

The Kaiserslautern Lutheran

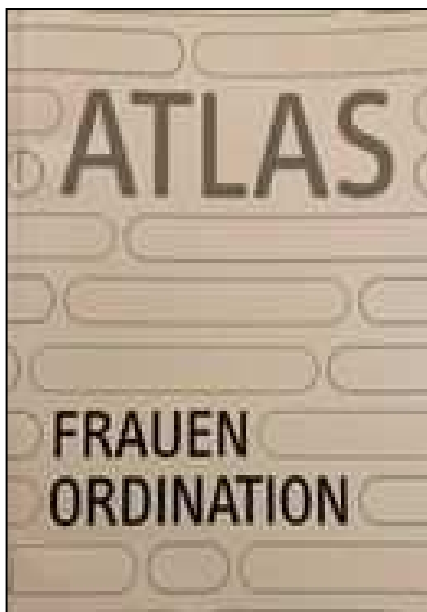
Nr. 15

Gottes Wort und Luthers Lehr' vergehet nun und nimmermehr

April 2023

The following lecture was delivered by Pastor Marc Haessig to his SELK congregation in Memmingen, Germany. Since the SELK was founded in 1972, the question of women's ordination has divided the church body. A renewed push for women's ordination in the SELK, as well as the manner in which it is being discussed, where both sides are allowed equal footing, is concerning for the future of LCMS/SELK relations. The SELK is becoming an example to us of what happens when a church body tolerates false doctrine and practice in its midst. The divisions will eventually become apparent. We pray for the future of the SELK, but most of all we pray for the pure doctrine of God's Word to shine forth in that church body, and that the Lord of the Church would also preserve us from false doctrine and false teachers.

—Pastor Jensen



A Burning Issue: The Ordination of Women¹

By Pastor Marc Haessig

Translated by Pastor Jensen

It ought to be pointed out by way of introduction that our venerable church for decades has drifted and been torn by the topic of women's ordination. In this matter, the majority of the church and her pastors hold unswervingly to the doctrine of the Holy Scriptures and to the SELK Church Order, but a strong headwind is blowing just like in our Australian sister church, which at present is being broken apart by this question. This rift is made manifest among us by organized groups that campaign militantly for the ordination of women. This rift has penetrated congregations not least of all through repeated letters to the editor in the church publication *Lutherische Kirche*. I myself, as you know, have thus far always avoided this topic in my sermons.

The official position of the SELK, binding for all pastors and congregations, is unambiguous, clear, and biblical. The SELK agrees with her sister churches in Europe, North and

South America, as well as in South Africa, that the pastoral office is the successor office to the office of Apostle. The Lutheran Church teaches in her Lutheran Confessions: "We have a certain teaching, that the preaching office comes from the general call of the Apostles" (Power and Primacy, BSLK 473,10). Luther writes: "The Office of preaching the Gospel is the highest of all, for it is the true apostolic office, which lays the foundation of all other offices" (W2 X 1592.75). About this office, the preaching office, our church order says: "Only one who is called and ordained can carry out the office established by Christ of preaching the Word and distributing the Sacraments. This office can only be transferred to men." (GO 7)

Throughout the years, an ever-growing opposition, in accord with the worldly *Zeitgeist*, has formed against this last sentence. This point has already been debated at various district conventions [*Kirchensynoden*]. Pastors' conventions have grappled

¹Original Title: "Ein heißes Eisen: Die Frauenordination!"

with it. Now the parish pastors have been invited to present to their congregations an "Atlas" of women's ordination. This Atlas, which goes back to the general pastor's conference of our church, reflects the rift already mentioned. It is accessible online.

The "Atlas" is structured so that all points are divided into "pro" and "contra." Not pro and contra "the doctrine of the Holy Scriptures," however, but pro and contra "women's ordination." This allows the proponents of women's ordination to be seen not as "contra" but as "pro," as supporters. To support sounds positive. But whoever advocates for the biblical position and teaches the doctrine of Holy Scripture and the SELK church order appears as "contra," as opponents, which sounds negative. This may be a small thing, but one among many...

Among these other small things belongs, for example, reference to the (I kid you not), "female Apostle Junia." In Romans 16:7, Paul writes: "Greet Andronicus and Junias, my kinsmen and my fellow prisoners. They are well known among² the apostles, and they were in Christ before me." Some say that this Junias was actually a Junia.³ And now it gets interesting because of the word "apostle." Suddenly Junias becomes a female apostle and we have biblical proof for the ordination of women. That's the wish, in any case. Now, whether or not Romans is speaking of this Junias or Junia as a man or a woman, one thing is absolutely certain: neither Junias/ Junia nor Andronicus were apostles in the sense of the Twelve called and sent by Christ. The word "apostle," like the word "pastor," also has a wider sense. An apostle is one sent and a pastor is a shepherd. But not all shepherds are spiritual shepherds of a congregation and not all those sent belong to the circle of the Twelve, who were called

directly by Christ and placed into the office, and which was later expanded by the Lord when He called Paul. The word "apostle," by the way, is older than the time of the New Testament. In the pre-New Testament time in ancient Greece, "apostle" meant the leader of naval expedition, or the naval expedition itself. It would be just as laughable to make Junias/Junia the leader of a naval expedition as to make him/her an apostle in the narrow sense of the New Testament.

Another "small thing," which not incidentally is worldly instead of biblical, is here quoted from the "Atlas": "The church cannot credibly support the rights and dignity of minorities while at the same time discriminating against 50% of the members in its organization. When a church does not ordain women, then it cheats itself of this gift and excludes half of humanity from equal participation" (p. 21). If you consider that the Lord of the Church is actually the one ordaining, then this thought is an indirect attack against the Lord because He did not call women to 50% of the circle of Twelve.

It says further: "Reasons for the rejection of women's ordination are in no way understandable anymore by many inside and outside the church. Without convincing reasons, it comes across only as old-fashioned or misogynistic to *refuse* women entrance into the pastoral calling *because of their gender*. In this respect, the refusal is counterproductive to missions and prevents connectivity with societal discourse" (p. 20). "Our society is sensitive towards gender equality and to the discrimination of women at work and in the family. Today, all areas of society are working towards equality and the participation of women. By refusing to ordain women, the SELK is withdrawing into a parallel society" (p. 20).

To that it must be noted first of all that when we begin to argue in a worldly way in the church, then tomorrow we will have the acceptance of gay marriage and the day after tomorrow its ecclesiastical blessing. The church is not to hold itself to the world but to God's Word. Christ says: "teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you" (Matthew 28:20). "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free" (John 8:31f).

The fact is (Bishop Schöne always liked to make reference to this): Worldwide, about 80–90% of Christians reject the ordination of women on the basis of the Holy Scriptures. So regarding this question, the SELK belongs in no way to a parallel society. Rather, the EKD [the Evangelical Church in Germany, which ordains women] belongs to the 10% who practice women's ordination. But that is also not the point at all. The salient and determinative point is quite another. That is: What do the Holy Scriptures teach?

The Holy Scriptures clearly and explicitly reject the ordination of women. Whoever thinks in a worldly way would be disturbed by the Word of God that I will cite. But because we think in a spiritual way and hear God's Word while believing in God's love of humanity, we can hear this word with complete trust in God. This teaches: "As in all the churches of the saints, the women should keep silent in the churches. For they are not permitted to speak, but should be in submission, as the Law also says. If there is anything they desire to learn, let them ask their husbands at home. For it is shameful for a woman to speak in church . . . If anyone thinks that he is a prophet, or spiritual, he should acknowledge that the things I am writing to you are a command of the Lord. If anyone does

²The ESV translates this: "They are well known to the apostles." In Greek and German, it literally reads "among," which could then be taken to mean Andronicus and Junias were two among many apostles. —NSJ

³In the Greek, the accusative case is used (Ιουνίαν), which, without accents, could either refer to the nominative masculine form (Ιουνιάς) or the nominative feminine form (Ιουνία). —NSJ

not recognize this, he is not recognized." The Hermann Menge Study Bible adds the note: ". . . he will not be recognized (*also by God*)."

The Lutheran New Testament Theologian, Dr. Ernst Lerle, writes: "The expression *ekklesia* does not only refer to the existing persons of the local congregation or to the church, but it also refers to the worshiping assembly with the proclamation of the Word. Charismatically inclined members were used for prophetic speech and for instruction, and these services follow in the rankings immediately after the apostolate. [Although it belonged to the essence of the offices, that the tasks that fell to the one office were not completely taken from the other members (cf. the explanation to 12:28a)]. Every Christian who testified to the Gospel in conversation brought the prophetic word to the hearers. According to 11:5 [". . . a woman who prays or speaks prophetically. . ."], prophetic speech was self-evident as praying. In distinction to this, the office bearers of prophecy and teaching had the duty of public speaking in the worshiping assembly of the congregation. Paul does not authorize women for this service. In Corinth, approval of this directive of the Apostle was definitely not self-evident. Some members were more inclined to self-assuredly decide upon the matters." To say it another way: There is absolutely no discrimination here, but a division of office desired by God.

"[likewise also that women should adorn themselves . . . with what is proper for women who profess godliness—with good works. Let a woman learn quietly with all submissiveness.] I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man; rather, she is to remain quiet. For Adam was formed first, then Eve . . .]" (1 Timothy 2:9–15). Here again the public preaching office is being dealt with and the public teaching of the congregation; so not about other speaking or singing in the congregation. This might please or displease, but it is God's Word. And God is love. He, the Creator of man and woman, the Lord of the Church, decreed as He so decreed that

a woman would bodily carry the entire Divinity in her womb and therefore be called in the New Testament "mother of God" (Luke 1:43). It would be unsound to see in the honor given to this woman, Mary, discrimination against man.

We must always bear in mind that the Kingdom of God is a theocracy, not a democracy. Christ alone is the Lord of the Church (Ephesians 5:23), so God's Word is binding on the Church at all times. We certainly proceed democratically in the church in many areas: in calling a pastor, at the election of a bishop, or the election of the church council, for example, and not least of all in questions of the practical life of the congregation. So classic organizational questions. But as it relates to the doctrine of the church there is no democracy. The church cannot, for example, by a majority vote, do away with the doctrine of the Trinity because this doctrine violates the laws of nature and because it could disturb some people that God has an only-begotten son but not an only-begotten daughter. When a church changes biblical doctrine according to the caprice of the *Zeitgeist* and ideologies, or if it adjusts or distorts them, then it ceases to be the Church of Jesus Christ. Then it would only be a worldly club in which worldly rules apply.

So in theological questions, you cannot judge according to worldly criteria. But as you can read in the "Atlas" and also in the church publication *Lutherische Kirche*, the proponents of women's ordination gladly and often like to argue using women's rights. So they argue ideologically and politically, but not theologically. The Church ought not judge according to the wind of ideological trends, but according to God's Word alone. In the Smalcald Articles, Luther writes: "God's Word and nobody else ought to establish articles of faith, not even an angel" (SA 2.2; BSLK p. 421).

And God's Word in matters of ordination is sobering, for men and women. For according to God's Word there is no right to ordination, not even for men. Men, also, do not have a right to ordination. Ordination is being

entrusted with something. The one ordained is, as the Apostle, a "slave of God" (Paul), which is diametrically opposed to human rights. The theologian is to such an extent a slave of God that he must always bow down to the Word of God in his preaching, even if his old Adam stubbornly strives against it. —by the way, if there were a human right to ordination, then all men could demand to wear vestments and be clothed in this office thanks to this human right. But they shouldn't do that. They do not have this right. That's why so few men are becoming pastors. The reality is that almost the same number of men and women are not pastors. Our sister church in the United States, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, has about 9,000 pastors for 2 million souls. In that church, still nearly all of the 2 million members, whether man or woman, are not pastors.

In conclusion, the Lord Jesus, who included women such as Mary Magdalene in the disciples' circle of friends and who assigned duties to women (e.g. Luke 23:55; 24:9; John 20:11–18, among others), nevertheless intended the office of apostle and its successor office only for men. There is still plenty of work for man and woman in the Kingdom of God, which is the most friendly kingdom to women in this world. In the Kingdom of God, woman is just as important and valuable as man. "For God shows no partiality" (Romans 2:11). Therefore, "Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near" (Hebrews 10:23–25).

—Pastor Marc Haessig

A Letter from the Mission Field
Pastor Christian Tiewws

Wrapping up our baptismal preparation class at Zion Lutheran Church (SELK) in Hamburg last Thursday, we met in the children's Sunday school room, which is well stocked with Legos, building blocks, and other toys. We discussed the ending of the Second Article of the Creed in the Small Catechism (Farsi translation): "From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead." One of the catechumens asked: "In Christianity, is there a Judgment Day like in Islam, where everyone will be held accountable for what they did in their lives?" "Yes," I replied. "In that respect, both religions are similar. But regarding what happens on that day, Islam and

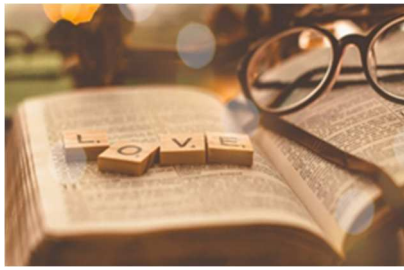
Christianity are quite different. In Islam, everyone will be judged according to whether they did enough good things in their life to have earned Allah's favor and be allowed into Paradise. "Yes," one of them added, "Muslims believe that after you die, you enter 'barzakh—a kind of limbo, in which everyone will have to wait in line, nervous about how Judgment Day will turn out for them." [Yet another similarity between Islam and Roman Catholicism—with barzakh being comparable to the latter's teaching of purgatory]. "But Christianity is quite different...", I explained, rummaging through one of



the shelves and collecting about a dozen wooden pins. I set them up on the table and arranged them in two groups. "At the Last Day, Jesus will raise everyone from the dead—and will also assemble those still living. He will separate them into two groups—those who believed in Him on earth and those who rejected Him (Matthew 25:32-34). For those who were baptized and believed in Jesus, their future is certain: He covers all their sins because He had already redeemed them on earth. No barzakh, no nervous waiting in line..." After a moment of reflection, one of the students exclaimed, "What would we do without Jesus...?"



Part of the baptismal preparation class



Elder's Corner

Insights, thoughts, and inspirational messages

“I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.¹⁵ I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one”¹⁶

John 17:15-16

It is common in Christian culture to use the phrase **“In this world but not of this world”**.

This comes from John 17 where Jesus is praying and says “I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.¹⁵ I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one”¹⁶

Jesus talks about the “Word” and in this His fulfilment of it and His life as both God and man. His statement also gives us the two kingdoms (spiritual and physical) that we are subject to by his decree. We are called into the Word as spiritual disciples and as such we are not of this world, we belong to the Kingdom of Christ. As part of that Kingdom we are not worldly minded, we don’t act, do, or behave the same as those in the kingdom of

Satan. However, we live physically in the world and are subject to the earthly kingdom. This is all that we are daily surrounded with and the interactions we have with the fallen creation. We are foreigners traversing the daily drudge of a sinful and fallen place. Living this life we will all be confronted with challenges, tribulations, and roadblocks, however, the knowledge of what Christ did for us on the Cross gives us the power to persevere and through love we give our gifts to those who are not yet with us in the Kingdom of Christ so that through His Word they too can inherit the gift of eternal life. So feel free to use the phrase **“In this world but not of it”** don’t hide from the world but go out and share the peace of God which surpasses all understanding.

—Paul Hester



*Music to listen
for this
Holy Week and
Easter*

*By
Emma Jensen*

O Mensch, beweine dein Sünde groß,
BWV 622, is one of Bach's most beloved chorale preludes. It is based on a Reformation-era Passion hymn, "O Man, Thy Grievous Sin Bemoan," by Lutheran cantor and musicologist Sebald Heyden. Catherine Winkworth's English translation of the first stanza is reproduced below for meditation while the prelude is being played:

*O man, thy grievous sin bemoan,
For which Christ left His Father's throne,
From highest heaven descending.
Of Virgin pure and undefiled
He here was born, our Saviour mild,
For sin to make atonement.
The dead He raised to life again.
The sick He freed from grief and pain.
Until the time appointed
That He for us should give His Blood,
Should bear our sins' o'erwhelming load,
The shameful Cross enduring.*

The exquisite setting with which Bach adorns this hymn, as well as his use of it elsewhere, such as in his *St. Matthew Passion*, seems to indicate that it held a special significance for him. His organ chorale prelude setting of it is without question one of the most heartfelt and deeply contemplative musical considerations of both the depths of our sin, and the depths of God's mercy, depths that would require the very Son of God to take on our flesh and become obedient

unto death, even death on a cross (Phil 2:8). The ending is especially noteworthy; what is translated as "shameful cross" in the English is originally *Kreuze lange*, referring to Christ *long* bearing our sins on the Cross. As a true text-painter, Bach dutifully draws out his final notes into a sublime, breathtakingly slow – "long" – coda. The excruciating pace, as well as the sudden unexpected harmonies, combine

to keep the listener waiting with bated breath for the final, satisfying resolution. In this way Bach manages to musically capture the ineffable sense of peace and release that comes only with the knowledge that Christ has taken the "overwhelming load" of our sins and forever nailed it to the Cross.

Christ Jesus Lay in Death's Strong Bands (LSB 458) is an Easter hymn by Martin Luther, published by Luther and his Kantor Johann Walter

in 1524 in the second and third ever Lutheran hymnals, the *Erfurt Enchiridion* and *Eyn geystlich Gesangk Buchleyn* ("a spiritual song booklet"). The text and tune are both based on a much older hymn, the Medieval German liturgical song *Christ ist Erstanden* ("Christ Is Arisen" – LSB 459), which is in turn based on an even older Medieval Latin sequence (a chant sung before the reading of the Holy Gospel), *Victimæ Paschali Laudes* ("Christians to the Paschal Victim" – LSB

460). These two songs were often sung together in alternating stanzas with the choir and congregation, as you will experience at KELC on Easter Sunday.

Luther's hymn first appears as an "improved" (German *gebessert*) version of *Christ is Erstanden*. It is based around two passages in 1 Corinthians, 15:54–57 ("O death, where is your sting? ...") and 5:7–8 ("For Christ our Passover Lamb has been sacrificed...") and ends with beautiful Eucharistic overtones ("Then let us feast this Easter Day...").

One of the most well-known organ settings of this hymn is *Christ lag in Todesbanden* (BWV 625), by Johann Sebastian Bach. This piece comes from perhaps his most well-known collection of chorale preludes, the *Orgelbüchlein* ("Little Organ Book," BWV 599–644). Predominating throughout the piece is a twisted stepwise sixteenth-note motive, perhaps depicting the "bands of death." The entire piece captures the language of verse 4, "It was a strange and dreadful strife when life and death contended." As organist Raymond Nagem puts it, both Luther's chorale and its Medieval predecessors "portray Easter as a titanic, intensely physical struggle," awe-inspiring rather than "conventionally pretty." For the Christian, it is precisely this knowledge that "Death is swallowed up in victory" (1 Cor 15:54) that arouses the highest, true Easter joy. Christ is risen! He is risen indeed!

April 2023

Month of the Military Child

God bless all the children of military families
here at KELC and in the KMC



Please
join us in
praying
for the important
work of the
Kaiserslautern
Military Resiliency
Center in Landstuhl,
Germany.

KELC Volunteer Schedule

4/2/23: 1st Sunday (*Palm Sunday*)

Usher: Jared Anderson
Greeter/Elder: Stephen Young
Altar Guild: Christina Peterson
Acolyte: Leah & Ryan Young

4/6/23: Maundy Thursday Service

Usher: Jeff Peterson
Greeter/Elder: Paul Hester
Altar Guild: Annie Shelton
Acolyte: Mark Hester

4/7/23: Good Friday Services

Tre Ore:
Elder: Stephen Guzik
Altar Guild: Emma Jensen
Tenebrae: No communion

4/8/23: Easter Vigil Service

Usher: Paul Hester
Greeter/Elder: Jeff Peterson
Altar Guild: Christina Peterson
Acolyte: James Hester

4/9/23: 2nd Sunday (*Easter Sunday*)

Usher: Mason Westphal
Greeter/Elder: Paul Hester
Altar Guild: Lorraine Hester & Annie Shelton
Acolyte: Mark Hester

4/16/23: 3rd Sunday

Usher: Young Family
Greeter/Elder: Stephen Guzik
Altar Guild: Emily & Eloise Ponziano
Acolyte: Jonathan Ponziano

4/23/23: 4th Sunday

Usher: Hester Family
Greeter/Elder: Jeff Peterson
Altar Guild: Christina Peterson
Acolyte: Dylan Worley

4/30/23: 5th Sunday

Usher: Guzik Family
Greeter/Elder: Paul Hester
Altar Guild: Lorraine Hester
Acolyte: James Hester



KELC volunteers will be serving dinner to the Ukrainian refugees on

**Friday, April 21st,
at Rhema Café,
beginning at 5:30 PM.**

We will also assist the children with crafts and games. We hope to see you there!

If you are unable to attend but would still like to help, please consider donating individual chip bags, Capri Sun drinks, or craft supplies. Donations may be brought to church this Sunday or dropped off directly at Rhema Café.

Thank you to all who came out and helped with the March dinner at Rhema.



April Birthdays



1 Pastor Jensen

1 Stephen Guzik

4 Tierney Grosskopf

4 Mathew Landers

4 Sven Malenius

14 Nate Ayers

16 Kristen Blank

17 James Anglin

24 Mattes Blank

25 Thomas Hester

27 Emma Swenson

CONFESSIONS

STUDY



On
Thursday
nights will
resume
after Easter

Holy Week Services

Palm Sunday

April 2nd Divine Service 8:30 AM

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Holy Week

Monday, April 3rd Vespers 7:00 PM

Tuesday, April 4th Vespers 7:00 PM

Wednesday, April 5th Vespers 7:00
PM

—

Maundy Thursday

April 6th Divine Service 7:00 PM

—

Good Friday

April 7th Tre Ore 11:00 AM

Tenebrae 7:00 PM

—

Holy Saturday

April 8th Easter Vigil Divine Service

Sunset 8:11 PM

—

The Feast of the Resurrection of our Lord

Sunday, April 9th Divine Service

11:30 AM

Easter Brunch to follow.

—

Easter Monday

April 10th Joint German/English

Service with St. Michaelis

7:00 PM

