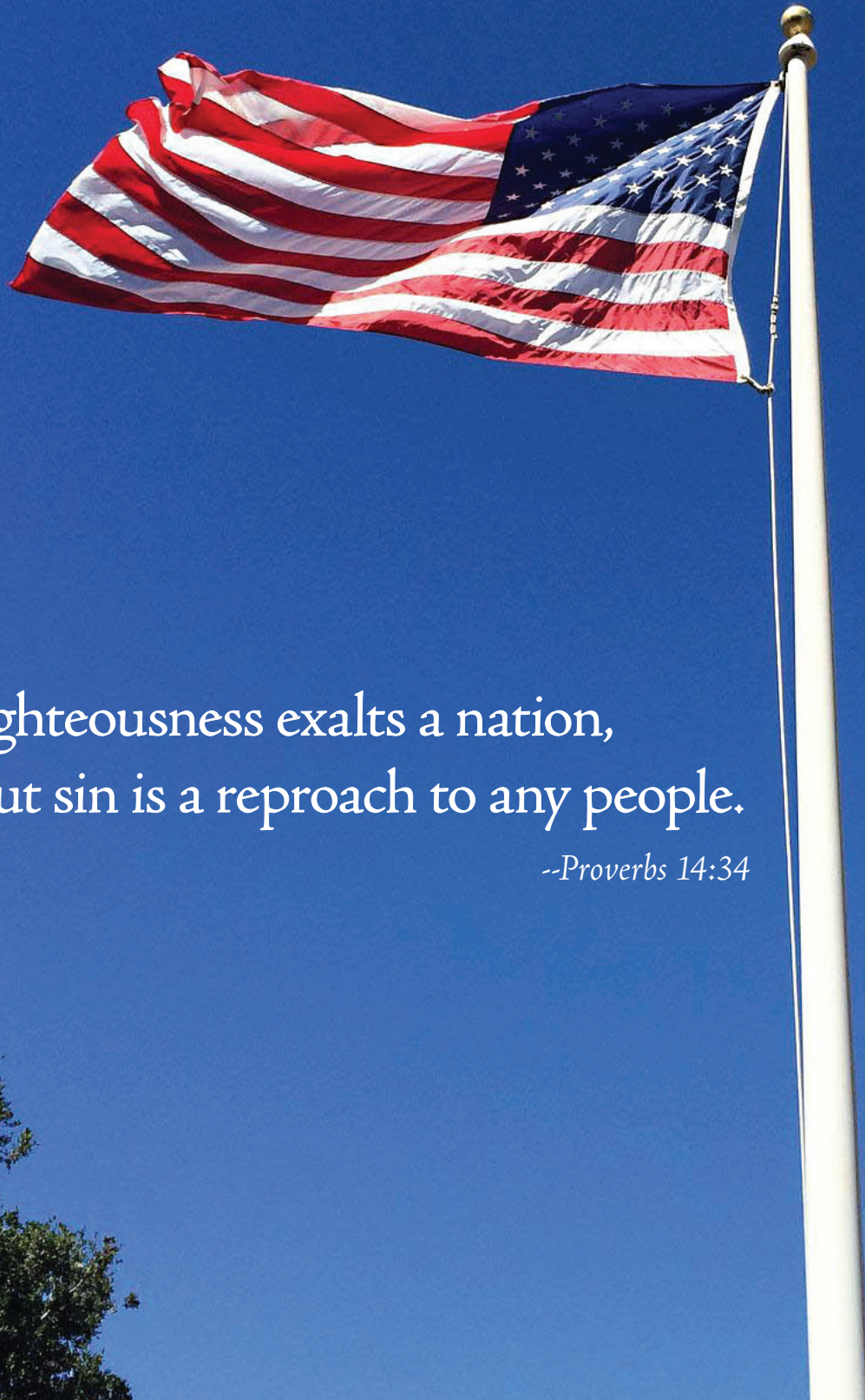


JULY 2022 VOL 65 NO. 1

LUTHERAN SPOKESMAN

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



Righteousness exalts a nation,
But sin is a reproach to any people.

--Proverbs 14:34



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Our Freedom Depends on *Originalism*

*Every word of God is pure; He is a shield to those who put their trust in Him.
Do not add to His words, Lest He rebuke you, and you be found a liar. (Prov. 30:5-6)*

It is no secret that in recent years our nation has become more and more politically polarized. Some claim that this division is even reflected in the makeup of our U.S. Supreme Court. Some of the more liberal justices have what is called a “living constitution” view of the U.S. Constitution, while others subscribe to the “originalist” approach. The idea of a “living constitution” is that judges should not be bound to the letter of this document as written, but should take into account the evolving needs of our society and adapt constitutional language to accommodate modern circumstances. “Originalists” counter that the only job of the judicial branch of government is to apply the laws as written. They argue that it is the legislative branch that is responsible for changing the laws when necessary, and that if the Constitution needs to be updated, there is an amendment process to accomplish that.



There are many who view the “living constitution” approach with alarm. They are apprehensive about the idea that their freedoms can be eroded by unelected judges who impose laws based on their own personal convictions, rather than on our nation’s founding documents.

While this may be a legitimate fear, it is not the biggest threat to freedom that we face. The larger threat has to do with a much more far-reaching freedom, and very little to do with earthly governments. The gravest danger is the sin that lives within each of us, and the damning consequences of that sin apart from the Savior. The liberty that God has bestowed on us is the full and free forgiveness of all sin, given because of Jesus’ sacrifice of Himself on the cross. Christians need to be acutely aware that retaining this freedom depends on an “originalist” view—not of the U.S. Constitution, but of God’s Word in Holy Scripture.

There are many Bible “scholars,” as well as entire church organizations, who view the Bible as a “living document” in the sense that they think we must adapt what it says to our modern

trends and sensibilities. According to this view, the Bible does contain truth, but it is up to us to sift through its contents in order to discover what is true, what is mistaken, and what is mere legend. We see this concept in action when some Christian churches and leaders proclaim, for instance, that a woman ought to have the right to murder her unborn child, that God blesses same-sex marital unions, that Jesus did not rise bodily from the grave, and that faith in Him is not the only way to heaven. These shocking anti-biblical teachings began on a smaller scale, with the denial of the word-for-word inspiration of the Bible. This then grew “like cancer,” as Paul describes false teaching in 2 Timothy 2:17.

When it comes to God’s Word, Jesus was an “originalist.” Of the Old Testament He said, “*The Scripture cannot be broken,*” (John 10:35) and “*Your word is truth.*” (John 17:17) He commissioned His apostles to record His teachings so that others would hear and believe (John 14:26, 17:20), and sent His Holy Spirit to see that this was done, word-for-word (2 Peter 1:21).

We thank God for the earthly blessings that we have enjoyed in this great country, the United States of America. We pray that the freedoms which our U.S. Constitution guarantees will continue for many years to come. We also recognize that all earthly powers and governments eventually fail and pass into the dustbin of history. Even then, the most important things, by God’s grace, remain. Therefore, like Jesus and the apostles, we make it our aim to be “originalists” for the truth of God’s verbally-inspired Word. Ultimately, the freedoms we have of forgiveness and life eternal, for us and our children, depend on it!



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

Approaching the Unapproachable

When Abraham Lincoln became president, he had an open-door policy to the public. For a couple of hours each week, Americans could air their grievances to the President, or ask for a job. As the Civil War waged on, President Lincoln asked the applicants to keep it short, “as if waiting to be shaved at a barber’s shop.”

For 21st-Century Americans, it is impossible to imagine the White House having such an open-door policy. With successful and attempted assassinations of American presidents, security around the leader of our nation is very tight. Today, one has to go through background checks and screening from the U.S. Secret Service to approach the president.

If that is the case with an elected leader of the people, access becomes even more controlled to those who are the supreme leaders of their kingdom. When Mordecai begged Queen Esther to speak to King Ahasuerus that he might spare the lives of all the Jews in the kingdom, Queen Esther replied, “*If any man or woman goes to the king inside the inner court without being called, there is but one law—to be put to death.*” (Esther 4:11 ESV) The king was too important and his reign too majestic for just anyone to approach his throne.

Scripture speaks in similar terms when it comes to the majesty of God. Paul writes to Timothy that God is “*dwelling in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see.*” (1 Timothy 6:16) Like the unapproachable blazing sun at the center of our solar system, God is so great, so holy, so powerful and awesome that we cannot approach Him. When Moses asked to see the Lord’s glory, the Lord said He would make His goodness pass before him and proclaim His name, but he said, “*You cannot see My face; for no man shall see Me, and live.*” (Exodus 33:20) God is so majestic that even the seraphim, those mighty six-winged angels, cover their faces and their feet in His presence.

Confronted with the majesty of God which caused the seraphim to cover themselves, Isaiah also wanted to cover himself, “*Woe is me, for I am undone! Because I am a man of unclean lips, And I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; For my eyes have seen the King, The LORD of hosts.*” (Isaiah 6:5) The tax collector would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven as he pleaded, “*God, be merciful to me a sinner!*” (Luke 18:13) After the miraculous catch of fish,

Peter fell at Jesus’ knees and said, “*Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!*” (Luke 5:8)

As sinful mortals who have rebelled against our Creator time without number, we have no business approaching God or even looking upon Him. His majesty is too great.

Marvel, then, that while we had no business approaching God, God in His amazing grace approached us. The eternal and almighty Son of God took on flesh to be our Brother. Though we could not approach God because of our sin, Jesus, Who

was with God and Who was God from the beginning, took our sin on Himself in order to reconcile us to God. Paul says, “*God erased the record of our debt brought against us by his legal demands. This record stood against us, but he took it away by nailing it to the cross.*” (Colossians 2:14 EHV)

Emboldened by the need of her people and her relationship with King Ahasuerus, Queen Esther went to the inner court of the king’s house. The king heard her pleas and acted in her favor. Cleansed from our sin and credited with Christ’s

righteousness, we now regard God as our Father Whom we can approach with any and every need. Through Christ we can approach Him Who dwells in unapproachable light. “*Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*” (Hebrews 4:16)

*“To God our Savior,
Who alone is wise,
Be glory and majesty,
Dominion and power,
Both now and forever. Amen.”*
(Jude 1:25)

"Marvel then, that while we had no business approaching God, God in His amazing grace approached us."



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OUR LITURGICAL LEGACY

*Ever wonder why we Lutherans use the form of worship we do?
In this series we examine the depth and meaning of the various elements of
our worship service, beginning with the history of Christian worship itself.*

The Confession of Sins

When I first started attending my bride's Lutheran church fifty-four years ago, I told her that I very much liked the Bible classes and the sermons, but I did not care for all the standing and sitting and reciting words of a ritual. Besides that, the traditional hymns were difficult for me.

That opinion is, I think, how many non-Lutheran Christians view our worship services. However, as I came to understand what was going on in the worship service, I increasingly realized that our liturgy is actually an elegant expression of theology—truth derived from God's Word!—rather than, as it is often misunderstood, mere ceremonial formality that's a residue of the Roman Catholic Church from which Martin Luther broke.

This "Our Liturgical Legacy" series is intended to deepen our understanding and appreciation of the beauty and especially of the biblical faithfulness of the liturgy with which God has abundantly blessed our church. As Craig A. Parton noted specifically about the Lutheran liturgy in his book *The Defense Never Rests*, "I . . . found Christ at the center of all of it and the reason for all of it." This month's article focuses on the Confession of Sins, a part of every one of our worship services.

"All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." (Romans 3:23) The question, then, is "How are we to deal with that fact?" Our "old Adam" tries to either deny or justify our sins: "Everybody does that, how can it be sinful?" "Yes, I did that, *but* (enter here the supposed mitigating circumstances)." Neither of those inane excuses is truly a solution to the problem of our sin. In fact, they worsen the problem rather than solve it. Moreover, our sin is not just a matter of some deed we have done or failed to do—it is a part of our very nature. We will not be entirely free from it in this life.

The only solution to our "sin problem" is confession and forgiveness. Here again, the centrality of the Gospel is shown in our Lutheran liturgy. How, after all, can we really approach the holy God, how can we worship Him, how can we be received as His children and expect His blessings, unless we admit our true nature and then cling to the Gospel of Jesus Christ for forgiveness? We cannot. The Bible clearly tells us, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us

from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us." (1 John 1:8-10) That is why the Confession of Sins is right at the beginning of our worship services, following immediately after the very short Trinitarian Invocation. Confession of sins is essential to rightly approaching the one true God. It is the prerequisite to the rest of our worship.



I once had a pastor who told me, "We can feed the sheep or we can entertain the goats, but in this church, we will feed sheep." The Lutheran liturgy provides not just food, but actually a feast for us sheep, blessing us with what God promised: "I will feed them in good pasture, and their fold shall be on the high mountains of Israel. There they shall lie down in a good fold and feed in rich pasture on the mountains of Israel. I will feed My flock, and I will make them lie down," says the Lord GOD." (Ezekiel 34:14-16) The Lutheran liturgy is rich food for Christ's sheep; it will not entertain goats.



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Eulogized Be Our God

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.” (1 Peter 1:3-5)

It’s a word rarely used in our religious circles. It’s a concept we try to avoid at our funerals and victory services—the eulogy. While we gratefully acknowledge the Gospel fruits in every phase and stage of believers’ lives, we are also careful not to glorify men, but rather the God and Savior Who has loved, redeemed, led, and preserved His sheep unto life eternal.

Yet in this great doxology (prayer or hymn of praise), Peter literally begins with the word “Eulogized be” (translated “Blessed” or “Praised” be). *Eulogy* means “good word of praise” and what follows is Peter’s Spirit-inspired tribute to the God of our salvation. Encapsulating the past, present and future of our lives and destinies in Christ, it provides rich comfort and hope on our sometimes weary and burdensome journey through this vale of tears. It has served as the highest eulogy at many Christian victory services.

At the heart of everything we are and have and hope to be in Christ is the Father’s abundant mercy. As repentant sinners, to this alone we flee. For as spiritual law-breakers by nature and by life reality, God’s holiness exposes us, His justice condemns us, and His wrath threatens us. Only in the unending, un-emptying, and unfailing reservoir of His mercy can we find forgiveness and blessing in Christ (Lamentations 3:22-26). Through the redemptive work and triumphant resurrection of His Son, four precious blessings flow from God’s mercy into our hearts and lives:

1. A New Birth: “born of water and the Spirit” (John 3:5), we by faith have been raised from darkness and death to new life and sonship in Christ (Romans 6:3-4).

God be eulogized (praised)!

2. A Living Hope: The Christian hope is alive and sure, and it springs eternal in the believing heart. And why? “through

the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.” Every doubt which Satan and our hearts raise about our future has been dispelled by Christ’s Easter victory.

God be eulogized (praised)!

3. A Heavenly Inheritance and Reservation: Unlike vulnerable and fleeting earthly inheritances, your heavenly inheritance is perfectly and eternally precious and secure. Unlike earthly reservations and promises, your heavenly reservations are guaranteed and guarded by Christ Himself (John 14:2-3).

God be eulogized (praised)!

4. A Protected Faith: To reach these heavenly goals we need a heavenly “protection plan” for our faith, one that will not fail us. In our great need and in His great mercy, our Father will be with us and shield us until we are safely home. “He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ.” (Philippians 1:6)

God be eulogized (praised)!

With our risen Savior having gained, secured, and promised such blessings for us, lifting our hearts and voices in a lifelong and eternal eulogy to our living God for His great mercy is our most natural, wonderful, and God-pleasing response. *Soli deo gloria!*



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"DO NOT FEAR"

"Fear not, for I am with you; Be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, Yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand. Behold, all those who were incensed against you Shall be ashamed and disgraced; They shall be as nothing, And those who strive with you shall perish. You shall seek them and not find them—Those who contended with you. Those who war against you Shall be as nothing, As a nonexistent thing. For I, the Lord your God, will hold your right hand, Saying to you, 'Fear not, I will help you.'" (Isaiah 41:10-13)

Such phrases as "do not fear" and "do not be afraid" occur more than three hundred and twenty-five times in the Bible. Are we getting the message?

Take Your Fears to God in Prayer

When afraid, take your fears to God in prayer. Say, "God, I'm afraid of losing my job. I'm afraid of this illness. I'm afraid of this temptation." Articulating your fears to God in prayer not only will help you distinguish between real fears and imaginary ones; but also will bring you the peace of heart and mind that only God can give. Paul wrote, "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 4:6-7 NIV84)

God Does Not Want You to be Afraid

When we read the Bible carefully, we find God telling us not to fear the simplest task or the most daunting endeavor. When Abraham faced the impossibility of fathering a child in his old age, God said, "Do not be afraid, Abram, I am your shield, your exceedingly great reward." (Genesis 15:1) When the Israelites were trapped at the Red Sea, with Pharaoh's army in feverish pursuit, Moses said, "Do not be afraid. Stand still and see the salvation of the LORD, which He will accomplish for you today." (Exodus 14:13) When Jesus taught His disciples not to worry excessively about the basic necessities of life, He said, "Do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." (Luke 12:32) When the daughter of Jairus died, even then Jesus told the grieving parents, "Do not be afraid; only believe, and she will be made well." (Luke 8:50)

God is With You

In times of trouble, we often wonder if God really is with us. But His solemn promise is this: "Fear not, for I am with you." (Isaiah 41:10) And this: "I will never leave you nor forsake you."

(Hebrews 13:5) And this: "I am with you always, even to the end of the age." (Matthew 28:20) God is not a temporary helper. He does not arrive for the good times and depart for the bad times. If almighty God is with you, whom should you fear? A petty dictator in North Korea? A pesky problem at the office? Nonsense.



God is Your God

God said, "Be not dismayed, for I am your God" (Isaiah 41:10) And how did He become your God? By choice, not by accident. Because He wanted you, not because He was obligated to you. Because He was willing to sacrifice His own Son, Jesus Christ, to redeem you from your sins. And if God the Father was willing to sacrifice His only Son for you, will He

withhold any other godly blessing from your life? No. Each time you feel fear creeping into your life, place it into the great equation of Romans 8:31 "What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?"

God Will Strengthen You and Give You Victory

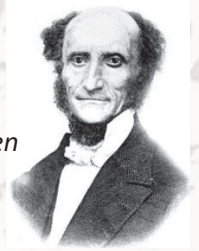
You have His word on it: "I will strengthen you, Yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand." (Isaiah 41:10) When we say, "I can't fix this problem" or "I can't endure this burden" or "I can't take this situation any longer"—there is entirely too much I and too little God. "I will strengthen you," He said. I will. Today, open your Bible, turn to Isaiah 41:10-13, and in the margin write, "By the grace of God, today is the day I stopped being afraid."



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WALTHER'S LAW AND GOSPEL

One of the hallmarks of the Lutheran Church is its proper understanding and application of the Bible's two main teachings—Law and Gospel. Dr. C.F.W. Walther's seminal work, *The Proper Distinction Between Law and Gospel*, is the basis for this two-year series. Note: page numbers given are accurate for the 1929 and 1986 editions of the book.



Tell It Like It Is

“Thesis XIX--In the fifteenth place, the Word of God is not rightly divided when the preacher speaks of certain sins as if they were not of a damnable, but of venial nature.”

“It’s O.K.” is, sadly, the most common response I hear when I apologize for words or actions which offend. Almost as if the person I’ve hurt doesn’t want me to feel *needlessly* bad, they dismiss my transgression as something I shouldn’t worry myself about.

But scripturally speaking, sin is never “O.K.” “It’s O.K.” is as shallow an absolution as the equally sad excuse, “I didn’t mean to.”

Such a weakening of sin’s gravity is common among false teachers, almost as if to make their works-righteousness easier than the awful spiritual burden it is.

The Roman Catholic Church teaches a distinction between how venial and mortal sins are to be dealt with. They define venial sins as sinful desires without the conscious intent to harm, and thus in no need of formal absolution. Some Pentecostal churches claim that you can attain a state of holiness in which you no longer truly sin, and similarly explain away any mistake you do make as no serious matter.

This false category was one of many errors that plagued Luther’s days in the monastery. Luther would spend hours each day rattling off sins to his confessors, which they considered venial, frivolous matters. All the exhausted priest could offer was an exasperated “It’s O.K.” But in the Scriptures, Luther found an actual remedy: “*The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.*” (I John 1:7)

Thus, in the Lutheran church, we are committed to preach the Law in all its sternness and the Gospel in all its sweetness. To hold back on one inevitably leads to a weakening of the other. In the end, the full Word of life is withheld from the soul in dire need of God’s saving counsel: “A preacher who does not preach both does not deserve the name of an evangelical minister, but is a false leader and is sowing the Gospel as if he were casting wheat into the ocean, where no crop can be raised.” (p. 326)

There certainly is a distinction to be made between the sins of weakness committed by any repentant soul (venial) and the willful desire to continue in a sin without repentance. The latter is called “mortal” sin because of its result—such a refusal to repent results in eternal death. But this distinction is a matter of the heart that no man can see.

Additionally, Walther warns that *any* sin, left unrepented, can be mortal: “there is no sin venial in itself.” (p. 237) The most seemingly minor transgression is an offense against God: “*For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all.*” (James 2:10) Even unintentional slips fall short of the perfect love God requires: “*For every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment.*” (Matthew 12:36)

The Savior offered only one remedy to sin: “*Man, your sins are forgiven you.*” (Luke 5:20)

The Scriptures present only one path to reconciliation between sinners: “*You ought rather to forgive and comfort him.*” (II Corinthians 2:7)

When speaking of sin, “It’s O.K.” is never O.K.

Whether you mean it or not, sin is sin. So, instead of ignoring or dismissing, exercise that peculiar authority given you as member of Christ’s Church: “*If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them.*” (John 20:23)

Tell it like it is, both Law and Gospel. This life-giving conversation between you and your God is both the key to effective Christian communication and the fount of His kingdom come.

Any sin, left unrepented, can be mortal.



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

[To read Walther’s *The Proper Distinction Between Law and Gospel* for free online, and to access related Bible class materials, go to www.ilc.edu/Walther/]

This series offers an overview of the chief teachings of the Christian church.

The Fall of Man

We stood watching, waiting, anticipating. Then we heard “Pop! Pop! Pop!” accompanied by puffs of smoke coming from the eighth floors of two twelve-story buildings. Six seconds later, nothing was left except two heaps of rubble, just as the demolition experts had planned.

Twelve-story buildings are made to last. They are not intended to fall. When they do fall, the destruction is great—even catastrophic if the fall is unintentional.

Adam and Eve were made to last. They were not intended to fall. God created them in His image (Genesis 1:27)—they were righteous and holy, and had a perfect knowledge of God and relationship with Him like none other. (Ephesians 4:24, Colossians 3:10)

God gave Adam and Eve a specific way to show their love for Him. They could eat freely from everything in the garden, except one tree—the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. Abstaining from eating this fruit—and only this fruit—would be a demonstration of obedience to their Creator, trust in Him, and love for Him. God warned, “*in the day you eat of it you shall surely die!*” (Genesis 2:17) In other words, the judgment of death would be immediate and certain.

God made mankind to stand forever, but Satan had other plans. Satan is the demolition expert. Having destroyed himself by rebelling against God (2 Peter 2:4, Jude 6), Satan turned his attention to destroying the crown of God’s creation.

First, Satan carefully placed the explosive charges (Genesis 3:1-5).

Cast doubt on God’s Word: “*Has God indeed said . . .*”

Change the focus from what one has to what one doesn’t have: “. . . *you shall not eat of every tree of the garden?*”

Offer an outright lie: “*You will not surely die.*”

Share a truth, but deceptively make it sound desirable in order to foster dissatisfaction: “*In the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.*”

With the explosive charges thus set, “*the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to*

make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate.” (Genesis 3:6)

Instantly, what stood in perfection came crashing down with billowing dust and debris. Spiritual death separated creature from Creator—they were afraid of God. Sin’s debris billowed making lust possible—they knew they were naked and were ashamed. The dust of defending sin and avoiding responsibility

settled upon God’s once-holy creatures—Adam blamed Eve, he blamed God for giving him Eve, and Eve blamed the serpent (Genesis 3:11-15). God gave greater understanding to the impact of destruction when He said what would follow in a sin-cursed world (Genesis 3:16-19).

Separation of soul and body in temporal death would now come to all; and all would die eternally separated from God in hell—a place of judgment prepared for the Devil and

his angels (Matthew 25:41).

Demolition can’t be undone, but something new can be built. In the midst of the rubble, God promised a rebuild. To the serpent Satan, God said, “*I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel.*” (Genesis 3:15).

While mankind still stood in the rubble of his own making, God promised a Savior Who would completely redeem sinners from their sin (Romans 5:8). We are rebuilt, and the image of God is restored through the work of the woman’s Seed—Jesus, our Savior.

Satan is still the demolition expert with the same strategies. The same dust continues to settle upon us, and we still die. But Jesus speaks to us as we sit in the debris of our sins, “*Come to me all you who labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest . . . learn from Me . . . you will find rest for your souls.*” (Matthew 11:28-29)

Demolition can’t be undone, but something new can be built.



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

NOTES FROM THE FIELD

In this series, those involved with CLC foreign missions profile one aspect of our overseas endeavors.

Update From the HCLC Nepal

[Ed.: The following is a report about current activities in the HCLCN. It is written, in his own words, by the indigenous pastor who is our main contact in Nepal. Names of people and places are being withheld because of the risk of persecution. The report is lightly edited for clarity.]

We at the Himalayan Church of the Lutheran Confession in Nepal (HCLCN) are very excited as the Lord has blessed us abundantly throughout the years. We are encouraged by the Word of the Lord and the current situation. It is getting better these days. The government of Nepal has lifted all COVID restrictions. Life is getting back to normal as it was before the COVID-19 pandemic. It has been a great time to do our mission work among communities.

The Lord has blessed us with many blessings and gifts during these years. We lost some of our pastors due to the pandemic. However, there are great blessings that we are blessed with. One of the greatest blessings for the HCLCN is our building project. We are very excited and thankful to the Lord for providing all the resources to carry out the building project.

During the visit of Missionary Todd Ohlmann to Nepal in March-April, the building was dedicated to the Lord. The building dedication took place on April 5, 2022. There were about a hundred people that were at the program. Our pastors from different districts and locations came to the dedication program.

Life is getting back to normal as it was before the COVID-19 pandemic. It has been a great time to do our mission work.

Now the building has been used as the headquarters of the HCLCN. It is located in the center of the country so it is easier for our pastors and visitors to travel to. The ground floor is going to be the Himalayan Bible Institute (HBI) classroom and dormitory for the students. The first floor is for the residence of the chairman and principal of the HCLCN. The second floor is going to be office, library, lounge and rooms for our guests. The work is almost completed and there is still some work to be done at the building.

During the missionary visit, there were several seminars in rural areas in the foothills of the Himalayas. During his visitation, Missionary Ohlmann encouraged us with the Word to work and restart the Bible Institute which was halted due to COVID and the construction of the building. The Lord blessed our

work with more seminars and conferences in the rural parts of the country, which was a blessing for the churches and communities. Through rough off-roads and windy hills we arrived in the villages where people were waiting to hear the Good News and the comforting words from the Scriptures.

Many places were reached with the Gospel of our Savior.



Visiting Missionary Todd Ohlmann (left) and a representative of the HCLCN.

NOTES FROM THE FIELD

In this series, those involved with CLC foreign missions profile one aspect of our overseas endeavors.



Worship service at a congregation of the HCLCN.

We also held seminars in the tribal villages in the hills. The churches are growing, and the youth in the churches are encouraged to get trained and serve the Lord in their villages. We had moments of great joy when we heard Gospel songs in the tribal languages. The Lord is calling tribes to His kingdom.

We received many requests from several parts of the country to reach out with the saving Word of God. There are invitations from the eastern part of the country as well as the western parts. There is a huge potential for growth. Many people are bound by evil and darkness, and are carrying a heavy burden of sins, and they want to be free.

Nepal will soon hold elections, and we pray that the elections go well. We pray that the Lord appoints those political leaders that do not show any partiality against minorities such as Christians. The country is going to go through many challenges and changes. The pandemic has affected all the parts and areas of the country. We pray that the Lord gives us leaders who will help to improve the situation of the country.

We plan to begin the pastoral training at the HBI soon. We will have ten students and we will start training the students

soon. We are praying that everything goes well according to the plans.

The Lord has blessed the HCLCN with new hope and enthusiasm to carry the Gospel message to the lost souls in the Himalayan country Nepal. We appreciate your prayers and continuous support.



HCLCN headquarters and seminary building.

WHAT'S NEW WITH YOU?

Updates from congregations around the Church of the Lutheran Confession

Saint Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church Lakewood, Colorado

In the list of appearances of the risen Christ which Saint Paul recounts in his First Letter to the Corinthians (chapter 15), the last one he mentions is Jesus' appearance to none other than Paul himself. The story (recorded in Acts 9) is remarkable. As Paul (Saul, as he was known at the time) traveled the road to Damascus to arrest the "detestable" Christians and take them back as prisoners to Jerusalem, Jesus revealed Himself to Saul in a dazzling display of glory. He used His divine power to turn a rabid persecutor of the church 180 degrees in his spiritual life. Before this, Saul had done all he could to maneuver himself into right standing with God by his compliance to the Law. He did not realize this was a dead-end road. Now, by God's grace, he came to regard his own moral goodness as worthless compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Jesus as his Savior and possessing the righteousness that comes through faith in Him.

It was with this amazing story of God's love in Christ for wayward sinners in mind that the founding members of our congregation chose "Saint Paul" as their namesake many years ago. It has been the prayer of our parishioners ever since that the Lord may use our church as an instrument for spreading the saving message of the Gospel to others. Our church is located on Wadsworth



Boulevard, a busy north-south artery of the west Denver suburb of Lakewood, with thousands of motorists passing by each day. With that in mind, our voters recently decided to purchase several "mission outreach banners," each



featuring a short-but-sweet Gospel message. We plan to display these banners at various times (for example, Easter, Christmas, and Reformation). We are praying they will catch the eyes of people passing by, that many may read and ponder the Gospel message, and then check out our church by attending a service. Perhaps the Holy Spirit will accomplish for their spiritual good what He did for Saul on the road to Damascus long ago.

Recently we at Saint Paul held a service commemorating the twentieth anniversary of the dedication of our worship facility. The service took place the afternoon of August 29, 2021 (our church building was dedicated to God's glory in February 2001). Delwyn Maas, a former pastor of Saint Paul, served as guest speaker. In accordance with good Lutheran tradition, a festive meal was served afterwards in the downstairs fellowship hall, enjoyed by a large number of members and guests.

One other recent happening at Saint Paul: in a meeting of our Mary and Martha Ladies' Group, a plan was initiated to share "Invisible Sunday School Lessons" with business establishments located in our area (at dry cleaners and hair salons, for example, as well as other businesses that will allow us to share the materials). Our church name, location, and website will be printed on the front page with an invitation to pay a Sunday morning visit. Extra copies will be made available to worship guests with young children, as well as to members, for sharing with friends who have little ones.



Each lesson contains a simple Bible lesson, picture, and prayer; with crayons for kids to use.

We pray the Lord may bless our efforts to share His life-giving Word, using it to work His conversion miracle in the hearts of those who do not yet know Him as the Way.



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

“BREAD OF LIFE” READINGS JULY 2022

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

Date	Hymns	Reading	Comments
July 1	TLH 297	Romans 1:1-17	<i>"For in it [the Gospel] the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, 'The just shall live by faith.'" (1:17)</i>
July 2	TLH 39	Romans 1:18-32	<i>"For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse." (1:20)</i>
July 4	TLH 295	Romans 2:1-16	<i>"Gentiles . . . not having the law, are a law to themselves, who show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and between themselves their thoughts accusing or else excusing them." (2:14-15)</i>
July 5	TLH 245	Romans 2:17-29	<i>"For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit, not in the letter; whose praise is not from men but from God." (2:28-29)</i>
July 6	TLH 378	Romans 3:1-20	<i>"That every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin." (3:19-20)</i>
July 7	TLH 373	Romans 3:21-31	<i>"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood." (3:23-24)</i>
July 8	TLH 371	Romans 4:1-12	<i>"Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, And whose sins are covered; Blessed is the man to whom the Lord shall not impute sin." (4:7-8)</i>
July 9	TLH 198	Romans 4:13-25	<i>"It shall be imputed to us who believe in Him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was delivered up because of our offenses, and was raised because of our justification." (4:24-25)</i>
July 11	TLH 369	Romans 5:1-21	<i>"Therefore, as through one man's offense judgment came to all men, resulting in condemnation, even so through one Man's righteous act the free gift came to all men, resulting in justification of life." (5:18)</i>
July 12	TLH 298	Romans 6:1-11	<i>"Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." (6:4)</i>
July 13	TLH 373	Romans 6:12-23	<i>"But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life. For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." (6:22-23)</i>
July 14	TLH 398	Romans 7:1-12	<i>"But now we have been delivered from the law, having died to what we were held by, so that we should serve in the newness of the Spirit and not in the oldness of the letter." (7:6)</i>
July 15	TLH 387	Romans 7:13-25	<i>"O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? I thank God—through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin." (7:24-25)</i>
July 16	TLH 231	Romans 8:1-17	<i>"The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together." (8:16-17)</i>
July 18	TLH 528	Romans 8:18-39	<i>"What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" (8:31-32)</i>
July 19	TLH 341	Romans 9:1-13	<i>"Of whom are the fathers and from whom, according to the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, the eternally blessed God. Amen." (9:5)</i>
July 20	TLH 391	Romans 9:14-33	<i>"And it shall come to pass in the place where it was said to them, 'You are not My people,' There they shall be called sons of the living God." (9:26)</i>
July 21	TLH 252	Roman 10:1-21	<i>"If you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." (10:9-10)</i>
July 22	TLH 374	Romans 11:1-18	<i>"At this present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace. And if by grace, then it is no longer of works; otherwise grace is no longer grace. But if it is of works, it is no longer grace; otherwise work is no longer work." (11:5-6)</i>
July 23	WS 744	Romans 11:19-36	<i>"For God has committed them all to disobedience, that He might have mercy on all. 'Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out!' (11:32-33)</i>
July 25	TLH 430	Romans 12:1-21	<i>"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind." (12:1-2)</i>
July 26	TLH 409	Romans 13:1-14	<i>"Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts." (13:13-14)</i>
July 27	TLH 597	Romans 14:1-23	<i>"Therefore, whether we live or die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ died and rose and lived again, that He might be Lord of both the dead and the living." (14:8b-9)</i>
July 28	TLH 284	Romans 15:1-13	<i>"For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope. Now may the God of patience and comfort grant you to be like-minded toward one another, according to Christ Jesus." (15:4-5)</i>
July 29	TLH 473	Romans 16:1-18	<i>"Now I urge you, brethren, note those who cause divisions and offenses, contrary to the doctrine which you learned, and avoid them. For those who are such do not serve our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly, and by smooth words and flattering speech deceive the hearts of the simple." (16:17-18)</i>
July 30	TLH 452	Romans 16:19-27	<i>"Therefore I am glad on your behalf; but I want you to be wise in what is good, and simple concerning evil. And the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen." (16:19-20)</i>

ILC NEWSLETTER

Every other month we get an update on what's been happening recently at our Immanuel Lutheran High School, College and Seminary in Eau Claire, Wisconsin.

Graduation at Immanuel

On May 21, 2022, Immanuel Lutheran High School, College, and Seminary hosted an event that has not taken place in three years: a full-scale, indoor commencement service. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the 2020 college and seminary graduation was held at Messiah Lutheran Church, and the high school class had a small, outdoor ceremony that was delayed until August. Similarly, last year's ceremony was also held outside. It was thus a blessing this year to return to our regular commencement, to have the gym packed with people and reverberating with hymns of praise sung to our God. The commencement service capped off a busy weekend at Immanuel that included Class Day, which features student awards as well as band performances, and the spring choir concert, held at Messiah Lutheran Church.

Pastor John Hein, Chairman of the ILC Board of Regents, provided the commencement address based on Psalm 100. He reminded our students that as they go out into a confused world, they are in possession of the wonderful truth that God has made and redeemed them and also that they are His very own possession. With those comforting thoughts in mind, through faith they are able to see their true purpose and privilege in life: serving the Lord with gladness.

The high school department graduated thirty-one students. The seniors chose as their class verse Joshua 1:9: "Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go." Principal Joel Gullerud addressed the senior class, reminding them that courage is moving forward in faith in spite of obstacles, difficulties, and fears by always remembering that our God is with us.

The college graduated one student from each program. Zachary Strike graduated with an Associate of Arts degree, Henry



Lau with a Bachelor of Arts in Pre-Theological Studies, and Kendra Rodebaugh with a Bachelor of Science in Education. Zachary Sippert graduated from the seminary. We are thankful that the Lord has blessed these young people with a Christian education that will help them to serve in His Kingdom. We are also excited that both Kendra and Zachary Sippert have accepted calls to serve in the public ministry. Kendra will be a teacher at Gethsemane Lutheran School in Spokane, Washington, and Zachary will serve as pastor of our congregations in Bowdle and Ipswich, South Dakota.

As the service drew to a close with the graduates' hymn, "Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah," and the singing of the Alma Mater, it was a wonderful moment to praise our God, Immanuel, and to remember that He has been with us and will continue to be with our graduates throughout their lives.



Dr. Daniel Schierenbeck is President of Immanuel Lutheran College in Eau Claire, Wisconsin.

Lutheran Spokesman

501 Grover Road, Eau Claire, WI, 54701

SEEN IN PASSING

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

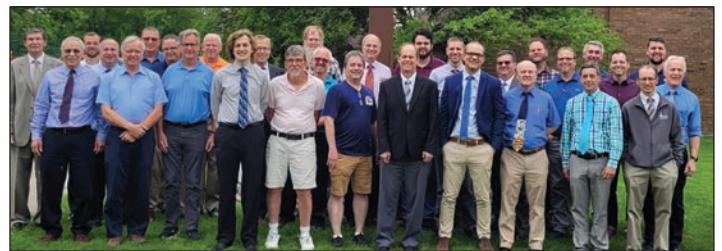
Bleak View of the Ministry in America. Recent research by the Barna group and Pastor Glenn Packiam indicates that only one in five Americans thinks of a pastor as very influential in the community. About the same number (21%) consider pastors to be “very credible” on the “important issues of our day.” Even among self-identified Christians, nearly half do not see their pastors as being an authoritative voice for navigating current trends in society. Only 31% of Christians see their pastors as “a trustworthy source of wisdom.” Among non-Christians, of course, it’s much worse – a mere 4% see pastors as a trustworthy source of wisdom. Packiam, Glenn. “As Pastoral Credibility Erodes, How Can We Respond?” *Leadership*. ChristianityToday.com, Spring 2022. Web. 29 Apr., 2022.

Senate Bill Fails to Codify Roe v. Wade. Ahead of an anticipated Supreme Court ruling on Roe v. Wade, a bill that sought to codify the so-called “right” to an abortion in federal law was defeated on May 11th in the US Senate. S. 4132 aimed to “protect a person’s ability to determine whether to continue or end a pregnancy and to protect a health care provider’s ability to provide abortion services.” None of the fifty Republicans in the Senate voted in favor of the legislation, and all but one Democrat, Sen. Joe Manchin, D-W. Va., voted for it. The 49 to 51 vote was expected, falling far short of the 60 votes required to overcome a filibuster. Clark, Heather. “Attempt to codify ‘right’ to abortion in federal law defeated in US Senate.” *Law and Government*. Christiannews.net, 17 May, 2022. Web. 6 Jun., 2022.

Artificial Intelligence a Risk to Religion? In an article for Deseret News, two Purdue University professors note the growing danger of authoritarian governments using AI and “big data” to undermine religious freedom and human rights. “What happens,” they ask, “when an authoritarian regime determines that a specific type of faith or religious adherence is a ‘threat to society’? Data and artificial intelligence can be deployed to target individuals and faith groups. Facial recognition technology, enabled by AI, can identify people entering or exiting houses of worship, which might later be used against them to bolster unjust charges of sedition.” The authors say that communist China has already developed sophisticated facial recognition software and used it to target and imprison minority Uyghur Muslims. In Venezuela, where the Catholic church has been government’s biggest critic, there is evidence that the government has imported this technology from China in order to undermine the church and keep tabs on activist priests. Could it happen under a democratic government? “It’s no secret that many governments, including democracies like the United States, use big data and artificial intelligence under the banner of national security.” Glick, Bonnie, and Lee, Kennedy. “The dark side of AI.” *Perspective*. Deseret.com, 26 Apr. 2022. Web. 30 Apr. 2022.



The Pacific Coast Pastoral Conference met in Lynnwood, Washington, May 10-12, 2022



Attendees at the Great Lakes Delegate Conference held in Saginaw, Michigan, June 6-7

ANNOUNCEMENTS



INSTALLATION In accord with our usage and order, **Luke Willitz**, who was called by Living Savior Lutheran Church in Eden Prairie, Minnesota, to be its pastor, was installed on May 1, 2022. Also participating in the service were Pastors George Dumann, Nathan Pfeiffer, Nathanael Mayhew, John Hein, David Ude, Jonathan Schnose, and Joseph Naumann, as well as Pastors Emeritus John Schierenbeck, David Schierenbeck and Daniel Fleischer.
—Pastor James Albrecht.