with the pure water of our Baptism. And as a result of these things we have been covered by the holy garments of Christ’s righteousness! The instructional repetition of the old covenant has now ended as Jesus has indeed consecrated for us a new and living way!

A careful study of the Greek in these verses attests to this truth. We look specifically at the Greek in the phrases “having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water” (v. 22). First, we recognize that a passive voice verb is used here. Passive voice means the action is not done *by* the subject but rather *to* the subject. What are the subjects? “Our hearts” and “our bodies.” What are the actions? “Sprinkled from an evil conscience” and “washed with pure water.” Why is this meaningful? Because the passive voice means we’re not the ones performing these actions! It means God is! It is God Himself who sprinkles our hearts from an evil conscience by the righteous blood of Jesus, and He washes our bodies with the pure water of Baptism.

Secondly, the tense of these verbs is the perfect tense. In the Greek, the perfect tense has a special meaning: a completed action with abiding results. It is the perfect tense that was used when Jesus victoriously proclaimed “It is finished!”

from the cross. Jesus was declaring that the payment for the world’s sins on the cross was a completed action with the abiding results of free forgiveness for all.

So too here in our text. When God sprinkles us with the atoning blood of Jesus and washes us in the pure water of Baptism, these completed actions have the abiding results of faith and salvation. No more repeating animal sacrifices. No more repeating of the putting on of holy garments. No more repeating of washing of water. The new covenant in which we now stand is all about God coming down to us in the person of Jesus Christ and leaving behind for us completed actions of salvation with abiding results that last into eternity.

**Chad Seybt** is pastor of Redeemer Lutheran Church in Cheyenne, Wyoming.



# Did Moses Stutter?

For most of us, the name *Moses* evokes powerful images. Moses standing before mighty Pharaoh. Moses leading the exodus from Egypt. Moses raising his staff over the Red Sea. Moses ascending Mount Sinai as it quaked and flamed with the presence of God. Moses smashing the tablets on which God Himself had written the Ten Commandments. Moses dying on Mount Pisgah, able to see the Promised Land, but not able to enter it.

Few of us, however, think of Moses as having a speech impediment. Yet, this may have been the case. The man who stood before Pharaoh and demanded, “*Thus says the LORD God of Israel: ‘Let My people go,’*” (Exodus 5:1) may have stuttered. Those who hold this view—and there have been many, including prominent Jewish rabbis like Shlomo Yitchaki, who lived during the Eleventh Century A.D.—point to the words of Moses himself.

When first called by God to lead the exodus, Moses said, “*O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither before nor since You have spoken to Your servant; but I am slow of speech and slow of tongue*” (Exodus 4:10). The Hebrew word for “eloquent” in this verse, *devarim*, means “words.” A more literal rendering is “I am not a man of words.” Even more telling is Moses’ reference to having slow speech and a slow tongue. The Hebrew word he used, *kaved*, means heavy—a heavy tongue; hence, by extension, slow, halting, difficult speech.

Later, when commanded by God to address Pharaoh, Moses replied, “*The children of Israel have not heeded me. How then shall Pharaoh heed me, for I am of uncircumcised lips*” (Exodus 6:12). According to one well-known Hebrew scholar, this phrase, “uncircumcised lips,” means stammering or stuttering; as if the lips were covered with skin, making it difficult to speak clearly.

There are other explanations for Moses’ reference to his slow tongue and slow speech, some bordering on the ridiculous:



Knowing that Moses may have stuttered somehow makes him more “human,” and reminds us that what Moses accomplished was done solely through the grace and power of Almighty God.

a fear of public speaking, difficulty finding the right words, the inability to speak fluent Hebrew after many years in Pharaoh’s household. According to one rabbinical legend, Moses’ speech problem was the result of burning his tongue on a hot coal when only a boy.

But the simplest explanation is that Moses had a speech impediment. And whatever that impediment was, he viewed it as severe enough to disqualify him from God’s call. “*O my Lord,*” he said in Exodus 4:13, “*please send by the hand of whomever else You may send.*”

God, however, would not accept Moses’ excuses, saying, “*Who has made man’s mouth? Or who makes the mute, the deaf, the seeing, or the blind? Have not I, the Lord? Now therefore, go, and I will be with your mouth and teach you what you shall say*” (Exodus 4:11-12).

Clearly, Moses was one of the greatest, most gifted of Old Testament prophets. And as such, he does evoke those powerful images of standing before mighty Pharaoh, leading the exodus, raising his staff over the parting Red Sea, climbing fiery Mt. Sinai, and smashing the two tablets on which the Ten Commandments were written.

But knowing that Moses may have stuttered somehow makes him more “human,” and reminds us that what Moses accomplished was done solely through the grace and power of Almighty God—the faithful God who was in Moses’ life, on

Moses’ journeys, and with Moses’ mouth. And this to such an extent that Stephen would later describe Moses in Acts 7:22 as “*mighty in words and deeds.*”



As someone once said, “God doesn’t call the qualified. He qualifies the called.”

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

# "What is the 'Headship Principle'?"

If I started by telling you what it is, you might not read anything that follows. So let's start by explaining its purpose and place in God's plan.

Near the end of Genesis 1, Moses writes, "So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them" (v. 27). The last phrase makes one thing perfectly clear: men are not women. Or, if you prefer, women are not men. Adam did not marry a carbon copy of himself. Eve was like him in some ways, but she was very much unlike him in others. This was by design. When he awoke from his sleep, Adam could praise God that she was "bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh" (Genesis 2:23). He could also praise God that she was much, much different than he. Husband and wife not only complemented one another, they completed each other. They were the perfect match, courtesy of God's brilliant design.

Both were equal before God. After the Fall, both stood under the condemnation of God's Law for their sin. Both were included in the promise of a Savior. They were each responsible for their own sins. But who was responsible for them together? If the two became one flesh, then one is responsible, not as a matter of rank but as a matter of order. That one, as you can see from Genesis 3:9-11, was Adam.

After the Fall, Adam and Eve were still equal before God. The Bible says, "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" (Galatians 3:28). Men and women are equally loved, equally redeemed, and equally saved.

And yet, the differences from Eden remain. Only now, they are distorted by sin. So far have we fallen, that no baby—boy or girl—enters this life with a clear understanding of the opposite sex, or of the God-pleasing roles in marriage.

Thankfully, the Lord not only resolves the problem of our sin, He also reveals His will in Scripture. See for yourself in Ephesians 5:22-33, Colossians 3:17-19, and 1 Peter 3:1-7.

God's plan? Men are commanded to love their wives. Wives are commanded to submit to their husbands as to the Lord.

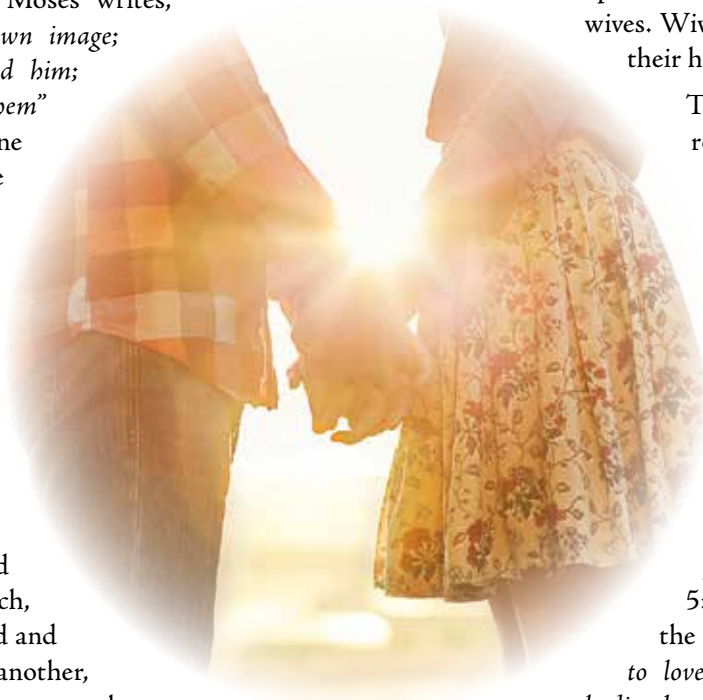
The word "submit" is the lightning rod for modern critics, but in Scripture it is both common and good. It is a military term that means to follow the lead of another. This does not mean that husbands bark out commands and their wives fall in line. It can't mean that, because husbands are commanded to love their wives, "just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her" (Ephesians 5:25). To eliminate all doubts, the Spirit adds, "So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church" (Ephesians 5:28-29).

The love of Christ is the game-changer, as always. This is the husband's motive for leading his wife in love. This is her motive for submitting to his lead. It is still a brilliant plan that recognizes the important differences between them.

The headship principle is also the submission principle. It is not about rank or inequality, but about roles and responsibilities. It is the way that redeemed husbands and wives function as God originally intended. The world bristles and objects, but that's what the world does with our Savior, as well.

If you have further questions on this topic, please talk to your pastor. He's called as your spiritual shepherd and will be happy to study and apply Scripture with you.

**James Albrecht** is pastor of St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church in Okabena, Minnesota.



Men and women are equally loved,  
equally redeemed, and equally saved.





*In preparation for the 500th anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation, we are presenting a brief survey of the life of Martin Luther. The series will culminate in the October 2017 issue with an account of his posting of the Ninety-Five Theses.*

# Life of Luther—1498-1503

**W**hen Luther reflected upon his life, he would speak of Eisenach as his “beloved town.” The town itself was not spectacular, though it was nestled prettily in the Thuringian forest and was a major city of that region. True, on its outskirts lay Wartburg Castle, but this did not endear the city to Luther. With its population of only 2,100 it was nothing to boast about. Rather, it was the people Luther met here that gave him fond memories.



Two teachers deserve mention. Of Trebonius it was later reported that he bowed respectfully to his students before class, in anticipation of the future distinction that some might achieve. Luther thought enough of Gueldennapf that he later petitioned those in power to grant him a pension.

## UNIVERSITY AT ERFURT

But these happy times ended when his prep school days were completed. Now it was time for Martin to choose a university. Erfurt, a city of about twenty thousand people, and known as “little Rome” or “the city of spires” because of its many churches, chapels, and monastic houses, was chosen for its solid reputation. About two thousand students attended there.

The new student was registered as “having funds.” Hans Luther was finding his way to modest wealth. Luther joined the St. George *bursa*—something like a frat house but with the strict supervision of a monastery. The daily routine was rigorous: up at 4:00 A.M. for prayer, devotions read during meals, study, lights out at 8:00 P.M. No one left campus without permission.

Luther thrived here, excelling in his studies and receiving his Bachelor of Arts (1502) and his Master of Arts (1505) in the shortest time allowed. He was second in his class of seventeen.

## LUTHER DISCOVERS THE BIBLE

Perhaps it was here that he first saw a complete Bible! This event is recorded several times in the Table Talks, but with differing details. We can’t be sure where or when it happened, but all agree that Luther was greatly surprised to find “far more passages, epistles, and gospels than were . . . expounded . . . from the pulpits.” The winsome account of young Samuel serving Eli and hearing a message from God caught his eye, and he thought “How fortunate I would be if I owned such a book.” Indeed! —and how fortunate for us that his prayer was answered!



**Norman Greve** is pastor of St. Peter’s Evangelical Lutheran Church in Iron River, Michigan.

## URSULA COTTA

Although Luther had an aunt in Eisenach, the fourteen-year-old boy did not stay with his relatives. Instead God provided a most wonderful substitute home for him. Luther had impressed a prominent woman of the city by “his singing and praying in the church.” She befriended him and arranged to feed him. This woman is not named, but Luther identifies Henry Schwalbe, a merchant of the city, as his host, and we may conclude that his wife is the benefactor. There was this small price: Martin agreed to take young Henry Jr. to school each day and perhaps also did some tutoring.

Now Ursula Cotta was a member of the Schwalbe family, and the families were close. It was natural, then, that Luther became close to the Cottas, too. Indeed, it seems probable that young Martin lived with the Cottas, but ate his meals with the Schwalbes. These were both deeply pious families, and Martin was influenced by the examples of his adopted family. Happy memories, indeed!

## GOOD TEACHERS

Martin was also happy in school and felt that he was blessed with skillful teachers. Gone were the endless drills and mindless recitations, harshly enforced by the rod. Rather, here he found teaching to sharpen his mind and engage his attention. Here were teachers who instilled understanding.

# St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church Lakewood, Colorado

*"I lift up my eyes to the hills — where does my help come from?  
My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth"*  
(Psalm 121:1-2 NIV84).



This Scripture verse has held rich meaning for God's believers of every time and place. The parishioners of St. Paul congregation, Lakewood, have special reason to be reminded of its comfort. Our church is located in the Front Range of the Colorado Rockies. On a clear day, when we see mountains like Longs Peak (sixty miles to the northwest, ascending to over 14,000 feet) or Pikes Peak (looming high above the southern horizon), we're reminded of the precious promises the Lord has given His believers in this Psalm: He Who fashioned the mountains by His power is our ever-present Helper. He watches over us 24/7, extending to us His fatherly care. He sees that no evil befalls us, directing our footsteps dependably by the lamp of His Word as we travel as pilgrims through the darkness of this world to our heavenly home. All for the sake of Jesus His Son who was crucified on a hill near Jerusalem two thousand years ago.

The people of St. Paul have experienced the faithful care of the Lord, as expressed in Psalm 121, from the founding of their church. The date was January 17, 1993. On that day members of two Lutheran churches (St. Luke of Denver and St. James of Golden<sup>1</sup>) gathered for a joint meeting so that they might take

a bold step of faith. They voted to merge and become a single congregation under a new name, St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church, believing the work of God's kingdom in their midst could be better served in this way.



Top: worshipers at St. Paul Lutheran Church. Above: children of the Sunday school.



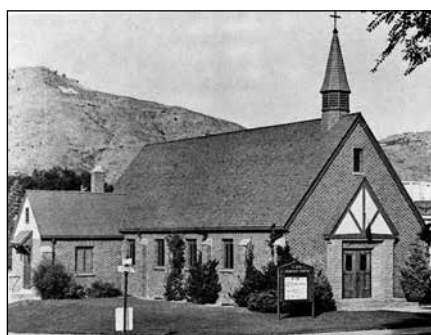
St. Pauls church interior



St. Pauls church exterior

The faith of the parishioners of St. Luke and St. James (now St. Paul) hasn't been put to shame. Over the years they have been on the receiving end of a vast array of God's blessings. Through the Good News of the crucified and risen Savior preached from their pulpit, presented in Bible class, taught in Sunday School, and shared among members, they have received strength for their faith and inspiration for their Christian calling. By the sacrament of Baptism their little ones have been spiritually reborn and adopted into God's family. Through the Lord's Supper their communicants have received the personal assurance of His forgiveness. There have been a number of trials and tribulations over the years, as is always the case for God's saints living in the Church Militant. Yet, through every struggle they have been called on to endure, they have found to be true the Lord's promise to be their ever-present Helper. He has been their shade at their right hand and He has seen to it that the sun will not harm them by day nor the moon by night (Psalm 121:5-6).

During the early years of St. Paul's history, the members worshiped for a time in the St. James church building, after it had been sold to another group. Eventually a parcel of property more suitable for their needs was located in the nearby suburb of Lakewood. A church edifice was constructed there and dedicated to God's glory in January of 2000. Because of its strategic location on a busy north-south highway of Denver (Wadsworth Boulevard) with thousands of motorists passing each day, St. Paul has been blessed to have a good number of drop-in guests at its services. Our current membership numbers 118 souls, including twenty-four pre-communicants. Since our



St. James Church in Golden Colorado, circa 1940

church's beginning, seventy-five souls have been baptized (eight adults), fifty-two have been confirmed (sixteen adults), thirty-two marriages have been conducted, and fifty-one souls have gone on ahead to be with the Savior in the Church Triumphant above. Pastors who have served St. Paul are Delwyn Maas (1993-1998), Victor Tiefel (1993-1998, associate pastor), James Sandeen (2000-2014), and Thomas Schuetze (2014 to the present).

In regard to current activities, we're blessed to have an active "Mary and Martha" ladies group with many women using their God-given talents to lend support to our congregation's ministry in a variety of ways. We have a "Feeding His Lambs" cradle roll program which assists our parents in the spiritual training of their pre-Sunday School children. St. Paul also conducts monthly services in Colorado Springs (seventy miles to the south). We meet in a rented chapel of the First United Methodist Church. The services are held generally in the afternoon of the fourth Sunday of the month, with attendance averaging in the teens. Another current mission project of St. Paul is the sending of postcards with a brief Gospel message and invitation to visit our church. These are mailed out each month to fifteen hundred families living in ZIP codes in and around Lakewood. We pray that through these outreach efforts the Lord will provide extra opportunities for sharing His Good News.

We look to the future confident of His blessing and clinging joyfully to His promise: *"Though the mountains be shaken and the hills be removed, yet my unfailing love for you will not be shaken nor my covenant of peace be removed," says the Lord, who has compassion on you* (Isaiah 54:10 NIV84).



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

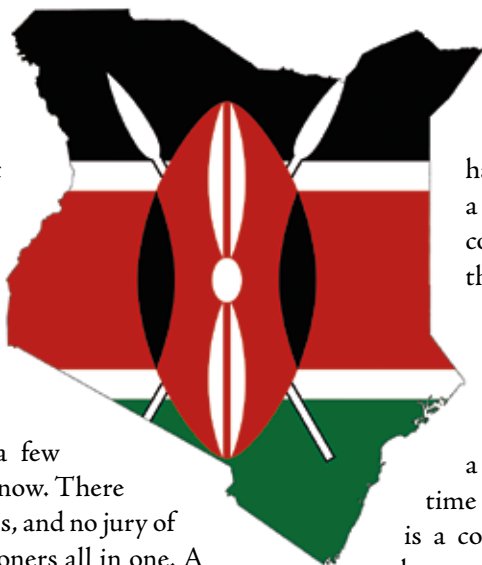
<sup>1</sup> The two churches had been in existence since the early 1940's as Wisconsin Synod congregations. St. Luke withdrew from the Wisconsin Synod in the late 1950's over doctrinal concerns and joined the CLC as a charter member. St. James withdrew from the Wisconsin Synod over doctrinal concerns in the mid-1970's and remained an independent Lutheran church till the merger of 1993 which brought about the formation of St. Paul Lutheran Church. In 1978 St. Luke withdrew from the CLC in a doctrinal controversy related to the third use of the Law. In 1996 the Lord graciously brought about a resolution of the doctrinal differences and a restoration of fellowship between St. Luke (which, together with St. James, had become St. Paul) and the CLC.

# Justice, Chotororo Style

Imagine this: you are conducting the Sunday worship service, completely unaware that a commotion is brewing somewhere outside the church. The faint chanting of an impromptu band of vigilantes draws incrementally closer. They all started their day as ordinary citizens. Some are shopkeepers, others farmers, many idle men who sit at the junction of main roads and tell stories to pass the time. Today all of these people share a common purpose, at least for a few hours. They want justice, and they want it now. There will be no calls for the police, no due process, and no jury of one's peers—well, maybe jury and executioners all in one. A man had stolen, or at least was presumed guilty of stealing, a couple of cows. This is no small matter, since two cows could make or break an entire family's income. Upon hearing the burglary report, pure democracy was sweeping into action. What the people wanted was someone to die for his crimes, and they were bent on getting just that. Death by stoning would be the preferred method of capital punishment.

Bang, bang, bang! "Please let me in! I ... I have never been baptized and I feel the need right now!" The person presumed guilty is at your church door and he pleads for refuge inside. What would you tell him? How would you respond in such a situation? Of course you should let him in, as the mob will not follow him into a house of worship in order to kill him. Once he is inside and safe, you can then determine if he truly has been baptized or not, then you can proceed.

This scenario was presented to the seminary students who met in Chotororo, Kenya, during a pastoral theology (also known as practical theology) lesson. Pastor Joseph was in charge of teaching this class because he had several decades of experience under his belt. Practical theology involves



Practical matters that confront a pastor in Kenya vary widely from those experienced by American clergy!

situations that pastors deal with, such as steps to take when you receive a call, how to conduct in-home visits, and how to handle certain counseling situations, to cite a few examples. The practical matters that confront a pastor in Kenya vary widely from those experienced by American clergy!

As I sat off to the side correcting papers from the classes I was more suited to teach, I was able to take in all of this. Upon first hearing it, I thought it seemed a bit far-fetched; but after I'd spent more time in Kenya, I realized that vigilante action is a common occurrence. There is an effort by the government to encourage people to notify their local police if they witness a crime being committed. One such commercial on national television portrays a woman at a bus stop having her purse stolen and screaming as the would-be thief tries to run away. The crowd around her stirs into action and a burly man grabs a large stone nearby while two others grab the pickpocket. The public service announcement comes to a close just before the stone has a chance to deliver its swift justice.

The events of the morning after that class took place dispelled the notion that this was purely a hypothetical situation. As I arrived at the Bible training institution up in the hills of Chotororo, I could see, in a neighboring field, two men on the ground surrounded by several agitated locals. Two police officers were keeping the people at bay to prevent them from executing mob justice. Their crime? You guessed it: grand theft cattle!



**Michael Gurath** is pastor of Holy Cross Lutheran Church in Phoenix, Arizona, and a visiting missionary to Africa.

# “BREAD OF LIFE” READINGS FEBRUARY 2017

TLH = The Lutheran Hymnal, 1941; WS = Worship Supplement 2000; LSB = Lutheran Service Book, 2006

Date	Verse	Reading	Comments
Feb 1	TLH 295	Romans 7:13-20	The Law is good, but it only leads us to recognize sin. It has no power to create spiritual life.
Feb 2	TLH 297	Romans 7:21-25	Jesus Christ alone can set us free from sin and death.
Feb 3	TLH 446 LSB 418	Matthew 4:1-11	Although He was true God, Jesus went before the tempter as one of us. His defense is ours too: The Word of God.
Feb 4	WS 771	Matthew 4:12-22	Jesus preaches and then shows His first disciples the joy of spreading the Gospel.
Feb 6	TLH 557	Matthew 4:23-25	Along with sin came disease, sickness, and death into the world; but the Lord demonstrates His power over all these ills.
Feb 7	TLH 287	Exodus 20:1-17	These ten cover it all, and show us what God expects of us.
Feb 8	TLH 326	Exodus 20:18-21	Observe how the people reacted to the Law. It made them aware of their own sinfulness. That's what the Law does.
Feb 9	TLH 384	Exodus 20:22-26	The Law was accompanied by the Gospel. God would cause His name to be honored and He would bless His people.
Feb 10	TLH 391	Romans 8:1-17	The righteous requirements of the Law are fully met in us, and those who trust in Christ Jesus are not condemned.
Feb 11	TLH 589 LSB 679	Romans 8:18-27	What if the worst day you could imagine suddenly turned into the best day you ever dreamed of? Heaven will be greater than that.
Feb 13	TLH 528	Romans 8:28-39	Memorize these passages, for they will be a blessing to you all your days.
Feb 14	WS 781 LSB 584	Matthew 13:1-23	Give thanks to God that He has opened your eyes and ears.
Feb 15	WS 794	Matthew 13:24-43	For now, we must live alongside sin and wickedness, but the Lord will deliver us in the end.
Feb 16	TLH 361	Matthew 13:44-58	The “kingdom” parables show us what a treasure we have in Jesus. How sad that some reject His loving rule.
Feb 17	TLH 358	Exodus 32:1-16	As soon as he learned of their sin, Moses began pleading on behalf of the nation. A foreshadowing of the work of Christ?
Feb 18	WS 779	Exodus 32:17-35	The wages of sin is death, therefore turn to the Lord in repentance for with Him there is forgiveness.
Feb 20	WS 786	Romans 12:1-8	The key words are at the very beginning: “In view of God’s mercy . . .”
Feb 21	TLH 412 LSB 697	Romans 12:9-21	Turn the tables on evil!
Feb 22	TLH 356	John 14:1-7	“ . . . and take us to heaven to live with Thee there.”
Feb 23	TLH 74 LSB 533	John 14:8-14	If you know Jesus, you know God.
Feb 24	TLH 230	John 14:15-31	Jesus did not need to show Himself to everybody. Others would follow through the power of the Spirit working in the Word.
Feb 25	TLH 366	Isaiah 55:1-5	Listen to the gracious Word of the Lord—freely given and good for the soul.
Feb 27	TLH 390	Isaiah 55:6-9	Why turn to the Lord? Because He is a God of mercy and not a God Who seeks to destroy us.
Feb 28	TLH 48	Isaiah 55:10-13	Peace, joy, and song belong to those whom the Lord draws to Himself.

*This series profiles the men and women who are preparing for the public teaching and preaching ministry at our Immanuel Lutheran College and Seminary in Eau Claire, Wisconsin.*

## Tom Naumann

**Age:** 25 **Program:** Seminary

**Year in School:** Senior

**Where were you born?**

Detroit Lakes, Minnesota.

**Where did you grow up?**

I spent my childhood in Ketchikan, Alaska, until I was nine, then Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, until college.



**Married? Unmarried? Tell us about your family.**

I married my wife, Ashley (née Elliott), in April of 2016. Ashley was born and raised in St. Louis, Missouri. We became friends while on a CLC Mission Helper Trip to East Africa in 2012. In 2014, we went on another Mission Helper trip, this time to Nepal, and we began dating soon after. Ashley graduated with a bachelor's degree in social work from the University of Arkansas in 2015. She currently works as a Wisconsin state social worker for Jackson County in Black River Falls, Wisconsin. We pray that the Lord will bless our family with children in the near future.

**What hobbies, sports or extracurriculars interest you?**

I enjoy playing pickup basketball on Tuesday nights in the ILC gym. I have been a lifelong deer hunter and outdoorsman. I root for the Nebraska Cornhuskers college football team along with the rest of my Ohlmann relatives. I also enjoy watching NFL football, cheering for the Denver Broncos, my team since my childhood. Ashley and I greatly enjoy the outdoors. This past summer we spent three weeks road-tripping, camping, and hiking through National Parks in Utah, California, and Oregon. We also like to visit friends in Park City, Utah, for snowboarding and skiing each winter.

**Tell us one thing about yourself that most people don't know.**

Many people don't know that I directed CLC summer youth camps for eight years, from 2009-2016. I co-directed along with Jessica Sydow and Joelle Lentz. We ran two camps: Youth Camp at ILC in Eau Claire, Wisconsin, and Camp Koyquin in Pillager, Minnesota. Directing camps included everything from appointing/selecting counselors and staff to organizing the daily camp activities and everything in between. I was very blessed to have the opportunity to serve the Lord in this capacity!

**Which academic subjects especially interest you?**

I very much enjoy our liturgics class with Professor Reim. It is very interesting to learn about how our Christian liturgy

and hymnody has developed over the past two thousand years.

I also enjoy homiletics, our class for sermonizing. There is nothing more exciting than digging into the original language of a Bible text and discovering another richly beautiful way in which God reveals His Law and Gospel in His Word and then being able to share that message with a congregation.

**How did you first come to consider the public teaching or preaching ministry as a career?**

Being the son of a CLC pastor, I was exposed to the public ministry life ever since birth. I can remember pretending to preach make-believe sermons when I was just a small child. However, I never felt like I was pressured into the ministry by my family. When I was nearing the end of high school, I applied to many different colleges. Yet, in the back of my mind I knew that I wanted to find a job where I could do the most to help people. That's a cliché and I know it, but it was true and still is. Eventually, I was led to the conclusion that the best way to help people is to do everything in my power to share the Gospel as best I could. With that in mind and believing that the Lord had blessed me with the spiritual gifts necessary for the public ministry, I entered into the Pre-Theology program at ILC, from which I graduated in 2013. The further that I get in my studies, the more confident I am that serving God as a CLC pastor is indeed my occupational calling.

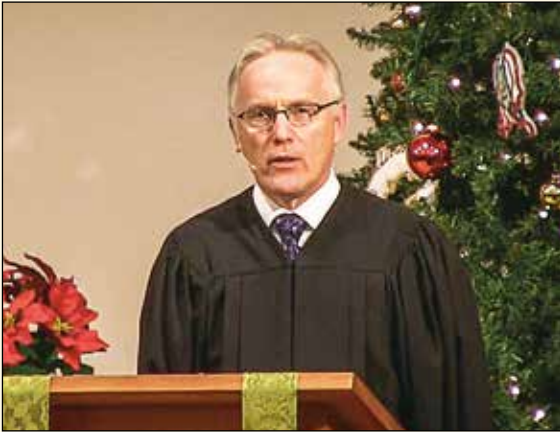
**What have you appreciated most about your time at ILC?**

The thing that I have most appreciated about my time at ILC are the close friendships that I have developed with my fellow students of God's Word. Being in Christian fellowship with my best friends is certainly one of the greatest blessings in my life. Knowing at all times that my closest friends have the same faith in Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins that I do is a comfort and blessing. With that largest life priority in common, friends are truly able to encourage and support one another.

**What qualities do you think will most be needed by the future leaders of the church?**

Writing about the pastoral ministry, the Apostle Paul states in 1 Corinthians 4:1-2 that "This is how one should regard us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found faithful." Truly in this world of deteriorating morals and outright rejection of God's authority, the quality of faithfulness is desperately needed in the church. Faithfulness to God's inerrant Word, faithfulness to caring for God's people, and faithfulness to the truth of the Gospel of Christ crucified for sinners.

# New Visiting Missionary Commissioned



## “We Send You On In Jesus’ Name.”

On Monday, January 2, 2017, a commissioning service for Missionary Todd Ohlmann was held at Messiah Lutheran Church in Eau Claire, Wisconsin. CLC Board of Missions member Nathanael Mayhew officiated at the service, and synodical president Michael Eichstadt conducted the rite of installation. Pastor Bruce Naumann addressed those assembled on the basis of 3 John 1-8, under the theme, “We Send You On In Jesus’ Name.” Many board members, faculty, and clergy participated in the laying on of hands—including Board of Missions Chairman Joel Krafft and members Steven Leinberger and Pastor Robert Sauers; Pastors Paul Tiefel, David Baker, and John Hein; and Professors Paul Sullivan and Paul Naumann.

As outlined in last month’s *Mission Newsletter*, the duties attendant on this call will differ somewhat from

those of the duties specified in the calls of previous overseas missionaries. Missionary Ohlmann will be stationed here in the United States, but will spend approximately six months each year in overseas travel as he conducts regular visitations to our sister church bodies. The CLC is currently in fellowship with church bodies and congregations in India, Nepal, Myanmar, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Republic of Congo, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Nigeria, Ghana, and Togo. In addition, we are exploring new contacts in Liberia, Haiti, Japan, Italy, Australia and Argentina.

While he is stateside, Missionary Ohlmann will visit domestic subsidized congregations, correspond with foreign affiliates and new contacts, continue development of the Online Theological Studies website, assist with the CLC Mission Helper Program, be a guest preacher, and attend area delegate conferences. We ask for your prayers on behalf of Missionary Ohlmann and his family as they continue their service to our Lord.

Top left: speaker, Pastor Bruce Naumann; top right: President Michael Eichstadt installs Missionary Todd Ohlmann; above: officiant Pastor Nathanael Mayhew blesses the new missionary.

### 3 John 1 - 8

1 The Elder, To the beloved Gaius, whom I love in truth: 2 Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers. 3 For I rejoiced greatly when brethren came and testified of the truth that is in you, just as you walk in the truth. 4 I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth. 5 Beloved, you do faithfully whatever you do for the brethren and for strangers,

6 who have borne witness of your love before the church. If you send them forward on their journey in a manner worthy of God, you will do well, 7 because they went forth for His name’s sake, taking nothing from the Gentiles. 8 We therefore ought to receive such, that we may become fellow workers for the truth.

## SEEN IN PASSING

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

### Whoops, Turns Out “Settled Science” was Wrong—by a Factor of Ten.

In today’s world it sometimes seems that science has been elevated to the level of a religion—people are expected to accept as fact whatever the high priests of science happen to be preaching at the moment. Those who refuse to believe, or who are skeptical, are cast out as heretics. One problem: **the “gospel” of science keeps changing—often dramatically.** The number of galaxies in the universe is a good example. In October, scientists working on NASA’s Hubble Space Telescope project increased the estimated number of galaxies in the universe by *a factor of ten*. You read that last part right: “It had previously been thought that there were 200 billion galaxies in the observable universe, but a team led by Nottingham University’s Christopher Conselice used images converted into 3D representations and new mathematical models to make inferences beyond the capabilities of contemporary telescope technology, leading to the number increasing to two trillion.” N.a., “There Are 10



This shot from the NASA/ESA Hubble Space Telescope shows a maelstrom of glowing gas and dark dust within one of the Milky Way’s satellite galaxies, the Large Magellanic Cloud (LMC). (ESA/Hubble/NASA)

Times More Galaxies in the Universe Than Previously Believed.” *Life*. RealClearLife.com, 21 Oct. 2016. Web. 9 Dec. 2016.

### The Priesthood of SOME Believers.

Seen in the Baptist Press: “In an apostolic letter issued Nov. 21, Pope Francis said he was granting ‘all priests, in virtue of their ministry, the faculty to absolve those who have committed the sin of procured abortion.’ Prior to this, a bishop or a specific priest approved by him typically was the only one who could forgive a woman who confesses she had obtained an abortion — as well as those who assisted in an abortion — because such a sin results in automatic excommunication from the church.” American evangelicals immediately protested, not that there was forgiveness for the sin of abortion, but that Catholic priests are the only ones who can dispense it: “One point at which Southern Baptists disagree with the pope’s pronouncement is the necessity of a priest to absolve sins,” said Rex Butler, professor of church history and patristics at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. “We agree with Paul,” he said, citing 1 Timothy 2:5-6: “For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself as a ransom for all, the testimony given at the proper time.” R. Albert Mohler Jr., president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, said the pope’s action “raises all the issues that were at the center of the debate in the church that led to the Protestant Reformation in the 16th century.” Strode, Tom. “Pope clashes with biblical teaching, Baptists say.” *News*. BaptistPress, 29 Nov. 2016. Web. 9 Dec. 2016.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**The TVBS Committee is beginning to make plans for Summer, 2017.** If you or your congregation is interested in hosting or sponsoring a TVBS session this summer, please contact the committee using the contact information below. We also welcome contact from groups or individuals willing to support the program in a variety of ways also found on our website. Thanks for your help with the Kingdom work.

**Professor Ross Roehl**, ross.roehl@ilc.edu, www.clctvbs.org

### The Temptation to Make Worship Entertaining.

“This is, by far, the worst thing that numbers obsession has done to the church,” *Patheos* columnist Jonathan Aigner said recently. “We have turned from our historic pattern of liturgy to a church free-for-all extravaganza. Worship is no longer the place for the church to gather and be reminded who they are and from Whom they come. Entertainment becomes the key. Cool music and self-help sermon series will certainly build an audience better than Word and Sacrament, but they won’t build a church, at least not the kind of church the world desperately needs. . . . My friend and former pastor from my United Methodist Church days told me recently that his District Superintendent had told him, ‘I don’t care what you do in worship, as long as attendance increases.’ These statements should be huge, obnoxious, florescent red flags.” Aigner, Jonathan. “4 Reasons to Stop Talking about Church Growth.” *Ponder Anew*. Patheos.com, Nov. 29 2016. Web. 9 Dec. 2016.