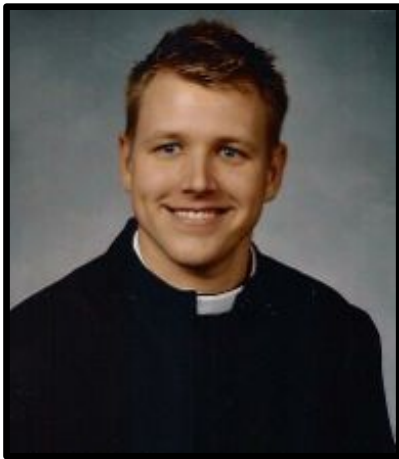

IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH

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From Pastor's Desk

It is a new year. It's a time that we take a stock of our past and look forward to what we want to be different in our future. A time to make new resolutions for this year and make amends with those unmet from our past. And so the new year marks a time of renewed vigor and hope. Vigor for the task at hand and hope for what it will bring.
door.

This year among all the resolutions that I'm making, I am renewing my study and praying of the Small Catechism. And I challenge you to do the same.

Do not be content to let the Word of God lie, as if inert, on the page of a book. The Word of God is a lively and life-giving Word. Luther prepared his Small Catechism to put the Word of God not only in your heart but on your lips. You may have thought of the Small Catechism as a textbook to be studied in preparation for confirmation and set aside thereafter. But Luther designed his summary of Christian doctrine to serve the Christian not only as a textbook to be studied but even more as a prayer book and an operator's manual for daily living.

Luther's Small Catechism is divided into Six Chief Parts. The first three—the Ten Commandments, the Apostles' Creed, and the Lord's Prayer—provide the very shape of the Christian life.

The Ten Commandments are a summary of God's own word of Law, by which He tells you what you are to do and not do. In the praying of these commands, the Lord teaches you that you are a sinner who does not love and trust in Him above all things and who does not live in the way He created you to live. The Commandments are words of repentance and are important words to include in your prayers because they teach you that it is impossible to save yourself.

The Apostles' Creed, in turn, is a summary of God's word of Gospel. It is a word of faith that confesses what the Holy Trinity has done, is doing, and will do for you, your life, and your salvation—centering in the person and work of Jesus Christ. When you pray the Creed, you give glory to God and learn to think of yourself the way God thinks of you in Christ. You edify and encourage people around you as you recount to them the saving deeds of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

In the Lord's Prayer, the Christian is taught by Jesus to call upon God using the very

“with all boldness and confidence . . . as dear children ask their dear father”

commands and promises of God Himself. Praying in this way is living the holy life—a life that has been made holy by the Word that has taken residence in you, entering your ear, lodging in your heart, and sounding forth from your lips.

These first three parts shape the Christian life of repentance, faith, and holy living. The last three parts teach you how this Christian life is brought to you and sustained in you.

In the next section, Luther teaches Confession and Absolution as the practice of living in the truth. When you confess your sins, you are telling the truth about yourself. You are saying what God says about you in His Law, that you are a sinner who deserves nothing but temporal and eternal punishment. When you receive Absolution, you are hearing an even greater truth about yourself: namely, that Christ has taken away your sin and you stand forgiven. You receive forgiveness from the pastor as from God Himself, for it is Christ who is speaking to you through the Absolution you hear.

The Last of the Six Chief Parts shows us that the Sacrament of the Altar is the very body and blood of Christ, who was given into death for your sin and raised to life for your justification. Eaten and drunk in faith, trusting what the Lord promises to give with His body and blood—the forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation—the faith received in Baptism is supported and strengthened.

These parts teach the ways in which Christ and all His benefits are brought to bear upon you, taking root and sustaining you in the Christian life. The remaining sections of the Small

Catechism—the Daily Prayers and the Table of Duties—continue to teach and train you in a life of daily prayer and service to both God and neighbor.

The Small Catechism summarizes the entire Holy Scriptures and puts them in a prayable form so as to be readily heard with your ears, believed in your heart, and spoken by your lips. As you pray and meditate upon these chief parts, the catechism teaches you how to live the new life given you in your Baptism. Because you have been made a new person in Christ, the old Adam in you is not to be indulged, tolerated, or even reformed. The baptismal life calls for the mortification of your old Adam through daily contrition and repentance and the living of that new life that clings to Christ for the forgiveness of sins.

As you learn to use this prayer book, consider and take to heart the words of Dr. Luther: “But for myself I say this: I am also a doctor and preacher; yes, as learned and experienced as all the people who have such assumptions and contentment. Yet I act as a child who is being taught the catechism. Every morning—and whenever I have time—I read and say, word for word, the Ten Commandments, the Creed, the Lord’s Prayer, the Psalms, and such. I must still read and study them daily. Yet I cannot master the catechism as I wish. But I must remain a child and pupil of the catechism, and am glad to remain so” (Martin Luther, *Preface to the Large Catechism*, 7–8). May such gladness be yours also.

Pastor Braaten



GREETERS LIST

- Jan 2 Donna & Gunnar Campbell – West
Jim Dyer – East
- Jan 9 Joan Vukelich – West
Becky Kappes – East
- Jan 16 Geof & Sue Danielson – West
Tim & Tresa Pollock – East
- Jan 23 Harold & Irene Wattjes – West
Donna & Gunnar Campbell – East
- Jan 30 Jim Dyer – West
Joan Vukelich – East
- Feb 6 Laverl Byers - West
Becky Kappes – East
- Feb 13 Geof & Sue Danielson – West
Tim & Tresa Pollock – East
- Feb 20 Harold & Irene Wattjes – West
Donna & Gunnar Campbell – East
- Feb 27 Jim Dyer – West
Joan Vukelich – East

GREETERS NEEDED

COFFEE COMMITTEE

January Laverl Byers

We Need Volunteers for the rest of 2011. If you would be willing to volunteer for coffee and donuts, please contact the church office.

ALTAR COMMITTEE

- Jan Ruth Bretz & Joan Vukelich
- Feb Sue Danielson & Becky Kappes
- Mar Ann Carroll and Ann Hilgendorf
- Apr Ruth Bretz, Marylin Joergens and Sue Danielson
- May Janet Stumeier and Tonia Timlin
- Jun Wanda Long and Sharon Allen
- Jul Sue Danielson and Becky Kappes
- Aug Janice Arthur and Ann Carroll
- Sep Delores Ford and Tonia Timlin
- Oct Mary Jane Jones and Sharon Allen
- Nov Irene Wattjes and Sherrie Hoel
- Dec Joan Vukelich, Delores Ford and Margaret Stilwell

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO VOLUNTEER FOR THE ALTAR COMMITTEE PLEASE CONTACT THE CHURCH OFFICE.

| ATTENDANCE | | OFFERINGS | | |
|------------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------|
| Saturday | Sunday | General | Missions | Building |
| 12/1 Wed | 28 | 250.00 | 85.00 | |
| 12/4 12 | 12/5 94 | 2590.00 | | |
| 12/8 Wed | 29 | 185.00 | | |
| 12/11 17 | 12/12 84 | 1866.50 | | |
| 12/15 Wed | 24 | 290.02 | | |
| 12/18 13 | 12/19 102 | 3018.78 | 100.00 | |
| 12/22 | 20 | 170.00 | | |
| 12/24 Eve | 64 | 674.00 | | |
| 12/25 Day | 30 | 624.00 | | |
| | 12/26 78 | 1071.00 | | |
| 42 | 358 | 10739.30 | 88.25 | |

EDUCATION CORNER

Have you ever asked yourself what the Bible says about homosexuality or the role of women in the church? Have you ever wondered why there are so many denominations or what Biblical worship is? Have you thought to yourself: Okay, so I'm saved but now what? If you have, then come to Bible Class. We're beginning a new study that will address just these issues.

The study is on 1 Corinthians, and here's the outline schedule.

1 Corinthians Bible Class

- 12/26/2010—Introduction & Overview
- The Word of the Cross Is the Basis for the Church's Unity
 - 1/2/2011—The Power of Forgiveness (1 Cor 1:1–31)
 - 1/9/2011—Wisdom from the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 2:1–16)
 - 1/16/2011—Jesus Christ, the Sure Foundation (1 Cor 3:1–23)
 - 1/23/2011—Spiritual Leadership (1 Cor 4:1–21)
- The Word of the Cross Is the Basis for the Church's Holiness
 - 1/30/2011—Defilement (1 Cor 5:1–13)
 - 2/6/2011—Cleansing (1 Cor 6:1–20)
 - 2/13/2011—To Marry or Not To Marry (1 Cor 7:1–40)
- The Word of the Cross Is the Basis for the Church's Freedom
 - 2/20/2011—Christian Freedom (1 Cor 8:1–13)
 - 2/27/2011—Your Rights and the Needs of Others (1 Cor 9:1–27)
 - 3/6/2011—Warnings About Spiritual Complacency (1 Cor 10:1–33)
- The Word of the Cross Is the Basis for the Church's Worship
 - 3/13/2011—The Lord's Supper with Reverence (1 Cor 11:1–34)
 - 3/20/2011—Spiritual Gifts (1 Cor 12:1–31)
 - 3/27/2011—The Royal Road of Love (1 Cor 13:1–13)
 - 4/3/2011—Prophecy and Tongues (1 Cor 14:1–33a)
 - 4/7/2011—The Ordination of Women (1 Cor 14:33b–40)
- The Word of the Cross Is the Basis for the Church's Hope
 - 4/14/2011—Hope in the Resurrection (1 Cor 15:1–58)
 - 4/21/2011—Conclusion



IN THE NEWS

DNA: The Language of Life

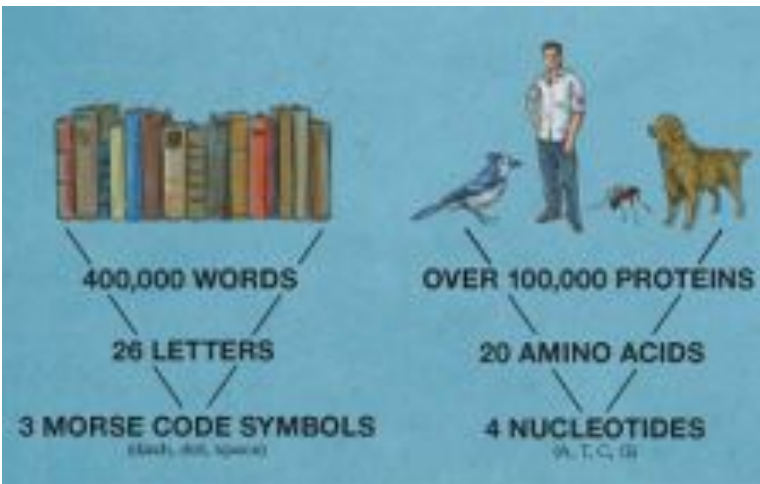
Whenever we hear a foreign language, we may not know what's being said, but we know it means something. It isn't gibberish. The words convey thoughts and meaning by an intelligent source.

In recent times, scientists have discovered an unmistakable language within all living things. Like a miniature library, DNA stores piles of information in extraordinary molecules that specify the details of everything from the shape of flower petals to the color of your eyes.

DNA resembles a language in many uncanny ways, as though a supremely intelligent Author and Life-Giver left His indelible message in every living thing.

The Letters of a Language

Using different combinations of four basic units, called nucleotides, DNA molecules can store all sorts of information, just like the dots and dashes of Morse code, or the binary numbers in computers.



The four nucleotides are combined into codes for twenty chemicals known as amino acids. By rearranging these twenty “letters of the genetic alphabet,” God designed the language so that it

could produce all the proteins that living things need—humans alone have over 100,000 proteins.

Similarly, English speakers can combine the letters of the alphabet into any words they need—now numbering hundreds of thousands.

Unwrapping a Strand of DNA

When it comes to storing massive amounts of information, nothing comes close to the efficiency of DNA. A single strand of DNA is thousands of times thinner than a strand of human hair. One pinhead of DNA could hold enough information to fill a stack of books stretching from the earth to the moon 500 times.

Although DNA is wound into tight coils, your cells can quickly access, copy, and translate the information stored in DNA. DNA even has a built-in proofreader and spell-checker that ensure precise copying. Only about one mistake slips through for every 10 billion nucleotides that are copied. If only our word processors were that good!

Same But Different

Interestingly, any two humans are 99% identical at the genetic level. A mere 1% makes up the many differences we see among people throughout the entire world.

Even if two beings have a copy of the exact same DNA, they are still unique individuals. For example, even though identical twin babies have 100% identical DNA, they have different fingerprints. So the invisible Creator makes it clear that the source of our individuality is not just coded into DNA. We're not just a bucket of molecules, but we are unique persons with souls, given to us by the Author of life.



Life Together: Confession or Witness?

It's no secret that we in the Missouri Synod struggle to live in the unity that Christ so freely and generously gives us in His blessed Gospel of salvation by faith in the cross alone.

A significant "fault line" that has divided us is whether the Church's primary task is either witness or confession. Shall we be primarily witnesses of the Gospel or confessors of truth? The Synod creaks and groans and undergoes occasional tectonic shifts relative to these issues.

In fact, these tensions have been with us since the very beginning and are, in a way, represented by the two major streams of Lutheranism (Loehe and Walther), which were melded into one Synod. The seismic synodical divide is full of crags and cliffs—misunderstandings, assumptions, prejudices, and presumptions. Each viewpoint represents more than a bit of the truth.

On the witness side of the fault, the primary, laudable, and biblical goal is reaching the lost—now, in today's world, in a way people today can actually hear it. "I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some" (1 Cor. 9:22). "For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost" (Luke 19:10).

Meanwhile, those who are convinced that the fundamental aspect of the Church's life in this world is confession—that is, holding forth for the truth of the Gospel and all its articles—rightly and intensely identify with New Testament texts that bid us to stand fast against world, culture, and prevailing trends. "Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful" (Heb. 10:23). "That faith, however, that does not present itself in confession is not firm" (Ap IV 385).

These two great truths of the Christian life are represented by two powerful and pervasive New Testament words: *martyria*, or witness, and *homologia*, or confession. Witness is used in the New Testament for a straightforward witness to facts (Matt. 18:16). The apostolic circle were witnesses to the resurrection in the legal sense, that is, they actually saw the risen Christ. As such, they were commissioned by Christ Himself to "bear witness" to what they had seen and heard (Matt. 10:18), and such witness produced faith in others.

So right from Pentecost, the witness becomes more than just a dispassionate reciting of historical fact. To be a witness was now to speak with faith and conviction about what God had done and continues to do in Jesus: To save people from their sins. In the second century, there arose the common use of witness as martyr for a Christian who had been murdered for the faith. It is clearly the intent of Jesus that the Church bear witness through all time to His saving Gospel; that is at the

essence of her very being and life (Luke 21:13; Is. 44:8; Acts 1:8).

To my great surprise and delight, while studying and paging through my Greek New Testament, I came upon a truth which is, I believe, vital for us as we seek to live together as a church. I discovered that in the New Testament, witness and confession belong together.

Finally, the witness is given by the disciples themselves (Jn. 15:27; 1 Jn. 4:14). Their witness is confession. "Witness" (*Marturein*) and "confession" (*homologein*) merge into one another (1 Jn. 4:14 ff.) [Kittel, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, 4:498]. I've come to be convinced by the Bible that witness requires the strong confession of the truth as it is in Jesus—"teaching all things which I have commanded you" (Matt. 28:19); "the doctrine and all its articles" (FC SD X 31). Likewise, confession ("Here I stand!") that does not "Go, therefore, into all nations" is not the full confession of Jesus. Put simply, witness without confession is not witness, and confession without witness is not confession.

Confession or witness? Yes! God grant us such a life together.

"Let's go!" Mark 1:38

e-mail: president@lcms.org

Web page: www.lcms.org/president

December 2010

Matthew Harrison



The 34th Biennial LWML Convention. . .is coming to Central Illinois! 2011 is here! Did you send in your Call for Workers Form? Consider it a privilege to serve God by helping others. Workers, serving eight hours or more at the convention, will receive a specific coupon to qualify for a discounted registration. Please do not send in your registration until you receive the coupon later this spring. Wait for the coupon, then register. Encourage everyone to come and be a part of the first national LWML Convention in the Central Illinois District. Pray for all aspects of the convention so that all praise and glory will be given to God. Come to Peoria, June 23-36, and be empowered by being with Jesus.



January 2011 Church Calendar

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|---|--|--|--|---|--|---|
| | |  | |  | | <p>1</p> <p>No Evening Service</p> |
| <p>2</p> <p>9:00 AM Divine Service 10:15 AM Bible Study & Sunday School</p> | <p>3</p> <p>7:30 AM Mattis 7:30 PM Men's Club Eric Brewer Jacob Dyer</p> | <p>4</p> <p>7:30 AM Mattis Miranda Faulk</p> | <p>5</p> <p>7:30 AM Mattis 6:00 PM Choir Jack Appley Joe Sluder Jonathan Branton</p> | <p>6</p> <p>7:30 AM Mattis 6:30 PM Take Down Christmas Tree 7:00 PM Trustees Mike & Torie Timin</p> | <p>7</p> <p>Pastor's Day Off Andrew Crawford</p> | <p>8</p> <p>6:00 AM Confirmation 10:00 AM Adult Men's Devotion 6:00 PM Confirmation Sun Day Special Youth Worship Conference Confirmation</p> |
| <p>9</p> <p>9:00 AM Divine Service Installation of Church Officers 10:15 AM Bible Study & Sunday School 11:15 AM Church Council Ann Wependorf Art Rubin</p> | <p>10</p> <p>7:30 AM Mattis 6:00 PM Mission 6:00 PM Elders Josh Higgins Daren Timin</p> | <p>11</p> <p>9:00 AM Circuit Pastor's Conference 7:30 AM Mattis Eric Munn Chris Casanova</p> | <p>12</p> <p>7:30 AM Mattis 6:00 PM Choir Hunter Orwick</p> | <p>13</p> <p>7:30 AM Mattis</p> | <p>14</p> <p>Pastor's Day Off Amanda Bowen</p> | <p>15</p> <p>8:30 AM Confirmation 10:30 AM Adult Information Class 5:30 PM Divine Service Mark & Aileen Pollock</p> |
| <p>16</p> <p>9:00 AM Divine Service 10:15 AM Bible Study & Sunday School</p> | <p>17</p> <p>7:30 AM Mattis 7:30 PM Mattis</p> | <p>18</p> <p>7:30 AM Mattis 2:30 PM Comm./Nurs. Home Emanuel Faulk Emily Rahn</p> | <p>19</p> <p>7:30 AM Mattis 6:00 PM Choir Laura Witt O'Brien Mark Timin</p> | <p>20</p> <p>7:30 AM Mattis Christopher Ladage</p> | <p>21</p> <p>Pastor's Day Off</p> | <p>22</p> <p>8:30 AM Confirmation 5:30 PM Divine Service</p> |
| <p>23</p> <p>9:00 AM Divine Service 10:15 AM Bible Study & Sunday School Lucas Sluder</p> | <p>24</p> <p>7:30 AM Mattis 9:00 AM Newsletter Deadline 6:00 PM Salvation Brian Casanova</p> | <p>25</p> <p>7:30 AM Mattis Kelly Wood</p> | <p>26</p> <p>7:30 AM Mattis 6:00 PM Choir Dean Mulgan</p> | <p>27</p> <p>7:30 AM Mattis</p> | <p>28</p> <p>Pastor's Day Off</p> | <p>29</p> <p>6:00 AM Confirmation 10:00 AM Adult Men's Devotion 6:00 PM Divine Service John Wood</p> |
| <p>30</p> <p>9:00 AM Divine Service 10:15 AM Bible Study & Sunday School</p> | <p>31</p> <p>7:30 AM Mattis Hunter Orwick</p> | | | | | |