



**THE  
CRESTVIEW LUTHERAN  
NEWSLETTER**

MAY 2023

**INSIDE  
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“And after He had said these things, He was lifted up while they were watching, and a cloud took Him up, out of their sight. And as they were gazing intently into the sky while He was going, then behold, two men in white clothing stood beside them, and they said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven.”

- Acts 1:9-11

## FROM THE PASTOR

As promised last month we will continue with the sainted former synodical president, the Rev. Dr. Barry's series, "What About?" Enjoy!

Pax Christi,

Pastor Parent



### What About...

### The Gospel

Why do we need the Gospel?

We cannot really understand how good the message of the Gospel is until we understand how bad our situation is without it. We are poor miserable sinners. We sin daily and deserve nothing but God's wrath and punishment.

Without Jesus Christ, our situation would be totally hopeless. The Scriptures describe human beings as dead in trespasses and sin.

Without the mercy and cleansing of God through the blood of Jesus Christ, there awaits for us only everlasting punishment in hell. Thus, we need the Gospel—desperately!

What is the Gospel?

The word "gospel" is a translation of a Greek word that means, "an announcement of good news." The Gospel is the good news that God, the Holy Trinity, decided not to abandon humanity when Adam and Eve first fell into sin. God decided then and there that sin and death would not have the last word. He promised to send a Savior.

When the time was right, God sent His Son into our world to be born of the Virgin Mary. Our Lord Jesus Christ lived a perfect life for us. On the cross, He received the penalty and punishment for the sins of the whole world, offering Himself as the perfect sacrifice for sin. Jesus rose from the dead, victorious over our ancient enemies: sin, death and the devil.

Therefore, each Christian is able with great joy and confidence to declare before the whole world: "My Lord Jesus Christ has redeemed me, a lost and condemned person, purchased and

won me from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil; not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood and with His innocent suffering and death.”

What glorious, good news! The one, true eternal and all-powerful God came into our world to live, suffer, die and rise again for us. We, who are unholy and unrighteous, receive the forgiveness of all our sins and thus receive the perfect holiness and righteousness of Christ our Savior—as a free gift—purely because of His love for us. That is good news! That is the Gospel!

How do we personally receive the forgiveness Christ won for the entire world? How does what happened on the cross nearly 2,000 years ago flow into our lives today?

Here too there is very good news. God, through His Gospel, offers us forgiveness and help against sin in more than one way. God is surpassingly rich in His grace. He gives His Gospel to us through His Word, through Baptism, through the Sacrament of the Altar, and through confession and absolution. These are the ways God enters our lives today to apply to us personally the great

salvation Christ won for the world.

The Holy Spirit works through the Word of the Gospel to create and sustain faith in our heart that Christ is the Savior of the world, and thus, our Savior too. The Bible is the Word of God, written down for our learning and edification. The Scriptures are filled with the good news of Jesus Christ and all that He has done for us. Through the almighty, Spirit-filled Word, God gathers us into His church, which is truly the mother that begets and bears every Christian through the Word of God. The Holy Spirit is present, effective and active through the Word when it is proclaimed, heard and meditated upon.

The Sacrament of Holy Baptism is water included in God’s command and combined with God’s Word; or as St. Paul says in Holy Scripture, “The washing of water with the word.” Through Baptism, we are made partakers of Christ’s death and resurrection. Therefore, we know that Baptism works forgiveness of sins, rescues from death and the devil,

*Continued from pg 3*

and gives eternal life to all who believe. Since Baptism is connected to the Word and promise of God, it is truly a life-giving water, rich in grace—a washing of the new birth in the Holy Spirit.

Christ has provided a special application of the Gospel through confession and absolution. Confession is admitting our sins to God and receiving His forgiveness from our pastor, as from God Himself, not doubting, but firmly believing that by it our sins are forgiven before God in heaven. Thus, by divine ordinance, Christ Himself has entrusted absolution to his Christian church and commanded us to absolve one another from sins.

The Lord's Supper is the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, under the bread and wine, instituted by Christ Himself, for us Christians to eat and to drink. In the Lord's Supper, Christ's body and blood are given to us as our treasure and gift which sustains our faith and life in Him. If you are heavy-laden

and feel your weakness, go joyfully to the Sacrament and receive refreshment, comfort and strength.

Those who want to be forgiven by God and who want to enjoy His presence in their lives, hunger and thirst for the Word and Sacraments. With the Psalmist we say, "My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When can I go and meet with God?" God has provided the means to receive Him. So, Christians hunger and thirst for God's Word, absolution, the Sacrament, etc. We have the certainty that God meets us and gives us what we need in His means of grace. The forgiveness Christ won for the world on the cross is applied to us personally by God through His Word and Sacraments. What a joy for us to know that where there is forgiveness of sins, there is also life and salvation.

Thus, we believe that we cannot, by our own reason or strength, believe in Jesus Christ our Lord, or come to Him; but the Holy Spirit calls us by the Gospel, enlightens us with His

gifts, sanctifies and keeps us in the true faith. In the same way, He calls, gathers, enlightens and sanctifies the whole Christian church on earth, and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith. In this Christian church He daily and richly forgives all of our sins, and the sins of all believers.

How does God cause us to respond to His Gospel?

We love God because He first loved us. Our Lord is at work in us both to will and to do what is pleasing to Him. Christians look to the Ten Commandments to know what is pleasing to God and wish to serve Him in gratitude for the great salvation that is theirs in Christ.

From the Word of God we learn that God wants us to put Him first, above any other person or thing, to respect His name and not misuse it, to hear and obey His Word. Children are to honor and obey their parents and others in authority. We are to look out for the welfare of others, doing nothing to hurt or harm our neighbor. We are to live sexually pure and decent lives, with hus-

bands and wives loving and honoring each other. In looking out for our neighbor's welfare and helping him to improve and protect his property and business, we are also to take care not to lie about our neighbor, but to help, support and defend him in every need, and, finally, we are to be content with what we have been given, and not want what is not ours.

What a joyful privilege we have to serve God and others! He gives us the opportunity to bear witness to our faith through both our words and our deeds.

*How is the Gospel obscured?*

The Gospel is obscured by well-intentioned people who want to encourage a life of good works, and end up making Christians think that it is by their works that they are saved. This is a great danger. Through His Word and Sacraments, Jesus is constantly working in our lives to forgive our sins and strengthen our relationship with God. God always receives the credit for our salvation. He is the one working in us. This is not something we can do.

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Our good works are the result of God’s love in our hearts and lives. Our good works in this life do not save us, only Christ saves us. Works serve our neighbor and show to the world that we are grateful for God’s mercy in our lives.

Another way the Gospel can be obscured is when too much emphasis is put on an emotional response to the Gospel. Some Christians believe that unless they have some sort of ecstatic, charismatic experience, or feel some sort of “spiritual high,” they are not really Christians. It is truly sad that some people look into their own hearts for the security that they are children of God, instead of putting their hope and trust in

the objective work of Christ for them, and in the means God uses to come to them—His Word and Sacraments.

If we find ourselves beginning to ask, “Am I doing enough?” or thinking, “It doesn’t matter what I do, for God will forgive me anyway,” then we are at risk of losing Christ and His forgiveness. We look always to Jesus and put our hope and trust in Him. He is our Savior. And, that’s good news!

All blessing, honor, thanks and praise to Father, Son and Spirit, the God who saved us by His grace. All glory to His merit! O Triune God in heaven above, You have revealed Your saving love. Your blessed name we hallow.

—Dr. A. L. Barry President The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

### Sunday’s Readings

(Lectionary)

Date	Old Testament	Epistle	Gospel
May 14	Num 21:4-9	James 1:22-27	John 16:23-30
May 21	Ezek. 36:22-28	1 Pet 4:7-11	John 15:26–16:4
May 28	Gen 11:1-9	Acts 2:1-13	John 14:23-31
June 4	Is 6:1-7	Rom 11:33-36	John 3:1-15

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

We only see half the picture, at best. Have you ever been in a situation where you thought there was more to see than what was apparent? Decades ago I was flying over mid-America at 39,000 feet in an effort to avoid some summer weather below and I saw the strangest thing I had ever seen (no, not a UFO). I looked far below me and saw a rainbow over top of the weather. What made it strange was that it was a complete circle! Imagine a large colorful doughnut - that's what I saw. It was my viewpoint above the water droplets that enabled this, as I later found out by digging out my physics book and reviewing basic optics. From the ground, we only see a little less than half of the arc, with no idea of what the true picture is. If someone had told me before that time that rainbows are complete circles, I would've thought that was impossible because of my personal (limited) experience.

It seems to me that in the

Christian faith, there are many examples where the Lord shows us the impossible (according to us). Thanks be to Him that through the Holy Spirit He has equipped us with faith to trust His Word and understand that these impossibilities are just another walk in the park for Him. Nothing unusual to Him, really. He's above the rainbow and sees that it's a circle - no big deal, it's always been a circle! The virgin birth of Christ, the Trinity, God dying on the cross to save us, and many others...some would say these events are impossible. But then, we only see half the picture now and the rest we believe in faith. One day, we'll see it all face-to-face (1 Cor 13:12); faith will no longer be necessary then. Thanks be to God!

Blessings,

Alex



## FROM THE DEACONESS

I was asked by Linda Urda, LWML Zone President, to give the devotion to the theme of “Divine Muscle” at the Spring Rally recently. This is the devotion I wrote for the event and thought I’d share it with you.

- Dcs. Heather

Remember the beloved song we grew up with, “Jesus Loves Me”:  
 “They (meaning me) are weak, but He is strong. Yes, Jesus loves me.”  
 Yes, Jesus does love me and you. So does the Father, so much so that in His strength He sacrificed Jesus because we are weak. Hidden in our declaration that we need God’s strength is the confession that we are weak. We do not like being faced with our weakness. In fact, we give it other names like we’re “struggling” or “having a hard time” with something. But if we declare “God is my strength!” then we must also declare “I am weak!” It is not a matter of when we are weak but that we are weak.

2 Cor 13:4 “For indeed He was crucified because of weakness, yet He lives because of the power of God. For we too are weak in Him, yet we will live with Him because of the power of God directed toward you.”

Rest assured, Christ our strength is here for us and with us and in us. We are weak but He is strong.

Weakness is considered a failure in this world. But we are not of this world. It is folly to them that in our weakness, we are strong. And not because we are following a self help 10 step program, living our best life now but because we rely on the source of all strength, Jesus Christ. Weakness is that thorn in our side which reminds us that we have need of a Savior. We find Christ in our weakness. And where we find Christ, we find strength for our spirit, our mind, and our body. He doesn’t

“loan” us His strength and then steps back to see how well we do. When He hears our cry, He comes to us and stays with us. He embodies the strength He gives us to bear our weakness.

In those times of greatest need, how did Christ strengthen you? Did He bring a sermon to your ears that spoke words of comfort and peace to you? Maybe a dear friend came by your side, sharing love of Christ? Or maybe it was at the altar where you tearfully but faithfully received His body and blood. However it was, Christ was there. He will not leave us or abandon us in our darkest hour.

He knows all too well the cross we bear. He bore and now bears with us



our weakness and it's off-spring of sin, suffering, and sickness. The God-Man, Jesus Christ, by the power of His Cross is strength for weakness, forgiveness for sin, comfort for suffering, and healing for sickness. This is the Great Exchange. It is a deep and sacred mystery. God's strength is His promise found in His own Son's body and blood, His strengthening, forgiving, comforting, and healing presence.

Faith received by the Holy Spirit assures us that He is with us to the end, come what may and in that end we will dwell with Him for eternity. It is by faith we know He has already fought the battle and won in His death, resurrection, and ascension. Rest assured, Christ our strength is here for us and with us and in us. We are weak but He is strong.

May the Peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you now and always.

### Getting Around OSELC

- Flower sign up—Sign up poster in the Fellowship Hall
- Refreshments sign up - Sign up sheet in the Fellowship Hall
- Directories—In the brochure rack in the Narthex
- Members' mailboxes—In the Narthex
- 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  
(find the list of board members 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](http://www.LCMS.org)

### FROM THE BOARD OF SOCIAL MINISTRIES

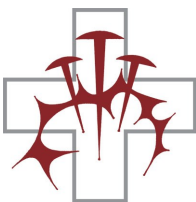
I would like to say a big Thank You to all for making the Fifth Sunday Feast a huge success. The Thank You is especially for the behind the scene workers. It would be nice to get some feedback as to would like to see it continue or not. I am trying to come up with a spot for our dining out in May, any suggestion would be welcome. -Becky

## FROM THE BOARD OF CHRISTIAN LIFE

From “Simple Gifts: A Series of Devotions on Stewardship” (lcms.org)

Savior. That is a word in which we in the Church have so often taken great comfort. We love to talk about our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! And we should. We have much to be thankful for in the person and work of Jesus.

We should shout it from the rooftop! But, when was the last time you contemplated the word “Savior”? To say that Jesus is your Savior is also saying something about you. It shows your weakness. To say that Jesus is your Savior means that you are confessing that you can’t save yourself. This flies in the face of what we have been saying since we were three-years-old. We always want to do things ourselves. The child wants to be independent. The youth can’t wait to leave home and be independent. The senior citizen does whatever can be done to be as independent as possible. The



sinner in us wants to be independent from God’s rules. The sinful steward often wants to get by with giving as little credit and stewardship as possible to the Lord! But all of these strivings for independence usually end badly! What a mess we can make of our lives at times. We are overwhelmed, consumed and drowned.

But Jesus IS our Savior. All those times we have tried to be independent of Him, He has been right there to catch us when we have fallen. When we have hoarded, He has been generous with His grace. When we have claimed ownership of that which is His and deserved death in the process, He has been there to save us and give us life! He is our Savior! Of that we can be thankful for every day! We are called then to be stewards of this Savior. We serve and live for Him every day. Our lives, and all our possessions, belong to Him. They are to be used for His glory every day! We are saved in Him. In Him we have life!

Blessings, Jennifer

## OPPORTUNITIES TO GET INVOLVED AT OSELC

Serve on a Board - See Alex Franco, Pres.

Sign up for Flowers—See sign up list in the Parish Hall

Sign up for Refreshments—See sign up list in Parish Hall

Serve on the Altar Guild—See Dcs. Heather Bien

Ongoing Project on Campus—See Brian Hull, Trustee

Serve as an Usher—See Julie Blaylock

Sunday School—9:00 a.m. Sunday, Parish Hall

Coffee with Pastor and Women's Study—10:00 a.m. Thursday

## FROM THE LWML

Serve the Lord with Gladness! Psalm 100:2

April mites totaled \$21.76. Mite Box Sunday is the first Sunday of the month. Mites are sent to the LWML Gulf States District to pay for District mission grants, administrative expenses and for National mission grants.

Crestview Manor was very grateful for the handmade Easter cards, snacks and drink mixes. Thanks to all who donated time, talent and items to help cheer up the residents and staff.

### UPCOMING EVENTS:

OSELC LWML Meeting Saturday June 3, 10:00 am in the Fellowship Hall

LWML National Convention, June 22-25, 2023, Milwaukee, WI. Registration is open via <https://www.lwml.org>

Registration fee increases on May 11.

Gulf States District Retreat, October 13-15, Stone Bridge Farms, Cullman, AL

LWML Gulf States District Convention, April 26-27, 2024, Prattville, AL

-Linda Urda



Our Savior Evangelical Lutheran Church

Council Meeting Minutes (TEAMS)

April 11, 2023

President – Alex Franco

Vice-President- Brad Bien

Opening Prayer – meeting began at 6:30 with Alex providing the opening prayer.

Attendance – Alex Franco, Brad Bien, Heather Bien, Becky Williams, Linda Urda, Brian Hull, Trish Hull, Jeannie Harrison, Jennifer Currid

Approve previous council minutes – approved (Brad/Becky).

Reports:

Pastor's Report (Fr Parent) – on vacation

Deaconess Report (Dcs Bien) – see attached.

Treasurer (Brian) – see attached.

Financial Report (Jeannie) – see attached.

Board of Security (Julie) – Person seen in the parking lot picking up rocks appears to be harmless.

LWML (Linda) - see attached. Voting on mission grant goals in May.

Board of Christian Life (Jennifer)- Membership board is 99% complete. Trees that were planted by the congregation will be fertilized and watered this week. The Care Group continues to provide snacks and lunch for work days. Will advertise that food is provided at work days.

Board of Education/ Youth (Gervase) – see attached.

Board of Elders (Alan) – no report.

Board of Trustees (Brian) – see attached. During the summer we will have once month work days to tend to inside maintenance. In the fall, we will resume outside maintenance.

Board of Social Ministry (Becky) - Remember that Sunday April 30 is our first feast day. The church will provide meats, and the congregation will provide sides and desserts.

Board of Evangelism (Alex)- Alex has updated the website to include sermons and to advertise free firewood.

Unfinished Business: None.

New Business: see paragraph in Treasure's report about the pastor's housing allowance

and IRS rules. Brian made a motion that we approve adjusting the housing allowance when the new IRS rules are published (Brian/Brad). At the end of the fiscal year, we will investigate the feasibility of purchasing another defibrillator.

Next Council Meeting will be held in-person on Tuesday, May 9; the Voters' Meeting will be held on Sunday, May 21 to avoid holding a meeting on Mothers' Day.

Meeting adjourned at 7:10 (Brad/Linda). Alex closed the meeting with the Lord's Prayer.

**OSELCLWML Meeting**  
Saturday, June 3  
Fellowship Hall  
10:00 am

**Men's Group**  
May 16  
7:00pm  
Pastor Parent's house  
All men of the church are invited for a great time of study and fellowship.  
6481 Wallanney Way  
Laurel Hill

**Women's Bible Study**  
Thursdays at 10:00 a.m.  
Study of  
Psalms  
Come join us for a good time of learning and fellowship!

**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!



**Birthdays:**  
Tom Schmoltdt 5/21  
Kevin Sparks 5/27

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

**Women's Book Club**  
Thursday, May 18  
11:30 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.  
See Jennifer Currid for details



**OUR SAVIOR LUTHERAN  
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We are on the Web!

[www.Oselc.net](http://www.Oselc.net)



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