



From Pastor's Desk YAWN . . .

By Rev. Jason M. Braaten

This month's From Pastor's Desk is an article I wrote for the October issue of *The Lutheran Witness*. I was also interviewed about that article on the radio program *Issues, Etc.* You can listen to that interview by going to the following Web link (<http://issuesetc.org/podcast/11131003122.mp3>).

Q: Sometimes church bores me. I'm interested in sports, politics, new restaurants. But I don't really care about theology. Should I?

A: I understand. To be honest, I'm not always fully plugged in. My mind wanders. My focus wanes. But why should that mean that there's

something wrong with church, with theology, with the things of God? Why is it that when we are bored or uninterested with something our initial reaction is that there's something wrong with the topic? Why is that our first response? Why do we affix blame and point fingers? Have we forgotten what our mother's taught us about that?

Here's the point: We don't recognize our boredom and disinterest as our own fault. We don't recognize our own self-centeredness, our own laziness, our own disdain for the things of God, for the gifts God in Christ freely gives in church, in the

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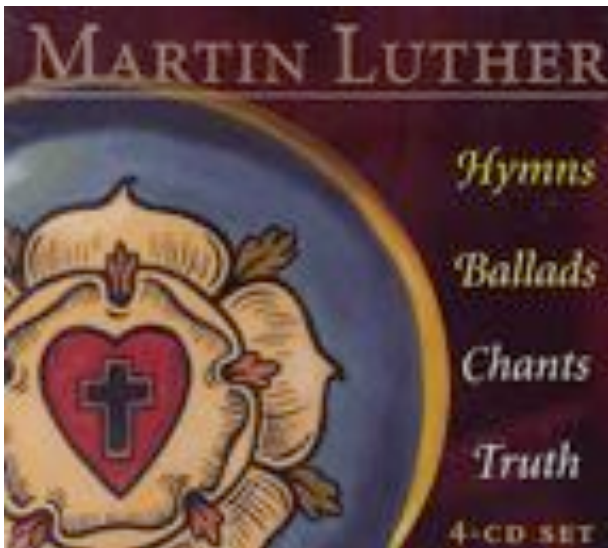
liturgy, in His Word and Sacraments. So, what's a person to do with that, you ask?

Repent, that's what. Confess your sin in it. Consider that at the heart of your boredom is your own selfishness for something else, something better, something more fun than . . . God.

And then consider what it is that is happening in church. Consider how profound it is that God deigned to take up human flesh so that He could give His life into death so that He could take your life out of it. He came to dwell with His own creation, to speak to it with His own mouth and in his own Words. Consider that every Sunday in church He delivers this life-saving and life-giving Word and Work directly to you and for you, to save you from sin, death, and hell. Jesus is present—physically and bodily, though hidden—in Words, in bread, in wine. He is there, for you. And where He is, there is heaven also. Church is heaven on earth. Church is simply the single most fantastic and amazing place you could ever want to be.

So, what's a person to do with that? Rejoice! Rejoice and sing, with all of heaven, with grandma and grandpa long past, with the apostles and prophets, with Martin Luther, the angels and archangels.

And while you rejoice and sing, you also work. We all have choices in how we spend our time. We work on things that bring us joy and wonder. We immerse ourselves in things that give us satisfaction and reward. So immerse yourself in God's unfathomable and endless riches. Work on mining those. Learn more and delve deeper into the Word and Work of God that brings endless joy and eternal rewards.



The Book of the Month
Martin Luther: Hymns, Ballads, Chants, Truth

This monumental recording project presents, for the first time, a complete recording of all the hymns, ballads, and chants composed or authored by Martin Luther. This four-CD set provides numerous vocal and instrumental settings combining Renaissance, Baroque, and modern instruments.

Many hymns are preceded by preludes composed by significant historic and contemporary composers. All texts are sung in

English by a choral ensemble noted for vocal clarity. Historic narrative is provided, quoting Martin Luther concerning music, worship, and liturgy.

A 64-page booklet presents each hymn text and brief comments concerning the history of the music and text. Durable packaging keeps CDs safe in shipment, so you can send a set to each of your friends. The set contains 39 tracks.

Regularly \$44.95 each, this set can be yours for \$30.00 each when you purchase 5 or more.

From the President Concerning Visitation

By Rev. Matthew C. Harrison

“A home going pastor makes a church going people.” Those words of Dr. Robert Preus at the Fort Wayne seminary stuck with me. Before I began serving in my first parish, I had also stumbled across the section in Dr. Walther’s Pastoral Theology, where he instructs pastors about the importance of and how to visit the homes of parishioners. Combined with good effort at preaching, there is simply nothing so significant in the pastor-people relationship and the well-being of the congregation as visitation.

Visitation is a much more profound reality for the Church than we realize. Just follow Jesus’ movement through the Gospel of Mark. “Let’s go!” he told his disciples (Mark 1:38). Jesus is the quintessential peripatetic. The “Great Commission” gives every pastor and the whole church its mission. It’s no mistake that Matt. 28:19 is the first verse in the ordination rite. “Go, therefore!” After the Jerusalem Council sorted things out regarding the Gentile/circumcision question, Paul turned to Barnabas and said, “Let us return and visit the brothers in every city where we proclaimed the word of the Lord, and see how they are” (Acts 15:36). What is not evident in an English Bible is that the Greek word in the original for visit is the verb form of the word Paul uses for overseer--that is, episcopus or bishop. “Therefore an overseer [episcopus] must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach” (1 Tim. 3:2).

Someone once quipped, “The problem with you Lutherans is not that you don’t have any bishops. The problem is you have too many!” They were referring to the teaching of the New Testament and of our Lutheran Confessions that every local pastor is an overseer or bishop. What’s his authority? Only



the Word of God. And the chief word Paul uses to describe the pastor’s office is the very word for visit!

A pastor is a visitor. He admonishes, rebukes on occasion, consoles, encourages and comforts God’s people--all with the Word of God--and he does it while wearing out his shoes, speaking the Gospel to those along the way who have not heard it.

Out of freedom, the Early Church followed the example of Jesus, Paul and the apostles in ordering the church. At the time of the Reformation, when most of the Catholic bishops did not become Lutheran, Luther and company began ordering the church for its benefit too. (See Luther’s Works, vol. 40, pg. 269). From the beginning, the Lutherans called most of their bishops “superintendents,” and



the LCMS calls its leaders “presidents” (e.g., district president, Synod president).

The constitution and bylaws of the LCMS are heavily weighted toward visitation, a function of ecclesiastical oversight or supervision. That is a fundamental task of the Office of the Ministry. Our presidents are in the office, and they carry out the functions of the office as a ministry of service, which extends no further than the Word of God. In this, the district presidents are defined as an extension of the Synod president’s office. The president of Synod is to visit the districts, the universities and the seminaries and has general ecclesiastical supervision to

see that the doctrine and practice of the Synod is adhered to and that convention decisions are carried out. “Doctrine and life!” (Luther). District presidents are to visit the congregations and pastors. To get this done, they are to use their vice-presidents and especially circuit counselors. We should return to calling these men “circuit visitors.” One sees a “counselor” when there is a problem, but visitation is to be a regular form of pastoral encouragement toward fidelity and mission, accountability, admonition, comfort and care. Just check out Paul’s letters to figure out what it’s all about. He went. He sent letters. He sent co-workers. As he visited established churches, he constantly preached and planted

new ones.

Absent visitation, we paralyze the “legs of the Gospel” as it were--whether it be parish pastor, circuit counselor, district president or Synod president. Visit!

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Facts and Figures; Dates and Times

Greeters List

4 Nov Ruth Sims – East
 Becky Kappes – West
 11 Nov Tim & Teri Pollock – East
 Harold & Irene Wattjes – West
 18 Nov Donna & Gunnar Campbell – East
 Jim Dyer – West
 25 Nov Ruth Sims - East
 Becky Kappes – West
 2 Dec Tim & Teri Pollock - East
 Harold & Irene Wattjes – West
 9 Dec Donna & Gunnar Campbell - East
 Jim Dyer - West
 16 Dec Joan Vukelich - East
 Laverl Byers - West
 23 Dec Ruth Sims – East
 Becky Kappes – West
 31 Dec Tim & Teri Pollock – East

Coffee Committee

Nov Jerry & Joyce Alexander
 Dec Pastor & Lauren Braaten

Altar Committee

4 Nov Tonia Timlin
 11 Nov Tonia Timlin

18 Nov Sue Danielson
 21 Nov Sue Danielson
 25 Nov Ann Hilgendorf
 2 Dec Ann Hilgendorf
 9 Dec Ann Hilgendorf
 16 Dec Ann Carroll
 23 Dec Ann Carroll
 24 Dec Ann Carroll
 25 Dec Lauren Braaten
 30 Dec Lauren Braaten
 31 Dec Lauren Braaten

Elder On Duty – Communion

4 Nov Geof Danielson
 11 Nov Geof Danielson
 18 Nov Jack Appleby
 21 Nov Jack Appleby
 25 Nov Jack Appleby
 2 Dec Josh Whitson
 9 Dec Josh Whitson
 16 Dec Josh Whitson
 23 Dec Greg Nau
 24 Dec Greg Nau
 25 Dec Geof Danielson
 30 Dec Geof Danielson
 31 Dec Jack Appleby

ATTENDANCE			OFFERINGS		
Date	Saturday	Sunday	General	Missions	Building
10/7	22	85	\$3,101.59	\$20.00	\$0.00
10/14	18	86	\$2,511.74	\$2.00	\$0.00
10/21	24	85	\$2,505.50	\$0.00	\$180.00
10/28	19	89	\$1,990.26	\$0.00	\$25.00
Subtotal	83	345	\$10,109.09	\$22.00	\$205.00
Total	428		\$10,109.09	\$22.00	\$205.00

Immanuel Lutheran Church, Tuscola, Illinois, Contacts' birthdays and events, **Historic Lectionary, US Holidays**

Nov 2012 (Central Time)

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
28	29	30	31	1	2	3
				<p>All Saints Day</p> <p>Nov 1st Anniversary</p> <p>1958 WATSON'S ANNIVERSARY</p> <p>7:30am - Matins</p> <p>8am - Staff Meeting</p>	<p>Peabody's Day Off</p>	<p>Don Burnett's birthday</p> <p>8:30pm - Divine Service w/</p>
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<p>Catechism Recitation Day</p> <p>Saylright Serving Time Ends</p> <p>Jay Suggs's birthday</p> <p>Trinity 23</p> <p>8am - Divine Service w/</p> <p>10:30am - Bible Class @</p> <p>10:30am - Sunday School</p> <p>11:18am - Council Meeting</p> <p>11:30am - Catechism Class</p>	<p>Ernest Fuhrman's</p> <p>7:30am - Matins</p> <p>8am - Staff Meeting</p> <p>9pm - Board of Elders</p>	<p>Evangelical Day</p> <p>7:30am - Matins</p> <p>8am - Staff Meeting</p>	<p>ROSE WISNEY'S ANNIVERSARY</p> <p>Jean Swanson's birthday</p> <p>7:30am - Matins</p> <p>8:30pm - Choir Practice</p>	<p>7:30am - Matins</p> <p>8am - Staff Meeting</p>	<p>Arthur Leary's birthday</p> <p>Carissa Swanson's birthday</p> <p>Peabody's Day Off</p>	<p>8:30pm - Divine Service w/</p>
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
<p>Children's Sacrament Week</p> <p>Third Last Sunday</p> <p>Wetrata's Day</p> <p>8am - Divine Service w/</p> <p>10:30am - Bible Class @</p> <p>10:30am - Sunday School</p> <p>11:30am - Catechism Class</p> <p>8:30pm - Nursing Home</p>	<p>David Swanson's birthday</p> <p>Susananna Kuehn's</p> <p>7:30am - Matins</p> <p>8am - Staff Meeting</p> <p>9pm - Board of Mission &</p>	<p>Emmanuel Swanson's birthday</p> <p>7:30am - Matins</p> <p>8am - Staff Meeting</p> <p>11am - Church Potluck</p>	<p>8:30pm - Matins</p> <p>8:30pm - Choir Practice</p>	<p>8am - Matins</p> <p>8am - Staff Meeting</p>	<p>Debra Neer's birthday</p> <p>Leonard Swanson's</p> <p>Mary Appaly's birthday</p> <p>Peabody's Day Off</p>	<p>Adeline Swanson's birthday</p> <p>April Swanson's birthday</p> <p>Cary Swanson's birthday</p> <p>John Swanson's birthday</p> <p>Emma Oye's birthday</p> <p>Leary Swanson's birthday</p> <p>Robert Swanson's birthday</p> <p>8:30pm - Divine Service w/</p>
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
<p>Catechism Recitation Day</p> <p>James Swanson's birthday</p> <p>Second Last Sunday</p> <p>8am - Divine Service w/</p> <p>10:30am - Bible Class @</p> <p>10:30am - Sunday School</p> <p>11:30am - Catechism Class</p>	<p>David Snyder's birthday</p> <p>7:30am - Matins</p> <p>8am - Staff Meeting</p> <p>9pm - Board of Ed</p>	<p>7:30am - Matins</p> <p>8am - Staff Meeting</p>	<p>Major Long's anniversary</p> <p>Woods Long's anniversary</p> <p>7:30am - Matins</p> <p>8:30pm - Choir Practice</p>	<p>Thanksgiving</p> <p>7:30am - Matins</p> <p>8am - Staff Meeting</p>	<p>Heather Welch's birthday</p> <p>Leah Swanson's birthday</p> <p>Peabody's Day Off</p> <p>Paul Swanson's anniversary</p>	<p>8:30pm - Divine Service w/</p>
25	26	27	28	29	30	1
<p>Last Sunday</p> <p>Leary Swanson's anniversary</p> <p>Michael Suggs's birthday</p> <p>8am - Divine Service w/</p> <p>9pm - Youth Group</p>	<p>7:30am - Matins</p> <p>8am - Staff Meeting</p>	<p>7:30am - Matins</p> <p>8am - Staff Meeting</p> <p>9pm - LHMNL @ Immanuel's</p>	<p>Debra Neer's anniversary</p> <p>Greg Swanson's anniversary</p> <p>7:30am - Matins</p> <p>11:50am - TAMA</p> <p>8:30pm - Choir Practice</p> <p>7pm - Thanksgiving Eve</p>	<p>8am - Staff Meeting</p> <p>1:30pm - Ladies Available</p>	<p>Carl Swanson's birthday</p> <p>Mark Swanson's birthday</p> <p>Peabody's Day Off</p> <p>St. Andrew the Apostle</p>	

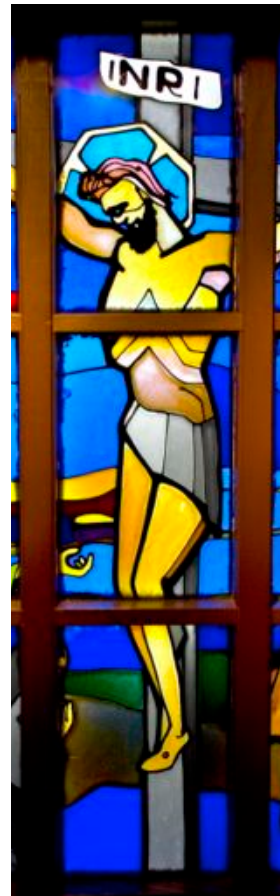
Immanuel Lutheran Church, Tuscola, Illinois, Contacts' birthdays and events, Historic Lectionary

Dec 2012 (Central Time)

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
25	26	27	28	29	30	1
<p>Ad Te Levavi</p> <p>Catechism</p> <p>Rachel Bretz's</p> <p>9am - Divine Service</p> <p>10:30am - Bible</p>	<p>Cora Jehnke's</p> <p>Janet Pollock's</p> <p>7:30am - Matins</p> <p>8am - Staff Meeting</p> <p>8pm - Board of</p>	<p>Nell Olliger's</p> <p>7:30am - Matins</p> <p>8am - Staff Meeting</p>	<p>Wilhelmina</p> <p>7:30am - Matins</p> <p>8:30pm - Choir</p>	<p>7:30am - Matins</p> <p>8am - Staff Meeting</p>	<p>Christine</p> <p>John Moore's</p> <p>Luanne Hoey's</p> <p>Pastor's Day Off</p>	<p>David Dentiston's</p> <p>Dawn Stokes's</p> <p>Virginia Osborne's</p> <p>5:30pm - Divine</p>
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<p>Children's Sermon</p> <p>George Greerford's</p> <p>Populus Zion</p> <p>Regans Bowles's</p> <p>9am - Divine Service</p> <p>10:30am - Bible</p>	<p>Patricia Romine's</p> <p>7:30am - Matins</p> <p>8am - Staff Meeting</p> <p>9pm - Board of</p>	<p>Nicolas Cler's</p> <p>7:30am - Matins</p> <p>8am - Staff Meeting</p> <p>11am - Circuit</p>	<p>Oliver Bresten's</p> <p>7:30am - Matins</p> <p>8:30pm - Choir</p>	<p>David Stymeter's</p> <p>Justin Norman's</p> <p>Tucker Bowles's</p> <p>7:30am - Matins</p> <p>8am - Staff Meeting</p> <p>12pm - Ladies Aid</p>	<p>Emily Czernobka's</p> <p>Jacob Wright's</p> <p>Pastor's Day Off</p>	<p>5:30pm - Divine</p>
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
<p>Catechism</p> <p>Gaudete (Advent 3)</p> <p>Gerald Alexander's</p> <p>9am - Divine Service</p> <p>10:30am - Bible</p> <p>10:30am - Sunday</p> <p>11:30am - Catechis</p>	<p>Anteigh Jones's</p> <p>Bill Brough's</p> <p>Leigh Ann Whitson's</p> <p>Mark Whitson's</p> <p>7:30am - Matins</p> <p>8am - Staff Meeting</p> <p>8pm - Board of Ed</p>	<p>Ava Whitson's</p> <p>Kelci Hoey's</p> <p>Tiffany Crouch's</p> <p>Travis Pollock's</p> <p>7:30am - Matins</p> <p>8am - Staff Meeting</p>	<p>Nichole Poa's</p> <p>7:30am - Matins</p> <p>8:30pm - Choir</p>	<p>Janice Arthur's</p> <p>7:30am - Matins</p> <p>8am - Staff Meeting</p>	<p>Lesell Byers's</p> <p>Leo Wyckoff's</p> <p>Pastor's Day Off</p> <p>St. Thomas the</p>	<p>5:30pm - Divine</p>
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
<p>James Oyer's</p> <p>Rorate coeli (Advent)</p> <p>9am - Divine Service</p> <p>10:30am - Bible</p> <p>10:30am - Sunday</p> <p>10:30am - Bible</p>	<p>Eve of the Nativity</p> <p>7:30am - Matins</p> <p>8am - Staff Meeting</p> <p>7pm - Christmas Eve</p>	<p>Sabrina Fox's</p> <p>The Nativity of Our</p> <p>7:30am - Matins</p> <p>8am - Staff Meeting</p> <p>9am - Christmas Day</p>	<p>St. Stephen the</p> <p>William Koss's</p> <p>7:30am - Matins</p> <p>11:30am - TAMA</p> <p>8:30pm - Choir</p>	<p>Sharon Allen's</p> <p>St. John, Apostle</p> <p>7:30am - Matins</p> <p>8am - Staff Meeting</p>	<p>Guy Stevens's</p> <p>Holy Innocents,</p> <p>Margaret Stillwell's</p> <p>Pastor's Day Off</p>	<p>5:30pm - Divine</p>
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
<p>Holly Wyckoff's</p> <p>Sunday after</p> <p>9am - Divine Service</p>	<p>7:30am - Matins</p> <p>8am - Staff Meeting</p> <p>7pm - New Year's</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>5</p>
30	31	1	2	3	4	5

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Immanuel's stained glass window in the Narthex.