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LUTHERAN SPOKESMAN

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



*"For by grace you have been saved
through faith, and that not of
yourselves; it is the gift of God"*

Ephesians 2:8



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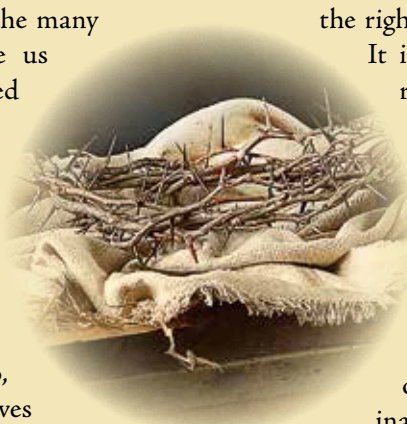
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The Celebration of God's One-Way Path

If we could travel back in time, one of the many things that would no doubt surprise us would be the changes that have occurred in ecclesiastical emphasis. Virtually all Christians today would, for example, list Christmas, Good Friday, and Easter as our greatest Christian celebrations. Yet church historians tell us that many Christians in prior centuries regarded Epiphany as the preeminent Christian event. The change is difficult for modern Christians to grasp, especially given the fact that Epiphany receives so little emphasis or notoriety today. What caused such a dramatic shift in emphasis? In two words, *ignorance* and *entitlement*.

Christians today have no trouble identifying the basis for our modern celebrations of Christmas, Good Friday, and Easter: Jesus was born, Jesus died, and Jesus rose from the dead. Not so with Epiphany. While many could explain that the word *epiphany* means “manifestation” or “appearance”—and might even be able to associate Epiphany with the arrival of the Magi, the baptism of Jesus, and Jesus’ first miracle at the wedding feast in Cana—few could articulate the importance of those events. In the minds of most Christians today, Epiphany is encapsulated in Christmas. Jesus manifested Himself on earth *at His birth*. It seems illogical to us that God would send His Son into our world, but then withhold the revelation of that Son. The three events that are routinely commemorated in connection with the Epiphany simply tell us how God revealed His Son also to the Gentiles (the star that drew the Magi), how the Father announced to the Jews that Jesus was His Son (His Baptism), and the revelation of the miraculous powers that verified Jesus’ deity (changing water to wine in Cana). Given all of that, Christians today still find it difficult to grasp the significance that prior generations recognized in Epiphany.

The root problem can probably be traced back to our modern sense of entitlement, a symptom of the larger problem of human pride. Of course Jesus came to save all mankind, Jew and Gentile alike, and of course He revealed Himself when He came to earth as our Brother. Yet sinful mankind has



the right to assume none of the truths of the Gospel. It is by *grace* we have been saved, and grace is rightly defined as “God’s underserved love for sinners”—unworthy, undeserving sinners.

Maybe the reason prior generations of Christians placed such great emphasis on Epiphany was that they did not share our modern sense of entitlement. Prior to the Reformation, God was portrayed as angry, demanding, and vindictive—all of which created the impression that He was inaccessible to sinful human beings. Through the Reformation, countless souls were blessed by the Holy Spirit with a correct, Biblical understanding of the God Who loved them enough to sacrifice His own Son to pay their sin-debt. Filled with joy and peace by the revelation of the true Gospel, those souls seemed to have been blessed with an abiding appreciation of the impossible dilemma from which they had been rescued. They were acutely aware of the fact that they had no path, no road, no means by which they could access their God through their own thoughts, words, or actions. No such path existed. “*But the righteousness based on faith says, ‘Do not say in your heart, ‘Who will ascend into heaven?’ (that is, to bring Christ down) or ‘Who will descend into the abyss?’ (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead).’*” (Romans 10:6-7 ESV) They recognized that since we could not ascend to God, God had to come to us. This, to our forefathers, was the celebration of Epiphany—the celebration of not only the fact of the one-way path between God and man, but also the fact that our Savior chose to travel that path. To Christians in former times, Epiphany was not viewed as a part of Christmas; rather, Christmas was regarded as a part of the greater mystery of Epiphany. We could not go to God, but He has come to us.

However we choose to celebrate Epiphany, we pray for a greater appreciation that our Savior-God traveled that one-way path, and that He did what only He could do.



Michael Roehl is pastor of St. Paul Lutheran Church in Bismarck, North Dakota.

The Lord's Mysteries of Life

Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to attain. For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place, when I was woven together in the depths of the earth. Your eyes saw my unformed body; all the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be. (Psalm 139:6, 13-16 NIV)

Mankind is presumptuous. We are proud. We declare our wisdom as superior to all other wisdom, and if we cannot understand something, then we will do what we will do. And so it is with the issues of life. We behave as if we are the masters of our own fate and determine the outcome of all life, and as if there is no other authority or might or dominion over man in this world.

In this Psalm, David confesses the opposite to be true, especially with the issues of life. *"Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to attain."* (verse 6) This is the wisdom that comes from God which we also should recognize as being too wonderful for us, too lofty for us to attain, as we consider what David by inspiration reveals concerning the mysteries of life.

First of all, David acknowledged the wonder of God's hand in his creation. Yes, David was formed in his mother's womb in a way that we have come to accept as natural, but it is actually so much more than nature. How we were "knit together" by the hand of God within our mother's wombs as we were given life is a wonder of God. We, too, are led to confess with David that we are *"fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well."* (verse 14) There is design to our being that comes from the Master Designer. David knew and understood that he was born from his mother, but he also knew by faith that he was a work of God.

The implications this truth has for the conduct of our lives and our attitude toward human life are immense. God made us with all the gifts and abilities we possess so that we might serve Him and our neighbor according to His holy will all the days of our lives. The number of the days of our lives are in God's hand as well. Isn't it amazing, indeed *"too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to attain"* that the Lord, when I was still unformed, had plans for my life even though I am but dust and ashes! *"All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be."* (verse 16)

It is with this Spirit-given insight into the mind and heart of God that we are led to speak of the sanctity of human life. It isn't that we simply *imagine* our lives are precious—they are! Life itself is the gracious will of God bestowed upon us in the wonder of His almighty power and wisdom, the wonder of His grace and love in Christ. He sees our days, every one of them, before they even come to be! Who are we to say that a life started by the power of God should not be? How can anyone declare a human life too great an inconvenience or too much of a burden? These are souls for which Christ gave His life, whose burden of sin Jesus willingly bore, souls for whom He shed His blood. Why would He do this? Only because of the greatness of His love! *"Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to attain."* (verse 6) However, I do know

this: God's grace comes to us in this brief pilgrimage, and there is not one soul whose salvation He does not desire.

Theodore Barthels is pastor of St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church in Austin, Minnesota.



WS HYMN 717

“Bright and Glorious Is the Sky”

It was on the second day of creation that God made the expanse of the sky, and since then He has used it from time to time as something of a billboard for important announcements. Abraham, for example, was told to look up into the sky for confirmation of the promise God was giving him (Genesis 15:5). There were the Christmas angels who appeared in the sky, announcing the birth of Jesus to the shepherds. Now we come to Epiphany, where the sky again plays a role, hosting the famous “star in the east” which started the wise men off on their journey to find the King of the Jews.

The opening verse of the Danish-Lutheran pastor Nicolai Grundtvig’s (1783-1872) hymn, “Bright and Glorious Is the Sky” turns our attention skyward as well, **Where the golden stars are shining, / All their rays to earth inclining** (v. 1). Our thoughts fly heavenward as they beckon us.

God certainly got the attention of the wise men, too, and they got the message that the long-promised Messiah had appeared on earth. So they **Went to find the king of nations / And to offer their oblations / Unto Him as Lord and King** (v. 2). But why? Why would they care about a Jewish baby in little Bethlehem? They cared because they had been led by the Spirit to believe that He was *their* Lord and King. That’s why we care about this Child, too. He is *our* King also. Not a King who rules over us with an iron fist, not an angry judge who bends us to His will by force with threats and punishments, but a King who comes to lay down His very life for us—a King who saves us from our sins.

It truly was no ordinary King that the wise men found in Bethlehem. But Jesus was not out of the ordinary because He was so grand and awe-inspiring. Instead, He was out of the ordinary because He was so much the opposite. The wise men found this King humble and lowly, taking on the form of a servant, coming not to serve Himself, but to serve us. **Him they found in Bethlehem, / Yet He wore no diadem; / They but saw a maiden lowly / With an infant pure and holy / Resting in her loving arms** (v. 3).

Yes, they found Him—but can we? The magi had a star to guide them, but do we? How are *we* drawn to the King? Grundtvig tells this in the fourth and fifth stanzas. These verses form the climax of the hymn text and bring the main application home to us. The fact is, **We too have a star to guide us / Which forever will provide us / With the light to find our Lord** (v. 4).

As a star, God’s holy Word / Leads us to our King and Lord; / Brightly from its sacred pages / Shall this light throughout the ages / Shine upon our path of life (v. 5). Indeed, it is the Word of God that leads us to our Savior! The Word is a lamp for our feet and the light for our path (Psalm 119:105) that brings us to the King. This Word is always there for us, eternal and unchanging, drawing us to Christ Jesus and the forgiveness and peace He gives to us. Heaven and earth will pass away, but the Word of the Lord will never pass away (Matthew 24:35). May it ever be God’s instrument to lead peoples of all nations to Christ.



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*.

Skirting the Issue

King Saul, along with three thousand men, was again on the hunt. Out of jealousy, the king was pursuing a most elusive prey: David, the king-elect. Time and time again the outlaw king had eluded Saul with superior tactics and speed. But now David and his men were cornered in a cave near the “Crag of the Wild Goats,” located on the mountainous slopes west of the Dead Sea (1 Samuel 24).

Into the very cave in which David was hiding, Saul entered to relieve himself. Consider David’s position and frame of mind. For months Saul had chased him like a dog, even though David had given Saul no cause for his jealous rage. David’s men were quick to encourage him to take advantage of this golden opportunity to strike a blow for freedom and justice.

But David knew that Saul was still king over God’s people, that he still owed allegiance to Saul, and that vengeance was in the hands of God. But David couldn’t easily forget what Saul was doing, so he silently crept up behind King Saul and cut off a piece of his skirt or robe, but spared the king’s life. Later on David would show Saul the piece of cloth he had cut off as proof of what he could have done, but didn’t; as proof that he was acting righteously and Saul very wrongly toward him.

Almost immediately David suffered an attack of conscience. He rebuked his more blood-thirsty men and told them, “*The Lord forbid that I should do this thing to my master, the Lord’s anointed. . .*” (verse 6) Later David fell on his face before Saul and repented of the fact that he had cut off even a small piece of the hem of Saul’s garment.

But why? It seems like such a small thing in comparison to what Saul was doing. Saul’s robe was certainly in need of some repair, if not ruined. And the king no doubt suffered some public embarrassment for having been caught with his pants down. But David had shown mercy and spared the king’s life. So why the angst?

Indeed, David had shown a certain disrespect toward Saul, as he admitted. But some scholars have suggested there was

more involved here, that the hem of the king’s robe represented royal authority and power. And so what David had done bordered on rebellion. He had attacked the very symbol of Saul’s kingship. No wonder godly David was smitten with heartfelt remorse!

Saul’s response perhaps lends credence to this thought. Not only did he acknowledge David’s non-murderous action, but said, “*I know indeed that you shall surely be king, and that the kingdom of Israel shall be established in your hand.*” (verse 20) If his hem or edge of his skirt represented royal authority, then this incident foreshadowed the loss of Saul’s kingship and David’s future reign.



**Attacking Jesus’
royal authority by
cutting out pages of
His holy Word is not
profitable at all, but
constitutes rebellion.**

Speaking of hems, on two occasions Matthew—writing to a Jewish audience—reported the importance, in Jesus’ ministry, of His hem. A woman with a flow of blood for twelve years approached Jesus from behind “*and touched the hem of His garment.*” (Matthew 9:20) The woman was healed and praised for her faith by the Lord. Many who were sick in the land of Gennesaret “*begged Him that they might only touch the hem of His garment. And as many as touched it were made perfectly well.*” (Matthew 14:36)

Jesus’ physical robe is no longer available to us to cut off or to touch. But what a picture, both warning and comforting! Attacking Jesus’ royal authority by cutting out pages of His holy Word is not profitable at all, but constitutes rebellion. But what a gracious and wonderful thing to openly approach Him, to touch Him and be touched body and soul with His healing, gracious power.

Uncounted numbers of children have hidden their faces in their mother’s skirts. Blessed are they who hide themselves in the hem of the royal and righteous garment of their Almighty King. They are like little chicks who nestle under the skirt-like wings of their protecting Savior.



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Faith in an Almighty Deliverance

By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured as seeing Him who is invisible. By faith he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of blood, lest he who destroyed the firstborn should touch them. By faith they passed through the Red Sea as by dry land, whereas the Egyptians, attempting to do so, were drowned.

(Hebrews 11:27-29)

What would it take to deliver two million unarmed men, women, and children from oppressive slavery to a superpower nation? It would require nothing less than superior might. Through His supernatural power, the almighty God liberated the helpless nation of Israel from their bondage to the great Egyptian empire.

The Lord God almighty brought Pharaoh and his people to their knees through the means of ten dreadful plagues. The final plague which prompted Pharaoh to order Israel to leave was the killing of the firstborn throughout Egypt.

Having second thoughts about losing a free-labor force, Pharaoh changed his mind and sent “six hundred choice chariots, and all the chariots of Egypt with captains over every one of them” (Exodus 14:7) after Israel. At the approach of this formidable army and with Israel’s back against the Red Sea, God miraculously made a pathway through the sea with a wall of water on either side so that Israel could safely leave Egypt.

What would it take for Moses and the Israelites to follow God’s lead for their deliverance? It would require nothing less than a Spirit-worked faith in God’s almighty ways to save them.

Moses, who had previously feared Pharaoh and fled from his presence (Exodus 2:15), now stood fearlessly before Pharaoh, demanding that he let God’s people go. Without any hesitation, Moses led Israel out of Egypt. Why the change of heart? Moses came to know by faith that the invisible God was with them to bring about their deliverance (Exodus 3:12ff).

How was Israel to prepare for their mass exodus? God instructed them to kill a lamb, smear its blood on their

exterior door frames, eat a meal of lamb, and be ready to leave at a moment’s notice. This didn’t sound like much of a preparation. But it was God’s way of sparing their firstborn from death and ensuring that they left Egypt unscathed. With faith in God, Moses readied the people for their departure.

When Israel thought they would be slaughtered by Pharaoh’s army at the Red Sea, the Lord mercifully restored faith in their hearts. Putting trust in the Lord’s control over nature, Israel passed through the sea without a fear that the walls would collapse and bury them in a watery grave.

Israel’s exodus from Egypt by the power of God has been used to picture our deliverance from a cruel bondage to sin, Satan, and eternal death. Like Israel, we are powerless to save ourselves from these mighty forces. What did it take to deliver us from our captivity? Nothing less than the almighty power of our Savior Jesus Christ! As true God, Jesus bore the accumulated weight of every human sin and suffered the punishment of hell to

fully atone for them.

And how is it that sinners are able to benefit from Jesus’ rescue efforts? It is only through a Spirit-worked faith in His redemptive work.

Thank God for His infinite mercy and His great power to deliver us from our captivity and bring us safely to the promised land of heaven!



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

Putting trust in the Lord’s control over nature, Israel passed through the sea without a fear that the walls would collapse and bury them in a watery grave.

“What’s so bad about a couple living together outside of marriage?”

Unfortunately, this is no longer a common question. I say “unfortunately” because the reason the question is so seldom asked any longer is that our society has gone so far down the road of sexual perversion that “living together” hardly gets anyone’s attention. Even some Christian parents have defended their children’s decision to move in with their significant other without marriage. The customary defenses are generally “They can’t afford to pay two separate rents,” “Living in separate places won’t stop them from having sex,” and, “They want to make sure that they are compatible before they get married.”

These defenses may seem reasonable, but defending what God forbids is never reasonable.

Just to be clear, it’s not the actual living at the same address that is the main problem. The problem is the sexual immorality, and sexual immorality is a problem because it is sin, and sin is a problem because it places one under the condemnation of God’s Law and—if unrepented—condemns such a one to hell.

That being the case, it is important that we be ready to give clear testimony to anyone who seeks to defend this indefensible life-choice. So, let’s take the first one. “We can’t afford to pay two rents.” Besides the fact that the fifty-five-inch television and monthly Dish Network subscription, the internet and smart phone subscriptions, the eating out and going to bars and night clubs all reveal such a defense to be nothing more than a self-deception, there is something more important to take into account. Jesus asks the following question:

What does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul? Or what can a man give in return for his soul? (Mark 8:36-37 ESV)

No amount of money saved is ever worth throwing away one’s relationship with God, and thus eternity in heaven. That’s the most expensive decision anyone could ever make.

Secondly, while it is true that living in separate places won’t stop a couple from engaging in sexual immorality, it in no way follows that making it easier for them to do so is the right

thing to do. The Bible doesn’t teach us that if we are tempted to sin we should go ahead and give ourselves over to it. Rather, it says,

But because of the temptation to sexual immorality, each man should have his own wife and each woman her own husband.
(1 Corinthians 7:2 ESV)

The God-chosen way to deal with this particular temptation is marriage, in which sexual intimacy not only satisfies physical desires but also has deep spiritual benefits as well. Marriage isn’t just a social construct; more importantly, it is a precious gift of God.

Finally, let us deal with that third defense that is offered for why a couple might choose to live together without being married.

The claim is that they want to make sure they are compatible with one another before doing something as drastic as committing to one another for life. The truth is that they *aren’t* compatible—none of us are. That’s because inside of each person is the corruption of sin. That sin corruption reveals itself in pride, greed, covetousness, self-righteousness, arrogance, and jealousy. Since both individuals have this sin corruption, there will be conflicts whether they are married or not. But, once again, the Bible has a better avenue to deal with this than by giving oneself over to do what God forbids. The Bible’s plan is

But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. (1 John 1:7 ESV)

Living in the darkness of sexual immorality will never give or prove the compatibility that one claims to seek. True compatibility, or fellowship, comes only from walking in the light of God’s holy Word, which exposes our sin corruption and pours out to our repentant hearts the cleansing forgiveness purchased by the shedding of Christ’s blood.

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



THE ROAD TO REFORMATION

In observation of the 500th anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation, we are presenting a brief survey of the life of Martin Luther. The series continues with major events in the life of the Reformer that took place after 1517.

Junker Jörg



After the Diet of Worms, Martin Luther's writings were banned, and many Roman loyalists threatened to kill him.

Luther feared no ill. The Holy Scriptures showed him the pure Gospel, that he was declared righteous by Christ's blood alone. An assassin's knife would merely send him to heaven.

But the Saxon prince, Elector Frederick the Wise, had other ideas. On March 4, 1521, Luther was abducted and imprisoned in Wartburg Castle. Frederick's plot was smart but consternating.

The former monk had no problem with a cell, but this one was different. Before, he had starved himself in an attempt to atone for his sins, but now his door admitted servants bearing sumptuous platters of food. Once, he had made penance on a splintery floor, but now his room was filled with fine furniture. Monastic solitude had had a false sense of purpose, but at least it had one! Wartburg had none.

Frederick was a gracious abductor and planned day outings for Luther, but in order to leave his cell, he had to wear stuffy clothes and grow a beard like other nobility. Few people even knew Luther was in hiding. Most thought him to be dead.

The recess breaks, like rabbit hunting, were senseless to Luther. The reckless chasing showed the nobles to be full of themselves. One time, bothered and bored, Luther hid the rabbit under his topcoat, only to have the dogs maul the critter beneath his clothes.

When Luther was let outside, he most certainly stood out. "Who's that fellow?" people would ask. "Are you sure he belongs here?"

When pressed for a name and title, Luther gave a fake one in jest: Junker Jörg. In English, that's like saying, "My name is . . . Gourd Pumpkinsquash!"

He found his days meaningless. The Lord promised great things in His Word, and Luther had taken a stand for that Word. But now he did not see God's plan.

Back at Wittenberg, Andreas Karlstadt attempted to fill the void left by Luther's absence. He initiated reforms with abandon. Statues of Jesus were smashed, the liturgy differed from one week to the next, and the sermons were just as reckless.

None of this was the clear preaching of the forgiveness of sins, and word about it was getting back to Luther. Frederick let the reformer have a short trip home. Seeing the mess in Wittenberg gave Luther a sense of purpose as he returned to his cell.

The people needed the Word of God! The Scriptures made the Gospel clear, but that truth, in a sense, was trapped in Luther's head, just as he was trapped in the castle. He knew the Greek and Hebrew, and he was given clarity by the Spirit through the Word. And by faith, he had the desire to make it known to all.

Luther repented of his despair of uselessness and trusted in Christ instead.

With this new perspective, the Wartburg became a blessing rather than a burden. There were treasures here for the Master's employ: a vast and complete library. An endless supply of paper and ink. Uninterrupted time. Luther wasted little.

Within seven months, he had produced a German translation of the Bible. For centuries, it remained the standard throughout Germany, and it is a work we still have much to learn from today.

This is God's way. David had his senseless days. Paul wandered in Arabia. Jesus' cross was and is foolishness to many.

But David wrote the Psalms, Paul the Epistles. The Savior rose from the grave.

Luther translated it all.

You may have your own days when you feel of no use. But when you think you serve no purpose, dear sinner, the Gospel sets you free, too! Do you have a Bible? Pen and paper? A friend in sorrow or need? The forgiveness of sins by Jesus' death and resurrection gives you something to write and talk about!

Thank God for your Junker Jörg days! Thank Him for your "meaningless" moments, because in Christ you have everything you need—for yourself, and to share with others!

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



Trinity Lutheran Church — Millston, Wisconsin



Millston is a community of 135 residents in west-central Wisconsin, sixty miles southeast of Eau Claire. U.S. highway 12, connecting Chicago to Minneapolis, runs through Millston. Today I-94, just at the edge of Millston, carries much of the traffic *past* Millston. A rail line from Chicago to Minneapolis also runs through Millston. The well-known *Twin Cities 400* train traversed the route for many years—400 miles in 400 minutes. The track is still well kept; frequent trains pass through Millston, though none stop.

In the mid to late 1800's, the logging industry flourished; sawmill operations sprang up, and logs were floated down the Black River to Onalaska (La Crosse). The areas of Black River Falls, Warrens, Tomah and Wisconsin Rapids also

contained many marshes—difficult for logging—home to wild cranberries. Commercial cranberry farms and bogs dot the area today.

In the 1850's Mr. Hugh B. Mills settled southeast of Black River Falls, now Millston Township. He operated a sawmill on Robinson Creek (it burned down in 1863), started Mills' Tavern (hotel) on the road from Black River Falls to Tomah, and operated a farm. His "tavern" became Mills Station, a stop on the rail line from Chicago to Minneapolis. In 1874 Mills built a sawmill on Wyman Creek near Mills' Station, thus officially beginning what is today Millston. His house next to the sawmill still stands. Mr. Mills owned hundreds of acres of timber and farm land. He became co-founder of the Jackson Bank of Black River Falls.



By the 1880's, German Lutherans had also settled in the area east and northeast of Millston in Knapp Township. The land was better suited for farming than the land in the immediate Millston area was. A church named St. Luke's was organized. The school building from the disbanded logging villages of McKenna and Zeda was moved to the four-corners area of Knapp Township, to serve as St. Luke's Lutheran Church. The congregation became a member of the Wisconsin Synod.

In 1955 Pastor Robert Mackensen began serving St. Luke's. In 1960 he and a majority of the members of St. Luke's left the Wisconsin Synod. They formed Trinity Lutheran Church with fifty-six members. The congregation began meeting in Millston in a church which the Mills family had built, known as the Millston Union Church, not affiliated with any one denomination or confession. Trinity continued to rent the Union Church building for 25 years. Trinity joined the newly formed CLC in 1962.

In 1968 Trinity purchased a lot in Millston for a mobile home for its pastor, and eventually placed a pre-built home on the same site. Because the Union Church building was small and the congregation was growing, Trinity purchased additional property next to the parsonage and began a building project. Work progressed over the course of six years. The new church, seating 125, was dedicated in December, 1988.

In 1990 Trinity had 130 members. During the ensuing years, however, the numbers began to dwindle. At this writing there are twenty-eight members, many of whom have roots in Knapp Township. This small group is determined to

continue. With the energy of several new members, Trinity has renewed its outreach efforts. Trinity has mission festival, going door-to-door to invite community members. An annual highlight is the spring choir concert presented at Trinity by the ILC Tour Choir prior to its ten-day choral trip.

In 2015 Trinity aligned itself with Morning Star of Fairchild and Peace with God of Onalaska, Wisconsin. Pastor Richard Kanzenbach serves all three, using a rotation of retired pastors, ILC seminary students, and ILC professors to assist in conducting weekly services at Trinity. By God's grace the Gospel message of *REST* from the guilt of our sins, *REST* from the burdens of this life, and *REST* in heaven through Jesus our crucified and risen Savior continues, and prayerfully will continue, to sound forth from the little flock in Millston, for the welfare of their own souls and the souls of others!

The congregation has been served over the years by pastors Robert Mackensen, James Sandeen, Robert Mehlretter, Clarence Hanson, Mark Bernthal, Mark Gullerud, Mark Bohde, Arthur Schulz, Matthew Ude, Lawrence Bade, Burgess Huehn, and currently Richard Kanzenbach. Numerous vacancy pastors from ILC and Eau Claire have also served.



Richard Kanzenbach is pastor of Morning Star Lutheran Church in Fairchild, Wisconsin, Trinity Lutheran Church in Millston, Wisconsin, and Peace with God Evangelical Lutheran Church in Onalaska, Wisconsin.

Congregation-Based Outreach

“Every Christian, every pastor, teacher, laymember is a missionary. He or she cannot be anything else, as that is the new nature of the believer.”

In the CLC we generally look at overseas outreach as the job of the Board of Missions. And when it comes to a sending agency, a synod-supported mission board is one traditional way of doing overseas work. But some Christian churches have opted for more of a congregation-based outreach.

When we look into the first history book of Christian outreach, the *Acts of the Apostles* by Luke, we see that congregational sending and support was practiced. When the Jerusalem congregation under the apostles learned of the work of Philip the evangelist in Samaria, they sent Peter and John there. Paul in his outreach was supported time and again by the Philippian congregation. The prime example of this congregational approach is Antioch in Syria, which sent out Paul and Barnabas. God gives us freedom in how we can do outreach beyond our geographical limitations.

OUR FELLOWSHIP, TOO, HAS MADE USE OF CONGREGATION-BASED OUTREACH:

- CLC congregations have frequently sent literature to overseas contacts. Sometimes this has meant a lot of material, in bulk and/or over a lengthy period of time. Naturally, the Bible is usually at the top of the list of needed materials.
- Sometimes immigrants and visitors to our country will come into contact with a CLC congregation, resulting in the congregation gladly working with these individuals. This has often led to further contacts in a foreign country.
- In our Phoenix congregation, contact with a Kenyan visitor to church eventually led to the congregation supporting mission work in Mois Bridge, Kenya.
- A few years ago, a Liberian man's attending our Minneapolis church led to his membership, and to the congregation's supporting work in Monrovia, Liberia.

- Our Mankato, Minnesota congregation has had contact with Sudanese refugees, as well as with a Peruvian man; both led to mission visits in those countries.
- Recently one of our congregations has seen a Nicaraguan visitor in church. We pray that this may lead to contacts in Central America.

One historic example of the congregation as a mission society was the Lutheran congregation at Hermannsburg, Hanover, Germany. The Hermannsburg Society was founded by Pastor Ludwig Harms in this village in 1849. He rejected the rationalism of his youth. Near the end of his university training he was reading John 17:3, *“And this is life eternal that they might know Thee, the only true God and Jesus Christ whom Thou has sent.”* (RSV) This was the turning point in his life. Under his ministry at Hermannsburg, the whole congregation became a missionary society; not merely a few members. The congregation was known as the “Farmers Missionary Society.”

One of the founding pastors of the CLC, George Tiefel, held this view of the congregation as a mission society in itself. He said, “Every congregation is and must be according to its very nature a mission society. If we of the Church of the Lutheran Confession would bear that always in mind, our work would flourish. . . . Every Christian, every pastor, teacher, laymember is a missionary. He or she cannot be anything else, as that is the new nature of the believer.”

Based on our Lord's command and the privilege given to us by the Lord Himself to preach and teach the Gospel of salvation, we have a pure goal: the little girl telling of the prophet, the aged woman cradling in her arms the precious gift, the young man refuting errors and speaking the truth, the husband and wife working together for Him in their home and on the road, and the list goes on and on.



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

Want to meet the person who may be your next pastor or Christian day school teacher? 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.

Michaela Winters

Age: 22

Program: Education

Year in School: Senior

Where were you born?

Eau Claire, Wisconsin

Where did you grow up?

Eau Claire, Wisconsin

Married? Unmarried? Tell us about your family.

I am the oldest of the five children of Steve and Eve Naumann. I married Kenny Winters last September. We hope to start a family, as God wills, in the near future.

What hobbies, sports, or extracurriculars interest you?

I love photography and have my own amateur photography business going. I love to do stand-up paddleboard. I play basketball and volleyball, and also do crafts.

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

I went to Nepal on a mission trip right after I graduated from Immanuel High School. This was probably the final "big push" that convinced me that I wanted to be a teacher and work with kids.

Which academic subjects especially interest you?

I really enjoyed Dogmatics; it made me think hard about doctrines and teaching I'd previously taken for granted. I also loved art, and the children's literature course.

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

I had amazing teachers, and relatives who were teachers, when I was going through school. I looked up to them. They helped me through some of the most important times of my life and taught me from the firmest foundation: God's Word. I remember giving it some serious thought after my



third grade teacher told me that she thought I would make a good teacher. Since then, it has always remained in the forefront of my mind. Everything I loved or wanted to get into could go back to teaching. God has used His gentle guiding hand to lead me to my decisions. He made it clear to me that there was a need, and made me eager to fill it.

What have you appreciated most about your time at ILC?

The things I appreciated most were the moments spent in Christian fellowship and the Word. I love the Christmas chapel we have, and the chapel services in general. I have appreciated immensely the hard work, advice, and ever-listening ears of the professors. They have been a

tremendous support for me as I have made my way through the education program, and have pushed me to my limits to fulfill the potential they saw in me. I also appreciate how loving and supportive the Messiah school and congregation is. Their support of and help with the student teaching program has made me a much more confident teacher.

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

I think the future leaders of the church will need to be strong, gentle, and diligent. Strong, because the world is very evil; it is becoming harder and harder for Christians to be free in our religion. We need to remain strong in our faith, and encourage others in the same. We need to be gentle, not letting our selfish, sinful flesh get the best of us and influence us to exert ourselves over each other, becoming offended by each other in trivial matters. We want others to see our gentle, but strong lights, and see the hope that is in us as a welcome and a true hope! Finally, we must be diligent because the world will try to tell us we are wrong, so we should be digging into the Word daily and eagerly to learn more and have a better understanding of the Bible.

“BREAD OF LIFE” READINGS JANUARY 2018

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

Date	Verse	Reading	Comments
Jan 1	TLH 347	Genesis 1:1-31	At the start of the new year, we are reminded of God’s new creation, both the one at the beginning and the one yet to come.
Jan 2	TLH 54	Joshua 3:1-17	We do not know where the new year will take us, but we know that our God will go before us.
Jan 3	TLH 657	Psalms 2:1-12	Our Lord Jesus Christ is Lord of the nations, and we take refuge in Him.
Jan 4	TLH 118	Job 1:1-22	Our happiness is not in earthly things, but in knowing that whatever trials the Lord allows are for our good.
Jan 5	TLH 375	Isaiah 1:10-20	How are our hearts made clean before the Lord so that we do not give Him “meaningless offerings”? He must make them clean (v. 18).
Jan 6	WS 717	Matthew 1:18-2:12	As a star God’s holy Word leads us to our King and Lord!
Jan 8	TLH 158	Genesis 4:1-12	Paradise is lost and the blood of Abel cries out from the ground. Who answers the blood that cries after us? Thankfully, our Savior Jesus does.
Jan 9	TLH 295; LSB 836	Joshua 8:30-35	In the new land the Word of the Lord, the Law and the Gospel, was to be part of everyone’s life.
Jan 10	WS 782	Psalms 5:1-12	The Lord graciously protects and blesses His children, the people who count on Him for deliverance.
Jan 11	TLH 526	Job 3:20-26	Our lives are full of grief, disappointment, and frustration; but we can look to our God, Who promises to see us through.
Jan 12	TLH 106	Isaiah 9:1-7	Though we walk in the shadow of death, Jesus gives us the light of life, even life forever.
Jan 13	WS 773; LSB 418	Matthew 3:13-4:11	As Jesus began a ministry which would destroy the work of the devil, Satan immediately attempted to defeat Him, but could not.
Jan 15	TLH 17; LSB 717	Genesis 8:15-9:3	After the terror of the flood, God remembered Noah and promised to protect him and care for him. The promise of v. 21-22 still stands for us, doesn’t it?
Jan 16	TLH 298; LSB 405	Joshua 12:7-24	You don’t have to be able to pronounce all these names to understand the point—God gave victory after victory to His people!
Jan 17	TLH 321	Psalms 6:1-10	The Lord hears us when we weep over our sins, He assures us of His forgiveness in Christ, and He sends us relief.
Jan 18	TLH 530	Job 5:17-27	God sends us hardship not to destroy us, but to train us and to exercise our faith in Him.
Jan 19	WS 742; LSB 927	Isaiah 12:1-6	Surely it is God Who saves me!
Jan 20	TLH 487	Matthew 7:15-29	Not everyone who says, “Lord, Lord,” is a true teacher of God’s Word. Believers need to beware whom they follow.
Jan 22	TLH 220	Genesis 14:8-20	Melchizedek praised God for victory, Abram gave him a king’s share of the spoils, and later it’s revealed that he foreshadowed Christ, our great High Priest (Hebrews 7).
Jan 23	WS 743	Joshua 20:1-9	God is a God of justice and took special care that crimes were properly tried before the assembly.
Jan 24	TLH 651	Psalms 11:1-7	David is confident in God’s justice, even when the wicked seem to be having their way.
Jan 25	TLH 435	Job 7:7-17	Job laments that God continues to test him. Sometimes He tests us beyond what we think is good for us, but never beyond what is truly good for us.
Jan 26	TLH 278	Isaiah 22:5-14	The people of Judah turned from the Lord in unbelief and would find no help apart from Him.
Jan 27	TLH 492; LSB 831	Matthew 9:27-38	Jesus, Helper of the helpless!
Jan 29	TLH 369; LSB 561	Romans 5:12-17	God’s grace in Christ and the gift of righteousness through Him conquers all sin and death.
Jan 30	TLH 428	Genesis 18:1-15	God’s promises are no laughing matter, and can be trusted one hundred percent.
Jan 31	TLH 424	Psalms 13:1-6	The Lord’s love is unending, therefore count on it in the day of trouble.

College Visitors' Day



The only entry gate into Christian education is *Immanuel*.

I am talking about the person, our Lord Jesus Who came for us, not the campus. Seeing our great burden of guilt, He came to carry away the guilt of sin for us. Seeing our blind stumbling in the darkness, He came to give us the light of His Word. Seeing our bondage in death, He came to open for us the portals of heaven. Seeing our own unwillingness to come to Him, He sent the Holy Spirit to create faith in our hearts. Immanuel has come for you and wants to abide with you.

Recently, Immanuel, the school in Eau Claire that serves our Church of the Lutheran Confession, hosted a college visitors' day. On November 10, 2017, we gathered to emphasize the importance of abiding in Jesus, no matter what college and career path a student may follow. *"For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?"* (Matthew 16:26)

But we also gathered to encourage each student to consider the benefits available in attending Immanuel Lutheran College, where every teacher shares our belief in the teachings of our Savior God, and the Bible is the basic text for all subjects. At this college, even secular subjects are taught from a Christian point of view: geography opens the panoramic vista of God as the Creator and Preserver of the world, history is a record which shows how God guides the destinies of nations, social studies teaches the duties of a Christian toward his country, science is presented as God's handmaid. The student learns to exclaim with the psalmist, *"Marvelous are Your works."* (Psalm 139:14) By the grace of God, Immanuel offers a

Christian world view for Christian young people. *"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, And the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding."* (Proverbs 9:10)

SOME OF THE CURRENT STUDENTS SHARED THEIR UNIQUE PERSPECTIVES WITH THE HIGH SCHOOL JUNIORS AND SENIORS WHO WERE ATTENDING:

"You may not feel God calling you toward the pastoral or teaching ministry now. You may think that you've already learned all you need to know about the Bible. But there is so much more to be gained at the college level. The two-year AA program can help you grow. No matter where you are, stay open to God's guiding in everything; don't say 'No' to God."

"Attending Immanuel has really been a blessing to me, a blessing I want to share with the lambs of Christ's kingdom. Even if the Lord is not directing you toward the teaching ministry, you'll want your children to have the privilege we've had of a Christian education. So, don't unintentionally discourage someone else from entering the teaching program, saying things like, 'You mean you are just going to come back here?' Coming here is a great blessing!"

"God has put you in a life raft. But you are facing some major decisions. It may seem that your life raft is entering turbulent waters. One big decision is whether you will stay in that life raft or abandon it. Another is whether you will be a help to others, whose hands are reaching up from the turbulent waters, by pulling them onboard."

"Perhaps you have doubts about what you should do, where you should go. I have had lots of them. I did not plan on being here, preparing to be a pastor. Yet, despite all my doubts, Jesus has led me here. And if Jesus can make a pastor out of me, He can prepare you to be a pastor or teacher too."



John Ude 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.

Nepal Follows India in Outlawing Christian Conversions.

In October of 2017, Nepal enacted a law to curb evangelism by criminalizing religious conversion, thereby joining neighboring countries like India and Pakistan, where the region's small-but-growing Christian minority faces government sanctions because of their faith. The new law states that anyone found guilty of attempting to convert a person from the majority Hindu faith to a different religion can be punished by five years' imprisonment. Christian leaders in Nepal immediately petitioned the government to rescind the law, which is widely expected to exacerbate the persecution of religious minorities. Shellnutt, Kate. "Nepal Criminalizes Christian Conversion and Evangelism." *International ChristianityToday.com*, 25 Oct. 2017. Web. 11 Nov. 2017.

Masses Rally in Streets of Kiev to Celebrate Protestant Reformation.

In a public display of faith that would have been unthinkable a generation ago, hundreds of thousands of Christians rallied in the streets of Kiev to commemorate the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation. The rally was organized by Protestant leaders after a declaration by Petro Poroshenko, president of Ukraine, recognizing the anniversary of the Reformation. Attendance was estimated at up to a half a million people. Leader Sergey Rakhuba with *Mission Eurasia* said, "Many traveled from all four provinces there just to be a part of that celebration, to thank God for the freedom to worship, to thank God for the freedom to preach the Gospel in their country, and to celebrate God's faithfulness." N.a. "Hundreds of Thousands Gather in the Streets of Ukraine to Praise the Name of Jesus." *CBN News.CBNnews.com*, 21 Sept. 2017. Web. 11 Nov. 2017.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS: Pastors, professors, male teachers, and voters of congregations within the Church of the Lutheran Confession are invited to nominate individuals for the following synodical offices to be elected at the 2018 CLC Convention:

- CLC President
- CLC Vice-President
- CLC Moderator
- CLC Secretary
- Board of Trustees—Called Servant
- Board of Trustees—Lay Member
- Board of Regents—Called Servant
- Board of Regents—Lay Member
- Board of Missions—Called Servant
- Board of Missions—Lay Member
- Board of Education—Pastor Member
- Board of Education—Professor

Member Nominations will be received January 1, 2018 through March 31, 2018. Nomination forms, lists of eligible called servants, and submission information are available on the clclutheran.org website. — Pastor Paul Nolting, Moderator



Clergy participating in the installation of Pastor Mark Weis at St. Luke's Lutheran Church in Lemmon, South Dakota, November 12, 2017. Left to right: Pastor Paul Nolting, Pastor Michael Roehl, Pastor Paul Krause, Pastor Weis, Pastor Delwyn Maas, Pastor Mark Gullerud, Pastor Aaron Ude, Pastor Timothy Daub.