

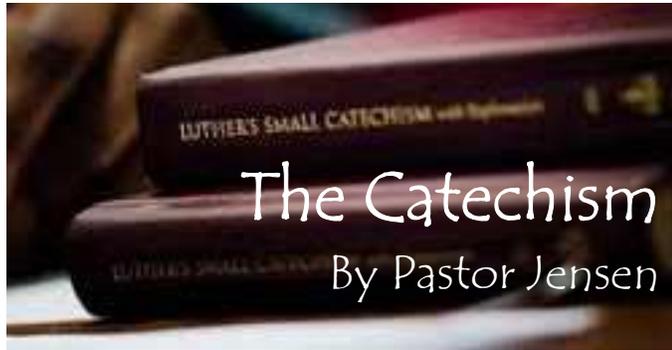
# The Kaiserslautern Lutheran



Nr. 7

*Gottes Wort und Luthers Lehr' vergehet nun und nimmermehr*

July 2022



When Missouri Synod Lutherans speak of “the Catechism,” they are often referring to the synodical version of *Luther’s Small Catechism* that has been revised and passed down for years within our congregations and church body. Remember, if you don’t have a copy, you can get one from KELC as part of the Essential Lutheran Library (thanks to Deaconess Carolyn Brinkley!) Strictly speaking, however, the catechism and catechesis have more to do with passing on information orally. During catechesis class every Sunday, we use the synodical catechism as a guide, but our emphasis is on oral questions and answers. The words “catechism” and “catechesis” come from the Greek root “echo,” meaning “to sound” or “to ring out.” Although we have it as a book today, the catechism was originally a summary of teachings passed down by word of mouth. Luther’s catechism appeared at a time when literacy rates were rather low. The content was preached in sermons, and even printed on posters for the information to be taught to all. Those who had the ability to read could recite the content of the catechism to others that all Christians might take to heart

emphasized in the Middle Ages, so the catechism Luther received included the Decalogue, Creed, and Lord’s Prayer. These are the fundamental texts necessary for everyone to know in order to be a Christian. Luther also included Baptism and the Lord’s Supper, as the Sacraments are formative for the Christian life as well. Later additions include Confession, the Table of Duties, other prayers for morning, evening, and meals, and even sometimes marriage and baptismal rites, music, and illustrations. The content of the catechism, the key texts of the Christian faith, could be expressed in many different ways, including the extensive questions and answers we find in printed catechisms today.

The Ten Commandments are rooted in natural law and divine revelation, and so express the way man is to relate to both God and fellow man. Medieval catechisms tended to stress virtues and vices, but already in the later medieval era, the Ten Commandments were again given a place of prominence. The First Commandment is the basis of all following Commandments because a

the catechism’s content.

Going back to the Early Church, the content of the catechism has always included the Creed and the Lord’s Prayer. The Ten Commandments were again

right relationship with God affects how we worship God and receive his blessings, as well as how we interact with our neighbor. Again, the Ten Commandments provide the contours of how man is to live in relation to both God and fellow man.

The Creed is a compendium of Scripture that provides a map for Christians to use in reading Scripture. In the Creed, the story of creation and new creation, of the fall into sin and redemption in Jesus Christ, of the Holy Spirit and the forgiveness of sins, is laid out succinctly for both the simple and mature in the Faith. Without the overarching framework the Creed provides, Christians would become lost in the depth and profundity of the Bible. The history of salvation summarized in the Creed is the basic information necessary for someone to know if they want to be a Christian and understand what the Bible is talking about.

The Lord’s Prayer connects the Christian to God and to the worship of the Church. Whereas the Creed teaches us what to believe, the Lord’s Prayer informs us who we are to call upon. Although this is already known from the Ten Commandments (Commandments 1-3), the Lord’s Prayer teaches how that is to happen. Jesus Himself entrusted this prayer to the Church that we might know how to address the Father. We learn in the Lord’s Prayer our identity as children of God.

The primary catechetical texts that all Christians must know are the Ten

Commandments, the Creed, and the Lord's Prayer, but Luther also included the Sacraments because of their fundamental role in the Christian life. Baptism is not merely the entrance into the Christian life that must be constantly renewed through penance (the Roman Catholic position). Baptism is a new birth that has ongoing relevance throughout the Christian life, with repentance constantly taking us back to our Baptism. In the Lord's Supper, we receive the forgiveness of sins and unity with Christ. These important aspects of the daily life of Christians were once again included in Luther's version of the catechism. The later addition of Confession, other prayers, etc. aids the Christian in clarifying his identity in Jesus Christ and new life as a Christian in this world.

The key texts of Christianity, as found in the Catechism, are versatile in their application to Christian life and identity. In Luther's day, sermons were a popular way of instructing Christians in the basics of Christianity. Catechetical sermons were popular in the Middle Ages and were used by the Reformers, too, as a way of reaching the laity, many of whom had no other way of receiving instruction due to illiteracy. The catechetical sermons' emphasis on the basics of Christianity provided a framework for the hearer to properly understand all other sermons and teaching on God's Word. With the arrival of the printing press, these sermons could be distributed and read to a wider audience. In fact, Luther's explanations of the catechism were originally preached from the pulpit, and only later published for distribution.

Medieval catechisms were used as confessional manuals for priests to examine penitents and assign various forms of penance. Luther also used the catechism as a confessional

manual, but in a different sense. Rather than enumeration of sins and prescription of good works, Luther emphasized the instruction about repentance and forgiveness a Christian should undergo before receiving the Lord's Supper. The Lord's Supper could only be given to those who were examined and showed they knew the Catechism, that is, that they knew their sin and desired to do better.

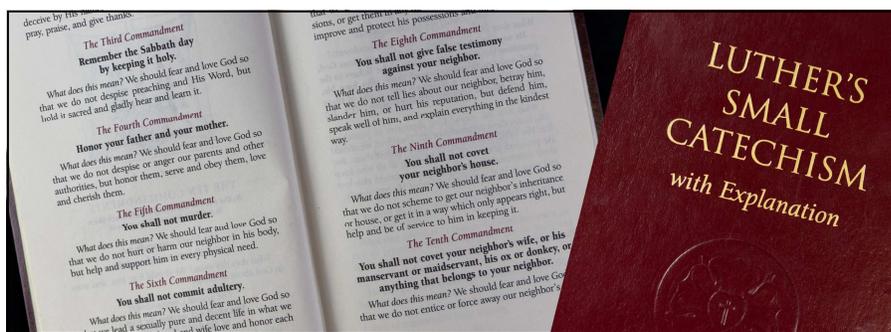
The Catechism was also used as a prayer book for Christians. Luther had already replaced medieval prayer books with his *Little Prayer Book*, but the catechism supplanted even that. In his preface to the Large Catechism, Luther recommended meditation on the chief parts of the catechism as a replacement for the canonical hours. Meditating on the texts of God's Word was supplemented with morning and evening prayers, as well as prayers before and after meals. The entire catechism can be prayed through meditation on each of the Ten Commandments, the assertions of the Creed, the petitions of the Lord's Prayer, and the scriptural texts foundational to the Sacraments of the Church.

The printed catechism was not the only method of teaching the key texts of Christianity. The Church also taught the catechism by means of liturgy and hymnody. The text of the catechism was incorporated into different parts of the service as part of the lectionary for the day. In Wittenberg, the Sunday Matins and Vespers services were used for teaching on the catechism. The three

main parts, that is, the Ten Commandments, the Creed, and the Lord's Prayer, were taught, but also the Baptism, the Lord's Supper, marriage, and confession.

In terms of music, the Creed was recited in Luther's German Mass by way of a hymn based on the Creed. In this way, the meaning of the Creed could be expounded and easily remembered because of the music. Luther additionally wrote hymns for each of the other chief parts of the catechism. Lutheran hymnals always contained these and other catechetical hymns that the people could easily sing in the various services and remember from day to day. The key texts of the Christian faith could always be in the hearts and minds of the people.

Until recently, the catechism has always been understood not as just a book, but as the content of the Christian faith summarized most especially in the Ten Commandments, the Creed, and the Lord's Prayer, but also in the key texts of the Sacraments. Luther understood the importance of a basic framework for the faith, and so found various ways of passing down that framework through preaching, liturgy, hymnody, and the printed word. From generation to generation, both simple and mature Christians understand the faith through such a framework and will continue to find fresh ways of passing down that faith once delivered to the Saints to generations yet unborn.





A Letter from the Mission Field

## Pastor Christian Tiews

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ at KELC!

### Part I of II

I was in Pakistan last month. My assignment was to teach the Pakistani students of our online Lutheran seminary basic doctrine of the ancient Christian faith, *Law and Gospel* to be more precise. But to our surprise, the Lutheran seminary students from Pakistan were joined by 19 Pentecostal pastors fascinated by Lutheran Christianity who are converting to Lutheranism, along with their congregations.

These 19 pastors and their congregations are a subset of 200 Pentecostal congregations, all of which desire to become Lutheran. Why? Because they have come to realize that only Lutheran Christianity gives you the true and faithful teachings of the ancient church. Because every other denomination other than Lutheran Christianity either adds or subtracts central teachings from Scripture and thus *differs* from what we know about Christianity from the New Testament.

This exciting development in Pakistan means that, God willing, we will gain well over 100,000 new Lutherans in Pakistan in the next few years. However, converting Pentecostal Christians is of course not the focus of our missionary work. It simply means that we will have over 100,000 more

people on the ground who will help us share the Gospel with their Muslim neighbors, of which there are over 230 million in Pakistan.

During my stay in Islamabad, I had many opportunities to speak with our seminary students and these 19 pastors. "What is it like to be a Christian in Pakistan?" I asked them. Even though Islamabad is a more peaceful place than other cities in Pakistan, essentially Christians are under attack from two sides: From Muslims *and* from Hindus.

Christians make up only 1% of the population but they are very bold about their faith, very often wear crosses around their necks, and boldly share the gospel in their churches, with the doors wide open, for the whole neighborhood to hear. By the way, they also have a man with a shotgun standing at the front door, ready to stop a mob that might try to penetrate the church.

We Christians in the West are not used to having to defend our faith and we are certainly not used to being persecuted for it. However, things are starting to change, at least in the United States...

Part II next month!

—Pastor Christian Tiews

## Hail & Farewell

Sadly, we say Farewell to **the Tittel Family** as they PCS to London.

Also, Farewell to the **Pflugradt Family** as they head to the Washington, DC area.

God's peace be with you.

—  
Welcome Back! to **the Hester Family** returning to join us from Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas.

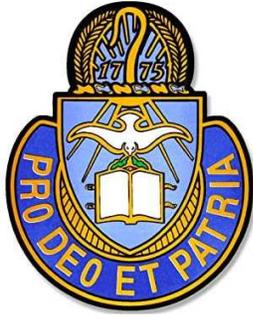
And Welcome to **Jared Anderson** as he joins us from Baltimore, MD.

## LOOK FOR US ON FACEBOOK & MESSENGER

### Kaiserslautern Evangelical Lutheran Church (KELC)

For news, worship sign-ups and fellowship events.





# PRO DEO ET PATRIA

“For God and Country”

—The motto of the U.S. Army Chaplaincy,  
since July 29<sup>th</sup>, 1775

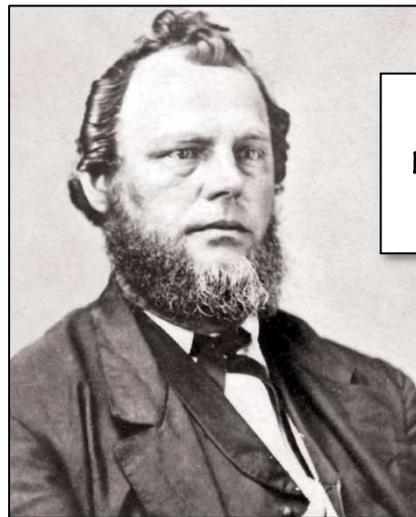
In the May newsletter, we were introduced to the LCMS Ministry to the Armed Forces (MAF), the mission arm of our church body that endorses Chaplains for the military. A collaborative relationship must exist between each military branch and MAF, as well as between MAF and the local congregation that has a Vicar or Pastor who desires to be a Chaplain. And of course, it is critical that the local congregation and the Seminarian/Chaplain Candidate or Pastor that seeks to accession as a Chaplain be on the same page. It is “good, right, and salutary” that congregations and future Chaplains support one another in all facets of the application process, training, and before/after the final Call from the Board of Missions. A close partnership between congregation and minister is vital to the formation and success of a military Chaplain, whether the Chaplain intends to serve as a Reserve Chaplain/Parish Pastor, or as an Active Duty Chaplain.

In the case of former KELC Vicar/Chaplain Candidate, now Reverend/Chaplain (CPT) Ryan Schnake; KELC is intimately familiar with the process of producing

Chaplains for the Army. Currently, MAF endorses:

- 58 Active Duty Chaplains
- 44 Reserve Chaplains
- 26 Guard Chaplains
- 7 Chaplain Candidates
- 11 Chaplains for: the Coast Guard Auxiliary (2), Directors of Religious Education (2), and Civil Air Patrol (7)

From the first LCMS Pastor to serve as a military Chaplain (Rev. Friedrich Richmann, in 1862 for the



**Chaplain  
Friedrich Wilhelm Richmann  
1862**

58<sup>th</sup> Regiment of the Ohio Volunteers during the Civil War), and CH (CPT) Henry Gerecke (whose ministry to German prisoners at the Nuremberg trials is chronicled in the book “Mission at

Nuremberg”), through the decades to Army Chaplain Ray Larson whom I introduced to you in the last newsletter: the Lord has, and always will, provide Pastors and Chaplains to work in the ripened fields.

I’ll conclude this series with a final example of how the Lord provides Shepherds for the Office of Holy Ministry. If you recall, I’m the result of Chaplain Ray Larson catechizing my wife Camille at Ft. Riley Kansas in 1983. Therefore, I call Chaplain Ray my “Spiritual Father”. Fast forward to 2008 and I’m sitting

in my makeshift office trailer and there’s a knock on my door. It’s from a Soldier that was deployed with my battalion in Ramadi, Iraq.

Specialist Joshua Schiff was an MP and assigned to the 438<sup>th</sup> Military Police Company, an Army National Guard unit from Kentucky. Apparently, he had attended one of my worship services and wanted to know about this “Lutheran thing”. My answer, which has proved



Chaplain Captain Henry Gerecke

Sacramento, we can be sure that a Call into the ministry is part and parcel with His work. You can imagine how full of joy that phone call was for me and Camille, not to mention the subsequent story that was told at the MAF banquet later that night! We are all in this together, watching and participating in, the mysterious yet very practical way to equip the Saints for service both in the pew and the pulpit.

I have yet to persuade Rev. Joshua Schiff, now pastor of Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church in Orange, CT to join the Army Chaplaincy, but it's not for lack of trying! As a Called and Ordained servant of the Word, Rev. Schiff is a joyful testament to the fact that the story continues...not by what we have done, but by the grace and mercy of our Lord bringing loved ones to faith in His Son Jesus Christ through redeemed sinners. Pro Deo et Patria!

beneficial to so many conversations, was: "Why do you ask?" SPC Schiff began to explain to me his previous experiences with religion, his experiences with God's Word, and he was intrigued by "the whole thing". I don't recall what happened next, other than I handed him a Luther's Small Catechism and asked him to come back after looking through it.

been trying to get ahold of you for the past couple months. I wanted to tell you that I'm leaving for the Seminary in Ft. Wayne this summer. I want to become an LCMS Pastor and you should know that the Small Catechism you gave me was the start of this whole thing". And there you have it. Chaplain Ray's spiritual grandson.

Our Battalion was rapidly re-stationed to Taji, Iraq and I don't think SPC Schiff and I ever had a chance to talk again "post Catechism handoff". Fast forward to January 2017. Camille and I were in our hotel room at San Diego Naval Air Station, North Island getting ready for a MAF banquet during our MAF Annual re-certification training. The phone rings and the voice on the other end asks: "Is this Chaplain Ayers?" No, I didn't say "Why do you ask" ...but, "Yes, it is, who am I speaking with?"

Whenever, and wherever, the Spirit works through Word and

"You might not remember me Sir, but this is Joshua Schiff and I've



Rev. Joshua Schiff  
& Family

# Rescuing My Mother from Ukraine

An Update from Oksana Diring

June 27, 2022, Oberursel, Germany, Lutheran Theological Seminary. I am sitting on the terrace of the apartment that has been a home for me and my mom for the past three months; the weather is nice - not too hot; the birds are singing; two neighborhood cats come and check on me from time to time. I am thinking about how to tell our story, where to start...

Well let me introduce myself:

My name is Oksana Diring, I was born in Ternopil', Ukraine. For the past 16 years I have been living in the United States. My husband is the pastor of St. James Evangelical Lutheran Church in North Branch, Michigan, pastor Brian Diring. We have two children: Danilo will be 5 in a few days; and Yesenia is 3.

February 23rd was our little daughter's birthday. We had a wonderful day; the house was decorated with balloons; birthday cake; a fun time opening presents; and at the end we watched all together our daughter's favorite movie. At the end of the day everybody was tired and happy, my husband had put the kids to bed, and I had finished my household chores. I sat down to check emails and messages. Then I read a message from my friend, telling me that Ukraine is under attack by the Russian army. I was in shock; I couldn't believe it. I turned on the TV to watch the news, which reported the same. I checked the cameras in my mom's apartment. My mother is 84 years old and has dementia. When COVID started, with the lockdown and getting COVID, she was no longer able to live by herself, so we had to find a lady who would live

with her and help her with cooking and cleaning, and to provide companionship. My mother and her caregiver were peacefully asleep.

I went upstairs to wake up my husband. He rushed to the TV to watch the news, and we both sat in silence. Then I heard my phone ringing. It was



my mom's caregiver. She was in a panic, asking me if I knew what is going on. "Yes, I do know," I told her. She told me "I am sorry, I want to be alive, I am running, I will feed your mom breakfast, and I will be gone." (I understand, when people are panicking, they can't think clearly and make abrupt decisions.)

Mom can't live by herself - she can't make herself a cup of tea or heat up a bowl of soup. I called the other caregiver (the two alternated, one week on, one off) and asked if she could come earlier for her shift. She said yes, stating she would come later that afternoon.

But I soon learned that inter-city buses were not operating. So my friend drove his car to get her.

While making these arrangements, my husband and I spent a sleepless night, because Ukraine is seven hours ahead of Michigan, and we were wondering what to do next. How would we get Mom out of Ukraine? How long would Ternopil' be safe?

Over the next three days we tried to make arrangements through a contact of my husbands to get Mom to the Polish border—this effort eventually failed, but not before we had already purchased a plane ticket for me to fly to Poland to meet Mom. After church on Sunday the 27<sup>th</sup>, my husband and a member of our church drove me to Chicago (10 hours, round trip), while our children stayed with another member family. While I was gone, my husband would take care of the kids, with some help from members of the congregation. I hated to leave my kids, but we both agreed that we had a responsibility to see to Mom's safety and well-being.

I arrived in Poland the next morning and went to the American consulate. Since I didn't have an appointment, the guard wouldn't let me in--it didn't matter that I am a US citizen. He was very rude. There were a lot of people outside the consulate, and a consular officer explained to the Ukrainians that if they have relatives or friends in the US they will get a visa, and even told them how to get an expedited appointment. At that moment I had all my general questions answered, and in a good mood I returned to the hotel to call my husband and tell him we need to apply for a visa for Mom in Krakow, Poland.

When I returned to the hotel and connected to the internet, I got bad news: my mother's other caregiver panicked like the first, gathered all the groceries she could carry, took all of Mom's money and left. I was not too

far from Mom's, about 10 - 12 hours; I was planning to just jump on a train and go. Fortunately, another friend told me not to worry—she would stay with Mom until we arranged transportation. It was a relief. Now I had to arrange how to get Mom across the border.

Fast forward to March 10<sup>th</sup>. Despite some car trouble, God was with us, and I met Mom and my friend Lidia at the border. I was happy to see my mom and my friend. My friend and I looked at each other, crying a bit, and talking. The time went fast, then she had to go back to Ukraine. Her husband was in Teroborona, training to defend his country. I looked at my friend and wondered when would be the next time I'd see her again. We both had the same thoughts, both crying and looking at each other in silence; then she slowly went back to her car.

Mom was sitting on the bus, looking out the window and asking me, "Are we really in Poland?" I said, "Yes we are, Mom." - what a beautiful country.

By the early evening we arrived in Krakow. Mom was tired and started to have a panic attack—she wanted to go back home. It is hard for people with dementia to be moved to a different place. Somehow I got mom to bed. The next day, my husband applied for a travel visa for mom, we couldn't schedule an appointment for that day as everything was booked until the end of 2022.

My husband finally turned to our senator for help. One of her staffers advised us that Mom needed to go to Frankfurt, as the Frankfurt consulate is processing immigrant visas for Ukrainians.

Now I had to find a place to stay in Frankfurt, but God had a plan. Our friend Catharine Soule (married to ELS pastor Andrew Soule) called some friends to find a place for us to stay.



Through James Krikava, she got into contact with pastor Nathaniel Jensen, who is serving as a pastor of Kaiserslautern Evangelical Lutheran Church. Pastor Jensen made arrangements for us to stay at the Lutheran seminary in Oberursel. So I bought train tickets from Krakow to Berlin and Berlin to Frankfurt.

I neglected to mention thus far, that while Mom can stand and move about a bit, she needs a wheelchair for travel. Once again, God already had everything planned. Our friend Claudia (wife of ELFK pastor Jonas Schroeter) arranged for someone in Krakow to help me load Mom and the baggage on the train. A station employee and four guards lifted Mom in the wheelchair onto the train. In Berlin, another employee met us at the car with helpers to help us out of the train. Since our train arrived in Berlin three hours late, we missed our connecting train, but they gave us new tickets and got us to the right platform (the railway station in Berlin had five levels with trains arriving and departing from all five).

A seminary student named Markus Busenius met us in Frankfurt at 2 AM and took us to Oberursel. We settled comfortably in one of the apartments.

The next day, after Mom and I both had a good amount of rest, I went to look for a grocery store. On campus I met a lovely lady. She asked me if I was the lady from the United States with the mother from Ukraine. I said yes. The lady smiled, and I felt so much warmth coming from her. She introduced herself as Doerte Rambach da Silva. At that moment, I didn't know that she and I would become very good friends. She took me and my mom under her wing, and became our "guardian angel," setting up doctor's appointments for Mom, handling Mom's registration requirements, medical insurance, tons of paperwork and much more.

In addition to checking on us regularly, Doerte showed me around, took me grocery shopping, etc. We took walks in the forest and went on bike rides. I used to ride a lot when I was a child. The bike rides, especially, have been very therapeutic. Doerte loves to do gardening around the Seminary campus; she has been doing it for many years, planting flowers, mowing the lawn, etc. When it was time for spring cleaning, I enjoyed helping her. Her husband Gilberto da Silva, professor of Church History at the seminary, also helped us a lot, he

arranged a lot of things in the background. For example, he arranged for us to be able to stay here in our apartment the whole time.

Since I hadn't packed much, not knowing I would be in Europe so long, Doerte got me and Mom some clothing. She even arranged for me to borrow a sewing machine from her friend.

Doerte saw me when I was sad, frustrated, and disappointed....

Taking care of a person with dementia is all new to me, especially being "on duty" 24/7 with no break. I had to learn to deal with a lot of new things. It is hard to look at your mom and see her falling apart. When I met her at the Polish border she knew who I was, but now she doesn't (always) know me, she forgets how to hold a fork, she forgets the names of things, and much more. My Mom is with me now, she has everything what she needs, and we will take care of her.

I had many sleepless nights in the beginning, I just couldn't sleep. My hand automatically reaches for the phone, and I go straight to the news, reading stories of other Ukrainian families and the trouble they've had to live through. While waiting in Poland for Mom, I met many Ukrainians who were fleeing the War; all of them had their own unique stories. I consider myself blessed—God was watching over me: I never had to hear the sounds of air raid sirens, missiles passing overhead, and explosions; I never had to sit in a cold basement, waiting...



On Wednesday, July 6<sup>th</sup>, at 8:00 AM my Mom finally has an interview appointment at the US consulate in Frankfurt. We have been waiting for this appointment for a long time, but after much paperwork and fee payment, we have finally reached this point.

Sunday evening, July 3<sup>rd</sup>, I was sitting outside on the terrace of our apartment, the day was warm and lovely, the birds were singing—the cats didn't come to check on me today. I am excited and nervous for Mom's future, is it in the United States? Can I take her with me? And when? So many questions. Her case is class B, only one officer will decide to give her a visa or not.

I only can pray and lay our future into God's hands, He knows the best, he will guide us in the right direction.

We are very thankful, to God, and to all the people here in Germany, in Ukraine, and in the States who have done so much to get us this far. It is impossible to list all those who have helped us, because we don't know all of their names. We can only say thanks to God, and thank God for all of you.



## The Lord's Prayer

Our Father  
who art in heaven  
hallowed be Thy Name;  
Thy kingdom come,  
Thy will be done on  
earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our  
daily bread; and forgive  
us our trespasses as we  
forgive those who  
trespass against us; and  
lead us not into  
temptation, but deliver  
us from evil. For Thine  
is the kingdom and the  
power and the glory  
forever and ever.  
Amen.

## Vater Unser

Vater unser im Himmel,  
geheiligt werde  
dein Name.  
Dein Reich komme.  
Dein Wille geschehe,  
wie im Himmel so auf  
Erden.  
Unser tägliches Brot gib  
uns heute.  
Und vergib uns unsere  
Schuld,  
wie auch wir vergeben  
unsern Schuldigern.  
Und führe uns nicht in  
Versuchung,  
sondern erlöse uns von  
dem Bösen.  
Denn dein ist das Reich  
und die Kraft und die  
Herrlichkeit in Ewigkeit.  
Amen.

## Sundays at KELC

### Divine Service

Sunday Mornings  
8:30-9:30 AM

### Fellowship Time

Sunday Mornings  
9:30-10:15 AM

### Sunday School & Bible Study

at Kirche Mittendrïn  
10:15-11:15 AM

### Catechesis

St. Michael's Basement  
11:30 AM-12:30 PM

## SAVE THE DATE

### Wittenberg Germany Tour



### Labor Day Weekend

Sept 2nd-5th



### Congratulations to Chaplain Gregory Todd

LCMS Chaplain Gregory Todd with MAF Director, Chaplain Craig Mueller,  
on the day Chaplain Todd was promoted to  
Chief of Chaplains for the United States Navy.

# CHOIR REHEARSAL



LSB 499

Come, Holy Ghost,  
Creator blest

Wednesdays after  
Confessions Study

# CONFESSIONS STUDY

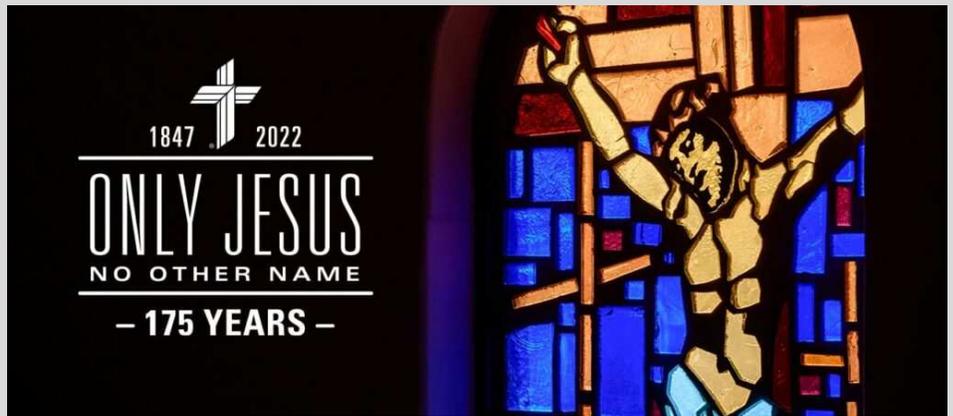


Wednesday Nights  
at 7:00 PM  
Location TBD

# Fellowship Lunch

## SAVE THE DATE

Sunday, July 24th



Dear Fellow Christian,

4-24-22

I can't thank you enough for being the "third leg" of my Thrivent Action Project. Those who donated, and myself, felt comfortable that the new underwear would be getting to the Ukraine people. My husband and I have had all of you in our prayers and sent money. However, this project felt like action with a need that they would all have.

God be with you and all the others who are "serving God by serving others".

God bless,

Dorene Santel

# July Birthdays



3rd Karleen Hester

4th The United States

A note from Dorene Santel who, together with Dawn Werner, collected and sent us new undergarments for the Ukrainian refugees.

# The Liturgical Calendar

—by Emma Jensen

—excerpt from *The Zion Trumpet*,  
Rev. Mark P. Braden, Zion Ev.  
Lutheran Church, Detroit

The world has its calendars. They chronicle and forecast the passing of time. In our part of the world, they typically show Monday as the first day of the week, which responds to the normal work schedule of many – Monday through Friday. But the Church is not like the world.

For the Church, the first day of the week is Sunday. Matthew 28:1 teaches us, "Now after the Sabbath, as the first day of the week began to dawn, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb." Sunday is the Day of Resurrection. Sunday is the Lord's Day, as Revelation 1:10-11 teaches: "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day, and I heard behind me a loud voice, as of a trumpet, saying, 'I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last.'"

Sunday is the first day of the week for the Christian. The rhythm of our lives is based on the Divine Service... Each week begins for us with that greatest Celebration on earth – God's Service. In that Service, God comes to us with His Saving Gifts. He bestows upon us His forgiveness and salvation. We hear His Word of forgiveness publicly proclaimed as we confess our sins and receive Holy Absolution...

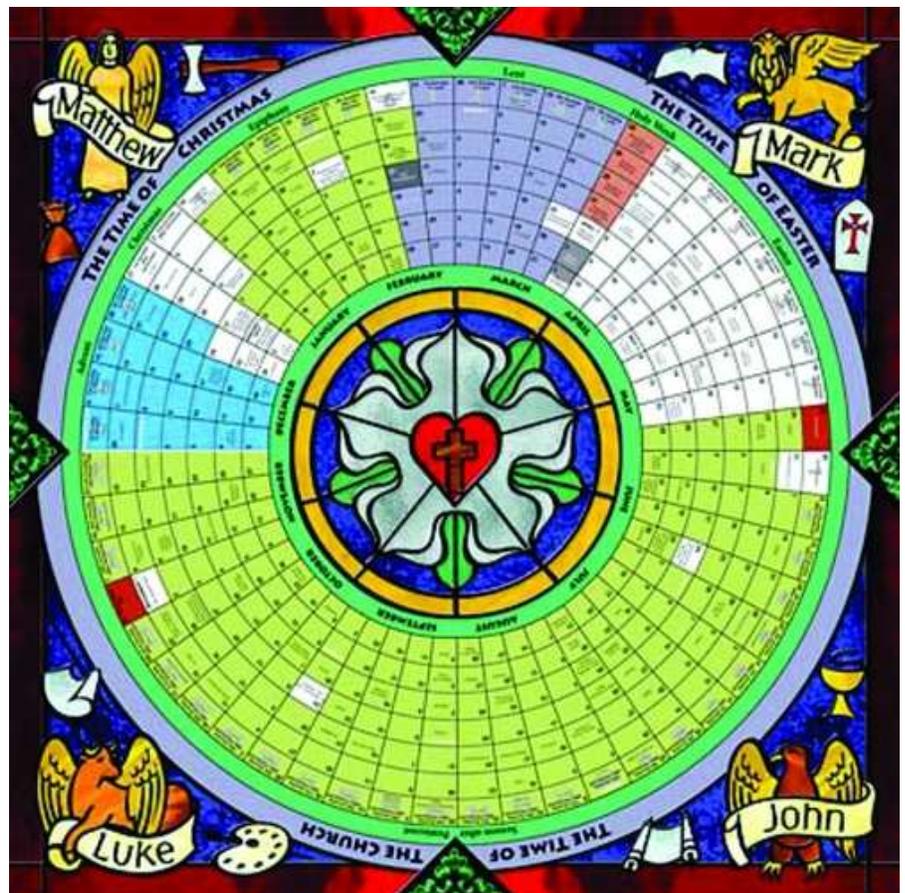
In God's Divine Service to us we hear His Word proclaimed and sung. We respond to His Gifts with thanksgiving and praise and prayer, our "service" to Him. We engage kinetically, standing, sitting, kneeling, bowing... as we respond physically to

the presence of God and His Gifts, the Divine Service invoking in us a response of mind, soul, and body. We kneel to receive Christ's Body and His Blood. We hear His dismissal, "Depart in peace," and we go forth to live out the week strengthened of faith, encouraged and comforted, in the hope that only the Gospel in all its forms can give.

The theme of the Sunday pericopes ["readings"] sets the theme, and the liturgical color, for the week that follows... The world has its observances. Many are national. We think of the Fourth of July and President's Day, for instance. In South America these dates are unimportant.

They have their own national observances. The Church too has its observances, many of which predate the founding of all modern nations. These are not national, not regional, but universal, or "catholic" observances...

For the Christian the liturgical calendar informs our daily life and worship. As we daily pray the appointed Psalms, we note that the first Psalm of our morning prayer is the Introit Psalm from Sunday. We use the Sunday Collect as the first Collect as we daily pray... We watch the daily liturgical calendar for commemorations of the martyrs and of our Fathers in the faith who have gone before us, and our faith is enriched in learning of the miraculous ways in which God worked in their lives. All this is to say that the world has its calendars, and the Church has its calendar. It is the Church's calendar that norms and informs the daily life of the Christian.





# Elder's Corner

## Insights, thoughts, and inspirational messages

### The Gentle Calmness of True Strength"

by Jeff Peterson

#### Consider the irony of freedom.

"Define it as "the right to do as you please," and you will never be truly free. Define it as "the right to do as you ought," and you will have discovered the essence of true freedom. In Romans 14 Paul described the use – and abuse – of Christian liberty" —H.C.G. Moule

<sup>13</sup> Therefore let us not pass judgment on one another any longer, but rather decide never to put a stumbling block or hindrance in the way of a brother. <sup>14</sup> I know and am persuaded in the Lord Jesus that nothing is unclean in itself, but it is unclean for anyone who thinks it unclean. <sup>15</sup> For if your brother is grieved by what you eat, you are no longer walking in love. By what you eat, do not destroy the one for whom Christ died. <sup>16</sup> So do not let what you regard as good be spoken of as evil. <sup>17</sup> For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking but of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. <sup>18</sup> Whoever thus serves Christ is acceptable to God and approved by men. <sup>19</sup> So then let us pursue what makes for peace and for mutual upbuilding. —Romans 14:13-19

In principle, Paul's own convictions lay with the "strong," those who knew that 'nothing is unclean'

*<sup>14</sup> "I know and am persuaded in the Lord Jesus that nothing is unclean in itself, but it is unclean for anyone who thinks it unclean."* —Romans 14:14

He knew that the Lord was not grieved, but pleased, by the moderate and thankful use of his natural bounties. But though the strong may be right in principle concerning certain activities, this leaves untouched the still more stringent overruling principle, to 'walk in the way of love'

*<sup>2</sup> And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.*

—Ephesians 5:2

The strong are not to be ashamed of their liberty. But they are to be ashamed of one hour's unloving conduct. Their strength in Christ is never to be ungentle. It is to be shown, first and foremost, by patience. It is to take the form of the calm, strong readiness to understand another's point of view.

When it comes to the exercise of Christian freedom, God is looking for men and women who are strong in The Lord, yet tender toward those who are weak in the faith; he is looking for believers who temper their freedom with love.

When you encounter a "gray area" in your walk with God, when you're not sure of the right course of action, when the scriptures are silent on a particular activity – what then?

Then put Paul's principle to work: When in doubt, LOVE!

Remember, you are loved, and you are forgiven!

### Spotlight Verse

*Paul reminds us of the spiritual warfare all around us*

<sup>19</sup> So then let us pursue what makes for peace and for mutual upbuilding.

*Romans 14:19*