

The EVANGEL

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Letter From the Editor

Greetings in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! This edition of *The Evangel* comes on the heels of our 500th Anniversary of the Reformation Celebration in Deephaven, MN. As you will see, there are a few brief updates about the events there, and many pictures. For those of you who would like to listen to the lectures given there, I have also included ways to access those videos along with the articles. It is always such a wonderful thing to get together as an association, and this time we had so much to celebrate!

In addition to this, it is encouraging to be reminded of the great ministry work that our congregations engage in at a local level. I had many conversations with people at the Celebration concerning new and innovative ways of meeting and ministering to people in their communities. It is clear that being aware of the needs in your communities and working together to bring the gospel to people therein is a priority of our congregations, and for this work, we all rejoice. I encourage you all to continue to pray for our association. If there is one thing we can be certain of, it is that prayer indeed works. God hears us and cares for us in all things. In this vein, the more we share with one another about what is happening in our churches, the more we can pray for one another as we continue in our respective vocations and communities.

As you may know, Advent marks the beginning of the church year. Although this edition will be in your hands after Christmas, it is still important to mark the time: Advent is a time of waiting, a time of eager anticipation of the coming of Christ into the world to save sinners. In the same way that the people of Israel waited for the coming of Jesus at Christmas, we too wait for the second coming of Jesus. Living in a time of waiting is not easy. We see that sin affects every aspect of life: our families, our friendships, our churches, our bodies, our environment—everything sees decay and death and sadness. But take heart! God promised the people of Israel a savior who would rescue the whole world from sin, death, and the devil, and He has indeed done this. Jesus has atoned for all of our sins; He has taken our punishment upon Himself, and we have been set free. We see throughout the scriptures that God keeps his promises, and we can be assured that His promise that Christ will come again will indeed come true. I hope that all of you hold onto that promise as we begin a new church year.

In Christ,
Lisa Cooper

*In 2018, we will be exploring the topics found in the Small Catechism in greater depth to further emphasize the Reformation's effects in the life of the church. To submit articles for upcoming editions of *The Evangel*, please email them to me at theevangel@taalc.org, or mail them to 425 E Lincoln Ave. Watseka, IL, 60970. Please include the author's name and photo credit, along with a way to contact you (either a phone number or email address). Articles cannot be published without proper citations.*



The Reformation Today

Part 4

by TAALC Presiding Pastor, The Rev. Dr. Curtis Leins

A False Doctrine

The self-assured pastor set himself as an example for his congregation. "I really don't sin anymore," he said. "Sure, when I was young, I might have sinned. But, now that I am older in the faith and more mature, I don't sin anymore."

This is not a fictional story or an exaggeration to make a point. These words actually were spoken in an American, non-denominational congregation in the recent past. This pastor actually believed that he did not sin and that if others in his congregation would follow his example, they could be without sin too.

The pastor was teaching a false doctrine about human beings (that they could live without sin). This heresy contaminated his related theological teachings regarding justification, the atonement of Christ, the grace of the Sacraments, and even the nature of Christian worship. When the Word of God was twisted and the Original Sin of Adam was forgotten and the continuing sin of humanity was denied, the true Gospel of Christ was lost.

You may think that this failure in a modern church is a problem particular to our time. The truth is, this same failure has been with us from the beginning of the church and was especially apparent at the time of the Reformation, 500 years ago.

Antinomianism

In the years 1537 to 1540, the town of Wittenberg was torn apart by theological controversy. The chief spokesman of the false doctrine was John Agricola and the name that Luther gave his falsehood was "Antinomianism." Luther coined the term meaning: against (from the Greek "anti"), the law (from the Greek "nomos"). Antinomianism was against the law of God.

It was claimed by Agricola that Luther had rejected the law of God, the Ten Commandments. By misrepresenting Luther, Agricola supported his own notion that the law of God was unnecessary and inappropriate for believers. Agricola said that believers did not need the law, they only needed the Gospel. Therefore, pastors should no longer preach the law of God to Christians.

Luther responded with two sermons in 1537, warning against this theological error and against the moral corruption that it engendered. In addition, Luther arranged for a disputation with Agricola in 1537. Agricola failed to appear. A second disputation was scheduled in 1538 in which Agricola admitted his errors. Dr. Luther forcefully argued that the law of God must be preached before the greatness of the gospel could be realized. This is true for the believer as well as for the unbeliever, said Luther. Unfortunately, the controversy continued, and Luther arranged a third disputation. Agricola was absent yet again.

In a treatise published in 1539, Luther provided one of the primary documents of this controversy. In it, he addressed the false doctrine of the Antinomians and the proper place of law and gospel.

The devil devotes himself to making men secure, teaching them to heed neither law nor sin... It seems to me that these spirits think that all who are listening to the message are pure Christians, without sin—though in reality they are dejected and downcast hearts who feel their sin and fear God and who therefore must be comforted. (Against the Anitnomians: LW: 47, p. 111.)

Luther taught that Christians need to be stirred to repentance because they are still sinners. They must not be allowed to become complacent in their sin or self-righteous in their denial of it. Luther asked how anyone could think that he, who had written so many teachings and sermons on the Ten Commandments, could abandon them. In fact, Luther declared, "I myself, as old and as learned as I am, recite the commandments daily word for word like a child."

Dr. Luther encouraged pastors to preach the pure doctrine, always including the law and the gospel. It was not enough to preach only the grace and suffering of Christ, the terrors and punishment of the law also were necessary. Luther explained that sin must be preached wherever Christ is preached:

For who could know what and why Christ suffered for us without knowing what sin or law is?... For the law terrifies me more when I hear that Christ, the Son of God, had to fulfill it for me than it would were it preached to me without the mention of Christ and of such great torment suffered by God's Son, but were accompanied only by threats. For in the Son of God I behold the wrath of God in action, while the law of God shows it to me with words and with lesser deeds. (Ibid., p. 113.)

Lest we make the same mistake as Agricola, we must understand the purpose of the law and the gospel, based upon a right theology of the sin of humanity.

Passive and Active Righteousness

Much like our own day, the church in Luther's day taught a theology of human glory. Human reason, human holiness, and human works stood in the center of Medieval theology. Luther called this a "theology of glory," whereby human beings captured and earned God's favor by their own holy works. The theology of glory encouraged and exalted human efforts in order to obtain God's favor and eternal blessing.

Luther responded to the human-centered theology with a Christ-centered theology, a theology of the Cross. In it, he exposed the reality of human sin, as described clearly in Paul's letters to the Galatians and the Romans. Without faith in Christ, all human beings are dead in their sin. They cannot approach God, cannot choose God or have faith in God, and cannot properly fear, love, and trust God. The center of biblical faith and true theology is not human action, but the merciful and all-sufficient sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the Cross.

God's Word and Sacraments create faith in the heart of the believer. By that faith, the righteousness, blessing, and life of Christ are imputed to the believer, and the sin, punishment, and death of the believer are imputed to Christ. Believers are passive recipients. They passively receive God's faith-creating Word and Sacraments. They passively receive Christ's righteousness that yields God's favor and results in God's eternal grace. Before God, humanity must always remain the passive recipient of passive righteousness, imputed by grace through faith.

However, once faith is received, the believer is moved by God's Word and Spirit to serve the world. Here, the believer participates in an active righteousness. The believer's actions are not perfect, but they are inspired by the living Christ who is within the heart of every believer. The redeemed imperfectly obey God's commands and do God's will according to the Word and Spirit that are theirs by grace through faith. Righteousness before God comes not by doing, but by believing. Righteousness before one another comes as a result of works performed according to the power and guidance of the Holy Spirit. (An excellent article by Robert Kolb is found in *Lutheran Quarterly: Vol. XVI* (2002), "Luther on the Theology of the Cross.")

Right Use of the Law

Though the power and domination of sin are removed from the believer, and though the wrath of God for sin is imputed to Christ, the believer still struggles with sin as long as he or she lives in the flesh and in the world. For this reason, both the unbeliever and the believer have continuing need for the law of God.

The Formula of Concord: Solid Declaration, Article VI, "Third Use of the Law," provides a clear explanation. First, the law of God functions as a rule and discipline in the civil arena. It preserves society's safety and decency. Second, the law of God confronts people with the knowledge of their sin and drives the repentant to the Cross of Christ for forgiveness. Third, those who have been converted and are now free from bondage to sin and bondage to the law, still benefit from the law as a guide in Christian living.

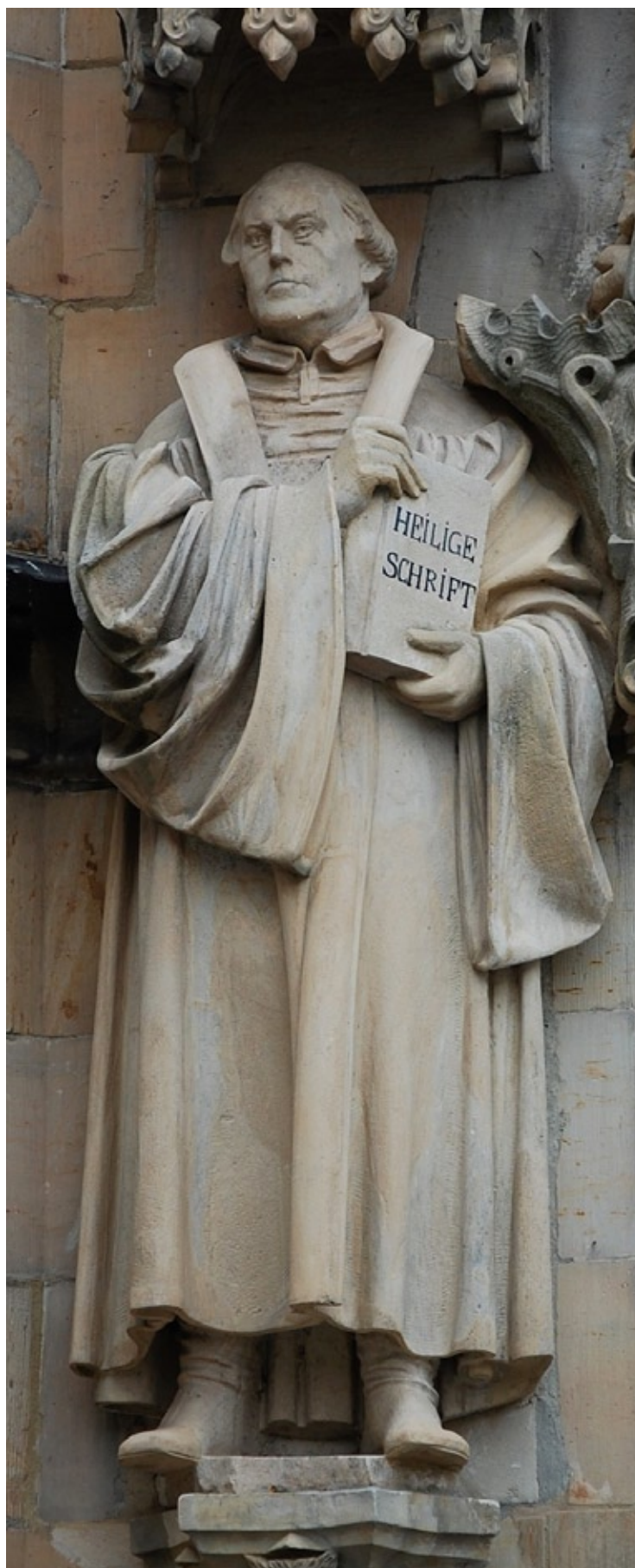
For the law is a mirror in which the will of God and what is pleasing to him is correctly portrayed. It is necessary to hold this constantly before believers' eyes and continually to urge it upon them with diligence. (Formula of Concord: Solid Declaration, Article VI: 4.)

For although their sins are covered up through the perfect obedience of Christ, so that they are not reckoned to believers for damnation, and although the Holy Spirit has begun the mortification of the Old Adam and their renewal in the spirit of their minds, nevertheless the Old Adam still clings to their nature and to all its internal and external powers. (Ibid., Article VI: 7.)

Reformation Today

False doctrines and heresies are still very much alive in the Christian Church today. One false doctrine will inevitably pollute all related doctrines. For, when the Word of God is not rightly preached and the Sacraments are not administered in their purity, the truth of the Gospel can quickly be lost. Typically, one of two things results: either the people become arrogant pharisees who believe that they truly are without sin, able to satisfy God's righteous law with their own holiness, or the people recognize the depravity of their own sin and are crushed under the weight of God's judgement.

In both of these cases, the law and gospel of God's Word and the clear declarations of the Great Reformer, Martin Luther, provide a necessary safeguard. The Word of Christ that was made known at the time of the Apostles and capably defended at the time of the Reformation is ours today. Let us celebrate the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation! Let us faithfully proclaim what we believe, teach, and confess!



Reading Luther

By The Rev. President Shields

As we enter the 500th year after the Reformation, the danger is that we might *only* read about Martin Luther. However, how refreshing it might be to read what Luther actually wrote. Obviously Luther wrote more than most of us read even in a year. So let's narrow down the list of writings that will expand our knowledge about him as a writer.

One invention, the printing press by Gutenberg, appeared about 70 years prior to Luther beginning to write for others. The printing press allowed the rapid spread of Luther's writings, especially pamphlets. Thus, instead of what took weeks, months, or years for hand written copies of what he wrote, the speed of the printing press significantly shortened the time from writing to distribution, not just for one copy but many copies.

What should I read?

Confessional writings

As Lutherans we do not follow Martin Luther, rather we confess the same faith that he did. Our public statements of faith are compiled in *The Book of Concord*, dated in 1580. Surprisingly, Luther only wrote three parts of the book: *The Small Catechism* (1529), *The Large Catechism* (1529), and *The Smalcald Articles* (1537). However, his influence on the others writings is evident. He reviewed and approved of *The Augsburg Confession* (1530), and *The Apology [Defense] of the Augsburg Confession* (1531). Further the next generation of theologians who wrote the *Formula of Concord* (1580) borrowed heavily from Luther, quoting some passages at length.

A starting point for reading Luther is to read his three writings in the *Book of Concord*. If you have been raised in a Lutheran church, you are most likely familiar with *The Small Catechism*. Luther wrote it to help parents teach the Christian faith to their families. In addition, Luther wrote sermons for pastors to teach the congregations, published as *The Large Catechism*. Thus, the two catechisms complement each other. Reading both will enhance your understanding of the key topics of the Christian faith.

Early writings

The 500th celebration of the Reformation highlights one of his earliest writings (Oct. 31, 1517): *The Disputation of Martin Luther on the Power and Efficacy of Indulgences*, better known as *The Ninety-Five Theses*. You can search online for this document. Luther's direct approach to false teaching emerges

in this document and continues in his later writings. He also wrote *An Explanation of the 95 Theses* in 1518.

Other early works worth reading: *The Heidelberg Disputation* (1518) and *Two Kinds of Righteousness* (1519). In 1519 the Leipzig Debate presented a theological disputation originally between Andreas Karlstadt, Martin Luther, Philipp Melancthon, and Johann Eck [papal expert]. The topics were originally to be on free will and grace. However, Eck and Luther met and expanded the topics to purgatory, the sale of indulgences, the need for and methods of penance, and the legitimacy of papal authority. In the debate, Luther claimed that *sola scripture* (Scripture alone) as the basis for Christian beliefs. In June 1520 Pope Leo X banned all Luther's views from writing and preaching.

There are three significant writings from 1520: *To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation Concerning The Reform of the Christian Estate*, *The Babylonian Captivity of the Church*, and *The Freedom of a Christian*. These three writings had significant influence on the public life of the 1500s and lead to the Peasants Rebellion and later to the nobility responding to control the masses.

Other Important Writings

Because Luther wrote doctrinal statements and discussed what is commonly called systematic or doctrinal theology, his other writings were more closely related to his specialty, namely exegetical theology, particularly the Old Testament. Thus, as you begin to search his exegetical writings, you discover his series on Genesis (8 books in English translation), his commentaries on the Psalms, and his commentaries on the Minor Prophets (1524-1526). Perhaps the premier commentaries include his ones on Galatians (1535 ed.) [vol. 26 and 27 in English], his commentaries on the Gospel of John (1537) [vol. 22, 24 in English].

This list is only a sampling of what Luther wrote. But your time will be well spent reading some of these books and articles. And there is no need to rush through them. Take time to understand the key points, to appreciate his writing style (even in English), and to give thanks that God used Luther who dedicated his life to teaching the Christian faith.

For Further reading:

Here is a website that provides a chronological list of Luther's writings with the English volume references: <https://lutherantheology.files.wordpress.com/2010/02/luthers-work-chronological-website2.pdf>

Church Fellowship

by The Rev. Joe Dapelo

“Behold, how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity!” (Psalm 133:1)

A great thing occurred in our church body on a rainy October day in Fort Wayne, Indiana. After two days of meetings, delegates from The AALC and the Selbständige Evangelisch-Lutherische Kirche (Independent Evangelical Lutheran Church in Germany) resolved to move forward with a resolution for both church bodies to acknowledge their unity in the Gospel and confession of faith, and to declare altar and pulpit fellowship.

The AALC was represented by our Presiding Pastor, Dr. Curtis Leins, our Seminary President, Rev. Rich Shields, and Rev. Joe Dapelo. SELK was represented by their bishop, Rev. Hans-Jorg Voigt, and seminary professor, Rev. Werner Klaen.

The SELK has approximately 180 congregations across Germany, with 118 active pastors. Independent Lutheran churches in Germany arose in the 19th Century in response to the Prussian Union, which forced a union between Lutheran and Reformed churches under King Friedrich Wilhelm III. Confessional Lutheran church bodies in Germany formed SELK in 1972.

The discussions were fruitful, as we discussed theological matters, such as the doctrine of the Word, the Church, the Office of Holy Ministry, the Sacraments, and Worship. We also spent time discussing the distinct polity of each church body, and the unique history of each body. Both church bodies are members of the International Lutheran Council (ILC), and Bishop Voigt serves as the Chairman of the ILC. Our membership in the ILC allows us to partner with other Confessional Lutheran bodies around the globe in mission, seminary training, etc.

A resolution to acknowledge altar and pulpit fellowship between our two bodies will be brought before



our Commission for Doctrine and Church Relations (CDCR), Executive Committee, and Association Council, with the intent to bring a resolution before the 2018 General Convention of The AALC in June in St. Paul, MN.

This was the second European body that The AALC has had the pleasure to dialogue with this year. In March of this year, we met with representatives of the Lutheran Church in Norway, a relatively new church body that has broken away from the state church in Norway. They were represented by their bishop, Rev. Torkild Masvie, and Rev. Eirik-Kornelius Garnes-Lunde. The AALC was represented again by our Presiding Pastor, Dr. Leins, Rev. Joe Dapelo, and Rev. Jordan Cooper.

Bishop Masvie was able and willing to declare their fellowship with us that day! We resolved as representatives to carry the same recommendation to our CDCR, Executive Committee, Association Council, and, ultimately, to our General Convention in June.

The leadership of The AALC has no desire to simply declare fellowship with church bodies on paper, but rather we desire to find practical ways to partner with sister church bodies around the world. We desire to continue discussions and seek ways to work together for the sake of the Kingdom.

The AALC has received overtures from other church bodies around the world to dialogue and partner. Pray for these opportunities and partnerships, and pray for our brothers and sisters in Germany and Norway. It is truly pleasing to the Lord when brothers dwell together in unity.

As we prepare for the 2018 General Convention, you will see resolutions for fellowship in The Evangel and convention mailings. Please feel free to ask questions of our leadership regarding these bodies, and pray for the work of The AALC here in the United States and around the world, as we seek to bring the message of the Gospel to the nations.



The Reformation Celebration Keynote Lectures

Members of the clergy and laity of TAALC gathered together in Deephaven, MN to celebrate the 500th anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation. This time together consisted in fellowship, worship, and presentations from pastors on some of the central theological themes that influenced Luther's reforms. If you have interest in checking out these lectures yourself, you can find a playlist of videos available on Youtube.¹

The first lecture given was presented by the Rev. Nathan Hoff. Pastor Hoff spoke about the central theme of the Reformation: justification by grace through faith. He talked about how the culture has shifted so that people no longer see themselves as in need of justification, but instead demand God himself to vindicate his own actions. We, however, need to turn the question around and look at ourselves, and our sin. This message is just as relevant as it ever was: all sinners need to be forgiven.

Second, the Rev. Joe Dapelo spoke on the topic of the ministry. God chose to deliver this free gift of justification by using the Word and Sacraments. It is the role of the pastor to deliver these gifts. There is nothing holy or unique about the pastor as a person, as the true work of salvation is of God. The pastor is merely a tool that God uses.





In connection with the ministry, the Rev. Rich Shields discussed the church. God did not only institute the pastoral office, but he gave all believers a position in his church. This body consists in all people who trust in Christ for salvation, and all enter into the holy priesthood that Jesus established. We enter into the church through Holy Baptism, and are nurtured through the Lord's Supper.

The gift of Holy Baptism was discussed by the Rev. Dr. Curtis Leins in his opening talk for the second day of the conference. Through the Sacrament, the believer is Christed (to use Rev. Leins distinctive term), meaning that he or she has put on the Savior, and received all of his benefits. Holy Baptism is not just the beginning of the Christian life, but it gives the power to live in faith each day, even unto one's reception into eternal life.

The life of the Christian was explained by the Rev. Jordan Cooper who discussed the role of good works and sanctification. Salvation by grace does not mean that good works do not matter. Instead, the free gift of salvation leads one to a life of abundant good works. These things are not done in order to earn salvation before God, but to serve the neighbor that the Christian is called to love.

Pastor Chris Rosebrough ended the talks with a lecture on the ending of the Christian life in glorification. He discussed some of the false views of the end times that are commonly taught, and spoke about the hope that God's people have in the second coming of Jesus. When he comes back to this earth, the church will be received into glory, and wickedness will be judged.

All of these talks were an encouragement to those who were present, as these truths impact our lives day to day. If you were not able to attend, I encourage you to take a look at the videos, as I think they will encourage and strengthen your faith immensely.

¹The address is: <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLxaDcwjYomzys-jxC7PpcScLE-hA5ZPOI>. You can also simply look up "2017 AALC Reformation Conference" in the search bar on Youtube, and it should appear at the top.



Martin Luther



Drawing by: Joan Bengtston

at the 500th Celebration of the Reformation

by Lisa Cooper

During our meal times at the Reformation Celebration, The Rev. Rich Eddy became Martin Luther. Even more than just donning a costume, he gave a passionate, personal history of Martin Luther from Luther's perspective. It felt as if we were meeting the real Luther. Over the course of the two days, we heard about the events leading up to his writing of the 95 Theses, and how the Reformation subsequently spread. As you might know, Martin Luther's students often drew pictures of him giving lectures, so when Joan Bengtston submitted this drawing of Pastor Eddy as Luther, it was a perfect fit.



German Folk Dancers at the 500th Celebration of the Reformation

by Lisa Cooper

Along with our time spent with Martin Luther, we were also blessed to have the German folk dancers perform for us the second evening of the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation Celebration. Not only did they entertain us, but they gave us information about the origins of the dances, their outfits, and explained why certain movements would have been used in different geographical areas. Some of the people in attendance were invited to join them in dance as well. It was a wonderful time of celebration!





Noah's Ark Encounter Trip For Friends and Neighbors

By The Rev. Kevin L. Leidich

With a tremendous amount of help from the congregations of TAALC and Rev. Dr. Dean Stoner, on July 21st St. Paul Lutheran Church of Chatham, Kentucky invited its friends and neighbors to go with them to experience the Ark Encounter. The congregation put in a lot of effort, made sandwiches, raised funds, and invited people it did not know to join with them on this outing. It truly did take all hands on deck to get everything aboard in time. We planned, by the grace given, to do what was good, but we know the Lord establishes a matter. Dominus nisi Frustra—without God all is frustration.

Planning meetings helped the congregation to envision the good that could be done through working together to meet and encourage its neighbors in Christian Faith. The main goal was to reach out to families that might not otherwise be able to go to see the Ark Encounter. A gift was given to the congregation to help with this project from another TAALC congregation which acted like a seed of possibility. Tasks were delegated covering all the bases to make the trip successful. Large outdoor signs were put up, further financial support came in from both the aforemen-

tioned congregation and other congregations. Congregational members developed a lunch plan and the ingredients were purchased with funds from Thrivent. At the congregation's annual homemade Ice Cream fete the trip was promoted to guests. T-shirts were gathered and printed to personalize a remembrance of the event. The congregational president reserved a bus and a phone number was given for anyone interested to call from the community. We sought to have personal contact with guests and to get acquainted with them. In the future we will contact these people, building further church activities with the hope of forming relationships and friendships with those around us.

On the day of the trip Pastor gave a little devotion on the world before the Ten Commandments, a world which was filled with violence rather than peace. Noah and his family faced two major dangers: one was drowning in the flood and the other was drowning in violence. Violence is not just a matter of the hands, but it comes from our fallen heart. Without the flood, Noah's family—the last that walked with the Lord—might have perished. If you ponder breaking the loving and just commandments of



the Lord, it is easy to perceive of the violence of evil. Stealing things is violence towards neighbor, dishonoring parents in words and deeds is a violence, turning from the Lord who created us and even speaking curses against Him and creation is not peaceful and loving, but violent. Adultery is violence against marriage, bearing false witness is violence in words against family members and neighbors. Peace is the opposite of violence; it lives in us through faith in the Lord's salvation, and a rejection of evil. Peace is a gift of the Lord. Remember, at Noah's time there was a promise that a child would be born who would overcome the devil and be pierced in so doing. By placing faith in the Lord's promise of salvation, Noah was a righteous man. It is always right to walk before the turning from what is evil and violent and holding to what is good and peaceful. In the New Testament, the disciples are instructed to go to a house and say, "Peace be to this house," and if a man of peace is there, then your peace shall remain. The ark is like the basket that Moses was placed in and was a means of preserving life. The Hebrew word for ark only appears twice—once for Noah's Ark and once for the reed basket which held Moses as a baby on the Nile River. Noah's ark was grace and mercy for mankind as man awaited the fulfilling of the Lord's promise to send a savior to redeem humanity from its sins. The Lord's prophecy for us this day is that Christ Jesus will return on a day just like that day when Noah entered the Ark.

It rained during the ride to the ark and stopped just in time for us to enjoy lunch at a nearby park. We enjoyed the many fine displays inside the ark, and the air-conditioned facilities. With three decks, our feet racked up plenty of steps; my wife's pedometer measured 5,000.

This year there were also animals to see at a petting zoo, and you could ride a camel.

The following highlights seem worthy mentioning. Many guests expressed their thanks for making the trip possible. We learned that even when you think that you know everyone there are people surrounding you that you do not know. Three friends from another town came by the Ice Cream Fete. It was easy to believe that they must just be someone's extended family, but they came because they saw the ad in the paper, and they then went to see the Ark because we went table by table pitching the Ark trip even when we might have believed that everyone there knew about the trip already. It pays to reach out in faith, and to try to make connections and build on the contact. It is a thought that those who were guests seemed to go home with a favorable impression and may well encourage other family members or neighbors to attend the Ark Encounter if we did it again. About 75 percent were guests, and it was very worthwhile to encourage faith and friendship in the Lord. May the Lord bless these seeds and grant an open door, and give us the courage to walk through it.

In the Lord's Grace
 Pastor Kevin L. Leidich
 St. Paul Chatham and Trinity of Kentucky

Prayer Bookmark

January

1. Trinity Lutheran *West Hempstead, NY*
2. Abiding Grace Lutheran *Gillette, WY*
3. American Lutheran *Mandan, ND*
4. Ascension Lutheran *Ames, IA*
5. Bethel Lutheran *Rowland, PA*
6. Bible Lutheran *Dodge Center, MN*
7. Calvary Evangelical Lutheran *St. Paul, MN*
8. Calvary Lutheran *Crystal Lake, IA*
9. Christ Lutheran *Chippewa Falls, WI*
10. Christ Lutheran *Duluth, MN*
11. Christ Lutheran *Ellis, KS*
12. Christ Lutheran *Germantown, MD*
13. Christ the King Lutheran *Chesterfield, MI*
14. Christ the Ray of Hope Lutheran
Albuquerque, NM
15. Christus Victor Lutheran *Fayetteville, NC*
16. Clam Falls Lutheran *Frederic, WI*
17. Community Lutheran Church of
McAllister Wausaukee, WI
18. Elim *Brush Prairie, WA*
19. Emmanuel Lutheran *Bremerton, WA*
20. Emmanuel Lutheran *Kelliher, MN*
21. Faith Lutheran *Columbus, ND*
22. Faith Lutheran *Holstein, IA*
23. Faith Lutheran *Watseka, IL*
24. First Evangelical Lutheran *Parshall, ND*
25. Good Shepherd Evangelical Lutheran
San Diego, CA
26. Good Shepherd Lutheran *Franklin, NC*
27. Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church of
Deephaven Wayzata, MN
28. Grace Lutheran *Nunda, SD*
29. Hope Lutheran *Brighton, IA*
30. Hope Lutheran *Hampton, VA*
31. The Barn Again Lutheran *Tijeras, NM*
& Ascension *Waterloo, IA*

Prayer Bookmark

February

1. Kongsvinger Lutheran *Oslo, MN*
2. Lake Madison Lutheran *Nunda, SD*
3. Light of Christ Lutheran *Williston, ND*
4. Lucky Mound Lutheran *Parshall, ND*
5. Mighty Fortress Evangelical Lutheran
Seward, NE
6. Mountain View Lutheran *Thornton, CO*
7. New Hope Lutheran *Newfolden, MN*
8. Our Redeemer's Lutheran *Williston, ND*
9. Our Savior Lutheran *Piqua, OH*
10. Peace Lutheran *Defiance, OH*
11. Pilot Knob Lutheran *Forest City, IA*
12. Poplar Lake Lutheran *Fosston, MN*
13. Prince of Peace Lutheran *Evansdale, IA*
14. Redeemer *West Union, IA*
15. Shepherd of the Mountain Lutheran
Frazier Park, CA
16. Shepherd of the Valley *Galt, CA*
17. Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran *Sidney MT*
18. Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran
Yuba City, CA
19. Sonland Lutheran *Casa Grande AZ*
20. St. John's Lutheran *Pocahontas, MO*
21. St. Luke Evangelical Lutheran *Traer, IA*
22. St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran *Augusta, KY*
23. St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran *Otis, CO*
24. St. Paul Lutheran *Tripoli, IA*
25. St. Paul's Lutheran *Napoleon, OH*
26. St. Peter's Lutheran *Elk Grove, CA*
27. Trinity Lutheran *Galata, MT*
28. Trinity Lutheran *San Pedro, CA*



Meet

The Rev. Tom Jahr

TAALC Chaplain

Chaplain Jahr is married with five children, ages 6-17. He joined the Federal Bureau of Prisons as a chaplain after serving as an AALC pastor in Waterloo, IA at Ascension Lutheran Church. Previously, he had served as a chaplain at a Children's Hospital, as well as the VA hospital in Atlanta. Chaplain Jahr has served in the Bureau of Prisons since 2005, at prisons in Petersburg, VA, Ashland, KY, Phoenix, AZ and currently is in Manchester, KY. Chaplain Jahr is the supervisor for a team of three additional full-time staff, who with him provide pastoral care and coordinate religious accommodation for roughly 1100 inmates.

Chaplain Jahr sees the world through the cross of Christ, and his prayer is that all may come to know that Jesus Christ is Lord!

One Way to Serve the Fallen

By The Rev. Greg Stenzel

Living in the greater San Diego area one cannot get away from the military. San Diego is a significant Navy town. The U.S. Marine Corp has a large footprint as well, with MCRD (Marine Corps Recruit Depot) and Camp Pendleton serving our nation with an active presence. Living in a town with military significance is nothing new to me, as I was born and raised in Vallejo, CA, home of the former Mare Island Naval Shipyard. So, I suppose, one could say that military influence and patriotism is in my blood.

I love the military. Though I never served (one of my life regrets) I try to serve now by honoring our military as I ride my motorcycle. A few years ago a friend told me about Patriot Guard Riders. I quickly realized that their mission was a good fit for me.

"Our Vision"

"The Patriot Guard Riders is a diverse amalgamation of riders from across the nation. We have one thing in common besides motorcycles. We have an unwavering respect for those who risk their very lives for America's freedom and security including Fallen Military Heroes, First Responders and honorably discharged Veterans. If you share this respect, please join us..."

"...Our main mission is to attend the funeral services of fallen American heroes as *invited guests of the family*. Each mission we undertake has two basic objectives:

1. Show our sincere respect for our fallen heroes, their families, and their communities.
2. Shield the mourning family and their friends from interruptions created by any protester or group of protesters."

[taken from patriotguard.org]

Patriot Guard Riders is a nationwide organization, and all members are volunteers. Some regions of the country see a lot of activity, while others participate in a few missions a year. Living in Southern California, however, we participate in over 600 missions each year; 50 per month, which includes the counties of Los Angeles, Riverside, and San Diego. Due to my pastoral responsibilities, I'm only able to participate on my days off, but what a privilege to do so; about three missions per month.

At the invitation of the family, one objective is to provide escort services from the mortuary, or family home, to one of our National Cemeteries where full-military honors await the fallen. Those who are Killed in Action are often met at the airport where they are escorted from their plane to the mortuary. For example, most recently, Patriot Guard Riders met the plane of two sailors who died July 2017 in the tragic accident aboard the USS Fitzgerald in Japan; their respective funerals followed a week later. The most memorable for me were missions that took place this year where PGR participated in the services for



two of our fallen. One, a POW from the Korean War era, whose remains were located and identified then returned home after over 60 years missing, and most recently where the remains of a Naval Aviator shot-down over Vietnam were recovered and returned home.

Why do we do these things? Many of our members are veterans of Vietnam. We join with them in saying, "Never again will returning warriors, living or dead, be disrespected. Never will their bravery, their wounds, or their deaths be ignored."

As you might imagine, it is truly an honor to serve in this way. Dignity, honor, and respect is the goal for each mission. Flag-lines are a common scene at each mission. Standing at attention, and saluting with a raised flag is our way of honoring the fallen. Further, providing a barrier of protection between a protesting public and the grieving family is why we are there. Patriotism is put in motion and given a voice through the low rumble of our motorcycle exhaust.

Someone once said of us that the Patriot Guard is like the morning mist. If you look for us right now, nothing's there. But, when a tragedy befalls a member of America's armed forces; we appear in force from the four corners. We pay our respects, we ride, we hold our flags and we shed our tears. And then, like the mist, the Patriot Guard is gone until needed again. Should a freedom fighter be lost from your hometown, or a veteran of previous conflicts, or a young man or young woman is killed in the service of this free America, Listen for the Rumble. The Patriot Guard is coming.



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