

# Lutheran Sentinel

A Publication of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod

*"Engage Others with Jesus."*

*And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!" (Romans 10:14–15)*

It Is Written

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# From the President

## The War to End All Wars

This coming July marks one hundred years since the official start of World War I (WWI). The assassination of Austrian Archduke Ferdinand in Bosnia in June 1914 led one month later to a profusely bloody conflict fought on European soil, but with global implications. The two sides were known as the Allies and the Central Powers. While it is difficult to assess the precise number of casualties, estimates for WWI are 10 million soldiers killed, not to mention the lives of civilians and the staggering number of the wounded. The United States entered the conflict with Germany on April 6, 1917. Interestingly, while the war often was pegged hopefully as “the war to end all wars,” only two decades after its close (1918) an even deadlier war would play out on the world theater.

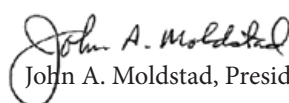
A battle of cosmic proportions far surpassing those two world wars has occurred already. In this case, there is a divinely given guarantee of peace. The jubilant news of the successful defeat is for all people to hear and believe, and the fruits of the victory are enjoyed on a very personal level. We are referencing the battle and victory commemorated during the holy Lenten season, culminating with Easter Sunday!

Think of Jesus' words right before He entered into His suffering, death, and resurrection to defeat the power of our intimidating foes—sin, death, Satan, and hell. The apostle John records our Lord saying, “Now is the time for judgment on this world; now the prince of this world will be driven out” (John 12:31). The same apostle also gave this summation: “The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work” (1 John 3:8).

WWI was won, in large part, by men willing to put their lives at risk while down in the trenches. For their sacrifice, we are truly grateful. As we consider the enormity of our own sins and the powers of the dark world beyond human strength, and then realize the victory of the battle at Golgotha by the One who put Himself in the trenches on our behalf, we sing with hymnwriter Isaac Watts:

**Were the whole realm of nature mine,  
That were a tribute far too small;  
Love so amazing, so divine,  
Demands my soul, my life, my all. (ELH 308:4)**

Blood shed in conflicts between nations may be viewed as blood poured out *at* or *by* the hand of the enemy. The shedding of blood by the Son of God in His substitute role for every sinner was *not* paid to the *enemy*. It was poured out to satisfy the Trinity's holy justice against sin. There was no other way to win peace with God. Yet what a price our loving God did pay! *His* blood—and not that of another—provides full forgiveness of sins. His forgiveness is meant to be received individually by faith in Jesus. Faith in Jesus' forgiveness brings with it a peace for life everlasting! *That* indeed is the **end of all wars!**

  
John A. Moldstad, President of the ELS



# JOHN THE APOSTLE: A Witness to Christ

Atheists claim that there is no proof of God's existence. What they mean is that we cannot *see* God, in the way that biologists can see microbes in the laboratory, or in the way that astronomers can see galaxies in outer space. God *cannot* be seen, either with a microscope or with a telescope.

Christians would agree that the existence of God cannot be demonstrated with the use of the scientific method. His existence, as "Spirit" (John 4:24), is beyond the scope of empirical observation. But Christians would respond to the atheists in two ways: 1) While physical evidence for the existence of God cannot be found in the realm of *scientific observation*, evidence of God's existence *can* be found in the realm of *historical testimony*; and 2) The evidence of God's *existence* that is accessible within history is always accompanied by the evidence of God's *purposes*. In sacred history, God does not simply reveal that He *is*; but He also reveals what He *does* and *why* He does it.

As matters of history and not science, I know that the Pilgrims landed in Plymouth in 1620 and that Abraham Lincoln delivered the Gettysburg Address in 1863; not because I was there to see these events with my own eyes, but because trustworthy people who *were* there have passed on to me their testimony of what they saw. This is also the way a court of law works. The prosecution seeks to prove to a jury—by means of eyewitness testimony and other pertinent evidence—that the defendant committed a certain crime at a particular time in the past.

Also, as matters of history and not science, I know that Jesus of Nazareth identified Himself as the Son of God and that He died and rose from the dead; not because I was there to hear Him say and do these things, but because of the reliable testimony that comes to me in the pages of the New Testament. The apostle John is one of the chief witnesses to these truths. He bears witness in his Gospel to what he saw and heard.

After describing the details of Jesus' death, John states: "He who saw it has borne witness—his testimony is true, and he knows that he is telling the truth—that you also may believe" (John 19:35). And in reference to what the *risen* Christ said and did in his presence, John also states: "This is the disciple who is bearing witness about these things, and who has written these things, and we know that

his testimony is true" (John 21:24). These are solemn and serious declarations, similar to the sworn testimony that would be offered in court. John knows that what he is saying is important and that Christians of all times and places will stake their faith on what he has written!

The basic message of the apostolic Gospel is not only that Jesus died and rose again; but also that Jesus died, rose again, and was seen alive by real historical people (1 Corinthians 15:4–8). This locates the truth of Christ—and of God *in* Christ—very definitely in the realm of *historical* knowledge, where we are accustomed to believing in the truth of one-time events that we have not physically seen ourselves; and *not* in the realm of *scientific* knowledge, with its standards of experimentation and repeatability.

These apostolic testimonies do not merely demonstrate the *existence* of God. They also demonstrate that God, in Christ, was reconciling the sinful world to Himself (2 Corinthians 5:19). They show that God, through the sacrifice of Jesus, was taking away the sin of the world (John 1:29). And they prove that God, in His raising of Christ from the dead, thereby declared His acceptance of this sacrifice as a sufficient ransom for the salvation of us all (Romans 4:25).

Ultimately, however, we are not persuaded by the *absolute* truth of what John and the other apostles tell us about God and Christ, merely on the basis of a rational evaluation of their testimony—as would be done by the members of a trial jury in their deliberations. We are persuaded in a *supernatural* way, by the Holy Spirit, that these events really happened—and that they happened for the sake of our salvation from sin and death. St. John quotes the Lord to say: "But when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me" (John 15:26).



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**David Jay Webber** is pastor of Redeemer Lutheran Church in Scottsdale, Arizona, and a member of the ELS Doctrine Committee.



## The righteousness of God and of man in vocation

# I: JESUS' VOCATION WON RIGHTEOUSNESS FOR ALL PEOPLE

The theme running through our *Lutheran Sentinel* articles this year is that of vocation. A vocation is defined in the dictionary as: “(1) a call, summons, or impulsion to perform a certain function or enter a certain career, esp. a religious one. (2) any trade, profession, or occupation.” Vocation for the Christian is really God’s work and how God works through us to do His will. It is living our lives for Him in accord with God’s will and to His glory. This month “vocation” is connected with “righteousness.” Righteousness is the perfect life God demands of all sinners, which is impossible for humans to accomplish; thus the need for a Savior. Jesus is that Savior. His vocation was to earn and to win salvation for the world.

Think back to the time when the boy Jesus was at the Temple in Jerusalem for the Feast of the Passover. He was only twelve years old. The King James Version of the Bible translates the reply of Jesus to his parents, “*Wist ye not that I must be about my Father’s business?*” (Luke 2:49). Although the Greek could rightly be translated “*in my Father’s House*” it is far richer and deeper to translate the phrase “*the things pertaining to His Father.*” What Jesus says with all respect to His parents is that He cannot understand why they would be searching for Him. It should be assumed that Jesus would be involved with the “things,” or affairs, pertaining to His Father. He was in the temple courts, sitting among the teachers, listening to them, and asking them questions. He amazed everyone with His understanding and His answers.

Jesus’ vocation was to do the will of His heavenly Father (John 4:34; 17:4). He came to serve, not to be served (Matthew 20:28). His mission was to win salvation for the whole world. In order to do this, Jesus was born of the Virgin to live a perfect life under the Law of God. He had to take

the sinner’s place in hell, suffering the eternal punishment deserved for all lawbreakers. This He accomplished while suffering and dying on the cross. He came back to life again, overcoming sin, death, and the devil.

The practical application of this vocation of Jesus is that through His life, death, and resurrection, forgiveness of sins has been won for everyone. No one is excluded. As the *Small Catechism* teaches, “For where there is forgiveness of sins,

there is life and salvation!” Rejoice that salvation is complete! Jesus paid the world’s debt of sin **in full!** His spoken Word from the cross, “It is finished!” establishes this reality. Jesus’ righteousness (perfection) becomes personally mine through faith, by the power of the Holy Spirit working through the means of grace. “Jesus, Thy blood and righteousness My beauty are, my glorious dress” (TLH 371:1).

Thank God that Jesus carried out His vocation, even in the midst of adversity. Jesus’ vocation while living on this sinful earth brought Him rejection, discomfort, disappointment, and at times anger. But He remained determined. The inspired prophet Isaiah describes this Servant (Christ) resolutely facing His suffering, “I set my face like flint” (Isaiah 50:7). The Book of

Hebrews describes Jesus as “the Author and Perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross” (Hebrews 12:2). Although the term “joy” in this passage can certainly refer to future thoughts of heaven, it also can rightly be understood as the willingness of Jesus to fulfill His earthly vocation, yes, willingly, lovingly and joyfully. “Let us fix our eyes on Jesus,” rejoicing that **Jesus’ vocation won righteousness for all people.**



**Paul Schneider** is pastor of Holy Scripture Lutheran Church in Midland, Michigan.

# II: CHRISTIAN ACTS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS SERVE NEIGHBORS

There is a teen devotion book with an attractive title, *If God Loves Me, Why Can't I Get My Locker Open?* Other than the title, I didn't like the book very much, but the title serves very well to address the belief of many that if there is a God in heaven then there must be some help for the trouble in our lives. Does God really care about the fifteen-year-old freshman spinning the combination on her locker, late for class, sweating nervously, self-conscious, and on the point of tears? Does He care that Aunt Peggy, 85 years old, has to say goodbye to her little dog, who has been a faithful companion since Uncle Ben died? Does He care that people might think Him unmerciful?

First of all, the answer is, "Yes." God's name is hallowed when people know Him as He is, and that means they know Him as loving and gracious. Paul told the Lystrians (Acts 14) who were treating him and Barnabas like gods that they should already know something about God and His goodness, "Nevertheless He did not leave Himself without witness, in that He did good, gave us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness" (Acts 14:17).

One witness to God's goodness in the world is the blessings of His providence. Every good thing bears witness to the goodness of God, Who is good, and Whose mercy endures forever. Through His providence come all the joys of life, the beauty, the happiness, the contentment, the peace, the love, and the celebration. The very fact that these blessings come to all kinds of people is a witness to the grace of God, as Jesus said, "For He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust" (Matthew 5:45).

Another providential witness to God is human vocation. Why should one person like to farm and another to pilot an airplane? Why should one person like to put pipes together and another to play music? It is part of God's order to provide us with food and transportation, sanitary living conditions, and the lifting up of the heart. All useful and good vocations are God's blessings to us.

And yet another witness is Christians. Christians certainly speak about Christ, but they also are people living for Christ. What more can we want for our children? What more can we want for ourselves than that we be a blessing to

others and an honor to Him? While anyone serving in their vocation can be God's blessing to others, Christian or not, the Christian serving his neighbor also serves Christ, loves Christ, and honors Christ.

The Christian plumber sees Christ behind the frantic voice of the homeowner whose basement is the worse for plugged sewer lines. The Christian farmer sees Christ behind all the persons who will nourish their bodies through his crops. The Christian musician plays for Christ to hear. The Christian sophomore sees Christ in the frantic freshman who needs help with her locker. The Christian pilot sees Christ behind the exhausted family stuck on the plane because the terminal gates are snowed in. The Christian nurse sees Christ behind the more-lonesome-than-ever Aunt Peggy.



Vocation makes a difference in the world. It makes a difference in the world when Christians are a blessing to their neighbor and an honor to Christ. First, it makes a difference in the lives of the people who are touched. Drains get fixed. People are fed. Lockers get opened. Hearts are lifted up. There is a sympathetic voice from the cockpit for stranded travelers. Aunt Peggy has a friendly and sympathetic touch. But when this is done to the honor of Christ, not only do Christians see Christ in their neighbors, the neighbors see Christ in Christians, so that even when in trouble or catastrophe they will learn of the love of God in the only way that really says it all: "He did not spare His own Son, but gave Him up for us all" (Romans 8:32).

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**Edward Bryant** is pastor of St. Timothy Lutheran Church in Lombard, Illinois.



# Speaking the Truth in Love

“What is truth?” You probably recognize those infamous words of Pontius Pilate, responding to Jesus, when He had just declared, “Everyone on the side of truth listens to Me” (John 18:37).

The devil has been quite successful in getting a good part of our culture, as well as the world, to buy into the lie that “truth” is really unattainable. Why? Because, according to popular thought, everyone has their own ideas of what truth is. This philosophy is then coupled with the “politically-correct” crowd’s insistence that no one has the right to claim the existence of absolute truth, and everyone should be forbidden from sharing/teaching such “nonsense” to others. By demonic design, these social pressures have been intimidating.

But Jesus Himself said, “I am the way, **the truth**, and the life” (John 14:6,

emphasis added). A scan of the four Gospels reveals that Jesus proclaimed the phrase, “I tell you the truth” no fewer than 79 times. But those are simply the places where He emphasized that point. The truth is: everything Jesus said was absolutely true!

The devil is fully aware that there is absolute truth, especially the absolute truth that he was defeated by Jesus, through the sacrifice of His perfect life on Calvary’s cross and His resurrection from the dead, leaving His tomb empty. He knows that the words of Jesus are absolutely true: “Whoever hears My Word and believes Him who sent Me has eternal life and will not be condemned. He has crossed over from death to life” (John 5:24).

The Eternal Truth became a human being so that He could serve as our Substitute; defeating sin, death, and the devil himself! The truth is: all who believe in Jesus; all who believe the truth that He is the God–Man, who died on the cross to pay for all our sins and rose from the grave alive again, personally have their sins forgiven, receive new life

in Christ, and have the certainty of life everlasting!

We have been rescued from the clutches of the devil! Death has been swallowed up in Christ’s victory and has now become only a doorway to eternal life! And it’s the liar, Satan, who has been condemned eternally.

Despite the devil’s attempts to pollute the world with a deadly fog of lies, we, who have received the true light of Christ by faith, are directed by Jesus, to proclaim His

life-giving truth to a lost and dying world. We do this not in arrogance, haughtiness, or vengeance, but, as St. Paul counsels, “Speak the truth in love” (Ephesians 4:15).

Christ’s love is our motivation and is what sustains all our efforts to speak the truth and share the Gospel—even in the face of opposition, which we know will

come—because we know that our gracious God “wants all to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth!” (1 Timothy 2:4). Continue to grow in God’s Word and engage others with Jesus, because He is the only truth that sets us free and saves us for all eternity!



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**Rodney Flohr** is co-pastor of King of Grace Lutheran Church, Golden Valley, Minnesota.

# Jesus' Resurrection Affects Our Lives

What if Christ has not been raised? What difference would it make for your life? Have you ever considered that question? The great resurrection chapter, 1 Corinthians 15, spends several verses playing out that scenario. "If Christ has not been raised," what disastrous results would ensue! "If Christ has not been raised," Paul explains, the apostles' preaching and our faith are useless. "If Christ has not been raised," the apostles are false witnesses. "If Christ has not been raised," we are still in our sins, and those who have died in faith in Christ are lost. "If Christ has not been raised," we are to be pitied more than all men since our hope for Christ is only for this life. In other words, without the resurrection of Christ, our Christian faith falls like a house of cards. We would be without salvation or a Savior or eternal life in heaven.

After building our suspense for several verses, Paul makes the triumphant declaration: "But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep" (1 Corinthians 15:20). Rather than living in uncertainty, we now live in the certainty of knowing that our sins are forgiven. This means that we don't have to walk around carrying the burden of our sins anymore. Christ has carried that burden to the cross, and God has declared us "not guilty" by raising Jesus from the dead! What a load off our consciences!

Since "Christ has indeed been raised from the dead" our faith has a certain basis. Jesus is who He said He was, the Son of God, who indeed would suffer and die but would rise again the third day. In the words of an Easter hymn,

"Had Christ, who once was slain,  
Not burst His three day prison,  
Our faith had been in vain;  
But now has Christ arisen,  
Arisen, arisen, arisen;  
But now has Christ arisen!" (CW 160).



Since Christ has risen, we are freed from a life of serving ourselves and our sinful nature. Instead, we are set free to live our lives for Him who died for us and rose again. As Paul explains, "He died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for Him who died for them and was raised again" (2 Corinthians 5:15). The power to live for Christ comes to us in Holy Baptism. Through Baptism, our sinful nature is buried with Christ and our new man is raised to walk in newness of life (Romans 6). In our lives as Christians, we daily make use of our baptisms as we confess our sins to God and are raised to new life through faith in Christ.

Because "Christ has indeed been raised from the dead," we have a certain future, an eternal future. As we confess in the words of the Nicene Creed, "We look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come." We live in hope and expectation of Christ's return and of our future resurrection. "We believe that Jesus died and rose again and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in Him" (1 Thessalonians 4:14). As Thomas Kingo wrote in his hymn "Like the Golden Sun Ascending":

"Thou hast died for my transgression,  
All my sins on Thee were laid;  
Thou hast won for me salvation,  
On the cross my debt was paid.  
From the grave I shall arise  
And shall meet Thee in the skies.  
Death itself is transitory;  
I shall lift my head in glory" (ELH 354:5).

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**Shawn D. Stafford** is pastor of Hartland Lutheran Church in Hartland, Minnesota, and Manchester Lutheran Church in Manchester, Minnesota.



# Jesus Blesses a Child-like Faith

It was time for supper and as the family was about to sit down to eat, ten-year-old Martina came from the bedroom she shared with her younger sister carrying the Bible and the Advent wreath made by her little sister in kindergarten. “Papa, here are the Bible and the Advent wreath Sonja made in kindergarten. Please read to us from the Bible about the coming of Jesus,” requested Martina.

“I’m hungry and tired. Take that to your bedroom. I don’t want to hear anything about that Bible stuff,” rebuffed her father. Sadly Martina returned the Bible and Advent wreath to their bedroom.

The next evening before supper Martina again brought the Bible and Advent wreath to the table and asked her father to read to the family, but was again told to put the Bible and Advent wreath away. For several evenings, Martina persisted in her request to have her father read from the Bible, only to be rebuffed.

After more than a week of this ongoing interchange between the father and his older daughter, the father discussed with the mother how it could be that his daughter could be so persistent in her request to have him read from the Bible. He told his wife that he needed to find out why this book was so important to his daughter when normally she would not ask again if told no the first time. The father began to search for the answer in the book from which his daughter asked him to read. His private reading eventually led him to understand the source of his child’s

desire to have him read to the family. He came to realize that his daughter believed what the Bible said about Jesus as her Savior. But he couldn’t understand how she could believe something that didn’t make sense to him or his wife. She was only a child, and he had difficulty understanding what it meant when it said that God loved us so much to send his Son to die for us. But it was clear that his daughter believed

this! How could she believe this when he couldn’t understand it?

He soon learned that God’s Word provided the answer in the Gospel of St. Matthew, when Jesus explains to His disciples that a child-like faith is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven: “Then Jesus called a little child to Him, set him in the midst of them, and said, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore whoever humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Whoever receives one little child like this in My name receives Me’” (Matthew 18:2–4).

Martina’s father eventually learned, just as Jesus’ disciples did, that the only way he could have that child-like faith was by spending time with Jesus in His Word. Eventually, Martina’s father was converted by the

Holy Spirit through an in-depth study of the Bible under the guidance of a missionary. He could now rejoice in that he was blessed with the same child-like faith as his daughter!



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**Silas Born** is a professor emeritus at Bethany Lutheran College in Mankato, Minnesota.





# On the Synodical Scene...

## Messiah Lutheran Church Celebrates Twentieth Anniversary

Messiah Lutheran Church of Omro, Wisconsin, celebrated its 20th anniversary on February 9, 2014. The Reverend Norman Schell was the guest liturgist with Messiah's Pastor Jesse DeDeyne leading the worship service. Special music was provided by the Messiah Choir. Fellowship and a light brunch followed the service.

First meeting 20 years ago in a funeral home, Messiah's small congregation began its nomadic journey. Through God's grace, Messiah always found a place to worship—the gym of an elementary school, a meeting room at the Omro Community Center, and the rental of a local WELS church, before finally, by the

Lord's providence, being able to worship in its permanent church home at 7394 Liberty School Road, Omro.

The congregation thanks the Lord for being the unfailing Shepherd of this small flock.



## Ordination Service in Utah

Candidate of Theology Paul Webber was ordained and installed as pastor of Hope Lutheran Church, West Jordan, Utah, on January 28, 2014. The Circuit Visitor, the Rev. Steven Sparley performed the rites of ordination and installation. The Rev. Jay Webber, the Candidate's father, preached the sermon based on the text 1 Thessalonians 2:4-8. The youth choir of the church also sang during the service. Also participating in the service were the Reverends Samuel Gullixson, Jonathan Micheel, Noah Bater, and Douglas Lange. The congregation served a dinner after the service.



### Announcing the 97<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod and the 58<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of Bethany Lutheran College Inc.

Theme: "Engaging Others with Jesus in Times of Trial"  
June 15-19, 2014, in Mankato, Minnesota

#### Synod Sunday—June 15

3:00 pm—Synod Sunday Service  
4:30 pm—Supper (free-will donation)

#### Monday—June 16

9:30 am—Opening Convention Service in Trinity Chapel

#### Tuesday—June 17

5:00 pm—Anniversary Service in Trinity Chapel

#### Wednesday—June 18

9:00 am—Convention Essay  
7:30 pm—Communion Service in Trinity Chapel

#### Thursday—June 19

8:45 am—Convention Essay continued

Rev. Craig A. Ferkenstad, Secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod

# Pastor, I Have a Question...

**Question:** *Where do dinosaurs fit in? I have yet to read the entire Bible. My husband says it mentions behemoths. I know they are not very important to the true message, just my curiosity.*

**Answer:** Sometimes those questions that may not seem that important, really are. This is such a question. Your husband is correct when he says that the Bible mentions behemoths. He is referring to Job 40, which says:

Look at Behemoth, which I made along with you and which feeds on grass like an ox. What strength it has in its loins, what power in the muscles of its belly! Its tail sways like a cedar; the sinews of its thighs are close-knit. Its bones are tubes of bronze, its limbs like rods of iron. It ranks first among the works of God, yet its Maker can approach it with his sword. The hills bring it their produce, and all the wild animals play nearby. Under the lotus plants it lies, hidden among the reeds in the marsh. The lotuses conceal it in their shadow; the poplars by the stream surround it. A raging river does not alarm it; it is secure, though the Jordan should surge against its mouth. Can anyone capture it by the eyes, or trap it and pierce its nose? (Job 40:15–24)

This is a picture-perfect description of a large, plant-eating dinosaur. The sauropods were the grouping of the largest dinosaurs, with lengths over 100 feet and weights over 100 tons. They are said to have lived on all the continents, including Antarctica.

Job said this creature “ranks first among the works of God,” thereby identifying it as the largest land creature known to man. Job also said, “Its tail sways like a cedar,” clarifying that it is a large reptile. Mammals have tails very different from cedar trees.

The word “behemoth” comes from the Hebrew and means “very large plant-eating creature.” The word “dinosaur,” however, is quite recent and was coined in 1842 by Sir Richard Owen.

Ancient peoples living in the Mideast were very much aware of dinosaurs, as evidenced by their numerous artworks that clearly picture dinosaurs.

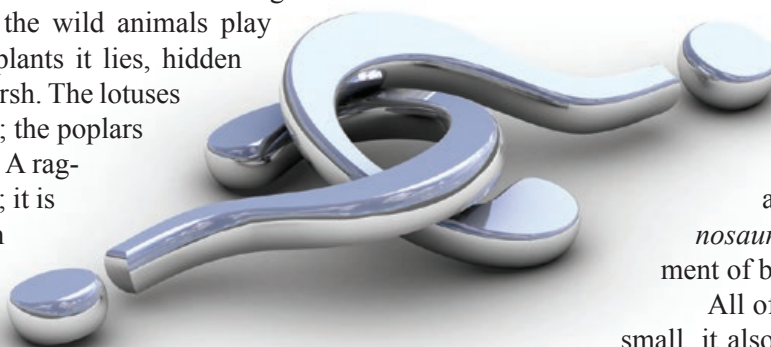
In the context of Job 40, God is comparing Job to the largest of His created animals in order to give Job a lesson in humility. When you are compared with a 100-ton dinosaur, it is easy to feel pretty small.

Part of this context involves the next creature described in Job, the “leviathan” in Job 41, a carnivorous animal described in verse 33 with the words: “Nothing on earth is his equal.” Until recently, it was impossible to identify what this creature might have been. However, in 1997 the skeletal remains of *Sarcosuchus imperator* (SuperCroc) were unearthed in the Sahara Desert. The description in Job

41 is a perfect fit for SuperCroc, a crocodylian like today’s crocodiles but 10 times bigger—weighing in at 10 tons. SuperCroc was almost twice as big as *Tyrannosaurus rex* and had a full complement of body armor besides.

All of this not only made Job look small, it also underscores the integrity of the Book of Job, an integrity that ultimately points to the truth of its overarching message, so powerfully stated in chapter 19: “I know that my redeemer lives, and that in the end he will stand on the earth. And after my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God” (Job 19:25–26).

And we pray, come Lord Jesus.



**Send your questions to:**  
Pastor Charles Keeler  
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Guest columnist **Allen Quist** is a member of Norseland Lutheran Church in St. Peter, Minnesota, and a member of the ELS Doctrine Committee.

# Mother's Day Offering 2014

“People half a world away need our help? No problem!” While perhaps no one actually spoke those words, they reflect the hearts of the Christians of Asia Minor and northern and southern Greece during the days of the apostles (Romans 15:26–27).

The church in Jerusalem was overwhelmed. Famine had hit—and hit hard. The cost of food skyrocketed. Persecution also took its toll. No faithful Jew wanted to hire or do business with followers of Jesus of Nazareth. It was a recipe for mass poverty among Christians.

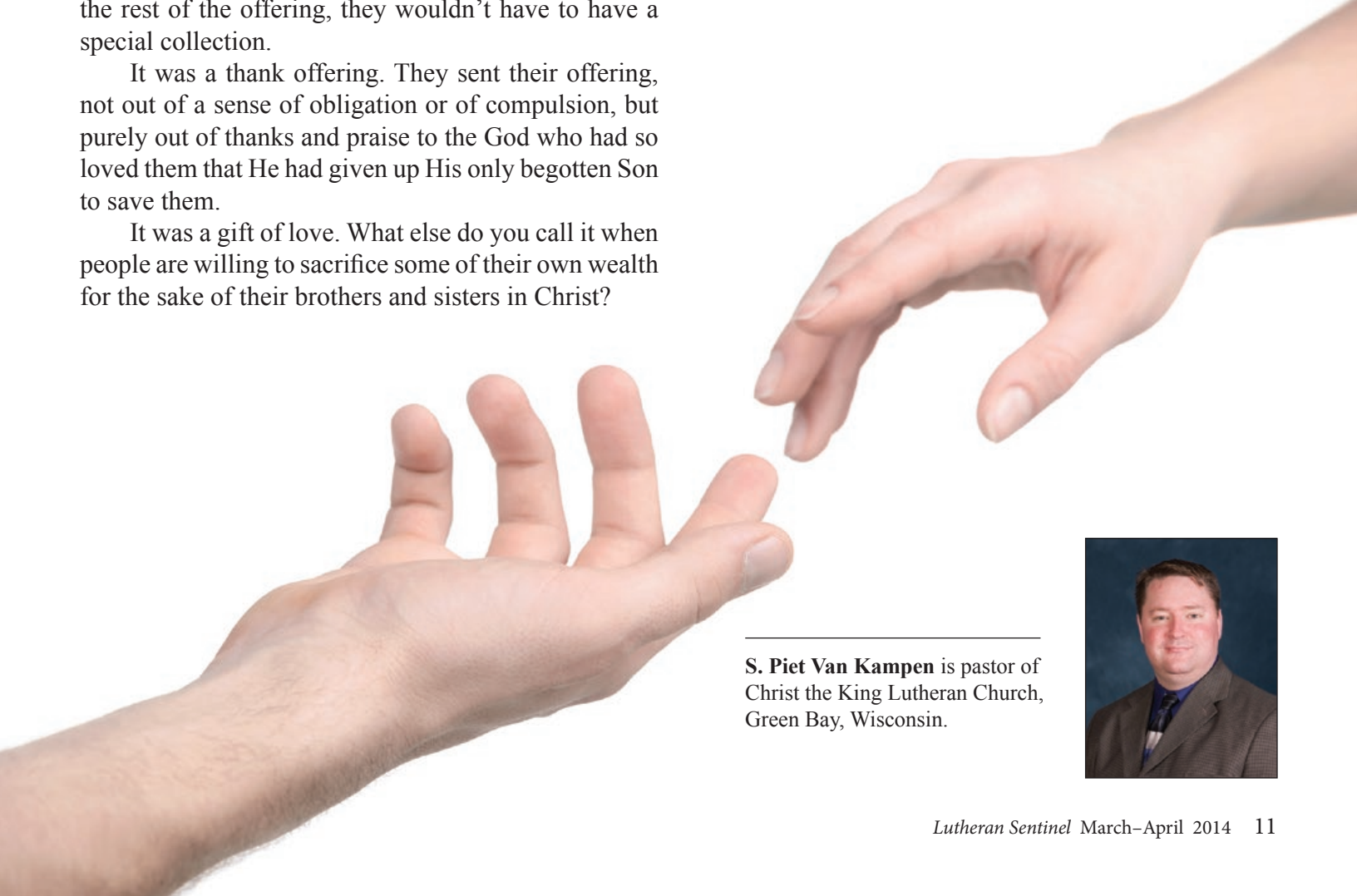
So when the believers in places like Ephesus, Troas, Thessalonica, and Corinth heard about the suffering of the believers in Jerusalem, they resolved to act. They sent money to bring relief to the poor in the church in Jerusalem.

It was a planned offering. The apostle Paul instructed the Corinthians to set aside a sum of money every week towards the offering (1 Corinthians 16:1–2). That way when he arrived to gather their gift in with the rest of the offering, they wouldn't have to have a special collection.

It was a thank offering. They sent their offering, not out of a sense of obligation or of compulsion, but purely out of thanks and praise to the God who had so loved them that He had given up His only begotten Son to save them.

It was a gift of love. What else do you call it when people are willing to sacrifice some of their own wealth for the sake of their brothers and sisters in Christ?

Once again this May you'll be receiving your envelopes for your Mother's Day offering for the ELS World Needs Fund. Donations received in the past have gone to provide relief in places as far away as Japan and India, and as close as Missouri. Take the opportunity to set aside a little something for your fellow believers around the world who are in tough times of their own. Offer a gift of love—a gift that gives thanks for the grace of God in Christ. A gift that says, “People half a world away need our help? No problem!”



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**S. Piet Van Kampen** is pastor of Christ the King Lutheran Church, Green Bay, Wisconsin.



# FOURTEEN ORDAINED IN INDIA

Fourteen men were ordained into the pastoral ministry in India at the end of January 2014. The men who were ordained have studied for about eleven years each to become pastors. Each of the fourteen men is already serving congregations ranging in size from forty to one hundred twenty. The oldest of the newly ordained pastors is I. Moses at 79 years old. Another new pastor, Watson, was ordained at the age of 74.

The ordination services were held at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Rajahmundry and St. John's Lutheran Church in Hyderabad, India. Pastors Solomon Mamidi, G.J. Ananda Raju, Pradeep Lingala, and Kalyan Gollapalli all participated in the service.

We are truly blessed to have these new pastors serving congregations in this rapidly expanding church body, the Lutheran Mission of Salvation-India.



# CHURCH DEDICATED IN RAJAHMUNDRY

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Rajahmundry, India, was dedicated to the glory of God on January 24, 2014. Pastor Kalyan Gollapalli, a graduate of Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary, serves the congregation. Much of the church interior is designed similarly to Lutheran churches in the United States, with Christian symbols incorporated into the altar rail, windows, stained glass, and even the doors.

The building was funded by donations from members of the ELS and WELS and by the ELS Board for World Outreach. Two additional floors will be built above the sanctuary as soon as funds are available. This additional space will house Grace and Truth Lutheran School and the Grace and Truth Orphan Home.



# NEW SCHOOL IN GUNTIPALLI, INDIA

A new school has been constructed in the village of Guntipalli, India. Construction was funded with donations from individual ELS members and St. Paul Lutheran Church (WELS), East Troy, Wisconsin, which had originally funded the construction of the church and orphan home at Guntipalli. The new school, St. Paul's, is the only one available in this rural village of six thousand people. Currently, students must travel eight miles by motorcycle taxi or on foot to attend the next-closest school.

The new building was constructed on the property of St. Paul's Lutheran Church and St. Paul's Lutheran Orphan Home and is scheduled to open in May, at the beginning of the Indian school year. The fifteen orphans cared for at St. Paul's Orphan Home will attend the new school.

Funds are still needed to furnish the school and help with the start-up costs. The school is expected to be self-supporting within a few years.



Paul Fries is the Communication Director for the Evangelical Lutheran Synod and serves on the ELS Board for World Outreach.

# LYA 2014

*I lift up my eyes to the hills. From where does my help come? My help comes from the LORD, who made heaven and earth. He will not let your foot be moved; he who keeps you will not slumber. Behold, he who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep. The LORD is your keeper; the LORD is your shade on your right hand. The sun shall not strike you by day, nor the moon by night. The LORD will keep you from all evil; he will keep your life. The LORD will keep your going out and your coming in from this time forth and forevermore. (Psalm 121, ESV)*

Psalm 121 is full of comfort because the psalm is not about us; it's about God, the Lord our helper and keeper. Verse 2 is familiar as a part of the confession of sins in the old "common" order of service. Verse 8 has been, and still is, the closing words of Baptism services.

God will protect, God will provide, He will not sleep, He will keep and preserve you forevermore.

This summer your synod's annual youth convention will meet on the campus of the University of Montana—Missoula. We will be nestled right up against the Rocky Mountains, a perfect setting for the convention's theme: Psalm 121:1.

Every year and at every location we try to take in some of the local "flavor." Last year in Florida the teens spent time at the beach; at our convention in Massachusetts they took in some colonial history with an afternoon at Plymouth. This year we will be river rafting one of America's most scenic gorges (and former stomping grounds of Lewis & Clark).

Of course we do more than swim at the beach and shoot the rapids. As each day begins and closes we gather around God's Word for devotions, Bible classes take up the morning part of the schedule, and every convention closes with a service of Word and Sacrament.

What a privilege to share this time with our youth! To play and study and worship the Savior with them!! Please keep this critical work of the synod in your prayers. Ask the Lord to keep our youth by His side by keeping our youth in His Word and Sacraments; that is their shelter in the heat of temptation and in the cold isolation our teens often feel. Pray that this summer's youth convention serves that purpose of connecting/reconnecting them to their Savior's Word and Sacraments.

Encourage the youth of your congregation to attend and encourage your congregation to support them. Again, this year we'll meet in Missoula, Montana, July 24–27. Registration information can be found online at: [www.els.name/about/our-work-together/youth/](http://www.els.name/about/our-work-together/youth/).

**I WILL  
LIFT UP MY  
EYES  
TO THE HILLS**  
PSALM 121:1

**MISSOULA, MONTANA**

EARLY REGISTRATION MAY 1 - \$250  
LATE REGISTRATION JUNE 1 - \$300

*Come for youth fellowship, Bible study, and worship.  
Activities include river rafting, climbing wall,  
and high ropes course.*

**JULY 24-27**  
**LYA 2014**



**Anthony Pittenger** is pastor of Bethany Lutheran Church in Port Orchard, Washington, and a member of the Board for Youth Outreach.

# Our Bethany Lutheran College

“What can we do to ensure that Bethany Lutheran College will remain a confessional Lutheran college in the future?” This question came my way from an alumnus who sent children to Bethany and hopes to send grandchildren there. When we see what has happened to other church-supported Lutheran colleges that allow non-Christian professors in their religion departments, this question is necessary to ask, and the answers are vital for the future of our college.

As a liberal arts college, Bethany provides the kind of education our synod and our young people need. During its history, Bethany Lutheran College has been blessed with gifted leaders who understood the importance of both a liberal arts and a Christian education.

What can we do? The following is what I answered. First and foremost: support your synodically-owned college. This support can take many forms. One thing that we can all do is pray. Ask God to bless the college, its faculty, staff, and students, so that they gladly hear and believe God’s Word. Pray that God would continue to give Bethany the professors and students to keep our college as a light shining into the world.

Second, talk with your pastor about the important role that Bethany has played in your and your children’s lives. Encourage him to promote the college in his confirmation classes and to the church families. They need to know that Bethany not only offers a top-quality education, but also “an education that lasts beyond a lifetime.” This means that Bethany integrates Bible truths into the students’ education and provides many opportunities for worship and student support, in order that students may grow in their faith and develop into future leaders in their congregations and communities.

Third, ensuring that Bethany remains a confessional Lutheran college means encouraging talented young Christian men and women to pursue a Ph.D. in their areas of interest. Lutherans with Ph.D.s are needed in higher education at Bethany. Many do not realize that being a Ph.D. graduate student can be a paid job. While programs may vary, a graduate student will typically have some teaching responsibilities in exchange for a tuition waiver and a livable wage for one person.

Bethany Lutheran College looks for qualified faculty within our fellowship. When those people are not available in a particular academic area, it prevents the college from developing those new programs. A doctorate in nursing is one example of this. Encourage your pastor to keep Bethany informed about college professors who are members of your congregation.

Fourth, support the college financially. Bethany uses your financial contributions for its daily operations, for special projects, and for scholarship support of its students. The college depends on outside support to keep education costs affordable. Ninety-eight percent of Bethany students receive some form of financial aid to help them pay for college. Your gifts and congregation scholarships can help young people you know decide to attend Bethany.

Fifth, tell other students and parents about Bethany Lutheran College. Our college is not only for Lutherans. Many students at Bethany have come to faith through what they have learned in their religion classes, chapel services, and the Christian witness of faculty, staff, and fellow students. Some people who once came to Bethany for athletics, convenience, or some other reason are now members of our clergy, committed to serving the Lord. Others are active members in their congregations. For a long time, Bethany has been an important mission outreach.

Finally, attend a Bethany Lutheran College Auxiliary meeting in your area, or start one if there is none available to you. You will not only hear about the work of the college, but also have opportunity to pray for it and support its work. Bethany graduates live throughout the United States and may not be far from you. Have them come to a youth group or hold a Bethany night at your church and have a graduate share what being a student at Bethany has meant to them.

Just over 85 years ago, our synod purchased Bethany Lutheran College. The list of past faculty and administrators is a picture of their faithfulness to a Christian liberal arts education. These people have blessed many generations of students with the “one thing needful,” teaching the message that Jesus is the Savior of the world. One cannot put a price tag on the number of souls whose faith was nurtured, increased, and even begun while students at Bethany. Because of this, Bethany’s mission as a Christ-centered liberal arts college remains vital to future students and vital to our synod. Your interest in Bethany and its mission is also vital to that future.



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**Theodore Gullixson** is an ELS pastor emeritus living in Mankato, Minnesota.

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# Call for Nominations for the President of Bethany Lutheran College

Since president Dr. Dan R. Bruss has announced his intent to retire from the presidency of Bethany Lutheran College, effective June 30, 2015, therefore the Board of Regents of Bethany Lutheran College, in accordance with the guidelines (412, Article IIA) adopted by the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, herewith requests the ELS member congregations to submit nominations for President of Bethany Lutheran College. Nominations may also be submitted by the Board of Regents.

The nominee shall be a member of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod or of its fellowship. The nominee should possess the aptitude and experience that will qualify him to direct the control and planning of all facets of the college operation.

The candidate must be a firm believer in the mission of our college. He must combine a skill for supervising and motivating highly qualified and creative people with an understanding of and a commitment to the doctrine of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod. The candidate should possess the necessary skills to lead Bethany and should demonstrate a deep commitment to and love for students.

The Regents respectfully request each congregation to prayerfully consider those who may fulfill the qualifications of this important office and submit their names to Secretary Paul Chamberlin, 90 Fairview Avenue, South Chatham, MA 02659; nrchamb@yahoo.com

Deadline: To be considered, all congregational nominations must be submitted to the Secretary by May 8, 2014.

