

September 2019 VOL 62 NO. 3

LUTHERAN SPOKESMAN

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

THE LORD'S REVELATION COMES TO ELIJAH

Then He said, "Go out, and stand on the mountain before the LORD." And behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind tore into the mountains and broke the rocks in pieces before the LORD, but the LORD was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake; and after the earthquake a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire; and after the fire a still small voice.

I KINGS 19:11-12



Participants in this year's CLC Youth Camp, held on the Immanuel College campus, June 23-29, 2019.

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Gospel Reinforcement

The still, small voice of God.

The news today can seem exceedingly loud. Numerous sources fight to be the first to tell us about all the effects of sin in the world. Political turmoil and corruption throw countries into chaos. Mass tragedies happen so frequently that we can seldom fully sympathize with victims before another tragedy becomes the headline news. Amidst the chaotic “noise,” the world asks Christians, “Where is your God?” (Psalm 42:3)



God is not silenced

That constant noise and tragedy can lead even the strongest Christian to exasperation. It’s easy to feel alone in this evil world. But God is not silenced by the noise. “For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword.” (Hebrews 4:12) God’s Word cuts through the noise to show us His love for all people.

We are not the first people to feel discouraged by the world around us. After God’s resounding victory in a contest with the prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel as recorded in 1 Kings 18, we read in 1 Kings 19 about a depressed Elijah, praying that he might die. He hid in a cave and told God, “I have been very zealous for the Lord God of hosts; for the children of Israel have forsaken Your covenant, torn down Your altars, and killed Your prophets with the sword. I alone am left; and they seek to take my life.” (1 Kings 19:10)

God built him up

Elijah then experienced roaring winds, earthquakes, and fires. But God was not in those miraculous signs. God instead came to him in a still, small voice. He told Elijah that he was not alone; seven thousand more believers remained in Israel. Rather than scolding Elijah for his doubts, God built him up with the comfort of the Gospel.

We deserve the full judgment of God’s Law in wind, earthquake, fire, and hell; but, like Elijah, God doesn’t give us all we deserve. The hope and comfort of the Gospel that we receive every time we study the Bible is that still, small voice of God. This is the value of Christian education: it is the continuous Gospel nourishment that our faith needs to live and grow. The effects of sin in the world should not discourage us, because Christ warned His disciples, “These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have

peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.” (John 16:33)

Education and the ability to learn are great blessings from God. But Christian education is much more than a blessing. It is a need. We can learn a great deal about God from mathematics, science, and the world around us. But the revealed knowledge of God, found in the Bible, is the source of our Christian education. Only in God’s Word do we receive the full, glorious understanding of Who God is and what He does for us. Only there can we receive the assurance of forgiveness of sins in Christ crucified. There is no other comfort for the problems of this world than the Gospel of Christ! It is the still, small voice of God.

“Therefore you shall lay up these words of mine in your heart and in your soul, and bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall teach them to your children, speaking of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. And you shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.” (Deuteronomy 11:18-20)



Ross Kok is a teacher at Holy Cross Lutheran School in Phoenix, Arizona.

Back to School Joy

What do you remember about the first day of school? It's always exciting, isn't it? New clothes, new school supplies, possibly a new classroom, a new seating arrangement. If you struggled with your math last year, there's good news! The new school year brings a fresh start. Even those of you who dreaded school must admit that you felt that certain spark the very first day. Now compare that with what you remember about the one-hundredth day. The feelings just aren't the same. It's not long until the excitement wears off, new clothes and supplies become old, frustration with classes builds up, and children begin making excuses to stay home.

I wonder if the disciples shared similar feelings the week after Easter. After Jesus died, confusion and dismay filled the disciples' hearts. Fear was also present, as we know they had locked themselves in a room, afraid of the Jews. But all those feelings evaporated in an instant when their Lord appeared to them behind locked doors and announced, *"Peace be with you."* (John 20:19) What peace! What joy! Their teacher Who was dead was now alive! Their lives, which appeared to be ending, had been restored! They were given a fresh start.

But how quickly did this excitement turn to dreariness as the days moved on and their troubles continued! We can only infer their reasoning, but it does appear likely that the disciples were still motivated by fear when, only one week later, they were once more gathered in a room with the doors locked tight. Then Jesus appeared to them again, answering their fear with those same comforting words, *"Peace be with you."* (John 20:26) Will the excitement of the first day of school give way to dreariness in a few weeks or months? What can we do to prevent the gloom from setting in? Jesus' solution for us is the same as the one He gave to the disciples: His comforting Word. Let us consider our Savior's promises to us.

Are you excited about wearing a brand-new outfit when school resumes?

Well consider the even better clothes your Savior bought for you! *"My soul shall exult in my God, for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation; he has covered me with the robe of righteousness."* (Isaiah 61:10 ESV) These are clothes that won't fade in the wash, that you won't outgrow in a year. Christ's perfection is always in style, and He's made it yours to wear.



Students from Gethsemane Lutheran School, Saginaw, Michigan.

Are you worried about passing some more-difficult classes or finding new friends?

God has answers for you! *"When he calls to me, I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble; I will rescue him and honor him."* (Psalm 91:15 ESV) The God Who created math and physics, and your classmates, is waiting with a listening ear to hear your concerns.

Are you worried about simply surviving the long school year? Wondering how you can continue through the daily grind? *"Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life."* (Psalm 23:6) Whether it is the first day, or the one-hundredth, or the one-hundred-eightieth, God promises He will remain with you. In His mercy, He will continue to pass over your sins. By His grace, He will continue to forgive your failures. In His goodness, He will continue to provide what you need to survive.

May the Lord bless all our students and teachers these next nine months, continually returning to them with patient reminders from His comforting Word. In Christ Jesus, the first-day-of-school joy need never fade away.



Samuel Rodebaugh is pastor of Immanuel Lutheran Church in Winter Haven, Florida.

“Oh, Blest the House, Whate’er Befall”

What do you think of when you hear the term *Christian Education*? Many CLC members might answer, “Christian day schools,” or “Immanuel Lutheran High School, College, and Seminary.” Some might think of home schools where both the content and methods of education are governed by Christian parents instead of by the secular government.

All those responses most certainly are fine examples of Christian education. But they are incomplete. Indeed, in a society in which many elements are rapidly becoming antagonistic to Christianity and Christians, those responses may in some cases not even be adequate! It would be a dangerous mistake for Christian parents to assume that their responsibility for the Christian education of their children begins and ends with the above responses. Genuine Christian education involves the *entire* home and family life of the child.

Christoph Carl Ludwig von Pfeil’s 1782 hymn “Oh, Blest the House, Whate’er Befall” gives a more complete view of what constitutes Christian education.

“Oh, blest the house, whate’er befall/ Where Jesus Christ is all in all!/ Yea, if He were not dwelling there,/ How dark and poor and void it were!” (Verse 1) In nominally Christian households, religion is merely one item among a multitude of others in family life. It may even be an important Sunday ritual, but it’s not the “all in all” of the family. God, however, does not desire that Jesus be just one item among others on our menu, to be arranged along with “job,” “social relationships,” “recreation,” and so forth. It’s not a “menu item”; it’s the entire restaurant! What I mean by that is that our Lord would have our status as Christians—children of the living God—to be the *organizing principle* of everything else in our lives. Our Christian faith is not an element in our lives; it’s what *governs* the elements in our lives. Lacking this, that house is, indeed, “dark and poor.”

“Oh, blest the house where faith ye find/ and all within have set their mind/ To trust their God and serve Him

still/ And do in all His holy will!” (Verse 2) What strikes me in this stanza is the part about setting our minds. We must be steadfastly resolute. We face many obstacles opposing the consistent exercise of our Christian faith, and those obstacles are likely to increase as our society drifts away from its Christian foundation. We need to exercise the firm determination of Joshua in the Covenant at Shechem: “*But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.*” (Joshua 24:15) We must let nothing deter us from this objective.

“Oh, blest the parents who give heed/ Unto their children’s foremost need/ And weary not of care or cost!/ May none to them and heav’n be lost!” (Verse 3) It does not “take a village” to rear godly children; it takes Christian parents who understand the importance of Christian education for their sons and daughters. God has given children—and the responsibility for their upbringing—to parents, not to schools or governments or any other societal institution. Blessed are the Christian parents who faithfully shoulder that responsibility and bring up their children “*in the training and admonition of the Lord.*” (Ephesians 6:4)

The last verse of this hymn addresses an important truth that we need to remember in our own lives, as well as to instill in the minds of our children. **“Then here will I and mine today/ A solemn covenant make and say:/ Though all the world forsake Thy Word,/ I and my house will serve the Lord.”** (Verse 5) As Christians, we are not “of the world,” and we must then be willing to accept the consequences of being different. We also must teach our children to ignore peer pressure when that pressure is to compromise biblical beliefs and behavioral standards. Our immersion in a culture that is increasingly in conflict with biblical standards tends to desensitize us to that conflict. The solution is to be so immersed in God’s Word that we naturally reference all things by *that* standard rather than by worldly ones. “Though all the world forsake Thy Word, I and my house will serve the Lord.”



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

Pfeil, Christoph Carl Ludwig von, 1712-1784

Listen to hymn at: <http://lutherantacoma.com/hymns/131.mp3>



Your Salvation Is The Lord's Agenda

Perhaps more than any other Old Testament Scripture, the New Testament writers quote Psalm 110. Jesus Himself quotes it in Matthew 22:44, *"The LORD said to my Lord, 'Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool."* He quotes it to oblige the Pharisees to reexamine their ideas regarding who they think the Messiah ought to be and what he ought to do. They were hoping for a human king to deliver them from being under the reign of Rome. With the question Jesus posed to them, it became clear that such perspectives could not stand in light of a careful consideration of Psalm 110.

"If David then calls Him 'LORD,' how is He his Son?" (Matthew 22:45)

In Psalm 110 the LORD in heaven is speaking to David's son—a descendant of David. Why would David call one of his descendants "my Lord"? That question left them all stunned. Speechless. No one answered, and they asked Him no more questions.

No father, much less a king, addresses one of his sons, grandchildren, or great grandchildren as "my Lord." Yet David, the most highly regarded king in Jewish history, does that very thing.

And to this descendant of David the LORD in heaven goes on to say, *"Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool."* Whoever sits at the king's right hand is considered coequal with the king; but here we're not just talking about a king, are we? God is the One speaking, and He tells David's descendant to sit at His right hand. That is stunning! In the next verse God declares that this son of David will reign with His mighty scepter. David's descendant is going to be reigning side-by-side with the LORD in heaven! Spectacular!

All along, the religious leaders had taught that the Messiah was going to be a human king with a political

agenda. Jesus, in effect, asks them, "How can that be?" In this Psalm David calls his son "my Lord," and God invites David's son to sit at His right hand and wield the scepter along with Him.

A careful reading of Psalm 110 establishes that the Messiah *must* be Someone Who is more than merely a human being; yes, Someone Who is not the same as God the Father and yet equal to God the Father. Jesus Himself is the One of Whom David wrote.

Many had projected onto Psalm 110 what *they* wanted it to mean.

They wanted a human king.

They wanted him to gain their freedom by a political and, if necessary, a military victory; and

They wanted an earthly kingdom.

None of that was what Jesus was about. Sadly, many still project onto Jesus their ideas about the kind of Lord He ought to be and what kind of a role they want Him to have in their lives.

Jesus did not come to be the kind of Messiah that people wanted, He came to be the Messiah that people needed.

Jesus came to be David's Lord and to be our Lord, and His objectives are far above and beyond any political agenda and anyone's personal agenda:

Jesus came to get rid of your sin, conquer the enemies of your soul, and save you from going to hell—that is **His** agenda!

We are liberated from feeling like we need to be in control, delivered from fearing what's going to happen next, and we gain a perfect peace when we surrender our agendas and embrace His agenda.

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



Obey Your Leaders?

“Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you.”

(Hebrews 13:17 ESV)

This verse has been called spiritual authority’s most abused verse. Sadly, it has been used by pastors and other church leaders to silence any opposition that might come their way. Is this verse saying that Christians must submit unquestioningly or blindly to spiritual leaders without critically thinking about the nature of the leadership being exercised? Certainly not.

The reason given for obeying and submitting to leaders in the church is based on the fact that they are keeping watch over souls. The authority that church leaders have is not based on position or power. Verse 7 gives us the basis of their authority: *“Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God. Consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith.”* (ESV). The authority of church leaders then and now is based upon the truth of the message they proclaim and on the godly example they display.

The Apostle Paul is a wonderful example of a Christian leader.

Paul’s ministry was based on revelation from God (Galatians 1:11-24). He also appeals to his godly character especially throughout 2 Corinthians where he refers to himself as a *“servant for Jesus’ sake”* (4:5), and as one who has not taken advantage of anyone (12:17-18). This is the type of leader the writer to the Hebrews calls on Christians to obey and submit to.

The Brief Statement of 1932, Paragraph 32

“Although the office of the ministry is a divine ordinance, it possesses no other power than the power of the Word of God, 1 Pet. 4:11; that is to say, it is the duty of Christians to yield unconditional obedience to the office of the ministry whenever, and as long as, the minister proclaims to them the Word of God, Heb. 13:17, Luke 10:16. If, however, the minister, in his teachings and injunctions, were to go beyond the Word of God, it would be the duty of Christians not to obey, but to disobey him, so as to remain faithful to Christ, Matt. 23:8. Accordingly, we reject the false doctrine ascribing to the office of the ministry the right to demand obedience and submission in matters which Christ has not commanded.”

The Brief Statement of 1932 can be found at:
<http://clclutheran.org/library/BriefStatement.html>

Paul was not infallible, and neither are church leaders today. Their authority lies not in themselves, but in the Word of God. It is, therefore, only insofar as they faithfully discharge the responsibilities of their office that they are to be obeyed and submitted to. If church leaders preach any Jesus other than the Jesus of the Bible, believers should do well to close their ears and not obey them.

Where church leaders rightly preach and teach God’s Word, and where their conduct is godly, then believers will want to willingly and joyfully obey such leaders. This is in the best interest of both leaders and those being led. Leaders have the great responsibility of watching over the people of God, and they will give an account before God for their leadership. This is a responsibility that many church leaders take very seriously. They love those under their care and want nothing more than to see them believe in God’s Word and live godly lives. When this is the case, members should obey and respect their leaders. When such leaders are not obeyed and respected, the work of the church can become burdensome, and this is not good for anyone. When church leaders feel that their calling is a burden, they do not properly feed their members with God’s Word and, in turn, the members become even more irritated with their leaders.

Our Savior Jesus lived, died, and rose again for us, and He has gathered us into His Church around the Means of Grace so that the benefits of what He did might be our own. In His Church, He has called some to be shepherds and others to be sheep so that the Gospel might be proclaimed and shared among us. Thanks be to God for faithful pastors, teachers, and members. May God help us to carry out the role He has given us for His glory.



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

UNDERSTANDING THE CULTS

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.

Unity Church

The Unity School of Christianity—more commonly called Unity Church, or just Unity—is a sister cult to Christian Science (*Lutheran Spokesman*, February 2019). Each cult had its own founder, but both were influenced by the writings of Phineas Parkhurst Quimby.

Myrtle Fillmore, a founder of Unity, converted to Christian Science in 1887. Charles, Myrtle's husband, also converted to Christian Science but was really more intrigued by the occult and Hinduism. This couple took, as Charles said, "the best from all religions" and concocted a belief system that became Unity.



Many Unity adherents retain membership in other churches because Unity suggests that it can peacefully coexist with other religions, including Christianity, and even enhance them. Meanwhile Unity's teachings clearly contradict Scripture. The idea that darkness can co-exist with light is a deception of the highest order by the Prince of Darkness. "What fellowship has light with darkness?" (2 Corinthians 6:13 ESV) The scriptural answer is, none!

Unity has fueled its growth through direct mail campaigns, correspondence courses, and attractive publications—including its magazine, *Daily Word*. It also operates a worldwide prayer ministry called "Silent Unity." After first contact with Silent Unity, one receives a personalized prayer followed by a letter of support. Vast numbers of people make use of Silent Unity. Sadly, all of those prayers are to a false god and are left unheard and unanswered. "The eyes of the LORD are on the righteous, And His ears are open to their cry. The face of the Lord is against those who do evil." (Psalm 34:15-16.)

Similar to other cults, Unity makes use of biblical language (sheep's clothing) to portray its non-Christian (wolf) theology (see Matthew 7:15). It uses the Bible as a

lure, but considers it neither inspired by God nor infallible.

In Unity, the biblical Trinity is an allegory and does not exist. In fact, Unity's god is not even a personal being, but rather an infinite mind that can be expressed in matter. "Christ" is the divine spark in all humans, and Jesus is just the man who best expressed this "Christ Consciousness." Thus, Jesus was neither the promised Christ nor the Son of God, but only a master teacher.

Unity adherents believe that every person is inherently good. This opposes God's teaching about inherited sin (Psalm 51:5). Without the truth concerning sin, it follows that salvation isn't really needed. For Unity, salvation is reduced to "living the Christ pattern," and heaven and hell are just states of mind.

Unity sets itself apart from other cults by its belief in reincarnation. Unity's reincarnation teaching is more palatable to western thinking than the Buddhist or Hindu reincarnation teachings are because it eliminates the possibility of returning as a lesser life form. "Eventually all souls reincarnate on the earth as babes and in due time take up their problems where they left off at death."

The teaching of reincarnation is easily refuted by clear Scripture (see Hebrews 9:27 and 1 Corinthians 15). Nevertheless, it is one of the most effective doctrines for the cult's outreach purposes because reincarnation is attractive as a much "happier" alternative to hell.

It is truly astounding that Unity's belief system could ever be described as "Christian," and yet it is often characterized that way. Unity is void of truth concerning sin and grace, the Triune God, the Son of God Who is the Redeemer of the world, and so much more. There is no lamp nor light for the sinner's way (Psalm 119:105) to be found in Unity, only a manmade spiritual stew and sin's deep darkness.



How desperately the Gospel is needed!
How blessed we are to proclaim it!

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

“THIS WE BELIEVE”

In ongoing observation of the 500th anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation, we are presenting a brief overview of those confessional documents that make up the *Book of Concord*.

The Power and Primacy of the Pope

History

Word was received that Pope Paul III had called for a general council to be held in Italy in May of 1537. In response, Elector John Frederick of Saxony commissioned Luther to prepare articles of faith in the event that Lutherans were summoned there to defend their doctrinal positions. Luther completed his work on several articles, and they were reviewed by Wittenberg theologians before being delivered to the Smalcald League in February of 1537. Luther himself was unable to attend due to illness. Although these articles were not formally adopted at the time, many pastors signed agreement with their content. It was agreed, however, that something official be adopted regarding the power and primacy of the pope prior to the general council being held.

Since Luther was not present, Philip Melancthon was chosen to prepare a treatise for that purpose. Some have mistakenly referred to “The Power and Primacy of the Pope” as an appendix to the Smalcald Articles, but it would be more accurate to refer to them as a supplement to the Augsburg Confession. Although composed by Melancthon, the content echoes Luther’s earlier work “Of the Papacy,” and is marked by a clearer tone than Melancthon typically employed. The final product was formally adopted in the weeks that followed, even though the general council did not end up meeting until 1545 in Trent.

Content

The confession presents three major objections to the papacy. The first deals with the pope’s claim that he is above all other church bishops and pastors by divine right, and that therefore he alone has the right of electing, ordaining, confirming, and deposing all other clergy. The pope also claims the authority to make laws about worship and to change sacraments and doctrine. His official edicts are claimed to be on par with Scripture, and the faithful are therefore conscience-bound to obey him in order to be saved. To refute these claims, Melancthon rightly explained Matthew 16:15-19, emphasizing that it was the

Apostle Peter’s confession, *not* Peter himself, that would be the “rock” on which the church was built. Christ Himself clearly forbids lordship among the apostles, but instead speaks of a spirit of humility and service. The authority of the ministry lies in the Word of God; it is not of human origin. The pope’s claim of primacy does not even have a historical foundation. The early church placed all bishops on equal footing, and they were often chosen by their own congregations, not by the Roman bishop. Pope Gregory the Great (A.D. 590-604) rejected the idea of primacy and the title of universal bishop.

The second objection is that the pope claims to possess authority in the affairs of the state as well as those of the church. Jesus declared, “*My kingdom is not of this world.*” (John 18:36) He commissioned His followers to go and preach the Gospel to all the world, not to bear the sword in order to possess a worldly kingdom. Popes had placed an emphasis on earthly wealth and physical property at the expense of the spiritual growth of the people.

The third objection is that the pope, placing himself in the position of God, declares that those not accepting of his “divine right” to rule in both the spiritual and secular realms will forfeit their salvation. God’s Word clearly states that those who teach other than what the Bible does should not be followed, even if they hold a position of authority in the church. “*But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed.*” (Galatians 1:8)

The sternest conviction of the papacy, however, lies in the identification of the papacy as Antichrist. In II Thessalonians 2:4 Antichrist is described as one “*who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.*” For this reason, the confession insists that all Christians should abandon this Antichrist and his followers.



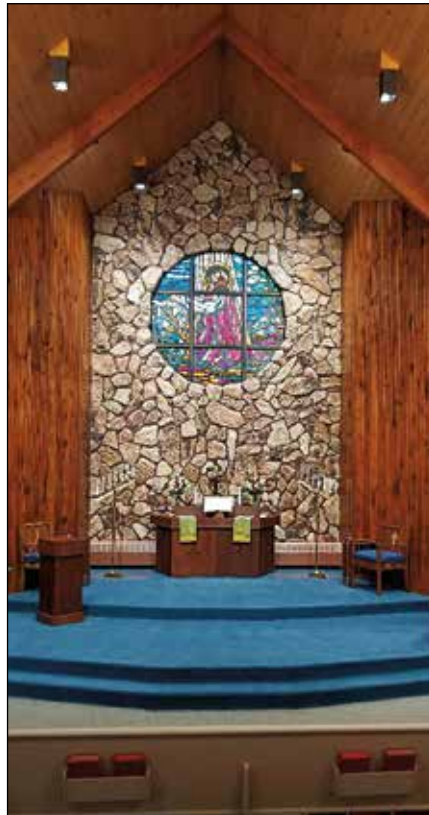
Joe Lau is a professor at Immanuel Lutheran College in Eau Claire, Wisconsin.

Gethsemane Lutheran Church

Saginaw, Michigan

For many, *Gethsemane* is a name difficult both to spell and to pronounce. For those unfamiliar with its Biblical significance, it seems a strange and foreign name. But what a wonderful name for a Christian congregation! For it was there in the Garden of Gethsemane, on the night before He died, that our loving Savior resolved to go forward and suffer the hell we all deserved because of our sins. This truth is stunningly pictured for all who come to Gethsemane for worship, for as worshipers pass through the doors of her sanctuary and look up, there, above the altar, they are greeted by the sight of a large stained-glass window, bright with dazzling color. The window pictures our beautiful Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane, ready and willing, after agonizing in prayer, to lay down His life for all. The justification of each and every sinner—by the doing, dying, and rising of Christ—is the precious truth upon which the Church of Christ is built! So, yes, Gethsemane is a wonderful name for a Christian congregation.

Gethsemane is a Christian congregation. Moreover, she also is a confessional Lutheran congregation. As a member of the Church of the Lutheran Confession, we at Gethsemane hold unswervingly to the Lutheran confessions, believing them to be a clear and accurate profession of what the Scriptures teach. What this means is that we simply aim, by God's grace, to stand on God's Word alone,



while allowing the Gospel of Christ to have predominance in all our preaching, teaching, and counseling. This commitment to Scripture alone, with an emphasis of God's grace in Christ, is a precious gift from God.

This God-given allegiance to the Lutheran heritage of Scripture alone is what led to the founding of Gethsemane congregation sixty years ago. In the late 1950's, Pastor Otto J. Eckert and a small number of like-minded believers felt conscience-bound to leave their former fellowship when that fellowship became guilty of false teaching. Gethsemane's first service was held on Reformation Sunday, November 1, 1959, at what was then the Marr Theater in Saginaw. At a special meeting held at the D.F. Maier home on November 5, 1959, Gethsemane Evangelical Lutheran Church was organized.

In the coming years, the Lord showered the growing congregation with one blessing after another. A house of worship was soon constructed, with the dedication service taking place on May 20, 1962. This first house of worship was later converted into the parsonage when a new and bigger sanctuary was built in 1978. In 1982, the congregation took the bold step of opening a Christian day school, with fifteen students enrolled that first year. In 1991 Gethsemane dedicated a new school addition. Other building projects include the construction of two separate teacherages.

Through it all, the Lord has blessed the



congregation with faithful pastors; all of whom have been committed to God's Word, the proclamation of the eternal Gospel, and the care of precious blood-bought souls. Pastors serving Gethsemane have been Otto J. Eckert (1959-1974), David Schierenbeck (1974-1983), Mark Bernthal (1983-2002), and Michael Wilke (2002 to the present). Mr. Karl Brandle also faithfully served Gethsemane both as a vacancy pastor and assistant pastor. Gethsemane currently numbers 165 souls with an average Sunday/Monday attendance of about 70. On any given Sunday you will find a nice mix of worshipers ranging in age from one to ninety-one.

One area in which the congregation has been very richly blessed is that of willing hearts and hands to serve the Lord and His Church. Moved by the precious Gospel, members can be seen doing something around the church on just about every day of the week. This willing spirit to serve the Lord is a gift from God that has been apparent throughout the sixty years of Gethsemane's existence.

Gethsemane has been further blessed with a heart for Christian education. Many faithful Sunday school teachers have led God's lambs to Jesus. For thirty-seven years she has also operated a Christian day school. Full-time teachers at our day school have included Ross Roehl (1982-1994), Lynette Roehl (1983-1992), Elsie Godsey (1984-1986), Sherry Wielinski (1992-1995), Ardith



Top: children of Gethsemane Lutheran School.
Above: Gethsemane's organ, member Anthony Garibay at the keyboard

Zimmerman (1991-1997), Kurt Koenig (1995-1998), Debi Leinberger (1998-2001), Pam Reames (1997-2002), Rachel (Pfeiffer) Rosendahl (2001-2005), Heidi (Aymond) Nelson (2005-2008), Gloria Wilke (2003 –present), and Daniel Barthels (1994 – present). We would be remiss if we didn't mention that many volunteers have served our day school, all of whom have been a great blessing to our students. Our 2018-2019 day school enrollment was eighteen. Of further interest in the realm of Christian education is the fact that over the years, despite the long distance between Saginaw and Eau

Claire, nearly forty young people from Gethsemene have been blessed to attend Immanuel Lutheran High School and/or College.

In 2009 Gethsemane celebrated its 50th anniversary with the theme "*Jesus Christ: the same yesterday, and today, and forever.*" (Hebrews 13:8) Jesus doesn't change, nor does His Word. Our fervent prayer is that for many years to come, God will enable Gethsemane to faithfully proclaim the unchanging message of Christ crucified to a world lost in sin; and that as both members and visitors look up at the stained glass image of Jesus in the Garden, they may all be reminded of our blessed Savior's redeeming love, "*who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross.*" (Hebrews 12:2)



Michael Wilke is pastor of Gethsemane Lutheran Church in Saginaw, Michigan.

CHRISTIAN DAY SCHOOL PHOTOS FROM AROUND THE CLC.

In this Christian Education issue of the Lutheran Spokesman, we thought you'd appreciate seeing Christian education in action, with photos submitted by Christian day schools from across our synod.





“BREAD OF LIFE” READINGS SEPTEMBER 2019

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

| Date | Hymns | Reading | Comments |
|---------|-------------------|-------------------------|---|
| Sept 2 | TLH 422 | Numbers 13:16-33 | Caleb shows us that we can trust the Lord over our own eyes. |
| Sept 3 | TLH 426 | Ecclesiastes 11:1-6 | We do the work the Lord puts in front of us to do without always worrying how it will end up. |
| Sept 4 | TLH 550; LSB 788 | Philippians 1:3-11 | Along with Paul, we give thanks for the fellow Christians God has put in our lives. |
| Sept 5 | WS 763; LSB 512 | Philippians 2:1-18 | Christian humility shines like a light in a dark world, and Jesus, Who humbled Himself for us, helps us to remain humble. |
| Sept 6 | TLH 437; LSB 884 | Philippians 3:1-21 | We are surrounded by so many spiritual dangers in this life that it is vital to keep pressing on toward our heavenly goal. |
| Sept 7 | TLH 427 (LSB 728) | Philippians 4:1-13 | We can face anything through Christ Who strengthens us. |
| Sept 9 | WS 800 (LSB 922) | Ecclesiastes 11:9-12:7 | Young people, use the time of your youth wisely—to gain a knowledge of God and to grow in your faith. |
| Sept 10 | TLH 245 (LSB 571) | Numbers 21:4-9 | The bronze snake was a picture of Jesus. We trust in Him for salvation from death. |
| Sept 11 | TLH 292 (LSB 585) | 1 Timothy 1:3-11 | We don't warn people of sin and false doctrine just to make their lives difficult, but rather so they can learn to love from a pure and forgiven heart. |
| Sept 12 | TLH 469 (LSB 648) | 1 Timothy 2:8-15 | God establishes specific roles for men and women in the church. |
| Sept 13 | TLH 474; LSB 652 | 1 Timothy 3:1-13 | Those men who have leadership roles in the church must be especially conscious of setting a good example for the flock. |
| Sept 14 | TLH 621 (LSB 858) | Song of Solomon 2:8-3:5 | How blessed and happy are the husband and wife who seek after one another in love. |
| Sept 16 | TLH 483 (LSB 682) | 1 Timothy 4:11-16 | Do you have a young pastor at your church? Remember that God has given him just the gifts he needs to serve you. |
| Sept 17 | TLH 488; LSB 842 | 1 Timothy 5:1-2, 17-21 | Those in positions of church leadership should treat those who are in their care with respect, and likewise the others should respect the leaders whom God has given them. |
| Sept 18 | WS 743 (LSB 802) | 1 Timothy 6:3-19 | Use earthly wealth wisely and do not let it rule over you. In this way you should continue to fight the good fight of faith. |
| Sept 19 | TLH 166 (LSB 419) | Job 1:6-22 | The most striking verse of this section is the last one. How did Job do it? Only with God's help to keep him faithful. |
| Sept 20 | WS 711 (LSB 373) | Titus 2:11-14 | Jesus has come and brings salvation for us all through the forgiveness of our sins! |
| Sept 21 | WS 753 | Titus 3:4-11 | Paul again writes to Titus about our Savior Jesus Christ, this time how He saves us in Baptism. |
| Sept 23 | TLH 146 (LSB 434) | 1 Peter 1:13-25 | It took something of tremendous value to redeem you—the precious blood of Christ! |
| Sept 24 | TLH 234 (LSB 496) | Numbers 33:50-56 | Idolatry must be driven out before the Lord. |
| Sept 25 | TLH 447 (LSB 664) | Deuteronomy 4:1-14 | Israel is called on to obey the LORD their God as they prepare to cross into the land that was promised to them. |
| Sept 26 | TLH 19 (LSB 819) | Deuteronomy 4:15-31 | The LORD our God is a compassionate God. There is no reason to leave Him to chase after idols! Stay true to the Lord! |
| Sept 27 | TLH 22; LSB 920 | 1 Peter 2:1-17 | Come to the LORD and you will experience goodness and blessing, but turn from Him and you will only fail. |
| Sept 28 | TLH 259 | 1 Peter 3:13-22 | If you should suffer for doing what is right and good, don't let that discourage you! You're in good company (v. 18) and you've already been saved through Christ in Baptism. |
| Sept 30 | TLH 11 | 1 Peter 4:7-17 | If you should suffer for being a Christian, do not be afraid. When His glory is revealed, you will rejoice! |

A New Professor—Daniel David Schierenbeck

“Run with endurance the race set before you.”

ILC's new professor is the son of John and Sharon Schierenbeck of Eau Claire, Wisconsin. He is also the brother of Professor Jeffrey Schierenbeck of Eau Claire; Michael Schierenbeck of Fond du Lac, Wisconsin; Amy Mielke of Eau Claire; and Dawn Watson and Scott Waugh both of Columbia, South Carolina.

Dan has completed several half marathons and 10k races, even conquering the infamous Hospital Hill in Kansas City, Missouri. This is a remarkable feat considering his health history. What is even more remarkable is the spiritual race that led Dan to be a professor at Immanuel Lutheran High School and College.

Dan was born in Spokane, Washington, on New Year's Eve 1969. Shortly after his birth, Dan was diagnosed with a hole between the two ventricles of his heart. The Lord provided a world class pediatric heart surgeon who banded his pulmonary artery when he was six weeks old. This minimized the leaking and made it possible for him to survive until he was five years old and could have open heart surgery to repair the hole. The Lord blessed both of these operations.

In July of 2008, when he was donating stem cells for his brother Mike's stem cell transplant at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, it was discovered that he needed open heart surgery again to repair his pulmonary artery and also a small hole in his heart. A year later, he had open heart surgery again to replace his pulmonary valve. He continues to run his race.

Dan's "race" was blessed by a Christ-centered education with special Christian teachers. He attended grade school at Gethsemane Lutheran School in Spokane, Washington; and at Holy Trinity Lutheran School in West Columbia, South Carolina. He then graduated from Immanuel Lutheran High School and College. The Lord was preparing him for his appointed race.



The Lord provided a helper suitable for Dan in Sharon (Sherry) Babb from Tony, Wisconsin. He blessed them with three special daughters: Morgan, who will graduate next spring from the University of Central Missouri with a degree in economics; Hannah, who will be a freshman at the University of Wisconsin—Eau Claire; and Allie, who will be a sophomore at Immanuel Lutheran High School.

He developed an interest in English and English literature in his classes with Professors Paul Koch and John Lau. Dan earned his master's degree in English at the University of Wisconsin—Eau Claire. He went on to get his Ph.D. in English at the University of Tennessee at Knoxville. Dan taught at the University of Central Missouri in Warrensburg, Missouri, near Kansas City, for seventeen years. He served as the chair of the English department there for the past three years.

Little did anyone know that all of this was in preparation for the next big step in his life. In the fall of 2018, Dan received the call to teach English at Immanuel Lutheran High School and College. The Holy Spirit led him to accept this call. The Lord had it all figured out. They sold their house in Warrensburg to the first couple that looked at it. Sherry came up to Eau Claire in June for a job interview with Child Support of Eau Claire County, and a week later the job was hers. The sale of their house closed on July 11. Sherry's new job began on July 15. The professorage was ready for their furniture on July 18.

As Dan and his family settle in to new challenges and a busy life, they are encouraged by the writer to Hebrews to *“run with endurance the race set before you looking to Jesus the author and finisher of your faith.”* (Hebrews 12:1-2) Jesus has provided another gift to build up the body of Christ.



John Schierenbeck, father of Dan, is a retired pastor and former President of the CLC. He and his wife Sharon now make their home in Eau Claire, Wisconsin.

Lutheran Spokesman

501 Grover Road, Eau Claire, WI, 54701

ANNOUNCEMENTS



In accord with our usage and order, **Samuel Justus Naumann**, who was called by Resurrection Lutheran Church, Corpus Christi, Texas, to be its pastor, was ordained and installed on Sunday, July 7, 2019. Participating was congregational president Allen Durham.—Pastor David Naumann

Photo: Resurrection / Corpus Christi Pastor Samuel Naumann, center, Mr. Allen Durham, left, Rev. David Naumann, right.



In accord with our usage and order, **Nathan Aksel Buck**, who was called by Valley Bible Academy - St. John's Lutheran, Clarkston, Washington, to be its principal and additional teacher, was installed on Sunday, July 21, 2019.—Pastor David Naumann

Photo: St. John's / Clarkston teacher Nathan Buck, left, with Rev. David Naumann.

Fall 2019 West Central Pastoral Conference

St. Luke's Lutheran Church, Lemmon, South Dakota

September 10-12

Agenda:

- Historical Study of CFW Walther's Thesis VIII in Kirche und Amt—Pastor Thomas Schuetze
- Reconciling the Concepts of Divine Providence and Free Will—Pastor Timothy Daub
- Study and Structure of the Purpose of Mark—Pastor Mark Gulerud
- What Constitutes Abandonment in Marriage? —Pastor Michael Roehl
- Devotional Study of a Minor Prophet—Pastor Paul Krause
- Monergism of the Holy Ghost and the Role of the New Man in the Christian Life —Pastor Paul Nolting
- Online Ministry and the Sanctity of the Call—Pastor Delwyn Maas
- How can the Christian Know When the Doctrina Publica of a Church Body Has Changed from Error to Truth? —Pastor Joel Fleischer
- New Testament Exegesis—Pastor Mark Weis



- Old Testament Exegesis—Pastor Chad Seybt
 - Chaplain—Pastor Aaron Ude
 - Speaker—Pastor James Naumann
- Submitted by Pastor Timothy Daub, Secretary

Comments Solicited on Nominees for ILC Professor:

The Board of Regents announces the following nominations to fill the professorship vacated by the impending retirement of Professor Paul Sullivan at the end of the 2019-20 academic year: Pastor Luke Bernthal, Pastor Timothy Daub, Pastor Michael Eichstadt, Pastor Wayne Eichstadt, Pastor John Hein, Pastor Nathanael Mayhew, Pastor David Reim, Mr. Peter Reim, Pastor Chad Seybt, Mr. Stephen Sydow, Pastor Mark Tiefel, and Pastor Mark Weis. The position would require the ability to teach in a variety of areas, which may include high school and college courses in religion, social sciences, and church history. All comments from members of CLC congregations regarding these candidates are to be received by email or letter no later than midnight September 8, 2019 (letters postmarked August 30, 2019) to: Mr. James Burkhardt; 217 Windy Lane; Rockwall, TX 75087; email: jeb6217@yahoo.com.