

MAY 2024 VOL 66 NO. 11

# LUTHERAN SPOKESMAN

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



**"It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you."**

**-John 16:7**







Pages 12-13

## IN THIS ISSUE MAY 2024

### COVER STORY - ASCENSION

He Went Up to Send Gifts Down ..... 3

### DEVOTION - PROPHET, PRIEST, AND KING

Only One Could Do It All ..... 4

### OUR LITURGICAL LEGACY

Service of the Sacrament: The Distribution ..... 5

### STUDIES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

The End of All Things Is at Hand ..... 6

### GEMS FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT

How to Sleep in Peace ..... 7

### THE PARABLES OF OUR LORD

The Dragnet ..... 8

### VOICES FROM THE PAST – EDMUND REIM

Some Post-Good Friday Thoughts ..... 9

### NOTES FROM THE FIELD

Equipping the Saints for the Work of the Ministry ..... 10

### IN THE PIPELINE

Noah Ohlmann ..... 11

### WHAT'S NEW WITH YOU?

Berea Evangelical Lutheran Church–  
Inver Grove Heights, Minnesota ..... 12-13

**BREAD OF LIFE READINGS, MAY 2024** ..... 14

### ILC NEWSLETTER

Mark Kranz Retirement ..... 15

**SEEN IN PASSING / ANNOUNCEMENTS** ..... 16

The Lutheran Spokesman (USPS 825580) (ISSN 00247537) is published monthly by the Church of the Lutheran Confession, 501 Grover Road, Eau Claire, WI 54701, and is an official organ of the Church of the Lutheran Confession (CLC). Website address: [www.clclutheran.org](http://www.clclutheran.org)

Periodicals postage paid at Eau Claire, WI and additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes (Form 3579) to Lutheran Spokesman, 501 Grover Road, Eau Claire, WI 54701-7134

Editor: Paul Naumann, 3732 Claymore Lane, Eau Claire, WI, 54701, E-mail to [paul.naumann@ilc.edu](mailto:paul.naumann@ilc.edu); Assistant Editor: Craig Owings; Art Director, art direction & graphic design by Pipestone Publishing Co.; Proofreaders: Vance Fossum and Paula Naumann; Staff: James Albrecht, David Bernthal, Timothy Daub, Michael Eichstadt, Wayne Eichstadt, David Fuerstenau, Mark Gullerud, Richard Kanzenbach, John Klatt, Joseph Lau, Delwyn Maas, Karl Olmanson, John Pfeiffer, Nathan Pfeiffer, David Reim, Peter Reim, Sam Rodebaugh, Michael Roehl, Robert Sauer, David Schierenbeck, Chad Seybt, Steven Sippert, Mark Weis.

Material submitted for publication should be sent to Editor Paul Naumann three months before date of publication. Announcements and other short notices should also be sent to Editor Naumann.

Business Manager: Steve Lentz, 501 Grover Road, Eau Claire, WI, 54701. E-mail to [lutheranspokesman@ilc.edu](mailto:lutheranspokesman@ilc.edu). Subscription Manager: Jessica Lau. Individual subscriptions {foreign-U.S. currency only}: \$18.00 {\$36.00} for one year; \$34.00 {\$50.00} for two years; \$50.00 {\$72.00} for three years; sent in bulk to congregations: \$15.00.

Send address or payment question requests to: [lutheranspokesman@ilc.edu](mailto:lutheranspokesman@ilc.edu)

Spokesman Online Version at: [www.lutheranspokesman.org](http://www.lutheranspokesman.org)

Printed in U.S.A.

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

# He Went Up to Send Gifts Down

**I**t is a time-tested maxim: “What goes up, must come down.” This is true for the stock market, it is true for emotions, and it is true for everything upon which gravity exerts its influence.

Jesus’ ascension reminds us that He flipped this maxim to be: “He who comes down, must go up.” Or in the inspired words of Paul, “*Now this, ‘He ascended’—what does it mean but that He also first descended into the lower parts of the earth?*” (Ephesians 4:9)

The Son of God became man and descended to the earth in order to redeem sinners. He humbled Himself to do this, but once the work was complete “*God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name.*” (Philippians 2:9) Jesus came down to accomplish His work, but not to stay permanently.

When Jesus told the disciples that He would be going away, they were sad. However, Jesus also told them, “*It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you.*” (John 16:7)

Jesus’ return to Heaven would be for the advantage of all believers because from there He would send gifts to His Church on earth. The first of these gifts was the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, but there was more to follow—and still is. “*To each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ’s gift. . . . He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.*” (Ephesians 4:7,11-12)

The ascended Savior has not left us to fend for ourselves. He has given us Baptism and the teaching of the Gospel to make disciples as He commands us (Matthew 28:20). The ascended



Jesus also sends specific gifts to specific individuals to serve in equipping believers for the work of the Gospel ministry.

Jesus no longer visibly walks the earth, but that should not leave us sorrowful, because He is sitting at the right hand of God and sends gifts down for us. He has given us His Word through the apostles, the prophets, and the evangelists. The Holy Spirit continues to use that Word to equip us as Jesus’ witnesses. As a result, the body of Christ grows so “*that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine . . . but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ— from whom*

*the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.*” (Ephesians 4:14-16)

As we stand in spirit with the apostles and watch Jesus ascend, we don’t need to keep staring into the sky. We know He is coming back, and until He does, we have work to do! It is work that we do not do alone, “*For He Himself has said, ‘I will never leave you nor forsake you.’ So we may boldly say: ‘The LORD is my helper; I will not fear. What can man do to me?’*” (Hebrews 13:5-6)

As you remember Jesus’ ascension, remember that He went up to send gifts down for you, and rejoice!



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



# Only One Could Do It All

Between 1961 and 2017, the National Football League offered a youth football skills competition known as “Punt, Pass, and Kick.” Children were invited to compete within their age groups, winners being determined based on the cumulative distance and accuracy of their punts, passes, and kicks. That those three events are mostly unrelated meant that only highly gifted athletes could hope to win. It’s not uncommon for athletes to be able to kick accurately, or to boot long punts, or to throw for great distance—but those three traits being found in the same individual is quite rare. But there’s another “P, P, & K,” the criteria of which are even harder to meet—in fact, there’s only one who can do it all. I’m speaking of the threefold office of *Prophet, Priest, and King*.

Throughout the Old Testament there were individuals who had been chosen by God for service in these various roles. You might think of Moses or Isaiah or any of the other prophets who not only relayed revelations from God about the future, but also unveiled God’s present will and grace in words people could understand. Then there were the priests who acted as intermediaries between sinful man and a holy God: confessing sins, offering sacrifices, and returning with forgiveness. Others, like Saul and David, were anointed as kings. Their focus was to be not only on the secular needs of the people, but also on providing for their spiritual needs as well.

But if you read about those kings and their reigns, the overarching tale is a sad one. Notwithstanding the great promises connected to the throne of David (2 Samuel 7:12-16), the kings who sat upon that throne were all too often characterized by sin and faithfulness. Yet God would remain faithful to His promises. He would revive David’s line, set a Son of David upon His throne to rule forever, and of His kingdom there would be no end. He would be the One of whom all these Old Testament offices presented only a partial

*They in their separate roles foreshadowed Christ, Who was the unprecedented exception Who would fulfill the roles of Prophet, Priest, and King perfectly, simultaneously, and infinitely.*

picture. Taken together, they in their separate roles foreshadowed Christ, Who was the unprecedented exception Who would fulfill the roles of Prophet, Priest, and King perfectly, simultaneously, and infinitely.

So still today, Christ continues His work as Prophet even among us, revealing to us what God is like—He’s neither distant nor uninvolved; nor do we have to guess at what He thinks. Rather, Christ

prophesies to us through the Word that God comes near to us in blessing, that He is active in bringing salvation to us, and that His thoughts toward us are filled with grace.

He continues His work as Priest among us, reconciling us to God. Through the sacrifice of His own life on the cross, Jesus has reestablished peace between man and God so that the Father eagerly hears our prayers, forgives our sins, and delivers us from the vile plots of the devil. What’s more, Jesus Himself is “*at the right hand of God, [making] intercession for us.*” (Romans 8:34)

And finally, Christ continues His work as King for us. Having conquered our spiritual enemies, He reigns with all power and authority over all things for the good of His church. Yet His rule is not like that of the kings of this world who exercise authority only with threats and power. As King, Jesus exercises His grace—forgiving the lost, receiving the prodigal, pardoning sinners like us. He rules in order to save.

Prophet, Priest, and King. Only One could do it all. And Jesus holds this threefold office having one unified purpose: your salvation.



**Samuel Rodebaugh** is pastor of Faith Lutheran Church of Manchester, Missouri.



## 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 Lutheran worship service.*

# Service of the Sacrament: The Distribution

“**A**nd as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, ‘Take, eat; this is My body.’ Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, ‘Drink from it, all of you. For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.’” (Matthew 26:26-28)

To faith, these words of Jesus are simple; to human reason, impossible.

Without going into the complexities of hermeneutics (the scholarly interpretation of language, especially the words of Scripture), suffice it to say we believe that in the Lord’s Supper we receive the true body and true blood of the Savior Jesus Christ “in, with, and under” the visible and tangible elements of bread and wine.

So then, what happens when we commune? The Lord’s Supper is a means of grace, instituted by Christ, the Son of God, through which we receive forgiveness of sins. How can that possibly be? It can be because Jesus says so. It doesn’t make sense to human reason—which no doubt is why so many deny that effect and interpret the whole thing as merely a symbolic act of remembrance. Nonetheless, we accept by faith the clear words of Jesus that what we receive along with the bread and wine is His body and blood, and that in that reception the Holy Spirit is active to forgive our sins and strengthen our faith for daily living. It is the working of God, and that alone, which produces that effect; we can only thank and praise Him for this great blessing of His grace.

The only *essential* parts of this sacrament are the use of Christ’s words in consecrating the bread and wine, and the distribution of the consecrated elements to the communicants. All other practices, so long as they are done decently and in good order, are matters of *adiaphora* (things neither commanded nor forbidden by God). Obviously, however, there must be some sort of liturgical structure to implement those two essential parts.

Confessional Lutherans seek to do all things in keeping with God’s Word, and we find—both historically and currently—a

variety of liturgical practices. Lutheran liturgists have composed many different liturgies for the Sacrament of the Altar, each seeking to attain the goal of reverently reinforcing the nature and solemnity of the Lord’s Supper.



Usually, those liturgical details are well-considered; but sometimes—dare I assert this?—the suggestions of those who write books about liturgies may tend to encroach on Christian liberty. We must remember that other than the two essential elements of the Lord’s Supper, all else is *adiaphora*.

For just one example among many possible, this one in connection with whether to use a chalice or a chalice plus individual cups, one liturgy expert mentions that tradition calls for the common chalice alone to be used, because it is a symbol of Christian fellowship and the unity of which Paul speaks in 1 Corinthians 10:16-17. That part is a fitting comment. Unfortunately, he then goes on to say that if individual cups are also used, only the chalice should be on the altar for the consecration, and

the individual cups should not be filled beforehand or placed on the altar. Rather, he says, the communicants who use individual cups should take the empty cups from a rack in the pew or from a cabinet at the entrance to the chancel, take those empty cups with them to the altar, and then have them filled from the chalice by the officiant. Certainly, there’s nothing wrong with following that suggestion, but binding consciences with *adiaphora* should be avoided.

In our liturgical practice and all else, the CLC seeks to uphold and practice God’s Word in a manner that glorifies God and edifies the believer without encroaching on Christian liberty. We thank our Lord for that blessing, and pray that it may continue among us. Amen.



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



# The End of All Things is at Hand

***“But the end of all things is at hand; therefore be serious and watchful in your prayers. And above all things have fervent love for one another, for ‘love will cover a multitude of sins.’ Be hospitable to one another without grumbling. As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God. If anyone ministers, let him do it as with the ability which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.” (1 Peter 4:7-11)***

**Y**ou go to the doctor, and he tells you that you have three to six months to live. Now, what do you do with that? Obviously, there are going to be a lot of powerful emotions. You’re likely to be sad, afraid, and even angry. But after you accept the reality because you have no other choice, you are going to prioritize the most important things in life. There are certain affairs that you need to get in order. But then, you’re going to spend as much time as you can with your loved ones and say your final goodbyes. You’re going to spend your time doing the most important things because the time is short.

In our text, Peter reminds us that *“the end of all things is at hand.”* Jesus has accomplished everything needed for our redemption, and there’s nothing more to expect now except His second coming. Jesus will return, and when He does, He will take us to be with Him. What comfort!

What a call to urgency as well! We don’t know when Christ will return, so Peter is urging us to spend our time doing the most important things. He encourages us to *“be serious and watchful in your prayers.”* Prayer is a gift our Savior has entrusted to us as we wait for His return. As we consider the things that take place every day, we prioritize prayer: prayers for ourselves, our families, fellow believers, and for the many unbelievers in the world.

The fact that Jesus can return at any time should affect how we treat others. Sadly, our relationships with others—even our fellow Christians—often aren’t what they should be. We view what people say with suspicion and put the

worst construction on their actions. But with the Last Day impending, there’s no time for that kind of attitude toward others. Rather, we should show *“fervent love for one another”* which *“will cover a multitude of sins.”* We recognize our own failings, and out of love we bear with the faults of others.

That love will sometimes manifest itself in providing for the physical welfare of others. As we show hospitality to others *“without grumbling,”* the door may be opened to share the Gospel while there is still time.

Finally, Peter encourages us to use the gifts we have been given to serve others, with the ultimate goal that God receives the glory. God has supplied each of us with a wide variety of gifts, and He has given us the privilege to be His mouth, hands, and feet as we use His gifts to share His Word and serve others.

*“The end of all things is at hand.”* We have been made alive in Christ, and know we will be with the Lord in the end. May we, through our words and actions, bring Christ to a world that is dead in sin so that many may become alive in Christ and join us at His reappearing.

***We don’t know when Christ will return, so Peter is urging us to spend our time doing the most important things.***



**Robert Sauers** is pastor of Immanuel Lutheran Church in Winter Haven, Florida, and a member of the CLC Board of Missions



# How to Sleep in Peace

*(Please read Psalm 4)*

Amid an armed rebellion, and with his life in danger, David was still able to sleep. Why?

## David Prayed

David was able to sleep because he gave his problems to the Lord in prayer. God was the source of his salvation and had never failed him in the past. We too give our problems to the Lord. Unfortunately, we don't always leave them there. Instead, worrying that God won't hear and answer, we snatch our problems back.

When sleepless, our prayer should be similar to David's: "O Lord, in undeserved grace You saved me when I could not save myself. Looking back on my life, I can't name one time when You failed me. And I know You will not fail me now."

A millennia after David, the apostle Paul made this same declaration in Romans 8:32, saying, "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?"

The point is, if God loved you enough to give you Jesus, will He refuse you a loaf of bread, a change of clothes, a place to shelter, or the means to repair a struggling marriage? No. Give your problems to God and leave them with God. You'll sleep in peace.

## David Weighed

David also found sleep by weighing his enemies against God's infinite power and love. In the privacy of his thoughts, he called out the opposition, essentially asking, "Who are you when compared to my God?"

When sleepless, we should weigh our opposition in the same way: "Financial trouble, who do you think you are? Sicknes, who do you think you are? Loneliness, who do you think you are? You are NOTHING compared to the God Who loves me, hears me when I call, and has claimed me as His very own."

Paul made this same comparison in Romans 8:31. He asked,



"What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?" What's your answer? If your answer is NO ONE and NOTHING can be against us, turn out the light and go to sleep.

## David Stayed

Few things cause more agitation and sleeplessness than anger. When angry, we roam through hallways at 2:00 A.M., bathrobed and bleary-eyed, nursing injuries and anger, and saying things like "I can't believe she embarrassed me that way" or, "I can't believe he treated me so

badly."

However, rather than nursing his anger, David rested his heart, mind, and faith on the Word of God. Instead of plotting revenge on those who betrayed him, he stayed in his bed, quietly meditating on how God would want him to behave.

For David, the antidote to angry sleeplessness was to put his trust in the Lord. If anger is keeping you up at night, don't take matters into your own hands; place them into God's hands. Instead of counting sheep, count on the Good Shepherd.

## David Laid

Through prayer, weighing his problems, and resting his mind and heart on the Scriptures, David was able to lay his problems to rest and his head on the pillow. While others were saying, "Who will show us any good?" (Psalm 4:6), David expected only the best from God. Using words reminiscent of the Aaronic Benediction, David said, "LORD, lift up the light of Your countenance upon us." And dear friend, if you go to bed each night knowing that Almighty God is smiling on you in the brightness of His grace, you'll sleep in peace.



Mark Weis is a professor at Immanuel Lutheran College in Eau Claire, Wisconsin.



# The Dragnet

Every hoarder's worst nightmare is to find someone sorting through his belongings, and throwing into the trash items that he considers to be personal treasures. The Parable of the Dragnet (Matthew 13:47-50) is imbued with this same intensity and shock.

The dragnet is a wide swath of netting drawn across open water, enclosing "some of every kind" along its way to the coast. Once on shore, the haul is dumped into one heap of squirming fish and sorted at a frenzied rate: "They sat down and gathered the good into vessels, but threw the bad away." (verse 48)

The lifelong fisherman works through the pile like a ballot-sorting machine. The fish is deemed either edible or unfit for human consumption based on one snap judgment alone: "pitch or keep."

The parable serves as a jarring image for the final day: "So it will be at the end of the age." (verse 49)

Like the hoarder who wants to let nothing go, the sinner would rather make drawn-out pleas for every misdeed harbored in the heart. Like the undecided voter, the soul longs for some write-in option in between sinner or righteous.

But once it starts, there is no room for excuses: "The angels will come forth, separate the wicked from among the just, and cast them into the furnace of fire." (verses 49-50)

No dumpster diving after the fact. No 4:00 A.M. adjustment to the vote tally.

To the unbeliever, it will be a nightmare. But as with every parable, the tension is resolved by the good news that the eager fisherman standing on the shore is Jesus, your Savior: "No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day." (John 6:44)

Faith in Him casts out all fear, because faith clings to His cross as the sole determining factor: "I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself." (John 12:32)

There on Golgotha, the Son of God was deemed fit for nothing other than the wrath your sins deserve: "He was numbered with the transgressors." (Isaiah 53:12) But instead of being tossed to the burn pile, Jesus rose from the refuse of death as the glorious proof that "God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them." (II Corinthians 5:19)

The words "impute," "number," and "reckon" are legal language. Like an election judge or court clerk tasked with sorting a heaping pile of paperwork, there is no time for anything short of a snap "approve-or-decline" judgment.

This means that, in divine court, the case is decided by faith alone. Just as Abraham believed and "it was accounted to him for righteousness," so too "it shall be imputed to us who believe in Him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead." (Romans 4:22-24)

In the final reckoning, the angels are given one directive: "These people either believe in Me, or they don't." This is no arbitrary judgment; rather, the criterion is the Gospel—the same Gospel by which the Lord calls and gathers you into His kingdom today.

Now, as the net draws closer, you might find yourself in close quarters

with more than a few rotten fish. But our parable's promise of a heavenly shore where every sin and woe is cast eternally away lets you rescind your rash judgments in favor of His perfect judgment. Trust that Jesus keeps you crammed in the net for your eternal good: "From now on you will catch men." (Luke 5:10)

Leave the sorting to the angels. You and I get to spend this time of grace finding the lost.



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





Professor Edmund Reim  
(1892-1969)

*In this series we are reprinting Spokesman articles by early leaders in the CLC. Pastor James Albrecht is the curator of the series. Professor Edmund Reim (1892-1969) was a leader in the formation of the CLC. He served as president of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary (WELS) until 1957, when conscience compelled him to leave his former fellowship for doctrinal reasons. He subsequently became president of Immanuel Lutheran Seminary. This article is from the Lutheran Spokesman of May 1965. Scripture quotations are from the King James Version.*

## Some Post-Good Friday Thoughts

Our heading is the result of some reflective thought concerning two “happenings,” both on Good Friday, and both in the area of public communications. The one was on television, the other in a leading midwestern newspaper.

The first incident is that in the news broadcasts for that day much was said about its being the first anniversary of the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King. If on the other hand it was mentioned at all, the fact that this same day was also the anniversary of the death of a far greater King was used mainly by way of allusion. It created a dramatic background. It served to emphasize the martyr quality in the death of this modern victim of violence.

The second item refers to a front-page cartoon that exploited the significance of Good Friday. It showed a huge cross bearing down on a ragged and emaciated tax-paying citizen, bringing him to the verge of collapse. Drawn in the familiar shape of modern missile weaponry, the two parts of this cross represented the ever-increasing cost of future intercontinental nuclear warfare.

Our reason for drawing attention to the first of these incidents is not to detract anything from the tragedy of that assassination of a year ago. In fact, that event may well serve as a vivid symbol of things which should weigh heavily on the conscience of our nation, which should stand as a call to repentance and a return to sanity in the handling of the complex problems of race. But not for a moment should it be permitted to obliterate or even dim the memory of that

Great Event of almost two thousand years ago, that Event which brought about the perfect solution for the greatest problem of all time. By the sacrifice brought on Calvary by the Son of God, where He offered His very Life and Blood, full and complete satisfaction was rendered for the sins of all the world. There, and there alone, true healing is to be found for the grievous wounds which threaten the very life of all mankind, and particularly of our beloved country today.

To which King, then, does our loyalty belong? There can be only One. As for the cartoon referred to above, little more need be said. If not directly sacrilegious, it was, to say the least, highly irreverent and in very poor taste. We grant without argument that taxes can become burdensome indeed. But even for a moment to compare their weight with the weight of that cross which was borne for us by our Lord Jesus is so completely out of proportion that the two should not be shown on the same sheet of newsprint. For His true cross consisted of the sins of all mankind. And although on that Way to Calvary the cross of wood was beyond His waning strength, yet under the weight of that real burden of our sin He did not fail us. This He bore unflinchingly to the very end.

As for the choice, “Which Cross?” we grant that the purpose of that cartoon may well have been to save future generations from ruinous taxation. But for our real hope and salvation, let us ever look to and hold fast the True Cross, our One Salvation.



## NOTES FROM THE FIELD

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

# Equipping the Saints for the Work of the Ministry

**T**he Mission Development Fund (MDF) provides money for many of the tools we use to train pastors around the world. For example, in 2018 the MDF helped a pastor who is one of our seminary instructors in India replace the laptop and video projector he uses to teach seminary. They were stolen at knifepoint by Hindu radicals who stopped a pastoral training seminar he was conducting in a village. The MDF has also helped purchase laptops, video projectors, and printers for other places, like the Martin Luther Bible School (seminary) in India, and for Pastor Jacques Pondi Lumiangu in Kinshasa, D. R. Congo. Pastor Lumiangu's daughter helps him print and reply

to the correspondence course lessons I send him, which he then uses to teach the three men from his congregation whom he is training to be pastors.

The video projectors purchased through the MDF are used not only to train pastors, but also to spread the Good News of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus through film and evangelism programs.

The MDF has also funded the building of seminaries around the world, most recently in Nepal and in Togo. Here in Togo, we have built a small classroom/church building and a teacherage. The seminary here is out in the country, a ninety-minute drive north of the capital of Lomé where I live. We stay in the teacherage one or two nights a week while teaching classes. The classroom here has no electricity, so I do not use a video projector in class, but the MDF has enabled us to install

a solar panel system in the teacherage, so I can have light in the evening to correct the student's homework and a fan to help me work and sleep in the 75-102° weather.

The MDF has also helped Pastor Blewu purchase a vehicle to drive us to the seminary each week. This not only gives us more freedom and flexibility in our travels, but it was actually cheaper in the long run than hiring a shared vehicle each week.

The MDF has also provided vehicles and motorbikes in India so that the head pastors can travel to train and encourage the pastors under their care.

Catechisms and Bibles are other tools funded by the MDF. Luther's Small Catechism is an invaluable resource, as it gives the local pastors a way to teach the major truths of the



Inside a Togo classroom

Bible simply and clearly in their native language.

While the MDF provides important tools to train pastors, it is the CLC general budget that funds the work of your full-time missionaries. Recently both the CLC general fund and the MDF have faced shortfalls. God has given us many opportunities to spread the Gospel, but the laborers are few. We look to Him to continue to provide the funds we need to equip the saints with tools and training for the work of the ministry.



**Peter Evensen** is a full-time foreign missionary for the CLC.



## IN THE PIPELINE

*Want to meet the person who may be your next pastor or Christian day school teacher? This series profiles the men and women who are in their final year of preparation for the public teaching or preaching ministry at our Immanuel Lutheran College and Seminary in Eau Claire, Wisconsin.*

# Noah Ohlmann



**Age:** 23

**Program:** Teaching Track

**Year in School:** Senior

**Where were you born?**

I was born and raised in Saint Louis, Missouri.

**Married? Unmarried? Tell us about your family.**

I am engaged to be married in August to Erica Oster, who is also in the teaching program. I have four siblings, a sister-in-law, and I am an uncle to two nieces and two nephews.

**What hobbies, sports or extracurriculars interest you?**

I enjoy disc golf, hiking, lifting weights, running, watching baseball and football, and shooting trap.

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

I have been to a total of nine countries in my life. I would like to visit many more in the future with my future wife.

**Which academic subjects especially interest you?**

History and science are two of my favorite subjects and I look forward to teaching them in the future.

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

I've always wanted to have a career that would feel fulfilling and that would help others. Teaching could do both for me and it is also an opportunity for me to work in a Christ-centered environment.

**What have you appreciated most about your time at ILC?**

I have greatly appreciated developing strong Christian friendships. It has been a blessing to grow alongside others who share the same faith and values as I do.

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

God tells us how, as leaders of the church, we have a lot of eyes watching us. So it is important that we devote ourselves to living Christ-like lives. The Bible says, "God is love," so first and foremost future leaders should demonstrate love in everything that they do. It is also important for our future leaders to practice patience, humility, and respectfulness in how they deal with others, mirroring our Savior. Also, since the leaders of the church are living witnesses, they should show joy in all that they do so they can spread that joy to others.



## WHAT'S NEW WITH YOU?

*Updates from congregations around the Church of the Lutheran Confession*

# Berea Evangelical Lutheran Church *Inver Grove Heights, Minnesota*



“*J*esus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.” (Hebrews 13:8)

When I was asked to write this article about what is new at Berea, I kept coming back to what isn't new, but has been consistent. We know that we are sinful by nature and incapable of leading the life that would earn us a heavenly home. However, Christ Jesus, our Savior, led a perfect life, died a painful death, and in so doing, paid for our sins. Through His sacrifice, we have been redeemed and made acceptable before God and will live with Him in His glory for all eternity.

One of the blessings of a Christian congregation is the ability to fellowship with others to share the Word of God; to be strengthened by and to receive comfort from our fellow Christians. Being near other CLC congregations, Berea is afforded the opportunity to do a pulpit exchange during Lent. Although each preacher delivers this message of Christ's suffering and death in his own unique style, they all proclaim the same clear message from Scripture.

Berea has learned that technology offers us the ability to expand our reach so that more can hear this Good News. What started as the recording of services on a cell phone from the pews by then-high school student Sam Radermacher has turned into an investment in audiovisual equipment to live stream our services. This also provides an option to view archived services. We have a team of individuals who prepare the liturgy slides, run the



equipment during service (our stream team), and make certain that we have the licenses for the use of the music that we use to praise our Lord. This allows those who are unable to attend services to still hear and share in this wonderful message. Although we do not know everyone who views these services, we know that for some it is their only method to hear the preaching of the Word of salvation that God offers to us.

Thanks to more volunteer efforts at Berea, we have recently begun publishing the audio of our sermons as a weekly podcast. This extends our Gospel proclamation to yet another channel of communication and makes great devotional listening during that daily commute.

There are a few items that our Evangelism Committee has





Children of Berea

undertaken that may not be new to other congregations but are new to us here at Berea. One is the creation and distribution of “Blessing Bags.” The bags, assembled by our Youth Group, contain some simple daily needs for the body, but also Scripture messages on sin and grace and the hope that can be found only in Christ Jesus. These bags can be handed out to the homeless individuals that we often encounter at major intersections in the Twin Cities. This not only helps to satisfy some of their physical needs, it also provides nourishment to feed their hungry souls.

Last summer Berea participated in the Inver Grove Heights Day parade. A float was built and many in the congregation, both young and old, passed out flyers and treats with information on Berea and the Word of God that we preach.

Another blessing we have is our Christian Day School, which continues to grow. For this current school year, we have seven students in preschool and thirty-two students in K-8th grades. Although our school primarily serves our members, we have seen an increase in interest from non-members. We now have thirteen non-member students enrolled at Berea. This interest is partially due to dissatisfaction with the public school system. Regardless of the reason, it provides us with the opportunity to share the Word of God with these precious souls.

Berea Lutheran School is blessed with a capable and dedicated staff. Many have served for numerous years. Christy Moen teaches our preschool and kindergarten classes. Christine Starland serves as a teacher’s aide. Cathy Augustin shares her love of music as music teacher for all grades, as well as teaching various other classes to grades



Teaching staff at Berea Lutheran School



Parade float

1-5. Claire Abbas, our newest teacher, is serving now in her second year as our lower grade teacher. Our principal and upper grade teacher, Matt Thurow, has served Berea for twenty-one years. He has accepted the call to ILC to replace retiring professor Mark Kranz. Although Matt will be greatly missed, we know that our Lord provides all that we need. Many of our children will look forward to being in his classroom again up at Immanuel.

Our congregation is near the airport, so if your travels should take you through the Twin Cities, please join our worship. We would love to see you.



**Steve Ludvigson** is a member of Berea Lutheran Church and serves on the CLC Board of Regents. His home is in Apple Valley, Minnesota.



## “BREAD OF LIFE” READINGS MAY 2024

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

Date	Hymns	Reading	Comments
May 1	TLH 421/LSB 688	John 9	The hardships that we face in life are not necessarily results of specific sins that we have committed. The Lord uses all our hardships to His glory. The man is not blind because of any sin on his part or on the part of his parents. Jesus heals him, using his blindness as an opportunity to display the glory of God.
May 2	TLH 596/LSB 759	John 11	Jesus raises Lazarus from death. The Jewish leaders, afraid that many will believe in Jesus, plot to kill Jesus. Even in the midst of such evil scheming, the Lord prophesies the reason for Jesus’ death through the mouth of an unfaithful high priest.
May 3	WS 765/LSB 840	Acts 9	The Lord converts to the Christian faith one of the most zealous persecutors of the Christian faith. Paul proclaims Christ in Damascus and in Jerusalem. Peter heals Aeneas and raises Tabitha from death.
May 4	LSB 551	Acts 10	Through a vision of unclean animals, the Lord reveals to Peter that the Gospel message is to be proclaimed also to the Gentiles. Peter preaches to Gentiles and they receive the Holy Spirit.
May 6	TLH 348	Genesis 9	The Lord commands Noah and his sons to multiply and to fill the earth, giving them permission to eat every kind of animal but forbidding them to eat blood. The Lord promises never again to flood the earth. Noah drinks too much wine, Ham dishonors Noah, and Noah curses Canaan.
May 7	TLH 152	2 Corinthians 7	Paul calls the Corinthians to be holy. Paul expresses his pride and joy in the faithfulness of the Corinthians. Paul rejoices that since he has convicted the Corinthians of their sin in his previous letter, they have repented.
May 8	TLH 97 / LSB 390	2 Corinthians 8	Paul encourages the Corinthians to give generously of their wealth in order to support the work of the church.
May 9	TLH 441 / LSB 781	2 Corinthians 9	Paul encourages the Corinthians to contribute freely, generously, and cheerfully.
May 10	TLH 652 / LSB 606	2 Corinthians 10	Paul defends his conduct against false accusations. Believers in Christ are to boast only in the Lord.
May 11	TLH 423	2 Corinthians 11	Paul warns the Corinthians against the deception of the “super-apostles.” Paul reminds the Corinthians of all that he has suffered as an apostle.
May 13	TLH 175 / LSB 426	2 Corinthians 12	Paul shares with the Corinthians the visions that he has received from the Lord and the “ <i>thorn in the flesh</i> ” that the Lord has sent to keep him humble. Paul boasts of his weaknesses. Paul expresses heartfelt concern for the believers in Corinth.
May 14	TLH 240 / LSB 504	2 Corinthians 13	Paul closes his letter with warnings, greetings, and blessing.
May 15	TLH 264 / LSB 658	Ezekiel 35	The Lord calls Ezekiel to prophesy against Mount Seir.
May 16	TLH 417 / LSB 703	Ezekiel 36	The Lord calls Ezekiel to prophesy against the mountains of Israel. The Lord is concerned for the honor of His holy name. Therefore, for the sake of His holy name the Lord will give his people a new heart and a new spirit, cleansing His people from iniquity.
May 17	TLH 382	Ezekiel 37	The Lord reveals to Ezekiel His regenerating power, bringing back to life an army of dry bones. So the Lord will raise His people from their graves and will put His Spirit within them. The people of the Lord will be united and the Lord will be their God.
May 18	TLH 231 / LSB 768	John 16	Jesus foretells the persecution of His disciples. Jesus promises that after He has gone away, He will send the Holy Spirit to His church. The sorrow of Jesus’ disciples will turn into joy. The tribulation that believers experience in this world is only temporary; Jesus has overcome this world.
May 20	LSB 509	Ezekiel 38	The Lord calls Ezekiel to prophesy against Gog.
May 21	TLH 149 / LSB 435	John 4	While traveling through Samaria, Jesus speaks with a Samaritan woman at Jacob’s well. Many Samaritans of the town believe in Jesus. Jesus heals the dying son of an official in Capernaum.
May 22	TLH 592	John 5	Jesus heals a sick man on the Sabbath, much to the chagrin of the Jewish leaders. Jesus teaches about His authority as the Son of God. The Scriptures bear witness about Jesus.
May 23	TLH 316 / LSB 642	John 6	Jesus feeds the five thousand. Jesus walks on water. Jesus teaches that He is the true bread of life from heaven. Many disciples no longer follow Jesus on account of His hard sayings. The twelve recognize that Jesus has the words of eternal life.
May 24	TLH 277 / LSB 699	John 7	Jesus teaches at the temple during the Feast of Booths. Many of the people believe in Jesus. The chief priests and the Pharisees send officers to arrest Jesus. Impressed by the teaching of Jesus, the officers choose not to arrest Him.
May 25	TLH 249 / LSB 960	Isaiah 6	Isaiah sees a vision of the Lord sitting on a throne in the temple, being praised by seraphim. Isaiah acknowledges his unworthiness to stand before the Lord, but one of the seraphim cleanses Isaiah by touching his lips with a burning coal from the altar. The Lord sends Isaiah to preach to His people.
May 27	TLH 469 / LSB 648	Deuteronomy 1	On the east side of the Jordan River, Moses reminds the children of Israel of their recent history: how the Lord commanded the children of Israel to leave Horeb and to take possession of the land of Canaan, how Moses appointed leaders over the children of Israel, and how the children of Israel refused to enter Canaan.
May 28	TLH 50 / LSB 924	Deuteronomy 2	Moses reminds the children of Israel of their time spent in the wilderness and of their defeat of King Sihon.
May 29	TLH 9 / LSB 906	Deuteronomy 3	Moses reminds the children of Israel of their defeat of King Og, how the Lord forbade Moses to enter Canaan, and how the Lord appointed Joshua to lead them into Canaan.
May 30	TLH 580	Deuteronomy 4	Moses commands the children of Israel to obey the commands of the Lord. Moses forbids the children of Israel to worship idols, reminding them that the Lord has shown Himself to be the only true God. Moses establishes three cities of refuge.
May 31	TLH 287 / LSB 581	Deuteronomy 5	Moses reminds the children of Israel of the Ten Commandments and admonishes them to live according to the Ten Commandments.



## 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.*

# Mark Kranz Retirement

God has long blessed the CLC through teacher Mark Kranz, who is retiring after forty years of service in synod schools, including the last twenty-three at ILC. He reports having thoroughly enjoyed all of the locations and congregations in which God has placed him. He is thankful for his supportive wife who has shared his adventures and struggles. He is amazed at the ability of God to make use of such a vessel as himself, shortcomings and all, in His precious Kingdom work.

God molded Mark into the servant He desired through the many gifts and experiences He granted him. The son of an Army father, he was born at Fort Sill, Oklahoma. By the time he was seventeen he had lived in seventeen different houses. As a pilot, Mark's father moved the family often while managing a number of airports in the Midwest. Mark became a member of the CLC family as a 5th grade student at Immanuel-Mankato, graduating high school from there in 1980. By that time he had acquired a private pilot's license and intended to receive training to become a commercial pilot. However, after being influenced by some Christian friends, God led him to a pivotal decision to attend ILC and prepare for the teaching ministry instead. Upon college graduation in 1984, Mark was called to fill a teaching vacancy at Grace Lutheran in Valentine, Nebraska. In the summer of 1988 he married Beth (nee Nolting). The couple was blessed with two sons, Matthew (1990) and Ethan (1992). Juliette Kranz, their first grandchild, was born on April 11, 2023. Mark also served the congregations of Holy Cross in Phoenix, Arizona, where he was their first teacher (1992-1996), and Luther Memorial in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin (1996-2001). He became a professor at ILC in 2001.

Mark's interests, experiences, and gifts have been used by God at ILC in many ways. A gifted musician himself, he was "instrumental," along with Professor Joel Gullerud,



in transforming the ILC pep band into a class taken for credit. Immanuel's band is regarded as one of the best in the area and has become a staple at school sporting events, concerts, and Class Day festivities.

Mark has coached girls' softball and volleyball, and was ILC's athletic director from 2012 through 2022. His amiable demeanor towards coaches and officials has led many opponents to enjoy competing against the Lancers at our home contests.

Mark's love of the outdoors, travel, and history meshed well with the classes he taught at ILC, including physical and cultural geography, American history, and social studies methods. Professors at Immanuel are expected to wear many hats, but some Mark has worn would not necessarily be known by many. He has been a faithful bus driver for decades, transporting sports teams and churchgoers countless times. He has served as both a high school and college class advisor. He has been the faculty secretary for over twenty years.

Students will, no doubt, miss his collection of ties, and his timely jokes that are either amusing or groan-worthy, and his profound knowledge of trivia. But I think they will more likely miss his kindness, compassion, and Christian example. I will miss him as a true friend and neighbor, in every sense of the word.

The Kranzes own property on a lake to the north that they plan to make their fulltime home. Mark looks forward to projects involving wood and tinkering, fishing and the outdoors. They plan to continue to make ILC's morning chapel part of their daily routine. I have the feeling that God is not done using Mark's many gifts just yet.



Joe Lau is a professor at 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.

**Wisconsin Court Rules Against Religious Charity.** In a narrow 4-3 ruling in March, the Wisconsin Supreme Court ruled that a Catholic social services agency in Superior, Wisconsin, could no longer claim an exemption from paying unemployment tax. The Catholic Charities Bureau, which provides assistance to area disabled, elderly and low income people, is wholly controlled by its Catholic diocese, but that didn't sway the majority. "The organization is religious," said the ruling, "but the work is secular." Opponents of the church have for decades been challenging churches' exemptions from paying property taxes, but this is the first time a church has been sued to remove its unemployment tax exemption. The church's lawyers promise to appeal. "The Wisconsin Supreme Court got this case dead wrong," said Eric Rassbach, vice president and senior counsel at the Becket Fund for Religious Liberty, a law firm that is representing Catholic Charities. "CCB is religious, whether Wisconsin recognizes that fact or not." Richmond, Todd. "A Wisconsin ruling on Catholic Charities raises the bar for religious tax exemptions." *Religion*. APNews.com, 14 Mar., 2024. Web. 24 Mar., 2024.

**Dating Sites May Not Be All That.** Most people are acquainted with someone who successfully used an online dating app to find a future spouse. However, writing about dating apps in general (not specifically Christian dating sites), communications professor Kara Alaimo says that the potential downsides may outweigh the benefits. In fact, according to Alaimo, dating apps themselves may be contributing to a dearth in marriages (a record-high 25% of forty-year-olds in America have never been married.) Why? For one thing, many dating sites ask users a slew of questions and claim they'll use the answers to match them with the right people. Except that decades of academic research says it doesn't work that way—people's qualities can't predict whether they'll be compatible. Secondly, users can find it hard to make a definite choice when there seems to be an endless number of people to swipe on. This may even have an adverse effect on people who are already in relationships, making them less satisfied with their partner and less committed to the relationship since they believe they can easily find a new partner online. Finally, there is always the possibility of abuse and even violence when making online matches with people who are, after all, strangers. What should people looking for love do? The first step,

according to Alaimo, is to "recognize that dating apps aren't going to do your work for you." Alaimo, Kara. "A big reason so many Americans are still single." *Opinion*. CNN.com, 13 Feb., 2024. Web. 24 Mar., 2024.

**Inflation Reduction Act Pays Pentecostals to Plant Trees.** The US Department of Agriculture (USDA) has given \$1 million to the Church of God in Christ (COGIC) to plant trees in cities and expand green spaces in urban environments. The money comes from a \$1 billion fund created by the Inflation Reduction Act, which President Joe Biden signed into law in 2022. Individual congregations will propose local projects. "Faith based . . . organizations are often critical to helping USDA programs reach the communities who need them most," said cabinet secretary Tom Vilsack. COGIC is the largest Pentecostal church in the United States. Silliman, Daniel. "United States: Church of God in Christ to plant trees." *Gleanings*. ChristianityToday.com, 18 Mar., 2024. Web. 24 Mar., 2024.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### 2024 West Central Delegate Conference

May 21-23

Grace Lutheran Church, Valentine, Nebraska

Agenda:

- A Devotional Study of a General Epistle—Pastor Delwyn Maas
  - Personal Prayer Fellowship—Pastor Paul Krause
  - Preparing Young Christians for Attending Public University—Delegate from Berea Sioux Falls
  - "New Earth" and the Last Day—Pastor James Naumann
  - Encouraging Faithful Church Attendance—Delegate from Prince of Peace Hecla
  - Archaeological Discoveries in Support of the Veracity of the Bible—Delegate from Grace Valentine
  - Encouragement for Overcoming Congregational "Politics"—Delegate from Redeemer Cheyenne
  - Review of Convention Prospectus Materials
  - Speaker: Pastor Michael Roehl
  - Chaplain: Pastor Zachary Sippert
- Submitted by Pastor Timothy Daub, Secretary