

For the remaining issues of *The Kaiserslautern Lutheran* this year, I'll be writing a series on "Christian buzzwords." A "buzzword" is basically a piece of trendy jargon. It's a word or phrase used so often or in such a broad way that it has lost most of its meaning. Some examples of buzzwords in the business world include: "cutting edge," "holistic," "benchmark," "paradigm," and "next generation." In the military, buzzwords might include: "people first," "mission always," "accelerate, change, or lose," "do more with less," "we are a family," "mission creep," "interoperability," and "innovation." Or in the political sphere: "checks and balances," "fake news," "echo chamber," "hot button issue," "dog whistle," and "equality." The number of buzzwords in our life is nearly endless. They act as a sort of code by which we communicate with others. The danger is that we use such terms so much that they lose nearly all meaning and will become incomprehensible to future generations.

Christian Buzzwords: "Evangelical"

By Pastor Jensen

Christianity, like any other realm of our life, also has its buzzwords. Once you start thinking about it, you'll notice how you absorb the language of those around you. It becomes part of who you are. You can often tell someone's church background based on the words and turns of phrases they use. If someone speaks about having "given" or "surrendered his life to Jesus," or making a "decision for Christ," he's most likely an Arminian (Christians who believe in the power of free will even before conversion). If someone speaks about the "sovereignty of God," the "reprobate," "election," and "covenants," he might very well

be Reformed (opposite of Arminian). If a Christian speaks about the "anointing," "Spirit Baptism," "tongues," and "vision casting," he might be charismatic/Pentecostal. Or if theology is discussed in terms of "justice," "inclusivity," "diversity," "equality," and "contextual," you're probably dealing with progressive/liberal/mainline Christianity.

Of course, Lutheranism itself has distinctive buzzwords: "means of grace," "sacraments," "in, with, and under," "sin, death, and the devil," "believe, teach, and confess," or "Divine Service." These words and phrases that have meaning for us could leave outsiders completely clueless. Of course, learning the lingo is part of initiation into any community. And as Christians, we also ought to learn the language of other confessions/denominations in order to better understand and communicate with them. The trick is both learning the meaning of buzzwords, and trying to write and speak in fresh ways so that the words



A Letter from the Mission Field Pastor Christian Tiews

Currently back in Latvia, with the other faculty and seminarians from Eurasia and Africa for Luther Academy's "Intensive Study Weeks." Once or twice a year we see our students face-to-face and supplement online instruction with in-person classes. This past semester I taught "Lutheran Confessions of Faith," in which we worked through the entire Book of Concord—a collection of 16th century documents that explain correct Christian teaching on various doctrines and expose theological errors introduced by

the medieval Church and other groups. I greatly enjoyed the students' final papers, reading their thoughts on how the Lutheran Confessions interpret Holy Scripture faithfully and serve as a pastor's most helpful tool

for explaining various doctrines. One student had for many years been a priest in a certain Christian denomination. But, praise be to God, at one point he discovered the original teachings of Christianity, studied them, and a few years later was ordained a Lutheran pastor. Now honing his skills at the Academy, he offered a lovely illustration, sharing how his grandfather had always read the newspaper with a magnifying glass. He compared the Book of Concord to that magnifying glass because it amplifies key doctrinal

concepts of the Bible and brings them into focus. Indeed, he summarized, "The Book [of Concord] was created through the initiative of a simple Augustinian friar [and other theologians] who detected some deficiencies on the part of the clergy in following the true teaching of Jesus Christ. Thank you," [Luther Academy"], "for allowing me to write these few lines that also contain my living expression of the Lutheran Faith in which I am growing thanks to the input of many people who contribute to my spiritual and human growth." Amen. And a prayer of thanksgiving for the many generous donors who make Riga Luther Academy possible, a wonderful institution forming pastors who spread the Gospel all across Eurasia and Africa—faithfully.



LCMS MINISTRY TO THE ARMED FORCES

A Ministry of Presence



A year ago this month, for the July 2022 newsletter, I completed my series on the LCMS Ministry to the Armed Forces (MAF). My purpose for writing the May, June and July articles about MAF was to highlight the mission work that our Synod engages in whenever an LCMS Pastor becomes a military chaplain. Congregations send their Pastors to serve our warfighters either fulltime on Active Duty, or as a Reserve or National Guard Chaplain for a minimum of one weekend a month and two weeks a year. Without our congregations supporting this mission in the practical formation of their LCMS Pastors, and supporting them and their families, we would not have any LCMS Lutheran Chaplains available to serve our LCMS service members. Not to mention, the multitudes of non-Lutheran Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, Coastguardsmen, and Guardians who encounter Jesus from their unit's LCMS Chaplain.

As I ended the series of articles last July, I explained how the Army Chaplain that catechized my wife, Camille, influenced my becoming an Army Chaplain. And then I introduced you to Joshua Schiff, a former Military Police Specialist whom I deployed with to Iraq. He became an LCMS Pastor, in part, as a result of our discussions and reading Luther's Small Catechism. I ended the

July newsletter article with the following:

"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!"

Well, I am writing today's article with an exciting addendum. This past March I opened an email from an Army Recruiter requesting that I submit a letter of recommendation to support the application of Rev. Joshua Schiff to be accessioned as an

Army Chaplain. You could imagine my quick reply agreeing to submit a letter of reference, and shortly thereafter, sending that very letter. On June 22nd, Joshua emailed me and said:

"Good afternoon Chaplain Ayers, I wanted to personally thank you for your support and encouragement both now and all those years ago. I was informed of my selection into the Chaplain Corps yesterday and wanted to let you know. Thanks again!

In Christ, Joshua"

I had to share this exciting news with my KELC family. Please pray for Josh, his wife Shelly, and their two children as they transition from Zion in Orange, to their first Active Duty Army Chaplain assignment. Praise God from Whom all blessings flow!

Very Respectfully,

Raymond L. Ayers



Rev. Joshua Schiff & Family



Elder's Corner

Insights, thoughts, and inspirational messages

Spotlight Verse

¹⁰ I appeal to you, brothers, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same judgment.

1 Corinthians 1:10

What does it mean to be a Lutheran (Lutheran Church Missouri Synod – LCMS)?

By Jeff Peterson

I have often pondered this same question. You would think that since my father, brother, and brother-in-law are all LCMS Lutheran Pastors, that this answer would be simple and easy, but being an LCMS Lutheran isn't always that simple of an understanding. (But it can be!)

There often comes a time in one's faith walk that we question what we believe or even why we believe a certain way. Being an LCMS Lutheran really comes down to The Word of God, its Truths and Sound Doctrine.

*"He must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in **sound doctrine** and also to rebuke those who contradict it."* **Titus 1:9**

Even though Paul is writing to Titus and instructing him on how to search for and instruct Elders (Overseers/Pastors) of the True Word of God, it also can apply to us as Christians and parishioners of the LCMS Lutheran Church. We are to hold to sound doctrine, not waiver to the whims of society,

and to not appease the masses to make them feel better about themselves.

Before the reformation, Martin Luther was perplexed and concerned that the Pope and the Roman Catholic Church had the Gospel and the Graces of God wrong, and that they were not keeping to sound doctrine as taught by the prophets and apostles. As he searched God's Word, The Holy Spirit revealed many Truths to him, and when he brought these Truths to the Pope's attention, Martin was scorned, shamed, and told to recant his way of thinking and to fall in line with the Roman Catholic Church. Martin responded with:

*"My conscience is captive to the **Word of God**. Thus I cannot and will not recant, because acting against one's conscience is neither safe nor sound. Here I stand; I can do no other. God help me."*

Martin Luther went on to write and say many things defending God's Word, and these are known as confessions of faith, Martin was not alone in His fight to defend the Word of God, there were

several others that helped him through out the years to stand firm to **sound doctrine** and to **confess their faith** in front of Kings, Lords, Emperors, and the Pope.

Today we have the Book of Concord, which contains these confessions of faith, so that we can believe, teach, and confess the Truths of God's Word as they are summarized and confessed in this Book of Concord, like a road map for Lutherans.

This road map reinforces what we as LCMS Lutherans believe. We believe in the truths of God's Word, the Holy Bible, as they are correctly explained and taught in the Book of Concord, and by us believing this we confess the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

As stated in the Book of Concord: "All doctrines should conform to the standards [the Lutheran Confessions] set forth above. Whatever is contrary to them should be rejected and condemned as opposed to the unanimous declaration of our faith" (FC Ep. RN, 6).

"10 I appeal to you, brothers, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree, and that

there be no divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same judgment." **1 Corinthians 1:10**

For us to be a confessional Lutheran, we need to honor the Word of God. The Word of God makes it clear that it is God's desire for His church to be in agreement about doctrine, and to be of one mind, living at peace with one another.



"11 Finally, brothers, rejoice. Aim for restoration, comfort one another, agree with one another, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you." **2 Corinthians 13:11**

It is for this reason that we truly treasure this precious confession of Christian truth in the Book of Concord (The Lutheran Road Map □). For us Confessional Lutherans, there really is no other collection of documents, or

statements or books that so clearly, accurately and comfortingly presents the teachings of God's Word and reveals the Biblical Gospel as our Lutheran Road Map (Book of Concord).

"13 Since we have the same spirit of faith according to what has been written, "I believed, and so I spoke," we also believe, and so we also speak, 14 knowing that he who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and bring us with you into his presence. 15 For it is all for your sake, so that as grace extends to more and more people it may increase thanksgiving, to the glory of God." **2 Corinthians 4:13-15**

Together with our commitment to pure teaching and confession of the

faith, we should always be, as equally strong in commitment to reaching out boldly with the Gospel and speaking God's truth to the world. That is what "confession" of the faith is all about.

What it means to be an LCMS Lutheran is pretty simple right!

Remember, you are loved, and you are forgiven!



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

CONFESSIONS STUDY



On Thursday nights
at
St. Michael's

LOOK FOR US ON FACEBOOK & MESSENGER

Kaiserslautern
Evangelical Lutheran
Church (KELC)

For news, worship sign-ups
and fellowship events.

KELC Volunteer Schedule

7/2/23: 1st Sunday

Usher: Mason Westphal
Greeter/Elder: Stephen Young
Altar Guild: Annie Shelton
Acolyte: Ryan Young

7/9/23: 2nd Sunday

Usher: Jared Anderson
Greeter/Elder: Paul Hester
Altar Guild: Lorraine Hester
Acolyte: Mark Hester

7/16/23: 3rd Sunday

Usher: Jim Ponziano
Greeter/Elder: Paul Hester
Altar Guild: Eloise & Emily Ponziano
Acolyte: Jonathan Ponziano

7/23/23: 4th Sunday

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

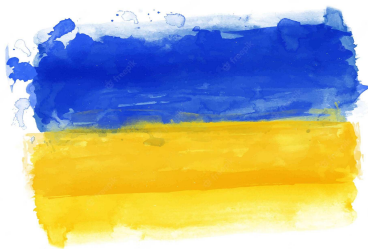
7/30/23: 5th Sunday

Usher: Jeff Peterson
Greeter/Elder: Rob Tuttle
Altar Guild: Annie Shelton
Acolyte: James Hester



Thank you to all who came out and helped with the Ukrainian Kids Party on June 23rd and the BBQ Potluck dinner at Rhema on June 30th.

Please join us again at the end of July. Date and Signup Genius coming soon.



June Birthdays

- 4 Paul Hester
- 5 Annie Shelton
- 6 Gabe Paulsen
- 17 Samuel Abliganz
- 17 Jared Anderson
- 28 Ray Ayers
- 29 Rob Tuttle



July Birthdays

- 3 Karly Hester
- 7 James Hester
- 14 April Paulsen
- 17 Brandon Holmes (Marla's husband)
- 28 Eloise Ponziano

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



June Wedding Anniversaries



Happy 22nd Anniversary to
Dewey & Gwen Landers on the 2nd.

Happy 4th Anniversary to
Anthony & Hannah Swenson
on the 22nd.