



LUTHERAN SENTINEL

A PUBLICATION OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD

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OUT OF ZION

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BOARD FOR WORLD OUTREACH:

The Ransom Room

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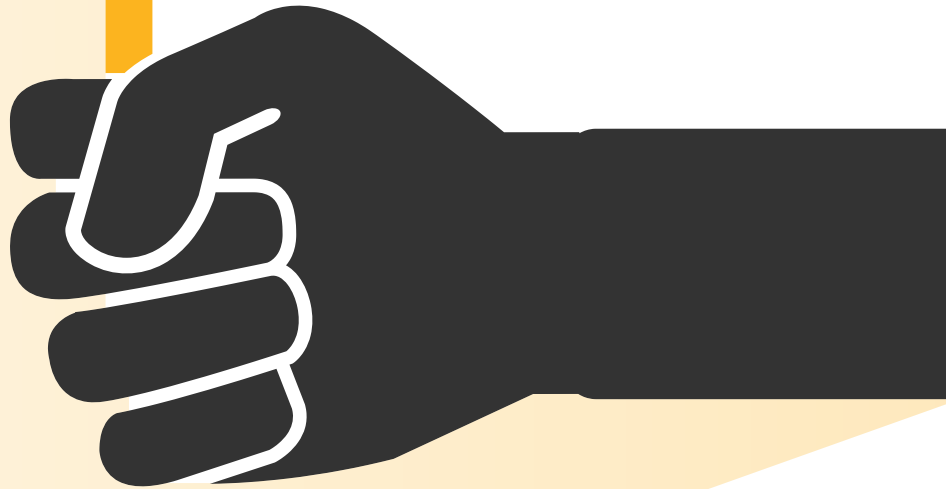
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The Greatest Memo

by **REV. JOHN A. MOLDSTAD**, President
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD, Mankato, Minn.



Dear Members and Friends of our ELS:

I shall not forget the fervent desire of a man I once visited in the hospital. He was dying of a serious disease. He could hardly talk. I knew he wanted to tell me something important. He confided in me that there was one thing he desired most for his family. It was not that I should give them all one last hug from him. It was not to hand them a check for X dollars the man had set aside and placed into an envelope, nor was it to recall for his family a specific story from the “good old days.” No, what the man wanted most, he said, was simply that each member in his immediate family would take hold of Christ as Savior and continue to stay grounded in the Word.

What is your ultimate desire for your family members and for your friends? Does it mirror the parting desire of the dying man in that hospital bed? When the Apostle Paul was bidding farewell to the elders in the Ephesus congregation, he knew it was going to be the last time he would see them. The Holy Spirit had informed him that prison and hardships were facing him upon his arrival in Jerusalem. So what was Paul’s parting comment? He said, “Now I commit you to God and to the Word of his grace, which can build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified” (Acts 20:32).

Sharing the good news of Jesus – telling sinners we have an inheritance in heaven by faith in the saving work of Christ’s life, death, and resurrection – is the greatest memo we can pen for others! Words in a will document can say it memorably. Comments passed on at a sober bedside etch the saying in minds of loved ones. Parting words directing souls

to Christ make an indelible impression. One from our synod’s clergy, who went to heaven years ago, told of how he – at the time full of cancer – would begin a Gospel conversation with strangers by saying, “By the way, I won’t be seeing you here again so I want to tell you something important...”

The star leading the way for the Gentile sages to the exact location of the Savior of sinners serves as a sign of how the light of God’s Word is intended to shine streams of saving grace to souls near and far. Epiphany presents a focus on the miracles of Christ to show our Savior is God himself come in the flesh. It also serves as a time to “reveal his glory” (John 2:11) as the One who has rescued us from sin’s darkness! Whether in good health or facing our moment of earthly departure, beaming the light of our Lord’s epiphany is what it’s all about! O God, help us so to shine.

*And not alone to nations
In far away retreats,
But ev’rywhere I broadcast
His love through crowded streets.
The lives that my life touches,
However great or small –
Let them through me see Jesus,
Who served and saved us all.*

(ELH 195:4)

The city of Cajamarca, Peru
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THE EPIPHANY CHRIST



by **REV. KYLE MADSON**, Editor, *The Lutheran Sentinel*
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I was once introduced as a local pastor to a few fellas who were meeting weekly in a coffee shop for a Bible study. They promptly urged me to attend with this plug: “We’re exploring how big and great God is.” The Christian church year has a whole season for this biblical study. It’s called Epiphany – God unveiling Himself to the world in the person and work of Jesus.

But what this “big-ness” – this greatness – looks like stands in contrast to mankind’s measures of “big” and “great.” This becomes very apparent in one of the historic lessons for Epiphany – the Boy Jesus visiting the temple with Mary and Joseph (Luke 2:41-52). Allow me to summarize: 12-year old Jesus obediently accompanies His parents in their Passover pilgrimage to Jerusalem; He sits in the temple hearing the prophecies and holding forth with the scholars; He returns with His earthly parents to his home.

Behold! The “bigness” and “greatness” of God: Jesus obeyed His Heavenly Father and His earthly parents faithfully, and in that order.

Though this boringly obedient God in the flesh is not what our flesh measures as “big” and “great,” it is most certainly the God our flesh needs to shine through.

Jesus shines through as the Son who lived in perfect honor toward His Father. Where we sinners have made gods of virtually every created thing under the sun, Jesus feared and honored only One! Where you and I have misused God’s name, throwing it around casually or failing to use it properly in prayer, praise, and thanksgiving, Jesus made perfect exercise of His Father’s holy name. Where we have often in many ways made hearing God’s Word and receiving the gifts He gives through that Word of secondary

importance, Jesus kept this hearing the Word and the receiving of the Word’s gifts in the highest place.

His obedience is certainly an example to us – an example of what it is to be faithful to God. But it is more than an example to you. Jesus’ perfect obedience is His gift FOR YOU. With this gracious Good News, the Spirit has penetrated the fog of sin for you and me and created faith in our once-darkened hearts. And now, that faith is caused to cling to Jesus’ perfect faithfulness to His Father – because that faithfulness is FOR YOU.

And as Jesus is shown forth as the obedient Son of His heavenly Father, so also He grew up in perfect obedience to His earthly parents.

Having all been children (plenty of us still are), our sins are many and monumental in this most immediate law of loving neighbor – honoring our father and mother. As parents, we have often and in many ways failed (despite our good intentions) to fulfill the law of love by making God’s Word and His gifts the primary and most immediate way by which we love our children.

And for our woeful lack underneath this law of love, Jesus shines through as our great supply – our perfect obedience: honoring His mother and father by journeying with them to the temple, by faithfully waiting upon the Heavenly Father’s Word, by returning submissively with Mary and Joseph to Nazareth. His obedience certainly shines as an example to us as children. But even more, Jesus’ love of God and of neighbor epiphanies Him as the promised Christ – The One bearing up under the law for us, redeeming us from our sin, making us sons (Galatians 4:4-5).

**The boringly obedient Son shows forth with greatness:
 The Lord, our righteousness!** (Jeremiah 23:6)

We discard the leftover wine after communion by pouring it on the grass or ground, but what should be done with the leftover wafers?

Answer:

Communion wafers are among the simplest food items, composed of flour and water. They are pressed, baked, and then sold in boxes of 1,000. And yet the miracle of the Lord's Supper is that these simple, lowly wafers, when combined with the Words of Institution, give the greatest possible gifts together with the consecrated wine: the forgiveness of sins and the strengthening of our faith!

Since an earlier column dealt with leftover communion wine, it only makes sense to also talk about communion wafers. This matter falls into the category of adiaphora (pronounced "ah-dee-AH-for-ah"). The term adiaphora refers to beliefs and practices about which the Bible remains silent. While God's Word establishes the Lord's Supper as a sacrament for us to eat and drink, it does not specifically tell us what we must do with the remaining bread and wine (also known as the Reliquiae).

So Christians have some freedom to decide what to do with the remaining consecrated bread. This freedom does not mean we can do whatever we want, though. Love for God and for our neighbor guide all our decisions. As with the leftover wine, the major concern is to show deep respect for the sacrament while at the same time to avoid giving offense to those who have a weak faith (1 Corinthians 8:10-11).

Scripture teaches us that in the Supper, the bread is the true body of Christ, that Jesus took the bread, broke it, and gave it to His disciples, saying, "This is my body which is given for you" (Luke 22:19). Our Savior also gave clear instructions about what to do with the consecrated bread in the Supper: He said, "Take, eat" (Matthew 26:26) and "do this in remembrance of Me" (Luke 22:19). Outside of the eating and drinking that takes place in the Lord's Supper, the bread is simply bread and the wine is simply wine. (This is why Lutherans do not place the leftover consecrated bread in a *monstrance*¹ for adoration or use it in a Corpus Christi festival the way Roman Catholics do.)

¹ A *monstrance* is a large container with an opening on the front side, sitting on an elevated stand, which usually contains consecrated communion bread so that parishioners may kneel at the altar and adore the host without partaking in the Sacrament.

² "*Ciborium*" literally means "food-container" in Latin.

By our actions, we can help assure people that they have truly received Christ's body in, with, and under the bread. One way we do that is by not throwing wafers away unnecessarily. Sometimes, if they are damaged or stale, we may have to dispose of them, but usually communion wafers can be saved until the next time the Lord's Supper is offered. Most congregations use a silver or silver-plated covered cup called a *ciborium*² (pronounced "sih-BORE-ee-um") to store communion wafers that have been opened and used for the Supper.

In some churches, the pastor distributes the host to communicants directly from the ciborium, while in other churches the pastor distributes the host from a paten, a shallow silver or gold platter. If your church uses only a ciborium, then simply leave the wafers in the ciborium after the service. If your church uses a paten, then one of two things may happen, depending on the tradition in your congregation. Either the pastor and/or the elders eat the leftover communion wafers, or the consecrated wafers can be placed in the ciborium until the next celebration of the Supper. In either case, respect for the Sacrament is maintained. Consecrated bread will ultimately be used for its intended purpose.

As in the case of leftover communion wine, feel free to ask your pastor and elders about the tradition and practice of your own congregation in this matter. Perhaps there is a historical or practical reason why your church does what it does. You might learn something you didn't know before.



Do you have a question for Pastor Van Kampen?

Send them via email:
pastorspvk@christthekinggb.org

Send them via "snail mail":
 1700 Cardinal Ln,
 Green Bay, WI 54313

THE RANSOM ROOM



Family gathering for worship, Cajamarca, Peru

“You were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ.”

1 Peter 1:18-19

by **REV. THOMAS HEYN**, ELS Board for World Outreach Administrator
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In the mountains of northern Peru, lying at 8,900-foot elevation, is the city of **Cajamarca** (pronounced kah-ha-MAR-ka). About two miles from the city center is an archaeological site dating back to the time of Moses and King David. The current city, occupied for more than 2000 years, now has over 200,000 inhabitants and has been declared a World Heritage Site. From the mid-1400s to the mid-1500s, it was an important city in the Inca empire.

On November 15, 1532, the Spanish conquistador **Francisco Pizarro** arrived in Cajamarca after a two-year journey to find the heart of the Inca empire. He sent a messenger to **Atahualpa**, chief of the Incas, and proposed a meeting in the main plaza of the city. Atahualpa, not knowing what to expect, arrived in ceremonial dress with a large procession accompanying him. Little did he know that Pizarro and his 168 soldiers were going to ambush Atahualpa and his thousands who were neither properly armed nor prepared to fight.

Atahualpa was captured and confined to a room (pictured) in a nearby building. He requested two months so he might gather from his people a ransom for his release. He was being held in a room 22 feet by 17 feet. He would fill the room with gold to a level as high as 9 feet. In addition, he would fill—twice—a smaller adjacent room with silver. According to later records, the gold alone was worth about 450 million US dollars today!

Atahualpa demanded to be released. Diego de Almagro, another conquistador, demanded he be executed. Pizarro reluctantly agreed to a trial. Atahualpa was found guilty of, among other things, idolatry, adultery, and inciting rebellion. He was sentenced to be burned alive that evening.

Atahualpa turned to Pizarro and exclaimed, “What have I done, or my children, that I should meet such a fate? And from your hands, too, you, who have met with friendship and kindness from my people, with whom I have shared my treasures, who have received nothing but benefits from my hands!”

Two hours after sunset on 29 August 1533, the Inca was prepared to be burned at the stake when Friar Valverde offered death by garrote (strangulation) if Atahualpa would consent to be baptized. The Inca agreed, assuming the name Francisco Atahualpa in honor of Francisco Pizarro.

In spite of a king’s ransom being paid, the Inca chief and his empire came to an end. An almost inconceivable ransom of gold and silver was not enough to save him. Today you can still visit the “Ransom Room” where Atahualpa was held.

Why this story? Because this is a city where the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Peru, with our help, wants to begin mission work. **Pastor Segundo Gutiérrez** grew up in this city. His father, siblings, friends, and relatives live here. Pastor Gutiérrez travels here about once a month to bring God’s Word to his family and friends. He visits to share the message summarized in St. Peter’s words at the beginning of this story—redemption, not with gold or silver, but with the precious blood of Christ, the spotless lamb of God.

They gather in the homes of one or another of the people in this small group of Lutherans. They sing hymns, listen to devotions by Pastor Gutiérrez, and work toward gathering a growing congregation.

Land on a principal street in this ancient city has been donated by the Gutiérrez family for constructing a church. A building, probably more than a hundred years old and recently used as a warehouse for fruits and vegetables, will be torn down and a new house of worship will be constructed in its place—if funding can be obtained.

People travel to Cajamarca not only from throughout Peru, but from around the world to see this World Heritage Site. They visit the Ransom Room. Perhaps they can also hear about the true Ransom.

Two hundred thousand souls live in Cajamarca. How much are they worth? Four hundred fifty million dollars’ worth of gold and silver? No, worth more than that. They are and were worth the precious blood of the Lamb of God. A new church in Cajamarca could reach out with the message of the true ransom, the better ransom, the ransom brought by Christ that brings true freedom—true deliverance from eternal death.

Please keep this group of believers in your prayers. Your offerings can help support the ongoing visits to this preaching station. It is an eight-hour drive to Cajamarca from the nearest Peruvian synod congregation. Plans for a church building will continue if funding can be obtained.

If you have questions, please contact us:

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God at Work: Divine Care Through Many Callings

by **LON KNUDSON M.D.**, Contributing Writer
MT. OLIVE LUTHERAN CHURCH, Mankato, Minn.



Physician Calling

“A cobbler, a smith, a farmer, each has the work and office of his trade, and yet they are all alike consecrated ...every one by means of his own work or office must benefit and serve every other, that in this way many kinds of work may be done for the bodily and spiritual welfare of the community, even as all the members of the body serve one another.”

Martin Luther - "An Open Letter to the Christian Nobility"

I met my wife Kathy while I was a medical student at the University of Minnesota and she was attending Bethany Lutheran College. Close Christian friends introduced us, and she has been by my side in my calling to be a physician ever since. Because of our college experiences at Bethany, Mankato holds a special place in our hearts, and we chose to raise our family and build a practice here in 1985. I've been a pediatrician for 40 years with practice emphasis in developmental-behavioral pediatrics and children's mental health.

As a physician, the immediate neighbors I am called to serve are:

- The children from birth to 21 years and their parents, who I am blessed to care for as patients. My patient panel has varied from 2000 to 4000 patients depending on my practice emphasis. This is a tremendous privilege and responsibility and provides an intimate setting to connect with these children and their families.
- As a physician, I have been called to serve in leadership roles in healthcare, religious, educational, and community organizations.
- In recent years, I have seen my role as a mentor in the workplace become more of an emphasis. I have greatly valued and have been immensely blessed with great mentors in my career and feel called to serve in this capacity for those with whom I work.
- My family is an incredible blessing, and I consider my primary calling on this earth to do what I can to make sure that they will be with me in heaven.

A few scriptural passages that help direct my calling to serve in the capacity of physician to my patients are:

- *If anyone causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin,[a] it would be better for him to have a huge millstone hung around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea.* (Matthew 18:6),
- *Amen I tell you: Whoever will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.* (Mark 10:15),
- *Let no one look down on your youth. Instead, be an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, and in purity.* (1 Timothy 4:12).

The main reason for the calling in the care of children with special needs and mental health disorders is the tremendous need. It can be mentally draining to be presented with so many who are suffering. The challenge of offering spiritual counseling and support in a secular institution has had its hurdles. I am currently blessed to work in an organization that gives me latitude to openly practice as a Christian physician. Families dealing with children who are seriously ill, struggling with mental health issues, and certainly those facing death are in need of spiritual support as well as good medical care.

I approach the spiritual issues with my families, but I am not always given the green light to pursue these issues. This can be one of the most frustrating aspects of care in not being able to provide help in the areas they need the most.

One of the biggest mental stressors for me is dealing with personal and organizational greed. The distraction of personal greed and the fights with insurance companies regarding medical decision-making are significant barriers to the provision of patient-centered care.

The blessings associated with this calling have been abundant throughout my career and far outweigh any stressors that I have experienced. Some of my most awesome blessings have been the coming to faith of medical school roommates, coworkers, and patients. I have performed emergency baptisms and have been asked to be a sponsor for a patient's baptism. The prayers over me by four fellow physicians as we were struggling to right the path of our clinic was humbling and the results were eye-opening. Putting aside our plan and putting God at the helm was a real challenge to our trust in him. No clinic should survive the turnover of its CEO, CFO, chief medical officer, director of nursing, and public relations director within one year. I was beginning to think that God's plan was for the clinic to fold and for us to move on to continue his work elsewhere. Was I wrong! The whole culture of the clinic changed with openly Christian leadership. This experience led me to be bolder in my prayer, sharing of the Gospel, and study of Scripture at work.

The daily blessing of the relationships with my patients and coworkers is certainly making it difficult to consider retirement. I truly will miss them. I am currently following the biblical model of work hard and rest. I know God will continue to provide me with ample opportunity to share his love after I am no longer able to work in this capacity.

OUR PROTOCOL

"Therefore I urge you, brothers, by the mercies of God, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice—holy and pleasing to God—which is your appropriate worship."

(Romans 12:1)

OUR PRAYER

"(Lord)Hear us, cheer us by Thy teaching; Let our preaching and our labor, Praise Thee God and bless our neighbor."

(ELH 27:3)

OUT OF ZION

by **REV. PAUL WEBBER**, Contributing Writer
HOPE LUTHERAN CHURCH, West Jordan, Utah

Next summer, the annual LYA convention will be held in St. George, Utah. One of the highlights of this convention will be visiting Zion National Park, which is one of the most beautiful places in North America. Just knowing that, someone might think that the theme for next summer's LYA convention, "Out of Zion," is based on the fact that we will be visiting Zion National Park.

If any member of the youth board tries to tell you that Zion National Park had nothing to do with choosing the theme for next summer's convention, don't believe them. But the theme "Out of Zion" means much more for next summer's youth convention than just reminding those who attended that they got to visit Zion National Park.

The Evangelical Lutheran Hymnary contains many hymns that you won't find in either Christian Worship or the Lutheran Service Book because those hymns are unique to the Norwegian flavor of confessional Lutheranism which the ELS still

has the privilege to foster. One of those hymns is number 56, "Ye Lands to the Lord." Every verse in that hymn ends with the phrase, "Sing praise unto God out of Zion." But what exactly does that mean? Where is Zion? What is Zion?

In Old Testament times, Zion had a very specific meaning. The Temple mount in Jerusalem was called Mount Zion. Mount Zion was the place where the one true God, who is Himself omnipresent, decided to locate Himself for the sake of his people. God's Old Testament people knew that the temple was God's house, built where God had said to build it. At His house, God was present with and for His people, forgiving their sins through the promises of His Word and especially through the promise of forgiveness that God had attached to the various sacrifices for sin that were offered at the temple.

But now that Christ has come into the world and accomplished the promise of forgiveness and salvation that God had made through His Old Testament prophets, God does not locate Himself at the temple in Jerusalem anymore. He doesn't need to. The temple served its Old Testament purpose, the purpose which expired with the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ.

In these New Testament times, Zion still means the place where God has located Himself with and for the sake of His people. But now the location of Zion is wherever God's people come together around God's Means of Grace. So next summer in the worship services that are held during the youth

Zion National Park at sunrise.
 Utah, USA

convention, when the teens and chaperones sing “Ye Lands to the Lord,” along with many other hymns, they will, very literally, be singing praises unto God out of Zion.

And there is still yet another meaning of Zion besides the temple in Jerusalem in Old Testament times and God’s people gathered around the Means of Grace in New Testament times. Right now, Zion also means heaven, the dwelling place of God with all His saints. And in the future, Zion will mean the new heaven and the new earth where God will dwell with all His saints for eternity.

So right now, all Christians are already in Zion because God has brought them into his Church on earth through Baptism and keeps them there by faith. But even as all Christians give thanks to God for His grace and mercy in bringing them into His church, they are also looking forward to when they will be brought to join God’s saints from every time and place in the New Jerusalem, the great and final Zion, of which the prophet Isaiah writes in the 35th chapter of his book.

“No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beasts come upon it. They shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there. And the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with singing. Everlasting Joy shall be upon their heads. They shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.”

I am blessed to live and serve in the state of Utah, which means that I have already had the chance to bring my family to visit Zion National Park. I cannot recommend it enough. Everyone who attends next summer’s LYA convention will stand in awe at the wonders of God’s creation contained in Zion National Park.

And along with that, you will be able to gather with your fellow Christians from all over the country around God’s Word and sacraments, where God has located Himself and His forgiveness for us, and to respond to God’s grace as His people always have, praising him in word and song.

***Ye lands, to the Lord make a jubilant noise;
Glory be to God!***

***Oh, serve Him with joy, in His presence now rejoice;
Sing praise unto God out of Zion!***

***For good is the Lord, and His mercy is sure;
Glory be to God!***

***To all generations His truth shall still endure;
Sing praise unto God out of Zion!***

ELH 56, verses 1 & 4

In Your blest body let me be / E'en as the branch is to the tree / Thy life my life supplying
P. NICOLAI

Martin Luther's Busy Year

Exsurge Domine (“Excommunicated”)

*For over two centuries, Lutherans have commemorated the **Lutheran Reformation** on **October 31, 1517**, the day Martin Luther posted an invitation to debate ninety-five theses against indulgences.*

1520

Most think of that day as the beginning of the Reformation. There is at least one other date that is a more decisive point for the Lutheran Reformation:

— **June 15, 1520** —

Two and a half years after the ninety-five theses were published, a papal bull entitled **Exsurge Domine** threatening Luther with excommunication was published in Rome. It has that title because Pope Leo X chose to open the decree with the closing words of Psalm 82:8: “*Arise O God [Exsurge Domine in Latin], plead your own cause.*” A “bull” was an edict or decree (think “bulletin”) because of the metallic lead seal attached to papal decrees. Exsurge Domine gave Luther sixty days after its official publication in Saxony to recant those of his statements spelled out in the decree – 41 of them. If he did not repent after the sixty days, he would be excommunicated – a heretic.

There was considerable discussion about Luther in Rome during the first half of 1520. While Luther had spoken critically of the pope in previous years, it was in the Leipzig debate in June of 1519 that he made his strongest statement on the

papacy, and word of it traveled to Rome. The decree threatening Luther with excommunication was dated June 15 and was posted in St. Peter's basilica in Rome, but it was not officially published until it had been delivered to officials in Wittenberg on October 10. That meant that the sixty days would expire on December 10. In spite of the length of time it took for the document to arrive in Wittenberg, word of it had spread by word of mouth and Luther and others in Wittenberg knew of its existence as early as July.

By December, the day of reckoning was near; it was clear to all that Luther would not recant his statements condemned in the bull. On December 10, Philipp Melancthon posted a notice in Wittenberg for students and friends of evangelical reform to gather on the banks of the river Elbe, a spot used to burn the contaminated clothing of those who had died of the plague. The plan was to burn some of the most onerous decrees of the pope and some of the books that had contributed to the idea of papal supremacy. Such an act was an appropriate response to Exsurge Domine since the bull had called for Luther's books to be burned throughout Germany. Luther came to the book burning, and, perhaps on the spur of the moment, threw into the fire not the papal document itself, but a printed copy of it.

The threatened excommunication was actually carried out by another decree, *Decret Romanum Pontificem* ("The Roman Pope has been appointed to..."). The excommunication of Luther was much more decisive than any other event for the Reformation since it marked the point of no return for Luther – the church was not going to be reformed from within the church of Rome.

Why Excommunication?

Leading up to Pope Leo's threat of excommunication was the debate that took place in Leipzig in July of 1519. Luther's debate opponent was Dr. John Eck, a professor at the University of Ingolstadt in Germany. Original plans were for Eck to debate Luther's colleague Andreas Karlstadt, but Eck drew Luther into the proceedings and Karlstadt's part is hardly remembered today.

In one of the theses for debate, Luther said that the doctrine of papal supremacy was only four hundred years old and did not go back to the apostles. Dr. Eck early on had some sympathy for Luther, but because Luther had spoken less than glowingly about the papacy, Eck became severely critical of him. The statement of Luther that gave Eck an opening came when he offered this thesis to be debated: "The claim that the Roman Church stands above all others rests merely on the weak papal decretals of the last 400 years, while over against this claim there are 1,100 years of church history, the texts from the Holy Scriptures, and the decrees of the Sacred Council of Nicea."

In the early part of 1520, Eck drew up a list of quotations from Luther that he proposed as grounds for declaring Luther a heretic. The list of Luther's heretical statements to be condemned moved from the argument about repentance to indulgences and then

to the authority of the papacy. In an essay defending the statements Eck called heretical, Luther examined the arguments the popes had used to defend their authority and concluded that the doctrine of the supremacy of papal power dated back only four hundred years. Thus a primary ground for the threat to excommunicate Luther rested on his rejection of papal authority. Eck's list of 41 statements by Luther, covering a multitude of topics, were included in the papal bull and if not recanted by Luther would lead to Luther's excommunication. The *Decret Romanum Pontificem* by which Luther was condemned as a heretic reiterated the list of 41 errors

The Floodgates Are Opened

Before 1520, Luther had acquired a reputation as an astute, biblical theologian, scholar, and writer, but when Rome turned the screws on Luther, it opened a flood of reformatory writings. That flood began with four treatises written during 1520, followed by much more. Already in February of 1520, Luther wrote another essay, "*Treatise on Good Works*," a most important treatment of that subject. While Luther was awaiting the arrival of the papal decree during the summer and fall of 1520, he wrote three treatises, which are often bound together as "Three Treatises," in which he laid out the basis for reforming the church. Those three are: "*Letter to the Christian Nobility*," "*The Babylonian Captivity of the Church*," and on "*The Freedom of a Christian*." Thus the year 1520, while under tremendous pressure from Pope Leo, Luther churned out a body of writing that drove to the heart of the Reformation.

While Luther's "*Treatise on Good Works*" began as a sermon, it ended up as a little book. Luther made it clear that good works are only those laws commanded by God and that good works in no way lead to faith and salvation. Rather, truly good works only follow faith.

Luther's "*Letter to the Christian Nobility*" deals specifically with power in the church. Luther listed three walls or doctrines by which the church resists reforming: 1) they have declared that the spiritual authority rules over temporal authority; 2) that only the pope may interpret Scripture; and 3) only the pope may call a council of the church.

In the *Babylonian Captivity*, Luther analyzes the Roman system of seven sacraments and concludes that there are only three that are truly instituted by God – baptism, confession (absolution), and the Lord's Supper.

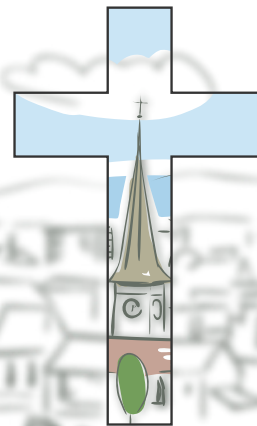
Finally, in "*Freedom of a Christian*," Luther lays out the doctrine of justification and the Christian life. He does so through the use of a paradox: "A Christian is a perfectly free Lord of all, subject to none. A Christian is a perfectly dutiful servant of all, subject to all."

In the following issues, we will examine these four writings as foundational documents of the Lutheran Reformation.

Cross Focus

Focusing on the world around us,
through the lens of the cross.

by **REV. PAUL FRIES**, Communication Director
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD, Mankato, Minn.



THE BEST CONSTRUCTION

The Eighth Commandment and its meaning reads:

You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

What does this mean?

We should fear and love God, so that we do not lie about, betray or slander our neighbor, but excuse him, speak well of him, and put the best construction on everything.

The Eighth Commandment is in for a tough year. An election year with a politically polarized nation is ideal soil for Satan to plant the seeds of anger, malice, and gossip. Our politicians, our media, and even our friends and family often don't seem to require facts before making judgments. In this type of climate, we as Christians must set the example of behavior, grounded in faith and informed by God's Word.

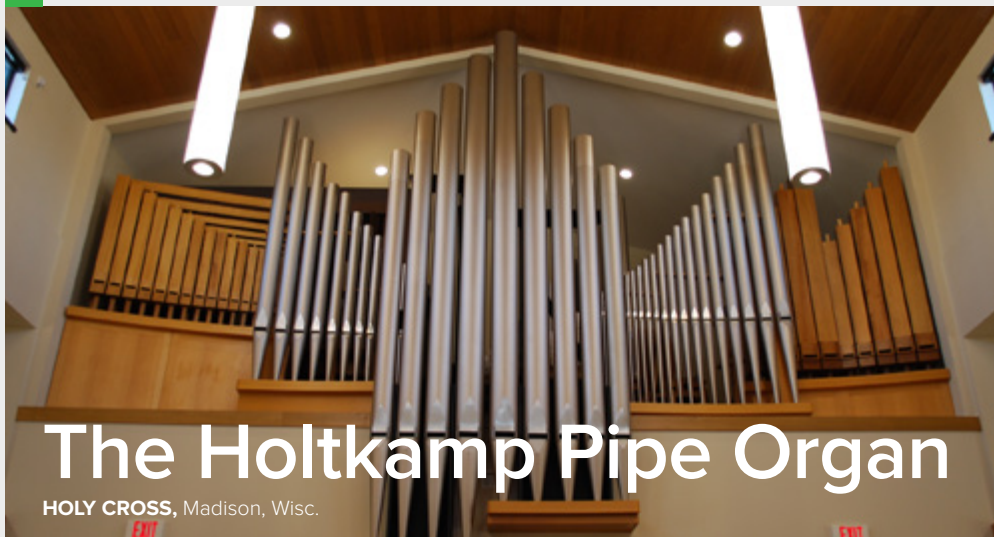
[Love] *does not rejoice over unrighteousness but rejoices with the truth* (1 Corinthians 13:6). There is no shortage of unrighteous and even evil conduct in our nation. At the same time, many things we hear in the news or read on the internet are only loosely based in fact – if having any factual basis at all. It can all be quite confusing and overwhelming.

As this year progresses, let's use this commandment as our guide, putting the best construction on the words and actions of others, and, at the same time, upholding and defending God's Word *speaking the truth in love* (Ephesians 4:15).

NO, THE WORLD WON'T END IN TWELVE YEARS. BUT IT MIGHT.

Recently, twelve years has been floated as the time frame for our world to end (as far as human life is concerned) because of climate change. Whether or not you believe the climate is changing due to human activity, as a Christian you can be assured that this timeline is false. The world could end in twelve years. It could also end tomorrow. But the human race will not become extinct because of a changing climate.

Jesus' words in Matthew 27 are quite clear that the end of the world will come when we least expect it and that the times will seem quite normal up until His return. He sums up His words with verse 44: "*You also need to be ready for this reason: The Son of Man is coming at an hour when you do not expect him.*" As a synod, as congregations, and as individual Christians, our greatest concern should not be climate change. Rather, it must be strengthening the faith of believers and bringing God's Word to all who have not yet believed.



The Holtkamp Pipe Organ

HOLY CROSS, Madison, Wisc.

30 ranks, 29 stops, 1174 pipes

The pipe organ as a worship leadership instrument has a long-standing tradition at Holy Cross. Our four rank Schantz Pipe Organ was installed in 1964 at Holy Cross. Pastor George Orvick signed the contract. This instrument served well for over 50 years. Upon the sale of the Milwaukee St. property the Shantz was donated to a mission congregation in California.

The tradition continued as we researched instruments and the space needs for a new organ.

The Worship Center Design Committee considered room acoustics, placement and structural needs. The Organ Committee was established to research types of organs: digital, pipe, or hybrid. This committee visited local churches to sample the various sounds. The recommendation was

made to pursue a pipe organ purchase and the search began for new and used instrument possibilities.

Jim Baxter, our organist, was tasked with finding suitable instruments by contacting organ builders and a variety of used pipe organ locations. He visited a Schantz Organ in Ohio, a Casavant Organ in Elm Grove, WI, and a Holtkamp Organ in Maryland for quality used instruments. It was decided the 1994 Holtkamp for sale at Brown Memorial Woodbrook Presbyterian Church in Baltimore, MD was the most compatible for our needs. Our gratitude to Chris Holtkamp, the builder, for his insight and knowledge. The purchase, moving and reinstallation of this instrument was presented to Church Council and forwarded to the Voters Assembly for their approval. The motion passed to purchase the Holtkamp for \$60,000.

Today the instrument is valued at \$850,000.

Nolte Organ Building of Milwaukee, WI was hired to relocate the organ to the new Holy Cross sanctuary. David M. Storey Pipe Organ Builders, Baltimore, MD dismantled, packed and shipped the instrument to Madison and Milwaukee for storage until total funds were raised.

The Nolte's work included redesigning the instrument to fit our organ chamber, adding chimes, digital control, zimbelstern and refinishing the organ console. It was John Nolte's creative facade design that retained the Holtkamp aesthetic. Many thanks to John and Jeremiah Nolte and Chuck Habeck for their patience and expertise to guide us through this project.

Through the overwhelming generosity of the congregation, the \$245,000 for the entire project was raised in under six months outside of the church budget. We extend a sincere thank you to all who contributed so generously, both with funds and physical labor to move pipes into organ chamber.

The Lord has indeed blessed Holy Cross during this entire project. The pipe facade is impactful, the sound is supportive and uplifting, and the acoustics of the room enhance the use of the Holtkamp Organ in sending forth praises to God.

SOLI DEO GLORIA
To God Alone Be The Glory

52nd Annual | Bjarne Wollan Teigen Reformation Lectures

YLVISAKER FINE ARTS CENTER, Oct. 31 - Nov. 1, 2019
BETHANY LUTHERAN COLLEGE, Mankato, Minn.

Sponsored by:
BETHANY LUTHERAN COLLEGE &
BETHANY LUTHERAN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

This year the theme of the Reformation Lectures was "Lutheran Preaching through the Centuries." The lectures emphasized proper Lutheran preaching. The first lecture, given by Dr. Robinson, was entitled, "Preaching in the Reformation." In this essay there was a discussion of homiletical work in the pre-Reformation and Reformation era. The works of Luther, Melancthon, and Johannes Mathesius are highlighted. The second lecture, presented by Dr. Kuster, was entitled, "Preaching in the Nineteenth



(left to right) Pres. Gaylin Schmeling, Pres. Paul Wendland, Dr. Thomas Kuster, Dr. Paul Robinson, Prof. Nicholas Proksch, Prof. Thomas Rank, Dr. Timothy Schmeling

Century." Here the essay centered on the sermonizing of a number of important Lutheran preachers. Among those men discussed were Charles Porterfield Krauth, F. C. D. Wyneken, C. F. W. Walther, U. V. Koren, H. C. Schwan, and Henry Sieck. The third lecture, given by Pres. Em. Wendland, was entitled, "Preaching Today." In this es-

say the essayist reviewed current trends in preaching and outlined a Lutheran identity in preaching. He pointed out what makes Lutheran preaching distinctly and uniquely Lutheran.

The complete lectures will be published in the March issue of *the Lutheran Synod Quarterly*.

MEETING MY BROTHERS & SISTERS:

Faith Lutheran Parkersburg, Iowa

by **REV. MATTHEW BROOKS**, Contributing Writer
FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH, Parkersburg, Iowa



Faith Lutheran Church is located in Parkersburg, Iowa – a town of about 1800 people and eight churches.

Faith Lutheran Church had its beginnings in 1970 when, for doctrinal reasons, Pastor Elroy Buhr led about 200 souls out of the ALC congregation in town. For about a year, the small group used other facilities for worship and activities until the congregation was officially formed and a church building erected in 1971.

Over the years, like many congregations in rural settings, the membership of the church has shrunk so that now the congregation numbers 43. An encouraging blessing is that over the past 6 years, nine new households have either re-joined the church or have become members through adult confirmation. Average attendance on a typical Sunday is 25. Faith has an active Sunday School that meets throughout the school year and Vacation Bible School every summer.

To celebrate the church's 50th anniversary in 2021, an anniversary/outreach committee has been meeting monthly to brainstorm ways of increasing our visibility in the community. When we celebrate our anniversary, we want it to be an event that glorifies God and communicates to all that God has shown His love to us primarily by sending His Son, Jesus, to be our Savior from sin.

Faith's current pastor, Matthew Brooks, first met the congregation when he came from Mankato, Minnesota, to help with the tornado clean-up in 2008. He has served Faith since 2013 and considers it a privilege to serve such a kind, faithful flock that wants to remain faithful to God's Word and the Lutheran Confessions.