



THE LUTHERAN WITNESS™

VOL. 129 NO. 10 OCTOBER 2010

What Makes America American?

Understanding Christianity
throughout American History

10 Minutes with . . . Matthew Harrison <

Hitting the Million Mark <

It's Mission Month <

What a Difference a Half Millennium Makes! <

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Not Our Will, but Thine

My mother, Louise Cady, was a hard-working farm wife and mother of five. She never claimed to be a noted scholar, a talented musician,

or a great educational leader. But she loved God. If there was a degree in mothering, she would have taken top honors. She was the queen in her kitchen, wearing many an apron out. She was a specialist at the old treadle sewing machine. The greatest flood could not wipe out the love she had for her family.

As years passed, she could no longer take care of herself. The wisps of gray hair had turned to a beautiful white. Her wrinkled, thin-skinned hands and slim, almost lifeless arms could no longer hold her new wiggly great-grandson. She came to live with my husband, Norm, and me for six months. The rest of the year, she lived with my sister, Dorothy, and her husband, Johnny.

She was always interested in the grandchildren and great-grandchildren. She would often ask, "Did they get to Sunday School?" "Are they doing well in school?" One day, two of the great-grandchildren walked up to her and asked, "Would you read to us, Great-Grandma?" The words were barely visible for her failing eyesight. She held the storybook close to her eyes to see as much of the picture as she could. She then proceeded to make up a story. She sure fooled those great-grandchildren!

Another game they enjoyed playing was "motorcycle." Each would straddle the arms of the lounge chair. "Va-room!" they shouted.

"Now, boys, don't go too fast," she warned. "I am nearly 100 years. I can't take much speed anymore." (She was 96.) Her mountains of humor were a joy to everyone.

Her frail, stooped body was beginning to have pain most of the time. One night, I heard mumbling sounds coming from her bedroom. When I approached her bedroom door, I heard her praying, "Please, Lord, take me out of my misery. I don't want to hurt anymore. I thank You for Your blessings given to all my family, but take me home to be with You." She was anxious for God to answer her prayers right away. But God doesn't work that way. He answers our prayers when He is ready, so He put her on hold.

"And He went a little farther, and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, 'O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt'" (Matt. 26:39 KJV).

Later, she wanted to go to a nice nursing facility in her home town of McPherson, Kan. This little town had been her home for 70 years. When we made the trip from our St. Joseph, Mo., home to visit her, we found her in her wheelchair consoling a friend of many years. "It will be all right," we heard her say. "God will take care of you." My vision was blurred with tears. Perhaps this was one reason God did not take her to His heavenly home when she asked. She was able to bring a little joy into the life of another.

At the age of 98, God answered her prayer. She was finally cradled in God's arms, free of pain and sleepless nights.

Not our will, but Thine.

Mrs. Susan Walter is an active member of St. Paul Lutheran Church, St. Joseph, Mo.



The Will of God Is Always Best

The will of God is always best
And shall be done forever;
And they who trust in Him are blest;
He will forsake them never.
He helps indeed In time of need;
He chastens with forbearing.
They who depend On God, their friend,
Shall not be left despairing.

When life's brief course on earth is run
And I this world am leaving,
Grant me to say, "Your will be done,"
Your faithful Word believing.
My dearest Friend, I now commend
My soul into Your keeping;
From sin and hell, And death as well,
By You the vict'ry reaping.

(LSB 758:1, 4)

Providing Missouri Synod laypeople with stories and information that complement congregational life, foster personal growth in faith, and help interpret the contemporary world from a Lutheran Christian perspective.



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staff

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Karen Higgins	editorial assistant

Editorial office: 1333 S. Kirkwood Road, St. Louis, MO 63122-7295
314-996-1202

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1-888-THE LCMS (843-5267)
www.lcms.org
e-mail: LUTHERAN.WITNESS@lcms.org

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Four hundred ninety-three years ago, a Roman Catholic monk named Martin Luther nailed 95 arguments against a practice of the Catholic Church to a door. *What, you may be wondering, does that matter to me? After all, this isn't 1517, I don't live in Germany, and Luther is dead!*

The good news? *The Lutheran Witness* has some answers.

Case in point: Read Dr. Lawrence Rast's review of a soon-to-be-released TV documentary titled *God in America*. You'll get a crash course in Christianity's role in the formation of the United States and how religion has affected the nation's political and social history. Interestingly, you'll also learn what the documentary *doesn't* say about Lutheranism in America.

Also, check out Dr. Robert Kolb's article on celebrating Reformation Day. He explores how other churches have reacted—and continue to react—to the events of the Reformation, how both opponents and supporters of Luther have existed since 1517, and how you can celebrate Luther's clear proclamation of the Gospel in your own church today.

Speaking of the Reformation, do you have "A Mighty Fortress" on the brain? Read Emily Barlean's heartening story about how Rev. Gary Benedix, pastor of Hope Lutheran Church, Jackpot, Nev., hit the jackpot by purchasing Concordia Publishing House's one millionth *Lutheran Service Book*.

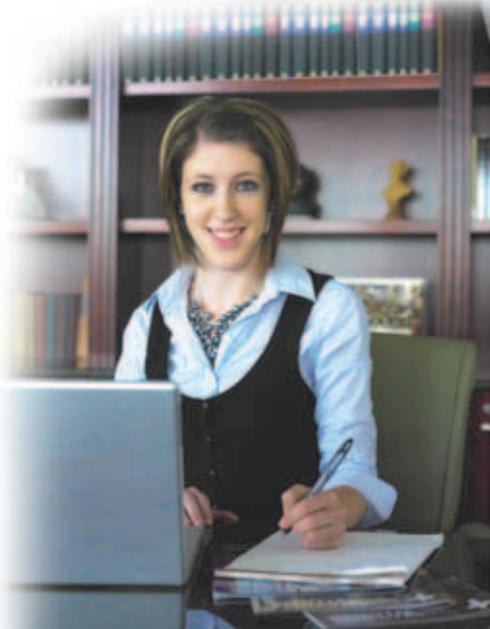
And what better way to celebrate the rich heritage of the LCMS than by planning an event in commemoration of Mission Month! Stacey Welcenbach and English District President David Stechholz have a few ideas on how your congregation can reach out to the unchurched in your area with the living, active Word of God.

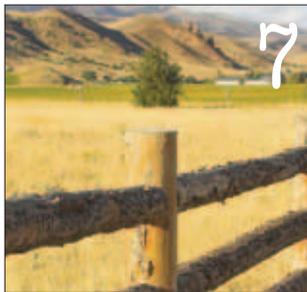
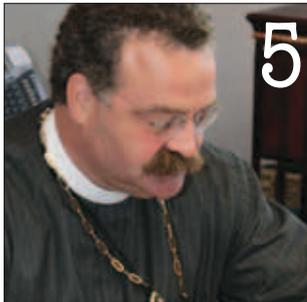
Also, be sure to take time for Dr. Richard Eyer's article "In the End, It Is All Christ." There Dr. Eyer offers solace to Christ's faithful ones, reminding us of the comfort of the Gospel in the midst of suffering.

Finally, e-mail us at lutheran.witness@lcms.org to let us know what you think of our new column "Ten Minutes with." This month, we feature a short Q-and-A with LCMS President Matthew C. Harrison, who was installed Sept. 11.

The Reformation may have occurred centuries ago, but it still affects your life as a Lutheran today. During this month, take time to ponder the courage and faith of Dr. Martin Luther, but, better still, take joy in Christ who loves you and who does all things—including reformations—well.

Adriane Dorr, Managing Editor
The Lutheran Witness
adriane.dorr@lcms.org





features

10 Minutes with . . . 5

by James Heine
Get to know President
Matthew C. Harrison.

What Makes America American? 7

by Lawrence R. Rast Jr.
Is America a Christian
nation? Read Dr. Rast's
article to find out.

Hitting the Million Mark 10

by Emily Barlean
CPH sold its one millionth
hymnal! To find out who
bought it, read on.

It's Mission Month 13

by Stacey Welcenbach
Looking for ways to
celebrate Mission Month?
We can help!

In the End, It Is All Christ 16

by Richard C. Eyer
Christ offers comfort
to you in the midst of
suffering.

What a Difference a Half Millennium Makes! 18

by Robert Kolb
Why do we celebrate
Reformation Day anyway?
Dr. Kolb has the answers.

departments

- 1 LIFELINE
- 4 LETTERS
- 23 Q & A
- 24 NOTICES
- 28 SEARCHING SCRIPTURE
- 29 FROM THE PRESIDENT

»» on the web

- For the latest Synod news, visit *Reporter Online* at lcms.org/reporter. This month, see especially *Reporter's* coverage of the Sept. 11 installation of President Matthew C. Harrison and the Synod's new officers.
- Also, go to lcms.org/witness to check out "Dancing on the Devil's Head," a quick study in whether or not Lutherans should celebrate Halloween by Rev. William Cwirla, as well as an interview with Rev. Gary Benedix from "Hitting the Million Mark."

How to Write a Letter to the Editor

The Lutheran Witness receives a steady supply of letters from our readers. Although we can't answer every letter personally, we read every one and appreciate receiving them.

Each month, we normally have space to publish only four or five letters, so the competition is tough. Still, letters from readers add vitality to a magazine, and often they offer readers a different perspective on a topic. Here are a few tips for writing a letter to the editor and getting it published.

- **Respond to a story that has been published recently** in *The Lutheran Witness*. Be timely and focus on one topic. In your letter, include the story's title and the month of publication.
- **Be brief.** Make your point in no more than 150 words (shorter is better). The chances of a long letter with multiple points being published are slim.
- **Be your own editor.** Pause a moment before you hit that "send" button (or seal the envelope). Review what you've written, not only for spelling and grammar, but also for context. Letters that do not deal with issues in a constructive manner serve no purpose in a Christian magazine.
- **Include your name, address, and telephone number.** We do not publish letters without this information. If your letter is published, only your name and city of residence will be used.

As with any publication, all letters to *The Lutheran Witness* are subject to editing for length, grammar, facts, and clarity. We do not publish open letters, form letters, unsigned letters, or letters signed with pseudonyms. Also, as a rule, we do not print letters from the same author in back-to-back issues or letters responding to letters previously printed.

Finally, the letters we print reflect the proportion of letters we receive on a topic or the comments we receive about an issue.

Send your letters to "Letters," c/o *The Lutheran Witness*, 1333 S. Kirkwood Road, St. Louis, MO 63122-7295; or send them via e-mail to lutheran.witness@lcms.org.

We look forward to hearing from you.
—The Editors

continued on page 26



Matthew Harrison

Rev. Matthew C. Harrison was installed as the 13th president of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod on Sept. 11. Several days before his installation, The Lutheran Witness sat down with President Harrison for a conversation about the LCMS, his new responsibilities, his family, and himself. The following is an edited version of that conversation. An extended version of the conversation can be found online at lcms.org/witness.

For photos, stories, and videos of the installation of President Harrison, visit lcms.org/reporter.

Q: We suspect the past few weeks have been a whirlwind. Have you had an opportunity to catch your breath?

A: Well, I have caught my breath on occasion. There has been a day or two here and there that we've taken a bit of rest. I moved a woodpile over the weekend, and that was very helpful—just slowly, slowly moving those logs from here to there gives one time to contemplate, think through things, settle down a bit.

Q: Do you find that physical activity is a good opportunity to think and clear your mind?

A: Yes, physical activity is that for me, although I don't do enough. I need to be more intentional about that.

I actually find great consolation in working with my hands. I build things. I'm a bit of a carpenter. I just built a cross over the last few weeks. It was a way to think about things while being distracted with my hands. I like sawdust, and wood is such a theological medium. It is First Article: It's creation. It's beautiful. It's actu-

ally glorious. And Second Article: It has to die to reveal its beauty. It reminds one of Christ. And then, as a friend recently reminded me, it is the wood that has suffered the most tribulation in life, that is the most twisted and knotty and full of disease, etc., that reveals the most glorious grain and finish in the end. That is a profound reality. It's a profound picture of the Christian life.

Q: What has surprised you about your new position?

A: I expected an outpouring of kindness from people. What has overwhelmed me is the number of people who are calling, who are writing letters, who are on Facebook, telling me they're praying for me and the family, and praying for the Church, and often people you might not have expected to do that. That has been overwhelming.

Q: The convention mandated significant changes to the national structure of the LCMS. What might the local congregation—or the person in the pew—notice?

A: What we have to do is have a positive impact on the financial situation immediately. And we are in the process of really working through those things that need to remain and

We are called . . .
both here and
everywhere around
the world to make a
huge impact for the
sake of the Gospel
of Christ.

✓ 10 Minutes with . . .

where the streamlining needs to take place. It is a very challenging process to contemplate. But we at the national level must simply learn to live within our means.

As we've begun to look at how to put the restructuring together (and a great deal of it depends on the president's office in designing the structure that is responsible to the president), we've been really looking hard at the Bible and how the New Testament life of the Church works. And so we've come up with a threefold emphasis of witness, mercy, and life together. And we're really mining the New Testament on these three important aspects of New Testament life: sharing the Gospel; caring for people in need, both within and without the Church; and then living together in unity, in love, in doctrinal unity, and peace and harmony.

Q: If you could speak to every congregation face-to-face for 10 minutes tomorrow, what would you say to them, and what would you encourage every individual to do when they left that meeting?

A: Hmm. I would tell them that they're all damned sinners under the Law. Every last one of them deserves eternal death, and so do I. But by God's gracious giving, He has saved us by the blood of Jesus. And He has brought them together, not by their own works or doing, but brought them, and all of us, together into the Church to live together and receive this grace and to live out this life together. And the Missouri Synod has a sacred vocation. We have been given such fantastic gifts! We are not the biggest, and we've got a million problems and challenges, especially as this country slips deeper into paganism. But we are called with the resources and capacities the Lord has given us and continues to give us, both here and everywhere around the world, to make a huge impact for the sake of the Gospel of Christ, particularly for confessional Lutheranism. And it's our challenge in our day to do this. There's nobody, nobody like the Missouri Synod and her partners, who can bear witness ecumenically to *sola scriptura*, *sola fide*, *sola gratia*, *solus Christus*. That is our sacred task now—today! And we can do it only by God's grace.

Q: What has been the reaction of your family to your election as president of the LCMS?

A: "What, him?" You know, "We didn't know he had that in him! Do they know the mistake they've made?" Actually, it's been profound and funny too. I'm still Matt. My dad is still my dad, and my mother is still my mother, and I do not tell my mother what to do.

Q: Near the end of our conversation in Houston, you said, "My garage is messy, and I need to get home and clean it up." Has there been any progress on that front?

A: Thankfully, I'm happy to say yes. A great deal of progress has been made on that front. I used this move as an opportunity to ditch a lot of stuff—including a lot of books. I took quite a load of books to the seminary and gave them to students. So, yes, we made progress. But there's always (as is the case of the Law), always more to do, and it's never like it should be.

James Heine (james.heine@lcms.org) is executive editor of *The Lutheran Witness*.



President Matthew C. Harrison, an avid bluegrass fan, plays the banjo following his installation as the 13th president of the LCMS.

PBS has chronicled the American experience in war and peace, depression and prosperity. Now, with *God in America*, it looks at religion. Dr. Lawrence Rast previews the series and reflects on its hits and misses from a Lutheran perspective.

What Makes America American?

Dr. Rast reviewed the first four hours of PBS's six-hour program. The final two hours were not available at press time. —Ed.

Is America a Christian nation? Ask this question, and you'll probably get responses that run across the spectrum from "Yes" to "No," including "Yes, but . . ." and "No, but . . ."

To many people it just seems so plainly obvious: Of course, the United States is a Christian nation! How could it be otherwise?

Many people in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod are absolutely convinced that this is so. At the same time, there are plenty of people—people who attend LCMS congregations—that are convinced that America is not a Christian nation, properly speaking. And, there are plenty of people that fall at some point on the spectrum between these two poles.

Why the divide? Shouldn't this be simple?

In fact, it's not. Answering this question often raises more questions. What is necessary for a nation to be Christian? Specific biblical statements in constitutional documents? A majority of citizens holding membership in Christian churches? A majority of citizens actually going to a Christian church each week? Beyond these, some wonder whether one can be a good Christian and a good American at the same time. Is there really a wall of separation between the church and the state here in the United States?

Perhaps the better question is simply this: What is it that makes America American? And what is it that makes an American an American?

God in America

This is where *God in America* steps in. From Oct. 11–13, 2010, from 9:00–11:00 p.m. EDT on PBS, a series of six one-hour episodes will consider how Americans have understood and used God as they built and developed their nation. (See <http://www.pbs.org/godinamerica/> for more information on the particulars of the series.)

With only six hours to tell the story of religion in the United States, clearly the topics addressed would have to be selective. The result is that *God in America* offers the viewer a panorama, a wide-angle snapshot of the development of American thought on the role of religion in the story of the United States.

The range of topics, however, is impressive. Catholic missions and Puritan orthodoxy in the seventeenth century give way to revival and revolution in the eighteenth. A recurring theme is that those traditions with roots in Europe—for example, the Methodists and the Baptists—adapted and, in some cases, accommodated themselves most adeptly to the emerging American mind. Their uniquely American interpretations of Christianity would challenge other churches and even religions to do the same.

While the debate about whether America is a Christian nation will no doubt continue, one thing remains sure: Americans are more active religiously than other nations in the West. And this includes not only Christians but people of other faiths as well.

'The American Lutheran story is a fascinating and compelling one. Why didn't we make the cut?'

The emerging narrative challenges the viewer to ask repeatedly just what is so distinctive about religion in America. And that, for a Lutheran, is a very good historical question.

American Exceptionalism?

Does America have a unique place in God's story? Is there something exceptional about the United States and its role in the story of redemption? Is this exceptionalism limited to Christianity, or does it embrace other faiths?

One hint at the answer is the way in which biblical metaphors and language have permeated American discourse. Even today politicians often sound like preachers—especially when they are up for election. Biblical literacy may be on the decline, but politicians who intentionally reject American exceptionalism may find themselves looking for work after November 2010's midterm elections.

As *God in America* shows, this is nothing new. This sense of divine interest in the American religious experience is deeply embedded in the American character.

The result for American Judaism was a deep divide, which remains to this day, between those who sought to maintain their historic faith in a new set of circumstances, and those who argued that the faith must be accommodated to those new circumstances. As one commentator notes, "There is something about the American context that seems to encourage particular expressions of the faith rather than any one unified expression of the faith." And so, in the end, it came down to the most basic of American freedoms. "You don't like it, you start your own," as another commentator put it. If your religious community doesn't meet your needs, American freedom allows—perhaps encourages—you to start your own.

Where Are the Lutherans?

American Judaism offers a good case study for the question of Americanization, and the story is well told. However, another option would have been to consider the Lutherans of the nineteenth century. The arguments advanced by American Jews

'While the debate about whether America is a Christian nation will no doubt continue, one thing remains sure: Americans are more active religiously than other nations in the West.'

This exceptionalism has and will continue to challenge every faith community in the United States. For example, episode six examines Isaac Mayer Wise. Wise worked to establish Reform Judaism in America while his opponents adhered to Old World traditions. For Wise, the future of Judaism lay in accommodating itself to the American way of life. "The future greatness of Judaism in America," wrote Wise, "depends upon the union of congregations. We must be united in form of worship in order to have no element of discord among us." But that form of worship for Wise was to be uniquely American in character, even to the point of embracing elements of American Protestant worship and doing away with biblical dietary laws. Being kosher was not part of being Jewish as far as he was concerned. Yet, when American Jews could not agree on what degree to adapt to the American way, they separated and, in so doing, showed just how American they truly were.

for accommodating American life sound strikingly familiar to those who know the American Lutheran story (and the same might be said for most traditions with roots in Europe).

But here is a real disappointment of the series. American Lutheranism itself experienced many of these themes in ways at least as intense as the other traditions and, in some cases, more so. Indeed, as the saying goes, at the turn of the twentieth century, no church spoke more languages on Sunday morning than the Lutherans. In the 35-year period of 1840 to 1875, at least 58 distinct Lutheran synods were formed in America. Some were based on ethnicity, and some were based on geography, but many were driven by the question of how Lutherans would respond to the unique demands of America. Should we accommodate our theology? Should we resist?

Lutheran answers to such questions were vigorously debated in print and sermon. Divisions

FOR FURTHER READING

occurred, and many have been slow to heal even to the present. Yet the American Lutheran story is a fascinating and compelling one. Why didn't we make the cut?

And that raises another rather uncomfortable question: How is it that a series considering the topic of God in America believes that there is nothing either distinct enough or interesting enough about Lutherans to include them in the program? Perhaps that says more about America's Lutherans than it does about the producers of this series.

Beyond the lack of Lutherans, however, is the more distressing reality of a lack of specific references to the biblical Gospel in the program.

And this, perhaps, is the real frustration of the series. On the one hand, its overview of the American religious experience will be helpful to those not familiar with the broader story. Yet, in many ways, the title is misleading. In the end, the episodes are not so much about God as they are about revival, revolution, slavery, Civil War, and civil rights. Theology proper is not the focus of this series. Theology is talk about God. This series is talk about human beings.

More pointedly, this story is about religious freedom and the question of how America's unique circumstances have allowed for the multicolored tapestry that is religion in the United States. No faith tradition has remained unchanged by the religious freedom that America offers.

Should I Watch It?

Yes. I recommend taking the time to do so. True, it lacks the full picture. True, many times the heroes are those who challenge the positions of the Christian witness. True, the Lutherans should at least play some role in the story.

Nevertheless, the story is told well and in a reasonable fashion that will introduce those who are unfamiliar with the broader contours of the story of religion in America.

Is America a Christian nation? The answer of *God in America* to that question is a reasonable one. We may say yes or no for ourselves, but what is unavoidably true is that the Christian experience, variously understood and defined, has played an essential role in the emergence of what is America as we know it today.

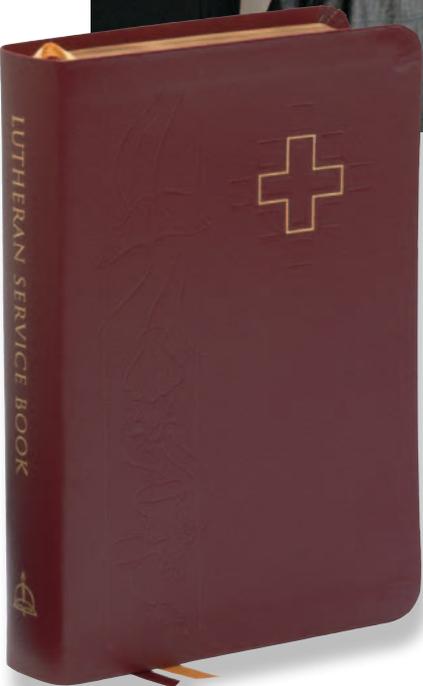
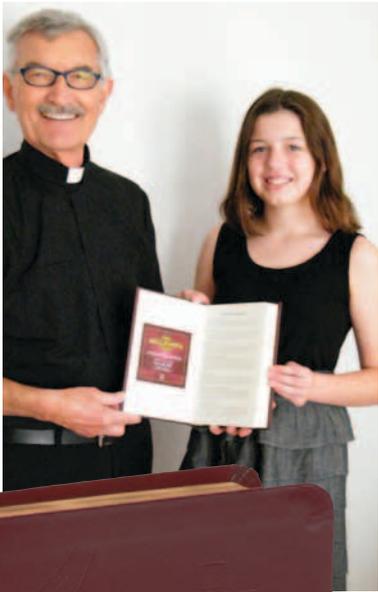
What is it that makes America American? And what is it that makes an American an American? Religious freedom is *God in America's* answer. And the compelling story of how religious freedom has manifested itself in the United States makes this one series worth watching—critically, of course.

Dr. Lawrence R. Rast Jr. (lawrence.rast@ctsfw.edu) is academic dean of Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Ind.

There is a rich and varied body of literature that readers may pursue for further information on the subject of *God in America*. Recommended works include:

- Nathan Hatch, *The Democratization of American Christianity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989).
- Roger Finke and Rodney Stark, *The Churching of America, 1776–2005: Winners and Losers in Our Religious Economy* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2005).
- Mark A. Noll, *A History of the Christian Church in the United States and Canada* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1992).
- Sydney Ahlstrom, *A Religious History of the American People* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004).
- E. Brooks Holifield, *Theology in America: Christian Thought from the Age of the Puritans to the Civil War* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005).
- Jon Butler, *Awash in a Sea of Faith: Christianizing the American People* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992).
- E. Clifford Nelson, ed. *The Lutherans in North America* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1980).

Each of these books makes demands on its readers. However, they are perhaps among the most useful in understanding the story of Christianity in the United States and will allow the watcher of *God in America* to appreciate the fuller narrative of the “surprising work of God” (to use Jonathan Edwards’s phrase) here in the United States.



Hitting the Million Mark

Hope Lutheran Church in Jackpot, Nev., has indeed hit the jackpot. To find out how Rev. Gary Benedix, the church's pastor, purchased the one millionth copy of *Lutheran Service Book*, read on.

When you hear about a publishing company selling more than a million copies in record time, you almost expect the book to have the words *Harry Potter* or *Twilight* in its title. However, Concordia Publishing

House has a best seller topping the million mark—one that has reached that publishing milestone without the over-the-top media hysteria that so often accompanies today's publishing blockbusters.

After just four years, CPH has sold more than a million copies of *Lutheran Service Book (LSB)*.

"People need a way to give voice to their faith. There are three core books that can do that: the Bible, the hymnal, and the Catechism," says Rev. Paul McCain, CPH publisher and executive director of editorial. "The hymnal is the book that helps put our faith in a form that we can easily remember. That is a powerful influence in a Christian's life."

The publication of *LSB* began on a strong note. Its first print run of 250,000 sold out in pre-orders, and since its debut in 2006, about 80 percent of LCMS congregations have adopted the hymnal.

"We are absolutely thrilled to celebrate the overwhelming reception that *Lutheran Service Book* has had in our churches," says CPH president and CEO, Dr. Bruce G. Kintz. "At CPH, it is our mission to serve the church by providing resources for today's ministry, and the hymnal's success shows us that our mission is being fulfilled."

Although most of the hymnals were purchased by congregations, a few weeks ago Rev. Gary Benedix, pastor of Hope Lutheran Church in Jackpot, Nev., made an uncommon purchase by buying a single copy of *LSB*.

Benedix, who recently retired after 42 years in the ministry, has "been driving 40 miles to Jackpot to serve Hope Lutheran Mission there for the past 24 years," he says. "Hope is a mission congregation and the single congregation in Nevada in the Northwest District!"

At the time, Hope was not a part of the aforementioned 80 percent. When Benedix ordered a copy of *LSB* online, he planned to use the hymnal for two things: first, as a launching pad for introducing *LSB* to his congregation, and second, as a gift for McKenzie Heileman, his one and only confirmation student.

What came next was unexpected.

"I got a phone call from Dr. Bruce Kintz, the CEO of Concordia Publishing House, and he told me I had purchased the millionth hymnal," Benedix explains. "I was confused. I thought they were calling everyone to tell them the news, but he explained that I had actually, physically purchased *the* millionth hymnal. I couldn't believe it!"

Although he didn't know it, Benedix had indeed hit the jackpot. A small church whose attendance ranges from four to 25 on any given Sunday, Hope had not been able to adopt *LSB* when it was released, but Benedix didn't let that stand in his way.



Left to right: Rev. Gary Benedix and confirmand McKenzie Heileman; Rev. Benedix; some of the congregation of Hope Lutheran Church.

As a way to promote the purchase of hymnals for every home, CPH has reduced *LSB*'s prices significantly. It now offers the Pew Edition for only \$20 and the Gift Edition for \$30.

"From the beginning, this has been *your* hymnal," Reske says, "and we want to make sure you have every opportunity to get your hands on it."

Emily Barlean (emily.barlean@cph.org) is a marketing communications specialist at Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.

"The liturgical aspect of worship is so important to me," he said. "The beauty of the service, especially in *LSB*, adds depth and spirituality to each person that uses it."

In fact, Benedix was so interested in getting *LSB* for his congregation that he hoped members would purchase their own copies to use during worship and at home. But because of his single purchase, not only would McKenzie receive a hymnal, but the congregation would acquire *LSB* as well. Because Benedix purchased the millionth copy, CPH gave Hope 30 copies of *LSB* as a way of saying thank you.

"We are so excited to get started with *LSB* and to continue this liturgical tradition with Word and Sacrament in Jackpot," Benedix says. "We cannot wait to begin to use these orders of worship, prayers, and hymns at our every week worship service."

And what about McKenzie and her confirmation instruction? How will she use that milestone copy of *LSB*?

"I'll expect her to use it at home to read through the devotional services, the responsive prayer, and the chief parts," Benedix says. "It's difficult to get kids to memorize, but her memory work will be the prayers in the hymnal, which are marvelous."

Benedix's expectations for McKenzie align perfectly with CPH's hopes for *LSB*'s future, observes Peter Reske, CPH's managing editor of music and worship resources.

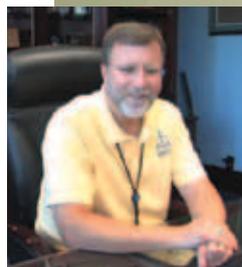
"If you only use the hymnal on Sunday, you will miss all the little things in there that are so important," Reske says. "Many things often go overlooked."

In order to help LCMS members realize what they might have overlooked the last four years, CPH has introduced its "Hymnal in Every Home" campaign, which McCain hopes will show people just how the hymnal can be used at home.

"It gives great continuity between Sunday morning and home life, because it is basically your one-stop-shop. There are suggested daily Bible readings, hymns, prayers, Psalms, and more," McCain says. "Why only worship the Lord on Sunday? His Word is our sustenance. Can you survive by eating only one day a week? Probably. But God's buffet is open 24/7, and He invites us to enjoy richly."



Nearly 100 percent of LCMS congregations adopted *The Lutheran Hymnal* after it was introduced. Around 60 percent adopted *Lutheran Worship*. Eighty percent are currently utilizing *Lutheran Service Book*, and nearly the same percentage of congregations in Lutheran Church-Canada are using it as well.



ON THE WEB

To watch Dr. Bruce G. Kintz, president and CEO of Concordia Publishing House, make the phone call to Rev. Gary Benedix, check out cph.org/hymnal. There, you'll also find more information on how you can order your own hymnal at a reduced rate, hymnal tips, and videos and pod-casts celebrating the use of *Lutheran Service Book*.



It's Mission Month by Stacey Welcenbach

This month, LCMS World Mission invites all individuals, congregations, districts, and other organizations to join in celebrating Mission Month throughout October! Your congregation may have a tradition of doing this every year, or you may be starting it for the first time. Regardless, celebrate what God is doing today through the global Lutheran missionary family of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and our partners in reaching out with God's love and the Good News of Jesus both around the world and here in the United States.

Why Celebrate?

We pray together during worship each Sunday that God's mission and will would be done. We also celebrate His love for His children at mission fairs and festivals by remembering all He has done to bring lost people to Himself. Celebration focuses on God's grace, which extends from His throne into our communities, country, and world (Acts 1:8).

As Christians, all of us have received God's grace in Christ Jesus. As God's own children, He has given us the privilege of being part of His mission to our

Looking for ways to celebrate the Reformation and Mission Month this October? LCMS World Mission and English District President David Stechholz offer a variety of ways to rejoice in the joy that comes from sharing the Gospel with your neighbor right here at home.

own communities and to the world—praising Him for those who have already come to faith and praying for those who have yet to believe in Jesus Christ.

Why October?

Mission Month intentionally coincides with the celebration of the Reformation to remind us that the message of salvation through Scripture alone, faith alone, and grace alone needs to reach those fields that are ripe for the harvest. Following in the footsteps of Luther himself, our mission-focused Reformation celebrations include reflection on the importance of spreading God's Word in a culturally and linguistically understandable way—and in a

It's Mission Month

culturally and linguistically diverse world right here at home—just as Luther made the Bible available in the German people's native language.

How to Celebrate

Find these resources and more at www.lcmsworldmission.org/missionmonth.

- > **Hold a mission festival!** Involve each group in your church in the planning.
- > **Host a mission prayer and praise meeting.** Check the hymnal for mission hymns.
- > **Help plan a school or Sunday School mission fair.** Each class can prepare an exhibit on a specific country, type of mission work, mission family, or people group. Serve different foods from other countries.
- > **During a worship service, read John 3:16 in several languages.** Locate members in the congregation who are able to read the “Gospel in a nutshell” in their own language. Make a banner or bulletin board using these languages.
- > **Commit to praying for missionaries each day of October.** Use missionary prayer cards or the monthly Pray For Us prayer calendar.
- > **Include a “Mission Minute” during your Sunday services, Sunday School hour, or Bible-study groups.** Watch seven new faith-sharing videos from fellow LCMS members at www.lcms.org?17698, or read the latest Good News stories from mission fields across the globe.
- > **Discover your own unique way of celebrating God's mission.**

Also remember that even though the LCMS designated October as LCMS World Mission Month, mission *can* and *should* be celebrated all year long. You may also choose to plan special mission celebrations during Epiphany or Pentecost. Whenever and however you celebrate, LCMS World Mission is ready to help provide ideas and resources for your celebrations.

For more information, check out LCMS World Mission at www.lcmsworldmission.org/missionmonth. You can also send an e-mail to mission.info@lcms.org or phone 1-800-433-3954.

Stacey Welcenbach (stacey.welcenbach@lcms.org) is director of communication services for LCMS World Mission.



CONNECTING WITH PEOPLE

by David Stechholz

Connecting with people who are not in or who have fallen away from Christ's Church is easier for some of us and seemingly impossible for others. So if you don't have the gift for gab, how do you, as a child of God, give witness to Jesus Christ and His saving death and resurrection and your faith in Him to others? How do you connect with dechurched and unchurched people?



First and foremost, you are giving a witness by faithfully worshiping the Lord God publicly in your church and being connected to God's holy Word and Sacraments and your brothers and sisters in the faith. I encourage you to be in the Word of God in Bible classes, Sunday School, small group ministry, and personal and family home devotions.



Second, match your deeds with your words. At Christmas, I wanted to honor my wife and son's request to see an outdoor Christmas lighting display from our car. I accidentally cut in front of someone who later identified my car and wrote a scathing e-mail to me. I wrote him back, admitting that I was sinful and that my driving was wrong. We all must watch our public behavior that it models the love of God in Jesus Christ.



Third, never underestimate the power of prayer. The Lord can place someone into your life who may become your special project. Ask God to help you find words or caring actions that can connect with that person to help her or him see the love of God in Jesus Christ, the world's Savior.

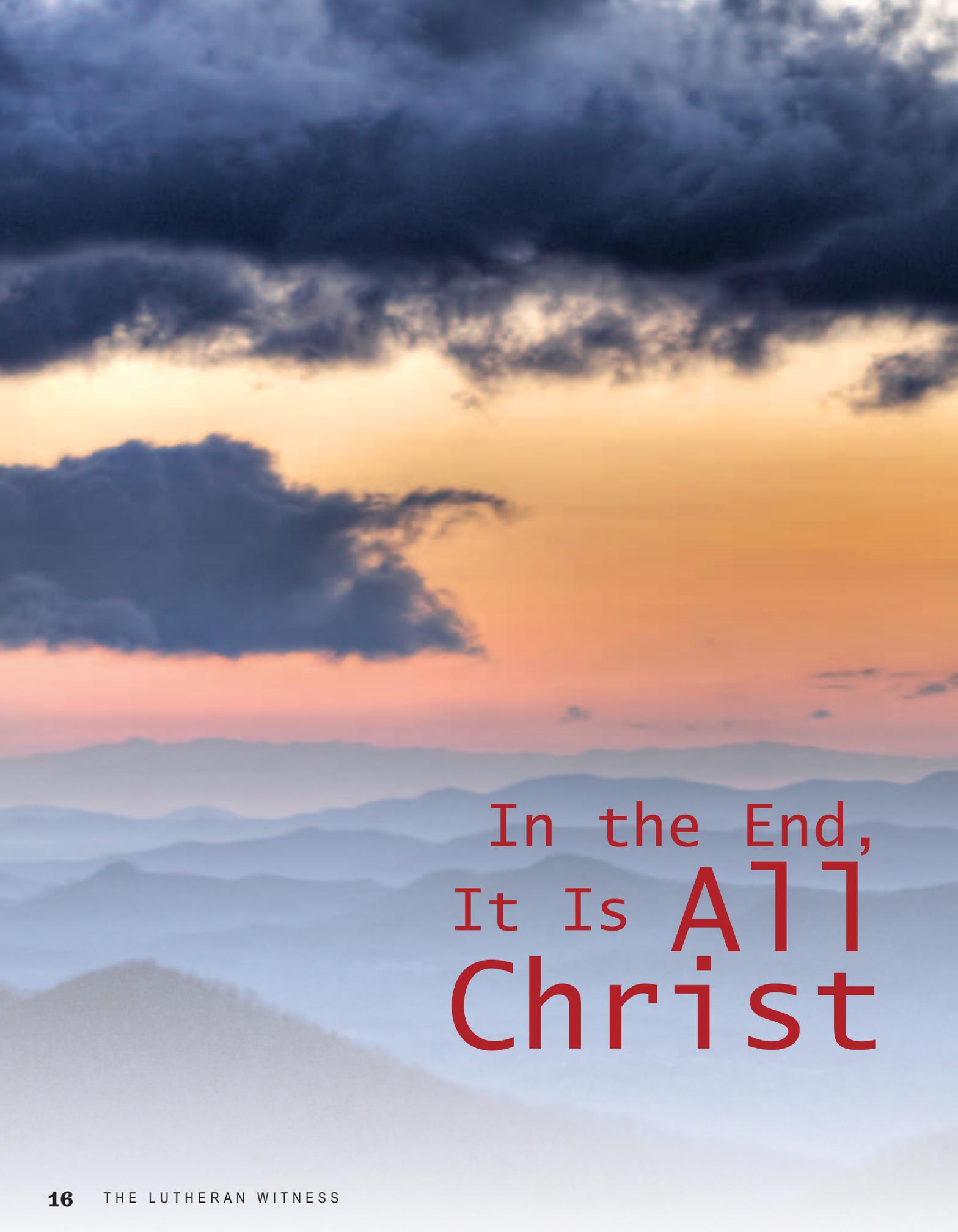


Fourth, willingly offer to help your church or school serve in its community. As you do it as a child of God, you are giving a witness, even if words are not spoken but a kind smile is shared.



Finally, and for this I turn to my wife for comment, “Send an encouraging note to someone who may not yet be a faithful Christian. I like to do things,” says Janet, “that people don't see. It's the simple things.” My wife has a servant's heart. Connecting with people can be through simple Christlike actions without words.

Rev. David Stechholz (edpres1@englishdistrict.org) is president of the English District of the LCMS.

The background of the page is a photograph of a mountain range at sunset or sunrise. The sky is filled with dark, heavy clouds in shades of blue and grey, with a bright orange and yellow glow from the sun breaking through near the horizon. Below the sky, the mountains are layered and shrouded in a light mist or fog, creating a sense of depth and tranquility. The overall color palette is dominated by blues, oranges, and soft greys.

In the End,
It Is **All**
Christ

This end was the death of my mother-in-law. My wife and I had decided to drive the 65 miles from Milwaukee to Chicago after early church to see her failing mother at the nursing home. She had been failing for weeks but hung on just enough to keep us all off balance in our plans for the immediate future.

I had been there before, waiting at the bedside with patients when I was a hospital chaplain. I had seen the uncertainty and ambivalence of family members awaiting the death of a loved one. I saw the concern for each other as well as the impatience with death, waiting patiently for something no one wants to have happen yet knowing it is time for it.

Each of Mom's children had taken their turn at the bedside over the past several weeks, even as they had done several times before in her lifetime, wondering if this would be the time of her departure. My wife's family is very close and has always supported each other well.

I focused on supporting my wife. Being a support to in-laws is different from being part of the immediate family. In-laws are sometimes required to wait on the sidelines like a coach, supporting the players so they can play their best.

There is helplessness, even loneliness, in being a coach. You are not a player, and you cannot act like one. It interferes with the game, and you risk being ejected from the game at times. However, you do have to be a coach, even if it is only for one player at a time.

My wife and I had gone to early worship in order to receive the Lord's Supper and then drove immediately to see her mom. We arrived about 11:20 a.m. that morning, and as we stood in her doorway, she waved and tried to speak, a good sign since she had been largely unresponsive on other visits. Because she was having some breathing problems, the nurse assisted her with her oxygen mask but with little success. The mask was removed. Mom remained agitated and did not speak except to suddenly turn toward me and, with urgency in her eyes, call my name.

The seriousness in her look as she spoke my name reminded me of a similar time: when my own mother died. We had accompanied my mother to the hospital emergency room, and as she was being admitted to the hospital, she turned to my wife and said, "Take good care of my son!" It was Mom's last request. I now heard my wife's mother asking me to do the same for her daughter, so I became her coach in the final minutes of the game.

Because my mother-in-law was agitated and restless, we began to sing hymns to her. She calmed down. I read parts of Psalm 62 to her:

"For God alone my soul waits in silence; from Him comes my salvation. He only is my rock and my salvation, my fortress; I shall not be greatly shaken. For God alone, O my soul, wait in silence, for my hope is from Him. . . . On God rests my salvation and my glory; mighty rock, my refuge is God. Trust in Him at all times, O people; pour out your heart before Him, God is a refuge for us. Once God has spoken; twice have I heard this: that power belongs to God, and that to You, O Lord, belongs steadfast love" (Psalm 62:1-2, 5-8, 11-12 ESV).

We then prayed for Mom's peace, and my wife sang "Amazing Grace," later recalling the words, "Through many dangers, toils, and snares I have already come; His grace has brought me safe thus far, His grace will lead me home" (LSB 744:3).

As we sang, her mother's color changed. She took three more breaths and then stopped. As my wife later recalled, "We sang her into heaven," just as we had done with my mother a few years ago.

It has been a few years since I retired as a hospital chaplain, but all those previous times of waiting at the bedside with families has come back to me in a flood of tears. I have been with what seems like dozens of patients at their time of death, waiting with families or sitting at the bedside in their absence. I had often walked patients up to the door of heaven, awaited its opening and watched them walk in, then returned to walk again with others.

The hard part is not only in walking others up to the door of heaven but in not being able to walk through the door with them into Christ's fullest presence. But, like many times before, it was now time for me to walk with others again—my wife and her family—as they grieved the loss of their mother, my mother-in-law.

In the end, it is all Christ . . . from the cross to the resurrection, His cross and ours. In our suffering and dying as His faithful ones, we, too, eventually get to walk through the door with Him!

Dr. Richard C. Eyer (reyer@milwpc.com) is the retired director of pastoral care for Columbia Hospital, Milwaukee, Wis., and emeritus professor and director of the Concordia Bioethics Institute at Concordia University Wisconsin. He is the author of *Marriage Is Like Dancing* (CPH, 2007).

On God rests my salvation and my glory; mighty rock, my refuge is God.

1517-2017



What a Difference a Half Millennium Makes!

by Robert Kolb

Ever wondered why a Catholic monk nailing a piece of paper to a door 493 years ago affects you today? Dr. Robert Kolb explores what impact Dr. Martin Luther's work had on the Church then and what it means for the Church today.

People around the world are beginning to get ready to celebrate! To celebrate what? The 500th anniversary of Luther's posting of 95 theses on indulgences, even though many of them do not know what the theses were or what purposes indulgences served.

Whether they know much about Luther or not, many—within Lutheran churches, within other Christian churches, and outside the church completely—do know that Luther's theses launched a reform movement. At the same time, he set in motion a cultural revolution.

In addition to refocusing the entire understanding of how Christianity functions as a religion, Luther inaugurated the first mass media event in history. He did so quite unawares. For a small circle of friends, he prepared his theses—academic proposals for debate—on indulgences, which were grants from temporal punishment from the pope after guilt before God had been absolved. Luther only wanted to explore the practice of selling these indulgences. Pope Leo X had commissioned their sale in Germany to aid Archbishop Albrecht of Mainz in paying off his debts—incurred in attaining his third high office in the church—and to support the building of Saint Peter's Basilica in Rome.

Printers saw a market for such theses, however, much broader than Luther's little circle of conversation partners. He was touching a raw nerve in a populace in the midst of a crisis of pastoral care. As a teacher of the Bible and an Augustinian monk, Luther burned with concern for the peace the indulgence system robbed from those who should be trusting in Christ and hearkening to His Word. The

printers used Luther's bait for debate and Johann Gutenberg's relatively new medium to carry out an innovation in how ideas could be spread to a wide public across German-speaking lands and beyond.

That is something worth celebrating. Lutherans have celebrated Oct. 31 to remember that Luther inaugurated a revolution in the way in which western Christians perceived their faith. He had grown up with a ritual-based religion that gave the human creature ways of performing sacred works to please the Creator. He defined the Christian faith as a perception of reality based on the Creator's longing to converse and commune with His human creatures. Luther centered his life, his trust, on God come in human flesh as Jesus Christ to restore sinners to that conversation and community by dying and rising.

Other Christians have celebrated that as well, sometimes through different lenses than Lutherans use. People outside the Church have found in Luther—with good grounding and sometimes not so good grounding—the symbol of a new way of using language and communicating, or a herald of human freedom and human rights, but also the initiator of error, political abuse of power, or racist cruelty.

Remembering the Day

In the sixteenth century, some Lutherans did stop to remember the Wittenberg Reformer, more often on his birthday and death day than on Oct. 31. On the 100th anniversary of the posting of the 95 Theses, Calvinists took the lead in celebrating Luther's bold move. Threatening war clouds hung over Germany in 1555 as Roman Catholic officials maneuvered to reverse the tolerance granted to adherents of the Augsburg Confession by the Religious Peace of Augsburg. Lutheran princes, for the most part, exerted their best efforts to find compromise with the dedicated Roman Catholic Habsburg emperors. Calvinist princes, especially Frederick V of the Palatinate, took the lead in actively preparing for what he regarded as inevitable conflict. Rallying support across the Protestant landscape by celebrating the beginning of the Reformation seemed appropriate, politically as well as piously, at the moment. Lutherans slowly joined the planning.

Lutherans and other Christians did observe subsequent centennials when a so-called 17 year came around. In the nineteenth century, Klaus Harms—a professor in Kiel, Germany—used the occasion to issue 95 new theses, calling for a return

to Reformation faith in the face of the rationalism of the Enlightenment. At the same time, the Calvinist king of Prussia, Frederick William III, used the event to initiate efforts to bring the Lutheran majority of his lands together in a union with his Calvinist fellow believers. In 1917, the Western world was at war; Germany and all things German stood in discredit in much of Europe and North America.

Luther took further buffeting in the following years because some associated his anti-Jewish remarks with National Socialist anti-Semitism. As unfortunate as those remarks were—The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod repudiated them in convention in 1983—the association of his religiously and exegetically based criticism with the blood- and soil-related racism that arose in the nineteenth and early twentieth-century is anachronistic and irresponsible.

A Significant Milestone

What will happen in 2017? Critics are already sharpening their knives. A self-designated Anabaptist announces on the Internet, “Martin Luther was not a great reformer like [sic!] the history books teach, but he was a fraud” and “deranged.” Rumors circulate that Roman Catholic critics will dredge up again a rather recent fabrication of a murder charge against Luther, which he avoided by fleeing into the monastery. In fact, Luther’s sixteenth-century opponents pioneered analysis of his life. The first biography of the Wittenberg Reformer flowed from the pen of his foe, Johannes Cochlaeus. In 1549, he published his *Commentaries on the Deeds and Writings of Martin Luther*, labeling Luther an “enraged hornet,” a “triple-jawed Cerberus,” and a “disgraced, infamous, and damned heretic.” Cochlaeus invented some stories that cannot be documented elsewhere . . . but not a murder.

Luther scholar Christopher Boyd Brown of the Boston University School of Theology points out that Luther did indeed say, “By the singular plan of God I became a monk, so that they would not capture me . . . because the entire [Augustinian] Order took care of me” (Table Talk, *D. Martin Luthers Werke* [Weimar 1912], 1:134), in reference to his protection in the church-political maneu-

vering following 1517. The papal party wanted to burn him at the stake, and his Augustinian superiors and brothers shielded him. The murder charge cannot be documented from reliable historical sources.

Against such allegations, what should Lutherans do as they prepare for 2017? One answer may be, “Not much.” Luther has survived Johannes Cochlaeus and countless other detractors and misinterpreters of good will. He remained in 2000, according to *Life* magazine, the third most important person of the past millennium. He will survive as a voice of Christ’s Gospel in the twenty-first century as well.

Nonetheless, Lutherans in North America should prepare, individually and in their congregations, for a celebration that serves the Gospel. Serving or glorifying Luther is no proper goal. He wished to fade into the woodwork so that the biblical message of new life in Christ could be broadcast. Proper preparation for celebrating the posting of the Ninety-five Theses should begin with individual reading and discussion to inform ourselves of just what it is that has made Luther a special person in western history, especially the history of the Church.

A Host of Resources

Between 1958 and 1986, CPH and Fortress Press issued 54 volumes of Luther’s writings in translation. Currently, CPH is translating 12 more volumes under the editorship of Professor Brown. In addition, studies of aspects of Luther’s thought and life can enrich our understanding of what he taught and what his insights into Scripture mean for twenty-first-century people in our own circumstances and environments.

Congregations should, at the same time, place key resources for learning more about Luther and how his proclamation of the Gospel may be translated into our world in their libraries and urge members to read and digest them. To that end, congregational discussion groups will be of great help. Such groups can profit not only from printed materials but various other resources, including the several films presenting Luther’s life, produced during the past 60 years. Electronic materials also can encourage our deepening understanding of our own

heritage and why it should be shared with other Christians and those outside the faith at the beginning of the twenty-first century.

Despite the fact that Luther's world differs in many significant ways from ours—the computer has replaced the printing press; democratic forms of government the monarchy; modern capitalistic practices the partly feudal, partly capitalistic forms of economic exchange Luther experienced—our contemporaries face their own sin and other forms of evil around them. God continues to put His Church to work in bringing the life-giving message of forgiveness and salvation in the Crucified and Risen One to those around us. Luther is not the point and will not be in 2017, but his insights in the Word of life in Scripture can improve our own witness and sharpen our own skills at delivering life and salvation to those around us.

Dr. Robert Kolb (kolbr@csl.edu) is missions professor emeritus of systematic theology at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. Along with Dr. Timothy J. Wengert, he is the editor of the 2000 translation of the Book of Concord published by Fortress Press.

✓ SUGGESTED READING

- Charles P. Arand, *That I May Be His Own. An Overview of Luther's Catechisms* (Saint Louis: Concordia, 2000).
- Scott H. Hendrix, *Luther* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2009).
- Robert Kolb, *Martin Luther, Confessor of the Faith* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).
- Robert Kolb and Charles P. Arand, *The Genius of Luther's Theology. A Wittenberg Way of Thinking for the Contemporary Church* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008).
- Paul W. Robinson, *Martin Luther. A Life Reformed* (Upper Saddle River: Prentice Hall, 2009).
- Ernest G. Schwiebert, *Luther and His Times. The Reformation from a New Perspective* (Saint Louis: Concordia, 1950).
- Timothy J. Wengert, *Martin Luther's Catechisms. Forming the Faith* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2009).

Primary Sources

- *Luther's Works* (Saint Louis/Philadelphia: Concordia/Fortress, 1958–1986).
- *Sermons of Martin Luther* (the Church Postil), ed. and trans. John Nicholas Lenker (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1983)
- *Sermons of Martin Luther* (the House Postil), ed. and trans. Eugene Klug (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1996).





Baptism: Dunking, Sprinkling, or Pouring?

I once witnessed a Lutheran pastor baptizing a person by immersion. I didn't know we Lutherans baptized that way. Is this a proper way to baptize?

Lutherans have understood the Bible to teach that a valid Baptism must include the *application* of water (together with the Word), but the *manner* in which the water is applied is not a matter of divine command. Lutherans have objected to the practice of immersion when someone insists or the impression is given that this form is required by God for a Baptism to be valid or proper.

Martin Luther consistently taught that only “the water and the Word constitute one baptism” (*Large Catechism* IV, 46), not the way water is applied. In his day, baptismal practices varied. In some churches it was customary for the pastor to pour water from the baptismal font over the infant’s head. Others immersed an infant three times in the baptismal font. Luther expressed a personal preference for this latter practice because of its symbolic significance. In a treatise on the Sacrament of Baptism (1519), he wrote that such a usage reminds us that “baptism . . . signifies that the old man and sinful birth of flesh and blood are to be wholly drowned by the grace of God” (*Luther’s Works*, 35:29).

Christians today who require immersion usually argue that only this method is faithful to God’s will. They commonly insist that the Greek term for “baptize” (the verb *baptizo*, as well as its noun form) has the root meaning “immerse.” Thus, they contend, Baptism *must* be by immersion. However, this cannot be proven on the basis of the New Testament.

To be precise, the word cannot be reduced merely to this narrow definition. In some contexts the term belongs in the category of “cleansing or purify” by washing (e.g., Mark 7:4) and not necessarily by immersion. One Greek

dictionary widely used by translators today gives examples of acceptable ways to translate the term and then says: “such expressions do not necessarily imply the quantity of water nor the particular means by which the water is applied.”

How good it is to know that the value and effect of our Baptism does not depend on the quantity of water our pastor used or the way he applied it! And we most certainly do not need to be rebaptized for such reasons. “Even if we were immersed in water a hundred times,” says Luther, “it would nevertheless not be more than one baptism, and the effect and significance would continue and remain” (*Large Catechism* IV, 78). Through God’s work (not ours) of Holy Baptism, He “offers and presents the forgiveness of sins,” life, and salvation to us according to His promise. Each day through daily contrition and repentance we make use of our Baptism. In this way, the Old Adam within us “with all sins and evil desires” daily should be drowned and die, and “a new man daily emerge and arise to live before God in righteousness and purity forever” (*Small Catechism*, “What Baptism Indicates,” 22–23, 210–11).

Until his retirement, Dr. Jerald C. Joersz was an associate executive director of the LCMS Commission on Theology and Church Relations.



Send your questions to Q & A, *The Lutheran Witness*, 1333 S. Kirkwood Road, St. Louis, MO 63122-7295; or send them via e-mail to lutheran.witness@lcms.org. Please include your name and address. While we look for questions that have broad interest among our readers, no question is unimportant. Unfortunately, the volume of questions we receive makes it impossible to answer every question individually.

Official Notices—Constitutional Amendments

Office of the Secretary
The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod
September 15, 2010

To All Member Congregations of the Synod:

The 2010 convention adopted two resolutions to amend the Constitution of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. Article XIV of the Constitution details the amendment process:

- Amendments must not conflict with the provisions laid down in Articles II and VI of the Constitution.
- Proposed amendments must be submitted in writing to the Synod assembled in convention.
- Each amendment must be voted on separately at the convention and receive a favorable two-thirds majority of votes cast.

The above requirements were all met and the approval process now continues during the months following the convention:

- Amendments adopted by the convention must be submitted to the congregations of the Synod by means of three announcements in the Synod's official periodicals.
- The amendments must be submitted directly to each voting congregation of the Synod on an official ballot provided by the Synod.
- After taking official action on this matter, congregations must use this official ballot to cast their affirmative or negative votes, returning it to the Secretary of the Synod.
- For final approval, amendments must receive a favorable two-thirds majority of all votes cast by congregations within six months of the date of the mailing of the ballots.

The proposed amendments will become effective only if they receive a favorable two-thirds majority of the votes cast. The purpose of this mailing, therefore, is to submit the constitutional amendments adopted by the 2010 convention to the voting congregations of the Synod, offer information regarding those amendments; and provide the official ballot to be used by the congregations to determine whether the amendments have been approved by the required two-thirds vote.

— CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT A —

Resolution 8-10, "To Amend Constitution Articles X and XI," received the required two-thirds vote during Session 12 of the 2010 convention [Yes: 796; No: 305]. It amended Articles X and XI by changing the title of "Vice-President—Finance—Treasurer" to "Chief Financial Officer" and made this an appointed position.

PRESENT/PROPOSED WORDING

Article X Officers

—A—

The officers of the Synod are:

1. A President
2. Vice-presidents, in line of succession, as prescribed by the Bylaws
3. A Secretary
4. ~~Vice-President—Finance—Treasurer not in line of succession~~
5. ~~A Board of Directors~~
6. ~~Other officers, as specified in the Bylaws~~

—B—

1. The President, the vice-presidents ~~in line of succession~~, and the Secretary must be ~~ordained ministers of religion—ordained~~ of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and, like the ~~Vice-President—Finance—Treasurer~~, other officers; and the members of the Board of Directors, members of voting congregations.

(Paragraphs 2 and 3 remain unchanged)

Article XI Rights and Duties of Officers

(Sections A through D remain unchanged)

E. Duties of the Vice-President—Finance—Treasurer

~~The Vice-President—Finance—Treasurer is the custodian of all moneys and records normally related to the Office of Treasurer of the Synod and shall~~

1. ~~Keep an exact record of all moneys received and expended by the Synod;~~
2. ~~Administer the Synod's financial affairs according to its instruction;~~
3. ~~At any time submit to an examination of his books and accounts by an auditing committee when so ordered by the Synod or its officers.~~

F. E. Composition and Duties of the Board of Directors

1. The Board of Directors shall consist of not fewer than seven voting members, to wit: the President, the Secretary, one pastor and four laymen. The First Vice-President and the ~~Vice-President—Finance—Treasurer~~ shall be a nonvoting members.
- (Paragraph 2 remains unchanged)

— CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT B —

Resolution 8-27, "To Add a New Article XIV," was adopted by the required two-thirds vote during Session 12 of the 2010 convention [Yes: 762; No: 346]. It added a new Article XIV to the Constitution to clarify the relationship between the Bylaws and the Constitution, renumbering former Article XIV accordingly.

PRESENT/PROPOSED WORDING

Article XIV Bylaws

The Synod in convention may adopt bylaws that are consistent with and do not contradict the Constitution of the Synod, which controls and supersedes such bylaws and all other rules and regulations of the Synod. Bylaws, which may be adopted, revised, or eliminated by a simple majority vote of a national convention, are binding regulations for the Synod and its conduct and governance.

Official Notices— From the Districts

REV. KEITH DUSHEKE was appointed circuit counselor of the Omaha North Circuit for the remainder of the present term ending at the next convention in June 2010, replacing REV. RICHARD GUDGEL, who resigned the position, effective June 30.—Rev. Russell L. Sommerfeld, President, LCMS Nebraska District.

REV. WAYNE WENTZEL, Grand Blanc, Mich., was appointed circuit counselor for Circuit #12—Flint South, effective Aug. 1, replacing REV. LARRY ECKART, who accepted a call out of the state.—Rev. David P.E. Maier, President, LCMS Michigan District.

HEATHER DEL VALLE was removed from the Ministers of Religion—Commissioned roster of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod by action of the president. JESSICA LUKAS BYLER, director of Christian Education, resigned from the Ministers of Religion—Commissioned roster of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. They are, therefore, no longer eligible to receive a call.—Rev. Gregory S. Walton, President, LCMS Florida-Georgia District.

REV. TIMOTHY J. SCHARR, Trinity, Nashville, Ill., will assume the responsibilities of the district president Sept. 1, replacing REV. HERBERT C. MUELLER JR., who was elected as Synod's first vice president, also effective Sept. 1. REV. FRED KRAEMER, Holy Cross, Collinsville, Ill., was appointed circuit counselor, replacing REV. MICHAEL WALTHER, who will be Southern Illinois District's second vice president. DR. GEORGE GUDE, EMERITUS, is the first vice president of the Southern Illinois District, and REV. MICHAEL WALTHER, Good Shepherd, Collinsville, Ill., is second vice president. The effective date for these changes is Sept. 1.—Rev. Herbert C. Mueller Jr., President, LCMS Southern Illinois District.

REV. JONATHAN MANOR, Bloomington, Ill., was appointed circuit counselor for the Bloomington South Circuit, replacing REV. PHILIP KAUFMANN, who was called to glory.—Rev. David Bueltmann, President, LCMS Central Illinois District.

Official Notices—Colloquies

RICHARD J. NIEBANCK, Delhi, N.Y.; has completed the Pastoral Colloquy Program through The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod as Pastor Emeritus. LUIS ENRIQUE BARRETO-LUGO, Temecula, Calif.; MARK S. SCHROEDER, Lexington, Va.; TERRY F. WIECHMAN, Valley Center, Kan.; JAMES D. CHINERY, Iron Mountain, Mich.; RANDALL SCHOEMANN, Kewaunee, Wis.; DAVID C. NOLL, Spokane, Wash.; WILLIAM J. BULTMAN, Bowie, Md.; and JAMES FUCHS, Savage, Minn.; have completed the Pastoral Colloquy Program through The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and are therefore, eligible for a call.—Rev. Herbert C. Mueller Jr., Chairman, Colloquy Committee, 1333 S. Kirkwood Road, St. Louis, MO 63122-7295.

LORI A. GEDWILLO, Omaha, Neb.; RHONDA A. HENSCHEN, Aberdeen, S.D.; KARI R. PERNA, Napa, Calif.; JENNIFER J. BARR, Fort Worth, Texas; SARAH E. HOLTAN, Wauwatosa, Wis.; BRETT A. JONES, Green Bay, Wis.; BARBARA Y. PHILLIPS, Ormond Beach, Fla.; KIMBERLY S. PRIEST, Hoagland, Ind.; NANCY S. SWERINGEN, Ormond Beach, Fla.; KARA TESKE, Buckley, Ill.; KAREN E. MAURER, Alexandria, Va.; and HEATHER WOOLMAN, Rochester, Minn.; have submitted their applications for the Teacher Colloquy Program of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod through CUEnet.

Correspondence regarding these applications should be directed within four weeks after publication of this notice to Rev. Herbert C. Mueller Jr., Chairman, Colloquy Committee, 1333 S. Kirkwood Road, St. Louis, MO 63122-7295.

SUSAN GARCIA, Fremont, Calif.; LORRAINE KNAPP, Victorville, Calif.; and CHARLES RODRIGUES, Long Beach, Calif., have completed all the requirements of the Teacher Colloquy Program of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and are, therefore, eligible to receive a call.—Dr. Becky Peters, Director, Colloquy Program, Concordia University, Irvine, 1530 Concordia West, Irvine, CA 92612-3203.

BRENT NEAL, Houston, Texas, and TARA COURSON, Jacksonville, Fla., have completed the Teacher Colloquy Program of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and are, therefore, eligible to receive a call.—Dr. Jim McConnell, Dean, College of Education, Assistant Colloquy Program Director, Concordia University Texas, 11400 Concordia University Drive, Austin, TX 78726.

MICHELLE Y. KIDD, Fort Wayne, Ind.; TYSON A. WUNDERLICH, Cape Girardeau, Mo.; and SANDY E. ARMSTRONG, Fenton, Mo., have completed the Teacher Colloquy Program of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and are, therefore, eligible to receive a call.—Mark A. Waldron, Concordia University Chicago, 7400 Augusta St., River Forest, IL 60305-1499.

JODI M. MEISNER, St. Petersburg, Fla., has completed the Teacher Colloquy Program of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and is, therefore, eligible to receive a call.—Prof. Norman Metzler, Director, Colloquy Program, Concordia University, Portland, 2811 N.E. Holman St., Portland, OR 97211-6099.

LISA BRAINARD, Enid, Okla., has completed the Teacher Colloquy Program of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and is, therefore, eligible to receive a call.—Brian L. Friedrich, President and CEO, Concordia University Nebraska, 800 N. Columbia Ave., Seward, NE 68434-1599.

Official Notices—Requests for Reinstatement

LAURIE B. ERIKSEN, Delray Beach, Fla.; REBECCA RUTH HILLMAN, Cheney, Kan.; NADINE L.

HOGER, Matteson, Ill.; MICHELLE URBAN, Columbia City, Ind.; and CAREN MEYER VOGT, Hamburg, N.J., have applied for reinstatement to the Ministers of Religion—Commissioned roster of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. Correspondence regarding these applications should be directed to the undersigned for receipt no later than Nov. 5.—Dr. Raymond L. Hartwig, Secretary, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, 1333 S. Kirkwood Road, St. Louis, MO 63122-7295.

Positions

The Lutheran Witness welcomes notices for positions available at affiliated entities and Recognized Service Organizations of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. The deadline for receipt of such notices is the 20th of the month two months prior to the publication month (e.g., Oct. 20 for the December issue). Send notices to karen.higgins@lcms.org.—Ed.

Lutheran Bible Translators seeks an experienced **director of Program Ministries** to provide leadership to Program Ministries, its staff and missionaries, and to liaison with partner organizations.

The successful candidate will have a strong background in administration and strategic planning, as well as being a team leader handling sensitive issues. Essential duties and responsibilities include being a relationship builder, especially with staff, missionaries, co-workers and partners, both international and domestic. This relationship building is to ensure understanding of issues impacting the mission of the organization. The candidate must be good in networking with other agencies involved in Bible translation activities and have seven-plus years of experience, especially as a Bible translation missionary in a cross-cultural setting. The candidate must hold a graduate degree (theological or academic) in a field related to the position. Salary is negotiable.

Submit cover letter with salary history and resume by Nov. 15 to dmehl@lbt.org or mail to Dean

Mehl, Human Resources Manager, Lutheran Bible Translators, 303 N. Lake St., Aurora, IL 60507; www.lbt.org.

The following institutions of the Concordia University System are seeking candidates for positions:

Concordia College-New York, Bronxville, N.Y., seeks to fill the following positions: **Early Childhood Education; Special Education; Director of Communications.**

Concordia University Texas, Austin, Texas, seeks to fill the following positions: **Administrative Computing Analyst; Associate Vice President/Director of Communications.**

Concordia University Wisconsin, Mequon, Wis., seeks to fill the following faculty position: **Physics.**

(continued on page 26)

OFFICE SPACE FOR LEASE 3558 S. Jefferson Ave. St. Louis, MO

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I believe in the Holy Spirit

Two phrases in the August *Lutheran Witness* report on the recent LCMS convention impressed me. One was by President-elect Rev. Matthew Harrison who used the phrase “guided by the Spirit of God.” The other was in the final sentence of the convention by President Gerald Kieschnick: “May our almighty God lead this church by the Holy Spirit.”

We know the Holy Spirit causes faith in the Gospel of Christ by which people receive forgiveness from God. Instead of shying away from studies and statements relating to the Holy Spirit because some teachers and groups among the Christian community have gone to extremes, we need to inform our members (including our leaders) what to expect through the Holy Spirit. If we do, we will know how the Spirit, using God’s Word in the Bible, can cause Christians to interact peacefully, and we will realize the results with joy.

*Rev. George Gusthe
Oklahoma City, Okla.*

Pray continually

In a 24-7 news cycle, one can easily suffer from a fatigue of constant communication and stories on floods, disasters, dying, and various other torments . . . including frenzied fear. The story of this “Light on a Hill” on the part of Pastor Tursic and the shining light of hope in hopelessness can be a great vision for each and all of us. It really is a rejuvenating hope, for Jesus Christ was also on His knees in Gethsemane, and our church on its knees, even in this day of nuclear saber rattling, knows deep down, even in the weakness of weak faith, that our Lord will never forsake us (Hebrews 13), as we kneel for intercessory rescue, cry for comfort and consolation, even in the darkening days of despair and a culture of death where thousands die each day of disease and hunger. Sometimes, we can see the good news of the Gospel in a clearer light while on our knees.

*Dr. Albert E. Jabs
Lexington, S.C.*

NOTICES

(continued from page 25)

Concordia University, Portland, Ore., seeks to fill the following faculty position: **Marketing.**

Concordia College, Selma, Ala., seeks to fill the following position: **Vice President for Institutional Advancement.**

For more information about these and other CUS positions, including complete job descriptions, qualifications, and application process, visit <http://www.lcms.org/cusjobs> and click on “Positions Available at Our Campuses.”

Anniversaries

The *Lutheran Witness* welcomes notices 50 words or less from LCMS congregations about their upcoming “milestone” anniversaries. The deadline for receipt of such notices is the 20th of the month two months prior to the publication month (e.g., Oct. 20 for the December issue). Send notices to karen.higgins@lcms.org.—Ed.

Triune, Sharon, Wis., will celebrate its 50th anniversary with a 10 a.m. divine service Oct. 3, with Dr. Patrick T. Ferry, president of Concordia University Wisconsin, as guest homilist. A dinner will be served after the service. Contact church office 262-882-4000 or vicarblanchard@sharontelephone.com.

Trinity, Colby, Kan., will celebrate its 75th anniversary with a 10:30 a.m. worship service Oct. 10, with former pastors and Rev. Keith Kohlmeier, Kansas District president, participating. A catered meal and celebration program are planned for the afternoon. Contact the church at 785-462-3497 or lutheran@st-tel.net.

Good Shepherd, Inglewood, Calif., will celebrate its 75th anniversary with a 3 p.m. special service Oct. 10. Rev. Donald Jordan, Redeemer, Chico, Calif., will be the guest preacher, followed by a meal held at The Proud Bird restaurant. Contact the church office at 310-671-7644 or goodshepherdllc@sbcglobal.net.

St. Mark, Chesterland, Ohio, will celebrate its 50th anniversary with a 10 a.m. Jubilee Sunday service Oct. 10. Reverend David Buegler, former Ohio District President, will be the guest preacher, followed by a brunch in the Fellowship Hall. Contact the church office at 440-729-1668.

First, Van Nuys, Calif., will celebrate its 90th anniversary with a 2 p.m. worship service Oct. 16, followed by a luncheon. Call the church office at 818-989-5844.

St. Paul’s, Hancock, Md., will celebrate its 100th anniversary with a special 3 p.m. service Oct. 16. Dr. Carl Fickenscher, professor at Concordia Theological Seminary, will be guest preacher. A pot luck picnic will follow. Contact the church office at 301-678-7180.

Our Redeemer, Dubuque, Iowa, will celebrate its 50th anniversary Oct. 17. Dr. Wallace Schulz will be guest speaker at both worship services, with a catered dinner to follow. To attend dinner, RSVP to Doris McCorle at Our Redeemer Lutheran Church, 2145 JFK Road, Dubuque, IA 52002; ortcdqb@gmail.com.

Church of the Cross, Rockville, Md., will celebrate its 50th anniversary with a 10:30 a.m. worship service Oct. 17, with former Southeastern District President Dr. Arthur Scherer as proclaimer. A 1:30 p.m. dinner and program is planned at a restaurant. Contact church office at 301-762-7565.

Our Savior, Marion, Kan., will celebrate its 70th anniversary with a 9 a.m. special service Oct. 17, with a 12:30 p.m. dinner follow in the parish hall. Contact the church office at 620-382-2432.

St. Matthew, Lee’s Summit, Mo., will celebrate its 50th anniversary at the 8 and 10:30 a.m. worship services Oct. 24, with Rev. Jeff Erstmeyer, former vicar, as guest preacher. A catered dinner will follow the late service. Contact the church office at 816-524-7068.

St. James, Lafayette, Ind., will celebrate its 160th anniversary with a 4 p.m. hymn festival Oct. 30, with former pastor Rev. Luther Brunette as guest speaker and Dan Calabrese as guest organist. A catered dinner and program will follow. For reservations, call the church office at 765-423-1616.

Prince of Peace, Ozark, Ala., will celebrate its 50th anniversary with a 4:30 p.m. Reformation Day service, Oct. 31, with Rev. Kurtis Schultz, president of the Southern District and one of our former pastors, as guest preacher. A dinner will be served after the service. Contact the church office to purchase advance meal tickets at popoffice@centurytel.net or 334-774-6758.

Immanuel, Mercedes, Texas, will celebrate its 100th anniversary with a 10:30 a.m. worship service Nov. 7, with Texas District President Rev. Ken Hennings presiding. Dr. Gerald Kieschnick will be the speaker at the 4 p.m. festival service. A catered meal will follow. Contact the church office at 956-565-1518 or immanuelmercedes@sbcglobal.net.

Calvary Lutheran Chapel, a campus ministry at the University of Wisconsin, **Madison, Wis.**, will mark its 90th anniversary Nov. 7. Rev. Jim Knuth, pastor from 1974 to 1984, will preach. Rev. David Groth, a Calvary student from 1983 to 1988, is the luncheon speaker. For information, call 608-255-7214.

Zion, St. Louis, Mo., will celebrate its 150th anniversary with a special Harvest Home Service at 10:30 a.m., Nov. 14, with Dr. Reed Lessing from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, as guest preacher. A dinner will be served from noon to 1:30 p.m. Contact the church office for dinner ticket prices and reservations no later than Nov. 8 at 314-231-0382 or kevin@zion-lcms.com.

Immanuel, Kansas City, Mo., will celebrate its 125th anniversary on All Saints Day, Nov. 7, with a 10:45 a.m. divine service and luncheon to follow. Special music will accompany the worship. There will be guest speakers and time to reminisce at the luncheon. Visit online at www.immanuelcms.com.

In Memoriam

Obituary information is provided by district offices to the Synod's Office of Rosters and Statistics. Any questions about content should be referred, therefore, to the appropriate district office.—Ed.

ORDAINED

KAUFMANN, PHILIP S.; Dec. 9, 1946, Chicago, Ill., to July 2, 2010, Bloomington, Ill.; son of Willard and Minnie (Becker) Kaufmann; graduated Springfield, 1972. Served 1972–2010. Ministries/parishes: Dieterich, Wheeler, Springfield, Normal, Ill.; Central Illinois District circuit counselor: 1994–1997. Survivors: Waneve (Garbalagty) Kaufmann; sons: Timothy, Rev. Martin. Funeral: July 7, 2010, Normal, Ill.; interment: July 7, 2010, Justice, Ill.

KRAUSE, EDWIN GEORGE; Sept. 27, 1925, Oak Park, Ill., to July 14, 2010, DeKalb, Ill.; son of George and Adella (Reinke) Krause; graduated St. Louis, 1952. Served 1953–2007. Ministries/parishes: Rockford, DeKalb, Ill.; Northern Illinois District circuit counselor: 1990–1997. Preceded in death by his wife, Hildegard (Thalman) Krause. Survivors: Gladys (Suelflow) Krause; son: Rev. Kenneth; daughters: Jeannette Newton, Debra Weber. Funeral and interment: July 23, 2010, DeKalb, Ill.

MERZ, ROBERT JOHN; June 20, 1927, Power, Mont., to July 31, 2010, Bremerton, Wash.; son of John and Irma (Kothe) Merz; colloquy 1965. Served 1965–1986, 1986–1991. Ministries/parishes: Moses Lake, Othello, Warden, Bremerton, Auburn, Wash.; Buhl, Idaho; retired 1991. Preceded in death by his wife, Alice (Steen) Merz. Survivors: Enola (Maier) Merz; sons: John, Stephen, Michael, Carl; daughters: Janice

Tomac, Michelle Lehmeyer/Garcia, Jane Miletich. Memorial service: Aug. 6, 2010, Bremerton, Wash.; interment: Aug. 5, 2010, Spokane, Wash.

KOLB, ERWIN J.; Aug. 6, 1924, Bay City, Mich., to July 26, 2010, Milwaukee, Wis.; son of John and Lydia (Lutz) Kolb; graduated St. Louis, 1949. Served 1949–1989. Ministries/parishes: Bethalto, Cottage Hills, Highland, Centralia, Ill.; Seward, Neb.; St. Louis, Mo.; retired 1989. Survivors: A. Bernice (Homm) Kolb; son; Rev. Peter; daughters: Kathryn Sauer, Denise. Memorial services: July 30, 2010, Milwaukee, Wis.; Aug. 23, 2010, Bethalto, Ill.; interment: Aug. 23, 2010, Bethalto, Ill.

NISSEN, NORMAN E.; June 19, 1930, Fergus Falls, Minn., to March 25, 2010, Prior Lake, Minn.; son of Nanning and Marie (Chell) Nissen; graduated St. Louis, 1958. Served 1959–1987; 1992–1998. Ministries/parishes: St. Louis, Mo.; Hancock, Hagerstown, Md.; Hinckley, Sandstone, Minn.; East Grand Forks, Minn.; Latuna, Texas; El Reno, Okla.; retired 1998. Preceded in death by his son, Jeremy. Survivors: Eunice (Naumann) Nissen; sons: Nathan, Joel, Jonas, Nicholas; daughters: Naomi Horsager, Christina. Funeral and interment: March 29, 2010, Fergus Falls, Minn.

REICHEL, CHARLES E.; Oct. 15, 1943, Shawano, Wis., to April 5, 2010, Rome, Ga.; son of Edward and Elenore (Koenig) Reichel; graduated St. Louis, 1969. Served 1969–1984; 1988–2001. Ministries/parishes: Oxford, Holly Springs, Miss.; Gadsden, Ala.; retired 2001. Survivors: Sharon (Werfelmann) Reichel; son: Carsten; daughters: Cara, Carlyn. Funeral: April 9, 2010, Rome, Ga.

SCHWOLERT, NORMAN WALTER; July 1, 1931, Flushing, N.Y., to June 30, 2010, Highland Village, Texas; son of Rev. Walter and Elise (Steege) Schwolert; graduated Springfield, 1958. Served 1958–1969; 1973; 1985–1995. Ministries/parishes: Riverside, Camarillo, Calif.; Denton, Lewisville, Texas; Southern California circuit counselor: 1966–1969; retired 1997. Survivors: Ruth (Schnaars) Schwolert; sons: Stephen, Phillip, Thomas, Matthew; daughter: Lois Lyles. Memorial service and interment: July 6, 2010, Flower Mound, Texas.

WOLF, LESTER AUGUST; July 22, 1917, Belleville, Ill., to July 1, 2010, Winston-Salem, N.C.; son of John and Emelie (Kniepkamp) Wolf; graduated St. Louis, 1942. Served 1943–1982. Ministries/parishes: Salem, Nashville, Ill.; Hickory, Winston-Salem, N.C.; Chairman Southern Illinois District Mission Board: 1954–1955; retired 1982. Survivors: Thelma (Behnke) Wolf; son: David; daughters: Deborah, Janice Plott, Rebecca Kirby, Kim Houston, Cynthia Anderson. Funeral and interment: July 4, 2010, Winston-Salem, N.C.

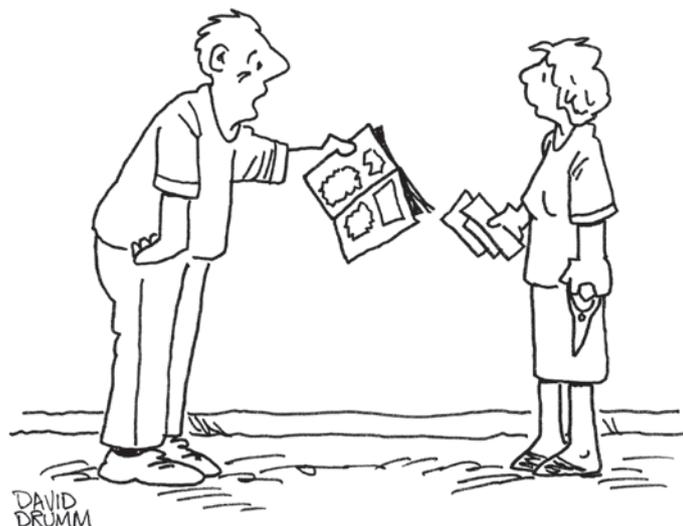
COMMISSIONED

ARONSON, DEVIE S.; Nov. 13, 1954, Denison, Iowa, to June 19, 2010, Denison, Iowa; daughter of Murlyn and LaMae (Johansen) Aronson; graduated Seward, 1976. Served 1976–2010. Schools/ministries: Arenzville, Ill.; Fremont, Neb. Funeral and interment: June 25, 2010, Charter Oak, Iowa.

BATHJE, ARNOLD AUGUST; Oct. 22, 1927, Oak Park, Ill., to July 7, 2010, Traverse City, Mich.; son of Arnold and Amanda (Rabe) Bathje; graduated River Forest, 1949. Served 1949–1985. Schools/ministries: Chicago, Ill.; East Detroit, Richmond, Rogers City, Detroit, Traverse City, Mich.; retired 1985. Preceded in death by his sons, Paul and James. Survivors: Lois (Fahselt) Bathje; sons: David, Steve. Funeral and interment: July 12, 2010, Traverse City, Mich.

BREDEHOFT, LINDA L. (TAMM); June 6, 1959, to Dec. 8, 2009, Elmhurst, Ill.; daughter of Richard and Irene Tamm; graduated River Forest, 1981. Served 2004–2009. School/ministry: Elmhurst, Ill. Survivors: David Bredehoft; daughters: Bethany, Amy, Erika. Memorial service: Jan. 9, 2010, Elmhurst, Ill.

HILGENDORF, RICHARD WILBERT; June 25, 1939, Milwaukee, Wis., to May 29, 2010, Bakersfield, Calif.; son of Gerhard and Irene (Gierach) Hilgendorf; graduated River Forest, 1962. Served 1962–1984; 1987–2010. Schools/ministries: Papua, New Guinea, Asia; Bakersfield, Calif. Survivors: son: Matthew; daughter: Lesley Back. Memorial service: June 7, 2010, Bakersfield, Calif.; cremation.



"Honey, I wish you would wait until I read *The Witness* before cutting out your Bible study articles."

A Modern Reformation

In the year 1517, on the evening before All Saints, the Castle Church in Wittenberg was prepared for the festival services to be held the next day. Inside the church, 19,000 relics were laid out to be adored by the arriving throng of worshippers.

Outside the church doors, however, a different preparation was under way. There Dr. Martin Luther was busy posting his 95 Theses. This was a courageous act, for he was calling the Church to repentance.

Within two weeks, he not only debated his position in Wittenberg but had his theses translated from Latin into German to be distributed throughout the land.

If Luther were alive today, the title of his theses would be different too. In 1517, they were entitled, "Disputation on the Power and Efficacy of Indulgences." Luther was challenging the idea that one could buy his way into heaven. While the Church no longer resorts to raising money through the sale of an indulgence, perhaps Luther would take aim at the lack of vigilance our modern Church has in protecting and proclaiming the pure Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Remembering the Reformation should make us a little bit uncomfortable because the Church in every generation is in need of self-reflection and correction. What needs reforming in our lives and in our congregations? Examine the following Scriptures based upon the five great teachings of the Reformation.

Scripture Alone

Read 2 Timothy 4:1-5. What warning is given?

In verse 2, what three actions result from preaching the Word?

Is your faith informed by Scripture plus something else?

Grace Alone

The free gift of grace alone can save us. Read Ephesians 2:4-9. According to verse 5, what is God's grace able to do?

In what ways is your conscience plagued by the notion that you need grace plus something else?

Faith Alone

Romans 1:16-17 was an important passage for Luther. What power of God is described in verse 16? What is it able to do?

How does verse 17 emphasize faith alone?



Do you seek righteousness by faith plus something else?

Christ Alone

Our confidence as Christians comes from the object of our faith: Jesus Christ. Read 2 Corinthians 5:17-21. What does God accomplish for us in verse 18?

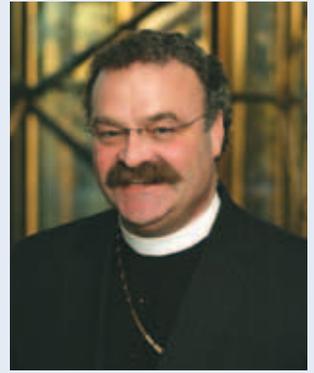
Christ's work is all-sufficient! What are we saying if we feel that we need Christ plus something else?

God's Glory Alone

Luther and the Reformers ended many of their writings with *Soli Deo Gloria*, which means "To God alone be the glory." Read Galatians 1:3-5. Let these words be the praise you offer God this Reformation Sunday!

Rev. Steven B. Borst (ilcspastor@yahoo.com) is senior pastor of Immanuel Lutheran Church and School, Riverside, Calif.





WITNESS: Before God and to the World

In this month's letter, President Harrison begins a series of three articles on the "Witness, Mercy, Life Together" emphasis for the Church and the world. To find out more about these themes, check out: www.lcms.org/emphasis.

The Lutheran Reformation had been in full swing for nearly six years, but Martin Luther had yet to write his first hymn. A profound event moved his poetic and musical soul. Within a short period following, most of the hymns and liturgies he produced during his lifetime would gush forth in a flood of firm conviction and deep faith in Christ. What was the event?

Two young men, Augustinian brothers like Luther, were burned at the stake in Brussels on July 1, 1523 for preaching the Gospel of free forgiveness in Christ. They were the first "martyrs" of the Lutheran Reformation. Luther wrote a hymn in the popular ballad form of the day, used by the town criers of his day to deliver the latest news from village to village. Luther's ballad spread the news of these martyrs' deaths, as well as the precious Gospel for which they died.

*The first right fitly John was named,
So rich he in God's favor;
His brother, Henry—one unblamed,
Whose salt lost not its savor.
From this world they are gone away,
The diadem they've gained;
Honest, like God's good children, they
For his word life disdained,
And have become his martyrs (Luther's Works, 53:214).*

The familiar term *martyr* comes from a Greek New Testament word often translated "witness." In its simplest (legal) use, a witness is merely one who recounts the facts observed (Matt. 18:16). Thus, it was crucial for the place of Judas among the Twelve to be filled with "a witness of the resurrection" (Acts 1:22), since the apostolic band was told by the risen Christ, "You shall be my witnesses . . . to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8). John's Gospel and letters show a particular interest in such "bearing witness" (*martyria*)—an understandable fact since John was writing late in the first century as the eyewitnesses to the events surrounding Jesus were quickly passing into eternity.

Of John the Baptizer, the text says, "And there came a man sent from God by the name of John. This one came as a witness (*martyrian*) . . . that all might believe through him" (John 1:7). The text of John 1 is worth a careful read.

What is John's testimony of Jesus? "This is the witness (*martyria*) of John . . . He confessed and did not deny, and he confessed, 'I am not the Christ'" (John 1:19–20). John called for repentance (John 1:23) and then pointed to Jesus with a witness so profound it has been repeated in the liturgy of the Church since at least the seventh century: "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). Finally, like Jesus, John the Baptizer sealed that witness with his own blood. How many faithful Christians have been safely guided to Jesus by John's witness? Countless millions.

The greatest witness, however, is not John, but Jesus Himself. Paul bids Timothy to "fight the good fight of faith, take hold of the eternal life for which you were called when you confessed the good confession before many witnesses." For, as Paul continues, "Jesus Christ Himself bore witness to Pontius Pilate in the good confession" (1 Tim. 6:12, 13).

Today the fundamental gift and task of the Lutheran Church is to bear witness to Jesus Christ—to His Gospel and all its facets (AC VII 2; FC EP X 7). This is our task toward each other. This is our task over against those who do not know Jesus. This is also the sacred vocation and ecumenical task of the Missouri Synod to world Christianity. We exist to bear witness—even to the point of suffering and death (and it may well come to that sooner than later here in the West)—to salvation by grace alone, through faith alone, on account of Christ alone. This Gospel is God's own testimony about Himself. This is the very confession of Christ Himself. This is the witness of the apostolic Church and the Church of all ages. This is the witness sealed by the blood of Jesus, the blood of John the Baptizer, and the burning of John and Henry, confessed and sung by Luther.

"Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses [such as Brothers John and Henry, Luther, John the Baptist, and especially Christ] . . . let us run with endurance the race that is set before us . . ." (Heb. 12:1).

Matthew Harrison

"Let's go!" Mark 1:38

e-mail: president@lcms.org

Web page: www.lcms.org/president