



Acts of Faith

Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church
The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod
Kewanee, Illinois



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In the Church Year, we have now entered the season of Pentecost. The paraments and vestments are now green, and they will remain so until late Fall when we ring in the new Church Year with Advent. Green is for growth. Pentecost is the season of growth—growth of the Church, and, important for us now, the growth of God’s people.

Just a few weeks ago, on the Festival of the Holy Trinity, we read the ancient words of the Athanasian Creed. You may remember how this creed ends. (If you have a hymnal at home, and you should, you can review the creed on page 319.) The creed ends with these words: “At His coming all men shall rise with their bodies and give an account of their own deeds. Those who have done good will enter eternal life, and those who have done evil will go into everlasting fire. This is the true Christian faith. Unless a man believes this firmly and faithfully, he cannot be saved.” Those words get our attention. What does it mean when it says we have to give an account of our own deeds? Hasn’t Christ saved us? (Yes, He has!) Aren’t we saved by grace through faith apart from works? (Indeed, we are!) So, what does this mean?

As I noted last month, we are called to our life together in Christ by Christ Himself. We are made His people by His sacrifice of Himself on the cross for you and me. We are free, and that freedom in Christ makes us servants of our neighbor. There are a number of passages that make this clear. From the mouth of the Lord we have the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25 and following). In this parable, Christ is the Samaritan. In Him, we are called also to become the Samaritan who binds the neighbor’s wounds. In Matthew (Matthew 25:14 and following), our Lord speaks to us the parable of the talents. Read here how it ends:

“But his master answered him, ‘You wicked and slothful servant! You knew that I reap where I have not sown and gather where I scattered no seed? Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and at my coming I should have received what was my own with interest. So take the talent from him and give it to him who has the ten talents. For to everyone who has more will be given, and he will have an abundance. But from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away. And cast the worthless servant into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth’” (Matthew 25:26-30).

Here, the Lord reminds us, His people, what we are to do with the gifts He has given us (It’s ALL from Him!). We are to use these gifts in service of Him and His Kingdom. This parable is followed by the Lord’s talk of the final judgment (Matthew 25:31 and following). His final words in that bit of teaching are this: “Then he will answer them, saying, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.’ And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life” (Matthew 25:45-46). These texts are the basis for the last lines of that great ancient creed.

We can hear the words of our Lord echoed by the Apostles in their epistles. St. Paul, writing to the church in Rome, says this: “Why do you pass judgment on your brother? Or you, why do you despise your brother? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God; for it is written, ‘As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.’ So then each of us will give an account of himself to God” (Romans 14:10-12). The author to the Hebrews also notes, “And no creature is hidden from His sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account” (Hebrews 4:13). These texts are also reflected in the Athanasian Creed.

Luther wrote brilliantly on this in his great treatise of 1520 called Martin Luther’s Treatise on Christian Liberty (also known as The Freedom of a Christian, found in the American Edition of Luther’s Works, Volume 31, page 343 and following). In this early work Luther puts forth the following two propositions: “A Christian is a perfectly free lord of all, subject to none. A Christian is a perfectly dutiful servant of all, subject to all” (page 344). What we have received in Christ, Luther notes, is to be used to do the good works the Lord would have

(Cont. on Page 2)

Worship Schedule
 9:00 AM, Sunday Worship Service
 Adult Bible Class, 10:15 A.M.

<i>Altar Guild Schedule</i>		
Aug 04	Kari Tavares	Green
Aug 11	Sharon Larson	Green
Aug 18	Marilyn Sturtevant	Green
Aug 25	Mary Hahn	Green

<i>August's Calendar</i>	
Aug 04	8th Sunday after Pentecost Worship with Holy Communion
Aug 08	WOF Meeting 10 AM
Aug 11	9th Sunday after Pentecost Worship with Holy Communion
Aug 18	10th Sunday after Pentecost Worship with Holy Communion
Aug 20	Elders Mtg. 6:30 PM Church Council 7:00 PM
Aug 25	11th Sunday after Pentecost Worship with Holy Communion

Weekly Ushers:

1st Sunday: Gary Hahn & Kevin Hull
 2nd Sunday: Eric Cervantez & Nick Leezer
 3rd Sunday: Nick Philips & Randy Stockner
 4th Sunday: Mike Leezer & Wendell Hier

Elders List:

Wayne Becker: 309-853-8783
 Kevin Hull: 309-852-0801
 Ron Larson: 309-853-5111
 Mike Leezer: 309-286-3014
 Ted Sturtevant: 309-853-8203
 Wendell Hier 309-853-8388

(Cont. from page 1)

us do in service to our neighbor. In serving (loving) our neighbor, we serve God. These are the good works we are called to do. And these works are done out of love and to honor the God who has saved us by grace.

I could go on, but, hopefully now, you get the point. Just as our first parents were called to work in paradise, so we, recreated in Christ, are called to work. We are called to work! We are called to do the work His will requires—not ours. There’s the rub. And so the warning. The Christian life is not a life of complacency and going along with the whims of the culture. Our life in Christ is decidedly counter-cultural. These are the works for which we must give account. What did we do with the gift of the Spirit living in us? What did we do with the Master’s talents? Did we use our freedom in Christ to satisfy our own lusts and passions and so return to the slavery (and death) of sin? Our salvation necessarily produces fruit—its works.

Yes, Christ has died for our sins. He has freed us not to fall back into sin, but He has freed us to live a life of love—a life of loving our neighbor. Thus, the final words of the ancient Athanasian Creed serve as a reminder and warning to us. Certainly, there is forgiveness for our many failures. The creed’s warning and reminder prevents me as pastor from teaching gospel reductionism. Gospel reductionism is, rather simply, ignoring the proclamation of Law (the Ten Commandments) that convicts us of our sin and drives us to Christ. It also keeps me from what theologians call antinomianism. Antinomians, put simply, teach that the Law is not necessary for Christians. This of course is wrong, and easily dismissed by Scripture and our Confessions. Christians delight in the Law and seek to uphold God’s law in their lives. These last lines of the creed remind us of that.

So, again I ask you, over these Summer months reflect and pray on the life Christ has called you to. Listen to His voice as we return to the Gospel according to St. Luke over these weeks. Rejoice in what you are in Him.

In Christ’s most Holy Name, Rev. Len Astrowski, Pastor

2019 Synodical Convention news: The Rev. Dr. Matthew C. Harrison has been reelected President of The Lutheran Church— Missouri Synod for a fourth term of office, 2019–2022, after receiving a majority of votes cast in the June 22–25 election. Harrison has served as LCMS president since 2010.

\$337,737 was given for the National Offering this year, which exceeds 2016 totals by more than 16%! The offering will go directly to the mission of the LCMS to make Christ known to the nations.

August Birthdays

August 3	Randy Stockner
August 5	Heidi Heinrich
August 6	Mark Tudder
August 10	Layne Stapel
August 12	Jemma Cade
August 16	Laura Heinrich
August 21	Jack Breedlove
August 25	Erin Travares

REMEMBER: Please contact the office and inform us of any changes of name, address, marital status, e-mail, phone, and cell phone.

Baptism Dates

Jack Breedlove	8/31
Lauri Cochran	8/15
Jonathon Estes	8/24

Wedding Anniversaries

August 2	Joe & Sue Cervantez
August 9	Jeffrey & Laura Heinrich
August 10	Kari & Joe Tavares

Lutheran Hour Ministry Radio Program

Station	City, State	Freq.	Day & Time
WKEI	Kewanee, IL	1450 AM	Sun 5:30 AM

Prayer Requests: Have someone or something that you would like Pastor Weber to include in either his personal prayers or in our public Prayer of the Church on Sunday morning, please fill out a prayer request, place in an envelope, and leave it in the office or hand it to Pastor.

Women of Faith: The ladies will be meeting on Thursday, **August 08**, at 10:00AM. Cheryl Snyder will be hostess and lead a devotion. All ladies are invited to attend. Bring a brown bag lunch with you.



We welcome into our Faith family, Debra Fronk, by her reaffirmation of faith on July 21, 2019.

Those For Whom We Pray: Please include the following in your thoughts and daily prayers.

Our Faith family: Cari Bridgewater, Betty Godke, Tootie Godke, Bonnie Nuding, Nancy Tudder, Cheryl Snyder, and Heidi Heinrich.

Friends: Jeff Bowman, Karen Wright, Judi Umbarger, Ray Rumbold, Glen Quart, and all military personnel.

Inactive Members—Pray the Holy Spirit bring them to the understanding of their need to be in regular worship in church on Sunday, and that we as their brothers and sisters in Christ would reach out to them.

CID: Our campus, prison, deaf, and Hispanic missions in the District need your prayers and support.

R.I. Cir: St. Matthew, Milan, and Trinity, Coal Valley, are calling shepherds to lead their congregations. Pray that God grant these congregations patience, wisdom, and discernment in this process.



Our Christian sympathy and prayers are extended to the family of Fred Stapel. Fred returned to his Heavenly home on June 27, 2019 at 88 years of age. His funeral and visitation were held at Faith on July 3rd. We will miss Fred's smile and the stories that he graced us with for so many years.

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. Romans 15: 13

July Voters' meeting was held on Sunday, July 14, following the worship service. The Treasurer reported that during the first half of the fiscal year expenses exceed income by **\$6,333.16** leaving a General Fund Balance of \$24,386.94 and a Memorial Fund Balance of \$19,336.02. Our mortgage balance at CID-CEF is \$218,078.12.

The voters approved the Elders report which indicated one member transferred away, one baptism was performed, and there were three deaths in the congregation during the period.

The Trustee reported that general maintenance has been preformed on the building, the organ was repaired, and the piano was tuned. A new hot water heater needs to be installed, and the elevator is out of service until it can be repaired. The elevator work is being contracted out, and it is expected to be very expensive to repair and re-inspect to meet Fire Marshall requirements. Ted, Gary, and Kevin continue to keep the grass cut around the church building. The wheeled weed trimer was overhauled at a cost of \$70. A new tree was purchased and planted on the campus thanks to some friends of the Carol Schwefel family. Speakers for the organ are to be replaced using Memorial funds yet this year.

As part of old business, a constitutional amendment reducing the require number of Elder positions from six to four was given a second discussion with no opposition indicated. This will be voted upon in the January 2020 meeting.

Under new business it was suggested a new membership directory be prepared and published for informational purposes with correct addresses, phone numbers, and e-mail address . The officers will begin to work on this project. Members will be asked to provide and review this information.

CID News: *Bring Giving Home* is a Stewardship and Mission Education emphasis unfolding in CID during the rest of 2019 and 2020. It began with the Spring District Pastors' Conference, and it will continue this fall with weekday evening Circuit workshops. At each of these, pastors and lay leaders from a Circuit's churches will have the opportunity to gather for an evening meal, followed by a couple of hours of presentation and discussion. The workshop will feature Stewardship teaching and discussion. The pastors and lay leaders will be challenged and encouraged to unfold Stewardship emphases in their congregations during 2020.

The Rock Island Circuit workshop is scheduled for Monday, Sept. 8, 2019, at Immanuel Rock Island. Anyone interested in attending should contact Pastor as soon as possible.

Also during 2020, CID President Mark Miller and Stewardship Executive Ken Schurb will place a priority on preaching, as invited, in District churches that request sermons and Bible classes related to Stewardship. Dr. Schurb is constantly available for church consultations.

Have you ever noticed the subtle ceremony of receiving the offerings during the Divine Service? The offerings are collected in plates or baskets, and they are brought forward and given to the pastor or an assistant. The pastor turns toward the altar, and, as he slightly bows his head, the offerings are raised slightly to the Lord and placed on the altar or an adjacent table. Originally, this ceremony included more than simply bringing forward what was collected in the offering plates. The elements for the Holy Communion – the bread and the wine – were brought forward with the offerings. The offerings and elements were lifted toward the Lord and placed upon the altar. The altar, now made a table, would be set for the Lord's Supper.

Gifts brought to the altar come from the sweat of His people's brow. They are the bread and wine, the fruits of His people's labor in this fallen world. After six days of labor and toil, the people are to bring a generous proportion for the Lord's work. Gifts set upon the altar are offered to the Lord for Him to take up and press into service for His gracious work.

For what is offered to the Lord from the sweat of His people's brow – the bread of anxious toil – comes back to us as the bread of life. The bread comes down from heaven that whoever eats this bread and drinks this cup will receive life through the forgiveness of their sins. What a blessing! God provides for us in all things. He provides bread from the sweat of our brows. He receives this from us in the first-fruits offerings we give to Him in thanksgiving and praise, and He turns these into spiritual bread. He gives this heavenly bread – the bread of eternal life – back to us so we might have joy.

So, the next time you are in the Divine Service, watch this ceremony in wonder. The offerings we have given to Him, the Lord gives back to us in His supper so that we may rejoice in the salvation He won for us upon the cross.