

The Crestview Lutheran

Newsletter

April, 2022

Our Savior Evangelical
Lutheran Church



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“For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.” Luke 19:10

For all this it is my duty to thank and praise, serve and obey Him.

-M. Luther, SC

From the Pastor

Liturgical Thought

Explanation and Guide to the Lutheran Liturgy¹

The Liturgy

“Our Lord speaks and we listen. His Word bestows what it says. Faith that is born from what is heard acknowledges the gifts received with eager thankfulness and praise. Music is drawn into this thankfulness and praise, enlarging and elevating the adoration of our gracious giver God.

“Saying back to Him what He has said to us, we repeat what is most true and sure. Most true and sure is His Name, which He put upon us with the water of our Bap-

“The Liturgy is the language of the Church because it arises from the Word of God and the culture of Christian faith. As such, Christian worship is more than a simple meeting of people; it is more than a program; it is more than an observance of practical rules and order; it is the vehicle or means through which God serves His people.”

tism. We are His. This we acknowledge at the beginning of the Divine Service [in the invocation]. Where His Name is, there is He. Before Him we acknowledge that we are sinners, and we plead for forgiveness. His forgiveness is given us, and we, freed and forgiven, acclaim Him as our great and gracious God as we apply to ourselves the words He has used to make Himself known to us.

“The rhythm of our worship is from Him to us, and then from us back to Him. He gives His gifts, and together we receive and extol them. We build one another up as we speak to one another in psalms, hymns, and

spiritual songs. Our Lord gives us His Body to eat and His Blood to drink. Finally, His

blessing moves out into our calling, where His gifts have their fruition. How best to do this we may learn from His Word and from the way His Word has prompted His worship through the centuries. We are heirs of an astonishingly rich tradition. Each generation receives from those who went before and, in making that tradition of the Divine Service its own, [God's children of today are connected with the Church of all time.]²"

The Holy Liturgy draws upon the rich traditions and experiences of the faith and devotion of God's people throughout the history of the Church. The Word of God has created the language of faith, which we express in the greetings, responses, canticles, psalms, hymns and prayers. The Liturgy is the language of the Church because it arises from the Word of God and the culture of Christian faith. As



such, Christian worship is more than a simple meeting of people; it is more than a program; it is more than an observance of practical rules and order; it is the vehicle or means through which God serves His people. Therefore, it is quite literally, "God's Service," or as our Reformation Fathers called it, *Gottesdienst*" (pronounced, GOT tes deenst). Through the

Divine Service, God is with His people, serving His people, bestowing on them the gifts of forgiveness and salvation through His Word and blessed Sacraments. The response of God's people is nothing less than faith in action.

The Holy Liturgy is distinctive because the Church, the gathering of true believers in Jesus Christ, is itself distinctive. Perhaps at no other time since the founding of the first infant Christian congregations by our Lord's apos-

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tles, has this been more markedly illustrated than in the world we see around us today where it seems the Church is under constant attack on all sides—even from within. Truly, the Church on earth is a stranger in a strange land, a sojourner passing through on its way to its true home with God in paradise.

The Church and her worship are formed around a permanent community of believers who follow a common rule of faith and life. God's people are born, baptized, live, worship, and grow old in this community, and are finally called home to be with their Lord. Throughout this cycle of life, the congregation of the saints ebbs and flows, waxes and wanes, but our God is time-

less, everlasting, and unchanging—the same yesterday, today, and forever. As He is timeless, so too is His Church and her worship, against

whom the gates of hell and the whims and wisdom of men shall not prevail.

“Like the planets go about the sun, so the congregation in its services, full of loveliness and dignity, moves about her Lord... pure confession has no lovelier form, no more attractive manner, than when it is engaged in adoration and praise.”³ Our faith and confession is not a product of a

code of ethics or a struggle against social and moral decay. It is the fruit of God's Word, preached and taught purely, and administered to God's people in His blessed and holy Sacraments adminis-

“The rhythm of our worship is from Him to us, and then from us back to Him. He gives His gifts, and together we receive and extol them. We build one another up as we speak to one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs.”

tered rightly according to the Gospel (AC VII, The Church).

“These are the two priestly offices, viz., to hear God speak and to speak to God who hears us. Through the benediction, through the sermon and the distribution of the Holy Sacraments, God comes down to us and talks with [us]; there [we] listen to Him and again [we] go up to Him and speak in the ears of God who hears [our] prayer.”⁴ This is worship, this is Gottesdienst, and this is the purpose of our Holy Liturgy.

Pax Christi,

Fr. Parent

¹Much of this series on the Liturgy of the Church is found in Why? A Lay-

man’s Guide to the Liturgy, by Rev. Burnell F. Eckardt Jr., Repristination Press, (Malone, TX.), and first published in Gottesdienst, The Journal of Lutheran Liturgy, in a series by the same name between the years 1985-2005. Used by permission.

²Lutheran Worship, The Commission on Worship of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, Concordia Publishing House, (St. Louis, MO.), 1982. Text in the brackets is mine.

³Wilhelm Loehe, Three Books Concerning the Church, translated by Edward T. Horn, 1908, pp. 196-97, as quoted in The Lutheran Liturgy, by Luther D. Reed, Muhlenberg Press, Philadelphia, 1947, p. 4.

⁴Martin Luther, “Sermon at the Dedication of the Castle Church at Torgau,” 1544, Luther’s Werke, Weimar Ausgabe, Bd. 49, p. 594, as quoted in The Lutheran Liturgy, by Luther D. Reed, Muhlenberg Press, Philadelphia, 1947, p. 8. Text in the brackets is



From the President

When fighter aircrews eject from their airplanes, it's typical that they experience "temporal distortion" (a false sense of time). Many times it involves spreading a 5-second event into several minutes of explanation when they later recall the ejection. Though I've been blessed never to have ejected in my flying career, I did experience a temporal distortion just last year, but in the other direction. It was in Panama City, during the Tre Ore service. It actually lasted three hours, but it "seemed" closer to 30-45 minutes afterward and I can't explain it. Others who were there have told me of experiencing similar distortions.

This Good Friday, OSELC is hosting the Tre Ore Service and if you haven't been to one before, please don't miss this opportunity! It may sound like a long time, but experience teaches that it is not (and if you can't stay for all of it, it's OK). In the Tre Ore, we are blessed to hear pastors from around our circuit reading the Scriptures and preaching their sermons that go with the readings. I hope to see you there - you won't soon forget it!

Blessings,

Alex

Sunday's Readings (Lectionary)

| Date | Old Testament | Epistle | Gospel |
|-------------|----------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| Wed. 4/6 | Lev. 16:15-22 | Heb. 9:11-26 | John 1:29 |
| Sun. 4/10 | Zech. 9:9-12 | Phil. 2:5-11 | Matt. 26:1-27:66 |
| Thurs. 4/14 | Ex. 12:1-14 | 1 Cor. 11:23-32 | John 13:1-15, 34-35 |
| Fri. 4/15 | N/A | N/A | John 18:1-19:42 |
| Sat. 4/16 | Various | N/A | John 20:1-18 |
| Sun. 4/17 | Job 19:23-37 | 1 Cor. 15:51-57 | Mark 16:1-8 |
| Sun. 4/24 | Ezek. 37:1-14 | 1 John 5:4-10 | John 20:19-31 |
| Sun. 5/1 | Ezek. 34:11-16 | 1 Pet. 2:21-25 | John 10:11-16 |

Save the Date

Friday, April 6th at Our Savior

Tre Ore

A blessed three hours remembering Christ’s agony on the Cross.

(stay for the entirety or “come-and-go”)

Holy Week

Maundy Thursday, 7:00pm

Tre Ore, Friday, 12 noon -3pm

Good Friday, 7:00pm

Easter Vigil, Saturday, 7:00pm

Men’s Group

April 19

7:00pm

Pastor Parent’s house

All men of the church are invited for a great time of fellowship.

(The Men’s group will meet on the 3rd Tuesday night of each month.)

6481 Wallannee Way

Laurel Hill

Women’s Bible Study

Thursdays at 10:00

Study of

Psalms

Come join us for a good time of learning and fellowship!

Birthdays

| | |
|-----------------|------|
| Jaime Sparks | 4/4 |
| Jennifer Franco | 4/5 |
| Ethan Grimes | 4/5 |
| Grace Parent | 4/5 |
| Becky Williams | 4/6 |
| Pearson Sparks | 4/17 |
| Clinton Trexler | 4/25 |

Coffee with Pastor

Coffee with Pastor

begins with

Matins at 9:00 a.m.

followed by time with Pastor to get to know him and for him to get to know his flock!

Sunday Mornings

8:00-8:45—Private Confession

9:00 Sunday School

10:00 Divine Service

From the Security Board

Reminder!

If you are the last to leave the premises, please check all doors to assure they are closed securely and locked.

Thank you!

Julie Blaylok

From the Board of Christian Life

Before Trish and I could finish determining how many plants we would need for the revitalization of the church's landscaping, the beautiful people of Our Savior were literally throwing money at us to adopt their favorite plants! There is a chart posted in the Parish Hall so all can sign up to adopt their favorite plant. All donations are appreciated, but your sweat equity would also be appreciated. If you love to dig in the dirt, join us on Saturday work days (9:00 a.m.).

During the next few Saturday mornings, those who can will be working their way through



the church grounds, probably in this order: front of church, side of Parish Hall, side of church next to Parish Hall, sign in front, parking lot side of Parish Hall, back of church, planters in front of Parish Hall, the three crosses area, and the side of church next to the large lot area. You may notice that some of these areas already have a new look!

Our goal is to accomplish most of this work before Easter and before the summer heat arrives. Thanks to Brad for his tractor skills which are making this job more manageable.

In His Service, Jennifer

From LWML

Serve the LORD with gladness. Psalm 100:2

March Mites Collected: \$27.72. Every penny helps.

LWML Mites At Work in Ukraine and Russia: Thanks to LWML mission grants from the Texas and Rocky Mountain Districts, believers in both countries are receiving encouragement and strength when they need it most. Three years ago Bible Study author Donna Snow began working with Word Rus and the Lutheran Church in Eurasia to translate 8 LWML Bible Studies in Ukrainian and Russian. "Even though their countries are being shaken by war, God is reminding them through His Word that He has given them a Kingdom that cannot be shaken." His timing is perfect. www.wordrus.org

Isaiah 55:11 So is my word that goes out from my mouth: it will not return empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.

Easter Lillies are on sale for \$10.00 until Palm Sunday.

Gulf States District LWML Convention is April 22-23, 2022 in Huntsville, AL. Four women are attending: Crystal Ballard, Jeannie Harrison, Trish Hull, and Linda Urda. Ingathering donations are going to Ascension Lutheran Preschool & CDC and Grace Lutheran CDC. Due to limited space we will only collect masking tape and gift cards for Kroger, Walmart and Target. A collection box is in the Narthex until April April 17. Linda is the delegate for our congregation to vote on new officers and the biennial mission grants.

Respectfully,

Linda Urda

OSELG LWML President



Only Jesus

April 1, 2022 / Letter From the President By Matthew Harrison

“And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:12). Celebrating 175 years is important. But it’s a rather brief period compared to the 500th anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation. It’s less significant still compared to the 2,000-year history of the Lord’s Church, and it pales in comparison to the 4,000 years since the call of Abraham and the promise of the Savior given by the Lord to him.

In the past decade of serving the congregations of the Synod, I’ve learned that I am not that significant, either, especially in the history of the Synod. Nevertheless, God works what He wills despite our insignificance. If a new Lutheran church body began today with 12 congregations, it would be the butt of unending jokes, as was the Missouri Synod in 1847. If it were to claim that its constitution was the restoration of the authority of the inerrant Scriptures, the Lutheran Confessions and authentic New Testament Christianity, it would be ignored, laughed at and scorned. If it claimed the Bible and Luther’s catechism are absolutely true and that there is no other God than the Holy Trinity and no salvation outside of faith in Christ and His blessed cross and resurrection, its founders would

be accosted as kooks by contemporaries.

How insignificant were 14 congregations and a handful of pastors 175 years ago? They knew they were numerically insignificant. They knew they were the object of ridicule in a world awash in agnosticism, especially in the church. They lamented the state of their mother churches back in Europe where the Gospel had largely been supplanted by mere morality. Even pastors no longer believed the Word of God.

Like ours, their world was in chaos. Revolutions shook all of Europe in 1848. Atheism was rife among German immigrants to America. A cholera epidemic raged in the U.S. in 1849 and killed thousands. The liberal Germans in St. Louis attacked the Saxons from the moment they stepped off the boat. The LCMS was poor, small, weak, and they knew it. And because they were far flung from Michigan, Indiana, Ohio, Buffalo and St. Louis, they were lonely. But they were certain of one thing: Luther’s Reformation had rediscovered and re-asserted the truth of the free forgiveness of sins in the blessed Gospel of Christ, delivered by the Word and distributed in Baptism and Christ’s body and blood in the Sacrament. They came from various

backgrounds. Some had been theological liberals (Wilhelm Sihler), many had been pietists (overemphasizing religious feelings as the ground of faith and certainty over the objective teachings of the Bible and catechism). Personal crises had driven a number of them to believe the Bible, read the Lutheran Confessions and confess the old teachings of the Lutheran Church as the teachings of Scripture.

Through Dr. C.F.W. Walther's "The Lutheran" newspaper (*Der Lutheraner*), they discovered each other. They corresponded. They hatched a plan for a Lutheran Synod (synod means "together on the same road" in Greek), crafted a constitution (which still survives, mostly word for word in the present LCMS constitution), and officially brought the church body into existence in Chicago on April 26, 1847. The Missouri Saxons brought their log cabin seminary, after Wilhelm Loehe gave the Synod a seminary in Fort Wayne. They embarked on a mission to share the Gospel far and wide, and were keenly aware of their divine mandate to "seek and save the lost." They educated pastors and sent them to shepherd the thousands upon thousands of German-speaking immigrants spreading across the wide reaches of America. They planted churches for Germans who had left their homeland for economic promise and had come from weak churches in the old country. In New York and Boston, they met

the immigrants as they came off the boats and sent them to German communities served by pastors across the fruited plain. Walther and others spoke English, but they concentrated on German-speaking communities because of the enormous opportunity and volume of work. Eventually, they were only too happy to help found an "English Synod," which became the "English District" of the LCMS (1911).

Just like 175 years ago, war has returned to Europe. We've suffered a global pandemic. The church is in grave decline in the West. Just google "Decline of the Church in the West" for the shocking statistics, particularly in the U.S. The "woke" culture ubiquitous on university campuses all around the world has created a culture of sexual ambiguity. In some ways, the LCMS is doing slightly better than many churches, but we, too, are heavily affected. Easy fixes are mythical. Our children are bombarded from the earliest age with the lies of a morally adrift culture. For 60 years, the sexual revolution has taught that sex is subjective, a personal choice, and one may be one's own creator. Our governments support "sex change" operations even for minors. The abortion of a child as an inconvenient byproduct at odds with one's own self-determination is one of the greatest indicators of the denial of our Creator and His will for His creatures, created male and female. (Read Carl True-

man, *The Rise and Triumph of the Modern Self*.) Apocalyptic times indeed. Come, Lord Jesus!

What's the answer? What's our task? What's our message? Only Jesus. "There is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

Today, we are just under 6,000 congregations. Is our constitution antiquated? Not unless the Word of God is antiquated. "The word of the Lord remains forever" (1 Peter 1:25). Today, we have 5,700 active pastors sharing Christ, day in and day out. Today, we have the largest Protestant parochial school system in the U.S. We have thousands of teachers sharing the message with "the least." "Your Creator is the Triune God." "He has made you. You are His." "Only Jesus is your Savior." And "He has redeemed you as His very own creature." We equip our people with Jesus; fortify our mothers and fathers; strengthen homes to love, teach and prepare children for life in this world with its challenges and blessings; shore up our men to be men in God and our women to be holy women of Christ.

Today, we face the hatred and ridicule of the world, a world in chaos. Our fathers and mothers in the faith faced the same. Today, we face the same threat of loneliness and isola-

tion they did. Whether the loneliest pastor and tiniest congregation in the farthest reaches of the earth or the president of the Synod, we are terribly insignificant. Imagine those 14 lonely, insignificant congregations in 1847. What a difference it made for them to be joined in faith and love in the Lutheran confession.

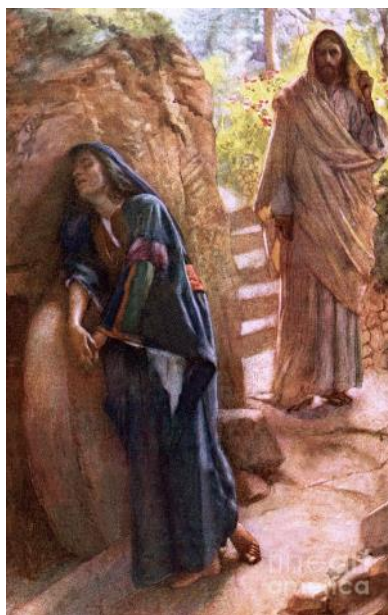
Today, we face very similar challenges. The decline of Christianity in the West presents us with the greatest challenge in the modern history of the church. With Jesus, and only Jesus, we shall go forth nevertheless: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age" (Matt. 28:19–20). "Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful" (Heb. 10:23).

Who we are — a 175-year-old church body — is important, but it pales in comparison to the history of the church. But what we do — preaching and pointing to Jesus for 175 years — is quite significant indeed. It has eternal consequences. If 175 years is an accomplishment, it's Christ's accomplishment. Come what may, the next 175 years are in the hands of Jesus, only Jesus, and so are we.

—Pastor Harrison

He is Risen, indeed!

“But Mary was standing outside the tomb, weeping; so as she wept, she stooped to look into the tomb; and she saw **two angels** in white sitting, one at the head and one at the feet, where the body of Jesus had been lying. And they said to her, **“Woman, why are you weeping?”** She said to them, “Because they have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they put Him.” When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing *there*, and yet she did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to her, **“Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?”** Thinking that He was the gardener, she said to Him, “Sir, if you have carried Him away, tell me where you put Him, and I will take Him away.” Jesus said to her, **“Mary!”** She turned and said to Him in Hebrew, **“Rabboni!”** (which means, Teacher). Jesus said to her, “Stop clinging to Me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but **go to My brothers** and say to them, **‘I am ascending to My Father and your Father, and My God and your God.’**” Mary Magdalene came and announced to the disciples, **“I have seen the Lord,”** and that He had said these things to her.” John 20: 11-18



From Dr. Martin Luther

“Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? . . . thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.” 1 Cor.15:54-57

This is a strange and unprecedented message, such as reason cannot comprehend. It must be accepted in faith. The message is that Christ is alive and yet died, and died in such a way that in Him death itself has had to die, and lose all its power

And as the Lord Christ has conquered death, He has also conquered sin. For in His own Person He is pure and just; but because He takes upon Himself the sins of others He becomes a sinner. That is why sin can assault Him. And He, the Lord Christ, is very ready to be thus assaulted and nailed to the cross in order that He may die, as if He had Himself sinned and brought His death upon Himself. But there, hidden under the sin of others, His holiness is so great that death cannot overcome Him. Thus sin, like death, attacked the wrong man, and so grew weak and died in His body.

And likewise the devil wanted to prove his power over Christ, and uses all his might against Him, trying to bring Him down. But He meets with a higher power which he cannot overcome. And all this has been wrought in order that our Lord Christ might glory because by being cast down He was lifted up on high, and these three mighty foes, sin, the devil, and death, must lie low under His feet. This great victory we celebrate today. Now all power consists in this, that we take it well to heart and firmly believe in it.

Sermon for Easter Day, 1544. W.A. 52.249f.

“Christ was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.” Rom.4:25

When I look at my sins, they slay me. Therefore I must look upon Christ, who drew my sins upon Himself and has become a blessing. Now they lie no longer on my conscience but on Christ, and they seek to slay Him. Let us see, then, how they get on with Him. They cast Him down and kill Him. O, Lord God, where is now my Christ and my Redeemer? Then God comes and brings Christ forth and makes Him alive, and not only alive, but He sets Him in heaven and lets Him rule over all things. Now where is sin? It is on the gallows.

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And when I hold on to this and believe it I have a joyful conscience, like Christ, for I am without sin. Now I dare death, the devil, sin, and hell to do me harm. Inasmuch as I am a descendant of Adam they can harm me; I must shortly die. But now that Christ has laid upon Himself my sin, and has died for it, and been slain for it, they can do me no harm, for Christ is too strong for them. They cannot hold Him. He breaks forth and smites them to the ground, and ascends into heaven, binds and fetters sin and sorrow, and rules over them eternally. Therefore I have a good conscience, I am joyful and blessed, and fear those tyrants no longer, for Christ has taken my sin away from me and laid it on Himself. But they cannot remain on Him.

—On the fruit and power of the resurrection of Christ. W.A.10.1(ii).221



Getting Around OSELC

Flower sign up—Sign up poster in the fellowship hall

Refreshments sign up - Sign up sheet in the fellowship hall

Directories—on the back counter in the nave (where Service is held)

LWML mite boxes—on the back counter shelf in the nave

Serve as chairman of a board—See Alex Franco

Serve on a board—See that board's chairman (list is on the back of the newsletter)

Make Offerings Electronically—See Brian Hull

Subscribe to the Lutheran Witness magazine—See Trish Hull

Websites:

Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod—www.LCMS.org

Southern District—www.southeranlcms.org



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We're on the Web

www.Oselc.net

OSELC Staff, Officers, and Volunteers

Pastor Raymond Parent

Deaconess Heather Bien

Council President: Alex Franco

Council Vice-President: Brad Bien

Council Secretary: Trish Hull

Treasurer: Brian Hull

Financial Secretary: Jeannie Harrison

Board of Elders: Alan Widener

Board of Christian Life: Jennifer Currid

Board of Trustees: Brian Hull

Board of Education/Youth: Gervase Anthony

Board of Evangelism: Alex Franco

Board of Social Ministry: Becky Williams

Board of Security: Julie Blaylock

LWML: Linda Urda

Library: Jennifer Currid

Soup Kitchen Director: Becky Williams

Usher Director: Julie Blaylock

Organist and Kantor: Brian Hull