

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.



President Harrison addresses recent abortion expansion actions

The following statement from President Harrison is intended not only to address the current situation in our country, but also to provide a continued confession of the LCMS' position opposing abortion.

"In him was life, and the life was the light of men" (St. John 1:4).

On Jan. 22, 2019, the 46th anniversary of the Roe v. Wade Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion on demand, the governors of both New York and Illinois signed laws to extend and promote abortion.

"This is the evolution of humankind in America," said New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo as he signed the Reproductive Health Act into law. In Illinois, Gov. J.B. Pritzker signed an executive order to ensure taxpayer funding of abortions, saying that it would make his state "the most progressive ... in terms of women's reproductive rights."

Life, not death, is the goal of humanity. History testifies that death is never the means through which justice and human rights prevail. We do not advance on the graves of our children. Germany, which sought eugenics as the solution to problems, now has strict abortion laws. To defend and support life is the goal of every just government, and the right to life is the hallmark of a good society.

Yet abortion laws have allowed the abortion of more than 61,000,000 children since Roe v. Wade. That's nearly 50 times the number of American soldiers killed in all wars. The abortion industry and its proponents take great lengths to avoid facing the fact that abortion dismembers a living child in a horrid pool of its own blood. This is barbaric.

Abortion is a lie. Science is on the side of life. We shall stand against the barbarism of abortion until our dying breath. Abortion is illogical, as we slaughter babies in the womb while developing ever-better care for other unborn children. Abortion contradicts the natural law written on human hearts that teaches us it is wrong to kill.

Lawmakers and bureaucrats in our country have become emboldened to force citizens to go against their conscience. People publicly

The resurrection of Jesus is God's grand statement that life is the goal of this creation. The resurrection of Jesus proclaims that all creatures find the goal of their existence in life.

that life is the goal of their movements and their work. The flowers that grow toward the sun seek the light that enlivens them. We all live under God, who grants life to His whole creation.

And in the giving of His Son to be the Savior, God shows that He is the Lord of life. Jesus came to love. He taught us to love all people, including those whom we consider our enemies. He taught us to unconditionally love every person, even those whom this world considers unworthy of love.

Jesus not only taught us to love. He brought healing and wholeness to the broken. He proclaimed peace to those who were troubled. He sat with those who were excluded. He lifted up those who were beaten down. But most of all, He loved through the sacrifice of His own life on the cross. He died to forgive the sins of all humanity. His forgiveness is a free gift for all who trust in Him, including those who suffer from guilt for aborting their child. He rose on the third day.

The resurrection of Jesus is God's grand statement that life is the goal of this creation. The resurrection of Jesus proclaims that all creatures find the goal of their existence in life. Just as God raised Jesus from the dead, so we learn that God treasures life over death.

We live as citizens in this world, and we seek to be

We thank God for our leaders and for this great land He has given to us and for its precious freedoms and opportunities. The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod advocates strong citizenship and active participation in government. We obey the laws of our land and encourage those around us to do so.

We are, however, bound by our conscience to speak against those laws that are unjust and, especially, those laws that violate God's law and the natural law that binds all mankind. Abortion and other means through which humans kill humans violate these natural and moral laws that form the foundation of society.

Therefore, we stand against these actions and against all laws that sanction abortion or the taking of innocent life. We cannot stand silent when people elected to positions in which they are to protect citizens continue to pass laws and advocate for legislation that undermines the sanctity of human life. Our conscience is bound by both the Word of God and reason to speak for life as a precious gift of God and to speak against any and all who promote the killing of unborn children. We cannot hide the evil of these laws under the banner of "rights" or "privilege." Children's lives are at stake. They cannot speak for themselves. We will speak for them, and we will work to protect their lives.

And we will continue to work to love and support the women who face difficult choices or suffer from the consequences of abortion. We support young mothers who have chosen life for their children. We work to provide adoption and other opportunities to care for children in need. And we continue to show God's mercy to all, just as He, in Jesus, has mercy on all.

We will work, love and pray that all might know the love of Jesus and trust in Him for salvation. "In him was life, and the life was the light of men" (John 1:4).

Rev. Dr. Matthew C. Harrison, President
The Lutheran Church—
Missouri Synod

Prayer

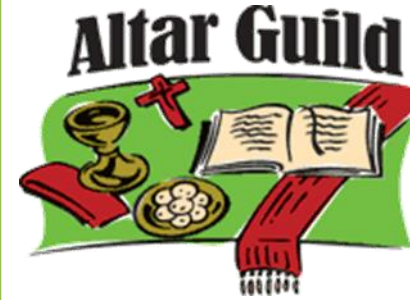
Gracious Father, as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are Your ways higher than our ways and Your thoughts higher than our thoughts. We do not understand the disregard for the work of Your hands and the wanton destruction of human life that has taken place through the atrocity of abortion. Bring an end to abortion, euthanasia and all other legal means to unjustly take life. Instill in Your people love for life as is pleasing in Your sight. Grant wisdom and strength of conviction to those who make, execute and administer our laws, that they might protect the unborn, the aged and all those whom they govern. In Jesus' holy name. Amen.



FROM THE ADLERS:
Our heartfelt thanks for all the cards, gifts, "goodies" and for the generous Christmas gift from Bethlehem congregation. It is truly a blessing to serve you all!

FROM OUR SECRETARY, PIANIST AND ORGANISTS,
Tammy Pike, Sylvia Frenzel and Mary Bowden: We extend a heartfelt thank you to our Bethlehem family for the generous gift you gave to us at Christmas. Also from Aaron Jackson: I would like to thank the congregation for the Christmas gift I received and for your continued support of my future education.

Thank you to our members and guild members: Valinda Saville, Audrey Felder and Bobbie Hartenberger and a thank you for those who have been serving on Altar Guild. Anyone else that would like to volunteer can see Lori Fortner or Lea Rosier. This can be a one month per year commitment.



Bethlehem Lutheran Church is sponsoring a chili fundraiser to benefit the local Meals on Wheels. It's a worthwhile program that serves home-delivered meals, as well as meals on-site, to older adults in Anderson, Cherokee, and Rusk Counties.

Church members invite the community to join them for their 12th annual "Chili Friday" from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Menu includes homemade chili, chili dogs, or Frito pie with all the trimmings, drink, and homemade dessert.

Cost is \$8 for adults and \$4 for children 12 and younger.

The local Meals on Wheels serves an annual average of 207,075 meals, and 825 people a day. Most of the elderly clients served are unable to shop for, or prepare their own meals. Many live alone, often isolated from people.

The Meals on Wheels' delivery person may be the only face some see for weeks. Many look forward to seeing the delivery driver's smiling face.

Lunch delivery runs from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. for five or more orders. Call the church office at 903-729-6362, Tuesday through Thursday, before noon to place orders.

Bethlehem Lutheran Church is at 1515 South Loop 256, across from Palestine High School.



COURTESY PHOTO | Special to H-P
Volunteers prepare chili in the kitchen of Bethlehem Lutheran Church at last year's Chili Friday fundraiser.

Bethlehem's twelfth annual Chili Friday was a huge success! There were many donations for Silent Auction items as well as door prizes. Thanks to all who helped with cooking, clean up, decorating, delivery and donations, selling tickets and The Kiwanis Club of Palestine. Also to the following businesses:

All Star Ford, Applebee's, Appliance Sales & Service, Auto Zone, Brookshire's, Chili's, City Pawn Shop, Cotton Patch, Dairy Queen, Denny's, Heritage Land Bank, Hometown Pharmacy, Irene's Cocina, Iron Gate Feed, Kenzie's Snowballs, Little Mexico, Lowe's, Montalba General Store, Palestine Bowling Center, Palestine Painted Cookie, Palestine Tires, Perfection's Auto Detail, Reliable Auto Supply, Schulman Movie Theater, Shelby Savings Bank, Subs N Dogs, The Real Estate Group, Unique Boutique, Vance Brothers, Wal-Mart, Wendy's, Wild Pearl's Boutique and William George.

Total proceeds will be announced soon and a check will be presented to Palestine Meals on Wheels.



February
2019



Life NEWS

www.lutheransforlife.org



Life Newsbytes

Operation Rescue’s annual survey of abortion facilities finds abortion facility numbers in the United States fell in 2018 to a historic low of 697. Last year, a total of 40 abortion facilities reportedly closed or stopped committing abortions. The decline continues a national trend indicating a 79 percent drop in the number of abortion facilities since 1991. Despite the reported closings in Operation Rescue’s latest survey, the group found a significant increase in the number of medication abortions that took place. This shift is seen in how abortions are done and how late into pregnancy abortionists are willing to do them. The survey finds the most significant trend shifts were related to surgical abortions: Surgical abortion facilities are slowly being replaced by clinics that offer abortion-inducing drugs that can only be used in the first trimester of pregnancy. There has been a dramatic reduction in the number of facilities that conduct abortions at 20-weeks gestation or more. The reasons for abortion facility closures were varied, including failure or refusal to comply with new state laws, a lack of an abortion provider, failure to comply with state regulations, and landlords unwilling to lease to abortion businesses. *(Operation Rescue, 1/9/19; CLR LifeWire, 1/10/19)*

**Abortions in America
Since 1973: 60,069,971**

Source: www.lifenews.com

Speaking Up For Life

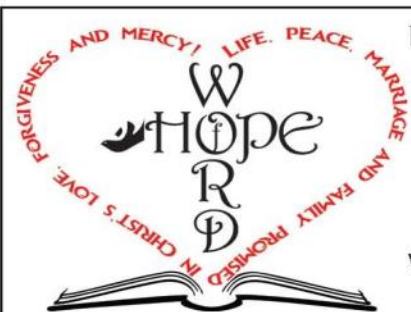
“[I]f it is wrong to kill a human fetus, it is wrong because this interrupts the vocation of that fetus to praise God and enjoy Him forever, a vocation given [the child] by God Himself in and with the gift of existence, a vocation we may not override for purposes of our own without offending against the rights of God.” *Douglas Farrow, author of Desiring a Better Country: Forays in Political Theology*

“So when we see the embryo ... in that petri dish—vulnerable, helpless, and destined for destruction—we are compelled to speak and defend and help. And not because it is the right thing to do or the moral thing to do, but because it is the Christ thing to do. Our God became incarnate as an embryo, giving value to all embryos.” *Rev. Dr. James I. Lamb, former executive director of Lutherans For Life*

BE SURE AND CHECK OUT ...

www.lutheransforlife.org/media/life-quotes

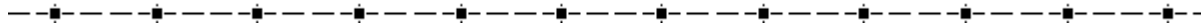
www.lutheransforlife.org/life-blog



For those who have had an abortion—
a **Word of Hope.**
888.217.8679
www.word-of-hope.org

ing down, providing food to deliver, and all the tasks necessary to serve lunch, provide auction items and visit with our guests----made this a memorable event for the community and our church.

LWML members were pleased to be “willing workers” in addition to providing a monetary donation toward necessary expenses.



As we stare at a fresh New Year, are we thinking about the “goes around, comes around” idea? For farmers to reap a harvest in the fall, they prepare the ground in the winter and plant in the spring. For you and me as believers in the God who says “It is more blessed to give than to receive” (Acts 20:35), we have an opportunity in 2019 to give blessings to others in trusting faith that our loving God will ensure our needs are met and then some.

The one constant is God’s grace:

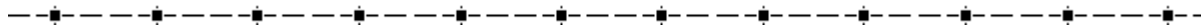
Grace to heal the hurts and losses of the past.

Grace to strengthen us for the challenges ahead.

Grace to love others, even when it is hard.

Grace to believe and stretch and grow.

Grace to step out of the boat as Peter did; knowing that Grace in Christ will be with us and even catch us when we fall.



PERSONAL CARE KITS for Lutheran World Relief.

Include the following in each kit: Drop into box in Narthex.

Two or three bath-size bars of soap equaling 8 to 9 oz., any brand, in original wrapping.

One adult-size toothbrush in original packaging.

One sturdy comb, remove packaging

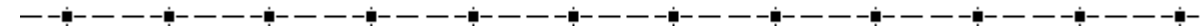
One metal nail clippers (attached file optional), remove packaging

Note: Towels will be provided later.

When you shop for groceries at Kroger’s, be sure to use your **Kroger card** to participate in the “Community Rewards Program” (as it will appear at the bottom of your receipt). Please continue to use your Kroger card during the new year of 2019 as our LWML uses these funds for various projects.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR - -

- ✦ Sunday, February 10, 2019 — LWML meeting immediately after church.
- ✦ June 20-23, 2019 — LWML 38TH Biennial Convention, Mobile, Alabama. More information is available in the 2018 fall edition of Linked by Love online: <http://www.lwmltxdist.org/linked-love>.



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. Why we meet together: The LWML in Texas creates opportunities for Lutheran women to become more aware of the need for outreach to peo-

flesh of Jesus. The church spends time hearing of the miracles, the signs and wonders, of Jesus in the world.

And this made plain to all that Jesus was who He said He was: He was the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, the only-begotten Son of the Father, in the flesh. For “the Word became flesh and dwelt among us” (John 1:14).

It is revealed for all the world to see that Jesus is God in the flesh. It is made manifest by His words and His work, by what He said and by what He did. And these belong together, for “the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.”

Jesus is the Word and will of God in the flesh, that is, He is the walking, talking, enactment of God’s Word.

It is no different for us. We are called not just to believe in God in hearts, but also to trust in God in word and deed.

As James wrote: “But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves” (James 1:22), and again, “What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? ... So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. ... Show me your faith apart from your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. ... For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so also faith apart from works is dead” (James 2:14, 17–18, 26).

Our faith is lived out in works for our neighbor. Our trust in the Word and will of God is lived out not in word only, but also in deed and in truth.

In other words, the Epiphany of the Lord creates in us an epiphany of our faith in our works of obedience to God who commanded them. By this, our faith is made manifest to the world. It is, as Luther wrote of faith:

“Faith is a divine work in us. It changes us and makes us to be born

brings with it the Holy Spirit.

“Oh, it is a living, busy, active, mighty thing, this faith. And so it is impossible for it not to do good works incessantly. It does not ask whether there are good works to do, but before the question rises, it has already done them, and is always at the doing of them.

“He who does not these works is a faithless man. He gropes and looks about after faith and good works and knows neither what faith is nor what good works are, though he talks and talks, with many words about faith and good works.

“Faith is a living, daring confidence in God’s grace, so sure and certain that a man would stake his life on it a thousand times. This confidence in God’s grace and knowledge of it makes men glad and bold and happy in dealing with God and all His creatures.

“And this is the work of the Holy Spirit in faith. Hence a man is ready and glad, without compulsion, to do good to everyone, to serve everyone, to suffer everything, in love and praise to God, who has shown him this grace.

“And thus it is impossible to separate works from faith, quite as impossible as to separate burning and shining from fire. Beware, therefore, of your own false notions and of the idle talkers, who would be wise enough to make decisions about faith and good works, and yet are the greatest fools.” (*Preface to the Book of Romans*)

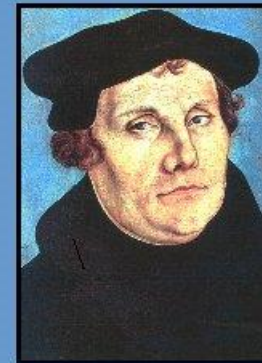
So, then, let our faith be active by God’s power in the Word through the Holy Spirit. And let then our faith be made manifest to the world by what this faith does: serving our neighbor — in church, in the family, and society — with the works of faith in time, talents, and treasures.



God’s Share First

Some people say that preachers talk too much about money. But the three subjects about which Christ spoke most were wealth, hypocrisy, and the Kingdom of God. Three of the Ten Commandments deal with money. Sixteen of the thirty-eight parables in the New Testament deal with money and stewardship. One verse of every six in the Gospels deals with

Bethlehem Lutheran Church recommends percentage giving as one more means of properly focusing all of life on the Lord Who gives all things. Have you made a covenant with God to give Him a specific percentage of all that comes into your hands?



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 with them and provide for them

Gil called the meeting to order. Pastor opened with Psalm 84 devotion and prayer. Minutes were read. **Motion by Jerry, 2ND by Melanie to accept. Motion carried.

REPORTS:

VP - absent

Financial Secretary - Lea reported December income \$19,130, expenses \$13,250. Income for 2018 \$186,577, expenses \$167,319, excess \$19,239. Loan balance \$30,945 and CEF report.

Treasurer - Lea gave account balances & income report. Budget report for December and for 2018. Savings breakdown. **Motion by Melanie, 2ND by Jerry to accept financial reports. Carried.

Elders - James reported average attendance for December was 64. 3rd quarter average attendance 61; added Shawn Daughtrey, Dwight & Valinda Saville; released Ginger Arrant, Nolan & Kathy Green. 2018 average attendance 65, average communed 61; added 11, 5 released and 4 deaths.

Christian Education - Melanie reported Children's Christmas Service went well, will take down trees and decorations tomorrow. Midweek resumes January 9TH until Lent.

Evangelism - Jerry reported Bible Jamboree will be April 27TH.

Stewardship - vacant

Properties - Jim received 2 estimates for glass doors from Clear Choice Glass & Mirrors, Palestine and Independent Glass & Mirror, Tyler. Will present to voters.

Social Concerns - Megan reported Advent meals went well. Holiday Dinner great, honored Ristvedts 60TH anniversary. Working on Chili Friday tickets, flyers, advertising. Will cook on January 23RD; collecting silent auction items.

Youth - Devin reported raised \$714 on 3 fundraisers plus \$500 donations, split between 2 youth trips. Early Registration due January 31. Youth board met. Will take Super Bowl Sub orders for February 3RD, planning Bible Study also.

Pastor - will take in new members Don & Teresa Gibson, Brian & Stephanie West, Christopher & Sarah McDonald, Rayne & Jamilynn. Sanctity of Life Sunday January 20TH. **Motion by Jerry, 2ND by Lea to take door offering for Living Alternatives of Palestine. Motion carried. Ash Wednesday March 6TH, Palm Sunday April 14TH. Will begin new Midweek Bible study; Circuit Pastors Meeting January 17TH in Nacogdoches.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Roger Harris' property to be deeded to church.

Still getting estimates for Kitchen remodel.

NEW BUSINESS:

Gil mentioned excess funds, discussed options. Will present to voters.

Discovered shortage on Tammy's pay for 2017 and 2018. **Motion by Lea, 2ND by James to pay \$1,550 to correct. Motion carried.

Kiwanis possibly use Luther Hall in April/May to honor top 10 students in 6 school districts.

Devin mentioned Veterans Breakfast in November, will check.

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

HEALTH NEEDS—MEMBERS:

- Albert Harris - back problems
- George Nelson - recovering from a stroke

HEALTH NEEDS—FRIENDS:

- Jerry Dukes [Jackson's friend] - complications from surgery
- Jackie Enders [Donna Hughes' sister in law] - in hospital in Arizona
- Nicole Jones (age 3) [Sandy Smith's co-worker's granddaughter] - tumor, scoliosis
- Lori Owens [Ken Koehler's daughter] - pneumonia
- Kenneth Taylor [James Taylor's brother] - advanced pancreatic cancer
- Gene & Patsy Worsham [Tim's parents] - ongoing health concerns

HOMEBOUND:

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

COMFORT:

- DeAnne Atkinson and family for the loss of her father, Paul Gianakon,
- Becky Burke family [Adler's son-in-law's aunt]

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**

Please inform the Pastor and the Church Office regarding the status of submitted prayers so we may be timely and up-to-date in petitions to our gracious God.





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: February 3, 2019
TITLE: "Slow Solution"
TEXT: St. John 20:21
SPEAKER: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler

God's gift of eternal life through faith in Christ is not a quick fix. It's a slow solution to the hidden problem that separates us from God and each from other.

DATE: February 10, 2019
TITLE: "Where Heaven Meets Earth"
TEXT: St. John 3:1-21
SPEAKER: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler

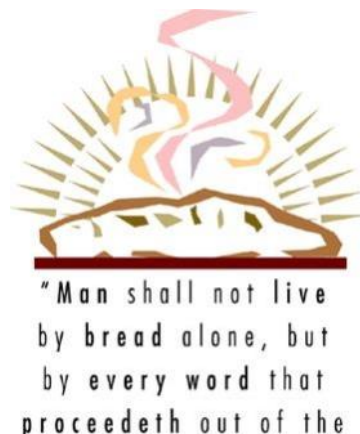
Hitting that snooze button may be doing more harm than good. It's time to stop spiritual snoozing and wake up.

DATE: February 17, 2019
TITLE: "Enter His Labor"
TEXT: St. John 4:1-42
SPEAKER: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler

What would you do if your Word was all-powerful? Jesus started a conversation with an outsider.

DATE: February 24, 2019
TITLE: "Not by Bread Alone"
TEXT: St. John 6:1-29
SPEAKER: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler

There is a spiritual hunger beyond food that is expressed in food. Jesus provides for both.



bekah. After wrestling with the Angel of the Lord, Jacob, whose name means "deceiver," was renamed "Israel," which means "he strives with God" (Gen. 25:26; 32:28). His family life was filled with trouble, caused by his acts of deception toward his father and his brother Esau and his parental favoritism toward his son Joseph (March 31). Much of his adult life was spent grieving over the death of his beloved wife Rachel and the presumed death of Joseph, who had been appointed by the Egyptian Pharaoh to be in charge of food distribution during a time of famine in the land. Prior to Jacob's death during the blessing of his sons, God gave the promise that the Messiah would come through the line of Jacob's fourth son, Judah (Genesis 49).

February 10 - Silas, Fellow Worker with Paul - Silas, a leader in the church at Jerusalem, was chosen by Paul (Acts 15:40) to accompany him on his second missionary journey from Antioch to Asia Minor and Macedonia. Silas, also known as Silvanus, was imprisoned with Paul in Philippi and experienced the riots in Thessalonica and Berea. After rejoining Paul in Corinth, he apparently remained there for an extended time. Beyond that there is little further mention of Silas and his association with Paul.

February 13 - Aquila, Priscilla, Apollos - Aquila and his wife Priscilla (Prisca), Jewish contemporaries of St. Paul, traveled widely. Because of persecution in Rome, they went to Corinth where they met the apostle Paul, who joined them in their trade of tent-making (Acts 18:1-3). They, in turn, joined him in his mission of proclaiming the Christian Gospel. The couple later traveled with Paul from Corinth to Ephesus (Acts 18:18), where the two of them established a home that served as hospitality headquarters for new converts to Christianity. Apollos was one of their numerous Jewish pupils in the faith. An eloquent man, Apollos "spoke with burning enthusiasm and taught accurately the things concerning Jesus" (Acts 18:25). He later traveled from Corinth to the province of Achaia, where he "showed by the Scriptures that the Messiah is Jesus" (Acts 18:28). Aquila, Priscilla, and Apollos are all remembered and honored for their great missionary zeal.

February 14 - Valentine, Martyr - A physician and priest living in Rome during the rule of the Emperor Claudius, Valentine became one of the noted martyrs of the third century. The commemoration of his death, which occurred in the year 270, became part of the calendar of remembrance in the early church of the West. Tradition suggests that on the day of his execution for his Christian faith, he left a note of encouragement for a child of his jailer written on an irregularly-shaped piece of paper. This greeting became a pattern for millions of written expressions of love and caring that now are the highlight of Valentine's Day in many nations.

February 15 - Philemon and Onesimus - Philemon was a prominent first-century Christian who owned a slave named Onesimus. Although the name "Onesimus" means "useful," Onesimus proved himself "useless" when he ran away from his master and perhaps even stole from him (Philemon 18). Somehow Onesimus came into contact with the apostle Paul while the latter was in prison (possibly in Rome), and through Paul's proclamation of the Gospel he became a Christian. After confessing to the apostle that he was a runaway slave, he was directed by Paul to return to his master and become "useful" again. In order to help pave the way for Onesimus' peaceful return home, Paul sent him on his way with a letter addressed to Philemon, a letter in which he urged Philemon to forgive his slave for having run away and "to receive him as you would receive me" (v. 17), "no longer as a slave, but as a beloved brother" (v. 16). The letter was eventually included by the church as one of the books of the New Testament.

February 16 (birth date) - Philip Melanchthon, Confessor - Philip Melanchthon (1497-1560) was a brilliant student of the classics and a humanist scholar. In 1518 he was appointed to teach along with Martin Luther at the University of Wittenberg. At Luther's urging, Melanchthon began teaching theology and Scripture in addition to his courses in classical studies. In April of 1530, Emperor Charles V called an official meeting between the representative of Lutheranism and Roman Catholicism, hoping to effect a meeting of minds between two opposing groups. Since Luther was at that time under papal excommunication and an imperial ban, Melanchthon was assigned the duty of being the chief Lutheran representative at this meeting. He is especially remembered and honored as the author of the Augsburg Confession, which was officially presented by the German princes to the emperor on June 25, 1530, as the defining document of Lutheranism within Christendom. Melanchthon died on April 19, 1560.

February 18 - Martin Luther, Doctor and Reformer - Martin Luther, born on November 10, 1483, in Eisleben, Germany, initially began studies leading toward a degree in law. However, after a close encounter with death, he switched to the study of theology, entered an Augustinian monastery, was ordained a priest in 1505, and received a doctorate in theology in 1512. As a professor at the newly-established University of Wittenberg, his scriptural studies led him to question many of the church's teachings and practices, especially the selling of indulgences. His refusal to back down from his convictions resulted in his excommunication in 1521. Following a period of seclusion at the Wartburg castle, Luther returned to Wittenberg, where he spent the rest of his life preaching and teaching, translating the Scriptures, and writing hymns and numerous theological treatises. He is remembered and honored for his lifelong emphasis on the biblical truth that for Christ's sake God declares us righteous by grace through faith alone. He died on February 18, 1546, while visiting the town of his birth.

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

1515 South Loop 256

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!



FEBRUARY 2010

