

May 2018 VOL 60 NO. 11

LUTHERAN SPOKESMAN

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



*"This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven,
will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven."*

(Acts 1:11 ESV)



Page 8



Page 10

IN THIS ISSUE

May 2018 — VOL. 60 NO. 11

Pause, Consider, but Then Move Forward	3
Honoring the Christian Wife and Mother	4
A Hymn of Glory (TLH 216) "On Christ's Ascension I Now Build"	5
Prepared for the Journey	6
A Faith That Runs	7
"Don't Judge Me"	8
Luther Reforms the Liturgy—1526.....	9
Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church Hidewood Township, South Dakota	10
Notes from the Field CLCI Public Gospel Meetings	12
Bread of Life Readings, March 2018.....	14
Dedication of New Church for Peace Lutheran, Mission, South Dakota	15
Seen in Passing.....	16

Get and give the gift of the Gospel

Subscription to the *Lutheran Spokesman* is \$18.00/year.

ORDER SUBSCRIPTION ONLINE AT:

www.lutheranspokesman.org

Or mail subscription to:

Mr. Benno Sydow, Business Manager
2750 Oxford Street North
Roseville, MN 55113



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, Michael Roehl, Robert Sauers, Thomas Schuetze, Chad Seybt, Mark Weis.

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

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

Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are from The Holy Bible, New King James Version, copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Lutheran Spokesman Art Direction and Design by MschaserLLC 2017. Any use of the images and/or graphics in part or whole without permission is prohibited. Contact Matt Schaser at: mschaser@sbcglobal.net for terms and usage.

Pause, Consider, but Then Move Forward

Ascension is actually not our holiday, is it? Not really. It belongs, for the most part, to our Lord Jesus. Think of it. If you were Jesus, wouldn't you be eager to return to heaven to be with your Heavenly Father and to exist in the perfect bliss of paradise—especially if you knew from personal experience what that place was really like?

Clearly. Who wouldn't want to be there right this minute? The Apostle Paul certainly agreed. In his letter to the Philippians he said, *"If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me. Yet which I shall choose I cannot tell. I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better."* (Philippians 1:22-23 ESV)

The Ascension was therefore the day Jesus got to go home—*victorious!* It was Jesus' great day as He returned to the glory and bliss of His Father's side in heaven.

That's not to say that there's nothing in the Ascension for Christians.

The word the Bible uses to describe how the disciples stood staring off into space is the same one it uses to describe how the children of Israel stared at the glowing face of Moses when he came down from Mount Sinai (2 Corinthians 3:13), and how Stephen stared at the vision of angels when he was being stoned (Acts 7:55). Clearly, this event was absolutely amazing to those who witnessed it. Who knows how long the disciples stood there, or how long they would have stood there had the two men dressed in white not arrived? The angels asked the same question anyone walking up to a similar group today would ask: *"Why do you stand looking into heaven?"* The angels obviously knew the answer, so with the question they offered both an explanation and a promise—and in that explanation we learn the promise that the Ascension of our Lord Jesus holds for us: *"This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven,*

will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven." (Acts 1:11 ESV)

Pause for a moment and contemplate both the absolute reality and the dramatic import of that simple statement of truth from the angels. Jesus will one day return to this earth as He once left at His Ascension. What an awesome, heart-lifting thought. Jesus is coming back—at any moment!



And He is coming back for us. Because He made us clean. In fact, that's the whole point, isn't it? Jesus returned at His Ascension to the Father, and He could do so only if He was victorious; that is, He could return to His Father only if He had actually accomplished His mission to rescue fallen mankind. The fact that He returned to heaven means that He had successfully completed His mission. That is, in fact, how and why the Ascension serves as the "second great proof" of Jesus' victory. The first proof was His Resurrection from the dead. The second great proof was the Ascension, which ought to hold the same place in the human heart as does the empty tomb of Easter

Sunday. Jesus could not have returned to the perfection of heaven if He had failed to win our forgiveness. His Ascension means that we are forgiven.

As you celebrate the Ascension, pause and be reminded of the fact that that very Ascension is a declaration from God that the full debt for your sins has been paid by your Savior. But then move on. As Peter, James, and John could not remain on that Transfiguration mount—for their ascended Lord had work for them to do while they waited to rejoin Him—so, too, He has given us work to do. Be about your Father's business.



Yet as you go, carry with you the image of your glorified Savior. That is Jesus as He now exists, our all-powerful Savior-God for Whom nothing is impossible.

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

Honoring the Christian Wife and Mother

“Husbands, likewise, dwell with them [your wives] with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered.”

(1 PETER 3:7)

Mother’s Day is a big and special day across America. If you’re thinking of having Sunday brunch on Mother’s Day, be prepared for a long wait to get a table. Cards will fly out of the local card shops, and mothers across America will all be told that they are the very best mother of all. Then Monday comes and everything goes back to normal. Mothers will once again be taken for granted, or worse, verbally abused by spouse and children who can’t find the car keys, the homework, or the article of clothing that is needed right at the moment. We hope this doesn’t describe Christian homes, homes that are blessed with the loving presence of the Lord Jesus!

The passage above is addressed to Christian husbands, but it is also very suitable as an encouraging word for Mother’s Day. As Christ is the head of the Church, so the husband is to be the head not only of his wife, but also of the Christian home. As a Christian husband comprehends the love of Christ in his heart, he will model that love of Christ in his home—first to his wife and then also to his children. The husband’s attitude toward his wife and children can be a huge factor in establishing a truly Christian atmosphere in the home.

So what does Peter, by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, encourage? The Christian husband will honor his wife. This will begin with love and thoughtfulness toward her. He will strive to provide her with his assistance and consideration. He will remember that as his Christian marriage has been blessed by the Lord’s enduring presence, so his wife is his partner not

only in temporal matters of running a household, but also in spiritual matters as well. She brings a very special quality of Christian faith and love into the home and into their marriage. They are joint heirs of the grace of life. That is not focusing merely on this material life, but on the gift of spiritual and eternal life we have been given in Christ Jesus. Even “*as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma,*” (Ephesians 5:2) so

the husband will imitate that attitude in his love for his wife. It will be a sacrificial love that honors her for all she brings to home and marriage.

The world may view as inconsequential, or merely cute, the spiritual touches brought into the home by the Christian mother, but in reality they are invaluable blessings. She teaches the children their bedtime prayers. She sings of Jesus’ love for them. She encourages the completion of Sunday school lessons. She is present both to chide the erring

children, and then to embrace them, not only with her love but also with the Savior’s love.

There is great cause to honor the Christian wife and mother on this Mother’s Day. Let us begin by thanking and praising the Lord for His gift of devout Christian wives and mothers. Let’s make this Mother’s Day a special day for them; but may

we also take that honor into the following Monday, the following week, and the rest of the year, giving honor to whom the Lord has clearly told us honor is due.

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



TLH HYMN 216

“On Christ’s Ascension I Now Build”

“On Christ’s ascension I now build/ The hope of mine ascension.” (verse 1)

When Christ returns on Judgment Day, you, along with all believers, will ascend bodily into heaven, to be forever with Him where there is no sorrow, no tear, and everlasting joy. This fundamental Christian doctrine is scorned by many “modernists” as “pie in the sky bye and bye”—mere wishful thinking. However, our confidence in this truth is unshakably founded on the inerrant Word of God and confirmed by the historical fact of Christ’s Ascension.

In John 14:2-3, Jesus tells His disciples, “*In My Father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.*” When the resurrected Jesus later visibly ascended into heaven, that historical event—witnessed by the apostles—confirmed His promise. Josua Wegelin (1604-1640) provides an additional reason for our assurance. He writes, “**For where the Head is, there full well/ I know His members are to dwell/ When Christ shall come and call them.**” (verse 1)

American readers today may slightly misunderstand the “members” part of that sentence. Our modern usage of the term usually refers to a number of undifferentiated equals joined together in some organization, such as members of a club, or voters in a parliamentary group. The original meaning, however, is nearly the opposite. It refers to what we would probably call “organs” or “body parts.” That is the sense in which it’s used in I Corinthians 12:12-31, where we

learn that every Christian is a *member* (that is, a body part) of the body of Christ, even though we are all different from one another in many ways. So also in this second part of verse 1, Wegelin uses this biblical picture of all Christians being members of the body of Christ as an additional reason why we can be confident of our own ascension. We are members (parts) of Christ’s body, the Church. The Head of that body is now in heaven, so certainly the other body parts will be there also.

The last two verses of this hymn turn our attention to our daily walk as Christians in this world, waiting for the time when we, too, shall ascend to be with Christ. The focus of our lives, first and foremost, is to be characterized by trust in Him: “**My heart shall rest in Him alone,/ No other rest remaining.**” (verse 2) How foolish we are if we look to earthly fame or fortune for our sense of wellbeing and success! Those things are seldom attained and always short-lived. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus tells His believers, “*Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.*” (Matthew 6:19-21) In like manner, this hymn proclaims, “**For where my Treasure went before,/ There all my tho’ts shall ever soar/ To still their deepest yearning.**” (verse 2)

I’ve struggled with the phrase “adorning Thy redemption” in verse 3. To adorn something is to enhance, lend beauty to, or decorate it as if with ornaments. Wegelin writes, “**Oh, grant, dear Lord, this grace to me,/ Recalling Thine ascension,/ That I may ever walk with Thee, Adorning Thy redemption.**” Certainly, there is nothing we can do to enhance Christ’s redemption. However, the phrase is no doubt intended as a poetic way of saying that we are to live our lives “as is fitting for saints.” (Ephesians 5:3). That is, we pray here that we may do nothing that would in any way sully the reputation of Him Who has redeemed us, to Whom we will one day rise bodily to eternal life.

Lord, grant this unto us all.

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



Listen to Hymn 216 at:

<http://lutherantacoma.com/hymns/216.mp3>

Josua Wegelin

Born: January 11, 1604 - Augsburg, Bavaria, Germany

Died: September 14, 1640 - Pressburg, Hungary

Josua Wegelin was for a short time pastor at Budweiler (“Church of the Barefoot Monks”), and in 1627 he was appointed fourth diaconus of the Franciscan church

at Augsburg. In 1629 he was compelled to leave Augsburg with thirteen other Evangelical pastors by the Edict of Restitution enacted by Emperor Ferdinand III. In 1632 he was recalled as archdiaconus of the Franciscan Church, when Gustavus Adolphus took over the city. He was appointed preacher at the Hospital Church of the Holy Ghost in 1633. In 1635 he was again forced to flee, finding refuge in Preburg, Hungary, where he held office as pastor, Senior, Inspector, and later Doctor of Theology. Source: ELHHB Website [Handbook to the Lutheran Hymnal]



Prepared for the Journey

Life is a journey. As Christian travelers, we're simply passing through the Temporary on our way to the Eternal. During the trip, we often face dangers, difficult terrain, ups and downs. What can prepare us for the journey? Psalm 121, often called the *Traveler's Psalm*, provides the answers.

GOD'S PRESENCE.

When traveling, how much planning do we do? We may spend hours on the internet researching the best fares and best accommodations. If driving, we may take the car in for a tune-up and tire rotation. But at what point in our travel plans do we include God? Does He come first or last; before the ticket purchase or after the baggage claim?

While our own travel plans are important, they are not solely responsible for bringing us to our destination. God is. Knowing this, the writer of Psalm 121 placed God first—literally, from the first verses, saying, *"I will lift up my eyes to the hills—from whence comes my help? My help comes from the LORD."*

LORD in capital letters is a translation of the Hebrew word **YAVEH**, meaning "I AM." This name of God, perhaps more than any other, emphasizes His eternal nature and unchanging faithfulness. So we ask, "Lord, are You with me on this trip?" True to His name He answers, "I AM." We ask, "Lord, are You with me in this hospital room?" He answers, "I AM. That is My name. That is My promise." Whether traveling between continents or through a troubled marriage, God Himself is with us every step of the way. And to know this is to be prepared for the journey.

GOD'S POWER.

After reminding us that God is our constant Helper, the psalmist adds the words, *"Who made heaven and earth."* God created the universe. He made everything from nothing. Are we to believe then that our lives and journeys are too hard for the Lord? The reality is, our problems aren't too big. Our view of God is too small. Why wouldn't we press on in any godly endeavor, knowing that our God made heaven and earth? To know this is to be prepared for the journey.

GOD'S INVOLVEMENT.

The psalmist wrote of God, *"He will not allow your foot to be moved."* These words convey more than personal protection. They are also God's personal guarantee that if we trust Him

*I will lift up my eyes to the hills—
From whence comes my help?*

*My help comes from the LORD,
Who made heaven and earth.*

*He will not allow your foot to be moved;
He who keeps you will not slumber.*

*Behold, He who keeps Israel
Shall neither slumber nor sleep.*

*The LORD is your keeper; The LORD
is your shade at your right hand.*

*The sun shall not strike you by day,
Nor the moon by night.*

*The LORD shall preserve you from
all evil; He shall preserve your soul.*

*The LORD shall preserve your
going out and your coming in*

*From this time forth,
and even forevermore.*

Psalm 121

and follow His Word, He will never allow our trust—our "footing"—to be put to shame. Consider this: the God *"who made heaven and earth"* is so involved in your daily life that He cares about your feet. But then, should we expect anything less from the God Who led the Israelites through the wilderness for forty years, without allowing one sandal to wear out? To know this is to be prepared for the journey.

GOD'S WATCHFULNESS.

As parents, we wish we could watch over our children twenty-four hours a day, but we can't. We wish we lived closer to them, but we don't. But Someone is constantly watching over them and us—God. We're told twice in Psalm 121, *"He who keeps you will not slumber"* and again, *"Behold, He who keeps Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep."* Every second of every day of every year of your life, God Himself is watching over you. And to know this is to be prepared for the journey.



Mark Weis is pastor of St. Luke's Lutheran Church in Lemmon, South Dakota.

A Faith That Runs

“Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.”

(Hebrews 12:1-2)

“Religion is a crutch for the weak.”

This comment is often made to disparage religious people, as though those who reject religion are somehow not weak. The truth, however, is that all humans are sinners, and so all humans are weak. And as such, all people have crutches that they turn to in their moments of weakness. Some turn to alcohol and drugs, while others turn to sinful pleasure or other amusements. Some rely on self-help techniques and practices. And there are also those who turn to various false religions, or mere “spirituality.” These things truly are crutches, and poor ones at that. But the expression, “Religion is a crutch for the weak,” does not apply to Christianity. It is true that we are all weak, but the Christian faith is no crutch!

It is faith that runs.

That word *crutch* is a fine description of the world’s attempts at dealing with sin and its consequences. All of the world’s crutches can only deaden the pain or mask the symptoms, but Jesus cures the disease! The Christian faith is not one of limping along; it is a faith that runs. The Bible repeatedly refers to our faith in this manner. “*The name of the LORD is a strong tower; the righteous run to it and are safe.*” (Proverbs 18:10) “*Those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength . . . They shall run and not be weary.*” (Isaiah 40:31) “*Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it.*” (1 Corinthians 9:24) And here in Hebrews 12 we are invited to “*run with endurance the race that is set before us,*” just as did all of those heroes of faith that we have read about in the previous two chapters. This is the “*great cloud of witnesses*” that surrounds us. The accounts of their lives are recorded there in Scripture for our learning. And those lives witness

to the faithfulness of God’s goodness. Yes, this great cloud of witnesses testifies to the steadfastness of God’s promises of grace and mercy in Christ Jesus.

Those accounts of Old Testament believers reveal the race of faith to be one of endurance, but if we are weak, then where does such endurance come from? Our text gives the answer: look unto Jesus. Fixing our eyes on Jesus gives us the ability to run and endure the race of faith knowing that Jesus met sin and its curse head on for us, and He won! Through faith His victory has become yours! May God grant us the grace and endurance to run after Jesus, so that at the end of our race of faith we may gladly sing

My course is run.

My Jesus took for me

Upon Himself my guilt.

Upon the cross, the bitter, shameful tree,

For me His blood He spilt,

Thus by His death and grace abounding

For me a refuge surely founding.

My course is run.

My course is run. Amen! (TLH 599:2)



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

“Don’t Judge Me”

It used to be that the most frequently-cited passage in America was John 3:16. The reference was visible at practically every NFL game you watched. As the football sailed toward the uprights, someone beyond the end-zone would hold up the sign. *John 3:16.*

Today it seems that America has moved on from John 3:16 to Matthew 7:1, “*Judge not, that you be not judged.*” You probably won’t see this held up for the cameras, but you will hear it when people are defending their sins. “Don’t judge me,” is the ready comeback. “Don’t impose your morality on me,” is the cry of our postmodern culture. “What is right for you may not be right for me,” is the way truth is reduced to personal opinion. If the person has any church connection, the response is often, “The only one who can judge me is God.”

IS IT TRUE THAT ONLY GOD CAN JUDGE?

In some ways it is. What matters is not my will or preference, but His. He is the Judge. But He doesn’t make people wait until Judgment Day to find out what His judgments will be. The time to find out where God stands on the moral issues of the day is now, because now there is still time to repent.

Even if we were limited to using Matthew 7, it would be clear that “*Judge not*” does not mean that all judging is wrong.

QUITE OFTEN, JUDGMENT IS REQUIRED.

7:5 “*First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother’s eye.*” We are not to close our eyes to a person’s sin, but to address it in a humble and loving way.

7:6 “*Do not give what is holy to the dogs; nor cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you to pieces.*” How to know when a person becomes a dog or pig toward what is holy? Judgment is required.

7:15-16 “*Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruits.*” To discern between truth and lies, judgment is required.

7:24 “*Do not judge according to appearance, but judge with righteous judgment.*”

JUDGING IS NOT THE PROBLEM.

Being judgmental is. That can happen when we measure people by subjective, human standards. It happens when we judge motives that we can’t see. It happens when we judge without love.

THEY THOUGHT IT WAS AN OPEN AND SHUT CASE.

One day, the Pharisees dragged an adulterous woman to Jesus to see what He would do. Open and shut case? They thought it was. But then Jesus stooped down and wrote on the ground. We don’t know what He wrote, but we do know what He then said to the Pharisees: “*He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first.*” (John 8:7) Jesus wasn’t condoning the sin of adultery. He was making it clear that she wasn’t the only one who needed to repent. Pious though they appeared, they didn’t care about the woman. They cared about themselves.

Scriptural judging has one goal: the salvation of souls. Its purpose is not to make people upset or make them look bad, but to lead them to see that God’s judgment has already fallen. It thundered down upon Jesus in our place. Every sin was paid for. Every misstep, every false belief, every act of false judging was charged to Him so that we are forgiven.

Our goal is to lead everyone to repent and be saved. That takes more than holding up a sign. It takes humility, honesty, and love.

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



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.

—1526—

Luther Reforms the Liturgy

Luther was a fearless reformer who plunged ahead heedless of personal cost when he saw the Gospel under attack. For him, the Gospel was truly a great treasure that needed to be restored to its native clarity, allowed to shine in its natural glory, and shared with all. The tarnish of human additions had to be removed, since they could only dim the glory. The desire to achieve this goal made Luther a very practical reformer. Always the question before his eyes was, “How will what I write and do help the common man to see the Gospel more clearly?”

How then did Luther approach that very practical concern, the forms of worship, the liturgy? On the one hand, he didn't feel any urgency to introduce changes. Several other pastors introduced new forms to their congregations before Luther did. And Luther had to be prodded to develop a formal worship service before he finally did so. Even then, the changes he made were at first small. He was careful not to disturb the devotion of the congregation.

On the other hand, there were things that disturbed him. In his view, “the Word had been silenced, non-biblical elements had been introduced, and the service itself had become a meritorious work.” People were led to think that going to church was their gift to God, an act of obedience that brought merit to themselves. The truth was that God wished to bless them through the worship, forgive them, speak comfortably to them, hear and answer their prayers, and present Himself to them in the sacrament.

Therefore, the changes to the liturgy that Luther introduced served the purpose of providing clear presentation of biblical truth to the congregation. The Lord's Supper was cleansed

of a number of parts that taught that it was a re-sacrifice of Jesus offered by the priest for the people, that the bread and wine were changed into Christ's body and blood by the words of institution as spoken by the priest, and that Christ's body was now visibly present on the altar to be venerated and worshiped. The words of institution alone were left in that part of the service. Communion in both kinds (both bread and wine) was restored to the people. Singing a hymn during the distribution was introduced. Communion was to be celebrated only when communicants were present. If this seems obvious to us, it is only because private masses and masses for the dead have long been eliminated from Lutheran practice.

The other major changes were intended to increase the congregation's participation in the service. First of all, the order of service was written in the German language, so the people could understand what was going on. This was not as simple to do as it sounds, and it caused Luther much difficulty because most of the service was chanted at that time—even the Gospel and Epistle Readings. Luther worked with two professional musicians to devise a chant that would work well for the German language.

Then, he introduced congregational singing. At this time almost all the singing done in church was done by choirs of monks, trained in singing. Now Luther wrote hymns and encouraged others to do the same. Some of these were hymn versions of parts of the service, such as “Isaiah Mighty Seer in Days of Old” (TLH 249) for the Sanctus. Others were versifications of psalms. Still others were not based on any one portion of Scripture but taught the truths of Scripture.

Luther, rightly believing that all Christians are priests before God, broke down the distinction between priest and layman in the worship service and invited the congregation to fully participate in worship and not merely to observe.

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



Luther's Deutsche Messe, or German Mass. The mass was published by Martin Luther in 1526 as a suggestion for worship. Its function, according to Luther, is to help people hear the word.

Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church Hidewood Township, South Dakota

I would imagine that the sight of a white, wood-framed church, sitting out on a hill in the midst of a rolling countryside, would turn the thoughts of many to the nostalgia of yesteryear—to a time when many family farms dotted the landscape of the Midwest and prairie states, a time when moms and pops raised large families, eking out a living on a quarter-section of land. I speak of nostalgia because many such country churches no longer exist, owing to the once-thriving population of rural America having moved to metropolitan areas for work.

Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church, Hidewood Township, has proved to be the exception to the rule. Located in the country, in the Coteau hills of eastern South Dakota, some twenty miles to the south and east of Watertown, Zion has existed as a congregation since the late decades of the 1800's. In its early years, the mostly German Lutherans who settled in the area were served by circuit-riding pastors, and they met in homes and in a schoolhouse until 1899. It was then that their first church building was built. Since then the building



itself has seen several changes. The church was expanded to its present size in the 1940's, and more recently a comfortable entry, which gave much-needed gathering room as well as indoor plumbing facilities, was added.

The wind, synonymous with South Dakota in the minds of many, blows incessantly through the Hidewood hills. And as the building has weathered the wind, so the congregational membership has also stood the test of time. In the late 1950's various members of Zion and of Trinity Lutheran in Clear Lake, South Dakota, along with their pastor, Albert Sippert, withdrew from the WELS (Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod). By 1960 Zion was

a member congregation in the CLC and became a dual parish with Trinity Lutheran in Watertown, South Dakota. Both were served by Pastor Christian Albrecht.

Since then Zion has seen its membership wax and wane. Currently, area agriculture is dominated by huge dairies and





industrial farming. Nevertheless, members of Zion who do farm have come up with ways for some of the next generation to “stay home”—in taking over family farms, raising cattle, and hauling feed, cattle, hay, and grain. Zion currently numbers twenty-nine souls, mostly divided between members scattered in area farms and others residing and working in nearby Brookings. However, its relatively small count in numbers does not reflect the size of the congregation’s wholehearted dedication to worship around God’s Word. Attendance at services reflects a healthy percentage of the congregation, and Zion has recently seen internal growth (five children aged six and under) and also visitors with children—all of which makes for lively Sunday mornings and an active Sunday school.



Besides sharing a pastor, Zion and Trinity also share a summer outdoor service and picnic in Watertown. They also work together for summer vacation Bible school and Christian elementary education at Trinity. Having South Dakota State University located in nearby Brookings has made that city a good location for a monthly Bible study, currently held at a member’s home.

Because agriculture is such a vital part of eastern South Dakota’s economy, Zion’s members are very familiar with the challenges and successes, the disappointments and joys that come with the raising and harvesting of crops, and the need for relying on our gracious Lord through it all. In the same way, Zion anticipates the Lord’s gracious blessings, as He sees fit, on their continuing use and spread of His Word in their part of His world.



Paul Krause is pastor of Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church in Watertown, South Dakota, and Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church in Hidewood Township, South Dakota.

CLCI Public Gospel Meetings

[The following is a report from Pastor Jyothi Benjamin on “public Gospel meetings,” a recurring evangelism effort of the Church of the Lutheran Confession in India (CLCI), of which Pastor Benjamin is chairman. The report is lightly edited for clarity.]

“We organize the Church of the Lutheran Confession in India (CLCI) public Gospel meetings several times a year in various villages of South India. It is said that ‘India lives in the villages,’ so mainly we concentrate on Indian tribal villages. These CLCI public Gospel meetings are one of the ways we reach the unreached and start new CLCI Congregations with the help of our CLCI members in surrounding villages. This evangelism through our CLCI public Gospel meetings is about God working through our CLCI congregations to develop vibrant witnesses to the Good News of Jesus Christ here in India.

“Before we start, we pray and ask for guidance and courage to bear witness to the Good News of Jesus Christ and to go where God is leading us to plant new CLCI congregations in various Hindu villages where there are no churches.

“We provide special training to equip our CLCI youth to become more comfortable in doing the survey in various villages to promote these public Gospel meetings, and to avoid opposition from local antisocial elements. We take time to identify witnessing opportunities. Then we make perfect planning to organize the Gospel meetings. We plan in such a way that no one will

want to miss them. We invite people to come! Sometimes it is necessary to spend some money on publicity through pamphlets and canvassing.

“Usually these public Gospel meetings last three days. Services are held in the afternoon and in the night. Meetings are held in open air under temporary tents, and sermons are amplified with loud speakers. Anywhere from 500-1000

people attend these meetings. Depending upon the number of people attending, sometimes we hire a sound and music system so we can join the angels in singing ‘Glory to God in the highest!’ We sing melodious Lutheran hymns with music to attract people and introduce them to Jesus Christ. Every public meeting starts with sincere salutations and supplications to our Lord God Almighty. Every meeting includes joyful singing led by our CLCI choir team. People gather spontaneously and with expectation participate in these meetings. We offer a short Lutheran worship with confession of sins.

“We share the Word of God with the people and observe how the Word of God fills people through the Holy Spirit. The Word ignites the minds of the people to the purpose of their existence on



Top: Caption

Bottom: caption

The Word ignites the minds of the people to the purpose of their existence on earth. The inspiring messages from our CLCI leaders and pastors refresh the newcomers, and promise the way to salvation and eternal life.

earth. The inspiring messages from our CLCI leaders and pastors refresh the newcomers, and promise the way to salvation and eternal life. The Word of the Lord penetrates the hearts of many, changing their lives and bringing a dynamic Christian life. The Word, through the guidance of the Holy Spirit, urges each individual to receive Jesus as their Savior. Jesus Christ won the hearts of many people, including children and youngsters.

“Sometimes we see positive results, and sometimes we face some opposition from local antisocial elements and other religious groups. We are glad to inform you that there has been an especially great response to the Gospel in the tribal villages, where social ills such as alcoholism, robbery, prostitution and superstition are common. These are the devil’s strongholds in these tribal villages. At the end of the prayer meetings we pray for each and every individual so that people would be delivered from the evil powers and know the Savior of their lives. Even though it is very difficult to conduct Gospel meetings in these tribal villages, we are glad to report that many tribal people have received Jesus as their Savior and been baptized through these meetings. We are even starting new churches.

“Through these CLCI public Gospel meetings, we preach and teach the Good News of Jesus. As you know, the promises of the Good News of Jesus are meant to be shared with others. Some of the non-believers in villages also attend the



meetings. Mainly we aim our sermons to present the Gospel to unbelievers present. After each prayer meeting many come forward to have individual prayers. This shows that the Word of God is working in their hearts. Sometimes village elders are seen responding to the Gospel. With the present results we are not satisfied—we keep moving ahead for more results with the gracious help of our Lord. We firmly believe that the Good News of Jesus changes lives of people. Please do pray that God may grant us His grace to do a good follow-up in these unreached villages. Rejoice and pray with us, this is the Lord’s harvest time here in India.

“We welcome people, we sing, we preach, we always remember our mission: Bear witness to the love of God in Christ Jesus. From the bottom of our hearts we convey our heartfelt thanks to all the CLC USA members

who have been upholding us with your wonderful material and spiritual support.

“Gracious God, we give You thanks for opportunities for mission and ministry form. Continue to guide, empower and strengthen us to boldly witness your love to the many perishing souls here in India, in Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.”



Pastor Jyothi Benjamin is the Chairman of the CLCI. His home is in Nidubrolu, Andhra Pradesh State, India.

“BREAD OF LIFE” READINGS MAY 2018

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

Date	Verse	Reading	Comments
May 1	TLH 59	2 Samuel 7:1-16	God promised David that his throne would endure forever, a promise that was ultimately fulfilled in Christ, the greatest King of all.
May 2	TLH 524; LSB 691	Psalms 52	The wicked may boast, but in the end those who trust in God’s unfailing love will flourish.
May 3	TLH 602	Jeremiah 29:1-14	Jeremiah comforts the exiles with the good news that they would be delivered. He comforts us with the good news of our eternal deliverance.
May 4	WS 724	Mark 15:21-32	If Jesus had wanted to save Himself, He could have come down from the cross. But He wanted to save us.
May 5	WS 780	2 Corinthians 4:5-12	We may be weak, but the Word of God we proclaim is certainly not!
May 7	TLH 464; LSB 542	Exodus 23:1-9	Pursue justice and love your neighbor. We have failed at both, but are thankful that Jesus Christ did not.
May 8	TLH 260	Psalms 54	So often the righteous are under attack, but the Lord helps us in our troubles.
May 9	TLH 25	Job 38:1-12	When we feel sorry for ourselves and start to think the Lord cannot help us, He asks, “Who are you to think I can do nothing?”
May 10	WS 757; LSB 815	Psalms 47	Christ our Savior ascends in triumph. His victory (and ours) is complete.
May 11	TLH 522; LSB 553	Jeremiah 33:1-16	When God chastens us on account of our sins, we can trust that He will also be there to restore us.
May 12	TLH 645	Luke 2:1-20	The “Righteous Branch” that Jeremiah said would come was born in Bethlehem—our righteous Savior who gives us His righteousness!
May 14	TLH 442	2 Corinthians 8:1-12	Out of love for Christ, the Corinthians gave to their fellow Christians in need.
May 15	TLH 443	Exodus 25:1-8	Our gifts for the Lord come from the heart.
May 16	TLH 30	Psalms 57:7-11	God’s people praise Him with music, singing of His faithfulness.
May 17	WS 781	Jeremiah 37:6-17	The prophet of God suffers prison for preaching the truth, a reminder that Christians everywhere are suffering for the Lord.
May 18	TLH 489	Luke 4:14-30	When Jesus preached the truth, He too was rejected by those who did not believe He could save them.
May 19	WS 788	2 Corinthians 9:6-15	When we give our offerings, our hearts can be in it too, for our giving is an expression of thanksgiving to God for His great gifts.
May 21	TLH 32; LSB 769	Exodus 32:1-14	Moses interceded before God when the people sinned, just as Jesus would later intercede for us.
May 22	TLH 437; LSB 501	2 Samuel 21:15-22	Did you know that there was more than one “Goliath” the Israelites had to face? Did you know that those giants fell too?
May 23	WS 787	Psalms 61	We turn to our God for protection.
May 24	TLH 425	Job 42:12-17	The Lord saw Job through all his terrible troubles. It’s a lesson we would all do well to take to heart.
May 25	TLH 327	Luke 5:17-26	The paralytic had an even bigger problem than his paralysis—and Jesus took care of that first!
May 26	TLH 521; LSB 603	2 Corinthians 11:30-12:10	Do you complain about your weakness? Think about how your weakness highlights God’s strength.
May 28	TLH 246	Exodus 33:12-23	The Israelites were distinguished from other people by God’s Presence. Isn’t that what distinguishes us Christians today from others too?
May 29	TLH 294	1 Kings 3:4-13	Solomon had a lot to learn (he was still offering sacrifices on the high places), but the wisdom from the Lord would guide him.
May 30	TLH 567	Psalms 65	Our gracious God not only forgives our transgressions, but cares for us in this life too. O give thanks!
May 31	TLH 355	Proverbs 1:1-7	Solomon, the wisest king of all, recognized that true wisdom humbly looks to God. Are you wise?

Dedication of New Church for Peace Lutheran Church, Mission, South Dakota



Forty-seven members and visitors gathered to dedicate a new church building for Peace Lutheran Church on Sunday, October 15, 2017 at 3:00 P.M. The church is located just east of Highway 83, two miles south of Mission, next to Peace Lutheran Cemetery.



The congregation's pastor, Paul D. Nolting, delivered the dedicatory address with the theme:

"We Dedicate This Church to God!"

The address was based upon two biblical texts—Exodus 20:24 and Romans 5:1. Pastor Nolting emphasized that while the new building could be described as a "small, country church" as opposed to the large cathedrals found elsewhere in the world, God promises to "record" His name and bring His blessings to all in attendance, whenever the truths of the Bible are taught and the sacraments are properly administered. He went on to point out that it was only proper for the members of Peace to now promise to share God's message of peace through the Lord Jesus Christ not only with each other, but also with the Mission community and surrounding areas as the Lord gives them opportunity.

Mrs. Jan Endes, of St. Paul's White River, served as organist for the occasion. Mrs. Carol Ahrens, of Grace Valentine, accompanied Pastor Nolting and Mr. David Maas, also of Grace Valentine, in the singing of the Anthem: "Prince of Peace." An hour of fellowship celebrating this gift from God followed the service.



Paul D. Nolting is pastor of Grace Lutheran Church in Valentine, Nebraska, as well as St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church in White River, South Dakota and Peace Lutheran Church in Mission, South Dakota.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The 33rd Convention of the Church of the Lutheran Confession

Place:
Immanuel Lutheran
College, Eau Claire, Wisconsin

Date and Times:
Thursday, June 21 at 10:00 a.m.
through Sunday, June 24 at 3:00 p.m.

Theme:
“Behold Your God” (Isaiah 40:9-11)

Essayists:
Professor John Ude, Pastor David Ude
Chaplain: Pastor David Pfeiffer

Convention Service Preacher:
Pastor David Naumann

Convention Service Liturgist:
Pastor Mark Tiefel

Memorial Service Preacher:
Pastor Paul Tiefel Jr.

Reporter: Professor Joseph Lau
--Pastor Paul Nolting, CLC Moderator

Great Lakes Delegate Conference

Faith Lutheran Church, Markesan, Wisconsin
10:00 A.M. Monday, June 4, through Tuesday,
June 5, 2018

Agenda:

- How Can the Founding Principles of the CLC be Impressed on the Hearts of Our Succeeding Generations?—Teacher Andrew Roehl
- The Role and Training of Elders—Pastor Neal Radichel
- Doing the Work of an Evangelist—Delegate Randy Wittorp



- Communion service speaker—Pastor Jay Hartmann
- Chaplain—Pastor David Schaller
—Submitted by Pastor Michael Wilke, Conference Chairman

2018 West Central Delegate Conference

St. Paul Lutheran Church, Bismarck,
North Dakota

May 29-31

Agenda:

- A Review of Jesus’ Mandate for and Blessing Upon Infants Through Baptism—Sioux Falls Delegate
- In the World but Not of the World – Dealing with Coarseness of Popular Culture—Lemmon Delegate
- A Study of Sinful Pride—Pastor Paul Krause
- How Ought the Predominance of the Gospel Be Manifested in Our Preaching Ministry? – Pastor Delwyn Maas
- Encouraging Parents to Take a More Active Role in the Christian Education of Their Children—Valentine Delegate
- Doctrinal Talks with False Teachers (Impressions, Consequences, and Accountability)—Pastor Thomas Schuetze
- Did Luther Hate the Jews?—Pastor Paul Nolting
- The Hope of Eternal Life as Taught in the Psalms—Pastor Mark Gullerud
- Communion Service Speaker—Pastor Joel Fleischer
- Chaplain—Pastor Chad Seybt
—Submitted by Pastor Chad Seybt, Conference Secretary

SEEN IN PASSING

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



Lucas Warren — photo: Gerber Foods. Used by permission.

Child with Down Syndrome Named Gerber Baby for 2018. In a February press release, the Gerber baby food company announced that Lucas Warren, a child from Dalton, Georgia, is the winner in the company’s annual photo search for the “Gerber Baby.” Lucas, who was born with Down syndrome, was selected out of 140,000 entries for his “glowing and giggly smile.” Gerber’s choice comes at a critical time. Prenatal genetic testing has increasingly led parents – especially in Scandinavian countries, but increasingly in the U.S. as well – to identify and abort babies with Down syndrome. This despite a 2011 study by Harvard University which found that 99% of people with Down syndrome are happy with their lives, and 96% of parents of a Down child said they did not regret their decision. Thiessen, Marc. “When will we stop killing humans with Down syndrome?” *Opinions*. WashingtonPost.com, 8 Mar. 2018. Web. 15 Mar. 2018.