

BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH MISSION STATEMENT: Steadfast in the Word, Bethlehem Lutheran Church shares Christ and serves people with friendship in His love in all God's world.

Grace and peace be yours in abundance, fellow sojourners!

I share the following this month. from *Against the Night* by Charles Colson with Ellen Santilli Vaughn. Copyright © 1989, 1999 by Fellowship Communications. Used by permission of Vine Books

“A world of nice people, content in their own niceness, looking no further, turned away from God, would be just as desperately in need of salvation as a miserable world - and might even be more difficult to save.” —C. S. Lewis

The monastic orders of the Dark Ages could not have modeled communities of character if they had looked like the troubled world about them. Today, in a new age darkened by the collapse of character and the dissolution of faith, the church cannot model the Kingdom of God if it is conformed to the kingdoms of man.

Too often in recent years the church has suffered from the same collapse of character that is so widespread in our culture. Too often the church has been apathetic, marked by individualism, and constrained by the love of self rather than the love of Christ.

If the church today is to be the church, it must diligently protect its spiritual integrity. This begins with what the Greeks called **metanoia**, which means a change of mind - and is translated in the New Testament as **repentance**.

The repentance that God desires is not just contrition, or acknowledgment and confession of our sin. It is also a daily attitude and perspective.

- ✠ Repentance is the process by which we see ourselves, day by day, as we really are: sinful, needy, dependent people. It is the process by which we see God as He is: awesome, majestic, and holy.
- ✠ Repentance is the essential manifestation of regeneration that sets us straight in our relationship to God and so radically alters our perspective that we begin to see the world through God's eyes, not our own.
- ✠ Repentance is the ultimate surrender of self. It is a radical change of mind that goes beyond spiritual stirring and inklings of interest. Unless there is metanoia, God has not been allowed to take control. An unrepentant Christian is a contradiction in terms.
- ✠ Repentance is the first of Martin Luther's 95 Theses: When our Lord and master Jesus Christ said 'repent', He willed that the entire life of believers be one of repentance.
- ✠ Repentance is the first word of the Gospel. It is the centerpiece of John the Baptist's message. Repent and believe were Jesus' first words in the account of Mark, and His last words to the disciples commanding them to preach repentance and forgiveness of sins.
- ✠ Repentance for Christians, is both individual and as a body. Each person needs to reflect a life of repentance just as the corporate church needs to model that same attitude of faith and life.
- ✠ Repentance is a rare message in today's church because it requires confrontation with an uncomfortable subject - sin. And sin does not sell well in our feel-good culture. When sin gets personal, people get skittish. Only the conviction of personal sin, however, brings us to Christ.

✠ ✠ ✠

I look forward to seeing you each Sunday morning ... worshipping and studying with you ... lifting up and exalting our great God with you! Come with a smile on your face, a bounce in your step, your Bible in hand, and that friend you personally and intentionally invited. Also, bring a joyful, eager attitude to be touched by the Risen Christ, together with a hungry heart for spiritual vitality and victorious living that comes each time we encounter God's renewing presence in Word & Sacrament!

AFTER DIVINE SERVICE, MAY 26TH

Please stay to honor the High School graduation of Matthew Jackson and Nic Worsham after Divine Service May 26th.

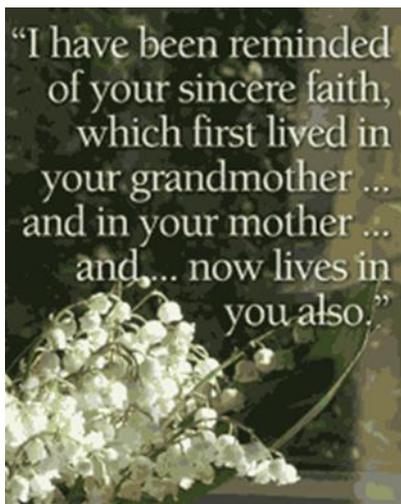


Dear church members, The Anderson County Veterans Service Center would like to thank you for your kindness in providing refreshments for our PTSD Troup Meeting every Wednesday at our office. Thank you for the booklets that was provided for our Vets. Your kindness and thoughtfulness is graciously appreciated. God Bless, Vernon Dedmon



YOUTH GARAGE SALE SATURDAY, MAY 18TH 7 AM—2 PM

The youth will have a fund raising garage sale here at the church. Donations are being received and volunteers are needed! See Devin Jackson for more information. All proceeds will be split between Higher Things and National Youth Gathering.



From there, they will be directed to locations all over the world.
Many thanks to all who participated in this effort !

LWML Spring Zone Event, Saturday, May 18, 2019

St. John Lutheran Church, Athens, TX, 9:30am to 2:00pm. **“Let Your Light Shine,”** based on St. Matthew 5:12-16. Bible study to be given by Pastor Seth Davidson. Registration, snacks, lunch, all for \$6.00. Items for Ingathering: (easy to fix foods & snacks for school age children) to benefit families with children through the Henderson County Food Pantry.

(After the event, we are invited to enjoy the First Annual “Gospel Jamboree” on the Church grounds, free for everyone!)

We will carpool from Bethlehem. Contact JoAnn Tugwell or Donna Hughes of your interest. They have requested we RSVP before May 1, 2019.



NEWS FLASH: 2017-2019 National Mission Goal Met! Thanks be to God for His generosity and generous offerings from men and women all over the U.S. as they faithfully filled their mission Mite Boxes. Twenty-two ministries have received complete grants. Over the past two years God has blessed us to raise the funds to meet our Mission Goal of \$2,075,000, as selected at the 2017 Albuquerque Convention.



Remember to use your **Kroger card** as part of Kroger’s “Community Rewards” Program which is linked to Bethlehem’s LWML. We appreciate your efforts as we use these funds for our various projects. Find out how you may participate; ask Donna Hughes.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

- ✦ Sun., May 5, LWML meeting after church service, since Mother’s Day is May 12.
- ✦ Sat., May 18, 2019 – East Texas Zone Spring Event
- ✦ Sat., September 21, 2019 – East Texas Fall Zone Rally. *Watch for more details.*
- ✦ Friday & Saturday, October 11 & 12, 2019 – Texas District 2019 Rest & Renewal Retreat, Lakeview Methodist Conference Center, Palestine. “Come to Me...” based on St. Matthew 11:28-30. Speaker will be Kaye Wolff, LWML VP of Special Focus Ministries.

Our society is open to all women of Bethlehem. We usually meet after church on the second Sunday of the month. There are no dues, but we collect donations for MITES and for our general fund. The Annual Bazaar is our major fundraiser.

asm as we gathered everything we needed to put 100 kits together! And thanks to those who brought soap, toothbrushes, clippers and combs and donated money and to those who packaged our kits, counted and boxed them. Thank you also to Debbie Curry who picked up all 13 boxes of care kits and got them delivered to the drop-off site in Houston, and from there they can go all over the world to help in crisis situations



Holy Communion or Unholy Chaos



The expression
“closed communion”
comes from the
Ancient Church
custom of dismissing
those who were not
eligible to receive
the Sacrament
before the beginning
of the liturgy of the
Eucharist.

The Ecumenical Movement’s Use of the Lord’s Supper (Part 2)

by Rev. Paul T. McCain

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What then of the Apostle’s assertion that Christians are to examine themselves before they commune (1 Cor. 11:28), and his further assertion that Christian ministers are “stewards of the mysteries of God” (1 Cor. 4:1)? Orthodox Christianity, of both East and West, has always held that these two important truths require a practice that is known as closed communion. The expression “closed communion” comes from the Ancient Church custom of dismissing those who were not eligible to receive the Sacrament before the beginning of the liturgy of the Eucharist. The dismissal of non-communicants would occur and then a deacon would cry out, “The doors! The doors!” The church doors were then literally closed. Closed communion is the practice of limiting participation in the Lord’s Supper to those who have been catechized and examined in the truths of the Christian faith and who have promised to believe, teach and confess what the church in which they will commune believes, teaches and confesses. Thus, for the New Testament and Early Church, altar fellowship was church fellowship and church fellowship is most visibly and tangibly expressed in altar fellowship.

Reformation Understandings of Fellowship

Luther was concerned that communicants be examined carefully in order to determine if they understood what the Lord’s Supper actually is and what is given in the Supper. Luther regarded participation in the Lord’s Supper as an act of confession of what one believes. So did Calvin, who wrote in his Institutes

permit those who had not confessed the true faith to commune (4.12.5). When Reformed Christians in Strasbourg signed the Wittenberg Concord thus formally embracing the Lutheran view of the Lord’s Supper, Reformed Christians in Zurich did not permit their students to receive the Sacrament in Strasbourg.²

Many Christian churches today view the Lord’s Supper, at best, as only a way for Christians to commune “spiritually” with Jesus Christ who is present only in heaven. Furthermore, many believe that the presence of Christ in the Sacrament of the altar depends on the faith of the individual communicant. Therefore, most evangelical and Protestant Christians today do not believe, as Luther and the Lutheran Confessions clearly do, that in the Lord’s Supper the bread is the Body of Christ and the wine is the Blood of Christ which is present, distributed and received into the mouths of all who receive the Blessed Sacrament.³

2. Also, in 1580 it is reported that Reformed preachers in Oldenburg required communicants to confess that the Body and Blood of Christ were not present in the Holy Sacrament. See the magisterial article on Supper Fellowship in Martin Wittenberg, *Church Fellowship and Altar Fellowship in the Light of Church History*, translated by John Bruss in *Logia: A Journal of Lutheran Theology* (Reformation 1992) Vol. I, No. 1, 23-57.

3. “It is not our faith which makes the sacrament, but solely the Word and institution of our almighty God and Savior, Jesus Christ, which always remains efficacious in Christendom so whether those who receive the Sacrament believe or do not believe, Christ nonetheless remains truthful in his words when he says, ‘Take eat, this is my body.’ This he effects not through our faith, but solely through his omni-



By Mona Fuerstenau

Parenthood is a grand adventure! It's a story that begins in our dreams and unfolds over years—full of plot twists and turns that take our breath away (both in good ways and bad). We have a dream of our children and our family. We wonder which parts of us and our spouse they will also have. We think about the ways in which they will be uniquely different from either of us. We hope our son will have the love of music that we do or that our daughter will have a love of sports. We might even pray that there are some of our traits that they will not have! This is all part of the delicious anticipation during the period of expecting. We are praying and hoping and dreaming and expecting.



In truth, reality is never like the dream. Your son may have inherited your least favorite uncle's red hair. Your baby may arrive too early and with many medical issues. Your daughter may have the spirited temperament of your feisty sibling. Your child may have a disability that is immediately apparent or that unfolds over time. None of your children share your fascination with and love of science.

So, what do we do with these “dream” differences?

We write a different story—with God's help. We love our children, despite the unanticipated differences from our dreams. We recognize each as a God-given, wonderfully designed gift. Psalm 139:13-16 affirms for us that God has knit each of us together. Each one of us is fearfully and wonderfully made.

I would venture to say that not many people praying to be parents dream of having a child with a disability. I know I didn't. That was not part of my dream story. It is a plot twist that is different, unexpected, not what we had planned. Having a child with a disability is so significantly different from the family dream we can lose sight of who we are and whose we are.

But we ARE His. God is good, all the time. We can fully put our trust and our children in His hands. We can each become who He wants us to be. And as we grow and learn, we appreciate and embrace our parenting story, rich beyond what we ever could have dreamed or imagined.

We, the Church, can help these parents and families. Bethesda can provide support in talking with parents expecting or discovering a child with disabilities. Our ministry consultants across the country provide support and resources for the Church to walk alongside these families. Visit our website www.BethesdaLC.org and click on your state to see services offered locally. See also Bethesda's resource called “Welcoming a Child with Disabilities” available at www.cph.org under the Shop Bethesda button.

Together we can write and share God's wonderful plan and story for all of His children in His family.

involves our whole life – everything we have and everything we are.

Let us not, though, fall into the trap of thinking that because we give of ourselves in one area we can neglect giving in another. Stewardship is not stealing from Peter to pay Paul. It is not a game we play whereby we justify ourselves in not giving a tenth of our income because we have given in some other way. This is why our Lord warns:

“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cumin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faithfulness. These you ought to have done, without neglecting the others.” (St. Matthew 23:23)

We are given to do both – tithe of ourselves and what we have. And so it is that St. Paul makes his appeal to us:

“I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.” (Romans 12:1-2)

We are to present our bodies as a living sacrifice to God. We are not to have the mind of the world, where we exchange equal weight of this for an equal weight of that, and then think that we have done what God has required.

Our whole life is given over for service in and for the Church

ble response to what He has done for us – not one for the other, but all in all.

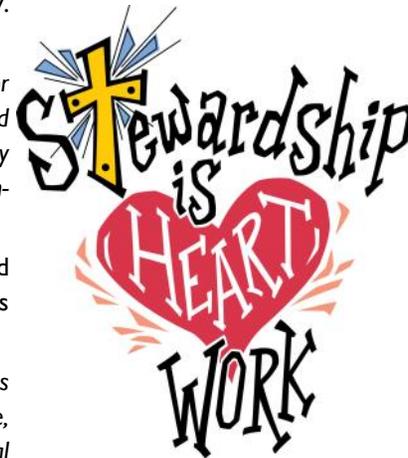
But what does this look like? St. Paul never lays down a general principle without also giving us some practical application of what shape that principle is to take concretely. He gives the general principle that our bodies are to be living sacrifices to God, and, after admonishing those who have been given particular gifts of grace to serve the church, St. Paul then speaks generally of what is expected of all. He says:

“Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good. Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor. Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality.” (Romans 12:9-13)

This is what it looks like to present your bodies as living sacrifices. This is how we live out the grace of God here in time.

Let us then heed the apostle’s teaching. Let us present our bodies – everything that we have and everything that we are – as living sacrifices to God, our reasonable response to what God in Christ Jesus accomplished for us by His death and resurrection.

Through this we have forgiveness of sins, a new life in Christ, and eternal salvation. And through this worship, the grace of God is made manifest in His saints – for the church and the world.



God’s Share First

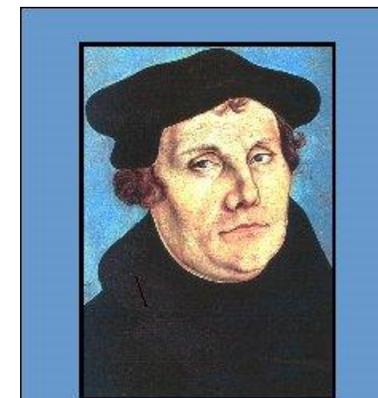
Question: Does the New Testament teach tithing?

Answer: The New Testament teaches full response to the love of God in Christ. Jesus said that He came not to destroy the Law but to fulfill it. *St. Matthew 5:17*.

Jesus does say that we should tithe (*Matthew 23:23*). But His teaching goes beyond the tithe to fulfill a higher law...the law of total commitment...the law of LOVE!

GENEROUS GIVING:

We recommend percentage giving to its members as a starting place for financial growth in the Lord. We believe that regular systematic giving is called for in the New Testament living. We urge our members to set aside a definite percent of their income to covenant with the Lord for this and to ask God to lead us on to total commitment.



Those who would be Christians are under obligation in the sight Of God to esteem the m worthy of double honor who minister to their souls, that they deal well

Gil called the meeting to order. Pastor opened with Psalm 91 devotion and prayer. Minutes were read. **Motion by Devin 2nd by Burl to accept. Motion carried.

REPORTS:

VP - no report.

Financial Secretary - Gil reported March income \$19,497, expenses \$12,853. Will take loan balance off report after Voter's meeting.

Treasurer - Gil gave account balances and income report. Budget report for March and year-to-date. **Motion by James, 2nd by Burl to accept financial reports. Motion carried.

Elders - James reported average attendance for March was 63, communed 56; first quarter average attendance was 67 average communed 62. 1st quarter membership changes: added 8, released one. Membership 144 baptized, 128 confirmed. **Motion by Burl, 2nd by Jim to amend Elders report & accept. Motion carried.

Christian Education - - Melanie reported no Sunday School on Easter morning; Mid Week resumes April 24th. Looking at summer Sunday School material.

Evangelism - Vacant

Stewardship - Vacant

Properties - Jim reported Garber Hall kitchen almost done, will use Luther Hall for meals thru May. Discussed painting Garber Hall. Replaced lights in Luther Hall.

Social Concerns - Megan reported Lent meals going well, Butch will provide BBQ for last meal. Easter breakfast menu; biscuits, gravy, eggs, bacon. Graduation dinner on May 26th; still looking for date for mortgage burning.

Youth - Devin reported youth garage sale will be May 18th; bake sale in future. Looking at trip to Six Flags this summer; researching horseback riding & zip lining. Matthew's Eagle Scout Court of Honor will be June 1st.

Pastor Report- Lenten, Holy Week Schedule. Reviewed "Concerning Confrontation." James stated elders wearing robes was Elders' idea.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Burl working on Roger Harris property, still not closed.

Discussed putting Service on-line.

NEW BUSINESS:

None

**Motion by James, 2nd by Jim to adjourn. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned and Pastor closed with the benediction.

Present: Gil Daughtrey, Burl Gruetzner, Jim Broad, James Taylor, Devin Jackson, Melanie Jackson, Megan Taylor, Pastor Adler.

HEALTH NEEDS—MEMBERS:

- Ron Bloecher - recovering from surgery
- Lana Bowden - recovering from surgery
- Albert Harris - back problems
- George Nelson - recovering from a stroke
- Lea Rosier

HEALTH NEEDS—FRIENDS:

- John Campbell [Tammy Pike's friend] - many medical issues
- Ray Clark [Peggy Adler's brother] - recovering from heart surgery
- Deanna Chapman [Fortner's friend] - cancer treatment
- Jerry Dukes [Jackson's friend] - complications from surgery
- Lille Mae Fogel [Jo Ann Tugwell's sister] - recovering from a broken hip
- Sonny Guillen [Donna Hughes co-worker] - car accident, serious injuries
- John Leach [Fortner's friend] - cancer treatment
- Ruby Olson [Peggy Adler's Aunt] - recovering from a stroke
- Lori Owens [Ken Koehler's daughter] - pneumonia
- Eileen Rigby [Donna Hughes' friend] - car accident, serious injuries
- Gene & Patsy Worsham [Tim's parents] - ongoing health concerns

HOMEBOUND:

- Bobby Fulmer, Dorothy Jackson, Martha Kaudelka, Johnnie Weaver

IN PRISON:

- William Schatte (LC-MS member @ Faith/Plano, incarcerated at Powledge Unit)

THOSE PREPARING FOR CHURCH WORK:

- Aaron Jackson – attending Concordia University, Seward, NE

THOSE SERVING IN OUR NATION'S ARMED FORCES:

- Members: Kyle Lawson and Kyle Shepherd ...
- Non-members: Robert Garcia [Juanita's son], James Reed [Devin Jackson's co-worker] and Jeremy Stafford [Marcy Hogan's nephew]

**Please
help
us
keep
this
list
updated.
Thanks**



Sunday at: 10:30 AM on 97.5 FM KTTB Tyler, TX
Sunday at 12:30 PM on 91.5 FM KHCB Madisonville, TX

Online at www.lutheranhour.org

DATE: May 5, 2019
TITLE: "The Good Fisherman"
TEXT: St. John 21:1-14
GUEST SPEAKER: Ryan Tinetti

Jesus is not only the Good Shepherd; He's the Good Fisherman, who draws the fish and fills the nets.

DATE: May 12, 2019
TITLE: "Home"
TEXT: St. John 14:1-7
GUEST SPEAKER: Dr. Dean Nadasdy

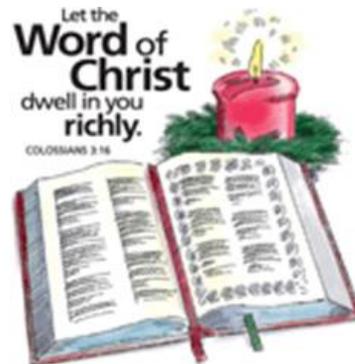
With Jesus, we have a home. That's the good news for today.

DATE: May 19, 2019
TITLE: "Up Close and Personal"
TEXT: St. John 15:26-16:4
SPEAKER: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler

You can't get to know a person from a distance. The same is true for knowing God.

DATE: May 26, 2019
TITLE: "Sculptor Spirit"
TEXT: St. John 16:7-15
SPEAKER: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler

The Holy Spirit is the Sculptor. Our lives are His medium. The image of Jesus is His goal.



versy and ecclesiastical disagreements. At the Council of Nicaea in 325, he defended Christian orthodoxy against the proponents of the Arian heresy, which denied the full divinity of Jesus Christ. During his 45-year tenure as bishop of Alexandria, Athanasius wrote numerous works that defended the orthodox teaching. His enemies had him exiled five times; on two occasions he was almost murdered. Yet Athanasius remained steadfast and ended his days restored fully to his church responsibilities. The Athanasian Creed, although not composed by Athanasius, is named in his honor because it confesses the doctrinal orthodoxy he championed throughout his life.

May 4 – Friedrich Wyneken, Pastor and Missionary - Friedrich Wyneken is one of the founding fathers of The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod, along with C.F.W. Walther and Wilhelm Sihler. Born in 1810 in Germany, he came to Baltimore in 1838 and shortly thereafter accepted a call to be the pastor of congregations in Friedheim and Fort Wayne, Indiana. Supported by Wilhelm Loehe's mission society, Wyneken served as an itinerant missionary in Indiana, Ohio, and Michigan, particularly among Native Americans. Together with Loehe and Sihler, he founded Concordia Theological Seminary in 1846 in Fort Wayne, Ind. He later served as the second president of the LCMS during a period of significant growth (1850-64). His leadership strongly influenced the confessional character of the LCMS and its commitment to an authentic Lutheran witness.

May 5 – Frederick the Wise - Frederick the Wise, elector of Saxony from 1486 to 1525, was Martin Luther's sovereign in the early years of the Reformation. Were it not for Frederick, there might not have been a Lutheran Reformation. Born in Torgau in 1463, he became so well known for his skill in political diplomacy and his sense of justice and fairness that he was called "the Wise" by his subjects. Though he never met Luther, Frederick repeatedly protected and provided for him. In all likelihood he saved the reformer from a martyr's fate. Frederick refused the pope's demand to extradite Luther to Rome for a heresy trial in 1518. When Emperor Charles V declared Luther an outlaw in 1521 at the Diet of Worms, Frederick provided sanctuary for Luther at the Wartburg castle. On his deathbed, Frederick received the Lord's Supper in both kinds—a clear confession of the evangelical Christian faith.

May 7 – C.F.W. Walther - Carl Ferdinand Wilhelm Walther (1811-87), one of the founding fathers of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, served as its first president from 1847 to 1850 and then again from 1864 to 1878. In 1839 he emigrated from Saxony, Germany, with other Lutherans who settled in Missouri. He served as pastor of several congregations in St. Louis, helped establish Concordia Seminary in 1839, and in 1847 was instrumental in the formation of our Synod, which was then called (in German) "The Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States." Walther was a prolific writer and speaker who worked tirelessly to promote confessional Lutheran teaching and doctrinal agreement among all Lutherans in the United States. Walther was the founding editor of *Der Lutheraner*, which was published from 1844 to 1965. He also founded a German theological journal, *Lehre und Wehre* (doctrine and defense), which was published from 1855 to 1929. Among Walther's most influential works are *Church and Ministry* and *The Proper Distinction between Law and Gospel*. He died on May 7, 1887 and is buried in Concordia Cemetery in St. Louis.

May 9 – Job, Patriarch - Job was a blameless and upright man who came from Uz (Job 1:1), a land northeast of Canaan. The Book of Job examines the depths of his faith, which was severely tested through the sufferings God permitted. Despite the sudden death of his ten children and the loss of all his wealth and his health, Job refused to curse God: "*Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return; the LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD.*" (Job 1:21) Still, in the midst of his tribulations Job questioned the meaning and purpose of suffering to the point of asserting his own righteousness. (Job 34:5-6) Finally, the Lord revealed that a man cannot know the mysteries of God. (chapters 38-41) Job's faith in God as his Redeemer and the resurrection prevailed. (19:25-27) In the end the Lord restored his wealth and blessed him with another seven sons and three daughters.

May 11 – Cyril and Methodius, Missionaries to the Slavs - Cyril (c. 826-69) and Methodius (c. 815-85) were brothers who came from a Greek family in Thessalonica. The younger brother took the name "Cyril" when he became a monk in 868. After ordination, Cyril became librarian at the Church of Holy Wisdom (Hagia Sophia) in Constantinople. In 862 the brothers were sent by the emperor as missionaries to what is now the Czech republic, where they taught in the native Slavic tongue. Cyril invented the alphabet today known today as "Cyrillic," which provided a written language for the liturgy and Scriptures for the Slavic peoples. This use of the vernacular established an important principle for evangelical Christian missions.

May 21 – Constantine, Emperor, and Helena, his mother - Constantine I served as Roman Emperor from A.D. 306 to 337. During his reign the persecution of Christians was forbidden by the Edict of Milan in 312, and ultimately the faith gained full imperial support. Constantine took an active interest in the life and teachings of the church and called the Council of Nicaea in 325 at which orthodox Christianity was defined and defended. His mother, Helena (c. 255-329), strongly influenced Constantine. Her great interest in locating the holy sites of the Christian faith led her to become one of the first Christian pilgrims to the Holy Land. Her research led to the identification of Biblical locations in Jerusalem, Bethlehem, and beyond, which are still maintained as places of worship today.

May 24 – Esther - Esther is the heroine of the biblical book that bears her name. Her Jewish name was Hadassah, which means "myrtle." Her beauty, charm, and courage served her well as queen to King Ahasuerus. In that role she was able to save her people from the mass extermination that Haman, the king's chief advisor, had planned. (Esther 2:19—4:17) Esther's efforts to uncover the plot resulted in the hanging of Haman on the very same gallows that he had built for Mordecai, her uncle and guardian. Then the king named Mordecai minister of state in Haman's place. This story is an example of how God intervenes on behalf of his people to deliver them from evil, as here through Esther He preserved the Old Testament people through whom the Messiah would come.

May 25 – The Venerable Bede - Bede (673-735) was the last of the early church fathers and the first to compile the history of the English church. Born in Northumbria, Bede was given by his parents to a monastery in Northern England at the age of seven. He rarely left the monastery and devoted the rest of his life to teaching and writing. The most learned man of his time, he was a prolific writer of history, whose careful use of sources provided a model for historians in the Middle Ages. Known best for his book, *The Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, he was also a profound interpreter of Scripture: his commentaries are still fresh today. His most famous disciple, Cuthbert, reported that Bede was working on a translation of John's Gospel.

Lutherans place their faith in the Triune God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – who has made us, redeemed us, and empowers us for Christian living.

We believe Jesus Christ is the divine Son of God, who came to earth as a man, suffered and died in our place to win for us forgiveness of sin, and who rose again to life, assuring us that we, too, can live with Him eternally.

We teach that we come to stand in right relationship with God not through our own goodness or righteousness, but through our faith in Jesus as Savior. Faith alone receives the full promises of God.

We believe that the two Sacraments, Baptism and the Lord's Supper, were instituted by Christ and offers forgiveness of sin to all who receive them in faith.

Concerning Baptism, we teach that infants should also be baptized, since they, too, are sinful and need God's grace. God can work faith in them, even though they are too young to intellectually grasp the Gospel.

We believe that the body and blood of Jesus are truly present in the Lord's Supper through miraculous means, and that only Christians who are in full agreement with our all our beliefs should commune with us.

We believe that God speaks to the world through His Word in the Bible.

We believe that God loves every person and intends for all a life of dignity and meaning.

We believe that Marriage is a life-long union of one man and one woman. We reject any other “union” called “marriage” as immoral and contrary to God's will.

We assert the vital importance of the Christian congregation as the community of believers in which the Gospel is correctly preached and the Sacraments are rightly administered.



Bethlehem Evangelical Lutheran Church

The Lutheran Church -- Missouri Synod

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Palestine, Texas 75801-5857

If you no longer wish to receive this newsletter, would you be so kind to simply write “Refused” and then place it unopened in your mailbox. That way, we'll be certain to remove your name from our mailing list, and you will be helping us to use very precious resources most wisely.

Thank You!



MAY 2010

