

July 2017 VOL 60 NO. 1

LUTHERAN SPOKESMAN

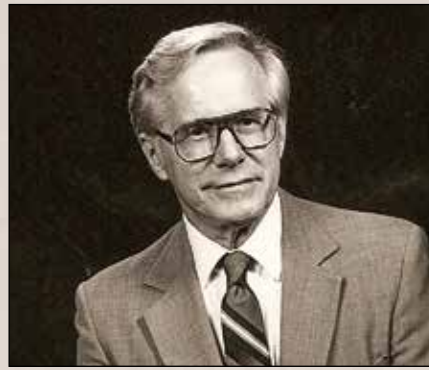
"...The Scripture Cannot Be Broken." (John 10:35)



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Page 10



Page 14



Page 15

IN THIS ISSUE

VOL. 60 NO. 1 — July 2017

Called by Christ to Be Servants of His Servants	3
The Shepherd Kindly Calls	4
Hymn 493 — “Thou Who the Night in Prayer Didst Spend”	5
Forged In Fire	6
Initial Inductees into the Hall of Faith	7
“Why don’t CLC members pray or sing at other churches?”	8
Wrestling with the Psalms: 1512-1513	9
St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church Vernon, British Columbia	10
“It’s Not Mine, It’s God’s!”	12
Bread of Life Readings, July 2017	13
IN MEMORIAM	
Gordon P. Radtke, 1919-2017	14
ILC Newsletter Immanuel Lutheran High School Visitors’ Day	15
Announcements	16
Seen In Passing.....	16

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the messenger who announces peace, who brings good news, who announces salvation, who says to Zion, ‘Your God reigns.’ ISAIAH 52:7

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

The Lutheran Spokesman is published monthly by the Church of the Lutheran Confession, 2750 Oxford St. N., Roseville, MN 55113, and is an official organ of the Church of the Lutheran Confession (CLC). Website address: www.clclutheran.org.

Editor: Paul Naumann, 3732 Claymore Lane, Eau Claire, WI, 54701, E-mail to paul.naumann@ilc.edu; Assistant Editor: Craig Owings; Art Director, Graphic Designer, Print Production: Matthew Schaser; Proofreaders: David Lau and Paula Naumann; Staff: James Albrecht, Theodore Barthels, David Bernthal, Timothy Daub, Wayne Eichstadt, David Fuerstenau, Frank Gantt, Norman Greve, Mark Gullerud, John Klatt, Ross Kok, Joseph Lau, Delwyn Maas, Bruce Naumann, Nathan Pfeiffer, David Reim, John Reim, Michael Roehl, Thomas Schuetze, Chad Seybt, Steven Sippert, Mark Weis.

Material submitted for publication should be sent to Editor Paul Naumann three months before date of publication. Announcements and other short notices should also be sent to Editor Naumann. Business Manager: Benno Sydow, 2750 Oxford St. N., Roseville, MN 55113. E-mail to BennoSydow@yahoo.com. Individual subscriptions {foreign-U.S. currency only}: \$18.00 {\$22.00} for one year; \$34.00 {\$42.00} for two years; \$50.00 {\$62.00} for three years; sent in bulk to congregations: \$15.00.

Spokesman Online Version at: www.lutheranspokesman.org Printed in U.S.A.

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Called by Christ to Be Servants of His Servants

“When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts to men.’ . . . And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.”

(Ephesians 4:8,11-13)

The day was Maundy Thursday. The location, an upper room in Jerusalem. Jesus was gathered with His disciples to celebrate the Passover. At the outset of the evening’s festivities, He stooped over, took a towel, poured water into a basin, and started washing the disciples’ feet. Peter tried to stop Him, thinking that this act of service was beneath his Master’s dignity. Jesus told Peter, “What you don’t understand now, you will later.” After completing the chore, He told His disciples, “I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you.” (John 13:15, for the full account see vv. 1-17)

Jesus was teaching a spiritual lesson that He wants His believers of all times to take to heart: He calls us to serve Him in those around us by kindhearted deeds. This is to be a response to the work of love He performed for us all by washing us clean of our sin by His blood shed on the cross. We rejoice to know that He views the acts of loving service we do for others as having been done for Him (see Matthew 25:40).

In the Ephesians passage quoted above, we learn that out of the large group of *all* believers in Christ, He chooses *some* to serve Him in a unique way: as *public ministers*.¹ In the Church’s early days, writes Paul, Christ gave gifts to His Church in the form of *apostles* and *prophets* (who served the Lord by planting His Church in the world through the preaching of

the Gospel, and and by serving as God’s penmen, recording the books of the New Testament). Christ also gave—and continues to give—*pastors* to serve as spiritual overseers of His people, *teachers* to provide sound instruction in the Word, and *evangelists* to spread abroad the good news of salvation in Christ.²

The purpose Jesus has in mind in conferring these gifts on His Church, Paul says, is to equip believers for the work of ministry and build them up in their faith (so that they might not be thrown off course in their faith-lives by

false prophets peddling their lies as “truth,” nor by those who promote empty, worldly philosophies as “wisdom”).

The ultimate purpose Jesus has in mind in providing the Church with public servants of His Word is that Christians may be guided safely and dependably to their heavenly destination, and be among the blessed company who will stand before His throne and “*serve Him day and night in His temple.*” (Revelation 7:15)

Lord Jesus, thank You for supplying Your Church with the gift of public ministers. We ask for Your blessing on the work they do in Your name for the welfare of souls. Help us all to faithfully serve You through service to those around us in the sphere of life in which You have placed us, until by Your grace we reach our heavenly goal. Then we shall praise You in perfect joy for the greatest work of love ever: Your redeeming us to God by Your blood. Amen.

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



¹ The Bible word *minister* means “servant.”

² More examples of Christ’s gifts to His Church could be added to the list, such as church deacons and elders, Christian missionaries, and synod leaders; all with their particular areas of service, as specified in the divine calls they receive from their fellow believers.

The Shepherd Kindly Calls

“Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly; nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock; and when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away.”

(1 Peter 5:2-4)

This summer, several CLC congregations will have ordination and installation services for their new pastors who have just graduated from Immanuel Lutheran Seminary in Eau Claire. These men will then begin a career of service to the Lord and His people. In each case, how these positions were filled is unlike any type of “job placement” in the usual sense of that phrase. None of the graduates sent in a résumé to apply for the position of pastor. The congregations conducted no interviews of prospective candidates; in fact, they asked to be assigned a graduate sight-unseen! There were no salary negotiations or contracts to sign. From the standpoint of normal business practices, the whole process appears to be fraught with uncertainty and the likelihood of failure—and yet both parishioners and pastors-elect expect the arrangement to work out superbly. The reason for this, simply put, is a matter of faith. It has to do with trust in the promises and directions that are found in the Word of God concerning the doctrine of the *call*.

The God-pleasing relationship of the pastor to his people is simply and warmly described in the passage cited above from 1 Peter 5. It is the Chief Shepherd, the Lord Jesus Christ, who wishes to bless His people with the life-giving Word of God. Because He has ascended to the right hand of the Father, He is not visibly present to personally comfort and guide us. He has therefore entrusted His believers in Christian congregations to the care of under-shepherds, that is, men to whom He has committed this work as His representatives. Because it is the Holy Spirit who has made them overseers (Acts 20:28), they have authority and responsibility for the care of Jesus’ sheep.

In spite of this God-given authority, however, their work is

to be marked by humility. They are not to labor for personal advancement or worldly gain, but for God’s kingdom and the benefit of His believers.

In the same way, those who are called into the teaching ministry in our Lutheran schools are to be regarded as God’s gifts to His Church, in order to feed the Lord’s precious lambs with the Word of life.

The congregations’ part in this divine arrangement is to receive their called servants as representatives of God, to love them for the sake of their work with God’s Word, and to provide for their earthly needs so that they can devote their full-time work to the ministry, as God’s Word directs:

“And we urge you, brethren, to recognize those who labor among you, and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love for their work’s sake.”
(1 Thessalonians 5:12-13)

“Even so the Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should live from the gospel.” (1 Corinthians 9:14)

Because of sin in this world, those who serve in the public ministry have foibles and flaws of one kind or another. Church members also often fail to do their part in appreciating and supporting the work of their called servants. But with the assurance of God’s forgiveness through Christ, and a humble spirit of loving forgiveness and service toward each other, the church family will prosper. It will receive the great blessing of the Good Shepherd, Who works through the under-shepherds to whom He entrusts the care of His flock.

Bruce Naumann is associate pastor of Messiah Lutheran Church in Eau Claire, Wisconsin.



How these
positions were filled
is unlike any type
of “job placement.”

HYMN 493

“Thou Who the Night in Prayer Didst Spend”

Public ministers of God’s Word are faced with a challenging task. They bring that Word to bear in a world that increasingly resents it. They must deal with many different people, many different personalities, and many different problems which Satan throws in their way. Without the hand of God at work in their ministries, they would fail in a moment. It is fitting then to pray for all those whose task it is to administer Law and Gospel; including pastors, teachers, missionaries, evangelists, and more. But what do we pray?

The hymn *Thou Who the Night in Prayer Didst Spend* (TLH 493) begins by reminding us that our Savior Himself prayed all night long before He chose the apostles who would carry His ministry into the world (Luke 6:12). Before any endeavor involving the work of the kingdom, it is good to call upon God (Luke 11:2). Since the ministry of the Gospel is a ministry carried out by human messengers, we pray as Christ did, asking that the necessary workers be sent out (Matthew 9:38). **Thou who the night in prayer didst spend / And then didst Thine apostles send / And bidd’st us pray the harvest’s Lord / To send forth sowers of Thy Word.**

Second, we pray to Jesus, the Lord of the Church, that He give His ministers the gifts of holiness, faithfulness, and an unselfish spirit. Public servants of the Word who are lacking in these areas can hinder the message of Christ crucified. Ministers acting contrary to the Word of God, not doing their work faithfully, or always doing what personally benefits them the most, may distract precious souls from hearing and believing the saving truth. For this reason the Apostle Paul gave Timothy detailed instruction for the proper conduct of ministers (1 Timothy 3), and for this reason we pray, **Hear and Thy chosen servants bless / With sev’n-fold gifts of holiness. / Oh, may Thy pastors faithful be, / Not lab’ring for themselves, but Thee!**

Third, we pray that the Church’s ministers would tell us what we need to hear, especially the good news of the forgiveness of sins in Christ. **Give grace to feed with wholesome food / The sheep and lambs bought by Thy blood, / To tend Thy flock, and thus to prove / How dearly they the Shepherd love.**

Now it came to pass
in those days that He went
out to the mountain to pray,
and continued all night
in prayer to God.

Luke 6:12

Fourth, a prayer is raised for those who receive the ministry of the Word. Those who hear need God to work in them so they accept what is told to them (1 Corinthians 12:3b). Hearers need to put away petty complaints over the spiritual leaders Jesus has given them and recognize that the Word those leaders bring is living water for their souls (John 4:14). **Oh, may Thy people faithful be / And in Thy pastors honor Thee / And with them work and for them pray / And gladly Thee in them obey, / Receive the prophet of the Lord / And gain the prophet’s own reward!**

There is a final petition that ministers and hearers will together reach the goal of their faith. **So may we when our work is done / Together stand before Thy throne / And joyful hearts and voices raise / In one united song of praise, / With all the bright celestial host, / To Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.** In all, the hymn presents a model prayer for the holy ministry.

The author, Christopher Wordsworth (1807-1855), was the nephew of English poetic giant William Wordsworth, and a scholar of the first rank. The Ukrainian composer Dimitri Bortniansky (1751-1825) is responsible for the beautiful hymn tune ST. PETERSBURG. His works influenced later Russian composers such as Tchaikovsky and Rachmaninoff, the former of whom collected and edited Bortniansky’s sacred music in ten volumes.



David Schaller is pastor of Redeemer Evangelical Lutheran Church in Sister Lakes, Michigan. He also prepares the “Bread of Life” devotions for the *Lutheran Spokesman*.

Listen to hymn at: <http://lutherantacoma.com/hymns/493.mp3>
Hymn Text: Luke 6:12 ff.
Author: Christopher Wordsworth, 1862, cento, alt.
Composer: Dimitri S. Bortniansky, 1822, ad.
Tune: “St. Petersburg”

Forged In Fire

Forged In Fire is the name of a current TV show. Several bladesmiths are given various hunks of steel, and each one is asked to forge and create a knife of his own design. Their blades are then tested for sharpness, strength, and durability, by which tests the field is narrowed to two finalists, who then are challenged to recreate an iconic weapon of the past. The winner is declared the Forged In Fire champion.

Ehud, a bladesmith in his own right, was the second judge of Israel (Judges 3:12-30). Because of evil committed, God had given Israel over to Eglon, king of Moab, to whom the nation had paid tribute for eighteen years. When the children of Israel cried unto the Lord for deliverance, God raised up Ehud, a man who is described as “a left-handed man.” (v. 15) The Hebrew term suggests that Ehud may have had a physical disability that affected his right side.

Ehud would deliver the next tribute payment to Eglon at Jericho, but the judge had a plan. He went to his forge and made for himself a double-edged dagger about a foot and a half in length. Though it might have lacked the strength of a single edge, his blade had the advantage of having two cutting edges. This dagger he hid, strapping it to his right thigh, and then went to pay homage to Eglon.

If Ehud had a visible physical disability, it’s not hard to imagine how he got by Eglon’s bodyguards. Much like a young David versus Goliath, Ehud might have been mocked and never taken seriously, never even frisked. After all, what sort of dangerous threat could a physically disabled person pose?

But Ehud also had a bold spirit forged in fire. After paying the tribute and rather slyly arranging a solo audience with the king—described as a very fat man—Ehud approached him and said, “I have a message from God for you.” (v. 20) Then he unsheathed his dagger and plunged it into the king’s belly. The double-edged blade cut in so far that Eglon’s belly fat closed over the hilt, and his entrails burst out.

Following this bold act, Ehud made his escape. He summoned the fighting men of Israel, who under his command seized the fords of the Jordan leading to Moab. Ten thousand of the enemy were killed, and not a man escaped. So Israel was delivered and lived in peace for the next eighty years.

The thought arises that our God Himself is a most accomplished bladesmith. For Scripture says that “*the Word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*” God knows all, for “*all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.*” (Hebrews 4:12-13)

From the forge of eternity, God sent forth His Word to mankind, saying, “I have a message for you.” His Word is not some dull book on a shelf, but living and active and like a double-edged sword. It cuts right to the heart of a person, or as some cultures might say, to the guts of the matter. It reveals the marrow of sin and the tough tendons of self-righteousness. Those who reject God’s Redeemer and His Word in unbelief will surely face Him who wields “*the sharp two-edged sword*” on Judgment Day (Revelation 2:12).

But God’s Word is a sword that cuts another way also. For it is the “*sword of the Spirit*” (Ephesians 6:17), and has a mighty and gracious edge, being “*the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes*” (Romans 1:16); indeed, “*it is perfect, converting the soul.*” (Psalm 19:7) Ehud’s dagger cut and killed and revealed the stink of unbelief, with the result that God’s people were delivered and lived in peace. God’s sword is that which cuts into the fat of human pride, converts the soul, and by faith brings us into peace with God. Forged in fire, what an instrument of God’s justice and mercy is His double-edged sword! What a Champion He is!

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



Initial Inductees into the Hall of Faith

By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and through it he being dead still speaks. By faith Enoch was taken away so that he did not see death, “and was not found, because God had taken him”; for before he was taken he had this testimony, that he pleased God. But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.

(Hebrews 11:4-7)

In the world of professional sports, each has its Hall of Fame into which almost every athlete aspires to be inducted. But only those who have distinguished themselves as superior athletes and crowd-pleasers are voted into a Hall of Fame.

At the Hall, each inductee has a bronze bust, pictures, records heralding the athlete’s great feats, and other memorabilia.

In Hebrews 11, we find what has been referred to as the “Hall of Faith.”

The believers listed in this special Hall were truly remarkable, providing us with wonderful examples to emulate.

The first believers to be inducted, so to speak, into the Hebrews 11 Hall of Faith are Abel, Enoch, and Noah. The Holy Spirit draws our attention to distinctive features about each of these believers, whose biographical records are found in the book of Genesis (Abel in 4:1-15; Enoch in 5:21-24; Noah in 6:5 and following). Abel and his brother Cain were Adam and Eve’s first offspring. Abel offered up a sacrifice superior to Cain’s sacrifice in worship of the Lord. Enoch was set apart from countless believers as being one of two who entered heaven without dying. And Noah, in obedience to God, built a huge seaworthy vessel which enabled him and his family to survive the worldwide flood.

While athletes earn their way into the Hall of Fame through personal achievements, those in the Hall of Faith are there by reason of God’s gracious working for and in them. They could all testify with the apostle Paul, “*But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain.*” (1 Cor.15:10)

It was due to a Spirit-worked faith in their hearts that each believer listed in Hebrews 11 was richly blessed by God. Out of faith in the one true God, Abel, Enoch, and Noah were concerned not about being crowd-pleasers, but rather pleasers of God. And it was because they lived their lives in loving service and worshipful devotion to God, out of faith in Him, that they were well-pleasing to Him. Possessing faith in the coming Savior and His redemptive work, these three believers received the imputed righteousness of Christ (see Romans 3 and 4) and were found acceptable to God.

While athletes aspire to be in a Hall of Fame, every believer in the one true God looks forward to being welcomed into God’s Hall of Faith—their eternal home of heaven. We can confidently plan on entering the eternal realms of glory because of the crucified and risen Savior Jesus Christ, to Whom we look by faith. Who deserves the credit for this?

All honor, glory, and praise belongs to our Savior God.

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



"Why don't CLC members pray or sing at other churches?"

This question begins with an unfortunate assumption; namely, that praying or singing requires certain visible motions. Praying is more than the folding of hands and the closing of eyes. Singing is more than opening the mouth and matching musical notes with one's voice. Praying and singing are acts of worship, and worship is always primarily about what is going on inwardly, in the spirit. Jesus told the Samaritan woman at the well, *"But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him."* (John 4:23 ESV)

There is another assumption in the question, which is that no CLC member ever prays or sings at other churches. Some don't, but perhaps others do. The question that's really being asked is this: "Is it appropriate for members of the CLC to pray or sing at other churches?" But here, too, there is an inherent problem in the question, because synodical affiliation is not the issue. The true issue is the error that is promoted and preached at other churches. Worship is an expression of fellowship, and no one ought ever express fellowship with anything other than the truth.

Sadly, many churches promote error through their preaching and teaching, and their members express fellowship with that error through their worship at those churches. They have either been deceived by their spiritual leaders to believe what is contrary to God's Word, or they have been deceived by their own reason that such contrary teachings aren't important. So they attend the church of their choosing and, through their worship, express fellowship with what is not God's truth. Throughout the Bible, in both the Old and New Testaments, God calls His people to forsake the lies of the devil and sinful

men and to worship Him only in connection with the truth as it is revealed and taught in Holy Scripture.

The CLC doesn't exist to tell people where to worship and where not to worship.

The CLC exists because God has worked a love for the truth, which comes from Him, in our hearts.

The CLC doesn't exist to tell people where to worship and where not to worship. The CLC exists because God has worked a love for the truth, which comes from Him, in our hearts. It is this truth that teaches us when to express fellowship, which is always and only with that truth. Where there is error, God's truth compels us to avoid it (see Romans 16:17-18) for the sake of our own hearts and the hearts of others, which are both so easily deceived.

This "avoiding" of error should not be done as a show of superiority, but in love for the truth and in love for the eternal salvation of others. There are times (weddings, funerals, and so forth) when circumstances will find us in a church where error is being preached. At such times our silence is a witness against the error. But keeping silent isn't the only thing we can do—we can also open our mouths, when opportunity permits, to be witnesses for the truth. After all, we aren't saved by our love for the truth, we are saved by *hearing* that truth, which is the only way for anyone to be saved. This is why the devil is so intent on distorting and subverting the Bible. He knows that it is able to save souls. Well, we know that too. So Scripture exhorts us to refrain from expressing any fellowship with error, and it also exhorts us to speak the truth in love.

If you have any questions regarding what the Bible says about this issue or desire to study it further, speak with your pastor. God has placed him in the ministry to handle this Word of truth for your sake.

Frank Gantt is pastor of Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church in Atlanta, Georgia.



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.

Wrestling with the Psalms: 1512-1513

When Jacob feared a violent reunion with Esau, he took his struggle before God and wrestled with Him, demanding a blessing. God blessed him, but the ordeal left Jacob with a disjointed hip.

Luther wrestled with God, too. Monastic life had proven the futility of outward works of penance. His trip to Rome had shown that hypocrisy pervaded the entire church. And his theological studies immersed him in authors who reduced God's Word to petty concerns.

Monastic theologians twisted everything into moralism. Academics of the rabbinic schools turned the Old Testament into mere Jewish history. And the scholastics philosophized the Scriptures into multiple, esoteric meanings. Luther found comfort in none of these schools of thought.

So, giving up on all of them, he sought a blessing directly from God. Jacob had wrestled with the Angel of the Lord. Luther wrestled with the Scriptures. And just as Jacob spoke as he was wrestling, so did Luther in his public lectures.

His first great undertaking as a Wittenberg professor was a teaching series on the Psalms, in 1513. Wrestling to find truth amidst the error that abounded, he made some bold claims.

The scholars had taught that righteousness was something man could achieve through works. Luther rejected this, teaching that David spoke of Christ's righteousness, not his own.

The scholars saw the Psalms primarily as David's words. Luther said the Psalms "must be understood as referring to Christ the Lord, except where it is clear from plain words that someone else is spoken of."

Wrestling to find comfort in the Psalms, the future Reformer aimed to find Christ in them, but he would later admit that this eager desire led him to overreact and interpret certain psalms apart from God's intended sense. For example, he had taught that the "blessed man" of Psalm 1 was Christ instead of the Christian. Also, at this time he still believed that there could be multiple layers of meaning to a passage.



Luther was certainly headed in a good direction with these lectures, but he was still wrestling. Remember, the *Ninety-Five Theses* would not be posted until several years later, and even then his clarity would have a way to go.

Later, in 1519, Luther chose to return to the Psalms, writing a formal commentary. He said he had owed much to that previous work but was glad he was delivered from it. This time, he could "teach the Psalms in all respects according to their real sense and meaning."

What happened in between? His clarity on justification removed that divide between David's righteousness and Christ's. He now understood that Christ's righteousness became man's by faith. He rejected multiple meanings in favor of the single intended sense of the inspired words. No longer trying to make Christ the first-person speaker of every psalm, Luther taught that many of the Psalms represent the heartfelt prayers of the Christians, whose faith clings to Christ.

His 1513 lectures show a wrestling Luther—a Luther blessed by God but with a hip out of joint.

His 1519 commentary shows a teacher at ease with what his Master has to say. Such was his confidence in the Psalms that he was led to turn several of them into his first hymns, beginning our rich heritage of Lutheran hymnody.

Luther's early teaching had some mistakes, but he had to make those mistakes as he wrestled with the Word. It was through the Word that the Spirit was working in him, in order that the Gospel might again be taught in its truth and purity.

Fear of making a mistake keeps many Christians from speaking in Bible class or from sharing the Gospel with others. But Luther's mistakes—his disjointed hip—can give you confidence. Wrestling with the Scriptures out loud

is a way to learn and grow. You will make mistakes along the way, but when you submit to the Word, as Jacob and Luther did, the Lord will always win out in the end.



Timothy Daub is pastor of Prince of Peace Lutheran Church in Hecla, South Dakota.

St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church Vernon, British Columbia

God invites us, “*Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good.*” (Psalm 34:8) This month’s “Slice of Life in the CLC” gives us another taste of the Lord’s goodness. Life in any congregation of God’s people is like a little taste of heaven, for our life is already “*hidden with Christ in God.*” (Colossians 3:3) We have already received “*every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.*” (Ephesians 1:3) This article will give you a taste of some of the specific blessings God has granted St. Paul congregation beyond the blessings that are common to all of God’s Children.

Location

Our location is rich with blessings from our gracious Lord. Vernon is situated at the north end of the beautiful Okanagan valley. It is truly a little taste of paradise in God’s creation. As you drive up the Okanagan valley from the US border, you pass by seven lakes flanked by high hills and towering cliffs on either side. The Okanagan is situated between the higher mountains of the coastal range to the west and several ranges to the east leading up to the majestic Canadian Rockies in Banff and Jasper National Parks. Ski resorts, lakes, golf courses, and a multitude of places for camping, fishing, hiking, and rock climbing all make the Okanagan Canada’s playground. Vernon is also blessed with a more temperate climate than the rest of Canada, which supports the growing of many fruits: apples, peaches, and cherries. There is a multitude of vineyards and wineries. We are often treated to a “fly-by” from our resident pair of bald eagles. It is truly a wonderful place to live.

History

Reviewing the history of St. Paul congregation is like sampling a smorgasbord of God’s grace and blessings. As with many of our congregations, St. Paul Lutheran Church



Above: photos from past Pacific Coast Youth Camps, hosted jointly by St. Paul of Vernon and Redemption of Lynnwood, Washington.



began with God's great gift of faith and commitment to His Word. The founding members were filled by God with an earnest desire to let God be God and to follow His Word in all points. Therefore, submitting to God's will, they left their former fellowship, which had begun holding to a false position.

The first contact with the CLC came when some "snow birds" from Vernon visited Holy Cross Lutheran Church in Phoenix, Arizona. After some discussion, Pastor Michael Eichstadt put them in contact with Pastor Bertram Naumann of Lynnwood, Washington. Pastor Naumann soon began monthly visits to Vernon. After about a year of these monthly services, the faithful few organized as St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church in Vernon. In the Fall of 1996, the congregation was approved for mission status in the CLC and began calling. In the spring of 1997, Pastor David Reim accepted their call and became their first full-time pastor. The members of St. Paul have been tasting God's goodness ever since. By God's grace they have grown in many ways and are committed to supporting the full-time Gospel ministry in British Columbia.

Congregational Life

Although the majority of the founding members have passed away, the congregation has gained some new members and currently has twenty-six communicants and six pre-communicants. The average attendance is twenty-three.

Many of the original members had immigrated to Canada from Germany. They had lived through the turmoil and suffering of World War II, experiencing many hardships as they fled from their homes, suffered hunger, and witnessed the ravages of war. But they also experienced the faithfulness of God, and learned to depend upon Him in every need, in life and in death. They were grateful to the Lord for the good

The members of St. Paul bring a wide variety of experience and background to the congregation—a group made up of plumbers, carpenters, an engineer, an auto mechanic, a farmer, a Royal Canadian Mounted Police officer, and a 911 operator.

life He'd given them in Canada, and they served Him there with gladness. Thus constituted, the congregation conducted services in both German and English for the first fifteen years. Today they worship together in a single English service.

Worshiping without a church building poses a number of challenges, but the members of St. Paul have grown to appreciate the fact that the Lord meets with us and blesses us wherever His Word is proclaimed and His people gather to call upon His name.

The congregation organizes a youth camp each summer. In the early years they went backpacking in the mountains of British Columbia as they dug into God's Word together. Later they joined with youth from our sister congregations in Washington state to form the Pacific Coast Youth Camp, meeting in a variety of campgrounds in Washington and British Columbia. This summer's camp will be held July 24-28 in Banff National Park—come join the worship and fun!

The members of St. Paul bring a wide variety of experience and background to the congregation—a group made up of plumbers, carpenters, an engineer, an auto mechanic, a farmer, a Royal Canadian Mounted Police officer, and a 911 operator. They all seek to use their various talents to serve the Lord and build up His church. They rejoice that, as of January 2018, they will have received the last of their synod subsidy and will become a self-supporting congregation. St. Paul is thankful to all the members of the CLC who have supported them through their mission offerings and prayers over the past twenty years, and they trust the Lord to bless them in the years to come.

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



“It’s Not Mine, It’s God’s!”

During our lives, we often meet interesting and unique people, and there are many lessons that we can learn from the lives and examples of those whom we meet. Edward is one of those people.

Edward is a very interesting character. His incredibly long dreadlocks might make you think he is from Jamaica. In fact, he was born in Tanzania, but lived in Kenya for many years, and even spent some time teaching art and carving in Canada. He speaks very good English, as well as several other languages and a number of dialects. He is easy-going and has a good sense of humor. He has a dog (which is unusual in Africa) named *Simba*, which means “lion” in Swahili. He has a love of and concern for children, and especially for orphans. He is a faithful member of one of the congregations of the Tanzanian Church of the Lutheran Confession. But all of this fails to truly describe Edward.

Most important of all, Edward has a love for his Savior Jesus Christ. It was this love that motivated Edward years ago to donate part of his land to the Lord’s work. He wanted a church to be built; and little by little, it was. But Edward has bigger plans. The church only takes up a part of the land he has given. He also wants his land to host a school—not just any school, but a school for orphans.

“This isn’t my land,” he said. “It’s God’s. He has just loaned it to me while I’m here.” The least he could do, he felt, was to give part of it back to the Lord for the work of His kingdom. And so he has.



Left: Edward with Pastor Nathanael Mayhew; above: Marangu church in Tanzania, built with Edward’s support.

Edward reminded me of a truth I have learned, but often forget: “It’s not mine, it’s God’s!” Think about it—that is true about everything we have. The car I drive, the home I live in, the money I have in the bank, the gifts and abilities I have been given, even the children I care for. They aren’t mine; they are God’s. He has just loaned them to me for the time being. Edward was motivated by his Savior’s love for him to use what was the Lord’s for His kingdom, and for the future instruction of young children in the truths of God’s Word. What could be more important or more valuable than that?

How easy it is to forget all that God has done for us, and to lose sight of why we are here and why God has blessed us with all that we have. Edward’s words and actions are a valuable reminder and wonderful example for us all. Jesus came to serve us, by laying down His life for us. Like Edward, we are witnesses of that redemption won for all by our Savior.



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

“BREAD OF LIFE” READINGS JULY 2017

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

Date	Verse	Reading	Comments
Jul 1	TLH 289	Deuteronomy 5:1-22	Moses reviews the commandments, an important Word of God, so the people can know when they are straying from the Lord.
Jul 3	TLH 417	Deuteronomy 5:23-33	God's will is that the hearts of His people would trust Him and respect Him, for to walk with Him means blessing.
Jul 4	TLH 577	Romans 13:1-7	The governing authorities are placed in our lives by God for our benefit.
Jul 5	TLH 439; LSB 845	Romans 13:8-14	You can't ever love your neighbor too much. That's one debt that is always outstanding. So seek good and pursue it for Jesus' sake.
Jul 6	WS 772	1 Kings 18:1-15	Elijah's initial boldness to proclaim the Word of the Lord is evident here.
Jul 7	TLH 251	1 Kings 18:16-24	There is no middle ground when it comes to God (v. 21), and He does not share His glory with other gods. Either you believe in Him or you do not believe in the true God at all.
Jul 8	TLH 501; LSB 828	1 Kings 18:25-39	Elijah prayed that the Lord would make it known that He was the true God. That is our mission prayer too—May the world know the Lord is God!
Jul 10	WS 746	1 Kings 18:40-46	With Baal's prophets defeated, the Lord sent a mighty rain on the land as He promised, again proving Himself to be the one true God.
Jul 11	TLH 477:3	Luke 15:1-7	Jesus loves nothing more than bringing sinners to repentance and showing them the joy of their salvation in Him.
Jul 12	TLH 477:4	Luke 15:8-10	When a sinner turns from evil, trusting in Christ's death and resurrection for forgiveness, it is grounds for great rejoicing!
Jul 13	TLH 280	Luke 15:11-32	The prodigal son returned because of the love of his father. That's the same reason anybody returns to God—and there is happiness when they do.
Jul 14	TLH 437	Psalms 119:1-8	Those who seek to do the will of the Lord will not be put to shame. Leading an upright life will not ultimately hurt you.
Jul 15	TLH 286	Psalms 119:9-16	God's Word is what keeps our hearts on track. The Law shows us our sin and in the Gospel we delight in the forgiveness that is ours.
Jul 17	TLH 352; LSB 553	1 John 1:1-4	The apostles proclaim for us the Word of life: Jesus Christ, Who gives us life eternal.
Jul 18	TLH 404	1 John 1:5-10	Nobody can claim to have fellowship with God while living in impenitence (sinning against God without admitting it and sorrowing over it).
Jul 19	TLH 235:1-3	Psalms 119:17-24	It is God who must open our eyes to see and understand the wonderful things in His Word.
Jul 20	TLH 477:1-2	Psalms 119:25-32	When our souls are weary with sorrow and trouble, we can turn to the Word of God for strength and comfort.
Jul 21	TLH 383	Galatians 3:1-9	We must always be on our guard against work-righteousness (the idea that we can gain God's favor by human effort). We are justified by faith in Christ.
Jul 22	TLH 178; LSB 550	Galatians 3:10-14	Nobody is counted "not guilty" by following the Law. Instead, Christ was cursed for us on the cross, taking the blame for us, the lawbreakers.
Jul 24	TLH 376; LSB 599	Galatians 3:15-25	The purpose of God's Law is not to save people, but to show them their need for a Savior. We are justified by faith in Christ.
Jul 25	WS 751	Galatians 3:26-29	All who believe in Jesus for the forgiveness of their sin are God's true children and stand to inherit heaven, no matter who they are.
Jul 26	TLH 235:4	Psalms 119:33-40	We ask the Lord to guide and direct us by His Word.
Jul 27	TLH 235:5-6	Psalms 119:41-48	We put our hope and confidence in the Word of the Lord, for in it our salvation is revealed to us.
Jul 28	WS 782	Matthew 5:1-12	When we feel the world is trampling on us because of our faith, these are words to encourage us.
Jul 29	TLH 235:7	Matthew 5:13-16	Christians are salt and light. Without them, the world would be dark and dreary indeed. So don't be afraid to let your light shine!
Jul 31	TLH 235:8	Matthew 5:17-20	Just because we are forgiven doesn't mean we despise God's holy Law, but we strive to keep it all the more because Christ kept it for us.

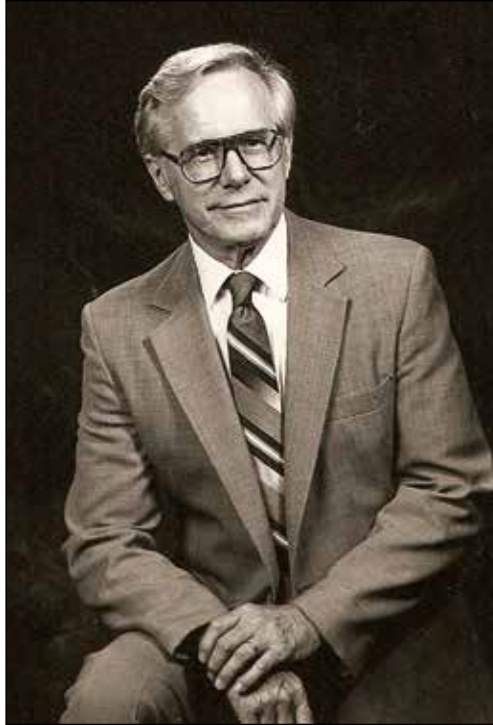
Gordon P. Radtke, 1919-2017

Gordon Paul Radtke was born in Milwaukee, Wisconsin on June 10, 1919, God's gift to Edwin Radtke and his wife Mathilda née Radke. He was baptized on July 13 of the same year.

Gordon's schooling included six years at Concordia College in Milwaukee, Wisconsin; two years at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, Missouri; and two years at Wisconsin Seminary in Thiensville, Wisconsin. He graduated in May of 1944. Over the following years he also took courses at Milwaukee State Teachers College and the University of Wisconsin in Madison.

On September 17, 1944 God united Gordon with Claudine Krueger in a Christ-centered marriage, and later blessed them with a son Jonathan and a daughter Johanna. Over the years, the Lord graciously added eight grandchildren and eleven great grandchildren.

The Spirit of God gave Gordon special gifts for working with people and starting programs. His first call was to a mission congregation in Wabasha, Minnesota, where he also opened two preaching posts and began services in nearby Kellogg, Minnesota. Late in 1946, he accepted the call to Red Wing, Minnesota, where he assisted the congregation in opening a school. In 1950, he accepted the call to Belle Plaine, Minnesota, where the existing school was expanded and soul-care was done in the Lutheran Home for the Aged. In 1953, the call to Monroe, Michigan was accepted, a school opened, and outreach efforts undertaken, with help from seminary student Karl Brandle. In 1955 the Radtke family moved to Mankato, Minnesota, where Gordon took up the work of assistant pastor to G.W. Fischer. While he served there, the doctrinal issues within the synod came to a head. In obedience to the Word of God, the congregation and its pastors separated from their former fellowship and over the next few years sought out like-minded Christians, a process which eventually led to the formation of the Church



of the Lutheran Confession. In 1959, the Mankato congregation started a high school, college, and seminary, which relocated in 1963 to Eau Claire, Wisconsin.

In the fall of 1966 Pastor Radtke became Professor Radtke when he accepted the call to Immanuel Lutheran College. He taught a variety of classes in all three departments over the next twenty-nine years until his retirement in July of 1995. He was President of ILC from 1982 to 1989 and Dean of the Seminary from 1989 to 1994. Professor Radtke ended his long and dedicated public service in the kingdom by coming out of retirement to serve as pastor of Morning Star Lutheran Church in Fairchild, Wisconsin from 1995 to 2009. While in Eau Claire, Prof. Radtke was a charter member

in the Chippewa Valley Symphony and was active in the community. He enjoyed his Tuesday outings with his friends from Messiah congregation's Coffee Klatsch.

The victory over death obtained by Jesus was given to Claudine, Gordon's beloved wife of 67 years, on October 18, 2011.

Gordon stayed busy sorting through his accumulated materials and visiting with friends and family about his amazing life living under God's grace. In the past few years, he had some health issues, nothing very serious, and recently began slowing down. On Thursday, April 6, 2017, the Lord Jesus ended Gordon Radtke's earthly pilgrimage at ninety-seven years, nine months, and twenty-seven days. His body was cremated and the ashes buried beside the ashes of his wife in Rest Haven Cemetery to await the resurrection of all on the Last Day.

Gordon was preceded in death by his parents; his wife, Claudine; two grandchildren, Robert and Heather Radtke; and his sister Marilyn and her husband Roger Hagen. Still in the time of grace are his brother Marvin, son Jonathan (wife Debbie), daughter Johanna Williams, eight grandchildren, and eleven great-grandchildren.

Immanuel Lutheran High School Visitors' Day

Springtime at Immanuel Lutheran High School in Eau Claire, Wisconsin, is packed with traditional events, like Arbor Day, Field Day, ILHS Banquet, and the Senior Tea, to name a few. One such event is High School Visitors' Day, which generally occurs on the last Friday in April or the first Friday in May; this year it was April 28.

ILHS Visitors' Day provides seventh and eighth-grade students throughout the synod an opportunity to visit the campus of Immanuel, interact with students and staff, and learn more about what it would be like to attend ILHS. Invitations are extended throughout the CLC, with around seventy students and a dozen adults visiting the Immanuel campus for the occasion.

Many visiting students travel from a distance and arrive on campus Thursday evening. Games and mixer activities are organized for these early arrivals, who then get to sample resident student life by spending the night in the dormitory.

The actual Visitors' Day program takes place during the school day on Friday. Visiting students take part in a variety of activities. They learn about co-curricular activities and athletics. They attend a classroom setting in which a few teachers share an engaging or entertaining sample of their subject areas. Tours of the campus buildings and grounds are conducted. Students may even participate in game show-style experiences, scavenger hunts, or other activities centered on various aspects of life at Immanuel.

Adults who accompany the visitors are invited to tag along with the students during the day, but they also have their own opportunity for question-and-answer time with Immanuel staff members. This gives chaperone parents a chance to learn more about Immanuel Lutheran High School.

The program itself changes from year to year, but one constant has been the active involvement by the high



school students of ILHS. Numerous student volunteers participate in planning, organizing, and conducting the Visitors' Day program under the supervision of the principal.

At the close of the school day, the formal Visitors' Day program comes to an end, but a few more ILHS events are on the schedule in the afternoon and evening. Baseball and softball games are usually played at locations on and off campus. Friday evening the Immanuel drama club presents a play or musical production. Many visiting students stay in the dormitory Friday night, providing them one more opportunity to interact with their high school student host.

Immanuel Lutheran High School has been richly blessed with people, programs, and property. Our students and staff enjoy the opportunity to show and share blessings with visiting students, many of whom, God willing, will return as students and be able to carry on this cherished tradition of welcoming prospective students at the next Visitors' Day at Immanuel.

Jeff Schierenbeck is a professor at Immanuel Lutheran College in Eau Claire, Wisconsin.



SEEN IN PASSING

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

Freedom of Religion . . . Except for Christians.

In a recent review of a book documenting incidents of persecution against Christians, columnist Rachel Lu of *The Federalist* observed, “Christians are turning into the sort of minority it is socially acceptable to despise and marginalize. Ordinary rules of civility and social inclusion don’t seem to apply to them. We believe in free speech, except not for Christians. Freedom of association doesn’t necessarily apply to them. Rules of civility and decency are more optional when Christians are involved. Shall we even pretend that freedom of religion is a cherished American commitment in our day? When a group is ‘approved’ for this kind of marginalizing treatment, it’s hard to predict where it will stop. Christianity hasn’t changed very much, at least in the relevant respects. Christians became moral renegades because the mainstream culture shifted, leaving our beliefs ‘on the wrong side of history’ as progressives have envisioned it. We’re vilified for maintaining positions that have been embedded in the Christian tradition for centuries. If the dominant culture can change enough to permit this level of *kulturkampf* against an ancient Western faith, who can say how much further it might go?” Lu, Rachel. “Why

Are Progressives On An Anti-Christian Witch Hunt?” Books. *TheFederalist.com*, 15 Jul. 2016. Web. 5 May 2017.

Vice President Criticized for Being Faithful to His Wife.

A Washington Post article profiling Karen Pence, wife of Vice President Mike Pence, caused a backlash of liberal outrage when it revealed that the Vice President has for decades followed a personal policy that dictates that, unless his wife is present, he will not eat alone with another woman or attend an event where alcohol is being served. In an interview with *The Hill* in 2002, Pence explained the reason: “If there’s alcohol being served and people are being loose, I want to have the best-looking brunette in the room standing next to me.” His practice is similar to the so-called “Billy Graham Rule”: to avoid any situation that would give even the appearance of impropriety, the evangelist said he would not “travel, meet, or eat alone with a woman other than my wife.” Emma Green, writing for *Atlantic Monthly*, observed that “some folks—mostly journalists and entertainers on Twitter—have reacted with surprise, anger, and sarcasm to the Pence family rule. Socially liberal or non-religious people

may see Pence’s practice as misogynistic or bizarre. For a lot of conservative religious people, though, this set-up probably sounds normal, or even wise.” Green, Emma. “How Mike Pence’s Marriage Became Fodder for the Culture Wars.” *Politics*. *TheAtlantic.com*, 30 Mar. 2017. Web. 11 Apr. 2017.

Christians Who Don’t Read the Bible?

The good news: a recent Religious Landscape Study by the Pew Research Group revealed that a solid majority of Americans (71%) still identify themselves as Christians. The bad news: only a third of Americans say they read Scripture even once a week. 25% of those who claim to be Christians say they do not believe the Bible is the Word of God. An additional 16% say the Bible is the Word of God, but “should not be interpreted literally.” Only four in ten Christians said that reading the Bible is essential to the Christian faith. Three out of ten did not know that Jesus was born in Bethlehem. Only four in ten could name all four gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. Geiger, Abigail. “5 facts on how Americans view the Bible.” *FactTank*. *Pewresearch.org*, 14 Apr. 2017. Web. 10 May 2017.



Delegates, pastors and teachers at this year’s Great Lakes Delegate Conference, held June 5-6 in Coloma, Michigan.