

March 2019 VOL 61 NO. 9

LUTHERAN SPOKESMAN

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



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Butterflies, Jesus, and You

After six days Jesus took Peter, James and John with him and led them up a high mountain, where they were all alone. There he was transfigured before them.”

(Mark 9:2 NIV84)

One of the wonders of the created world is the process of metamorphosis. When God called into existence the creatures that swim in the sea and fly in the air (on creation day five), He gave to some the amazing ability to change from one form into another as part of their life cycle. One example is the monarch butterfly, which has four stages in its life cycle: egg, caterpillar, chrysalis, and adult butterfly. A truly remarkable change!

Each year, on the last Epiphany Sunday, the Christian Church recalls the biblical account of the remarkable metamorphosis of Jesus (also known as the “Transfiguration”).

One day while He was walking with three disciples on a mountain in Galilee, His lowly appearance was changed. His clothes started to dazzle with whiteness. His face began to shine as bright as the sun.

Jesus’ metamorphosis was, of course, far different from the change that occurs with creatures like the butterfly. For one thing, it happened instantaneously, not gradually. Then, too, Jesus’ metamorphosis did not involve changing into something He wasn’t previously. Rather, it was a revelation of what He already *was*: God’s all-glorious Son! Whenever Jesus preached a sermon or performed a miracle, people could sense this. “There is something special about Him not visible to our eyes” (Matthew 7:28-29, Luke 8:25). That something “special” was that He was their Messiah in Whom all the fullness of the Deity was living in bodily form (Colossians 2:9, Philippians 2:6-8). It’s just that, during the period of His life on earth, He chose (for the most part) to conceal His divine majesty from their view so that He might live in lowliness, serve them in love, and offer His life as a ransom on the cross.

How did Jesus’ transfiguration happen? Simply put, it happened by an act of His own will. He who made the

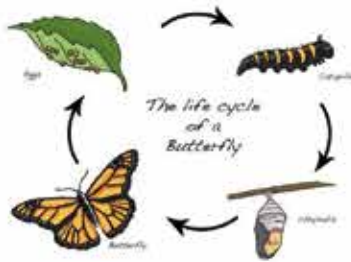
decision to hide His divine glory during the time of His earthly life decided to uncover it for a moment in full view of His wondering disciples. Why? He wanted to strengthen them for the ordeal they would soon experience at Jerusalem, where they would witness their beloved

Master taken prisoner, mocked, abused, crucified, and buried in a grave. In the face of “contrary evidence” (what their eyes would see) and what unbelieving enemies would wrongly claim (He’s an imposter), Jesus wanted to bolster their trust in Him as their almighty Lord come from heaven to deliver them from sin, death, and Satan.

He also wanted to instill in their hearts the certainty of their *own* eventual metamorphosis on the Last Day, when He would return in majesty and invite them to live with Him in Paradise with glorified bodies fashioned to be just like His (1 John 3:2, Philippians 3:21). All this thanks to His successfully accomplished mission as their heaven-sent Redeemer.

Jesus’ transfiguration holds the same significance for you. As you hear again the account of His transfiguration on that mountain of Galilee, may it heighten your appreciation for His work as your Savior. May it bolster in you the certainty of His identity as God’s dear Son in Whom the Father is well pleased, Who came here in love to redeem you. May it also be a source of comfort to you through the duration of your trek across the plain of life (in which you may have some ordeals to weather and troubles to cope with), knowing that *your* metamorphosis will happen, too,

when your Lord returns to receive you to Himself and causes you to shine like the brightness of the sun in your Father’s kingdom (Matthew 13:43).



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

“Hat in Hand”

An office worker named Bill had had just about enough. He was tired of the management’s incompetence. Most of all, he was tired of his immediate supervisor, Mr. Sanders. He had to vent about it somewhere, so he walked over to his co-worker’s desk and said “Sylvia, can you believe that Sanders guy? He never gets the work schedule done on time, and I think he deliberately ignores my requests for time off! A fourth grader could do a better job than he does. What a dimwit!” By this time, Sylvia was looking over Bill’s shoulder with surprised horror. Sure enough, Mr. Sanders was right behind Bill the whole time. The manager spun on his heel, stomped into his office, and slammed the door. What could poor Bill do now? There was only one thing he *could* do, of course. He humbly went into Mr. Sanders’s office to plead for his job. Though he wasn’t wearing a hat, I guess you could say that Bill went to his boss with his “hat in his hands.” He had no excuses—nothing to offer but a heartfelt apology.

Have you ever had the need to go, hat in hand, to plead with someone whom you had offended?

It might have been a parent, a teacher, your boss, or even a judge. It’s not a pleasant experience, but sometimes it’s the only way when you need the forgiveness of someone who holds your fate in his hands. In biblical times, the outward sign of a humble heart was the wearing of sackcloth and ashes (see Jonah 3:5-7). That’s the reason we observe the beginning of Lent with *Ash Wednesday*. It’s a day for us to

come to Jesus’ cross with the ashes of repentance. We come with no remedy for our own sins, no excuses, and nothing to offer except a plea for the Lord’s mercy.

Whenever sinners come before the holy God with hat in hand, pleading only the blood of Christ, they always come away with God’s declaration of complete forgiveness.

A heart that is truly broken over sin does not say, “All right, I guess you caught me. I’ll say I’m sorry if that’s what you want to hear.” No, genuine repentance means that we come to the Lord, Whom we have deeply offended, with the same attitude of heart that David had when he wrote “*Against You, You only, have I sinned, And done this evil in Your sight.*” (Psalm 51:4)

When we do, the Lord replaces our black ashes of sin with the pure white righteousness of the Lord Jesus, “*who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree.*” (1 Peter 2:24) God’s purpose from the beginning, in view of Jesus’ death in our place, has always been to “*console those who mourn in Zion, To give them beauty for ashes, The oil of joy for mourning, The garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.*” (Isaiah 61:3)

Whenever sinners come before the holy God with hat in hand, pleading only the blood of Christ, they always come away with God’s declaration of complete forgiveness, and the promise of eternal life in Him. That’s what Ash Wednesday is all about.

But what about Bill, our man with the loud mouth and the angry boss? He gave his humble speech, hat in hand, with a sincere apology—and Mr. Sanders fired him on the spot. That’s how it goes with people sometimes. You burn a bridge and there is just no way to rebuild it. But that’s not our Lord’s way. He always stands ready to receive, forgive, and bless us because of our dear Savior. This Ash Wednesday,

let us have the same trusting confidence of which we read in Psalm 86:5: “*You, Lord, are good, and ready to forgive, And abundant in mercy to all those who call upon You.*”



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

The Value of Rest and Quietness

“Don’t just sit there—do something!”

This familiar adage applies in many situations. The crops won’t plant themselves in the spring. The cereal spilled all over the floor isn’t going to clean up itself. *“If anyone will not work, neither shall he eat.”* (2 Thessalonians 3:10)

This axiom, however, does not apply at all to our being saved. Our ego finds that hard to swallow. This goes beyond the commendable inclination to be responsible and clean up after ourselves; it’s also a sinful pride thing. We would like to be able to take at least a little credit for saving ourselves—or perhaps more than just a little.

In the challenges they faced with their enemies, Israel sought security through making alliances with other nations. Maybe swift horses would be the answer!

Regarding their spiritual needs and their relationship with God, we read in the early chapters of Isaiah how most trusted in “going through the motions” of worship. They brought sacrifices; but, without repentance, God called those sacrifices futile. They lifted up their prayers with incense; but, without contrition and faith, God called that an abomination. Yes, they were going regularly to the temple; but if it was not to worship the Lord in spirit and in truth, then, from God’s perspective, they were merely trampling in His courts.

Whether dealing with external or internal matters, those people supposed the answers were to be found in what *they* did. The answers never were. Israel was proficient, though, in making things much worse.

It was to those people that the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel said, *“In returning and rest you shall be saved; In quietness and confidence shall be your strength.”* (Isaiah 30:15)

Here the word “returning” indicates repentance. “Rest” emphasizes waiting on the Lord and trusting in Him.

We would like to be able to take at least a little credit for saving ourselves—or perhaps more than just a little.

The Lord takes salvation entirely out of the hands of His people—a good thing, because they were making a huge mess of it! They were going down paths that could only end in disappointment and destruction. Stop! Listen to the Lord instead of yourselves. His Spirit will soften your hearts and turn you around to follow the path of salvation.

When Scripture speaks of waiting on the Lord, trust is implicit in the waiting. It means to trust in the Lord’s way of resolving what we are facing and to trust in His timing—which will often be quite different from ours. *“For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways,” says the LORD.* (Isaiah 55:8) For instance, who would have expected the Son of God Himself

to take on the form of a humble servant and choose to suffer the wrath of God for our sins so that we would be spared? We could never have imagined that, but here it is—love beyond anything we could have hoped for or imagined.

We can listen much more effectively when we’re not talking.

Quietness is a source of strength for God’s children, because then we’re taking in what God has to say to us. Quiet time is a special blessing when it’s spent mulling over God’s Word and humbly seeking how to apply it aright. When we take in what God has done, is doing, and will do to save us, that fills us with joy, and *“the joy of the Lord is your strength!”* (Nehemiah 8:10)

Once again we come to this fundamental theme of Scripture: repent, trust, and quietly wait for the Lord. Stress becomes less and peace becomes more when our strength is in the Lord.



“Commit your way to the Lord, trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass.” (Psalm 37:5)

Delwyn Maas is pastor of Gift of God Lutheran Church in Mapleton, North Dakota.

True Contentment

Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." So we may boldly say: "The LORD is my helper; I will not fear. What can man do to me?"

(Hebrews 13:5-6)

Have you ever stopped to think about what motivates you in life? What drives you to do what you do and say what you say and think what you think? Whatever your motivation is, I think it is safe to say that on some level, whether conscious or unconscious, there is one basic desire that motivates the majority of our decisions. What we all want more than anything else is the feeling of contentment.

Sadly, that feeling of contentment often eludes us, and there are a number of traps along the way that keep us from being content. Maybe it's the trap of comparing ourselves to others. We can't find contentment because someone else makes more money; someone else has a nicer house and nicer cars. We think to ourselves, "If only I had (fill in the blank), then I would be content."

Maybe the trap we fall into is the trap of waiting for changes. We think once we get a better job, or once we get married, or once we have children, then we will be content.

Would we really be content?

But even if we had everything we could ever think we would want, would we really be content? King Solomon wrote, "Whatever my eyes desired I did not keep from them. I did not withhold my heart from any pleasure, For my heart rejoiced in all my labor; And this was my reward from all my labor. Then I looked on all the works that my hands had done And on the labor in which I had toiled; And indeed all was vanity and grasping for the wind. There was no profit under

the sun." (Ecclesiastes 2:10-11) We probably couldn't even imagine having all that King Solomon had, but it didn't bring him contentment. It was merely a "grasping for the wind."

Our text says, "be content with such things as you have."

Notice that God doesn't say "become content," and then leave it up to us to find contentment on our own.

Notice that God doesn't say "become content," and then leave it up to us to find contentment on our own. He says "be content." Why? "For He Himself has said, 'I will never leave you nor forsake you.'" If we are discontented, it's because we are tempted to desire something apart from God, something greater than God.

God reminds us that He is the source of true contentment. We find contentment in His reassurance that even as we pursue our selfish wants, our God pursues us. Even as we pursue temporal things, God desires to give us spiritual blessings. Even as we want to satisfy our earthly appetites, all our God wants to do is remind us how our Lord Jesus satisfied God's righteous demands by His holy life and satisfied God's righteous wrath by His death for us on the cross. In the cross and the empty tomb, God has literally done everything it took to give us eternal salvation.

Now this same God promises that He will never leave us. He will never forsake us. We spend so much time looking for contentment in the wrong places. And yet, our loving God stands by our side and shows us where true contentment is found.

Robert Sauers is pastor of Luther Memorial Church in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, and a member of the CLC Board of Missions



Is This Worm an “Easter Egg?”

“But I am a worm, and no man; A reproach of men, and despised by the people.”

(Psalm 22:6)

When the term “Easter egg” is applied to a movie or other such medium, it does not refer to the hard-boiled and brightly colored eggs that some families hide for their children to find on Easter. Rather, the term refers to some sort of “inside” joke or allusion cleverly hidden in a scene. For example, in *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, the *Star Wars* robots R2-D2 and C-3PO show up quite clearly (if you’re looking for them) as hieroglyphs on a pillar just as Indiana Jones finds the Ark. It’s something that most people never notice, but those who find it enjoy it like children finding a hidden Easter egg.

Psalm 22 contains what may be just such an “Easter egg,” although, given the content, it would be more of a “Lenten egg.” There is significant meaning—unknown to most readers—hidden in the use of one particular word. You may already know that Psalm 22 is a Messianic psalm: it foretells things about the coming Messiah, Jesus Christ. This psalm pictures, specifically, the suffering that Jesus would experience on the cross to win our salvation.

Throughout the psalm, it is the Messiah Who is speaking. It begins with words which Jesus would speak from the cross a thousand years later: “My God, My God, *why have You forsaken Me?*” Throughout Psalm 22, the sufferings He experienced when He was crucified are expressed. It is in the first part of verse 6, however, that the “Easter egg,” or at least the allusion unknown to those who do not read Hebrew and do not know about this specific worm, occurs. There, the Messiah says, “*But I am a worm, and no man.*”

The Hebrew word used here for “worm” is very significant. It is *tol’at*. This is not just any old generic worm; that would be the Hebrew word *rimmah*. But the word used in Psalm 22 refers specifically to the worm commonly known as the “scarlet worm.” This worm was used in ancient Israel to make scarlet dye, and forms of the word *tol’at* are most often translated as “scarlet” or “crimson.” However, in Psalm 22:6, it is properly translated as “worm.”

The “Easter egg” aspect of Jesus’ use of this word is striking, and derives from the life cycle of the scarlet worm. When one of these worms is about to give birth, she attaches herself to a piece of wood. She then forms a hard, protective shell around herself, and gives birth to the young larvae inside this shell. During the process, she secretes a crimson gel, which covers everything inside the shell. While inside the shell (usually three days), the larvae feed on the body of the mother worm. After emerging from the shell, they retain the red color for the rest of their lives. In the meanwhile, the body of the mother worm turns into a white waxy substance, which falls to the ground like snow.

It would be a mistake to assert these comparisons as the express meaning of this passage, or to over-allegorize these points of comparison, as some commentators do. However, at least three facets of the crimson worm’s life cycle are certainly striking in terms of the Messiah’s choice of the words, “*I am a [scarlet] worm, and no man.*” The first is that in order to give life to others, the worm attaches itself to a piece of wood, even as Christ was nailed to the wooden cross to give spiritual life to us. Second is the sacrificial aspect. For the mother to give life, she must die. So also the Son of God gave us eternal life through His death. Finally, and perhaps most obviously, the red color produced by this worm reminds us of the blood of Christ, by which we are saved from all our sins. “*Come now, and let us reason together,’ Says the LORD, ‘Though your sins are like scarlet, They shall be as white as snow.’*” (Isaiah 1:18)

If Jesus’ choice of words in verse 6 of Psalm 22 was, indeed, an “Easter egg,” I pray it may be one which gives us increased appreciation for this Messianic psalm.



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

UNDERSTANDING THE CULTS – ROSICRUCIANISM

In this twelve-part series we are taking a brief look at some of the major cults, past and present, that have found adherents in the United States. Your pastor can help you if you'd like a more in-depth study of a particular group.

Rosicrucianism

In the arena of secret societies, historic Rosicrucianism was a champion. It perfected secrecy to such a degree that some suggest it was founded upon an elaborate work of fiction.

Prominent men sought membership, only to be denied because one had to be deemed worthy and chosen by an existing Rosicrucian. Members lived ordinary lives, not disclosing their secret affiliation to anyone—not even families.

Complex symbols and diagrams abound in Rosicrucianism, but a simple hieroglyphic rose crucified upon a cross represents the “Brotherhood of the Rosy Cross.” For those who attempt to place a layer of Christianity upon Rosicrucianism, the cross symbolizes Christ, but truer to the order, the rose and cross represent the experiences and challenges of a thoughtful life well lived.

The accounts of Rosicrucianism’s genesis are many and varied, but none is able to claim historic certainty. In general, the beginnings are traced to three documents published in three successive years beginning in 1614. Together, these documents are known as the *Rosicrucian Manifesto*.

The manifesto tells the story of a poor German man from noble descent who is “the Highly illuminated Father C.R.C.” Placed in a cloister when he was five years old, he later studied with philosophers and mystics across Europe. He chose three other men and with them began the “Fraternity of the Rose Cross.”

The discovery of the founder’s tomb led to the publication of the manifesto because, it was said, finding the tomb was a sign that the world was ready for Rosicrucian wisdom. The manifesto’s message electrified Europe with intense excitement. The existence of a secret brotherhood of alchemists and sages who were preparing to transform the arts, sciences, religion, and politics sparked glimmers of hope in a land that far too often appeared darkly hopeless.

An 18th century variation of Rosicrucianism had considerable influence on Freemasonry. Many Freemasons became Rosicrucians, Rosicrucianism was established in

many Masonic lodges, and the eighteenth Free masonry degree was named the “Rose-Croix.”

In 2017 Rosicrucianism was added as one of 216 religions recognized by the U.S. Armed Forces. Today’s Rosicrucians fall into three groups: *Esoteric Christian Rosicrucians*, who profess Christ and claim to possess a unique knowledge of inner Christian teachings; *Masonic Rosicrucians*; and *Initiatory Rosicrucians*, who claim to follow pure and ancient Rosicrucianism.

Rosicrucianism is devoted to the study of ancient mystical, philosophical, and religious doctrines. Its teachings are a combination of occultism and other religious beliefs and practices. The central feature is the belief that its members possess secret wisdom that was handed down to them from ancient times which they seek to use in reforming society, culture, and religion.

Just as Rosicrucianism once offered the excitement of hope in Europe’s darkness, today’s Rosicrucians also offer a compelling siren call: “Imagine having the ability to actualize your highest potential in all areas of life. Imagine developing greater creativity. Imagine setting a new course for your future!” In sharp contrast, the true God says, “Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men . . . and not according to Christ.” (Colossians 2:8) “When they say to you, ‘Seek those who are mediums and wizards, who whisper and mutter,’ should not a people seek their God? . . . To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.” (Isaiah 8:19-20)

Rosicrucianism claims that it is not a religion and that one can retain his own god and worship while still following this so-called higher wisdom. The truth is that Christ’s disciples simply cannot follow a “wisdom” that contradicts the Word of their Savior. “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.” (John 6:68)

Wayne Eichstadt is pastor of Gethsemane Lutheran Church in Spokane Valley, Washington.

Brotherhood of the Rosy Cross



"THIS WE BELIEVE"

In ongoing observation of the 500th anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation, we are presenting a brief overview of the Book of Concord. The series will survey the three ecumenical creeds and the Lutheran confessions.

The Athanasian Creed

In this creed we confess that Christ is both fully God and fully man.



artin Luther once said of the Athanasian Creed, "I doubt whether the New Testament church has a more important document since the Apostolic Age." Let us take a look at why he thought that.

Author

Sometimes things are misnamed. The guillotine, for example, is named after a Frenchman, Dr. Joseph-Ignace Guillotine, someone who actually opposed the death penalty. One would think that the Athanasian Creed was written by Athanasius (A.D. 296-373), the noted theologian who had done much work on the Nicene Creed (A.D. 325), but too many facts rule him out as the author. The truth is that we don't know who wrote this creed. Athanasius wrote in Greek; this creed was written in Latin, not to be translated into Greek until the twelfth century.

Evidence suggests that it was written in Gaul (now France) in the mid-fifth century. Caesarius, the Bishop of Arles, a city in southern France, used this creed in worship in the early sixth century. It was at this time that Vandals and Goths from the north were invading this region and bringing with them the Arian heresy—the idea that Jesus was not fully God, equal to the Father. The Athanasian Creed was no doubt written to affirm and bolster the orthodox Christians in their confession.

It went on to become a popular creed for instructional purposes. Charlemagne (c. A.D. 742-814) required all churchmen to memorize it. Although not as commonly recited as the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds, both the Roman Catholic and Anglican churches recited it on prescribed days in the church year.

Content

The Athanasian Creed was written to combat prevalent false teachings of the day. Much of the creed is an exposition of the Trinity. False teachers had questioned the equality of the three persons of the Godhead, subordinating the Son

and the Holy Spirit. The creed responds: "So the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God. And yet they are not three Gods, but one God."

Other false teachers had confused the nature of Christ. In this creed we confess that Christ is both fully God and fully man. For Him to be not fully God and not fully man would mean that His atoning sacrifice for sin would not have accomplished our salvation. "God of the Substance of the Father, begotten before the worlds; and Man of the substance of His mother, born in the world . . . Who, although He be God and Man, yet He is not two, but one Christ."

Quicumque—Telling it like it is!

The Athanasian Creed is also named the "*Quicumque*" because of its first word, translated "Whosoever." Unlike the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds, this creed comes with a warning. Since this creed deals with the most fundamental Christian truths—the Trinity, the divinity of Christ, and redemption—those who reject the doctrines of this creed will be condemned. "Which except a man believe faithfully and firmly, he cannot be saved."

In a day of milquetoast ecumenism where the majority are willing to sell out the clear Gospel message for the sake of outward, feel-good unionism, the Athanasian Creed tells it like it is, because the Bible tells it like it is! "*Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.*" (Acts 4:12) "*Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.'*" (John 14:6) It is incumbent on the Christian church today to speak the truth. The heresy may be branded differently today, but the threat is the same—to diminish the one Triune God and the saving work of the incarnate Word, Jesus Christ.

Joe Lau is a professor at Immanuel Lutheran College in Eau Claire, Wisconsin.



Pastor Kossi Blewu of the MELC-Togo

Pastor Kossi Blewu is forty-eight years old. He is married, has seven children, and—along with his wife—cares for four orphans. He serves as a pastor, Bible Institute teacher, and chairman of the Mission Evangelique Luthérienne de Confession du Togo (MELCT). Togo is a former French colony on the south-west coast of Africa. The name of this church body translates to “The Confessional Lutheran Evangelical Mission of Togo.”



Pastor Kossi is a former high school teacher, school headmaster, and prison evangelist. Before he affiliated with the CLC, he had been working with a Togolese Lutheran pastor in a prison ministry. This Togolese pastor had graduated from Concordia Lutheran Seminary in St. Louis, Missouri. In 1999 this Lutheran pastor had met a CLC member who was visiting Togo and had expressed interest in working with the CLC. At his invitation, Missionary Koenig made a trip from Nigeria to meet with him. But when it was determined that we did not share a common confession of faith with this man, the CLC Board of Missions did not pursue further contact. At that point it seemed as if our involvement in Togo would be short lived. But the Lord had other plans, better plans! Through this initial contact, Missionary Koenig was introduced to Kossi Blewu. He was described as someone who was sincere in his desire to proclaim God’s Word, but who also needed more theological training. Over the next several years Kossi studied with Missionary Koenig both in person and by correspondence. He also attended the seminary in Nigeria for a short period of time. The CLC declared fellowship with Pastor Kossi and the MELCT. Pastor Kossi was ordained by Missionary Ude and the MELCT was officially registered with the Togo government in 2008.

Over the past ten years the Lord has blessed the work of Pastor Kossi and the MELCT. Four men have gone through seven years of part-time theological training with



Pastor Kossi, assisted by CLC missionaries. In March of 2017 these four men were ordained and appointed to serve as pastors of MELCT congregations and preaching stations. In April of 2017 the Mt. Horeb Lutheran Bible Institute was established, and seven men began their studies in preparation to serve as faithful preachers, teachers, and evangelists. The Lord has also provided opportunities for the MELCT to care for seven orphan children. Forty other needy children gather at the church in Lomé each week for Bible study and nutrition. The care that these children receive is supported through offerings to the CLC Project Kinship.



Photos, clockwise from far left: Pastor Kossi Blewu; worshipers leaving a service at a new MELCT church; Pastor Kossi with theology students; church sign.



several months as he stopped attending school and refused to eat or go outside. He feared for his life and the welfare of his family. His mother called in a local Juju doctor to try to help him. But of course, this didn't help. The visit from the Juju man only frightened him more, so he decided to run away. He left home and went to the big city of Lomé. He remembers that he did not care if he lived or died, but he was not going back to the Juju doctor, and he wanted to get away from the men who hated him and his father. As the oldest son and heir to the family businesses, he thought this was the best way to protect his family.

When he arrived in Lomé, he noticed that there were a lot of churches and many people were coming and going on Sunday mornings. He decided to find out what Christianity was all about. That was where Kossi first learned of God's grace and mercy. What the Holy Spirit revealed to Kossi through His Word led to a saving faith and a life of service to the Lord and His kingdom. While living in Lomé, he attended college and studied to become a school teacher. He graduated, but before he completed his government teacher exams, he took a job teaching French at a high school in Ghana. After a few years he returned to Lomé, where he passed the government teaching exams and began teaching secondary school. He eventually became a headmaster (equivalent to our position of principal). During all of this time he continued to attend church services and Bible studies. As his faith grew, so did his desire to serve the Lord and share the Good News of Jesus Christ.

Around the age of thirty he became involved with a non-denominational prison ministry, organized by the Lutheran pastor mentioned earlier. As a result, Kossi began to hear and learn the truths of Scripture in a new and systematic way. He was introduced to Lutheran doctrine and was shown how it was derived from Scripture alone. The CLC's plan had been to work with the Lutheran pastor who was mentoring Kossi, but that never materialized. Instead, the Lord used that man to introduce Pastor Kossi to Missionary Koenig and the CLC. This teaches us again not to think so highly of our plans that we miss the privilege of following the Lord as He directs us down a much better path of His choosing.

What has unfolded over the past eighteen years is just a part of the story of our gracious Lord working in and through the life of Pastor Kossi Blewu. As a child he grew up as the oldest of ten children. He grew up in a rural village a couple of hours north of the southern coastline of Togo. He was the oldest of ten children; he had four sisters and five brothers. His father was a hardworking and successful farmer, carpenter, and businessman. He was shrewd in his financial dealings and the Blewu family was envied by many in the area. Kossi attended a private Presbyterian school as a child but does not remember ever attending worship services or believing in Jesus in his youth. Neither he nor any of his family were Christian. They followed the old superstitious religions of their ancestors.

When Kossi was only seventeen years old, his father died rather suddenly. Several men in the area, who were envious of his father's success, saw this as an opportunity to change their fortunes in life. These men drove Kossi away from his home and family with threats of violence if he continued his father's businesses. This led Kossi into a deep depression for



Todd Ohlmann is a full-time visiting missionary for the Church of the Lutheran Confession.



More information and pictures from Missionary Ohlmann's most recent visit to Togo, in October of 2018, can be found on his blog at:

<https://missionaryohlmann.blogspot.com/>

IN MEMORIAM



ROLLIN ARTHUR REIM

1922-2018

A Faithful Spokesman. A Loving Shepherd

Rollin Arthur Reim was born on September 11, 1922, in Fox Lake, Wisconsin, to Edmund and Selma (Schaller) Reim. He was baptized on October 1, 1922, at St. John's Lutheran Church, Fox Lake, Wisconsin.

Rollin attended Northwestern College, Watertown, Wisconsin; and Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary in Mequon.

On July 8, 1950, Rollin married Ruth Engelhardt at St. James Lutheran Church, Wauwatosa, Wisconsin.

Rollin was ordained into the pastoral ministry on July 3, 1949, at Calvary Lutheran Church in Mapleview, Minnesota. During his early ministry he also served congregations in Sioux City, Iowa; and New Ulm, Minnesota. Rollin was installed as the CLC missionary and pastor of the San Francisco Bay Area on September 12, 1965. Pastor Reim became the founding pastor of both St. Stephen Lutheran Church of the San Francisco Peninsula (Mountain View), and St. Stephen Lutheran



Church of the East Bay (Hayward) and at times in his ministry helped serve members in the Central Valley as well as Southern California. Rollin's ministry spanned more than fifty years of full-time service. He fully retired from the public ministry in 2007, but remained very active in the congregation and faithfully helped further Christ's kingdom through his words and actions until the day His Savior called him home.

The Lord blessed Rollin and Ruth with four children: Sue (Michael) Slattengren of Danville, California; Jean, now with the Lord; John (Carolyn) Reim of Eau Claire, Wisconsin, and Grace of San Carlos, California. They were also blessed with six grandchildren, and six great grandchildren. Rollin was preceded in death by his wife, Ruth, and daughter, Jean.

He will be remembered for his encouraging spirit, his friendly, outgoing nature, and the exemplary way he lived out the Gospel of Jesus Christ in his life and ministry. He dearly loved his family, his Savior, and all the

people he was called by God to serve.

His life serves as a good example for all of us. He endured his pain patiently, trusting in the Lord's gracious good will for him. In His mercy, the Lord answered Rollin's prayers and delivered his soul from this world to his eternal home with Him in heaven on Tuesday, November 27, 2018, at the age of 96.



"Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of His saints."

Psalm 116:15



IN THE PIPELINE

This series profiles the men and women who are in their final year of preparation for the public teaching or preaching ministry at our Immanuel Lutheran College and Seminary in Eau Claire, Wisconsin.



June Schmid

Age: 37

Program: Teaching

Year in School: Senior

Where were you born?

La Crosse, Wisconsin

Where did you grow up?

Onalaska, Wisconsin

Married? Unmarried? Tell us about your family.

I am the youngest of six children. I have four sisters and one brother. I am married and have four children—three girls and one boy.

What hobbies, sports, or extracurriculars interest you?

Reading, hiking, kayaking, hanging out with my kids

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

I love to paint! I get totally wrapped up in it and it relaxes me. I wish I had more time to paint!

Which academic subjects especially interest you?

Symbolics, religion and I loved my children's literature class.

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

I remember reading the story of the man born blind (John 9). The man was healed and the people asked whether it was the man or his parents who had sinned and caused his affliction. Jesus answered, "Neither this

man nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God should be revealed in him." I realized that God uses us for His purpose. At the time I had been considering going back to school to become a teacher. When I found myself here in Eau Claire I realized that I could put my desire to teach together with my passion for religion. I enrolled the next fall.

What have you appreciated most about your time at ILC?

I have been thankful for the opportunity to grow in grace as I have learned so much in my religion classes. I loved having chapel built into my days. I made some wonderful Christian friendships. The staff at ILC was caring, supportive and encouraging. We also had a lot of fun in my methods classes learning to teach, and critiquing each other.

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

Faith. Love. Empathy. Humility. Love for God and His Word.



“BREAD OF LIFE” READINGS MARCH 2019

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

Date	Hymns	Reading	Comments
Mar 1	WS 795	John 6:25-58	Just as feeding on earthly food gives us earthly life, feeding on Jesus (believing in Him) gives heavenly life.
Mar 2	TLH 431 (LSB 709)	Genesis 28:10-22	The Lord strengthened Jacob's faith by repeating the promise made to Abraham, and Jacob was confident of God's watchful eye upon him.
Mar 4	TLH 541 (LSB 876)	Psalms 20	We trust not in human strength, but in the power and protection of our God.
Mar 5	TLH 295	Mark 7:1-13	The sinful nature seeks to take God's laws and replace them with our own, attempting to make ourselves the masters of what is right and wrong.
Mar 6	TLH 174	Psalms 22	Although a prayer of David's in his troubles, it is clear that this Psalm also foreshadows Christ's suffering and death on the cross.
Mar 7	TLH 429 (LSB 708)	Psalms 23	Our Lord's sole aim and purpose is to shepherd us to life everlasting.
Mar 8	TLH 132 (LSB 810)	Mark 8:27-30	Christians believe and confess that Jesus is the Anointed One from heaven.
Mar 9	WS 720	Mark 9:2-13	As they were leaving the mountain, Jesus drew comparisons between Elijah and John the Baptist, and foretold His own suffering too.
Mar 11	WS 719	Psalms 25	In times of suffering we call upon the Lord, "Look upon my affliction and my distress and take away all my sins."
Mar 12	TLH 40 (LSB 798)	Genesis 35:1-14	Jacob returned to the place of his famous dream and he and his family worshiped God.
Mar 13	TLH 280	Matthew 18:10-20	Don't get upset if a concerned Christian tries to talk to you about your sins. He is following Jesus' direction out of love for you.
Mar 14	TLH 454 LSB 771	Psalms 27	Although we are sinners, we have confidence that God our Savior will not turn away those who come trusting the atoning death of His Son.
Mar 15	TLH 522 (LSB 615)	Genesis 37:12-28	Joseph, his father's favorite, didn't have to work like his brothers, so they weren't happy to see him—but the Lord preserved his life for another purpose.
Mar 16	WS 775 (LSB 578)	John 7:14-24	How do we know Jesus is from God? We know it because His teaching gives honor and glory to the One who sent Him.
Mar 18	TLH 408 (LSB 945)	John 8:1-11	Did Jesus excuse or ignore the woman's sin? No, he forgave her and reminded her not to abuse that forgiveness by continuing in her old ways.
Mar 19	WS 744	Psalms 29	The Lord uses His great strength to bless His people and give them peace.
Mar 20	TLH 531 (LSB 889)	Genesis 39	Sometimes it looks as if the evil people and liars are always winning over God's people, but the Lord has a way of turning things around.
Mar 21	WS 773 (LSB 825)	John 9:1-12	Jesus gave sight to the blind, a sign that He was the Messiah (see Isaiah 35:5).
Mar 22	TLH 430 (LSB 730)	John 9:13-23	The Jews simply would not believe that the miracle had actually happened, and just like unbelievers do, they tried to discredit it.
Mar 23	TLH 5 (LSB 908)	John 9:24-41	The man who could now see confessed His faith in Christ, but the Pharisees remained blind.
Mar 25	TLH 227	Genesis 41:15-40	Joseph's knowledge came from God. Our spiritual knowledge and faith is a gift from God, too, and does not originate from within us.
Mar 26	TLH 325	Psalms 32	There is surely hope and comfort for those who are troubled by their sins!
Mar 27	TLH 521 (LSB 760)	Psalms 33	Those who stand against the Lord will not be victorious in the end, for the Lord will carry out His plans in spite of them.
Mar 28	WS 783	John 10:1-21	What shepherd would actually give his life for a sheep? Only one, the Good One.
Mar 29	TLH 101 (LSB 888)	John 10:22-39	Some today insist that Jesus never claimed to be God, but when He said, "I and the Father are one," the Jews knew exactly what He was claiming.
Mar 30	WS 784 (LSB 722)	Genesis 45:1-11	It took some time for Joseph to see, but God's designs in his life were now clear to him. It can take some time for God's purposes in our lives to become clear to us too.

Online Courses at Immanuel Lutheran College

In the spring semester of 2014, ILC launched its first college online course, Religion 102 (Old Testament), with a goal of having almost all of the required CLC teacher certification courses eventually available in an online format. Five years later, beginning in the fourth quarter of the current semester, Education 305, "Practical Theology for Teachers," will be made available online for the first time. Readers of the *Spokesman* may recall a listing of the CLC certification courses in the "ILC Newsletter" article of September 2018. The only courses in that listing not available online are Religion Methods and the student teaching requirement. The hands-on nature of these two endeavors dictates that the student seeking certification work with a teacher or pastor in the local parochial school, while able to take all the other CLC certification courses online. Such an approach is intended to make the achievement of CLC certification easier than it was before.

The online college courses have also benefited a couple of our traditional students currently enrolled at ILC and at Immanuel Lutheran High School. Mrs. June Schmid, an education senior anticipating graduation this May, utilized the online platform to meet credit requirements in Religion 101. Danielle Gamble, a high school senior at Immanuel, Eau Claire, completed Religion 203 online during the first semester and is now taking online the continuation course Religion 204. In the fall of 2019 she intends to enroll in the education program at ILC and will have a six-credit head start in working toward becoming a parochial school teacher in our CLC church body. Taking religion courses for credit involves more than watching digital recordings of each class. As determined by the course instructor, online students take online quizzes and complete other assignments, which are submitted via email.

Many of the teacher certification courses are also required in the college pre-theological program so as to enroll in the seminary. These include Religion 101-102 (Old Testament),



Professor John Reim connects with students -- both in person and online — in his Religion 204 class.

Religion 203-204 (New Testament), Religion 305-306 (Symbolics), Religion 407-408 (Dogmatics), and Education 204 (History & Philosophy of Education). Although pre-seminary students have not utilized the online format of these courses so far, the option is there and is currently being used by a non-traditional student enrolled in the Limited Ministry Program.

The Limited Ministry Program at ILC has been in place since the 1970s, but since the early 1980s it has not been pursued by any students. That pattern changed in late August when Allen Durham, a CLC member in Corpus Christi, Texas, began taking Religion 203-204 and Religion 407-408 as online courses. In recent years Allen has been able to assist his pastor by teaching Bible Class and also conducting lay services in Weslaco, Texas. He affirms that taking the New Testament courses and the Christian doctrine courses have greatly strengthened his knowledge of Scripture and its teachings, which is a great help in the current limited ministry work that he is doing. God willing, the online approach will continue with his taking Religion 101-102 and Religion 305-306 in the 2019-2020 school year.

College online courses for credit are not the only benefit of this program to the CLC constituency. During the five years of availability so far, several members have taken advantage of the auditing option for many of the courses, even in the years when the course is not offered to ILC students in residence. There is an audit price for all the available college courses, but the online high school course on 1 Corinthians is free. With the 1 Corinthians course and some of the college courses, there is an option for group use as well. For more information on the available courses and their costs for credit and audit, go to the ILC website (ilc.edu), click on *academics*, then *online classes*.



Steven Sippert is president of 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.

The New Moralists on the Left.

In reviewing Daniel Mahoney's book, "The Idol of our Age: How the Religion of Humanity Subverts Christianity," columnist David Deavel observes, "Without the moral law, human beings will invent a moral law, albeit one that is arbitrary, confused, and confusing even to its enforcers. Right now we are subject to the confusions of those who, though they tell us that all women must be believed, cannot define what a woman is. They have no problems with euthanasia and abortion but find the idea of capital punishment and just war . . . well, they just can't even. But their absolutes will be relativized by the next bosses. What else would one expect in an age in which, as Mahoney puts it quite elegantly, 'relativism coexists with boundless moralism'? Man as the measure of all things really means some men will measure — compassionately, of course! — all things for everybody else. Democratic compassion is the tenderness that might lead to loss of work or deplatforming on Twitter because of "misgendering" others. But given the opportunity, it can, as Flannery O'Connor said, lead to the gas chambers. Bye-bye, starry sky. Contrary to the official humanitarian narrative, the totalitarian movements of the 20th century were not caused by 'totalizing truth' or intellectual 'monism'. They were caused by the denial of truth, especially a moral law within." Deavel, David P. "Our Spiritual Opioid Crisis." *NationalReview.com*. 10 Jan. 2019. Web. 23 Jan. 2019.

Congress Applying Religious Tests for Public Office?

On December 15, 2018, in a Senate confirmation hearing for a district court judge, Senator Kamala Harris was questioning nominee Brian Buescher, when she inquired about his membership in the Knights of Columbus, a Catholic men's society. Questions included the following: "Were you aware that the Knights of Columbus opposed a woman's right to choose when you joined the organization? Were you

aware that the Knights of Columbus opposed marriage equality when you joined the organization? Have you ever, in any way, assisted with or contributed to advocacy against women's reproductive rights?" This is only the latest in what appears to be an accepted trend of attempting to disqualify candidates for public office based on their religion. Nor is the discrimination limited to Catholics. In June 2017, Bernie Sanders clashed with Russell Vought, now acting director of the Office of Management and Budget, over a blog post Vought had written regarding Islam that several Muslim groups considered Islamophobic. "I'm a Christian, and I believe in a Christian set of principles

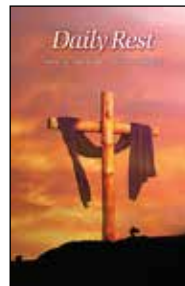
based on my faith," Vought said. By the end of the exchange, Sanders said, "I would simply say, Mr. Chairman, that this nominee is really not someone who is what this country is supposed to be about." Vought is an elder in his church, married, and has two daughters. Ramesh Ponnuru observed, "To see what's wrong with this line of questioning, it might be helpful for liberals to flip this scenario. What if a religious progressive were up for a nomination, and a Republican senator asked if his church's position in favor of same-sex marriage or abortion rights or transgender accommodations would affect his decisions? Wouldn't the left be outraged?" Continetti, Matthew, "The Outrageous Assault on the Knights of Columbus." *Columns.Freebeacon.com*. 11 Jan. 2019. Web. 23 Jan. 2019.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

NEW CLC DAILY DEVOTIONAL

As authorized by the synod in convention, the Board of Education and Publications announces the first edition of "Daily Rest," to be published quarterly beginning with this year's Ash Wednesday celebration on March 6. The Editor of this daily devotional is Pastor David Pfeiffer.

The first edition will be offered free to all families of the CLC and will be mailed in bulk to each congregation. We hope and pray that many will take advantage of this tool to bring God's Word into their homes and hearts. Following the free first edition, there will be a yearly subscription fee of \$15.



ILC Tour Choir schedule

Trinity, Millston, WI.
Sunday, March 3; 10:00 A.M.
Trinity, Watertown, SD.
Saturday, March 9; 7:00 P.M.
Good Shepherd, Rapid City, SD.
Sunday, March 10; 7:00 P.M.
Redeemer, Cheyenne, WY.
Monday, March 11, 7:00 P.M.
Prince of Peace, Loveland, CO.
Tuesday, March 12, 7:00 P.M.
St. Paul, Lakewood, CO.
Wednesday, March 13, 7:00 P.M.
Grace, Valentine, NE.
Thursday, March 14. 7:00 P.M.
St. John's, Okabena, MN.
Friday, March 15, 7:00 P.M.
Our Redeemer's, Red Wing, MN.
Saturday, March 16, 3:00 P.M.
Berea, Inver Grove Heights, MN.
Sunday, March 17, 9:00 A.M.
Messiah, Eau Claire, WI.
Sunday, March 24, 6:30 P.M.