

the **REP**ORTER

Editor's Entry

Fall 2015—and we've got a blockbuster edition of *the repORter* to add to your autumnal good cheer:

- Elizabeth Peterson makes a compelling defense of regular Individual Confession & Absolution
- Tim Koch explains the ins and outs of IDE's 39th Convention
- Tom Wemlinger treats us to a gem of a Web Gem: *Evangelical-Lutheran Liturgical Congregations*
- Gerry Peterson covers a CF conference with Dr. Reed Lessing—we shoulda been there!
- Yours truly manages to lull you into a weekend nap by showing you vacation photos

A Blessed Reformation Season to All!

-Greg Gerjerts

Also In This Issue:

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A profile of the Brewsters by S Lair

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Informative LWML articles by J Fink

Missions budgets by G Staudinger

Plus lots more:

Word Cloud Puzzle; Event Calendars; Upcoming Hymns & Readings; Attendance & Contribution Graphs



Pastor's Post

Reformation Faith and Reformation Life

By Pastor Michael Knox

As the green fields of summer give way to fields ripe for harvest in the fall, the Lutheran Church remembers the events that mark the beginning of the Reformation. On October 31 we commemorate Martin Luther's nailing of 95 Theses to the church door in Wittenberg. Sadly, while most Lutherans know about this event, the truth is that most Lutherans can't tell you what even one of those Theses stated. For all practical purposes the 95 Theses have been forgotten. Similarly, most Lutherans know that Martin Luther and other Reformers fought to restore the truth of salvation by grace through faith in Jesus Christ to the Church. What is often forgotten, like the content of the 95 Theses, is that the Reformers also restored a proper teaching of good works and the relationship between faith and works. As Martin Luther stated clearly, "We are saved by faith alone, but the faith that saves is never alone."



Growth in Faith and Life is a Goal

As Lutherans, we tend to get a little nervous when the topic is the Christian life and talk comes to effort or work. After all, St. Paul did write, "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast" (Ephesians 2:8,9). Similarly he wrote, "Therefore no righteous in his sight law; rather, through conscious of one will be declared by observing the the law we become sin" (Romans 3:20). While we should caution must not paralyzed. In his the Staff", Rev. Klemet Preus reminds us, "If we keep our doctrine of salvation straight, then our doctrine and practice of good works will be straight as well." One should certainly have the goal of growing in the Christian life. To do otherwise is not pleasing in the sight of God.

We are saved by faith alone, but the faith that saves is never alone.

-Martin Luther

A secular prophet once said, "He who fails to plan, plans to fail." You should and must be purposeful when it comes to growing in faith and life. It won't happen by accident!

By Tom Wemlinger

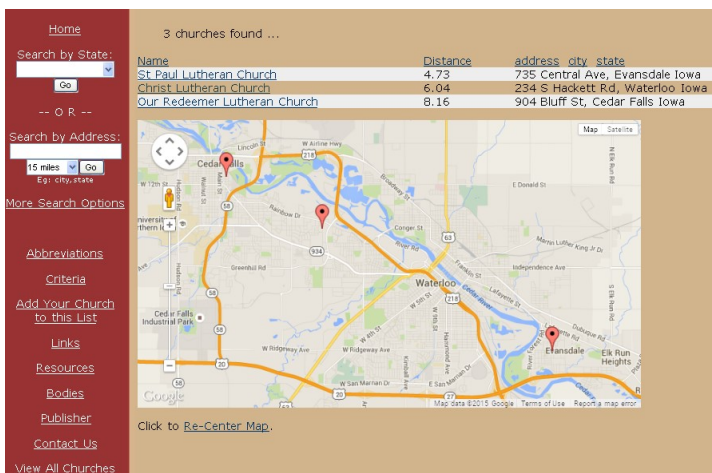
What do you do if you're planning a trip out of town over a weekend and you're looking for an LCMS church to attend while you're away? There are several options available: you could use the church finder on the LCMS web site; you could Google "LCMS" and the name of the city, which will give you the results of several online business directories; or you could just wait until you arrive at your destination and check the Yellow Pages. If there are any LCMS churches in the area, you should have no trouble finding them using any of these tools.

If you're using this "dartboard" approach, though, you may encounter some difficulties. None of the tools listed above will yield much information beyond a church's location and what time the services begin. In order to find out what actually goes on during the service, you have to do more research—check out web sites, make phone calls, look up information about the pastors, and so forth. The LCMS has, unfortunately, allowed a wide variety of questionable (and decidedly un-Lutheran) practices to gain a foothold, and you're increasingly likely to encounter this phenomenon if you aren't careful. What to do?

Enter <http://lutheranliturgy.org>, a voluntary listing service for congregations that use the historic liturgy. From the web site: "This website was developed to assist Evangelical-Lutherans in locating congregations which use the historic liturgy of the Church in all of their services and practice Closed Communion. Whether traveling on vacation or business or moving to a new home, this directory will help them find Evangelical-Lutheran congregations which have not adopted worship customs from the surrounding culture." Congregations listed in the directory must agree to the following criteria:

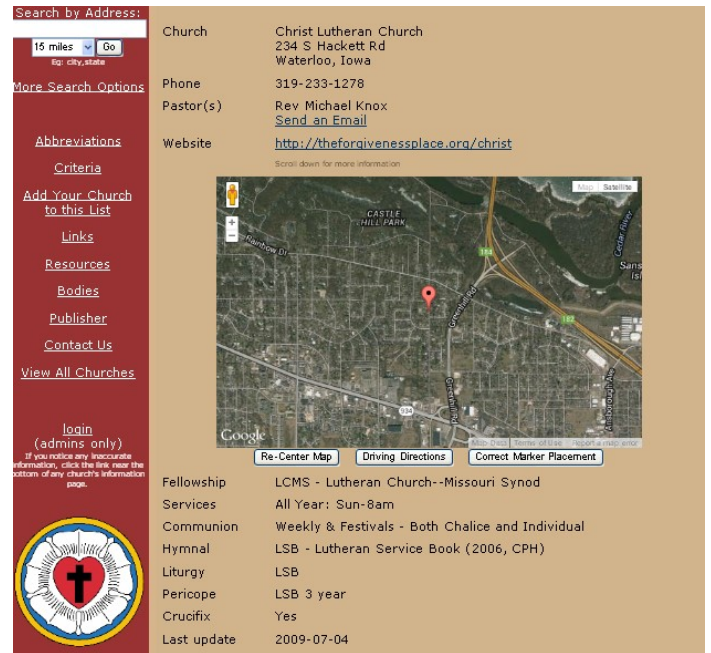
- The congregation must be committed to the exclusive use of the Historic Liturgy of the Church.
- The congregation must practice closed communion.
- The congregation must pass the "fussy-family test".
- The congregation must maintain faithfulness to Scripture and subscribe to the Lutheran Confessions.

The web site is basic and uncluttered. A search panel on the left side of the home screen allows searches by state or by address. Below is a sample directory listing and map showing the search results for "50701":



Name	Distance	address	city	state
St. Paul Lutheran Church	4.73	735 Central Ave, Evansdale Iowa	Evansdale	Iowa
Christ Lutheran Church	6.04	234 S Hackett Rd, Waterloo Iowa	Waterloo	Iowa
Our Redeemer Lutheran Church	8.16	904 Bluff St, Cedar Falls Iowa	Cedar Falls	Iowa

Pointers on the map show the search results geographically. Clicking on the directory entry yields detailed information about the congregation:



Church	Christ Lutheran Church 234 S Hackett Rd Waterloo, Iowa
Phone	319-233-1278
Pastor(s)	Rev Michael Knox Send an Email
Website	http://theforgivenessplace.org/christ

Scroll down for more information

Fellowship	LCMS - Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod
Services	All Year: Sun-8am
Communion	Weekly & Festivals - Both Chalice and Individual
Hymnal	LSB - Lutheran Service Book (2006, CPH)
Liturgy	LSB
Pericope	LSB 3 year
Crucifix	Yes
Last update	2009-07-04

Note that the directory listing includes not only the service times, but also communion frequency, the hymnal(s) used, and lectionary cycle. Church contact information includes address and phone number, as well as email addresses for the pastors and a web site URL. A detailed map will guide you right to the door, and visitor comments provide helpful information on what to expect during the worship service.

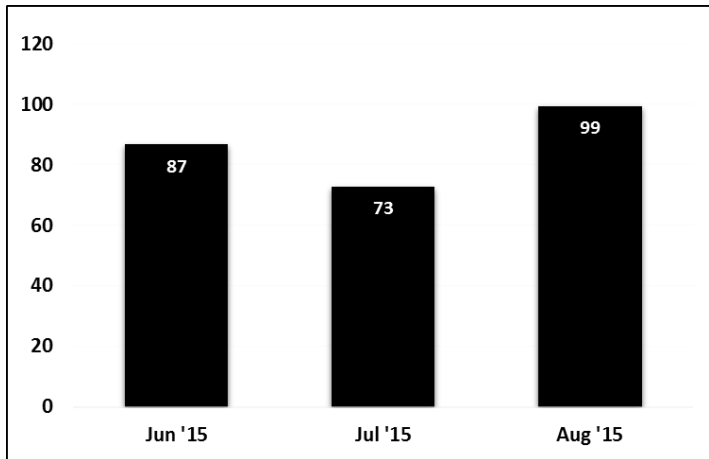
A few things to remember when using this web site:

- It is not all-inclusive. Many congregations that are committed to historic liturgical practices are not listed. The listing service is voluntary, so congregations must initiate the listing process on their own. (Many may not even be aware that this service exists.) You may still need to check the LCMS directory and individual church web sites for the information you need.
- The directory also includes listings for WELS, ELS, and ELDoNA congregations, so be sure to check the "Fellowship" field on the directory listing—especially if you plan to commune.
- Remember that service times and contact information may change, and these changes are not always submitted to the ELLC webmaster in a timely manner. Be sure to call and verify the information before you go.
- Note: The web site is not the easiest to navigate on a mobile device. Don't wait until you're on the road to investigate!

What we believe as Confessional Lutherans has profound implications as to how we worship, and the modern innovations adopted by many of our congregations do not reflect the sacramental nature of God's service to His people. While it is unfortunate that we actually need a web site such as lutheranliturgy.org, we certainly can be thankful we have it.

ORLC By The Numbers

Divine Service Average Attendance



Divine Service Total Contributions



Oktoberfest!

St. Paul's Lutheran Church

109 South Elm Street

Kewanee, Illinois

October 4-6, 2015 (Sunday, Monday, Tuesday)

The Twentieth Annual *Oktoberfest!* and *Gottesdienst Central* will be hosting the Rev. Richard Stuckwisch, PhD, Pastor at Emmaus Lutheran Church, South Bend, Indiana.

Pastor Stuckwisch's topic for the conference is: "Eucharistic Sacrifice and Eucharistic Prayer in Theology and Practice".

The question of the Eucharistic sacrifice is a critical ingredient in the Lutheran understanding of worship. Pastor Stuckwisch happens to be an expert among us on the matter. He became interested in the Lutheran confession of Eucharistic sacrifice in the course of his STM studies at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne.

He explored this further in his doctoral work at the University of Notre Dame, where he investigated the Inter-Lutheran Commission on Worship, focusing especially on the development and discussion of the Eucharistic rites of the Lutheran Book of Worship (1978) and Lutheran Worship (1982).

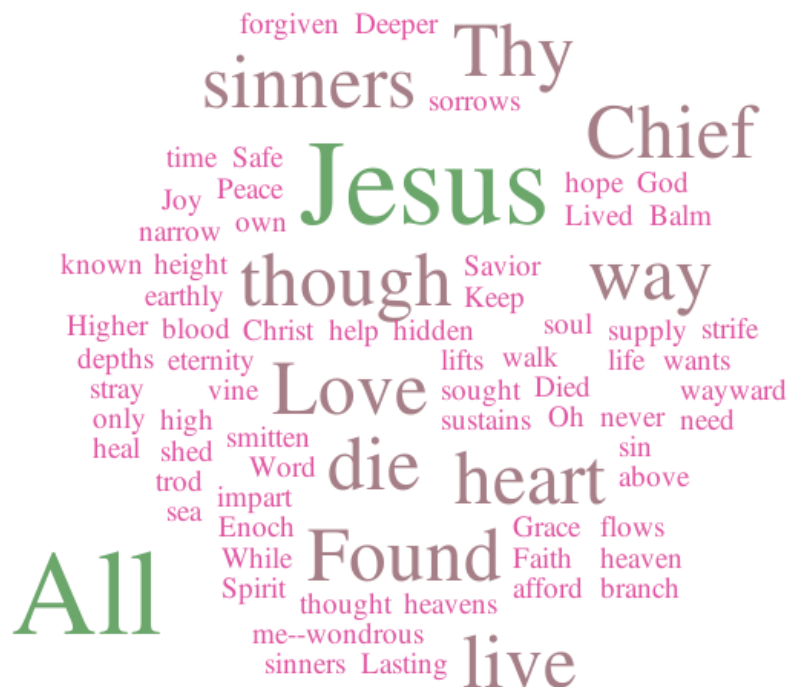
His PhD research was published in 2011 under the title, "Philip Melanchthon and the Lutheran

Cloudy Content

Impress the Editor: Guess the Textual Source of this Word Cloud!

Word Cloud: An image composed of words that are used in a particular text or document. The size of each word indicates its frequency or importance.

Last Edition's Solution: From Luther's Introduction to Romans: "Works are necessary for salvation, but they do not cause salvation; for faith alone gives life."



Fall Rally

The Waterloo Zone LWML Fall Rally will be held on Saturday, October 10, at College Hill Lutheran Church. Registration and breakfast will be from 8:15 to 9 a.m., with the Rally beginning at 9 a.m.. The Speaker will be Pastor John Wegener of College Hill Lutheran Church, and the Rally theme is "Why Campus Ministry?"

An ingathering will be taken for College Hill LCMS U Community Chest items: needed are cereal, granola bars, pop tarts, crackers, mac-n-cheese, fruit snacks, canned fruit or vegetables, popcorn, pretzels, nuts, chips, pudding or cake mix, pop, juice, salsa and paper products. All women are invited to attend.

Fall Retreat

Many of you may be busy harvesting and preserving your garden's bounty. All women are invited to Reap the Bounty of the God's Love at the 2015 Fall LWML Retreat, September 18 and 19 at Camp IoDisEa. We won't be putting up any fruits or vegetables, but you are invited to preserve your faith through Bible Study. There will be music, fun and fellowship with other women in Iowa East! Early registration is due by September 4. Fees for the entire retreat are \$60, but if you can't come for the full 24 hours of fellowship, spiritual growth, and fun, come either Friday or Saturday! (After September 4 add \$5.)

Check-in runs from 1:00 through 6:00 p.m., with opening devotions and dinner beginning at 5:30 on Friday. The activities for Saturday begin with breakfast at 8 a.m. and end with closing devotions at 2 p.m. Fee for Friday-only is \$25, and Sat-

urday-only is \$30. You may use the camp linens for a \$3 fee or bring your own. Bring your own towel and snacks to share.

The speaker will be Alice Hoffmeier. We will be gathering items for camp. Registration forms and a schedule of events are on the table in the Parish Hall, or see Judy Fink for more details.

Hope to see everyone at the Fall Retreat where you will reap the bounty of God's love. The Waterloo Zone is hosting the event, so let's have a good turn out!

LCMS Disaster Response receives \$100,000

At their June 2015 meeting, the LWML Board of Directors voted and approved redirecting an unused mission grant of \$100,000 from the 2013-2015 LWML Biennium to fund a new disaster response center in the Dominican Republic, as well as a conference for disaster response training in Latin America.

The sum of \$80,000 will be given to build the disaster response training center in the Dominican Republic. In addition, this center will provide emergency housing for the entire region of Latin America. The remaining amount of \$20,000 will fund a disaster response training conference for pastors in Latin America.

This conference will focus on a theological approach to pastoral care after times of tragedy and disaster. Pastors completing the specialized training will then receive individual communion sets to be used during disasters.

Parishioner Profiles: Charter Members Harold and Elnora Brewster

By Sara Lair

Harold and Elnora have been married for 62 years. Harold retired from John Deere; Elnora worked at a beauty shop early in her life, then devoted herself to raising their four children (one of whom is deceased). They enjoy ten grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren.



After retirement, Harold and Elnora had a travel trailer and were snowbirds in the winter and spent summers in Minnesota. Harold remembers buying our church building from Nazareth Lutheran and states emphatically that "our church is the most beautiful in the area."

Harold and Elnora have served Our Redeemer in many areas, including the choir, the Board of Trustees, and church cleaning. They remember the days before air conditioning, and they remember frequent "guests" in the balcony: honey bees and bats.

The Brewsters live at Willowood and absolutely love the experience. It is very close to the church, but mobility problems preclude their getting to church as often as they would like. They both relate that one of the highlights of their last year was having

the confirmation students come with Pastor for a call—they love all the children in our church.

Their apartment at Willowood reflects their many interests—growing African violets (the secret is watering from the bottom with Miracle Gro liquid) and a "shop" with numerous cuckoo clocks in various states of repair. Harold, who is teaching his 11-year-old great-grandson the art of repairing clocks, is a woodcarver and has crafted many beautiful things.

Harold proudly showed the interviewer his WWII jacket with medals and awards—and the jacket still fits! A visit with the Brewsters is truly an enjoyable experience, and they welcome visitors.

Making Regular Individual Confession

By Elizabeth Peterson



I would like to suggest to my Our Redeemer brothers and sisters in Christ that you seriously consider making regular individual Confession. It is a very helpful practice for growing in the Faith because you will always spend some time thinking about your sins beforehand. I have also asked one person who knows me really, really well (Gerry) for some advice on what seem to him to be my most tenacious sins. Gerry's input was very helpful in getting me started with Confession.

I began to receive this gift last spring. The monthly Monday evening sessions are when I do this. Of course, I was nervous and somewhat tearful when I made my first confession. Do not let fear of showing emotion regarding your sins stop you from making that first Confession. This is normal, and Pastor Knox is very understanding. It also gets easier as you get used to doing it. It does, trust me.

The Lutheran Service Book has brief sections on both Corporate (p. 291) and Individual (p. 292) Confession so that you will know what to say. Here is how it works. You attend the Corporate Confession session on the first Monday of the month at 7:00 p.m. and participate in the Corporate Confession prayers.

Everybody sits in the front pews of the Sanctuary on the Lectern side. Pastor has the kneeler set up between the front pew and the Altar rail. At the end of the Corporate Confession service, each person comes up and kneels at the kneeler and receives Absolution from Pastor and leaves the Sanctuary. Those who wish to participate in Individual Confession, however, do not go to the kneeler for Absolution at this time but stay behind in the pew. If more than one person stays behind, then only one person will confess at a time, and the others need to leave the Sanctuary during each person's Confession. Pastor Knox will come and get each person individually when the previous person is done. You kneel at the kneeler and find the Individual Confession service in the Lutheran Service Book. I should also mention that Pastor Knox is happy to hear confessions at times other than the monthly Monday evening sessions. You do not need to attend those sessions in order to make a confession.

A little bit of background can help to explain the Lutheran approach to Individual Confession. When he was an Augustinian monk, Martin Luther had a great deal of personal trouble with Individual Confession. The Catholic Church taught that you needed to confess every sin, and Luther was truly tormented that he might forget some sins or be unaware of some. He once confessed for six hours! His confessor finally had to tell him to back off some and cease confessing trivial nonsense. It is hard to believe that anyone could confess sins for six hours, but Luther, in his later life, told this story on himself. Once Lu-

ther became a priest as well as a monk, he was additionally fearful that he might offer Mass without every single one of his sins having been forgiven. He was terrified of approaching God at the Altar while harboring even the smallest unforgiven sin. As his theology matured over the years, however, Luther realized that no one can ever remember all of his or her sins, and that we are even unaware of some of our sins. He wanted to make sure that people did not suffer the overwhelming guilt and even terror over their sins that he had felt while he was a monk.

That is why the Order for Individual Confession in the Lutheran Service Book has these words for the confessing individual to say: "What troubles me particularly is that..." We are absolutely not expected to attempt to confess "all" of our sins. I have gotten into the practice of focusing on one sin per session, whether a long-term, chronic sin, or a more recent sinful episode in my life. This works well for me. (I certainly am not in any danger of "running out of sins" to work on any time soon.) Once you have confessed the sins on which you want to work in this particular Confession, you say from LSB, "I am sorry for all of this and ask for Grace. I want to do better." Pastor will then place his hands on your head and absolve you by saying, "In the

stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ I forgive you of all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." You reply with, "Amen," and you are done.

Once again, I would like to urge everybody to seriously consider participating in Individual Confession and thereby receiving the precious gift of Holy Absolution. It makes you think honestly about your sins beforehand, which is good for developing self-awareness and self-understanding. I have come to see that thoughts that chronically worry and fret me are connected to my sins. Individual Confession and Absolution has helped to loosen the grip of old grudges and regrets.

I probably don't even need to say this, but I will: Pastor Knox is very, very understanding and helpful. After giving you Absolution, Pastor may offer you some brief counseling as well, if he feels it will be appropriate for you.

If you have old or long-term sins that never seem to let you go, you can get out from under the guilt and sadness. You really can! If guilt from past sins for which you have been absolved tries to come back, that is just Satan trying to undermine your faith. Remember that you have been absolved, and the Pastor's forgiveness is God's forgiveness. Our Lord Jesus Christ paid the full price for everyone's sins, past, present, and future, yours included. Tell Satan to take his torment someplace else; you will not play his guilt game, anymore.

Amen!



Georgia! . . . Trip of a Lifetime!

By Greg Gerjerts



In May of this year I had the opportunity to join a group of old friends and new acquaintances on a

week-long trip to Georgia in Eastern Europe.

The Georgian Orthodox wedding of a daughter of one of those old friends to a native Georgian (both the bride and groom currently live in New York) provided the impetus for the trip. In the days before and after the wedding ceremony, accompanied by a dedicated tour guide, we visited spectacular Georgian sites.

Our first base of operations was the capital city of Tbilisi (pop. 1.2 million); the second, Kazbegi (pop. 5,300; now officially referred to as Stepantsminda), a small town

in the Caucasus Mountains. Kazbegi's elevation is 5,700 feet, about the same as Denver's. Mt. Kazbek, 16,512 feet, lies immediately west of the town.

Situated where Western Asia meets Eastern Europe, Georgia is bounded to the west by the Black Sea, to the north by Russia, to the south by Turkey and Armenia, and to the east by Azerbaijan.

A little larger than West Virginia (27,000 square miles), Georgia lies on the same parallel as Iowa. Time difference from Cedar Falls: +9 hours. Jet lag was a factor but, surprisingly, not as much as I'd feared.

I admit, I'm someone who thinks a week's fishing at a remote Canada lake is about as good as a vacation can get. All in all, however, this over-the-top holiday was an experience of a lifetime!



Itinerary

23 May

- 1 Hotel check-in, city of Tbilisi
- 2 Tbilisi walking tour (4 hrs, 6 km): Rustaveli Ave, Freedom Square, Baratashvili St, Shavteli St, Peace Bridge, Rike Park, Narikala Fortress, Meidany Square, Metekhi Church, Leselidze St., Sioni Cathedral, Anchiskhati Basilica of St. Mary

24 May

- 3 C. Jvari Monastery
- 4 Town of Mtskheta, walking tour
- 5 Svetitskhoveli Cathedral, site of wedding service
- 6 Gujari Restaurant
- 7 Return to Tbilisi

25 May

- 8 Town of Signaghi, walking tour
- 9 Bodbe Monastery of St. Nino
- 10 John's wine cellar for wine degustation and lunch at Pheasant's Tears Restaurant
- 11 Return to Tbilisi

26 May (Independence Day)

- 12 Town of Gori and Stalin Museum tour

13 Ananuri Fortress

- 14 Gudauri mineral (travertine) stop
- 15 Gudauri panorama stop
- 16 Hotel check-in, town of Kazbegi

27 May

- 17 (Long!) hike to Gergeti Holy Trinity Church
- 18 Picnic lunch with panoramic view
- 19 (Long!) return hike to Kazbegi

28 May

- 20 Dariali Monastery with view of border with Russian Federation
- 21 (Long!) hike to Gveleti waterfall

- 22 Picnic lunch near waterfall
- 23 Return hike and drive to Kazbegi

29 May

- 24 Village of Sno, birthplace of Patriarch of Georgia
- 25 Tour Ananuri Fortification Church

- 26 Lunch at Restaurant Ananuri

- 27 Return to Tbilisi

- 28 Supper at Restaurant Tsiskvili

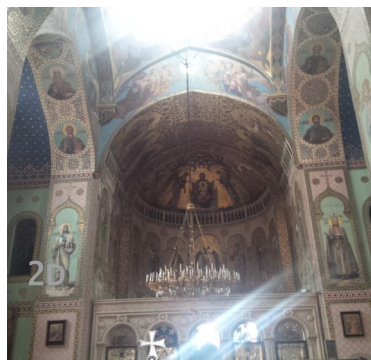
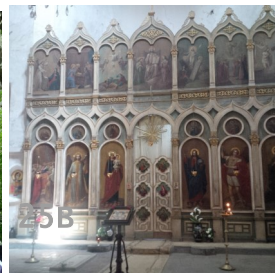
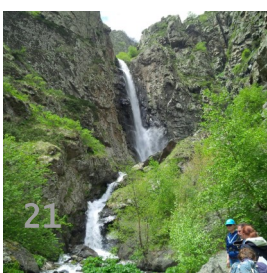


Photo Captions



- 2A Street spice merchant—Tbilisi was on the Silk Road and was named by Marco Polo.
- 2B Anchiskhati Basilica door arch.
- 2C Icons and candlelighting inside Anchiskhati.
- 2D Stunning Sioni ceiling and arches.
- 5A Traveled by Mercedes Benz van (we had a dedicated driver, Nodar, all week) to town of Mtskheta, site of the wedding. Svetitskhoveli is an impressive structure, well preserved, and significant to medieval architecture development throughout the Caucasus.
- 5B It's official!
- 6A Guests are taking their places at the wedding feast, a "Supra", which is "a traditional Georgian feast and an important part of Georgian culture. During a Supra, the role of the "tamada" or toastmaster, is an important and honored tradition. The tamada is expected to keep the festivities moving along with toasts and songs and to ensure that the wine keeps flowing." I can safely say that our tamada was up to the task.
- 6B Yes, food IS STILL being served 2-1/2 hours into the feast.
- 9 Cathedral under construction on Bodbe grounds.
- 10 Pheasants Tears Restaurant Head Chef Gia Rokashvili—and some admirer. Rokashvili soon will be preparing a meal in London for the Queen of England (at her request).
- 12A The train car Stalin took to the Yalta Conference.
- 12B Replica of Stalin's office—can just imagine his chairing a meeting ...
- 15 Perhaps the first UNI Panther hat worn on this overlook.
- 17 Hikers getting closer to our destination: Gergeti Holy Trinity Church.
- 20A Dariali Monastery in view (upper left).
- 20B Under construction since about 2010, it is nearly complete.
- 20C Looking straight at the border crossing with Russia.
- 21 Reaching our hiking destination (nearly).
- 24 Remains of Sno Fortress located in village of Sno, birthplace of spiritual leader of Georgian Orthodox Church, "Catholicos Patriarch of All Georgia His Holiness and Beatitude Ilia II".
- 25A Main entrance wall to Ananuri Fortification Church of St. George.
- 25B,C More scenes at Ananuri
- 28 Back in Tbilisi, we prepare for one last fabulous supper -- this one at Restaurant Tsiskvili ("Mill" in English)

Hymn Cycle

Reformation Season Readings and Hymns

SUNDAY, 6 SEP 2015, 15TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST, DS SETTING THREE

The Readings: Isaiah 35:4-7a; James 2:1-10, 14-18; Mark 7:24-37

Hymn of Invocation: Praise The Almighty797

Hymn of the Day: O Christ, Our True And Only Light839

Dist Hymn: O Morning Star, How Fair And Bright395

Dist Hymn: Oh, How Great Is Your Compassion559

SUNDAY, 13 SEP 2015, 16TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST, DS SETTING THREE

The Readings: Isaiah 50:4-10, James 3:1-12, Mark 9:14-29

Hymn of Invocation: Come Holy Ghost, God and Lord497

Hymn of the Day: Praise the One Who Breaks the Darkness849

Dist Hymn: Chief Of Sinners Though I Be611

Dist Hymn: With High Delight Let Us Unite483

SUNDAY, 20 SEP 2015, 17TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST, DS SETTING THREE

The Readings: Jeremiah 11:18-20, James 3:13-4:10, Mark 9:30-37

Hymn of Invocation: Sing, My Tongue, The Glorious Battle454

Hymn of the Day: If Your Beloved Son, O God568

Dist Hymn: Christ, The Life Of All The Living420

Dist Hymn: Lord Of Glory, You Have Bought Us851

SUNDAY, 27 SEP 2015, 18TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST, DS SETTING THREE

The Readings: Numbers 11:4-6,10-16,24-29; James 5:1-20; Mark 9:38-50

Hymn of Invocation: O Day of Rest And Gladness906

Hymn of the Day: Triune God, Be Thou Our Stay505

Dist Hymn: In The Very Midst Of Life755

Dist Hymn: O God, Forsake Me Not731

SUNDAY, 4 OCT 2015, 19TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST, DS SETTING THREE

The Readings: Genesis 2:18-25, Hebrews 2:1-18, Mark 10:2-16

Hymn of Invocation: God's Own Child, I Gladly Say It594

Hymn of the Day: Children of The Heavenly Father725

Dist Hymn: O Father, All Creating858

Dist Hymn: Preserve Your Word O Savior658

SUNDAY, 11 OCT 2015, 20TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST, DS SETTING THREE

The Readings: Amos 5:6-7, 10-15; Hebrews 3:12-19; Mark 10:17-22

Hymn of Invocation: O God Of God, O Light Of Light810

Hymn of the Day: The Law of God Is Good And Wise579

Dist Hymn: O Lord, We Praise Thee617

Dist Hymn: Sing Praise To God, The Highest Good819

SUNDAY, 18 OCT 2015, 21ST SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST, DS SETTING THREE

The Readings: Ecclesiastes 5:10-20, Hebrews 4:1-16; Mark 10:23-31

Hymn of Invocation: Baptismal Waters Cover Me616

Hymn of the Day: I Bind Unto Myself Today604

Dist Hymn: Jesus, Priceless Treasure743

Dist Hymn: O Christ, Our Hope, Our Hearts' Desire553

SUNDAY, 25 OCT 2015, 22ND SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST, DS SETTING THREE

The Readings: Jeremiah 31:7-9, Hebrews 7:23-28, Mark 10:46-52

Hymn of Invocation: In Thee Is Gladness818

Hymn of the Day: From God Can Nothing Move Me713

Dist Hymn: My Faith Looks Up To Thee702

Dist Hymn: Rejoice, My Heart, Be Glad And Sing737

Let's Meet... Morgan Niebergall!

By Tom Wemlinger

You've seen this young lady in church on Sunday mornings with her parents Jim and Cathy, sister Molly, and brother Michael. She lives in Buckingham and spends part of her summer vacation working in the agricultural field. She has worked with our youth group at the Sturgis Falls ice-cream booth, and she recently served a term on the Our Redeemer Youth Board. Let's get to know a little bit about Morgan Niebergall!



Q. What school do you attend?

A. Union High School.

Q. What year in school?

A. I'll be a sophomore.

Q. What is your favorite subject? Least favorite subject?

A. My favorite subject is English, and my least favorite subject is Science.

Q. What do you like most about school? What do you like least?

A. I like getting to see my friends every day and making memories, and my least favorite part of school is getting up early for it.

Q. Tell about what you plan to do after graduation.

A. I plan to go to college and become a physical therapist.

Q. What are some of your favorite activities?

A. I like to play tennis with my mom and I've been enjoying a book my friend told me to read.

Q. What do you like to do in your spare time?

A. I like to watch Netflix.

Q. You have a rather interesting summer job. Tell us a little bit about it. What do you like about it? What don't you like about it?

A. I don't really like anything about detasseling other than the paychecks I get.

Q. What is your favorite Bible verse? What makes it special to you?

A. It's hard for me to choose a favorite, but one verse that I like is Psalms 30:2. I really like it because it's simple in telling you that when you need help from Jesus, he is there for you and will give you what you need. And I think that is a good and simple way of reassuring people that he will always be there for them.

Q. If you won an all-expenses-paid two-week vacation trip to anywhere in the United States, where would you go? What makes that particular place appealing to you?

A. I would go to New York City. I really like how the buildings light up at night, and during the day I like the big crowds of people walking the streets. Everything in NYC appeals to me!

Q. What else would you like for people to know about Morgan Niebergall?

A. My favorite food is potatoes.

Reformation Faith and Reformation Life

Continued from Page 1

And why is that? Because growth in faith and life, though they are entirely God's work, occurs because you make use of the gifts that God has bestowed on you. Growth in faith and life come about exclusively through receiving God's gift of forgiveness in Word and Sacrament. Stated another way, without the hearing of God's Word and apart from receiving the Sacraments, there is no growth in faith and life!

Growth in Faith and Life is a Group Effort

You've heard me say on numerous occasions that one of the great dangers in the church is individualism. Christ incorporates individuals into His body, the Church, where they are fed, nourished, and sustained. You gather for corporate worship because that is where Christ ministers to you. There, through His pastors, Jesus feeds, protects, and guides His flock.

Each of you has a responsibility to one another. St. Paul, in the context of language that connects the Christian life to corporate worship, lays before the whole church this obligation: "Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him" (Colossians 3:12-17).

The author of Hebrews also connects

Christian faith and life to corporate worship and the community of the body of Christ: "Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty con-

way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness. Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbor, for we are all members of one body. In your anger do not sin. Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold. He who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with his own hands, that he may have something to share with those in need. Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you" (Ephesians 4:22-32).

How do we know this? Because God is faithful to His promise, "As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater, so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it" (Isaiah 55:10, 11).

With a proper understanding of faith and good works, I hope you enjoy celebrating as Lutherans the restoration of Reformation Faith and Reformation Life.

—Pastor Knox



Martin Luther burning the papal bull that excommunicated him from the Roman Catholic Church in 1520, with other scenes from Luther's life and portraits of other Reformation figures; lithograph by H. Breul, c. 1874.

science and having our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching" (Hebrews 10:19-25).

Growth in Faith and Life is God's Work

I, along with the Board of Elders, desire that our congregations be identified by a vibrant life of Christian faith and life. To that end, we know that a congregation of people, active in corporate worship and devoted to the study of God's Word, will be one that abounds in the fruits of faith. We will be a people that is like that which St. Paul describes in Ephesians 4, "You were taught, with regard to your former

If we keep our doctrine of salvation straight, then our doctrine and practice of good works will be straight as well.

—Klemet Preus

MISSIONS IN OUR BUDGET

By Glenn Staudinger



The original intent of this article was to give a brief account of the visit to Our Redeemer by Rev. Robert Kieselowsky (Executive Director of Philadelphia Lutheran Ministries). While I hope to fulfill that intent, a short look at some of the other missions in our budget seems appropriate as we prepare for our 2016 budget.

Our Redeemer's mission budget is divided into three categories: Church Worker Training, District Mission, and Other Mission. Individual mission contributions are expressed as a percentage of our non-loan budget. For 2015 this amounted to 11%, or \$23,232.

Church Worker Training is 1%, or \$2112, divided between our two seminaries. District Mission consists of: Camp IoDisECa (2%), Iowa District East (2%), North Liberty mission (1%), and Lutheran Family Services (1%), totaling 6%, or \$12,672. Other Missions include: *Issues, Etc.* (1%), Lutheran Heritage (1%), Siberia and Baltics (1%), and Philadelphia Lutheran Ministries (1%), totaling 4%, or \$8448.

With the exception of the North Liberty mission, which was added fairly recently, the first two categories have been firmly established in our budget for many years. "Other Missions" has grown out of the abundant blessings our congregation has received and our willingness to share these gifts with others. Lutheran Heritage is oldest and best known due to its work translating authentic Lutheran materials into many languages and dialects.

On this same note, we support Rev. Johnson in Siberia and the Baltics as, regrettably, missionaries have to raise substantial amounts of money to support their endeavors even though they are sent by Synod. Our support for Seminarians has become a priority due to Synod's insufficient support.

Closer to home, Philadelphia Lutheran Ministries, a Recognized Service Organization, was organized to support a missionary to the city of Philadelphia. They have established the only LCMS congregation in our fifth largest city of over five million!

Issues, Etc. is Christ-centered, Cross-focused talk radio on Lutheran Public Radio. Hosted by Rev. Todd Wilken, *Issues, Etc.* offers truly Lutheran discussions about our Synod, current world views, theology, music, and our fallen state.

Looking at these line items in Our Redeemer's mission budget, you might ask, "How and why are these particular missions selected?" Acknowledging that there are many worthwhile and deserving entities to choose from, I don't believe there is a particular method to choosing. There is the common theme of authentic Lutheran background and emphasis: God bestowing

His mercy through Jesus Christ in Word and Sacrament is our public confession, and is reflected in who and what we support with our finite financial capabilities. But how do we choose? Our Redeemer and Pastor receive hundreds of appeals every year. In-person appeals and conversations with Pastor and members has been the way most missions make our "short list". Following up with progress reports or in-person visits has kept our recipient list fairly stable for a few years.

This does not mean Our Redeemer is committed to always contribute to the same places. To whom and how much is up to the voters of the congregation. Suggestions are needed by Pastor and the Board of Elders. These few words should in

Begging Your Attendance

(All locations @ ORLC unless noted otherwise.)

September

- 2 Parent/Student Meeting for Confirmation, 7:00 p.m.
- 9 Midweek Bible Study/Confirmation begin
- 12 Breakfast/Confessions Study w/ Vicar Grills, 8:00 a.m.
- 13 Sunday School/Bible Class begin, 11:00-11:45 a.m.
- 14 All Boards Night, 7:00 p.m.
- 17 Nursing Home Service @ Shell Rock, 4:00 p.m.
- 18-19 LWML Zone Fall Retreat @ Camp IoDisECa
- 20 Congregational Pig Roast @ Orchard Hill Park, 3:00 p.m.
- 21 Confession/Absolution @ Our Redeemer, 7:00 p.m.

October

- 4-6 Oktoberfest @ St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Kewanee, IL

November

- 20-21 Senior High Retreat @ Camp Io-Dis-

Updated Data

New Contact Data
[None this period.]

New Addresses
[None this period.]

no way be taken to discourage individual giving to your favorite causes. The Food Bank, the Red Cross, and countless others do a fantastic job of aiding people in need, but let us not confuse exhibiting Christian care with Mission. Please continue in your support as you are able in both.



Rev. Robert Kieselowsky

As If You Were There

Seminar on Isaiah 1–39

By Gerald Peterson



In July Elizabeth and I took part in a seminar presented by Pastor Reed Lessing on Isaiah 1-39 at College Hill Lutheran Church. Pastor Lessing was formerly on the exegetical studies faculty of Concordia Seminary in St. Louis. He has written several of the Concordia blue commentaries and is widely known as a scholar of Old Testament studies.

Isaiah is long and complicated. New Testament writers cite it more than any other Old Testament book except the Psalms. It was a favorite of Paul and Jesus. Most of us are familiar with certain passages, especially those that prophecy the birth of Jesus. But there is much more there, as Pastor Lessing pointed



out with great skill and deep learning. He seemed to know the Bible by heart and could call on any verse easily. What is more, he knew the Bible in any language that helped to make explication clear—Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek, other ancient languages, English, German. And he could put the Bible into its historical context:

Michelangelo (c. 1508–12): Isaiah

that is, he could explain what was going on in the Middle East—politics, trade, war, diplomacy—at the time when the book of Isaiah was composed.

Rather than summarizing Pastor Lessing's entire presentation—even if I could!—I would like simply to offer a few high points:

- Names are important. God's name is Yahweh. God is Yahweh's title. Yahweh is God.
- Likewise, Baal is the title of an Old Testament false god. Baal's name is Hadad.
- The word "Eden" means delight.
- What we see in English translations as "Lord of hosts" is actually "Lord of armies" in Hebrew.
- Isaiah 1-39 pairs righteousness with justice (active, we do it); Isaiah 40-55 pairs righteousness with salvation (passive, we receive it); Isaiah 56-66 puts passive and active righteousness together.
- When you see the word "woe" in the Bible, death is around the corner.
- Biblical writers assumed that readers would be familiar with

earlier texts and that the audience would read and re-read their work.

- God has a plan that we must trust. Unfortunately, our plans frequently work at cross purposes with God's plan.
- God's plan, even in Old Testament times, was to show mercy and bring salvation to all people. The children of Israel were his chosen people. God made promises to them, and they carried the message. But the message was for all people.
- God made a series of covenants with his people (Abraham and Sarah, Moses, David). Only the Sinai covenant is conditional. The other covenants are unbreakable and everlasting.
- Refusal to repent is much worse than the sinning that calls for repentance.
- After the Resurrection, there will be a new heaven and a new earth. Professor Lessing suggested that it might be a restored heaven and earth, a restored Creation, perhaps like Eden, where we will find our final joy.
- Righteousness is important, but holiness is more important in Isaiah.
- God is both with us (immanent) and beyond us (transcendent). Jesus is our kinsman-redeemer, both God and man. He is here with us, but he is also true God and holy.
- Pastor Lessing quoted John Calvin as saying that the human mind is an idol factory.
- Pastor Lessing said that the best we can be is a repentant idolater. That is, we always find something other than God in which we place our trust. However, if we repent, God, through the intercession of His Son, will forgive us.
- In an aside, Pastor Lessing said that whenever he feels anxious, worried, nervous, or concerned, he first repents before taking action.

While Pastor Lessing's presentation was aimed primarily toward pastors, Elizabeth and I came away with both a better understanding of Isaiah and a clearer picture of important Scriptural themes. Pastor Lessing will finish Isaiah next summer at College Hill. I urge you to attend.



One more thing. Pastor Lessing (at left) is the co-author of an excellent introduction to the Old Testament: Prepare the Way of the Lord, Concordia, St. Louis, 2014. The book takes the Old Testament book-by-book, pointing out chronology, authorship, and theological themes. I recommend it highly.

IDE's 39th Convention

Pastor Knox Elected to Term as Clergy Member to Board of Directors

By Tim Koch



The Thirty-Ninth Convention of Iowa District East, The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, was held June 26-27, 2015, in Cedar Rapids. One hundred eighty-two clergy and lay delegates were in attendance. Our district convention usually consists of three chief parts: elections, the convention essayist, and overtures/resolutions.

Elections

The Rev. Dr. Brian Saunders was elected by acclamation to continue as District President; the Rev. Max Mons, from St. Paul's Lutheran Chapel in Iowa City, was elected as 1st Vice-President; and the Rev. Dr. Matthew Rueger, from St. John Lutheran Church in Hubbard, was elected as 2nd Vice-President.

Other noteworthy elections were Jim Swales—Joshua Swales father—as lay member to the District Board of Directors, and our pastor, Michael Knox, as a clergy member to the board of directors.

Convention Essayist

C.F.W. Walther encouraged conventions to be a time of study and learning the teaching of the Lutheran faith. A large portion of the time in our district conventions is utilized for study.

The essayist for the convention was the Rev. Randall Golter. Rev. Golter serves as the Special Assistant to the Synodical President. He is primarily responsible for two projects: 1) Planning and coordinating the 2017 500th anniversary celebration of the Reformation; and 2) Leading the "Preach the Word" project, which is to help pastors commit themselves to improving their preaching and to help the laity in the hearing of the Gospel.

Rev. Golter presented a four part presentation titled, "Witness, Mercy, Life Together: The Church in Motion".

Overtures/Resolutions

A trend in our district over the last three conventions has been to present fewer overtures to the delegates. The majority of the overtures at this convention dealt with "housekeeping" issues, such as pastor and church worker pay scales and bylaw changes. One resolution requested that the president of synod convene a task force to identify weaknesses in the Dispute Resolution Process. The Dispute Resolution Process is the procedure with which the Synod deals with conflict. It has its flaws and needs improvement.

Another overture requested that the congregations of the district reexamine and increase their contributions, through District, to Synod. Dr. John Wohlrahe, 2nd vice-president of synod, delivered the President's Report. In the report he stated that funds received by Synod have increased over the past few years, but that most of them are designated—meaning they must be spent on what the donor(s) wish them to be spent. This has caused some problems in the Synodical office. The amount of non-designated funds they receive is barely enough to keep the lights on.

When Our Redeemer discusses its "Missions" portion of the budget later this year, we may wish to reexamine the mix and determine the appropriateness of increasing our non-designated giving to Synod.



Our Redeemer 904 Bluff Street



To: